

## **EDUCATING WOMEN AND NON-BRAHMINS AS 'LOSS OF NATIONALITY':**

Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the Nationalist Agenda in Maharashtra

**Parimala V. Rao**

*This paper deals with the nationalist discourse in Maharashtra spanning over forty years. This discourse argued that educating women and non-Brahmins would amount to a loss of nationality. The nationalists, led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak during 1881-1920 consistently opposed the establishment of girls' schools, the imparting of education to non-Brahmins, and implementing compulsory education. They were also instrumental in defeating the proposals to implement compulsory education in nine out of eleven municipalities. By demanding 'National Education', the nationalists sought to reshape the meaning and scope of compulsory education advocated by reformers, as their national education consisted of teaching the Dharmashastras and some technical skills. The important source for this paper is Tilak's own writings in his paper, the Mahratta.*

### **The pre-colonial Maharashtrian society**

Pre-colonial Hindu society in Maharashtra consisted of a stratified caste hierarchy, administered by a strong Hindu state under the Peshwas, whose reason for existence was to enforce the *Varnaashrama Dharma*, or asymmetric of caste privileges. The state controlled the tiniest of social spaces in even remote villages through its efficient bureaucracy. Fathers and brothers were punished for not marrying off their infant daughters. Uma Chakraverti has quoted Peshwa sources to demonstrate numerous instances of Peshwas ordering the local officials - *Mamlatdars* - to take action against the Brahmins who kept their daughters 'unmarried' after the age of nine.<sup>1</sup> The state even decided who could sit where during ceremonial lunches in temples, and those transgressing the strictures were severely punished. The Peshwa drove the Saraswat Brahmins, who refused to comply, out of his territory by confiscating their land.<sup>2</sup> The state also decided which ritual a caste could perform and which it could not - it was

forbidden for Brahmin widows to marry, though Shudras were advised to not oppose marriage of their widows. The Shudras were forbidden to greet each other with *Namaskar* or wear a dhoti in a single fold; these were reserved for Brahmins. Those transgressing these strictures were excommunicated and the state imposed taxes on them. So in the pre-colonial Hindu society, the state imposed caste and gender disabilities.

## **The society under colonial rule**

The battle of Kirki in 1818 ended the Peshwa's rule in Maharashtra. Within a decade of the fall of Brahmanical Peshwai, the Brahmin and non-Brahmin intellectuals of Maharashtra began to work towards ending gender and caste inequalities. J.V. Naik has analysed the Marathi writings of the Tarkhadkar brothers - Bhaskar Pandurang and Dadoba Pandurang - and those of Bhau Mahajan in the 1830s. These early reformers attacked the social slavery of the caste-ridden Hindu society, child marriage, the adverse conditions under which widows had to live, the denial of education to women,<sup>3</sup> and the rack renting of Khoti landlords.<sup>4</sup> These early reformers criticised the wasteful expenditure of the colonial government on disastrous wars in Afghanistan, as well as the meaningless expenditures on the Sankranti and Ganesh festivals. They argued that the same money could be used for education and medical care of the poor and needy.<sup>5</sup> The attack on colonial policies and caste and gender inequalities formed the basis of the early reformist discourse.

Gopal Hari Deshmukh popularly known as Lokhitwadi and Jotirao Phule took up the issues in a much more articulate manner from the 1840s onwards. Lokhitwadi severely criticised the position of women within the Brahmanical religion, and castigated the Brahmins as killers and butchers of their daughters. Drawing public attention to the existence of a large number of child widows, he suggested that if the Hindu Shastras did not support widow marriage, new laws should replace them, and asked his contemporaries to make a critical study of the Hindu scriptures.<sup>6</sup> He joined Vishnu Shastri Pandit, Mahadev Govind Ranade and Atmaram Pandurang in starting the Prarthana Samaj in 1866. Later, Ganesh Gopal Agarkar and Gopal Krishna Gokhale joined the group in advocating the abolition of the institution of caste, as it was responsible for the decadence of Hindu society. In the Prarthana Samaj, the non-Brahmins conducted the ceremonies, which consisted of portions of the Vedas and Upanishads being recited, and Bhakti hymns being sung. The singing of the hymns of Tukaram, which ridiculed the caste system - 'the Brahmin who flies to rage at the touch of a Mahar; that is no Brahmin, the only absolution for such a Brahmin is to die for his own sins'<sup>7</sup> - denoted the defiance of its founders. By giving priestly duties to non-

Brahmins, the Prarthana Samaj challenged the established notion of the sanctity of Brahmanical priesthood.

For most liberal reformers associated with the Prarthana Samaj, opposition to caste was one of the four pillars of the reform movement, the other three being the abolition of child marriage, the advocacy of widow marriage, and the education of women. This made them more concerned with gender inequalities than the caste-based inequalities. The revolt against caste disability was taken up more forcefully by Jotirao Phule. He judged Hindu culture ruthlessly by applying two values - rationality and equality. The application of these two principles called for a total rejection of the unequal aspects of culture like the caste system, the authoritarian family structure, subordination of women, the ban on their education, and the enforcement of life-long widowhood and child marriages upon girls/women.<sup>8</sup> He threw open the drinking water tank at his house for the untouchables.<sup>9</sup> Since the inequality promoted by caste was rooted in irrationality, he rejected the entire value system and sought to introduce a new value premise wherein religious pragmatism and social equality formed the basis of a new social order. Rosalind O'Hanlon states that Phule believed in a revolutionary change of the society, and established the Satyashodhak Samaj (Society for the Search of Truth) in 1873. He rejected the Brahmin-mediated worship and introduced simple rituals of worship and marriage for the Satyashodhaks.<sup>10</sup> Gail Omvdt, analysing the Satyashodhak polemic, has stated that it was a class type of conflict that became a fundamental basis for debates over group identity and status. Though both the Brahmin reformers and Phule considered rationality and equality as the touchstones of any reform, there was a radical difference between the two. Phule located the essence of revolt outside of Hindu society,<sup>11</sup> while the reformers located it in the ancient Upanishads and medieval Bhakti.

O'Hanlon and M.S. Gore have shown that the colonial education system indirectly assisted the revolt against caste and gender inequalities. The educational institutions opened by the government were open to all. This theoretically negated the traditional value premises enforced by *Shastric* injunctions, stating that women and the Shudras were not entitled to education. With this new value premise, in a formal sense, opportunities were available to all. However, the fact remained that in government schools, the traditionally literate castes benefited by it.<sup>12</sup> The educational institutions established by missionaries were successful in defying *Shastric* injunctions. During 1818-90, if education reached small towns and the backward and untouchable castes, it was primarily through the work of Protestant missionaries.<sup>13</sup> These missionaries, aiming at the non-Brahmins for possible conversions, encouraged them to take up education with the view that western learning would naturally create a desire for

Christian truth on which it was built.<sup>14</sup> They also felt that the best means of the proselytising process lay not in an emphasis on the specific doctrines of Christianity as a revealed religion, but upon the normative and cognitive framework within which they were located.

The missionaries, in their attack on the superstitious practices of nineteenth-century Hindu society, also made use of the arguments of European radicalism. The attack on caste hierarchy, the questioning of idolatry, and emphasis on the inconsistencies in the early Vedic and later Puranic texts and the hand of the Brahmins in maintaining the confusion by denying non-Brahmins access to the literature, created few converts, but gave rise to numerous reformers and radicals. The free intermingling of castes previously kept away from each other, the indiscriminate availability of education, and the hostility shown to conventional religious hierarchies formed the basis of the intellectual debate that took place in Maharashtra during the nineteenth century.

Jotirao Phule was the first reformer to articulate the importance of educating women and Shudras as a means of empowering them. Phule had the most radical ideas on educating women. He considered that men had kept women in an unenlightened state in order to preserve their own superiority.<sup>15</sup> He argued that had a holy woman written any scripture, men would not have been able to ignore the rights due to women, and would also not have waxed so eloquent about their own rights. If women were learned enough, men would never have been able to be so partial and deceitful.<sup>16</sup> Phule started a school for girls in 1848 and undertook the task of teaching there. He opened two more schools in 1851-52.<sup>17</sup> The difficulty in obtaining teachers for his school encouraged him to teach his wife Savitri Bai who in turn began to teach in these schools. Both faced intense hostility from their society.<sup>18</sup> His efforts at educating women had limited success as children of Brahmin and other upper-caste families did not enter these schools. Phule, along with his friends Sadashiv Ballal Govinde and Moro Vitthal Valavekar, also established schools for boys, which were open to all, but catered mostly to non-Brahmins.<sup>19</sup>

Lokhitwadi and Ranade began a campaign for compulsory education, called mass education, in general, and girl's education in particular in the 1870s. They appealed to the government to start schools in rural areas. The difficulty in finding trained teachers made them approach Mary Carpenter, an educationalist from England who had been involved for some time in establishing teachers' training schools in Bengal,<sup>20</sup> to establish the first primary teacher's training college for women in Poona in 1870. In spite of the efforts made by the reformers, the growth of women's education was slow. Bengal Presidency was more advanced on this front. By 1881-82, there were 41,349 girls in primary schools and 1,051 in secondary schools. Bethune had a College department

with six girl students.<sup>21</sup> By contrast, there was only one secondary school for girls in Poona in 1882. The reformers realised that the basic hindrance to women's education was the institution of child marriage. Children as young as one year old were married, though the most favoured age for marriage was between eight to 10 years.<sup>22</sup> Hence, they took up the issues of promoting girls' education and opposition to child marriage simultaneously.

## **The Nationalist Opposition**

The widespread support for mass education and the continuation of the decisive role of the government in maintaining educational institutions alarmed the dispossessed landed elite. A small group of anti-reformists led by Vishnushastri Chiplunkar emerged in the 1870s. They were soon joined by V.N. Mandalik and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. This group called themselves Nationalists and began to analyse every reform as 'loss of nationality or *rashriyata*.' They termed the loss of caste as the loss of nationality. They declared that 'the institution of caste had been the basis of the Hindu society and undermining the caste would undermine the Hindu society'. Lokhitwadi and Phule, who advocated the abolition of caste-based inequalities, were called 'as traitors to the nation-*rashtra*' by Chiplunkar and Tilak, who claimed that they represented the real Hindus.<sup>23</sup> Mandalik, being a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, tried to influence the educational policies of the government, while Chiplunkar eloquently defended the rights of 'Brahmins as custodians of knowledge' and criticised 'Phule's ignorance of Marathi grammar' in his *Nibhandmala*. The early death of Mandalik and Chiplunkar made Tilak -the youngest of the three - the sole defender of the interests of the dispossessed elite who called themselves the nationalists.

The campaign led by Phule and reformers for the implementation of compulsory education was opposed by Tilak. He devised various arguments against compulsory primary education. He argued that 'subjects like History, Geography Mathematics and Natural Philosophy ... have no earthly use in practical life'. Tilak explained that teaching reading, writing, and the rudiments of history, geography and mathematics to Kunbi (peasant) children would actually harm them. This was the most definite way the elite had of avoiding competition in higher education and jobs. He also emphasised that the peasant's children should be taught traditional occupations, and that the curriculum meant for other children was unsuitable for them.

You take away a farmer's boy from the plough, the blacksmith's boy from the bellows and the cobbler's boy from his awl with the object of giving him liberal education ... and the boy learns to condemn the

profession of his father, not to speak of the loss to which the latter is put by being deprived of the son's assistance at the old trade.<sup>24</sup>

He suggested an 'alternate rational system of education in villages' to teach 'most ordinary trades like those of 'a carpenter, black smith, mason and tailor'. To this list of subjects, 'quarrying and mining, the smelting of iron ore' were to be added; even this differentiated system of education was not to be made compulsory to those 'to whom education was unsuited and useless'. Tilak criticised the effort of the colonial government to bring education to the villages, and encouraging the peasants' children to take up education.

With a view of securing a larger attendance of kunbi children in the schools the government has lately placed the primary schools under the control of revenue officers.... (who) are required to induce cultivators and others to send their children to schools but no one has paused to inquire what ultimate good is to be derived by this forcing process, and whether more harm than good is not likely to result from it.<sup>25</sup>

He explained that as the educated look up to the government for employment; a greater number of educated people meant greater responsibility on the part of the government to provide jobs. He warned that since the government could not provide for employment on such a large scale, the educated would be discontented with the government. Criticising the reformers who pressed for compulsory education and argued that since the municipal schools were supported by public funds, they should be open to all, Tilak countered that 'it was not public money as the entire population did not pay taxes and it was taxpayer's money and only the taxpayers had a right to decide how this money was spent'.<sup>26</sup>

Tilak appreciated 'the elevating influences of a liberal education provided by the British', and explained that he was 'neither for closing down schools and colleges or blot out the department of public instruction but against the indiscriminate spread of education which was unsuited, useless and positively injurious to Kunbi children'. He suggested that if the government was bent upon providing education for all, then only 'the education befitting their rank and station in life' should be provided to the peasant's children, while general education should be given to those who had a 'natural inclination' for it.<sup>27</sup> Tilak argued that by supporting the extension of 'liberal education for the masses the reformers were committing a grave error' as 'English education encouraged the people to defy the caste restrictions and the spread of English education among the natives will bring down their caste system'.<sup>28</sup> Tilak argued that caste was the basis of the Hindu nation, and that it was extremely essential to preserve it to assist the process of nation-building.

## The Hunter Commission

The appointment of the Hunter Commission in 1881 to look into the issues concerning both the medium of instruction and the role of the government in maintaining educational institutions widened the gulf between the reformers and Satyashodhaks on the one hand, and the nationalists on the other. The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, which was dominated by reformers, in its memorial before the Education Commission considered that the chief requirement of the country was the establishment of a school in every village that had more than 200 inhabitants. The Memorial stated that the Bombay presidency had 26,652 towns and villages, out of which about 16,839 had more than 200 inhabitants. However, of these, only 3,127 villages had schools with 2.5 lakh children. The Memorial pleaded on behalf of the 12 and a half lakh children who had no access to schools, insisted on the continuation of secular education imparted in schools, and rejected the suggestion by certain influential persons for the introduction of religious education in schools.<sup>29</sup>

Phule, in his representation, demonstrated the neglect of the primary education of the Shudras, Mahars, Mangs and Muslims in the Bombay presidency.<sup>30</sup> Arguing for the cause of compulsory education, he suggested that the government should give more importance to primary education than higher education. He stated that nearly nine-tenths of the villages in the Bombay Presidency were without any provision for primary education,<sup>31</sup> and stressed that the withdrawal of the government from schools would tend to check the spread of education.

The Hunter Commission attempted to appease diverse interests. It declared that the educational institutions should remain open to all, and if low-caste children sought entrance into cess schools, their rights had to be maintained. It also tried to pacify upper-caste interests by suggesting that those who objected to this had the 'liberty to withhold their contributions', and advised teachers and inspectors 'not to urge the low castes to claim the rights about which they are themselves indifferent'.<sup>32</sup> The Reformers and Phule urged the government to give up such an ambiguous stand, and actively promote the educational interests of all.

The demand for mass education advocated by the reformers included providing the untouchable children with access to schools. R.G. Bhandarkar, testifying before the Education Commission, supported Phule's contention that the lower classes were excluded from primary instruction. He requested the government to take suitable measures to extend education to Mahars and Mangs. Summing up the attitude of the orthodoxy towards untouchable education, Bhandarkar stated that, 'they neither actively oppose nor promote elementary education. In the case of Mahars, Mangs and Chambaras

they do not insist that these classes should not be instructed but that they should not be in their too close vicinity'.<sup>33</sup> The orthodoxy did not oppose the education of untouchables; their only contention was that they did not want the untouchable children to come in physical contact with their children, as it was opposed to the principle of purity and pollution ordained in the *shastras*, to which they blindly adhered. The nationalists used the same *shastric* injunction to oppose the entry of untouchable children into schools. The intention of the orthodoxy was blind faith, while that of the nationalists was the desire to control society. Tilak opposed the admission of Mahars and Mangs to the schools.<sup>34</sup> He criticised 'the emotional British officers and impractical native reformers for encouraging the Mahar boys to seek admission into government schools'. Tilak also stressed that the nationalists 'would not tolerate the alien government and anglicised reformers who in their zeal for the doctrine of the equality of mankind were interfering in the internal affairs of the Hindu society'. The colonial government's support to such an endeavour was, according to Tilak, 'against the spirit of Queen's proclamation, which guaranteed that the government would abstain from all interference with religious belief'.<sup>35</sup> Tilak stated that the attempts made by 'the indiscreet officers to force association of Mahars and Dhades on Brahmin boys was against the guarantee of religious neutrality'.<sup>36</sup> Tilak blamed the missionaries for encouraging low-caste people to push forth their claim to admission into schools. Since the colonial government and the missionaries were the two important agencies imparting western knowledge, and because they could not be influenced into accepting such a discriminating system of education, Tilak demanded that the missionary as well as government schools should be 'transferred to the municipalities with complete power of recruitment of teachers in the hands of school boards':

the local bodies are the best agencies for the work. They know the wants of their own locality and they alone can adjust the course of instruction, the number of schools, the subjects to be taught and ultimately the grants to be given to local educational enterprise.<sup>37</sup>

Since the local bodies were controlled by the landed elite (as only the tax payers were allowed to vote), they could restrict education. Tilak's associates controlled nine out of 11 municipalities in the Marathi-speaking areas of Bombay presidency. In 1892 the Dapoli municipal president Vishnu Hari Barve, a supporter of Tilak, refused to let untouchable children enter the classrooms of the Municipal Board School, and made them sit on the veranda of the school. The Mahar and Chambar retired army officers took up the matter with the Commissioner of Public Instruction, who directed Barve to allow the untouchable children inside the classroom in accordance with the grant-in-aid rules. The municipality avoided the issue by stating that it would have to expand the classroom first in order to accommodate more children. It conveniently stated at a



later date that such expansions could not be made due to a lack of funds, and untouchable children remained outside the school system during the next two decades.<sup>38</sup>

## Higher Education

The nationalist attack on colonial education was not restricted to the admission of non-Brahmins to schools. Tilak criticised the Bombay University's efforts to simplify the syllabus for the matriculation as well as the B.A. examination. M.G. Ranade and other reformers advocated simplification of the university syllabus to reduce the burden on the students. The university in 1881 decided to introduce translation from the vernacular to English, and admit students who had not taken a classical language in matriculation. It also simplified the Sanskrit and Mathematics papers. Tilak argued that 'lowering the standard of education would lead to an increase in the number of passes in the matriculation and degree examinations.'<sup>39</sup> He called it

a suicidal policy to fill colleges with more students as in few years, the number of matriculation candidates will raise to two thousand or more and the number of passes to six or seven hundred or more ... if such a situation arose the professors will find it extremely difficult to teach overcrowded classes.<sup>40</sup>

Tilak argued that a simplified syllabus and examination system helped poor graduate students who would turn out to be reformers, and that there was no need to reduce the standard of education as 'the natives of high social order who are both intelligent and imaginative can understand English authors as correctly and enter into their spirit as fully as ordinary Englishman'.<sup>41</sup> Tilak expressed concern that the newly established colleges in small towns, along with the reduced fees and local scholarships, have led to an increase in the number of graduates. This situation, according to him, led to two developments. First, there were more reformers demanding 'extreme reform like immediate abolition of caste' than there were a decade earlier. Second, that 'indiscriminate competition for the government offices would lead to indiscriminate selection like the competitive examination to test the calibre of the candidates'.<sup>42</sup>

At this stage, the nationalists did not consider English education an instrument of colonial-imperial rule and, therefore, detrimental to the national interest. Though the nationalists argued that the English educated were interested only social reform and not the national regeneration, they at the same time believed in the providential nature of English education. Tilak refuted the Prarthana Samaj's insistence on vernacular education by stating that 'it is not English education which spoils our native lads, but it is the want of religious teaching which brings about a mischievous results'.<sup>43</sup> He

emphasised the civilising nature of English education - 'before the English education was introduced into the country, we were as ignorant a mass of people as could exist in the nineteenth century'<sup>44</sup> - and insisted that 'all our future aspirations are subject to this reforming influence of the English language'. However, Tilak analysed that there existed a gap between

the duty of the graduates who ought to utilize the intelligence and labour of the country most advantageously, to produce most beneficial results and the actual results of they seeking immediate reforms and consider persons who are reputed to be wise and experienced as selfish cowards.

This was because the graduate's

moral nature and political instincts are too high ... is shocked at the sight of oppression, dishonesty and a thousands other evils, from which few governments are entirely free ... He is bent on reform. He proposes or seeks extreme reforms in religion and government and urges them with the most fanatic zeal.<sup>45</sup>

Tilak actually warned the colonial government that the reformers demanding compulsory school education and expansion of higher education 'will demand similar extreme reform in the governance'. To put an end to the social revolt confronting Hindu society and the possible future political revolt facing colonial rule, Tilak suggested 'a rise in the standard of education and extension of three year degree courses into a four year one which would enable a student to be thorough in the subjects and only the students serious enough to devote time and energy towards acquiring knowledge would opt for it'. Tilak argued that such a measure would reduce the increasing number of graduates every year. Since English education was essential for its civilising influence, Tilak began to address the issue of reforming curriculum 'to curb the growing number of anti-caste reformers'. He explained that the existing university curriculum 'does not completely satisfy all the requirements of a graduate as we wish him to be', as it did not include in its syllabus 'general culture', which would have curbed the above tendencies. Tilak insisted on the introduction of 'general culture' along with 'special culture'. By 'special culture' he meant European knowledge while 'general culture stood for something Indian', though it was not specifically discussed as to what it amounted to. According to him, 'it was an instruction, which would guide the duties of graduates in relation to the society', and 'sufficiently enlarge their ideas to take a correct and liberal view of the matters that are likely to engage their attention'.<sup>46</sup>

## The Nationalists on women's education

The nationalists resented the establishment of girls' schools as vigorously as they did the entry of non-Brahmin education. They refuted the reformers' assumption that in the idealistic Vedic past, women had enjoyed equal status as they had had access to education. Tilak argued that the status of women was better during the Peshwai.<sup>47</sup> Ranade and other reformers founded the Huzur Paga School, a girls' high school, on 9 August 1884. At the inauguration, Ranade expressed the hope that the government would assist the establishment of such schools in every small town throughout the presidency. Tilak instantly attacked it by stating that 'education would make women immoral'. In the same week, B.M. Malabari published his *Notes on Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood*, in which he appealed very effectively to the public conscience regarding the condition of child wives and child widows, which he considered inhuman. Tilak enthusiastically supported Malabari's *Notes*.<sup>48</sup> Tilak reporting both the issues supported Malabari and opposed Ranade. Tilak called the establishment of a girl's school in Poona as 'a threatening immediate problem.' He exaggerated that 'every city and town of note is being provided with a girls' school' and called on the nationalists to tackle the issue at once'.

The present system of education followed in schools and colleges is the source of a great evil. No true Hindu would like to see India lose its nationality its individuality as a separate nation.... Nobody can be ignorant of the fact that it is the fair sex that has to play a prominent and a difficult part in the work of increasing the human species. The method in which our delicate sex is to be moulded is far from being productive of immense good.... When I learnt that the girls were to be taught in English, that the softer sex was on the eve of receiving higher education to study the alphabet of that language which has, no doubt done so incalculable good to India by opening the vast reservoir of western knowledge, but which has also impaired the health of many youths.<sup>49</sup>

Tilak wanted to have discussions with the managing committee of the female high school, and hoped that the reformers would agree to his suggestion of not teaching English, science and mathematics to girls. Both these articles, written on the same page, one welcoming the suggestion for reform, including questioning the Shastras from a Parse reformer, and the other to stop women from receiving English education denoted that he was very clear from the beginning about his patriarchal agenda. Tilak's hopes that the managing committee of the Girls' High School would give due consideration to his suggestion did not materialise. The committee, consisting of Ranade,

Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Ganesh Gopal Agarkar and other reformers who were also deeply involved in supporting Malabari's proposal, summarily rejected Tilak's proposal. The reformers believed that since society was hostile to the idea of widow marriage and rising the marriageable age of girls, education was to be imparted to girls in order to enable them to free themselves from certain fixed ways of life and modes of thought.<sup>50</sup> They argued that the basis of women's education was individual freedom.<sup>51</sup> Ranade considered that women's education was essential for changing society and for bringing about an all-round development of a national life, as a nation could not have a politically advanced system while it was economically and socially backward.<sup>52</sup> So women's education in all branches of knowledge was needed. Hence he refused to discriminate between men and women about the kind of education to be imparted.<sup>53</sup> Gokhale was not prepared to make any concession as he claimed an equal position for women, and supported the introduction of co-education in Fergusson College.<sup>54</sup> Agarkar, reacting to Tilak's opposition to the girl's high school, declared that

It is plain foolishness to assume that women will become immoral and irreverent because of education. To say this is to deny them their very place among human beings and one who holds this conviction would also have to admit that all the education that men are now getting is making them incapable of handling the responsibilities of the household and that all our institutions are vile places meant to teach young boys how to be immoral and unjust. It is our firm belief that all education will have equal benefit for both men and women and that the more women like Gargi and Maitreyi that we have... will this country on the path of freedom.<sup>55</sup>

Agarkar expressed confidence that 'these foot-soldiers will not be able to make even a dent in the fort of women's education'. He emphasised the liberating influence of education on both boys and girls and suggested co-education, as he believed that all paid employment and professions would ultimately be linked with brain power and ability, and be available to men and women equally according to these criteria.<sup>56</sup> Tilak immediately turned hostile to both Malabari's proposal and the Poona girl's high school.

Viewed from Tilak's patriarchal orthodox position, women were not to be educated at all, as they, along with the Shudras, were traditionally denied the knowledge of sacred literature.<sup>57</sup> Women had an extra infringement on their right to be literate by a cleverly used superstition, which stated that a literate woman would become a widow; hence, education was to be shunned as if it was a sin.<sup>58</sup> However, the nationalists did not emphasise this apparent orthodox fact in their tirade against the girls' high school, arguing instead that teaching Hindu women to read and write would ruin their precious

traditional virtues, and make them immoral and insubordinate.<sup>59</sup> Since they did not possess the required power to stop the functioning of the girl's high school, and since the reformers began to send their daughters and sisters to the high school, efforts were directed towards controlling what was being taught there. Ranade, placing the girls at par with boys, instructed the girls' high school to teach same subjects as were taught in the boys' high schools, namely English literature, arithmetic and science. The nationalists countered the reformers' arguments that women well-versed in both English and Marathi would contribute immensely to enriching vernacular literature by translating English works into the vernacular.

Do you seriously hope, are you really in earnest that our women will do anything in the direction of original literature for centuries to come? ... I know of very few female names who have added perceptibly to the stock of human knowledge or have modified by their brain production the current of human thought.<sup>60</sup>

The nationalists used twin arguments to oppose women's education. First, women were weak, and hence 'should not be taxed with subjects which are beyond their powers to understand',<sup>61</sup> and 'waste their energies in cramming up like students studying for the Matriculation examination'. They argued that teaching English to girls interfered in the natural aspect of a woman's life'.<sup>62</sup> The second argument against women's education was that educated women would become immoral. They quoted the police reports, the scandals of the town to prove their point.<sup>63</sup> Tilak opposed the teaching of history, English, mathematics and science to girls, and suggested that 'High school girls should be taught Sanskrit, sanitation and needle work' as 'women well versed in English would have nothing substantial to offer the society, because English did not offer any tangible knowledge.' Tilak declared that 'English education had dewomanising impact on women, which denied them a happy worldly life'.<sup>64</sup> *Kesari*, edited by Agarkar, continued to support both English education for women and the proposals of Malabari, while the *Mahratta*, edited by Tilak, attacked both. As the intensity of debate grew, Agarkar and Tilak became hostile to each other.

Tilak, on his part, called upon the Hindus to make a united effort to put an end to such revolt. He hoped that by opposing the Age of Consent, he could establish himself as a leader of the orthodoxy. However, he was shocked to see 'the perfectly orthodox Brahmins sending their girls to the schools without paying any serious attention what was being taught there'. He advised them to 'bring pressure upon the reformers to select such subjects for the girls as will be of some use and akin to female susceptibilities'.<sup>65</sup> The Brahmanical orthodoxy always held education in high esteem, and added to this was the benefit of 'additional income brought in by their daughters

as teachers in the schools'. Tilak himself accepted that the sight of 'the daughter of a poor family contributing in however a slight degree, to their resources was bruited among neighbours, and made many converts'.<sup>66</sup> Failing to secure the orthodox support, Tilak warned that 'the situation was getting out of hand', and asked the opponents of girls' education to unite and make a combined effort to stop it. The reformers insisted that women were capable of making an independent contribution to literature. Tilak questioned them, stating:

Such dreams and visions as these be true or end in idle smoke, human nature remains unchanged ... there is no purer, deeper joy than that of a mother over her first born child; no intensity of grief more bitter than her sorrow at its loss. As a girl of seven she hugged her baby doll however battered, old and ugly; as woman of twenty she clings to her newborn son .... As to the women of future they must grow out of the women of the present .... Now is this not we ask, exactly what we have been contending for .... Our *shastras* and customs require a girl to qualify herself for a married life and if our schools cannot give them necessary training they are worse than useless. Nothing can be gained by Anglicising our girls ... a day will come when the managers of the school will be asked to reform their school.<sup>67</sup>

He also objected to the admission of non-Brahmin girls to the government schools in general, and Ranade's school in particular. The nationalists condemned the attempt by prostitutes to admit their children to the municipal schools.<sup>68</sup> They insisted that 'the gravity of the situation particularly in the field of women's education' was more a cause of worry than the debates concerning the Age of Consent.

## **Rakhmabai**

The question of empowering women through normal education came to be coupled with the question of women's rights in 1885 when Rakhmabai refused to join her husband Dadaji Bhikaji, to whom she had been married as a child. Rakhmabai was the daughter of Jayantibai from her first husband, Janardhan Pandurang. Janardhan died when she was two and a half and her mother merely 17. He left behind some property and willed it to his young widow. After six years of her husband's demise, Jayantibai married Dr Sakharam Arjun, a reformer of repute, and transferred her property to Rakhmabai. When Rakhmabai was 11 years of age, she was married to Dadaji Bhikaji, the poor cousin of Sakharam Arjun, with an understanding that Dadaji would educate himself and 'becomes a good man', with Sakharam Arjun taking care of his expenses. Dadaji resented the disciplined life required for pursuing education and started living

with his maternal uncle Narayan Dhurmaji, who lived an immoral life and influenced Dadaji to slide into an indolent and irresponsible existence. Dhurmaji had a mistress, whom he had brought to live with his other family members, as a result of which his wife attempted to commit suicide. In the meantime, Rakhmabai acquired education, and upon realising the futility of living with Dadaji, refused to join him.<sup>69</sup> Rakhmabai was not challenging the point that the husband's house should necessarily be the residence of the wife's, but declined to join her husband because of the nature of the household in which she was required to live.<sup>70</sup>

Rakhmabai first wrote in the *Times of India* under the name 'A Hindu lady', on issues pertaining to women's education and child marriage. She criticised V.N. Mandalik for opposing legislative intervention regarding the rise in the marriageable age of girls. Tilak ridiculed the 'Hindu Lady coming to the front in a manly way to take up the cudgels on behalf of the oppressed and down trodden half of the Hindu community.'<sup>71</sup> Rakhmabai's letter very sensitively portrayed the position of women, particularly that of a daughter-in-law in her mother-in-law's house, who suffered the loss of mental and physical freedom. Rakhmabai wrote that a daughter-in-law worked with the servants. She stated that the position of a daughter-in-law was so low that she was worse off than the servant, as the servants had the option of refusing to work or changing their masters, whereas a daughter-in-law was bound for life.<sup>72</sup> Rakhmabai criticised Manu for assigning a demeaning position to women, and Hindu men for perpetuating such a position. She divided the nineteenth-century Hindu men into categories. The first consisted of those who opposed all reforms and who thought too meanly of the female sex to grant any liberty; the other category consisted of those who were in favour of reform, but were not courageous enough to pursue it. Hence, she suggested that reforms should be forced upon society in a manner similar to the one that led to Manu's Code being forced upon society centuries ago.<sup>73</sup> Tilak's reaction to Rakhmabai confirmed his earlier stand on women's education. He commented,

The letters which have evoked so much sympathy are not in all probability the production of a lady as they are represented to be, but that some irresponsible rash and ill informed enthusiast has probably caught hold of a school girl to subscribe for him as a Hindu lady in order to secure sympathy which he himself otherwise could not have done. At any rate, we are not inclined to believe the letter to be genuine production of a Hindu lady until better evidence is brought forward. And till then we do not hesitate to consider them as worthless and undeserving of the sympathy as they have evoked.<sup>74</sup>

On his part, Dadaji went to court to seek a restitution of conjugal rights in March 1884.<sup>75</sup> Dadaji accused Rakhmabai's mother and grandfather of having an interest in property, because of which they were loath to let her join her husband. Rakhmabai refuted the charges and held Dadaji's waywardness solely responsible for her refusal to join him.<sup>76</sup> Rakhmabai argued that since the marriage had taken place without consent and since it was not uncommon in her caste (Sutar-carpenter) for a woman to refuse to live with her husband, she had done so. She also criticised Dadaji for taking the unusual recourse of prosecuting his wife, serving her with a solicitor's notice, and dragging her to the court, and declared that she would not join him.<sup>77</sup> Restitution of conjugal rights had no basis in the Hindu Shastras, but was in fact an extension of English law into the domestic sphere. Justice Pinhey of Bombay High Court opposed 'grafting of English marriage laws upon a Hindu marriage system to which they never intended to apply', as it stood neither on juristic nor on moral grounds. Justice K.T. Telang argued that the restitution of conjugal rights could not be enforced on suits filed by Hindus, as the Hindu law books do not prescribe the mode of enforcing the performance of duties by either the husband or the wife.<sup>78</sup>

Rakhmabai's revolt against the patriarchal constraints of society was supported by the reformers, who pressed for legislative action. A committee was formed under Professor Wordsworth, a leading supporter of M.G. Ranade in social reforms. The Committee began to advocate the urgency of passing the Age of Consent Bill. In the meantime, Dadaji filed an appeal against the judgement. Justice Pinhey had by now retired and Justice Farran decided the case against Rakhmbai and ordered her to live with her husband or face imprisonment of six months. Tilak supported the court's decision by stating that,

the discipline of the Hindu religion is so strict that even under cruel treatment wives pull on with their husbands, simply because they consider that it is their duty to do so. In place of this noble sentiment our reformers would like to substitute the idea of a commercial bargain, both parties living together for mutual profit and dissolving partnership as soon as either of them feels disinclined to continue.<sup>79</sup>

The nationalists refused to acknowledge the caste status of Rakhmabai, who repeatedly stated that in her caste divorce and re-marriage were easy and widely accepted modes of social behaviour.<sup>80</sup> Her own mother had married Dr Sakharam Arjun after the death of her first husband. They failed to mention any of this and continued to argue the case, drawing references from Manu to Yagnavalkya. By advocating late marriage and widow re-marriage for girls, the reformers had directly attacked the Aryan religious morality and proposed the adoption of a lower-caste morality for the higher castes.<sup>81</sup>



Rakhmabai's behaviour was judged from the point of view of upper-caste morality, and the colonial agency was asked to enforce Brahmanical tradition. The reformers' appeal to the same agency to enforce lower-caste religious morality was nothing short of treachery.<sup>82</sup> Tilak considered that 'the issues raised by the controversy were not individual but concerned the issues of vital importance to the whole Hindu race', and concluded that 'if Rakhmabai refused to join her husband she should go to jail ... we believe that Rakmasbai's stand for liberty is not righteousness and therefore does not deserve our sympathy'.<sup>83</sup> Rakhmabai decided to face imprisonment instead of living with her husband. The Rakhmabai Defence Committee began a widespread campaign to defend her from both the anti-reformers and the colonial judicial system. Wordsworth called upon the educated youth to consider it their sacred duty to support reform within the Hindu community.<sup>84</sup> Tilak considered that this committee

is working to upset the social institutions among the Hindus and as one means to this end it was endeavouring to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the established courts of the land, all breaches of marriage obligations as recognized by the Hindu community ... the case for abolition of imprisonment for disobeying the decree of the court ordering a wife to go to her husband must be made to rest on grounds similar to those for the abolition of imprisonment for debt.<sup>85</sup>

The nationalists failed to elicit support from the orthodoxy in their attack on Rakhmabai, just as they had failed in their attack on girls' education. Raghunath Rao, the orthodox Brahmin diwan of Baroda whom the orthodoxy considered as their leader, called the judgement against Rakhmabai 'preposterous and unjust'.<sup>86</sup> He opposed Tilak by stating that 'whatever may be the shastric injunction regarding the restitution of conjugal rights, it is barbarous to send a women to jail', and wondered 'how can any sane man think of it?'<sup>87</sup> Numerous orthodox Brahmins appealed to pundit Narayan Keshav Vaidya of Poona to seek Max Mueller's intervention regarding the issues concerning Rakhmabai.<sup>88</sup>

The restitution of conjugal rights in Rakhmabai's case was not a novelty. As early as 1843, a Parsi woman called Perozeboye sued her husband for restitution of conjugal rights when he refused to let her live with him. In the 1870s, a Hindu woman, Yamunabai, refused to return to her husband on the grounds that 'he was of unsound mind who could not take care of her or her property or protect her from his male relatives with whom she could not live with honour and decency'. The court ordered the wife to return to her husband.<sup>89</sup> Had Rakhmabai not been educated, it would in all probability have become just another case in court. So it was the element of education, particularly, English education, that tilted the case in her favour. Rakhmabai articulately expressed her predicament, and thereby the fate of millions of child wives all over India, which

mobilised the support of the reformers. Rakhmabai's fight was the struggle of a lone woman against the male establishment.<sup>90</sup> A single woman defying court orders and deciding to go to jail unnerved patriarchal Tilak and his anti-reformist friends.<sup>91</sup> The Rakhmabai episode strengthened Tilak's thesis that English educated women would destroy patriarchy in the Hindu society.

Rakhmabai's refusal to join Dadaji affected the nationalists so much that almost the entire edition of *Mahratta*, six out of eight pages, dealt with the issue from Dadaji's point of view. The nationalists organised a public meeting at Hirabagh on 5 June 1887. The speakers at the meeting argued that 'the enforcement of marital rights should be left to the jurisdiction of the castes alone. However ever since the British courts took the place of caste Panchayats, the power and influence of the latter had declined.' They called upon the authorities to 'once again invest with the power of excommunication which they formerly exercised, to their fullest extent'. Summing together all the possible authorities on Hindu law from Manu to Yagnavalkya, they went on to declare that 'the greatest possible care should be taken to guard or watch over women they are incapable of independent existence both by virtue of their physical inferiority and their situation in life'. He declared that, according to the Hindu ideal of marriage, a husband and wife should so act as not to be separated from each other, that only death will separate them. 'Women are to live with their husbands though (the latter is) devoid of any merit and should seldom entertain the idea of separating themselves from their husbands, father, and sons otherwise they would bring both the families to disgrace.' The speakers also declared that 'Rakhmabais, Saraswatibais should be punished for they same reason as there is punishment for thieves, adulteress and murderers'.<sup>92</sup> Rakhmabai's refusal to live with her vagrant husband and Ramabai's conversion to Christianity were viewed as crimes comparable to theft, adultery and murder. The nationalists held intense discussions on the allegations and counter-allegations made by both parties, and concluded that Rakhmabai's public reply contained portions that were defamatory.<sup>93</sup> Tilak, gauging the widespread support for Rakhmabai, advised Dadaji 'not to pursue the matter ... recover his costs and leave Rakhmabai to her fate'. The Rakhmabai controversy ended in August 1887 when she bought her freedom from Dadaji for a sum Rs 2,000.<sup>94</sup>

In September 1887, Tilak removed Agarkar from the editorship of *Kesari*. Now Tilak became the absolute owner-editor of both weeklies. With this renewed power, he launched an incessant attack on Ranade's girl's high school. Tilak stated that 'the curriculum and the management of our local Female high school here are highly objectionable'. He questioned the efficacy of following the curriculum taught to boys.

The very first question that strikes us at the very onset of our inquiry is, what is the aim of the course of instruction? If the object be to change the state of the Hindu household after the English model by the instruction given to our girls, we have nothing more to say; for we would condemn it most strongly as being dangerous and at the same time an almost impossible feat. If, however, the object be to fit in the education of females with the existing state and constitution of the Hindu community and Hindu household, to make our females useful helpmates of their husbands and not merely ornamental figure heads, then we dare say the present course of studies in the female high school is not much calculated to further that object. The object of the Board is not to educate the girls attending their school so as to be good clerks, good schoolmistresses or good English or Marathi authoresses.<sup>95</sup>

Tilak authoritatively declared that 'subjects useless to girls were English, arithmetic, sciences and music and subjects useful to girls were vernacular, moral science, needle work', and that 'forcibly giving the same education to women was disadvantageous'.<sup>96</sup> Tilak argued that if the reformers' objective was not to make a clerk or a teacher out of every girl who attended high school, then the subjects taught had to undergo an extensive change.

Holding as we do, the opinion that men and women have different spheres of activity allotted to them in domestic economy, we think that the instruction which is to fit them for the duties pertaining to their respective spheres must be given on essentially different lines. In the first place, we fail to see the utility of teaching English to the majority of girls .... There is one feature of this curriculum, which strikes us very forcibly; religious and moral instructions as can be conveyed by lessons inculcating high principles of ancient Aryan religious morality finds a place nowhere in the list of subjects taught.... In other words, there is nothing that can constantly show the girls that there are high and more honourable duties allotted to them in this world, which do not end with learning the '*Pathamala*' or knowing the names of the *Peshwa* by heart.<sup>97</sup>

After criticising the curriculum, Tilak went on to criticise the idea of girls spending the entire day out of the house. He argued that it was 'unacceptable to the majority of the people who would not allow their daughters to spend upto 15-16 years, from 11 to 5 with a Christian teacher mugging western knowledge without performing household

duties'.<sup>98</sup> So 'the money spent on such an unpopular measure is useless'. Otherwise, warned Tilak, 'only poor women who are compelled to earn a living by becoming teachers will make use of the institution'.<sup>99</sup>

It is the practice of holding the school from 11 AM to 5 PM and the subjects which are useless to girls', be struck out from the curriculum and the necessary ones be added to it, the whole course can be eminently finished by holding the school for three hours only everyday either in the morning from 7 AM to 10 AM or from 2 PM to 5PM in the afternoon. Three hours of instruction will be quite sufficient and the girls will have time to devote to domestic duties. A girl preparing her lessons till 10AM and remaining at school till 5 PM becomes a regular boy student and is quite likely to forget that there are other duties incumbent on her .... Features above pointed out, are likely enough to develop in girls vain tastes and make them feel a sense of superiority to their partners. It is not we believe, necessary to point out, that if this side be allowed to develop in girls, we should not be surprised to find girls like Saraswatibai, Ratisundaris ready like the now immortal Rakhmabai to wash their hands clean of Ganapatraos and Madanpals.<sup>100</sup>

Tilak asked the reformers 'to fit in the course of instruction with the existing state of Hindu society'. He attempted to dissuade the orthodoxy from sending their girls to schools by arguing that the educated woman would turn out to be another Rakhmabai or Ramabai, strong willed, with an independent understanding of her status in Hindu society, and would acquire new ideas pertaining to the dignity of womanhood.<sup>101</sup> This, he said, was opposed to the culture of the Hindus. Tilak's response to the curriculum of the girls' high school evoked a strong response from a large section of the population, including the orthodoxy. In less than a month, Tilak was forced to acknowledge:

Some time ago we reviewed in these columns the curriculum of the local Female High School and pointed out that it was utterly unsuited to the requirements of our women and that unless it was considerably changed the money spent for the purpose may be taken to be wasted upon it. It was the interest of some of our contemporaries to misunderstand us and to represent us as opponents of female education.<sup>102</sup>

Tilak argued that his opposition to women's education had a scientific basis as 'the brain of a woman on an average weighed less by five ounces than that of a man'.<sup>103</sup> He criticised the Sakhi Samiti for teaching English. This organisation had been set up by Swarnakumari Debi, Rabindranath Tagore's sister, to educate widows and train them

as teachers in Calcutta.<sup>104</sup> He declared that 'English and western science did not constitute education'.

By education we mean that education which is least likely to interfere with our secular and religious morality. None other will be accepted by the people at large and should therefore be attempted.<sup>105</sup>

Stressing once again that he was not orthodox and did not support the orthodoxy's opposition, he argued that 'We do not see any harm in girls of 15-16 going to school for an hour or two daily'.<sup>106</sup> Tilak argued that the duties of men and women in Hindu society were different, and education for women was to be tailored accordingly. 'We blame orthodox people for not giving any education to their girls. But they have a right to ask us what we do in the matter and how far our efforts are crowned with success?'<sup>107</sup> By arguing that the orthodoxy opposed English education for girls, Tilak was misrepresenting facts. He repeatedly stressed that he was not orthodox and nor did he support the Poona orthodox Brahmins, but at the same time stressed that he was voicing the opinions and concerns of the orthodoxy as they had no channel through which to communicate. During 1884-92, no new girls' schools were established in Poona, and Ranade's school was unable to accommodate the growing demand, which made many orthodox parents defy the convention of segregating widows from unmarried girls and admit their unmarried daughters to Karve's school attached to the Widows Home.<sup>108</sup>

## **Compulsory Education**

The demand by the reformers, non-Brahmins and the depressed classes for education on equal terms within the same existing English education pattern and Phule's emphasis on compulsory primary education<sup>109</sup> was considered detrimental to the interests of the nationalists. In 1888 Krishnarao Bhalekar, a Satyashodhak, organised a campaign for the immediate introduction of free and compulsory education. He started the Din Bandhu Sarvajanik Sabha Free School in Poona with assistance from M.G. Ranade, R.G. Bhandarkar, D.R. Shet, Gangaram Bhau Mashke and Sayajirao Gaikwad, the Maharaja of Baroda.<sup>110</sup> Tilak called those associated with Bhalekar 'half timid, half ignorant and wholly stupid street preachers who encourage caste jealousies and personal animosities'.<sup>111</sup> Bhalekar called for a public meeting in 1889 in Poona to urge the government to implement compulsory education. This meeting was attended by 10,000 people. The popularity of the issue of free and compulsory education, which led to Brahmin and non-Brahmin reformers joining hands to start a school, made Tilak realise that the idea of keeping the masses out of the reach of schools and colleges by raising the standard of education would not work.

By 1888-89, it was also apparent that the Brahmins were losing ground, at least in primary and secondary education in the Bombay presidency. The report of the Director of Public Instruction for the Marathi-speaking areas clearly stated the increasing entry of non-Brahmins into the schools. For the year 1887-88, out of 4,84,039 secondary school students, only 93,336 were Brahmins; the rest included 2,87,641 other Hindus and 9,360 low castes. In the year 1888-89, of a total of 507,752 students, only 95,919 were Brahmins, and 2,99,716 were other Hindus and 10,630 low castes.<sup>112</sup> In Poona, too, the non-Brahmins fared better than the Brahmins. The credit did not go entirely to the government as the non-Brahmins also undertook individual efforts in this direction. The reformers pressed hard for implementing compulsory education. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, speaking at the second Bombay provincial conference, pointed out that 'educationally we are very poorly fed ... since Duffrin's time the department of education has been placed on famine ration'. He asked the government to give up ambiguity and the oscillating nature of its educational policy, which in principle kept the doors of educational institutions open to all castes while at the same time allowing the local bodies to decide the matter. He urged the government to take a firm stand in favour of free and compulsory education. Attacking Gokhale's insistence on the expansion of the educational infrastructure, Tilak wrote:

Whatever the eloquence of the facts and figures of Mr. Gokhale, we stick to our view and say that the leaders of public movement are committing serious blunder in insisting upon government to continue to maintain and manage institutions, the utility of which is disproportionately too small compared to the cost they entail and in which hardly any scope for development ... Mr. Gokhale seemed to make much of the money spent upon education by the nations of Europe.<sup>113</sup>

Tilak urged Gokhale to give up 'the doctrine of the equality of mankind and insistence on effacing all caste distinctions in education'. He hoped that Brahmin reformers would soon realise the futility of opposing anti-reformers as they both had a common interest in maintaining a privileged position within the Hindu community. Tilak argued that revolt against the caste system could be countered only by removing education from the hands of the government and transferring it to the hands of private bodies, which would in turn introduce national education.<sup>114</sup>

In 1889, Tilak began a systematic attack on the colonial education system as a whole, and the part played by the colonial government in particular. His critique can be divided into three parts. First, he opposed the maintenance of education institutions by the government. He suggested that 'the Bombay presidency should be broken up into

a number of educational units, not only for the purposes of the distribution of funds but also for the purposes of meeting the educational requirements of the variously civilized communities'.<sup>115</sup> These educational units were to consist of elected and official members. 'The municipal constituencies were to be utilised to elect a certain number of representatives for the Educational Boards, who would have powers to determine the number of schools necessary for each locality, the fee to be charged in schools, the number of free studentships to be allotted to them and the recruitment of teachers.'<sup>116</sup>

Entrusting primary and secondary education in the hands of elected education boards with powers to decide which locality needed schools and which did not, the amount to be charged as fee, and the standard of teaching each class was an incredible idea. The municipal constituencies, which elected municipal board members, consisted only of tax payers, who also happened to be the members belonging to the economically dominant class of landed Brahmins and merchants. Hence, entrusting the entire educational apparatus in the hands of the nationalists was sure to prevent non-Brahmins from entering the schools and reformist Brahmins from being appointed as teachers. The nationalists and close associates of Tilak, like S.H. Chiplunkar and M.B. Namjoshi, controlled the Poona Municipality, and opposed the introduction of compulsory education. So if education was handed over to the Municipality, Tilak and his nationalist associates would be deciding the fate of education.<sup>117</sup>

Second, in order to contain the spread of English education, he began a campaign for the introduction of vernaculars instead of English as a medium of instruction. When the Arya Samaj was campaigning for vernacular education, Tilak commented: 'we are not at all zealous, like the Punjabees to have a university, which conducted the greater part of its business in vernacular'.<sup>118</sup> Now he began to support the introduction of vernaculars: 'vernacular should be made the medium of instruction in our High schools. We are of opinion of that if this were done the next generation of students would receive a sounder education than they at present do.'<sup>119</sup>

Tilak also argued that Marathi medium would inculcate 'true patriotism and a love for all that is old - old events, old chivalry, old persons and thus extend this love for the nation'.<sup>120</sup> Hence he insisted that the vernacular should receive the highest priority in primary and secondary education, and English should be completely removed from the curriculum.<sup>121</sup> The reformers' contention that 'knowledge of English was essential for the lower classes to convey their grievances to the officials and manage their court cases' was completely sidelined. Tilak argued that the only grievances that existed were national grievances - 'we admit that we need speakers like Babu Surendranath to convey our problems in England, but for this it is totally unfair to make thousands of people spend huge amounts of energy uselessly in learning'.<sup>122</sup>

The third important point made by Tilak in his attack on the colonial education system was that there was a lack of discipline in schools and colleges,

Under the influence of western education old beliefs have been shaken and all domestic and social discipline, as it hitherto obtained, has come to be looked upon as unworthy of our adherence .... To a Hindu educated youth the sight of Gladstone defending the Bible against the attack of Huxley and other scientists is as ridiculous as that of a Sayana using all his learning and logic to prove that the Vedas are of divine origin.<sup>123</sup>

Tilak did not intend to discard the entire sphere of western learning. His objection was only to the access to radicalism, which created a number of sceptics and reformers. He conceded superior status to the European civilisation,

the whole question reduces itself to how to engraft a higher civilization upon a nation without destroying the feelings of respect and reverence which are essential to the stability of every social system. Can it be done by the Secular system of education, which is at present followed by Government? and if not, how can a foreign government, differing from the rules, in religion and many other circumstances, improve it so as to secure a steady progress?<sup>124</sup>

Tilak accused the reformers of 'gradually surrendering the power of the caste into the hands of the rulers'. The reformers, declared Tilak, are 'killing the caste and with it, killing the vitality of the nation'.<sup>125</sup> By allowing women and non-Brahmins to educate themselves, the reformers had destroyed the 'Hindu nationality'.<sup>126</sup>

It is a sad commentary on our zeal for social reform and female emancipation ... is there any necessity of at all of a female High School at the present time, especially of the Poona institution. There are still considerable differences of opinion as to whether our women need to be taught English and other ornamental subjects at all; why then should government contribute to a school expressly founded for such purpose ... what is urgently wanted is primary schools for girls that would give them such knowledge as is useful in domestic life ... teaching English would prove to turn out girls to be a dead weight on their husbands.<sup>127</sup>

Tilak's persistent efforts to keep women subjugated was consistently criticised by reformers, particularly Agarkar. The 1893 Social Conference was addressed by one Hardevi, who emphasised the importance of encouraging women's education. To Agarkar, a Hindu lady addressing such a large gathering was an elevating sight. Agarkar quoted the example of the princely state of Baroda, where education was compulsory for both boys and girls, and urged his fellow reformers to relentlessly pursue it in the Bombay



Presidency.<sup>128</sup> To this Tilak retorted, 'His Highness may have perhaps been over-sanguine in expecting a millennium during his lifetime when 90% of female population will be educated.'<sup>129</sup> The reformers considered education to be the means through which a change in society could be brought about. Gokhale believed that education

Assumes additional importance by reason of the bondage of caste and custom which tries to keep us tied down to certain fixed ways of life and fixed modes of thought, and which so often cripples all efforts at the most elementary reforms. One peculiarity of the Indian life of the present day is the manner in which almost every single act of our daily life is regarded to be regulated by some religious notion or the other. We must eat, and sleep and even stand and sit and walk only in accordance with certain religious beliefs .... It is obvious that, under the circumstances, a wide diffusion of education, with all its solvent influences, among the women of India, is the only means of emancipating their minds from this degrading thralldom to ideas inherited through a long past.<sup>130</sup>

The nationalists argued that it was particularly detrimental to educate women without instructing them in moral and religion obligations, since

the object of female education is not to make the women equal of man... it must also be remembered that women having to perform the wifely and maternal duties require a fund of energy to perform them satisfactorily. Their energies in other directions must be spent very sparingly in deed and therefore their education should to be so planned as to give to their minds a minimum amount of useful culture and information with minimum expenditure of energy.<sup>131</sup>

Tilak held that the radical content in English education resulted in reformers attacking the institution of caste, which led to non-Brahmins passing themselves as Brahmins when they go abroad. He gave an example of 'a Modaliyar- a non-Brahmin of the Madras presidency passing off as a Brahmin in Hong Kong before the French and German Scholars'. He castigated the reformers for encouraging such behaviour among the people.

Since the days of late Mr. Vishnoo Shastri we have been doing our duty of teaching the people their state as it is and the surroundings which make their progress in matters which affect the interests of the ruling class, so very different. Our conviction differs from those who preceded us and whose duller satellites are designated by the term reformers .... Their work is that of destruction, their first and foremost

attempt was to dispel through the land any reverence that might be felt for the Brahmins: their next sally was against the time honoured institutions, customs and manners of the Brahmins and the Hindus generally. The late R.B. Deshmukh and the late Jotirao Fulley may be cited instances of such reformers.<sup>132</sup>

By this time, Tilak had begun to emphasise the introduction of 'national education' in order to restore reverence for the *Dharmashastras*, 'essential to bring back old discipline in the schools and colleges. The secular education which is followed by the government schools under a foreign government is the most unlikely means of doing it.' He proposed a system of national education, which would consist of teaching the *Dharmashastras* in the schools.<sup>133</sup>

## **National Education**

Tilak argued that national education was essential to curb the de-nationalising tendencies of secular education. He emphasised that an education based on religious dogma promoted nationality, and without such an education the learned people of the nation cannot become leaders and such a nation does not deserve to prosper.<sup>134</sup> In order to achieve this, 'an instruction based on general principles culled from all religions cannot serve the purpose, what is not familiar through the family cannot serve as a pedagogical tool'.<sup>135</sup>

We shall not be content with only moral basis being established for education; we are positively of the opinion that religious education must form an integral portion of the education of our school and college boys. The proficiency of the school and college boys in the subject of religion should affect the merit of the general results of the students.<sup>136</sup>

Tilak demanded that the government 'replace poetry and drama even in Sanskrit and vernacular by religious texts like *Smritis*, *Shastras* and *Puranas*'. He emphasised that 'much of the instruction should consist of dogma pure and simple'.<sup>137</sup> He opposed the teaching of even Hindu philosophy as 'it would lead to debates and scepticism while religious dogma equipped men to deal with affairs of the world'. Tilak suggested that the entire syllabi of schools should consist of 'the history of the *Sanatan Dharma* and a little attention also paid to comparative study of religion ... to prove the greatness of Hinduism'.<sup>138</sup> During the Swadeshi Movement, Tilak insisted that national education consisted of four important principles - religious education, the abolition of English, introduction of technical education for industrial development, and finally, educating the people in politics. He declared, 'that which gives us knowledge of the experience of

our ancestors is called education'.<sup>139</sup> These ideas clashed directly with the ideas of national education propagated by Aurobindo. The national schools established by the nationalists were opposed by the reformers and non-Brahmin leaders. Some of these schools were raided and closed down by the Maharaja of Kolhapur.<sup>140</sup>

Control over the syllabi and opposition to the expansion of educational facilities, which formed the core of Tilak's scheme both during his early political career and the Swadeshi Movement, continued to dominate the education scheme, and was widely discussed in the columns of *Mahratta* even after his imprisonment in 1908. The nationalists insisted that the *Gita* should form the basis of national education,<sup>141</sup> and opposed 'unexclusive privilege being given to undenominational teaching it'.<sup>142</sup> The Maratha Educational Conference countered the national education proposed by the nationalists. Keshaurao Pawar, R.G Bhandarkar and R.P. Paranjpe, speaking on the platform of the Maratha Educational Conference, condemned it as returning to 'mindless ritualism and keeping the entire nation in ignorance'. They called upon the Bombay government to improve the condition of education and popularise compulsory education. The nationalists, opposing the suggestion of the Maratha Education Conference, suggested 'the appointment of a music master to play music in public and arrange slide shows of Hindu religious places to attract people who would in turn send their children to schools'.<sup>143</sup>

Gokhale introduced the Compulsory Education Bill in 1910.<sup>144</sup> He considered that the material condition of the masses could be improved only with the universalising of elementary education.

If you want to increase the wage earning capacity of the workmen, if you want the peasant to grow stronger and healthier and take better care of himself and understand his dealings with money lender and understand better the benefits of sanitation and agriculture, then compulsion alone had been proved effective in spreading education.

He called free and compulsory education the first remedy of all the remedies to be applied. Gokhale lamented the politicising of the compulsory education debate: 'the local bodies who are in charge of primary education and whose voice is bound to be, effective in the matter are with one exception opposed to the introduction of free education.' Gokhale wanted to levy fees only on those students whose family income was Rs 25 and above per month; for the rest, education was to be free. He suggested that two-thirds of the expenses should be born by the provincial government and one-third by the local bodies.<sup>145</sup> Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal supported Gokhale's Bill. Opposition to Gokhale's proposal for compulsory education came from two quarters. The nationalists argued that it drained the financial resources of the government and

was a waste of public funds. The Muslim League supported the nationalists by stating that the very concept of compulsory education 'attacked the means of living of the very poor in the country'.<sup>146</sup>

During the Home Rule League movement, Tilak once again insisted that 'religion alone should form the basis of any educational endeavour in India and secular education was imperfect and unsuited for Indians'.<sup>147</sup> The Maratha Education Conference countered Tilak's ideas. The Conference was attended by Khaserao Pawar, Vittalrao Sakharam Zende, Dr Ramakrishnapant Bhandarkar, R.P. Paranjpye and Ramachandrapant Vandekar. They argued, 'though the education that was given may not be perfect of its kind, but it was certainly better than no education'.<sup>148</sup> Tilak criticised 'the colonial education which discourage students from learning anything from their elders about the actual surrounding', and insisted that 'only in the national schools independent of government control, adequate education in making good citizen can be given'.<sup>149</sup> G.S. Khaparde, defending Tilak's national education, insisted that 'a discussion on the theory of karma and the existence of God' should be included in the syllabi. Khaparde insisted that,

it is very necessary to teach religion to Indian children ... with our time honoured methods of teaching religion, nothing appears to be more practicable: that method is found in our Puranas .... These thrilling accounts of the mighty men and women of the past, of God's love and compassion towards the devotees, the certain destruction of evil, these are priceless heritage of India and ought to be utilized.<sup>150</sup>

Khaparde's syllabi consisted of the tenets that Tilak had elaborately expounded during the Swadeshi movement. To this, Khaparde added his opposition to the buildings, benches, desks, caps, coats, and even examinations. Education at the primary level was to consist of,

as I said already, in the first or elementary stage I would insist on religious teaching which should be mostly oral and instruction in three R's. This should be all. During the early years the teacher should carefully find out the boy's inclinations, his talents in any specific directions; and so in the next stage should help the boy to learn the things which would be both of interest and of use to him.<sup>151</sup>

The only difference between Tilak's earlier scheme and Khaparde's scheme was that under the former, the schools were to be controlled by local boards, whereas Khaparde completely did away with local boards, as the expansion of franchise under the Act of 1919 would have led to a non-Brahmin majority in the local boards.

## The Establishment of a Women's University

The nationalists attacked Dodho Keshav Karve's efforts to establish a women's university. Karve was a radical social reformer who devoted his entire life to pursuing the emancipation of widows and imparting education to women.<sup>152</sup> He married a widow and established the Hindu Widow's Home Association at Poona in 1896, which accommodated Brahmin, Prabhu, Sonar and Maratha widows. The institution had a school attached to it. Karve laid stress on women's education, and argued that 'education would make women economically independent and would enable them to think for themselves.'<sup>153</sup>

The annual session of the Indian Social Conference held at Bombay is remarkable from the point of view of women's higher education. Speaking at the conference, Karve proposed the establishment of a women's university in India and immediately began to collect donations for it.<sup>154</sup> The nationalist response to such a proposal was in continuation with its earlier opposition to women's education. Thirty years had lapsed between the starting of the first secondary school for girls in Poona and the proposal for a woman's university, and Tilak continued to be as obstinate as ever. The intellectual threat from women was perceived even more strongly than ever before. If secondary education opened the floodgates of western ideas and highlighted the injustice meted out to women in Hindu society, the women's university virtually placed women on par with men, and threatened men's control over the former. Attempts were made once again to generate public opinion regarding the subjects to be taught to women. A series of articles in *Mahratta* is testimony to such an effort. The nationalists argued that collegiate education for women should consist of 'cooking and other domestic useful art in addition to the higher culture',

we hold that nature and social custom ... have assigned to woman a distinct place and function in the social organism... For generations to come, Home will be the chief centre and sphere of woman's work. She will appear at her best there. There she will perform the work, which will exalt her morally and socially ... The Home will be a theatre large enough to allow her to give expression to all that is best in her ... Education of women in India will, again have to be made adaptable not only to women's special role mentioned above, but also to the peculiar conditions which obtain in India.<sup>155</sup>

Tilak criticised Karve and the Hindu Widow's Home Association for taking over the responsibility of carrying out such a venture. He agreed with Karve that the medium of instruction should be the vernacular, but opposed the teaching of any subject other than 'home management skills and the Puranas'.

We must contemplate the average Hindu girl as a daughter-in-law having special duties in that relation towards the inmates of her husband's household. She must be considered in this special relation. A Hindu girl must grow to be a good daughter-in-law in addition to her being a good wife and a good mother and so forth. We are of opinion that the extra Home jurisdiction is peculiarly the duty and privilege of the strong sex ... A Hindu woman's social usefulness will depend on her sympathy with and grasp of our traditional literature ... Puranic and other religious literature ... That the light of education must be so manipulated as to make the domain of women a blessed place ... girls should be provided with a fair knowledge of hygiene, domestic economy, child nursing, cooking, sewing and so forth.<sup>156</sup>

Tilak objected to the very structure of the university which allowed 30 out of 60 to be elected by the Hindu Widow's Home Association. The remaining 30 were to be divided between graduate donors and sympathisers. Tilak criticised Karve for 'practically appropriating for itself the whole management of the new venture'. He argued that people would not have confidence were the university to be associated with such a 'dogma'. He also demanded that the management be handed over to an elected body, which would make suitable changes in the courses taught in the university.<sup>157</sup> Tilak made it clear that the university should be a place 'where Hindu home, the Hindu traditional literature and the Hindu women's religious temperament are properly taken care of', and suggested that,

a university, which caters to the intellect and lets, the religious instinct take care of itself, is not worth the name. If our Hindu girls are to spend the most impressionable period of their lives in contact with school work which never appeals to their *Hindutva*\* as such, which places before them many a secular ambition without giving them the sacred touch stone to determine the relative worth of these ambitions - such an 'education' is in our opinion more of a curse than anything else.<sup>158</sup>

Tilak repeatedly insisted that the curriculum of the university should teach 'only hygiene, domestic economy, child nursing, cooking, sewing and so forth along with Puranas and other religious literature'. He proposed to name the university 'the Hindu Women's University to enable it to give religious education and is controlled by Hindus', and 'put the religious education of Hindu women students among the aims and objectives of the university'.<sup>159</sup>

The end of education is to produce self-respecting and practical men and women imbued with a pride in the race and religion and the community to which they belong .... This end requires the school and college atmosphere and curriculum to be in some degree Hindu for Hindu students and Mohamedon for Mohamedan for students and so on.<sup>160</sup>

In spite of the vehement opposition by Tilak and the nationalists, a women's university was established in June 1916 on a secular basis, teaching modern sciences and English.<sup>161</sup> This prompted Tilak to emphasise the cause of National Education during the Home Rule Movement. The position of women in the scheme of national education, according to Tilak, was to be home-centred and subservient to men. The objective of female education was not to make women equal to men, but to complement men.<sup>162</sup> Since it was impossible to implement under the existing colonial education, Tilak once again upheld the concept of national education. His proposal on national education consisted of 'discarding the English language, the introduction of religious and moral education, and education in politics.' 'Without Swarajya,' declared Tilak, 'there will be no possibility of having any kind of education useful to the nation, either primary or higher.' The education useful to the nation was 'knowledge of the experience of the ancestors and the religious and moral education.'<sup>163</sup> Under the colonial education system, imparting such an education was impossible; hence, education was to be kept away from women.

### **Opposition to Compulsory Education for Girls**

The nationalists' opposition to girls' education continued till as late as 1920. When the proposal to make education compulsory for both boys and girls came up for discussion in Poona municipality, Kelkar and other nationalists opposed it, and wanted to make primary education compulsory for boys alone on the pretext that it would lead to a financial burden on the municipality. The reformers opposed the move. They argued that they were willing to accept 'compulsion for both or compulsion for girls alone but never for compulsion for boys alone'. The nationalists criticised the reformers' 'frenzied zeal' for women's education, and called it strange that people should refuse to educate boys because education for girls had not been made compulsory.<sup>164</sup> Tilak criticised the 'foolish attempt' of the reformers to introduce compulsory education for girls.<sup>165</sup> The next year, when the reformers again brought out the proposal, it was once again shot down by the nationalists.<sup>166</sup> A letter by N.C. Kelkar in *Mahratta* opposed the Bombay government proposal to make primary education compulsory for both boys and girls. Kelkar wrote that he was explaining the position of the Nationalist Councillors, and stated,

The cost of free compulsory education to boys and girls simultaneously would be too heavy for the municipality to bear at once in the present state of finances.... Compulsion should not be applied for education till an appreciable percentage of the class of children to whom it is to be applied have already been encouraged to attend schools on a voluntary basis. Boys are already being educated so that, that class may now be regarded as ripe for compulsion, on the other hand not more than 25 percent of girls are attending the schools.<sup>167</sup>

The nationalists refuted the reformers' contention that Tilak was opposed to women's education by stating that Tilak, Kelkar and Lavate had educated their daughters, and criticised 'the moderates for playing devil's advocate'.<sup>168</sup> Tilak opposed the extension of compulsory primary education to women till the very end. He was as vocal then as he had been at the time of the establishment of the first girl's high school in Poona.

## **Conclusion**

The nationalists in Maharashtra considered the education of non-Brahmins and women would result in the loss of distinct Indian nationality. The nationalist critique of colonial education in Maharashtra was motivated by their caste and patriarchal interests. As their spokesperson, Tilak was not analysing colonial education by situating his ideology in the nationalist discourse. He was a product of colonial education. It was this education that had given him the power of intervention in public debate and government policies through his two weeklies. He had reaffirmed his faith in colonial education by associating himself with the establishment of the New English School in 1880 and, subsequently, the Deccan Education Society. As his writings prior to 1889 suggest, he also believed in the civilising influence of English education. Tilak considered that 'English education was very essential for the material development of the country; however, uncontrolled, western knowledge produced social rebels who encouraged people to defy the caste restrictions'.

Tilak's opposition to the implementation of compulsory education was rooted in the fear of losing age-old caste and gender privileges, and the destruction of the intellectual aristocracy that had been carefully constructed and maintained since the medieval period. The reformers and Phule, by advocating compulsory education, threatened to dismantle these structures. Brahmin reformers and Phule's Satyashodhak movement heralded an era of challenge to Brahminism hitherto unknown in history since Buddhist times. Reformers like Phule, Agarkar and Bhandarkar approached the issues from the point of view of absolute equality of mankind, while other reformers



like Ranade, Gokhale and Karve emphasised that improvement in the position of non-Brahmins and women was a necessary condition for constructing the Indian nation.

As far as women's education was concerned, the nationalists and Tilak insisted that the position of woman within the family was that of a subservient daughter-in-law, who did not stand independently in her relations to any one, including her husband and children. They were extremely critical of educated and independent women like Rakhmabai. In the nationalist scheme of things and in their version of Hinduism, which was for all practical purposes the *Varnashramadharm*, women occupied a subordinate position, and any attempt to change that was considered a threat to his construct of *Hindutva*.

Tilak's idea of Hindu woman as subservient daughter-in-law was diametrically opposed to the reformist construct of emancipated and educated women. Tilak was favourably disposed towards the Age of Consent Bill, provided the reformers sought the consent of religious heads and caste Panchayats. Tilak opposed imparting English education to women. This is proved by the fact that Tilak showed enthusiasm for Malabari's proposal, but turned against it only when the reformers refused to change the curriculum for the girls high school at Poona. The nationalist attack against women's education was so strong that in the next 20 years, no new girls' school was established. In 1904, R.G. Bhandarkar lamented in the Legislative Council that the Bombay Presidency had 20 boys' high schools but only one for girls. He pleaded for funds to start girls' schools throughout the Presidency.<sup>169</sup> The nationalist attack had an impact even after 65 years. At the time of India's independence, Poona had only eight girls' high schools as against 31 boys' schools; and in none of the girls' high schools the medium of instruction was English.<sup>170</sup>

Tilak repeatedly informed Brahmin reformers that they, as leaders of public movements, were committing a serious blunder by insisting on compulsory education. He hoped that the reformers would soon realise the futility of opposing the nationalists as they both had a common interest – that of maintaining a privileged position within the community. The reformers refused to place caste interest above national interest, and continued to pressurise the government to implement compulsory education. This 'irreverence grown in schools', Tilak stated, was un-national, and he insisted that it should be controlled by making access to education difficult. In order to achieve this, he suggested an increase in the standard of education, the number of years in colleges, as well as transferring educational institutions from the government into private hands. When these measures could not be forced upon the colonial government, he began to advocate national education, which consisted of 'the initiation into the daily religious

observances ordained in the *shastras*. This was extremely narrow and sectarian, and recognised the *Dharmashastras* as the only source of national education.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Uma Chakravarti, *Rewriting History: The Life and Times of Pandita Ramabai* (New Delhi, 1998), pp. 19-23.

<sup>2</sup> Sudha V. Desai, *Social life in Maharashtra under the Peshwas* (Bombay, 1980), p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> J.V. Naik, 'Social Reform Movements in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries in Maharashtra- A Critical Survey', in S.P. Sen (ed.), *Social and Religion Reform Movement in the 19th and 20th centuries* (Calcutta, 1979), pp. 284-85.

<sup>4</sup> J.V. Naik, 'Bhau Mahajan and his Prabhakar, Dhumketu and Dnyan Darshan: A Study in Maharashtrian Response to British Rule', in N.K. Wagle (ed.), *Writers, Editors, and Reformers: Social and Political Transformations of Maharashtra 1830-1930* (New Delhi, 1999), pp. 64-78.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 70-71. Bhau Mahajan reported the case of a Babu in Calcutta spending Rs 13 lakh on the shraddh- death ceremonies - of his mother, and suggested that Babu should have put that money in some bank in the name of his mother instead, and utilised the interest on that amount to establish an educational institution or some useful industry. Prabhakar, 7 March 1847.

<sup>6</sup> Y.D. Phadke, *Social Reformers of Maharashtra* (New Delhi, 1989), p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Dilip Chitre, trans., *Says Tuka: Selected Poetry of Tukaram* (New Delhi, 1991), p.15<sup>1</sup> Uma Chakravarti, *Rewriting History: The Life and Times of Pandita Ramabai* (New Delhi, 1998), pp. 19-23.

<sup>8</sup> J.R. Shinde, *Dynamics of Cultural Revolution in the Nineteenth Century Maharashtra* (New Delhi, 1985), pp. 56-83.

<sup>9</sup> G.P. Deshpande (ed.), *Selected Writings of Jotirao Phule* (New Delhi, 2002), p.3.

<sup>10</sup> Rosalind O' Hanlon, *Caste, Conflict and Ideology: Mahatma Jotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest Movement in Nineteenth Century Western India* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 302.

<sup>11</sup> Gail Omvdt, *Cultural Revolt in a Colonial Society: Non-Brahmin Movement in Western India, 1873-1930* (Bombay, 1976), p. 108.

- <sup>12</sup> M.S. Gore, *Non-Brahmin Movement in Maharashtra* (New Delhi, 1989), p. 43.
- <sup>13</sup> Rosalind O' Hanlon, *Caste, Conflict and Ideology*, p. 64.
- <sup>14</sup> M.S. Gore, *Non-Brahmin Movement*, p. 16.
- <sup>15</sup> C. H. Heimsath, *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform* (Princeton, 1964), p. 103.
- <sup>16</sup> M.J. Phule, *Collected Works* (Bombay, 1991), p. 38.
- <sup>17</sup> T.V. Parvate, 'Mahatma Jotirao Phule: An Epoch-making man', *Journal of Lok Rajya*, Vol. 38 (15), 1982, p.8.
- <sup>18</sup> Dilip Chitre, *Says Tuka* 30.
- <sup>19</sup> M.J. Phule, *Collected Works*, p. 16.
- <sup>20</sup> Rosalind O'Hanlon, *Caste, Conflict and Ideology*, p. 114.
- <sup>21</sup> An article in 'Bengalee' dated 22 December 1866 in Manmathnath Ghosh (ed.), *Selections from the writings of Girish Chunder Ghosh* (Calcutta, 1912), pp. 656-58.
- <sup>22</sup> Barbara Southard, 'Bengal Women's Education League: Pressure Group and Professional Association', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 18 (1), 1984, p. 57.
- <sup>23</sup> *Mahratta*, 24 August 1884, p. 1.
- <sup>24</sup> *Mahratta*, 22 March 1891, pp. 2, 3: 'What shall we do next?' Editorial; *Mahratta*, 12 April 1891, p. 3: Editorial; *Mahratta*, 26 April 1891, p. 2: 'How Shall We Do It?' Editorial.
- <sup>25</sup> *Mahratta*, 15 May 1881, pp. 3-4, 'Our System of Education – A Defect and a Cure'.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- <sup>28</sup> *Mahratta*, 15 May 1881, p. 3.
- <sup>29</sup> *Mahratta*, 21 August 1881, p. 2.
- <sup>30</sup> S. Bhattacharya, et al. (eds), *Educating the Nation* (New Delhi, 2003), Document no. 1, p. 1.
- <sup>31</sup> T.L. Joshi, *Jotirao Phule* (New Delhi, 1992), p. 36.
- <sup>32</sup> 'A Statement for the Information of the Education Commission', in G.P. Deshpande (ed), *Selected Writings*, pp. 102-12.

- <sup>33</sup> The Report of the Education Commission 1882 (Calcutta, 1883), p. 517.
- <sup>34</sup> S. Bhattacharya, *Educating the Nation*, Document no. 49, p. 125.
- <sup>35</sup> *Mahratta*, 26 March 1882, pp. 5-6: 'Admission of Mahar boys into Government Schools'.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* p. 5.
- <sup>37</sup> *Mahratta*, 20 September 1885, p. 1: 'Independent Power of Municipalities in Respect of Public Education'.
- <sup>38</sup> *Mahratta*, 18 January 1885, p. 2: 'The Transfer of Primary Schools'.
- <sup>39</sup> Philip Constable, 'Sitting on the school verandah: The ideology and practice of 'untouchable' educational protest in late nineteenth-century western India', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 37 (4), 2000, pp. 404-6.
- <sup>40</sup> *Mahratta*, 7 August 1881, p. 1: 'Our University I. Editorial'.
- <sup>41</sup> *Mahratta*, 14 August 1881, p. 1: 'Our University II. Editorial'.
- <sup>42</sup> *Mahratta*, 21 August 1881, p. 1: 'Our University III. Editorial'.
- <sup>43</sup> *Mahratta*, 1 March 1885, p. 3: 'Reasons for Raising the Standard of Education'.
- <sup>44</sup> *Mahratta*, 18 January 1885, p. 2: 'Education in India'.
- <sup>45</sup> *Mahratta*, 15 February 1885, p. 2: 'Functions of our Universities'.
- <sup>46</sup> *Mahratta*, 15 March 1885, pp. 2-3: 'Our views about the University Curriculum'.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* p. 2.
- <sup>48</sup> *Mahratta*, 12 February 1882, p. 2.
- <sup>49</sup> *Mahratta*, 24 August 1884, pp. 2-3: 'Mr. Malabari's Notes on Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood'.
- <sup>50</sup> *Mahratta*, 24 August 1884, p. 2: 'Higher Female Education'.
- <sup>51</sup> Stanley Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale*, p. 37.
- <sup>52</sup> D.R. Jatava, *Evolution of Indian Social Thought* (Jaipur, 1987), p. 200.
- <sup>53</sup> P.J. Jagirdar, *M.G. Ranade* (New Delhi, 1971), p. 185.
- <sup>54</sup> Y.D. Phadke, *Social Reformers*, p. 40.

- <sup>55</sup> B.R. Nanda, *Gokhale, Gandhi and Nehru* (London, 1974), p. 45.
- <sup>56</sup> *Kesari*, 9 August 1884: 'Hindustan is sunk!'
- <sup>57</sup> *Kesari*, 26 August 1884: 'Misunderstanding'.
- <sup>58</sup> Mani Karmarkar, 'Education of Women', in S.P. Sen (ed.), *Social and Religious Reform*, p. 314.
- <sup>59</sup> Ranade, *His wife's Reminiscence*, p. 38; Chakravarti, *Rewriting History*, p. 209.
- <sup>60</sup> Rosalind O Hanlon, *A Comparison between Women and men, Tarabai Shinde and the Critique of Gender Relations in Colonial India* (Madras, 1994), p. 16.
- <sup>61</sup> *Mahratta*, 31 August 1884, p. 6: 'Female Higher Education'.
- <sup>62</sup> *Mahratta*, 7 September 1884, p. 6: 'Higher Female Education'.
- <sup>63</sup> *Mahratta*, 7 September 1884, p. 6: 'Higher Female School'.
- <sup>64</sup> *Mahratta*, 7 September 1884, p. 7: 'Bombay Gossip'.
- <sup>65</sup> *Mahratta*, 28 September 1884, p. 1.
- <sup>66</sup> *Mahratta*, 18 January 1885, p. 5: 'Education in India'.
- <sup>67</sup> *Mahratta*, 19 April 1885, p. 8: 'Female Education in India'.
- <sup>68</sup> *Mahratta*, 13 November 1885, p. 3: 'Female Education'.
- <sup>69</sup> *Mahratta*, 20 September 1885, p. 1: 'Independent Power of Municipalities in Respect of Public Education'.
- <sup>70</sup> Sudhir Chandra, *Enslaved Daughters: Colonialism, Law and Women's Rights* (New Delhi, 1998), pp. 1-16.
- <sup>71</sup> Chakravarti, *Rewriting History*, p. 140.
- <sup>72</sup> *Mahratta*, 5 July 1885, pp. 1-2: 'A Hindu Lady on Early Marriage'.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>75</sup> *Mahratta*, 18 October 1885.
- <sup>76</sup> Sudhir Chandra, 'Who's Laws? Notes on a Legitimising Myth of the Colonial Indian State', *Studies in History* (n.s.), Vol. 8 (2), 1992, p. 188.

- <sup>77</sup> Sudhir Chandra, *Enslaved Daughters*, Appendix C, p. 225, and Appendix D, p. 235.
- <sup>78</sup> *Mahratta*, 10 July 1887, p. 8: 'Rakhmabai's Reply to Dadaji's Exposition'.
- <sup>79</sup> Sudhir Chandra, 'Who's Laws?', pp. 190-97.
- <sup>80</sup> *Mahratta*, 27 March 1887, p. 1: 'Dadaji Vs Rakhmabai once again!'
- <sup>81</sup> *Mahratta*, 12 June 1887, p. 6, and *Mahratta*, 25 September 1887, p. 7.
- <sup>82</sup> Chakravarti, *Rewriting History*, p. 92.
- <sup>83</sup> *Kesari*, 22 July 1890.
- <sup>84</sup> *Mahratta*, 27 March 1887, p. 1: 'Dadaji Vs Rakhmabai once again!'
- <sup>85</sup> *Mahratta*, 12 June 1887, p. 2: 'Analysis of Mr. Wordsworth's Letter on Hindu Social Reform'.
- <sup>86</sup> *Mahratta*, 5 June 1887, p. 1: 'The Scope of Rakhmabai's Defense Committee'.
- <sup>87</sup> Sudhir Chandra, 'Who's Laws?', p. 204.
- <sup>88</sup> *Mahratta*, 12 June 1887, p. 8.
- <sup>89</sup> *Mahratta*, 18 September 1887, pp. 7-8: 'Hindu Social Reform'.
- <sup>90</sup> Jim Masselos, 'Sexual Property/Sexual Violence: Wives in late Nineteenth Century Bombay', in Anne Feldhaus (ed.), *Images of Women in Maharashtrian Society* (Albany, 1998) pp. 115-16. Masselos discusses various cases of domestic violence prevalent in the nineteenth century, the majority of which were against young wives. These instances of violence were mainly to establish the husbands' superiority over wives, and to correct erring wives. English education deprived men of their superiority and power over their wives. So English education was a greater concern for Hindu patriarchy than the age of consent
- <sup>91</sup> Meera Kosambi, 'Continuities and Discontinuities in Maharashtra's Socio-cultural Scene', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 18 September 1993, p. 1978.
- <sup>92</sup> Tanika Sarkar states that for sometime in Hindu nationalist circles, Rakhmabai became a name more dreaded than Malabari or colonial legislators. 'The Hindu wife and the Hindu Nation; Domesticity and Nationalism in Nineteenth Century Bengal', *Studies in History* (n.s.), Vol. 8 (2), 1992, p. 232.
- <sup>93</sup> *Mahratta*, 12 June 1887, p. 3: 'The Law for the Restitution of Conjugal Rights as it Stands and Should Be Amended'.

- <sup>94</sup> *Mahratta*, 2 October 1887, pp. 6-7: 'The Charge Against Rakhmabai'.
- <sup>95</sup> Uma Chakravarti, *Gendering Caste: Through the Feminist Lens* (Kolkata, 2003), p. 131.
- <sup>96</sup> *Mahratta*, 18 September 1887, p. 1: 'Curriculum of the Female High School, Is It In The Right Direction?'
- <sup>97</sup> *Kesari*, 28 September 1887. Whenever such efforts were made in western India, the reformers quoted the example of the princely state of Baroda. To this Tilak retorted, 'His Highness may have perhaps been over-sanguine in expecting a millennium during his lifetime when 90% of female population will be educated' (*Mahratta*, 26 February 1893, Editorial). The efforts of the Maharaja Gaikwad of Baroda paid its dividends. By 1911 Baroda had 79.6 per cent boys and 47.6 per cent girls of all school-going age group, whereas British India had 21.5 per cent boys and 4 per cent girls (*Mahratta*, 14 May 1911, p. 234).
- <sup>98</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>99</sup> *Kesari*, 11 October 1887.
- <sup>100</sup> *Kesari*, 25 October 1887.
- <sup>101</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>102</sup> *Mahratta*, 7 September 1887, p. 6: 'Higher Female Education'
- <sup>103</sup> *Mahratta*, 13 November 1887, p. 3: 'Female Education'.
- <sup>104</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>105</sup> Radha Kumar, *The History of Doing, An Illustrated Account of Movement for Women's Rights and Feminism in India, 1800-1900* (New Delhi, 1997), p. 38.
- <sup>106</sup> *Mahratta*, 12 January 1889, p. 2: 'The Rise of Women's Education'.
- <sup>107</sup> *Mahratta*, 21 April 1889, p. 2: 'The Cause of Female Emancipation'.
- <sup>108</sup> *Mahratta*, 30 June 1889, p. 3.
- <sup>109</sup> Maharshi Karve Papers, List of unmarried and widowed girls, NNML.
- <sup>110</sup> T.V. Parvate, 'Mahatma Phule: An Epoch Making Man', *Lok Rajya*, Vol. 38 (15), 1982, p. 31.
- <sup>111</sup> Rosalind O Hanlon, *Caste, Conflict and Ideology*, p. 283.

- <sup>112</sup> *Mahratta*, 26 February 1888, p. 5: 'Caste Jealousies, Editorial Notes'.
- <sup>113</sup> *Mahratta*, 16 March 1890, p. 2.
- <sup>114</sup> *Mahratta*, 26 May 1889, p. 1: 'Second Bombay Provincial Conference, Editorial'.
- <sup>115</sup> *Mahratta*, 12 January 1890, p. 4: 'The Education of the Masses'.
- <sup>116</sup> *Mahratta*, 3 March 1889, p. 1: 'The Educational Policy of the Government, Editorial'.
- <sup>117</sup> *Mahratta*, 1 January 1889, p. 2: 'The Transfer of Primary Schools'.
- <sup>118</sup> *Mahratta*, 25 January 1890, p. 2: Editorial; *Mahratta*, 18 January 1891, p. 3: 'The Poona Municipality', Editorial; *Mahratta*, 8 February 1891, p. 2: 'The Storm Against the Municipality', Editorial.
- <sup>119</sup> *Mahratta*, 2 July 1882, p. 3.
- <sup>120</sup> *Mahratta*, 12 July 1885, p. 2: 'Reform of the University Curriculum'.
- <sup>121</sup> *Mahratta*, 20 March 1887, p. 5: 'Sanskritized vs pure Marathi'.
- <sup>122</sup> *Mahratta*, 3 March 1889, p. 1: 'The Educational Policy of The Government', Editorial.
- <sup>123</sup> *Kesari*, 6 October 1891.
- <sup>124</sup> *Mahratta*, 8 September 1889, p. 1: 'Moral Discipline in Schools and Colleges', Editorial.
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>126</sup> *Mahratta*, 10 May 1891, p. 3: 'The Caste and Caste Alone Has Power', Editorial.
- <sup>127</sup> *Mahratta*, 22 March 1891, pp. 2, 3: 'What shall we do next?', Editorial.
- <sup>128</sup> *Mahratta*, 25 December 1892, p. 3.
- <sup>129</sup> *Sudharak*, 2 January 1893, p. 2.
- <sup>130</sup> *Mahratta*, 26 February 1893, Editorial.
- <sup>131</sup> S. Bhattacharya, et al. (eds), *Educating the Nation*, Doc. No. 109, pp. 211-12.
- <sup>132</sup> *Mahratta*, 5 May 1901, p. 9: 'Letter to the Editor by "an observer from within"'.  
<sup>133</sup> *Mahratta*, 26 April 1896, p. 1: 'Notes on the Present Activity'.
- <sup>134</sup> *Mahratta*, 27 October 1901, p. 1.
- <sup>135</sup> *Kesari*, 19 March 1901, p. 2.



- <sup>136</sup> *Kesari*, 3 November 1903, p. 2.
- <sup>137</sup> *Mahratta*, 5 July 1903, p. 318: 'Religious Education in Schools and Colleges'.
- <sup>138</sup> *Mahratta*, 3 July 1904, p. 313: 'Religion Education Suggestion Towards a Practical Scheme', Editorial.
- <sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 314.
- <sup>140</sup> V. Grover (ed.), *Political Thinkers of Modern India - B.G. Tilak* (New Delhi, 1990), Speech at Barsi in 1908 on National Education, pp. 197-201.
- <sup>141</sup> *Mahratta*, 1 October 1905, p. 476: 'Kolhapur Affairs'.
- <sup>142</sup> *Mahratta*, 10 April 1910, p. 173: 'Moral and Religious Education'.
- <sup>143</sup> *Mahratta*, 15 June 1913, pp. 185-86: 'The Problems of Religious Education'.
- <sup>144</sup> *Mahratta*, 14 May 1911, p. 234.
- <sup>145</sup> *Mahratta*, 27 March 1910, p. 146.
- <sup>146</sup> *Mahratta*, 30 July 1911, pp.367-369: 'Elementary Education Bill. Objections Answered, Hon. Mr. Gokhale's Speech'.
- <sup>147</sup> Servants of India Society, File No. 10. NNML
- <sup>148</sup> *Mahratta*, 29 March 1914, p. 97: 'What is the Ultimate Authority in Politics and Ethics?'
- <sup>149</sup> *Mahratta*, 3 January 1915, p. 11: 'The *Maratha* Education Conference'.
- <sup>150</sup> *Mahratta*, 26 August 1917, p. 407: 'Education for Citizenship'.
- <sup>151</sup> *Mahratta*, 14 April 1918, p. 178: 'Hon. Mr. G.S. Khaparde'.
- <sup>152</sup> *Mahratta*, 14 April 1918, p. 179.
- <sup>153</sup> D.K. Karve, *Looking Back* (Poona, 1936), pp. 81-84.
- <sup>154</sup> Maharshi Karve Papers, caste-wise list of inmates, NNML.
- <sup>155</sup> R.P. Paranjpe, *D.K. Karve* (Poona, 1915), p. 44.
- <sup>156</sup> *Mahratta*, 9 January 1916, p. 13: 'A Women's University'.
- <sup>157</sup> *Mahratta*, 20 February 1916, p. 87: 'Indian Women's University'.
- <sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> *Mahratta*, 27 February. 1916, p. 97: 'Indian Women's University'.

\* The word is printed in Nagari Script.

<sup>160</sup> *Mahratta*, 27 February 1916, p. 97.

<sup>161</sup> G.L. Chandavarkar, *Dhandu Keshav Karve* (Delhi, 1970), p. 169.

<sup>162</sup> *Mahratta*, 5 May 1901, p. 6.

<sup>163</sup> Tilak's speech at Ahmadnagar on 31 May 1916. Printed in B.L. Grover, *B.G. Tilak* (New Delhi, 1981), p. 261.

<sup>164</sup> *Mahratta*, 17 August 1919, p. 394: 'Free and Compulsory Education in Poona'.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p.392: 'Extremists in Female Education in Poona C.M.' (city municipality).

<sup>166</sup> *Mahratta*, 22 February 1920, p. 87: 'Compulsory Education Controversy in Poona'.

<sup>167</sup> *Mahratta*, 29 February 1920, p. 103: 'Nationalists and Compulsory Education- N.C. Kelkar'.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102: 'Lies and Misrepresentations'.

<sup>169</sup> *Mahratta*, 25 September 1904, pp. 461-62: 'Mr. Bhandarkar's Speech'.

<sup>170</sup> Poona District Educational Hand Book, 1952, p. 5. The only English medium girls high schools were the Anglo Indian schools at Kirki and Poona Cantonment.