Chapter III.

PRE SHIVAJI PERIOD

The Situation:

The final defeat of the Marathas of Deogiri in 1318 and the destruction of the Vijayanagar Empire in 1565, established beyond doubt the Muslim domination over Hindus in south India. From 1318 onwards up to 1674 Maharashtra was governed by different Muslim rulers. The successive defeats of the Hindus at the hands of Muslims from the year 1295 onwards created inferiority complex among Hindus. Hence, Hindus from Maharashtra tried their level best to keep the Hindu society united by giving up some traditions and customs and by inculcating some new traditions. The Hindu society at that time was highly caste-ridden society and therefore even the concept - social and political equality was beyond imagination even to a political thinker. Maharashtrian saints and other religious sects and pantheon have rendered excellent service to keep the social and religious unity, which ultimately helped inculcate the sense of nationality and political unity among Maharashtrians. Since all the higher posts in administration, in Military services, in diplomatic services were occupied by Muslims, there was little opportunity for Maharashtrians to show their mettle. It was but natural to expect that Maharashtrians were content in rendering service to the Muslim rulers - by occupying secondary
positions everywhere.

**Bahamani Kingdom**:

The unity among the five Bahamani kingdoms - Imadshahi, Adilshahi, Nizamshahi, Qutbshahi, and Baridshahi was a temporary one. Quarrels and wars immediately started among the Muslim Sultans. Foreign mercenaries like Turks, Persians, Abyssinians and Mughals employed by the Deccan sultans added fuel to fire. They proved more troublesome than useful. Therefore, the Sultans were compelled to rely chiefly upon the local Bargirs and Shiledars. This situation gave opportunity to Maharashtrians to show their spirit. This training in arms brought education, power and wealth with it and in the sixteenth century we meet with Ghanges and Ghorpades, Jadhavs and Nimalkars, Mores and Shindes, Dafles and Manes, as generals in charge of ten or twenty thousand horses and in enjoyment of proportionate Jahagirs. The late justice M.G. Kanade writes that "the ground was prepared partly by nature, partly by the ancient history of the country, partly by the religious revival, but chiefly by the long discipline in arms which the country had undergone under Mahomed rule for three hundred years". Maharashtrians were politically shrewd enough to exploit this opportunity. The political situation was not yet ripe for the establishment of an independent Hindu kingdom. Any attempt on the part any Maratha Sardar or Jahagirdar at this stage would have indirectly forged unity amongst Muslims. The defeat of the Vijayanagar
Emperor in 1567 in the battle of Razkastangdi, i.e. Talikot, was the latest example of Muslim unity.

Beginning of the Maratha Nationalism:

The defeat of the Vijayanagar Empire and the end of it is really the beginning of the Maratha nationalism. The five Bahamani kingdoms now thought that there is no danger to their existence because the powerful Vijayanagar empire was totally destroyed. This fact gave additional impetus to the feuds among the five Bahamani kingdoms. The political policy of different Jamindars and Watandars was to express loyalty to the Muslim Sultans and at the same time to strive for independence. Hindu Jamindars proved faithful servants and brought with them their own retainers to serve in the Muslim army. Maratha Bargirs and Shiledars proved useful particularly in the hilly country ending in the Western ghats. Mahomedans at no period seem to have had any partiality for hills and the jungles. So naturally, the entire wilder portions of the Maratha Maharashtra was practically in the hands of Hindu Jamindars. This very wilder portion of Maharashtra became the assembly area of the nationalist Mavales. In this way, writes Smith, there gradually grew up a hardy race of mountaineers, always the best stuff for soldiers, who brought up in their own faith

and traditions, were yet taught the art of war by their conquerors, and only awaited a time of danger and of weakness to raise the standard of revolt, and assert their own independence. This was, in fact, the origin of Mahratta nation and the Sultans of Bijapur and Ahmednagar may be said to have educated and brought into existence the nation which, before long, was to take, not only their places, but very nearly to acquire the sovereignty of India.

**Maloji and Shahaji**

The policy of Maratha Jamindars and Sardars and Vatandars can be best exemplified in the life history of Maloji and Shahaji - grandfather and father respectively of the great Shivaji. Maloji was born in the year 1550. He became a shiledar at the age of 27, i.e. in the year 1577. Within a period of twelve years Maloji became Panchhajari (i.e. the owner of 5000 horses or one who is authorised to keep an army of 5000 soldiers.) His position as a Jahagirdar was duly recognised in the Bijapur Darbar. The borders of his jahagir touched the borders of the Mughal Empire, Adilshaha of Bijapur and Nizamshahi of Ahmednagar. How fearless Maloji was can be seen from his following act. He had slain two pigs and had thrown them into a Masjid near Daulatabad. Not only that, but he threatened the Badshah of Ahmednagar that, if Lakhoji Jadhavrao is not keeping his word (i.e. about the marriage of Jijabai with Shahaji), he will be compelled to do such acts again and again.
Maloji constructed a big lake on the top of the hill known as Shikhar Singanapur. He also reconstructed the temple at Grushneshwar. This latter act of Maloji clearly denotes the revival of Hindu religious spirit.

Maloji died in the year 1619.

For the life history and the political policy of Shahaji we have to depend upon five important sources, -

(1) Radha Madhav Vilas Champu - composed by Jayaram Pindye
(2) Shiv-Digvijay
(3) Shivaji - Pratap
(4) Basatine Salatin
(5) Shahaji Maharajanchi Kaifiyat.

Shahaji soon became, one of the most important Sardars belonging to Nizamshahi. In the famous battle of Bhatawadi (1624) against the combined forces of the Mughals and Bijapur, Shahaji showed his capacity as a military leader in defending the Ahmednagar. It was Malik Amber who first employed Maratha Chieftains against the Mughals with a new art - the art of guerilla warfare.

Policy of Shahaji:

For some reason Shahaji left Ahmednagar and joined the services of Adilshahi of Bijapur. Shahaji was made Sar Lashkar by Ibrahim Adil Shah and Karyat Talbid and Panhala were conferred upon his relations. After the death of Malik Amber (14th May 1626) Shahaji left the services.
of Adilshahi and rejoined the services of Nizamshahi. Probably, Murtaza II invited him; and the Jagirs of Poona and Supa which Shahaji has secured on his leaving Adilshahi, were reconfirmed by the Nizamshah. But he soon left the Nizam Shah and joined the Mughals for two reasons - (a) Many events of disloyalty, court intrigues and the wickedness of Hamid Khan; and (b) the shocking murder of Lakhoji Jadhavrao - father-in-law of Shahaji and several members of his family. The Mughal Chronicler Abdul Hamid Lahauri writes about Shahaji "... Shahaji then came and joined him with 2000 horse. He received a Khil'at, a Mansab of 5000 and a gift of two lacs of Rupees, and other presents. Sambhaji, elder brother of Shivaji, also received a robe and a Mansab." 

Within a very short period Shahaji left the Mughal camp. The reason for this desertion was his dissatisfaction. It is true that Shahaji has changed sides on several occasions. Not to be too loyal to any of the Muslim Badshah, appears to be his political policy. But his every change of the sides, which he had undertaken had made him more and more powerful, and practically independent. When he left the Mughals and rejoined Nizamshahi, within a period of one month he seized the district of Nasik, Trimbak, Sangameshwar, Junnar as well as parts of Northern Konkan. He repaired a fort called Sheemagadh and renamed it after his name as Shahagad. This Shahagad was the chief centre of his activity. This act, on the part of Shahaji
tantamounts to the establishment of a new kingdom. Later Shāvājī had done the same thing. Shahājī has now become a king-maker. With the active support of Murar Jagdeo, he got crowned at Pemgad, one petty princeling belonging to Nizamshahi's family. Murūtza Nizamshahi, was in fact, was secretly murdered by Fath Khan. The sons of Nizamshahi were too young to occupy the throne. So it became necessary for Shahājī to take the child (king) upon his lap and occupy the throne himself. In this manner, he conducted the affairs of Nizamshahi Darbar. Even the Sardars like Lakhūjī Jadhavrao had to salute to Shahājī, thus seated on the throne. This practice created the bitterness among the Sardars, particularly Muslim Sardars, of Nizamshahi.

**Aim of Shahājī:**

In joining Nizamshahi, his camp, Shahājī had four-fold aim - (a) To restore the territory of Nizamshahi which had been lost, (b) to administer the territory belonging to Nizamshahi, (c) to unite or bring back all the Sardars who had left Nizamshahi and thus to make Nizamshahi powerful, (d) to deal effectively with Adilshah of Bijapur and the Shahjahan, the Delhi Emperor.

Within a very short time Shahājī captured Junnar, Jīvdhan, Sunda, Bhorgad, Parasgad, Mahuli. In 1633 he seized the country from Poona and Chakan to Nasik and Tryambak. Shahājī became so powerful that Shahjahan was compelled to move into the Deccan personally. He arrived at Daulatabad in 1636. Now the worst period of Shahājī's
life started. The Mughals and Adilshah joined hands on the condition that Adilshah should give no quarter to Shahaji until he submitted to the Emperor and surrendered Junnar and other Nizamshahi forts to the imperialist and agreed to take service under Bijapur. The result of this combined effort of the Mughals and Adilshah was that, Shahaji was hunted from fort to fort. In this grave situation many Maratha Sardars helped Shahaji, to name a few - Ghatge, Kate, Gaikwad, Kank, Thomare, Chauhan, Mohite, Mahadik, Kharate, Pandhare, Wagh, Ghorpade etc. By the end of 1636 Shahaji surrendered himself to young Nizam. He agreed to enter the service of Adil Khan. He went over to Bijapur with young Shivaji.

**Shahaji joins Adilshahi**

Shahaji served Bijapur kingdom from November 1636 to 1662. As a Sardar of Bijapur he participated in the wars against Mysore, Bangalore and Basavapattan. In these expeditions, 'some incidence happened' according to Basatinu's Salatin, 'which became the cause of disunion and disaffection between Shahaji and Mustafa Khan'. According to Brihadeeshwar Shilalekha (कुत्तीमर शिलालेख ), Shahaji began to disobey the orders of Mustafa Khan. He began to behave like an independent king. Adil Shah feared that Shahaji might become independent. Another cause of anxiety was already not only existing but growing rapidly - Shivaji's activities near Poona. Shahaji was treacherously arrested in his bed on the 25th July, 1648.
However, Shahaji was soon released. Shahaji was kept in ordinary confinement. He was told that 'Adil Shah would pardon him and restore him to his former honours, if he surrenders the forts of Kondana (Sinhagad), Bangalore and Kandarpi.' Shahaji decided to obey and wrote to his two sons - Vyankoji at Jinji and Shivaji at Poona. Vyankoji and Shivaji promptly accepted the terms. Jedhe Shakavali states - 'Shahaji was released in return of Kondana. At the same time Kanhoji Jedhe and Dadaji Krishna Lohkare were also released. Maharaj (Shahaji) said to them - "on my account you have put to the hardships of a captivity .... Adil Shah ordered me to march into Karnataka. He promised me to confer on me the province of Bangalore ... Your Vatan is in Maval and my son Shivba occupies Khedebare and Poona. You should help him with your troops; and since you are influential in those parts, you should see that all the Maval Deshmukhs, to him and obey him. Thus you should all assert your strength and should any Mughal or Adilshahi army march against you, you should fight them in full faithfulness to Shivba."

The remaining part of Shahaji's life could be best studied from the following points of view - (a) His relationship with Adilshahi, (b) Shahaji's life at Bangalore, (c) His attitude towards Shivaji and his activities, (d) His relationship with Hindu kings and Sardars, Naiks and Palegars in Karnataka -

(a) As a feudal Sardar Shahaji remained loyal to Adil Shah but his loyalty was based upon partly self respect and partly
expediency. Shahaji's attempt to make Nizamshahi kingdom powerful and to be the de facto master of that kingdom, was short-lived. And therefore, he was satisfied to accept nominal sovereignty of Adilshah. Shahaji's self respect is excellently reflected in his letter (dated 6th July 1657) to Adil Shah in which he states that - 'We Rajputs have served from old till now under several kings; we have never before served nor shall we do so in future under dishonour and displeasure. We shall not further put up with unfair treatment ... if your Majesty will have my services in future, I claim that my status should be maintained as heretofore'.

It was not the 'de jure' authority but 'de facto' authority which mattered in those days. Shahaji, with his large army numbering sixty to seventy thousand - cannot be expected to meekly obey all the orders of Adil Shah. Shahaji had already achieved Dominion States after struggling for nearly forty five years. Foreign registers have recorded how Shahaji threatened Bijapur. A letter written by Hevington from Kolhapur dated 10th December 1659, states - "One months tyme more will, wee believe, put an end to his

23. The Indian National Congress required forty-four years (1885 - 1929) to adopt a resolution demanding complete independence (on the banks of Ravi river in Punjab under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru in 1929).
(Adil Shah's) trouble; for Sevagyas father Shawjee, that lies to the southward, is expected within eight days with his army consisting of 17,000 men, and they intend for Bijapore, the King and Queens residence, whose strength consists only in men and they are about 10,000 soldyers: so that in all probability the kingdom will be lost.

Similarly, Dutch Dagh Register records (on 16th May 1661) that - "The Neyks of Madura and Tanjouwer and the commander Shahaji, (Sahajie), Antosie Pantele, and Lingamaneyk have met to consider an offensive and defensive contract which is a serious thing to us." It will be clear from these two records that Shahaji, though a vassal Sardar of Bijapur, was powerful enough, even to challenge the authority of Bijapur, i.e. Adil Shah. Shahaji practically became an independent king. The only thing that he had, crowned himself as a king, as such.

(b) The daily life of Shahaji at Bangalore as vividly described by Jayaram Pindye in Hadhamadhav Vilas Champu, clearly testifies the theory mentioned above. This Champu-Kavya was composed by Jayaram Pindye, who was wellversed in twelve languages, at Bangalore - the capital of Shahaji. In it he mentions Shahaji as a protector of South (India). He describes the daily routine of Shahaji. In this description he says the 'Navagagi' was full of Maratha Kshatriyas who were waiting for Shahaji. Shahaji entered the Darbar taking salutes from general (लेनापरी) and other Sardars surmounted the throne which had lion-shaped pillars. He
described the names of the important thirty five poets who were in the Darbar of Shahaji. Majority of these poets were Hindus belonging to different provinces and speaking different languages like Urdu, Parsi, Bruj, Gujarati, Punjabi, etc. Allikhan is the only Muslim poet mentioned therein. The detailed description of his daily routine, his Darbar and his army clearly shows that Shahaji had become a king. Shahaji was shrewd enough to choose his capital as Bangalore which was sufficiently away from Bijapur. Another advantage of this 'long-distance' was that Shahaji kept himself aloof from the court-intrigues of Bijapur Darbar. With a powerful army he was able to keep his independence intact. Shahaji spent the last fifteen years of his life (i.e. from 1649 to 1664) practically as an independent king. He died accidentally at Basavapattana on the 23rd January 1664. 'At his death his conquests included Anegondi, Basavapattan, Kanakagiri, Bangalore, Kolar, Arni, Ginji, Tegenapattam, (Cuddalore) and Porto Novo, besides his personal estates scattered about in the Deccan and the Karnatak.'

(c) Shahaji's attitude towards Shivaji and particularly towards his activities have been explicitly mentioned above. When he was released by Adil Shah he spoke to Kanhoji Jedhe and Lohkare. He asked them to be loyal to Shivaji.

24. In addition to this there were 35 poets who were not very famous. Jayaram Pindye had given the names of all these poets.
When Shahaji joined the services of Adilshahi, he left his artillery, camels, horses and elephants in the Jahagir of Poona, Supa and Chakan. He also kept a large amount of money which Shivaji later on utilised for erecting a new army. The most important contribution was the 'personnel' which Shahaji left for Shivaji. Dadaji Kondadeo in Poona, Habshi at Visapur (Visapur), Phirangoji Narasala at Chakan, Sambhaji Mohite in Supa and Nilakantharao in Purandar. These were the trusted and loyal men who helped Shivaji. Shivaji's activities near about Poona compelled Shahaji, as was expedient, to reprimand his 'recalcitrant' son. Shahaji maintained good relations with the Adil Shah without in any way hampering the good work that Shivaji was doing.

Shahaji and Shivaji

According to Shivadigvijay, Adil Shah and Shivaji entered into a secret treaty, in 1661. The reason for both the parties entering into an agreement, was the fear from Emperor Aurangzeb. Shahaji advised Adil Shah that he should enter into an agreement with Shivaji. Shivaji was also prepared to join hands with Adil Shah. The point which must be noted is that Adilshah and Shivaji entered into agreement as equals, and not as Emperor and his vassal king. Adil Shah had not insisted that Shivaji should enter into the services of Bijapur. It was decided that Shivaji's envoy Shamji Naik Punde should reside at Bijapur. Adil Shah must not employ any envoy at Shivaji's Darbar. Adil Shah
was to pay every year an amount of seven lacs of Hons as Peshakas (tribute). After this treaty it was possible for Shahaji to enter into Shivaji's territory. Shivaji and Shahaji - son and father - had not seen each other for the last twenty four years. Shahaji expressed his desire to visit the holy places, like Tuljapur. He was also eager to see his grand child. He, accordingly first went to Tuljapur, visited the Bhavani Devi. Thereafter he reached Shingnapur via Pandharpur. From Shingnapur he went to Phaltan. It was decided that Shahaji and Shivaji should see each other according to ancient Hindu religious tradition, so the place chosen for such a visit was Khandoba's temple at Jejuri. Shahaji and Shivaji visited each other with other members of the family after performing some religious rites. Shahaji visited later on many forts like Rajgad, Torna, Sinhagad, Purandar, Pratagad, Vishalgad, Panhala, Ranga, Raygad, etc. Shahaji had already advised Shivaji to choose Raygad as his capital. After visiting many forts, observing artillery, army, Pagas, Horses, kept by Shivaji in excellent condition Shahaji was obviously very much pleased. He presented a sword named 'Tulasa' to Shivaji and returned to Karnatak via Jejuri. He also advised Shivaji about the policy to be followed in relation to Adil Shah and Aurangzeb. What transpired between the two, is not known to History. Shahaji went to Bangalore to subdue the Naik of Bidnur and some Palegars of Basavapattan who had recently revolted. By this time Shivaji had looted Surat. Shivaji in the north
sandwiched the Muslim state in between them. But for the untimely, accidental death of Shahaji in 1663, all the plans which Shahaji and Shivaji might have chalked out remained unfulfilled. When Shivaji heard the news of the death of his father, he erected a monument at Shikhar Singanapur.

(d) The territory which Shahaji had conquered in south was well administered. Shahaji's system of revenue was just and efficient. He employed many Brahmins from Maharashtra. Kyat gladly paid the revenues. He maintained cordial relations with majority of the palesgars and other southern princes and Naiks. Shahaji was very punctual in remitting a part of revenue to Bijapur. Still the Bijapur Patshah always suspected Shahaji; He never despatched Shahaji alone either to conquer southern states or subdue rebellious local chiefs. Some one Muslim general - like Ranadulla Khan, Asadkhan, Ahmed Khan, Mustafa Khan, Rustum Jama - always accompanied Shahaji. The atrocities committed by the Muslims in the south are described in the Jesuit letters. It states "but nothing can equal the cruelties which the Mahammadans employ. Expression fails me to recount the atrocities which I have seen with my eyes; and if I were to describe them, truth would be incredible." Shahaji was certainly not as cruel as Muslim generals were. One more Jesuit letter from Trichinopoly states - 'The people have submitted to the yoke of a conqueror from whom
they get less cruelty and more justice than from their own sovereigns.' This letter had already mentioned the name of Shahaji as a general of Adil Shah. Shahaji knew Kannad (Kannada) language very well. He had employed many local people in his administration. The poet Durga Thakur says that the Brahmans of Karnatak have thanked and expressed their gratitude to Shahaji because he had defeated the Yavanas. Shahaji encouraged and protected Vedic Knowledge. In short, Shahaji kept cordial relations with peoples of Karnatak.

Aim - Self Rule:

Of all the Maratha Sardars of his generation Shahaji alone played the most ambitious part of a king-maker and to fight for the defence and maintenance of this kingdom, viz. Nizamshahi. His attempt was short lived, because he had to face two powerful enemies - the Mughals and Adil Shah. Shahaji's attempts created a 'spirit' which was essential to establish a new state. He was the first great Maratha Sardar to encourage Kshatra Dharma, i.e. the duties of warrior class. His attempts paved the way for Shivaji to establish a new independent state. According to Jayaram Pindy, Shahaji's aim was to establish a self rule (i.e. independent state) and to protect, encourage and defend Hindu religion, country, language and people. Shahaji had, during his life time, tried his level best to achieve this goal, but it was left to Shivaji, to achieve it.

It will be easy to understand, from this background,
the attempts made by Shivaji to establish 'Hindvi Swarajya' - the ideal cherished by Shahaji.

In the next chapter, we shall trace the political developments from 1645 onwards up to the coronation of Shivaji in 1674, resulting into the establishment of national state based on two important principles - (a) This is our state, (b) This is the kingdom of Gods and Brahmins.