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**Study of Gopal Ganesh Agarkar's social reform and modern thought  
concerning to progress of people**

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**Abstract**

We see there were many social reformers who had worked for development of society. Lokhitwadi Gopal Hari Deshmukh, Bhau Daji Lad, Nana Shakar Sheth and many more social reformers had worked for development of society. There were many bad customs were practiced in society. As well as many bad traditions were practiced in society. Due to all bad traditions and bad custom there was bad effect on society. Development of society was stopped. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had tried to remove all these bad customs from society. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had given importance to person. There is society for development of society. There should not prohibition on independence of person. He had given importance to independence of person. Changes in society should be as per change in time. Other wise society will become stagnated. Besides closing all these bad customs there will not any progress in society. Agarkar had opposed caste system in society. Due to caste system we cannot make progress in society. He had forced on removing all bad customs which were practiced in society. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had forced on reform in society.

**Key Words**

Social reform, age of consent, child marriage, editor of newspaper, caste system, untouchability, establishment of school.

**Introduction**

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar was progressive thinker and social reformer. There was bad customs and traditions were practiced in society. All these things were there due to lack of education. Education of woman and untouchable were banned in society. Custom of child marriage was practiced in society. after death of their husband child widows were there. Those widows were facing many problems. Hair of widows were cut. Widows had permission of wearing color full cloths. These widow women were facing many problems. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had promoted widow remarriage. He had focused on education of woman. He had read books of Herbart Spencer. These books were 'sociology' and 'ethics.' Gopal Ganesh Agarkar was inspired by thought of Herbart Spencer. He had started social reform in Maharashtra. He had worked for social reform in society.

**Research Methodology**

There are following research methodology were used for writing of this research paper. Historical research method is used for writing of this research. Many reference books are used

read at first in such way data collected. After that analysis of data written in descriptive method. For this research observation made on reference books, text books, newspaper and websites. Important points noted on it. In this way observation method also used for this research paper.

### Objectives

1. To study the reasons of backwardness in education.
2. To study the different type of problems of society in contemporary period.
3. To correctly study the need of education in present perspective.
4. To find current issues related social and educational development.
5. To find correct solutions on it.

### Early Life

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had born on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1856 in Tembhu village. Tembhu village comes in Karad taluka of Satara district. His mother's name was Sarswati. Economic condition of his father was very bad. So he had faced many hardship in childhood. Due to bad economic condition he had travelled in many places for his education. He had travelled in Akola, Karad and Ratnagiri for his education. Due to bad economic condition he had done different jobs. He had worked as clerk in court. He had left that job. He went to uncle Wamanrao Agarkar in Ratnagiri. After that he had done job of Compounder in Karad. Later he had came in Akola to his maternal uncle Sadashiv. He had passed in examination of matric in 1875. V M Mahajani had helped Gopal Ganesh Agarkar for education when he was taking education in Akola. For further education he had went to Pune. In Pune also there was bad economic condition. But he did not left education. He had passed in examination of BA in 1878 from Deccan College. For completion degree of BA he had taken Economics, History, Mathematics, English and Sanskrit subject. After that he had completed his MA in 1880. For completion Degree of M A he had taken Philosophy and History subject in Pune. With many hardships he had completed his education. Agarkar was inspired by thought of 'Herbart Spencer.' He had read books of 'Sociology' and 'Ethics' of Herbart Spencer. He had inspired by John Stuart Mill. He had read books 'On Liberty' and 'Subjection of Woman' of John Stuart Mill.

### Educational Work

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar was aware about education. He had understood the importance of education. While Agarkar was in Pune for education. He had come in contact of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. When Agarkar was taking education of MA. At that time Lokmanya Tilak was taking education of LLB. In this period both were talk each other about their aim. They had decided about not to join government service. They both decided to work for independence of country. Agarkar had understood that education is powerful. In Pune he had started 'New English School' on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1880. This school was started with help of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Vishnushatri Chiplunkar and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. Agarkar and Tilak had started news paper 'Maratha' in English on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1881. In Marathi language they had started 'Keshari' news paper. Editor of 'Keshari' was Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. Editor of 'Maratha' was Lokmanya Gangadhar Tilak which was English language. 'Deccan Education Society' was established on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1884 by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Agarkar. Fergusson college was started on 2<sup>nd</sup> January

1885. This college was started by Deccan Education Society. First Principal of Fergusson college was V S Apte. Second principal of Fergusson college was Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. He had served on this post from 1892 to August 1895. First class of Fergusson college was started in wada of Gadre. Lokmanya Tilak and Agarkar both had worked together. But after some period there was difference in their thinking. Lokmanya Tilak had given importance to independence first. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had given importance to social reform. This was the difference between both. Day by day difference between both were increased. Due to differences Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had resigned editorship of Keshari on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1887. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had started new weekly 'Sudhakar' on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1888. Weekly 'Sudhakar' was in both language in Marathi and in English. Agarkar was superintendent of New English School in 1885. Agarkar was teaching History and Philosophy subject when he was principal of Fergusson College. Maharaja of Indore Shivajirao Holkar had donated Rs 700/- to Deccan Education Society. Tilak and Agarkar had clashes on this topic. As per suggestion of Shivajirao Maharaj Holkar amount of Rs 400 had to be given to Agarkar. Remained amount had to be distributed in ten members of Deccan Education Society. Due to these differences Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had resigned from Fergusson College and Deccan Education Society in December 1890.

### **Social Work**

Agarkar had given importance to social work. Agarkar had promoted widow remarriage. He had helped in marriage of Dhondo Keshav Karve and Godubai Joshi on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1893. This was widow remarriage. Agarkar was thinking about without social reform independence will not work. To protect independence will become difficult without social reform. Agarkar was thinking about making social reform under British Rule is easy, so his first preference was to social reform. Agarkar had printed news in Keshari in 1882 about torture of Chhatrapati Fourth Shivaji of Kolhapur. R B Barve had filed case against Keshari and Maratha. With support of false document R B Barve had won this case. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Lokmanya Tilak got punishment of 101 days imprisonment. Both had to give Rs 100/- fine. Both Agarkar and Tilak were put in imprisonment in Dongari of Mumbai. After that Phiroz Shaha Mehta had appealed in court taking side of Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Lokmanya Tilak. In this time Mahatma Phule had collected Rs 10,000/- from people and helped to Lokmanya Tilak and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. In this way Mahatma Phule had helped them in their bad time. Agarkar was against four varna system and caste system. Due to this difference we cannot make progress in society. This thought he had put in front of people. Agarkar had opposed child marriage. He had said that if system of child marriage is closed then we will not see child widows in society. Happiness of life for both man and woman will increase. Woman will carry their family responsibility well condition. With reference to this Agarkar had supported bill of consent age. But majority of the society had opposed progressive thought of Agarkar. People made complaint about this bill. Consent age bill was put forward by Sir Andrew Scoble on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1891 in legislative council of governor general of India in Calcutta. This bill was debated and opposed Romesh Chandra Mitter on same day. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Bhandarkar were in side of this bill. But Lokmanya Tilak had opposed this bill. It was social interference in society. But Agarkar did not accept this claim of

people. Bad customs in society should remove as soon as possible. We should take support of law to remove these bad customs. Cutting hair of widows should be closed by making laws. Agarkar had criticised bad thought of people. He had told people about there is bad customs are practised under name of religion. Agarkar had opposed caste system, child marriage. Agarkar had also opposed untouchability and caste system. Besides closing all these bad customs it is very hard to live happily. Closing all these bad customs are beneficial for development of people. Agarkar had mentioned about festival of Holi that there is not found such type of bad festival anywhere. Realistic life had given less importance. Spiritual life had given more importance is not good for society. Due to this situation our society inactive. Society is not working on useful things.

### **Writings in Keshari**

Agarkar had written about bad things in society in news paper. He was independent thinker. He had focused on development of people by using their minds. He had criticized on bad belief of people, superstitions and irrational thinking. Society of that period did not like thought of Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. Old thinking people had carried procession of death of Agarkar to opposing Agarkar's thought. He had faced many problem for carrying social reform in society. Due to his progressive work Gopal Ganesh Agarkar is known for visionary social reformer. When Agarkar and Lokmanya Tilak was in jail of Dongri in Mumbai. News paper work of Keshari and Maratha was carried by V S Apte and M B Namjoshi. In this period Phiroz Shaha Mehta and Kashinathpant Telang had appealed in court taking side of Agarkar and Lokmanya Tilak. Agarkar had written in Keshari on consent age bill. Heading of news was 'vade vade jayate tatwabodh.' His writing were become famous in this period. Agarkar had taken this progressive thought from many thinkers. Agarkar's role model were Russo, Gibbon, Mill, Volter and Spencer. Government of Mumbai had taken note about largest selling newspaper Keshari. From 24<sup>th</sup> January 1881 copies of Kesari was selling nearby one thousand five hundred. In Kesari Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had written about social welfare in society. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar was present in National Congress session held in 1885. Tilak was extremist in politics. But Gopal Ganesh Agarkar was moderate politician and social reformer. Bundgarden in Pune was working place of Lokmanya Balgangadhar Tilak and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. Because both had pleaded about social and national work in this place. Weekly Sudhakar in Marathi was written in Agarkar. English writing was carrying by Gopal Krushna Gokhale. After death of Agarkar work of Sudhakar was carried by Devdhar and Patwardhan till 1914. In later period Suhakar was run by Ramchandra Vishnu Phadtare form 1914 to 1916. Agarkar was writing in Varhad Samachar when he was in Akola in 1876. He had given importance to science base thought. He had not taken any burden of people bout work of social reform. Without fear he had worked for development of society. New English School was first started in Budhawar Peth. This school was started in Wada if Morobadada Phadnis on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1880. But after some period it was shifted in Shaniwar Peth on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1883. Here place was wada of Vishnu Mahadev Gadre. Agarkar had not only tressed on writing and reading. But he had focussed on all subjects which was taught in Mumbai University for examination of matric. There was for ban for untouchable to

take water from public places. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had written in news paper about this bad custom. Progress of society was stopped due to this caste system, so he had opposed this system. He had focussed on equality of all people in society. In constitution of India in part III Article 14 states about equality before law. There was ban on entry of temples that also opposed by Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. In this way he had worked for development of all people. He had opposed consuming liquor in society. he had told about bad effects of drinking alcohol. It expends money. Many deceases comes in body due to taking alcohol. British people had neglecting ban on alcohol. He had told about bad effects of consuming tobacco. He had told that there should ban on tobacco for age group under twenty five years old. Agarkar had criticized on British Government for neglecting on all these things.

### **Balanced Food**

Agarkar's all thoughts were progressive. His thoughts were universal. Balanced food is important for good health. There were vegetarian and nonvegetarian people in society. but he had given preference to vegetarian food. All vitamins and minerals are in Vegetable and fruits. Vegetarian food increases life of people, so he focussed on vegetable food and its importance. Power increases due to taking vegetable food. He had spread this thought by writing in news paper.

### **Writing of Agarkar**

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had written in many news papers. As well as he had written books. Agarkar had written 'Dongarichy turangatil 101 divas' in 1882. He had written 'Alankar Mimmansha.' He had written 'Vikarvilsit' this was translation of of Shakespear's play 'Hamlet.' He had written 'collection of essays' from Sudharak in 1887. Remarriage of 'Sheth Madhavdas Raghunathdas and Dhankunwarbai' in 1907. Collections of eassy's from Kesari.

### **Conclusion**

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar had worked for development in society. He tried to remove all bad customs from society. He had written in newspaper about these bad traditions in society. He had made lot of efforts in his whole life for reform in society. He had worked on child marriage. Bad conditions of widows in society he had wrote about this in news paper. He had criticized all bad customs in society. He was pioneer of modern society. Many progressive thought he had put in front of people. Without fear he had worked for reform in society. Many orthodox people had had criticized and opposed his work. But Agarkar did not stopped his work. For this cause he had established schools in Pune. In present times also his thoughts are important. Hence study of Agarkar's thoughts is important.

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