CHAPTER IV
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

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SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

4.1. Introduction:

A period of decade is woth mentioning to describe social and economic life. The entire decade was full of difficulties as well as challenges. In this decade Sambhaji not only administered but also strengthened the public administration of the period for attaining maximum welfare of the subject or Rayats. Shivaji had established people’s settlement and Sambhaji continued it smoothly. The most significant aspect of Sambhaji’s good governance was based on people’s participation in the system. He was able to infuse new spirit in the system. The study of social and economic life in the period of Sambhaji can be conducted on the basis of sources and evidences both primary and secondary.

The objectives, analysis of community life of the period can be made on the basis of available sources in a systematic way. The economic history of any period in Indian history cannot be examined without understanding of the social life perfectly. A network of responsible social system presented in the period. Hence a clear cut close analysis of interlock of social and economic life has been made in this chapter. A sharp analysis of the inter relationship between these two aspects has been unexplored here. In each period social system develops its own economic resources and professions suitable for the continuity of social system. The period of Sambhaji was not exception to this theory. All these aspects which have been carefully studied here reveal different dimensions of the period under discussion. In order to highlight these problems a new outlook has been developed in this research work for better understanding of the socio economic life Social and economic life is closely related to each other and they are inseparable from each other. In this chapter it would be evaluated how Sambhaji fought against adverse social and economic conditions prevailing at the time.

After invasion of Mogul King Aurangzeb the entire Maharashtra was witnessing turmoil. In the adverse conditions the common man was sufferer of the conditions. Hence social and economic aspects of contemporary life will be explained here. Different aspects of rural life, arts,
crafts and festivals and social relationship among various groups as well as trade and commerce and economic aspects will also be carefully studied here. All these socio-economic aspects being interrelated among each other will be unfolded in sociological angle.

The subaltern approach will be very much befitting. On this background to highlight social and economic life of the period under study will be conducted.

For such a study both primary and secondary sources will be used here. The manifestation of different aspects of the life of Maratha people will be documented on the basis of authentic sources.

Sambhaji was able to overcome many difficulties like drought due to his perfect administrative vision as well as program of action he launched. He had a legacy of strong and well-built Marathi state and economy by Shivaji the Great. He not only strengthened the social peace and harmony, but also he had promoted a strong base for economic growth and prosperity through his vision and implementation. The progress that Maratha state achieved during Sambhaji’s turbulent decade was an effect of his sound politics and actions. He had developed Maharashtra Dharma in a systematic manner and imbibed it in public life. The Maratha informal education through saints and prophets was continued by him and he tried to strengthen the value system on which Shivaji’s Swarajya was based. The true base of the Maratha’s social life was on the basis of well-built and well-organized village life. Village as a unit was very much compact and sound and had a healthy system based on ethical values and well-built social and economic life that Maratha states had witnessed during Sambhaji’s period.

A.R. Kulkarni has appreciated this with special reference to the period of Shivaji and also Sambhaji. P.C. Joshi’s studies on Sambhaji’s administration amply testify this phenomenon.

The study of social and economic life in the period of Sambhaji is based on his letters to the Maratha generals as well as his correspondence with Portuguese and English East India Company and Sanskrit sources which have been recently brought to light. The archaival material which has been published by earlier scholars requires new interpretations based on sociological perspective. Here we mean inter-socital relationships between Brahmins and Kshtriyas, between Kshtriyas and Vaishyas, vis a vis relations of upper caste with lower caste can be examined for understanding the dynamics of social life in the period. Further it is true that the growth of
economic institutions is based on their dependence on social life without understanding this interplay between social and economic life we cannot present a totally new picture of contemporary western Deccan in general and Maharashtra in particular. The benefits of Shivaji’s and Sambhaji’s administration were also received by parts of Karanataka and Tamil Nadu. Hence a broader span of understanding is required to examine currents and cross currents in the social and economic life.

Every process in history is a social process and social interactions are very basic in understanding the economic spectrum of life. Hence understanding this interplay is very much significant in this connection.

The modern sociological approach testified in the science of histosirical writings reveal that the sociological formation of Indian society on Varna system is very basic in the geneis of rebuilding of social life. In the period of Sambhaji the traditional philosophical system was contined. However, every effort was made to strengthen it to fight against the foreign invaders. Attempts of reorganization of Indian society were effectively made by the state to face the new challenges which were like religious conversion, taxes on festivals, as well as uncertainty in social life, which were witnessed by other regions in the Northern India. Chhatrapati Shivaji and Sambhaji both of them tried to avoid Islamic influence on Indian social life in the form of language, customs as well as Islamic traditions in the development of social and economic institutions. Sambhaji’s book Budhbhushan and Shivaji’s book Rajya Vyawahar Kosh both of them illustrate a common feature that avoiding of feudal influence and protecting original genious ideas in the Hindu polity was essence of the state craft and every sincere effort was made to reshape social life to make it more vibal and vibrant to face any foreign calamity. Shivaji made a crusade against such invation and Sambhaji continued it with rigour and strength.

Shivaji and Sambhaji fought bravely against cultural exploitation made by moguls. They could protect Hindu religion in their Hindvi Swaraj.

This theory has been endorsed in the foregoing pages while understanding facets of social and economic life.
4.2. Sociological approach to the study

The study of Maharashtra’s socio economic life under Sambhaji cannot be complete without understanding sociological perspective. Historical events are part of cross section of society. When a historian describes social problems, he has to critically examine social relationship. It has been rightly observed that while understanding social currents and undercurrents, sociologists believe that the things are not as they seem. The truth behind this logic is that the revelation of life then becomes a more realistic probe made by historian to reveal them in a more factual manner. The spirit of any historian depends on how he absorbs, discovers, and describes real society and social life based on historical sources. Many a time things are not as they seen on the surface. Then historian by questioning social realities describes the bitter truth in the form of history. Each historian develops his own sociological perspective. The historian with his creative force reveals life in a greater efficiency, greater ability and understand social fabric in a realistic manner. Historians have been largely successful in portraying these social issues through their works. The social upheavals and cultural turmoil, which is absorbed by historian depends on their creative abilities of the depiction of truth. Understanding of social situation depends on participant observation of a historian in a realistic manner. Medieval society was feudal and traditional. Religious feelings were base of this social system. To put the same in the words of Ron Matson “Society, in all of its complexity, has multiple layers. Much like an onion, what we see on the surface tells us little about what lies beneath.” (1) Historians have tried to unfold these layers in a very careful manner. The period of Sambhaji was of turmoil and tensions. V.K.Bhave has rightly observed that there was not much difference between cities and villages during Maratha period. Cities were in thousands population and there was little difference in the facilities between cities and villages.” (2) Bhave further observed that “Social life was peaceful and coherent. People were happy and prosperous. Much of the life was based on agro based products and services. On one side aristocrats and noble men were leading affluent life and learned Brahmins as well as folk artists were dependent on this rich class, which was creamy layer.”(3)

It has been observed that “Having a sociological imagination will truly be a gift that comes from the discipline of sociology, but a gift we give ourselves through increasing
awareness about society and our personal lives.” (4) Such an awareness can be examined by studying sources of social history.

Social stratification systems create ‘layers’ of people in society based on the unequal distribution of scarce rewards. Social classes are the relative position of people based on such things as income, education and occupation.” (5) But in medieval period there was good deal of social exchange and economic cooperation among people which was a factor of social progress.

Maratha’s domination began from the period of Maloji-Shahaji’s period and it continued during Shivaji’s period. Social life in Deccan was comparatively peaceful than that of north due to Maratha’s protective shield. (6)

The sociological perspective can help to understand what forces played on social matrix of the medieval period under Sambhaji.

It has been observed that “Social structure, most sociologists agree, is the enduring patterns in society that place people into relative positions based on important characteristics like age, income, gender, race, or ethnicity.” (7)

The social structure was based on agrarian life and people were living in villages in more number and they were happy because their needs were ably met and they were able to satisfy themselves. (8)

It is true that “Social interaction is a complex, subtle process whereby people initiate and respond to one another based on commonly understood symbols.” (9)

In the period of Sambhaji Saffron flag, Maharashtra dharma and temples of Mahadeo and Hanuman were symbols of socialization, against the mogul exploitation and religious hegemony. To understand more correctly in the Encyclopedia of world history, it has been observed that “Social history is a branch of history that documents the living and working conditions of people rather than affairs of state. Only in the early 20th century did historians begin to study how people lived and worked in the past.”(10) The present study of social life has been conducted in this viewpoint.
The sociological approach provides some basic principles to understand the social system in an effective manner. The sociologists have pinpointed that “The vital people, who search for understanding and justice with an intense desire to make the world a better place for everyone and world needs as much help as it can get to become a more humane and just place for all its inhabitants.” (11) Every period of history or any ruler tries to shape the time in this manner.

Further it has been noted that “The promise of sociology (Berger 1963) is to illuminate the social world such that people can understand it and help themselves to a life lived with greater efficacy, a greater ability to understand and control their lives.” (12) The period of Sambhaji of the Maratha period implies the same phenomenon. Social life was well controlled and well developed.

Sociology is much younger discipline and can be testified to the historical period also. (13) Medieval social system was extension of ancient system. After the Vakataka period, four varnas were transformed into caste system and they were getting social treatment as per their status. (14) Changes in the social life of Indian village can be examined by understanding role, and functions of different castes in the medieval period. It is true that Indian social structure was agrarian throughout the ages and social organizations and economic institutions were corollary for agricultural system. Sambhaji’s period was also not an exception to this. We have to study socio economic life in the frame work of these limitations. Total rural reconstruction and replanning of village life was not possible in the period of a decade. However, every effort was made by the ruler to infuse a new spirit in the system to make it more powerful to face the foreign challenge. After 11th century series of states in the North and western region were collapsing one after another, but it was only Chhatrapati Shivaji who brought socio economic change through Hindvi Swaraj in a very short span of 30 years. Sambhaji had this legacy which he continued with great confidence. In spite of social stratification caste dynamics and differences both Shivaji and Sambhaji were able to change Indian society by catalizaing the process of socialization, which was responsible for making sacrifice, dedication and devotion for the betterment of Indian society and nation. This can be examined in this chapter.

Thus it is clear that economic history can be newly presented in the sociological perspective. The changes and reforms in the economic system are depended how people at large respond to the system. In the Maharashtra though there was drought and s---yet economic system was
properly lined up by ruler. The entire system was so well oriented and geared up that every effort was made so that the common man is benefied and his interests are protected properly. The entire system was so effectively adopted that the people at large are benefitted and new vision is rightly implemented. The study of economic life in the sociological perspective can be conducted in such a way that the common man is benefited. While adopting sociological approach in the building of economic history the following aspects must be carefully observed:

- The economic system is depended on social system
- The changes in the economic system can be very well studied by observing the social system.
- People respond to economic reforms by reshaping the social system in the prevailing conditions.
- A careful and critical analysis of economic policies can be made by obtaining the social responses by people at large.
- The sociological phenomenon of economic organism is thus closely linked up with the analysis of social aspirations of the people. A critical analysis of social facts can be conducted in a systematic manner in this way by analyzing older social systems in new perspective by a historian.

Thus, all these dimensions have been very well presented and carefully examined in this work in nutshell by developing new sociological strategy to the present work. Different aspects of social life can be described as a background to the subject matter here in this chapter. The overall socio economic conditions in the pre-Sambhaji period can be described below.

4.3. Maharashtra in socio economic turmoil

The period of Sambhaji was marked with period of crisis and conflict. The Moguls had concentrated to wipe out the Hindu state with every effort and they were planning route the Maratha system from the grass roots. However, Sambhaji was very much dedicated and devoted to Maharashtradharma. In one of the letters to Sambhaji by Saint Ramdas it has been appealed to raise the state based on Maratha patriotic values, which were a solid foundation of Maratha state. It would be interesting to study how Sambhaji was able to overcome social and economic problems prevailing at the time.
The period of Sambhaji was full of social upheavals and economic crises. On one side Mogul King Aurangzeb was attacking the Maratha culture and on the other side the drought conditions were creating scarcity of water and food, which was a challenging task. Sambhaji had received legacy of well administered Swarajya under Shivaji. However, after his assisination on thrown there were two divisions in the Maratha state. Sambhaji had to fight war of succession and he was able to establish himself as one of the able rulers of great confidence. What Balaji Awaji Chitnis has described Sambhaji in his Bakhar which was written under the orders of Rajaram, presented a biased picture. Kamal Gokhale in her book Shivputra Sambhaji has pointed out that there was injustice against Sambhaji to describe him as a ruler, who was not just and vigilant in administration. On the contrary he was an able ruler with perfect vision of administration. He was sincere, responsible and stern administrator. (15) Further P.S.Joshi in his book Chhatrapati Sambhaji has praised Sambhaji’s administration and pointed that “Chhatrapati Sambhaji, his ministers and officers took interest in supporting the cultural and religious activity in the Swarajya. They also honored and encouraged learning in the Swarajya by granting lands, grains, and money to the scholars.” (16) Inspite of economic problems Sambhaji had devoted his money and resources for the purpose of learning and education. It shows great care taken by Sambhaji for the rebuilding the Maratha nation though situation in the Swaraj was uncertain and shakey. In this turmoil also Sambhaji had built moral of the society by resetting social and economic order which has been explained in the foregoing pages.

Sambhaji had treated drought situation with great care and caution. He strengthened the Maratha revenue system. He reorganized Maratha social set up based on the values of Maharashtradharma. He was able to unite the society based on national values. Inspyte of social divisions and differences, Sambhaji’s effort was to restructure Maratha society effectively to face the challenge of Mogul invasion. S.P.Sen has observed that Patils were on the top of the pyramids and they were enjoying civil and administrative powers.

Sambhaji was able to unite these Maratha offices for strengthening the state. In the early phase he was successful but in the last few years he was brought under difficulties by own men. It has been noticed that Shirke, one of the powerful Maratha general was playing conspiracy against Sambhaji and he tried to corner Kavi Kalasha who was diplomatic advisor of Sambhaji. (Russell R.V. “Tribes and caste of Central provices of India” published under the orders of the
central provinces administration in favour vol.I, Bombay, 1925, p-249.) Thus internal differences in the Maratha state added problems of Chhatrapati Sambhaji and the state went in turmoil. At the last phase Mogal king Aurrangzeb rightly used this situation and he was following the policy of divide and rule for his success. It is said that when Sambhaji was at Sangameshwar, in the house of Desai, to resolve the revenue crisis information about his stay, Mogal side could get it due to internal differences in the Maratha state.

After the death of Chhatrapati Shivaji, there prevailed dispute in the house itself about the successor. Sambhaji rocked Rajaram and wanted to get the power. After making a struggle and after subsiding his counterparts, he came to power. However the social and economic condition during this period of transition was also uncertain. In the period of transition the Moguls were watching wisely to entr in the fray. They were eager to take benefit of this situation.

On this background it is clear that the socio economic condition of the state was precarious. By providing security and stability Sambhaji had to set priorities. This was most suitable period for capturing the Maratha state. The condition of the Maratha state was like a divided house. The safety, security and prosperity of the state was under question. The significant aspect of the Maratha state was that right from the beginning of the reign of Sambhaji, the rains were insufficient and the entire state was slowly turning towards the drought situation. The division in the house of Sambhaji was a dangerous phenomenon and the Maratha state was marching ahead with full confusion. Due to Sambhaji’s sincere efforts the state was undergoing through many changes. Top priority was given by the king for rebuilding or monitoring the power of the Maratha state. The following credit points must be given Sambhaji for smooth and systematic approach of the said Maratha king. Thus the challenges can be described in the process by illustrating three major facts:

- Maratha administration under Sambhaji was strong and sound.
- The problems of young generation were solved on top priority.
- The entire state was witnessing change for better governance and sound administration

Thus Sambhaji was trying his level best to provide peace and glory. Hence all the efforts made by Sambhaji were responsible for the stability and peace of the state.
Now on this background different aspects of social life can be documented as below.

4.4. Aspects of social life

In any period society consists of certain organisms, system and factions. The social milieu and norms regulate the social system. In India the Vedic society was based on Varna and Ashrama system. The same was diluted and transformed into caste system. The period of Sambhaji was also dominated by the traditional system and influence. In the end of the Peshwa period at the time of British administration, T.N. Atre wrote a book “Gavgada”, which was a systematic document of the village system. The different aspects of social life were interlinked and there existed unity in diversity in village life. The family was an important segment in social system and it was shaped by certain values. These values were governend by earlier norms of Smrutis and Sutras. The study of social life can not be complete without understanding women’s characters and salient features of the medieval period. The Maratha society was having a strong base of norms and values which geared the social life. In order to study the social life of the period, there is a need to look at the system with open and unprejudiced manner. In the early period of Chhatrapati Shivaji, the founder of Hindavi Swarajya the cultural values and prosperity of Maharashtra Dharma was developed by saints and prophets. The intense influence of these values throws light on social life of the period. The period of Sambhaji was also not an exception to this. The social aspects of life in the decade were having effect of the earlier phase and it also influenced later course of history. In this section important salient features of social system can be studied to pin point the issue. The significant aspects of social life which can be traced as noteworthy and minute have been documented here with proper evidences in a neat manner. Thus a careful study of all these aspects revealed that there was a good deal of social cohesion in the period. The village life was controlled with various norms and regulatory factors. Further a very high regard towards moral values prevailed in the period. The entire social life was neatly arranged to meet the political values. The Maharashtra Dharma was well regulated and the feeling of nationalism was deeply rooted through the social system. The success of Sambhaji’s decade was in the form of peace and prosperity. The social peace was achieved and new vision was developed to look at the contemporary period. The social and economic life of the period has been documented here on the basis of both primary and secondary sources. The social life of
the period was thus dominated by peace, security and prosperity. Due to peace the social life was stable.

The medieval social life was feudal. It was a part of sultanants and mugal period. It promoted in Grece form. Hence customs and traditions of period continued in Maratha period.

**Social structure:**

The medieval social life was extram of ancient peiod. K.N.Chitnis has rightly observed that there were branches and sub branches in caste system. To remove differences among them was difficult. The caste and sub caste developed on the bais of the status or significance of the social group. (17) The caste system was rigid during Sambhaji’s period. According to M.G.Kulkarni in the medieval social life there were standards of social life and this system had created a stereotype system based on rules and regulations. (18) The social life of the period of Sambhaji was also regulated by Customs and traditions which prevailed in the period of Sambhaji too.

According to A.R.Kulkarni “In the seventheenth century the villages, which were deserted due to Government policies began to get rehabilitated. Their developement was possible due to freedom during Shivaji and Sambhaji’s period. (19)

The Varna and caste feelings denied the social life.(20) The medieval caste and varna was a cohesion of the ancient system. It has been rightly observed that “This was the peiod during which Varna was transformed into caste and the process of social transformation was thus ended.” (21)

B.S.Sawant has observed that “varna was deeply rooted and it led to the rise of caste system (22) Thus the society of the period was based on Kinship and blood relations.The social structure was pyramedical =. Brahmins and Kshriyas were on the top of the society and they were ruling together as good as in a colition. The Brahmins were having religious rights and they were canonating the king. In turn they were getting many offices of benefits in the Ashtrapradhan mandal as well as on the higher administrative positions. They were close to the king and advising him at crucial times. The study of Sambhaji’s book Budhbhushan and Adnyapatra written by Ramchandra Pant Amatiya in the period of Shivaji amply testifies this
phenomenon. The medieval social structure in India both in Hindu and Muslim religion who was highly traditional, but the Muslims’ social life was more feudal than that of Hindus’ social setup. The way in which the Muslims were enjoying the feudal life was also affecting Indian rulers of their times. But it seems both Shivaji and Sambhaji tried to avoid this influence and tried and maintained seriously the social life based on the philosophy of catholic and tolerant Hindu tradition reflected in Dharmashastras. The study of Hindu social structure in the medieval period has been made by K.N.Chitnis in his book “Socio-economic Aspects of Medieval India.” He has very well explained different dimensions and interactions in the social life for the betterment of people in Deccan, reviewed by Chhatrapati Shivaji and Sambhaji.

Hindu society

The Hindu society during Maratha period was conservative and traditional. According to P.G.Sahastrabudhe “The social life was based on Chaturvarna system and medieval Maharashtra was not exception to this.(23) Thus the Maratha society in Maharashtra was fully influenced by social inequality during the above period.

- Brahmin: This was the top section of the society. Brahmins were mostly intellectuals, engaged in teaching learning process and were highly respected in the society. They were also interested in setting educational institutes and Gurukuls for promoting Sanskrit language. He was expert in Vedic tradition (24) Thus the Brahmins were dominating the medieval social life. According to Dr. Dutta Bhagat Brahmins were highly revered and they enjoyed important religious powers at the time of rituals. After performing rituals they were getting “Dakshana” or donation. Gaga Bhatta had received good amount of Dakshana during coronation (25) Even in the period of Sambhaji in his eight ministers only one military general was of Maratha and others were Brahmins. Thus it seems Brahmins dominated the political and social scene. Brahmins were running educational institutes in the prominent cities and religious centers of Maharashtra, such as Pune, Paithan, Newase, Wai and Nasik as well as Satara and Tajawar in Tamil Nadu. These centers were getting endowments in the form of Agrahar lands for running these educational institutes effectively. Good number of examples in the period of
Sambhaji can be illustrated which reveals the respected position of Brahmin in the state craft. Samarth Ramdas who was most respected in the period of Shivaji had written an extensive letter to Sambhaji for advising him for the betterment of local society. This letter is a manifestation of intellectual ideas which were inculcated by Ramdas in the form of Maharashtradharma. Keshav Pandit under whom Sambhaji was given initial training in the Sanskrit language had continued his relations with Sambhaji. He had always guided and inspired Sambhaji to evolve ideals of Hindi polity relevant to the conditions. It has been argued that the framework of the book Budhbhushan written by Sambhaji was provided by Keshav Pandit. After his Keshav Pandit, Sambhaji had appointed his son on a respected position. References illustrate that Keshav Pandit was given Agrahar land for continuing his scholarly activities in the state. This is a ample testimony that Sambhaji had continued the policy of Shivaji regarding respect words learned persons. Thus all these arguments prove that Brahmins were treated as Acharyas, master of knowledge seekers. They were having a close resemblance in theory and practice and their day to day life was respected in the society, because they were following principles of purity in the life and character in a careful way. This was leading towards ideal postion in the medieval society.

- **Kshatriya:** According to Bahekar after Brahmins, Kshatriya enjoyed important position. Majority of the people in villages belonged to Kshatriya class. They were also known as Marathas. (26) Thus it seems Marahas were enjoying power in the period. There were two class Marathas and Kunbis. The Kumbis were further classified as “Des Kunbi” and “Kokan Kunbi” one belonged to countryside and the other was coastal (27) This shows the cross sections of Maratha society. The Kunbis’s were poor farmers, who cultivated land. In the Khandesh area there also Kunbis as Lewa Kunbi. According to G.S. Ghurye among the Marathas there were two types one Kadu and other Aakkarmase.. Among them some farmers of high profile allow their sons but not daughters to marry ordinary families. (28) In the Maratha community there were two sections Bitter and Sweet. However, though they were
friendly with each other, but matrimonial relations were not in practice. These social stratifications were based on customs and traditions. According to Karve Irawati Marathas and Kunbis were different from each other. There were no matrimonial relations among them. (29) Maratha’s were superior to Kunbis. Marathas were belonging to ruling community while Kunbis were farming, they were busy with animal husbandry, dairy and many of them belonged to agricultural labour class. (30) In the Shivaji’s period the Maratha community was fighting together for achieving Swaraj. However, in the period of Sambhaji the house was divided in two groups in early phase. But in the later phase Sambhaji was able to unite them based on values. They could make sacrifice in the Maratha war of independence effectively because they were hard core fighters and lovers of freedom and they were patriotic clan of Marathas. In the entire history of India when Rajputs crumbled, Jats were also divided. It was only Kshiritya community in Maharashtra who fought against the foreign powers, without making any compromise with them. The way in which Kshiriyas in Maharashtra became part of the strong hold of Swaraja, they could resist Mogual invasions effectively because Kashtiryas were well trained, well guided, and well organized by Shivaji the Great. Sambhaji as a soilder and general was a war like prince and he himself established a model before all other Maratha fightes. His abilities he could inculcate among his collegues known as Mavlas. The way in which Sambhaji fought against Moguals and Partugease could set an ideal before his fellowmen. The Maratha Kshtiryas thus became fore runners in the nation building process, which began in the period of Shivaji and continued in the period of Sambhaji

- Vaishya or trading community was based on the profession of trade and commerce. In the Sambhaji’s period this community was prevailing in Maharashtra. T.K.Birajdar has observed that In the medieval period the Vaishya community people mostly migrated from Gujrat and Karnataka. The trade was not under the hands of Marathas. These two people had dominant position in the market. The Vaishya community used to visit various weekly
markets by selling their commodity, putting them on their heads or they were using camels, horses for commercial transportation. In the period of Shivaji Shetye and Mahajan were Vatandars of market. They were organizing Pethas and weekly markets. Vatandars were responsible for management of market. Chhatrapati Shivaji had protected their interests by supporting their economic transactions. Due to this policy in the Shivaji’s period Raigad, Thane, Kalyan, Bhivandi, Rajapur etc. had emerged as flourishing trade centers. These centers continued to flourish in the period of Sambhaji. However, whenever there was drought or natural calamities, trade and commerce was getting set back. However, Sambhaji’s remedies were very effective, which were giving relief to the traders as well as business people. (31) The various schemes launched by Sambhaji for the promotion of traders in the state provided a new scope for their development. The incentives given by Sambhaji were so attractive that the traders were feeling secured and safe in the state. Their activities enlarged profit making process also developed and accordingly the state treasury was also strengthened. This lead to the sufficient growth of trade and commerce in the Maratha state. The trading system which was rationalized by Shivaji was further redefined by Sambhaji and he made it full proof system based on checks and balances. He was able to nurture honesty, sincerity and loyalty towards the state in the traders’ mind, which enhanced the profit and also raised moral confidence of the trading community.

- Vatandars: Mr. Awalkar S.V. in his book “Shivkalin Sahitya” Vol.9, published by Bharat Itihas Sanshodhan Mandal, Pune, illustrated details about Vatandars. This was an aristocrat class enjoying power at the crucial stage. They can be included as Patils, (village headman), Kulkarni (Village revenue officer), Chougula next to village headman, Revenue officers at Peth and Kasba, Top revenue officers having better position than Patil were known as Deshmukhs. Deshpandes were looking after revenue record of Pargana and were having more powers than Kulkarnis. Mahar vatan was also important at village level. Thus vatandars were powerful and respected officers during
the Maratha period. They were loyal to the state and were participating in the establishment of Maraha swaraj.

- Lower castes in the period: Oturkar R.V., and others have described the lower class details.

The lower castes in the Maratha period were serving the society in different ways. They belonged to artisans, craftsman, as well as skilled labors. Important strata of this class have been described below: There were twelve balutedars, who were depended on agricultural business. Their functions were designed and they were getting due share in the form of “balut”. These were mainly 12 in number, such as Carpenter (Sutar), potter (Kumbhar) Blacksmith (Lohar), Barbar (Navi), washerman (Parit), Smaller print & assistant of Kulkarnis (Gurav), theologists and ephimari interpreter (Joshi), Gold smith (Sonar), Caretaker of Masjed, (Maoulana), Cobbler (Chambhar), Security soilldors (Mahar), Protector and assistant of cobbler (Mang)

There were 18 Alutekars who were included in highly skilled working class. They were mostly Eatable oil producers (Teli), Collectors of Tendu leaves etc. (Tambholi), Weavers (Sali), Shefferds weavers pf warm cloths (Dhangar), tailors (Shimpi), Gardner (Mali), Local musicians and folk artists (Gondhali), Prist (Davri), Praisers (Bhatt), Prist of Adivashi (Thakur), Muslim Prist (Maulana) Lingayat Prist (Jangam), traditional instrument players (Vasjantgri), Bin player (Gadshi), Dancers and signers (Kalawkar), Protector watandar(Taral), Palenquien bearer (Bhoi), Prist and Bhiksha holder (Gosavi) (Kulkarni A.R. “Medieval Maharashtra” Dimond Publication, Pune, 2007, p-64) . These alutedars were getting due share in agricultural production as per their status and performance. Nomadic tribes: In this community following sections were active during Sambhaji’s period. Kaikadies wer weavers of bamboo baskets as well as they were preparing toils and brushes for cleaning. Berads were brave and they were protecting forts. Vaidus were local medicinal traditional doctors (Vaidu), Pardhis were hunters, (Pardhi), Komtis were mostly preparing sacred threds and were engaged in small trading businesses. Kolhati were mostly from Mankeshwr in Barshi taluka, they were rope dancers, Buruds were preparing baskets from
bamboo and selling them, Beldars were engaged in digging wells and they were also rock cuttes, Patharwats were engaged in cutting of stones. There was little difference in the functions of Beldar, Patharwat and Wadars and they were engaged in cutting stones. (Baisane Anil and Patil Subhash “Society and superstitions under Maratha” Kalpana Publictions, Nanded, 2005, p-31) In Maharashta during the period of Sambhaji the Adivashi communities included Bhilla, Gounda, Pawara, and warlies etc. (Ibid., pp-27-30) The Adivashis had their own way of social and cultural life. They were mainly living in forest and they had their own traditions of farming, cultivation, festivals as well as marriages. They had their own Jat Panchat system.

Maharashtra in the pre-Shivaji period was ruled by five different factions of Bahamani dynasty such as Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar, Adilshahi of Bijapur and Kutubshahi of Golkonda and Imadshahi of Berar and Baridshahi of Bidar. Muslim community was living in Maharashtra in this period and many local Hindus had also converted to Islamic religion. Shivaji had to fight with Adilshahi of Bijapur and Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar. There were two clans Shiya and Sunni. Among Shiyas Bohara and Khoja were two major communities. The muslim community under Sambhaji was serving the society with full loyalty. They were performing small works like weavers of cloths, butcharmen, sellers of saints, They were perfect in their jobs. In the Shivaji’s period, they were part of the army and enjoyed important positions. Noorkhan Beg was Sarnoubhat and Daryasarang was Chief of Navy. Baba Yakub was a respected spiritual Guru of Shivaji and Sambhaji also respected him and visited Kelshi his home town. Kazi Hyder was personal secretary of Shivaji. Thus Muslim community was staying happily in the Maratha state and Shivaji and Sambhaji also adopted a tolerant policy towards them.

4.5 Aspects of economic life

The rural economic life of the period of Sambhaji was rich and prosperous. The overall village life in the Maratha period was well dominated by the community and developed economic life. Agriculture was the backbone of the economy and the production of foodgrains was
satisfactory. All these types of food production were useful for day to day life of the common man. There were many small scale industries based on agro-based products. The entire system was based on professional enterpreneurship. Enterpreneurship and skill development was possible on the basis of traditional system of Balutedari and Alutedari. These Balutedars were doing social activities based on their traditional skills and they were serving the cause of the people. These aspects are closely related to economic system. There is a need to understand the different aspects of economic life in nutshell. The various aspects can be studied on the basis of the sources of income. The state was helping to provide professional strategies. The effective use of talents, skills and abilities was a major factor of the prosperity of the Maratha village community.

In this part it has been studied different dimensions of Maratha enterpreneurship and industrious qualities which led to the economic development of the period. Chhatrapati Shivaji had established factories on Raigad at the time of coronation. Sambhaji continued the policy and developed further the effective policy for better economic development for the bright future of the period, which has been unfolded in the following points.

Sambhaji had legacy of Shivaji’s well organized state. It was very well developed in agriculture and industry. In the norms of medieval period, the state was operating in a systematic manner. Major highlights of the economic aspects of the period of Sambhaji can be illustrated below:

**Agriculture:**

Right from the ancient period, rural life in India was agro based. Sardesai has observed that in the medieval period there was not much between rural and urban life. Due to lack of communication and industrialization, their ideas of economic life were not much developed.(32) The land of cultivation was known as ‘Kali’ or black soil and the land of habitation was known as ‘Pandhari’. (for white soil land) (33) However, the considering the range of medieval period, the Maratha state was equally prosperous like Mogul state. In comparison to villages, larger places like Kasbe or thane were comparatively less.(34) A.R.Kulkarni has rightly observed that many people had taken initiative themselves to cut forest and to make ready the land for cultivation and due to this process, many settlements of Maratha villages had came in existence.(35) Villagers were known by different words like Budruk, Khurd. Further in the costal
area, small habitants were known as ‘Khari’ and at other places they were known as Majra, Wadi, Padi etc. (36) Kasbas were centers of trade and commerce for the group of villages. Trade and commerce was one of the four powers prevailing in the period. The four powers can be described as Diwan Satta, Gotsatta, Dharmasatta and Vyaparistta. (37) The social and economic life of the period was substantially influenced by these powers. The study of agrarian life can be examined in this frame work.

Revenue officers:

Shivaji’s revenue system has been well appreciated by Scotwearing, Ranade and Jarvis. MG Ranade has pointed that Shivaji was an able administrator and had established civil system like Nepolian-I. (38) Scotwearing has observed that though Shvaaji had plundered some areas of enemies, but he had well administered his own territory and he tried to retain as well as enhance economic resources of the state. He had minutely cared about welfare of his subjects. (39) Historians have further endorsed that the revenue system of Shivaji had substantially strengthened the state and provided pathway for peoples’ development. (40) Sambhaji had followed in these lines. Shivaji’s revenue system was a fusion of Malikambar’s revenue reforms and Raja Todarmal’s model. Malikambar was serving in the Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar and Todarmal was working under the Mogul admisition of king Akbar. Malikambar’s revenue system was defective on following grounds:

- All the land was not properly surveyed
- The standards for land measurement were different from each other
- The measuring of land was made by using ropes
- Some rulers were using iron chains instead of ropes. (41)

Shivaji appointed Annoji Dutto to reform the revenue system and he suggested the use of stick instead of ropes for measuring the land. The stick was of the length of five hands. 20 sq. sticks were treated as one ‘Bhigga’, and 120 Bighas was equated to one “Chahur” (42) Shivaji had divided the land in 16 provinces. The vatsans of Patil, Kulkarni, Deshpande were retained, but the task of revenue collection was assigned to state officers. (43) In the mogul period the revenue circles were divided in four areas, such as ‘Mauje’, ‘Paragana’, ‘Subha’, and ‘Prant’.
Shivaji replaced it by three names such as ‘Mauje’, ‘Turf’ and ‘Prant’ (44) The officer looking after the Taraf area was known as Hawaldar. The officer on the Prant was known as Subhedar. Sursubhedar was appointed to supervise the Subhedar who was incharge of prant. Subhedar was given 400 hons as salary and he had respected and honour of talnquin. The officers under Subhedar were Diwan, Mujumdar, Phadnis, Subnis, Karkhanis, Chitnis, Jamadar, and Potnis. These were having 125 hons of salary per month. Dr. Balkrishna had observed that Shivaji’s revenue system was based on mixture of Vijaynagar, Adilshahi, Nizamshahi and Mogul revenue system. (45) The new system had not only increased efficiency but it wiped out corruption.

**Maratha agriculture reforms:**

Sambhaji with minor changes followed Shivaji’s revenue sytem. According to Rolison and Patwardhan “The chief cause of unrest in India was economic. It was shivaji’s economic reforms which chiefly recommended him to the people.” (46) The monopolistic method of selling the revenue area by the bits of Maktas was discontinued by Shivaji due to the closure of Farming system. Farmers became happy. (47)

Shvaji closed the Jamindari system and open Rayatwari system which created direct linage with farmers. Shvaji began started Tagai or cash credit system for farmers, which they were allowed to replay in installments. During droughts, floods and foreign invasion, state was giving compensation to the sufferers. This policy was continued by Sambhaji and he adopted special policy for eradition of drought conditions during his period.

During the war or drought affected area, concession was given in the revenue rates. Further incentives were given for settlement of new villages, market places and trade centers etc. in the affected areas. When people were migrating due to plundering by enemies army, the state was giving them special protection. (48) Sambhaji continued this policy. Examples can be given how Sambhaji had healed people to fight against enemies attacks on swaraj.

In order to meet complicated issues, special tribunals were appointed to provide and cheap, impartial and prompt justice was meted out to the people. (49) P. Kenedy has rightly appreciated Shivaji’s policy towards farmers. He has pointed that “The peasant knew what he had to pay and he seems to have been able to pay this without any great oppression.” (50)
Grant Duff has pointed that “The assessments were made on the actual state of the crop, the proportionate division of this was three fifths to the rayat and two fifths to government. As soon as he got permanent possession of any territory, every species of military contribution was stopped, all farming of revenue ceased and the collections were made by the agents appointed by the state.” (51) These reforms had helped the farmers’ community. Sambhaji also continued the same policy. The Marathas were earning resources through many ways. There was difference in direct and indirect tax (52) The reason behind this was that method was not scientific. The economic pattern was based on earlier traditions and current needs. Both Shivaji and Sambhaji followed these tactics. According to A.R. Kulkarni, all the money collected from people was not included in the government treasury in those days. The property which had no heirs was amalgamated in the government property. Further the presents and gifts given by foreign diplomats were put in the government treasury, which was also an important source of income. (53) There were 20 sources of income, which included revenue tariff, as well as sources from capturing the foreign ships, and cheque on piracy. (54) The tariff on trade and commerce was also a source of income. The Maratha nobles were also assigned the task of revenue collection in the conquered area.

Currency system:

Shivaji had strong belief in Hindu system. He named his coin as Hon, which was name of the coin of the Vijayanagara Hindu dynasty. His coin was of 42 Grains which was closer to Chol, Chalukya dynasty coin. In Sabhasad Bhakar 32 types of golden coins prevailing in the period of Shivaji have been described. Shivrai Hon was prominent among them. Sambhaji improved the currency system and had maintained his own coin. According to V.G. Khobrekar, Shivaji had not minted his own silver coins, they were in the market coming from foreign countries like Iran. However, in the Rajavyahar Kosh Sloka number 38 to 41 have described and it has also noted rates of transaction. Pratap takka were other coins active in the market. According to Chandrashekhar Gupta a coin Shambhu, Shivrai of Sambhaji was advanced in nature and example of effective currency system. (Khobrekar V.G. History of Maharashtra (Maratha period) ”Part I, Maharssthrs Rajya Sanskriti Mandal, Mumbai, 2006, p-586, also see Pawar Jaysing, Chatraptati Sambhaji Commemoration Volume, Kolhapur, p-361)
Thus currency under Sambhaji’s period was well developed and it was testimony of flourishing of trade and commerce.

4.6. Missing links and new analysis:

The period of Shivaji and Sambhaji is broadly known as Shivkal. This period had tremendous inputs in the sense of economic prosperity. Dr. Balkrishna had prised Shivaji for his economic reforms. Shivaji tried to protect interest of farmers by providing them concessions. (55) Sambhaji also continued Shivaji’s progressive policies and enriched them. Shivaji’s removal of drought policy was further strengthened by Sambhaji. There are many examples which illustrated that Sambhaji had carefully planned to help people in the drought affected areas. In Solapur district at Mohol, Sambhaji had ordered to build two water tanks for meeting the needs of the poor people. (56), Broadly speaking we can correlate Shivaji’s policy and Sambhaji’s policy on the following three points:

- The Vijayanagara model which was based on Hindu polity was sound basis of Maratha revenue administration.
- The Marathas experience under Nizamshaji (Ahmednagar), Adhilshahi (Bijapur) had provided the Maratha bureaucrats grass root experience and they can understand drawbacks in the system, and they tried to reform it.
- Shivaji developed own model by amending drawbacks in the system. The genius diplomat like Annaji Dutto was helping him. Sambhai continued and reformed the said policies. His book Budhbhusham is a well developed treatise on Hindu administration, which he practiced. (57)

Thus Sambhaji’s economic policies were based on earlier experiences and he tried to improve the Maratha system in his period.

The above discussions revealed that the Marathwada village as a rich and prosperous unit. The surplus values generated by the village people were collected by the state and the entire system was well developed to meet future challenges in a systematic manner in the medieval period of darkness, which brought them to light.

The Maratha village was a well developed unit which was agro based. The various sources of income for the state were well protected and there was a close balance in the system.
about income and expenditure. The revenue records were well maintained and farmers were rightly helped at the time of drought and scarcity. Special help was given in the hard situation and special incentives were given to the farmers to face future tense situations.

### 4.7. Missing links and new approach:

While describing social and economic life of the period, there is a need to bridge information gaps at different points. In order to bridge these gaps careful planning of source material and its analysis has been made for the correct understanding of the problem.

Firstly there is need to understand the missing links. The information based on primary sources has been used here to bridge gaps in the proper understanding of social and economic life. The different dimensions of social and economic life prove that these ideas are based on proper information support. The following strategy has been developed here in nutshell:

- Corelation of facts to bridge gap
- Coordination of ethics based on proper knowledge
- Evaluation of facts to bridge knowledge gap
- Critical study of the missing gaps and to develop a new approach

The study of these missing links can help to look at these problems in an objective manner. Hence this approach has been developed here

### 4.8. Subaltern approach

In the subaltern approach history is evolved out of struggle. Basic factor is that once the other side which is exploited gets subaltern consciousness and fights against the system with regerous energy and efforts. The struggle made by the Maratha state under Sambhaji both way against the religious and economic exploitation. The mogulas were converting people by force and also looting them economically. One Gangadhar Ranganath Kulkarni of Kasbe Harsool district Auranbad was forcibly converted to Islam. After five years in 1685 he repented and requested Sambhaji to allow him in Hindu region. (58) Sambhaji followed the policy of Shivaji and he was purified. This example amply testifies Sambhaji’s positive role to face conversion policy. He further while signing the pact with East India compnmay in the year 1684, had put a special article that britishers should not forcefully purchase and convert any person who is citizen
of the state.” (59) These two examples amply show that Sambaji was conscious about both religious and economic cultural exploitation during the mogul period. The subaltern appaoch testified to Sambhaji bring two facts to the light

- Sambhaji bravely fought the cultural invasion made by Aurangzed and he was able to withstand Maharshtradrharma, which Saint Ramdas had advised him to follow it.
- Sambhaji adopted a very tough policy to fight against the cultural exploitation made by English and Mogul in the Maratha state.

Thus Sambhaji’s appaoch proves thsat he was dedicated and devoted to the cause of freedom and Hindvi Swaraj and he at every movement tried to be the champion of it. He became light liberator and protector of Maharaashtadharma like his father Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Thus in the subalterm approach the basic nexus of the problem is the understanding of the exploration process. In the medieval period the Mogul rulers were continuously exploiting the local community. They were creating atmosphere for forced conversion towards Islam at one hand and on the other hand they were imposing taxes like Jijia on Hindus and other religious groups. There were strict regulations on conducting of fairs and festivals. Due to these straict rules the local people were largely handicapped amd they were always brought to difficulties. Here the majority local people were getting secondary treatment and they were not able to get respected treatment from the ruling class. Due to all these problems the local people were unhappy about the administrative system of the Moguls. The Maratha state was following more liberal, tolerant and sympathetic approach towards all sections of societies including the followers of Islam. When Portuguese were forcing antiliberal, anti Hindu state in religious and social life they were given strong protests. The explulsion of the local people by Moguls and Portuguese was not only economic but it was religious and cultural. In the sublturn studies what is more important is bridging the gap by understanding the subalterl consciousness. The Marahas were first in India to protect against the cultural explusion of the Moguls and Portuguese. In order to understand all these facts the subalterm approach was well developed in a newa angle. A toally new approach has been adopted here in this chapter to pin point the cultural approach in the medieval period. All these aspects have been critically studied and new light has been thrown on various aspects of the socio economic and cultural aspects of the period. The
study of subalersrn consciousness has been conducted here for the first time to throw light on
different dimensions of the socio economic and cultural life of the period. Hence this study is
unique to pin point the neglected aspects of the public life.

4.9. Summary

Thus in this chapter a thoroughlight was shaded on social and economic life under
Sambhaji. During his period 1689-89 was full of turmoils and conflicts. The mogula army had
verually camped in Maharashtra. Aurangzeb wanted to give a full point to the Marathwa state.
Sambhahji had shouldered the responsibility of protecting the Maratha people. In adverse
conditions with no resources, no man power and no foreign help, Sambhaji fought against
Portuguese and English men on one hand and Auragzed and his fellowmen on the other hand. It
was tremendously chalensing task, but Sambhai was never shaken from his goals. He had
dedication and devotion towards Maharshtradharma. Rightly proved by P.S.Joshi in his book
Chhatapati Sambhaji it has been pointed that(60) Sambjaji’s admisntiaison was very sound
efficient and alert. The fruit of this administration can be reflected in social cohesion and
economic prosperity. The Maratha state was rich having resources manpower, well built army
and nevy had all the capacities to fight against enemies to protect own subjects. Sambhjaji did it
bravely having mission and vision to change the profile of the state. He was able to reconstrcut
Maratha state and he was able to lead the people in the tempest to achieve the goals of Hindiv
Swaraj.

Thus in this chaper various processes of socio economic life were studied. A net work of
various facts was corelaed properly to pin point different issues. The analysis made in this chaper
has tried to project many neglected angles. The various aspects of the social and economic life
were carefully noted and the proper correlation of facts was presented in the clean process. The
careful and critical exploration of facts has led to examine different aspects in a new angle. A
right and rational view point was kept in mind to throw light on the interrelated aspects of public
life. The role of saints and prophets was significant enough to regulare the material life of the
period. The villages were peaceful and progressive in the field of agriculture. The economic
prosperity was based on high yield in agriculture. Sambhaji’s period witnessed drought situation.
In the drought affected areas every care was taken to protect the farmers’ economic life. The distressed and needy farmers were provided timely help to meet these challenges. In order to study all these problems there is a need to develop more balanced approach in balancing of social and economic history. Here every care was taken in this chapter to pin point many issues of controversy and delicate. The missing links were bridged by filling knowledge based on authentic evidences

In the next chapter, light is throwun on religious and cultural life.

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