

Shahuji Maharaj : A Modern Social Reformer.

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Abstract: The Shahu Maharaj is taken prominently and inevitably among modern social reformers. Because he made many reforms for education, health, farmer reforms, dams, canals, and women's education for society and the lower classes, whose contribution and work are still relevant, the practical importance of the work done during the British rule is as much for the society as it was at that time. He was a visionary who tried to get to the bottom of the problems and solve them. Modern thinkers, doing bold work in many ways, contributed to the freedom movement and the new construction of India and are called the builders of modern India. Similarly, Shahu Ji Maharaj is a contemporary social reformer for his works. A historical and analytical study of these facts and concepts has been done in the present research paper.

Key Words: Shahu Maharaj, Modern Social Reformer, Reservation, Modern Education

Introduction: Everyone born on this earth is mortal in him, but only one gets the credit of being a remembrance. Shahu Ji Maharaj is prominent and essential among the great men who contributed to independent India and social reform. He was a social reformer, yet he was a great ruler. Who implemented the modern education system in his state? Women's education was also encouraged. He also encouraged the students to go abroad from their state. He always did good work for the farmers so their income could progress. He was a famous king of the Bhonsle dynasty (June 26, 1874 – May 6, 1922). His rule (reign was under the Indian princely states of Kolhapur. All work was conducted democratically under his authority. This was why he was considered a genuinely democratic and social reformer.

The first Maharaja of the princely state of Kolhapur was of Maharashtra. It was a priceless gem in history. He was greatly influenced by the contribution of social reformer Jyotirao Govindrao Phule. Shahu Maharaj was an ideal leader and able ruler who was associated with many progressive and social work activities during his rule. From his statesmanship in 1894 to 1922. Till his death, he worked tirelessly for the cause of lower caste subjects in his kingdom. Primary education for all, irrespective of caste and creed, was one of his most important priorities. He used to work for social work and social reform. That is why he has remembered as a great social reformer.

Objectives of the research paper:

- ❖ To study the life of Shahu Ji Maharaj critically.
- ❖ Analytical study of the works and contributions of Shahu Ji Maharaj

Research Methodology: Historical and analytical research methodology has been used in the present research paper based on secondary sources. Edited books, reference books, research papers, and Internet websites have been used as secondary sources.

Research Hypothesis: After studying the literary materials from the research paper, the positive hypothesis has been confirmed because modern consciousness has been communicated in society, community, and groups due to the works of Shahu Ji Maharaj. His results have also improved in a big way.

Shahu Jee Modern Social Reformer: Any caste, religion, culture, and country has its history. The present cannot remain without being influenced by past events. The influence of authority is visible in every culture. Whoever has the power will torment the weaker than himself; there is no doubt about it. The world operates on this framework of fish justice. The ancient tribal society was similar in that the powerful tribes used to destroy the weaker tribes and take them under their control. The culture of tribal communities is visible somewhere in which civilization in almost every country. This scene of human society is also visible in India. For thousands of years, in the name of varna and caste, depriving the maximum mass of human beings of essential humane means reflects this civilization. India is where exploitation, discrimination, superstition, and inhumanity were at their peak. If the country's power had not been weakened by separating man from man in the name of the caste system, then today, India's face would have been different in every field. When the varna system was created in the Vedic period, the principle of the varna system was karma based, but later the varnas started being determined based on birth. This change did not take long. When the varnas started being determined by birth, according to the varna system, the child born in the low caste, no matter how sharp the intellect was, could not study and teach and could only do what the varna system had given him. Apart from this, he was treated worse than animals. Leave it as a human being, and it was not even considered a living creature. Thus, the caste system became so cruel that most of the country's people were deprived of human society and the government itself. When most people are not concerned with the country, it is evident that the country's development will be blocked. This was why foreign invaders plundered India in various ways, and the British made their colony. After the arrival of the British in India, the education policy of Lord Macaulay came into force in 1835, due to which the non-Savarna castes (who were now doomed to live an uneducated life) also started getting the right to read and write a little. As a result of which, social consciousness started awakening among the people. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule The country's first teacher, Savitribai Phule, comes forward for social reform, or to say that the consciousness of social reform is awakened in her. Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj, the grandson of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, was greatly influenced by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule, so he also took the initiative of social reform in his state.

When prominent leaders were coming forward to drive the British from the country, Shahuji Maharaj was not only thinking of freeing the country from the British, but he also wanted to free the country from the slavery of his own country. Even the most prominent leaders of the country fighting for freedom did not pay attention to this or say that no one wanted to talk about the real reasons for the slavery of the country. In India, if the country's power had not been weakened by dividing man to man in the name of caste religion, then the Mughals and the British would not have had the courage to take over India. Therefore, due to the enslaved country's internal shortcomings, it was necessary first to consider those root causes, and Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj considered these root causes. Shahuji Maharaj made unforgettable social reforms during his reign, especially challenging Brahminical supremacy, a revolutionary step at that time. He made arrangements for education for women, Dalits, and backward in his state, opened schools, arranged for hostels, and placed 50 percent reservations in education and jobs in his form for the first time in the whole country. For which he is also called the father of reservation. Sahu Ji Maharaj gave the slogan - "whose number is heavy - his share," "whose share - his share," "whose as much participation - his responsibility."

Not only this, but Shahu Ji Maharaj also ended the Balutdari system in 1917. A small amount of land was given to the Shudras, and complimentary services were taken from their entire family for the village. He ended this, and by implementing land reforms, the Shudras got the right to become land owners. By this order, their economic slavery was removed to a great extent. Shahu Ji Maharaj recognized the talent and importance of Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar in time. He said while addressing a public meeting in Manmad in 1920- "I think that in the form of Dr. Ambedkar, Dalits are their liberator. have got it and hope he will cut the shackles of slavery of Dalits."

Shahu Ji Maharaj's style was very different, and he used to attack casteism directly; sometimes, he tried to explain with love and to say his point in jest. Shahu Ji Maharaj was not only in favour of an egalitarian human society from the theoretical point of view but also from the practical point of view. He continued to make a human society throughout his life. Despite being the king, he used to meet the people, listen to their problems and solve them. Not only this, but at that time (when it seemed like a crime to think too), he encouraged inter-caste marriage and got many such reforms in his patronage, in which widow remarriage and child marriage ban. were prominent. Two years before his death in 1920, Shahu Ji Maharaj not only participated in the 'Akhil Bharatiya Bahishkrit Parishad' meeting in Nagpur, but he also made tea from a Dalit and drank it. He did this on many occasions.

He appointed qualified and virtuous people of Bahujan Samaj in the administration system. The young Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj bravely faced the famine and plague-like epidemic of 1897-98. Shahu Maharaj believed it was necessary to abolish the upper castes' social and religious special rights. He was attracted to the Satyashodhak stream of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule. The ideology of Satyashodhak Samaj was revived with the encouragement of Shahu Maharaj. Shri Shivaji Vedic School was established in Kolhapur, and Shri Sadashiv Rao Patil, an independent young teacher, was appointed Kshetra Jagatguru. Unless the Bahujan society becomes intelligent after being educated, their poverty, superstition, and ignorance cannot be removed, keeping in mind that he emphasized primary education. In 1917, he enacted the law of compulsory free primary education in his state and started primary schools in every village. Shahu Ji started weaving and Spinning mills in 1996 to provide employment. The 'Rajaram College' was built by Shahuji Maharaj and was later named after him. He emphasized education, and he started many educational programs to promote education. Forbid the practice of untouchability in public places. Ordinances were also issued for this in 1918-19. The Balutedars were freed from their Balut system, and all the industries of the society were opened to them. Shahuji Maharaj fought with untouchability till the end. Shahu Ji Maharaj had to face the wrath and wrath of the Chitpavan Brahmins of Maharashtra for getting the rights of justice and equality to the backward, downtrodden, and women. They were tried by humiliating him in various ways. The reasons for the hatred of ordinary Brahmins towards Shahu Ji can be understood. He was bound to hate the person who broke all his domination. The sad part was that individuals like Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Dange (Left) also expressed anger and hatred towards him. Shahu Maharaj's constant struggle with Tilak continued.

Shahu Maharaj also gave shelter to Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society. Arya Samaj Gurukuls were also established, and Rajaram College was given to run the Arya Samaj. One can understand the plight of the poor and downtrodden backward who are themselves poor or oppressed victims. Nevertheless, Shahuji Maharaj was none of these. They were neither poor nor exploited. He was the king,

yet he understood the pain of the country's people who were cursed to bear that pain for centuries and whose pain was not understood by anyone. Shahu Ji Maharaj made an extraordinary contribution to making Azad systematic in the making of modern India, which cannot be forgotten.

Conclusion:

Based on the deductive method, Shahu Ji Maharaj was the inspiration of humanism who essentially worked for the progress of the deprived sections of society. He made arrangements for primary education in his state, and the state ultimately made its expenditure. He is also considered the end of social evils and a modern social reformer. He always gave importance to logic and humanity. He rejected the evils prevalent in that society. He believed that all people could participate in all kinds of social and religious activities without any restrictions. He started compulsory primary education for people. Due to all these reforms, he has become known as a modern social reformer.

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