

## C O N C L U S I O N

In the present work, an attempt is made to study political thought of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj, who played a very important role in the modernisation of Maharashtra. Shahu not only carried forward the work started by men like Phuley and Agarkar but also added a new dimension to it by encouraging the political activities of backward classes in the State. Social and political ideas of Shahu Maharaj are precursors to the emergence of radical political ideology in Maharashtra.

Following is the summary of the dissertation.

In the first chapter of the thesis Shahu's emergence on political scene is studied in the light of historical conditions in the last two decades of 19th century. Shahu's different achievements especially his social and political reforms are studied with reference to challenges he had to face. Shahu's contribution to non-Brahmin movement and his role in the modernisation of Maharashtra is analysed. Thus in the first chapter background of social and political ideas of Shahu Maharaj is studied.

In the second chapter social ideas of Shahu Maharaj are studied.

Shahu Maharaj was basically a social reformer who wanted to free our religion and society from the strange hold of priestly class. He was opposed to dominance of Brahmins in different spheres of life and held a view that due to the influence of caste system, Hindu society had faced several problems. He was opposed to the practice of untouchability and sought to emancipate the Shudras and anti-shudras from the religious slavery of Brahmins. He was a follower of Arya Samaj and maintained that by following the principles stood for equality among all human beings and advocated the principle of equality of opportunity to all the peoples. He condemned the caste system that did not accord any consideration for merit.

In the third chapter educational and economic ideas of Shahu Maharaj are discussed. Shahu was a great supporter of compulsory education as he thought that through education only the backward classes could bring about their own advancement. He did not support the theory of filtration and maintained that provision of free and compulsory primary education for all is essential. Thus he stood for democratisation of education and sought to break the monopoly of one caste over education, Shahu can be considered as a prophet of establishment of Agro-Industrial Society in Maharashtra as he realised the importance industrialisation

based on modern technology. His economic ideas were modern as he was trying to modernise a feudal set-up.

In the fourth chapter political ideas of Shahu Maharaj are extensively studied towards and entire India and made numerous speeches to bring about some total of awakening in the backward classes. He was of the view that the true Swaraj could not be achieved unless Indians removed their social defects. The new Swaraj was bound to go in the hands of Brahmins, therefore, backward classes should take-up to education and did not allow Brahmins to monopolise power. Shahu sought to encourage non-Brahmin movements in the South Indian States and advocated a principle that to uplift the backward classes the jobs should be reserved. He advocated the communal representation on the basis that it would not allow Brahmins to monopolise power. Shahu was supporter of British rule as he thought that through our British connections, we could remove all the social defects that were responsible for our backwardness. Shahu initiated many far reaching reforms in his princely State and these reforms can bear a good comparison with of the Indian constitution which was passed in 1920. It can be said that Shahu Maharaj was the one of the first thinkers who clearly advocated the concept of social democracy.

One of the important aspects of Shahu Maharaj's political activity was an attempt to co-ordinate activities of all the non-Brahmin and backward class parties that were working in South India. These associations received Shahu's help guidance and encouragement.<sup>1</sup>

Shahu Maharaj had to work within the limitations. He was King of an important princely State but it is really remarkable to note that keeping himself within the limits Shri Shahu Maharaj carried out many radical views. His admiration of the Russian revolution are a pointer to this fact.

REFERENCE

- 1) Kavalekar, K.K. : Non-Brahmin Movement in Southern India, 1873-1949, Published by Shivaji University, Kolhapur, 1979, p. 105.