
UNIT 5 JUSTICE M.G. RANADE

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5.0 OBJECTIVES

This Unit deals with the social and political thought of Justice Mahadeo Govind Ranade who advocated the cause of social, political and economic reforms in the 19th century India. After going through this unit, you should be able to know Ranade's ideas on :

- Social and religious reforms
- His concepts of liberalism and nationalism
- The problems of economic development of India.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Nineteenth century India was characterized by the emergence of various ideologies and movement seeking to bring about social and political reforms. Justice M.G. Ranade was in the forefront of this reformist movement in the Western part of India.

Ranade was born on 18th January, 1842 at Nasik in an orthodox and well to do Brahmin family. His early education was at Kolhapur and higher education at Bombay. He was a brilliant student and acquired B.A. and LL.B. degrees. He joined the Bombay judicial service and in course of time, he became a judge of the Bombay High Court. He was instrumental in giving a progressive shape to public life in Maharashtra by participating in the working of the Pune Sarvajanik Sabha, Prarthana Samaj, the Indian Social Conference and the Indian National Congress.

Ranade wrote a number of books and articles, delivered lectures and drafted petitions to awaken in the people a consciousness about their rights. In all his activities, he carried forward the message of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He modified many ideas of Roy and argued that social, religious, political and economic reforms

were interconnected. He stood for all-round and total reforms. He wanted to establish a free democratic society in India which would be based on justice, equality and liberty.

In the subsequent pages, we shall try to understand social, religious, political and economic ideas of Justice Ranade.

5.2 RANADE AND RELIGIOUS REFORMS

Ranade was a deeply religious person and he wanted to bring about basic reforms among the Hindus who he believed had degenerated considerably. This deterioration had come about due to distortions in religious beliefs and practices, hence he pleaded for their reformation.

5.2.1 Ranade's Criticism of Hindu Religious Practices

Though Ranade was a great admirer of Indian culture and religion, he was highly critical of some of the Hindu religious beliefs and practices. What he wanted was reformation of Hindu religion. Therefore, he did not advocate conversion or the establishment of a separate sect. He felt that the basic philosophy of Hindu religion was sound and what was needed was to rid Hinduism of corrupt and perverted practices that had crept into the religion over a period of time.

Strict adherence to the letter rather than the spirit of the Hindu religious practices irked Ranade. He was critical of polytheism—i.e. worshipping of many gods. He believed in the existence of one God. According to him, Polytheism, encouraged superstitious and corrupt practices. It also gave birth to idol worship. The temples of different gods became the centres of religious orthodoxy and vested interests. Idol worship strengthened the hands of the religious authorities and gave birth to the worst type of priestcraft. All these had succeeded in keeping the masses away from the true religious and philosophical precepts. There was, therefore, an urgent need for reform within the Hindu religious tradition.

Ranade wanted to purge Hindu religion of all its evil practices and for that purpose, he along with his friends established the Prarthana Samaj.

5.2.2 Ranade's Philosophy of Theism

Ranade believed in the existence of one God and was therefore a monotheist. In his book 'Philosophy of Indian Theism', he expounded the theistic interpretation of the Universe and wrote against materialism and agnosticism. He held that *existence* was divided between human soul, nature (matter) and God. God was the source of *all thought currents*. The human mind sought refuge in God because God was the supreme spirit which forged links between man and nature. He was the source of all wisdom, benevolence, beauty and power.

Man, through the various stages of development of civilisation has tried to understand God. Polytheism and idol worship were out stages in this process. With the progress of science and an increase in knowledge, he hoped that man would be able to understand some aspects of the spirit. According to Ranade, the spirit was immanent in everything and in every being. It provided order and purpose in the universe. It animated reason, conscious mind and personal will.

Though Ranade believed in God, he did not make man a mere instrument in the hands of God. Man had a self-conscious mind and free will. These distinguishing features of man were the foundations of law and morals. Every man had a conscience and the freedom to do things in the light of his conscience. He had the ability of self-development and perfection. For Ranade truth was not to be found in sacred books but it was to be searched. Man must discover for himself the purpose and truth of man's relations with other men. The central idea of his theistic philosophy was morality. This morality was not eternal, but had to be reviewed at constant intervals.

Ranade did not believe in the non-dualistic monism of Adi Shankaracharya because he held that God and man were not one and the same thing. They were kept

different by divine dispensation. According to him, no human being could become God, nor could he merge his being into a cosmic Brahman. This mystic goal of union was illustory. The essence of salvation, according to Ranade, was living a saintly life guided by truth and morality.

5.2.3 Prarthana Samaj and Brahma Samaj Compared

The Brahma Samaj established by Raja Ram Mohan Roy inspired Ranade to establish the Prarthana Samaj. However, Ranade decided from the beginning that the Prarthana Samaj would not follow the Brahma Samaj *in toto*. He wanted the Prarthana Samaj to bring about changes from within, by remaining in the Hindu fold unlike the Brahma Samaj which had disturbed, according to Ranade, the historical continuity of the community by going out of the fold. The Prarthana Samaj tried to take inspiration from the Indian sources, as it was believed in the orthodox quarters at that time that Brahma Samaj was influenced by Christianity. Ranade claimed that he belonged to the long tradition of Marathi saints such as Jnyaneshvar, Namdeo, Eknath and Tukaram. In fact, the Samaj he claimed was continuation of the Bhakti movement. Thus, the sources of its inspiration were indigenous and its practices had local roots. Therefore, the Prarthana Samaj did not become a separate sect in Maharashtra and continued with its efforts to reform religion from within.

Thus, we see that although Ranade was a religious man who had great respect for the Hindu Philosophical and religious tradition, he wanted to reform Hinduism so that it could recapture its old essence.

Check Your Progress 1

Note : i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

1) What was the main criticism of Ranade against the popular practice of the Hindu religion?

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2) In what way was prarthana Samaj different from Brahma Samaj?

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5.3 RANADE AND SOCIAL REFORMS

Ranade's vision of reformation was total as it covered the social, political, economic and religious aspects of our lives. In the following pages, we shall discuss Ranade's criticism of the Hindu society, his methods of social reform, his perspective on the caste system, liberation of women and education.

5.3.1 Ranade's Criticism of the Hindu Society

Ranade held that the root of all evils of the Hindu society could be traced to a distorted understanding of the Hindu religion. It was religion that gave sanction to the caste system, untouchability and subjection of women.

He maintained that the caste system had divided the Hindu society into groups and factions. The caste system was based on status determined by birth—this caste position was by and large unchangeable. Birth and not merit determined a person's social mobility.

Ranade wanted total change in the Hindu society. He was critical of the lack of freedom in the Hindu society. He urged the people not to be misled by those in positions of authority but to use their own power of reasoning. Ranade advocated the creation of a society in which individuals would be free to associate with one another and not be constrained by considerations of caste status and the limitations imposed by the caste system.

5.3.2 Ranade on Methods of Social Reforms

Ranade advocated social reforms because he knew that all-round reforms were necessary to bring about basic change in Hindu society. There were different methods of social reform and Ranade held that barring revolution all other methods should be pursued. According to him, there were four methods of social reform and they were as follows :

- 1) The first method was the method of tradition in which the cause of social reforms was advocated with the help of religious texts.
- 2) The second method was that of appealing to the conscience of the people. Reformers could attempt to sensitize people to the corrupt, superstitious and unjust practices.
- 3) The third method was enforcement of reforms by means of penalties, for instance, the government banned the practice of burning widows.
- 4) The fourth method was that of rebellion which sought to change the evil and inhuman customs by force. This could, however, break the continuity and would divide the society.

Ranade, did not favour the revolutionary method because it would break the historical continuity of the community. Ranade recommended the first two methods, but he was not averse to the use of state power or enforcement of reforms. He was not averse to the idea of a foreign government legislating for Indians so long. At the same time, he knew that mere legislations would not bring about change and it had to be accompanied by popular movements of the people.

Ranade was neither a revolutionary nor a revivalist, he was devoted to the evolutionary path of slow and gradual change. In his opinion, lasting progress was possible only by accommodating new ideas within the accepted way of life.

5.3.3 Ranade on Social Reforms

Ranade believed in all-round development of the society and held that social, religious, political and economic reforms were interdependent. Reform according to Ranade had to be gradual and undertaken in such a manner that it did not break the continuity of traditions. He was opposed to revival of the old and archaic since these did not have anything positive to offer. He said, "in a living organisation as society is, no revival is possible. The dead are, buried and burnt once for all and the dead past cannot be revived. If revival is impossible, reformation is the only alternative open to sensible people". In his addresses to different social conferences and gatherings, he exhorted reformers to work for slow and gradual change. He believed that India's future was bleak if this process of reform was not undertaken.

Ranade's efforts were in the backdrop of a controversy about the relative importance of social and political reforms. Lokmanya Tilak and his followers were of the opinion that political reforms were more important than social reforms because after securing political power, it was always possible to effect social reforms. But Ranade did not agree with this view and believed that social reforms were more important. In his opinion the foundations of a modern society could be established only through social reforms, which, in its turn, would facilitate the struggle for political power.

In the remaining part of this section, we shall discuss: (1) Ranade's ideas on reforms in the caste system, (2) liberation of women and (3) education.

Ranade was a critic of the caste system, he believed that the caste system prevented the development of individual capacities. Ranade was critical of the fact that the caste system did not permit free choice of vocation, nor did it ensure an equality of opportunity. Ranade favoured reorganisation of the Hindu society on the basis of

freedom of choice and quality. He pleaded for the abolition of caste system and argued in favour of inter-caste marriages. He suggested the extension of education through the other developmental facilities to the lower castes.

The oppression of women by the Hindu social system was yet another tradition which Ranade sought to reform. Ranade supported the age of consent bill that raised the marriagable age of women.

Education was another important subject that drew Ranade's attention. He favoured the introduction of secular education in India which would inculcate the virtues of civic life. The aim of education should be the pursuit of truth. Thus, education for him had a liberating influence. He did not like students to blindly follow their teachers. He wanted them to develop the spirit of adventure. He was of the opinion that in the university courses, there should be judicious blending of tradition and modernity. He accorded equal importance to physical education. Ranade attached more importance to what was taught rather than to how it was taught. He set little in store by examinations and wanted the universities to be the centres of knowledge and excellence.

Ranade was a champion of Indian languages and sought their development so as to enrich the cultural life of the Indian people. Ranade wanted the British government to spend more on education especially on primary education because the latter was greatly neglected. It was not possible for the government at that time to open schools at every place; hence, he pleaded for the establishment of both government aided schools and private schools. He demanded that every village should be provided with a school. Education of women and education of backward communities were subjects dear to his heart and he exhorted the government and society to carry forward educational activities for these helpless sections of the society.

Ranade wanted to establish a new Indian society based upon contract and free choice. He wanted to instil among Indians a sense of human dignity and commitment to progress.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note : i) Use the space given below for your answer.
ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

1) What sort of change did Ranade want to bring about Hindu society?

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2) What were the evil effects of the caste system on the Hindu society according to Ranade?

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3) State the four different methods of social reform discussed by Ranade.

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5.4 RANADE'S INTERPRETATION OF INDIAN HISTORY

Though Ranade was highly critical of some of the inhuman practices observed by Hindu society, he was in no way its total opponent. In fact, he was very proud of India's tradition and claimed that the Indian people were the chosen people of God. Ranade's interpretation of Indian history was important because it became the basis for the development of his concept of nationalism. According to Ranade, the development of history took place on the basis of divine will. It was the divine will that the Indians should experience different invasions. These invasions gave the Indians an opportunity to learn from other peoples and cultures and absorb the best elements from their social and cultural traditions without losing their own identity.

In the present section, we shall discuss Ranade's ideas on:

- 1) The rise of Maratha power
- 2) Providential character of the British rule in India.

5.4.1 Ranade on Role of Islam in Indian History

Ranade believed that interaction with the Islamic tradition enriched the indigenous Indian society and culture. He gave the example of the Bhakti and the Sufi traditions of religious philosophy in this context. He was particularly impressed by the composite nature of the culture that was a consequence of this interaction. Ranade admired the broadmindedness and humaneness of the Bhakti (stemming from a re-interpretation of Hinduism) and the Sufi (a reformulation of the Islamic world view) movements. He was also impressed by the refinement in the fine arts, architecture and other creative activities which was the result of an intermingling of diverse trends and traditions.

5.4.2 Ranade's Views on Rise of Maratha Power

Ranade was a keen student of Maratha history and he was appalled by the distortion of Maratha history at the hands of the British historians. He was profoundly impressed by the personality of Shivaji and undertook a deep study of the historical processes involved in the Maratha uprising. He wrote his famous essay *The Rise of Maratha Power* to show that the Maratha movement had its own philosophy and purpose.

According to Ranade, the Maratha state was the result of a great social and political movement begun by Marathi speaking people. Ranade pointed out that the Maratha state survived after Shivaji, and in fact, expanded far and wide for 140 years after his death. Ranade held that the rise of Maratha power was a national uprising, the uprising of the whole people strongly bound together by the common affinities of language, religion and literature and seeking further solidarity by a common independent political existence. Secondly, Ranade held that the rise of Maratha power was not a mere political revolution but it was essentially a social revolution. This social revolution preceded a political revolution and prepared the ground for the latter. He likened the Bhakti movement in Maharashtra to the protestant reformation movement of Europe in the 16th century. He held that the Bhakti movement was "heterodox in its spirit of protest against all forms of ceremonies and class distinctions based on birth and ethical in its preference of a pure heart". This according to Ranade proved that every political change needed reformation. Ranade held that under the leadership of Shivaji the Marathas rose to power mainly because of Shivaji's exceptional abilities. He motivated them to fight for Swaraj by uniting and overcoming separatist tendencies. It was because the Maratha state was deeply rooted in the hearts of the people that it survived despite adversities.

But Ranade knew that the national upsurge of the Marathas could not become permanent because the Maratha state lacked solidarity and self-discipline. The Marathas could not establish a modern state which required virtues not promoted by the prevailing caste system. Caste arrogance and pride tended to destroy social unity. They failed to develop a liberal social polity "which would help bring about the progress of different sections of society." Pointing out the moral of the story, Ranade wrote, "the attempts failed; but even the failure was itself an education in highest

virtues and possibly intended to be a preparatory discipline to cement the union of Indian races under the British guidance.”

5.4.3 Ranade on the British Rule in India

Ranade was of the opinion that the British conquest of India was a divine arrangement because it was God’s desire to keep the Indians under British guidance. He had no doubts about the fact that the Indians were the chosen people of god, but to redeem themselves and their past they required to have guidance from the British.

Ranade realised that foreign rule had adversely affected the intellectual, moral and cultural health of the society. However, he believed the Indians could benefit from the British experience in the establishment of industries, management of markets, modern secular education, knowledge of English language and proficiency in different arts and sciences. Thus, the British association for him was a long educative process that would help India realise her soul. He asked Indians to learn from their British connection because he believed that a great country like India could not be held down permanently and sooner or later in god’s providence, the people of this country would rise to the status of a self-governing community. He held that the transfer of power was inevitable.

We have seen that Ranade’s interpretation of Indian history was based upon his belief that Indians were the chosen people of God and they would redeem their past through the British connection.

Check Your Progress 3

Note : i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit

1) Why in Ranade’s opinion could the Marathas empire not succeed?

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2) On what belief was Ranade’s interpretation of Indian history based?

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5.5 POLITICAL IDEAS OF RANADE

Ranade is considered a prophet of modern India because he visualised the future course of development in India. Ranade sought to enlighten the Indian masses about the benefits of material progress which could be used as a means to ethical and desirable lives. Therefore, he expounded a political philosophy that aimed at spiritualisation of politics but opposed the use of religion or spiritual authority in politics. He believed in liberalism but revised its basic tenets.

In the present section, we shall discuss: (i) Ranade’s ideas on liberalism, (ii) on nature and functions of the state, (iii) on Indian politics and (iv) concept of Indian nationalism.

5.5.1 Ranade’s Ideas on Liberalism

Ranade’s concept of liberalism was based upon his overall theory of morality which drew up on the belief that the purpose of all human activity was the development of man and his capacities in all spheres of life. The purpose of our life according to Ranade was essentially moral. “The end” he wrote, “is to renovate, to purify and also to perfect the whole man by liberating his intellect, elevating his standard of

duty and perfecting all his powers." He held political elevation, social emancipation and spiritual enlightenment as three important goals that should be pursued.

Ranade was a moderate. He did not believe in revolutionary methods. His political method was essentially constitutional. In this method the purity of means was emphasised. Secondly, the change was sought through the constituted authority and not by breaking it. Thirdly, the agitators were expected to exhaust all the legal means available and try to change the heart of rulers. In this method, submission of petitions and representations played an important role because he thought that in the case of local grievances, such methods would prove to be successful. Even if these petitions failed, Ranade upheld their utility as being essential for training in democracy and politics.

While defining liberalism, he said that moderation would be its watchword. Belief in the dignity of human beings and individual liberties, duty to obey the laws of the state and striving ceaselessly for reforms were the goals he set for the Liberals. The liberals must aim for change in a gradual manner. Ranade advocated change through constitutional means. He believed that, advancement, if had to be permanent, had to be slow. Thus Ranade's liberalism was essentially progressive.

5.5.2 Ranade on the Nature and Functions of the State

Ranade differed from the British individualists regarding the role of the state in the field of political economy. He maintained that the state represented the power, wisdom, mercy and charity of its best citizens; therefore, it had to play a more positive role in human life. It was the duty of the state to protect the lives of the people and to make it nobler, happier and richer. The purpose of the state was essentially moral. It was a means to attain higher grades of civilised life.

According to Ranade, in modern times the state could not rest with its police functions. Now it had to look after the social welfare and social progress. According to Ranade, the state must perform regulative, productive and distributive functions. The state should regulate and control public life. The force of the state must be used to prevent social malpractices and exploitation of man by man. Secondly, the state should get involved in productive activities. The classical liberals held that the state should not interfere in economic matters, but Ranade argued that the state could perform productive functions by establishing industries in key areas of the economy. He did not want to substitute the state action for individual initiative but to make individual initiative more broad based and to encourage the spirit of creativity and self-help among members of the society. When individuals became capable of managing their own affairs, the state should withdraw because ultimately the state protection and control were but crutches to teach the nation to walk. Thus, he wanted to strike a right balance between individual initiative and state intervention.

Though Ranade was not a socialist, he realised the importance of the distributive functions of the state. He maintained that it was the duty of the state to provide the minimum means of betterment to the people. Ranade upheld the right to property and free individual initiative. He however, advocated some limitations on the rights of the rich people. He suggested state intervention to reduce the gulf between the wealthy and the poor and to assure a minimum standard of living to all the citizens. Ranade argued that in a poor and backward country like India, the state had to play a positive role in the productive and distributive processes.

5.5.3 Ranade's Ideas on Indian Administration

Ranade was a keen student of Indian administration and suggested many reforms in its working. The establishment of a democratic government in India was his goal. He requested the British government to grant fundamental rights to the people. He held that the Indian government should be developed around the following six principles: (1) supremacy of law, (2) representative government with representation to princes in the upper house of parliament, (3) common constitution for states, (4) parliamentary government, (5) representation of India in the imperial parliament pending full development of Indian constitution and (6) decentralisation of judiciary.

He was of the opinion that the guiding principles of the central government should be national co-ordination, local execution and collective action. There must exist

linkages at all levels of the government so that proper co-ordination was achieved. Local autonomy had to be balanced with the demands of the national government.

Ranade supported decentralisation of power and he was very happy when Lord Ripon decided to introduce local administrative bodies in India in 1882-83. He opined that due to the centralisation of power, the germs of progress had been nipped in the bud and local initiative destroyed. He wanted local functions to be delegated to the local authorities. He favoured the development of a widespread scheme of local government with village bodies as the foundations of the system. He claimed that once upon a time, the Panchayati system in India was very strong and effective. He wanted the government to give wide ranging powers to local bodies so that they could become strong and responsible.

Ranade sought to introduce some reforms in the princely states because he wanted the government in these states to be accountable and operate on the basis of time tested practices. He suggested that the laws of the state should be written. The local bodies should be given more powers. The arbitrary powers of the ruler should be curbed by appointing a Council of Elders etc.

5.5.4 Ranade—the Prophet of Indian Nationalism

Ranade was the prophet of Indian nationalism. He was the first Indian thinker to insist that national development must be based on the principles of democracy, secularism and liberalism. He emphasised the importance of religious tolerance and Hindu-Muslim unity because he believed that the Indian people were the chosen people of God and India was the true land of promise. It was their historic duty to show the path to the world.

Ranade made it clear that Hindu or Muslim culture could not become the foundation of Indian nationalism. The composite Indian culture which had been developing since the past 3000 years was the basis of Indian nationalism. According to Ranade, the chief quality of the Indian people was their ability to absorb the best from other cultures and to give a new shape and form to their culture. Ranade expected that interaction with the British would also enrich Indian culture. "There has been no revolution, and yet old condition of things has been tending to reform itself by the slow process of assimilation. The great religions of the world took birth here and now they meet again as brothers prepared to higher dispensation, which will unite all and vivify all; India alone among all nations of the world has been so favoured."

Ranade wanted to promote the fusion of the best elements in different communities in order to develop a common Indian nationality. His ideal was national unification and for that purpose, he wanted to work in as many fields and at as many levels as possible. This would be a slow growth but he believed that short cuts to unity were dangerous.

Ranade maintained that all the major communities in India should come together to attain common objectives and fight against poverty and backwardness. Freedom and prosperity were not possible without unity. He made it clear that it was the common tenet of Indian nationalism that progress for India meant progress of all its parts and communities. He recognised the fact that through united action and progress, Indians could gather enough strength to make the transfer of power from the British to Indians inevitable. While pointing out the main characteristics of Indian nationalism, he wrote "The inner spring, the hidden purpose not consciously realised in many cases, is the sense of human dignity and freedom which is slowly asserting its supremacy over national mind. It is not confined to one sphere of family life. It invades the whole man and makes him feel that individual purity and social justice have paramount claim over us all which we can ignore long without being dragged to a lower level of existence."

Thus in political matters Ranade advocated the cause of freedom and progress and wanted to develop such state structures that would strike the right balance between individual rights and public good. In his economic ideas, he maintained the same theoretical balance.

Check Your Progress 4

Note : i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

1) What were the main features of the political method advocated by Ranade?

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2) What were the main functions of the state according to Ranade?

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5.6 ECONOMIC IDEAS OF JUSTICE RANADE

Justice Ranade was considered to be the father of modern Indian economics because he studied the problems of India's economic development from a realistic point of view. In this section, we shall discuss his ideas on Indian political economy, Indian agriculture and industrialisation of India.

5.6.1 Ranade on Indian Political Economy

While studying Indian political economy, Ranade reviewed the then prevalent theories of economic development. He came to the conclusion that they could not be arbitrarily applied in a backward country like India. He made it clear that as in other social sciences in economics also, time, place, circumstances, endowments and aptitudes of men, their laws, institutions and customs should be taken into account. The laws of classical economics could not be arbitrarily applied, because history proved that they were not universal. He did not approve of the extreme individualism nor the social indifference of classical economists. He said there ought to be no theoretical limits to the action of the state even in the economic sphere and each proposal of its expansion should be considered from the practical standpoint. The countries which were late in capitalist development had to rely on the state for initial industrialisation.

Ranade thought that the problem of distribution was not properly tackled by the classical economists. It condemned the poor to poverty and helped the rich to get richer. In this situation, freedom of contract became meaningless when the two contracting parties were not evenly matched. "In such case" he wrote "all talk of equality and freedom adds insult to the injury". He supported the right to property but made it clear that the institutions of property and privileges were historical categories and products of social processes. They had no other justification for existence except moral and moral justification was always based on equity, justice and fair play. Hence, he favoured curtailing the rights of landlords in favour of tenants. He was not averse to modifying the laws concerning private property and distribution of produce if equity and fair play so demanded.

Ranade was of the view that economics was a social science and its problems should be studied through historical perspective and with social sympathy.

5.6.2 Ranade on Indian Agriculture

Ranade realized that agriculture was the basis of Indian economy. But during the British period, agriculture suffered from many defects and it had to be re-organised on a scientific basis. He was of the opinion that Indian agriculture suffered indebtedness, lack of enterprise, excessive revenue demands by the government, backward methods of cultivation, lack of agricultural credit and overdependence of large sections of the population on agriculture. For the improvement of agriculture, Ranade suggested the following measures:

- 1) New methods of agriculture or capitalist farming should be encouraged and land should be entrusted to such farmers who have financial capacity to buy costly equipments and machinery. Thus, he favoured capitalist farming.
- 2) He held that the transfer of agricultural land to the capitalist farmer was necessary because he would make better use of it. However, he did not favour transfer of land to moneylenders who had no aptitude or patience to cultivate the land.
- 3) For agricultural development farmers needed capital. Therefore, Ranade suggested establishment of co-operative credit societies and service societies that would cater to the needs of the farmers. The government should encourage establishment of small farmers co-operatives to fulfill the credit needs of the farmers.
- 4) He suggested ways and means to overcome the problems of rural indebtedness by making legislation to protect the rights of farmers. He also suggested establishment of agricultural banks to provide credit facilities to the farmer.
- 5) For agricultural development, the standardisation and stabilisation of land settlement was necessary. He favoured ryotwari system with property rights to the farmers and fixing of land revenue settlement permanently.
- 6) For the development of undeveloped land, Ranade suggested formation of state farms. He hoped that through state farms, government could take place only when Indian agriculture became prosperous, and agriculture could not become prosperous unless it was managed by thrifty and diligent farmer.

5.6.3 Ranade on Industrialisation

India was a land of poor people. Excessive reliance upon agriculture was the cause of this poverty. Therefore, Ranade argued that the poverty of the Indian masses could not be eradicated except through industrialisation. However, India was a backward country and in an underdeveloped economy like India, industrialisation could not take place on the basis of individual initiative. The state had to play a positive role by setting up state owned industries in key areas. The state had to initiate the change, because agriculture in India was getting "ruralised" and "depressed". It was only through industrialisation that this depression could be overcome.

Ranade was in favour of an integrated scheme of national economic development. Agriculture, trade and industry were the three organs of economy and Ranade held that they should be properly and harmoniously developed. The key to modernisation of economy was industrialisation.

Though Ranade did not advocate state regulated planned economic development, he certainly visualised some sort of planning through positive state intervention. He favoured the state initiative to propel the forces of change.

Check Your Progress 5

Note : i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of the unit.

- 1) How did the views of Ranade and the classical economists differ?

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- 2) Why did Ranade favour emergence of the capitalist farmer?

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5.7 LET US SUM UP

In the preceding pages we have discussed social and political ideas of justice Ranade. Many of the institutions and practices of modern India can be traced to justice Ranade's social and political ideas. He was a liberal thinker in the humanistic tradition and stood for progress and welfare of all human beings. He favoured spiritualisation of politics, and emphasised importance of truth and morality in our life. He sought to establish a society which was based on justice, equality and fairness. He did not adopt doctrinaire positions and argued that for social and economic development the state had to play a positive role. He made it clear that the composite Indian culture and welfare of all communities was the basis of Indian nationalism. In the economic field, he supported state initiative to bring about industrialisation of the country.

5.8 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

Chandra B. 1974 *Rise of economic nationalism in India*, Delhi.

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Karunakaran 1975 *Indian politics, from Naoroji to K.P. Nehru*, Gitanjali.

Karve D.G. 1941 *Ranade—The prophet of Liberated India*. Aryabhushan, Pune.

Pantham T. and Deutch K. (Ed.) 1986 *Political thought in modern India*. Sage, Delhi.

Parate T.V. *Mahadev Govind Ranade—A biography*.

5.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) Ranade criticised Hindus for following evil practices that had some religious sanctions. He criticised Hindus for their polytheism and idolworship. He thought that the temples of different gods became the centres of vested interests. Polytheism and idol worship gave birth to superstitions.
- 2) Whereas the Brahmo Samaj set itself up as a separate sect, the Prarthana Samaj insisted it would reform Hindu society by staying fully within the Hindu fold. Unlike the Brahmos, the Prarthana Samaj took inspiration from the Indian sources and claimed that it belonged to the long tradition of Bhakti movement.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Ranade expected that change in Hindu society should take place from constraint to freedom, from credulity to faith, from status to contract, from authority to reason, from unorganised life to organised life, from bigotry to toleration and from fatalism to a sense of human dignity.
- 2) According to Ranade caste system was largely responsible for India's degeneration because it divided Hindu society into hundreds of small groups. In this system merit had no place and there was no scope for progress and onward mobility because birth in a particular caste determined the place of a person in the society. It gave birth to evil practices like untouchability.
- 3) According to Ranade there were four methods of social reform. The first method of social reform was tradition. Second method was appealing to the conscience of the people. Third method of reform was to enforce the reforms with the help of legislation and state power and fourth method was that of rebellion.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) According to Ranade Islamic rule over India greatly benefited Indians because in the fields of philosophy, religion, arts, crafts, science and the art of government, Indians learnt several new things from Islam and they absorbed them into their religion and culture.
- 2) Ranade held that the Maratha state was not established by a free booter but it was the result of a great social and political movement of the Maratha people. Secondly, it was a national uprising. Thirdly, it was preceded by the social movement launched by Maratha saints which was progressive in character and lastly, it was led by a leader like Shivaji who was a man of exceptional abilities and qualities.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) Ranade's liberalism was a moderate liberalism which did not believe in revolutionary methods. His political method was constitutional method. In this method, the change was sought through the constituted authority. Ranade thought that submission of memorials, representation and petitions played an important role in constitutional method.
- 2) Ranade believed in the positive intervention of the state in human life. He divided the functions of state into three parts: regulative, productive and distributive functions. According to him, the state would regulate the public life. It would set up industries in the productive field and it would ensure proper distribution of wealth on the basis of justice and fair play.

Check Your Progress 5

- 1) Ranade held that the views of the classical economists could not be blindly applied to the backward countries like India. Unlike the classical economists, Ranade believed in the intervention of the state in economic matters. In the field of distribution also we could not depend upon the economic laws. If distribution of the produce was to be done on the basis of justice and fair play, the intervention of the state was necessary. The classical economists did not want state intervention.
- 2) Ranade supported the rise of capitalist farmer because he thought that the capitalist farmer would be able to invest money in agriculture. He would modernise agriculture by buying costly equipments. He would cultivate land as a paying business and would manage the agriculture diligently.