

---

CHAPTER - II

The Early Career of

Narayanarao Babasaheb Ghorpade.

---

## C H A P T E R - II

### The Early Career of

### Narayanrao Babasaheb Ghorpade.

#### 1) Early life of Babasaheb :

Shrimant Babasaheb was not born as a prince. He was born in a village by name Karkamb in Sholapur district. His father, though a well to do person, could not be called as a rich man. He had a farm-house with some land attached it, and was also a moneylender. He belonged to the middle class.

Shrimant Babasaheb has written recollections of his childhood days, which provide a clue to the fact that, his was a very opulent family. The atmosphere in his house, was very strict. Children were not allowed to have their own ways. His father was a tyrant. Everybody had to abide by the father. Vishnuanna, his elder brother and Bayatai, his sister were his playfellows. He had deep attachment and love for his brother and sister.

" Even after Babasaheb's accession to the Ichalkaranji Gadi, he did pay attention to his brother Annasaheb and his sons and daughters. He saw to it, that each and everything was being made easily available to them. His sister Bayatai got married to his friend Janubhau Fadnis at Ichalkaranji.

It was matter of a sheer coincidence that Babasaheb could get his sister for all the time in his vicinity." <sup>1</sup>

Govindrao Abasaheb died suddenly. As he had no heir apparatent, it was necessary, in the interest of the jagir that, somebody should be adopted. Government opted for adoption. Then the search was undertaken to find an appropriate boy from the Konkanaatha Brahmin subcaste. The political agent collected eight boys for the preliminary selection. Those boys included the six years old Gopal, the son of Laxmanrao Joshi, Karkambkar. Gopal proved out to be superior to all other boys in almost all aspects. The political agent gave his opinion in favour of Gopal's adoption.

" The late Abasaheb's wife Padmavatibai, adopted Gopal on 10th August, 1876, and named him as Narayanrao Babasaheb. For the approval of this adoption she presented the Nazarana of rupees 1,70,000 to Karvirkar, Babasaheb's 'Munj' took place, on 27 April, 1879." <sup>2</sup>

Govindrao Abasaheb died in the month of February in 1876. And in June, 1892, Shrimant Babasaheb accessed to the Ichalkaranji gadi. During the interval of about sixteen years, pendemonium, instability and turmoil, prevailed in Ichalkaranji jagir.

2) Babasaheb's Birth-Date :

There are two different opinions about his birth date. " The magazine ' Maha-Rashtra ', published in the year, 1942, states, " Babasaheb was born in the year 1870 at Karkamb in Sholapur district." <sup>3</sup>

On the other hand the administrative file of Ichalkarnji maintained in Kolhapur Archives contains the following information.

" Shrimant Narayanrao Govind Alias Babasaheb Ghorpade, Pant Sachiv, a Kokanasth Brahmin, is the Jahagirdar of Ichalkaranji, was born in 1871 and succeeded to Gadi by adoption in 1876." <sup>4</sup>

3) Education :

After his adoption, Babasaheb started enjoying the stately life of a prince. His Primary and Secondary Education was done by special tutors at home. Mr. Marathe taught him Marathi. He had teachers like Modak, Gokhale, Rashingkar to teach him English, Later Gangadhar Pant Gadre also taught him English. Babasaheb's classmates in those days, were Babasaheb Patwardhan Mirajkar, Shrimant Abasaheb Pratinidhi Vishalgadkar, Shrimant Khardekar Sarlashakar, and Shrimant Akkalkotkar. All

these princes were being taught at Kolhapur under the vigilance of the political agent at Kolhapur State. The retired Karbhari of Ichalkaranji State, Raosaheb Rashingkar, was also a teacher of Babasaheb for sometime. In his opinion, though Babasaheb was clever, he had no talent to speak of. He used to study on the strength of his continuous efforts. He never dodged his study, he learnt every thing by heart. But he disliked writing. This was why, his hand writing could never improve. So far as the hand writing was concerned, Shrimant Abasaheb Vishalgadkar was superior to all other boys. These two were poles apart. Abasaheb was neat and tidy, whereas Babasaheb was careless and untidy since his childhood days. Shrimant Abasaheb took pains to keep his books and note-books in a very clear and tidy manner even in his old age.<sup>5</sup>

" His secondary school education was done under the tutorship of Candisaheb at Kolhapur. He passed his Matriculation examination in 1888, and was awarded " Alfred Scholarship . " from Rajaram College, Kolhapur. Babasaheb was generous enough to allow the scholarship to be given to the poor student, who stood next to him."<sup>6</sup>

He was in the Rajaram College for only one year. Afterwards, he went to Elphinstone College, Bombay. He had offered

English, History and Economics as his subjects for his B.A. Prof. Wordsworth taught him History. Prof. Oxenham also helped him a lot. At the same time, he used to remain present for some lectures on law. In those days Prof. Sethana took more care of the royal family students. Babasaheb used to go to the High Court to listen to some civil and criminal cases or appeals. He always stood first in his class. He had mastery over English both spoken and written.

Parents had taken care to juxtapose the bookish knowledge and education with practical education of the prince. He was made to go on small tours in the jagir and was well informed about the jagir. Horse riding was his favourite hobby. / " Shrimant Babasaheb was a voracious reader from his childhood. He had deep interest in Vedant, philosophy and history. He had attended an international exhibition on industry in 1884, at Calcutta." <sup>7</sup> |

Babasaheb could learn many things from clerks and Mujare. He learnt morality from them. At Kolhapur he used to be surrounded by the sons of Maratha Knights, who were his classmates and playmates. Babasaheb took his education not for the sake of degree, but as a means for getting knowledge. He had this practical approach towards education. <sup>8</sup>

" After his graduation, he took interest in the study of law, because he knew that it would be of great help to him in the administration. He, not only attended the lectures on law and read the books of Law, but also was in the habit of hearing of some cases in the Bombay High Court, regularly. He became well-versed in law and judicial procedure. He learnt everything for practical purposes." His stay at Bombay, helped him to come in contact with great personalities like advocate Mandalik, and Justice Telang. Justice Ranade's advice and his thoughts exerted great impact on Babasaheb's mind. He would approach these persons as a disciple and have a debate on various subjects and would get his difficulties solved. He had great reverence for Justice Ranade. Justice Ranade also gave him very nice treatment. It was Justice Ranade who taught him that " the King should be happy in the service of the humanity rather than his seeking happiness in his own luxury and fancies." <sup>9</sup> Ranade impressed upon him that the King is the trusty of the subject, and that he should lead the people and do good to them. /

Shrimant Babasaheb believed in the adage that, " travel and journey makes man rich in his knowledge." He loved to travel. He had travelled all over the north India. He wrote his diary regularly with meticulous details. While travelling, he used to have aesthetic pursuits. When he visited tourist

spots, he used to collect information about the fertility of the land, the trade and commerce, the economy and the trends in the people. When he happened to visit a particular state, he would get acquainted with political agent, and seek information about the administration in particular.

" After his return from England and Europe he wrote a book, called, 'Impressions of British life and Character. " This Book was praised by many prominent persons on account of its merits." <sup>10</sup>

#### 4) Babasaheb's Marriage :

Babasaheb got married, while he was taking his education. In those days early marriages was a tradition. Boys used to get married, when they were about eleven or twelve. Girls were married when they were seven to eight years old. If a girl of ten years was unmarried it used to be a shame on the part of parents. On such background we feel that Babasaheb got married a little late, that is, when he was sixteen. In fact his comparatively late marriage was a surprise on the tradition. <sup>11</sup>

The Second surprising thing about his marriage is that, he got married to a girl, hailing from a comparatively poor family of an advocate from Ahmednagar.

N.D.Tamhankar writes in his book, ' Shrimant Narayanrao Babasaheb Ghorpade, Ichalkaranji, " Babasaheb got married to Durgabai, the daughter of an advocate, Mehaniraj Paranjape from Nagar. The marriage took place on 28 March, 1886." <sup>12</sup>

Tamhankar refers to Babasaheb's wife as Sunderabai in his book. But her original name was Gangabai, yet she was famous as " Maisaheb " among the people. Maisaheb was a educated and well-behaved. She had a very good conduct. It was due to Maisaheb that the women in the Ichalkaranji principality were educated, to some extent.

" Maisaheb be got a son in December 1892, but he died very soon. She did not have any issue afterwards. " <sup>13</sup>

5) Babasaheb's accession to Ichalkaranji Gadi :

After finishing his education Babasaheb became mature in all aspects. He was awarded accession to Ichalkaranji Gadi on 18th June 1892 by the Government, which was in the fitness of the things. Babasaheb deserved it. Babasaheb took his charge as the ruler of Ichalkaranji principality in the year 1892, and he continued to be in the office till 1943./ Till its merger, he ruled Ichalkaranji principality ably.

He took initiative in almost all aspects of administration and instituted some new ways in the Ichalkaranji principality.

After finishing his education, Babasaheb was to get accession to the Ichalkaranji Gadi. But he ~~had not~~ decided whether he should accept it or not. To him accession to the throne meant servility to the superiors. Superiors, according to him, were always devoid of sympathy. And working under the superior would never allow his dreams to be fulfilled. He would have to eat humble pie every now and then. Such, different doubts haunted his mind. He was not ready to accept the throne, because he felt that it was better for him to keep aloof from all such matters.<sup>14</sup>

" Babasaheb expressed all his thought to his then adviser Justice Ranade. Justice Ranade did not agree with what Babasaheb said. On the other hand he told Babasaheb that though, the scope of his authority was limited, there was a lot which could be done with a principality in hand, India then was under the British rule, the local governments were busy making the British happy. According to Ranade some power is better than no power at all. He told Babasaheb to be satisfied what he had. He further, told him that though his jagir was small, though he

had little jurisdiction in Civil and Criminal cases, he had been compensated with free hand in land revenue. In addition to that he was at liberty so far as the departments of education health, trade and commerce were concerned. He told him that, he would be able to render services and would do good to nearly seventy five thousand people. In spite all this, he agreed that, to the ambitious man like Babasaheb, servility would mean confinement to little area. Finally, Ranade advised him to accept this challenge and prove his merits." 15

Babasaheb yielded at last to Justice Ranade and he took his office at the age of twenty two.

Analysis of the Source Material

The Sources used in the study of reforms made by Narayanrao Babasaheb Ghorpade of Ichalkaranji can be divided into two, viz. published sources and unpublished sources.

1) Published Sources :

The first biography of Babasaheb, was written by N.D. Tamhankar, who was his servant in the year, 1951. " Mr. J.L. Goheen was the administrator, of Ichalkaranji jagir upto 1934. He has written a book, named " Glimpses of Ichalkaranji," published during the lifetime of Babasaheb, in 1934.

H.G.Franks has written the book, " The story of Ichalkaranji, in 1930.

' Maha-Rashtra ' a magazine published in 1942, contains articles written by different persons who knew the work of Babasaheb closely.

" Ichalkaranji Sansthanacha Itihas " written by V.V. Khare, " Maharashtra State Gazetteers, Kolhapur district " by Government of Maharashtra, and " A brief history of the State of Ichalkaranji, printed at the Aryabhushan Press, Poona, these are the published sources.

2) Unpublished sources :

All these authors have not used the unpublished material in their writing. In the dissertation unpublished sources maintained in Kolhapur archives have been used to throw light on the reforms made by Babasaheb Ghorpade of Ichalkaranji.

,0'

N O T E S

1. N.D.Tamhankar, Shrimant Narayanarao Babasaheb Ghorpade, Ichalkaranji, pp.12,13.
2. V.V.Khare, Ichalkaranji Sansthanacha Itihas, p.183.
3. Author Anonymous, Shrimant Narayanarao Babasaheb Ghorpade Adhipati Ichalkaranji in Maharashtra, edited by P.R.Ambike, 1942, p.29.
4. Kolhapur Archives, Ichalkaranji Administration file No.98, p.67
5. N.D.Tamhankar, op.cit, pp. 5,6.
6. Author Anonymous, op.cit, p.29.
7. Ibid, p. 29.
8. N.D.Tamhankar, op.cit, p. 9.
9. Ibid, pp. 9,10.
10. Ibid, p.11
11. Ibid,p11
12. V.V.Khare, op.cit, p.184
13. N.D.Tamhankar, op.cit, p.68
14. Ibid, pp. 68,69.