

**CONTRIBUTION OF 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY WOMEN'S TO THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN MAHARASHTRA****Dr. Sambhaji Sopanrao Darade**

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**Abstract**

Maharashtra's contribution to the Indian war of Independence was very significant and grade. For this freedom, the work of women in Maharashtra is as important as that of main. The history of Indian freedom struggle would be incomplete without maintaining the contribution of women. The sacrifices made by the women of India new line will occupied the foremost place. The Maharashtra women broke away from various restrictions and got out of their traditional home oriented routes and responsibilities. So the participation of women in the freedom and national awakening is simply incredible and praiseworthy.

**Keywords:** Maharashtra, Indian, women, freedom movement, contribution.

**Introduction**

The status of women in pre-independence India was limited to the family. Purring the period of the East India Company, many social reformers such as the Raja Ram Mohan Rai and JyotiraoPhule had undergone numerous challenges that were associated with bringing about changes in the status of women with in Indian society. Women participation in India freedom struggle begins as early 1817 when BhimaBaiHolkar fight against Britishers Madam Bhikaji coma, the first Indian woman socialist who fight for her motherland's freedom after the 1857 uprising (Chand Tara-1961). There is no doubt that women participation in India anti-imperialist struggle in large number. But not much researchers has been done on the work of women in Maharashtra who have contributed to the Indian independence and its conservation. Therefore it is necessary to study the contribution of the women's, Gandhiji appeared to women to come forward with equal justice and join the freedom struggle (Agrawal M.G -2008).

**Women's Leader of the National Movement:**

There is no doubt that women participate in the Indian anti-imperialist struggle in large number. If we were to recall the names of women leaders in our national movement, we will find that the list is a very long one. Starting with Sarojini Naidu, Rani Lakshmbai, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, ArunaAsaf Ali, Mridula Sarabhai at the national level, we may go on to provincial level leaders like Annie Besant, Hansa Mehta and Usha Mehta in Bombay and several others. In fact such in the nature of our nationalist is to moment that it is very difficult to distinguish between regional level and all India level leaders. The contribution of women in the struggle for independence India cannot be over looked. A lot of coverage us women raised their voice against the British rule, many women's look so the streets, lead precisions and held lecture and demonstration. These women passed a lot of courage and intense patriotism (Ralhan.O.P-1995).

**British Raj in Maharashtra:**

The British ruled for more than a century and brought hugechanges in every aspect of life for the people of the Maharashtra region. Areas that correspond to present day Maharashtra were under direct or indirect British rule, first under the East India company crown. Purring this era, Maharashtra region era was divided into the Bombay presidency, central provinces, Hyderabad state and various princely states such as Kolhapur and Miraj people from Maharashtra played an important part in the social and regional perform moments as the nationalist movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries(Chopra.P.N-1975).

The Marathi social reformers of the colonial era include Mahatma JyotiraoPhule his wife SavitribaiPhule, justice TarabaiShinde, PanditaRamabaiJyotiraoPhule was a pioneer in opening school for girls and Marathi dalit castes. The ultimate am 1942 to the British to quit India was given in Mumbai and Culminated in the transfer of power and independence of India in 1947. S.M Joshi, YashvantraoChauhan, Swami RamanandaBharti, Nana Patil, ArunaAsif Ali, Ashfaqulla Khan and several others leader from Maharashtra

play a prominent role in this struggle (Raju Rajendra-1994).

### **Women Freedom Fighter of Maharashtra:**

Maharashtra has a large participation of women in Indian war of independence but not much has been written or researched about it. Many women from Maharashtra contributed to the freedom movement but their work was not given much light.

### **Ramabai Ranade:**

Ramabai Ranade was an Indian social worker and one of the first women's right activities in the 19th century. At the age of 11, she was married to the justice M.G. Ranade, who was a distinguished Indian scholar and social reformer. In that era of social inequality women were not allowed to go to school and become literate. Ramabai, soon after her marriage started to learn reading and writing with the strong support and encouragement from her husband (Sarkar Sumit, 2008). Inspired by her husband, Ramabai started 'Hindu ladies social club' in Mumbai to develop public speaking among women. After the death of her husband, Ramabai developed the rest of her life to the betterment of women's lives mainly through the activities 'seva Sadan society' in Mumbai and Pune.

Later, Ramabai Ranade attended the National congress session and enlightened the public about the Indian independence movement.

### **Aruna Asaf Ali:**

Aruna Asaf Ali played a leading role during the quit India movement of 1942 during the quit India movement and she rose to occasion. She unfurled the national flag at the Gowalia tank Maidan in Bombay to signify the commitment of quit India movement and become a legend for thousands of youth that rose to emulate her. She became full time activities in the quit India movement and went underground to evade arrest. She edited 'Inqulab' monthly journal of Indian National Congress (Kosambi, Meera- 2000).

### **Madam Bhikaji Cama:**

Madam Bhikaji Cama was influenced by Dadabhai Nauroji and was a source of inspiration for Indian youth in the UK. She unfurled the first national flag at the international socialist conference in struggle (Germany) in 1907, organized free Indian society and begins the journal 'Bande Mataram' to spruce her revolutionary thought. She traveled a lot and spoke to people about Indians struggling for independence (Thilagarathi-2009).

### **Anusayabai Kale:**

Anusayabai Kale was an Indian politician. She was elected to the Lok Sabha the lower house of the parliament of India, from Nagpur as a member of the Indian National Congress in 1952 in 1948. She was president of the Indian women's conference. She worked to enlighten the people about the importance of the Indian war of independence. As a result she emerged as a good politician (Kapde Kar Vinay-1991).

### **Jankidevi Bajaj:**

She was born on 7 January 1893 in Johra in Wardha district, she was married to 12 years old Jarnalal Bajaj. Jarnalal participated in the freedom struggle movement and Jankidevi also took up khadi speaking on charkha, working for Gauseva and the betterment of the lives of Harijan and their temple entry in 1928. After independence, she worked with Vinoba Bhave on Bhoodan movement. She serves as president of Akhil Bhartiya Goseva Sangh for many years since 1942 (Ghawavankar Rohini-1986).

### **Kashibai Kanitkar:**

Kashibai Kanitkar was the first major woman writer in Marathi from Maharashtra India since 15th century 'sant' Poet Kanhopatra Kashibai was born into a wed they family in the town of Asked in Sangli district. Kashibai had no formal education, but with her or progressive husbands strong encouragement. She learnt to read and gradually mastered many Marathi, Sanskrit and English work. Kashibai Kanitkar along with literature did importance work of enlightening about the Indian independence movement of that time (Sarojini Vaidya-2008).

At the same time Mahatma Gandhi allowed Damayanti Dharmadhi Karisharayu Dhotre to carry out Satyagrah. Also Gangabai Walujkar, Vanutai Chaudhari, Yamunatai Patil, Kalawati Nagpure etc. Women from various district participated in this moment in large numbers.

**Conclusion:**

The story of women's participation in India freedom struggle in the story of making bold choice, finding then silver on strength, inside jail and in legislature. After so many efforts India achieved Independence once on August 15, 1947. Thousands of Indian women's dictated their lives for obtaining freedom of their motherland. Along with other women's from our country, the contribution of woman's in Maharashtra to the freedom movement is the invaluable. There is a need to research the contribution of some of these women who have come to light in history and some who have stay away.

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