

CHAPTER – I

**INTRODUCTORY
SHORT HISTORY OF
KOLHAPUR STATE
(1710-1949)**

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‘Kolhapur’ history may be divided into three periods, early Hindu Period. partly mythic, and partly historic, reaching to about A.D. 1347; Musalman period lasting from A.D. 1347 to about 1700; and Maratha period since 1700. Kolhapur would seem to be one of the very old cities in the country.

The separate ‘Karveer’ state was established by Tarabai, the widow of Rajaram in 1710 and this state lasted upto 1st March, 1949 when it was merged into Indian Union. Shahu Chhatrapati who ruled Kolhapur from 1884 to 1922 was the 9th ruler of Kolhapur state history there are two great personalities one was Tarabai because she fought bravely against ^{the} mighty Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb and protected Maratha Raj founded by Shivaji and subsequently, she established independent separate Kolhapur Raj in 1710. The another important personality was Shahu Chhatrapati who was great social-revolutionary ruler. He introduced so many social, educational, economic reforms in his state and Kolhapur like Mysore and Baroda state became one of the progressive native states in the 1st quarter of 20th century in modern India.

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Some scholars and historians studied Shahu's social, economical and educational work in detail. But unfortunately no scholar yet has attempted the progress of '*Public Works Department*' under Shahu's era. Shahu was a great builder. During his reign he constructed so many public buildings, dams, roads, bridges which latter on became a boon to the people of Kolhapur district. Radhanagari Dam, Shahu Mill, establishment of Shahupuri and Jaysingpur settlements. Construction of Palace theatre, erection of Shahu Khasbag Wrestling Arena are the living monuments of Shahu Chhatrapati.

Therefore in this M.Phil. dissertation a humble attempt has been made to study the progress and development of Public Works Department under Shahu's era by using original documents like Administrative report of Kolhapur state from the year 1884-1922, Huzur Tharav, Books, P.W.D. records, Kolhapur Gazetteers etc.

To understand the history of Kolhapur state one has to study the background of Kolhapur state. Here it is not wrong to give some history of Kolhapur state in brief.

Ancient History of Kolhapur :

From the records and antiquities available to us it appears that Kolhapur was one of the oldest culture breeding centres of Western India, Kolhapur is known as the Dakshina Kashi or the

Kashi of the South, the ancient temple of Mahalaxmi is being the main attraction. Kolhapur was one of the oldest religious, educational and trade centres in Western India, on the basis of the material unearthed by the 'archaeologist' it can be safely asserted that the antiquity of Kolhapur goes back atleast to the third century B.C.¹

During ancient period Kolhapur and its adjoining area was ruled and controlled by various early political dynasties like, Satvanas, Vakatakas, Chalukas of Badami, Rastrakutas of Mal Khed, Chalukas of Kalyani, Shilharas of Kolhapur, Karad and Yadavas of Devgiri.²

Fortunately the inscriptions and coins of these dynasties are found in and around Kolhapur which shed light on glorious early history of Kolhapur area.

Medieval History :

After the fall of Yadavas of Devgiri in the 1318 A.D. this province went under the control of Bahamani rulers of Gulbarga.³ Hasangangu Bahamani, the founder of Bahamani Dynasty personally undertook expedition to the West and halted in Kolhapur itself in around 1352 A.D.⁴ The rule of Bahamani lasted over this area from 1347 to 1490 A.D. and some Muslim monuments, inscriptions, coins, of this period are found in Kolhapur District.⁵

In 1490 A.D. Bahamani Kingdom was divided into five Dynasties and Yusuf Adilshah became the founder of Adilshahi Dynasty which ruled from Bijapur. Adilshahi Kingdom lasted from 1490 to 1686 A.D.⁶ Adilshahi rulers established their sway over Kolhapur, Panhala and Vishalgad since 1490 A.D. Panhala was the summer capital of Adilshahi rulers and some Adilshahi rulers frequently visited Panhala and stayed for some time here. Number of Persian inscriptions are found in Kolhapur, Panhala and Vishalgad.⁷ Some buildings and public offices were built by Adilshah in Panhala. These historical monuments speak about the history of Adilshahi in this area.

Shivaji and Kolhapur :

When the great Shivaji entered upon his work of creating a nation and founding of empire, the hill-forts in the Kolhapur territory were too favourably situated for his purpose not to attract his notice. It was not till 1659 however that Shivaji seems to have taken possession of Kolhapur and Panhala.⁸ Shivaji after having overpowered Afzal Khan at Pratapgada made a dash southwards and took possession of Panhala and its neighbouring Pavangada. From this point he reduced Rangna and Khelna or Visalgada together with the other forts in the district above and below the sahyadris. He soon made use of his new acquisitions. After defeating Rustum Zaman and Fazal Khan in a battle fought at

Raibag, a few miles east of Kolhapur, he assembled his forces at Visalgada and thence carried on operations in the Konkan.⁹ But immediately Siddhi Johar, A Adilshahi noble marched against Shivaji and besieged Panhala fort on 2nd March, 1660 and conquered it.¹⁰ Subsequently Shivaji recaptured Panhala again on 6th March, 1673 and Panhala along with Kolhapur area remained under the control of Maratha rule permanently.¹¹

Towards the end of his reign Shivaji used Panhala as a place of confinement for his eldest son Sambhaji who was there when his father died in 1680.¹²

During Sambhaji's Reign and Rajaram's Reign generally some parts of the Kolhapur area was under the control of Maratha Chhatrapati. In the year 1700 Rajaram's sad demise took place and his widow Tarabai took the reign of administration in her hands in 1700 A.D. in the name of her minor son Shivaji who was only 4 years old.¹³ In 1707 Aurangzeb died at Ahmednagar and his successor's realised Shahu who was in Moghul prison since 1689 A.D. which led to the division of Maratha states into two Maratha states, Karveer and Satara states.

History of Chhatrapati of Kolhapur (1710 to 1884 A.D.) :

The separate Maratha state of Kolhapur was founded by Tarabai the daughter-in-law of Chhatrapati and the wife of

Rajaram in the name of her son Shivaji-I in 1710 and the seat of this second Maratha state was at Panhala.¹⁴ This kingdom of Panhala later on came to be called as Karveer or Kolhapur kingdom which lasted upto 1949 A.D. when it merged into the Indian Union.

Shivaji-I (1700 to 1714 A.D.) the son of Tarabai and Rajaram was the first Chhatrapati of Kolhapur. But by the bloodless Palace Revolution of 1714 A.D. Tarabai and her son Shivaji-I were removed from power by Sambhaji-II, the son of Rajaram and Rajasbai.¹⁵

Sambhaji (1714-1760 A.D.) second son of Rajaram became king in 1714 after a successful revolution and he also continued the struggle for supremacy against Shahu of Satara. Their rivalry ended only with the partition of kingdom effected by the treaty of Warna concluded on April 13, 1731.¹⁶ By this treaty Shahu recognized Kolhapur as a distinct and independent state it was agreed by the treaty that the river Warna would be the boundary between the two states.

Subsequently, after Sambhaji-II Kolhapur state was ruled by Shivaji-II (1762-1818 A.D.) Sambhaji-IV alias Abasaheb (1813-1821 A.D.) Shahaji alias Buwasaheb (1822-1838), Shivaji-III alias Babasaheb (1838-1866 A.D.), Rajaram (1866-1870 A.D.), Shivaji-IV (1870-1883 A.D.), Rajarshi Shahu (1884-1922 A.D.) and

Rajaram (1922-1940 A.D.), Shivaji (1941-1946) and lastly Shahaji (1947-49).¹⁷ It is in that the year 1949 Kolhapur state merged into the Indian Union.

The Relations Between the English East India Company and the Kolhapur State :

Britain came in contact with India through the East India company which was granted a charter by Queen Elizabeth in 1600 A.D. After the death of Mōghūl Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707 A.D. The English and the French East India Companies fought between themselves for the Indian trade. In course of time, the English East India Company was able to establish its commercial hegemony. It became the largest single promoter of this country's foreign trade. The desire for a fuller and unimpeded economic exploitation whetted the appetite for political domination and unimpeded economic exploitation whetted the appetite for political domination and the trading centres, known as "factories" were converted into forts and the English merchants into warriors. As a result of the three Deccan Wars of 1746-1748, 1748-1754 and 1756-1763, the English drove the French out of South India and became the dominant force there.

The power of East India Company was rising in India. Therefore, Sambhaji (1714-1760) maintained good relations with the foreigners. He entered into treaties with the English, the

Portuguese and the Dutch. By the treaties he allowed them to carry on trade and gave places in the coastal strip of the Kokan.

During the reign of Shivaji¹⁶ (1762-1813) Kolhapur established better relations with the East India Company by concluding a treaty in 1765 A.D.¹⁸ Another Treaty was entered into the interest of British trade and was signed in 1792 A.D.¹⁹ with the Company.

But Shivaji-II had to conclude humiliating treaty with the English on October 8, 1812.²⁰ This treaty virtually marked the end of the independent existence of Kolhapur state. By the last clause the Chhatrapati had to accept subordinate position to the English. Shivaji-II did not live long to suffer this indignity. He died on April 24, 1813.²¹

The next Chhatrapati Shahaji alias Buwasaheb (1822-1838) again had to sign two treaties with the British, one in 1826 and another on March 15, 1829.²² The Kolhapur Army was restricted only to 400 horse and 800 footmen. A permanent British force was stationed near Kolhapur. The old administrators were replaced by new ones who enjoyed the confidence of the Company. This treaty of 1829 marks the final eclipse of the Kolhapur power.²³

Dawn of Modernisation of the Kolhapur State and Appointment of D.C. Graham as a First Political Agent (1844)

Generally the Chief Ministers of Kolhapur belonged to the respectable families of Kolhapur. But for the first time during the reign of Shivaji-III alias Babasaheb (1838-66) in 1844 the British decided to have their man as a Chief Minister. Daji Krishna Pandit was the first Minister appointed by the British. The appointment gave a rude shock to the people of Kolhapur, who looked upon their state as an independent entity. The result of this step was the rebellion of the Gadkaris in 1844 which was ruthlessly suppressed by the British Army within a few days and ultimately in January 1845 a Political Superintendent was appointed to administer Kolhapur state Major D.C. Graham was the first Political Superintendent of Kolhapur state and Daji Krishna again resumed the charge of civil administration.²⁴ Thus Chhatrapati of Kolhapur thereafter lost their independent status.

Among the measures adopted for the administration of Kolhapur was the appointment of a British Officer as a Political Superintendent. Previously to this the political supervision of the territory had been vested, first in the Principal Collector of Dharwad and afterwards in the Collector of Belagavi who was also Political Agent in the Southern Maratha country. Experience, however, showed that Kolhapur required the undivided attention of

a British Officer on the spot, and Captain D.C. Graham of the Bombay Army was appointed ^{1st} first Political Superintendent. He had a difficult task before him. The principality was overwhelmed with debt as, in addition to the debt incurred by its rulers, the cost of suppressing the insurrection was charged to Kolhapur and had to be paid to the British Government by instalments. Education was almost unheard of and the arrangements for the administration of justice were very imperfect. There were a large number of persons, too, in the state who despised any other occupation but that of carrying arms and who, if left unemployed, would form a class dangerous to the community. Such persons were provided with occupation by being enlisted in a local corps which was raised and disciplined by British Officers and which on more than one occasion did good service. Arrangements were made to liquidate by degrees the debts of the state and the administration was carried on as economically as was consistent with due provision for the requirements of justice and education.²⁵

Modernisation of Kolhapur began in the regime of Babasaheb (1838 to 1866 A.D.). In 1848 two Government schools were started in Kolhapur, within seven years a school was established for female education. A public library and reading room was opened. Major Graham started the first public

dispensary in 1848. For conservancy and such other work a Municipal Board came into being in 1854.²⁶

Major Graham was the first Superintendent. Daji Krishna Pandit was again the charge of civil administration. Major Graham prepared a report about the history and the social and political conditions of Kolhapur which is yet accepted as a fine specimen of research.

As early as 1844 when the British took over the Superintendent of the State during the regime of Babasaheb Maharaj administrative changes were made on the line followed in the British Provinces. Thus the modern development of Kolhapur can be said to have started when the British obtained political suzerainty in 1844.

In 1845 a British Officer was to be appointed as the Head of administration and invested with wide military and civil powers. His official designation was 'The Political Superintendent' of Kolhapur.²⁷ The Political superintendent arrived in 1845. He was Major Douglas Graham, who later compiled that invaluable record of contemporary Kolhapur, "The Statistical Report" Daji Krishna Pandit who was now cleared of all charges, was appointed his deputy.

Reforms of D.C. Graham :

Then Graham set about creating an administrative machine after the pattern prevailing in British India. Daji Krishna Pandit was appointed the Chief Revenue Officer. A Civil Court conducted by a Sardar Ameen and two Munsifs, and a Criminal Court headed by a Nyayadhish, were set up. Balajipant Gokhale was Kolhapur's first Sardar Ameen, and Janardhan Hari Kirtane the first Nyayadhish. The state was divided into six pethas and a Revenue Collector, or Mamlatdar, empowered to try cases of petty crime, was appointed to each petha. The city of Kolhapur had a Kotwal (Police commissioner) and each petha a Foujdar (Sub-Inspector) and all were provided with squads of Policemen to assist them in maintaining law and order.²⁸

Statistical Report of Kolhapur Principality :

Having organized the administration to his satisfaction, and with most of the ex-rebels resettled, Major Douglas Graham took up the work of compiling his Statistical Report. Everything was strange to them, and they had been put to administer enormous tracts of land almost single-handedly, and it is to their credit that they were anxious to know everything about the land and the people they were expected to govern. So they compiled statistics. 'The Report' has maps, detailed descriptions of forts and buildings complete with plans, a brief history of Kolhapur, long accounts of

the various religions, castes, creeds, customs and conventions, fascimile copies of archaeological inscriptions, drawings of agricultural implements, the rates of chillies and ginger per seer and per pylee and the meanings of the words 'seer' and 'pylee' and page after page of tables of unbearably exhaustive facts and figures. In 1853, Major Graham completed his report and went to England on leave, where he died.²⁹

Successor of Babasaheb Maharaja :

Babasaheb Maharaja during whose reign British started the modernisation of Kolhapur state died in 1866 and he was succeeded by Rajaram who ruled from 1866-1870 A.D. Unfortunately this ruler did not live long and expired in 1870 without leaving any important work. The next ruler was Shivaji-IV who ruled the Kolhapur from 1870-1883 but this prince also met unfortunate death in prison in 1883 and a new dawn was opened with the adoption of Shahu Chhatrapati.³⁰

Glorious Reign of Shahu Chhatrapati (1884-1922) :

Rajashree Shahu Chhatrapati was the 9th Chhatrapati of Kolhapur state and great social revolutioner, he was the link between Mahatma Phule and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar his period was important in the history of Kolhapur state.

Yeshwantrao, the elder son of the Raja of Kagal was adopted on March 17, 1884 and was named as Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. he was born on July 26th, 1874. On April 2nd, 1894 he was invested with the full ruling rights.³¹ In 1902 he visited England to attend the coronation of Edward VII.

Shahu Chhatrapati took a great interest in education. He built a number of hostels in Kolhapur where students of the backward classes were given free accommodation. Because of his love of education he was invited to preside over the Maratha Educational Conference in 1917. He was one of the leading social reformer of Maharashtra of his times. His great work for the abolition of untouchability, has been a high water mark of his career. He hated the caste-ridden Hindu orthodox order and did his best to bring about social equality. He was a great patron of the *Satyashodhak Samaj* which aimed at a casteless society. To strike at the Brahmin monopoly in religious matters, he established the Shivaji Vaidic School in 1920. For the same purpose he created the *Gadi* of the *Kshatra Jagad Guru*. His love for wrestling and other manly sports is well known. It would not be wrong to say that he completed the modernisation of Kolhapur. He was a source of inspiration to a number of Maratha youths. Generations of the educated Marathas trained under him took active part in the social and political movements in Maharashtra.

His younger son Prince Shivaji had an accidental death in 1918. He could not bear this shock for a long time and died on May 6th, 1922 at Bombay.³²

Thus this is the brief political survey of Kolhapur history. Since its inception to the sad demise of Rajashree Shahu Chhatrapati (1710 to 1922) since 1844 Kolhapur state was under the control of political agent appointed by British Government. This political agent was supervising authority. Kolhapur state was not sovereign state but vassal state since 1813. But actual direct administration of Kolhapur state ~~was~~ came under their controlled since 1844. After the appointment of British Political Agent in Kolhapur state the modernisation of Kolhapur state started. All the old departments of Kolhapur state were reconstituted on the model of British administration. The Kolhapur state administration was divided into three following major heads :

1. General Administration under the headship of Diwan.
2. Revenue Department under the headship of Chief Revenue Officer (C.R.O.).
3. Judicial Department under Chief Justice.

These three departments were again sub-divided, and Public Works Department was included in General Department under the control of the Diwan. The immediate Officer of P.W.D. was Chief Executive Engineer of the State. This Chief Executive Engineer

was assisted by other staffs such as Assistant Chief Engineer, Supervisor, Overseer, Clerks, Tracer, Peons, and other technical staff.

The Public Works Department during Shahu's period was one of the major and leading department which carried minor and major projects for the benefit of state subject, Shahu Maharaja was benevolent ruler and paid much attention towards this department. The actual major and minor works done by this department during Shahu's Period will narrate in the subsequent chapters of this works.

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