

PREFACE

The present study seeks to discover in depth the nature of political leadership of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who was being a moderate, played a role sometimes as like as extremist. Thus, when I started working on the social and political thought of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, I had no idea of the time and labour it would involve. It was really very difficult to understand what the role Gokhale as moderate played in the freedom movement, prior to the rise of Gandhi. Gandhi himself was not responsible for it. He never ignored the role of the moderates whose struggle for freedom movement was remarkable. He himself paid a great tribute to Gokhale and admitted and regarded Gokhale as his 'political guru'. However, it would be considered by saying it 'generation gap' which helped to misunderstand the social and political environment in which the early leaders of Congress had to do something for the liberation of our motherland. It was really a great mistake of 'History' to represent them, whose role was really forgotten by us.

Now, with the changing of times and availability of fresh sources, it is now possible for us to cope with difficult problems and was easy to explore the leadership of Gopal Krishna Gokhale. We have a huge man of materials, diaries, unpublished official records and private papers for a study in depth.

Gokhale's political career was practically coincided with the work of first thirty years of early Congress. But the most interesting fact was this; he was the youngest among all of them. He was a lucky enough that he had good relation with early Congress leaders. His personality, ability to speak about the problems of India in front of the British in India and abroad pushed him to conquer the love and confidence of the senior leaders of

Congress, as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, as the confident of the British Committee of the Congress in London, as India's unofficial envoy to England, his role was remarkable and all of these qualities helped him to reach forefront in Indian politics. Not only that he was a vocal observer and clever. His intellectual idea i.e. educational problem, social upliftment, caste questions, his role was remarkable. Thus, the study of his life gives us valuable insights into the history of Indian nationalism and the relation between India and British.

The present study while making this analysis of leadership – dynamics, has taken into account all these factors. In substantiating the viewpoints, extensive references have been made to primary resources – speeches, writings and other related documents. Comparism and cross-references have been made as far as possible to make this complete and meaningful.

One of the difficulties faced in the completion of this research work is the scarcity of primary source materials on Gokhale's social and political ideas. So to come in the conclusion, I have to depend on various correspondences, which are available from time to time.

While my mind had been haunting by an aspiring idea to do some work, Professor Pradip Kumar Sengupta of the Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal and Dean, Faculty of Arts, Commerce & Law inspired me to undertake a study of the social and political thought of Gokhale.

He also kindly consented to guide my research work. He not only initiated me into this work but also encouraged me all along and extended all kinds of assistances. I am very grateful to him for his valuable time he gave for me. Whenever I required I had an easy access to his residence. He never felt or expressed his disgust. I am particularly grateful to Dr. S.K. Patra, Ex-Vice Principal, Bani Mandir Railway Higher Secondary School, Siliguri Junction and my father, who inspite of their important works and responsibilities, had given encouragement through my work and advised me on various

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