CHAPTER V

RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL LIFE

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RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL LIFE

5.1. Introduction

The manifestation of religious and cultural life depends on examination of sources related to segments related to the understanding of way of life as well as standard of living. There is a basic difference between customs and culture because when the external material life is recorded and adduced then internal values must be presented in the cultural area. In medieval India people were orthodox and traditional because they were following cultural values with Great Spirit and regour.

The study of religious and cultural life is an important component in the medieval history because the life was mostly dominated by religious norms. Being a significant component in the medieval history, religion was attained significant value in the period. Especially the religious policy of Aurangzeb had created more complications in the western India. After the death of Shivaji the Great, the Maratha community was devastated and Sambhaji had to take important decisions for rearranging forces in a new angle. The new understanding of source material can help to throw light on medieval sources.

In this chapter Sambhaji’s religious and cultural policy will be highlighted. Sambhaji’s sole efforts were to fight against the Islamic invasion of Mogul Empire Aurangzeb’s fanatic policies. In this chapter different aspects of cultural life of Sambhaji will be properly highlighted. It is true that social and cultural aspects are totally inseparable and they require an integrated approach. Hence in this chapter sociological viewpoint will be adopted for this study. Dr. Kamal Gokhale has rightly observed that though Aurangzeb had made a massive invasion on Maharashtra, people could sustain due to Maharashtra dharma policy of Shivaji, which Sambhaji continued rigorously. His energy on administrative affairs was voluminous, but he had never neglected religious matters during his period. (1) According to Shivde Sambhaji fought against Aurangzeb with full strength to protect Hindu religion and culture. (2) Thus we have to study
Sambhaji’s religious and cultural policy in the context of Maharashtra dharma which was propagated by saints and prophets in the medieval Maharashtra.

In this chapter Sambhaji’s religious policy will be examined on the basis of contemporary sources. Sambhaji’s policy was reply to the Aurangzeb’s policy. Sambhaji had assisted temples and mosques which were doing harmonious work. Further Sambhaji’s relations with Ramdas will also be studied. Ramdas’s letter to Sambhaji amply testifies this phenomenon. Sambhaji had begun Shuddhi movement and those who were compulsorily compelled to convert to Islam after their request they were again purified and brought to Hindu religion. The example of Rango Bapuji Kulkami of Kasbe Harsool in Aurangabad district has been cited as an example of Sambhaji’s broad based religious policy. He had helped many temples for their renovation as well as for their repairs. Grants were given for regularly lighting of lamps and worship in the shrine. In the Sambhaji’s period people were leading rich cultural life through fast, festivals, and fairs. They had quality means of entertainment. The ornaments, jewelry, costumes and coiffure, growth of literature, scholarly books and poetry can be recorded as a symbol of high water mark. Sambhaji himself was a Sanskrit scholar and had written a book “Budh Bhushanam” under the guidance of Keshav Pandit, his Guru.

The period of Chhatrapati Sambhaji was (1680-89) was full of turbulence. After the death of Shivaji the Great, Sambhaji had to carry the legacy of well built Hindu state and he had ably continued this legacy with great courage and confluence. Sambhaji was ahead of his times both in policies and actions.

Dr. Kamal Gokhale has rightly observed that in a short span of nine years, Sambhaji was always alert in administration. He was a sound and efficient administrator. The careful explorations of Sambhaji confidence amply support these arguments. (3) The study of the Sambhaji was based on peace and security. Religious tolerance and cultural unity was important character of the period. Sambhaji was brave and courageous but he was misguided by Poet Kalash, a Sanskrit scholar, is also a wrong conception. There are no evidences to endorse this. (4)

On the contrary the Sanskrit sources on Sambhaji revealed that the poet Kalash was his friend, philosopher and guide. He had to suffer along with the King as his Amatya. He never
compromised with the enemy. The qualities of Sambhaji which manifest hidden talent was full of creativity and courage, responsibility and righteousness, alertness and accuracy in administration as well as confidence can be testified at every stage of his administration.(5) Dr. P.S. Joshi has classified Sambhaji’s career in an interesting manner. According to him, “The war with which Chhatrapati Shivaji was against the Moguls since 1670 had not ended with the death of Shivaji. Therefore, it was continued by Sambhaji during the period of his reign (1680-1689 AD) finally, in that war he was captured alive by the Moguls and Aurangzeb put him to a cruel death.” (6) Sambhaji had to fight from beginning to the end for the sake of Hinduri Sara.

Thus Sambhaji was a genius ruler who had ably contributed for the problems of religion and culture. Here the period of decade of Sambhaji’s period was full of challenges. He not only maintained peace and security, but also he had protected Hindu religion and culture by safeguarding every minute of his life.

Here in this chapter religious and cultural life of the period has been carefully presented. Many neglected aspects have been highlighted here for the first time and new facts have been brought to light about religious and cultural life of the period.

It is true that the medieval social life was feudal and Sambhaji had to work under these circumstances which were prevailing throughout the medieval period.

The real understanding of Sambhaji’s personality was made possible for the first time by Dr. Kamal Gokhale; earlier scholars like G.S. Sardesai, V.S. Bendre as well as Ranade and Phatak were also not able to examine Sambhaji properly. The study of social and cultural life under Sambhaji has been made here for the first time based on new sources and new ideas as well as new sociological perspective. Hence the following aspects have been neatly highlighted here.

Good governance and effective administration leads to peace and prosperity. Chhatrapati Shivaji was known for his administrative abilities. In spite of drought and wars, Sambhaji had ably ruled the state. (7)

It is true that the effective and sound administration of Sambhaji was based on the theory of welfare state. The royal seal of Chhatrapati Shivaji had focused mainly on “Mudra Bhatrate
Rajte”. The seal of the state was to set welfare of the people.(8) Sambhaji had continued the policies of Shivaji which were based on social peace and cultural prosperity. Sarkar rightly pointed that “Shivaji was a greatest commendable genius that medieval India had ever produced.(9) This can be justifiably policies of Chhatrapati Sambhaji. In this chapter his social and cultural wisdom has been illustrated in the foregoing pages.

Religious and cultural life during the period of Sambhaji was not far away from Shivaji’s policies and principles. He had followed the footprints of Shivaji, the Great and continued these progressive policies with great mission and vision. The entire administrative mechanism was geared up by Sambhaji to strengthen the peoples’ power. Sambhaji’s state was following the principles of Maharashtra dharma which was championed by Saint Ramdas and as reflected in Gurucharitra also. The growth of art, literature and culture during this decade was closely identical towards the policy guidelines provided by Shivaji. Dr. Balkrishna’s appreciation of Shivaji’s cultural plans can be closer to Sambhaji’s actions and deeds.

In any period religion and culture are closely related aspects. In medieval age of 17th century the period of Chhatrapati Sambhaji was mostly significant for upbringing cultural identity in the adverse conditions. As the Mogul power was imposing Islamic culture on India, it was inevitable that many segments of Indian society were not at all happy. Maharashtra was a major land which have a sheet of awakening against these imbalances. The entire process was baed on awakening made by saints and prophets in the medieval period. The seeds of awakening were sown. The feeling of Maharashtra Dharma was cultured properly. After demise of Shivaji, Sambhaji had to protect thee values with great care and caution.

In this chaper the religious and cultural life of the decade 1986-89 has been described on the bais of primary as well as secondary sources. The focus in this chaper is on understanding the cutltrual relevance of the period. The different divisions of religious and cultural life have been discussed in this chapter. The most challenging aspect of Sambhaji’s life and career was that he was able to overcome many difficulties soon after ascending the throne. He was able to clarify different issues neatly and he was able to set problems. Providing cultural identity and religious freedom was a major challenge before him.
Hence he was right enough to foster new cultural values leading towards religious freedom in the area of Maharashtra at large.

5.2. Aims of Hindavi Swaraj

As rightly pointed by Jadunath Sarkar, Shivaji was greatest constructive genius that medieval India ever produced. This constructive policy of Shivaji has been reflected his concept of Hindavi Swarajya i.e. freedom of Indian state. Shivaji was able to understand the fact that India has to fight for setting its problems as a free nation. The Mogul king Aurangzeb was hitting the very existence of Indian culture and religion. Shivaji’s strong faith in tolerant and cohesive policy reveals in the letters and his actions during his rule. The period of Sambhaji was turbulent and he had to continue Shivaji’s policies in the same vigor and rigor.

Chhatrapati Shivaji had established Hindavi Swarajya to bring all Indians under one umbrella. (10) Sambhaji had continued the policies of Shivaji the Great and he also tried to benefit of fruits of this states to all members of his state including Hindu, Muslim, Christians and others also. Shivaji had often pointed that do not touch the common people else they will curse you and feel bad.

Every care was taken to avoid exploitation of the poor and downtrodden by the administration. In the state the policy of equality to all “Sarvabhuti Samtriti” was followed which was a cardinal principle of Hindu polity. V.K.Rajwade has edited sources of Maratha History and in the 8th Volumes, in one of the letters it has been pointed that (11) Sambhaji through his letters and donations amply testified all the three aspects of good governance such as efficiency, speed in disposal and responsibility towards people. P.S.Joshi has appreciated Sambhaji’s administrative efficiency. (12) Shivaji’s emblem ended with three words Mudra Bhadrayate Rajte, which means the Sara aims to attain welfare of people.(13) The Marathas have rich administrative experience under Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar, and Adilshahi of Bijapur. This experience provided them vision for better administration. (14) Thus aim of Maratha Sara was welfare of the people. They tried to protect religion and culture in the adverse situation. Hence in this chapter his religious, cultural and all comprehensive catholic approach is mainly highlighted.
Hindavi Swarajya’s oath was taken at Rohideshwar Shiva temple in Mawal province and Sambhaji continued rigorous efforts to promote the cause of the same. He captured Torna fort in 1646 and toiled hard up to end of his life. The most of the period of his life up to 1674 went in struggle and conflict. However, after his coronation in 1674, he was able to fulfill the dreams of Hinduri Sara. Shivaji’s relentless and untiring efforts were responsible for coming of this Sara in to reality. Sambhaji had deep faith in the policy principles of Sara and he made total sacrifice for it.

The following five aims were on top priority from 1674 onwards:

- To establish well developed administrative mechanism for establishing Hindavi Swaraj Sara.
- To extend future welfare towards the people at large in South India from Karnataka to Tamilnadu.
- To provide justice to the common men to provide them religious freedom.
- To evolve a systematic network for the protection of Indian culture from the clutches of Moguls and other western invaders such as Portuguese and English.
- To provide art, architecture, literature and culture in the western India for showing the fruits of freedom and Sara to all.

To sum up, the sole aim of Hindavi Swaraj was Mudra Bhadratye Rajate – the state aims to attain welfare of the poor people.

Thus all these discussions prove that the aim of Hindavi Swarajya was to attain maximum number of welfare of the people. Shivaji the Great had an effective Mudra stating that “Mudra Bhadrya Rajate” i.e. Royal seal aims to attain the welfare of the people. Sambhaji’s aim to establish and cultivate the higher ideas of the Hindavi Swarajya which also aimed to maintain the peace and glory as well as security and progress of the people. The entire discussion conducted here in this part has revealed that Swarajya was mainly established to solve basic problem of Rayat or poor people. After the fall of Bahamani dynasty the Maratha generals were working at different places in the fractions of Bahamani dynasty such as Adilshahi of Bijapur, Kutubshaji of Golkonda and adjacent dynasties. All these sub sections of the Bahamani dynasty were independent but they were not having any independent status. They were followers of Islamic
Shivaji revolted against this colonial approach of his father Shahaji and rejected to bow down before Adilshahi of Bijapur. Thus price had shown his liking for national identity. The cry of the Maratha ruler Shivaji was for freedom and nationalism. Many children had taken birth when Shivaji born at Shivneri, but the cry of Shivaji was in favour of freedom and independence. After getting Torna, Shivaji had defeated Afzalkhan and established his strength as a well planned ruler. After returning from Agra, Shivaji aimed to establish his independent state which he demanded that to establish this state with the will and pleasure of the people. On 6th June 1674 after his coronation Shivaji had established his state and he tried to fulfill the decisions that he had taken at the time of the oath at Rohdeshwar, a Mahadeo temple in Malva province in Pune district. The aim of Hindavi Swarajya can be described in the following five points:

- To attain welfare of the Rayat
- To promote the religion and culture of the people
- To provide religious freedom of the people
- To establish the welfare system for well being of subject
- To provide justice and equality to all

All these aims and objectives of the Hindavi Swarajya were aimed to fulfill in a systematic manner so as to establish the Maratha state again on strong basis after death of Shivaji the great. He tried to shoulder the responsibility in more greater relevance to meet the future challenges to help poor people from their religious atrocities at the time.

5.3. Religious policy: towards all religions:

Sambhaji’s religious policy was in tune with Shivaji’s approach towards the other religions. Sambhaji have followed the foot prints of Shivaji the great. Moghl king Aurangazeb was on the head of the Maratha rules. He thought that it was the right time to face the Mogul challenge. The following aspects can be noted below.

In ancient India religion is defined as a basic power of society. “Dharmatu dhonryat dharmai”was a definition of Dharma.(15) This concept of Indian “Dharma” was almost beyond of religion as a method of worship. It had also included professional ethics and ethics of a profession. Every profession had its dharma and norms of life. The true manifestation of way of life can be possible by understanding religious way of life of the period. Sambhaji’s religious
policy must be examined on these lines. Chhatrapati Sambhaji’s religious policy was like that of Chhatrapati Shivaji, the Great. The state was helping both Hindus and Muslims as well as other different religions were treated equally. Sambhaji never made any difference between any group of religion or forum. In the medieval period religion was one of the dominant features of the social and cultural life. Hence every care was taken while treating different religions. Aurangzeb was fanatic and was a conservative Sunny sect follower, through which he hated non Islamic religions like Hinduism, Jainism and Christianity. (16) He aimed to transform India into Islamic nation. He felt that unless and until large scale Islamization is practice no social and economic rights can be guaranteed to local Kafirs, i.e. non Islamic community. (17) Aurangzeb banned in his court to use tikka as well as music and dance, which he felt was anti Islamic. He further banned renovation of Hindu temples. (18) By the orders of King Aurangzeb temples at Banaras, Mathura and Sorti Somnath were destroyed and Mazjids were contracted at the same place. Many of the Hindu officers were removed from the services and secondary treatment was given to them in the court. On 12\textsuperscript{th} April 1679 Jijiya tax was taxed on Hindus. (19) At Prayag to take a sacred deep Hindus were charged six rupees and four annas for per one dip. Such taxes were also clamped on other thirthas. (20) There was a difference in taxation. Islamic trades were not taxed but Hindu traders had to pay 5\% Chungi tax. (21) Conversation to Islam was appreciated by the state by providing concessions. In the property disputes if one becomes Islam, the entire property use to go in his favor. (22) To ride in a palanquin was banned, riding on horses and elephants was also taxed Further retaining of weapon was also not allowed. Every effort was made for Islamization of India. The pro-Islam policy of Aurangzeb received still resistance by the local communities. Among many local communities, Marathas were prominent to face Islamic invasion. Shivaji fought bravely with stalwart Mogul generals like Shahistekhan. The Marathas diplomatically surrendered few forts by the treaty of Purandar and Shivaji agreed to visit Agra. (23) Thus Shivaji proved his abilities by defeating Moguls in the crucial wars.

Sambhaji’s text Budhbhushan has rightly illustrated various duties and responsibilities of King in the state craft and to look after his subjects and their religions was one of the prime duties of Kingship. Kautiliya’s Arthashastra was an important text that was base of Sambhaji’s understanding of the political system. Hence the religious organizations of the state such as Suni, Diya, Kosla and Dadla were well defined in the Sambhaji’s Hindavi Swaraj. In order to look at the welfare of the people, Sambhaji was respecting every religion, Hindu, Muslim or Christen. In
the Sara both Hindu and Muslims were staying together happily to support the political system. Here Dr. Kamal Gokhale has illustrated some examples during the period of accession to thrown, Sambhaji received blessings from many saints and prophets. He had met Sadavarti Malhar Gosawi, a Saint at village Korti while travelling from Panhala to Fort Raigad. (24) On 25 October, 1680 Sambhaji had darshan of Baba Yakub Awalia, a Fakir at Kelshi while going to Fort Raigad. (25) S.N.Joshi has given some illustrious records which revealed that Sambhaji was kind enough towards religious centers of learning. (Malhar Gosavi Sadavarti, was continued with some other Agrahar land grants for his scholarly activities. (26) To support local saints and prophets both Shivaji and Sambhaji had granted some lands to the local saints for continuing their charitable works. (27) Sambhaji also continued earlier scholarships and Inam grants towards religious places such as Chinchwad, Morgaon, Sajjangad and Chaphal. (28) This policy of Sambhaji was parallel in tune with his father’s policy. On 12th January, 1683, Sambhaji had accorded consent to non grants for continuing religious rituals in Pune district. (29) Sambhaji had instructed his administrative officers not to disturb respected saint like Moreshwar Gosawi of Kare Pathar. Sambhaji directed them to take care, safety and security of this saint who was doing sacrifice for the betterment of people. (30)

Sambhaji was knowing genius contribution made by saint Ramdas for the foundation of Maharashtra dharma. Along with a senior diplomat Ramchandrapant Amatya, Sambhaji had specially visited Sajjangad fort to have darshan of sacred saint Ramdas (31) At Chaphal Sriram Festival was regularly conducted from the period of Shivaji. Sambhaji not only continued it but also supported it. Sambhaji had issued many letters to celebrate the festival with pomp and glory as usual. (32) Minute instructions were given for continuing donations for lighting lamps and providing milk for festivals.(33) One Islamic solider had purchased a cow at Karwar and sloughed her to meet his hunger. When Sambhaji received this news he had hanged the alleged solider for this crime. (34) At village Navalgund near Darwar there were no temples for worship. Sambhaji had written a letter to construct a temple and to provide facilities for worship of local deities. (35) The various aspects of Sambhaji’s religious policy can be neatly examined.

The religious policy of Chhatrapati Sambhaji was pro Hindu but it was not against Muslims or Christians. He was at equal distance with all the religions and cults. The line of principles he followed with these religions and spiritual heads was the same as was being
followed by his father Shivaji, the Great. His association with Ramdas and Baba Yakub amply testify the same. The basic contribution of Sambhaji was in setting the religious problems on top and following the same in a systematic manner. Like Shivaji, Sambhaji was able to illustrate his policies on broader and catholic lines. His policies were wide, all comprehensive and liberal enough to accommodate all castes and creeds as well as different religions at par equal. This has been exemplified on the basis of authentic source material.

5.4. Aspects of cultural life:

Culture is a manifestation of various aspects of human life such as arts, crafts, customs, tradition problems and overall behavior of the people. All these aspects can be very well illustrated on the basis of evidences available in the period of study.

Hence cultural life can be portrayed on the basis of these aspects webbed on the canvass of the period under discussion. Hence this part of the research is based on collection of facts in a systematic manner. All these aspects have been explained in this chapter. These aspects are closely related to each other. They include both material culture as well as spiritual upbringing of life. The cultural life includes different aspects such as fairs, festivals and the cultural awakening promoted by saints and prophets in the period. The study of cultural life mainly reflects the way of life of the people at large. The role played by king and his ministers also include district approaches followed and practiced by the ruling class.

Culture denotes of customs, traditions, art crafts and behavior of the people. There is a basic difference between civilization and culture. One is related to the material one and the other is related to values and eternal spiritual uplifting of mankind. While understanding facets of cultural life we have to review various aspects and angles together. Hence medieval progress as well as spiritual values can be examined here in a systematic manner. A new approach can be developed to explore these aspects effectively.

The social and cultural life of medieval period cannot be separated from each other. The health and security of the state had led to peace and prosperity and due to this stability there was a systematic development of rich cultural life.
Culture has been defined as a prime force of customs, traditions, and behavior as well as habits and art craft during the period. The medieval cultural life during the period of Sambhaji was well developed. Sambhaji had very well followed the footsteps of Shivaji the great. The sound economy was also an important factor responsible for rich and balanced development of cultural life. Both culture and communication was well developed and the root cause behind this was the policy of the state which was tolerant and catholic towards all religions and cults. The synthesis of cultural life was identified and well protected. About scholarly attitude of Sambhaji V.S.Bendre has observed that Sambhaji was well read in the fields of Sanskrit poetry, religious literature and archery. His expertise in the field of ethics was always appreciated by the people. (36) Sambhaji in his works like BudhBushnam has tackled subjects like poetry, metaphysics, and science of aesthetics. (37) This led to the cultural development of the state. P.S.Joshi has rightly highlighted cultural policy of Sambhaji. He has pointed that “Chhatrapati Sambhaji, his ministers and officers took interest in supporting the cultural and religious activity in the Sara. They also honored and encouraged learning in the Sara by granting lands, grains, and money to the scholars.” (38) Culture is both material and spiritual way of life. There must be close similarity between theory and action. (39) According to P.G/Sahastrabudhe culture is something value based, humane and distinctly related to way of life. (40) Sambhaji’s cultural policy was in tune with this principle.

Ornaments:

Both gents and ladies used well developed ornaments. Gents used Kantha, Bajudandha, Sirpech etc.” (41) Ladies were using ornaments such as Kuyari, Karnaphule, and Mangalsutra etc. (42) Thus life during Sambhaji’s period was rich and well developed Like Hindus Muslims also used ornaments of their test as per their social and economic status.

Festivals: Hindu’s festivals in the Sambhaji’s state were celebrated with pomp and glory. B.S.Sawant has given examples of Gudhi Padva, Pola, Holi, Dasra, Diwali, Makar Sankrant, and Vasant Panchami as well as Ram Navmi and Krishna Astami etc. (43) People were participating on large scale in these festival. Sara had ample freedom in comparison to Mogulai, the area ruled by Moguls. People were exchanging good will gestures while meeting each other and in these festivals they were preparing Puran Poli and other sweets, closely akin to local culture, and food products.
Means of entertainment:

Means of entertainment symbolize cultural status. In the medieval period, fairs and Jatras were regularly held and citizens of all age group were participating in these groups. There were Vidhushak, dancers, serpent players, Garudi, magicians. Further, bullock cart races and wrestling competitions were organized. The female dancers were also popular in Tamasha or Loknatya, known as Vag in those days. (44)

Thus, these were popular means of entertainment during Sambhaji’s period.

Costumes and Coiffeur

Males and females were using different dresses of their choice and test as per their economic status. Rich people were using high quality textiles, while poor were using simple cotton cloth. Male were using Dhotar and Kurta, while female were using nine yard sadi, and choli. Pitambar was used while performing religious rituals. There were different modes and methods while using sari as per their manners, etiquettes and social norms. (45) Male and female were using shoes and chapple as their status. Shoes were known as Joda and ladies were using Payposh. The Jodas were prepared of high quality skin and they were also decorated with warm Reshmi textile (46) The hair style was also a an important character. Different hair styles were in practice Women was using Ambada, a soft rope, and they were putting high quality ornaments and oven flowers with them.

A.R.Kulkarni has rightly observed that village as a unit was happy and pleasant in nutshell. The village as a unit was witnessing religious cohesion and harmony. Equally cultural life was also highly elevated and equally sophisticated. It was based on moral and spiritual values. The Sanskaras of saints and prophets were infusing village life in a positive angle. The political security and economic prosperity leads to cultural cohesion and harmony. Sambhaji’s period of decade was responsible for providing social security. In spite of continuous threat of foreign attacks in the period, there was well cultural identity through art, architecture and literature. The socio cultural reality was ably understood by Sambhaji and he was a able to fight with the odd situation. His constant and continuous efforts were responsible for well tuned cultural life. The art work, literature and architectural creations amply testify the social cohesion
and cultural realities. The social realities and cultural creations were part of social dynamics and the entire state witnessed a good watermark in the field of art, architecture and literature.

All these aspects of cultural life manifest the elevation of public life both in the areas of material life and spiritual awakening. The highly developed standard of living as well as elevation of value conscious life is mainly part of cultural life. The cultural richness is a denominator of the all round progress of the period. In the period of Sambhaji a new outlook in the arena of cultural life was developed. The cultural identity and pride is based on social consciousness developed in the period. Hence all these angles are significant to throw light on different aspects and their correlation. This level of correlation was examined in this part and following facts can be noted:

- The cultural life of the period of Sambhaji was rich
- People were value conscious and they were leading moral life.
- Equal treatment was given to both Hindus, Muslims and other communities while protecting the temples and mosques.

Thus all these aspects have been very well explained in this exploration. The overall society was value conscious and based on cultural pride.

5.5. Arts and literature:

Prosperity and stability of the period leads towards development of fine arts, and literature in abundance. When King himself is creative enough to produce high quality literary works, the society also undergoes through such creative activities. Art is nothing but application of knowledge to the real life. The matured culture is reflected through viable forms of expression while understanding facets of arts and literature. In the Sambhaji’s period scholarship, education etc. was provided and art as well as architecture could develop in spite of Mogul attacks on the state.

Koyaji son of Shahaji was a Sanskrit scholar. King Venkoji Bhosle of Tanjawar in Tamilnadu was also a Sanskrit scholar. Later rulers of Tanjawar have also produced high quality Sanskrit literature and plays in Marathi. These contributions are available in Sarasawati Library of Tanjawar (47) Sambhaji himself was a Sanskrit scholar, poet and literary man. His book
Budhbhushan amply testifies this phenomenon. As a scholar and a creative writer Sambhaji was respecting scholarly persons during the period. Like his grandfather Shahaji – Sambhaji had also reflected respect and reverence toward the Sanskrit scholars at the time. It is true that Sambhaji’s respect towards Kavi Kalasha was based on these lines. Sambhaji’s book Budh Bhushanam reveals numerous aspects of life beyond polity, and it proves all comprehensive, broad approach of Chhatrapati Sambhaji towards cultural life. (48)

The poet Kalasha who was a close advisor and diplomat in the court of Sambhaji was holding the position of minister in the court of Sambhaji. His abilities as a genius scholar proved that Sambhaji like his grandfather Shahaji was always in the company of classical Sanskrit scholars. Some people have wrongly interpreted Kalash as secret spy of Aurangzeb but this is baseless. He was very close to Sambhaji and loyal to him. He shared Sambhaji’s social and cultural life and he also suffered like him while fighting against Moguls. Sambhaji fought against his own Shirke relatives who were trying to bring Kalash in difficulties. It is an example of Sambhaji’s faith and loyalty in his friendship. (49)

The close circle around him which was included in Asthapradhan Mandal reveal that Sambhaji was always seeking practice advice from the Ministers of high repute. Sambhaji was discussing various issues and problems with these ministers during crucial times. The advice of ministers was respected and carefully examined at every movement of decision making.

The progress in the field of art, architecture and literature depends on peace, stability and security. Sambhaji was able to provide security in the state due to his alertness and administrative efficiency. His performance in the field of art and architecture was well up to mark. The different structures of the period of Chhatrapati Sambhaji’s period reveal quality in its structures and monuments. M.S. Mate’s work on Maratha archival has illustrated some interesting examples like that of Deshpande’s wada,. Sambhaji was able to reset and reestablish Ashrams on some local rivers in Solapur district at Mohol. To sum up efforts made by Chhatrapati Sambhaji can be reviewed in the following five areas:

- Sambhaji provided renovation of Hindu temples at religious places during his period. Good number of examples is available to illustrate these examples.
- Sambhaji had a system to repair forts. He could repair some forts in a shortest time when he was fighting against Portuguese invasion.

- Sambhaji continued Shivaji’s policy regarding storage of water. His systematic efforts were responsible for the construction and repair of small and medium water tanks, when the state was undergoing water shortage.

- Sambhaji’s generals and his high class diplomats constructed their Wadas and homes safe and secure for their stay. The house of Desai in Sangameshwar in Konkan was well built and strong enough for protection of the residents. Houses in Kolhapur and Satara were best examples of this type.

- Educational centers in the state were supplied by the state by giving them grants for their successful efficient operations. The Mathas at Sajjangad established by Saint Ramdas and Chaphal and Baba Yakub’s sacred center at Kelshi were helped a great deal for their effective operations by granting them funds in the form of Agrahar villages and mathas.

Thus Chhatrapati Sambhaji made serious efforts to provide art, architecture and literature. He was responsible for promoting Sanskrit literature during his tenure. Like his grandfather Chhatrapati Shahaji he was able to maintain harmonious relations with Sanskrit scholars and could seek inspiration from Kavi Kalash, Keshav Pandit etc.

5.6. Sambhaji’s approach to conversion and Shuddhi movement:

In the Sambhaji’s period Moghal and Portuguese invaders were in a mood to attack and capture parts of Maharashtra. This conquest was not only political but it was also religious. The contemporary religious conversion was a serious issue and people were conscious about the issue. They were informing the state about the complex problems and they were expecting stern action in this matter. The steps undertaken by Sambhaji were important to turn wheel of the time.

All these facts can be examined on the basis of the few evidences and documentation of sources. A careful and critical understanding of correspondence in the period is required to pinpoint the problem. Few case studies can be provided and a new angle can be traced here to look at the problem in a systematic manner. Thus all these aspects can be very well examined and illustrated here.
Sambhaji was realistic and objective in his deliberations. Especially in the field of religion, in medieval period forced conversion was an inevitable fact. In the Sara of Shivaji and Sambhaji, such conversions were not allowed. Few episodes revealed that Sambhaji had corrected such conversions. This was an answer to the Mogul King Aurangzeb’s policy of forced conversion. The socio religious policy of Sambhaji was mostly balanced and was all comprehensive. His religious policy was in favor of Hindus, but it was not against Muslims. His approach was realistic and corrective.

English, Portuguese and Moguls were committing religious atrocities and they were forcefully converting forcefully local people towards their religion. Sambhaji was very much conscious about religious injustice and atrocities on local people. He was always against forced conversion. During this period Mogul rulers were forcefully converting local people towards Islamic religion. In many cases Sambhaji had rescued these force converts. Some examples and cases can be illustrated to throw light on his religious policy. He not only put a strong resistance against conversion, but produced logical theory of Suddhi or purification of religious converts. Sambhaji’s approach to conversion was well thought, advanced as well as progressive in the context of new age of the medieval period. While appreciating this policy P.S.Joshi has observed that “Thus Sambhaji continued the liberal policy of Chhatrapati Shivaji of converting to Hinduism and the Hindus who were forcibly converted to Islam.” (50) The case of conversion of Gangadhar Raghunath Kulkarni of Kasbe Harsool, in Aurangabad district is an unique episode which occurred during the Sambhaji’s period. He had fallen prey to forceful conversion to Islam, later on repentded and went to Raigad fort to meet Sambhaji and requested him to grant Shuddhi to enter in again in Hindu religion. (51) After Prayachit repentance and confession, Shuddhi was granted to this Brahmin. Gokhale has argued that Sambhaji might have taken such many progressive decision during his career (52) Further Sambhaji had paid attention for the settlement of life of those reconverted Hindus for their safety and security.

There are many examples of renovation of Hindu temples which Sambhaji had given priority. P.S. Joshi has observed that “The Mogul army devastated the territory of Torgal and Navalgund of the Dharwad district in 1684. As it had also destroyed Hindu temples in that area, Lakhaava Lingappa Desai of Mamle Torgal requested the officer of Kasba Navalgund to construct temples. Therefore, that officer gave an inam to Venkatibhat Kashinathbhat
Varanashikar and arranged for the construction of a temple at Navalgund.” (53) Thus it is clear that Sambhaji was having a very progressive approach to bring in the converted Hindus back to their religion. Further he had paid due importance for the renovation of temples.

Though Muslims were not in sizable number in the state of Sambhaji, yet Sambhaji had tried to support their safety and security in the state. On one side he respected Muslim saints and prophets and on the other side he had appointed able Muslim soildors and generals on respected high positions. Sambhaji’s catholic approach towards Muslims has been appreciated by historians like Dr. Kamal Gokhale, Dr. Sadashiv Shivde etc. The role, relevance and effectivity of this policy can be illustrated from the example of Sambhaji and Baba Yakub relationship. In order to get peace and solace in the hurried and hectic life, Sambhaji had spent almost a week with this place. He could get spiritual satisfaction when he stayed at Kelshi in Satara district. The Maratha king was not fanatic, neither he was one sided and having malice towards Muslims. He had equally good relationship with Muslims and they felt secure in his states. Thus Sambhaji’s policy towards Muslims was equally appreciable like that of Shivaji the Great.

Thus Sambhaji treated the issues of conversion seriously. He adopted a liberal policy to tackle the issue. He solved the proelm of Rango Bapu Kulkarni of Kasbe Harsul who had fallen a pray to conversion. He was not only allowed to come back to the Hindu religion, but his entry was confirmed by endorsing his coming back to Hindu religion. As the state took a keen interest in the matter, the positive message was given to the entire state. The study of the issue in Kasbe Harsul has been studied by Kamal Gokhale on the basis of archiological material and she has rightly observed that Sambhaji’s approach was rational, liberal and catholic enough to takle the problem. The entire phenomenon reveals that Sambhaji had a clear cut and well developed policy of Shuddhi of converts. He also provided religious heads to support is policies. By looking into the serious issues carefully Sambhaji was able to resovle the crisis carefully. His overall new approach towards the problem of conversion was objective, realistic and clear cut as well. A critical analysis of all these facts truly manifested the cultural life of the period. These aspects provide us a more clear and more objective picture about the problem of conversion tackled by Sambhaji in his period.

5.7. Tolerant approach towards Muslims:
Chhatrapati Shivaji’s period Kazi Haldar was a Muslim personnel. Shivaji respected the Muslim spiritual guru and respected their Holy Quran. Sambhaji also followed the tradition of Shivaji, the great. Hindu and Muslims were treated as two wheels of the state chariot.

Hindu and Muslims were the two eyes right and left of the state. They were equally respected by Chhatrapati Sambhaji effectively. The diversity of the society and religion both were maintained properly. Sambhaji’s policies were rationale and catholic. He visited Balu Yakub’s center at Kelshi and stayed there for few days for spiritual awakening. The entire process of involving, persuading and transforming people was made by Sambhaji effectively. The minority Muslim community was not kept away from the entire process. All these minority communities were given full scope for its development in the all round manner. These dimensions were correlated to each other and Muslim saints and prophets were equally respected and rewarded by the state.

The socio-cultural awakening of the Muslim saints and prophets were identified by the king himself. Like Chhatrapati Shivaji, Sambhaji had also explained all the potentials for the respect and welfare of the people. All these aspects must be carefully examined in a systematic manner. Hence every care has been taken in this chapter to correlate theory and practice regarding the welfare of the Muslim community. The spiritual gurus were respected and their spiritual height was well respected. The events regarding the visit of Chhatrapati Sambhaji towards the center of spiritual awakening in the Hindavi Swarajya revealed the well and catholic approach of the state.

Sambhaji and Ramdas relations can be explained in new angle with new evidences. Saint Ramdas had written letters to Sambhaji for guiding him in a crucial time. After accession to power Sambhaji’s condition was like Arjuna in Mahabharata war, yet Sambhaji was able to overcome these complexities to proper guidelines he had received from Saint Ramdas, his Spiritual Guru. Sambhaji was able to establish Maharashtra dharma due to inspiration by Saint Ramdas. The entire Maharashtra owes a great deal to Ramdas, because he had contributed Dasbodha, a political treatise as well as his letters to Sambhaji.

Sambhaji treated Muslims or minority community as equal citizen in the state. Like Aurangzeb he never treated them as Muslims. On the contrary, he had respected Muslim saints
and prophets. Like his father Baba Yakub, a learned spiritual scholar was not only respected but supported by providing grants and concessions towards the religious centers, mosques and Masjids. The study of some important decisions taken by Sambhaji can be well elucidated and properly highlighted here. Sambhaji’s papers have described his visit to Baba Yakub of Yelsi and grants given for his spiritual seat of learning. In the archival references it has been pointed that Sambhaji stayed at Elshi for 8 days. He reached Kelshi on 19-10-1680 and he returned from that place on dated 25-10-1680. (54)

Muslims were small in number in Sambhaji’s state. They were performing their professions honestly and feeding with dedication. All these decisions taken by Sambhaji were pragmatic as well as progressive in all respects. Many of them were enjoying good positions in army, artillery and navy. According to Shivde Sambhaji continued policy of Shivaji honestly and sincerely. In the navy of Sambhaji important persons like Daulatkhan, Kawaji Mohd. Siddi Mistri and Janoji Furzon etc. were Muslim officers performing their duties righteously. (55)

Thus Muslims were leading safe secure and peaceful life during Sambhaji’s period. They were participating in a constructive manner for rebuilding of Hindavi Swaraj. Though Sambhaji favored Hindus, he never neglected, or insulted Muslim as a part of social component. His equal tolerant and catholic approach was a step forward like Shivaji, the Great.

5.8. Sambhaji – Ramdas relations:

The study of Sambhaji Ramdas relations reveled that Sambhaji had tremendous respect towards saint Ramdas. After death of Shivaji the great, Ramdas wrote a letrr to Sambhaji making him alert about the prevailing conditions around him. He appealed Sambhaji to expresss his bravery and valor in such a way that he has to play an important role in the problem of Swarajya. He further pointed that the protection of Maharashtra Dharma was the responsibility of the state. He described “Mantra” to all who belonged to Maharashtra. All the Marathi spseaking community was included in Maratha community. The pride of the Maratha people must be reflectedin Maharashtra Dharma as it was activated by Shivaji the great. He further called people to remember the glory as well as ideals provided by genius ruler. His insight was perfect and was influensenced by the gresat saints and prophets of the land. Ramdas further called his people to
follow the same in a systematic manner. Ramdas in his book Sasbodh had described the political, social as well as economic conditions of the times. His ideal philosophy was based on Hindu religion and culture. He wanted to protect it from the invasion of Aurangzeb. He described the mogul king as Aurangya papi and the same couplet can be noted below:

Budala Aurangya Papi

Mlench Sanhar Zahala

Udand Jahale Pani

Snan Sandhya Karawaya

was described my Ramdas after the fulfillment of Swarajaya. It was based on values and principles of good governance nurtured in the period. He had further appealed the people at large to follow all the objectives and ideals to fulfill the dream of Swarajya in the period.

Sambhaji’s relations with Muslims were catholic and liberal. He had always inspired true followers of Islamic religion. Though Aurangzeb’s policy towards Hindus was negative, yet Sambhaji never behaved in the same manner. He had evolved a more objective policy. The way in which he looked at forced conversion, can be appreciated. He had handled the problems of forced conversion of Kasbe Harsool in a very objective manner. He set forth a new ideal by doing so.

Chhatrapati Sambhaji respected saint Ramdas and was seeking his significant and diplomatic advice at every crucial stage. The famous letter of Ramdas written to Sambhaji after the death of his father Shivaji, the Great, illustrates his theory and appreciable advice. Ramdas felt that he must follow the footsteps of his father for establishing of Maharashtra dharma. He felt that all Marathas must be united together for cherishing the dream of Maharashtra dharma for the betterment of further generation. (56) He further appealed Sambhaji to seek lessons of bravery from Shivaji, the Great and he expected strokes of bravery in such a way that shaken from roots. Sambhaji’s every decision was based on this diplomatic advice of Saint Ramdas. The way in which Sambhaji has fought against the Mogul army, must be appreciated because these reactions and responses were based on the able and diplomatic advice of Ramdas and his treatise “Dasbodha” (57)
S.K. Altekar has given detailed information about Ramdas’s letters to Sambhaji which contained useful advice given by the saint to the ruler. (58) More and better evidences are available to support Sambhaji Ramdas visit and deliberations among them. Sambhaji had cared and helped for the renovation of Ramdashi Mathas during his life time. In 1678, Sambhaji had met Ramdas on Sajjangad (59) However, evidences do not speak about this visit, but it is a clear reference that Sambhaji had met Ramdas at the time, when Shivaji had visited Sajjangad after coronation along with his all royal queens and paraphernia. (60) After getting power on the thrown, Sambhaji had met Ramdas along with senior diplomat Ramchandrapant Amatya in the month of Jestha. (61) The grants given by Shivaji for religious rituals known as Moin were continued by Sambhaji in 1680. (62) Annaji Datto minister of Shivaji had given village Wakurdi for maintenance of Hanuman festival at Chaphal and Sambhaji continued the same by endorsing the same grant. (63)

Thus the above sources speak a great deal about Sambhaji Ramdas relations and the support granted by Sambhaji for the religious and spiritual work conducted by Ramdas for the betterment of Hindavi Swarajya. Thus Sambhaji Ramdas relations form a significant chapter in the religious and cultural life of Sambhaji.

Dr. Appasaheb Pawar, a senior researcher and former Vice-Chancellor of Shivaji University, Kolhapur has written an extensive paper on Shivaji-Ramdas relations, but up till now nobody has studied Sambhaji-Ramdas relations. There are three important facts which can be brought to light hereafter careful explorations of the subject. These observations are based on careful exploration of archives as well as study of literature available in the religious centers.

- Sambhaji had met Ramdas three times. First he met him after accession on the throne. Secondly he had met Ramdas at Sajjangad and Chaphal. Ramdas respected goals and objects of Sambhaji and he had inspired Saint Ramdas and his works.
- Sambhaji continued grants given for Mathas at Sajjangad and Chaphal. The symbolic respect of Sambhaji towards the Maharashtra dharma can be witnessed through the examples of their evidences.
• Ramdas’s letter to Sambhaji is famous. It had serious reflections, philosophical interactions. The way in which Ramdas had advised Sambhaji is based on Hindu polity. Ramdas had previously witnessed Shivaji’s policies and he inspired Sambhaji to face new challenges in a realistic manner.

5.9. Sociological analysis:

A careful sociological analysis of the religious conditions prevailing the period of Sambhaji brings to us to understand the following points:

• Sambhaji was able to understand various socio religious pressures due to the contemporary conditions. Mogul king Aurangzeb and his men were forcefully converting Non-Islamic religion people to Islamic religion. Sambhaji put a full stop to this.

• During the period of Sambhaji Hindu and Muslims were staying together in harmony because state was in favor of religious feelings of the people. The state had equality treated both Hindu and Muslim saints and prophets.

• The socio cultural atmosphere during the period of Sambhaji was cordial and friendly to each other because the state was always looking in to the welfare of the people. Sambhaji’s policies were based on balanced thinking and welfare of all.

• “Mudra Bhadrate Rajate” was the policy of Shivaji the Great and Sambhaji was following the same in an interesting manner with little changes suitable for local conditions. The maximum welfare of the all was the real policy of the state.

The period of Sambhaji was full of turmoil and crisis. In this period following facts can be presented:

• Sambhaji was able to face Mogul invasion because entire society was supporting him.

• The religion and culture as a learning force was carefully handled by Sambhaji.
• Sambhaji had treated Hindus and Muslims equally, because he knew that social peace is required for national progress.
• Cultural life during Sambhaji’s period was rich and varied because he had shaped this period.
• Sambhaji was seeking inspiration from saints like Ramdas who had provided new vision to him.
• The socio cultural interaction in the decade was creative and innovative.
• The sociological phenomenon of the period was based on cultural effluence.
• The cultural development of the period was possible on the basis of struggle and conflict witnessed by the people in the decade of turmoil.

The sociological analysis thus throws light on the following facts:

• Social prosperity was the major force behind the success of Sambhaji’s period.
• Social unity and harmony was responsible for tremendous achievement of the period.

The sociological analysis of Sambhaji’s policies reveals some more interesting facts. Chhatrapati Sambhaji was able to draw strength from different cross sections of Indian society in Maharashtra. He was able to strengthen Hinduri Sara by correlating saints and prophets. Their spiritual power was used properly for seeking strength of the ruler and society. The letter of Saint Ramdas to Sambhaji is a best example of such interaction. These dialogues were highly spiritual and they had a philosophical base. The states requires energy from such centers which were developed by saints and prophets in a dedicated manner. Justice M.G.Ranade has evolved a wider theoretical frame while appreciating the role played by Maratha saints and prophets in the process of social awakening leading towards a total renaissance. The period of Shivaji witnessed what one may call the beginning of the process of nation building. Sambhaji continued this policy by correlating different social forces together in a coordinated manner.

The sociological analysis about the religion and cultural life of the decade has been provided here in this study. The following important aspects can be described as energy facts about the religion and cultural life of the period.
• Unity in diversity was an important character of the character of the period and the divine cultural traits were well protected.
• There was social interaction and assimilation among small groups. The various sections and cross sections in society stayed together peacefully and enjoyed the cultural life.
• The fairs and festivals were centers of cultural life and they had well developed aspects of cultural vanity. All the fairs and festivals were based on previous traditions.
• The traditional folk arts were based on oral tradition which were followed by generations
• The cultural life was manifested through art, architecture and paintings which were manifested in the end of the 17th century in medieval India.
• Thus all these aspects can be highlighted as sociological features of the cultural life during the period of Chhatrapati Sambhaji.

5.9. Pros and cons of religious policy:

The cultural diversity along with the pride in the Hindutwa was essence of the cultural life. Hindavi Swarajya aimed to protect the culture of the people. Hence all the efforts were made to protect the culture

• Faith in the religion
• Confidence in the Hindutwa
• Freedom to all religions
• No taxes on religious gathering
• No distinction among communities on the grounds of religion.

All these were some of the prominent aspects of the cultural life. The following were the limitations

• The clear policy towards the western places was not there
• The Portuguese and English were supporting communalism.
The Aurangazeb’s religious policy was contradiced by Shivaji by writing letter but Sambhaji had not done so. In the period of Shivaji he had found moguls for few days. This had tarnished his designs. However the policy of Sambhahji in the later period was perfet and sound. It was well designed on the basis of Maharashtra Dharma. The letter written by Ramdas amply tesfies the same. Thus all these aspects provide us a clue and viewpoint to look at the research problem.

5.10. Summary:

Medieval Deccan during Chhatrapati Shivaji and Sambhaji was facing attacks on religious freedom and hence the state had to undertake necessary steps for meeting different challenges in a systematic manner. The control on religious and cultural life was a matter of state policy. However, sincere efforts were made by state to set balance between Hindu and Muslim religious communities. Equal treatment was given to both of them and no distinction was made on the basis of religious following. Temples and mosques were given equal and sizable grants for performing religious duties. Every care was taken to light lamps at sacred places regularly. Land, endowments or Agrahar were given to the institutions, who were providing education to the needy people. Due to such efforts socio religious education was also supported as a part of cultural prosperity of life.

Thus in this chapter religious and culture life during the period of Sambhaji was carefully studied. The facets of his policy were studied in the context of Hindavi Swaraj. A critical study of religious and cultural life during the period of Sambhaji was explained. There was peace and glory in the state due to law and order situation rightly controlled by the state. The equal opportunity and freedom to all religions was a righteous policy of Sambhaji and he had sternly implemented this policy in a systematic manner. He allowed purification process in respect of forcefully converted persons. Mr. Kulkarni of Kasbe Harsool who was forcefully converted as Muslim was allowed to entry in Hindu religion after purification by Sambhaji. All such cases can be treated as an ideal test case of the period of Sambhaji. Dr. Kamal Gokhale has rightly pointed that the efforts made by Sambhaji to protect the interests of exploited people who were victims to the religious atrocities of Mogul state. The wide and comprehensive plans of Chhatrapati Sambhaji were mostly all inclusive. He had respected religious feelings of non Hindu
communities in his state. Like Moguls he also foiled religious atrocities caused by Portuguese in Goa. Study of all these policies revealed that Sambhaji was balanced and catholic enough in religious and cultural policies.

Thus in this chapter aspects of religious and cultural life were explained together in a relevant manner. The new dimension of sociological analysis was mainly explained in this chapter. The different aspects such as aims, objects of Hinduri Sara, new aspects of religious and cultural life were properly highlighted. In this connection progress in the fields of arts, and literatures was specifically highlighted. Sambhaji’s smooth relationship with Muslims was specially underlined and Sambhaji Ramdas relationship was also specifically examined. The whole explanation is based on sociological explorations conducted here, which is the nexus of this study.

Thus finally we can state that social and cultural aspects are inseparable. We have to understand these facts in a unique angle, which is sociological.

This in this chapter various aspects of cultural life were explained in an interesting manner. A new perspective was developed to look at the problem. The arrangements mad by Sambhaji have been developed here. The cultural process of Maharasshtra Dharma was explained throughout the chapter. All these aspects have been properly highlighted here. The study of various social features of cultural life was a successful phenomenon completed here. In the next chapter Sambhaji’s contribution to Hindavi Swaraja has been highlighted properly.

In the next chapter contribution of Sambhaji for the establishment of Hinduri Sara has been discussed properly.

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