ABSTRACT

Of Ph.D. thesis entitled:

STRUGGLE AND SACRIFICE: CONTRIBUTION OF CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJI IN THE CONSERVATION OF HINDAVI SWARAJYA

The period of Chhatrapati Sambhaji (1680-1689) is treated as later phase of Shiv Shahi in medieval India. However, it would be interesting enough to examine and highlight Chhatrapati Sambhaji’s contribution separately as an independent entity. In this work sufficient light has been thrown on the contribution made by Chhatrapati Sambhaji in the protection and consolidation of Hindavi Swaraja in various fields such as political, socio economic, religious and cultural. Hitherto Sambhaji’s work is examined on the basis of Chitnis Bakhar, which was written as per order of Chhatrapati Rajaram. The biased information about Sambhaji is misleading and has been described as exaggerating and imbalanced. In order to make correct understanding of Sambhaji’s personality, life and work, his successes and failures have been critically studied here. Hence this work is unique in the process of evaluation of his historical role as a just and able ruler who continued the spirit of swarajya effectively.

Findings:

• Sambhaji’s role has remained neglected in the building of Hindvi Swaraj. New justice has been provided in this work for evaluating his performance in the right angle.
• Sambhaji was able to strengthen Hindvi Swaraj in the adverse conditions. His struggle and dedication was corner stone of his contribution to the history of medieval India.
• The socio economic and cultural aspects of the period of Sambhaji illustrate mass participation on large scale than that of political life.
• The socio economic, religious and cultural life of the period of Sambhaji was value based and he protected Maharashtra Dharma as Maratha identity and Hindvi Swaraj as national identity, both merging in each other for nation building.
• People’s participation against the mogul attack on Maharashtra was a solid base of Sambhaji’s success. Like the king people also were actively involved in fighting the adverse conditions. The will power of the society was highly elevated due to awakening made by saints and prophets.
• Sambhaji took every care to provide relief to the common people during the conditions of drought, which prevailed during his period. The administrative capacities of Sambhaji can be witnessed in this phase.
• Chhatrapati Sambhaji established his bravery and able leadership while fighting against Moguls and Portuguese. The Portuguese papers have described Sambhaji as war life prince.
• Sambhaji raised huge mass movement for the protection of people, their religion and culture.
• The public life during Sambhaji’s period was based on the value of struggle and loyalty towards the value of freedom. He and his fellowmen treated these values higher than any other selfish motives.

Chapter scheme:

Chapter I: Historical background:

In this chapter the Swaraj and its geographical divisions prior to the rise of Sambhaji has been highlighted properly. Further significance, objectives as well as new sociological perspective were also studied. The authenticity of sources was examined and new light was thrown on different sources for reunderstanding Sambhaji’s struggle and sacrifice.

Chapter II: Research Design
In this chapter most suitable and befitting descriptive research design was examined properly. The various methods of data collection were reviewed and both primary as well as secondary sources were explained. Modi, Arabic and Persian as well as English and Portuguese sources were classified and described one after another. Both modes of internal and external criticism were testified to available sources and line of interpretation was set in this context.

Chapter III: Life and work of Sambhaji and Review of Literature:

In this chapter in the beginning major events in the life of Sambhaji were covered and later on brief historical details were elaborated. The milestone research works conducted by G.S. Sardesai, Jadunath Sarkar, G.H.Khare, A.R.Kulkarni, Dr. Kamal Gokhale, Dr. Shivde, Dr. Bahekar were reviewed. Their achievements and limitations were also presented. New sociological angle and subaltern perspectives were studied.

Chapter IV: Social and economic conditions:

In this chapter it was 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 Sambhaji’s life were 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 were also carefully studied here.

Chapter V: Religious and culture life:

In this chapter Sambhaji’s religious and cultural policy was highlighted. Sambhaji’s sole efforts were to fight against the Islamic invasion of Mogul Emperor Aurangzeb’s fanatic policies. In this chapter different aspects of cultural life of Sambhaji were 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 was adopted for this study.

The socio cultural aspects of Sambhaji’s period were explained in this chapter.

Chapter VI Sambhaji and strengthening of Hindvi Swaraj:
This chapter had mainly focused on contribution made by Chhatrapati Sambhaji for strengthening of Hindvi Swaraj. The chapter has mainly focused on Sambhaji’s struggle with Portuguese and Moguls as well as Englishmen. Finally this has turned into Sambhaji’s struggle and sacrifice for the fostering of Hindvi Swaraj.

Chapter VII: Conclusion:

In this chapter review of earlier chapters has been presented in order to cover different aspects of the problem. After presenting of summary, major findings have been illustrated and a new theoretical frame has also been presented.

New theory:

The new theoretical frame of this research work has mainly focus on following aspects. The historical sociological approach and subaltern history approach can help to rebuilt Sambhaji’s history.

- Historians have not given proper justice to the contributions made by Chhatrapati Sambhaji. Hence correct evaluation of Sambhaji’s performance has been made in this work.
- Sambhaji bravely fought with Portuguese and he has been described in Portuguese papers as “War like Prince.”
- If Sambhaji-Akbar alliance would have been successful, this would have turned the trends in history.
- Due to drought all economic difficulties Sambhaji had to make rigorous struggle for retaining freedom.
- Chhatrapati Sambhaji promoted art and culture.
Summary:

The entire research work has led to the understanding of facts about Sambhaji in new angle. The entire theme has led to highlight the contribution of Chhatrapati Sambhaji. The struggle and sacrifice of Sambhaji thus led to the new understanding of Sambhaji’s contribution made to the strengthening Hindavi Swaraj in a new angle.

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