

CHAPTER IX
CHANGES IN THE VALUE SYSTEM OF GUJARAT IN THE
19TH CENTURY

Introduction

In this chapter, we will be observing the emergence of certain new values that were working as underlying forces behind the emergence of a new system of political economic, educational, communicational and social relationships in Gujarat during the 19th century.

It has been pointed out that normative rules and moral ideals play an important part in social life. Values determine both the fact and the mode of integration in social systems within the limits set by the functional prerequisites of social systems and personality systems.¹

The new patterns of political, economic, educational and other relationships which were emerging as parallel and superimposed systems of relationships of pre-British Gujarat, were guided by certain distinct new values and were trying to operate as the underlying thread binding these new relationships. These values which emerged and operated to bring about changes in various sub-systems of Gujarati society were the following:

I. Western liberal value system behind the emerging new relationships.

- i) A new sense of respect for the individual.
- ii) Rationalism wherein the principle of considering reason as the criterion to arrive at current judgement.
- iii) Secularism, meaning an approach viewing all sets of relationships in terms of this world and not in terms of other world; and further the growing dominance of change-orientation attitude.
- iv) A new sense of betterment as manifested in the idea of progress in this world.

We will examine how this new value system emerged in the 19th century and worked as a basis of the various changes in political, economic, educational and social systems, which were emerging in the 19th century Gujarat.

II. We will evaluate the role of the new value systems in Gujarat during the 19th century.

I

UNDERLYING WESTERN LIBERAL VALUE SYSTEM BEHIND THE EMERGING NEW RELATIONSHIPS

1) Respect for the individual

The most significant principle permeating the introduction of changes either in political, economic, educational or social relationships was the new importance given to individual as a human being and the respect for his or her personality. This humanism, viewing customs and beliefs with the yardstick of its beneficial or harmful effect on the individual slowly emerges as a basic value which colours the activities of all those who wanted to bring about reforms in various aspects of relationships in the society.

Sjt. Govardhanram has pointed out very aptly the absence of the idea of respect for individuality in the traditional Hindu value system. He says: "A westerner is an independent entity in society, while a Hindu is a part of the total society. Our social conception is that individual's welfare is subordinate to social welfare...In west, every opportunity is given to develop individual liberty provided it does not come in the way of any other individual's liberty.. The western concept is that society is composed of such individual units...Therefore (in our Hindu concept) function, religion, duty are some of the watch words... The western people look to their rights"² underlying the concepts of individual's right lies the basic assumption of equality of all individuals.³

We will observe how this new concept was being introduced in the 19th century social life of Gujarat.

In the political field, when the principle of rule of law was being introduced by the new rulers, it naturally treated all subjects on equal footing, and therefore we found that there were no separate laws for different caste groups and even the highest authority was treated on par with an ordinary tailor or an untouchable.⁴ Further it was this principle by which taxes were levied and not on the basis of caste or community. In recruitment and appointment to public services also, the same criteria of equality of individual applied.

When the British rulers introduced the payment of fixed salary to the individual and calculated the payment not on the basis of the total needs of the family but on the individual and the services rendered by him the same principle of recognising individual as the unit of social relationships was operating.* Therefore the transformation of hereditary land gifts into ownership of land on payment of quit-rent, or settlement with the original hereditary landowners (Vatandars) on their own functional basis and not on the basis of service rendered by the family⁵ and in fact recognition of land as property which is saleable and purchaseable in the market were steps based on the concept of individuality.

*When an English teacher made a law in his school that a student will be granted leave of absence only when he or his wife were ill but not on grounds of the illness of his parents or when a person was quarantined during an epidemic and thus separated from his family. Such instances were considered cruel and unnatural from traditional criteria. (Govardhanram Tripathi, Gujarati Lekh Sangrah, p.114).

In the field of economic activities wherein the principle of contract was replacing the principle of custom as the basis of economic relationships, the underlying assumption was that the individual was the initiator of and focal point of economic activities.

The new education which on the one side was made open to all individuals irrespective of caste, religious or sex differences and further focussed on training the individual to achieve certain competence to play his or her role as an individual, also revealed how it was based on a new notion of recognition of individual as a unit of society as well as the respect of personality. Therefore it recognised the right of every individual to take to education. It was this same principle of recognising women and members of depressed castes (till then the unprivileged sections of society who had no right to education) as distinct human beings with their own personality, that worked in granting the right of education to these groups also.⁶

The social reformers when they crusaded against the evil effects of the practice of infanticide, child marriage, enforced widowhood, as well as the prevalence of sub-castes and infinite groupings, the same principle of humanism and respect for individual could be located. It is in this spirit that the pioneer reformer Durgaram says "all men are members of one common family. We are superior because we are Brahmins is a wrong conception."⁷ When Narmadashankar, Dalpatram, Karsandas or Navalram demanded certain reliefs for women, they were demanding it on the basis of equality. She was a human being with equal right to see the outside world, or get opportunities for the development of her personality.⁸ One of the most poignant expression of this new sense of respect for the individual

is revealed in the famous discussion between poet Narmad and his wife Dahigauri when Narmad frankly discussed with his wife about his desire to indulge in social reform by marrying a widow but at the same time intending to give full freedom to his wife to decide if she feels like separating from him, or staying with him as a co-wife. This choice it has to be remembered was given on the basis of an assurance by Narmad that his wife will not have to undergo financial hardships if she stayed separately from him.⁹

Even the pledges taken by social reformers to practice or to refrain from practising certain types of activities also indicate how a new sense of self-hood and a new determination of not permitting their individuality to be suppressed by the social customs and institutions was gradually emerging. The decision of Karsandas not to go on horseback for his marriage¹⁰ or Narmad's declaration that the priest~~ly~~^{ly} Brahmin woman should also wear blouses when they go for caste dinner as the lay women of the Brahmin caste were doing,¹¹ or Durgaram's decision to utter daily some definite number of words in the favour of social reform¹² may appear very insignificant, but they reveal the growing individuality of the enlightened person.

Similarly in a large number of ~~statements~~^{statements} made during the process of their written or oral campaigns, against the malpractices in Gujarati society as well as while persuading people to bring about certain types of reforms, the social reformers were invoking the principle of recognising the personality of the individual and were demanding for the provision of adequate institutional and moral atmosphere for the individuals to develop their personality.¹³

Even the new trend in Gujarati literature, as observed earlier, pointed to the fact of growing individuality. Literature was not the vehicle

of merely praying to God, but it was a means to express one's own reactions, one's own mood, and one's own turbulations and perturbations. The conflict felt by individuals as conscious beings in the customary social life becomes an important theme of literature, it may be that the problem is of ill-assorted marriage as in the case of Dalpatram's drama "Mithya-bhiman" (vain glory) or Ranchodlal Udairam's drama ^{'Lalita dookh darshak'} (the plight of Lalita) or it might be a conflict experienced by a newly educated individual in joint family life as reflected in 'Sarswati Chandra' or it may be the age-old conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law as found in Mahipatram's novel "Sasu Vahu ni ladai". In short, the misery experienced by poet Kalapi at seeing a stone being thrown on a bird (Pankhi ~~du~~par pathro) or pleasure felt by poet Kant at seeing the confluence of ocean and moon (Sagar ane Shashi) or the delight of listening to cuckoo's song at midnight (Madhya ratriye koyal) experienced by poet Narsinhrao are all evidence of the growing expression of individuality.

Finally, the new spirit of humanism as revealed in the growing assertion for rights as citizens is manifested in the new value respecting individual as an entity slowly emerges in Gujarat during the 19th century and manifesting itself in the changes that were taking place in different aspects of the social life of the Gujarati people. It is in this spirit that the periodical 'Swatantrata' demands political liberty for the people: "We have every right to ask political freedom and we are capable of enjoying the political freedom also."¹⁴ Similarly, ~~in~~ it was this spirit of equality that forced papers like Mumbai Samachar and Rastgoftar to write scathingly against the British system of justice which was partial to the Europeans.¹⁵

Critic Navalram sums up these developments in a succinct manner, when he says that "in our society, from the beginning the fact of special treatment

to individuals has been believed, and expressed. In behaviour...The definition of our culture pattern is the confluence of equals and unequals ...while new value emphasises the equality of men, meaning all men are equal, all have equal rights, nobody is higher and no one is lower."¹⁶

Hence we can easily remark that the history of the twentieth century in Gujarati society is in one respect a story of newly emerged principle of respect for individuality trying to battle with the traditional institutional fetters and strive to create adequate institutions and norms within Gujarati society for its proper manifestations.

ii) Rationalism

Another principle which works as a basis for the various changes indicated earlier was the principle of considering reason as a criterion to arrive at judgements. As Prof. Laski describes, "It (liberalism) has always seen in both tradition and uniformity an attack upon the right of individual to make of his own affirmations and insights a universal rule made binding not because authority accepts it, but because its inherent validity secures for it the free comment of others."¹⁷

In pre-British society as we have observed, faith and not the reason was the guiding principle determining life. Further truths revealed through tradition were considered sacrosanct and therefore were treated as inviolable.

In the 19th century Gujarat the new value of judging everything on the anvil of reason had emerged. Critic Navalram therefore gives significant place to rationalism in describing the nature of social reform movement in Gujarat.¹⁸ Hargovinddas Kantawalla also voiced the same feeling when he said, "In the initial stages the youths who had taken new education, began to feel dislike towards our religion, or sacred books, our knowledge, our

customs, our social organization, our rituals, our beliefs, and our moral conceptions. They thought that we should not accept a particular thing because it has been said in the religious texts or because the preceptor had said. But if our heart feels that it is true, if it could be proved by reason then, only we should accept it."¹⁹

In this atmosphere the principle of reason was being applied in various facets of life. The application of the principle of rationality in political sphere was inaugurated when the very structure of political administration was transformed from traditional framework to legal-rational basis. Further the new attitude of rationality was also revealed in the new trend of active criticism of the rulers by intelligentsia for demanding redressal of certain grievances as well as for participating in political activities of the state. It was also revealed in the emergence of various political associations which subjected the policies of government to systematic analysis, advanced criticism against them and proposed alternative programmes and legislations to government. Thus the challenge to authority was a part of rational attitude. Therefore movements were being organized to protest against unjust tax or discriminatory policies of the new rulers.

Similarly the principle of reason manifested itself in the new types of economic activities generated in Gujarat during the 19th century. As Wilbert Moore mentions: "The value of economic growth requires, for example, a fairly high degree of ^{individual} mobility and ^a placement, a system grounded on merit in performance, and that requirement is likely to come into conflict with a number of strongly supported values relating to the primary of kinship position and obligations as a moral virtue."²⁰

In the Gujarati society that rationality was revealed in a new type of production wherein the principle of contract operated between the

various factors of production as well as in the process of exchanges of commodities. This principle of rationality was manifesting itself in a changed attitude towards expenditure of resources, on traditionally unproductive and wasteful ceremonies. Most of the reformers who had stood for new economy criticised on rational grounds the old traditional approach of hoarding gold instead of transforming into capital, or wasting money in caste dinners.²¹ They were not against spending money but they wanted people to spend on modern needs such as housing facilities in towns, hospitals, dispensaries, reliefs for accidents in factories, providing employment to the unemployed, starting industrial schools and such other sectors.^{22*}

In fact Navalram saw the danger of this new attitude also. He observes, that many a times the newly born intelligentsia scorns at spending money on rituals, but it does not divert its resources to new types of expenditure. Criticism of ritualistic expenditure has become a very convenient economy for the new group.²³ In short rationality in expenditure was a growing value in economic field.

In education, the principle of reason is revealed in various aspects. It manifests itself in the elaboration of a totally new type of structure of educational system with a well-thought out objective as well as an elaborately worked out gradation of courses, and classes. It was also revealed in the content of courses. Further reappraisal of the entire educational system through various commissions and committees and a constant debate over its various aspects both among the various groups of the rulers as well as among the new educated intelligentsia who also constantly

*In this respect poet Narmad hails the efforts of Parsis and Jains. (Narma Gadya by Narmadashankar, p.95).

reflected over the educational system.* Further the principle of rationality is manifested in the fact that it developed a new critical, change-oriented attitude among those who took modern education, and thereby generated a new approach towards political, economic, social religious and other aspects of life. We have referred to this element, in our discussion in chapter VI, as to how the new education generated a new intelligentsia which pioneered all social and other reform activities. The traditional attitude towards whatever the teacher said was to be accepted without questioning had given place to the attitude of questioning the teacher even. We have referred to the instance of poet Narmad in Chapter I. We may also add here that this spirit is succinctly recorded by Narmad when he makes one of his characters remark: "Modern children are thoroughly spoiled. Whatever the elders say, sacred texts have said is all wrong for them and whatever a Britisher says is true. Do we give education for this purpose?"²⁴ The principle of rationality in education was also visible in the very nature of the content of knowledge imparted through this education. As we have observed earlier, education tried to inculcate the very principle of democratic and rationalist ideas which were growing in European countries in the minds of the new intelligentsia. Even the magazines they started or associations^{on} they established were given such names as Buddhivardhak Sabha, Buddhivardhak ~~Monthly~~ Monthly, Buddhiprakash

*We can cite the various instances of minute of education presented by Lord Elphinstone, Lord Macaulay, Capt. Jervis or opinions presented at the time of Wood's Despatch or Hunter Commission, or opinions expressed by Juggannath Sunkerseth, the managing committee of the Gujarat Vernacular Society or memorandum submitted by D.B. Manibhai Jadhav, as revealing the new orientation.

periodical and such others*, wherein effort was made to thrash out various problems confronting Gujarati society in the 19th century. Thus we find that the principle of rationalism became a guiding thread in the emerging educational structure, content as well as in the attitude of those who were nurtured in this education.

In this field of social and religious life we find the principle of reason, emerging in three ways.

- i) It is manifested in the emergence of a new group of intelligentsia with a rational approach towards all social phenomena.
- ii) It is reflected in the subjecting of various social phenomena to a critical analysis based on reason.
- iii) It is also reflected in the rise of various social reform movements to bring about modifications or a total change in the traditional social customs and institutions.

(i) In the chapter on 'Changes in Social System during the 19th century' we have referred to the rational attitude of the reformers with regard to social phenomena. We may also mention here that even the revivalists while criticising several of the actions of reformers, or in the process of defending of the traditional customs used rational approach. Manilal Nabhoobhai criticised on rational grounds, the efforts of social reformers to raise the age of consent through government

*It may be mentioned here that the word 'Buddhi' was being used as measuring intelligence, reason-rationalism (Buddhivad). In an allegorical dialogue between reason and tradition, the author attributes all the evils arising out of subordination of reason to tradition. In the end when knowledge and reason once again triumph the society also prospers. Here the meaning is implied in the word 'buddhi' (refer to Naval Granthavali, pt.II, by H.Shroff, 1915, pp.238-45).

legislation²⁵ and raised a doubt with regard to the utility of National Social Conference.²⁶ Or for that matter Govardhanram's defence of the end of his novel²⁷ were all coloured in a rational garb.*

(ii) The principle of reason was evidenced in the fact that during the 19th century various customs, institutions, and practices came under a critical scrutiny by various thinkers, e.g., this criticism takes the form of pointing out the irrationality and harmfulness of such practices like child marriage, prohibition of widow remarriage and foreign travel as well as preventing girls from taking to education. Similarly this criticism takes the form of exposing the harmful effect of a large number of caste practices and a number of ceremonies and rituals round marriage and death. The same attitude is revealed when the intelligentsia subjected superstitions, magical beliefs and traditional religious organisations to the scrutiny of reason.²⁸

It is on the same principle of reason that at the time of vacancy of the seat in the legislature, newspapers demanded that a fit person should be selected. Days of the great ornaments have passed and they have given place to those of real earnest workers.²⁹ This principle is also manifested in exposing the association of caste and occupations. One writer remarked that if the Brahmins are found in occupations such as Government service, military service, commercial undertakings, cooking and even begging wherein lies the connection between caste and occupation.³⁰

*At one place Govardhanram remarks, 'if your ideas are different from the older generation you express them. Listen to what they say respectfully, and impartially think over them. Then try to convince them in a cultured and modest manner.' He therefore does not want the youngsters to accept everything but wishes at the same time to reject the ideas of elders in a respectful manner and not in a very high handed insulting way. (Govardhanram by Pandya Kantilal, p.45).

(iii) The emergence of the principle of reason in social field is further observable in the efforts of bringing about social and religious reform within Gujarati society during the 19th century. As Navalram remarked rationalism was the connerstone of social reform movement.³¹ This value enabled the pioneers of social reform movements to challenge the authority of the religious bodies by freeing the new intelligentsia from the slavery of tradition and acceptance on faith of whatever was prescribed by shastras or customs.

On this basis, we find a number of movements to change the social and religious life of Gujarat emerged. We find, for instance, a series of efforts to elevate the status of woman in the fields of marriage, education and religious life. Similarly efforts were made to bring about reforms within the caste system on rational principles. Further the effort made to build up various social and religious reform organizations like Anti-Child Marriage Association or Widow Remarriage Association or institutions like Manav Dharma Sabha, Prathna Samaj, Arya Samaj and others were also the manifestations of the growing rational attitude to social system. This principle finds its manifestation in numerous challenges which were hurled against the religious authorities or practitioners of magic and other superstitions, or manifested in open debates carried on to prove the bona fides of a social reform programme. The whole spirit of challenge was based on rational grounds. Lastly the efforts to persuade the state to enact legislations to bring about modifications was another aspect of rationality.

In conclusion we can state that the new principle of rationality was slowly entering as a value in the political, economic, educational and social fields in the 19th century.

iii) The emergence of secularism as value

Another important value which was introduced into the 19th century Gujarati society was secularism. The word 'secular' is used in two ways. The first connotation of the word is this world and not religious, in contrast to other worldly and supernatural. Second connotation of the word secular is popularized by Becker. In this sense a secular society, "is any society or part thereof that imparts to or elicits from its members evaluation leading to well-marked readiness to change."³²

We will point out how secular values were emerging in both its connotations in Gujarati society.

The first fundamental change indicating the emergence of secular values is revealed in the fact that law was not merely separated from religion, morality and custom but also was made supreme. As we have observed, excepting in personal matters, the British Government and later on the legislatures, enacted laws for the Indian people. Even in personal law, gradually secular law was penetrating as one can notice in Saste Disabilities Act of 1850, or Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 or Special Marriage Act of 1872.

Secondly the new type of associational life which was growing round educational, political, economic and social interests was of a non-religious nature. The associations of this type having their own rules and regulations and attempting to pursue specific programmes, were distinctly secular and for number of times constituted of members belonging to various religious denominations. This was unlike the various groupings and associations including even Mahajans which were basically coloured with supernatural basis.

The educational system which was introduced by the British was kept distinctly secular by the rulers for reasons discussed on the chapter on Education. As Kenneth Ingham points out, "The introduction of history and geography taught in the light of western knowledge, made possible an attack upon the cosmography of the Hindus and so helped to weaken the faith of the students in their traditional superstition."³³ Definite instructions were given to eliminate passages referring to religious differences while selecting the content for the Government text-books.³⁴ The Wood's Despatch of 1854 affirmed the policy of religious neutrality and banned religious instruction in Government institutions for as these "were founded for the benefit of the whole population of India...The education conveyed in them should be exclusively secular."³⁵ In fact the whole modern education was described as 'Godless education.'

In the field of relationship between the teacher and the taught, though respect for teacher was accepted as proper attitude, yet, the pre-British concepts of teacher as god, and therefore, infallible were giving way to the attitude of doubting the teacher's knowledge even.

In literature also, we have observed the gradual emergence and dominance of secular themes. As pointed out, earlier the pre-19th century literature dealt with the themes which were basically religious or worked out social content with basic tinge of religious colouration. In contrast themes chosen during 19th century were dealing with social ~~patterns~~ ^{problems}, natural beauty, romantic love between two human beings, themes pertaining to certain heroes or episodes of past history of Gujarat. Though religious themes were not altogether banished from literature, still the predominance of non-religious themes was revealing. Further the forms of literature were not merely religious like bhajans, akhyans

and morning songs (prabhatiyas) but other forms suited to new needs such as lyrics, dramas, novels, essays had also emerged. The basic secular approach of journalism which emerged during the 19th century needs no special reference.

The emergence of secular values could be revealed in the change that took place in the life of Gujarati people. As observed in the 1st Chapter, the social life of Gujarat in the pre-British period was basically organized round religious functions. Most of the outdoor activities like Kathas, dramas, festivals, picnics and other celebrations were predominantly linked up with religion. For women, as we have observed, their entire life was affected by religious norms. For her the basic outdoor public life was concentrated only round religious activities; and mostly manifested in the form of attending to temples and celebrations in temples. Though in the 19th century public participation in religious activities did continue still the emergence of growing participation in non-religious activities was striking.

Popular participation to celebrate a widow's remarriage, to commemorate the memory of a great man who might have played a tremendous role in various fields of social life, to protest against some economic measure of the government, to assemble for discussing topics such as advantages of foreign travel, or woman's education, or the significance of a personality like Martin Luther or Newton, to gather together for going to river banks for celebrating the full-moon day, or to visit a theatre to see some dramatic performance were all instances of non-religious gatherings. The participation of women who went to schools, or who attended dramatic shows, or who went out just for getting fresh air, were also manifestations of growing secular activities.

The value of secularism finds its manifestation also in the newly emerging attitude of the relationship between state and citizen. The emergence of an idea that the sovereignty of the ruler was not based on supernatural sanction but on the consent of the people itself is a proof of the growing secularism. Further the new notion about laws viz. that they are to be enacted by representatives of the people and were not the products of religious textbooks also indicate a secular approach. The caste for instance was backed up by Hindu religion. Still the secular state enacted legislations to restrict the authority of the caste. In short as Smith points out, "Caste regulations based on permitted sacred texts and immemorial custom were no longer/to hold unchallenged sway over Hindu social life. With the British came the revolutionary principle that it was within the province of the state to regulate and change society by legislation."³⁶

Even viewing secularism in the sense in which Prof. Becker meant, we find that it was developing in Gujarati society. Whether in political, economic, educational or social sphere we find the emergence of a value which prompted individuals and groups to the type of evaluations of social life which generated a sense of readiness to make change. This new readiness to bring about change in this world is linked up with the emergence of another type of ^{value} which may be described as a value of betterment of persons in society.

iv) Idea of progress

a) Throughout our study, we have observed that during the 19th century, a new conception of what is good in society on this earth based on the criterion of welfare in this world is emerging and striving to manifest itself in social, economic, educational, political and intellectual movements.

Thinkers starting from Durgaram Mehtaji to Dadabhai Naoroji or Behramji Malbari or Govardhanram Tripathi, do not explain the plight of individuals or groups as the product of 'Kali Yuga' (Kali Age) nor do they consider these problems as incapable of being resolved by conscious actions of individuals and groups. In fact all the movements in various fields have an underlying assumption that the maladjustments within society could be removed, that society can develop and progress by efforts to bring about such a change if consciously striven for.

Here we should note that the approach to social problems and the solutions offered by the 19th century transformers of Gujarat were qualitatively different from approaches and solutions offered by the reformers in Pre-British period. The Pre-British reformers while criticising the evils of the society located, their causes in the operation of the 'yuga bala' or 'spirit of the epoch'. According to these thinkers, the evils were destined to continue till that divinely ordained epoch is lasted. The solution which they offered were more in the nature of preparing people to heroically face the ordained situation and to purify themselves to slightly accelerate the bringing about of the improvement in the next epoch in the cycle of life.³⁷ Even the medieval saints who were "active revolutionaries" of medieval society, when they criticised caste inequalities, or ~~exposed~~^{exposed} the fatality of rituals³⁸ were not able to give an alternate programme, because for them also, life in this world was a preparation for Moksha.

In fact pre-19th century conception of both the social malady as well as the framework within which society operated, was founded on the assumption of society ordained by supernatural forces. Unlike these reformers, as we have pointed out, the new reformers viewed social problems

as maladies of a ~~new~~ reformed social structure. They had strong conviction that these maladies could be remedied and also, that the social order could be improved, and bettered further and further. The forces which would bring about such an improvement were not supernatural agencies but human agencies using various types of methods for this change. It is this confidence which forces Narmad to record the achievements made by social reformers in eradicating social evils; in fact Narmad describes them as "the battles which we won".³⁹ Surely it is in this spirit that he mentions some twenty methods of improving the status of woman in this world.⁴⁰ It is this optimism which forces Navalram to evaluate the course of social reform and to declare that "the realization that our morals and customs have deteriorated and without eradicating them we are not likely to be raised in higher status, and also the effort to act accordingly, are the aspects of real reform."⁴¹ Dalpatram also reflects on the changes in society. He says that "there is a very great difference between the ideas of the people born in the earlier century and those who are born in this century. The former think that it is the extreme Kali Yuga while the latter feel that modern life is the beginning of 'Sat Yug' (reign of truth)"⁴². In his essay on "The Condition of Gujarati Hindus", he suggests various means of improving the conditions of Gujaratis in this world. Further/^{he} has a strong conviction that if British machinery were introduced in India and if rational approach in various social aspects were exhibited, India would also prosper like any western country.⁴³

It was on this basis of concept of progress that various social reform, religious reform, and political reform movements were launched. It was because of the conviction that improvement in this life is possible

that caste reforms were attempted, and parallel concepts of improvement and effort were developing along with those of resignation to the situation and fatalistic attitude to problems.

In short the secular orientation which was generated during the British period also as a consequence resulted in the emergence of the idea of progress.

Another consequence of this new attitude towards society and its development was the emergence of a new sense of history. If society has deteriorated, its causes are to be located; further these causes must have been linked up with the forces in the past. It was out of the search for the chain of past, leading to the present stage and also to discover the trend of development in the future which expressed itself in what is called sense of history.

(b) New sense of history - In the 19th century Gujarat, a new set of values developed round historical sense. For the first time people and more particularly the intelligentsia were familiarized with the scientific concept of history and not merely mythological sense of history. This could be understood in two or three ways. Till the 19th century, there was very little knowledge of chronology, and connected chain of historical events. In the absence of this, the concept that human society as an evolving society through historical periods was not prevalent. The Indian conception of history was "not linear, positivistic and progressive."⁴⁴ Whatever concept of the past was with regard to creation, e.g., in Hindu shastras, there are references to two important genealogies, viz., Surya Vansh (sun dynasty) and Chandra Vansh (Moon dynasty) but ^{the concept is} very much coloured with mythology. Further in Indian religious traditions, the concept of fall is evidenced in the phenomenon of 84 lakhs of rebirths, the ultimate aim of which is the release from this cycle of birth and death, and

secondly there is the conception of cyclical development in the 4 yugas.⁴⁵ We also notice that the time sense is not real but imaginery. Even today we find it very difficult to have a chronological history of Gujarat or India. Hence if Premanand or Shamal were referring to past history, or past events such as that of Krishna or King Vikram or poet Narsinh, it was very much coloured with mythology, and it became rather difficult to sift the real from imaginery. In this sense continuity with the past was limited to few generations, and there was absence of continuously evolving chains of events.

There is a second sense in which the sense of history was very little prevalent in the pre-19th century Gujarat. There was possibility ~~that~~ of some knowledge of Gujarat territory, or knowledge of some chronological order of the kings and their rule, became ~~the~~ necessities of the administration. But there was no knowledge of past or present in respect to outside territories, and particularly with regard to extra-national events there was enormous ignorance. Knowledge was limited to Gujarat in which also the idea of territory was nebulous. There was no interconnected knowledge about different provinces of the country. Further consciousness of existence of countries like Britain, America, France or China was absent. As far as sense of history goes, pre-19th century society had a very closed existence.*

*Narmad remarks at one place that people had no conception of the distances between one place and another. When he wanted to go to an interior town from Bhavnagar (a city in Saurashtra) he was told that it will be some 2 miles; in reality it turned out to be more than double that distance. (Mari Hakikat by Narmad, p.56). Similarly people had no conception of where England or China were located. Some people used to ask, "If we go from here, which region will come first, China or England?" (Kavi Narmad by V. Bhatt).

In all these respects we find a definite change in orientation and content. Slowly efforts are made to release history from mythology, and this we find in efforts made by the government in compiling Gazetteers, in recorded histories of Ahmedabad, Broach, Gujarat, in Sarva Sangrahs written with very little mythological ingredients. The past history of Gujarat begins from Karan Vaghela. A connected picture of history of Gujarat starting from Vanraj Chavda, i.e., from 746 A.D. to 19th century had been given by various authors.⁴⁶

In this connected chronological record, a sense of stages of development, sense of society as an evolving phenomenon is revealed. In this is linked up the optimism, ideas of progress, and moulding of future by one's own efforts, and not to leave the course of history either to fate or nature. This is revealed from the fact that both the reformers as well as revivalists looked for causes of social degeneration either in the caste or tradition or in the abandonment of Vedic traditions. Further they had confidence in social engineering, as reflected in the social reform movements, religious reform movements and also efforts of revivalists to reestablish the Vedic society. There is all round confidence in future history of Gujarat which is essentially reflected in the social reformers. The revivalists like Manilal Nabhoobhai, Govardhanram, Dayanand Saraswati or Ishwaram Desai may not share the enthusiasm of the social reformers, still they were not advocating for restarting the evil customs of old society. Even for criticising the British rulers, the consciousness of political past is essential. Further when the militant nationalists criticised the imperial character of British rule, it did not originate out of personal or individual jealousies or injustice. The portrayal of relations between 'Hind and Britannia' or devastating

criticism of Warren Hasting's rule, was done in the spirit of democratic right of the people to challenge the rulers. This was the atmosphere which led to conscious planning of the Gujarati society, on new basis. Once again what we want to emphasise here is that the change that was observable was in the explanation of evils of society and methods of eradication of those evils.

Lastly the 19th century Gujarati mind was alive not only to the local events but it had knowledge of other provinces and other nations. The curriculum of new liberal education required study of European history, and therefore students began to know about happenings outside India. Further the political administration of British Government, for example, in the Bombay State was composed of Southern, Northern and Central Divisions. So Gujarat which came in the northern division, had to be familiar with the happenings in Maharashtra and Karnatak. Further due to transferability of service also, people of other parts of India came to Gujarat and people from Gujarat had to go to other parts. Thus contact with Satyendranath Tagore might familiarize people with Bengal happenings and Brahmo Samaj, contact with Dadoba Pandurang or Dr. Bhau Daji might give a glimpse into the life of Maharashtrian people and their activities, movements of the leaders of All India Congress, National Social Conference, Arya Samaj, Theosophy, or Ramkrishna Movement, familiarised people with the life and programmes of people other than Gujaratis. In creating this wider consciousness and sense of wider dependence, the role of liberal education, new methods of communication, press and newspapers, was enormous. Thus the contact with other groups of people was not occasional but continuous. When intellectuals like Narmad, Govardhanram, Kalapi, Manishanker Ratnaji Bhatt or Narsinhrao Divetia, came in contact with world developments

through literature, the sense of history was still being widened.*

In this spirit Narmad writes 'Rajya Rang', a historical account of world civilizations. Even in the analysis of our social institutions like the position of woman, social thinkers exhibit a sense of history and try to compare her status with that of other nations or in ancient India.⁴⁷ Narsinhrao Divetia, Kalapi or Kant manifest this consciousness of development, and our own dependence on other countries, through their literature. Their creations were not only dependent on their emotional affinity to Premanand, Narsinh, Bhalan or Kalidas, or Upanishads, but also draw emotional strength from Keats, Wordsworth, Shelly and also Shakespear.

Thus, in short 19th century Gujarat exhibited one new value viz., a sense of history. As Wilsons put it "small groups often emphasise their common descent, larger groups their common race, others their common humanity, thus expressing both present unity and continuity with the past."⁴⁸ Nineteenth century Gujarati society was thus evolving from small group life composed of near relations and face to face relationship into wider existence enveloping not only people of Gujarat but India and international humanity of which Gujarat was a link in the chain.

II

EVALUATION OF THE NEW VALUE SYSTEM

Having observed the emergence of some of the new values in the 19th century Gujarat and which had established themselves into a rival value

*It may be interesting to note that when poet Narmad recited some of his own poems Sir Alexander Grant being impressed with the poems requested Narmad to translate them in English so that he (Sir Grant) could show them to poet Tennyson who was a friend of Sir Grant. (Mari Hakikat by Narmad, pp.89-90). This also reveals the growing contact between one part and the other of the world. Similarly some of the translated poems of Dalpatram were sent to Prince of Wales, in England, to Mary Carpenter and Sir T.C. Hope. (Dalpat Kavya, Part II, Dalpatram, pp.259-60, 267,274).

system along with the traditional norms and values, we may here point out some of the major limitations of the spread of these values in Gujarat.

1) The first major limitation lay in the fact that the new values were interiorized in the consciousness of only a small section of new educated class, and that too particularly among the educated groups living in certain urban areas. We have already observed in the chapters on political, economic, educational and social change, how this basic limitation operated in all fields of life. Vast bulk of population living in rural areas or in urban areas though slowly being involved in the new socio-economic matrix emerging as a result of the policies of British government objectively were not permeated by the new consciousness, as we may find even today. Not merely that, but they on the whole carried on their subjective life within the matrix of old traditional values, and therefore ~~ix~~ in spite of the emergence of rationalism, superstitions persisted, black magic thrived and the hold of Brahmins was not reduced considerably. Similarly in spite of the new value of dignity of men, caste system persisted.

2) The second major limitation which we observe about the spread of those values in Gujarat, is that not merely they were interiorized in the consciousness of a small section of educated individuals but the consciousness of these values developed unevenly and with unequal intensity even among this small groups of intellectuals. For instance, the sense of respect for individual which might have grown in the consciousness of some of these individuals may try to operate with regard to certain sections of the people, while in practise it would not be logically carried forward in its application to the persons of all categories of population, e.g., even the staunchest crusaders for respect for personality

while trying to build up institutions and practices, to translate this sense of respect for personality, would hesitate to include in these institutions the depressed classes, or the backward tribes. As observed earlier the pioneers of religious reform organizations like Prathna Samaj did not include untouchables in that reformed religious organization. Similarly when reformers tried to bring about certain changes in the conditions of women, they hesitated to attack some of the major institutions and practices like bigamy, equal rights of women in terms of property or political participation of women as shoulder to shoulder with men as equal citizens.* Nor do these intellectuals project the new values logically to the groups and sections of majority of lower castes and groups.

Similarly the western concept of sense of History was more utilized for glorifying the past rather than for understanding the past for moulding future. Thus Narmad after studying the histories of the world became more conservative, and Manilal Nabhoobhai utilised historical facts to prove inadequacy of widow remarriage.⁴⁹

*This sort of hesitation was reflected at even all India level. Surendranath Bannerjee, the veteran congress leader remarked in 1895 "I was not a little amused and interested to read in an English newspaper, the other day, a statement to the effect that women of my province had idolized the congress and that it had duly found its place in the Hind Pantheon. The fact is laid hold of by the writer as evidence of the superstition and ignorance of the people and their incapacity of representative institutions. I was not aware that my responsible congressmen had ever asked for representative institutions for women or for the masses of our people. However much we love and respect our ladies, we do not think they are yet qualified for representative government." (Quoted in Indian National Congress published by Natesan, pp.213-14).

Further we also find that the application of the new values operate in different degrees in different aspects of life of Gujarati society. For instance, the value of respect for individual or rationalism may be applied more extensively in the field of political or economic activities but may not be attempted to be spread in the social or religious systems. The intellectuals may stand for the application of the principle of equality before law, to function on a wider scale and enveloping larger stratta of population but they may not stand for the application of the same principles in the social or religious spheres by trying to destroy the very axis of traditional social structure in the form of caste system itself or in the form of basic overall subordination of woman. As observed earlier, a large number of these reformers tried to apply the values to reform the castes but not to end the very caste system itself.

Similarly these intellectuals ~~may try~~^{tried} to bring about some improvement in the condition of women, but ~~would~~^{did} not attack the source of woman's subordination viz. the institution of patriarchal form of the family itself. Even in the fields of religious matter, this intelligentsia though tried to eradicate some of the evils of traditional Hindu religious fold they never attacked either the underlying foundation of religious system itself nor did they extend the scope of criticism of religion to bring about a union of members of different religious denominations, e.g. none of the crusaders for religious reform ever crusaded to break the barrier between Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and other religious faiths. These reformers restricted their application of new values to merely bring about changes only within the fold of their own religion.

Here we may refer to one of the significant observations of Govardhanram Tripathi. While referring to the growing individualism in the west, he says that in our youths there has arisen a sort of double-life. On the one

hand they are nurtured in the new educational system which brings new values to them. On the other hand they have to live a traditional life in the joint family or caste system. He therefore says that the difference between the old and the new generations does bring about conflict but "the reason behind the conflict is the difference on ideals (Bhavna Bhed)".⁵⁰ It was because of this duality that many a times there arose a wide schism between preaching and practice. Those who might be propagating on the importance of foreign travel may themselves perform penance for 'committing such a crime' and thus remain in the caste-fold, or though criticising the wastefulness of expenditure may themselves incur enormous expenses at the time of marriage or death. Such dichotomy had a very depressing effect on the course of social progress. It was because of this hesitation on the part of the crusaders that lead~~y~~ an erstwhile social revolutionary like Narmad ~~who was~~ ^{to become} a defender of even the most obvious irrationalities such as the custom of abstinence from dinner after the eclipse has taken place or restrictions of freedom to women.⁵¹

3) The growth of these values suffered from another limitation. This limitation ~~lay~~ ^{lies} in the fact that the institutional fields within which they could manifest themselves were extremely limited in the Gujarati society of the 19th century e.g., some of the new values attempting themselves to operate through the medium of contract, could find expression only in a few institutions like factories, government service or in professions which themselves were very limited in extent. Similarly the new values which tried to operate through either education or journalism also found very restricted fields of application because of the limited growth of educational institutions and press. The same

type of limitation could be observed in political, religious or social fields because the new institutional framework through which these values could manifest themselves had developed to an extremely limited extent.

In short, while recognizing the fact that during the 19th century, a rival system of values founded on a qualitatively different basis did emerge, it should also be noted that the extent of their growth and the institutional media through which they tried to unfold themselves were extremely limited. In conclusion, we can state that in the 19th century, for the first time in the history of Gujarati Society, a rival set of values though only in a germinal form emerged and began to contest with the traditional values for supremacy.

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