
CHAPTER FIVE

TILAKS IDEAS ON SOCIAL REFORM

C H A P T E R - V

TILAK'S IDEAS ON SOCIAL REFORM

Tilak has elaborated his philosophy of social change in various articles by him, contributed to the Kesari." He was not opposed to social reform as such but was hostile to a total and immediate programme of social revolution. He adhered to an organic evolutionary and spontaneous conception of social change brought about by progressive education and growing enlightenment."¹ Tilak believed in educated person that they will reform our society on Indian cultural system. " The Bill (Age of Consent Bill) received the enthusiastic support of all the veteran reformer's but was violently opposed by Tilak and his orthodox friends. He did not deny the harmful effects of early marriage but argued that Education² and not legislation is the proper method for eradicating evil." " Tilak advance social views and his sympathy for modern position produced conflict of interest and led to political inconsistencies throughout his carrier. Although he severely criticised the high-scholl for girls, established in Poona in 1883, and denigrated Female education, he enrolled his own daughter there."³

His principal aim was a nationalistic upsurge and hence he was opposed to creating confusion in the mass mind by holding up before them divergent social philosophies. He did not want to incorporate corrosive influences in the body social by creating social schisms. He felt that progressive social change should be gradually introduced, but it should be under the inspiration and leadership of those who had reverence for Hindu ideals; He wanted gradual and peaceful change in society and he totally refused to believe that the salvation of India lay in the blind social imitation of the radicalism and feminism of the west.

Tilak said, " I am a liberal Hindu, we have always been advocates of reform, reform we say, but not of rebellion or licence."⁴ For Tilak's reformism was the product of his moral frame of reference, based on the philosophy of life of the Indian civilization and planned in accord with his own thoroughgoing realism. He would not content himself with analysing the evils of the existing social order, and then dreaming up ideal reforms that were so impractical that they could not be accepted by the people, or that were so alien that they had no relation to the culture of India. Another basis of his programme for reform was that those who believed

in reform, those who were educated and posed as the leaders of the community, should be the first to practise the reforms that they advocated. In this way he believed the reform leaders could set an example for all of society, and to the extent that society followed their example, acceptance of the reforms would be democratic and moral . Tilak arguments in this respect should be understood, taking into consideration the nature of the reform movementnamely the Non-Brahmin movement. The Non-Brahmin movement chiefly allacted the strong hold of the Upper castes on the society. In brief efforts of Jotiba Phule did contribute to a certain awareness (Political, Social and Economic) amongst the down trodden lot of the society. The Non-Brahmin movement remained out of the Congress fold untill Tilak advocated his priority. In this backdrop Tilak very boldly advocated his views and never gave up to what he said untill his last.

He further urged that if legislation was going to be employed to bring about social reform, then it should not be used to enforce reformed practices on the masses who neither understood the reforms nor appreciated their optential benefit. If anything, he advocated that social legislation be passed to bind the educated members of society, especially

those who advocated reforms and the use of state power to enforce them, to live up to the reforms they preached. He was himself willing to be bound by such laws, and urged that if other social reformers would join him in this procedure, then the example which they would set would inspire confidence and imitation in the people.

He proposed that Laws be passed, applying to all educated reformers to the effect that

- 1) Their daughters should not be married until they reached the age of sixteen, and that boys should not marry until they were twenty.
- 2) Unless they were prepared to marry widows, men should not marry after they were forty years old.
- 3) The educated reformers be absolutely prohibited from taking alcohol.
- 4) The reformers and their families be prohibited from accepting dowries in marriages.
- 5) There be no disfigurement of widows.
- 6) One-tenth of the monthly income of every reformers should be devoted to public purpose.⁵

Tilak believed it was much more important for the social reformers to practise what they preached than to lobby for general legislation.

The next thing the reformers could do, Tilak urged would be to mix with the people and to educate them to the necessity of reforming the decadent aspects of the caste-ridden social order. He believed that this procedure would be beneficial not only to society but to the social reformers themselves, for by mixing with the people they might begin to appreciate the values that they seemingly had been educated away from. He wrote " If the educated want to take up the social education factor, they must mix with the common people. Those who want to be the leaders of the people, must be in touch with the people to understand what are their needs, how much religious ardour they have got, and to what channel their energy should be turned in order to gain national good."⁶

Reform, to Tilak's mind, must grow from within the people. Reform would have to be based on the value system of the people and not on the values taught to the westernized few in an alien system of education.

Tilak was a Conservative, Historicist believing in the gradual evolution of the social consciousness. He accepted the need of social change and reform but these be carried on

under the leadership of men of eminent, moral and spiritual character living as the embodiment of the Hindu way of life and not by mere intellectuals pouring the vials of their worth on the contemporary society in newspapers. Hence it is clear that Tilak's hostile attitudes to social reform was dictated by his conception of politics and culture.

THE AGE OF CONSENT ACT :

For some time a movement was growing in the country for raising the age of consent for girls. B. M. Malabari, a Parsi gentleman, was propagating in England for the introduction of social reforms in Hindu society. His idea was to bring pressure on the Secretary of State for India, on the Viceroy to enact into law some of his proposals. Some of the proposals of Malabari were as follows :

- 1) Cohabitation by a husband with his wife, under twelve years of age, should be made penal,
- 2) In case of infant-marriage, the wife should be entitled to cancel the marriage, if she liked, on attaining majority.
- 3) Suits by husbands for the restitution of conjugal rights should not be allowed, and,

- 4) A widow should continue to hold her first husband's property even after her remarriage.

This problem of reform was however given a fresh impetus by an event that happened in Bengal. A grown-up man committed rape upon his child wife and she died. This event impressed upon the Government for the necessity for moving in the matter of the Age of Consent. Ranade, Agarkar, Gokhale and many of the members of the Deccan Education Society in general were favourable to the bill. Tilak as the leader of the orthodox school was opposed to this Bill.

It was the confirmed opinion of the orthodox Hindus that raising the Age of consent struck at the very root of Hindu society and nullified at one stroke the sanctity and indissolubility of the marriage tie. Tilak challenged the right of a foreign bureaucracy to sit in legislative judgement on Indian society. He asserted that a foreign Government should not be trusted with the power of making social changes. In his view social conditions could not be improved until political conditions were bettered. He held that slow and spontaneous action by society would bring about the desired result, education and consciousness of social evil would eradicate the defects.

Various orthodox Hindus, at the beginning of this controversy, wrote in the Kesari, deprecating Government interference in social custom. If we want Acts and Resolutions to regulate child-marriage, why then, not have ' Dinner Acts,' Sandhya Adoration Acts, and Bathing Times Acts,⁷ Ranade the leader of the reformers, replied to Tilak and his followers on all counts. He observed : whenever there is a large amount of unredressed evil suffered by people who cannot adopt their own remedy, the state has a function to regulate and minimise the evils. The history of the suppression of Infanticide and of Sati showed, Ranade asserted, that those institutions were checked, and could be checked only by the strong arm of Law, and once they were denounced as crimes, they disappeared from the face of the country. The sharp surgical operation, and not the homoeopathic infinitesimally small pill, concluded Ranade, was the proper remedy for the first class disorder.

K. T. Telang was of the opinion that " I entirely agree that the remedy for removing India's social ill does not lie in Anglicising India. But to say or suppose, as so many at present do, that those who desire social reform want to Anglicize the country socially, it at least as great and as injurious misapprehension as to say that those who want political reforms want to Anglicize the country politically."

The opponents of the Age of consent Bill held a meeting at Tulsibag in Poona in October 1890 when Tilak and his followers rather purpously put forth their counter proposals which were to be brought into force by law for the reformer's alone, who clamoured for the Age of consent Bill. They were as follows :

- 1 & 2) Girls and boys should not be married untill they reached the age of 16 and 20 respectively.
- 3 & 4) Unless they were prepared to marry widow's men, should not marry after they were 40 years old.
- 5) There should be absolute prohibition of liquer.
- 6) Acceptance of dowry in marriages should be prohibited.
- 7) Disfigurement of widow should be forth with stoped.
- 8) One-tenth of the monthly income of every reformer should be devoted to public purpose.

" It is very strange that those who opposed a little thing like raising the age of consent from ten to twelve now themselves offered to confer a greater benifit on society !

But their action belied their intension ! As these proposals were meant for a few persons and were not to be applicable to the Hindus in general, they were not considered at the meeting. At this stage it appeared on the surface that Tilak, their leader, did not want the foreign Government to interfere in social matters and that he objected to social reforms being enforced by law. He had roundly condemned Malabari's suggestion for Indian Marriage Laws as absurd and as involving an interference with Hindu religion. By signing the above mentioned proposals Tilak was willing to break Shastric Laws himself, but he did not bear the idea of Ranade and Bhandarkar agitating for the enhancement of the age of consent from 10 to 12 years. " ⁸

In December, 1890, after the Congress Session was over Tilak and his colleagues visited Gaya, Raniganj, Prayag, Lucknow and Agra, seeing holy places and industrial centres from the point of national growth. At Agra, Tilak came to know that the Age of Consent Bill was coming up for consideration in the Central Legislature. With an eager look he told his colleagues that he was going direct to Poona as agitation over the Age of consent Bill was to be renewed with greater force and enthusiasm. Tilak was of the ~~o~~pinion that " Is not the present bill in

complete opposition to our customs ? " answering " If today's bill is passed as it is then it will damage our traditions and Shastras " This is our major point, and we must put it before Government as fearlessly as we can.⁹

On January 9th, 1891, the Age of Consent Bill came up for consideration before the central Legislative council. Sir Andrew Scoble, Law member, in moving for leave to amend the Indian penal code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, said that it was considered an offence of rape when a man had sexual intercourse with or without the consent of the woman when she was under ten years of age. The proposal in the Bill, he observed, was to raise the age of consent both for married and unmarried women, from ten to twelve years. He observed that the object of the bill was two fold. It was intended to protect female Children (1) from immature prostitution and (2) from premature cohabitation. The Bill affected all classes of children, European's as well as Natives.

On his return to Poona from Agra, Tilak sounded a warning to the opponents of the Bill of the impending danger. He declared now a war on Ranade, Telang and Bhandarkar, the leaders of the social reformers.

The controversy reached a climax. Meetings after meeting were held some in support of the bill, others in protest against it. At the Bombay meeting held on February 8, 1891, Tilak was present and he congratulated the meeting on behalf on the Poona Orthodox Hindus on the bold stand they had taken in regard to the Bill. At Shaniwarwada the Poona opponents of the Age of Consent Bill held on February 8th, 1891, meeting wherein they denounced the Bill.

Shortly after this meeting of the supporter's of the Bill was held at Krida-Bhuvan in Poona. It was sponsored by Dr. Bhandarkar and others. Admission to the meeting was confined to the supporters of the Bill only. Tilak and his party leaders had planned at a private meeting on the previous night to capture the meeting. Tilak was not allowed to go in, and he had to wait outside for some time. His partymen and students had entered under one or other pretext one by one. Soon the uproar from inside and pressure from outside increased terribly. This resulted in rowdyism, students and other hooligans slinging mud and pelting stones at the meeting and cursing Dr. Bhandarkar in unspeakable terms.¹⁰ Despite these attacks the meeting went on and extended its support to the Bill.

" When asked at the door why being a pronounced opponent he had



come to the meeting, Tilak replied he came to escort the reporter of the ' Maharatta' and the ' Kesari' who, he feared, would not be admitted and that he himself would not care to be present at the meeting even if allowed, Nevertheless, he got into the compound and joined his friends at Mr. Kelkar's house, which it may be noted overlooks the place of meeting and is only nominally a separate place." ¹¹ Tilak denied any responsibility for the riot and connection between his appearance and the inception of violence need have been nothing more than coincidental, but as Gokhale wrote in ' Sudharak' !

" Mr. Tilak's presence in Mr. Kelkar's house during the time of the meeting was a very unfortunate incident and betokened a lamentable error of judgement on that gentleman's part. Mrs. Tilak is the leader of that section of the Poona people who have been taken up an attitude of uncompromising hostility to the Scoble Bill. He had become recently a kind of demigod to the orthodox community of this place, and we think he knows this. He should have seen that his presence in the Kridbhuvan, even as a mere, unsympathetic spectator of the meeting, was sure to encourage the mob in its unsympathetic attitude towards the meeting." ¹²

But despite this agitation and opposition the Age of Consent Bill was passed on March 19, 1891, by the Central Legislative Council at Calcutta." Strictly speaking, it had nothing to do with religion. The Orthodox Hindus had dragged religion into it. It was concerned with the Indian Penal Code. The age-limit was to be raised from ten to twelve. Government had already by law abolished Sati and Infanticide and Legalised widow remarriage. Any how Tilak fought against it, and therefore he came to be the forefront Champion of Hindu institution and traditions."¹³ Perhaps he was very uncompromising in his approach and attitude.

During the Age of Consent controversy; Tilak secured support from diverse groups : the religious leaders of Poona and Bombay who were not usually involved in elite-style politics, the students who turned up in large numbers at the Kridabhavan meeting and exhibited an interest in Tilak's program ; the militant party of Balasaheb Natu ; and prominent Brahmans in mofussil towns throughout the Deccan. Although Tilak gained political prestige as a champion of tradition, he failed to establish a political base. He had not yet found ongoing issues to weld the diverse groups which had supported him in 1890 into a political force. He also had to discover how to bridge the gap between the interests of traditional leaders and the activities of the western-educated elite. He needed some means of communicating with a traditional society.¹⁴

Reformers are always in a minority, Traditionalist are always in a majority ! Tilak preferred to be with the majority. By agitating against this Bill Tilak came to realised as leader of orthodox. But at the same time he also emerged as political leader, by trying to protect the hold of Brahmin orthodoxy in Indian society. Perhaps because of this, he was equally exposed in politics of Maharashtra and the nation in general.

TILAK AND CASTE SYSTEM :

Tilak's attitude toward social change can best be gauged from his attitude toward the caste system. While he believed that the division within Indian Society, like those of any society, were " Unnatural and artificial, " and degrading to the untouchables, Tilak considered them to be a fact of Indian life, " Like a developed branch outed tree, Hindu Chaturvarnya converted into thousand of sub caste. And it is impossible to unite them again, as it is difficult for the Negro's and Europeans in America to come to-gether".¹⁵ The Buddhists had attempted to root out the system in ancient times and had failed.

To Tilak, caste provided the most enduring core of Indian society. " Caste distinctions " were originally planned on the secular " Principle of division of labour " and were based on mutual interdependence rather than on the modern practice of discrimination. At the Second Provincial Industrial Conference, held at Poona in 1892, Tilak linked caste to the trade guilds of medieval Europe. Tilak emphasized the traditional structure, not because he wished to defend or preserve it, but because it offered the most viable means of modernization.¹⁶

While he was prepared to work within the social fabric, and at a gradual tempo in harmony with his society, Tilak remains something of a free spirit, ahead of his time who could be more liberal than the social reformers. In 1892 he agreed to undergo prayascita (Penance) for the " Sin " of accepting tea at a Poona mission house, but could ridicule the rationale for the orthodox custom. Arraigned before a religious court by the orthodox faction of Poona, Tilak silenced his critics by his knowledge of Hindu law and scripture and concluded that " there is no sin in taking tea from anybody." In other words Tilak agreed to do penance only after he had established the morality of his own action and had vanquished the orthodox forces in their own court.

On March 24th, 1918, the All India Depressed Classes Conference was held under the Presidentship of Sri Sayajirao Gaikwad, the Maharaja of Baroda. Tilak attended and addressed the Conference. He said, "God is for all. Taint finds no room in the eyes of God, who should then recognise it ? It is a sin against God to say that a person is untouchable who is not so to God Himself and if God were to tolerate untouchability I would not recognise Him as God at all".¹⁷ A 'Manifesto' declaring that its signatories would not observe untouchability in their day-to-day life was issued the same day by the leader's of the conference, but Tilak refused to sign it ! He did this, it is said on account of pressure from his lieutenant., in social matters he was a follower of his followers. Tilak had told Karmaveer Shinde, the Convener of this conference, that he would attend it in his personal capacity and not as the editor of the Kesari.¹⁸

" Part of Tilak's success as a politician was due to his ability to play a mixed role and speak in different social and religious terms to various groups. Thus, in 1891, when he was wooing the orthodox party, he spoke in traditional language, at other times he was a spokesman for reform and modernity. In 1893, following the communal riots, he was to in a Hindu voice, whereas at other times he wooed the non-Hindus. On

many occasion he was a complete democrat , who wished to take the politics of the Congress to the humble villager, on other occasions he appeared to be an advocate of Brahmanical Supremacy. It was part of Tilaks Charisma that most of his followers did not see such remarks as inconsistent. Each group tended to appropriate the sayings which appealed to it, Even his biographers have selected the material which suited their predilections. Hence Tilak has been referred to variously as the defender of tradition, as a centrist and as a social revolutionary." 19

TILAK AND FEMALE EDUCATIONAL :

Education for women was a problem most amenable to reform, the question generally being not whether but to what extent and in what manner to educate women. However education for women was much debated. Higher education of the type offered to men was discouraged for several reasons. The argument against teaching women medicine was based on women's allegedly weak physique and intellect, and the supposedly determinatal effect of the bodily strain of such education on them, such as ' de-sexing ' and incapacity to bear children. The social reasons were that since women's primary functions in life was to bear and raise children and manage household

tasks, formal education for them was unnecessary and wasted .

" But first and foremost, Anandibai Joshi had proved by her achievement that the charges against women as being weak, inferior in intelligence, unable to endure hardships like men unventuresome etc. are totally false and a mere prejudice."²⁰

Opposition to higher education was voiced by Tilak, who criticised the curriculum of the female High School on the grounds that it was indetical with the curriculum for boys and therefore unsuitable. Since Indian women were married young and acquired household responsibilities at an early age, they could not spend several years in school and professional education was wasted on them because they could never practise a profession, barring very rare exception like Anandibai Joshi.²¹

Tilak was of the opinion " In view of the duties of men and women in our society, this kind of education would not particularly benefit women, but its imposition by force would have detrimental results on Society."²² But now a days we have great examples that women are working with men in various areas, without any hindrance .

Tilak however, could not go along with western reasoning and one occasion felt obliged to list in the Mahratta in order of numerical value, the virtues of a " Model Hindu Woman ", foremost among these were " Obedience to the husband " " affectionate devotion to her husband and her children " and contentment with her lot in life." Least important of all was " Knowledge of the 3R's in the vernacular language " while; all the education implied by a B. A. degree would not compensate a Hindu woman for the absence of the higher of the above enumerated qualities." ²³

To bolster his argument that education corrupted women, Tilak pointed to the case of Rakhamabai. She was married at eleven to Dadaji Bhikaji, but continued to live with her family. In 1887, when Rakhamabai's father died Dadaji had called for her, but she refused to go to his home, Then the case became a court matter. Tilak defended Dadaji's position by insisting that a case of this kind be tried according to Hindu Dharma Sastra instead of English common law.

The orthodox opposition to Rakhamabai rested on several issues , pinpointed by the Kesai, some of which are also significant in view of the earlier discussion on the nature of patriarchy :

1) An English judge and the English system of justice was interfering with social and religious system of the Hindus by deciding the case in contradiction to their ' sacred texts and social customs ' (September 29, 1885).

2) Consent was not required/^{for}cementing the marriage bond among Hindus, since the wedding ceremony, with or without consummation, was eternally binding (Sept. 29, 1885).

3) This case would prejudice public opinion against women's education, since an educated wife likely to embarrass her husband in court, and since a woman whose aspirations were raised by education was likely to leave her husband if he was unable to fulfil them. In this, the English laws would support her (March 23, 1886).

4) The upper, castes, including Brahmins, were subject to certain religious regulations which prohibited remarriage for women and divorce, and stipulated that a girl should be married before reaching puberty. Other (lower) castes were not bound by these rules and had more freedom. Furthermore, even in communities which allowed late marriages for women, the advice of parents or guardians was strictly necessary. " Because even after attaining majority, a woman

in the first flush of youth would be unable to choose a suitable husband because of her youth, innocence, inexperience lack of restraint born of sexual passion, or immoral conduct instigated by someone." Complete freedom in this respect would lead to dire results, and court decision in favour of Rakhmabai was likely to bring these about (April, 6, 1886).
(Editorial)

5) A man had complete rights over his wife according to Hindu religious law. " If a Hindu husband sees his disobedient wife walking along the street or entering some ones house, he may drag her home or enter a strangers house to bring her out, in neither case is he liable to a law suit according to the Hindu religion. This behaviour is correct according to the Hindu view of a woman's rights. A man who finds his cow wandering about and puts a rope around her neck and brings her home is not liable to a law suit according to English law. The Hindu religion considers a woman to be on par with property and cattle. The only distinction is that as a human being she is entitled to food and clothing. But English law has changed all this, and that was beginning of (foreign) intervention in religion and custom." (April 13, 1886, editorial).

6) Compatibility in terms of education was not a requirement for a workable marriage. " Today thousands of men are happily living with their ignorant wives, but is it not surprising that a learned women files a suit for divorce in a court of law on the grounds that her husband is not worthy of her ? (March 22, 1887, editorial by Tilak).

7) If the consent of both parties is to be considered essential in order to legitimise a marriage, most Hindus born of child marriages would have to be considered illegitimate (March 22, 1887, editorial by Tilak)

8) The reformer's Claim, that the ancient Hindu texts allotted such disputes to the jurisdiction of the caste and not the king., and that the latter (in this case the British courts) therefore had no right to award a punishment more severe than that allowed by the former, is false, Ancient texts., in fact, did allow the king to judge such matters, and the punishment prescribed for a woman who left her husband and coveted another man was to be thrown to the dogs. However, matters never came to this pass, because the husbands authority over his wife and the caste authority over the husband-wife relationship, were strong enough (April, 5, 1887 editorial).²⁴

NATIONAL SOCIAL CONFERENCE :

Mañadev Govind Ranade was actively associated with numerous public bodies including the Indian National Congress but his chief interest lay in the sphere of education and social reform. In the second session of I.N.C. in 1886, however many delegates showed interest in discussing social issue. But because of the apprehension that there would be considerable difference of opinion on second problems showing a sign of weakness in the national body and that much time would be consumed in such debates, the majority of the delegates were opposed to keeping social matters on the agenda. Ranade and Ragunath Rao were, however, of contrary views and for discussing questions relating to social reform they started the National Social Conference as a subsidiary body of congress during its Third session in Madras 1887.

" The composition of the N.S.C. was broad based and including adherants of Prarthana, Brahmo and Arya Samajists and members of different caste and reform organisation to present a common front for reforming the society."²⁵ Social conference were arranged by Ranade and other for stimulating the movement of social reform. Congress was purely a political organisation so the leaders of Congress were not considering

the social point. It was only the National Social Conference which played an active role for the social reform. From its inception, Conference used the Mandap or Pandal used first by the Congress. Already there was struggle between moderate and extremists. According to Tilak there were three causes for using Congress Pandal by social reformers they are, " Firstly, to show to Britishers that we are reforming our society, other wise Britishers could not look after our political demand. Secondly, political reform and social reform must go hand in hand and thirdly, to claim as a tenants." ²⁶

Tilak questioned National Social Conference as to whether it was National, by using the title in his Kesari as " National ? Social Conference " ²⁷ The 1895, Session of the Congress and the Social Conference at Poona provided an opportunity for Tilak to wage a direct fight against the Social Reformers. Many delegates attended both the meetings, and the Conference Session immediately followed those of the Congress, as this was not only very economical, but most convenient and logical arrangement as well. Tilak, however as Joint Secretary of the Congress was in charge of Local preparations for it and claimed that, " it is a great mystery to us why so many people insist that the Social Conference should be hold in the Congress Pandal". ²⁸ Tilak further says " Money collected for

the National Congress will be spent only for the sake of the Congress, he reported explaining that " many people considered the Social Conference useless," Poona people and the young boy's managed a meeting which was not in favour of the Social Conference. Tilak was never, in favour of Social Conference and social reform; and he always tried to object the conduct of its meetings.

Chapekar later insisted that " Had the Social Conference been held in that (Congress) pavillion, we would certainly have made an attempt to set it on fire."²⁹ When less than a month remained before the scheduled meetings, Ranade decided to capitulate rather than risk further violence and possible irreparable damage to Congress as well as conference. A seperate pavilion, was erected on the grounds of Fergusson College and even there, orthodox terrorist made, persistent, though unsuccessful efforts to burn it down. Ranade told his friends, " We have above all to learn what it is to bear and forbear, to bear ridicule insults, even personal injuries at times and for bear from returning abuse for abuse."³⁰ Thanks to Ranades wisdom, a crises which might have proved disastrous was averted. But no permanent settlement had been reached

between the parties of revival and reform. They had indeed only just began to fight. The difference was this, that while Ranade was prepared if convenient to coquette with religious sanction to social order, Mr. Tilak insisted that there should be no divorce between the two."³¹ This is how he was in constant conflict with Ranade. This aspect also throws much light as how Tilak appreciated social reforms and social reformers.

TILAK AND AGARKAR :

Tilak and his friend G. G. Agarkar, after graduation from the University, developed a plan to establish a High-School and College to impart inexpensive and healthy education to the young people of Poona. Tilak violently differed, from his erstwhile colleague Agarkar mainly on the question of the primary of social reform which was dear to the heart of Agarkar, Tilak was however opposed to carrying out reforms with the help of the British rule and on the basis of the law passed by them. Tilak was urging that a place of primacy must be given to political emancipation, over social reform which is well brought out in the dialogue that took place between Tilak and Agarkar when they were just embarking on

their public career. To Agarkar's contention the main thing was a " Solid house " and that the doors for political reform could be provided later, Tilak replied, " you can well beat the resonant drum of house reform as you say, but what will you say to a man who is homeless ? Give him home and then ask him to reform his house." Another reason why Tilak opposed the idea of giving precedence to social reforms was that it would destroy the basis of national identity. We can summarise the contradiction between these two friends, on social reform as follows :

CONTRADICTION BETWEEN AGARKAR AND TILAK ON SOCIAL REFORM : ³²

Sr. No.	Subject	AGARKAR	TILAK
1.	2.	3.	4.
1)	Child - Marriage	1. Law is essential	1. Law is not essential and help of foreign Govt. must be avoided.
2)	Which comes First Social or Political.	1. Ultimate goal is of self-Govt. But to secure if social reforms, social education and development are necessary.	1. First priority to political reforms. All people from all states and, different races are suffering from the same disaster, and so the unity is possible, Freedom will bring social reforms.

1.	2.	3.	4.
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They need freedom not social development. It is not necessary also to compel them to change the customs and traditions in opposition. Society will break if the reforms will be pressed on them before their agreement. The traditional background must be examined to get success in social reforms, only intellectual ideas are not useful for that it will be harmful.

3) Women - Education.

1. Women education must be compulsory.
2. Same education for boys and girls.
3. Same (equal) education at the same institution.
4. Educated woman proves to be useful as daughter wife, mother to the society.

1. Women education may be compulsory
2. Due to physical difference the girls may get useful education for their future, it may be different from the boys.
3. Both agreed on the importance of well-education.

1.	2.	3.	4.
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| 4) Age of Consent. | 1. Age of consent must be fixed by law. It will be useful to avoid the calamitous happenings by child marriage.
2. Man-Woman physical inter-course is prohibited by law. | 1. It will be difficult to bring the rules and law in practice. Social obstacles are numerous.
2. Child-marriage and the current systems of marriage are according to the law. |
| 5) Hair Shaving of a widow. | 1. A widow may not be compelled. It is ugly, the custom must be prohibited by law. | 1. A widow gets purified by hair shaving and gets free in family if this custom will be forbidden a widow will be in danger. This reform may come spontaneously. |
| 6) Remarriage | 1. Remarriage must be encouraged inspired Encouragement and inspiration must be given to remarriage. Remarried persons must be honoured/ Congratulited. | 1. Re-marriage may be opposed if it becomes trouble some to the family-holders. Their consent is expected. |

1.	2.	3.	4.
7) Religion	1. Proud of Arya religion but revolutionary principles about of the heritage and traditions are considered on the basis of intellectual doctrine.	1. One should not interfere religion. The new attack of Christian religion must be abolished. Bad rules and customs must be broken. Original orthodox Hindu religion must be preserved.	

This is how Tilak differed with his colleagues and friends. He was a revivalist, with firm convictions. He stuck to his philosophical commitments and came in conflict with progressive thinkers of his times. It is doubted whether he has contributed to the rise of Nationalism when he advocated for Swaraj. Swaraj was wanted by all, either Extermist or Liberals. No body opposed Swaraj all were Nationalist; but Tilak even went to the extent of denouncing the reformist as anti-nationalist. Perhaps the contribution of the reformist is more in making Tilak known as Father of Indian Unrest; rather than Tilaks own contribution to be known as so.

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