

C O N C L U S I O N S

Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj ruled Kolhapur State from 1922 to 1940. He inherited from his father the great Shahu Maharaj a rich heritage which consisted of progressive policy, a vast network of educational institutions and a remarkable multi-dimensional educational growth. Chh. Rajaram Maharaj realised the basic principles of his father's policies. He therefore, continued and faithfully followed Chh. Shahu Maharaja's policies in social as well as educational fields. He associated himself with the non-Brahmin movement and the movement for education of the masses. His benevolent activities were not confined only to his state but also spread outside the state. Unfortunately as there is paucity of literature on Chh. Rajaram Maharaj people at large know little about his contribution to the growth of mass education in Maharashtra.

Those were the days when success or failure of a native prince largely depended upon ability and wisdom of his diwan and other advisers. The example of this kind is that of the wodeyar kings of Mysore who could get in succession able and farsighted Diwans like Sir Vishweshwariya and others. Rajarshi Chh. Shahu Maharaj was an independent ruler who was head and shoulders above his diwans and advisers. Moreover, he was a great visionary. Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj though

chief of the old block was a different type of man. Informed sources state that Rajaram Chhatrapati is not a great visionary like his father was a highly cultured, tender hearted king. He was a quite unassuming. Many of his good plans were thwarted by the selfish worthless and obstinate persons that surrounded him. He was lucky enough in getting the services of Shri Raossheb, D.A.Surve as his Diwan. Shri Surve was an able administrator and a wise adviser. Chh. Rajaram Maharaj got the services also of Dr.Balkrishna the then principal of Rajaram College which must have proved useful in the field of education. Fortunately Dr.Balkrishna's tenure of Principalship of Rajaram College well coincided with Chh.Rajaram Maharaja's reign.

Chh.Rajaram Maharaj was a highly cultured man. He had great reverence for his late father. He asked A.B.Letthe who was formerly Professor of English in Rajaram College and also one of his father's lieutenants to write the memories of Chh.Shahu Maharaj this has a parallel in the life of Chh. Rajaram I who asked Krishnaji. Anant Sabhasad to relate to him the stories of his father's i.e.Chh.Shivaji's heroism and great deeds. A.B.Letthe complied with Chh.Rajaram Maharaja's request and wrote in English two volumes of Chh.Shahu Maharaja's memoirs which are even today regarded by the scholars as a good source for the study of Chh.Shahu Maharaj and his times.

Like his father Chh.Rajaram Maharaj also understood the importance and value of primary education. He tried in his own way to bring about the growth of primary education in his

state. In 1922 when Chh. Rajaram Maharaj succeeded to the gadi there were 614 primary schools in Kolhapur state and 33997 pupils were taking education in those schools. Thereafter the number of schools and also of the pupils steadily increased every year. During the year 1940-41 there were 841 primary schools in state and 56822 pupils were receiving education in those schools. Scout movement was introduced at the primary school level in 1922-23. From the year 1927-28 physical education was made compulsory in the primary schools in order to ensure physical progress of students.

At that time of Chh. Rajaram Maharaja's accession to the throne secondary education in his state was not much developed. There were only three highschools and 20 Anglo-vernacular schools in the state. In all 2138 pupils were learning in the secondary schools in the state. During the regime of Chh. Rajaram Maharaj there was considerable growth of secondary education in Kolhapur state. From 1922-23 to 1940-41 the number of secondary schools and the pupils learning in those schools increased. In 1940-41 there were 13 highschools and 30 Anglo-vernacular schools with the total of 5029 of the students' strength. In order to encourage the spread of secondary education Rajaram Maharaj increased the number of free-ships and instituted a few scholarships for the backward castes' students. In 1924-25 scout movement was started at the highschool level also. Rajaram Maharaj had special interest in physical education and so he introduced it in the high-schools.

Remarkable progress was recorded in the field of higher education during the reign of Chh. Rajaram Maharaj. Due to his efforts Kolhapur became an important center of higher education in Western Presidency. At the beginning of his reign Rajaram College was, the only institution with 173 students, imparting higher education. In 1922 Rajaram College too was under the management of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. Chh. Rajaram Maharaj made many efforts for the development of this college. In 1926 he got back Rajaram College from the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha and restored it under the state control. In June 1927 Science Faculty was opened in Rajaram College due to the inspiration and encouragement of His Highness Chh. Rajaram Maharaj. Dr. Balkrishna was Principal of Rajaram College from 1922 to 1940. Chh. Rajaram Maharaj gave him all the necessary encouragement, support and co-operation in his efforts for the development of Rajaram College. By the end of Chh. Rajaram Maharaj's career Rajaram College was affiliated for all the principal courses of study upto the M.A. and M.Sc. degrees. The students strength in Rajaram College considerably increased during the period from 1922 to 1940.

Besides bringing about the development of Rajaram College Chh. Rajaram Maharaj started a Law College and a Secondary Training College in Kolhapur. Towards the end of 1932 a Law College which later on came to be known as Gykes Law College was started. In June 1934 a Secondary Training College which was named after Her Highness the senior Maharani

Tarabaisaheb was started at Kolhapur. All the three colleges in Kolhapur were affiliated to the University of Bombay. In order to encourage students to get higher education Chh. Rajaram Maharaj instituted many new scholarships, prizes and freeships which served as an incentive to the growth of collegiate education in Kolhapur State. During the reign of Chh. Rajaram Maharaj the number of female and backward caste students in all the three colleges increased. For example in 1937-38 there were 800 students in Rajaram College of which 37 were female students and 11 were backward castes' students.¹ Due to Chh. Rajaram Maharaja's efforts and his policy of encouragement the strength of students learning in all the three colleges in Kolhapur increased tremendously. In 1940-41 there were in all 1131 students taking collegiate education in Kolhapur. In the same year Kolhapur Barber spent an amount of Rs.1,24,941/- on Rajaram College, an amount of Rs.36,768/- on Law College and an amount of Rs.33,715 on Maharani Tarabai Training College.

Many years before the actual inception of Shivaji University Chh. Rajaram Maharaj cherished the dream of founding a University at Kolhapur named after Shivaji the great. In December 1936 he in his speech made a reference to Shivaji University.

In order to improve the quality of education and also to provide trained and efficient teachers to the schools Chh. Rajaram Maharaj paid attention to the training of teachers. Even before the establishment of Maharani Tarabai Secondary

Training College in 1934 Chh. Rajaram Maharaj founded in 1926 a training college for vernacular teachers. This college also made good progress under the supervision of Educational Inspector.

By founding O'Brien Technical School at Kolhapur in 1928 Chh. Rajaram Maharaj made a rich contribution to the development of Technical Education in his state. This school imparted instructions in various technical courses. Besides he made efforts to develop Jayasindrao Hatde Technical School founded by Chh. Shahu Maharaj.

In 1928-29 Chh. Rajaram Maharaj founded an agricultural school at Kolhapur. It was named as Shahu Agricultural School. This school was founded with the intention of imparting up-to-date and scientific knowledge about agriculture to the children of the peasants.

In the field of professional education Chh. Shahu Maharaj had founded a number of schools imparting practically useful knowledge to the people. Chh. Rajaram Maharaj well understood the significance of those schools and institutes. He, therefore, nourished all those schools. The professional schools thus nourished by Rajaram Maharaj were : Delhi Coronation Darbar Patil and Talethi School, The Shivaji Kshatriya Vedic School, Satyashodhak Samaj School, Arabic and Urdu Schools and the Deval Club. Besides in 1927 Chh. Rajaram Maharaj started a school called Grihini Shala in order to provide instruction to the middle aged women in domestic science and economy.

Chh. Rajaram Maharaj gave an encouragement to female education at all levels in his state. For the spread of primary education among girls he instituted several scholarships and prizes for deserving promising girls students taking education in primary schools. He also founded a separate high-school for girls where entire education was free. No fees were charged for the lady students taking higher education. Due to the educational concessions offered to the female students in Rajaram College a good number of lady students from different parts of India were attracted to Rajaram College. As a result of Chh. Rajaram Maharaja's policy of encouragement to female education a good number of ladies received higher education and distinguished themselves in different spheres of life.

Chh. Rajaram Maharaj paid special attention to the growth of education among the backward castes and communities. In this regard he followed the example of his father. In order to encourage the students belonging to the backward castes and communities to take education of every kind, Chh. Rajaram Maharaj instituted, during his reign, a number of scholarships and prizes for them. He also offered them freeships. He did all that he could to ensure educational progress among the depressed class people and to safeguard their educational interests.

In 1937 school board in Kolhapur state was thinking of restructuring primary education. At that time the issue of spreading adult literacy was also discussed. However, we do

not get any information regarding progress made in the field of spread of adult education.

Chh. Rajaram Maharaj was one of such few rulers in the princely India who realised the importance of education and tried hard to develop it in his state. He gave top priority to education. Therefore, expenditure on education in Karveer state was more than doubled during his reign. During 1921-22 the total expenditure on education in Kolhapur state was Rs.301583/- but the same expenditure during the year 1940-41 was Rs.743283/-.²

The educational movement started by Rajarshi Chh. Shahu Maharaj in Kolhapur state progressed speedily during the reign of Chh. Rajaram Maharaj. During Chh. Rajaram Maharaja's regime there was both quantitative as well as qualitative growth of education in Kolhapur state. As a result of the educational movement carried on by both Chh. Shahu Maharaj and Chh. Rajaram Maharaj there was unprecedented awakening among the masses here. Towards the end of Chh. Rajaram Maharaja's reign people of Kolhapur state organized themselves into the Praja Parishad and began to ask for democratic rights and responsible government. Kolhapur Praja Parishad was founded on 25th December 1939. Madhavrao Bagal and Patnaona Kumbhar were its leaders. Both of them belonged to the masses. Thus the growth of education in Kolhapur state under Chh. Rajaram Maharaj led to the political awakening and the rise of people's agitation for political rights.

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REFERENCE

- 1 Satyavadi, dt.4-11-1937
- 2 The General Administration Report on the
Kolhapur State 1921-22 to 1940-41.