



Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

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Government of Maharashtra

HISTORY PART III—MARATHA PERIOD



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London, W.C.2 or through any recognised Bookseller.

BOMBAY
DIRECTORATE OF GOVERNMENT PRINTING, STATIONERY AND
PUBLICATIONS, MAHARASHTRA STATE

1967

Price—Rs. 4.95

MAHARASHTRA STATE GAZETTEERS

GENERAL SERIES

51

1231

N67.3

HISTORY

PART III—MARATHA PERIOD



PRINTED IN INDIA BY THE MANAGER, GOVERNMENT CENTRAL PRESS, BOMBAY AND
PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT PRINTING, STATIONERY AND
PUBLICATIONS, MAHARASHTRA STATE, BOMBAY-4

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PART III

MARATHA PERIOD

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INTRODUCTION

This is the third part of the General Volume on History to be published in four parts. My thanks are due to the late Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Dr. V. G. Dighe, Prof. B. K. Apte and Dr. B. G. Kunte, for their scholarly contributions.

I am thankful to the Joint Editor, Dr. B. G. Kunte, and other members of the staff for the assistance rendered by them in the preparation of press copy, correction of proofs and preparation of Index. My thanks are also due to Shri J. W. D'Souza, Director, Government Printing, Stationery and Publications, and Shri S. A. Sapre, Manager, Government Central Press, Bombay-4.

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Bombay :
May 1967.

HISTORY

PART III—MARATHA PERIOD

CHAPTER 1*

RISE OF THE MARATHA POWER (1630-1707)

CHAPTER 1

Rise of the Maratha Power.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND.

A RACE OF MEN CAN BE CALLED A NATION only when they have a State or compact territory of their own, united under a universally accepted government not subject to any other power, besides a certain community of life and though among the general population. The Marāṭhās had formed such a Nation and State in the far-off past. But with the fall of the Yādavas of Devagiri, early in the 14th century, a foreign sovereignty, alien to them in race and religion, was imposed on the land; and henceforth the population lived as scattered units under a number of barons of their own race—some large like the Yādavas of Sindkhed or the Mores of Jāvḷī, but most others petty owners of a few villages. All of them owed allegiance to the Sultān of Gulbargā or Ahmadnagar, paid him tribute, and served in his wars with their personal contingents in hope of reward. The mass of the Marāṭhā people continued to live in seclusion in their villages, following their immemorial way of life, administering all local affairs through the hereditary village officials, and deciding their disputes by means of the village jury (*Mahazan*) who reported their findings to the district or provincial governor for confirmation and execution. The change of dynasties at the capital was to them no more than a two days' talk.

But this static condition of society was rudely disturbed when the authority of the central government dissolved, the Sultān became a puppet, factions nobles fought each other for selfish gain, and in the country-side every ambitious man raised his hand in lawless violence against his neighbours. Village life became unsettled and decay seized the seats of the country's wealth-production and the centres of culture and social progress. Fiscal oppression due to *doamlī* (rival authorities administering the same place) impoverished the rulers and the ruled alike, quite apart from the foreign invasion which the anarchy invited.

The law suits about the right to the hereditary village offices, the partition of family-lands or service-emoluments among kinsmen, the

* This Chapter is contributed by the late Sir Jadunath Sarkar.

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encroachment of one village-headman (*deśmukh*) on his neighbouring villages — all these ever-rising cases could not any longer be decided by a common judge nor such a judge's decision enforced by a strong executive magistrate. From this anarchy and decay of social order the house of Bhosle delivered Mahārāṣṭra in the dim twilight following the death of Malik Amber (1626) and the dissolution of the Nizām Śāhī monarchy.

The creator of the modern Marāṭhā nation was Śivājī Bhosle, whose life, 1627-1680, bridges the gulf in Deccan history, between the extinction of the Ahmadnagar Sultanate and Aurangzeb's coming for the last time to the Deccan to wear out his life and empire there. Within two years of his death (1707) the Government of Delhi gave up all attempts to rule Mahārāṣṭra.

Before the rise of Śivājī the Marāṭhā race was scattered like atoms through many Deccani kingdoms; he welded them into a mighty nation. Since the fall of the Yādavas of Devagiri, they had been mere hirelings, mere servants of aliens; they served the State, but had no lot or part in its management. Śivājī founded a State in Mahārāṣṭra and taught his people that they were capable of administering a kingdom in all its departments. And this he achieved in the teeth of the opposition of four great powers like the Moghal Empire, the Bijāpur Sultanate, the Portuguese and the Abyssinians of Jañjīrā.

Śivājī was the son of Śahājī Bhosle and climbed to greatness on his father's shoulders. True, the Mahārājā Śahājī best known in history was a ruler of the Kanarese country only and lived to the end of his days as a vassal of Ādil Śāh, no longer administering any part of Mahārāṣṭra (after 1648). But his wonderful resourcefulness, unfailing opportunism, and pioneer spirit of adventure made Śivājī's success easy, some may even say, possible. The noon-day splendour of the son's career has thrown into the shade the morning brilliancy of the father's achievement. Śahājī was the founder of Greater Mahārāṣṭra.

Śahājī (c. 1595-1664), the son of Mālojī, received his early training in war under his paternal uncle Viṭhojī, in the service of the Ahmadnagar Sultān, and after Viṭhojī's death (1623), succeeded him in the command of the family contingent. The discerning eye of Malik Amber first appreciated Śahājī's genius, and there are reports that this young captain launched the tactical move which led to the Nizāmśāhī victory at Bhātvaḍi (Oct. 1624). After Malik Amber's death (14th, May 1626), he served that Regent's son and successor Fath Khān for a few years. But a hopeless decay and disorder now seized the Nizām Śāhī Government. Śahājī's father-in-law Jādhav Rāv, the highest Hindu vassal of Ahmadnagar, was murdered at Court on 12 August 1630. The Sultān and his vazir plotted against

¹ 10th May as given by Shri Sardesai.

each other, and Śahājī, unwilling to face a dark future, went over to the Moghal side in November of the same year, and was assigned *jāgirs* in Junnar, Saṅgamner and Bezāpur (Bijāpur) from the Moghal Government. But he had first to conquer these places which had been seized by the Bijāpuris from the dead Nizām Śāhī Government. His career of conquest and plunder in the Poonā district was checked by a Bijāpuri army, and he was for a time driven to seek refuge with the governor of Junnar. On the retirement of the Bijāpuri invasion, Śahājī built a new fort Śahgaḍ (on the site of the ruined Bhīngaḍ, misspelt *Pemgaḍ*), raised troops, and again set out on conquest. Abandoning the Moghal service (June 1632), he began to seize the districts of Nāsik, Trimbak, Saṅgamner and Junnar, and parts of North Koṅkan. In concert with the Bijāpuri generals he offered opposition to the Moghals when they besieged Daulatābād fort, the last stronghold of the Nizām Śāhīs. But that fort fell on 17 June 1633, and the last crowned Nizām Śāh, Husain was taken away to die in Gvālior prison.

The Moghals captured the Sultān but not his kingdom. At once Ādil Śāh and Śahājī Bhosle seized as much of the ownerless Nizām Śāhī kingdom as they could. With the consent of a widowed Nizām Śāhī Queen, Śahājī crowned a boy prince as Murtazā Nizām Śāh II in his own stronghold of Śahgaḍ (Sept. 1633). In the name of this puppet Śahājī carried on the Government for three years, seized districts and forts, and levied a large army. Thus, he quickly occupied all the old Ahmadnagar territory from Poonā and Cākan to Bālāghāt, and the environs of Junnar, Ahmadnagar, Saṅgamner, Trimbak and Nāsik, plundering on all sides. His ally was Murāri Paṇḍit, the local Bijāpuri commander and the favourite of the Ādil Śāhī Vazir Khavās Khān. He gained the trust and even the personal love of Murāri by his cleverness and ability, as we see in the tradition of Śahājī having weighed an elephant by the Archimedian principle, for Murāri's *Tūlā Dān* at Pābaḷ (23 September 1633).

He made himself the master of the forts of Junnar, Jivdhan, Bhor, Māhuli, Kohij, etc., and practically all Taḷ-Koṅkan from Mahād to the frontier of the Javhār State. He next removed his royal puppet from Śahgaḍ to Junnar and himself lived in the latter fort in great wealth and power; twelve thousand of the disbanded former troops of Ahmadnagar gathered round him.

We possess an accurate account of the political geography of Mahārāṣṭra in this year in the recently published Diary of the Viceroy of Portuguese India, which embodies the reports¹ that he received from his Brāhman intelligencer posted in Bijāpur during that year. The division was this: of the total Nizām Śāhī territory worth 84 lakhs of *hon*, roughly one-fourth each was held by the Moghals, Ādil Śāh and Śahājī, and the remaining quarter was being scrambled for. Ādil Śāh had annexed 20½ lakhs of *hon* worth (besides Solāpur

¹ Reprinted by P. S. Pissurlencar in *Antiquary*, Vol. I, fasc. 1 (1941).

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and Ausā, worth seven and one lakhs respectively held by two of his independent Muslim nobles); the Moghals had seized 21 lakhs of *hon* worth, and Śahājī 20½ lakhs worth, including Junnar (three lakhs *hon*), Sahgaḍ (one lakh) Nāsik (one lakh), Cākaṇ (one lakh), Cāmargonḍā (¾ of a lakh), nearly three-fourths of Tal-Koṅkaṇ (eleven lakhs) and minor places (three lakhs in all), but not Poonā (75,000 *hon*) nor Indāpūr (50,000 *hon*), nor Nilāṅga (one lakh), which then lay in the Ādil Śāhī portion (as also did Caul in Koṅkaṇ). His roving operations helped to baffle the Moghals in their siege of the fort of Pareṇḍā (24 Feb.—21 May 1634), under Prince Śujā, who was starved out.

During 1635, the new Moghal viceroy of Ahmadnagar, Khān-i-Daurān kept Śahājī in check. Next year the scales were hopelessly turned against Śahājī. Śāh Jahān arrived at Daulatābād (21 Feb. 1636) determined to settle this Deccan business once for all.

A vast force of 50,000 Moghal horsemen under the best generals was launched to overawe Goḷkoṇḍā, invade Bijāpur, and crush Śahājī Bhosle. The Marāṭhā chief was driven away to Lohgaḍ and his village of Cāmargonḍā captured. Śāistā Khān at the head of 8,000 troops wrested the *parganās* of Saṅgamner taluka from Śahājī's men and pursued Śahājī himself to Koṅkaṇ. The city of Junnar was captured, but not the fort where Śahājī's family had sought shelter (middle of March 1636).

After some skirmishes and military demonstrations, the Bijāpur Government was forced to make peace with the Emperor (May 1636) on the following terms:—

(1) The Nizām Śāhī State was to be abolished even in name. All its territory was to be divided between the Moghals and Ādil Śāh,—the latter getting Solāpur, Vaṅgi, Bhālki, Chidgupā, the Poonā district, and North Koṅkaṇ. (2) Ādil Śāh recognised the over-lordship of the Emperor of Delhi. (3) Śahājī was to be expelled from Mahārāṣṭra and not to be taken into Bijāpuri service unless he ceded to the Moghals the forts of Junnar, Trimbak and some others.

The full force of the imperialists was now turned on Śahājī, who fought long in the broken North Koṅkaṇ; but after a long chase by Khān-i-Zamān, a general of Śāh Jahān and Raṇḍullā Khān his Bijāpuri ally, the Marāṭhā chief was forced to capitulate at Māhulī about end of October, giving up to the Moghals his puppet Nizām Śāh and his royal property, seven forts (Junnar, Trimbak, Triṅgaṭ-wāḍī, Harsgaḍ, Jivdhan, Cāvaṇḍ and Haḍsar), with all his territories in Mahārāṣṭra except his small *jāgīrs* in the Poonā district—which he was to hold merely as a revenue-paying vassal of Ādil Śāh. His new over-lord made to him a formal grant of the Poonā *jāgīr*, on 25 Feb. 1637.

Thus Śahājī Bhosle made his exit from Mahārāṣṭrā. He later built up a vast estate, a kingdom except for the lack of independence, but that was in the Kanarese country, and he had no further connection

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with Mahārāṣṭra except as a petty *jāgirdār* without political power, his *locum tenens* being subject to the authority of the Bijāpuri district governor. The creation of a national state in Mahārāṣṭra was the work of Śivājī and became an accomplished fact in 1674, ten years after the death of Śahājī.

Śivājī was the second son of Śahājī and Jijā Bāi (a daughter of the Jādhav lord of Sindkheḍ). He was born¹ (10 April 1627) in the fort of Śivnerī which overlooks the town of Junnar, and there the mother and the son lived till 1637, when they were removed to Poonā by Śahājī's order. After entering Bijāpuri service at the end of 1636, Śahājī was sent away to the Mysore plateau to conquer fresh territories for his sovereign and *jāgīrs* for himself; he was granted Bangalore in 1639 and made it his seat. His favourite wife Tukā Bāi Mohite and her son Vyāṅkojī accompanied him, while Śivājī and his mother were left behind. But he appointed Dādājī Koṇḍ Dev as manager of his Poonā *jāgīr* and ordered him to remove Śivājī and Jijā Bāi and maintain them there. In 1640-41 Dādājī paid a visit to Śahājī at Bangalore, with his master's family. Here Śivājī was married to Sai Bāi Nimbālkar, and a portion of the Poonā *jāgīr*, yielding about a lakh and a half of rupees in revenue, was formally bestowed on Śivājī as Śahājī's deputy while the father lived, and as full owner after his death. An administration in four departments under four heads² sent by Śahājī from Bangalore was set up in Poonā. Dādājī, as the guardian of the minor, presided over the law-court, along with Śivājī and Jijā Bāi, and latterly Śivājī only. On the death of Dādājī (7th March 1647), Śivājī became his own master at the age of twenty.

Dādājī Koṇḍ Dev was an exceptionally capable and active administrator. His own charge included the part of the Poonā district from Cākaṇ to Indāpūr, Śirvaḷ, and the frontier of Wāi, but not Supā (which was managed by another agent of Śahājī). The country had been desolated by anarchy and ceaseless warfare for a full generation, cultivation and population had been greatly reduced, and wolves in large packs infested the villages on the Sahyādri hill-side. Dādājī very wisely offered rewards for killing them. He conciliated the Māvaḷ hill-men by rewards and kind treatment, and induced them to settle in the valleys and extend the cultivation by offering very liberal terms of rent such as a few pice per *bighā* for the first four years, a few annas for the next three years, and the familiar full rate of Malik Amber's assessment only from the eighth year onwards. Thus the whole country was brought under tillage. His strict justice and vigour in punishing wrong doers suppressed lawlessness in the country and caused his name to be still remembered. Dādājī established complete mastery over the Māvaḷs adjacent to the Poonā district. The local headmen (*deśmukhs*) were mostly won over by

¹ The more widely accepted date is 19th February 1630.

² The Chancellor (*Peśvā*), the Accountant-General (*Majumdār*), the Foreign Secretary (*Dabīr*), and the Paymaster of the Forces (*Sabnis*).

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tactful handling and rewards; those who defied his authority were attacked and forced to submit. Thus peace and prosperity were established in that region, and it became a source of wealth and martial strength to the owner of Poonā.

Sivāji grew up in solitude away from courts and cities, a mateless child without brother, sister or father. The isolation of their life drew him and his mother very close together and intensified his love for her till it became almost an adoration for a deity. She imparted her own deep religious spirit to her son. From a very early age Sivāji was thrown on his own resources and learnt to carry out his own ideas unaided, and to take the initiative. He became skilled in fighting, riding and other manly games. From the sturdy and brave race of the Māvle people, Sivāji drew his earliest comrades, his most devoted followers, and his best soldiers. In the company of Māvle chieftains of his own age, young Sivāji wandered over the hills and forests of the Sahyādri range, hardening himself to a life of strenuous exertion. He began to love independence and loathe a life of servile luxury.

Sivāji's early
tentative
efforts.

The hill forts have played a part in the history of Mahārāstra unequalled by any other country. The whole of the Western Ghāts often terminate towards the top in a wall of smooth rock the highest points of which form natural fortresses, where the only labour required is to get access to the level space on the summit. Various princes at different times have cut flights of steps up the rocks, fortified the entrance with gateways, and erected towers to command the approaches. In many of them there are springs of the finest water or tanks filled during the rainy months.

Each fort was held by a *killedār* who was almost always directly under the Sultān's Government and independent of the *jāgirdār* or the surrounding country. A few villages below the fort were assigned to the *killedār* for feeding his garrison and their cattle. Thus Sivāji found in these numberless hillforts so many hostile garrisons planted in the midst of his own *jāgīr* territory, and he could not form a compact State unless he wiped out this rival authority.

After 1642, the Government of Muhammad Ādil Śāh fell into increasing decline owing to the Sultān's drunken habits, and alcoholism led to his being stricken down in 1646 with paralysis which kept him a bed-ridden invalid till his death ten years later. His chief ministers and best generals were all this time busy extending his dominions in the Western Karnātak (Ikeri, Basavāpattān, Serā), Central Mysore (Bangalore, Srirāṅgapattān, Bellur, Nanḍiyāl), and the Eastern Karnātak (Vellore, Jīnī, etc.). But the Poonā district lying in the neglected north-western corner and being a recent acquisition by the Moghal treaty of 1636, had not been really brought under the control of the Bijāpur Government.

We have definite evidence that in 1644 Śahājī had turned refractory and his agent Dādājī Koṇḍ Dev was seizing territory in the Sinhagaḍ region, so that an Ādil Śāhī force had to be sent against him.

A little later, about 1646, Sivāji gained the fort of Torṇā by tricking its Ādil Śāhī commandant. He also built some new fortifications in the neighbouring hills. But no notice of these acts was taken at the Bijāpur court. After the death of Dādājī, Sivāji got possession of some outlying parts of his father's *jāgīr* such as Cākan, Indāpūr, and Bārāmātī, and also secured the fort of Koṇḍānā by bribing its Ādil Śāhī governor.

Soon afterwards his progress was suddenly stopped by the news of the arrest of his father before the fortress of Jīnī (25th July 1648) by order of the Bijāpur Government. The cause was that the Bijāpuri Prime Minister and Generalissimo had evidence of Śahājī's intrigues with his master's enemies, the Qutb Śāh and Sri Rāṅgā Rāyāl. The captive was brought to Bijāpūr, but kept in honourable detention in charge of a Muslim noble. In the meantime, the Bijāpuri forces tried without success to wrest Koṇḍānā from Sivāji and Bangalore from Sambhājī, his elder brother. At last Ādil Śāh wisely made peace, conciliated Śahājī and restored him to his estates and honours (16 May 1649), on condition of his surrendering Bangalore, Kaṇḍārpī, and Koṇḍānā. So, Sivāji stayed his hand against Bijāpur for some years, after gaining the fort of Purandar by intervening in the disputed succession of its three brother-owners and then turning them out of the fort to live outside on a small land-grant (8th October 1648).

But seven years later he had increased and consolidated his power and felt that he had nothing to fear from Bijāpur now, as the Ādil Śāhī Government was threatened with absorption by Prince Aurāṅzeb, the Moghal Governor of the Deccan. He first laid his hand on the State of Jāvli, the heritage of the More family (named after Candrarāv More), which covered practically the whole of the Sātāgā district. This principality by its position barred the path of Sivāji's ambition in the south and south-west of his small Poonā *jāgīr*. Moreover, the Mores were jealous of the upstart Bhosles and naturally formed the core of local opposition to Sivāji's further advance at the cost of their common sovereign, the Ādil Śāh. But Sivāji by a daring combination of diplomacy and rapid movement resulting in the killing of the two leading More chieftains, seized their capital (15th January 1656) and annexed the whole principality, including the rock fortress of Rāyagaḍ, which was to be his future capital. Two miles west of Jāvli he built a new fort, Pratāpagaḍ, and here he installed his patron goddess Bhavānī.

A few months later, Aurāṅzeb invaded Bijāpur on the plea that Āli Ādil Śāh II, was not a genuine prince of the royal house. A famous captain like Sivāji could not be ignored by any side in such a crisis, and he received tempting offers from both. In the end he felt it more profitable to side with Bijāpur and enrich himself than to join the Moghals, who were too deceitful to be relied upon and too strong to be defied afterwards.

Two of Sivāji's captains, Mānājī Bhosle and Kāśī, crossed the Bhīmā and plundered Cāmargondā and Rāisin, then in Moghal hands (end of April 1657). An attempt to loot the *peth*

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of Ahmadnagar was defeated, but Sivaji in person entered the city of Junnar by escalade on a dark night (30th April) and carried away an immense amount of booty. The Marathā plunder in the Ahmadnagar district was stopped by a rapid march and great victory of the Moghal general Nasiri Khān on 4th June. Then began counter raids by the Moghal cavalry into Sivaji's own possessions. Then the monsoon stopped the fighting.

When in September the Bijāpur Government made peace with Aurangzeb, Sivaji decided to conciliate the Moghals. His envoy Raghunāth Pant met Aurangzeb (25th January 1658) and secured a letter of pardon for the Marathā chief. Aurangzeb then set out on his march to Hindustan to fight for his father's throne, and for two years after the Moghal power merely bided its time in the Deccan, while a jealous quarrel among the Bijāpuri nobles about responsibility for their defeat in the recent war with Aurangzeb, led to the murder of the good Prime Minister, Khān Muhammad (11th November 1657) and deranged the Ādil Śāhī administration.

The field was clear, and Sivaji was not slow to rush into it. As soon as the rains ceased he burst into Konkan. The northern part of this coast-strip formed the Kalyān or modern Thānā district, and was governed by a Bijāpuri noble, Mullā Ahmad of the Navāyat clan. In the absence of the governor at Bijāpur, Sivaji easily seized Kalyān and Bhivāndī (24 October 1657), and next the fort of Māhulī (8 January 1658), once Sahaji's last refuge. Then, having set up his own administration in the Kalyān district, he pushed southwards into the Kolābā district, as far as the neighbourhood of Mahād, where he stopped. Thus he became master of the whole of North Konkan except the sea-ports and the adjacent lands on the west coast, which still belonged to Bijāpur, the Siddis, and the Portuguese. The country southwards from Mahād was won later.

During the years 1658 and 1659 the war among Śāh Jahān's sons for the throne of Delhi kept the Moghal Government too busy to attend to the Deccan. The Ādil Śāhī court seized this respite to bring its rebel vassals to order. An army was detached to suppress Sivaji. Its commander was Afzal Khān (original name Abdullāh Bhātiāri) who had shown conspicuous courage and ability in his master's wars, and now occupied the foremost place in the council of the regent queen Bari Sāhibā. But the recent invasion of Bijāpur by Aurangzeb had so weakened that Government that only ten thousand horse and foot could be spared to follow Afzal Khān in this arduous enterprise.

As early as April 1659, the Bijāpur Government sent a circular letter to the *deśmukhs* of Māva to join their forces to Afzal Khān's and help him in overpowering Sivaji. Some of them responded to the command, but a few also yielded to Sivaji's appeal in the name of Hindu independence to side with him. Leaving Bijāpur at the end of the monsoons, Afzal Khān first raised money by sacking the famous Hindu temples and demolishing their idols, at Paṇḍharpūr, Jejuri and Tulzāpūr (September). Then marching towards Wāi, the seat of his *subhedāri* he seized the chief of Phaltan and extorted

2½ lakhs of rupees from him, and let terror and sacrilege loose on Sivaji's possessions. As the official history of Ādil Śāh records "The Khān's cavalry rode over the country of Sivā. Many of the enemy were slain, and the rest fled into holes".

Sivaji immediately withdrew from Poonā and took post with all his troops in the broken and wooded Jāvli district, whence it was impossible for Afzal Khān to expel him by force. The Khān's new policy was to lure Sivaji into a trap and then seize or kill him. He sent his steward Kṛṣṇaji Bhāskar to Sivaji, with this message; "Your father has long been a great friend of mine. Come and meet me and I shall use my influence to make Ādil Śāh pardon you and confirm you in the possession of the forts and Konkan territory that you have seized".

Sivaji was in a terrible dilemma as to how he should reply to Afzal Khān, who had established a reputation for treachery and atrocity; he had slain Kasturi Raṅgā, the Rājā of Serā, after inviting him to a conference for making surrender (1639) and was implicated in the murder of the Vazir Khān Muhammad when coming to wait on the dowager Queen of Bijāpur. Besides, it was widely known and even reported to the English merchants of Rājāpūr, that "because the Queen knew, with that strength (only 10,000 men) he was not able to resist Sivaji, she had counselled him to pretend friendship with his enemy, which he did."*

Sivaji also learnt through his own spies among Afzal Khān's officers that the Khān meant to arrest him by treachery. So, he made up his mind to fight in self defence, rather than yield to such delusive calls of friendship.

With masterly cleverness he completed his arrangements for turning his enemy's weapon against him. He agreed to visit Bijāpur and make his submission if only Afzal Khān first gave him a personal assurance of safety. It was settled that the two chiefs should meet in a tent pitched below the fort of Pratāpgaḍ, leaving their troops behind, and there exchange oaths of submission and protection.

On 10th November 1659, Afzal Khān was the first to reach the tent; Sivaji arrived after some time, both very slenderly attended. Sivaji mounted the raised platform, the Khān advanced a few steps and opened his arms to receive him in his embrace. Suddenly, Afzal tightened his clasp and held Sivaji's neck in his left arm with an iron grip, while with his right hand he drew his short straight sword and struck at the side of Sivaji. The hidden chain armour under the Marathā chief's coat rendered the blow harmless. Feeling himself about to be strangled, Sivaji promptly ripped open the bowels of the Khān with the steel tigers' claws which were fastened to his left hand with iron rings. As the wounded man relaxed his hold, Sivaji drove his thin sharp dagger into his body, wrested himself free, and ran away to his own followers standing below. Afzal's head was cut off and his few attendants killed.

* Revington's letter to the E. I. Co., 10th December 1659.

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Then, running up to Pratāpgaḍ, Śivājī fired a signal gun. At once his troops lying in ambush round the source of the Koynā fell upon the panic-stricken leaderless soldiers of Afzal, encamped carelessly in the low valley. The invaders were easily routed and all their camp and baggage plundered by the Marāṭhās.

Then the victorious Marāṭhās poured into South Konkan and the Kolhāpūr district, capturing many places including the fort of Panhālā (December 1659–February 1660). But here he was promptly besieged by the Bijāpuri general Siddi Jauhār (created Salābat Khān) and compelled to make a hair-breadth escape in the dark night of 13th July. His garrison yielded the fort on 22nd September to Ādil Śāh.

Aurangzeb, after being firmly seated on the throne of Delhi, sent Śaistā Khān, one of his highest generals, as Governor of the Deccan, to suppress Śivājī. This noble entered Poonā on 9th May 1660, after brushing aside the Marāṭhā opposition on the way. Then he took the fort of Cākan after a siege of 54 days, but at a cost of 868 men killed and wounded on his own side (15 August). Early next year he wrested parts of the Kalyān district from Śivājī's men. Though his lieutenant Kārtalb Khān was surprised and defeated at Umbarkhind (3 February 1661), Śaistā Khān recovered Kalyān itself in May. But Śivājī remained master of the southern part of the coast down to Daṇḍa-Rājpurī.

On 5th April 1663, Śivājī struck a blow which created as much terror and bewilderment among the Moghal soldiery as his slaying of Afzal Khān had done at the Ādil Śāhī court. In that dark night, with only 200 men he noiselessly penetrated into Śaistā Khān's harem in Poonā surprised and wounded him and retired in safety. In the scuffle one son and one captain as well as forty attendants and six wives and slave-girls of the Khān were killed and the Khān himself had his fingers cut off. The Marāṭhās lost only six men killed. Henceforth, supernatural powers were ascribed to Śivājī; no place was believed to be proof against his entrance and no feat impossible for him.

Aurangzeb in anger transferred Śaistā Khān to Beṅgāl (December), but while the change of Subhedārs was taking place at Aurangābād, the capital of Moghal Deccan, Śivājī crowned his success by the sack of the city of Surat (6th–10th January 1664). With marvellous rapidity and secrecy, he made long marches and quite unexpectedly appeared before Surat on 6th January. No defence was offered, the governor and some chief men took refuge in the fort, leaving the whole city to be pillaged by the Marāṭhās at ease, only the English and the Dutch factory-houses were saved by the valour and gun fire of those foreigners. The city, consisting mostly of grass huts and wooden cottages, was three-fourths burnt down. The plunder yielded him above a crore of rupees, as he "scorned to carry away anything but gold, silver, pearls, and diamonds and precious ware".

Throughout the year (1664) Śivājī reigned triumphant and ranged over the South Coast and Bijāpur territory without a check.

As the English merchants reported, "He is very nimble and active, imposing strange labour upon himself, he flies to and fro with incredible dexterity. Report hath made him an airy body and added wings, or else it were impossible he could be at so many places as he is said to be at all at one time".

The new viceroy of Moghal Deccan, Prince Muazzam, was a sluggard and so was his lieutenant Jaswant Singh of Mārwar. Their siege of Sinhgaḍ failed (May). So, Aurangzeb sent his ablest Hindu and Muslim generals, Mirzā Rājāh Jai Singh of Amber and Dilir Khān, to put down Śivājī.

By rapid marches Jai Singh arrived from North India, and reached Poonā on 3rd March 1665, relieving Jasvant Singh the Moghal commander there. With marvellous foresight and skill and combination and promptitude of blows, he immediately set out on the campaign which he brought to a happy end in three months only, before the monsoon rains could start and enforce suspension of fighting. His clever diplomacy kept Bijāpur back from assisting the Marāṭhā chief, and united all the enemies of Śivā on his side. Seductive offers were made to Śivā's followers to desert him, and above all Jai Singh combined all power in his own hands to pursue his objective with singleness of aim, as the road to success.

Leaving Poonā only ten days after his arrival, he reached his base between Sāsvaḍ and Purandar (only four miles from the latter) on 31st March, and immediately laid siege to Purandar fort, where the families of Śivājī's officers were sheltered.

Purandar is a double fort, with a crest 4564 feet above sea-level, and a lower fort or *māci* on a broad ledge round the waist of the hill, 300 feet below the crest, and four miles long in its winding circuit. From its north-eastern corner runs a spur for a mile eastwards in a narrow ridge ending with the outwork called Rudra-māl (now Vajragaḍ). This Vajragaḍ commands the *māci* on its northern face where the garrison lived, and Jai Singh decided to capture it first, so as to make the *māci* untenable by gunfire from Vajragaḍ.

By incessant bombardment, the Moghals demolished one tower of Vajragaḍ; Dilir Khān's Pathāns stormed the lower end, and forced the garrison to capitulate (14th April). Fire was opened from the position thus won, upon the *māci* of Purandar, while Jai Singh's flying columns ranged through the Marāṭhā country, plundering the villages and preventing relief from coming to Purandar. The Marāṭhā efforts to raise the siege were many, but they failed in the end. Advancing along the spur, Dilir Khān laid siege to the *māci* and on 30th May stormed the White Tower, and two days later the Black Tower that guarded the entrance to the *māci*. Already Murār Bājī Prabhu, the gallant *Killedār*, had fallen with 300 of his Māvle infantry in making a desperate sortie upon Dilir Khān's trenches.

Purandar was now doomed. And Śivājī very wisely decided to make the best term he could by a personal visit to Jai Singh. Of the interview between these two great historic personages we have

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graphic contemporary accounts in Jai Singh's Persian despatches to the Emperor and the Memoirs of Niccolao Manucci, a Venetian gunner in the camp of Jai Singh.*

The meeting took place on 11th June and Sivaji spent a couple of days there as Jai Singh's guest, while the terms were being settled. Jai Singh knew the strength of his own position and his pressure was inexorable. By the Treaty of Purandar, signed on 12th June 1665, Sivaji agreed :—

(1) To cede to the Moghals 23 of his forts with their adjacent lands yielding four lakhs of *hon* a year.

(2) To retain only 12 of his forts and their lands of the annual value of one lakh of *hon*.

(3) To serve the Delhi Government as a loyal vassal, by sending a contingent of 5000 horse under some officer of his own, to fight in the Emperor's wars, these to be paid for by the assignment of a suitable *jagir* from the Moghals.

In addition, Jai Singh made a secret engagement with Sivaji, by which the Delhi Government promised to confirm Sivaji in the possession of lands worth four lakhs of *hon* a year in the Konkan lawlands (Pāyin-ghāt), and five lakhs in the uplands (*Bālāghāt*) after he had himself conquered them from Ādil Śāh, provided that he paid to the emperor a *nazarānā* of forty lakhs of *hon* in thirteen annual instalments.

So, Purandar was surrendered to the Moghals, on 12th June and the other forts followed. What Sivaji retained included Rājgaḍ, Rāiri (Rāyagaḍ), Pratāpgaḍ, Jāvli, and Vardhangaḍ. The Moghals gained possession of Purandar, Sinhgaḍ, Lohgaḍ, Māhuli, Kohij, Songaḍ, etc., besides retaining Poonā, Kalyān, Trimbak, Cākan and Sivner (Junnar) which they had seized earlier.

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After closing the war with Sivaji, Jai Singh set out on the invasion of Bijāpur on 19th November 1665. Under the terms of the Treaty of Purandar, Sivaji accompanied him with a contingent of 2000 Marāṭhā horse and 7000 Māvle infantry. At first the advance was unresisted, and the Bijapuri forts on the way, Phaltan, Thathvādā, Khaṭāv and Maṅgalveḍhe, were easily gained by the Moghals. The first battle took place on 25th December, when a detachment under Dilir Khān and Sivaji advanced ten miles from Jai Singh's camp and fought a Bijāpuri army under Śārzā Khān, Khavās Khān, Jādav Rāv of Kalyāni, and Vyānkoji (the step-brother of Sivaji). The Deccanis evaded the charges of the heavy cavalry of Delhi, but harassed them by their "Cossack tactics" of loose fighting. The enemy retired at the end of the day, but as soon as the Moghal detachment set out to return to their camp, the Bijāpuris turned back and galled them from the rear and the wings.

* Storia do Mogor, ii, 136.

After two days, Jai Singh resumed his march, and on the 28th fought another battle of the same kind, with the same result. On 29th December, he arrived within 12 miles of Bijāpur, and came to a halt, as the country round had been devastated by the Bijāpuris the wells filled and all trees cut down. A Bijāpuri detachment under the famous general Śārzā Khān was raiding the Moghal dominions in Jai Singh's rear. It was impossible to take Bijāpur fort by siege or corruption of the Ādil Śāhī nobles. So, Jai Singh in despair, began his retreat on 25th January 1666.

He sent Sivaji to make a diversion on the west by trying to wrest Panhālā from Ādil Śāhī hands. On 16th January, Sivaji delivered an assault on Panhālā, three hours before sunrise. But the surprise failed, the garrison offered a stubborn defence, and Sivaji had to retire baffled after sacrificing a thousand of his men on the hillside. For this result, Netaji Palkar's failure to turn up at the right time and attack his sector of the fort was responsible, and he was punished by dismissal from his post of Sivaji's Master of the Horse (*sar-i-laṣkar*) or second-in-command. The degraded officer at once went over to the Bijāpuri side and began to raid Moghal territory. But Jai Singh lured him back (20th March) with large promises of reward. The Marāṭhās had no further part in Jai Singh's invasion of Bijāpur, which ended in complete failure; not a single fort taken by him during his advance remained in Moghal hands at its end. After much indecisive moving about, Mirzā Rājā died broken down and in disgrace, at Burhānpūr on his way back to Delhi (28th August 1667).

Jai Singh had persuaded Aurangzeb to adopt the policy of inviting Sivaji to visit the Emperor in person and there conciliating him with high favours, so that in future he might be always on the Moghal side and counteract the alliance between Bijāpur and Golconda for wresting the Moghal territorial gains in the Deccan, because Sivaji's adhesion would have made such an anti-Moghal confederacy invincible. With many promises of high gains in territory and dignity as the gift of the Emperor, Jai Singh at last induced the Marāṭhā chief to pay that visit to the imperial Court at Āgrā, which ended in completely revolutionising the destiny of the Marāṭhā race.

The recently discovered Jaipur State records in the Rājasthāni dialect and Jai Singh's full Persian correspondence which Jadunāth Sarkar was the first to bring to light, have entirely set aside the hitherto prevalent story of this historic visit to Āgrā. In the light of the most authentic contemporary evidence, we see that it began as a comedy of errors due to Rajput incompetence but developed into a tragedy through Aurangzeb's crooked policy; thus the honest and highly politic plan of Jai Singh in which the journey originated was nullified, and Sivaji was turned into an eternal enemy of the Moghals.

After making masterly arrangements for the safety of his territories during his absence and their orderly administration even if

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he were treacherously arrested or killed, Sivaji left Rajgad on 5th March and arrived one stage short of Agra on 11th May 1668. He was to have been presented to Aurangzeb at that Emperor's birthday *darbar* in the morning of the 12th. But owing to his host Kumār Rām Singh Kachvā's bungling, there was confusion in the customary arrangements for welcoming him by advancing (*istiqbāl*) and he met the Kumār in the heart of city, at noon, after the public *darbar* in Agra fort-palace had broken up, and there was no time left for instructing him in Court etiquette. Rām Singh, in order not to miss this auspicious day, hurried Sivaji on to Agra fort, where the Emperor was now holding the select Audience (*Divān-i-Khās*).

Sivaji was presented to the Emperor, who received his gifts but said not one word of welcome in return. Then the Marāṭhā chief was led back from before the throne and made to stand in the third row of nobles, the five-*hazāris*, even behind Jasvant Singh. He felt so much humiliated that he angrily protested to Rām Singh, ran away from the presence to a corner behind the pillars, and refused to accept a Moghal *mansab*. His wrangle with Rām Singh who tried in vain to pacify him, created a disturbance in the Court, and threw Sivaji himself into a fever. So, the Emperor told Rām Singh to take Sivaji back to his tent, without a formal leave-taking, and there pacify him.

Immediately after this strange scene, the Court-party opposed to Jai Singh, the nobles who had suffered from Sivaji's aggressions, and even the Emperor's aunt and eldest sister combined to urge Aurangzeb to punish Sivaji for his rudeness and thus avenge Saistā Khān. Aurangzeb's inner council induced him to accept the policy of either killing Sivaji or confining him in a fortress. But Jai Singh's solemn promise to Sivaji that he would be allowed to return home in safety and Kumār Rām Singh's insistence that he himself should be killed first before Sivaji was harmed, stayed the Emperor's hands, and he wrote to Jai Singh to learn what promises that Rājā had actually made to Sivaji. In the meantime, Sivaji was kept in detention in charge of Rām Singh, but with a guard of the Agra police-prefect's men round his tents.

Finding that he had nothing to hope for from the justice or generosity of the Emperor or his ministers, Sivaji turned to effecting his own deliverance. He sent home most of the officers and escort that he had brought with himself to Agra, and then in the night of 19th August escaped from his tent with his son Sambhaji (a boy of nine) concealed in big baskets of sweets which he had been daily sending out for distribution to holy men. By moving in the disguise of an Hindu ascetic, with breathless speed, through unfamiliar jungle routes, he reached his home in safety, but there fell ill from the effect of the privations he had to undergo during his flight.

For full three years after his return from Agra (1667, 1668 and 1669), Sivaji lived very quietly, and in peace with the Moghals. He used this respite to organise his government, provision and repair

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his forts, and consolidate and extend his power on the western coast, at the expense of Bijapur and the Siddis. Prince Muazzam, the new viceroy of Moghal Deccan, was an indolent pleasure-seeker. Sivaji appealed to the Prince's favourite Jasvant Singh to become his patron, and at their recommendation Aurangzeb recognised Sivaji as a Rājā and a loyal vassal (early 1668). A Marāṭhā contingent under Pratāp Rāv joined the Moghal prince at Aurangābād. The peace was broken at the end of 1669 by Aurangzeb's confiscation of Sivaji's new *jāgirs* in Berār, and his secret orders to seize Sivaji's son when attending Muazzam's court at Aurangābād as his father's deputy.

Sivaji opened his offensive with great vigour and immediate success, as the Moghal power in the Deccan was paralysed by a deadly quarrel between Prince Muazzam and his chief general Dilir Khān. In March 1670, the English factors at Surat wrote, "Sivaji marches now not as before as a thief, but in gross with an army of 30,000 men, conquering as he goes". He recovered many of the forts he had ceded to the Moghals by the Treaty of Purandar, especially Konḍānā, in capturing which the gallant Tānaji Mālusare fell (4th February 1670). In October he looted Surat a second time, carrying off 66 lakhs of rupees worth of booty. When returning from Surat with his plunder, he was intercepted by Dāud Khān between Vani and Diḍori (17th October), and an obstinate battle was fought with heavy loss on both sides; Ikhlās Khān Miānā was wounded here.

The Marāṭhās flushed with victory burst into all directions. The Peśvā recovered the fort of Trimbak; Pratāp Rāv (Sivaji's commander-in-chief) captured Ahivant and three other forts in the Cāndor range, and made a daring and successful raid into Khāndeś and Berār, looting Bahādurpurā (two miles from Burhānpūr) and Karīñjā, a city famous for its countless wealth, from which a crore worth of booty was carried off. Moro Trimbak Pingle at the same time raided West Khāndeś and Bāglānā; Sālhir, the chief fort of Bāglānā was taken (c 5th January 1671). But next month the Moghals recovered Ahivant from the Marāṭhās.

After the recess of the monsoon months, Aurangzeb's new generals Bahādur Khān and Dilir replaced the slow Mahābat Khān. Dilir seized Poonā and massacred all its inhabitants above the age of 9 years (end of December 1671). But the Moghal force besieging Sālhir was defeated with heavy slaughter, and all its camp and baggage taken by Pratāp Rāv and the Peśvā, and soon afterwards Mulhir was captured, completing Sivaji's conquest of Bāglānā, (February 1672).

Then the energies of the Marāṭhās overflowed into the *Koḷi* country or *Koḷvaṇ*; here the Javhār and Rāmnagar (Dharampūr) States were conquered (June-July 1672), thus giving Sivaji a short and easy route from Kalyāṇ up North Konkan to Surat. That great port now became subject to constant extortion by Marāṭhā armies, while the Nāsik district no longer remained safe for the Moghals.

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In November of this year, Shivaji's cavalry made a lightning raid into Berar and Telangana, the Moghal forces being baffled in their attempt to come up with them. But in the end the invaders were expelled without having been able to gain much (December).

Ali Adil Shah II died on 24th November 1672 and soon afterwards the government of Bijapur fell into weakness and disorder, which Shivaji fully utilised. He took Panhala (6th March 1673) and Satara (27th July), while Pratap Ravi Gujar raided the inland parts of Bijapur Kanara, looting Hubli and many other rich cities. Shivaji himself, at the head of a vast army, plundered and occupied Kanara, (October–December 1673). The Moghal viceroy could do nothing serious, and the rising of the Khaibar Pass Afghans called away Aurangzeb himself from Delhi (April 1674), leaving his Deccan representative without hope of support. Shivaji seized this political lull to crown himself, as a sovereign king, on 6th June 1674.

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Coast.*

Shivaji's annexation of the Kanara coast was effected in 1675, but it had been preceded by many years of raiding and small local conquests. After the fall of Afzal Khan, he had first pushed into the Ratnagiri district, but spared Rajapur port, as belonging to his family friend Rustam-i-Zaman (1660). It was however occupied on 3rd March 1661, and so also was Kharepatan. All the country northwards, forming the petty State of Sringarpur was now annexed by him. Desultory fighting followed for some years. In 1663, he made a dash to Vengurla by way of Kolhapur and Kudal, exacting blackmail but giving the local people his safe assurances. Vengurla was held by a garrison of his own (June). Throughout the second half of 1664 Adil Shah renewed his attack on Bednur, and the coast region was disturbed, which enabled Shivaji to reign victoriously and uncontrolled, daily increasing in strength.

Lakham Savant, the chief of Kudal, had earlier made peace by accepting Shivaji's vassalage, but he now conspired with the Bijapuri General Khavās Khan to recover his principality. In the first battle, early in October 1664, Khavās repulsed Shivaji after a bloody contest. Shivaji, however, turned aside to intercept, defeat and kill Baji Chorpade, the chief of Mudhol, who was bringing reinforcements to Khavās, and then sacked the town of Mudhol, massacring all the Chorpades found there (end of October). Khavās fled away from Kudal and Bandā, and Shivaji burst into the Savantvadi district, the petty *desais* of which were driven into Goa territory for refuge, and the country placed under a *desai* loyal to Shivaji. He next plundered Vengurla and Hubli (December). None could check him in his conquering and plundering career in this region. On 8th February 1665, he embarked at Malvan in his fleet and sacked Basrur (Barcelore), the chief port of the Bednur kingdom, but spared

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Karvar for a contribution. Indecisive fighting went on for some years afterwards, the places frequently changing hands between Shivaji and the Bijapuri barons.

In 1673, Shivaji made his second incursion into the upland of Bijapuri Kanara; Pratap Ravi sacked Hubli (May). Bahlol Khan the Bijapuri general, was enveloped at Umrani (15 April) but bought a safe retreat from Pratap Ravi. Next year Pratap Ravi was killed in making a rash charge on Bahlol Khan with only six horse-men at Nesari (24th February 1674), but Anand Ravi rallied the Maratha army, raided Sampganv (20 miles from Bankapur), and defeated Bahlol Khan in March. The Adil Shahs were able to expel the Marathas from the Karvar country. Shivaji himself set out on Dasara day (10 October 1673), with a vast force, robbed many rich towns, including Bankapur and reached Kadra, but was defeated and forced to evacuate Kanara, early in December. But in April next (1674) Shivaji was back in the Karvar country and kept his hold on Kudal. In 1675, Shivaji took the frontier fort of Phondā from Bijapuri hands after a hard fought siege (8th April–6th May) in consequence of which all the Karvar district as far south as the Gangavati river, passed from Bijapuri possession into Maratha hands. The Bednur Rani promised Shivaji an annual tribute. His possession of South Konkan and North Kanara remained unchallenged till his death.

Shivaji celebrated his coronation in June 1674 with full Hindu ceremonies, at a cost of nearly fifty lakhs of rupees, mostly in the form of money gifts and other presents to holy Brahmins and his own ministers, and charity to nearly fifty thousand Brahmins assembled in Rayagad for four months. There were two coronations on different dates, celebrated according to Vedic rites by Ganga Bhatta and Balam Bhatta and according to Tantrik rites by Niscāl Puri. The significance of the coronation lay in Shivaji's assertion of the claim that the Bhosles were pure *Kshatriyas* entitled to all the privileges of the twice-born castes, and that he was a suzerain monarch (*Cakravarti*, *Chatrapati*) and no longer the vassal of any other Power, Adilshah or the *Padsah*. The performance of the long forgotten Vedic ritual was a trumpet blast informing the Indian world that a Hindu Svaraj was born once more.

The war in the Deccan having now receded to the South, Aurangabad and Ahmadnagar were found to be posts too far north to serve as a convenient base for the Moghals. So, the new viceroy Bahadur Khan (1672-1677) encamped at Pedganv on the Bhima eight miles south of Camargonda, where permanent cantonments grew up, to which the name of Bahadurgad was given.

After the death of Ali Adil Shah II (1672), the Bijapur government rapidly broke up, the boy Sultan was a puppet and factious nobles quarrelled for monopolising power and wealth. The Moghal Subhedar found it more profitable to side with one or other of these Adil Shahi factions than to face the risky and difficult duty of fighting Shivaji. The Maratha King's clever diplomacy by secretly bribing Bahadur Khan

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ensured Moghal neutrality for some years; while Bijapur was paralysed and Golkondā became his ally. Seizing this opportunity, Sivaji made his grandest conquest, that of the Eastern Karnatak.

The dominions of the fallen Vijaynagar empire in that quarter had been mostly seized by Adil Sāh and Qutb Sāh. Bijapur had annexed northern and eastern Mysore, and the Madrās Plain from the Pālār river southwards to the Kolerun, i.e., from Vellore to 20 miles north of Tanjore, while Golkondā had seized the country north of the Pālār river, namely from Cicācole to Madrās. South of the Kolerun lay the kingdoms of Tanjore (conquered by Sivaji's step brother Vyankoji in 1675) and Madurā. The Qutb Sāhī minister Mādannā Paṇḍit, planned to conquer Bijapur Karnatak with the help of Sivaji, and a secret alliance between the two sovereigns was arranged by Sivaji's envoy, Pralhād Nirāji.

Leaving his capital at the beginning of 1677, Sivaji reached Hyderābād early in February, maintaining strict discipline among his vast army and preventing any robbery or molestation of the villagers on the way. He was welcomed by Abul Hasan Qutb Sāh, and during a month's stay at Hyderābād made an offensive and defensive alliance with that Government, according to which the Sultān agreed to pay him a subsidy of four and a half lakhs of rupees a month and assist him with a contingent of 5,000 horsemen and some guns and ammunitions to co-operate in the conquest of the Karnatak. In return Sivaji promised to his ally such parts of his conquests as had not formerly belonged to his father Sāhaji. For defending him against the Moghals, Qutb Sāh promised to the Marāṭhās one lakh of *hon* every year.

Descending into the Madrās plains, Sivaji took the strong fort of Jiñji by treaty with its Bijapuri Governor Nasir Muhammad Khān (May), promising him a money compensation, and laid seige to Vellore (which was yielded to him for a price as late as August 1678). As the Marāṭhā incursion swept over the country, only a few fortified places offered any resistance, the rich men every where fleeing to the woods or to the European trading cities on the coast. Ser Khān Lodi, the Adil Sāhī Governor of the North Trichinopoly district (with his capital at Vāli-Kaṇḍāpuram), was defeated in battle (20th June) and forced to give up all his territories. Then marching to Tirumala vāḍi, on the north bank of the Kolerun river, Sivaji halted and called his brother to an interview with him. Vyankoji came, but rejecting Sivaji's claim for the surrender of three-fourths of what Sāhaji had left at the time of his death, the Tanjore Rājā cleverly escaped to his own dominions (22nd July). Finally, in November, Sivaji set out on his return, exacting money from every place on his way, and leaving an army under Santaji Bhosle to administer his new conquests. He reached Panhālā at the beginning of April 1678.

The territory annexed by Sivaji in the course of this expedition covered an area of 180 miles by 120 miles, with 86 forts and

a revenue of 44 lakhs of rupees; Jiñji was the seat of its Governor. On his return journey he took easy possession of his father's *Jāgīr* districts of Kolār, Uskotā, Bangalore, Bālāpūr and Serā, in the eastern and central parts of modern Mysore. These latter areas were, however, restored to his brother Vyankoji a year later, as a friendly act.

Soon after his return from the East Coast, Sivaji had a rupture with the Golkondā Government. Qutb Sāh had borne all the expenses of this expedition, but Sivaji had not kept his promise by giving him a single one of the forts conquered there, nor shared the fabulous booty of that land of gold. So, the Sultan of Golkondā arranged a mutual arrangement among the ministers of Bijapur and helped them with funds to prepare for a war to "confine Sivā to Konkan". But this anti-Marāṭhā coalition was broken up; the slothful Bahādur Khān had been replaced by that active and unyielding enemy of Sivaji, Dilir Khān, who wrongly decided to capture Bijapur in alliance with the Afghān faction at the capital, instead of crushing Sivaji first by the united forces of the three Muslim Powers.

Sivaji's eldest son, Sambhaji was a brave but capricious, selfwilled and depraved youth, and his father had to detain him under watch in Parali fort. If we can believe the story told later by the poet Kavindra of Nevāsā, who was an eulogist of Sāhū Chatrapati, Sivaji had been instigated by his wife Soyrā Bāi to grant Mahārāṣṭra and the old dominions to her son Rājārām (a boy of ten) and offer the newly conquered and unsettled Karnatak territory to Sambhaji as his heritage, and Sambhaji naturally objected to it. Dilir Khān, knowing of the division of Sivaji's ministers into two factions for the rival heirs, sent secret messages to Sambhaji and induced that prince to escape from Parali to the Moghal Camp (13th December 1678).

With his new Ally Dilir Khān stormed the fort of Bhopālgad (45 miles south-west of Paṇḍharpūr) where Sivaji's stores and the families of his chief subjects were lodged for safety (2nd April 1679), and treated the prisoners with brutal ferocity. At the end of the rains, he opened his invasion of Bijapur whose Vazir Siddi Masaud made a defensive pact with Sivaji. The invasion was a failure and Dilir had to retire in disgrace. Even Sambhaji was induced to return to his father (4th December).

In November Sivaji effectually helped the defence of Bijapur by raiding Moghal territory in the rear of Dilir Khān, with 18,000 horsemen, plundering and burning all the places on the way. At Jālnā his troopers sacked the hermitage of the Muslim Saint Sayyad Jān Muhammad, where the property of the rich men of that city had been deposited for safety. As the Marāṭhās, loaded with booty, were retreating they were enveloped by Moghal pursuers under Raṇmast Khān and Kesari Singh, but escaped after fighting bloody rearguard actions and fleeing through hill-tracks for three days and nights.

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Shivaji's
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After reaching Rāyagaḍ (early in December), Shivaji tried to reform Sambhaji by persuasion, but found it necessary to continue his detention at Panhālā.

On 4th April 1680, Shivaji died after a short illness, when still in his 53rd year.

The Marāṭhā State, backed by the nation, was the creation of Shivaji. The secret of his success lay in his inborn genius for action and leadership and the nobility of his character. His conduct was marked by a high standard of morality, and he remained throughout life abstemious, free from vice, and devoted to religion. As a king he extended his toleration and bounty to all sects, opened the public service to talent regardless of caste or creed, and ensured efficiency and purity of administration. A new vista of expansion and glory was opened to all able men of the country. He had the born leader's personal magnetism and threw a spell over all who knew him, choosing the best instruments by an unfailing judgment of his servants' characters. No other Hindu has shown such constructive genius in modern times.

At the time of his death, Shivaji's kingdom included all the country (excepting the Portuguese possessions) from Rāmnagar to Kārvār; its eastern boundary embraced Bāglānā in the north and then ran southwards through the middle of the Nāsik and Poonā districts, encircling the whole of the Sātārā and much of the Kolhāpūr districts. These formed the natural expansion of his "Old Dominions" or 'Svarāj'. A recent but permanent acquisition was the Western Karnāṭak or the Kanarese-speaking country from Belgānv to the Tuṅgabhadra opposite Bellāry. East of this last province he had conquered a large slice of the Eastern Karnāṭak from Koppal to Vellore and Jinji, or much of modern Mysore and portions of the Madras districts of Bellāry, Cittur and Arcot, which was ruled by a viceroy at Jinji.

Outside these parts of his kingdom, there was a wide belt of neighbouring territory, where his army invaded every year after the *Dasarā* day and exacted tribute (called *Khaṇḍanī* or *Cāuth*), because popularly calculated at one-fourth of the land-revenue). It was his policy that his soldiers should "feed themselves at the expense of foreign parts for eight months in the year".

Shivaji was a statesman and not a mere conqueror. We obtain a vivid picture of his civil administration and military organisation in the *Adnyāpatra* of the *Amātya* and the *Sabhāsad Bakhar*. His council of eight ministers (*Aṣṭa Pradhān*) consisted of the *Peśvā* (President), *Mujumdār* (Auditor-General), *Vāqenavis* or *Vāqnīs* (Court Diarist), *Surnis* (Secretariat Superintendent), *Dabir* (Minister for Foreign Relations), *Senāpati* (Commander-in-Chief), *Paṇḍit Rāv* (Ecclesiastical head), and *Nyāyādhis* (Chief Justice). It was in no

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sense a Cabinet, and hardly a Council, because it very seldom met all together, and the king consulted the ministers, when he chose, only individually, except in great crises, which were rare (when it acted like the Privy Council of England on a king's demise). Each *Pradhān* was only a departmental head.

After the death of Shivaji at Rāyagaḍ Anṇaji Surnis and other ministers crowned his second son Rājārām there (21 April 1680). But the army chiefs under Hambir Rāv Mohite refused to obey this boy of ten who was a mere puppet in the hands of a ministerial faction; they went over to Sambhaji, who seized control of Panhālā fort, and coming to Rāyagaḍ gained peaceful possession of the capital (18 June). The leaders of the party against him were at first imprisoned, but later released. In August 1681, a dangerous conspiracy to murder Sambhaji and give the throne to Rājārām was detected and relentlessly suppressed; Anṇaji Datto, Bālaji Avji Prabhu and a few other officers were executed for complicity. Shivaji's widow Soyra Bāi, the mother of Rājārām died in prison either by suicide or poisoning.

Thus the able and experienced local men trained by Shivaji were excluded from his son's Government, and Sambhaji fell under the influence of a Kanauji Brāhman, on whom he conferred the title of Kavi-kalās (the Pinnacle of Poets), as his only faithful adherent. By this *vazir's* advice the Rājā became a worshipper of the Tāntrik cult, and the birth of an heir to him (Śāhū, on 18, May 1682) after the adoration of the goddess Kālī, confirmed the dominance of Kavi-Kalās over the Rājā's mind. This sect was abominated by nearly all the Brāhmanas of Mahārāṣṭra, and as a result the reign of Sambhaji was disturbed by frequent plots against him. This is attested by the records of the English merchants of Bombay and the French of Pondicherry.

Hence, the reign of Sambhaji was a period of arrested growth for the Marāṭhā State. Its inner strength was paralysed by the mortal antagonism between Sambhaji's followers and Rājārām's partisans. And this internal weakness was utilised by Aurangzeb, who was present in person in the Deccan with all his best generals and forces. This nearness of his enemy imposed caution on Sambhaji's movements, except westwards, against the Siddis and the Portuguese. Bijāpur and Goḷkoṇḍā were now too weak to help him, and soon ceased to exist as independent States.

Sambhaji's troops only carried out the customary raids into Moghal territory wherever they could, every year after *Dasarā*, but these sporadic activities were mechanical and did not lead to any extension of his State, nor even its strength. At the end of January 1681,

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they looted the suburbs of Burhānpūr for three days, digging up the floors of the houses for buried treasure, without any obstruction. In October an attempt to enter Ahmadnagar was defeated.

Muhammad Akbar, the fourth son of Aurangzeb, rebelled against his father in Rajputānā, but being defeated fled away from Ajmer to Sambhājī for shelter. He reached Pāli (ten miles east of Nāgothnā) on 1st June 1681, and was hospitably entertained by Sambhājī, who visited him on 13th November. But even with such a valuable pawn in his hands, Sambhājī could do nothing against the Moghal empire. Akbar was a proud, thoughtless, self-indulgent youth, and Sambhājī could never trust him. None of their plans for invading North India or Rajputānā in Aurangzeb's absence matured, as the interests of the two allies were not the same. At last, weary of Sambhājī's inaction, Akbar in anger went off to the Goā frontier and lived at Bāndā (in Śāvantvādī) and then at Bicolim (which was then a Marāṭhā territory), trying to sail to Persia in a Portuguese ship. Kavi Kalās and Durgādās placated him with fresh promises of Marāṭhā support, and in Sambhājī's war with Goā the Moghal prince acted as a peace-maker (1684). He spent a whole year at Sakharpe (in the Ratnāgiri district) and Malkāpūr and finally left India, in utter despair, in February 1687 for Persia, where he died in exile (November 1704).

Leaving Rājputānā in the middle of the year 1681 after patching up a peace, Aurangzeb arrived in the Deccan at Burhānpūr, on 13th November, and took post at Aurangābād on 22nd March next year, directing the operations of all his forces. He thus served as a constant check on any grand design of the Marāṭhās. Up to the fall of Bijāpur and Gōlkonḍā (1686 and 1687) his war with the Marāṭhās went on languidly with no decisive result.

While Sambhājī was busy personally bombarding Jañjirā (1682), a Moghal force under Sayyad Hasan Ali Khān descended from Junnar into North Koṅkan and took possession of Kalyān, burning all the Marāṭhā villages on the way. Śahābuddin Khān (afterwards created Firuz Jang) laid siege to Rāmsej (April), but failed after repeated attempts, and at last the siege was raised in October. Rāmst Khān reoccupied North Koṅkan (November) defeating the Peśvā and Rupājī Bhosle in many battles. Prince Āzam invaded Mahārāṣṭra from the east, and once in his absence his heroic wife Jahānzeb Bānu inspired her Rajput escort under Anurudh Singh Hādā to defeat the Marāṭhās in a great battle, in which 900 Rajputs fell and many Marāṭhās too. The year 1683 saw a strange inactivity on the part of the Emperor, he accomplished nothing notable, because his mind was upset and he could trust nobody.

Sivājī's unrivalled genius was shown by his organising a Marāṭhā navy and creating a chain of sea-forts on the western coast. His first capture of Kalyān (1660) was followed by his forming

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a dockyard there and building a navy for the protection of his subjects on the coast strip and promoting marine trade. An Abyssinian Colony, settled in the 15th century on the rocky island of Jañjirā, with some land-possession on the coast, such as Daṇḍa-Rājpūrī, Talā dominated the sea. While Sivājī held the eastern or inland part of the Kolābā district, these Abyssinians (called Siddis) held the western or coast strip. Hence there were frequent skirmishes and cruel raids between the two Powers. Every enemy of Sivājī could count on the help of the Siddis. In 1660 he arrested the coast for a time and even captured Daṇḍā, but his annual attacks on Jañjirā from the mainland always failed, and the Siddis even recovered Daṇḍā in 1671. The same chronic fighting continued throughout his reign and Sambhājī's also. A grand assault in 1675-76 failed to dislodge the Siddis, with heavy loss in men and munitions to the Marāṭhās; and also their frequent battles at sea (1676-80) had no decisive result.

The impossibility of capturing Jañjirā induced Sivājī to create a naval base near it. He fortified the little rocky island of Khānderī (called Kennery in the English records). This post was maintained in spite of many naval battles with the English and Siddi fleets, in which the young Marāṭhā navy triumphed once or twice. But the Siddis fortified the neighbouring island of Underī, defeated the Marāṭhā navy under Daulat Khān and thus neutralised the post at Khānderī (January 1680). Throughout Sambhājī's reign, the policy of the English Council in Bombay was "to keep fair with both" the Siddis and the Marāṭhā Rājā by all contrivances. Thus the Siddi fleet with convenient shelter in Bombay harbour close at hand, formed a constant menace to Sambhājī's coast villages. They had sacked Aptā twice, in 1673 and 1681. In December 1681-January 1682, Sambhājī in person bombarded Jañjirā with heavy guns, for 30 days. The attempt failed, and also two battles at sea, in July and October next.

Then Sambhājī invaded the Portuguese dominions for their help to his enemies, especially the Moghal armies invading North Koṅkan. In April 1683, he raided their territory of the North, i.e., Daman, burning many towns. Caul was assaulted by the Peśvā without success (August). The Viceroy of Goā attempted to take Phondā by escalade, but was driven back in a disastrous retreat (1 November), losing many hundreds of seamen and Kanārese sepoys. Sambhājī next invaded Goā. On 14th November 1683, his men occupied the island of Santo Estevao (2 miles north-east of Goā), beat back an attack by the Viceroy in person, but evacuated it on the 16th. In December, the Marāṭhās entered and plundered the districts of Sālsette and Bārdes, for a month. But the invasion of the region by a Moghal army under prince Sah Alam, by the Rāmghāt pass, drove Sambhājī away in flight to Rāyagaḍ. A peace was arranged between him and the Portuguese at Phondā by Kavi Kalās and Prince Akbar (20 January 1684) on the basis of the mutual restitution of conquests.

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The invasion of Sāh Alam failed through lack of provisions to do any harm to Sambhājī.

While Aurangzeb was involved in the sieges of Bijāpūr and Golkonḍā (1685-87), Sambhājī frittered away his strength in small predatory incursions, having "too many irons in the fire" to effect any decisive success. There were frequent desertions to the Moghal side. His rebel vassals kept South Konkan and Kanara in turmoil while Harjī Mahādīk, his Viceroy of Jīnījī, became practically independent on the East Coast. The Moghals gained some successes, such as burning Pācāḍ (at the foot of Rāyagaḍ), and capturing Konḍānā (December 1684). It was recaptured by the Marāṭhās in the succeeding year.

In the midst of this gathering darkness, Sambhājī, attended only by Kavi Kalaś and a small escort at Saṅgameśvar, was surprised and captured by an able Moghal officer, Saikh Nizām, after forced marches in secrecy (1st February 1689). A month later, Sambhājī and Kavi Kalaś were cruelly mutilated and killed by order of Aurangzeb at Koregān (11, March).

The ministers crowned Rājārām at Rāyagaḍ on 8th February, but that fort was besieged by Zulfiqār Khān and captured on 19th October, when Sambhājī's wife Yesu Bāi and son Sāhū became prisoners of the Moghals. But Rājārām had already slipped out of the fort, and he reached Jinji in disguise on 1st November 1689.

RAJARAM.

In the year 1689 Aurangzeb seemed to have reached the summit of his success. Bijāpūr, Golkonḍā, Rāyagaḍ had all fallen to him and their kings were his prisoners. But though he had crushed the Marāṭhā King, the heroic Marāṭhā people rose up and in eighteen years totally defeated the power of the Moghal empire directed by its ablest head. In November 1689, Rājārām reached Jīnījī and set up his independent government there, while his ministers left behind with full power of initiative most effectively organised the national resistance to Aurangzeb in the homeland. The disappearance of one common head and central Government among the Marāṭhās only multiplied Aurangzeb's difficulties, as every ambitious Marāṭhā captain, armed with a signed grant of Rājārām, fought and raided in a different quarter on his own account. Aurangzeb could not put an end to this people's war, because there was no Marāṭhā Government or State-army for him to attack and destroy once for all. The Marāṭhās were no longer mere banditti or local rebels, but the one dominating factor of Deccan politics,—an enemy all pervasive across the Indian peninsula from Bombay to Madras, and elusive like the wind, yet overwhelming large Moghal forces like a whirlwind (as Santāji Ghorpaḍe and Dhanāji Jādhav proved so often). The Moghals could not defend every place, and the forts won by them were easily recovered by the Marāṭhās as soon as the Emperor's army retired from them leaving only small garrisons. The local officers

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of the Emperor were driven to buy peace from the Marāṭhā captains by secretly promising them an annual blackmail of one-fourth of the revenue. Many imperialists made a concert with the enemy and enriched themselves by robbing the Emperor's own subjects. In fact, the Moghal administration, like that of the Chatrapati, was now dissolved, and outside the petty village-communities there was *do-amli* or rather anarchy. The whole country was fast turning into a wilderness through ceaseless warfare. Every year Aurangzeb's camps in the Deccan lost one lakh of soldiers and camp-followers through war, pestilence or famine, and three times that number of transport animals. The economic exhaustion of the Deccan was complete, "the fields were left devoid of trees and bare of crops, their places being taken by the bones of men and beasts" (Manucci, an eye-witness).

Rājārām was a sickly, softnatured youth, and his State was run by his ministers. At Jīnījī his chief confidant and real prime minister was Pralhād Nirāji, on whom the title of Regent (*Pratinidhi*) was conferred, while the *Peśvā* Nilo Moropant Piṅgle had no power. But the administration of the kingless Mahārāṣṭra land was very ably conducted by Rāmcandra Nilkanth¹ (of Bāvdā) holding the office of *Amātya*, and Saṅkarāji Malhār the *Saciv*, and after 1701 by Paraśurām Trimbak who rose to be Regent. Among the generals the men of supreme genius were Santāji Ghorpaḍe. Dhanāji Jādhav and Nemāji Śinde.

On reaching Jīnījī, Rājārām took over the government from Harjī Mahādīk's widow (a daughter of Sivāji), but suffered from extreme financial distress. But the Moghal cause, too, was weakened by the dismissal of the old Qutb Sāhī officers in control of the Eastern Karnāṭak and the rebellion of the Rajput contingents against Aurangzeb's order for temple destruction². Zulfiqār Khān arrived with a vast imperial army and began the siege of Jīnījī (September 1690) which at first drove the Marāṭhā forces in that province into the defensive.

The three fortified hills of Jīnījī cover such a vast area that a blockade of them was impossible and the Moghals simply sat down before one gate of it and fired at the defences opposite, but the garrison got supplies by a round-about jungle path on another side. Nor was Zulfiqār in earnest to take the fort, because he had made a secret pact with Rājārām for sparing each other while making an outward show of fighting. Aurangzeb's death was soon expected and in the inevitable dismemberment of his heritage, Zulfiqār planned to make himself independent ruler of the Deccan *subhās*, and placate Rājārām by recognising Marāṭhā independence and ceding the Bijāpūr *subhā* to him (Martin's *Memoires*). Thus the so-called siege dragged on for eight years (September 1690—January 1698), with

¹ Rāmcandra was given the title of *Hakumat-panāh* or Dictator, all other officers having to obey him like the king.

² *Memoires* of Fr. Martin, iii, 59.

Siege of Jīnījī.

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varying success for the two sides. At last under threat of Aurangzeb, Zulfiqār captured the fort on 8th January 1698, after secretly enabling Rājārām to escape from it with all the combatants before its fall. The Bhosle Rājā of Tanjore greatly helped his kinsman Rājārām with money and provisions throughout the siege.

In December 1691, Zulfiqār received reinforcements under his father Asad Khān and Prince Kām Bakhṣ, the youngest son of Aurangzeb, but could gain no decisive success that year or the next. The coastal country, however, was continually pillaged by the camp-followers and irregular plunderers of both the sides. In 1692, the excessive rainfall reduced the Moghal army to the greatest distress. Early in December two vast Marāṭhā forces, totalling more than 30,000 cavalry, raised in Western India by Rāmcandra Amātya arrived in Eastern Karnāṭak. One division of it, under Santāji Chorpade surprised and captured Ali Mardān Khān, the Moghal *faujdar* of Conjeveram (13 December) with all his property. The other division under Dhanāji Jādhav attacked Zulfiqār's siege camp and captured Ismāil Khān Makā, commanding the western outpost with all his property, and replenished the garrison.

Worse than these disasters, the imperial camp was torn by dissensions between the general and the Prince. Kām Bakhṣ resented the dominance of Zulfiqār and Asad Khān, and planned to flee to Rājārām. His position being untenable, Zulfiqār abandoned his big guns and fell back from the trenches to his base four miles behind. Here he placed the prince under detention, and went through almost daily fights with the exultant Marāṭhās outside. At last his food being exhausted, he bribed Rājārām's ministers and effected a safe retreat to Vāndivās (23 January 1693). The siege of Jijī was abandoned for the time.

In February 1694, Zulfiqār set out to conquer the South Arcot district, and coerce and exact a large tribute from the Rājā of Tanjore. Towards the close of this year he resumed the siege of Jijī, in the same insincere manner. In 1696, Santāji and Dhanāji who had returned from a visit to Mahārāṣṭra, pressed Zulfiqār very hard, and forced him to remain on the defensive in Arcot fort. The civil war between Dhanāji and Santāji enabled Zulfiqār to issue forth in 1697, exact tribute from Tanjore and return to Vāndivās (June 1697). In November, he renewed the siege of Jijī in right earnest and took it on 8th January next. Rājārām, escaping in time, reached Viśalgaḍ in safety in February. Thus the capture of Jijī was undone.

People's War in
Marāṭhā
Homeland,
1689-1699.

In 1689, Rājārām after slipping out of his beleagured capital Rāyagaḍ had come to Panhālā and there the strategy of national defence was matured. The Moghal power was to be distracted by transferring the Rājā and his Government to the far off Eastern Karnāṭak, while the Delhi forces were to be harassed on the Western

side by another party of his officers under the supreme direction of Rāmcandra Bāvdekar (*Hakumat Panāh* or Dictator) and his energetic assistant Saṅkarāji Nārāyaṇ *Saciv*, without having to refer to the distant *Chatrapati* for orders.

At first Aurangzeb's success had been uninterrupted; the Moghals had by the end of the year 1689 gained Sālhīr, Trimbak, Sinhgaḍ, Rājgaḍ, Panhālā and Rāyagaḍ. In North Koṅkaṇ, Mātābar Khān, the able *faujdar* of Kalyāṇ, captured many forts. The west coast was mostly under Moghal sway. Caul was lost and the Marāṭhās evacuated Khānderi island for Gheriā.

But the Marāṭhā revival started even before the year 1689 was out. Saṅkarāji struck one or two hard blows.¹ On 25th May 1690 they gained their first resounding success by capturing the Moghal general Rustam Khān with his family and entire camp after killing 1500 imperialists, near Sātārā. In the same year, Rāmcandra recovered Pratāpgaḍ, Rājgaḍ and some other forts. Even Panhālā was recovered in 1692; the long desultory siege of this last fort by Aurangzeb's grandsons (1692-96) ended in failure.

In 1692, there was a renewal of Marāṭhā activity with conspicuous success in many quarters. Santāji Chorpade made rapid raids far to the east over the Bijāpūr plains. He and Dhanāji threatened Western Kanarā, Belgānṇ, Dhārvār and Baṅkāpūr; then they went off to Jijī for nearly a year. In October 1693, Santāji returned and resumed his raids in the West, collecting *Cauth* as far east as Mālkheḍ. Nothing decisive resulted from the sporadic fighting during 1694 and the first ten months of the next year.

In 1695, Santāji Chorpade by masterly tactics and dispersal and concentration of his swift cavalry divisions, drove Qāsim Khān, the Subedār of Moghal Western Mysore (Serā) and Khānāzād Khān, one of the highest Court nobles, in helpless defeat into the small fort of Dodderi, where they were forced by starvation to make an abject surrender, giving up all their property and promising a ransom of 20 lakhs. Qāsim Khān himself died. Next Santāji slew Himmat Khān, a very able and vigorous general, (on 20th January 1696) near Basavāpaṭṭam.

Santāji then went to the Madrás Coast, and the rivalry between him and Dhanāji Jādhav for the office of Rājārām's *Senāpati* (Commander-in-chief) developed into a civil war. Dhanāji was defeated by Santāji near Conjeveram. Santāji returned to the homeland, but was defeated by Dhanāji near Sātārā and when fleeing was beheaded by Amṛt Rāv's brother (June 1697). Next year Jijī fell in January, and Rājārām returned to Viśalgaḍ in February, but there could be no revival of Marāṭhā aggression for some time owing to his broken health and financial distress. In October 1699, Rājārām issued from Sātārā with his family in order to avoid falling into the

¹ Kesav Papdit's Sanskrit poem on Rājārām's Journey.

CHAPTER 1.

Rise of the
Maratha Power.
RAJARAM

People's War in
Marāṭhā
Homeland,
1689-1699.

CHAPTER 1.
Rise of the
Maratha Power
RAJARAM
People's War in
Marāthā
Homeland,
1689-1699.

Aurangzeb's
last campaigns
in Deccan.

hands of Aurangzeb, who had personally marched out of Islāmpurī to besiege that fort. The fugitive Rājā was chased by the Moghals, defeated near Parenḍā and driven back towards Viśālgad. In January 1700, Zulfiqār (now created Nusrat Jaṅg) defeated Dhanājī and Haṇumant Rāv near Masur. But on 2nd March of this year, Rājārām died at Sinhagaḍ of fever caused by the hardships of his swift flying raids. His famous widow Tārā Bāī assumed control of the administration and crowned her son as Sivājī II, though her co-wife Rājas Bāī tried to make her own son Sambhājī II king with the support of a faction among the nobles, and defied Tārā Bāī, who however triumphed over her rival in the end.

After the annexation of the Ādilśāhī and Qutbśāhī kingdoms Aurangzeb marched up and down the country and then settled in camp at Galgali¹ for 3½ years, and finally at Brahmapurī (renamed by him as Islāmpurī) on the Bhīmā for 4½ years (1695-1699). Leaving his family in this base-camp (1699), he set out with the army to conquer the Marāthā forts, an attempt which occupied him till 1705, a year before his death. This final scene of his life's story was a tragedy of unrelieved failure. It was a repetition of the same sickening tale, a Marāthā hill fort captured by him after a vast expenditure of time, money and men, the fort after a few months recovered by the Marāthās from the weak Moghal garrison left there, and the siege begun again by the Moghals a year or two later. His soldiers and camp-followers suffered unspeakable hardships from rain and flood, lack of grain and transport, fodder, pestilence and enemy harassment, but the old Emperor refused to listen to advice, make peace, and return to Northern India. The Moghal Empire really perished in Mahārāṣṭra, though that country itself was turned into a wilderness by the horrors of endless war. In the end, the last Moghal prince withdrew from Mahārāṣṭra in 1709 and Marāthā independence was finally achieved.

The Moghal endeavours in these six years from 1699 to 1705 need be told in brief outline only. The Emperor captured Sātārā on 21st April 1700, Paraḷi (1st June), Panhālā (28th May, 1701), Khelṇā or Viśālgad (4th June 1702), Koṇḍāṇā or Sinhgad (18 April 1703), Rāyagad (16th February 1704) and Tornā (10th March 1704), besides five forts of lesser note, but none of them except Tornā was taken by assault, all others capitulated for a price. He, last of all, besieged and took Vāgingerā, the capital of the Berad tribe (in the present Solāpūr district, south-east of Bijāpūr City) on 27th April 1705, but became completely broken down in health at Devāpūr (May–October 1705), and was brought back to Ahmadnagar (January 1706) to die there on 20th February 1707.

Tārā Bāī's administrative genius and strength of character saved the nation in the awful crisis following Rājārām's death and Sāhū's captivity. As Khāfi Khān bears witness, "under Tārā Bāī's guidance

MARATHA
RESISTANCE
UNDER TARA
BAI.

¹ On the Kṛṣṇā, 34 miles south-west of Bijāpūr City.

Marāthā activity began to increase daily. She took into her own hands the control of all affairs, such as the appointment and changing of Generals, the cultivation of the country, and the planning of raids into all the six subhās of the Deccan, nay, even up to Sironj and Mandesor in Mālṇā, and winning the hearts of her officers, so that all the efforts of Aurangzeb against the Marāthās failed".

The colossal failure of Aurangzeb proves that a nation is greater than even the greatest individual.

CHAPTER 1.
Rise of the
Maratha Power
MARATHA
RESISTANCE
UNDER TARA
BAI.

CHAPTER 2*
EXPANSION OF MARATHA POWER
(1707-1720)

CHAPTER 2
Expansion of
Maratha Power.
DEATH OF
AURANGZEB
AND AFTER.

THE DEATH OF AURANGZEB IN FEBRUARY 1707 USHERED a new era in the history of the Deccan. The armies of the Great Moghal were everywhere on the retreat and falling back towards Hindustān from where they had been led forward to the conquest of the Deccan twenty-five years ago. The change was writ large for any discerning person to read. A few months before the Emperor's death the shrewd Manucci had noted 'King Aurangzeb repents of having entangled himself in the war with the Marāṭhās, for it has not succeeded as he had hoped. The Marāṭhās move about with their armies and pillage the empire in all directions. Every day they display their power and audacity to a greater extent in every part of the empire. In this war over a hundred thousand souls have died yearly, and of animals, horses, pack oxen, camels over three hundred thousand. The great nobles are in distress, their families are begging.¹

Khāfi Khān wrote, 'for all the struggles and schemes the campaigns and sieges of this prince the power of the Marāṭhās increased day by day. By hard fighting, by the expenditure of vast treasures accumulated by Śāh Jahān and by the sacrifice of many thousands of men, he had penetrated into their country, had subdued their lofty forts, and had driven them from house and home; still the daring of the Marāṭhās increased, and they penetrated into the old territories of the imperial throne, plundering and destroying wherever they went. In imitation of the Emperor, who with his enterprising armies was staying in these distant mountains, the Marāṭhā Commanders cast the anchor of permanence wherever they penetrated and having appointed Kamāvisdārs (Revenue Collectors) they passed the years and months to their satisfaction with their wives and children, tents and elephants. Their daring went beyond all bounds; they divided all districts among themselves, and in the imperial fashion they appointed their Subhedārs, Kamāvisdārs and Rāhdārs, They attack

* This Chapter is contributed by Dr. V. G. Dighe.

¹ Storia Do Mogor, by N. Manucci, Vol. IV, pp. 96-97.

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and destroy the country as far as the borders of Ahmadābād and the districts of Mālwa and spread their devastations through the provinces of the Deccan to the environs of Ujjain.¹

Aurangzeb himself was not unaware of the drift of events and during the last years of his life had tried to come to an understanding with the Marāṭhās, to obtain peace with honour. He had an idea of making use of the captive Śāhū to gain his ends, but his suspicious nature defeated the move. On his death, therefore, his son Āzam began his march northward without concluding any formal agreement with the Marāṭhās. The Marāṭhās in his rear were soon active and renewed their attacks on imperial territory. The captive Śāhū unwilling to be dragged to far off Delhi, began efforts to regain his liberty. The party in his favour at the Emperor's court consisting of Zulfiqār Khān and the Rajput nobility, advised Āzam to allow Śāhū to return to the Deccan, reclaim his patrimony and rule it as a feudatory of the empire. That would, they contended, ensure the safety of Moghal dominions in the south by having a friendly prince as their neighbour or should Śāhū fail to obtain general recognition, embroil the Marāṭhās in civil war and remove this source of danger for some time.

SHAHU.

Āzam, therefore, gave a willing ear to Śāhū's proposals. Between March and May 1707 there were two or three audiences between the two princes and robes and titles conveying royal favour were conferred on Śāhū. The talks, however, appeared to have a tendency to protract over a long period as the Moghal prince, busy planning the campaign for the throne, had little time for delicate negotiations. Uneasy at the prospects of further detention Śāhū left his Moghal friends one night at Durahā near Sironj about 8th May with a very slender escort consisting of his immediate attendants. To elude pursuit he plunged in the Vindhya forests and made his way to Bijāgaḍ, south of the Narmadā. The Rāwāl of that place Mohan Singh gave him a cordial welcome and helped him to get on to Sultānpūr in Khāndeś. Near Sultānpūr Amṛt Rāv Kadam Bānde joined the Prince's cause and they advanced to Lāmbkānī in Khāndeś. Word went round that the exile prince was returning and now veteran soldiers, loyal servants, adventurers began to flock round his standard. In his imprisonment Śāhū had contacted several Marāṭhā chieftains; to them and to others he wrote tactful and conciliatory letters inviting them to come and help him in the task of rebuilding the shattered Marāṭhā State, or reviving its faded glory. One of the first influential chiefs to respond to the Prince's call was Parsojī Bhosle of Berār. His example proved infectious; Nemājī Sinde, Cimnājī Dāmodar Moghe, Haibat Rāv Nimbālkar and a host of Marāṭhā captains in Khāndeś hurried to join his standard and swear allegiance to their new yet rightful master. His army thus swollen,

¹ Khāfi Khān, p. 374.

Śāhū advanced to Ahmadnagar; this old town was the seat of Muhammedan authority for over two centuries and occupied a central position and to it Aurangzeb had repaired in the last year of his life. From here Śāhū paid his respects to the remains of that venerable figure buried at Khuldābād and communicated his arrival to his aunt Tārābāi who was ruling as regent at Sātārā on behalf of her infant son Śivājī, eleven years of age.

Śāhū having informed the ruling party at Sātārā on his return, invited from them proposals for the future government of the Marāṭhā State. The Regent Tārābāi was a woman of imperious temperament and the prospect of resigning the reins of administration to her nephew and accept a subordinate position was distasteful to that masterful lady. She refused to believe the reports of Śāhū's release, discredited his letters and declaring the new claimant for the *Gādī* to be an imposter, ordered her generals to destroy wherever they should find him. This ruse could not stand for long; Śāhū was personally known to the leading Marāṭhā chieftains and officers who had come in contact with him. As a proof of greater conviction Parsojī Bhosle publicly dined with him. Tārābāi then put forth another and a stronger reason why she was not prepared to admit Śāhū to government. She argued, 'that the Marāṭhā kingdom had been reared up with painful toil by the Great Śivājī. This was lost by Sambhājī, Śāhū's father and her husband Rājārām raised the edifice anew out of ashes. He defended it against the Moghals' onslaught and hurled them back. The present Marāṭhā State, she contended, was her husband's creation. She also argued that the Marāṭhā State. The Regent Tārābāi was a woman of imperious Great Śivājī had expressed a wish on his death-bed that the succession should go to his second son Rājārām, the elder Sambhājī being unfit to rule. Śāhū thus in no way could lay any claim to the *Gādī*.'

Tārābāi's specious arguments could make little impression on the Marāṭhās, always jealous of the right of the elder or the senior branch to which Śāhū belonged. They had fought all these years to liberate their homeland and obtain the release of their legitimate Prince Śāhū, to whose freedom and reinstatement they looked forward as the natural culmination of that struggle. The sacrifices the nation had made, were not to uphold the cause of Rājārām or his son, but to save the honour of the House of Śivājī of which Śāhū of the senior branch was the living symbol, and whose return had great significance to them. Even Rājārām at the time of ascending the *Gādī* in 1690, had declared that he was holding the office of *Chatrapati* (the king) only in trust for his nephew then absent in the Moghal camp and that he would be only too happy to make way for the rightful owner. The issue had always been presented to the people of Mahārāṣṭra as the restoration of the senior branch

¹ Letter published in *Vividh Dnyān Vistār*, 1924 February.

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Śāhū's struggle
with Tārābāi.

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with Tārābāi.

to its rightful authority and Tārābāi's quibbles regarding the superior claims of her son deceived nobody. Herein lay Śāhū's advantage. The common people and soldiers were solidly on his side. It was ultimately this support of the common people that sustained his cause and helped him triumph over odds. Though commanded by the queen to swear fidelity to her son on milk and boiled rice, Tārābāi's officers did so with a reservation that their first loyalty would be to support the cause of legitimacy and uphold the dignity of the house of Śivājī.

Śāhū advanced to Kheḍ on the Bhīmā; his further prospects depended on the attitude of the great Marāṭhā captains and especially on Senāpati Dhanājī Jādhav who commanded the largest Marāṭhā army in the field. Dhanājī knew young Śāhū personally and was convinced of his superior claims to Marāṭhā leadership by his *Diwān* Bālājī Viśvanāth and Khaṇḍo Ballāl, the *Chatrapati's* hereditary Secretary. The old soldier refused to take arms against his lawful sovereign and carried with him the major part of the army. The remnant was too small to make a stand against the combined forces and fled to Sātārā (Battle of Kheḍ, 12th October).

Important consequences flowed from the battle of Kheḍ. It opened to Śāhū the gates of the Marāṭhā Svarāj, the heart of the hilly country of Poonā and Sātārā, where the great Śivājī had begun his wonderful career and which he took care to fence round with formidable fortresses. The powerful forces led by Senāpati Dhanājī had declared in his favour; Śāhū decided to press home his advantage. He marched on to the capital occupying on his way Jejuri, Sirva and Candan Vandan. The Saciv of Bhor Saṅkarājī Nārāyaṇ held some of the important hill forts in the region; he was summoned by the young Prince and assured of royal favour. Torn between his personal loyalty to the queen and his higher duty to his nation and the cause of legitimacy, the old veteran decided the issue by putting an end to his life¹ (27th October 1707). Śāhū sent message of sympathy to the bereaved family and by his conciliatory conduct made an excellent impression on his compatriots and obtained the hill forts of Rājgaḍ, Tornā, Rohiḍā, Vicitragaḍ without striking a blow. His rear thus secured, he was free to commence the siege of the capital. Tārābāi had fled to Panhālā with her son and her Amātya, Rāmcandra, leaving the defence of Sātārā to Paraśurām Pratinidhi. The garrison and the commandant had no heart to fight their own brethren. By seizing the commandant's family at Wāi Śāhū forced him to open the gates of the city. It was a Saturday in January 1708 that the victorious entry was made; and the memory of the happy event was greeted by the custom of beating of drums on Saturdays at the fort.

¹ Itihās Saṅgraha, Volume VI, *Peśvā Daftarānāl Māhiti*, pp. 188-189.

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His coronation and
new appointments
and pursuit of
Tārābāi.

After a week's time Śāhū ascended the *Gādi* in ceremony¹ and appointed his new ministers. Anxious to conciliate old families he made few changes and made them where absolutely necessary. The post of Peśvā went to a son of Moropant Piṅgle, Dhanājī Jādhav was confirmed as Senāpati and the right of making collections in several districts was delegated to him. At this period of confusion (as remarked by Grant Duff) the revenue was realized on no fixed principle but levied as opportunity presented itself in the manner of contribution. The infant son of Saṅkarājī Nārāyaṇ was likewise confirmed as Saciv; Gaṅgādhār Pralhād Nirājī was elevated to the post of Pratinidhi as Paraśurām Pant Pratinidhi refused to abjure his oath to Tārābāi. The Ciṭṭis family was continued in its office. Dhanājī's *Divān*, Bālājī Viśvanāth, who had materially helped the Prince's cause, was taken in direct service of the King, appointed Mutālīq or Deputy to the Amātya and was honoured with the dignity of 'Senā-Kartā', probably in appreciation of his skill in raising new contingents and furnishing them properly. The great Marāṭhā Captains, Nemājī Śinde, Parsoji Bhosle, Haibat Rāv Nimbalkar and a host of others received high sounding titles and dresses as the sovereign had little else to confer on the powerful chieftains.

But Śāhū was not yet out of the wood. His aunt had fled before him to Panhālā and from there was busy fomenting discord among Marāṭhā ranks and sowing disunity among Marāṭhā chiefs. Many Marāṭhā leaders like Ghorpaḍes, Cavāṇs, Dābhādes, Thorāts, had risen to greatness in her husband's service; the great house of Santājī Ghorpaḍe was the rival of Dhanājī Jādhav and competed with the Jādhav family for the honours of the generalship. Rāmcandra Amātya and the queen who had directed the defence of Mahārāṣṭra for over a long period, from Panhālā, claimed personal devotion from not a few commandants of forts in the Ghāt region. Śāhū therefore had to follow Tārābāi to the hills. He offered to cede to his cousin territory south of the Vārṇā to put an end to the internecine strife. Tārābāi refused the concession. How could she accept this small consolation when she wanted the sovereignty of the entire Marāṭhā State for her son? The offer was spurned and the struggle went on for quite a while; Śāhū's forces occupied Kolhāpūr and invested Panhālā; Tārābāi abandoned it for Rāṅgnā, and feeling insecure there moved to Mālvaṇ. Panhālā was occupied by Śāhū's forces; he attempted to storm Rāṅgnā, but failed and returned to the capital to spend the monsoon (1708 June).

¹ The dates given by Sardesai of the capture of Sātārā by Śāhū and of his coronation and followed by later writers lack authority. Sardesai takes these from *Sedgānkar Bakhar* and in looking up the calendar makes a slight mistake. If Sātārā was captured on a Saturday, that day cannot be 1st January of 1708 as given by Sardesai, which according to the calendar was a Thursday. Then the Sarvaḍhārī Hindu year given in *Sedgānkar Bakhar* accords with 1709 and not with 1708.

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SHAHU.
Failure of Nego-
tiations with
Bahādūr Sāh.

It was not possible for Sāhū to resume the offensive against Tārābāi after the close of the monsoon. The new Moghal emperor Bahādūr Sāh had been called to the south by the assumption of authority by his brother Kām Bakṣ. Bahādūr arrived in the Deccan in January 1709 and called upon Sāhū to aid him, sent a general call to the Deccan chiefs to lend him support in suppressing the revolt. Sāhū's relations with the Moghal authorities were of a nebulous kind; vague promises had been held out to him, but no definite agreement concluded, no *firmān* granted. Sāhū despatched an envoy to the Emperor's presence to obtain the *firmān* of *Svarāj*, *Cauth* and *Sardeśmukhī*, while a strong force under Candrasen Jādhav hovered in Khāndeś to back up his request. By Zulfiqār Khān's representations Bahādūr Sāh was inclined to favour Sāhū's cause; but Tārābāi (about this time) sent counter proposals saying that her son was the lawful sovereign of the Mārāthā State and offered to accept much lower terms. The enemy's game of throwing an apple of discord amongst the Mārāthās succeeded. Bahādūr Sāh refused recognition to either party asking them first to settle between themselves as to whom he should deliver the goods. He retired to Hindustān in the summer of 1709; Moghal goodwill was one of Sāhū's assets, its hollow nature was now exposed publicly. The Mārāthā prince if he was to rule his kingdom in the plenitude of his grandfather's powers, must do it on his own. The failure of his mission to the Emperor thus revived the embers of the civil war which before this were flickering out.

The suspense in which things were left by the retiring Emperor stiffened the attitude of some of the local officials. Lodi Khān of Cākaṇ had become quite an eye-sore to Mārāthās by his depredations in the Poonā district as far south as Purandar. He now showed the audacity of blocking up the path of the Mārāthā force retiring from Khāndeś through the Junnar pass; he was defeated and killed, his assistant Karim Beg of Junnar was taken prisoner. At the same time Tānājī Jagtāp, Yāsin Khān, the Siddi of Jāñjirā and several others became restive and started trouble in Mārāthā territory. However, so long as Dāud Khān, a nominee of the friendly Zulfiqār Khān, continued as Deputy Governor, there was for Sāhū no fear of general opposition to the establishment of his authority. But it was obvious that the most he could expect from this quarter, was neutrality and not active help in his cause.

The second prop that gave way about this time was the loss of Sāhū's *Senāpatī*. About this time died Dhanājī Jādhav¹ (1708 August). His army had materially contributed to the early successes of Sāhū. The great Mārāthā soldier died at Vaḍgānṇ on the Vārṇā

from the effects of one of his old wounds. His son Candrasen inherited the father's army, but not the old tradition in which his father had been reared.

Sāhū's third prop disappeared when Parsojī Bhosle died in 1710. Parsojī was one of the few great chiefs to declare themselves early in Sāhū's favour. He was of the same house as the Prince and had been able to carry with him a number of chieftains in Khāndeś.

The situation demanded of Sāhū quick decision, high organizing capacity, and daring and swift action of a skilful general which by rapid successes would overwhelm his opponents, and rally to his standard not only the common peasantry who believed in the righteousness of his cause, but the waverers and trimmers who were but too anxious to throw in their lot with the winning party. Unfortunately young Sāhū though full of personal courage, lacked initiative and vision and was altogether bereft of qualities of military leadership. All his youth he had passed as a prisoner in the Moghal seraglio and had no opportunity to cultivate habits of active life, no chance to obtain administrative experience, to learn military tactics and planning, and neither had he that iron discipline so essential for a successful soldier in those rough times when the king was primarily a military leader before anything else. A great landslide began round Sāhū.

Tārābāi's partisans who had lain quiescent in the first rush of Sāhū's victory now came out in the open. Hindu Rāv Chorpaḍe joined Hamid Khān and opposed collection by Sāhū's officers near Bijāpūr (14th November 1709). In March 1710 Hamid Khān surrounded Jādhav near Burhānpūr. Before the end of the year (1710) Tārābāi's intrigues began to bear fruit. Rambhājī Nimbālkar walked over to the Moghal camp and accepted service as *Faujdār* of Ahmadnagar. The air was thick with whisperings of a wide-spread conspiracy¹. The blow descended in the form of the revolt of the King's *Senāpatī*, Candrasen Jādhav.

Candrasen was in a peculiar position about 1710. At the head of one of the largest forces in Mahārāṣṭra he was being courted by Tārābāi on the one hand and by the Moghal Subhedār on the other. Young Candrasen's head was swollen with his importance; he had little regard for the monarch whose resources were of a very meagre kind, who looked to his chieftains to do for him the hard work of fighting and who refused to share his confidence with the youthful commander. Candrasen lent a willing ear to Tārābāi's overtures. A conspiracy was formed under his leadership. Prominent Mārāthā chieftains, the Thorāts, Sahājī Nimbālkar, Dābhāde were to join under Candrasen, march against Sātārā and oust Sāhū in favour of Tārābāi's son. These secret negotiations perhaps did not pass quite

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¹ *Itihās Saṅgraha, Peśvā Daftārāntīl Māhiti*, p. 12 *Rājwāde* Vol. 21, No. 94.

¹ *Jaipur Akhbārs Mss.*

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unnoticed. Śāhū had invited the chiefs to Sātārā in October 1710 and when Candrasen moved out in the next campaigning season Bālājī Viśvanāth was sent after him to watch his steps. Already jealous of the great influence Bālājī Viśvanāth had obtained over his father as his *Divān*, the latter's elevation in the King's council had done nothing to abate that jealousy. Early in 1711 Candrasen's force was foraging round Bārāmatī with Bālājī trailing behind him as a revenue official of the king. There was no love lost between the two and a petty dispute between the followers of Candrasen and Bālājī was taken up by the principals. Candrasen attacked Bālājī, dispersed his force and sent the latter flying to the King. To the King's protest against the outrage, the *Senāpati* sent a minatory reply that Bālājī should surrender to him or he would no longer consider himself bound to the sovereign by his oath of fealty. Such an open defiance of authority Śāhū would not tolerate. He ordered his *Sarlaškar*, Haibat Rāv, to hold up the rebel's advancing columns and sent him reinforcements. Candrasen was defeated in two battles near the Ādarki pass and Sālpā pass (Phaltan Taluka) and turned back to join Dāud Khān near Bahādūr Gaḍ. His later movements till he was befriended by *Nizām-ul-Mulk* in 1713 are uncertain. If he joined Tārābāi he seems to have achieved precious little¹.

Candrasen's revolt was a sign for a general rising all round. Tārābāi's followers Chātge, Ghorpaḍe, Cavān took up arms, occupied Vaḍgānv, Kumthā, Śirālā, Karhāḍ and other places and threatened to advance on Sātārā. Candrasen with the aid of the Moghal officers began raising fresh troops to renew the contest. Even much nearer Śāhū's authority came to count for nothing. The petty *Ināmdār* of Khatāv, Kṛṣṇarāv, proclaimed his independence. Damājī Thorāt another dependent of Tārābāi at Pāṭas Hingangānv (Poonā) turned out the King's officers. Paraśurām Pant who some time back had made a show of being reconciled to the new regime, had been granted the dignity of *Pratinidhi* and rewarded with the Viśālgāḍ jāgīr. His son in possession of the jāgīr, now declared for Tārābāi. Śāhū suspected the father to have instigated the treachery and losing his usual equanimity of temper ordered the jāgīr to be confiscated and the old *Pratinidhi* to be blinded. The execution of the extreme penalty was stayed by the intercession of Khaṇḍo Ballāl Cīṭnis, but Paraśurām was thrown into jail once more².

The most serious danger to Śāhū's State, however, came from Koṅkan. Here the powerful Āngre on Tārābāi's orders drove Śāhū's garrisons out of the Koṅkan forts of Rājmacī, Tuṅg Tikonā, Chāngāḍ, occupied Lohgaḍ, seized his *Peśvā* Bahiropant Pingle and threatened to march on Poonā.

¹ *Atitihāsik Patravayavahār*, pp. 5-8, *Śāhū Bakhar* and *Selections from Peśvā Daftar*, Volume VII, 13.

² *Śāhū Roznāī*, p. 55.

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The skies were falling round Śāhū. Though he had tried hard to conciliate the leading members of the old nobility they had with few exceptions refused to respond to his call and work with him whole-heartedly. On slight pretences they were changing sides and thwarting his plans for the settlements of the country. The *Senāpati* was in arms against him; his *Peśvā* had shown himself altogether devoid of initiative or capacity, the *Pratinidhi* was wavering in his loyalty and the *Sarkhel* after capturing the *Peśvā*, threatened to march on the capital; Dābhāḍe, Chātge and Thorāt were all either sitting on the fence or actively taking part in fanning the civil war. The only party that stood to gain by this internecine struggle was the Moghal Subhedār of the Deccan. The Deccan governorship had in the meanwhile changed hands, and in the place of the friendly Zulfiqār and his nominee Dāud Khān, brought on the scene *Nizām-ul-Mulk* a man of different metal, who meant to follow a different line of action towards the Marāṭhās.

His intimate friends and Councillors, foremost among whom were Khaṇḍo Ballāl Cīṭnis and Bālājī Viśvanāth Bhaṭ, advised the King an immediate change of policy. The lesser nobility and the common masses believed in the righteousness of Śāhū's cause as being the senior member of Śivājī's house and therefore the lawful and hereditary heir to the Marāṭhā throne, had been greatly impressed by his loving, god-fearing saintly disposition and were therefore solidly behind the new king. What was necessary was to organize this general good-will in the king's behalf and to assure the warring nobility that the new position they had acquired in the changed circumstances would be duly recognised and maintained. For the time being at least, there was no going back to Śivājī's days and Śivājī's constitution of centralised monarchy.

Śāhū being at his wits' end called upon Bālājī Viśvanāth to shoulder the responsibility and carry out the policy he advocated. Bālājī was not an altogether unknown figure in politics. His forefathers were hereditary *Deśmukhs* or revenue collectors of Mahāl Daṇḍa Rājpurī and Śrivardhan in Koṅkan about fifty miles south of Bombay. The family had left Koṅkan and migrated to Deś country owing to troubles with the Siddi rulers of Jañjirā. Bālājī's native cleverness, his experience as revenue officer and pleasant manners brought him employment immediately and secured his advancement in the Marāṭhā country. He worked as Subhedār (administrator and revenue collector) in Poonā and Auranḡābād districts in Rājārām's time, and thus became familiar with the currents and cross currents of Moghal Marāṭhā politics and the leading personalities in both the camps. Since Śāhū's return to Deccan he had faithfully followed his fortunes and had shown great organizing capacity and skill as a mediator. It was his advocacy that had brought to Śāhū's cause the veteran leader Dhanājī Jādhav in 1707 and secured him his ancestral throne. Again in 1711 by his activity, watchfulness and tact he had foiled Candrasen's conspiracy and defeated Śāhū's rivals.

Rise of Bālājī
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By defeating Kṛṣṇarāv Khaṭāvkar he had taught a stern lesson to rebels. Sāhū felt Bālaji was the only man whom he could trust to save his affairs and bring order out of chaos. On 17th November 1713 he appointed him his *Peśvā* or Prime Minister, gave him a fresh *jāgīr* of six *Mahāls* and two forts to meet the expenses of his troops and asked him to proceed against Kānhoji Āngre¹.

The threat from the Āngres was quite a formidable one. Kānhoji Āngre was brave and active and had risen to the admiralty (1698) by personal prowess. He had attracted to his service some of the most daring souls of all nationalities. His ships scoured the western waters and brought him treasure that was reported to be fabulous. His name had become a veritable terror to his neighbours, the Siddi, the English, the Dutch and the Portuguese. To contend with the *Sarkhel* looked quite a perilous task, but Sāhū's new *Peśvā* showed himself quite the master of the situation. In dealing with Kānhoji Āngre he decided to rely more on his powers of persuasion and diplomatic skill than on force. His personal friendship with that great chief in his former days proved a great asset to him. Marching towards Koṅkan at the head of about 4000 troops he invited the great Āngre to a personal meeting, and told him that a great future awaited their country provided they closed their ranks and did not fight among themselves. "Your father Tukoji" he told Āngre, "was raised to his high position by the great Śivaji. Is it right that you, his son should so far forget your loyalty to the senior branch of Śivaji's house that you should overrun Sāhū's kingdom and seize his minister? This is outright treachery. If you feel you have given your word of honour to the Queen, go and stay with her in peace. Why disturb our provinces? The best course for you, when the junior branch was defeated, was to acknowledge your mistake, reaffirm your allegiance and win Sāhū's favour. There is no third alternative for a subordinate chieftain. I have been asked to fight you and recover the territories you have seized. Remember you are surrounded by enemies who would be too glad to attack you at the first opportunity. Once hostilities start, it may be difficult to obtain royal pardon." The great Āngre was a shrewd man, knew the strength as well as the weakness of his position. Bālaji's friendship secured his land frontier and promised him support in dealing with his enemies. Perhaps about this time Tārābāi's power at Kolhāpūr was eclipsed and she herself thrown in prison². Kānhoji felt he was no longer bound by his oath to the Queen, and Sambhaji (the successor to Tārābāi's son) had nothing alluring about him nor showed promise of repeating the glories of his father or grand-father. Kānhoji entered into Bālaji's proposals and accepted his offer. 'On being confirmed in command of the fleet, his territory

¹ Sāhū Roznāī p. 45-56, *Itihās Saṅgrah, Peśvā Daftarāntil Māhātī*, pp. 13, 122-124, *Rājwade Volume 4* pp. 32-37, *Selections from Peśvā Daftar Volume VII* Nos. 1, 2 & 40, *Tritiya Sammelan Vitta*, pp. 85-91, 149-152.

² *Bhārat Itihās Samśodhak Mandal's Quarterly*, Volume XXVIII, p. 76.

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in Koṅkan and his title of *Sarkhel*, he agreed to renounce Sambhaji, to release the *Peśvā*, to restore all his conquests except Rājmaci and maintain the cause of Sāhū².

This agreement which was soon ratified at Sātārā was a great triumph for Bālaji Viśvanāth's diplomacy. It won over to Sāhū's cause, without bloodshed, the most powerful chieftain from Tārābāi's party and established his power on firm foundations. The new policy enunciated by the *Peśvā* in dealing with the Āngre chief, carried assurances of security to other chieftains who willingly came forth with declarations of loyalty.

About this time Tārābāi, the source of all this trouble, lost her power in Kolhāpūr and was thrown in confinement.

It was none too early that Sāhū secured peace on the home front. The several revolutions at Delhi had removed from the scene his old friends and brought in new personalities and developed a new situation. Imperial authority was on the decline and the empire was showing signs of dissolution. The friendly Zulfiqār Khān was no more, his place at Delhi having been taken by the Sayyad brothers Abdullāh and Husain Ali. They appointed to the Deccan governorship Nizām-ul-Mulk who had different ideas about the policy to be pursued towards the Marāṭhās.

The Deccan had peculiar fascination for the Nizām. Having spent his early career in the south in the Emperor's campaigns, the Nizām had obtained an intimate knowledge of the province, its people and its problems. Separated by a long distance from the heart of the empire, the southern province offered great possibilities to an ambitious man in the declining days of the empire and the Nizām was not one to miss them. The only effective opposition to the establishment of his independent authority in the Deccan came from the Marāṭhās; they were his rivals in the field. To check their rising power and keep it in effective bounds became the watch-word of his policy.

This advocate of a strong policy towards the Marāṭhās arrived in the Deccan in June 1713. He found his charge in a strange condition. The local representative of his predecessor, Dāud Khān Panni, had conceded to the Marāṭhās the rights of collecting *Cauth* which Bahādūr Sāh had refused in 1709; Marāṭhā agents had established a kind of parallel government and were everywhere active collecting their tribute direct from the ryots. No merchandise could pass without paying their toll. A Marāṭhā chief Nemaji Śinde had been taken in Moghal service and held charge of Aurangābād division which enabled him to extend his influence right upto Mālvā and Central India. The very existence of Moghal authority in the south was at stake.

² Sāhū Mahārāj Yāñce Caritra, p. 40, *Rājwade Volume II*, pp. 23-25; *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads* edited by Mawji and Parasnis, pp. 197-199.

Nizām in the
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The *Nizam* immediately set himself to put the house in order. He repudiated the convention entered into by his predecessors and turned out the Marāthā officers from their military posts from his territory. The Bhīmā Godāvari basin became the battle-ground where the two powers impinged on each other. Here the *Nizam* sent a strong force to drive away the advanced posts of the enemy. At the same time he decided to take advantage of the dissensions in the Marāthā court, invited to his service the traitor Candrasen Jādhav from Kolhāpūr and through him opened negotiations with the Kolhāpūr party.

To counteract the *Nizam's* activities the new *Peśvā* took the field immediately on his return from the Koṅkan. A number of indecisive engagements took place; in one such Haibat Rāv Nimbalkar was killed at Cāndā; in another the *Nizam* claimed to have defeated the *Peśvā* near Purandar; in yet another the Moghal *Bakhshi* and *Vaqainigār* of Bāglānā Muhammad Ibrāhim Tābrizi was lured into an ambushade and killed by Khaṇḍerāv Dābhāde while conveying a caravan from Surat to Aurangābād. The *Peśvā* also instigated several risings within the *Subhedār's* territory with the help of the Marāthā officials who had entrenched themselves in Moghal districts¹.

While the *Nizam* was trying to grapple with the Marāthās in the Deccan, his enemies at Delhi gave him no rest. They appointed as his *Divān* Haidar Quli Khān who affected to act independently of the *Subhedār*. This enraged the *Nizam* who removed him from service and sent him back to Delhi. While he was contending with enemies outside and within, he was recalled to Delhi, his place being taken by Sayyad Husain Ali (1715 May).

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The *Nizam's* transfer from the southern scene did not bring an immediate improvement in the situation. His successor Sayyad Hussain Ali for a time tried to follow the *Nizam's* strong policy towards the Marāthās. One of their chiefs Khaṇḍerāv Dābhāde had established himself in Khāndeś and levied fee on all merchandise passing from Surat to Burhānpūr and Aurangābād. The Moghal Viceroy despatched a strong force of ten thousand under his *Bakhshi* Zulfiqār Beg to bring Dābhāde to book and clear up the road. The Beg's column pursuing the enemy dispersed into the hills, when it was surrounded and cut-up to a man. 'Not one bullock, camel or horse belonging to that army was saved'.

Husain Ali retaliated by sending yet another and a stronger expedition under his *Divān* Muhkam Singh accompanied by his brother Saifud-din Khān and Candrasen Jādhav. Dābhāde skillfully retired before the enemy fighting rear-guard actions. A major engagement took place near Ahmadnagar. The Marāthā troops succeeded in breaking out and crossing the Bhīmā. Sweeping aside the enemy's

light cavalry that was harassing his flanks and rear, Muhkam Singh pressed towards Sātārā in the hope of coming against the main army. Dābhāde bided his time and went to Rājā Sāhū who had moved to Sātārā fort. The Marāthā garrisons which were posted in various places, held their ground. Whenever the Moghal army approached, the Marāthā force dispersed, and as soon as it departed they returned and occupied their positions. Against such a wary enemy the Moghal force could make little impression. Muhkam Singh and Jādhav retired the way they had advanced¹. (Dec. 1716 Jan. 1717).

Husain Ali's discomfiture against Khaṇḍerāv Dābhāde was learnt by Emperor Farrukh Siyār with evident satisfaction. Farrukh Siyār was a strange admixture of bravado and cowardice; he owed his elevation to the two Sayyad brothers yet had not the wisdom to surrender himself completely to their advice. He was jealous of the great powers wielded by them, plotted against them practically from the first day of his accession and wrote to his distant governors and feudatories to make war on them to bring about their ruin. Among others Sāhū and several Marāthā chieftains received those royal *farmaṇs* with which they complied most readily. Bands of horsemen overran imperial districts in the Deccan reducing everything to utter chaos.

Distracted by Marāthā attacks on one side and court intrigues on the other, Husain Ali had recourse to negotiations with Sāhū. To this course he was advised by Sankarājī Malhār, a former Minister of Rājārām, now in the confidence of the Sayyad. The *Subhedār* deputed Sankarājī Malhār, to Sāhū's court to find out a basis for peace. The Marāthā viewpoint in the discussions was set forth by *Peśvā* Balaji Visvanath.

Some kind of formal agreement between the two powers was long overdue. Aurangzeb had not been able to make up his mind on what terms to purchase peace. Azam held out vague promises which both parties were interpreting differently. Bahādur Sāh evaded the issue asking Sāhū to settle first the question of succession with his rival of the Kolhāpūr party. Though the highest authorities were thus balking the issues on some pretext or other, the ground was slipping under the feet of their local representatives. No longer able to hold their own against growing Marāthā pressure, they very conveniently sought accommodation with Marāthā chieftains as best as they could. This indefinite state of affairs only served to increase the general anarchy and profited none of principals. The Marāthās were extending their depredations to Gujarāt and Mālvā. Bold and intrepid spirits raised levies and began to make collections on their own. Partisans of Sambhājī were overrunning the Karnāṭak Subhā of Bijāpūr. No wonder both parties were keen on a settlement.

¹ Selections from *Peśvā Daftar XXX*, pp. 235-240. Khāfi Khān, pp. 464-465.

¹ Khāfi Khān, pp. 450-51.

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Bālaji Viśvanāth in the name of his master asked the right of raising *Cauth* throughout the six provinces of the Deccan—(Aurangābād, Berār, Khāndeś, Bidar, Hyderābād and Bijāpūr, which included the whole of Karnātak including the tributary states of Mysore, Trichinopoly and Tanjore) to be granted. He argued that the Marāthās over two decades were levying contributions over the Deccan provinces of the Moghals and this fact should now be formally recognised by an imperial grant. He also demanded *Cauth* of Mālwa and Gujarāt which Marāthā horse had invaded. He demanded likewise the right of raising an additional impost of ten per cent. for the Rājā as *Sardeśmukhi* or head of the landed gentry. The old conquest of Śivaji in Mahārāṣṭra *Svarāj* were to be completely restored, the *Subhedār* to issue orders for the release of such forts and districts as still continued under Moghal occupation. Sivnerī (Sivnerī fort) Śivaji's birth place, was required to be given up, as also the fort of Trimbak in Nāsik district. Conquests lately made by Parsoji Bhosle in Berār and Gondvan were to be confirmed. The old Bijāpūr districts in Karnātak were demanded in the name of Fateh Singh Bhosle. The mother and the family of Sāhū detained at Delhi were likewise to be set free and restored to the Rājā.

On his side for the grant of *Cauth* the Peśvā on behalf of his master, promised to maintain 15,000 troops with the *Subhedār* to aid the Emperor; for the hereditary right of *Sardeśmukhi* he agreed to pay the usual fee of 6·51 per cent. of the annual income from that source and bound himself to keep law and order in the country and suppress banditry; for the *Svarāj* or old territory the Rājā agreed to pay a tribute of ten lakhs of rupees every year. It was a condition of all these grants that the Rājā would be faithful to the imperial throne and serve it loyally¹.

The choice of the envoy had evinced the *Subhedārs* anxiety to come to an understanding with the Marāthās. The proposals worked out by his envoy were immediately accepted with the exception of claims on Gujarāt and Mālwa. Husain Ali delivered a sanad containing the articles of peace under his seal to the *vakil* of Rājā Sāhū and made no delay in writing for a royal firmān confirming the agreement. He introduced the agents of Rājā Sāhū everywhere and orders went round for restoring *Svarāj* territory to the Rājā's officials¹.

The importance of the treaty was not lost upon the Emperor. Complete abdication of imperial authority in the Deccan which it involved and at the same time strengthening the hands of his tormentors, he could not tolerate. He refused to ratify the agreement and prepared for war. He called to his aid Sarbuland Khān from Pātṇā, Nizām-ul-mulk from Morādābād and Ajit Singh from Gujarāt.

¹ Thorle Sāhū *Mahārāṣṭra Caritra*, pp. 50-55, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads* selected by Wad and edited by Parasnis and Mawji.

¹ Khāfi Khān, p. 468.

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They arrived in the capital but found they had neither the Emperor's confidence nor authority to act and wisely made their peace with the Sayyads. The Sayyad brothers informed of the monarch's intrigues, prepared to strike. Husain Ali marched to the capital with his Marāthā allies and arrived in Delhi in February 1719. The brothers surrounded the palace with their troops, entered the palace, and seized the Emperor's person after some altercation. The hapless monarch was thrown in confinement and power passing into the hands of the Sayyads. The treaty entered into between Rājā Sāhū and Husain Ali Khān was ratified and firmāns confirming the arrangements for *Cauth*, *Sardeśmukhi* and *Svarāj* were issued on 13th and 24th March respectively. Bālaji Viśvanāth who had accompanied the *Amir-ul-Umarā* to the capital returned to the Deccan in May 1719 with the deeds and the Rājā's family.

A right royal welcome awaited the minister at Sātārā. He had at last obtained recognition of the claims round which the Moghal-Marāthā struggle had centred over two decades. The treaty marked a triumph for Rājā Sāhū. His recognition by the Moghal authority gave him a distinct advantage over his rival Sambhaji and made other Marāthā chieftains look up to him as the fountain of authority. The Moghal rulers accepted the *fait accompli* and recognised the supremacy of Marāthā interests in the south by granting them the right of collecting revenue from the six provinces of the Deccan.

The treaty had been criticised variously by different writers. While some have hailed it as a great diplomatic triumph, others have questioned its moral basis; yet a third school of historians condemn the Minister for accepting Moghal suzerainty and perpetuating Muslim shackles. They contend that while Śivaji fought for an independent Marāthā state his grand-son acting on the advice of his Peśvā threw away the jewel of liberty accepting in exchange the badge of Moghal slavery. This is an extreme view and loses sight of the fact that in politics satisfactory solutions of vexed problems are often found in face-saving devices or fictions. To accept the fictions literally, to analyse them in a legalistic way without taking into account how they worked in actual practice is mere casuistry and evinces a frame of mind ill-becoming a dispassionate historian. A tributary state has no independent authority to make war or peace, has no claims on the sovereign. *Cauth* and *Sardeśmukhi* over the six *Subhās* of the Deccan were granted to the Marāthās who went on exploiting their advantage till they demanded tribute from the whole of the imperial domain. No man of commonsense would look on this relation as one of subordination to the Moghal Crown. The Marāthās were realists and were satisfied with the direction of policy leaving ostentatious display to the effete successors of Aurangzeb.

Criticism can rather be levelled against the scheme for realising the claims through a number of agents instead of obtaining the revenues direct for the royal treasury and thereby putting central

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authority on firm foundations. For, according to this scheme, the collections in Gujarāt were assigned to the *Senāpati*, those in Berār and Gondvan to the Bhosle of Nāgpūr, of the Sātārā region to the *Pratinidhi*, of the Māvals (Poonā district) to the *Saciv*; to the *Peśvā* was granted Khāndes and Bāglānā and Central India for his activities; the *Sarlaškar* obtained the basin of the Godāvarī and Fateh Singh Bhosle was expected to make the annual levy from the Karnātak. Konkan was left in the possession of Kānhoji Āngre. It was of the essence of the scheme that the chieftains whose authority had been established in a particular area should be recognised as the immediate ruler or law-giver of the region, should administer it and appropriate its revenues towards the maintenance of his troops while he contributed a small share to the Royal Exchequer.

Bālājī perceived that the revival of Marāṭhā power in its old monarchical form was no longer possible, that it would be difficult to harness the nation's military resources to the common cause unless concessions were made to the great warlords who had won an important place for themselves. He made them subordinate allies or confederates of the Sovereign, granting them a free hand in administering their conquests, called from them no greater sacrifice than uniting on matters of common policy. The arrangement, however, left too much authority in the hands of these chiefs without providing for checks to call them to account. This was the beginning of the *Jāgīr* system or Confederacy of the Marāṭhā States which was responsible for the speedy expansion of the Marāṭhā power and its rapid dissolution. Historians point out that this granting of authority over territory instead salaries to the officers by Bālājī Viśvanāth was a departure from the wise rule of Śivājī, but throw the blame on the master and not on the minister. They suggest that Bālājī substituted for the autocracy of the sovereign the Marāṭhā Confederacy because he saw that Śāhū had not the commanding talents and energy which had made possible the great King's concentrated dominion. But it has been made plain in these pages that it was the support of the common people, of the Marāṭhā peasant and the Marāṭhā *Siledār*, that enabled Bālājī beat down the opposition of the great war-lords and wrest victory for his master. In his desire to conciliate the great barons Bālājī Viśvanāth appears to have gone too far and compromised royal authority. In leaving large powers to them Bālājī undoubtedly surrendered the gains of the battle after winning it.

But it would be wrong to hold the *Peśvā* responsible for the defects the system developed later. He accepted the situation and found in the *jāgīr* system the best solution possible to bring peace to the distracted country. He had seen the Marāṭhā State wilting under fierce onslaughts of the Moghal and had also witnessed the tide slowly turning against the enemy. He grasped as few men of his generation did, the significance of the changes in the political atmos-

phere and was determined that his country should profit by them. His conciliatory approach enabled the great Marāṭhā soldiers to come under the common flag and unite their skill and resources for common purposes. Playing cleverly on the rivalries and factions of the Moghal Court he wrested from them terms which secured for his state the gains of the bitter fighting of a quarter century and established the supremacy of Marāṭhā interests in the Deccan.

Bālājī Viśvanāth did not live long to work out his scheme in detail. After the monsoon he marched south and dispersed the Kolhāpūr force at Aṣṭā and laid siege to Kolhāpūr. After some desultory fighting he retired to Sāsvaḍ near Poonā and died there on 2nd April 1720. He left behind his widow Rādhābāī, two sons, and three daughters. The eldest son who had been his companion in most of his campaigns in his later years succeeded him to the *Peśvāship*.

Bālājī Viśvanāth has been truly called 'the second founder of the empire'. He piloted the ship of the State through dangerous waters and brought it to a safe haven. His greatness has been dimmed by the brilliant victories of his son and immediate successor to the *Peśvāship*. But it need not blind us to the fact that it was the father's statesmanship that brought order out of chaos, upheld national interests and preserved the unity of the state when it looked as if the Marāṭhā people would once more sink into a number of petty principalities, making war upon each other and ending in submission to a foreign aggressor. The treaty with Husain Ali was a great diplomatic triumph which secured to the Marāṭhā people the gains of their suffering of a quarter century and created a wide field for their restless ambition.

The term of Bālājī's *Peśvāship* marks the transition from the royal period to the age of the *Peśvās*. It ushers a new era in the history of the Marāṭhās. The feeble successors of the House of Śivājī fade into insignificance and become mere figure-heads with the passage of time. The reins of government pass into the hands of the able Prime Ministers, who direct the course of Marāṭhā policy for the next century.

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Expansion of
Maratha Power.SHAHU.
Bālājī
Viśvanāth.

CHAPTER 3*

EXPANSION OF MARATHA POWER (1720—1740)

CHAPTER 3.

Expansion of Maratha Power.

SHAHU.

Peśvā Bājī Rāv I.

BALAJI'S ELDEST SON BAJI RAV SUCCEEDED HIM in the *Peśvāship* on 17th April 1720. The training and experience gained under his father's tutelage and the responsibility of office early matured the *Peśvā's* character and gave him a poise and ample grasp of affairs. A much more vigorous personality, he quickened the pace of events. The energies of his people that were being wasted in petty disputes and Civil War he directed into fresh channels and carried Marāṭhā arms into Hindustān. With a statesmanship of high order he combined military leadership suited to the genius of his people and under him the Marāṭhās made rapid progress. During his father's life time he had seen enough of the Moghal *Darbar* to convince him of its weakness. The parties anxious to dominate at the court were bidding against each other for Marāṭhā co-operation and the new *Peśvā* was too shrewd not to perceive the advantage such a situation gave him. He realised early, as few of his contemporaries • appear to have done, that the Moghal empire was rushing to its doom and that it was time for his people to march into Hindustān and seize supreme power instead of remaining confined to the narrow limits of their Deccan homeland. His early victories secured his position at home, increased his resources and confidence and in 1728 his armies burst into Central India. With Rajput help he secured a safe base in Mālṡā for his plan of *Hindu-pad-Pādsāhi* which became the watch-word of Marāṭhā policy and animated all Marāṭhā activities in the years to follow.

Problems nearer home demanded the *Peśvā's* first attention. He could not look northward before setting his own house in order. The great feudatories of the Marāṭhā State owed but nominal allegiance to the sovereign, and enjoyed freedom of action that was undesirable. It was necessary that the Royal authority, if it was to be effective, should be strong enough to override that of its feudatories and bend them to its will. The security of the Marāṭhā State was closely bound with its supremacy in the Deccan wrested from the Moghals after a bitter struggle of a quarter century. This had been unwillingly conceded in the treaty of March 1719

* This Chapter is contributed by Dr. V. G. Dighe.

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concluded by the Sayyads and its preservation called for constant vigilance. The Sayyads had been driven from power and the very extensive Deccan Province encircling Marāṭhā homeland on all sides except the west had been seized by Nizām-ul-mulk, the ablest among the Moghal chiefs and the most consistent opponent of the Marāṭhā State. The Nizām was not likely to respect an agreement which cut at the root of his authority. A part of the *Svarāj* territory was yet in the hands of Moghal officials and foreign powers like the Siddi of Jañjirā and Portuguese of Bassein and had to be wrested from them. The Civil War with the Kolhāpūr party was only in abeyance, the faction of Sambhājī refusing to accept a subordinate position. The situation was thus bristling with difficulties.

Contest with
Nizām-ul-mulk.

The safety of the Marāṭhā homeland was the key to the situation. This was always in peril till a satisfactory settlement was made with the Deccan *subhedār*. The Nizām had arrived in the Deccan in 1724 after his failure as *Vazīr* at Delhi and meant to stay. Within a year he beat down all local opposition, obtained formal recognition of his titles and was free to oppose Marāṭhā claims. But he knew that the Marāṭhās were too strong to be attacked in their homeland and had not forgotten the lesson of Aurangzeb's fruitless campaigning against them. He proceeded very warily in his plans. He removed his capital from Aurangābād to Hyderābād, a place distant from Marāṭhā territory and occupying a more convenient position for his province. By offering a *jāgir* in Berār he persuaded Rājā Śāhū to exempt his new capital from *Cauth*. The *Peśvā* protested in vain against the exchange as he saw that this was the thin end of the wedge to eliminate Marāṭhā influence in the Hyderābād quarter. His protest was overruled by the Rājā in the hope of establishing cordial relations with the Deccan *Subhedār*.

Sambhājī of Kolhāpūr now played into the hands of the Nizām. The Kolhāpūr Prince had refused to be reconciled to Śāhū's superior authority and was now roused into hostility by the Nizām's blandishments and by activities of Śāhū's armies in Karnāṭak. Two Marāṭhā armies under Śāhū's chiefs had swept southward as far as Srirāṅga-ṣaṭam in 1725 and 1726 and on this Sambhājī looked as encroachment on his rights. He made common cause with the Nizām on the promise that the latter would support his claims against Śāhū. Anxious to embroil the Marāṭhās in a civil war such a promise was readily forthcoming from the Navāb.

The Nizām now affected ignorance of the respective claims of Śāhū and Sambhājī, withheld payment of *Cauth* by dismissing Śāhū's agents from his dominions and asked Śāhū to submit his claims to be arbitrated. The proposed arbitration was a mere

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cloak to conceal his design of reviving the old controversy over succession and once more embroiling the Marāṭhās in their domestic dispute.

Śāhū was dumb-founded at the Nizām's proposal. He had always been anxious to live in amity with the Moghal *Subhedār* and his friendly overtures had been rewarded with the challenge to his authority. The *Pratinidhi's* timid advice of accepting the proposal of arbitration was stoutly opposed by the *Peśvā* and war was declared on the Nizām in August 1727.

Sambhājī of Kolhāpūr joined the Nizām and this the *Subhedār* felt would be the sign for the civil war to flare up. In a letter to Savāi Jai Singh he unfolded his scheme. "With a view to carrying out the Emperor's order I have with God's help, called to my side Rājā Sambhājī who is Śāhū's rival, conciliated him and engaged in punishing and exterminating Śāhū I am hopeful that other partisans of Śāhū would desert him for my side and his party would cease to exist—according to our hearts' desire."¹ But the *Peśvā's* genius and strategy defeated the Nizām's design. Orders for general mobilization were given on 1st August 1727. Forts were warned to be on the defensive and before the rains had stopped a large Marāṭhā army consisting mainly of light cavalry took the field under command of the *Peśvā* and entered the Aurangābād district. As the Marāṭhā army was plundering Jālnā the Nizām taking Sambhājī with him set out to punish the Marāṭhās. On 6th November 1727 a skirmish took place and the *Peśvā* avoided a contest turned in the direction of Burhānpūr. To save the wealthy city the Nizām hurried towards Burhānpūr but failed to come up with the Marāṭhās owing to his baggage and equipment. In the meanwhile the *Peśvā* had entered Gujarāt clearly with the intention of drawing the Nizām into the hilly country. His plan was to exhaust the enemy before attacking him in the field. The Nizām turning from the pursuit set his face towards Poonā to destroy the place of the *Peśvā's* abode. Talegānv, Nārāyangānv, Bārāmāti all surrendered and the main army advanced as far as Poonā. Learning that the *Peśvā* had re-entered Vajjāpur district along the Godāvari the Nizām retraced his steps to cover his country. His army had been tired out by marching and counter-marching and the Marāṭhā allies on whom he had placed great reliance proved utterly worthless and lacking in daring. In the mountainous country near Pālkhed in which he was marching, grain and forage could not be procured. The Moghal army was completely surrounded, attacked on 25th February and forced to seek terms. On 6th March 1728 was concluded the treaty of Mungī-Śevgānv. The Navāb granted recognition of Śāhū as the sole king of the Marāṭhās and promised to abandon the cause of Sambhājī. He also agreed not to oppose Śāhū's claims of *Cauth* and *Sardesmukhi*

¹ Mss. letter, Sir Jadunath Sarkar's Collection.

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Nizām-ul-mulk.

Defeat of
Senāpatī
Dābhāde.

over the six *Subhās* of the Deccan. The Nizām's attempt to sow dissensions and involve the Marāṭhā State in a Civil War was decisively defeated by the *Peśvā* and Marāṭhā supremacy over the Deccan was firmly established¹.

Abandoned by the Nizām it was easy to bring to book Sambhājī of Kolhāpūr. Incited secretly by the *Navāb*'s agents and Udājī Cavān he again declared war on Śāhū in January 1730. He was surprised in his camp on the Vārṇā and his camp equipage and his family fell into Śāhū's hands. Sambhājī threw himself on the mercy of his cousin. Śāhū anxious to wipe out bitter feelings invited Sambhājī to a personal meeting, and after much feasting and amidst scenes of splendour was concluded in April 1731 the treaty of Vārṇā which defined the relations of the Kolhāpūr Prince with the Marāṭhā State. Sambhājī was confirmed in the sovereignty of the territory held by him, he was also to occupy forts and posts upto Tuṅgabhadra and his position was recognised as that of a subordinate ally of the Sātārā Rājā. The agreement put an end to a long standing feud².

Another domestic dispute convulsed the young Marāṭhā State at this period. It was the revolt of *Senāpatī* Dābhāde. The province of Gujarāt had been marked out as the sphere of operations for the *Senāpatī* and for over two decades his subordinates were exploiting the region. Pilājī Gāikvād and Kanṭhājī Kadam Bāṇde among them had by 1725 broken down the imperial rule and secured the *Cauth* of Gujarāt.

From 1726 the *Peśvā*'s troops began invading the province. Sarbuland Khān, the Governor of Gujarāt concluded a treaty with the *Peśvā* in February 1727 granting him *Cauth* and *Sardeśmukhi* of the province on condition that the latter would take it upon himself to expel other disturbers of peace, a clause mainly directed against Pilājī Gāikvād and Bāṇde. These two chiefs defeated and drove out Udājī Pavār from Gujarāt who had invaded on behalf of the *Peśvā*. But in 1729 December a large army of that *Peśvā* under his brother Cīmājī marched into Gujarāt, expelled Bāṇde and Gāikvād sacked Peṭlād, Dholkā and other rich towns of Gujarāt and forced the Moghal Governor to renew the agreement of *Cauth* concluded by him two years back and pay the revenues of Gujarāt to the *Peśvā* or his agents³.

The agreement was clearly an infringement of the *Senāpatī*'s claims over Gujarāt. The *Peśvā* appeared to be claiming a superior authority over other chiefs and subordinate them to his dictation. This was

¹ Main authorities are *Thorle Śāhū Mahārāj Yāñce Caritra* by Chitnis and *Hadiqat-ul-alam* by Mir Alam; also S. P. D. IX, XXII and XXX.

² *Kavyetihas Saṅgraha Patren Yādī*, 1930 Ed., Nos. 1820.

³ S. P. D. Vol. XV, pp. 82-85, *Śāhū's Roznāsi* 105.

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resented by the *Senāpatī* and by all those whose interests the new agreement affected. The *Senāpatī* became a centre of revolt and round him gathered the disaffected elements—Pilājī Gāikvād, Kanṭhājī Kadam Bāṇde, Udājī Pavār, Kānhoji Bhosle and others. The party counted on being supported at Court by the *Pratinidhi*

At this stage of the dispute the *Senāpatī* committed a tactical blunder that lost him sympathy and support of the Court and placed him in the position of a renegade against constituted authority. Apprehending that he may not get justice from the monarch he entered into secret negotiations with the Nizām to invoke his aid. The Nizām readily welcomed the opportunity of weakening his opponents, sent encouraging replies to the *Senāpatī* and assumed a threatening tone towards the *Peśvā*'s agents¹.

The report of these intrigues reached the *Peśvā*. Before the disaffected elements could formulate their plan of action and effect a junction with the Nizām, the *Peśvā* entered Gujarāt at the head of a picked force, renewed the engagements with the *Subhedār* concluded last year and then advanced upon Baroḍā held by Pilājī Gāikvād. Trimbak Rāv Dābhāde hastened to meet the challenge, marched into Gujarāt at the head of ten thousand troops, was joined by *Bhil* and *Koli* levies and by a detachment of the Nizām. The two forces met at Dabhai on 1st April 1731, and the superior leadership of the *Peśvā* won the day. Trimbak Rāv Dābhāde fell on the battle-field and his force was dispersed. The Nizām's attempt to exploit differences in the Marāṭhā Court had once more been baffled and his intrigues defeated. Gujarāt was restored to the *Senāpatī* on whose behalf the Gāikvāds worked and brought the Province under Marāṭhā control by 1737.

The battle of Dabhai and Bājī Rāv's victory forms a landmark in the history of the *Peśvās*. It left the *Peśvā* without any serious rival at home and "with all but nominal control of the Marāṭhā Sovereignty". Nizām-ul-mulk thought it convenient to come to terms with the *Peśvā* by concluding an agreement in August 1731, by which 'the former was to be at liberty to gratify his ambitions in the south, while the *Peśvā* obtained a free hand in the north².

From domestic problems we must now turn our attention to bigger problems of foreign policy and expansion of Marāṭhā power in Hindustān. The Marāṭhās had crossed into Mālva and raided it as far as Ujjain and Siroñj in 1703 in the days of Aurangzeb as a reply to the Moghal offensive against their homeland. These raids had been repeated with great boldness in the second decade of the 18th century and Nemājī Śinde, Kānhoji Bhosle, Khaṇḍe Rāv Dābhāde,

Marāṭhā Expansion
in Hindustān.

¹ S. P. D. Vol. X, pp. 59-73.

² *Siyāh-ul-Mu'akherin*, p. 235 (Panini Ed.), Elphinstone, p. 387, See also S. P. D. Vol. XXX 90, 91, and B. I. S. M. Q. 1946, pp. 11-12.

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Cimnāji Dāmodar and other Marāthā chieftains had fought the imperial *Subhedār*s with varying fortunes. Marāthā pressure on Mālṡvā was growing and the Marāthās desired recognition of their position in the treaty of 1719. This the Moghal *Darbār* would not grant and it became necessary for the new *Peśvā* to wrest by arms what his father could not obtain by negotiations. Khāndeś and Mālṡvā were specially assigned to the *Peśvā* as his field of operations for levying Government dues, and *Peśvā*'s troops began to move in this quarter every year. The *Peśvā* invaded Mālṡvā in person in February 1723 and again in 1724 May, collected *Cauth* and met the Nizām on both the occasions. Home affairs kept him away for the next three years, but his subordinates raided south Mālṡvā and laid several places under contribution.

All this while the situation at the imperial capital was fast deteriorating. Aurāngzeb's successors were feeble minded persons unfit to rule over his vast empire. They loved comfort, indulged in vice and left the administration to their ministers. A scramble for power ensued among the nobility, each individual and each party fighting for his selfish ends. Distracted by intrigues, divided by parties the Moghal Government fell into neglect, the defence of distant provinces were left uncared for, the army lost discipline and descended into a mere rabble. While the Marāthās were attacking Mālṡvā and Gujarāt the imperial court occupied itself in night revels and excursions to gardens.

Battle of Amjherā
(29 November
1728).

About the end of 1728 two big Marāthā armies invaded Central India. The first under the *Peśvā*'s brother Cimāji Āppā entered Mālṡvā in November by the Māṇḍū Chāt and surprising the *subhedār* Ciriḍhar Bahādūr in his camp at the border town of Amjherā, defeated him on 29th November. The *Subhedār* with several of his commanders was slain, his standard and equipage fell into Marāthā hands and his force destroyed. It was a complete victory for Cimāji. The brave defence put up by the *subhedār*'s son at Ujjain against Marāthā onslaught held up the enemy's advance for some time but could not save the province. The mountain passes into Mālṡvā were lost to the Marāthās; the flood-gates were thrown open and the tidal waters now rushed in and within a decade Mālṡvā passed into the hands of the Marāthās.¹

Conquests in
Bundelkhand.

While Cimāji Āppā was reducing Mālṡvā the *Peśvā* entered Bundelkhand at the head of another large army. His help had been invoked by Rājā Chatrasāl, hard-pressed by Muhammad Khān Baṅgaṣ.

¹ This and the subsequent discussion of Marāthā expansion in Hindustān, is a summary of chapters VII to XIII of my work *Peśvā Bājī Rāv I & Marāthā Expansion*. These are based on *Peśvā Daftar Selections* particularly XIII-XV, XXII and XXX, and *Jaipur Akhbarā* (MSS.). The *Peśvā*'s letters printed in appendix of *Brahmendra Svāmīce Caritra* are also very valuable. Other sources are indicated in my work. See also *Hingne Daftar* Vol. I, pp. 3-7.

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Governor of Allāhābād. The Bundelās joined the Marāthās and invested the *subhedār* in his encampment near Jaitpur. Reduced to great straits Muhammad Khān Baṅgaṣ invited reinforcements from Allāhābād and from Delhi. His son Qāyum Khān tried to send relief but was defeated. The imperial Court immersed in its rounds of pleasures had no time to attend to the demands of its Governors. Baṅgaṣ retired from Bundelkhand leaving the Bundelās masters in their home. The grateful Chatrasāl rewarded his benefactor with a *jāgir* in his principality. The Marāthās thus obtained another foot-hold from which to mount their offensive against the Moghal empire.

Rājā Jai Singh of Amber and Muhammad Khān Baṅgaṣ who held between them the Governorship of Mālṡvā alternately from 1728 to 1737, tried appeasement and war in turn but neither policy proved successful. Baṅgaṣ governed the province from 1730 to 1732 chasing the Marāthās from place to place but found his resources altogether inadequate to throw them out. Rājā Jai Singh who succeeded Baṅgaṣ in the Governorship was the ruler of the important principality of Jaipur, a friend of *Khān-i-Daurān*, *Mir Bakṣi*, and wielded considerable influence in the Moghal Court. A man of culture and refinement he advocated the policy of winning the Marāthās over to the imperial cause by making them large concessions and satisfying their legitimate demands. Aware of the decay creeping over the Moghal empire the Rajput prince entertained secret ambitions of enlarging his kingdom of Amber so as to include in the rich province of Mālṡvā. For this it was necessary to persuade the Rajput nobility to accept his leadership and conciliate the Marāthās. But diplomacy rarely succeeds unless backed by force and the Rajput was too sensual and pleasure-loving to exert himself in the field. The Rajput prince refused to unite under the Kachvā banner and nothing short of the *Subhedār*i of Mālṡvā would satisfy the *Peśvā*. Jai Singh purchased peace by sharing with the Marāthās the large sums sent to him from Delhi for the defence of his charge.

Progress in
Mālṡvā and
Bundelkhand.

From 1732 the Marāthā offensive took the form of a two-pronged drive. One army under Śinde and Holkar would pour into western Mālṡvā by way of Gujarāt while another taking a north-easterly route would enter Bundelkhand and with their Bundelā allies ravage the country as far north as Gvālior and Gohad. In 1733 Savāi Jai Singh was surrounded near Mandsaur and extricated himself by paying six lakhs as ransom. In 1734 April Bundi was assaulted and Jai Singh's nominee was driven out; a force that had advanced to Siroñj under Muzaffar Khān was invested and escaped with difficulty.

Two large armies marched against the Marāthās in the cold season of 1734-1735. Vazir Qamruddin Khān came up against Pilāji Jādhav in February 1735 near Narvār, but found himself in great distress by the constant attacks of the light Marāthā horse. He sought refuge

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in the fort of Orchā and had to bribe the Marāṭhās with five lakhs of rupees before they retired. The second army under the *Mir Bakṣi Khān Daurān* advanced by way of Jaipur and entered Mālva through the Mukundrā pass. While encamped at Rāmpurā Rānoji Sīnde and Malhārjī Holkar surrounded it and cut off its supplies. Lifting the blockade the Marāṭhā Commanders passed the enemy's rear and invaded Rajputānā. This sudden irruption of the enemy caused dismay in Moghal ranks, and their Rajput allies insisted on going back to save their homes. *Khān Daurān's* army retired and while he was at Kotāh a meeting was arranged with the Marāṭhā chieftains on 24th March 1735 at which they agreed to accept twenty-two lakhs as *Cauth* for Mālva.

"The Marāṭhās", says the author of *Siṭyār-ul-Mutākherin*, "continued to extend their ravages and incursions to which they had been encouraged by receiving contributions in order to purchase their forbearance wherever they appeared. When they saw no measures were taken to oppose their movements they recommenced their operations in the next year. At length they assumed absolute dominion of those districts which formerly only paid tribute. By these encroachments the frontier of the empire retrograded while theirs advanced. By the supineness of the Emperor they now occupied the territories as far as Gvālīor and approached the vicinity of Akbarābād (Āgrā)".¹

Attempts at
Conciliation.

Having succeeded in levying *Cauth* and *Sardeśmukhi* in Mālva Bājī Rāv now applied through Savāi Jai Singh for their formal cession by the Emperor. He also requested similar grants for Gujarāt. The growing encroachments of the Marāṭhās had given rise to serious misgivings at the imperial Court. Was *Rājā* Jai Singh, his enemies openly asked, in league with his co-religionists and encouraging their aggressions or was he incompetent to deal with them? When the Peśvā's demands for tribute from Mālva and Gujarāt became known at the Court the Turāni Moghals declared themselves decidedly against such a disgraceful compromise. The party clamoured for the removal of *Rājā* Jai Singh and for placing the defence of the province in more competent and trustworthy hands. The advocacy of *Khān Daurān*, a friend of the *Rājā* and leader of the Hindustāni party, could not disprove facts of Marāṭhā aggression. There were reports of the Emperor's dissatisfaction with Jai Singh's conduct of affairs. The *Rājā* felt that his position was seriously assailed and invited the Peśvā to a personal meeting at which he hoped to evolve a formula satisfactory to both parties and yet keep the *subhedāri* of Mālva to himself.

The Peśvā left Poonā in November 1735 at the head of large force. His march in Hindustān created quite a stir at the Courts of foreign rulers. There were wild conjectures about his real intentions and

¹ *Siṭyār-ul-Mutākherin*, p. 242 (Panini Ed.).

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the Peśvā added not a little to the confusion by making an appeal to all Hindu rulers to gather under his banner. About the beginning of February he arrived at Udaipur and met the Rānā in a formal *Darbār*. Agents began to arrive from Jai Singh and from the imperial Court carrying drafts of agreement which would prove acceptable.

On 4th March 1736 in an atmosphere of great cordiality took place a meeting between the Brāhmin Minister of Sāhū *Rājā* and the Rajput Prince and the prospects of peace seemed very fair. Jai Singh's proposals amounted to the Peśvā declaring himself a servant of the Crown and in exchange getting his demands conceded.

The Emperor was prepared to bestow *Cauth* and *Sardeśmukhi* for the province of Mālva, an assignment of thirteen lakhs of rupees on the revenue of districts south of the Cambal and grant an authority to the Peśvā to levy tribute from the Rajput States from Bundi on the west to Bhadavār on the east¹. The concessions excited the Peśvā's cupidity and called forth fresh demands: he went on raising his claims till at last he demanded:—

(i) The *Subhā* of Mālva inclusive of the tributary States, to be granted in jāgir to the Peśvā and he be appointed Governor of the province.

(ii) The Rohillā Chiefs of Bhopāl and Bhilsā to be ejected from the province and their *jāgirs* to be made over to the Peśvā.

(iii) The forts Māṇḍavgaḍ, Dhār and Rāisin (commanding the passes in Mālva from the south) to be ceded to the Peśvā.

(iv) The territory up to the Cambal to be granted to the Peśvā in *jāgir*.

(v) An assignment of fifty lakhs of rupees on the revenues of Bengal to relieve the Peśvā's debts.

(vi) The cession of the holy places of Allāhābād, Banāras, Mathurā and Gayā.

(vii) The cession of the *Sardeśpāṇḍeship* of the Deccan and lastly came the demand for another *jāgir* of fifty lakhs of rupees in the *Subhā* of the Deccan.

From the modest demands for cession of *Cauth* and *Sardeśmukhi* of Mālva and war indemnity to meet his debts the Peśvā had gone on to ask for the virtual control of Mālva, Bundelkhand, Bengal and the Deccan. This almost took away the breath of the imperial court and it decided to fight. To gain time just then it procrastinated and spun out negotiations till the end of the campaigning season obliged the Peśvā to retire.

¹ S.P.D. XV, pp. 93-94 and Grant Duff, I, pp. 431-434 (1912 Ed.).
Vf 3792—5a

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Maratha Power.

SHAHU.

Peśvā Bāji Rāv I.

Sudden Attack
on Delhi.

When the next campaigning season opened the *Peśvā* marched into Hindustān at the head of fifty thousand troops. Bhopāl and Bhilsā the only islands of opposition held by Rohillā chieftains in the province of Mālṡā were reduced and the *Peśvā* then struck in at north-eastern direction and attacked the Jāt *Rājā* of Bhadavār.

Having laid Mālṡā and Bundelkhaṇḍ under contribution the Marāṭhā army stood poised on the Cambal hardly seventy miles from Agrā. The advance of the enemy so near the imperial capital constituted a menace of the first magnitude and roused the Court into feverish activity. Large armies were equipped and put into the field under the command of Vazir Qamruddin Khān and the *Mir Bakhsi Khān Daurān*. Royal letters were sent to provincial Governors, Moghal Chiefs and Rajput princes to rush to the defence of the capital and movements of troops and their concentration in the Delhi Agrā area were reported from all sides. This it was necessary to prevent and create a diversion and a strong detachment under Malhārji Holkar entered the Doāb. Holkar crossed the Yamunā at Kālpī and moving swiftly plundered Itimādpūr and Firozābād opposite Agrā. At Jalesar, however, he was surprised by Sāādāt Khān, Governor of Oudh and repulsed with losses. The *Peśvā's* attempt to distract the enemy and prevent his concentration had failed. Sāādāt Khān wrote to the Emperor glowing accounts of his victory, boasted of his soon being able to drive the Marāṭhās beyond the Cambal and advised the Emperor to break off negotiations with the *Peśvā*.

The *Peśvā's* *vakil* Dhoṇḍo Govind who was in the camp of the *Mir Bakhsi* communicated Sāādāt Khān's account of his success and the violent reaction it had produced at the Court. The *Peśvā* was determined "to give a lie to the wild boast and tell the Emperor that he was still in Hindustān and to show him flames and Marāṭhās at the gates of his capital". While the Moghal chiefs were celebrating Sāādāt Khān's recent victory the *Peśvā* making a wide detour through the Jāt and Mevāt country on the west passed the enemy's rear and arrived in the vicinity of the capital on 29th March 1737. Leaving Barāpulā and the Kālikā temple (near Okhlā) to his right the *Peśvā* moved his camp to the Kutb Minār and then to the plain where now stands New Delhi. On arriving near the Capital the *Peśvā* changed his mind of sacking the city; he knew that the Emperor and Khān Daurān were favourably disposed towards his demands but that the Moghal party was opposing the cessions. He sent letters of friendly professions to the Emperor, invited fresh proposals and to save the city from molestation moved in the direction of the Jhil tank. As the *Peśvā's* army was changing grounds the next day the move was misunderstood as retreat and the defenders sallied out to attack the enemy. The *Peśvā* lured the Moghal force beyond the protection of its artillery and then enveloping it completely routed it. On 31st March learning of the approach of enemy troops the *Peśvā*

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disappeared as suddenly as he had arrived before the capital. He hoped to draw the Moghal armies into the arid hills of the Mevāt country but the enemy refused to take the bait. Wearied by marching and countermarching the Moghal Commanders retired to their mansions in the capital. By his clever strategy the *Peśvā* had outmanoeuvred his opponents and completely immobilised them. The Turāni or Moghal party which opposed Marāṭhā ambitions was discredited in the councils of the Empire and the influence of the Hindustāni leader, Khān-i-Daurān, the Advocate of the peace policy, once more became supreme¹.

Nizām-ul-mulk, though he had agreed to give the *Peśvā* a free hand in Hindustān, watched his extraordinary progress beyond the Narmadā with the greatest anxiety. He thought that the *Peśvā's* new entanglements would reduce the latter's resources and allow himself greater freedom. Events however belied the Nizām's expectations. The weakness of the empire revealed itself more and more glaringly as the Marāṭhā-Moghal struggle developed and Moghal arms suffered reverses after reverses. Instead of being checked and driven back the *Peśvā* reached the very gates of Delhi and threatened to subvert the empire itself. The Nizām could no longer remain an idle spectator while the bulwarks of the empire were crashing round him. The news of the *Peśvā* trying to obtain greater control over his *subhā* of the Deccan and rivet further chains on his authority was most disquieting. The Nizām decided to make common cause with the imperialist Government to save it and save himself thereby.

The Battle of
Bhopāl.

The Moghal Court having realized its weakness in opposing Marāṭhā encroachments invited Nizām-ul-mulk to its aid and suspended peace talks. On his arrival in Delhi in June old jealousies and suspicions were set aside. Muhammad Sāh showered on him favours, gave him the best residence in the capital, and restored to him the government of Mālṡā and Gujarāt in the name of his son on the condition that he would drive the Marāṭhās beyond the Narmadā². At the head of an army of thirty-five thousand men and a fine park of artillery the Nizām left the capital to seek and if possible destroy the enemy. He marched southward through Bundelkhaṇḍ where he was joined by Sāādāt Khān's troops and also those of the Rajput and Bundelā chiefs (of Orchā, Datia, Narvār and several other Chieftains) till his force swelled to seventy-thousand. About the middle of December he arrived at Bhopāl. His strategy was to catch the Marāṭhā force between two pincers, to crush it between the imperial army under his personal command and another striking from the south under his son Nāsir Jāng.

¹ *Peśvā's* letter to his brother in appendix of Br. Ch. No. 27.

² S.P.D. Vol. XV, p. 83.

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But the *Peśvā* refused to act according to the enemy dispositions. Placing a strong detachment under his brother on the Tāpī to prevent succour going to the Navāb from the Deccan he invaded Mālva at the head of eighty thousand horse and came up with the Nizām at Bhopāl. The Nizām surrounding himself with his artillery waited for the Marāṭhās to attack him. He had not taken sufficient care to protect his line of communications with Delhi and Hyderābād and soon found himself completely isolated and invested in the town of Bhopāl. The grain supply in his camp soon gave out and men and animals famished for want of food. Two detachments that tried to carry relief to the beleaguered army one from Sāh Jahānpūr and the other from Burhānpūr were cut up. The Nizām's attempt to break out and escape under cover of his powerful guns was foiled by the Marāṭhā horse hovering round and galling the Moghal army with showers of rockets and match-lock fire. Unable to hold out any longer the Nizām begged for terms and on 7th January 1738 at Durāhā Sarāi¹ signed the convention promising to grant to the *Peśvā* the whole of Mālva, the complete sovereignty of the territory between the Narmadā and the Cambāl, to obtain a confirmation of it from the Emperor and to use every endeavour to procure the payment of fifty lakhs of rupees for war expenses².

The victory of Bhopāl marks the zenith of the *Peśvā's* triumphant career. Nizām-ul-mulk who was opposing the grant of *cauth* and *Sardeśmukhi* of Mālva had been forced to concede the entire province and recognise *Peśvā's* claims upto the Cambāl. The *Peśvā* accomplished the conquest which he had set before himself since he came to the *Peśvāship*. Creating powerful armies out of divergent elements of Marāṭhā siledārs he invaded Hindustān, brought to grief one imperial army after another sent against him, acquired immense territory till the Marāṭhā outposts reached the southern banks of the Cambāl and the Yamunā. The disaster of Āmjhērā first opened the eyes of the imperial Government to this menace from the south. But the measures it adopted to fight were feeble, half-hearted and lacked in consistency. The friendship of Rājā Jai Singh enabled the Marāṭhās to plant their power firmly in Mālva. The later attempts of the Moghal Government to oust the Marāṭhās failed on account of the pusillanimity of its leaders and want of energy in its administration. The defeat of the confederate armies at Bhopāl by the *Peśvā* established the supremacy of Marāṭhā arms in Hindustān and announced the birth of a new imperial power.

The Nizām failed to keep his promise of getting the convention ratified within his life-time. But no new *subhedār* was sent from Delhi and the province remained in Marāṭhā hands. Sinde and

¹ Durāhā is about 20 miles S. W. of Bhopāl. Sardesai is obviously incorrect when he says Durāhā is 64 miles north of Sirohī.

² The best authority for the campaign is the *Peśvā's* letters to his brother in *Brahmendra Svāmī's Caritra*, Appendix Nos. 33-36. Grant Duff has used them but his chronology of events is wrong.

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Holkar set up their headquarters at Ujjain and Indore and shared the revenue with the *Peśvā*. The invasion of Nādir Sāh next year convulsed the Moghal empire and hastened its decay. The Emperor became a shadow figure exercising little direct authority beyond the provinces of Āgrā and Delhi.

The upheaval at Delhi mystified the *Peśvā*. The revolution threatened to destroy the hegemony acquired by Marāṭhā arms in the imperial councils. If Nādir Sāh were to stay in India and found a new dynasty subverting the Moghal line, Marāṭhā supremacy would be gone and their new conquests would be imperilled. Bājī Rāv recognised the seriousness of the threat and talked of uniting Indian powers against the foreign aggressor. But before he could recall his forces from the siege of Bassein the Persian conqueror had turned his back on India and was returning to his country enjoining on all Indian rulers to render allegiance to the Moghal Emperor and obey his commands.

While Marāṭhā power was expanding in Hindustān the home front was not neglected. Large part of Marāṭhā territory on the western Sea-board was in foreign hands. The Siddis of Jañjīrā had long thwarted Sīvājī's attempts to reduce their island castle and annihilate their power. The Portuguese clung to the coastal strip in north Koṅkaṇ. Aurāngzeb had transferred his conquests in Koṅkaṇ to the Siddi Chiefs of Jañjīrā and put them in possession of important fort of Rāyagaḍ, Mahād, Dābhol, Ratnāgiri, etc. The Siddis had also seized Revas and Thal near Kolābā from which they harassed Marāṭhā shipping in Panvel creek. The Siddi's power from Jañjīrā as centre spread in a fan-like fashion right up to the western *ghāts* and covered the entire modern district of Kolābā with the exception of Peṇ and Alibāg. His possessions thus included Rāyagaḍ, capital of the great Sīvājī and a place of sanctity to the Marāṭhās which their racial pride and national honour would not allow them to tolerate in alien hands.

Conquests on the
West Coast.

These political considerations for expelling the Siddi were aggravated by a personal quarrel. Brahmendra Svāmī, a religious mendicant, was much respected in the *Peśvā's* family and shown very high regard in the Marāṭhā Court. He had built a lovely shrine dedicated to Śiva at Paraśurām near Ciplūn. Siddi Sāāt, the Siddi Commandant of the nearby fort of Añjarvel, taking offence with the Svāmī made a sudden raid on the temple on Mahāśivarātri day in 1727 and levelled it down. The Svāmī's rage knew no bounds, he rained curses on the Siddi, left Koṅkaṇ and settled at Dhāvaḍśī near Sātārā preaching a crusade against the Siddi defiler of his shrine.

Kānhoji Āngre to whom the west coast districts had been assigned as his sphere, was lukewarm towards the adventure. He died in 1729 and his son Sekhoji was won over the project of reducing the

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Siddi power. A political revolution occurred at Jañjirā in 1733; the Siddi Chief Siddi Rasul Khān died in February 1733 and his eldest son and successor was murdered by other claimants to the Command. The son of the murdered Abdullāh fled to the Marāṭhās for protection and asked their help in gaining the *Navābship*. A powerful Siddi Chief who was in command of the fleet and was perhaps a partisan of Abdullāh agreed to transfer his allegiance and come over to the Marāṭhā side on promise of substantial reward. Though it was the height of summer and end of the campaigning season, two forces one under the *Peśvā* and Fateh Singh Bhosle and the other under the *Pratinidhī* were immediately ordered to march to Jañjirā and seize the place in favour of the Marāṭhā nominee. The *Peśvā* descended into Konkan and arrived before the island castle on 2 May 1733. The suddenness of the approach took the enemy unawares. Rājpurī and Khokri surrendered without resistance, as also the Siddi fleet lying in the port. Sekhoji walked over to the Marāṭhās and with him the *Peśvā* sat down to direct the siege of the castle. The rebels fled to the castle and closed its gates before the Marāṭhās could get in.

Jañjirā was girdled by the sea all round though not far from the mainland. An attacking force without adequate support of a fleet and heavy artillery was helpless before it. Bājī Rāv looked to Sekhoji Āngre to provide naval support for his enterprise. But owing partly to the lateness of the season and partly to the jealousy Āngre felt at the intrusion of the King's forces in his field, his ships were slow in supporting the *Peśvā's* action. Sekhoji occupied himself with the attack on Siddi's places like Revas, Thal, etc., in his territory. In the meanwhile the Siddi chiefs had appealed successfully to the English at Bombay and Capt. Mac Neale arrived on the scene with a powerful squadron and the attack on Jañjirā had to be abandoned.

Srinivās Rāv *Pratinidhī* who had been sent into south Konkan bribed the *killedār* of Rāygaḍ and occupied the fort on 8th June. But his further operations were thwarted by intrigues. So strong was the jealousy between the *Peśvā* and the *Pratinidhī* that they began to work at cross-purposes with each other making further progress in the expedition impossible. The *Peśvā* tired of sitting before Jañjirā without hope of reducing the place, advised the *Darbār* to accept the terms offered through the English. Truce was declared and on 1st December Abdul Rahmān the *Peśvā's* nominee was seated on the Masnad. Bājī Rāv abandoned the siege and marched away from Rājpurī.

The results of the campaign were not unsubstantial. The Siddi was driven back to the sea: the Siddi's territory dwindled to the rock islands of Jañjirā, Underī and Añjanvel and Gowaḷkoṭ in the south. The Marāṭhās became masters of his land possessions. Rāygaḍ, the capital of the great Sivājī was recovered as also Caul and Thal and

Revās. Siddi Sāāt of Añjanvel continued to give trouble for some time but he was finally overcome in April 1736 and a final treaty was concluded ratifying the truce arrangements and establishing double government in the eleven *mahals* formerly owned by the Siddi. The Siddi's power declined and the Siddi became in all but name a tributary of the Marāṭhā State.

Another remarkable success won by the *Peśvā's* arms in Konkan was the defeat of the Portuguese and acquisition of their Province of the North comprising the island of Salsette and the coastal strip covered by Bassein and its dependencies. The Portuguese had seized these parts of the Marāṭhā country two hundred years ago and made Bassein the capital of their province and raised mighty fortifications round it. Bassein lay with a fertile tract; its equable climate, administrative importance and commercial prosperity drew to it many rich Portuguese families from Goā and the entire territory came to be looked on as a valued possession of the Portuguese empire in the east.

In the eighteenth century however, Portuguese power was on the decline. The command of the sea had passed to the Dutch and the English and the Portuguese clung to their outposts in India with difficulty. But they had not the wisdom to understand their unstable position; they had few friends among country powers and they made their subject people their worst enemies by their harsh and intolerant treatment. The inquisition was active in Goā and Bassein from 1550 persecuting all those who did not conform to the Christian doctrine or dared to worship publicly in their own way. Those who could, fled the country and settled in the neighbouring districts. But there were many who could not and clung to their hearths and homes in the hope that deliverance would come from their compatriots beyond the borders. As soon as Marāṭhā rule was established in Kalyān (1719) the popular discontent found expression. The Hindu leaders invited the *Peśvā* to deliver them from foreign yoke and restore their religious liberties. The Portuguese aroused by the danger threatening them began to put Salsette and Bassein in a proper state of defence and ordered the local people to contribute money and labour. A cry went up among the local people and in desperation they invoked the *Peśvā* to take possession of the country offering him their whole-hearted co-operation in the enterprise.

Portuguese activities in Konkan were also running counter to the interests of the *Peśvā*. In the domestic dispute of the Āngre family the Portuguese supported Sambhājī Āngre who was flouting the *Peśvā* and became particularly obnoxious to him. Probing attacks on Portuguese territory had started since 1723. Their safety against these and the intrigues of their Hindu subjects now lay in the new

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fortifications that were going up and these the Portuguese pressed with vigour. The attack on Bassein could no longer be delayed and in March 1737 a strong force under the *Peśvā's* brother *Cimāji* *Āppā* prepared to strike at the Portuguese possessions and collected in secrecy at *Kalyāṇ*.

The terrain of Salsette and Bassein is peculiar; the narrow coastal strip is cut up in many places by channels made inland by the sea and the rivers flowing out. This is not a country for large-scale movements of cavalry. Knowledge of fords and their control therefore becomes an important factor of military tactics in this area. The *Peśvā's* contacts with the local population of *Sālsette* and *Bassein* and the secret information obtained from them of the geography of the country and the strength of their posts proved very useful in this respect. On the night of 26th March at low tide an advanced detachment of *Marāṭhā* horse surprised the patrol at *Ṭhāṇā* ford, attacked the *St. Jeronimo* tower and secured the passage into the island. The next day the entire force poured in with its equipment and stores. The surprise was complete. The Governor frightened out of his wits left the island on 27th March and the main fort of *Ṭhāṇā* surrendered without much fighting. Detachments sent out soon reduced the remaining fortified places *Belāpūr*, *Pārsik*, *Marol* and only *Bāndrā* and *Varsovā* held out against the attack. While the main army was attacking *Salsette* another force, 2200 strong, rapidly marched on *Bassein* through hilly country. The same strategy had been planned here, but failed on account of the extra precautions taken by the enemy. Means had to be devised to besiege and assault the formidable fortress of *Bassein*. Outlying posts were seized, but the embattled walls of the fortress guarded by the sea on three sides and open only to the north stood frowning on the besiegers. Three attacks to escalate the walls made during the rains were beaten back with heavy losses. As the fair season opened the Portuguese received reinforcements and attacked *Marāṭhās* in the open country cutting up their detachments at *Māhim* and *Dhārāvī*. In the November of 1738 they even tried to recover *Ṭhāṇā* and sent a large expedition which however, failed disastrously. The Portuguese Commander *Pedro De Mello* was killed on the spot and his ships fled back.

The *Marāṭhās* now going over to the offensive collected a formidable force for the final assault on the enemy's stronghold. Another force invaded *Goā* and cut off supplies going to *Bassein*. The defenders were reduced to great straits; they melted even church plate to purchase ammunition from *Bombay*, but would not talk of surrender. *Marāṭhā* artillery roared night and day pounding the fortress and thus leaving the enemy no time to recover his breath. Mines were run to the walls and exploded on 2nd May. A general assault followed and after two days of heavy fighting *Bassein* capitulated on 5th May 1739 and the garrison marched out. *Bassein* fell never to rise again.

The conquest of *Bassein* was long cherished by the *Marāṭhās* as a matter of national pride and its transfer to the English was stoutly resisted in the first *Marāṭhā* war. The gains to the *Marāṭhās* by the campaign were the conquest of practically the entire province of the North of the Portuguese possession twenty-two leagues in length from *Varsovā* to *Damaṇ* with their four chief ports, three hundred and forty villages and a revenue of 2,50,000 rupees. They acquired, besides *Bassein* eight cities, twenty fortresses, the famous island of *Salsette*. *Damaṇ* and *Diu* however escaped the fate of *Bassein*.

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CHAPTER 4*
EXPANSION OF MARATHA POWER
(1741—1761)

BAJI RAV DIED IN APRIL 1740 AND WAS SUCCEEDED in the *Peśvāship* by his son Bālājī then twenty years old. The Chief Minister, by now, ruled in the *Rājā's* name the central region of Mahārāṣṭra, north Koṅkan recently wrested from the Portuguese and levied *cauth* on Khāndeś, Mālṡā, Bundelkhaṇḍ and territories beyond. He commanded the largest army in the Marāṭhā State and his resources were very great. This gave the *Peśvā* family a preponderance in the *Rājā's* council and therefore the succession of the son to his father's post was never in doubt. The story of the opposition of Raghuji Bhosle and Bābujī Nāik to the succession of Bālājī Rāv first accepted by Grant Duff¹ and implicitly followed by later writers on the authority of *Bakhars*, appears to be an attempt made by the *Peśvā's* protagonists to defend his attack on the Nāgpūr Chief three years later and has little basis in fact.

The succession of Bālājī Bāji Rāv marked no ostensible change in policy. The new *Peśvā* indicated that he would follow his father's expansionist policies in all respects and expressed his desire² to maintain cordial relations with Rajput princes who had facilitated Marāṭhā entry into Mālṡā and their subsequent successes in Hindustan. The *Nizām's* humiliating defeat at Bhopāl (1738) had brought the whole of Mālṡā under Marāṭhā control, but the imperial grants which would put the seal of authority on the transfer had been delayed. Young Bālājī, therefore, within four months of his investiture marched into Hindustan to renew friendly contacts with the Rajput Chiefs and undo the mischief created by the *Nizām* during his three years' stay in the imperial capital. The *Nizām's* influence at Delhi, however, was on the wane and the old man, powerless for mischief any more, was hard put to hold his own against his son in the Deccan. He was coming south to meet the threat of Nāsir Jaṅg's revolt and his position looked almost hopeless. The *Peśvā* was anxious to obtain the wizard's good-will for his northern projects and instead of exploiting the situation of a civil strife in

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Early successes
in the north

* This Chapter is contributed by Dr. V. G. Dighe.

¹ Grant Duff, Vol. II, pp. 3-4 (1912 Ed.);

² Hingne Daftar, Vol. I, pp. 15-19.

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the family of his neighbour, he went out of his way to call on the *Navāb* at Edalābād (on the Purnā) on 17th January 1741 and assure him of his support to quell the revolt. The friendly assurances caused dismay in the ranks of the rebels and helped the *Nizām* to overcome his son without difficulty.

The *Peśvā* marched northward levying *Cauth* on his new conquests and arrived at Dholpūr on 12th May. Here he met Savāi Jai Singh and concluded with him a pact for mutual aid. Both parties swore loyalty to the imperial throne; Jai Singh presented the *Peśvā* a sum of fifteen lakhs of rupees to meet his expenses and promised to obtain for him imperial *sanads* for the *subhedāri* of Mālva. The *Peśvā* on his side agreed to present himself before the Emperor, prevent other Marāṭhā chieftains from crossing the Narmadā and raiding imperial territory and send four thousand troops for the imperial service¹. Jai Singh's negotiations were approved and the grants for Mālva were issued in September. The whole of the province now passed into Marāṭhā possession. The *Peśvā's* chiefs put their seals to the treaty later in 1743.

The *Peśvā* however was not satisfied with the *Subhedāri* of merely one province. As expressed in one of his famous declarations² he desired the golden river from the north flow southward to enrich the regions of Mahārāṣṭra, to utilise the resources of the empire to make his country strong and rich. Next year he again appeared in Bundelkhaṇḍ and sent envoys to claim *cauth* for Āgrā, Allāhabād, Pāṭṇā and Beṅgāl. The imperial court afraid to refuse the *Peśvā*, called on him to fulfil the promise of protecting imperial domains from the disturbances caused by Raghuji Bhosle's invasion of Beṅgāl and involved him in a dispute with that chief. The Beṅgāl episode is narrated in greater detail later and need not detain us here.

In 1744 there was again trouble in Bundelkhaṇḍ. The Bundelā chiefs were not very happy about the growing demands of the *Peśvā* and rose all over. Two years back they had with great audacity attacked a Marāṭhā revenue collector and put him to death. The terrible retribution this called on them did not prevent these chiefs from revolting once more. Military posts at Jhānsī and Sāgar were permanently established in this rugged region and put under able Commanders. Bhilsā was recovered from the *Navāb* of Bhopāl in March 1745 and Jaipūr, the storm-centre of Bundelā disaffection, was stormed in 1746 May.

In 1748 the *Peśvā* visited Hindustan for the last time. Abdālī had invaded Puñjāb and there was rift among *Peśvā's* chiefs about the policy to be followed in respect of Jaipūr succession. The *Peśvā* visited Delhi and then entered Jaipūr territory to bring about a settlement in the dispute of Jai Sing's sons. The expedition was barren of results.

¹ S.P.D., Vol. XV, p. 97;² Rajwade Vol. VI, p. 267.

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Beṅgāl.

The province of Beṅgāl requires our attention now. This rich province in Moghal times comprised Beṅgāl proper, Bihār and Orissā and had so far fortunately escaped the welter of anarchy and misrule that had engulfed the rest of the empire. Murśid Qulī Khān had ruled the province wisely till his death in 1727 and after him his son Sujā Khān till 1739. With Sujā Khān's death in 1739 the peace of Beṅgāl was disturbed and the revolt and usurpation of Alivardi Khān, the deputy governor of Bihār brought the Marāṭhās on the scene. Alivardi led an army from Pāṭṇā into Beṅgāl, defeated the successor of Sujā Khān and by heavy bribes to the imperial court obtained its consent to his own appointment as Governor of the province. The followers of the family of the old *Navāb* however refused to acknowledge the title of the usurper. They challenged his authority and invited the neighbouring Marāṭhā chief, Raghuji Bhosle, to their aid. Thus started the Beṅgāl incursions of the Marāṭhās which dried up the resources of the province and brought Moghal authority in the eastern region to the lowest level and made Beṅgāl a fruitful field of conquest.

Beṅgāl lay contiguous to the territory of Raghuji Bhosle who had established himself in Berār and Goṇḍvan (modern Madhya Pradesh) and in the general scheme of Marāṭhā expansion, was marked as the Bhosle's field of conquest. Raghuji could with little difficulty send his horse into Orissā or pour them into the plains of Bihār through the jungle-paths of Chattisgaḍ. The local populace was altogether docile and the army which sustained the usurper's power was composed of mercenary Afghān soldiery which was disloyal and ready enough to sell itself to the highest bidder. The family of Murśid Qulī Khān was bitterly opposing the new *Navāb's* rule and the Bhosle's advent into Beṅgāl promised early results.

But Raghuji had counted without the opposition of the *Peśvā*. He was a typical Marāṭhā, a dashing soldier and a skilful leader of cavalry. His resources compared to that of the *Navāb* of Beṅgāl were meagre, but the general situation favoured the Bhosle. The Marāṭhā also had an overweening pride in his own prowess; he failed to recognise the political change that had come over the Marāṭhā State and affected to ignore the *Peśvā's* supreme authority. He claimed equal rank with the *Peśvā* and only succeeded in inviting the latter's hostility. The differences of the two Marāṭhā chieftains were cleverly played upon by the Moghal Court and the *Subhedār*, and the province of Beṅgāl which looked like a ripe fruit ready for the plucking, slipped out of Marāṭhā hands to be swallowed by the East India Company.

The first revolt against Alivardi Khān occurred in Orissā. Rustum Jaṅg, the deputy Governor of the Province and son-in-law of deceased Sujā Khān refused to acknowledge the authority of the regicide and declared his own independence (1741). He was however routed by the *Navāb's* troops and fled southward. Here he obtained the

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aid of Raghuji Bhosle, and marching back with a small Marāṭhā detachment, reoccupied Cuttack, but was again defeated and fell back on Nāgpūr with his Marāṭhā allies (December 1741).

Raghuji Bhosle by this time had returned from Karnātak. His resounding successes in that region had greatly added to his strength and raised his prestige at the Marāṭhā Court. He immediately plunged into the Beṅgāl adventure. In April 1742 a strong force under Bhosle's *Divān*, Bhāskar Rām, advanced swiftly into Beṅgāl through Pācet and entered the Bardvān district. Alivardi Khān in an effort to save his capital threw himself across the invader's path, was promptly surrounded and barely escaped with his life. The whole of Beṅgāl West of the Gaṅgā passed into Marāṭhā hands; Mursidābād, the *Navāb's* capital, was raided on 6th May and Hughli, Beṅgāl's chief port, was seized in July. The Marāṭhās spread over the country demanding tribute wherever they went. A lurid picture of Marāṭhā atrocities during the period of occupation is drawn by the Beṅgālī poet Gaṅgārām in *Mahārāstra Purāṇ*. The picture is obviously painted in deep shades and has done grave injustice to Marāṭhā character.

Bhāskar Rām made Kaṭvā his headquarters and in the security provided by the swollen rivers and by his light horse, was celebrating *Durgā Pūjā*, the national festival of Beṅgāl, in September. On the 27th of that month in the early hours of the morning while the Marāṭhā camp was resting after the night's festivities, it was surprised by the *Navāb's* troops. Bhāskar Rām who was for some time apprehending danger, immediately broke up his camp and abandoning his equipage and property beat a hasty retreat towards the forests of Chattisgaḍ. His detachments also vacated Bardvān, Hughli, Hijli and other places. Near Medinipūr he made an attempt to hold up his pursuers, but failing, withdrew to Nāgpūr. Bhosle's first attempt to levy *cauth* on Beṅgāl and bringing the province under Marāṭhā influence ended rather ingloriously (December 1742).

Raghuji Bhosle immediately fitted another force and personally led it into Beṅgāl. The new *Peśvā* was campaigning in Bundelkhaṇḍ and was known to be negotiating with the Moghal *Darbār* for the *cauth* of Beṅgāl. Raghuji was ill at ease and was anxious to know the *Peśvā's* intentions. He met the latter at Gayā but the Brahmin minister was too deep for the forthright Marāṭhā and refused to divulge his plans. On the Bhosle's return to his camp at Kaṭvā the *Peśvā* advanced into Beṅgāl and met Alivardi Khān at Plāssey. Here they agreed that the *Navāb* should pay Sāhū Rājā the *cauth* for the province through the *Peśvā's* agency besides 22 lakhs of rupees to the *Peśvā* himself for his expenses. In return the *Peśvā* stipulated that he would settle with Raghuji and not allow him to disturb the peace of the province. He then immediately started in pursuit of the Bhosle. Raghuji broke up his camp at Kaṭvā and hastily retired in the direction of Nāgpūr. The *Peśvā* however by rapid movements

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overtook the Bhosle's rearguard at one of the passes near Pācet and captured his camp equipage. The *Peśvā* had succeeded in humbling his rival but unwittingly gave a lease of life to the tottering rule of the Moghal *Subhedār*.

Raghuji now realised the hopelessness of succeeding in Beṅgāl in face of the *Peśvā's* hostility. He met the *Peśvā* at the Rājā's Court and came to an understanding with him obtaining for himself the untrammelled lease of the eastern province (31 Aug. 1743). There was a show of burying the hatchet but both parties remained suspicious and continued scheming against one another.

In 1744 February a fresh force under Bhāskar Rām took the field and entered Beṅgāl by way of Orissā and Medinipūr. Bhāskar Rām this year was in a grim mood and struck out in a determined manner. Alivardi Khān was at his wits' end to meet this fierce onslaught. His submission to the *Peśvā's* demands had brought him little comfort. The three years' continuous fighting had exhausted his treasury and dried up his revenues; the large armies raised by him were in arrears and therefore sullen. The *Navāb* was in a desperate mood; finding himself unable to oppose the Marāṭhās in the field he invited Bhāskar Rām and his colleagues to a conference to discuss peace terms and had them all murdered as they were entering the tent (31 March 1744). Treachery succeeded where arms could not and the Marāṭhā army threatening Beṅgāl melted away giving the *Navāb* a breathing respite.

But Raghuji Bhosle would not allow Alivardi Khān's base treachery to pass unavenged. There were serious mutinies in the *Navāb's* army and as soon as Raghuji heard of them he crossed into Orissā (March 1745) occupied Cuttack and then advanced into Bihār. A heavy indemnity of three crores of rupees was demanded for the murder of Marāṭhā generals. Alivardi contrived to beguile the Marāṭhā until he had suppressed the mutinies. Fighting was then resumed and Mursidābād was raided by Marāṭhā light troops on 21 December 1745. Four days later the *Navāb* succeeded in coming up with the main Marāṭhā army near Kaṭvā and dispersed it with his cannon. Fighting went on intermittently till the end of the campaigning season.

There were again serious disturbances in the *Navāb's* army from 1746-1748. The Pathān chieftains who formed the backbone of his military strength, revolted one after another and made Alivardi's rule precarious. The *Navāb* however showed great steadiness and courage in fighting and overcoming the rebels. The *Peśvā* in the meanwhile had renewed his attempts to obtain the *cauth* of Beṅgāl for himself and put the Bhosle on the alert. The result was Raghuji was unable to take advantage of the *Navāb's* difficulties. Orissā however remained with him and from Cuttack as his base he made annual incursions into Beṅgāl by way of Medinipūr. The *Navāb* built a cantonment at this place and posted himself there for over a year to prevent the Marāṭhās breaking into Beṅgāl. In

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1749 he led a fresh army into Orissā and recovered Cuttack from the Bhosle's agent. But no sooner was his back turned than the Marāṭhās returned and drove out the Moghal garrison and occupied the province. The fact was Orissā was too distant to be defended from Murśidābād with an active enemy striding across the route. The province itself was too poor to maintain a big garrison and the Beṅgāl treasury had been depleted by constant warfare. Weary with age and privations of war Alivardi Khān concluded a treaty with Raghuji Bhosle conceding him the surplus revenue from Orissā and 12 lakhs of rupees as *cauth* for the rest of Beṅgāl. The Bhosle on his part agreed not to molest the peace of Beṅgāl.

Raghuji Bhosle thus obtained a firm foothold in the eastern region and Beṅgāl passed into the orbit of Marāṭhā influence. The Marāṭhās however could not exploit their advantage to the full. The *Peśvā's* jealousy of Raghuji never abated and the atmosphere of suspicion had a dampening effect on Bhosle's activities. Raghuji died in 1755 and his successors had neither his abilities nor his courage. The English rose in power defeating Alivardi's successor in 1757 and the *cauth* of Beṅgāl ceased to be paid from 1761¹.

Rajputānā.

The ruler of Jaipūr was the leader of the Hindustani party at the Moghal *Darbār* and friendship with him had so far formed one of the cardinal points of policy pursued by the Marāṭhās in Hindustan. Savāi Jai Singh who ruled Jaipūr from 1699 to 1743 had come to occupy a unique position in the Indian political world. As the leader of the Hindustani party he dominated the Moghal Councils with the aid of his Marāṭhā allies. He had convinced the puppet monarch at Delhi that the best way to treat with the Marāṭhās and stop their inroads was to appease them by making the *Peśvā* the *subhedār* of Mālṡā and granting him *cauth* over the imperial domain. As a servant of the Crown, Jai Singh had argued, the *Peśvā* was bound to keep peace and prevent other Marāṭhā chieftains from disturbing it. A settlement on these lines had not only facilitated Marāṭhā entry into Hindustan but also assured that the opposition to Marāṭhā expansion would be local. Thus with Savāi Jai Singh's help Bājī Rāv had come to possess Mālṡā, obtained a footing in Bundelkhaṇḍ and was collecting tribute as far north as Āgrā and Allāhābād.

On the death of his father Bālājī visited Jai Singh in 1741 and promising to pursue the same friendly policy, obtained the formal grants for Mālṡā. Savāi Jai Singh died in 1743. The Moghal power had already declined and with the removal of the veteran Jai Singh the Rajputs became leaderless. A wise and firm leadership at this stage would not only have strengthened the Marāṭhā-Rajput alliance but could have transformed the Rajputs into the staunchest supporters

¹ For original material in Marāṭhī see *Purandare Daftar* I, 150, 152 and Rajwade III, pp. 208, 217, 220, 222 & VI, pp. 144-146, 170, S.P.D. Vol. XX, pp. 21-50. The details of the episode are very ably narrated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in 'Fall of the Mughal Empire' Vol. I pp. 67-180. Sejawalkar's article in the Deccan College Bulletin, Vol. II, pp. 360-382 is useful.

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of the Marāṭhā objective of *Hindu pad-pādsāhi* or revival of Hindu power. The new *Peśvā* however could not provide this type of leadership; his shifting and grasping policy in Rajputānā ended the traditional Marāṭhā-Rajput alliance and alienated the Rajputs from the Marāṭhās.

Ísvari Singh, the elder son of Savāi Jai Singh, on coming to the *Gādi* promised his younger brother Mādho Singh an appanage of 24 lakhs of rupees. Mādho Singh being born of a Udaipūr princess would not be satisfied with this. He contested the succession with his brother and demanded the partition of the Jaipūr principality. With the aid of Udaipūr troops he invaded Jaipūr. Ísvari Singh who had secured the help of Sínde and Holkar easily beat off the attack and repudiated the agreement. At this stage Mādho Singh succeeded in winning over Malhār Rāv Holkar by heavy bribes and renewed the contest. At the battle of Rājmaḥāl in March 1747 the allies were once more defeated and Mādho Singh's levies were completely routed. Both parties sent their agents to the *Peśvā*. Sínde had already protested against breach of the plighted word, but Holkar's persistent pleading of Mādho Singh's cause and the latter's promises of considerable cessions to the *Peśvā* made the *Peśvā* shift his ground and he advised his generals to support Mādho Singh and press Ísvari Singh to cede him 24 lakhs worth of territory. He argued that thus both the princes would be satisfied and Marāṭhā interests would be served.

In May 1748 the *Peśvā* entered Jaipūr State with a formidable army. Ísvari Singh assumed a very submissive tone and sent his envoys to treat with him. The latter's demands rose very high. He pressed for a partition of the Jaipūr Kingdom and demanded a war indemnity of fifty lakhs of rupees. When Ísvari Singh pleaded his inability to satisfy these demands his territory was invaded by Holkar's troops, and Ísvari Singh after some protracted fighting agreed to cede to Mādho Singh five *paragaṇās*. Malhār Rāv Holkar was appeased with a heavy bribe and promises of indemnity.

The tribute promised by Ísvari Singh was never received. The Rajput prince had neither his father's intelligence nor his bravery. His dispute with his brother was draining his treasury. The gathering misfortunes unbalanced the *Rājā's* already weak mind. He now surrounded himself with low domestics and sycophants and removed his capable ministers from office. When therefore a fresh Marāṭhā army invaded Jaipūr at the end of 1750 for demanding arrears no courtier would come forward to meet the infuriated Marāṭhā leaders and treat with them. In a mood of despondency the *Rājā* swallowed poison and to ensure that it may not fail caused a cobra to bite him. The Marāṭhā army arrived before Jaipūr next day when the city lay lifeless before them. Soon it became known that Ísvari Singh out of sheer desperation had put an end to his life and was beyond the reach of his tormentors.

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Holkar and Sindé now invited their protegé Mādho Singh to Jaipūr and seated him on the *Gādī*. They would not rest content now with arrears and a war indemnity. They demanded cession of one fourth of Jaipūr territory. The horrible death of their prince had already embittered the Rajputs against the Marāṭhās and the latter's desire to profit by their misfortunes infuriated them. Mādho Singh no longer desired Marāṭhā protection and was anxious to shake off his erstwhile friends. His secret schemes of killing the Marāṭhā leaders with poisoned food did not succeed, but the populace rose against the invaders and in a riot in the city three thousand Deccanis were massacred. A truce was patched up by which the Marāṭhās were promised compensation for the lives lost and property plundered and also obtained orders on bankers for ransom.

The *Peśvā's* rapacity had cost him the friendship of the Rajputs and estranged them from the Marāṭhā cause. The results of the estrangement were to show themselves with greater intensity in the decade to follow.

War against
the Nizām.

From 1748 A. D. affairs in the Deccan engrossed the attention of the *Peśvā* to the exclusion of those of Hindustan. The great *Nizām-ul-mulk* passed away in May 1748. After his last retirement from Delhi the *Navāb* had very wisely avoided contest with the *Peśvā* and confined his attention to the organization of his authority in the Karnāṭak. In the scheme of Marāṭhā expansion the southern region had been assigned to Fateh Singh Bhosle and Bāpuji Nāik and other smaller chieftains and their incapacity and indolence had prevented the conquest of this region and its integration with the Marāṭhā *Svarāj*. A number of *polygārs*, petty *rājās* and *navābs* dotted the Karnāṭak. In 1743 *Nizām-ul-mulk* had invaded this region, put his own authority as overlord on a firm footing and had ejected the Marāṭhās from Tricinopoly. After that, playing on the mutual jealousies of the Marāṭhā feudatories he had effectively barred their progress southward. Thus though the treaty of 1719 had granted the Marāṭhās overlordship over the Deccan and recognised their right of levying *cauth* and *Sardeśmukhi* over the six provinces of the *subhā*, the strong personality of the *Nizām* had prevented the proper realization of the engagement and the Marāṭhās continued to nibble away at the *Nizām's* territory. The great Moghal diplomat passed away in 1748 and thereafter his state became the scene of a protracted fratricidal war. This was too great an opportunity to be missed by the *Peśvā* to assert the treaty rights and out of his attempts to do so arose the war which, with short interludes of peace, lasted over a decade.

The issue was complicated by two factors; one was the death of Sāhū Rājā in December 1749 and the efforts of the ladies of his family, Sakvār Bāi and Tārā Bāi, to seize power and oust the

Peśvā from supreme authority; the other was the intervention of the French in Deccan politics. Sāhū Rājā had become a figure-head while he was yet living and by a deed of authority signed on his death-bed confirmed the *Peśvā* in his supreme position. There was a great amount of dissatisfaction against the usurpation, and Sakvār Bāi and Tārā Bāi both hoped to rally the disaffected elements on their side and rule in the name of the successor of Sāhū Rājā. Sakvār Bāi's scheme did not succeed and the lady burnt herself on the funeral pyre of her husband. Tārā Bāi, widow of Rājārām, secured the succession of her grandson. But Rām Rājā proved a broken reed. Called from obscurity to the Marāṭhā throne, he from the beginning, leaned heavily on the *Peśvā* and in consequence invited the wrath of his grandmother. The Chief Marāṭhā feudatories—the Kolhāpūr Rājā, Raghuji Bhosle of Nāgpūr and others to whom Tārā Bāi looked for support refused to be drawn in a contest with the *Peśvā* and Damājī Gāikvād who raised the standard of revolt, was promptly defeated and imprisoned within a year and a half of Sāhū Rājā's death.

The *Peśvā* had mastered the storm, defeated his rivals at home and was free to deal with the situation arising out of the *Nizām's* death.

On the death of the *Nizām* his second son Nāsir Jaṅg who possessed some ability and had obtained experience of administration and fighting in Karnāṭak succeeded to the *Navābship*. *Nizām-ul-mulk's* daughter's son Muzaffār Jaṅg, now challenged his uncle's authority and through the mediation of Candā Sāheb obtained French support for his scheme. Dupleix, the French Governor of Pondicerry, saw in the confused situation of the Deccan the possibility of establishing a French dominion in India and readily fell in with the scheme of Candā Sāheb and Muzaffār Jaṅg. The allies with a small French contingent pushed on to Ambur and defeated the *Nizām's* Governor of Karnāṭak in August 1749. Nāsir Jaṅg then marched in person to meet the challenge and for a time Muzaffār Jaṅg's cause appeared hopeless. But Dupleix by his clever diplomacy sowed dissensions among the enemy's ranks; at the battle of Arcot in December 1750 Nāsir Jaṅg's army was scattered to the four winds and the *Navāb* himself was killed. Muzaffār Jaṅg lost no time in marching to Hyderābād taking with him a French force under the command of M. Bussy. But he was not destined to see the capital of the Deccan. He was killed in a scuffle with the *Navāb* of Kaḍappā and the Deccan army found itself without a chief. Bussy showed great determination and skill in dealing with the situation. He immediately raised Salābat Jaṅg, the younger brother of Nāsir Jaṅg, to the *Navābship* and restored order in the army. The discipline of the French force, the effectiveness of its fire-power and the conspicuous ability of its Commander raised the prestige of the French at the *Navāb's* Court and the French became a power to be counted with in Deccan politics.

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Bussy's first hurdle before he could entrench himself at 'Hyderābād' was the large Marāṭhā army that had moved into the Rāicūr Doāb under the *Peśvā*. Circumstances however favoured the Frenchman. Reports of the revolt of Damāji Gāikvād reached the *Peśvā* while he was on the banks of the Kṛṣṇā, which made him anxious to return to Sātārā. When therefore Salābat Jaṅg under Bussy's advice offered to pay the *Peśvā* seventeen lakhs of rupees as *cauth* the latter closed with the overtures and marched back with the utmost expedition (March 1751).

The small tribute of seventeen lakhs of which only two had been paid in cash and the rest in promises, was a mere flea-bite when the *Peśvā* was planning the dismemberment of the entire dominion of the Nizām. War was again resumed in 1751 November. The Nizām's opposition under Bussy's influence had stiffened; the payment of the balance of the tribute of the last year had been put off and the new *Divān* Raghunāth Dās had started subtle intrigues at Sātārā to eject the *Peśvā*. A treasure of five lakhs sent from Delhi for the *Peśvā's* use, was seized by the Nizām's officials and detained at Aurangābād. In the meanwhile the *Peśvā* had succeeded in persuading Gāzi-ud-din, the Nizām's eldest son, to claim his father's patrimony and contest the *Navābship* for which he promised him his aid. In return he only asked for the recognition of the treaty of 1719 and cession of the districts of Aurangābād and Burhānpūr. Gāzi-ud-din, with Nāsir Jaṅg and Muzaffar Jaṅg removed from the scene, readily fell in with the scheme and started for the Deccan. The *Peśvā* concentrated his troops on his northern frontier near Ahmadnagar to be able to join his nominee and prepared to seize by force the districts of Burhānpūr and Aurangābād.

For Bussy this was a critical situation. To prevent a junction of Salābat's enemies he planned a bold strategy. Instead of vainly pursuing the light Marāṭhā horse he proposed a direct march on Poonā. Moving by way of Ahmadnagar the Moghals engaged the Marāṭhās near Pārner on 20th November (1751). On the next day during the lunar eclipse while the *Peśvā* was busy with rituals, Bussy's infantry advanced under cover of darkness, surprised the *Peśvā's* camp on the Kukḍi river and plundered his equipage including gold and silver utensils used by him at the time of worship. Though the casualties in the battle of Kukḍi were slight, the defeat was a blow to Marāṭhā prestige and immensely increased French reputation. The Moghal troops advanced devastating Rāñjangānṅ, Talegānṅ, Dhamdhere but suffered a reverse near Koregānṅ on 27th November. On 20th December another engagement was fought near Rāñjangānṅ Sāṇḍas. Reports also arrived that Raghuji Bhosle's troops had crossed into Berār and seized a number of posts. These setbacks and mutinous condition in the Moghal army abated Bussy's ardour to advance on Poonā. The Muslim officers in the Moghal army had

become jealous of the growing influence of the Frenchman. Gāzi-ud-din was reported to have started on his southern trek. Bussy became solicitous to come to terms with the *Peśvā* and Salābat acting on his advice accepted the propositions in favour of peace and a treaty was concluded on 7th January 1752 at Śingve near Rāhurī ceding the *Peśvā*, Jāgir worth four lakhs of rupees¹.

The *Peśvā* could not rest satisfied with a treaty which deprived him of his main objective. He had been duped by Salābat's *Divān* and humiliated by his French force. He now awaited the arrival in the Deccan of Śinde and Holkar with the new claimant Gāzi-ud-din. The *Peśvā's* intrigues were bearing fruit; the native troops of Salābat Jaṅg were on the point of mutiny and in an affray killed his *Divān* Raghunāth Dās in April 1752. The French were losing ground in the Karnātak and in September Gāzi-ud-din arrived at Aurangābād, and in return for aid promised to cede to the *Peśvā* the districts of Aurangābād and Burhānpūr. The *Peśvā's* forces were joined by those of Śindes and Holkars and the partisans of Gāzi-ud-din and the stage was set for an attack on Salābat Jaṅg and his French allies. But just then Gāzi-ud-din came to a sudden end. He was poisoned by a widow of the late Nizām-ul-mulk and died on 16th October 1752. The *Peśvā's* plans once more went awry.

The concentration of huge Marāṭhā forces at Aurangābād, however, overawed Salābat Jaṅg. Gāzi-ud-din as the eldest son of the Nizām had the prescriptive right to succeed and his challenge had caused serious dissensions among the Muslim nobility. Salābat Jaṅg on the advice of Bussy wisely proposed to yield to the *Peśvā* the districts of Aurangābād and Burhānpūr and avoid hostilities. A treaty was concluded at Bhālkī on 3rd November 1752 which advanced the Marāṭhā frontier from Junnar to the banks of the Tāpī in the Khāndeś. The forts in the districts however were retained by the Moghals though Trimbak, Dhoḍap and five other forts were seized by the Marāṭhās in 1751.

From Bhālkī the *Peśvā* marched into the Karnātak. Śripat Rāv *Pratinidhi* had already suggested the conquest and consolidation of Marāṭhā rule in Karnātak. But this had been delayed by the incompetence of Marāṭhā leaders in this region. As most of the Karnātak troops were now involved in the struggle between the French and the English raging round Tricinopoly, the region was denuded of troops. The *Peśvā* marched upto Śrirangpattam calling on the petty *Rājās* and *polygārs* to pay *cauth*. The forts of Dhārvād and Hole Honnur were occupied and the *Peśvā* returned to Poonā about the beginning of the monsoon in 1753.

¹ The account of the campaign given by Kincaid and Parasnis drawn from Malleon's 'French in India' is all wrong and needs to be scrapped up. I have used the more reliable original correspondence in Vol. I of Rajwade's '*Marāṭhyāncyā Itihāsācī Sādhane*'. No. 372 of *Purandare Daftar*, Vol. I, gives valuable details of fighting.

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Pressure in Karnāṭak was kept mounting for the next five years. In 1756 a great combination of the Karnāṭak *Navābs* and Murār Rāv Ghorpaḍe was broken at Sāvanur and half of the Sāvanur State comprising the modern Dhārvaḍ and Belgānṇ districts was acquired. In 1757 January Mysore was invaded, its capital Śrīraṅgaṭṭam was besieged and shelled, and fourteen districts were obtained in lieu of tribute. In the September of the same year Hoskot, Śīrā, Bangalore were reclaimed and the *Navābs* of Kaḍappā and Kurnool were defeated by Baḷvant Rāv Mahendaḷe. The Marāṭha frontier now advanced to the Tuṅgabhadra and Mysore and Arcot acknowledged the *Peśvā's* suzerainty.

Bussy during the interval had to face serious intrigues at the *Nizām's* Court. At the beginning of 1753 he fell seriously ill and for change of air went to Masulipatam leaving his force in charge of his deputy. Salābat's *Divān*, Sayyad Laṣkar Khān, who professed himself a friend of the *Peśvā*, and was highly anti-French, demoralised the small French contingent in all possible ways and dispersed it in small detachments on revenue duties. Bussy on his return in the autumn of 1756 defeated the intrigues of the Sayyad, and restored order in his force. To enable him to make regular payments to his troops he obtained on lease from the *Nizām* the province of Northern *sarkārs*. This rendered Bussy's force independent of the vagaries of the Hyderābād Court.

But the French were hated by the Muslim nobility at the Hyderābād Court and constant conspiracies were woven to undermine Bussy's influence and deprive him of power. The *Peśvā* was privy to all these intrigues and secretly encouraged the parties concerned. In 1756 after the battle of Sāvanur *Navāb* Salābat Jaṅg was led to believe that Bussy had received large sums from Murār Rāv Ghorpaḍe for interceding in his behalf and dismissed him from service for his dishonest conduct. Bussy saw through the game of his enemies, quietly retired to Hyderābād and held his ground forcing the *Nizām* to reinstate him in power.

But the seven years' war (1756-63) had started in Europe and French influence was on the wane. There were troubles in Northern *Sarkārs* and when the French Commander went away to quell them, fresh plots began to be formed against him. Śāh Navāz Khān, the *Nizām's* *Divān*, decided to wrest authority from the weak Salābat Jaṅg and put it into the capable hands of his brother Nizām Alī. The *Peśvā* watched the conspiracy with the greatest interest and was promised a *Jāgīr* of twenty-five lakhs of rupees by Basālat Jaṅg, another brother of the *Navāb*, who had now become the *Divān*. Nizām Alī was the Governor of Berār; collecting a strong force he arrived at Aurangābād, declared his loyalty to his brother and stoutly opposed any cessions to the Marāṭhās. In consequence a Marāṭhā army entered the *Nizām's* district of Aurangābād at the end of November 1757. Large reinforcements under Rāmchandra Jādhav

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were moving from Bhālki to join Salābat Jaṅg at Aurangābād and had reached Sindkhed. Dattājī Śinde marched to Sindkhed and invested Jādhav's force. Nizām Alī with his trained battalions under Ibrāhim Khān Gārdi hastened to the support of the beleaguered force. When however the besieged tried to break out they were fiercely attacked by Śinde (Dec. 12-16) and overpowered. Nizām Alī then sued for peace and concluded a treaty granting to the *Peśvā* territory worth twenty five lakhs of rupees and the fort of Naḷdurg¹.

Bussy against whom the intrigues of Śāh Navāz and Nizām Alī had been directed had kept aloof at Hyderābād. He now arrived at Aurangābād and to put an end to the plots, demanded his own *Kārbhārī* Haidar Jaṅg to be appointed *Divān*. This proposal would have put all powers into the hands of the French Commander. The enraged Nizām Alī invited Haidar Jaṅg to a personal meeting and murdered him. He then fled to Burhānpūr and in the tumult that followed Śāh Navāz Khān was killed. The *Peśvā* used the occasion for seizing Śivneri the birth place of Śivājī.

Bussy was again the master of the situation. He made Basālat Jaṅg the *Divān* of the *Nizām* and proposed to govern through him. But while Bussy was struggling to save Salābat Jaṅg the English had fought and won Plassey and conquered Beṅgāl De Lally, the new French Governor anxious to concentrate his troops for an attack on Madras recalled Bussy and on 21st July 1758 the Frenchman who had bolstered up the *Nizām's* power left Hyderābād forever leaving a clear field for the *Peśvā*.

Immediately on Bussy's departure Nizām Alī, Salābat Jaṅg's brother, returned to power and refused to carry out the terms of the treaty concluded only a year ago. He also refused to become the *Peśvā's* subordinate ally. The *Peśvā* therefore prepared for war and in 1759 November seized the strong fort of Ahmadnagar. This act led to an open rupture between the two powers. Early in December 1759 the war began in earnest. Sadāśiv Rāv Bhāu the *Peśvā's* cousin, brought to the field forty thousand cavalry, five thousand infantry trained under Ibrāhim Gārdi and a fine pack of artillery. The Moghals were attacked near Udgir on 3rd February 1760 and routed. Nizām Alī now surrendered to the *Peśvā* territory worth sixty lakhs of Rupees and the great forts of Aśirgaḍ, Daulatābād, Bijāpūr and Burhānpūr. The power of the *Nizām* was completely broken and the *Peśvā* confidently expected to make the rest of the *Nizām's* country part of his dominion within two or three years. The districts of Khāndes', Nāsik, Ahmadnagar, Śolāpūr and Bijāpūr formed the new addition to his already extensive Government².

¹ Rajwade I pp. 73-118 and III pp. 491-500.

² The account of these transactions is based on S.P.D. I and 25 and letters in Rajwade Vol. I, Nos. 165 and 166 are an epitome of the entire episode.

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While the *Peśvā* was reducing the Deccan, a crisis was brewing in Hindustan. The death of the Moghal Emperor, Muhammad Sāh, in 1748 marked a further stage in the disintegration of the already decaying Moghal empire. The Deccan, Gujarāt, Mālvā, Bundelkhand and Beṅgāl had passed outside the orbit of the empire within the life-time of the emperor; the Rajputs gave but nominal allegiance to the shadow figure at Delhi; the *subhedārs* of Oudh and Allāhābād were assuming independent authority and the frontier province of the Puñjāb, on the death of its able governor Zakāriyā Khān in 1745, became the scene of anarchy and misrule. The state of affairs was too tempting not to excite the cupidity of India's north-western neighbour, Afghanistan. Ahmad Sāh Abdālī, the ablest general of Nādir Sāh had recently consolidated his hold over this region and he now thought of emulating the example of his late master. He invaded the Puñjāb in the early months of 1748, marched up to Lāhore and obtained from that capital immense wealth and military stores. Despite a reverse at the battle of Mānpūr in March 1748, Ahmad Sāh renewed his advance next year and in February 1750 obtained from the *subhedār* the revenues of the four districts of West Puñjāb—Sialkot, Pasrur, Gujarāt and Aurangābād—formerly ceded to Nādir Sāh. In 1752 Abdālī again invaded the Puñjāb on the pretext that the tribute promised to him had fallen into arrears, seized the *Subhās* of Lāhore and Multān and sent an envoy to Delhi to get the agreement ratified. Ahmad Sāh who had succeeded his father in 1748, was a dull-witted raw youth of 22 whose education in war and administration had been totally neglected. He pursued pleasure, leaving the administration of state affairs to his *Vazīr* Safdar Jaṅg and to his Superintendent of harem, Javid Khān. The government became weak and degraded and the emperor never inquired about the realm, the soldiery or the treasury. Javid Khān was a low born upstart actuated by a vulgar greed of wealth and Safdar Jaṅg, the *Vazīr*, had neither the wisdom of a diplomat nor the political foresight of a great leader. The Moghal Court altogether lacked any stability or steadying influence. When Ahmad Sāh Abdālī threatened to march on the capital the frightened monarch immediately set his seal to the cession of West Puñjāb to the Afghān. At the same time he asked his *Vazīr* to take measures to meet the Afghān menace.

The Afghān advance was a greater threat to the ambitious schemes of the *Peśvā* than to the security of the insecure empire. The *Peśvā's* father, the great Bājī Rāv had talked of establishing a Hindu dominion in India and had steadily worked towards his objective. The friendship of Savāi Jai Singh and Khān Daurān had facilitated Marāṭhā progress beyond the Narmadā and had secured them powerful allies at the imperial Court. Bājī Rāv had avowed his intention of following in his father's footsteps. The leaders of

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the Hindustani party whom Bājī Rāv had befriended were all dead and *Nizām-ul-mulk* and Qamruddin Khān had once more established the ascendancy of the anti-Marāṭhā Turānī faction at the Moghal court. By the mishandling of the succession dispute of the Jaipūr State the friendship of the Kachvās House had changed into hatred for the Marāṭhās and contempt for their mercenary attitude. Marāṭhā position in Hindustan was deteriorating and the Afghān now threatened the entire fabric of the Marāṭhā scheme of things. The *Peśvā's* moves and countermoves in the decade from 1750 to 1760 have to be judged against this political background.

The Marāṭhā intervention in the succession dispute of Jaipūr has been narrated up to 1750 December. After patching up a treaty with Mādho Singh, Jayāppā Sīnde and Malhār Rāv Holkar advanced into the Doāb against the Rohillās at the invitation of Safdar Jaṅg. The Rohillās had entrenched themselves in the upper Doāb between Delhi and Oudh and had become a thorn in the side of the *Vazīr*. Their lawless and turbulent habits fitted with the times and they were defying imperial authority and ravaging the *Vazīr's* territory. The incursions of their compatriot, Ahmad Sāh Abdālī, had made them audacious; they advanced into the *Navāb Vazīr's* province, killed his deputy Naval Rāi and routed the *Vazīr* when he advanced against them (13 September 1750, battle of Rām Catauni). The *Navāb Vazīr* then obtained the aid of the Marāṭhās and in a campaign that lasted about a year chased the Rohillās out of his *Subhā*. In the close-fought battles of Aligaḍ (20 March 1751) and of Fatehgaḍ (17 April 1751), the Marāṭhā forces covered themselves with glory breaking the Rohillā opposition and scattering it to four winds. Fighting was resumed after the monsoon and the Paṭhāns were once more repulsed and retreated to the Tarāi jungles. Here the jungle fever and constant attacks of the Marāṭhās decimated their ranks.

While the campaign against the Rohillās was in the concluding stages, news arrived of the advance of the Abdālī in the Puñjāb followed by frantic messages from the emperor to bring the Marāṭhās to oppose the Afghān threat. The *Navāb* then concluded a defence pact with the Marāṭhā captains Sīnde and Holkar (April 1752). The defence of the empire against external foes and internal enemies was entrusted to the *Peśvā*. For his armed support the *Peśvā* was to receive fifty lakhs of rupees in cash out of which thirty lakhs was the price for keeping the Abdālī out. The *cauth* of the Puñjāb and Sind was likewise ceded to the *Peśvā* for military expenses. He was to be appointed *subhedār* of Āgrā and Ajmer and entitled to the remuneration of the posts. The pact thus put the entire resources of the empire at the disposal of the *Peśvā* in return for which he pledged himself to meet aggression at any point. The Marāṭhā objective of establishing suzerainty over the whole Indian continent seemed to have realized itself.

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The situation however was not as simple as it appeared on a superficial view. The empire for the defence of which the *Pešvā* had pledged himself was a shadow of its former glory. It had no resources, no army, and was riven by internecine disputes. The Abdālī was sitting astride the frontier province and menaced the safety of the empire. The situation demanded constant pressure of force and a continuity of policy. If the *Pešvā* was to interpose successfully, he had to make up his mind about his friends at the Court and then support them unflinchingly.

The defence pact of 1752 put heavy responsibilities on the *Peśvā*. He could levy *cauth* on the Puñjāb and Sind only by ejecting the Abdālī garrison and exercise his authority at Āgrā and Ajmer by subduing the refractory Jāts and Rājputs*.

On arriving near Delhi, Sindé and Holkar found they could not obtain the promised subsidy and started plundering the country round the capital for their provisions. A great terror hung over the capital. Malhār Rāv Holkar then entered into negotiations with Javid Khān and in return for Rs. thirty lakhs to be paid by Gāzi-ud-din, the new nominee for the *Subhedār* of the Deccan, agreed to retire. Safdar Jaṅg who had invited the Marāṭhā chiefs had been completely overruled and his authority flouted and Holkar had unwittingly become the instrument for his discomfiture.

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Sinde and Holkar retired to the Deccan in May 1752 leaving a small contingent at Delhi for the protection of the Emperor. The position of the *Navāb Vazīr* deteriorated after the departure of the Marāṭhā force. He became unpopular with the Emperor and was dismissed from his post on 13 May 1753. The *Peśvā's Vakīl* at Delhi joined the enemies of the *Vazīr* who was driven out of the capital in November. The revolution at Delhi threw the sole authority into the hands of Imād-ul-mulk or Gāzi-ud-din II, a boy of eighteen and the *Peśvā* on the advice of his *Vakīl* at Delhi decided to leave the initiative to this young villain and support him in all his iniquitous dealings.

At the outbreak of the civil war between the Emperor and Safdar Jaṅg, the former had sent an appeal for help to the *Peśvā*. His *Vakil* at the capital had also written to him to despatch a strong force northward to watch the situation. In response to the appeal the *Peśvā* sent a considerable force under the nominal command of his brother Raghunāth Rāv then aged 17. Jayāpā Sīnde and Malhār Rāv Holkār accompanied Rāghobā and the army crossed the Narinadā in September 1753, entered Rajputānā by way of Mukundrā pass, levied tribute on the Rajput states and then entering Jaipūr territory secured arrears from Mādho Singh and other chieftains. The emperor's war with Safdar Jaṅg had ended

* The pact did not become a scrap as remarked by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his 'Fall of the Mughal Empire' Vol. II, and accepted by Sardesai. It remained quite a live document as contended by Shejwalkar. See S.P.D. XXI 53, 55.

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by this time, but during its last phases Ahmad Šāh had developed intense dislike for his new *Bakshi*, the over bearing Imād-ul mulk and both sides now courted the favour of the Marāṭhā chiefs. Ahmad Šāh wrote to Rāghobā to dissociate from Imād-ul-mulk and follow the advice of his *Vazir*. But Imād had guessed properly the weakness of the Marāṭhās. He bribed Holkar and lured his nominal chief by wild promises of rich rewards. He visited the Marāṭhā chiefs in their camp and persuaded them to punish Suraj Mal Jāt for supporting the *ex-vazir's* cause. Raghunāth Rāv demanded from Suraj Mal a tribute of two crores of rupees. The Jāt pleaded his inability to pay this huge sum and shut himself up in the fort of Kumbher. Rāghobā laid siege to the place but in the absence of heavy guns could make no effect on the place. Holkar's son Khaṇḍerāv who had gone to a battery in a state of drunkenness was killed and the father vowed terrible vengeance against the Jāt. Malhār Rāv asked Imād to send him artillery from Delhi, but this the Emperor disallowed acting on the advice of his *Vazir* Sam Sām-ud-daulā. On the contrary he left Delhi and marched southward to organize a confederacy against Imād and the Marāṭhās. Hardly had he arrived at Sikandarābād when news arrived of the Marāṭhās having concluded peace with the Jāt Rājā (17 May) and of their marching to Delhi. Ahmad Šāh immediately abandoned his camp and fled to the capital. A column of the light Marāṭhā horse which had obtained information of the Emperor's movements made rapid marches and surrounded the camp on the night of 26th May. Everything was in a utter state of confusion and terror. The Royal family fell into the hands of the Marāṭhās as also the military stores and camp equipage. Malhār Rāv Holkar visited the royal prisoners the next day, comforted them and restored order. With Imād he then proceeded to the capital and was followed by the main army under Raghunāth Rāv. On 1st June (1754) Ahmad Šāh was deposed and made way for another puppet Ālamgir II. Imād-ul-mulk became the new *vazir* and promised his Marāṭhā masters eighty-two lakhs of rupees as the price for putting him in power. Another revolution had been effected at Delhi making the Marāṭhās the supreme arbiters of the empire. But they had been unable to carry with them either the general good-will or obtain co-operation of any influential party at the court. Their only ally was an upstart young lad of the most unscrupulous and ferocious nature. Never were great designs attempted with more despicable means.

Raghunāth Rāv next set himself to realize the tribute promised by the new *vazīr*. This proved an impossible task and even after five months stay at the capital only about ten lakhs of rupees came into Marāṭhā hands¹. In December Raghunāth Rāv marched away to Gaḍ Mukteśvar, settled contributions from the Rohillās

¹ S.F.D. xxi 60, xxvii 90; 108.

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and then moved into Rajputānā. He arrived at Puṣkar on 3rd March (1755), followed by Malhār Rāv Holkar levying tribute from the Gujar and Baluc landlords of Ravari and Pataudi. All the while the *Peśvā* was urging his chiefs to screw out more and more money from the new conquests and relieve him of his debts. Raghunāth Rāv offered to go to the relief of Jayāppā Sīnde who was then besieging Bijay Singh in Nāgore, but was informed it was not necessary. Rāghobā then visited Gvālior recently seized from the Jāt chief of Gohad and returned to Poonā in August 1755. His two years campaigning and his unholy alliance with Imād-ul-mulk had brought on humiliation on the royal family and alienated Muslim sympathies from the *Peśvā's* cause. His unsuccessful attack on the Jāt Rājā at Kumbher exposed the weakness of Marāthā army and the Sīnde's interference in the succession dispute of Mārvaḍ further embittered the Rajputs against the Marāthās. The recovery of the lost provinces of Puñjāb and Kābul was never so much as mentioned and the grand army allowed itself to be made an engine of oppression plundering defenceless villages and levying tribute on petty chieftains. The respect for the Marāthā name became a thing of the past and they came to be detested everywhere for their rapacity.

Sīnde's campaign against Mārvaḍ did not progress according to expectations. Bijay Singh's cause was popular with his compatriots and Marāthā intervention in behalf of the incompetent Rām Singh rallied the Mārvaḍis to the Jodhpur standard. However the first round of the struggle went in favour of the Marāthās. Sīnde advanced into Mārvaḍ after the siege of Kumbher, captured Mertā on 15th August and advanced on Nāgore 70 miles north of Mertā. The *Peśvā* did not want Sīnde's force to be entangled in a protracted struggle with the brave Rāthods while more lucrative undertakings waited for it at Delhi. He advised Jayāppā to patch up a treaty with Bijay Singh and go to Hindustan to help him 'cure the debt malady that was eating into his vitals like consumption'. But Jayāppā was obsessed with the idea of winning Mārvaḍ for Rām Singh and would not listen to his master's advice. Ajmer was captured on 21st February 1755 and Jhālore where the hereditary hoards of the Jodhpur Rājā were deposited, was occupied. Jodhpur was invested and Sīnde felt confident of concluding the campaign successfully. Bijay Singh however fought back stubbornly at Nāgore, and driven to the last extremity by the privations suffered by his army, had Jayāppā murdered in his camp (24 July 1755). The crime however, did not benefit Bijay Singh. Sīnde's brother Dattājī acted with vigour. While keeping his grip on Nāgore he defeated reinforcements coming to the relief of the Rāthod chief. The *Peśvā* sent succour and the Rāthod found themselves outnumbered and altogether helpless. Bijay Singh agreed to pay a fine of fifty lakhs of rupees and surrender half his kingdom to his cousin, besides ceding Ajmer and the surrounding district to Sīnde in full sovereignty and in February 1756 the protracted contest came to an end.

Rāghobā had reached Poonā in August 1755 and Sīnde followed him next April. Imād-ul-mulk found himself in sole command at Delhi untrammelled by his adversaries or his supporters. He now directed his exuberant energies to the conquest of the Puñjāb. Mughlāni Begum, the widow of Mir Mannu, had, after the death of her husband in 1753, become the virtual ruler of the province and by her wild pranks had made the province a scene of anarchy and disorder and the Afghān captains of her army were scheming and plotting against her. On the invitation of the Begum to aid her, Imād entered the province, seized the Begum and appointed his own nominee at the head of the province.

Imād's triumph however proved short-lived. He had roused the wrath of the Afghān chief without the means of meeting his challenge. A force from *Peśāvar* wrested Lāhore from the *Vazīr's* deputy in October and this was followed by the Afghān King in person in November demanding satisfaction for the unprovoked attack on his authority. Ahmad Sāh arrived at Lāhore on 20th December and appeared before Delhi on 23rd January (1757). He demanded two crores of rupees as indemnity, the hand of the Emperor's daughter, and all the territory west of Sarhind as the condition of his going back. The Emperor and his *Vazīr* powerless to fight and powerless to raise the ransom, sent piteous messages making abject surrender and pleading their inability to meet the demand. Early on 28th January the city was surrounded and Abdālī entered the walls ordering a general spoliation of the Moghal capital. None was spared: Muslims and Hindus, rich and poor, were subjected to all kinds of inhuman torture to make them divulge their secret hoards and deliver them to the conqueror. Mansions of Moghal noblemen were dug up for treasure. Many took poison being unable to meet the extortionate demands and many died of wounds inflicted on them by the Afghān soldiery. Then the Sāh marched southwards plundering the villages and slaying the inhabitants. Mathurā and Brndāban, two places of great sanctity to the Hindus and containing many temples were put to the sword and thousands of inhabitants were massacred. Idols were broken and temples set on fire. Gokul was bravely defended by the *Nāga Sanyāsīs* and then the invader beat back a hasty retreat on account of outbreak of cholera epidemic in his camp. Ahmad Sāh carried away with him 12 crores of rupees in treasure and also claimed virgin tribute from the imperial *Zenānā*. His soldiers were likewise gorged with booty.

The *Peśvā's* main army had returned to the Deccan in August 1755 followed by Sīnde in April 1756. The small contingent of Antājī Mānkeśvar could make little impression on the Pathān hordes and had retreated fighting. Govind Ballāl, Nāro Saṅkar and other revenue collectors safely kept south of the Cambal. A fresh army despatched by the *Peśvā* under his brother Rāghobā on a tribute levying expedition arrived at Indore in February 1757 but

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was held up for want of funds. Rāghobā had no definite views and no plans. Holkar on whom the young Commander relied loved procrastination and delay. Envoys from Bijay Singh of Mārvād arrived in the camp suggesting annulment of last year's settlement and undoing Sindē's work of the last year. Two months were spent in settling the Jaipūr tribute and all this while the army lived on the country. Rāghobā with one eye glued to the north-west for news of the Abdālī was pressing for Sindē's despatch to Hindustan. At the end of May the Marāṭhā vanguard entered the *Doāb* and recovered their posts, Etāvā, Sukohābād, Sikandarābād, Meerut from the agents of the Delhi Court acting under Najib Khān's instructions. Imād-ul-Mulk now joined his old friends and with Rāghobā marched towards Delhi in the first week of August and began the investment of the capital.

Delhi was then held by Najib Khān Rohillā who had risen high in the estimation of the Afghān King during his last incursion and at the time of retreat he had been left in supreme command at the capital. The Rohillā had always shown himself as the right hand man of the Abdālī and had acted as his right-hand man. He represented the rallying point of all the elements at Delhi that were disaffected towards the Marāṭhās and his destruction suggested itself as the first objective of the new Marāṭhā offensive. And yet when the Rohillā was surrounded and had little chance of escaping Malhār Rāv Holkar came forward to intercede in his behalf and obtain him a pardon for his misdeeds. Najib Khān was allowed to depart with his troops and property. Rāghobā entered the capital with Imād-ul-Mulk while Najib went to his *jāgir* and kept constantly inviting the Abdālī to expel the Marāṭhās from Delhi.

At Delhi a new treaty as hollow as the earlier one was concluded by the *Peśvā's* representative with the *Vazīr* by which the *Peśvā* was to receive one-half of the revenues of the entire empire consisting of 22 *Subhās*. The Marāṭhā army then re-entered the *Doāb*; while Rāghobā took a dip in the holy Gaṅgā at Gaḍ-Muktesvar his troops ranged over the northern *Doāb* seizing Rohillā outposts and levying tribute from Najib Khān's *jāgir*. The Yamunā was recrossed near Karnāl in January 1758 and Rāghobā then commenced his invasion of the Puñjāb.

At the time of his retirement from Hindustan Ahmad Sāh had appointed his own son Taimur Sāh as Viceroy of Puñjāb and left with him an army of 10,000 Pathān soldiers under the command of Jahān Khān, one of his ablest soldiers. But the province which had become the scene of rapine and misrule over a long period was not going to be quelled into obedience by a small force of ten thousand. Mughlānī *Begum* who had been cheated of the *Subhedārī* was ever creating trouble and Adinā Beg the *Subhedār* of Jālandar *Doāb*, refused to bend his knee before the new viceroy. In the Sikhs they both found a useful instrument

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to overturn the Pathān rule. The Sikhs rose in rebellion on all sides and Adinā Beg who had nominally accepted Pathān suzerainty entered into active co-operation with the rebels and defeated the Pathān troops sent against him. Fearing retaliation from the Abdālī the Beg opened negotiation with the Marāṭhā Commander camping at Delhi and called him to his aid. The prospects of expelling the Abdālī power from the Puñjāb and adding the frontier province to the Marāṭhā empire was too tempting to be brushed aside. Sarhind where Ahmad Sāh had posted Abdul Samad Khān was reduced with the greatest ease by the combined Marāṭhā — Sikh army which then marched on Lāhore. Taimur Sāh would not think of defence. His father was in trouble in Khorāsān and no relief could be expected from that quarter. Taimur abandoned the city on 10th April. Next day the Marāṭhā vanguard entered and pressed the pursuit of the flying army. They attacked the Pathāns 36 miles north-west of Lāhore and dispersed them, Taimur escaping with difficulty with only his Durrānī clansmen. The deep flowing Cināb stopped further pursuit.

There was wild exultation in Mahārāṣṭra over the conquest of the Puñjāb. Rāghobā in a tone of vaingloriousness spoke of extending his conquests to Kābul and Kandahār, former parts of the Moghal empire. The Marāṭhā horse had reached the bank of the Indus and quenched its thirst in its waters. The Marāṭhā dream of extending Hindu dominion over the whole of India appeared to have fulfilled itself. But Marāṭhā position in the Puñjāb was essentially weak. The occupation of the province based on Delhi where there was little support for the Marāṭhā cause was tactically a blunder. Marāṭhā detachments scattered over the Puñjāb, the *Doāb* and Āgrā had no strong base from which to draw sustenance. The Rajputs were hostile and the Jāt *zamindārs* defied Marāṭhā armies from behind their forts. Ahmad Sāh Abdālī looked on the province of the Puñjāb as a necessary adjunct to his barren Kingdom of Kābul and the seizure of the province was a direct challenge to him to defend his Indian conquests. A war of retaliation by the Pathān conqueror backed by the war-like tribes of the North-west frontier was inevitable. Only a well-equipped army strongly placed in the Puñjāb could meet the challenge and hold down the turbulent people.

Such an army was not forthcoming. Rāghobā remained at Lāhore for a month and then accompanied by Malhār Rāv Holkar marched back placing all authority in the hands of Adinā Beg who promised an annual tribute of 75 lakhs of rupees for the province. Rāghobā reached Delhi in June and moving through Rajputānā and Mālṡā arrived at Poonā in September 1758. Dattājī Sindē with his nephew was now despatched to the north. He was asked to deal firmly with *Vazīr* Gāzi-ud-din who was backward in the matter of payment of subsidy, break Najib Khān Rohillā's power, reduce Puñjāb to order and then march eastward to levy tribute on Bihār and Beṅgāl. Employment of large forces both in Deccan

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and in Hindustan had piled the *Peśvā's* debts: Rāghobā's expeditions had been financially failures and Sīnde had been specially asked to take a strong line in the levy of tribute and send the *Peśvā* at least a crore of rupees.

Sīnde's army under Jankoji reached Rajputānā in the middle of 1758. It operated there for about four months raising tribute from Mārvaḍ, Jaipūr, Koṭā, Sāhpurā and other Rajput principalities. At the behest of Raghunāth Rāv who was going south and of the *Peśvā*, Sīnde turned towards Delhi. Dattāji Sīnde in the meanwhile joined his nephew and the two arrived near the capital on 26 December. The *vazīr* was called upon to pay the arrears and after the city had been invested for some time an agreement was reached as to the amount to be paid and on 1st February Dattāji commenced his march towards the Puñjāb. He reached Machivārā on the eastern bank of the Sutlej and there Adinā Beg's son came and paid him a part of the tribute for the province. On his advice Sābāji Sīnde was posted at Lāhore with ten thousand horse and Dattāji turned back to deal with the hostile Najib Khān and effect a conquest of Bihār and Bengāl.

Najib Khān's hostility to the Marāṭhās and his active sympathy for the Afghān King was well-known. He was the centre of disaffection and every Marāṭhā chief including the incompetent Raghunāth Rāv had pointed out the imperative need of crushing the Rohillā and reduce him to impotence. Yet Dattāji felt he could keep the Rohillā in his hands, make use of him for the invasion of the eastern province and then destroy him at leisure. He called him to a conference, but when Najib refused to fall in with the Marāṭhā plan, proceeded to attack him. The Rohillā took post at Sukratāl, a defensible position on the Gaṅgā and defied Sīnde's force for about six months. He secretly organised a conspiracy of the Pathān chiefs of Rohilkhand, made friendly overtures to Sujā-ud-daula and invited Abdālī to Delhi to drive away the Marāṭhās.

Abdālī did not need any inducement. The expulsion of his son by the Marāṭhās had enraged Ahmad Sāh and he was determined to settle issues with the Marāṭhās — He made huge preparations, crossed the Indus in the autumn of 1759 and struck his first blow at Lāhore. Sābāji Sīnde withdrew hastily but several detachments dispersed throughout the Puñjāb were taken by surprise and suffered heavy losses. Five hundred troopers stripped of all their clothing arrived in Sīnde's camp on 23rd November and Sīnde knew that a great disaster had befallen his army in the Puñjāb. He immediately beat a hasty retreat and fell back on Delhi. In the meanwhile Abdālī advanced to Sarhind on 27th November, brushed aside a Marāṭhā column that barred his way and crossed the Yamunā and joined Najib Khān. The Rohillā chiefs now joined the Pathān King and on 10th January the entire army began crossing the Yamunā at the Barāri ghāt ten miles north of Delhi. Dattāji had posted pickets all along the river fords; when reports

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reached him of the enemy crossing he rushed to the scene and in an attempt to drive back the enemy was himself shot down. The death of the Commander caused panic in Sīnde's army which dispersed in the greatest disorder.

Sīnde's dispersed force was joined by Malhār Rāv Holkar near Kotputli. The two attempted to wear out the Pathān by their guerilla tactics, but Abdālī was too wary a foe to be intimidated by the futile tactics of Holkar. He surprised him near Sikandarābād on 4th March and routed his troops.

The news of the calamities reached the *Peśvā* at Ahmadnagar where he was celebrating the great victory of Udgir. Dattāji Sīnde's death and the rout of the armies of Sīnde and Holkar had shown the futility of the usual guerilla tactics against the hardy Pathāns of the hills, had wiped out all the *Peśvā's* gain in the north and set at nought his grandiose scheme of bringing the whole of the continent under the *Bhagvā-Zenḍā*. The *Peśvā* realized that the Abdālī was too serious a menace to be treated lightly. After a week's deliberation at Pātdur it was decided that Sadāśiv Rāv, the *Peśvā's* cousin, who had shown himself more resolute and more businesslike, should command the new army and oppose the Abdālī with new tactics and artillery adopted from the French. From Pātdur Sadāśiv Rāv Bhāu and the *Peśvā's* son Viśvās Rāv, set out on 16th March 1760 with Balvant Rāv Mehendale, Samser Bahādūr, Viṭthal Sīvdev Viñcurkar, Nānā Purandare and Damāji Gāikvād, twenty-two thousand picked cavalry and eight thousand disciplined infantry and a strong corps of artillery under Ibrāhim Khān Gārdi. Bhāu reached Gvālīor on 2nd June. About 18th June Malhār Rāv Holkar saw him and he soon brought Suraj Mal Jāt to discuss with the Bhāu the plans for the conduct of the campaign. Holkar and the Jāt stuck to the old style of warfare with the friendly Jāt Country as the base from which the enemy was to be harassed. But the Bhāu had more faith in his artillery and he brushed aside the counsel of Holkar as one arising out of defeat and despair. Bhāu had planned to attack Abdālī in the upper *Doāb* and drive a wedge between Delhi and Oudh. But this was foiled by the heavy rains that started that year, brought on floods and cut Delhi off from the *Doāb*. About 14 July the Bhāu arrived at Āgrā and on 2nd August stormed Delhi. The easy success of the Marāṭhās caused consternation among enemy ranks and some of the Muslim chieftains opened negotiations with the Bhāu. But Najib Khān Rohillā was steadfast in his aim and he would not allow Abdālī Sāh to negotiate peace unless the Marāṭhās were punished.

Both sides were well balanced and to avoid the arbitration of arms Sujā made certain proposals. Bhāu not only entertained them but expressed his willingness to appoint Sujā *Vazīr* at Delhi if he agreed to abandon the Abdālī's party. This gave offence to Suraj Mal Jāt who had already suggested to be put in possession of the capital and on the next day the Jāt contingent left the

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Marāthā camp. The Rajputs were sitting on the fence and refused to be drawn in the struggle. The Bhāu was thus left without a friend in Hindustan.

The big Marāthā army had advanced far beyond its base and was finding it difficult to obtain provisions. As the river Yamunā was in spate no early decision of arms could be obtained and Bhāu thought of advancing to Kuñjpurā, a half way house between Sarhind and Koil where the Sāh was encamping and cutting off the Sāh's line of communications. He marched north, Kuñjpurā was occupied on 16th October and the Bhāu then moved to Kurukṣetra to call in Alā Singh Jāt and raise the Sikhs.

But before his plans had matured Abdālī crossed the Yamunā at Bāgpat and set astride the Bhāu's communications southward. The Marāthā Commander entrenched himself at Pānipat and ordered his subordinates in the *Doāb* to harass the enemy's rear and prevent supplies reaching him. Here the Abdālī's light cavalry proved itself far superior to the Marāthās. They seized one by one the Marāthā outposts in the *Doāb*, made it impossible for Marāthā foragers to move out and destroyed Govind Pant Bundelā's detachment on 17 December 1760. The Bhāu's food supply was exhausted, his horses and gun — cattle were dying of hunger in hundreds and no succour could be expected from any quarter. Life became intolerable in the Marāthā camp and it was then decided to move out and attack the enemy. Battle was joined on 14th January; though the Marāthās fought well, the cool-headed leadership of Ahmad Sāh Abdālī won the day. The entire Marāthā army was destroyed only a few thousands escaping. All the artillery and camp equipage fell in the enemy's hands.

The battle of Pānipat was a turning point in the fortunes of the Marāthās and the consequences of the defeat were far-reaching. It stemmed Marāthā advance in Hindustan; the Puñjāb, Bengāl and Bihār were permanently lost to the Marāthās. The disaster killed the *Peśvā* and brought on the scene Raghunāth Rāv, the most infamous character in Marāthā history.

CHAPTER 5*

MARATHA POWER

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PESHVA
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THE BATTLE OF PANIPAT IS THE GREAT DIVIDING LINE of Marāthā history. "Never was a defeat more complete", writes Elphinstone, "and never was there a calamity that diffused so much consternation. Grief and despondency spread over the whole Marāthā people: all felt the destruction of the army as a death-blow to their national greatness". "Most disastrous of all was the blow to the prestige of the *Peśvā*, the one unifying influence in Marāthā Government. The weakened power of the *Peśvā* paved the way to English interference in Marāthā affairs. Pānipat in other words was the prelude to Assaye and Kirkee."¹

The consequence of the disaster did not lie concealed from friends or foes alike. For the grand army that Bhāu led against the Abdālī the Deccan had been denuded of all its best troops. What remained behind were second-line troops and country militia. When the grand army was annihilated Marāthā domination in the north was no longer tenable. The northern potentates refused to respect their Marāthā masters. The Jāts, the Rajputs, the Bundelās, the Rohillās revolted against Marāthā rule, seized their outposts and drove out Marāthā garrisons. Najib-ud-daulā marched on Delhi, took over the administration in his hands; the Rajputs talked of driving the Marāthās south of the Narmadā. Marāthā dominion in the north became aflame with revolts of petty rulers, risings of local militias and disturbances of hill tribes and the next few years witnessed the shrinkage of Marāthā frontiers and withdrawing of their rule south of the Cambā.²

Bālājī Rāv was aware of these coming consequences. Reports of revolts in Bundelkhand and Mālṡā had already reached him. He likewise knew that his southern neighbours were watching the struggle in Hindustan with no friendly eye and when therefore the

* This Chapter is contributed by Dr. V. G. Dighe.

¹ Cambridge History of India, vol. IV, p. 425.

² Marāthyañeyā Itihāsāci Sādhane, (Rajwade), I, 285, 288, 293, 297-99; S. P. D., vol. XXIX, pp. 5-50.

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news of the disaster at Panipat reached him, the blow dazed him and broke his heart. From Mālvā he returned to his capital and died mourning for his son and cousin.

Bālājī Rāv was succeeded in the *Peśvāship* by his second son, Mādhav Rāv¹ a young boy of sixteen years. The *Peśvā's* brother, Raghunāth Rāv was now the sole elderly survivor in the family. Void of all qualities of leadership except boundless ambition, mean and selfish, this man of weak and vacillating mind posed now as the saviour of the Marāṭhā cause and tried to seize all authority in his hands. But few around the court had faith in his abilities and everybody suspected his intentions. The *Peśvā's* mother, Gopikā Bāi, a masterful lady resented that her son should be ignored in the conduct of administration and urged him to take his rightful place. When these family dissensions came to be known, the *Nizām's* Court decided to profit by them. Nizām Ali, brother of Salābat Jāng, who had attained a predominant position at Hyderābād, occupied the Rāicūr *Doāb* ceded to the *Peśvā* last year and marched upon Poonā desolating the country and destroying Hindu temples in his line of march. The *Peśvā* called to his aid his chiefs and halted the enemy's advance near Urūji within less than one day's march of Poonā. Nizām Ali was surrounded and some of his subordinates went over to the Marāṭhās. Raghunāth Rāv who guided the affairs of his young nephew, came to terms with the *Nizām* by handing over to him territory yielding an annual revenue of twenty-seven lakhs (Jan. 1762). It was suspected that the gesture was meant to win Nizām Ali's friendship in a future contest with the nephew.

Battle of
Rākṣasbhuvan.

In the course of the year Mādhav Rāv decided to assert his rights. The uncle and the nephew disagreed violently in their march southward after Nizām Ali's discomfiture. Rāghobā in resentment resigned his office as regent and retired to Poonā. He then came out with a demand for a separate *jāgīr* worth ten lakhs of rupees and five important fortresses. When this was opposed Rāghobā withdrew to the neighbourhood of Nāsik, called together his partisans and prepared for war, secretly obtaining the support of Jānoji Bhosle and Nizām Ali. The two opposing armies fought a series of actions between 7th and 12th November and Mādhav Rāv despairing of successful resistance, gave himself up into his uncle's power. Nizām Ali was generously rewarded with a territory yielding an annual revenue of Rs. fifty lakhs including the fort of Daulatābād for the aid given to Rāghobā. The terms of the treaty were, however never implemented. The *Peśvā's* partisans were removed from office and Rāghobā returned to the regency with Sakhārām Bāpū as his *Divān*. But he was not destined to remain

¹ The main source for the career of Mādhav Rāv *Peśvā* is Aitihāsik Lekha Saṅgraha, vols. 1-4, edited by Khare. These should be supplemented by Selection from *Peśvā Daftar*, vols. 19, 29, 37, and 38 and Persian Calendars, vols. 1-4, Marāṭhyāñcā Itihāsāci Sādhane, Ed., Rajwade, vols. 1, 12, 13, 14, Hingne Daftar and vol. 1, Parandare Daftar.

in power for long. In the attempt to reward his partisans, Rāghobā incurred the enmity of the Patvardhans, the *Pratinidhi* and other Marāṭhā chieftains. The *Nizām* whose appetite had been whetted by easy gains of his earlier alliance decided again to fish in troubled waters. His *Divān* Viṭṭhal Sundar invited the disgruntled Marāṭhā element to join his master the *Nizām* and with this formidable accession he denounced the former treaties and gave out his intention of subverting the *Peśvā's* regency by that of Jānoji Bhosle; he peremptorily called on the *Peśvā* to deliver all territory east of the Bhimā and accept his advisers in the ministry. The *Nizām* sacked Poonā in May 1763. The *Nizām's* interference in Marāṭhā affairs temporarily closed the rift between uncle and nephew. Acting on the advice of Malhār Rāv Holkar, a Marāṭhā army ravaged the *Nizām's* territory while, Marāṭhā diplomacy lured back his new Marāṭhā allies. As the Moghal army was crossing the Godāvari in its march towards Aurangābād, it was attacked and decisively defeated at Rākṣasbhuvan (10th August 1763). Young Mādhav Rāv was chiefly instrumental in securing this signal victory and the result was that he soon took the reins of administration in his hands and retained them for the next nine years of his career. Nizām Ali threw the blames of his late errors on Viṭṭhal Sundar and implored pardon. He gave up his vaunted claims, confirmed cessions made at Udgir in 1760 and added to them territory worth twenty-two lakhs. The treaty remained in operation for the next thirty-two years. The brilliant victory won by the *Peśvā* went a long way in restoring Marāṭhā prestige.

The next problem the *Peśvā* had to grapple with was the advance of Haidar Ali of Mysore in the south Marāṭhā country. Haidar to start with was a petty officer in Mysore infantry. But his organizing capacity, his military discipline, his daring and his genius for intrigue brought him to the notice of Nanjaraj, the Mysore Commander, and in 1755 he became the governor of Diṇḍigal. In 1759 he actively opposed Marāṭhā advance in Mysore and wrested back the territory ceded a year earlier. By 1761 Haidar Ali became the head of the administration and seized supreme authority. As Marāṭhā power waned, Haidar Ali's grew in proportion. He occupied old Marāṭhā territory in Karnāṭak, forced the *Navābs* and Hindu chieftains to pay him tribute, and conquered the kingdoms of Gooty and Bednore; in 1763 Marāṭhā districts north of the Tuṅgabhadra were overrun, Dhārvār was captured and Haidar now menaced the entire Marāṭhā country south of the Kṛṣṇā. There was no choice for the *Peśvā* but to fight back this threat on his southern frontier. Haidar Ali however was too powerful a foe to be checked by the *Peśvā's* subordinate feudatories and for the next eight years the *Peśvā's* entire resources were directed to reduce if not exterminate Haidar's power. The fighting became bitter on account of the novel method pursued by the Mysore ruler. He knew that his small force was no match for the numerous Marāṭhā horse and he would not venture out in the open. Sheltering behind the woods in the western ghats, his infantry sallied forth at night to surprise

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the enemy. Mādhav Rāv *Peśvā* met Haidar's wiles with great skill and tenacity and wore him out. While one Marāthā force would keep Haidar Ali immobilized, another would devastate the country, stop supplies reaching the enemy's camp and thus force him out of his wooded defences. At the end of eight years campaigning Haidar had lost half his kingdom and held the remaining half in fee to the *Peśvā*.

The first Haidar-Marāthā campaign lasted from April 1764 to March 1765. Dhārvār was besieged and there was severe fighting at Rattehali, Jaḍi Anavadi and Bednore in which Haidar was decisively beaten. He agreed to pay a tribute of thirty-two lakhs, restored to Murār Rāv Ghorpade the fortress of Gooty and the surrounding districts and gave up all claims on Sāvanūr.

The offensive against Haidar Ali was resumed towards the close of 1766. A strong army invaded Haidar's north-eastern districts, took Sirā, Hoskot and Madgiri and forced him to surrender all previous Marāthā conquests in Karnātak. But immediately the *Peśvā's* back was turned, Haidar resumed the territory he had granted by treaty, intrigued with the *Peśvā's* domestic rivals and withheld the amount of the tribute due from him. The next two years the *Peśvā* spent in settling with his uncle and Jānoji Bhosle, but he again invaded Mysore in 1770, laid waste Haidar's north-western territory and advanced as far as Bangalore. Haidar clung to the forest belt of the western ghats, contending himself with destroying stray Marāthā detachments. The Marāthā army overran Guramkoṇḍā and Kolār districts and succeeded in reducing Bhairavdurg, Nandidurg, Kolār, Mulbagal and Nijgal. But the *Peśvā* could not press operations on account of failing health. In the next season Trimbak Rāv Peṭhe who had taken the *Peśvā's* place kept an army in the Mysore plains, surprised Haidar Ali at Cinkurali or Moti Talāv (near Sriraṅgaṭṭam) and dispersed his force to four winds taking all its artillery and equipment. Peace was not concluded till 1772 July, the intervening period being marked with minor operations of devastating character. Haidar at last agreed to surrender all Śivājī's former conquests in Karnātak (Sirā, Hoskot, Bālpūr and Kolār) as also Guramkoṇḍā and to pay fifty lakhs in indemnity. Mysore was reduced to half its overgrown size. But on account of the death of the *Peśvā* in November and the commotions that followed these gains proved only temporary and Haidar was on the march once more.

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We must now turn to affairs at Delhi. The defeat at Pānipat left the Marāthās in total eclipse in that quarter for some time. But no other power stepped in to assume the imperial role. Abdālī who could have easily done so, limited his views to the possession of the Puñjāb and even this he could not retain long on account of Sikh opposition. The mounting Sikh pressure also made the situation of Najib Khān, Abdālī's nominee at Delhi, insecure. The Jāts—the peasantry of the Āgrā province—under their able rulers

Suraj Mal and Javāhir Singh extended their rule as far north as Delhi and left Najib in control of only a small tract round the capital. The English in the meanwhile had won the battle of Plassey and Buxār, obtained the *Divānī* of Beṅgāl, Bihār and Orissā and with Sujā-ud-daulā as their subordinate ally, their frontiers now marched along the east bank of the Gangā. Mādho Singh of Jaipur organized a Rajput confederacy against the Marāthās and attempted to oust them from Mālvā, but after his defeat at Māngrol (1762) he relapsed into his usual somnolence. An expedition under Raghunāth Rāv sent in 1766 could achieve little for want of energy in the leader and discipline among his troops and failed even to curb the Rāṇā of Gohād. In 1769, after having reduced his domestic enemies to submission the *Peśvā* thought of rectifying Marāthā position in the North. He despatched his forces to Hindustan under Rāmcandra Gaṇeś and Visājī Kṛṣṇa who were later joined by Mahādji Sīnde and Tukoji Holkar. These chiefs were asked to call to account the Jāts, the Rohillās and others who had seized Marāthā conquests in Hindustan, restore the Emperor to his ancestral throne and regulate the imperial affairs in his name. In a great battle fought at Govardhan on 5th April 1770, the Jāt king was defeated and his districts across the Yamunā were overrun. Najib Khān who was playing his usual game of duplicity tried to form a Jāt-Rohillā alliance but his plans were discovered. Peace was granted to the Jāt Rājā (September 1770) on his surrender of Marāthā districts in the *Doāb* and on agreeing to pay sixty-five lakhs of rupees for arrears of tribute. The army then attacked the Rohillā chiefs. The districts of Etāvā, Sukohābād and Kanoj were ravaged and the fort of Etāvā was seized. Hafiz Rahmat and Ahmad Khān Bāgaṣ then submitted and made peace (January 1771).

In the meanwhile Najib Khān, the arch-enemy of the Marāthās, died on 31 October 1770 and it was decided to push towards the main objective of the campaign. Delhi was stormed in February 1771 and Sāh Ālam who had remained in exile for twelve years returned to the capital under Marāthā protection (Jan. 1772). The Marāthās then resumed the offensive against the Rohillā country. Timely death saved Najib from vengeance but others could not escape so lightly. His son Zabeṭā Khān was called upon to pay the customary *nazarānā* on succession and settle the accounts of the crown-lands held by him. On his refusal the Marāthā army headed by the Emperor marched into Rohilkhand dispersed Zabeṭā Khān's levies in a great battle at Candi Ghāt. Najibābād the fortress which Najib had built for depositing his treasure, was razed to the ground. The Marāthā forces then spread all over the country exacting tribute from places large and small.

The Marāthā chiefs had the satisfaction of avenging their defeat at Pānipat and wiping out the disgrace of the disaster. But further operations were marred by serious differences among them. Sīnde

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and Holkar held divergent views on practically every issue and Rāmcandraa Ganes was unable to decide between them. He was recalled by the *Peśvā* and Visājī Kṛṣṇa took his place. The English and Sujā-ud-daulā began inciting the Emperor and other Hindustani chiefs not to yield to Marāṭhā demands. The *Peśvā's* health was failing and he was in no frame of mind to watch his subordinates and direct their activities. Sinde and Holkar who had differed violently on every detail of policy, would not consent to act together. Sinde parted company and marched away to Jaipur. Visājī Kṛṣṇa and Tukoji Holkar sent minatory messages to Sujā-ud-daulā for his perfidious conduct in the late negotiations and threatened to invade his country. Sujā, relying on English support, refused to knuckle under the threats and forced the Marāṭhās to give up the struggle. The *Peśvā's* Government distracted at home could not sustain its army in the north and Visājī Kṛṣṇa retired to the Deccan in 1774. The flood waters of Marāṭhā invasion subsided leaving the banks high and dry.

Death of
Mādhav Rāv
and
consequences.

Peśvā Mādhav Rāv died on 18th November 1772. A man of fine character he had a high conception of his duties as a ruler and did much to protect the weak against the strong, exterminate corruption in the State and hold the rule of the law. Under his resolute leadership Marāṭhā power showed considerable buoyancy. His entire career was spent in resisting the encroachments of the *Nizām* and of Haidar Ali and quelling the revolt of his uncle and he had little time to attend in person to the affairs of Hindustan. His authority over the great feudatories suffered a steady decline in consequence. These chieftains assumed a degree of independence in their dealings and followed policies which often were in marked divergence to those of the central government. Had the young *Peśvā* lived longer he might have succeeded in subduing his chiefs to their former dependence, but his premature death removed the possibility of restraining the growing disruption.

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This disunion in Marāṭhā politics becomes all the more glaring in the period from 1772 to 1802. After 1772, the most important event was the murder of *Peśvā* Nārāyaṇ Rāv who had succeeded Mādhav Rāv and the first Anglo-Marāṭhā conflict arising out of it. Mādhav Rāv on his death-bed made an appeal to his uncle to avoid family dissensions and be reconciled to his young nephew Nārāyaṇ Rāv. But the appeal fell on deaf ears. Age had not withered Rāghobā's keenness about the *Peśvāship* and the harsh treatment meted out to him by the new *Peśvā* was not calculated to make him submissive. A conspiracy was formed by Rāghobā's partisans to release their patron from his confinement in the *Peśvā's* palace and put him on the *Gādī*. On 30th August (1773), the infantry Guards (*Gārdīs*) surrounded the palace demanding their arrears, broke into the *Peśvā's* chamber and cut him

up as he was imploring his uncle to save his life. Rāghobā was privy to the secret design of seizing his nephew but denied complicity in his murder. The horrid act was however universally detested and roused against him popular resentment which expressed itself in the formation of the League of the *Bārbhāis*. The chief men at the *Peśvā's* Court, Sakhārām Bāpū Bokil, Trimbak Rāv Peṭhe, Nānā Phadnis and others banded themselves into a confederacy to frustrate Rāghobā's ambition. By the end of the year the plot was ripe and the confederates raised the standard of revolt declaring Rāghobā a murderer and usurper and calling upon all to withhold co-operation from him. Rāghobā soon became a fugitive and in a desperate moment turned to the English of Bombay for armed aid to recover his *Peśvāship*. The Bombay Government, happy at the idea of extending its territory and of subordinating the Marāṭhā power to its own, immediately acceded, sent its own army to beat ministerial opposition and reinstate its ally in authority. Thus began the first Anglo-Marāṭhā War which was fought with bitterness on both sides and which strained the resources of both. It is not necessary to follow in detail the fortunes of the struggle as the same have been described in another chapter of this book. The Marāṭhā State emerged from the struggle bruised but not broken and the treaty of Sālbye concluded in May 1782, gave it a respite of twenty years to put its own house in order.

For the Marāṭhās the permanent results of the war were anything but favourable. The eight years' warfare drained the *Peśvā's* treasury as never before. The huge debts incurred by the ministry for war expenses threatened the Poonā Court with bankruptcy. The minority of the *Peśvā* and the difficulties that surrounded him on all sides encouraged the feudatories to affect greater freedom. They began managing their *Jāgīrs* as independent states owing but nominal allegiance to the *Peśvā*. Sinde, Holkar, Bhosle, Gāikvād though parts of an organic structure became in practice separate entities and each began to drift as he thought best. The disaster of Pānipat administered the first serious blow to the *Peśvā's* unifying authority. Rāghobā's rivalry for the *Peśvāship*, his revolt, the consequent civil war developing in the Anglo-Marāṭhā Conflict hastened the process of dissolution. After 1782, though the *Peśvā's* ceremonial precedence over his feudatories continued as before, he had little control over their internal affairs. His authority came to be limited to the provinces, directly held by him. The feudatories carried out his mandate or defied them as it suited their interests. The feudal tendency among the Marāṭhās that had raised its head after Sīvājī's death gathered momentum making the structure weak and vulnerable.

The Council of the *Bārbhāis* which at the beginning was formed to carry on the struggle against the usurper also underwent a change. Some of the members died in the interval of war, some

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went over to the enemy and some who faltered found themselves behind iron bars. Nānā Phadnis alone remained steadfast in his loyalty and his objective; with great patience, diplomatic skill and organizing capacity he had won the war and in the minority of the *Peśvā* came to occupy the first position in the Marāṭhā State. The war likewise brought to the forefront Mahādji Sīnde and enhanced his reputation as a great military leader. He had retired to Hindustan in the beginning of 1781, with the army, successfully fought back the British advance into Mālṡā and concluded the treaty of Sālbye which placed him in the position of a mediator between the Marāṭhā State and the East India Company and added to his prestige. The policies of the Marāṭhā State came to be determined by Nānā Phadnis in the south and Sīnde in the North, both patriotic and firm in their loyalty to a common master, but working practically independent of each other. Both realized that the English were now their rivals for the sovereignty of India and their efforts must be directed to resist British aggression. Nānā's plan for this was to reduce the great Marāṭhā feudatories to a rigid subordination to the power of the *Peśvā* and then bring the neighbouring powers of Hyderābād and Mysore into a subsidiary alliance with the Marāṭhā State to make a united stand against British advance. His attention was always rivetted on Poonā and the home country.¹

Sīnde's mind worked in a different way. He had witnessed the advance of the English from Calcutta to Kanoj within less than a quarter of a century. They were rushing in to fill the vacuum caused by the Marāṭhā eclipse at Pānipat. Mahādji felt that unless the English were halted, they would obtain control over Delhi affairs and endanger the entire fabric of Marāṭhā power. North India as the centre of political gravity was to him more important than Deccan and he refused to subscribe to Nānā's views and play a subordinate role to the Poonā minister. The new army organized by him under the command of De Boigne enabled him to take control of imperial affairs and made him the executive head of Hindustan. His new army was distrusted and his imperial designs instead of being looked as fulfilment of Marāṭhā objective, were viewed with alarm by the Poonā Ministry. They saw in them nothing but Sīnde's attempt at self-aggrandisement.² His rapid and growing successes in Hindustan roused Nānā's jealousy; the decade following the treaty of Sālbye is thus marked by a factious spirit between the two Marāṭhā leaders which unconsciously damaged Marāṭhā power and prestige.

The tide of British invasion had been turned back, but in the interregnum of the war large parts of Marāṭhā territory had been seized by the neighbouring states of Hyderābād and Mysore. Nānā Phadnis

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now turned his diplomatic talents to the recovery of these districts. The Mysore ruler was the stronger of the two of the troublesome neighbours. He claimed these districts as the price of joining the alliance against the British and was incensed with the double dealing of the Marāṭhā State when it concluded the treaty of Sālbye without his acquiescence and he defied article 9 in the treaty which attempted to coerce him into peace. Haidar Ali died in December 1782, but his son Tipū Sultān pursued hostilities against the British with a degree of success and in 1784, March concluded peace at Mangalore, without Marāṭhā intervention. His success in war and diplomacy made Tipū look on the Marāṭhās with great contempt and he thirsted to punish them for their treachery. When he found a Marāṭhā army advancing against him under Haripant Phadke, he ravaged the Rāicūr *Doāb*. Tipū's warlike activities and threats drew the Governments of Poonā and Hyderābād closer. Nānā Phadnis met the *Nizām* at Yādgir on 6th May 1784¹ and decided to prosecute joint measures against Mysore. Tipū's reaction to the pact was swift and decisive. He called on the *Nizām* to acknowledge himself as his vassal and cede to him the district of Bijāpūr. Nargund and Kittur, two Hindu states which enjoyed the special protection of the *Peśvā* were overrun, the families of the chiefs were taken into captivity and treated with great harshness. Nānā's hands were forced and a Marāṭhā army took the field against Tipū (March 1786). Badāmī and Gajendragad were reduced, but Tipū severely handled Haripant Phadke and the Patvardhans in several engagements and exposed the weakness of the Marāṭhā army and its outworn tactics. He captured Adoni from the *Nizām* by a swift stroke and then turning upon Sāvanur reduced it in the teeth of strongest Marāṭhā opposition. He seduced Tukoji Holkar and other Marāṭhā Chiefs with large bribes and Nānā was glad to end hostilities in 1787, when Tipū agreed to pay arrears of tribute and cede Badāmī, Nargund and Kittur. A British Resident had arrived in the *Peśvā's* Court and the British army was being put in a state of preparedness. Tipū suspected the English becoming more friendly with the Marāṭhās and to avoid isolation granted the Poonā Court favourable terms.

Tipū's fears proved but too true. Lord Cornwallis, who had arrived in India in 1786 to take charge of Company's affairs, had declared his intentions of eschewing all schemes of conquest or entanglements with native rulers. But Tipū's restless ambition, his embassies to Constantinople and Paris in 1787, his military activities confirmed the English in their attitude of vigilant suspicion. The British Residents at Hyderābād and Poonā were instructed to start negotiations for an alliance directed against Tipū. Nānā Phadnis after much deliberation joined the alliance in the hope that the two antagonists (Tipū and the British), would exhaust themselves in mutual destruction and that the Marāṭhās would become

¹ Poonā Residency Correspondence Series, vol. II, pp. 167-68.

² P. R. C. Series, vol. I, p. 374; P. R. C., vol. II, pp. 340-347.

¹ For the treaty, see P. R. C., vol. IV, Appendix I.

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arbiters of future negotiations.¹ Two Marāṭhā forces, one under Haripant Phadke and another under Paraśurām Bhāu Patvardhan, co-operated and contributed materially to the success of the operations. Tipū was brought to bay before Srirangpattam in March 1792. Half of his kingdom was partitioned among the allies and a large indemnity was levied on him. But the outcome of the campaign was far from what the Poonā minister anticipated. The Marāṭhās instead of being arbiters came to occupy a secondary place and lost the initiative to the British.²

SHINDE'S
REGENCY.³

While Nānā Phadnis was consolidating Marāṭhā power in the Deccan, Mahādji Sinde was following a similar course in Hindustan. Since the ratifications of the treaty of Sālbye he had secured considerable advantages. Gvālior and Gohād had surrendered and as a result several of the minor chiefs returned to their allegiance as Marāṭhā tributaries. Sinde, while prosecuting these objects was watching the confusions and contentions in the imperial territory. Mirzā Najaf who held the regency after Marāṭhā departure from Delhi in 1773, died in 1782 and the Emperor's affairs fell in a state of utmost disorder. Sāh Ālam himself was an amiable person, but altogether weak and incapable of conducting his own affairs or of restraining his subordinates. The four lieutenants of Mirzā Najaf Khān quarrelled violently among themselves about the executive authority. Mirzā Safi and Afrāsiyāb were murdered by their rivals and the King invited Sinde to undertake the regency of his house and regulate his affairs. Major Brown, the Governor-General's special envoy, was in Delhi, since the end of 1783, plotting against the Marāṭhās and "working desperately to revive Hastings' abandoned plan of turning the Emperor into an English puppet", and Sinde by refusing would have played into the hands of his enemies. He therefore, met the Emperor on 15th November (1784), and assuming the robes of his new office, became the power behind the imperial throne.

But Sinde's new office was not a bed of roses. The king was a cipher; his kingdom was parcelled out among a number of turbulent Moghal chiefs who owned but a nominal allegiance to the throne; the Sikhs were ravaging imperial domains on the north; the Rajput princes had for years ceased to pay any tribute. The first task of the new *Vazir* was to reduce these refractory chiefs to obedience and for this he needed a large army and vast resources. Nānā Phadnis, though he always pressed on Sinde the necessity of getting control of imperial affairs, could never spare funds for the schemes, he advocated. Mahādji perforce turned to raise money

¹ P. R. C., II, pp. 202, 222; P. R. C., III, Intro., p. vi and p. 511.

² P. R. C., vol. p. 341, Shore's reflections on the political state of India.

³ For this subject primary sources are *Mahadji Sindhi's Hist. Paper*, edited by Sardesai, *Poonā Res. Correspondence*, Series, Vol. I; also *Persian Records of Maratha History*, vol. I, Ed. Jadunath Sarkar.

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from his new acquisitions. He called on the Moghal feudatory chieftains to account for their holdings, dispossessed not a few of them and imposed heavy fines on the rest. The Rajput princes who had for years paid not a pie into the imperial treasury, were asked to pay the arrears of their tribute and of the Marāṭhā *Cauth*. These heavy demands and the hatred, the Moghal and Rajput chiefs felt for the Marāṭhās, incited them to revolt and united them in a grand conspiracy against Sinde. The ten years of Sinde's Regency at Delhi thus became a long drawn story of war punctuated by short interludes of peace.

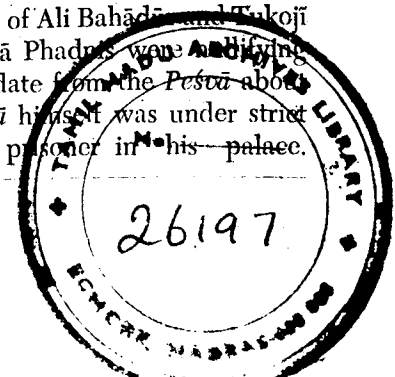
The war with Rajput princes began in 1786, when Jaipur declined to pay tribute demanded of her. In 1787, Sinde invaded Rajputānā personally but suffered a heavy reverse at Lalsot by the defection of his Hindustani battalions. Everything presaged total ruin and a second Pānipat for the Marāṭhā army when the day was saved by the cool intrepidity of the leader. With great skill Mahādji Sinde withdrew the remnant of his army to Dig and later southward to the Cambāḷ. Here Sinde once more regrouped his forces, led them to battle and defeated the Moghal chiefs near Āgrā. He was once more the master of Delhi, receiving overtures of abject surrender from the Rajput Chiefs. He looked to a period of tranquillity in which to consolidate the gains of his victory. But the jealousy of Tukoji Holkar, ostensibly despatched by the Poonā ministry to support Sinde's authority, but in reality to weaken it, encouraged Sinde's enemies; the embers of war once more flared up and Sinde's new army formed by De Boigne had to take field against the Rajputs. The Jaipur force was disposed of at Pāṭan (June 1790), and that of Jodhpur at Mertā (September 1790). Mahādji then marched to the Deccan in 1792 to settle issues with the Poonā ministers. In his absence Holkar openly conspired with his enemies but was decisively beaten at Lākheri in 1793, by Sinde's forces.

Sinde arrived in the Deccan in June 1792. Wildest rumours and conjectures were afloat about his intentions in visiting the home country after an absence of twelve years. He was now the highest functionary of the Emperor and was at the head of a powerful army and it was felt that he would claim the same position at Poonā as he held at Delhi. The Poonā minister apprehending a contest went to the length of asking military aid from the English which of course the Governor-General declined.¹ Sinde's armies were winning victories over his enemies but the intrigues of Ali Bahād and Tukoji Holkar and a host of other minions of Nānā Phadnis were nullifying their effects and Sinde wanted a clear mandate from the *Peśvā* about his authority in Hindustan.² But the *Peśvā* himself was under strict surveillance of the minister and almost a prisoner in his palace.

SHINDE'S
TRIUMPH AT
POONA.

¹ P. R. C., vol. II, pp. 229-230.

² *Ibid.*, p. 233.



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Before he could exercise his independent judgement he had to be liberated from ministerial thralldom. Mahādji arrived in Poonā on 12th June; ten days later at a great ceremonial *darbār* he delivered to the *Peśvā* the titles and honours brought for him from the Emperor and the *farmān* prohibiting cow-slaughter throughout India.¹ The formal functions were a prelude to an intimate intercourse that developed between the *Peśvā* and the Marāṭhā warrior. Śinde's frank manner, open speech and cordiality were in marked contrast to the reserve and coldness of Nānā Phadnis and young Mādhav Rāv came to cultivate a liking for the soldierly Marāṭhā. Nānā Phadnis felt jealous of the growing influence of Śinde and talked of retiring. There were charges and counter-charges and hot debates and Śinde exposed in open *Darbār* the high handedness of the minister in conducting the administration, his failure to understand popular grievances and the general atmosphere of suspicion prevailing in Poonā.² At last after the action of Lākheri had put the seal of victory on Śinde's armies, the Poonā minister could no longer hold out against him and yielded almost on all points. 'His accounts were signed by the *Peśvā* acknowledging a balance of five crores of rupees; as ready cash, could not be obtained from the Poonā ministry, Śinde accepted a transfer of the *Peśvā*'s share of the conquests in Hindustan. It was also agreed that Śinde should have the sole management of affairs in that quarter and the *Peśvā*'s Government should furnish him with such troops as he may require for his future operations'³

Śinde did not live long to enjoy the fruits of his victory. He died of a malignant fever on 12th February 1794 and was succeeded by his nephew Daulat Rāv, who was then about 14 years old. The circumstances of his having ended his career in Poonā for some time brought his Government completely within the influence of the paramount power and Nānā Phadnis used the occasion to exact long standing demands from the *Nizām*.

Śinde's achievements were hailed by his contemporaries as great victories and as fulfilling the long standing Marāṭhā ambition of dominating the Indian scene. It was one of the cherished objectives of Marāṭhā policy to obtain control over affairs at Delhi by exercising the executive authority of the Emperor. Bājī Rāv in 1736 and his son Bālājī in 1752 agreed to defend the Empire against aggression on the same condition. In 1771, the Marāṭhā had once more turned their face towards Delhi and had restored the capital to the fugitive monarch. But before they could settle down they had to abandon the venture and retire to Poonā. Mahādji became the Vice-regent in 1784 and successfully maintained that position against heavy odds, thus fulfilling the principal objective of Marāṭhā policy

¹ P. R. C., vol. II, p. 240.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 253-254, 258, 261-263, 275-292.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

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pursued over half a century. But it is doubtful if his successes brought stability to the Marāṭhā power or increased its security. The Moghal nobility remained sullenly hostile; the Rajput chiefs were completely alienated. If Nānā Phadnis had co-operated with Śinde, things might have shaped differently.

Mahādji owed his success in a large degree to the adoption of the European military system in which he was aided by a very competent French soldier Count De Boigne. The new system demonstrated its superiority over the indigenous method of fighting in a hundred clashes since the French routed the *Navāb* of Arcot at Ambur, in 1749. The dazzling successes of Dupleix and Bussy against overwhelming odds made native rulers fall for the new method of warfare. Trained armies under European officers became the craze of the day. The brilliant success of Bussy in 1751, of Hartley and Goddard in the Anglo-Marāṭhā conflict and of Tīpū Sultān in 1756 brought home to the Marāṭhās the ineffectiveness of the forays of their light cavalry. The Marāṭhā horse was powerless against compact armies or walled posts equipped with artillery. When other powers were employing trained battalions as the hardening core of their armies, it was inevitable for the Marāṭhās to follow suit. Mahādji Śinde at the time of shouldering imperial responsibilities, made up his mind to adopt the new system and introduced radical changes in his army. In De Boigne he found a Commander of 'superior knowledge, varied experience and lofty character'. De Boigne raised for Śinde three brigades between 1784-1792, equipped them with modern arms cast in the foundries at Āgrā and Aligāḍ and won a series of remarkable successes. Unfortunately the common Marāṭhā soldier showed little inclination to take to the new method of warfare and large numbers of Hindustan soldiers came to be recruited for Śinde's '*Campoos*'. The Marāṭhā officers likewise, were too ignorant to lead the battalions and the new army developed the fatal weakness of being recruited from foreign elements and commanded by foreign adventurers. It is dangerous for a country to depend on foreigners for its defence. For the European soldier in native armies the only attachment to service was the fortune he made out of it. When these battalions therefore faced the British army in 1803, they were destroyed quickly and there was nothing left for the chiefs except capitulation.¹

Though few of his contemporaries realized it, the death of Mahādji Śinde was the beginning of the dissolution of the Marāṭhā confederacy. This was concealed from common view by the signal victory won by Marāṭhā arms over the *Nizām* at Khardā in March 1795—the last occasion when all Marāṭhā Chiefs acted in concert under the *Peśvā*'s authority.

¹ For a fuller discussion, see '*Fall of the Mughal Empire*', vol. IV, pp. 102-116.
Vf 3792-8

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Unlike that of the Marāṭhās the *Nizām's* authority was never rooted in the soil. Since its foundation in 1724, it was in competition with that of the Marāṭhās and had been reduced to a position of subordination in the course of half a century. Large parts of the Deccan *Subhā* had been surrendered to the *Peśvā* and over the remaining lay the perpetual spectre of Marāṭhā *Cauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*. The *Nizām* however took advantage of the civil war in the Marāṭhā State, since 1774 and withheld Marāṭhā tribute. Even after the conclusion of peace in 1782, the Poonā Court did not dare press for arrears of its claims for fear of losing the *Nizām's* friendship against the menacing advance of *Ṭipū Sultān*. *Ṭipū's* power was however broken in 1792 and half his kingdom was partitioned among the allies. The amity that had marked for a time the relations between the two neighbouring powers of Poonā and Hyderabad disappeared with the disappearance of the menace endangering their existence. The dormant claims of the Poonā Court were again revived and brought forward for accommodation.

The *Nizām* in the meanwhile had come to lean heavily on the British and in his expectation of drawing on their support in the last resort he defied Marāṭhā claims with impunity. At the time of ceding Guntoor district in 1788 and again in 1790, when joining the alliance against *Ṭipū*, he had shown himself anxious for the Company's protection. At the end of the Mysore war in 1792, before the allied armies parted at Bangalore, there were talks of perpetuating the alliance and thereby securing their defence against the faithless *Ṭipū*. These talks gave rise to the much discussed but abortive treaty of guarantee. The *Nizām* saw in the guarantee treaty the opportunity of saving his independence from the Marāṭhās as well. The Poonā Government was however, alarmed at the growing friendliness between the English, its rival and the *Nizām*, its tributary and dependent, whose councils, it had influenced over a long period and who had now turned to another direction for guidance. It looked on the proposed engagement as "a shield held between it and its dependent the *Nizām*" and peremptorily rejected it.¹

The protracted discussion of the guarantee proposals was not the only occasion when the *Nizām's* designs were exposed. They were disclosed on many others. *Sinde's* visit to Poonā in 1792, offered the *Nizām* one such occasion to embarrass the Poonā authorities and flout their long standing claims. It was felt that the serious differences of *Sinde* with *Nānā Phadnis* were beyond adjustment and would lead to cleavage and revolution and the *Nizām's* minister *Āzam-ul-Umrā* decided to handle it as a lever for his own ends. He entered into secret correspondence with *Sinde*, bribed him with money to fan his rivalry with the Poonā ministry and in support of his designs began a threatening move in the direction of Poonā. *Sinde* made a dupe of

¹ For dissensions of the *Treaty of Guarantee*. See P. R. C., vol. IV, pp. 1-72.

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Āzam-ul-Umrā and nothing came out of this move. *Nānā Phadnis* thought that the time for an amicable settlement was past and pressed the *Nizām* with his demands about long standing arrears.

About this time occurred the death of *Mahādji Sinde*, which temporarily placed the vast military resources of his Government at the disposal of the Poonā minister. *Hoḷkar* was shaken by his defeat at *Lākheri* and was completely subservient to *Nānā*. The *Bhosle* of *Nāgpūr* had been estranged by *Āzam-ul-Umrā's* arrogant behaviour in withholding his share of revenue from *Berār*. Towards *Nānā*, *Āzam-ul-Umrā* had been indiscreet enough to use discourteous language unbecoming in a minister. *Ṭipū* had nothing but contempt for the minister who had cemented friendship with his sworn enemy the English and he now watched his ruin with jubilation.

The *Nizām* to the last hoped for British intervention and would not think of accommodating his differences with the Marāṭhās. *Sir John Shore*, who was then at the head of the Company's affairs 'refused to depart from justice and good faith and give assistance'. He understood that the revival of its old claims was the thin end of the wedge by which the Poonā Government sought to dominate the *Nizām's* Councils which would react unfavourably on the amity existing between the *Nizām* and the Company. To have countenanced openly the *Nizām's* rejection of the Poonā demands would have meant declaration of hostilities with the Marāṭhā confederacy, and to this length the Governor-General was not prepared to go at a time when the confederacy appeared almost irresistible and when *Ṭipū* smarting under his defeat was nursing thoughts of revenge. He also could not afford to forget the alarming situation in Europe where England was involved in a mighty struggle with revolutionary France, which precluded any hope of getting substantial reinforcements from home. The *Nizām* was a weakling and offered little advantage to Company as an ally. Thus circumstanced, the Governor-General was unwilling to risk an immediate war in anticipation of future dangers likely to result from Marāṭhā aggrandisement at the cost of the *Nizām*. He chose to follow the policy of strict non-intervention and advised the *Nizām* to liquidate Marāṭhā demands by a fair accommodation. The Governor-General pertinently observed, "When we reflect on the vices and imbecility of the *Nizām's* administration, the impossibility of directing his politics without usurping his government and the dangers of perpetual war, the consequence of such interference, when we consider the difficulty of making any effectual impression on the Marāṭhā State by our forces, the comparative facility with which they might injure us, the magnitude of their resources and exertions, as well as the number of troops, both native and European, which would be required to oppose the united efforts of the Marāṭhās and

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Tipū, and the inevitable ruin of a long protracted war—the inducement to support the *Nizām* at the hazard of such impending circumstances ought to be much stronger than the apprehension of future evils from the subversion of his power.¹

The *Peśvā* went into tents after the *Dasarā* on 26th December 1794. He gathered round his standard for the last time almost all the principal feudatories of the empire. The two armies drew near each other in the vicinity of *Khardā*, when the *Nizām* committed a tactical blunder. In seeking to march his army to the protection of the fort of *Pareṇḍā*, he made a flanking movement in face of the enemy's advance. His right flank was attacked by the *Marāṭhā* horse under *Paraśurām Bhāu* and *Sinde's* battalions on 11th March. Instead of keeping his ground, the *Nizām* in a moment of weakness retired to the fort of *Khardā* for shelter. This act proved his undoing. Scared by the cannonade of *Sinde's* guns, his troops fled away under cover of darkness of the night. The next morning the *Marāṭhā* army besieged the fort, which was insignificant and ill-equipped to stand a siege. After protracted negotiations, the *Nizām* made an abject surrender and submitted to a humiliating peace.

Nothing could have been more advantageous to the *Marāṭhās* than the treaty signed on 10th April 1795. It confirmed the demands of the *Poonā* Court, secured to it territory worth 33 lakhs of rupees annually, and promised it three crores in indemnity. The Minister who was the main cause of the hostility was likewise delivered to the *Marāṭhā* Government.²

DEATH OF SAVAI
 MADHAV RAV
 AND ITS
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The victory of *Khardā* proved 'a dead sea fruit' as the terms of the treaty were never fulfilled by the *Nizām* and the *Marāṭhā* empire was soon convulsed by internal troubles arising from the death of *Savai Mādhav Rāv*. The young *Peśvā* was a delicate youth brought up under strict tutelage of the minister. He was now twenty-one years of age, yet was denied any share in the administration. He chafed at the restraints placed on him and entered into correspondence with *Raghobā's* sons, his only surviving kith and kin but held as prisoner at *Junnar*. This was intercepted by the minister who upbraided his young ward for the folly of communicating with his enemies. The young *Peśvā* felt deeply mortified at the reproof given him, developed a melancholy temper and in a mood of despondency threw himself down the balcony of his palace on 25th October; two days later he died.

¹ Appendix in "Our Faithful Ally the *Nizām*", by Hastings Fraser.

² An amount of literature exists about the *Khardā* campaign. There are ballads, and *Bakhars*, dispatches in *Marāṭhī* in Vol. VII of *Rajwade* and Vol. IX of *Khare*. The best material will be found in Vol. IV and II of '*Poonā Residency Correspondence Series*'.

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Death is always tragic, but nothing could compare with the tragedy that now overcame the *Marāṭhā* empire. *Nānā Phadnis* had piloted the state for over two decades, had gathered all powers of the *Peśvāship* in his own hands as the guardian of a minor; with the death of the *Peśvā* his custodianship and with it the regency came to an end. By irony of fate the rightful successor to the *Masnād* was *Bājī Rāv*, son of *Raghunāth Rāv*, the sworn enemy of the minister and his succession *Nānā* now tried to prevent by all the means of which he was master. He was foiled in this by popular sentiment which favoured the cause of *Bājī Rāv*, by the superior, intrigues of the young man and by the hostility of *Sinde's* *Seṇvi* minister whom *Nānā* was unwise enough to provoke. But *Nānā* refused to acknowledge defeat and quit the scene; he insisted on clinging to the post when no longer wanted and in the resulting contest dragged down not only his own reputation for wisdom and sanity but the splendid fabric of the *Marāṭhā* State of which he was the last architect. In his attempt to retain his position he was involved in a maze of intrigues and conspiracies which created disorder and anarchy all over *Mahārāṣṭra* and amidst the rivalry of contending parties and clash of arms the British stepped in and put an end to *Marāṭhā* independence.¹

Aware of the repugnance of *Rāghobā's* son towards him and the consequent annihilation of his powers in the event of the latter's succession, the minister toyed with the idea of adoption of a collateral member of the *Peśvā's* family by the widow of the dead *Peśvā* and ruling in his name. But the move was not popular and despite the great reputation of the minister, could gather few adherents to support it. A number of infants were brought from *Koṅkaṇ* but none apparently was approved. In the meanwhile *Bājī Rāv* from *Junnar* had contacted the British Resident and *Daulat Rāv*, *Sinde* and was soliciting their aid for his succession. The British Resident could not commit himself, but *Sinde* offered his support on condition of his receiving one crore of rupees in cash and a *jagir* worth Rupees twenty-five lakhs. The agreement soon reached the ears of *Nānā*; rather than allow *Bājī Rāv* to fall into the hands of *Daulat Rāv*, he decided on his release himself. He despatched *Paraśurām Bhāu* to bring him to *Poonā*, waited on him on his arrival and both agreed to forget past enmities and carry on the administration in mutual trust.

The *Peśvā*, however, had clearly gone back on his agreement with *Sinde* and *Sinde's* ministers were incensed at *Nānā's* attempt to defeat their scheme of controlling the *Peśvāship*. *Bālobā Tātyā* now induced his master to march to *Poonā* to control the affairs there. *Nānā* knew his inability to oppose *Sinde's* trained battalions and was alarmed for his own safety. Though assured by *Sinde's* ministers that he would be safe provided the promised subsidy were paid and

¹ P. R. C., Vol. II, pp. 395-440.

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territory ceded, Nānā left the capital on 21st March (1796) and by way of Sātārā, Wāi and Rāyagad fled to Mahād. Three days after the Minister's flight Sīnde arrived at Poonā and asked Bājī Rāv to fulfil his promise. Bājī Rāv had neither the will nor the means to do so. He tried to wriggle out of the agreement by pointing Sīnde's failure to keep his side of the obligations and his own inability to meet any monetary demands in his present condition. To punish Bājī Rāv for his treachery Sīnde's ministers now proposed to set aside his claims in favour of his brother Cīmājī Āppā. They won over Paraśurām Bhāu to their plan, imprisoned Bājī Rāv and declared Cīmājī Āppā *Peśvā*, taking care to make his claims superior by having him adopted by the widow of Savai Mādhav Rāv.

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Cīmājī Āppā's *Peśvāship* was not destined to last long. It was after all a compromise effected by secondaries in the contest for supremacy. Paraśurām Bhāu was unable to meet Sīnde's demand for the large subsidy of a crore of rupees and the only person Sīnde's *Divān* could think of squeezing for money was beyond his reach weaving deep-laid plots to effect a come back. The recent revolution at Poonā brought the two aggrieved parties closer and soon a secret intercourse developed between Nānā and Bājī Rāv. The latter conveyed to the minister friendly assurances of his support in all his schemes to oust Bālōbā Tātyā from government in his favour. Nānā needed no further encouragement to exertions; he now set every engine at work. From his temporary abode at Mahād he sent emissaries to Tukoji Holkar, Raghuji Bhosle, Kolhāpūr Rājā, the English at Bombay, the *Nizām* and even Tipū Sultān to assist him with troops for setting up Bājī Rāv as *Peśvā*. Bābā Phadke and other partisans were asked to organize the *Mānkaris* and foment trouble at the capital. Tukoji Holkar's power and influence were already at the minister's disposal. Nānā's treasure began to flow freely and everybody that could be of use was promised whatever he demanded. Bhosle was to receive Rs. 15,00,000 in cash and the district of Gadha-Māṇḍlā; the Kolhāpūr Rājā was given a subsidy of 2 lakhs and asked to seize Cikoḍi (Manoli district) and whatever other territory belonging to the Patvardhans and thus distract Paraśurām Bhāu. The *Nizām* whom Sīnde was threatening with hostilities, readily listened to Nānā's proposal. All the claims on the *Nizām* won at Kharḍā, were cancelled in return for his aid. The English were promised adequate remuneration in territory and specie for adopting Bājī Rāv's cause and for assistance to be granted. Unfortunately for Nānā, Sir John Shore, the non-interventionist Governor General was at the head of the Company's affairs and he warned his subordinates against engaging in the contest and Nānā's agents had to content themselves with spreading rumours of the huge armaments that were preparing at Calcuttā, Lucknow and Bombay in support of the minister.

Nānā's chief triumph, however, lay in seducing Daulat Rāv Sīnde to his side in the contest. Through the Brāhmin opponents of Bālōbā Pāgnis, he led the young Sīnde to believe that he was being financially ruined by the *Seṇvi* minister and that he was courting disaster in opposing Nānā Phadnis whose cause had been espoused by powerful elements at home and abroad. Nānā likewise conveyed to Sīnde that he could accommodate him with a crore of rupees to meet his military needs, a *jāgīr* worth ten lakhs of rupees and the fort of Ahmadnagar on condition that he would 'place Bālōbā in confinement, declare for Bājī Rāv and return with his army to Hindustan.' Bālōbā little suspecting the fickleness and imbecility of his master remained ignorant of the plot in agitation. On the night of 26th October, he was seized with his colleagues and placed under guard. Nānā Phadnis returned to Poonā on 12th November and resumed his office a fortnight later. On 5th December Bājī Rāv, who had been released from Sīnde's confinement, was duly invested with the *Peśvāship*. 'The vigour of the minister's judgment, the fertility of his expedients, the extent of his influence and the combination of the instruments which he called into action surprised all India and from his European contemporaries procured him the name of 'the Marāṭhā Machiavelli'.¹

The master stroke of the minister, however, proved barren of results and all his accumulated treasure was expended in search of fancied security. Nānā had worked miracles in 1774, but the generation of veteran patriots had now passed away giving place to selfish intriguers and their villainous underlings. The misfortunes which had united Nānā Phadnis and Bājī Rāv had no sooner disappeared than their old hatred and jealousies revived. The demonstration of Nānā's influence and the net work of his diplomacy frightened Bājī Rāv and before he would accept him as his minister he secured himself by a secret pact with Daulat Rāv Sīnde, never to abandon his cause, thus rendering ineffectual all the minister's attempts to persuade Sīnde to withdraw to Hindustan. Nānā's return to the ministry as later events were to prove, was no longer restoration to his old authority, but a ceaseless struggle of the old veteran against acts of wanton cruelty, extortion and moral degradation of the *Peśvā* and his accomplice against himself, his partisans, and against all that was honourable and respectable in Marāṭhā tradition.

Bājī Rāv from the beginning was determined to frustrate the minister's attempt to exercise his old authority. In preference to *Huzrāt* troops that usually guarded the *Peśvā's* palace he posted

¹ *History of the Marhattas* by J. G. Grant Duff, vol. III, pp. 135-136. Duff was an employee of the British Residency and his later chapters are informative and reliable. He largely draws on the correspondence of Malet and Palmer and other Residencies for his narrative. This requires to be supplemented by material in Marāṭhī.

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round his palace Śinde's guards. Nānā in self-defence engaged Arab soldiers. The *Peśvā* refused to ratify the recent agreements concluded by the minister with the Bhosle and the *Nizām*, unless modified. He surrounded himself with the surviving members of his father's party, lavished gifts on low favourites and plunged in a life of sensuous gaiety. It did not matter if the treasury was empty; the *Peśvā* fleeced the *Paṭvardhans* and their followers and levied all kinds of taxes on the populace of the capital, one of them being *Santoṣ Paṭṭi* or contribution of congratulations on Bājī Rāv's accession¹. It was impossible for the minister to conduct administration and master and servant distrusting each other refused to meet in open court and moved under heavy escort.

Men of sanity and goodwill detested the new *Peśvā*'s ways. Nānā remonstrated with Amṛt Rāv on "the irregularity and levity of the conduct of Bājī Rāv who instead of attending to affairs of the State dissipated his time and property among dancers, singers and menial servants from which course he urged Amṛt Rāv to reclaim him."² Amṛt Rāv proposed to take a more active part in the administration which the suspicious *Peśvā* looked on as another insidious attempt on the part of the minister to subvert his authority.

The dispute over Holkar's succession was another jarring note between the *Peśvā* and the minister. Tukoji Holkar, Nānā's staunch supporter died on 15th August, (1797), but a few months before his death he had obtained the assent of the *Peśvā* and the minister to the succession of his eldest son, Kāśī Rāv. Kāśī Rāv was a half witted cripple and the other three sons of Tukoji refused to submit to the decision and started trouble in their *jāgīr* and were supposed to have obtained the support of Nānā. Against his brothers Kāśī Rāv invited the aid of Daulat Rāv Śinde. The Śinde's ministry welcomed the opportunity of subordinating the Holkar house and ending its rivalry in Hindustan. On 14th September a detachment of Śinde's corps attacked Malhār Rāv Holkar's camp at Bhāmburdā, dispersed his force and killed the chief. A great odium fell on Śinde and the *Peśvā* for the death of the chief which added to their irritation against the minister.³

But the chief cause of friction was money. Daulat Rāv Śinde had been promised huge subsidies both by the minister and the *Peśvā* for promoting the latter's cause; he had received no small amounts (about fifty lakhs) from the minister from time to time.⁴ But his household and huge military ate up all and he clamoured for more. Śinde now pressed the *Peśvā* for two crores of ruppes that was to be the price of his aid. His demands on the *Peśvā*'s Government

¹ P. R. C., vol. VI, pp. 6-7, 21.

² *Ibid.*, p. 38.

³ P. R. C., vol. VI, pp. 44-48.

⁴ *Ātīhāsik Lekha Saṅgraha*, vol. X, pp. 4110, 4118, 4120.

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went on increasing; in addition to the payment of the balance due by the recent engagement he asked for cancellation of all the *Peśvā*'s former claims on the Śinde's chiefship and withdrawal of Ali Bahādūr from Hindustan.¹ Bājī Rāv was without wealth or influence and suggested that only the old minister was obstructing the fulfilment of the engagements and standing between Śinde and his promised reward. The two now decided to apprehend Nānā Phaḍṇis and make him disgorge his riches. To lure him to a personal meeting one of Śinde's European officers pledged his word; on 31st December (1797), Nānā Phaḍṇis went to Śinde's camp to return a formal visit of ceremony when he was seized with Ābā Selukar, Bajābā Śirolkar, Dādā Gadre and several other persons of distinction who had accompanied him. Nānā's guard of about a thousand that waited outside was attacked and dispersed. Sarje Rāv Ghātge sent troops in the town to plunder the houses of Nānā and his followers. Nānā's Arab guards resisted and there was fighting. "The city of Poonā was like a town taken by storm; all night and the ensuing day there was firing, uproar, plunder and bloodshed."²

The arrest of Nānā Phaḍṇis was the signal for the spoliation of his party. A few of his adherents had accompanied the minister to Śinde's camp and were detained there. Bābā Phaḍke, Nāropant Cakradev, Trimbak Rāv Paracure and the rest were invited by the *Peśvā* to his palace on business and told that they could gain liberty only by payment of huge fines. Several lakhs were collected in this way but Śinde's hunger was insatiable. In February he married the beautiful daughter of Sarje Rāv Ghātge with ostentatious display; the marriage expense and the clamours of his army for arrears could be satisfied only with money. He now pressed the *Peśvā* for the promised subsidy of two crores. Nānā Phaḍṇis who was in Śinde's custody refused to yield to threats and divulge his secret hoards. The *Peśvā* had not the means of satisfying Śinde's needs and he now suggested that it might be raised by contribution on the capital. Śinde's father-in-law, Sarje Rāv was put in charge of the nefarious business. A veritable reign of terror was let loose on the capital. Making Nānā's residence his head-quarters, Ghātge seized merchants, bankers, money-lenders, in fact whomsoever he suspected of wealth, tortured them and made them disgorge their wealth; several died on the rack and several committed suicide.³

Sarje Rāv was a ruffian and his insolence and cruelty made him insupportable and unpopular with the *Peśvā* and his advisers. On the advice of his brother Amṛt Rāv, Bājī Rāv called Daulat Rāv Śinde for a meeting, taxed him with encouraging the inhumanity and contumacy of his servant and asked him to retire to Hindustan. Having rid himself of the minister, Bājī Rāv was now equally

¹ P. R. C., Vol. XI, p. 66.

² P. R. C., Vol. VI, pp. 84-87, 91-95, 99-111.

³ P. R. C., Vol. VI, pp. 125-129, 136-138, 153-158; Khare, Vol. X, pp. 5374-5390.

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anxious to liberate himself from the thralldom of Śinde. He entered into negotiations with the *Nizām* for obtaining his aid against Śinde. Śinde retaliated by sending his troops in the town to arrest the *Peśvā* and his advisers. The attempt however failed and Śinde had fresh difficulties to face.¹

The widows of Mahādījī Śinde had been promised ample provision by Daulat Rāv on his succession, but had been neglected. In 1797 they came to Poonā to seek redress but met with personal indignities at the hands of Śinde's new *Divān* Sarje Rāv Ghātge. The cause of the ladies was popular with the *Señvi* chiefs of Śinde's army; they had been disgusted at the elevation of Sarje Rāv and now threw in their lot with the ladies. Sarje Rāv made one or two unsuccessful attempts to disperse the insurgents, but they found shelter with the *Peśvā's* brother, Amṛt Rāv and continued to gather strength. The spirit of dissatisfaction spread in Śinde's army. Lakhbā Dādā declared in favour of the ladies and set Śinde's authority to defiance. Daulat Rāv had one resource left to intimidate Bājī Rāv and that was to release Nānā Phadnis. Accordingly Nānā was enlarged from Ahmadnagar fort on July 15th, and brought to Poonā. The minister declared he had no inclination 'to return to the administration of government unless the contending views and interests by which the State was nearly ruined could be completely conciliated. The *Peśvā* and Śinde had involved their affairs in much confusion and distress and his object was to reconcile them and rescue both from impending ruin'. In the distracted state of affairs the *Peśvā* perceived that the experience and influence of Nānā Phadnis was essential to the return of order and tranquillity in the state. He feigned sorrow at the late unhappy happenings, pleaded his innocence and asked the aged minister once more to accept office and save his government from ruin. Nānā refused to be deceived by the duplicity of Bājī Rāv but at last consented to assume administration.

The great minister lived for a year and a half but had little control over either domestic or foreign affairs. The *Chutrapati* of Sātārā and his brother Catur Singh made a bid for their freedom and were fighting Rāste's troops sent against them. The troops of Kolhāpūr Rājā invaded the territory of the Paṭvardhans, plundered and razed Tāsgānv to ground and laid Karnāṭak under contribution. They defeated the Paṭvardhan troops at Paṭṭankuḍī in September 1799 and killed Paraśūrām Bhāu. The insurgents who had joined the Bāis and Śinde troops ravaged the country from the Kṛṣṇā to the Godāvari. In Mālṡā Yaśvant Rāv Holkar was laying the country waste and in the north the struggle between Lakhbā Dādā and Ambājī Ingale brought Marāṭhā authority in contempt. A general atmosphere of anarchy and misrule prevailed in the Marāṭhā country which now swarmed with horsemen and great devastations were committed. Life and property became insecure and it was obvious that things were heading towards a crisis.

¹ Khare, Vol. X, 5391-5400.

Amidst these calamitous circumstances Nānā Phadnis died on 13th March 1800 and "with him departed all wisdom and moderation of the Marāṭhā Government". A great patriot and a diplomat he had succeeded in keeping the English at bay for over a quarter of a century. His last years were clouded by selfish intrigues and low cunning of his adversaries. "His power and influence were founded in his opposition to Rāghobā. They were subsequently supported, consolidated and augmented by his having for a series of years the control of the State as Regent under a tractable minor *Peśvā*. In the conduct of this important and arduous trust for a series of years Nānā displayed considerable talents of a civil and financial nature, exerted with regularity, firmness and consistency, and qualified with great prudence and moderation. But Nānā did not pretend to executive military talents and relied chiefly on his civil authority and address to control the army, which with his command of the treasures and resources of the state and the authority and influence of the *Peśvāship*, gave him till Savāi Mādhav Rāv's death in October 1795, an effectual control not only over the military immediately dependent on the *Peśvā* but also over the great members of the Empire."¹ It is said that in subverting the right of Bājī Rāv to the *Peśvāship*, so as to keep power in his own hands he committed one blunder which had fatal consequences for himself and for the state. But it is difficult to undertake how, circumscribed as he was, he could have avoided that. His statesmanship was of a limited type; being too much steeped in conservatism and the old feudalistic order he refused to look at changes that were taking place round him and lacked the imagination to build a progressive state. With his death disappeared the last link connecting the Marāṭhā Empire with its great warriors and statesmen. The field was left to two incompetent youths, Bājī Rāv and Daulat Rāv who were no match for the British diplomats and soldiers.

The death of Nānā Phadnis released Bājī Rāv and Daulat Rāv Śinde from all restraint. Within less than two months of that event Śinde had his *Señvi Kārbhāris* imprisoned on the charge of being in league with the Bāis and plotting against him. Sarje Rāv Ghātge became Śinde's prime minister and on his advice Bālobā Pāgnis and his brother Dhondibā were sent into captivity at Ahmadnagar. Merciful death on 1 November 1800 saved the old minister from further indignities. His brother Dhondibā and some of his adherents, Tuḷājī Śinde, Mānājī Vāgle, Yaśvant Rāv Vāgle were blown off from a cannon, while Nārāyaṇ Rāv Bakṣi, son of the veteran Jivbā Dādā, was destroyed by rockets tied round his body. Bālobā was suspected of intriguing with Nānā's partisans for putting Amṛt Rāv in authority and reducing Bājī Rāv to a cipher and for Śinde's removal to Hindustan.² After the destruction of the *Señvi* ministers, Nānā's remaining friends and adherents came in for a similar treatment. On the pretext of discussing with them

¹ P.R.C., Vol. VI, p. 112.

² *Aṭhihāsik Lekha Saṅgraha*, Vol. XII, pp. 6462-6476, 6486.

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the adoption of a son by Nānā's widow, Nāropant Cakradev, Bājābā Śiroḷkar, Rāghopant Goḍbole and others were invited to the *Peśvā's* palace, accused of treasonable practices, seized and sent to different forts. The Arab soldiery who were in the employ of these officers rose in revolt and fighting broke out in the heart of the capital. After considerable bloodshed the Arabs were pacified and agreed to retire on payment of the arrears. Amṛt Rāv in whose name the conspiracy was supposed to have been contrived was pensioned off and withdrew to Bassein. The extensive and fertile *jāgīr* of the Patvardhan was transferred to Sarje Rāv Ghātge and Śinde's troops moved southward to take possession plundering and devastating the country from Miraj to Bijāpur.¹

Śinde's control over the *Peśvā* was now complete and he demanded twenty-five lakhs of rupees in cash and new *jāgīr* being the price for the recent *coup*. Bājī Rāv was at his wits' end to satisfy Śinde's ever growing demands. He proposed an alliance with the British to free himself from the designs of Sarje Rāv Ghātge. Śinde's affairs in Hindustan however soon reached a critical stage and Bājī Rāv called off the negotiations to the great disappointment of the Governor General.²

Yaśvant Rāv Holkar had fled to Nāgpūr after Śinde's attack on Malhār Rāv's camp in September 1797. From Nāgpūr he escaped into Khāndeś and was joined by the old servants of the Holkar family. He seized the family treasure at Maheśvar, raised a considerable body of troops and devastated Śinde's territories in Mālvā. The Śinde's ladies and Lakhbā Dādā made common cause with Holkar who now threatened the total subjugation of Śinde's dominion in Hindustan. Matters having come to such a critical stage, Daulat Rāv Śinde left Poonā in November 1800 having extorted bills for forty-seven lakhs of rupees from the *Peśvā*.³

In the summer of 1801 there was heavy fighting round the fords of the Narmadā where Yaśvant Rāv Holkar won a number of brilliant victories and pillaged Śinde's capital Ujjain. By October Śinde's entire army had crossed over and inflicted a crushing defeat on Holkar at Indore. Śinde however instead of following the victory offered terms of peace which were rejected and Holkar resolved to carry the war into the Deccan. In this he was encouraged 'by the consideration that the power of the Poonā Government had grown extremely weak and would fall an easy prey to his attack. If he could strike successfully at Poonā and constitute himself the real custodian of the *Peśvā's* authority, he would give a rude

¹ Poonā Residency Correspondence Series, Vol. VI, pp. 569, 579-581, 586; Aitihāsik Lekha Saṅgraha, Vol. XII, pp. 6504, 6510-6515, 6521-6531, 6674, 6715-6718.

² P.R.C., Vol. VI, pp. 583-591.

³ Aitihāsik Lekha Saṅgraha, Vol. XII, p. 6829, 6834, 6837-6838.

shock to Śinde's prestige and power in the south and correspondingly increase his own.¹ He appears also to have received secret incitement from the old *Mutsaddies* of Poonā headed by Amṛt Rāv. To avenge the death of his brother Viṭhojī was the ostensible reason given out by him for coming southward.

After Śinde's departure Bājī Rāv instead of conciliating parties showed a spirit of revenge towards families suspected of disloyalty either towards his father or himself. 'To distress and pillage all such of them as fell into his hands was a favourite object of his policy.' The *Sarañjāms* of Phaḍke and Ciṭnis were sequestered. Rāste and his two sons, Hirojī Paṭaṅkar, Dādā Gadre, Nānā's brother-in-law Vaiśampāyan, Bhikājī Pant Dāmle, Moro Āṭhavale, to mention only a few names, were arrested on some pretext or other. The insecurity and oppression bred a general disaffection against the *Peśvā's* rule and expressed itself in sporadic risings all over the country. Whoever could command a few horse took to pillage. More serious were the revolts of Jivājī Yaśvant in Khāndeś and Viṭhojī Holkar in Solāpūr district. Viṭhojī after dispersal of Holkar's troops in 1797, fled in the direction of Paṇḍharpūr and took to a roving life. He soon gathered round himself a considerable following, was joined by Yaśvant Rāv Rāmkrṣṇa and Krṣṇa Rāv Modi two of Śinde's disaffected officers. Bājī Rāv sent against them Bālkrṣṇa Gaṅgādhār Bāvanpāge but he too joined the rebels. They declared themselves servants of the *Peśvā's* brother Amṛt Rāv, occupied posts and levied contributions in his name. This made them the particular objects of the *Peśvā's* deep indignation. In March 1801 the rebels were defeated near the Mān river. Viṭhojī Holkar was captured by Bāpū Gokhale and sent to Poonā. Bājī Rāv wished to make an example of him so as to deter the partisans of Amṛt Rāv from further attempts. Viṭhojī was given 200 strokes and then tied to the foot of an elephant and dragged round in the palace court yard.

Bājī Rāv by this barbarous execution sealed his own fate. Viṭhojī Holkar was no ordinary rebel. He belonged to one of the leading families in the Marāṭhā state and the humiliation heaped on that family roused against the *Peśvā*, general execration. Yaśvant Rāv Holkar 'vowed vengeance on those whom he considered his brother's murderers. He arrived in the Deccan in June, brushed aside a force sent against him at Dhond and arrived near Poonā on 23rd October. He had been followed by a force despatched by Śinde under Sadāśiv Bhāu Bhāskar. Some feeble attempts at negotiations were made but could not succeed on account of Holkar's exorbitant demands and the mortal fear entertained of him by the *Peśvā*. The issue was joined on 25th October. Holkar's bravery and dashing leadership carried the day. The joint army of Śinde and the *Peśvā* was annihilated and the *Peśvā* fled to the British for protection.

¹ Bājī Rāv and East India Company by F. C. Gupta.

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THE GREAT
BETRAYAL.
Treaty of
Bassein.

Bājī Rāv's authority as *Peśvā* was rooted in Śinde's military power and when that was temporarily annihilated the *Peśvā* was in a panic. His own military strength was contemptible; his perfidious conduct and treachery towards most of his military chieftains had alienated them from him, excited a general feeling of discontent and dissatisfaction towards his government and left the *Peśvā* friendless. Holkar's troops and *Peṇḍhāris* barred his escape route to the north to join Śinde. In sudden fright, Bājī Rāv fled to Mahād in Konkan and from thence sailed to Bassein in a ship provided by the British Resident at Bānkoṭ. At Bassein on 31st December 1802, he concluded an engagement with the Company's Government accepting British aid for his restoration. The Company agreed to furnish the *Peśvā*, a subsidiary force of not less than six thousand regular Native Infantry with the usual proportion of field pieces and European artillerymen attached and with the proper equipment of warlike stores and ammunition, to be stationed permanently within the *Peśvā's* territory. For its support the *Peśvā* surrendered to the Company, territory yielding an annual revenue of 26 lakhs of rupees. The Company obtained control over the *Peśvā's* foreign relations and was to act as arbitrator in his disputes with the *Nizām* and *Gaikvād*. The *Peśvā* agreed to take no Europeans into his service without the leave of the British Government. It was obvious that henceforward British bayonets were to maintain the *Peśvā* in his power, secure him against domestic as well as foreign rivals and exercise a strict control over his affairs. His independence was a matter of the past. In search of fancied security and in the hope of clinging to his authority, Bājī Rāv had betrayed his trust and sold himself and his people into subjugation.

For the Company's Government the treaty of Bassein was not a pact hastily concluded to aid the *Peśvā* in his distress; it was a culmination of a policy steadily pursued over more than quarter of a century of bringing native rulers under British sovereignty. The policy of non-interference in the affairs of Indian powers had served its day and had been swept aside by Lord Wellesley who came to India as Governor General in 1798. He was out and out an imperialist and had made up his mind to bring the entire continent under British domination. He saw that Great Britain could no longer play any but the dominant part in India. Within a year of his arrival he crushed Tipū's power, persuaded the effete *Nizām* to accept British suzerainty and then turned to the Marāṭhās in the name of the security and tranquillity of British dominion in India. He offered defensive alliance to all the Marāṭhā chiefs. Suspicious of British advances they had refused to consider them. "But the present crisis of affairs in the Marāṭhā State afforded the Governor General the most favourable opportunity for the complete establishment of the interests of the British power in the Marāṭhā empire."¹

¹ Martin, *Wellesley's Despatches*, vol. III, p. 6.

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The war that followed arose out of the unwillingness of the Marāṭhā chiefs to recognize the treaty which dissolved their union. They felt they had been outwitted by the English and brought to the verge of ruin by the *Peśvā's* folly. Holkar, after Bājī Rāv's departure from Poonā attempted to set up a new regime with the help of Amṛt Rāv and his partisans, but in view of the impending march of British troops his cause could get few adherents and he retired to Khāndeś, in March 1803. Daulat Rāv Śinde who had in the beginning welcomed British intervention soon became disillusioned when he discovered that "the re-establishment of the *Peśvā* in the Government of Poonā under the exclusive protection of the British power deprived him of every hope of ever regaining the control that he exercised before. Śinde and Bhosle opened frantic negotiations with Holkar to sink their differences and offer a united front to the English to rescue the *Peśvā* from his British friends. But even in the hour of danger the Marāṭhā chiefs could not forget their mutual animosities. The war that was forced on the chiefs found them unprepared and disunited. In a swift campaign that lasted less than four months, the armies of Śinde and Bhosle were defeated at Assaye, Āḍgānv and Gāvilgāḍ; at the same time Śinde's northern command was shattered at Āgrā and Lāsvari. By the treaties concluded in December 1803, at Devgānv and Surji Añjan-gānv, Bhosle and Śinde concluded peace, abandoning large parts of their conquests in Hindustan and the Deccan and accepting the dissolution of the confederacy.

The first few years of post-war *Peśvāship* were marked by the greatest cordiality between the *Peśvā* and the English. Released from the irksome tutelage of Nānā Phadnis as well as the dreaded rivalry of his powerful feudatories the *Peśvā* was free to follow his inclination in the arrangement of his affairs. He selected men after his own heart for office in government and gave himself up entirely to a life of vicious pleasure alternated by religious observances. The British Resident at Poonā took care to see that he did not involve himself in foreign intrigues and was kept in good humour and the presence of the Subsidiary force hastened the restoration of tranquillity in the *Peśvā's* dominion. The *Peśvā* expressed his gratitude to the English declaring, "I know you both (the Marāṭhās and the English), I have tried you both and I speak from what I feel. Those men with *turbans* who were my servants sought my ruin. You who wear hats and are foreigners, saved me from destruction and gave me back my throne. While they were here I was insulted and oppressed. Now that you are here, I am in repose and I do as I please. They took from their master crores of rupees and still asked for more. You have spent crores of rupees for a friend and demand nothing in return"¹ Col. Close who continued at the Residency till 1809, very tactfully avoided unpleasant discussions and was

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¹ P. R. C., vol. VII, p. 233.

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Southern Jāgirdārs
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helped in this by the non-interference policy of Marlow and Minto which desired no further entanglements with Native Courts.

But decisions on unpleasant topics could not be postponed indefinitely. When the *Peśvā* signed the treaty of Bassein in 1802 he little understood its real significance: he did not know that his restoration to the *Peśvāship* did not bring him back his old authority over his feudatories. He fondly imagined that the English force subsidised by him would help him crush his refractory subjects and give him complete sovereignty over them. From the signing of that treaty the *Peśvā* had urged the use of the Subsidiary force to put an end to the troubles created by the Southern *Jāgirdārs*, by destroying their levies and confiscating their *sarañjāms*. The Southern *Jāgirdārs*, the *Paṭvardhans*, the *Rāstes*, the *Pratinidhi*, the *Desāis* of Kittur, were all Nānā's partisans and were the special objects of the *Peśvā's* hatred. For years they carried on chronic warfare among themselves, seized Government lands and defied the *Peśvā's* officers in Karnāṭak. The *Peśvā* looked to his British allies for help to break the power of these *Jāgirdārs* and resume their grants.

An attempt to bring about a settlement with *Jāgirdārs* was made by Arthur Wellesley in 1803, but was not pursued during the pendency of war with Holkar and the subsequent inroads of the *Peṇḍhāris* in the Deccan. In 1811, Elphinstone came to the Poonā embassy and felt that these Chiefs should be brought under control because in their unsettled state they were always a thorn in the side in time of war. But he refused to fall in with the *Peśvā's* plan. He would not countenance the aggression of the *Peśvā* over the *Jāgirdārs*; while bringing the feudatories to obedience by the treaty of Paṇḍharpur, concluded in 1812, he extended to them British guarantee of protection.¹ This pledge of security by the Resident to the *Jāgirdārs* came as a painful surprise to the *Peśvā*. It made a mockery of his authority over his subjects. It was not so much their allegiance that he desired as their destruction. The arbitration effected by the Resident was altogether distasteful to the *Peśvā* and embittered his mind. He took a strong dislike to his erstwhile friends. This was the first serious rift between the *Peśvā* and the English.

Mission of Gaṅgā-
dhar Śāstrī
(1814).

The settlement with the Southern *Jāgirdārs* was followed by the another episode which again emphasised the serious differences between the *Peśvā* and English. This was the mission of Gaṅgādhara Śāstrī to Poonā. The *Peśvā* had long standing claims on the Gāikvād and had repeatedly asked the British Government for a settlement.² The Gāikvād's Government was in utmost confusion

¹ Poonā Residency Correspondence Series, vol. XII, pp. 80-110, 150-156, 163-169.

² P. R. C., vol. XI, pp. 275-293.

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and it was not until 1814 that an envoy could be deputed to discuss the claims. Gaṅgādhara Śāstrī arrived in Poonā in the beginning of 1814. It was soon discovered that the Śāstrī had authority to discuss only the financial aspect of the dispute with the *Peśvā* which the Poonā Court professed to treat as a subordinate issue.¹ The *Peśvā* wanted to utilise the opportunity offered by the Śāstrī's mission for asserting his paramount authority over the Gāikvād. This the British would not accept. Negotiations dragged on fruitlessly for months in the absence of common ground. The *Peśvā* was encouraged in his recalcitrant attitude by his low associates, chief among whom was Trimbakji Deṅgle. The Śāstrī's refusal to agree with the *Peśvā's* view cost him his life. He was foully murdered in the Viṭṭhal temple at Paṇḍharpur on 20th July 1815.²

The news of the murder of the Śāstrī, a Brāhmin and a foreign envoy, caused great consternation. Elphinstone immediately demanded punishment of the authors and instigators of the crime. He asked the *Peśvā* to confine Trimbakji, who, he declared, was condemned by the universal voice of his subjects. After much protracted negotiations the *Peśvā* yielded. But the arrest of Trimbakji and his imprisonment in the Ṭhāṇā fort in no way settled affairs. The seizure of his favourite minister was looked on by the *Peśvā* as his own disgrace. At the same time the Governor General conveyed to the *Peśvā* a message telling him that his authority was restricted to his independent possessions and no longer extended over the former feudatory Marāṭhā States and his British allies did not propose to restore the old order of things.³ This the *Peśvā* felt as a deliberate insult added to grievous injury and his thoughts turned to revenge and retaliation which he now pursued with secrecy and duplicity peculiar to his nature.

Arrest of
Trimbakji
Deṅgle.

The first stage in the act was the release of Trimbakji Deṅgle. Bāji Rāv entreated the Resident to set free his minister and spoke of sending a *vakīl* to the Governor General to effect his release. The Nepāl War was not progressing according to plan; and the temporary reverses of English troops were much exaggerated in Native Courts and were received with great jubilation. Secret plans and schemes for throwing off the English yoke began to be discussed. The Resident unaware of these rumblings, was reporting to Calcutta that all was quiet at Poonā and that the *Peśvā* was in a chastened mood and had changed his ways. His complacency was soon to be rudely shaken.

Peśvā prepares
for war.

Trimbakji Deṅgle managed to effect his escape from Ṭhāṇā Fort on 12th September 1816. Money for the purpose appears to have

¹ P. R. C., Vol. XI, pp. 343-348, 369-372.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 375-77.

³ P. R. C., vol. XIII, pp. 16-17.

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been supplied by the *Peśvā* through a relative of the Deingle. The story of the escape is too well-known to detain us here. The song recorded by Bishop Habar aptly represents popular sentiment:—

“There are five and fifty coursers there, And four and fifty men;
When the fifty-fifth shall mount his steed, the Deccan thrives again.”

Trimbakji fled to his native place Nimbgañv in Nāsik district and when pursued, disappeared into the Mahādev hills, south-east of Poonā. By the end of February 1817, the British Resident had definite information that Trimbakji had collected 3000 horse and 3000 infantry including the Rāmośis of the region in the neighbourhood of Phaltan and that he was in communication with the *Peśvā*. A week later he was informed of money being sent to Trimbakji from Paṇḍharpur and of men enlisting under his colours. All the accounts brought in by the Brāhmin spies and Harkārās to the Residency tended to prove Trimbakji's preparations for insurrection. And yet the *Peśvā* when asked to explain, denied the existence of the insurrection and the *Peśvā's* detachment sent against the insurgents quietly sat down in the midst of the insurgent's tract and reported that there were no rebels.¹

Elphinstone was convinced that the *Peśvā* was privy to the conspiracy and favoured its progress. He also received reports from Berār and Khāndeś, of troops assembling for Trimbakji under the immediate directions of the *Peśvā's* officers, of forts being repaired, of the *Peśvā* having started intrigues at the Courts of Śinde and Holkar and of his remitting money to Hindustan. The Resident sent repeated messages of remonstrance to the *Peśvā* only to be met with a total denial of facts. On 7th March (1817), a final warning was delivered that unless the *Peśvā* took measures to seize Trimbakji's family and adherents and disperse the insurgents he would be involved in a dispute with the British Government, the fatal consequences of which could not be foreseen.²

The *Peśvā* was however not to be deterred from the course he was determined to follow. Throughout the month of March his hostile preparations continued. His principal chiefs were directed to levy troops, the hill forts were provisioned, treasure and jewels were sent out of Poonā and the *Peśvā* was reported to be intriguing with other Native Courts. The Resident had no doubt now that the *Peśvā* was engaged in a deliberate conspiracy to stir up a war against the British Government. He informed the Governor General, that the *Peśvā* was never to be trusted again and that stern measures should be taken without loss of time to crush his power and deprive him

¹ P. R. C., vol. XIII, pp. 81-126.

² Forest, Official Writings, p. 168.

of the means of harming the Company, should it at any time be engaged in hostilities elsewhere in India. Elphinstone made the necessary military dispositions and waited for orders from Calcutta.

The Subsidiary force under the Commanding Officer, General Smith, arrived at Poonā on the 6th of May; about the same time Elphinstone learnt from a private source that the Governor General had approved of his suggestion of dealing sternly with the *Peśvā*, but that owing to disturbances in Orissā, his *ḍāk* had been delayed on the way. On the next day an ultimatum was delivered to the *Peśvā*, insisting on the immediate surrender of Trimbakji Deingle within the period of one month. For obtaining solid proof of the *Peśvā's* sincerity, Elphinstone demanded to be put in immediate possession of three hill-forts, Sinhgaḍ, Purandar and Rāyagaḍ. On the 8th morning the city was surrounded and the *Peśvā* then submitted and delivered the forts to the Resident. A proclamation offering reward for the seizure of Trimbakji or for giving information leading to his seizure, was issued under the *Peśvā's* signature. His adherents were named in the proclamation and their possessions were confiscated.¹ The Governor General's orders were received on 10th May and in conformity with them a new treaty was concluded on 13th June. It declared Trimbakji as the murderer of Gaṅgādhara Śāstri and the *Peśvā* promised to arrest him and deliver him to the English. The dissolution in form and substance of the Marāṭhā confederacy was recognised by the *Peśvā* and he agreed to recall his agents from foreign Courts including those of the former Marāṭhā feudatories. He made fresh cessions worth thirty-four lakhs of rupees to the British Government for maintaining additional troops at his cost and abandoned all claims over territories beyond the Narmadā.²

The treaty of Poonā was a heavy blow to the *Peśvā*. He had been forced to pay an enormous price for the Company's alliance which had humiliated him and made a mockery of his *Peśvāship*. When he met Malcolm at Māhuli in August next he talked to him with an air of injured innocence, but at the same time pursuing his preparations against the English. The native powers had become restive at the rapidly increasing aggressions of the British and they now looked to the *Peśvā* to head the war against them. The *Peśvā's* military advisers, among whom Bāpū Gokhale now occupied the chief post, counselled him to lie low and wait till the break-up of the monsoon, use the interval for perfecting negotiations with Śinde, Holkar and Bhosle, and the *Peṇḍhāri* chieftains and then rise simultaneously against the British. They pinned their hope to the traditional Marāṭhā warfare, of the Marāṭhā horse ravaging the country all round and making it impossible for the enemy to obtain provisions. These preparations could not be concealed from the Resident and

¹ P. R. C., vol. XIII, pp. 159-166.

² G. G.'s Instructions, 7th April and 17th May 1817.

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he called back the Subsidiary force that had been sent northward to co-operate with Hislop in his operations against the *Peṣvā*. The *Peṣvā* could no longer delay the attack. His army under Bāpū Gokhale burnt the Residency and attacked the small force under Col. Burr on November, 5th, 1817, on the plains extending from the Caturśringī hill but was repulsed. The Third Marāṭhā War had begun.

The issue of the war was never in doubt. The Governor General had prepared a vast army to put an end to the *Peṣvā* menace and this army took the field immediately after the end of the rainy season. The principal *Peṣvā* leader, Amir Khān, came to an understanding with the English and Daulat Rāv Sinde, cowering before English bayonets, entered into fresh treaty relations with Company on the same day that the battle of Kirkee was fought in the Deccan. Holkar State was in utmost confusion and his army was destroyed in the battle of Mahidpūr. Āppā Sāheb Bhosle was defeated in the battle of Sitābuldī. Thus the friends to whom the *Peṣvā* looked for support proved broken reeds. His own army consisting of raw levies of Marāṭhā horse and mercenary Arab soldiers was no match for the disciplined and well-equipped English force under Smith. At the battle of Aṣṭī (February, 1818), Bāpū Gokhale was killed and the English captured the *Rājā* of Sātārā and his family; from now on they posed as fighting on behalf of the successor of the Great Śivājī and a number of *Jāgirdārs* left the *Peṣvā*'s standard. Bājī Rāv became a fugitive and nobody seemed willing to offer him shelter. At last he surrendered to Malcolm on 3rd June 1818, at Mhow near Indore and set on his journey to Bithur near Kānpūr where he lived as a pensioner of the Company for thirty years and died in 1851.

The Governor-General had made up his mind to abolish the *Peṣvā*-ship and place his territory under direct British administration. The line of the *Peṣvā* became extinct and Marāṭhā country came to form a part of British dominion in India.

CHAPTER 6*

THE MARATHAS AND THE ENGLISH

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THE ENGLISH CAME TO INDIA AS TRADERS. The profits of the eastern trade were enormous and had always attracted the more adventurous people of Europe. For about a hundred years after the opening of the sea-route to India, Portugal enjoyed absolute monopoly of this trade, but since the beginning of the 17th century their prosperity was on the decline. The rising maritime powers of Holland and Great Britain dealt severe blows to the naval supremacy of Portugal and challenged its monopoly of Asiatic commerce. The Dutch concentrated on the spice islands and the seizure of Malacca in 1641, signalled their triumph over the Portuguese in that region. They also squeezed the English out of the Malay Archipelago and in a way were responsible for turning the attention of the English to the mainland of India.

The victories of Capt. Best (1612) and Capt. Downton (1614) over Portuguese fleets off the mouth of Tāpi river cleared the way for the English for opening of trade with India. A *farmān* obtained from Emperor Jehāngir in 1613, gave them permission to establish a factory at Surat and with it secured them 'the only key to open all the rich and best trade of the Indies'. The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe (1615-1618), made excellent impression at the Moghal court and soon subordinate agencies sprang up at Ahmadābād, Burhānpūr, Ajmer and Āgrā. The story of the progress of the East India Company in the 17th century and the establishment of factories clustering round Bombay, Madrās and Calcuttā has been told earlier. The rivalry of the East India Company with the Marāṭhās in the 18th century for supremacy in India forms the theme of this chapter.

The Marāṭhās and the English were not strangers when they met in the political arena at the opening of the century. The English were essentially traders seeking concessions from native rulers for

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* This Chapter is contributed by Dr. V. G. Dighe.

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exchanging their merchandise. They had faithfully followed the advice of their first ambassador in India. "Let this be received as a rule that if you will profit, seek it at sea, and in quiet trade; for without controversy it is an error to affect garrisons and land wars in India".¹ In pursuance of this advice the English had confined themselves to trade and had set up a number of factories along the West Coast and in the interior. If they watched political events in the country they watched them for the safety and security of their business.

From 1650, the English factors witnessed the rise of the Marāṭhās under the leadership of Śivājī. The hardy mountaineers and peasants dwelling in the Western corner of India defied the power first of the Ādilshāhī Sultanate and later of the Moghal empire and the English followed their progress with considerable interest. What the Marāṭhās thought of these foreign traders it is difficult to surmise. They treated them with suspicion, but showed little curiosity to know about their country, their way of life or their form of Government. For their navies, they had respect, but on land held them as altogether despicable.

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THE ENGLISH.

The earliest political contact between the Marāṭhās and the English occurred in January 1660, when Śivājī's troops came upto Rājapūr in pursuit of three junks of Afzal Khān in which Afzal's agent had fled there with his master's property, on the capture of Dābhol by the enemy. The English prevented the seizure of these boats and the goods contained in them. A year later in retaliation for the aid given by the English to Siddi Johār at the siege of fort Panhālā, Śivājī surprised Rājapūr and plundered the English factory carrying away with him as prisoners the four factors, Henry Revington, Richard Taylor, Randolph Taylor and Philip Gyffard. The factors were released in March 1663, but apparently no compensation was paid to the English in spite of protracted negotiations. In 1664 and 1670 Śivājī marched on Surat and stripped the city of its fabulous wealth. Though the entire populace suffered at the hands of the invaders, the English defended their factory and warehouse, and were left unmolested. In the years following when Śivājī attacked Kārvār and Hubli, the English factors had to contribute their share of the fine levied on the towns.

Śivājī's revolt in the Deccan and the disturbance caused by it hampered trade and were therefore distasteful to the English merchants. But their trading interests on the mainland, the vicinity of the island of Bombay—their chief seat of authority on the west coast—to the Marāṭhā country and its dependence on it for food and fuel, slowly but inevitably drew the English in the vortex of Marāṭhā politics.

¹ *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe*, ed. by W. Foster (Hakluyat Society), vol. II, p. 344.

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The rise of the Marāṭhā State claiming to unite the country of Mahārāṣṭra under its rule was a threat to the security of foreign settlements on the west coast. The Siddi and the Portuguese who held between them most of the Koṅkan littoral were naturally hostile to the new power. The English though they yet avowed no territorial ambitions, looked askance at the irruption of this novel element. They always made a merit of their being traders with no inclination to take part in the struggle that waged round them.

The Siddi's stronghold of Jañjirā lay only 45 miles from Bombay, the seat of the English settlement on the west coast. He found Bombay a convenient point from which to descend on the mainland, sack and burn villages, seize Śivājī's subjects and capture his shipping in the Peṇ river. The geographical position of the Siddi State marked its ruler as the natural enemy of the Marāṭhās and his atrocities and barbarous treatment of Marāṭhā prisoners inflamed Marāṭhā temper. The Siddi however was a tough fighter; his long experience of sea-faring, his powerful navy, his possession of the island castle of Jañjirā and his connection with the Moghal Court, balked Śivājī of his prey. The Marāṭhā ruler and his successors greatly desired English aid to bring the Siddi to his knees, which the English with large stakes in the Moghal country could ill afford to grant; at the same time they were anxious to appease and keep fair with the Marāṭhā ruler. In 1674, at the time of Rājā's coronation they sent an embassy under Henry Oxenden to congratulate him and conclude a treaty to trade in his country. After a fruitless attempt on the part of Śivājī's ministers to engage the English in a treaty of alliance against the Siddi, a commercial treaty granting them facilities to trade in the Rājā's dominions was signed. This treaty governed the relations between the Marāṭhās and the English for over half a century.

The treaty of Rāyagaḍ though hailed as very advantageous to both parties, did not lull mutual suspicions. Within two years of its ratification the Bombay Council was complaining that "so long as that pirate and universal robber lives, that hath no regard to friend nor foe, God nor man, there can be no security in any trade in his country."¹ The occupation of the island of Khānderi, lying at the mouth of Bombay harbour, by Śivājī in 1679, brought about a collision. When Śivājī found that the English would not or could not restrain the Siddi from entering the Panvel creek and molesting his territory, he sent his marines to occupy the island of Khānderi (Kenry) which commands the entry into the harbour of Bombay.

The English became apprehensive that 'Śivājī's designs could not be otherwise than to have check on the whole trade of Bombay and adjacent parts keeping there always a fleet of small brigantines to cruise up and down'.² The Deputy Governor of Bombay

¹ F. R., Surat, vol. 89, pp. 69-70.

² F. R., Bombay, vol. 8, p. 28.

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requested the Marāṭhā Commander to quit the place as it belonged to the island of Bombay. The request was declined and the work on fortifications went ahead. The expedition sent to dislodge the inmates (September 1679) failed miserably. At the end of November, the Siddi joined the English in blockading the island of Khānderi. Sivājī in retaliation threatened to invade Bombay and collected a large army at Kalyāṇ at which the inhabitants of Bombay became greatly alarmed. The Surat Council dreading a protracted struggle climbed down, withdrew its ships and made peace (January 1680). Khānderi remained in the hands of the Marāṭhās.

Dr. Fryer who then passed through Bombay has left in his journal the popular impression of the episode. He observes, "amongst these wars, and rumours of wars, we quietly lay down our Arms and leave Seva Gi and Syddy alone to contend for our stony piece of ground on Henry Kenry; how much to our Honour or Reproach may be gathered from the language daily cast in our Teeth. 'Why vaunt your Nation? What Victories have you achieved? What has your sword done? Who ever felt your power? What do you possess? everyone runs you down; you can scarce keep Bombain, which you got not by your Valour, but compact; And will you pretend to be Men of War or cope with our Princes? It's fitter for you to live on Merchandise and submit to us.'"¹

The period following Sivājī's demise, till the end of the century was one of peace between the Marāṭhās and the English. The warfare between the Moghal and the Marāṭhās was quickened in 1681 by the arrival in the Deccan of Aurangzeb himself and engrossed the entire energies of the Marāṭhā nation. The coastal districts were overrun by Moghal armies and the Siddi was once more put in charge of places he had lost to Sivājī before. He now became very active and attacked Marāṭhā shipping in Bombay waters. Sambhājī's protest against his sheltering in the harbour went unheeded. The nascent Marāṭhā navy was swept off the sea.

At the end of the century however there was a turn of fortune. Kānhoji Āngre by his daring and enterprise raised himself to the position of Admiral of the Marāṭhā fleet (1698) and claimed tribute from all vessels sailing along the west coast. Āngre's activities formed a part of the general struggle of the Marāṭhā people against Moghal conquest of their homeland. The chief objective to which his policy was directed was to recover Marāṭhā territory occupied by the Siddi and other foreign powers. The Western seas were to be Marāṭhā waters and all who visited ports established in them, were to be taught to respect Marāṭhā sovereignty and secure his permission for trading in those waters by buying his passes. Whatever power refused to conform to his orders would do it at the peril of bringing on its merchantmen his strong hand. His claim was challenged by the Siddi as well as the European powers, the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English, who on account of important

¹ John Fryer, *A new account of the East Indies and Persia*, vol. 3, pp. 163-165.

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trading interests on the Malbār coast, found such a demand most galling and injurious to their commerce. They preferred to look on Āngre as a pirate, as an enemy of peaceful commerce and made light of his high-sounding demands. Confident of their superiority at sea with their large ocean-sailing vessels and with their greater fire-power the Europeans refused to submit to Āngre's claims and preferred to fight out the issue. Āngre's fleet though inferior in weight and number, could always seek the shelter of forts which lined the coast. So long as his rear remained secure, Āngre could laugh at the efforts of his enemies to destroy his naval power. A state of perpetual warfare, punctuated by short periods of peace, therefore, existed on the coast between the Marāṭhā Admiral and his neighbours.

The English at Bombay watched Āngre's activities with great anxiety. Small ships belonging to the country merchants plying between Bombay and Cochin were seized by him and hardly any shipping could pass or repass Bombay. In 1699 they expressed their fears "of Sevajees and Sanganians grown strong and impudent so that scare any boats can pass to and from the island without convoys."¹ The Bombay Consultation, dated 6 February 1699 reports "the *Subhedār* of Kānhoji Āngre having agreed to the release of two Bombay merchants and requesting salt boats to visit his country."² In the fighting that broke out between the Siddi and Āngre at the end of 1700 the Siddi accused the English with supplying the Sevajees with ammunition.³ In 1702 a small trading vessel from Calicut with six Englishmen on board fell in Kānhoji's hands. A year later his galivats were worrying the fishermen of Worlee.⁴ In September of that year the English seized a *grab* sailing under Āngre's colour as "Conajee Āngre and his people were at sundry times committing many injurious and piratical actions on the inhabitants of this island". In 1704 November Kānhoji Āngre boldly rode into the bay of Bombay and anchoring his vessels at the mouth of the Peñ river threatened to starve the island. Mr. Reynolds was deputed to find him and tell him that "he could not be permitted searching, molesting or seizing vessels without breach of the existing friendship."⁵ Āngre returned a defiant answer saying that "The Sevajees had done many services for the English that never kept their word with him; that they lived now by their sword and would seize what boats or other vessels belonging either to the Mogulls vessels from any of his ports or Mallabarr, excepting such as had Conajee Āngre's passports; the English being at liberty acting as they please."⁶

¹ O. C. vol. 55, No. 6642.

² F. R., Bombay, vol. 5, p. 8.

³ O. C., vol. 56, No. 7506.

⁴ F. R., Bombay, vol. 5, p. 9.

⁵ *Bombay Public Proceedings*, vol. 2, pp. 15, 17, 21.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

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Surat letters to the Directors, of the period, are full of lament for losses suffered by them at hands of Āngre. In February 1707 Kānhoji captured the Company's *Machva* cruising off the Māhim river. In the same year the *Bombay* frigate was blown up in an encounter with his ships. In 1710, a Dutch sloop of war was captured and the *Godolphin* narrowly escaped the same fate. In 1711 the Directors were told that Āngre could take any ship except the largest ones: "along the coast from Surat to Dabul he takes all private merchant vessels he meets". The next year he captured the Governor of Bombay's armed Yacht and the *Anne Kārvar* and attacked the *Somers* and the *Grantham* East Indiamen.¹

While thus at war with his maritime neighbours Kānhoji Āngre as a partisan of Tārā Bāi, found himself involved in civil war. On the advice of Bālaji Viśvanāth he soon came to an understanding with Sāhū and was confirmed in the command of the fleet, was put in charge of several forts in Konkan and promised support in the contest with the Siddi.²

Kānhoji about this time also made up his differences with the English. In February 1713 he agreed that "in future English ships should be free from molestation, that no ships of any nation coming into Bombay harbour should be interfered with between Māhim and Kennerly (Khānderi), that English merchants should have liberty of trade in Āngre's ports on payment of the usual dues and that Āngre should be responsible for any damages done in future by the ships belonging to his Marāthā superiors. In return the Governor engaged to give passes only to ships belonging to the subjects of the English nation and to allow Āngre's people full facilities in Bombay."³

The treaty concluded with the English proved but a temporary truce. The town of Bombay was then unwallled and the factory had no marine to protect its interests. The island was in a declining posture when Charles Boone arrived as Governor at the end of 1713. With his arrival the settlement began to show great activity in equipping its fighting marine. Within two years it had built and equipped a fleet—consisting of "nineteen frigates, grabs, ketches, gallivats and rowing galleys, carrying two hundred and twenty guns besides a bomb-vessel and a fireship". This naturally alarmed Kānhoji and when he found the English engaged in war with the Sounda Rājā he recommenced attacks on Bombay shipping.

The immediate cause of hostilities was the capture of their merchantmen, *The Success*, the *Robert* and the *Otter* by Āngre. Āngre contended that these vessels belonged to foreign merchants

¹ *Malbār Pirates*, by Biddulph, pp. 77, 78.

² *Treaties, Agreements and Sanads*, edited by Mawjee and Parasnis, p. 197.

³ *Bombay Public Consultations Range*, ecc XLI, No. 4, (Consultation, 12th February 1713).

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and though laden with the goods of the Company could claim no exemption from his passes. The English retaliated by the seizure of one of Āngre's Sibar that visited Māhim and attack on his coastal towns. War was formally declared on 17 June 1718.

On the close of the monsoon on 2nd November a formidable expedition consisting of two East Indiamen, the *Victoria* frigate, the *Revenge* and *Defiance* grabs, the *Fame* galley, the *Hunter Ketch* and fifty gallivats sailed against the island of Khānderi. Boone led the expedition in person in the *Addison*. Two more ships the *Morrice* and *Stanhope* joined the expedition. A distant cannonade having produced little effect it was decided to take the fort by assault. Two attempts at landing were made on 6th and 7th November but both failed, the landing party was driven to the water and many were drowned. The fleet then proceeded to Kolābā, threw in a few shots and then sailed southward to do what damage it could to Āngre's forts and ships. They found a grab at Vijaydurg but the fire vessel of the fleet was blown up by a shot from the enemy before she could board the grab. Going to Kārvar they came across Āngre's fleet and took four of their prizes but the grabs got away. On the return voyage the fleet once more looked into Vijaydurg creek, found none of Āngre's fighting vessels, cast in a few cowhorns setting fire to some houses and then resumed its voyage to Bombay (December 1718).¹

Attempts were made about this time by Sāhū Rājā to intervene and stop the fighting. The terms proposed by the English were not acceptable and the treaty was not ratified. In consequence another expedition consisting of nine vessels and several fishing boats for landing troops and a strong detachment of troops was sent against Vijaydurg (Gheriā) in September of 1720 under Walter Brown. Āngre's fleet retired up the river and the cannonading had little effect on the fort. After burning a few boats the English commander retired.² The Government of Bombay celebrated this as a victory and fired salutes, but Āngre affirmed it was an inglorious defeat and demonstrated the little regard in which he held the enemy's threats he attacked the English ship *Charlotte* (April 1720) and carried her into Gheriā.³

Āngre's career was unchecked. He continued to defy the efforts of the Portuguese and the English to bring him to book. However common danger made the two European rivals forget their old animosities and join hands in an alliance to destroy their enemy. A treaty providing for a joint attack on Kolābā was concluded on 20th August 1721.

¹ The failure of the expedition against Khānderi is attributed to the treachery of Rāmā Kāmat, a Hindu inhabitant of Bombay. More correctly, it should be attributed to a Portuguese renegade Manuel de Castro: see Downing's History of the Indian Wars, Introduction, p. xvi and pp. 35-39.

² *Bombay Abstracts*, vol. I, p. 376 and the *Bombay Gazetteer*, vol. xxvi, Part I, p. 152; History of the Indian Navy by Low, vol. I, p. 100.

³ *Ibid.*

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The arrival of a royal squadron in Bombay in September (1721) under Commodore Mathews further added to the strength of the allies. On 29th November the expedition sailed from Bombay and joined the Portuguese force at Caul. Alibāg was bombarded on the 12th December and two days later an assault was made on the fort. No breach had been made and the walls were twenty feet high. The attack was repulsed with heavy losses, the Portuguese showing little spirit. The Viceroy of Goā being taken ill retired to his ship and the Portuguese contingent broke as soon as they saw the enemy advancing. Commodore Mathews watching the rout flew into a rage and roughly handled the Portuguese Captain. *Peśvā* Bāji Rāv and Pilāji Jādhar on behalf of Sāhū Rājā arrived at the head of six thousand cavalry, seized the field guns and ammunition of the enemy and threatened to wipe out his entire force.

The entry of Sāhū in the war immediately turned the scales against the allies. The Portuguese were not prepared to antagonise the entire Marāthā nation and as soon as the *Peśvā* offered to mediate in the dispute, they accepted his mediation. The insolent behaviour of the English Commodore towards the Portuguese Viceroy and General was not calculated to restore amity among the allies. The Portuguese accepted the liberal terms offered to them by the *Peśvā* in the name of Sāhū Rājā (9th January 1722) and the English withdrew to Bombay. The alliance that had been heralded with so much éclat broke up without achieving anything.¹

The war with the English continued with pauses at intervals. When pressed in other quarters Āngre would wave the olive branch and express willingness to make peace. When the pressure eased, his ships would be once more active. In 1723 Āngre was engaged in hostilities with the Sāvāt of Vādī and was threatened by the Dutch. He offered to discuss peace terms with William Phipps, the new Governor of Bombay. Phipps haughtily turned down the proposal charging Āngre with piracy; before he could hear of any terms he asked the Marāthā Commander to renounce war and as proof of his sincerity demanded immediate release of prisoners. This called forth Kānhoji's ire, he replied that "it little behoved merchants to say that his government was supported by violence, insults and piracies; for the great Śivāji founded his kingdom by making war against four kings; and that he himself was but his humble disciple; that he was ever willing to favour the merchants trading according to the laws of his country", and offered to release the English prisoners if his men imprisoned by the English were set at liberty.² Though the negotiations did not bring peace an exchange of prisoners was effected in 1725. Kānhoji's last act of hostility against the English was the seizure of the Company's galley *King William* in 1728. He died on 4th July 1729.

¹ Downing, *History of the Indian Wars*, pp. 53-57 and F. N., on p. 56; Biddulph, *Malabar Pirates*, pp. 174-180.

² Forest, Home Series, vol. II, pp. 37-41.

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DEATH OF
KANHOJI
ĀNGRE.

The death of Kānhoji Āngre forms a turning point in Anglo-Marāthā relations which were all along marked with the greatest acerbity on both sides. Āngre's restless energy, resourcefulness and daring had brought the Marāthā Navy to a high pitch of efficiency and developed it into a powerful striking force. His authority was supreme in Konkan and his exclusive writ ran in that region. Though his rivals affected to speak of him as a "Corsair", they saw in him the representative of Marāthā authority, the symbol of a mighty nation that appeared to be destined to take the place of the Moghal. If they dreaded his ships, they dreaded more the might of the Marāthā state that stood behind them.

Kānhoji's death brought about a change in the situation and resulted in new alignments. The Āngre family was riven with disputes. Kānhoji's immediate successor Sekhoji, the most capable and sanest among his sons, died within a short period of his appointment (1733 August). His remaining family, Sambhāji, Mānāji, and Tulāji and others, were all self-willed obstinate youths who quarrelled violently among themselves and invited outside intervention. The intemperate behaviour of Sambhāji Āngre towards the King and his powerful attitude of the latter with his *Peśvā*, the grasping and domineering attitude of the latter with his subtle intrigues brought about the downfall of the Āngre family and with it the ruin of the Marāthā navy and gave the English the opportunity to deliver its first deadly blow against Marāthā power.

DISPUTES IN
ĀNGRE'S
FAMILY.

Sambhāji Āngre succeeded to the Admiralty in 1733, September. A very capable man, he was rough of speech and rough of manners. Mānāji soon fell foul with him and opened negotiations with the Portuguese and the English to support his claim against his brother. The English naturally welcomed the opportunity of weakening the Āngre and despatched Capt. Inchbird to Caul (December 1734), to encourage Mānāji in his evil designs. It was very advantageous to them to keep up the dissensions between the brothers and thereby divide their force; they therefore authorised their agent to offer Mānāji money and military stores and instructed him "to spirit up Mānāji to carry on his resentments against his brother."¹

Mānāji Āngre's agents also met *Peśvā* Bāji Rāv, whom Sambhāji had greatly offended by his recalcitrance. The *Peśvā* saw in the family discord an opportunity to humiliate his opponent, reduce the Āngre power and make it subservient to his authority. He decided that the fleet and territories of Kānhoji Āngre should be divided between his protege Mānāji and Sambhāji; that Mānāji should hold independent charge of Kolābā² and Sambhāji that of Suvarnadurg. The arrangement ousted Sambhāji permanently from his northern posses-

¹ *Kavyetihās Saṅgraha Patre Yādī*, 23(1930, Ed.), S. P. D. III, 112 and xxxiii, 147, 159, 165, 245, 264, 274, 437. Also *Public Dept. Diary*, vol. VII, consultations, dated 22nd November 1734 and December.

² Rajwade—*Marāthyañcyā Itihāsāci Sādhane*, II, pp. 71-72.

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sions and confined him to the barren tract of the Ratnāgiri district. Sambhājī retained his father's title of *Sarkhel*, but it no longer stood for the principal command of the navy. Sambhājī naturally resented this decision and was never reconciled to the partition.¹ As the more daring and active among the brothers his removal from the vicinity of Bombay, gave satisfaction to the English. They had all these years meekly submitted to the insults of Āngre and were now happy at the turn of events. They accepted Mānājī as lesser of the two evils and readily assisted him to keep the feud alive. The *Peśvā* had humbled not only the pride of the Āngre house but had the Āngre's fief in his grip. A new English-*Peśvā*-Mānājī axis was established to curb Sambhājī Āngre and keep him away from Kolābā. This friendly understanding was the note of the next two decades and lasted till Āngre's power was completely overthrown in 1756.

With the conquest of Sālsette and Bassein by Cimājī Āppā in 1739, the *Peśvā* and the English became near neighbours and found it necessary to know each other intimately and cultivate a closer understanding. They despatched two embassies, one to Sāhū Rājā at Sātārā and the other to Cimājī Āppā at Bassein, to acquaint themselves with the aims and working of the Marāṭhā Court and assess the strength of their new neighbour.²

EMBASSIES OF
GORDON AND
INCHBIRD.

The first embassy was headed by Capt. Gordon. The object of the embassy as Capt. Gordon's letter of instructions informed him, was to gain information and insight into the Government interests and designs of the Marāṭhā Court. The envoy was to obtain knowledge of the state of Sāhū Rājā's Government and to discover who were Bājī Rāv's enemies at the Court and how much they were to be depended on. "It will not be amiss," the Board writes, "if you see a proper occasion and opening to instill a jealousy of his ambition and growing power by the accession of his conquests". Gordon left Bombay on the 12th May 1739 and arrived in Sāhū Rājā's camp near Miraj on 1st June. He found the atmosphere at the Court not unfriendly and the Rājā willing to do the English good offices; but his good offices counted for little as the *Peśvā* was all powerful and made small account of the Rājā. Gordon was not able to discover the real intentions of Bājī Rāv, but the general view was that he had no designs of molesting Bombay as it was esteemed useful for advancing the prosperity of his new acquisitions.

Capt. Inchbird's embassy to Cimājī Āppā was much more successful. Inchbird's mission was meant to disarm Marāṭhā jealousy for having aided the Siddi and the Portuguese in their late wars against

¹ Br. Ch. 326-328 and Rajwade, III, 272, 278.

² The accounts of the two embassies are given by Forrest in *The Selections from the Letters, Despatches and other State papers, Marāṭhā Series*, vol. I, Part I, pp. 67-84.

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the Marāṭhās, to discourage any demand for tribute and yet to impress the Marāṭhā General with the sincere desire of the English to cultivate a good understanding with their new neighbours. Inchbird spoke to the Marāṭhā Council of the importance of encouraging foreign trade to make their country prosperous. He succeeded in arranging the terms of a treaty, dated 12th July 1739 which was ratified at Bombay. It was not the first engagement of its kind as alleged by Forrest and Aitchison, but marks a land-mark in Anglo-Marāṭhā relations. It regulated trade between Bombay and the Marāṭhā Country and navigation of the Māhim River. By it the *Peśvā* conceded to the English free trade in his dominions.¹

A year after the conclusion of the treaty, *Peśvā* Bājī Rāv died. He was succeeded by his eldest son Bālājī Bājī Rāv more commonly called Nānā Sāheb. The policy of his father on the west coast remained unchanged. The new *Peśvā*'s servants in Konkan pursued their master's interests with great vehemence and continued to squeeze Āngres—Mānājī, Sambhājī and their successors—out of their land possessions, contributing materially to the success of the English navy at sea over their rival. The position of the Āngres grew more and more precarious. In spite of the exhortations of the great Sīvājī that the navy should meet its upkeep from the central exchequer and not depend on its earnings at sea for its sustenance,² it was driven to a course of indiscriminate plunder by its necessities. Sāhū unable to aid the fleet with money, had shown wisdom in accepting the advice of his Minister Bālājī Viśvanāth to sustain the fleet by marking Konkan as Āngre's sphere of influence and giving him a free rein in that field. The advent of *Peśvā*'s power in the Āngre's field—the domineering views of Bājī Rāv and his son and the failure of the Āngre brothers in coming to an understanding among themselves and their neighbours, upset the arrangement, isolated the naval command and dried up the resources of the Marāṭhā fleet. The destruction of Āngre's navy in 1756, was not a sudden catastrophe but the culmination of the policy initiated and worked out by the *Peśvā* since 1735.

In the discussion over the Portuguese treaty, Cimājī Āppā conveyed to the English envoy that "both the Āngres were pirates, robbers, senseless impolitic fellows". Inchbird agreed, saying "they were past all cure and it was labour in vain to reclaim them". Cimājī told the envoy that "if the English were ready to act in co-operation with a Marāṭhā force to destroy the pirate next season he would himself come down, and join the English in taking all Āngre's forts and country."³ The treaty ending the war with the Portuguese contained an article which provided for joint action for destroying the Āngre.

¹ Forrest, *Marāṭhā Series*, Ed. by Forrest, pp. 71-74, *Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, ed. by Aitchison, vol. II, pp. 9-13, (1931, Ed.).

² *Adnyāpatra*, p. 34 (1826, Ed.).

³ *Pub. Dept. Diary*, XIII, pp. 330-339.

ANGLO PESHVA
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In 1740 March, Sambhaji Āngre suddenly appeared before Kolābā, landed troops and with little opposition "seized all the ports and strong places in consequence of secret understanding with Mānaji's officers, only Kolābā and one small out-fort holding out for Mānaji". Sambhaji sent a message to his brother that he was visiting Alibāg to pay respects to his father's *samādhi*. The prospect of Sambhaji establishing himself at Kolābā and obliging the Company to increase their Marine force (the expense of which is already intolerant) to secure the navigation of the coast" was altogether unpalatable to the Bombay Council. They immediately despatched relief to Mānaji under Captain Inchbird and anxiously watched the issue of the contest. In the meanwhile a large force under Cimaji Āppā also arrived at Kolābā to support Mānaji in the struggle. Caught between two fires Sambhaji Āngre had little chance of escaping. He was fortunately aided out of the impasse by Mānaji himself who to his dismay found his ally and patron occupying his forts of Karañjā, Elephanta, Pālī Mirgaḍ and making himself free with his territory round these strongholds. Sambhaji, surrendering the places seized by him, quickly slipped away and repaired to the *Rājā's* court to lodge a complaint against the *Peśvā's* high handed action. Nothing apparently came out of the visit, Sambhaji returning a disappointed man.¹

The Kolābā incident served to cement further the union between the English and the Marāthās (the *Peśvā*). "Acting on Capt. Inchbird's report that the Marāthās were too jealous of Sambhaji's power and so many hostilities had already past between them, that they were bent to reducing him and would attack him as soon as a proper season would allow of their entering upon the action and were very pressing to gain a declaration of the Company's intention", the Bombay Council decided "that it could not do better than embrace the Marāthā (the *Peśvā's*) party and assist them in any expedition against him, so far as its forces would permit. By such a step it felt it would contribute to the humbling of a resolute bold enemy and also benefit by such events as their enmity might present it."² Cimaji Āppā who had conducted these negotiations died in December 1740, and Sambhaji's annual incursions remained unchecked. He seized the *Resolution* returning to Bombay from Surat and caused quite a panic. He died a year later on 12th January 1742.

TULAJI ĀNGRE

Mānaji Āngre ended with becoming a satellite of the *Peśvā*. Tulaji his half-brother and successor to Sambhaji Āngre's title, fleet and the barren kingdom of South Konkan—suffered worse fate. Tulaji was active and brave but haughty and altogether lacking in political foresight. His reckless courage and daring seamanship proved his

¹ Br. Ch. 56, Pub. Dept. Diary, XIII, B. 218-238, 253-260.

² Pub. Dept. Diary, XIII, B. pp. 305-306.

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undoing. Claiming that he was a servant of the Crown he looked on himself as a peer of the *Peśvā* and refused to bend his knee before the latter. The *Peśvā* had usurped the authority of the crown; his hostility placed Tulaji in the position of a rebel against the State. The *Sarkhel* while feigning allegiance to the puppet monarch at Sātārā, followed a line of action dictated by his personal needs and selfish interests. To subsist his army he entered into a war with the Sāvāt of Vāḍi at the end of 1746 and gained successes in the initial stages. But in 1748, the Sāvāt with the *Peśvā's* aid defeated him with heavy loss at Kuḍāl, and drove him out.¹ A third raid by Tulaji about 1750, was also successfully beaten back. His attempt against the chiefs of Viśālgaḍ and Bāvdā met with a similar fate.² To keep alive his fleet he raided Malabār ports and preyed on merchant shipping. His activities on land and at sea made him repugnant to all his neighbours—Marāthā chiefs of Viśālgaḍ, Bāvdā, Kolhāpūr and Vāḍi and the foreign maritime powers—the English, the Portuguese and the Dutch. The *Peśvā* in his capacity as the head of the State and the supreme law-giver, took it upon himself to champion the cause of the smaller chieftains and entered into alliance with the English 'to subdue and demolish Tulaji Āngre'.

Tulaji Āngre was not unaware of the clouds gathering over his head. In October 1754, he sent his agents to the Bombay Council with a proposal for accommodating their long standing differences. The terms he offered were liberal enough to be acceptable. But the English would hear none of it. They flatly refused to recognise Āngre's right to issue passes for their trading vessels, insisted on the restoration of all the ships seized by him and called on him to send them men of consequence to treat of peace.³ The reply clearly indicated that the English were in no mood to accommodate and Āngre could expect no quarter from them.

The *Peśvā* by 1754, had made himself master of the Konkan with the exception of the coastline. If Āngre would not go before him as a suppliant, would not respect his flag, there was no place for him in the Marāthā confederacy. With the *Peśvā* and Rāmaji Mahādev, his *Subhedār* of Sālsette, destruction of Āngre and his navy became an obsession. All the objections and fears of the English, Rāmaji Pant overcame by his arguments and by making them large concessions.⁴ On 19th March 1755, was concluded the agreement for

¹ S. P. D., XXIV, Nos. 86, 101, 98, 103, 99, 110, 115, 30, 113, 41, XXXIV, 34, Count of Alorna's report, pp. 203-206; History of Sāvāntvāḍi, *Ratnāgiri Gazetteer*, 1880, p. 441.

² S. P. D. XXIV, 20 25, *Pant Pratinidhi Bakhar in Bhārat Varṣa*, Vol. I, p. 56; *Gode Family Bakhar and Battle of Mudagaḍ*, J. U. B., Vol. V, Part IV, *Gode Family Bakhar and Battle of Mudagaḍ*, J. U. B., vol. V, Part IV, *Sāhū Roznāśi*, 225-229, 236 and 240.

³ Pub. Dept. Diary, Volume 27 (1754), pp. 309-315.

⁴ S. P. D., XII, 115.

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making a joint assault on Āngre's strongholds. The English squadron sailed out of Bombay under Commodore James and at Caul was joined by the Marāṭhā fleet. On 29th, they arrived before Suvarṇadurg and opening a terrific bombardment carried the place on 4th April. The lateness of the season held up operations for another year. Gheriā and Vijayadurg were assaulted by the fleet under Admiral Watson on 11th February 1756. A chance shell fell among Āngre's fleet which had been drawn up in the river and set on fire the *Restoration* grab. It spread to other ships and before long the whole of Āngre's fleet was on fire and was completely burnt out. At night the Admiral landed his troops to get between the town and the Marāṭhā camp. About four in the afternoon of the 13th, the attack was renewed and the garrison flung out the flag of truce. The English troops marched in, took possession of the place and hoisted their flag. The destruction of Āngre's power was complete. His entire fleet, which had been the terror of the coast for half a century, had gone up in a blaze. Āngre became a prisoner in his enemy's hands, was sent to Poonā and remained in custody till his death in 1786. The fort of Vijayadurg was plundered of all its accumulated treasure by the English and handed over to the *Peśvā* six months later after tedious negotiations. The *Peśvā* crushed his rival on the coast but in doing so lost the navy.

GROWING ANGLO-
MARATHA
TENSION.

The extermination of Tulājī Āngre closed the chapter of Anglo-Marāṭhā friendship. Though a new treaty concluded in the October of 1756, gave exclusive commercial advantages to the British in addition to a few villages round about Bāṅkot or Fort Victoria, the English could not be persuaded to accede to the *Peśvā's* request for help in his Karnātak and Hindustan projects. The all-round expansion of Marāṭhā power was viewed by the British with greatest anxiety and if they did not pursue active measures to prevent it, they refused to be a party to it. The relations between the *Peśvā* and the English became less and less cordial. The acquisition of Surat by the English in 1759 and their support of the Siddi of Jañjirā in his struggle against the *Peśvā's* navy so infuriated the Poonā Government that it refused to transact business with the mission sent to Poonā under Price in the August of 1759.¹

A year and half after the visit of the mission a terrible disaster overtook the *Peśvā* in Hindustan. At the battle of Pānīpat in 1761, the *Peśvā's* main army led by his cousin and his son was annihilated by the Afghān marauder Ahmad Śāh Abdālī aided by Najib Khān Rohillā and other Indian Muslim chieftains. Marāṭhā power in Northern India was destroyed and Marāṭhā prestige received a fatal blow. The defeat at Pānīpat was followed by the death of Bālājī Rāv *Peśvā* and the outbreak of civil war between his minor son Mādhav Rāv and his brother Rāghobā. The *Peśvā's* neighbours became restless and seized large parts of his dominions.

¹ Forrest, *Marāṭhā Series*, Vol. I, pp. 125-138.

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While Marāṭhā affairs were thus in a declining posture the fortunes of the East India Company were on the ascendant. The end of the Anglo-French struggle in January 1761, had left the British without a foreign rival on the Indian continent. Their victory over the *Navāb* of Bengal (1757) and subsequent revolutions engineered by them had put the richest Indian province at their command and provided them with a convenient base from which to march to the heart of Hindustan. From a trading concern the Company had risen to the position of a first-rate power and was now competing with the Marāṭhās for the political leadership of India. Nothing could have suited their ambitious views better than to see their opponents weakened by losses and riven by civil war. Growing coolness marked the next phase of Anglo-Marāṭhā relations which lasted from 1756 to 1774.

The difficulties of Poonā Government encouraged ambitious views in the Bombay Council. When envoys arrived at Bombay from Rāghobā during the monsoon of 1761, the Bombay Council welcomed the mission as giving them an opportunity for acquiring the islands of Sālsette and Bassein, "not so much for advantages expected from revenue, as advanced positions necessary to the security of the island and harbour of Bombay". Rāghobā offered to make cessions in Gujarāt for British aid in arms, but as Sālsette did not find a place in the cessions the talks ended inconclusively.

Mādhav Rāv *Peśvā* during his short regime showed wonderful resourcefulness and under his leadership the Marāṭhās recovered rapidly. By 1767, the embers of civil war laid low, the *Nizām* was humbled and professed friendship; Jānoji Bhosle who had been a source of great trouble was brought to book and made to disgorge his ill-gotten gains; above all Haidar Ali the most active enemy of the Marāṭhās was soundly beaten in several campaigns and abandoned much of the territory seized by him and agreed to pay a tribute of 33 lakhs of rupees. The President of the Bombay Council writing in November 1767 "lamented the growing power of the Marāṭhās and felt that nothing should be left undone to check it as much as possible". An embassy was sent to Poonā under Thomas Mostyn to learn the designs and sound the disposition of the Marāṭhā Court and persuade it to join the English against Haidar Ali. Mostyn soon discovered that there was little possibility of the Marāṭhās making common cause with Haidar Ali and did not press for a closer alliance.

The embassy sent its agent, Charles Brome, to Rāghobā at Nāsik to discover what advantages he was prepared to make to the English. Rāghobā expressed his resentment that his nephew did not leave him any share in the administration but had no definite proposals to offer.¹

¹ *op. cit.*, pp. 140-176.

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Mostyn once more visited Poonā in 1772, September under instructions of the Home authorities "to negotiate for certain advantages for the settlement in the Malabār and also for the cession of the island and peninsula of Sālsette and Bassein which added so much to the security and value of Bombay and penetrate Marāṭhā designs which might affect the Company's possessions in Bengal or Carnatic.". The period of Mostyn's third embassy lasted till the December of 1774 and was full of momentous events at Poonā—the death of Mādhav Rāv *Peśvā*, murder of Nārāyaṇ Rāv and the revolutions in the Poonā Government. Mostyn's reports convinced his masters that the time had come to strike the blow for the possession of Sālsette and that the seizure of the island amidst the confusion that reigned at the Marāṭhā capital, would pass unnoticed. An expedition under General Gordon and Superintendent Watson suddenly appeared before Thānā, assaulted the fort and occupied the island on 23rd December 1774. Rumours of a Portuguese fleet threatening Sālsette was given as the excuse for the English attack.

The seizure of Sālsette was an act of wanton aggression and formed one of the causes of Anglo-Marāṭhā hostilities that ensued in the year following. But the main reason for the outbreak was Rāghobā's invitation to the Bombay Council to support his claim to the *Peśvāship* against the Bārbbhāis or the council of Poonā ministers. Rāghobā was neither a diplomat nor a soldier and never popular at Poonā Court. The defeat of Pānipat and the consequent death of Bālājī Rāv *Peśvā* had dragged this small man from obscurity and put him in a position of command. As the sole surviving elderly member of the *Peśvā's* house he looked upon himself as the guardian of his young nephews and in that capacity proposed to keep the reins of administration in his hands. This was resented and led to friction and open war between the uncle and the nephew.

AFFAIRS AT
THE MARATHA
COURT.

Mādhav Rāv *Peśvā* died in November 1772 and was succeeded by his younger brother Nārāyaṇ Rāv. Differences soon appeared between the new *Peśvā* and his uncle and led to the murder of the latter by the adherents of Rāghobā. Rāghobā now became the *Peśvā*. Though he denied complicity in the crime his action in rewarding the ring-leaders and putting them in positions of trust belied Rāghobā's words and combined with his general unpopularity, to draw on him the odium of the entire Marāṭhā *Darbār* and Marāṭhā people. The repulsion felt for the perpetrator of such a heinous crime took the form of a plot to oust him from the *Peśvāship* and run it in the name of a son of Nārāyaṇ Rāv, natural born or adopted. Rāghobā's old friend and chief adviser Sakhārām Bāpū, inspired the main idea and took the lead in the formation of the league of the Bārbbhāis. Marāṭhā chieftains were informed by letters of Rāghobā having been

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dismissed from the *Peśvāship* and of the Council of ministers having taken over the administration in the name of the widow of the murdered *Peśvā*.¹

Large desertion in his army and the reports of the plot brought by his spies roused Rāghobā to the danger that was threatening him. He had gone to Karnāṭak to deal with Haidar Ali's aggressions. But the danger at home now required his attention. Patching up a treaty with Haidar Ali he turned towards Poonā. At Kāsegañv near Paṇḍharpūr on 26th March 1774, he defeated an army of the ministerial party led by Trimbak Rāv Peṭhe. Other armies barred his path to Poonā. Rāghobā broke his ground and fled northward to seek support from Sīnde and Holkar.

The birth of a male child to the widow of Nārāyaṇ Rāv *Peśvā*, who was pregnant at the time of her husband's death, in April 1774, put an end to Rāghobā's hopes of ever regaining the *Peśvāship*. Sīnde whom he had approached (May 1774), to mediate in the dispute suggested that Rāghobā should receive a *jāgīr* worth ten lakhs of rupees and two forts, that he should be helped to pay off his troops to enable him to dismiss them and that the two ministers, Sakhārām Bāpū and Nānā Phadnis, should come to Burhānpūr to discuss further details in a personal meeting. The ministers agreed and moved towards Burhānpūr in November. Rāghobā was not prepared to accept any compromise that left him no share in the administration. His talks with the ministerial party convinced him he could expect no further concessions from them. On 10th December, he bolted and fled towards Gujarāt, where he was joined by Govind Rāv Gāikvād.

Negotiations for Military aid had been opened with the English at Surat by Rāghobā's agents quite a year back; a draft treaty making large concessions to them in Gujarāt had been drawn up in September 1774. With Haripant Phadke threatening to encircle him in Gujarāt, Rāghobā renewed his solicitations. He was defeated on 17th February 1775 in the battle of Māhī (near Arras), and fled by way of Cambay and Bhāvnagar to Surat. On 6th March, was concluded the treaty by which the English agreed to support his cause with a force of 2500 troops with a due proportion of artillery. Rāghobā among other things agreed to cede to the Company in perpetuity Bassein with its dependencies, the island of Sālsette and other islands adjacent to Bombay, Jambusar and Olpād *parganās* in Gujarāt and the *Peśvā's* share of revenue of Aṅkaleśvar. For the expenses of the troops he was to pay a lakh and a half of rupees monthly and by way of security deposited with the Company jewellery worth six lakhs.²

FIRST ANGLO-
MARATHA WAR.

¹ S. P. D., V, pp. 12, 20, 24, 26, etc.

² Forrest, Marāṭhā Series, I, pp. 211-215. The first Marāṭhā war can be followed in detail in Forrest's Selections Marāṭhā Series and Khare's *Attihāsik Lekha Saṅgraha*, vol. VII and Historical papers on Mahādji Sīnde.

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The Bombay Council as remarked previously was anxious to emulate the example of Bengal and Madras to obtain political ascendancy at Poonā and make the presidency pay its way by means of increased revenue. But its plans were very badly laid, the means adopted proved quite inadequate for the ends in view and Marāṭhā resistance proved far more stubborn than what had been imagined from English experience in Bengal and Karnāṭak.

Colonel Keating who had arrived at Surat about the end of February at the head of the British detachment, joined Rāghobā on the conclusion of the treaty of Surat and both sailed to Cambay for the purpose of forming a junction with Rāghobā's defeated army that had fallen back on Kapaḍvañj. The season had advanced and Rāghobā wanted to remain in Gujarāt during the monsoon. The British were however anxious to push south in the direction of Poonā at once. The march of the confederate army southward was challenged and impeded at every stage by the forces under the command of Haripant Phadke. Several inconclusive actions were fought of which the battle of Arras, claimed as a victory by the British, cost them two hundred and twenty men of whom eighty-six were Europeans and eleven of them officers. The allies could make little progress after the battle and went into cantonment at Dabhoi for the rainy season.

TREATY OF
PURANDAR.

While both parties were preparing for renewal of hostilities after the rains the Supreme Government in Calcuttā intervened disapproving in strongest terms the policy and measures of the Bombay Council in supporting Rāghobā. They declared the war as "impolitic, dangerous, unauthorised and unjust". "You have imposed on yourself", they wrote, "the charge of conquering the whole Marāṭhā empire for a man who appears incapable of affording you any effectual assistance in it."¹ They sent Col. Upton to Purandar near Poonā to negotiate a treaty with the ministers and put an end to hostilities. Upton was in Marāṭhā camp for three months and concluded an agreement on 1st March 1776, which dissolved the British alliance with Rāghobā, provided for the retention of Sālsette by them, secured them Broach and the surrounding territory and promised a subsidy of twelve lakhs of rupees for the expenditure incurred on the troops. Rāghobā was to disband his troops and reside at Kopargāñv on the Godāvarī; expenditure of his household to the amount of ten lakhs was guaranteed.²

The treaty of Purandar was in no way dishonourable to either party. For the Marāṭhās the chief gain was the dissolution of the British alliance with Rāghobā. Once the English abandoned his cause, Rāghobā would be isolated and cease to be the source of

¹ *op. cit.*, p. 238.

² *op. cit.*, pp. 277-280.

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infinite trouble that he had proved so far. The English had gained their main objective—Sālsette and the islands adjacent to Bombay—which they had always held as of great strategic value. If both parties had been sincere in their professions peace would have followed the conclusion of the treaty. But in Rāghobā the Bombay Council had found a pliable instrument to increase their influence in the Marāṭhā Court. To surrender him to the ministerial party and abandon their recent gains in territory worth twenty-lakhs of rupees was for the Bombay Council too bitter a pill to swallow. Despatches received from the Court of Directors about this time encouraged the Council in its recalcitrant attitude. Instead of abandoning Rāghobā's cause it sheltered him first at Surat and then at Bombay, allowed his troops to remain in the city of Surat, afforded asylum to the partisans of the imposter of Sadāsiv Rāv Bhāu and secret encouragement to intrigues at Poonā. The Poonā ministers retaliated by refusing to fulfil their part of the treaty. They declined payment of the twelve lakhs that had been stipulated, nor would they surrender any territory near Broach. As counterpoise to the British they pretended to entertain seriously proposals presented to them by a Frenchman Mons de St. Lubin on behalf of his Government.

England's colonies in America were at this time in revolt against the mother country. France looked on this as an excellent opportunity of retaliating for the injuries suffered during the seven years war and freely gave her assistance to the colonists. The appearance of a French agent at Poonā greatly alarmed the Supreme Government at Calcutta and it readily fell in with the views of the Bombay Council to support the cause of Rāghobā; setting aside the treaty of Purandar a force was despatched from Bengal and another march upon Poonā in support of Rāghobā was sanctioned.

Eliated at the success of its views the Bombay Council immediately fitted an expedition to take Rāghobā to Poonā. It would not wait for the Bengal detachment to arrive in the Deccan. Reports of dissensions among the Poonā ministers and the appearance of a party supposed to favour Rāghobā's cause hastened its preparations. An army consisting of five hundred Europeans, three thousand sepoys and three hundred gun lascars attended by Rāghobā and a party of irregular horse set out on the road to Poonā on 25th November 1778. By 20th December the force had ascended the Bhor Ghāt, but saw no sign of Marāṭhā allies that were to join Rāghobā. By painful marches it pushed forward to Taḷegāñv in another three weeks. This however proved the limit.

"The hopes which the Bombay Council had formed of a general rising in favour of Rāghobā were grievously disappointed. The scheme of pushing into the heart of the Marāṭhā empire, the British discovered was a difficult one to accomplish." Nānā Phadnis with Mahādījī's aid had put down the faction that had invited Rāghobā to

RENEWAL OF
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Poonā and impeded the progress of the English army with fifty thousand seasoned troops. The small British force was sniped at on its march and cut off from its rear. When it reached the village of Talegānī it found the place completely reduced to ashes. The English Commander realising his mistake attempted withdrawal. But retreat was now too late and no longer practicable. On 17th January 1779 was signed the convention of Vadgānī, by which the English Commander accepted to surrender Rāghobā, abandon Sālsētte and all territory acquired since 1772 and countermand the march of the Bengal Detachment. The convention was to be later ratified by the Bombay Government.

The convention of Vadgānī was at once repudiated by the Bombay Government and the Supreme Government supported their action. The Bombay Council realized its mistake in underrating the strength of the Marāthā empire and the need of retrieving its mistake immediately if further disaster was to be avoided. But its army had returned defeated, its treasury was exhausted, its credit gone and its reputation tarnished. The Council's hope lay in obtaining reinforcements from Bengal. Fortunately for it Col. Goddard who had replaced Leslie in command of the Bengal Detachment in October 1778, received information of the disaster that had befallen the Bombay force while he lay encamped at Burhānpūr (30th January 1779) and pushing with all possible haste, reached Surat on 26th February. Rāghobā who had surrendered at Vadgānī and was being escorted to Jhānsī eluded his guard and reached Surat in June. Bengal also sent other detachments to strike at the north-east corner of Mālṡā and create a powerful diversion in favour of Goddard.

QUADRUPLE
ALLIANCE
AGAINST
THE BRITISH.

Nānā Phadnis who had now become the sole authority in the Poonā Government prepared to meet the situation. He formed a grand coalition of almost all Indian powers against the British. The native princes, the *Nizām*, Haidar Ali, the *Navāb* of Oudh and others all had become painfully alive to the aggressive designs of the British and the *Nizām* mooted the idea of a general alliance against them. Nānā Phadnis immediately accepted the idea and by large cessions in Karnātak to Haidar Ali won him over to the design. While the Marāthās would engage the English in the Western part of the peninsula, Haidar Ali was to attack the English in South Karnātak, the *Nizām* was to send an army to the Northern *Sarkārs* and the Bhosle of Nāgpūr to invade Bengal.¹ In the end though the *Nizām* remained supine and Bhosle was bribed into inactivity, the Marāthās and Haider Ali waged war so bitterly as to bring the British to the verge of ruin.

Goddard made a half-hearted attempt to end hostilities on the basis of the treaty of Purandar with an additional stipulation for the exclusion of the French from Marāthā dominions. Nānā Phadnis insisted on the fulfilment of the Vadgānī engagement and surrender

¹ Hist. Papers of Mahādji Sīnde, pp. 83, 92-96.

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of Rāghobā and war was renewed at the end of the year. To make the war pay for itself Fateh Singh Gāikvād was lured into an alliance (26th January 1780) on condition of ceding to the Company his districts south of the Tāpī and aiding the British with three thousand horses. Dabhoi surrendered on 20th January and Ahmadābād was captured on 15th February after severe fighting. Sīnde and Holkar had by now arrived in Gujarāt and Goddard turned southward to meet them. The superiority of the British in artillery prevented close engagements; the Marāthā horse, hovered round the enemy's camp hanging on his flanks, cutting off his supplies and attacking his lines of communications. Goddard was not prepared for this war of attrition and tried to surprise the Marāthā camp under cover of night twice (3 April and 19 April) but the results were indecisive. The Bombay Government which was impatient for results recalled the Bombay Detachment and heavy fighting took place in Konkan. Kalyān, Pārsik, Belāpūr, were seized by Capt. Campbell in May. Malānggaḍ was threatened. An attempt made by Nānā Phadnis to recover Kalyān was foiled by Capt. Hartley.

As soon as the rains ceased Goddard arrived at Bombay and marched his troops to the siege of Bassein. The fort was assaulted on 11th December and on the next day a force under Rāmcandra Gaṇeś that attempted relief was defeated by Hartley. Pressed to force a decision Goddard attempted a march on Poonā. His advance guard reached Khandālā on 8th February (1781) and Goddard himself followed it with the main force. Nānā Phadnis showed no inclination to yield to the threat and treat with the English; a large army took up a menacing position in the Māvaḷ hills and another pouring through other Konkan passes began to harass Goddard's supply columns. To avoid another Vadgānī, Goddard hastily retired at the end of April suffering heavy losses in men and stores.

The diversion created by Hastings in the north-east corner of Sīnde's possessions succeeded but partially. Mahādji Sīnde withdrew from Gujarāt to Ujjain for the defence of his dominion, but was too late to save Gvālior which was carried by a brilliant night escalade on 3rd August 1780. This fortress was of great strategic value and its loss naturally dismayed Mahādji Sīnde. The Rānā of Gohād and the Bundelā chief of Narvar joined the British and negotiations were opened with other Jāt and Rajput princes to join the British standard. Another and a still larger force under Col. Camac invaded Mālṡā and with the aid of its allies advanced by way of Sipri to Siroñj. Its further progress was halted here and Camac finding himself in a difficult corner, decided to fall back. The retreat was marked with daily losses and Camac's force stood in danger of being cut off. On the night of 24th March however, Camac surprised Sīnde's camp and took away his main standard and a number of guns. Col. Muir now joined Camac with reinforcements and took the command. No further advantage could be obtained by the

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British; they were frequently straitened for supplies by numerous bodies of horse from Śinde's camp which continued to hover round. Fighting ceased as the north Indian summer advanced.

Both parties were now weary of the war. Haidar Ali who had invaded Karnāṭak carried everything before him and appeared at the gates of Madrās. The English troops sent to oppose him were surrounded and almost annihilated. A French squadron under Suffren appeared on the Coromandel coast. Distracted by difficulties Hastings appealed to Śinde to make peace. A truce was concluded by Col. Muir on 13th October 1781 and the final treaty was signed at Sālbye on 17th May 1782.

The treaty of Sālbye consisted of seventeen articles; the main articles provided for the withdrawal of British support to Rāghobā and restoration of all British conquests in Gujarāt and Mālvā subsequent to the treaty of Purandar; Haidar Ali was to restore the territories he had taken from the British; all Europeans, except the English and the Portuguese, were to be excluded from the Marāṭhā dominions. Śinde was given Broach and he stood guarantee for the due fulfilment of the terms of the treaty.¹

The treaty of Sālbye was indeed a triumph for the diplomatic genius of Nānā Phadnis. The British object of putting their nominee on the *Peśvāship* and gaining control of Marāṭhā politics was frustrated. Marāṭhās at this period as Lyall puts it, "proved too strong and too well united to be shaken or overawed by such forces as the British could despatch against them."² Lt. Col. Luard when he writes in the Cambridge History "that the treaty established the dominance of the British as controlling factor in Indian Politics" is anticipating events.

INTERLUDE OF
UNEASY PEACE.

The twenty years following the conclusion of the treaty of Sālbye formed an interlude of uneasy peace. The Court of Directors declared in a pontifical manner "that they were completely satisfied with the possessions they already had and would engage in no war for the purpose of further acquisition and that they would never depart from that principle either in the condition then obtaining of the native powers or in any future revolutions amongst them. They allowed it to be known that peace was their primary object and that they would refrain from all interference in the contentions which might arise among the native princes unless called for by the stipulations of any existing treaty or by a threat of French interference."³ These were admirable sentiments and perhaps the Directors were sincere in their professions. But with the bitter experience of British diplomacy and of the activities of the Company's servants on the scene of action the native princes of India, least of all the Marāṭhā Government, could bring themselves to believe in the pacific disposition of the Company.

¹ Aitchison, *Treaties*, etc., vol. VII, pp. 39-43.

² Lyall, Sir Alfred, *British Dominion in India*, p. 191.

³ Poonā Residency Correspondence Series, vol. II, p. 13.

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Lord Cornwallis' refusal to aid the Poonā Government against Tipū Sultān in 1786 caused much heartburning and led to coolness between the two Governments. The Governor General's unwillingness, however, to take advantage of Śinde's difficulties in his war with the Rajputs in 1787 and the strict neutral policy that he followed in the crisis of his affairs next year went a long way to improve mutual relations. In 1790 the Poonā Government entered into an alliance with the British to reduce Tipū's overgrown power. The remarks of Malet reflect correctly if somewhat uncharitably Marāṭhā attitude in this war. "The grand object of our allies (the Marāṭhās) is to reap as much benefit as possible from the war and to stimulate Tipū's and our exertions to the exhaustion of our mutual force so that they may become the arbiter of future negotiations."¹ At the conclusion of the peace, however, the statesmanship of Lord Cornwallis did not fail to take care to see that "British enemies were crippled without making their friends formidable."

"The *Peśvā* is our rival in power" remarks Malet in another place² and British diplomacy was cleverly directed to spread disaffection towards the Marāṭhās among neighbouring princes, encourage mutual jealousies among the members of Marāṭhā Confederacy and thus undermine Marāṭhā power. The strength of the confederacy united under Nānā Phadnis appeared irresistible to the Governor General in 1794 and deterred him from supporting the Nizām in his arrogant assumption of independence and rejection of Marāṭhā claims on him. The result was the triumph of Marāṭhā arms at Khardā and the reduction of the Nizām to the position of a subordinate.

The fact of the matter was that so long as the two great Marāṭhā leaders, Mahādji Śinde and Nānā Phadnis lived and wielded authority, the Marāṭhā Empire had a semblance of unity and pursued a common vigorous policy which kept its enemies in awe. But after the death of Mahādji Śinde in 1794 and that of Savai Mādhav Rāv in 1795 the Marāṭhā State became a house divided against itself. Baji Rāv Raghunāth who succeeded to the *Peśvāship* in 1796, had imbibed such violent hatred for the minister who had sent his father into exile that he could never bring himself to trust him or feel himself safe while the Minister lived. Baji Rāv intrigued and plotted to ruin Nānā Phadnis and his partisans with the support of Daulat Rāv Śinde (Mahādji's successor). Śinde's trained battalions brought the new *Peśvā* success in the initial stages of the contest. Nānā Phadnis was seized, thrown into prison and died in March 1800. But soon there was violent reaction against the imbecile conduct of the two unworthy chiefs. The Minister's partisans received unexpected aid from Yeśvant Rāv Holkar who rose against Daulat Rāv's tyranny and his interference in Holkar's succession. In the battle of Hadapsar fought on 25th October 1802, the joint armies of the *Peśvā* and Śinde were routed, the *Peśvā* fled from Poonā and there were prospects that Nānā's partisans headed by Yeśvant Rāv Holkar would gain control at Poonā.

OUTBREAK OF
CIVIL WAR
AMONG
MARATHAS.

¹ F. R. C., vol. III, p. vi, 168.

² F. R. C., vol. II, p. 118.

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TREATY OF
BASSEIN
AND AFTER.

Circumstances however shaped differently. The British now intervened and intervened much more effectively than in 1775. Lord Wellesley who had come to India as Governor-General abandoned the policy of neutrality and was determined to make British authority supreme in India. He had already crushed Tipū Sultān of Mysore and forced the *Nizām*, the *Navābs* of Oudh and Arcot into subordinate alliances with the Company. He had offered the subsidiary treaty to the *Peśvā* four years back and now when the *Peśvā* turned to him for aid it was readily granted. On 31st December 1802 was concluded the treaty of Bassein. The *Peśvā* was to receive a subsidiary force of six battalions and to cede to the Company for their maintenance districts yielding twenty-six lakhs of rupees. He bound himself not to engage in hostilities, nor even to negotiate with other States without the permission of the British Government, and that Government was also to arbitrate his claims upon the *Nizām* and the *Cāikvād*. British troops reinstated the *Peśvā* in his capital in May 1803.

The treaty of Bassein was the most disgraceful compact the *Marāthās* ever concluded. It degraded the *Peśvā* to the position of a vassal of the Company. It broke up for ever the *Marāthā* confederacy which though loose and jarring, had a living sense of unity and a genuine national sentiment behind it. The treaty gave the British control of the *Peśvā's* country and resources. It ended once for all the contest for the sovereignty fought between the *Marāthās* and the British. As Sidney Owen remarks "while previously to the conclusion of the treaty of Bassein there existed a British Empire in India the treaty by its direct and indirect operation, gave the Company the Empire of India".

The *Peśvā's* action in signing the treaty and inviting the British for his protection shocked his friends much more than it surprised his enemies. *Sinde*, *Bhosle*, *Holkar* and other *Marāthā* leaders would not tolerate the surrender of national independence by the idiotic *Peśvā*. They prepared to sink their differences and make a common cause to resist the British threat. Wellesley's diplomacy however succeeded in keeping alive the rift between *Sinde* and *Holkar*. In two swift campaigns very skilfully organized the armies of *Sinde* and *Holkar* were defeated and dispersed and the *Marāthā* confederacy ceased to exist. The *Marāthā* chiefs were left in a sullen mood but were helpless against the tide of the new forces. Their attempt to revive the confederacy was effectively defeated by Hastings fifteen years later when the *Peśvā* was sent into exile, his kingdom annexed and *Sinde* and *Holkar* accepted the position of tributary princes.

CHAPTER 7*.

BHOSLES OF NAGPUR

THE BHOSLE FAMILY IS COUNTED AMONG THE ROYAL OR *KSATRIYA* CLANS of the *Marāthās*. The *Bhosle* house to which *Chatrapati Sivāji*, the founder of *Marāthā* Kingdom belonged, hailed from *Verul* near *Daulatābād*. The *Bhosles* of *Nāgpūr* are known as *Hīnganīkar* as one of their ancestors who was probably a contemporary of *Māloji*, the grandfather of *Chatrapati Sivāji*, rehabilitated the village *Berādi* near *Hīnganī* in the present district of *Poonā*. The two brothers *Mudhoji* and *Rupāji* of *Hīnganī-Berādi* were contemporaries of *Sahāji Bhosle*, the father of *Sivāji*. Like *Chatrapati Bhosle* house, the *Nāgpūr Bhosle* family too, considers that it descended from the *Sisodiā* *Rajputs* of *Udaipūr*. It is quite possible that some *Ksatriya* clans of the *Rajputs* came down, to the *Marāthā* country from the north during the long ascendancy of the *Muslims*. Nevertheless, it is a historical fact that there were *Ksatriya* families in the *Marāthā* country like the *Rāstrakūṭas*, the *Cālukyas* and the *Yādavas*, who had no relationship with the *Rajputs* of the north.

The family tree in the *bakhar* of the *Bhosles* of *Nāgpūr* denotes ancestors who were common to this house and also to the *Bhosle* house of the *Chatrapatis*. The *Bhosles* of *Nāgpūr* and the *Chatrapatis*' house belonged to the same *Ksatriya* clan. However, there is no independent historical evidence to establish common ancestry between the two families in the few generations preceding *Chatrapati Sivāji*. The account in the *bakhar* of the *Bhosles* of *Nāgpūr*, therefore, has to be taken with a grain of salt.

In the biography of *Chatrapati Sambhāji* by *Malhār Rāmrao Chitnis* it is stated that after the death of *Sivāji* his obsequies were performed by *Sābāji Bhosle*, as *Sambhāji*, the eldest son, was in confinement on the fort of *Panhālā*. But *James Grant Duff* in his 'A History of the *Marāthās*', Vol. I, p. 243, says that *Sivāji's* funeral rites were performed by one 'Shahjee Bhonslay' (*Sahāji Bhosle*). There is no unanimity among contemporary writers about the person performing *Sivāji's* funeral rites.

* This Chapter is contributed by Prof. B. K. Apte, Nagpur University, Nagpur.

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If, however, Sābājī Bhosle performed the obsequies there is every possibility that this Bhosle, the ancestor of the famous Raghuji Bhosle of Nāgpūr was a known blood relation of the *Chatrapatis*. At the time of Sāhū *Chatrapati's* home-coming when Tārābāi and her partisans purposely cast doubt about Sāhū being the grandson of Śivājī, it was Parasoji of the Nāgpūr Bhosle house who dined with Sāhū and dispelled the doubt. Then again during the last years of Sāhū's reign it was strongly rumoured that he would select an heir to the *gādī* of Sātārā from the Bhosles of Nāgpūr as he had no son. Later, the English offered to seat one of the Bhosle's of Nāgpūr on the *gādī* of Sātārā. All these events indicate the possibility of a common ancestor of the Bhosles of Sātārā and Nāgpūr though direct historical evidence is not yet forthcoming to establish the fact.

The two Bhosle brothers, Mudhoji and Rupāji were contemporaries of Sāhājī Bhosle and were noted roving soldiers.¹ Rupāji, it seems was residing at Bhām in the district of Yavatmāl, where he had a *jāgīr*.² He was childless. Of the sons of Mudhoji, Parasoji and Sābājī stayed with their uncle at Bhām and served in the army of *Chatrapati* Śivājī.

PARASOJI
BHOSLE.

Parasoji seems to have gained some distinction by his inroads into the territories of Berār and Goṇḍavana during the reign of Śivājī. He exacted tribute from these regions. After Sambhājī's death when Rājārām succeeded to the throne of the *Chatrapati*, Parasoji rendered him valuable help. In appreciation of his services Rājārām honoured Parasoji by presenting him robes, *jari-patakā* and title of '*Senā Sāheb Subhā*'. Goṇḍavana, Devagaḍ, Cāndā and Berār from where he had exacted tribute were given to his charge³. Parasoji was the first of the Bhosles of Nāgpūr to have received this honorific title. This grant was made in 1699 A.D.⁴.

When Sāhū was released by the Moghals, Parasoji was the first of the Marāthā nobles to join him. Parasoji dined with Sāhū in the same dish to dispel the doubt of the latter's royal descent. In 1707, Sāhū conferred on Parasoji the title of '*Senā Sāheb Subhā*' and issued a *sanad* granting him and his successors in perpetuity '*mokāsā*' of the following places :—

1. Prānt Ritapūr and Sarkār-Gāvel, Prānt Berār, Prānt Devgaḍ, Cāndā and Goṇḍavana.

¹ NPI., p. 44.

² *Ibid.*, p. 46.

³ Māhār Rāmrao Citnis Viraciṭa Srimant Chatrapati Sambhājī Mahārājā Anī Thorale Rājārām Mahārāja yāñci Caritre by K. N. Sane, Third Edition, 1915, p. 51.

⁴ NPI., p. 45.

2. Mahālwise details of Anāgonḍi¹, Berār, etc.—

Sarkār.	Mahals.
Gāvel	46
Narnālā	37
Māhūr	19
Kheḍale (near Baitul) ..	21
Pavnār	5
Kalamb	19
Total	147

So far, for the grant of 147 *mahāls* from the six *Sarkārs*, there is no documentary evidence.² Parsoji, the first *Senā Sāheb Subhā* died at Kheḍ at the confluence of the rivers Kṛṣṇā and Veṇṇā in 1709, on his homeward journey from Sātārā.³

Parasoji was succeeded by his son Kānhoji. *Chatrapati* Sāhū granted Kānhoji his hereditary title and also some land at Kheḍ for the maintenance of his father's memorial. Dārvā was taken by Kānhoji and he made Bhām his headquarters.

In the struggle between the Sayyad brothers and *Nizām-ul-mulk* for the control of the Delhi affairs, the former received the support of Sāhū. Sāhū sent Bājirāv *Peśvā* and Kānhoji Bhosle against the *Nizām*. In the battle of Bālāpūr fought on 10th August, 1720, the *Nizām* came out victorious. Many *Marāthās* lost their lives. In the battle of Sākhar-Kheḍā, 1724, Kānhoji Bhosle offered to help Mubārij Khān against the *Nizām*, but Mubārij impudently refused it.

Kānhoji breaks
his relations with
Sāhū.

Kānhoji was a religious minded orthodox Marāthā nobleman. It is said that he accepted food prepared by Brāhmins alone. The religious bent of his mind was probably due to his having no son. He performed sacrifices, religious rites and observed fasts so that he should be blessed by God with a son. Kānhoji soon got a son whom he named Rupāji.⁴

Kānhoji it seems was hot tempered. He could not carry on well either with the *Chatrapati* or the *Peśvā*. When called by the *Chatrapati* to explain the causes of his failure to pay the dues into the treasury, Kānhoji could neither pay the dues nor explain the accounts. The fact seems to be that he was not prepared to brook control with Sāhū. As the relations worsened, Kānhoji on 23rd August 1725, decamped from Sātārā and hastened to the *Nizām* for

¹ The word Anāgonḍi is wrongly read. Anāgonḍi is in Karnātak. The correct reading of the word cannot be ascertained.

² NBB., p. 31, states that these *Mahāls* were granted to Parasoji Bhosle. Independent evidence in support of this statement is not available.

P. D., Vol. 20, p. 1, "The Early struggle of the Bhosles cannot yet be set down with accuracy, not a single paper relating to Parasoji, the founder of the Nāgpūr Rājās and first prominent adherent of King Sāhū, having been hitherto discovered.

³ NPI., p. 50.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

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asylum. The *Nizām*, however, did not back Kānhojī as Śāhū reminded him that such an act was against the treaty entered into between them. When all attempts at rapprochement failed, Śāhū set Raghuji Bhosle against Kānhojī. Raghuji had been asking Kānhojī, his uncle, for his share in the ancestral *jāgīr*. This had naturally strained the relations between the nephew and the uncle. *Chatrapati* Śāhū in setting the nephew against the uncle exploited the family feud to his own advantage.

After making the necessary preparations Raghuji marched in 1728 from Sātārā against his uncle. Śāhū granted him the *mokāsā* of Devur near Wāi. For this grant the Bhosles of Nāgpūr were also styled as the *Rājās* of Devur. Raghuji received the robes of *Senā Sāheb Subhā*, *sanads* for Berār and Goṇḍavana, and the right to extend the levy of *cauthāi* to Chattisgad, Patna, Allahabad and Makasudābād (Bengāl)

Raghuji entered Berār via Aurangābād. Near Jālnā *Samser Bahāddar* Aṭole objected to Raghuji's taking the army through his territory as the old route passed through Nānded and Aṣṭī. Raghuji avoided an encounter with Aṭole and encamped at Bālāpūr after crossing the Lakhanvādā ghāṭs. From Bālāpūr Raghuji sent his armed men all over the Berār and collected tributes. *Sejāyat Khān* Pathān of Akolā serving under the Navābs of Ellicpūr was easily defeated by Raghuji and his territory subjugated. Thus, after establishing his rule over a greater part of Berār, Raghuji proceeded towards Bhām, the headquarters of his uncle in A.D. 1730. The small fortress at Bhām was besieged by Raghuji's army. He was joined by his other uncle Rānoji. Finding himself in a difficult situation, Kānhojī escaped from Bhām and ran for safety towards Māhūr. He was hotly chased by Raghuji and Rānoji and overtaken near Mandār (Van). In the skirmish that took place, Kānhojī was defeated and taken a prisoner. Kānhojī, the second *Senā Sāheb Subhā*, spent the remaining part of his life as a prisoner at Sātārā. At one time Kānhojī was an enterprising officer of Śāhū. He made some conquests in Goṇḍavana and led an incursion into Katak, laying the foundation of Marāthā expansion eastward. His proposals that he should be allowed to maintain 200 horses, and Akolā and Bālāpūr in Pāyā Chāt should be restored to him, were not accepted. All was lost, once he lost the favour of Śāhū.² The end of Kānhojī's political career in about 1730 A.D., opened up for Raghuji new opportunities in Berār, Nāgpūr and the region beyond, to the east.

By suppressing the recalcitrant Kānhojī, Raghuji gained the favour of *Chatrapati* Śāhū. As already observed, Śāhū conferred on him the title of *Senā Sāheb Subhā* and the right to collect *cauthāi* from Berār,

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Goṇḍavana, Chattisgad, Allāhābād, Makasudābād (Bengāl) and Pātnā. According to Grant Duff on the occasion of granting the rights Raghuji gave a bond which stated¹ :—

1. That he would maintain a body of 5,000 horse for the service of the State ;
2. Pay an annual sum of Rs. 9 lacs ;
3. Pay half of the tribute, prizes, property and other contributions excluding the *ghāsdānā* ;
4. Raise 10,000 horse when required, and accompany the *Peśvā* or proceed to any place he might be ordered.

These terms of the bond are important in determining *Chatrapati*—Raghuji and *Peśvā*—Raghuji relations.

Details of Raghuji's early life are not available. It seems that shortly after his birth his father Bimbāji died and he was brought up by his mother Kāsibāi and grandmother Bayābāi at Pāṇḍavavāḍī near Wāi (District Sātārā). The child, it is said, was born by the grace of one Rāmājipant Kolhatkar, a pious devotee of Rāma and was therefore named Raghuji. There seems to be much truth in this story. Raghuji was a devotee of God Rāma though the family deity was Mahādev. He installed the new idol of Rāma at Rāmtek and was responsible for reviving the religious importance of this ancient place. In his letter-head he incorporated the word '*Sitā-kānta*' meaning, the Lord of Sita in honour of his favourite God Rāma.

When Raghuji attained manhood he served in the army of his uncle Rānoji. Later he was with his other uncle Kānhojī at Bhām. Raghuji did not fare well with Kānhojī and entered the services of Raghuji of Devagad. For some time he was also with the *Navāb* Cānd Sultān of Devagad. Finally Raghuji decided to serve *Chatrapati* Śāhū at of Ellicpūr.² During his stay there he was asked to accompany Fatesingh Bhosle to the Karnātak where he distinguished himself as a capable soldier. When Raghuji's qualities as a soldier and leader of men came to the notice of Śāhū, he appointed him against the disobedient Kānhojī.

In the early part of his career Raghuji appears to have been a freelance soldier, shifting his loyalty from his uncle to the weak Goṇḍ *rājās*. This was rather the time-honoured expedient resorted to by many an ambitious soldier. Raghuji was not slow to grasp the political situation prevailing in the area from the distant Karnātak to Goṇḍavana and finally threw his lot with Śāhū, who was by then a well-settled *Chatrapati*. This was indeed a wise decision which benefited Raghuji as also the Marāthā expansion.

¹ NFI., pp. 58–64.

² Grant Duff, A History of The Marāthās, Vol. I, p. 424.

¹ Grant Duff, A History of The Marāthās, Vol. I, page 424.

² N. P. I., p. 69.

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After consolidating his position at Bhām in Berār, Raghuji turned his attention to the Goṇḍ Kingdoms of Devagaḍ, Gaḍa-Manḍlā, Cāndā and Chattisgaḍ. Internal dissensions in these kingdoms and their wars with other States were the occasions availed of by Raghuji for establishing his sway over them. In 1739-1740, Raghuji was sent to Karnātak by Sāhū. Raghuji distinguished himself in this expedition. Returning from Karnātak he made the necessary arrangement for the invasion of Bengal and dispatched a large army under the command of his General Bhāskarpant. Bengal invasion engaged Raghuji's attention for ten years, from 1741 to 1751 A.D. The net gain was the province of Orissā. It was during these years that the historic dispute between Raghuji Bhosle and Bālājī Peśvā arose when their interest in the east clashed. Thus, broadly the chronological sequence of Raghuji's major exploits is—

- Securing Berār by defeating his uncle Kānhoji;
- Extending his sway over the Goṇḍ Kingdoms;
- Karnātak expedition; and
- Incursions into Bengal.

Raghuji and
the Goṇḍ
kingdoms.

Devagaḍ: Raghuji for sometime had sought service with Cānd Sultān of Devagaḍ after quitting his uncle Kānhoji at Bhām with whom he had quarrelled. The details of Raghuji's service with Cānd Sultān are not available from the known source-material. Cānd Sultān died in about 1738. His illegitimate son, Wali Sāh killed Mir Bahāddar, the legitimate son of Cānd Sultān. Rānī Ratan Kuvar, the widow of Cānd asked for Raghuji's help as her two other sons Akbar and Burhān were minors. Raghuji at once proceeded from Bhām and defeated Wali Sāh's generals at Pāṭaṇsavaṅgi. He next conquered Pavani to the south of Bhaṇḍārā on the river Waingāṅgā. This was a strategic post. Raghuji appointed his own officer Tuḷojīrāmpant. The fort of Bhānore or modern Bhaṇḍārā was Raghuji's next target of attack. Wali Sāh, from Devagaḍ hurriedly dispatched an army under his *divān* Raghunāthsing to relieve the pressure on Bhaṇḍārā fort. Raghuji was camping at Śirasghāt on the Waingāṅgā. He split his army into two divisions stationing them at Sonbarḍi and Giroli. A select army under Raghuji Karāṇḍe was sent to face the enemy with the instruction that it should take to its heels at a suitable time and lure Raghunāthsing between the two Marāṭhā divisions. Raghunāthsing's army was entrapped, routed and drowned into the Waingāṅgā. He himself was taken a prisoner in a wounded state and honourably sent back to Devagaḍ with a view to capturing Wali Sāh by treachery. The fort of Bhaṇḍārā was besieged. Its *killedār* resisted bravely for about 22 days but was finally forced to deliver it to the enemy.

Raghuji next marched to Devagaḍ. Wali Sāh was advised by his *divān* Raghunāthsing to go out of the fort. This was preplanned. In a skirmish outside the fort Wali was defeated and arrested.

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Rānī Ratan Kuvar considered Raghuji as her third son and gave him the third part of her kingdom. She paid him rupees ten lacs for war expenses. In 1737, the Rānī granted Raghuji a *sanad* of her one-third kingdom bestowed upon him.

The *sanad* states that the fort of Pavani along with Bālāpūr, *paragaṇā* Multāi with Cikhali and 156 villages under the said *paragaṇā*, the whole of *paragaṇā* Marud, were granted to Raghuji and his successors in perpetuity.¹ The Rānī also agreed that she would not enter into a treaty with any other power without the knowledge of Raghuji. With the possession of these parts of Devagaḍ, Raghuji shifted his headquarters from Bhām to Nāgpūr. By 1748, the *divān* Raghunāthsing attempted to break off his relations with Raghuji. The latter, therefore, brought Akbar and Burhān to Nāgpūr under his direct protection and care.² Eventually their kingdoms came to be managed by Raghuji and the Goṇḍ house of Devagaḍ shaded into insignificance.

According to the account given in the *bakhar* (NBB), Raghuji secured a fresh *sanad* from Sāhū in 1738 A.D., bestowing upon him the right to collect *cauthāi* and *mokāsā* of Lucknow, Makasud-ābād (Bengal), Bidar, Bitiā, Bundelkhaṇḍ, Allāhābād, Hājipūr, Pāṭnā and Devagaḍ, Gaḍha, Bhavargaḍ and Cāndā.³ This very information given by Wills runs as follows, "while returning from Sātārā, Sāhū *Chatrapati* bestowed Goṇḍvana *jhāḍi* up to Katak free of revenue upon the *Senā Sāheb Subhā*."⁴ Goṇḍavana *jhāḍi* is the ancient Zāḍi Maṇḍalā to the east of the Wardhā river which included Nāgpūr, Bhaṇḍārā, Cāndā, etc.

**Gaḍha-Manḍlā*: It seems that when Bājīrāv was busy fighting with the *Nizām* at Bhopāl in 1736, Raghuji proceeded as far as Allāh-ābād and exacted tribute from the Rājā of Gaḍha-Manḍlā. Bājīrāv strongly resented this act. His son Bālājī invaded Gaḍha-Manḍlā⁵ in 1742, on his way to Bengal. Raghuji who was engaged in his Bengal expedition at this time bitterly complained to Sāhū of Bālājī's encroachment upon Gaḍha-Manḍlā which was his sphere of activity. Along with Bengal, Allāhābād, etc., Gaḍha-Manḍlā too was the bone of contention between Raghuji and Bālājī. Both were finally reconciled to one another by *Chatrapati* Sāhū in 1743.⁶

¹ NPI, pp. 71-74; also see RMSH, p. 173—As desired by the Rānī Ratan Kuvar her "possessions were divided into three equal parts and one of them, namely that containing Goṇḍavana, Pavani, Marud, Multāi and Bārgḥāt was given to Raghuji, *Senā Sāheb*" "He then lived in Nāgpūr and Devagaḍ provinces."

² NPI, p. 74.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁴ RMSH, p. 173.

⁵ NHM, Vol. II, p. 213. Raghuji complained to Sāhū that Bālājī captured his posts Gaḍha and Maṇḍlā, and ruined his *paragaṇās* Sivani and Chapar. The ruler of Maṇḍlā burnt himself to death to escape disgrace.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

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Raghujī's Karnatak expedition.

Cāndā: The fate of the Gond rulers of Cāndā was sealed when Devagaḍ and Gaḍha-Maṇḍlā had come under Raghujī's sway. During the reign of Rāma Sāh, Raghujī invaded Cāndā, but finding him a saintly king, Raghujī was so impressed that he left the country unmolested. His successor Nilakaṇṭh Sāh had gained disrepute as a tyrant. To deliver the people of Cāndā from his tyranny Raghujī invaded his country and made him a captive. The successors of Nilakaṇṭh Sāh were granted pension by Raghujī. Among the Goṇḍavana territories of Raghujī, Cāndā was next in importance to Nāgpūr¹.

After the death of Aurangzeb the whole of Karnatak was in a state of chaos. The various principalities were trying to extend their territory at the cost of their neighbours. Karnatak, then, roughly included the territory to the south of Kṛṣṇā bound by the Sahyādri and the Eastern *Chāts*. Aurangzeb had put Karnatak under the *subhās* of Bijāpūr and Hyderābād. The *sanad* of *cauthāi* granted to Sāhū by Emperor Muhammad Sāh included Hyderābād and Bijāpūr, Karnatak in addition to the four other *subhās* of the Deccan. According to his *sanad* the tributary states of Tañjore, Tricinopoly and Mysore were also subject to the levy of *cauthāi*.¹ The *Nizām-ul-mulk* as the *subhedār* of the Deccan claimed that all these territories belonged to him. The various *navābs* of Karnatak fought among themselves, the strongest of them trying to assert his authority over others by the simple law of might. The stronger *navābs* were those of Arcot, Sirā Kaḍappā, Karnool and Sāvanūr. The principality of Tañjore from the days of Sāhājī comprised the *paragaṇās* of Bangalore, Hoskot, Kolār, Bālāpūr and Sirā. Its ruler Pratāpsinha, *Chatrapati* Sāhū's cousin, was constantly harassed by Candā Sāheb, the son-in-law of Dost Ali, the *navāb* of Arcot. Candā Sāheb had usurped the kingdom of Tricinopoly by tempting its *Raṇi* Minakṣi to form perpetual friendship with him. With the fall of Tricinopoly he cast his covetous eyes on Tañjore which belonged to Rājā Pratāpsinha. Pratāpsinha appealed to Sāhū for help who dispatched a large force under Fatesingh and Raghujī Bhosle. In April 1740, the Marāṭhā forces attacked Arcot, killed the *navāb* Dost Ali and took his *divān* Mir Asad, a prisoner in May 1740. With Arcot in their possession Raghujī and Fatesingh laid siege to Tricinopoly, the stronghold of Candā Sāheb. Raghujī was joined by Pratāpsinha. Candā Sāheb unable to receive aid from his brother Baḍā Sāheb of Madurā, delivered the fort to Raghujī on 14th March 1741, the auspicious day of *Rāmanavamī*. Candā Sāheb and his son Abid Ali were imprisoned by Raghujī and at once sent to Nāgpūr under the strict supervision of his general Bhāskar Rām. Later, in 1744, Raghujī freed these royal prisoners on payment of a ransom of Rs. 7.75 lacs from the bankers of Sātārā. Nothing is known about the place where Candā Sāheb and his son were confined. Raghujī's

¹ NPI., p. 37.² A History of the Marāṭhās, Vol. I, (1912), by James Grant Duff—p. 368.

leadership and tact in the Karnatak campaign at once enhanced his prestige at the court of Sāhū. Pleased with his exploits Sāhū conferred upon him the *mokāsā* of Berār and Goṇḍavana up to the fronties of Katak.¹

During the war Candā Sāheb had sent his treasure and *zanānā* for safe custody to Dumas, the French Governor of Pondicerry. Raghujī who had an eye on the wealth of the *navāb* at once reprimanded Dumas for sheltering his enemy. Dumas politely yet firmly refused to surrender the entrusted wealth and women. Raghujī's wrath was wafted away when he was presented a few fine Champagne bottles by Dumas. Raghujī's wife is said to have been highly delighted with this French gift and asked for more. When Sāhū came to know of this he is reported to have remarked that a kingdom was sold for a bottle of wine. Whatever the account of this story, its realistic side must not be lost sight of by historians. Dumas at Pondicerry was well-equipped with men and material. In the extreme hour of difficulty he would have easily escaped into the sea with his wealth and women, and Raghujī's attack would have been rendered ineffective if he had chosen to launch one. Raghujī was not slow to understand the power of the French. Weighing things in mind Raghujī might have preferred an honourable retreat to a futile attack.

Karnatak campaign gave Raghujī eminence at the court of Sātārā and eventually in the Marāṭhā confederacy. It helped him in giving a status on par with the *Peśvās*.

Raghujī hurriedly returned to Nāgpūr as the Bengal affair was awaiting his presence.

It was Kānhoji Bhosle who first led an incursion in the territory of Orissā or Katak taking advantage of the chaotic conditions prevailing there. Before he was defeated and sent to Sātārā as a prisoner by Raghujī Bhosle, *Chatrapati* Sāhū granted Raghujī a *sanad* of Berār and Goṇḍavana and of the right to collect *cauthāi* of Chattisgaḍ, Pātnā, Allāhābād and Makasudābād (Murśid-ābād).² The date of his *sanad*, 1723 A.D., is obviously incorrect. On this occasion the grant of *mokāsā* of Devur near Wāi to Raghujī is dated 1731, A.D.³ The *sanad*, of Chattisgaḍ, etc., up to Murśid-ābād, therefore, should also be roughly of the same date, i.e., 1730 or 1731 or a year earlier. It is not likely to have been given as early as 1723 A.D. For this *sanad* of collecting *cauthāi* from Chattisgaḍ to Murśidābād, Sāhū never obtained regular permission from the Moghals. In order to secure the cession of Mālva

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¹ NHM, Vol. II, pp. 253-257.² NPI., p. 61.³ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

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under imperial seal Bājirāv I endeavoured hard all his life. He forced the *Nizām* after defeating him at Bhopāl in 1739, to obtain a *sanad* for Mālva.¹ Actually Mālva was given to the charge of his son Bālājī as its deputy *subhedār* by an imperial *farmān* as late as 1741 A.D.² But Sāhū when he allowed Raghuji Bhosle to extend his sway as far as Bengal and collect *cauthāi*, had not actually obtained a royal *farmān* from Delhi to that effect.

The political condition of Bengal was precarious by about 1740. Bengal, Bihār and Orissā were, then, all under the *navāb* who resided at Murśidābād. Its able governor Murśid Qulikhān died in 1727. In 1740, his son-in-law Sarfarāz Khān who was the *navāb*, was killed by an ambitious Turk in his service named Alivardi Khān.³ Alivardi's usurpation was hated by the partisans of the dead *navāb*. The strong faction at Alivardi's court was headed by an able Persian of Sirāz, by name Mir Habib who had risen to the position of deputy *navābship* of Orissā from very humble beginnings. He had made offers to Raghuji in the Bengal territory if he undertook an invasion. This was a very tempting offer to Raghuji who had been waiting to extend his sphere of influence to the east of Nāgpūr. Rather he considered the region from Nāgpūr to Bengal as his special field of activity. His brilliant successes in Karnāṭak had strengthened his claim which had the full support of Chatrapati Sāhū who had granted him a *sanad* to that effect.

When Raghuji was in Karnāṭak Mir Habib had been to Nāgpūr urging Bhāskar Rām to invade Bengal. But Bhāskar Rām waited till his master returned home from the distant Karnāṭak. On his return from Karnāṭak, Raghuji made thorough preparations and sent a force of ten thousand under the able command of Bhāskar Rām. On the auspicious day of *Dasarā* of 1741, Bhāskar Rām set out for the expedition. He marched through Rāmgad plundering Pācet (60 miles or 96·540 km., east of Rāncī) on the way to Burdvān. Alivardi Khān camping at Burdvān (15th April 1742) with his slender army, was surprised by the Marāṭhā forces. Bhāskar Rām employed half of his army in looting the area adjacent to Burdvān. The Khān finding himself helpless sent his agents to Bhāskar Rām begging for peace. The negotiations however fell through as Bhāskar Rām demanded rupees ten lacs as peace price. The Khān secretly left Burdvān for Kāṭvā, hotly chased by the Marāṭhās. As it was then the month of May, Bhāskar Rām decided to return to Nāgpūr to avoid the fury of monsoon. He, however, changed his plan at the prospect of obtaining immense booty from Murśidābād as designed by Mir Habib. Mir Habib with a light Marāṭhā force fell on Murśidābād and returned to Kāṭvā loaded with booty worth two to three crores. Alivardi Khān reached his capital just a day late—7th May—when it had been denuded of its wealth by the Marāṭhās. During the rainy season the Marāṭhās and

¹ NHM., vol. II, p. 159.

² *Ibid.*, p. 202.

³ NHM., Vol. II, p. 209.

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Mir Habib established their sway as far as Calcutta. They took back Orissā. The East India Company dug a ditch round their factory known as the Marāṭhā Ditch.

The Marāṭhā camp at Kāṭvā was busy celebrating the *Durgā puja* festival on 18th September 1742. It was attacked on 27th September by Alivardi's forces compelling them to run for safety helter-skelter. Bhāskar Rām escaped towards Pācet. He had to give up the outposts of Burdvān, Hugli and Hijli. Kātak was retaken by Alivardi and he returned to Murśidābād on 9th February 1743. Bhāskar Rām informed Raghuji of this discomfiture requesting him to despatch aid immediately. Raghuji however could not send succour to Bhāskar Rām owing to his clash with Bālājī Bājirāv *Peśvā*.

The *Peśvā* had left Poonā as early as 1741 with a view to putting a stop to Raghuji's activities in Bengal. He consolidated his position in Mālva with the help of Malhārāv Holkar, and captured Gaḍha, Maṇḍlā, plundering Sīvani and Chapar. Alivardi was terribly afraid on learning these activities of the *Peśvā*, as he was expecting a joint attack by the *Peśvā* and Raghuji. The *Peśvā*, however, offered to help the emperor and Alivardi Khān against Raghuji if he were granted the *cauthāi* right of Mālva, Bundelkhaṇḍ and Allāhābād. The Emperor readily agreed to this proposal and sent the *Peśvā* to relieve Alivardi.

On 1st February 1743, the *Peśvā* and his vast army took a bath in the holy waters of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā at Prayāg. Thence he proceeded to Murśidābād where he had a meeting with Alivardi near Plassey on 30th March 1743. Alivardi agreed to pay the *cauthāi* of Bengal to Sāhū and rupees twenty-two lacs to Bālājī towards the expenditure of the army.¹ A meeting between Raghuji and Bālājī earlier could not bring any tangible result.²

The *Peśvā's* army actually clashed with that of Raghuji in the Bendu pass near Pācet. The rear part of Raghuji's army was attacked and plundered by the *Peśvā*. From Pācet Raghuji made good for Nāgpūr and the *Peśvā* too started back for Poonā via Gayā.³

Chatrapati Sāhū who had known the deep-rooted rivalry between Bālājī and Raghuji called them to Sātārā and brought about a reconciliation which was respected by both the parties. Had the breach been neglected it would have certainly been detrimental to the interest of the Marāṭhā power in India. Raghuji and Bālājī signed an agreement at Sātārā in the presence of the Chatrapati on 31st August 1743. By this, all the territory from Berār to the east reaching Kaṭak, Bengal and Lucknow was assigned to Raghuji, and that

¹ OUM., p. 11.

² NHM., Vol. II, p. 216.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

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to the west of this line including Ajmer, Āgrā, Prayāg and Mālva to Bālājī *Peśvā*. None was to interfere with other's sphere.¹

Freed from the troubles with the *Peśvā*, the *Senā Sīheb Subhā* returned to Nāgpūr from Sātārā and sent an expedition into Bengal under Bhāskar Rām with a view to making up the lost ground. Bhāskar Rām left Nāgpūr early in 1744. Together with Mir Habib he harassed Alivardi Khān pressing him to pay *cauthāi*. Driven to desperateness Alivardi Khān hatched a plot to kill Bhāskar Rām by deceit. Through his agents he invited Bhāskar Rām for a meeting. It was arranged at Mānkurā between Amnigaūj and Kaṭvā when both the parties had pledged not to do any mischief by touching the Kurān and Gaṅgā water. Mir Habib had warned Bhāskar of the Khān's evil intention. But the brave and over-confident Bhāskar went to a parley with the Khān accompanied by a few select men. When Bhāskar Rām took a seat in front of the *Navāb* the latter gave a signal as pre-planned and the hiding Muslim soldiers cut Bhāskar and his comrades to pieces. Twenty-two Marāṭhā chiefs were killed. This tragic event took place on 31st March 1744.²

Bhāskar Rām's murder was an irreparable loss to Raghuji and he never forgot the treacherous act of the Khān. With a view to punishing the Khān, Raghuji started with fourteen thousand horses, crossed the mountainous tract and putting Sambalpūr to his left reached Orissā in March 1745. Durlabhrām, the new deputy governor of Orrissa who was taken by surprise entered the fort of Bārābati for safety. The fort was besieged by Raghuji, Durlabhrām soon surrendered to Raghuji and found himself a prisoner in his camp, but the siege continued as another officer, Abdul Aziz, offered stiff resistance. Alivardi was unable to send supplies to Abdul Aziz at the approach of the rainy season. Abdul therefore surrendered the fort to Raghuji on 12th May 1745, after bravely defending it for two months. When the siege was on, the Marāṭhās occupied Orissā as far as Midnāpūr and Hugli, and plundered Burdvān.³

After capturing the fort of Bārābati the Marāṭhās moved to Burdvān. At the invitation of a number of disgruntled Afghāns, Raghuji marched towards Bihār. An indecisive battle was fought at Mehib Alipur and Alivardi ran towards Murśidābād on 21st December 1745. At Rāmdighi near Kaṭvā, Raghuji received a terrible set-back and left for Nāgpūr in January of 1746. He stationed three thousand Marāṭhās under Mir Habib on the understanding that he would pay rupees eleven lacs for the use of his army.⁴

¹ NHM., Vol. II, p. 219.

² OUM., p. 12.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴ OUM., pp. 15, 16.

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In order to checkmate the Marāṭhās, Alivardi, sent his men from Murśidābād in November 1746. They inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Marāṭhās at Midnāpūr. The Marāṭhās fled towards Bālāsore through Jaleśvar.¹

By this time Jānoji Bhosle appeared on the scene. He reached Kaṭak for the rescue of Mir Habib. A stiff battle ensued between Jānoji and Alivardi, but as the rains were on, the latter returned to Murśidābād leaving the Marāṭhās, masters of Orissā, up to Midnāpūr throughout the year 1747. The plundering operations of the Marāṭhās continued unabated. Jānoji returned to Nāgpūr on hearing the news of his mother's death. Mir Habib was at Midnāpūr with a Marāṭhā force to help him. Raghuji sent his son Sābaji for the assistance of Habib.

In 1748 Alivardi reached Bālāsore and despatched his army to drive away the Marāṭhās who were making preparations to plunder the English factory under the command of Niḷo Paṇḍit. He in vain tried to search for the force under Habib, who was hiding in the jungles of Kaṭak. He then made a surprise attack on the fort of Bārābati and was finally able to take it in his possession. In June, 1749, Alivardi returned to Bengal.

Mir Habib with the Marāṭhā force reappeared at Kaṭak. Alivardi had to postpone his attack on the Marāṭhās as the rains had set in. On his reaching Murśidābād he was taken ill in October, 1749.²

From October, 1749 to March, 1751, the Marāṭhās did not allow Alivardi to rest. They harassed him by avoiding an open war when he came out with a large army from Murśidābād. In 1750 when Alivardi was at Midnāpūr the Marāṭhās quickly marched towards Murśidābād plundering all the way. Durlabhrām and Mir Jāfar, the officers who were stationed at Midnāpūr were nervous and unable to check the Marāṭhā inroads. This lingering war was a great drain on Alivardi's resources and men. The territory under him was a house divided against itself. In 1750 Alivardi was a man of 75, physically ailing. As the situation was intolerable his shrewd wife advised him to negotiate with the Marāṭhās.³ Old Alivardi accepted his wife's counsel and deputed Mir Jāfar to meet Jānoji and Mir Habib to settle the terms of peace. For more than a couple of years Jānoji was in Orissā⁴ or Raghuji was busy with the political affairs at Sātārā and Nāgpūr. The treaty was signed in May, 1751:—

(1) Mir Habib was to be confirmed in the Government of Orissā as the deputy *Subhedār* of Murśidābād.

(2) The *Navāb* was to pay annually 12 lacs of rupees to the Bhosles of Nāgpūr for the *cauthāi* of Bengal and Bihār.

¹ NHM., Vol. II, p. 224.

² OUM., pp. 16, 17.

³ NHM., Vol. III, p. 402.

⁴ NPI., p. 98.

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(3) When these amounts were regularly paid, the Bhosles were not to harass the two provinces.

(4) The district of Kaṭāk i.e., the territory up to the river Suvarṇarekhā was to be considered as the possession of the Bhosles.¹

After a long struggle lasting for nearly ten years, Ragujī was able to establish his right of collecting *cauthāi* from Bengal and Bihār. The province of Katak as far as Suvarṇarekhā came under his possession. This was the greatest achievement of Raghuji Bhosle crowning his earlier successes.

The Smaller states of Raipūr, Ratanpūr, Bilāspūr and Sambalpūr of Chattisgad area were conquered by Bhāskar Rām during the first two raids of Bengal. Raghuji's illegitimate son Mohansingh was in charge of these States².

Raghujī's territory included the area from Berār to Kaṭak. The Goṇḍ Kingdoms of Gaḍha-Manḍlā, Cāndā or Candrapūr and Devagaḍ were in his possession. Bihār proper was under the dual authority of the Bhosles and the Nizām. Originally the Bhosles were to get from revenue of Berār 25 per cent as *cauthāi*, 10 per cent as *sardesmukhi* and 5 per cent as *ghāsdānā*, the total working at 40 per cent. The remaining 60 per cent of the total revenue of Berār was to go to the Nizām. But later this original treaty seems to have been reversed by which the Bhosles secured 60 per cent of the revenue and the Nizām, the remaining 40 per cent.³

The strategic forts of Gāvilgaḍ and Narnālā with the territory attached to them were exclusively under Raghuji's possession. Similarly, the fort of Mānikdurg in the Māhūr area belonged to him. As already observed the states of Chattisgaḍ were also under his way as important outposts between Nāgpūr and the province of Katak. The acquisition of this vast territory speaks for Raghuji's generalship. He might have lost a few battles but he always won the war. In diplomacy, as understood in his day, he was second to none. By his mounting successes he won the confidence of *Chatrapati* Śāhū and on critical occasions he was consulted by him. Śāhū, prior to his death had called Raghuji to Sātārā to discuss the matter of succession to the *Chatrapati's* gādī. Raghuji was related to Śāhū through his wife.

capable and trustworthy persons like Bhāskarpant, Raghuji Karāṇḍe, Tuḷojipant, Nāroji Jācaka, Rakhamāji Gaṇeś, Kṛṣṇāji Āṭole and others⁴.

¹ NHM. vol. II, 224, Dr. B. C. Ray, in his Orissá under Marāthās, p. 20, expresses doubt regarding the exactness of the terms of the treaty. But from the treaty of Devagāñv, 1803, it is certain that Katak and Bālasore were surrendered to the British by the Bhosles. This means that Katak and Bālasore were with the Bhosles up to 1803, since their conquest.

² NPI, p. 100.

³ NFL, pp. 48 and 102.

⁴ NPL., pp. 105, 106.

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Raghuji and the *Peśvās* were not always on good terms. The rivalry between the two goes back to the days of *Peśvā* Bājirāv I. The spheres of influence of Raghuji and Bājirāv came into conflict when Bājirāv secured one-third part of Bundelkhand for the timely help rendered to Chatrasāl against Bangaṣ. When Bājirāv was fighting with the *Nizām* at Bhopāl in 1738, Raghuji did not offer him any help in spite of repeated requests. In the agreement between Raghuji and Sāhū, it was clearly stated that the former would accompany the *Peśvā* in his campaigns. But actually neither Bājirāv nor his son Bālāji were able to command the services of Raghuji in their capacity as the *Peśvā* or Prime Minister. Chatrapati Sāhū too often found it difficult to exercise control when two or more of his high servants were at sixes and sevens. Lack of strong central authority was rather the serious defect from which the Marāthā power suffered in the post-Sivaji period.

Raghuji avoided an open clash with Bājirāv knowing well his ability as also the influence he wielded with the *Chatrapati*. Bājirāv too acting on the advice of his brother Cimājīāppā settled his difference with Raghuji amicably.¹

The difference between Raghuji and Bālaji *Peśvā* over the eastern sphere are historic. They were settled by the mild-tempered Sāhū, who divided the spheres of activity of the two by granting Raghuji the territory from Nāgpūr to Kaṭak and to the granting Raghuji the territory from Nāgpūr to Kaṭak and to the *Peśvā* to the west of this line. Raghuji supported Bābuji Nāik as against Bālaji Bājirāv. But so long as Sāhū was alive such differences were not allowed to take a serious turn. After Sāhū's death Raghuji respected the *Peśvā's* authority. He did not join the *Peśvā's* opponents in the Marāṭhā confederacy being convinced that he was the ablest man among the Marāṭhās to occupy the *Peśvāship*. Raghuji knew well when to oppose and when to yield. He was not prepared to allow matters to be carried to the breaking point unnecessarily. In one of his letters to Nānā *Peśvā* he writes—'the Late Śrīmant Bājirāv was kind to me. But differences arose when we had a clash with Āvaji Kavaḍe who had entered Berār. All these matters should now be forgotten and I should be treated as your man.'² Bālaji *Peśvā* on learning the death of Raghuji wrote—'Raghuji was a respectable nobleman. His death is indeed a matter of great regret. God's will has to be accepted. Of late Raghuji was of much help to us.'³

Raghuji was a self-made man. He had risen to the status of a first-rate nobleman at the court of Sāhū by the dint of his merit. He therefore regarded that his status was on par with that of the *Peśvā* for all practical purposes. He disliked that the *Peśvā* should interfere with his sphere of influence. It may be observed

¹ NPI., p. 80.

² PD., 20, p. 30.

³ FD., 20, p. 68.

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that for this mutual jealousy neither the *Peśvā* nor Raghuji was so much at fault. The defect lay in the weakness of the central authority. In the absence of a strong centre the Marāṭhās were not able to create an effective confederacy which could enforce its authority over all.

Raghuji was mainly responsible for the prosperity of Nāgpūr. He brought along with him a number of Marāṭhā and Brāhmīn families from western Mahārāṣṭra who infused new order and life in the administration of Nāgpūr and Berār. Cultivation of Nāgpūr improved under Raghuji. A number of *Kunbi* or cultivators' families settled in the territory under Raghuji. The credit of settling the weavers or *Koṣṭis* also goes to Raghuji Bhosle.

Raghuji was a devotee of Rāma. He installed the idol of Rāma at Rāmṭek and revived the importance of this place of epic fame. He made land grants to many other temples and holy places.

The *Jari-Pataka* and the saffron coloured flag were the emblems of Raghuji. This great general who extended the Marāṭhā power as far as Kaṭak breathed his last at Nāgpur on the 14th of February 1755.¹

Raghuji had four sons, Mudhoji and Bimbaji from the elder wife, and Janoji and Sabaji from the younger. Janoji was the eldest among his brothers. It was Raghuji's desire that Janoji should succeed him and others should get their due shares of his vast territory. However, Mudhoji put his claim for his father's *gādi* on the plea that he was the son of the eldest wife of Raghuji. By the practice of primogeniture then prevailing, this claim was inadmissible. Janoji had the support of a number of courtiers like Kṛṣṇāji Govindrāv, the *subhedār* of Berār; Narahar Bullāl, the *subhedār* of Nāgpur, Sivabhaṭ Sāthe, the *Subhedār* of Kaṭak; Raghuji Karāṇḍe, Bimbaji Vañjāl, Nāroji Jācaka, Śivāji Keśav Tālakte, Ānandrāv Vāgh and Kṛṣṇāji Āṭole. Mudhoji had the support of Sadāśiv Hari, his *divān*, Dinkar Vināyak, Śivāji Vināyak and Narasiṅgrāv Bhavāni. The dispute of the two brothers was referred to the *Peśvā* Bālāji Bājirāv. Both of them were called to Poonā. The title of *Senāsāheb Subhā* was conferred on Janoji while the new title of *Senādhurandhar* was created for Mudhoji. Mudhoji received Candrapūr or Cāndā and Chattisgaḍ with the former as his seat of administration. Bimbaji was to reside at Chattisgaḍ and Sabaji at Dārvā in Berār.² The Bhosle brothers agreed to pay to the *Peśvā* a sum of twenty lacs³ as present on this occasion according to the time-honoured custom. Actually the *sanad of Senāsāheb Subhā* was issued as late as 1761 by Tārābāi when Mādhavarā I assumed *Peśvāship*.

¹ NPL., p. 103.

² NPL., pp. 115-118.

³ NHM., Vol. II, p. 342.

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At this time, Devajipant Corghade was a promising young man who settled the amount of present between Janoji and the *Peśvā* Bālāji Bājirāv.

Janoji and Mudhoji fought among themselves when their negotiations were in progress at Poonā, and even after their dispute was settled by the *Peśvā*.

By about 1759, the two brothers tried to settle their differences by resorting to arms. A battle was fought near Rahātgañv in which Mudhoji was forced to retreat. In the treaty that followed, it was decided that Mudhoji should actively participate in the administration and Raghuji Karāṇḍe, Trimbakji Rāje (Vāvikar) Bhosle and Pirāji Nimbālkar should act as mediators with a view to avoid any rupture in future. Pirāji Nimbālkar along with his force of six thousand was brought into the service of Janoji by Divākarpant. Pirāji hailed from western Mahārāṣṭra.¹

In 1760, Janoji and Mudhoji appealed to Sadāśivrāv to settle their dispute. Sadāśivrāv offered to settle it but asked them to run to his help at Udgir in his war against the *Nizām*. Both the brothers hastened to help Sadāśivrāv but the latter had concluded a treaty with the *Nizām* before the armies of the Bhosles could be brought into the field.²

Later, Mudhoji was forced to leave the fort of Cāndā when two of his trusted officers Ābāji Bhosle and Gaṅgādharpant turned against him. Janoji taking advantage of this difficulty marched on Cāndā, but hurriedly left the place being involved in the *Peśvā-Nizām* war, leaving behind Tuḷojipant and Majidkhān for the reduction of Cāndā, fort.³

The differences between the two brothers often resulting in an armed clash naturally weakened the power of the Bhosles. Nāgpūr, after the death of Raghuji, became a hot bed of political intrigues. Many courtiers exploited the family faction to their selfish ends. The two brothers were finally reconciled to each other because Janoji who was without a son decided to adopt Mudhoji's son as his successor. The credit of this amity, however, goes to the situation rather than to the wisdom of the either brother.

Janoji Bhosle was a man of vacillating nature. In the conflict between the *Peśvā* and the *Nizām* he sided with the latter. But both the *Peśvās* Bālāji and Mādhavrāv I proved too strong for him. Raghuji Bhosle when once reconciled with the *Peśvā* by the efforts of Sāhū remained loyal to him. Janoji failed to grasp the situation and had to pay heavily for the same in his relations with the *Peśvās*. At least as a matter of policy for safe-guarding his own territory, he should have maintained friendly relations with the *Peśvā*.

¹ NPL., pp. 126, 127.

² NPL., pp. 128, 129.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

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It was Bālājī Bājirāv who brought about a compromise between Jānoji and Mudhoji. Jānoji never cared to pay the *Peśvā* the sum of the present he had agreed to, when he was invested with the title of *Senāsāheb Subhā*. Similarly, he was very negligent in the payment of the dues to the central treasury. The *Peśvā*'s efforts to recover the State dues through his agents Vyākaṭ Moreśvar and Trimbakaji Bhosle proved futile.¹ In 1757-58, Mudhoji accompanied Raghunāthraṅ in his north Indian expedition. But soon returned back to Berār owing to some differences with him.²

In the Battle of Udgir, Jānoji and Mudhoji went to help Bhāu when the war was practically over. For a short time, when the Bhosle brothers worked in co-operation they helped the *Peśvā* in his attack on the *Nizām* at Sindkhed.³ The Bhosle brothers, mainly Jānoji and Mudhoji did not accompany Bhāusāheb to the battle-field of Pānipat. Nor does Bhāu seem to have commanded their service when the Marāṭhās were to engage themselves in a life and death struggle with Ahmad Sāh Abdālī. The cordial relations which existed between the *Peśvās* and the Sindes were conspicuous by their absence between the *Peśvās* and the Bhosles of Nāgpūr.

Jānoji and Mudhoji were with Nānāsāheb *Peśvā* when he was hastening to help Bhāu before the final rout of the Marāṭhās on the battle-field of Pānipat. Jānoji saved the retreating Marāṭhās from the attacks of the anti-Marāṭhā elements on their homeward journey. He brought the recalcitrant Bundelā Chiefs under control.⁴

Following their defeat in the Third Battle of Pānipat, the Marāṭhās were busy putting their own affairs in order. The robes of *Peśvāship* were granted to Mādhavrāṅ I. His uncle who was aspiring for the same office was not happy with this arrangement. The *Nizām* who was smarting under the defeat he had suffered in the Battle of Udgir was eager to fish in the troubled waters at Poonā. With a vast army of sixty thousand strong he desecrated the holy places of Tokā and Pravara Saṅgam and dug up Sīnde's palaces at Śrigondā for hidden treasure. In December 1761, he camped at Urlikāñcan for an attack on Poonā. Raghunāthraṅ sent urgent calls to the Marāṭhā generals for help. Jānoji Bhosle had joined the *Peśvā* with his army.⁵ He was present in the Battle of Cāmbhārgondā with a force of seven to eight thousand.⁶ The *Nizām* was surrounded by the Marāṭhā forces and compelled to surrender. Majority of the Marāṭhā nobles felt that this was the long awaited opportunity to exterminate the *Nizām*. But this could not be brought about because of the easy terms he was given by Raghunāthraṅ.

¹ NPI., p. 125.

² NPI., p. 123.

³ NHM., Vol. II, p. 342.

⁴ NPI., p. 132.

⁵ NHM., Vol. II, p. 467.

⁶ NPI., p. 136.

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Raghunāthraṅ had given easy terms to the *Nizām* at Urli with a view to securing his support in his dispute with Mādhavrāṅ which was expected any moment. Raghunāthraṅ was unwilling to work in co-operation with his young nephew who was the *Peśvā*. The situation deteriorated fast heading towards a civil war. Raghunāthraṅ's partisans had secretly secured the help of the *Nizām* and Jānoji Bhosle. In this great plot headed by Raghunāthraṅ, it was decided to deprive Mādhavrāṅ of his *Peśvāship* and power. Raghunāthraṅ was to appoint men of his own choice in high offices. Jānoji Bhosle was lured into the plot by the offer of *Chatrapatiship* at Sātārā after deposing Rāmrajā. Jānoji and the *Nizām* met near Kalaburgi (Gulburgā) and agreed to join the plot. From the territory that would be acquired the *Nizām* was to secure sixty per cent of the total tribute and Jānoji forty per cent. The *Peśvā*'s agents Vyākaṭ Moreśvar and Rāmaji Ballāl tried in vain to dissuade Jānoji and his adviser Divākarpant from joining the plot.

Young Mādhavrāṅ realising the gravity of the situation boldly surrendered himself to his uncle and put an end to the civil war that was threatening to sap the Marāṭhā power. By this dramatic decision Jānoji's dream of securing *Chatrapatiship* evaporated.¹

Shortly after the surrender of Mādhavrāṅ to his uncle, the latter—Raghunāthraṅ—started making his own arrangement by distributing offices and titles to his favourites and partisans. For some days in November 1762, the Marāṭhā leaders and diplomats assembled at Ale-gāñv and discussed all domestic issues.² Unfortunately such meetings could not be had frequently to solve the problems of the Marāṭhā confederacy. Moreover, there was no strong central authority which could force the decisions on all the members taken at such meetings.

The treaty between the Marāṭhās and the *Nizām* proved to be shortlived. Raghunāthraṅ, who was proceeding against Haidar Āli received news that the *Nizām* and Jānoji Bhosle along with a number of discontented courtiers were busy forming a coalition against him. Jānoji and the *Nizām* met at Gulburgā on 9th February 1763 and discussed the plan of seizing the *Peśvā*'s lands and sharing the spoils. Among the other Marāṭhās who joined the *Nizām* were the Paṭvardhans and the Pratinidhis. The *Nizām* as the head of this unholy alliance sent his demands to the *Peśvā* stating that all the forts east of the river Bhīmā should be delivered unto him, those who had been deprived of their *Jāgīrs* should receive them back and the *Peśvā* should settle all State affairs in consultation with the *Nizām's divān*.³

This challenge nullified the easy terms which Raghunāthraṅ had given to the *Nizām* at Urlikāñcan. Giving up the march on the territory of Haidar Ali, Raghunāthraṅ moved towards Aurangābād.

¹ NHM., Vol. II, p. 472.

² NHM., Vol. II, 472-73.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 475.

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Malhārāṇ Holkar joined Raghunāthraṇ when he was promised an additional *Jāgīr* of ten lacs. The plan of Raghunāthraṇ and Holkar was to lay waste the territory of the *Nizām* and his partisans. Knowing well that Raghunāthraṇ was a past master in the guerilla warfare, the *Nizām* decided to attack Poonā on the advice of Jānoji Bhosle. The combined armies of the *Nizām* and the Bhosles fell upon Poonā in 1763. Gopikābaī sought shelter with her men and jewellery in the fort of Purandar. Heavy tribute was exacted from the people of Poonā and the city burnt down. The shrine of Parvatī and other temples were desecrated and idols destroyed. Raghuji Karāṇḍe, the general of the Bhosle laid waste the region around Sinhgad and Purandar. He looted the *Peśvā's* jewellery at Sāsavad and set on fire important State records taken there for safety.¹ To retaliate the sack of Poonā, Raghunāthraṇ and his men carried fire and sword in the *Nizām's* territory. His army sacked parts of Berār. Mahādaji Sinde was ordered to raid Jānoji's territory and he proceeded towards Berār from Ujjain. Raghunāthraṇ had written Jānoji reprimanding him of his disloyalty and bringing to his notice how unbecoming it was for him to join the *Nizām*. At the same time Malhārāṇ Holkar was trying to dissuade Jānoji to give up the cause of the *Nizām* through his advisers Divākarpant and Bhavāni Munši. Jānoji was offered territory worth 31 lacs and was to be confirmed in the *Senāsāheb-Subhāship*. These direct threats and diplomatic approaches finally won Jānoji to the *Peśvā's* side. He agreed to leave the *Nizām* at the nick of the moment when the Marāthās would lead an attack. The other Marāthā nobles like Bhavānrāṇ Pratinidhi, Gopālrāṇ Paṭvardhan, Pirāji Nimbālkar and Gamāji were also persuaded to desert the *Nizām* on the promise of receiving *jāgīrs* and restoring lost positions.² In the Battle of Rākṣasabhuvan (10th August 1763), the *Nizām* was routed and forced to surrender. He gave to the *Peśvā* territory worth 82 lacs. Jānoji gave a banquet to the *Peśvā* and presented him the guns he had captured in the sack of Poonā along with the *Nizām*. Jānoji and the *Peśvā* were reconciled temporarily.

Vitthal Sundar the *divān* of the *Nizām* who was the brain behind all the ambitious schemes of his master was killed in the Battle of Rākṣasabhuvan.

The young *Peśvā* Mādhavrāṇ distinguished himself in the battle. The success of this battle was mainly due to his strategic and tactical movements.

Jānoji and
Mādhavrā
Peśvā.

In the Marāthā-*Nizām* struggle which ended in the battle of Rākṣasabhuvan, Jānoji because of his changing policy had displeased both the *Nizām* and the *Peśvā*. He had given up the wise policy

¹ NPI., p. 150.

² *Ibid.*, p. 152.

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of his father of supporting the *Peśvā* as the strong man. His policy was devoid of any sound principle. It was guided by the idea of extending one's own territory at the cost of others, including that of the other Marāthā potentates. This was rather the common malady from which the entire Marāthā power was suffering. Mādhavrāṇ was determined to correct this defect. With great difficulty he had brought Jānoji into his camp in the life and death struggle with the *Nizām*. The sack of Poonā in which Jānoji carried fire and sword was an act which the *Peśvā* was not prepared to forget. In the family dispute between Mādhavrāṇ and Raghunāthraṇ Jānoji always espoused the cause of the latter. Raghunāthraṇ in his own way gave easy terms to Jānoji looking upon him as his supporter in his dispute with Mādhavrāṇ.

Mādhavrāṇ was waiting for an opportunity to punish Jānoji. Berār was subject to the dual administration of the Bhosles and the *Nizām*. This naturally created friction between the two on several occasions. In 1765, Moro Dhondaji an officer of the *Nizām* in Berār was attacked by Jānoji's men. The *Nizām's* fiasco in the Battle of Rākṣasabhuvan was the result of Jānoji's treachery. He was keen on seeking revenge upon Jānoji for his breach of trust. He therefore appealed to the *Peśvā* for help when his officer was attacked. The *Peśvā* at once decided to help the *Nizām*.¹ On 17th October 1765, Mādhavrāṇ proceeded from Poonā and was joined by the *Nizām's* *divān* Rukn-ud-Daulā with a force of seven to eight thousand. The combined forces camped at Edalābād in December 1765. Raghunāthraṇ also came with his force to join his nephew. The *Nizām* started from Hyderābād and camped at Karañjā. His army was well-equipped with artillery. From Edlābād the *Peśvā's* forces went to Bālāpūr and started looting the territory of the Bhosle after dividing themselves into suitable batches. Sums of Rs. 1,75,000 and Rs. 1,70,000, were exacted from Bālāpūr and Akolā, respectively as tributes. Jānoji and Mudhoji took shelter in the fort of Āmner along with their families. Later, they shifted to the stronger fort of Cāndā. Jānoji finding the combined forces too strong for him to overcome sued for peace through the *Peśvā's* envoy Vyāṅkaṭ Moreśvar. The *Peśvā* too had no stomach for the fight. He was satisfied with the punishment he had meted out to the disobedient Jānoji. The terms of the treaty were finalised at Kholāpūr near Daryāpūr in 1766. It was decided that the Bhosle should retain territory worth Rs. 8 lacs only, out of the total territory of Rs. 32 lacs, he had received from the *Peśvā*, in the Battle of Rākṣasabhuvan. Out of the remaining 24 lacs, the *Peśvā* was to give the *Nizām* territory worth 15 lacs and was to retain for himself the rest.² Many differences between the *Nizām* and Jānoji were settled on this occasion. Following rapprochement Jānoji sent his men to help Raghunāthraṇ in his north Indian campaign.

¹ NPI., p. 159.

² NPI., p. 165.

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When the negotiations between Mādhavrāv and Jānoji were in progress, the former's agent conveyed him Jānoji's contention. Its gist is indicative of the general state of affairs in the Marāṭhā Confederacy. Jānoji was not slow to understand that the dispute between him and the Peśvā would only benefit the Nizām. But desire for power rendered any satisfactory solution difficult. The letter written to the Peśvā by his agent conveying Jānoji's mind runs as follows: "The *Srimant* being angry with us (Jānoji) has invaded Berār. I am not guilty of burning Poonā. When the Nizām indulged in this act I did not support him. I, however, admit that I did not help in the campaign against Haidar Nāyak. It is after all human to err. But the punishment meted out to me by depriving me of territory worth Rs. 30 lacs is too heavy. That has now been offered to the Nizām. Should the serpent be fed with milk? If I am ordered to attack the Nizām, I would destroy him in no time..... I shall proceed by rapid marches to meet your honour. I should not be let down".¹ Jānoji gave expression to his feelings in these words. But it seems that he did not really repent for what had happened. For, within a couple of years after the treaty of Daryāpūr he once again sided with Raghunāthraṅ in his dispute with Mādhavrāv and drew the latter's wrath upon himself.

Mādhavrāv
attacks Jānoji
and humbles
him.

In the quarrel between Mādhavrāv and Raghunāthraṅ in 1768, Jānoji decided to support the latter. However, Raghunāthraṅ was defeated and arrested before Jānoji's army could join him. Mādhavrāv was determined to teach Jānoji a lesson for violating the treaty of Daryāpūr in which he had agreed to support his cause. Jānoji was apprehensive of a fresh attack by the Peśvā. He, therefore, sent his envoy Cimañāji Rakhamangād Ciṭnis to the Peśvā for a talk. The Peśvā refused to listen to the envoy and asked Jānoji to send Devājipant to Poonā, as he considered Devājipant to be the mischief-maker in the Peśvā-Bhosle altercation. Mādhavrāv arrested Devājipant and marched on Berār. The Peśvā was accompanied by his generals Gopālrāv Paṭvardhan and Rāmacandra Gaṇeś Kānaḍe. The Nizām sent a force of eight thousand strong under Rukna-ud-daulā and Rāmcandra Jādhav. The Peśvā with the forces of his ally occupied Bhosle's territory to the west of the Wardhā river. The relatives of Jānoji had taken shelter into the fort of Gāvilgaḍ. Jewellery too was removed to this place. Jānoji with his forces encamped at Tivasā to the west of Wardhā river, (7-12-1768).

The Peśvā did not chase Jānoji. He took the fort of Āmner (20-1-1769), and straightway proceeded to Nāgpūr. Nāgpūr was looted and burnt. The burning of Poonā by Jānoji was fully avenged. The fort of Bhaṇḍārā was besieged and reduced by Rāmacandra Gaṇeś.²

¹ NPI., p. 163.

² NPI., p. 175.

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The fort of Candrāpūr or Cāndā, the strong-hold of the Bhosles was the next target of attack. The fort was besieged by the Peśvā's army. Jānoji who was outside moved from place to place carrying on a running warfare with the Peśvā's army. In order to relieve the pressure on the fort of Cāndā, Jānoji spread rumours that he was marching towards Poonā to release Raghunāthraṅ from the custody. At the same time Devājipant who was in the custody of Mādhavrāv managed to receive secret letters from Jānoji stating that when the Peśvā was engaged with the siege of Cāndā, Jānoji should attack Poonā and set Raghunāthraṅ free. The letters were intended to be seized by Peśvā's intelligence department. This ruse had its effect. The Peśvā's apprehension of Jānoji's attack on Poonā was strengthened. When these rumours gained currency Poonā was in the grip of consternation as the memory of Jānoji's first invasion was yet fresh.¹ The Peśvā at once decided to raise the siege of Cāndā and sent his men against Jānoji. He sent a letter through Rukna-ud-daulā to Jānoji on 3rd March 1769, expressing his desire for peace. Jānoji who was eager to end the war sent his terms and the treaty was finalised on 23rd March 1769, near Kanakpūr. Devājipant was the principal figure on behalf of the Bhosle in bringing about this treaty.

The following were the terms of the treaty of Kanakpūr :—

- (1) Jānoji was granted a *jāgīr* of 32 lacs in 1763, out of which he was allowed to have only 8 lacs in 1766; Jānoji should now relinquish all claim over the *jāgīr*.
- (2) The lands of the Bhosles of Akkalkot confiscated by Jānoji should be released.
- (3) The Bhosles used to collect *ghāsdānā* from the Aurangābād *Subhā* belonging to the Peśvā. They should discontinue this practice. The Bhosles likewise should stop collecting *ghāsdānā* from the Nizām's territory. The Bhosles would get their *ghāsdānā* collections from the Peśvā and the Nizām from their officers. The Bhosles should themselves collect *ghāsdānā* only if the Nizām's Officers fail to do the same for them.
- (4) The Bhosles should serve the Peśvā with their army when called.
- (5) The Bhosles should make no changes in the strength of their army without the permission of the Peśvā.
- (6) The Bhosles should not shelter rebels and disloyal persons coming from the Peśvā territory.
- (7) The Bhosles should not enter into political negotiations with the Emperor of Delhi, the Navāb of Oudh, the Rohillās, the English and the Nizām without the consent of the Peśvā.

¹ NPI., p. 179.

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- (8) The Bhosles should pay an annual tribute of Rs. 5 lacs to the *Peśvā* in five instalments.
- (9) The army of the *Peśvā* while passing through the Bhosle's territory would use the old routes.
- (10) The *Peśvā* should not interfere with the domestic affairs of Jānoji so long as he was looking after his relations properly.
- (11) Revā, Mukundpurā, Mahobā, Cārthāne, Jintur, Sakarkhedā, Mehekar should be given to the *Peśvā* by Jānoji.
- (12) The Bhosle should send his army to Orissā only if it is not required by the *Peśvā*.
- (13) The *Peśvā* should help the Bhosle with his army in the event of an invasion on the latter's territory.¹

Mādhavrāv and Jānoji met at Mehekar ceremonially. Parties and presents were exchanged. The *Nizām's* *divān* Rukna-ud-daulā was also present at Mehekar².

A careful analysis of these terms shows that Mādhavrāv's aim was to bring central control in the Marāṭhā confederacy, which was so necessary for its growth and survival. From the days of Bājirāv I, the *Peśvās* were struggling hard to assert their authority over the Bhosles of Nāgpūr in their capacity as prime ministers. There was no clear constitutional ruling on this point except the prevailing practice. The Bhosles in their own way considered themselves as the equals of the *Peśvās*. All accepted the overlordship of the *Chatrapati*. But after the death of Sāhū his successors proved to be nonentities. Under the circumstance the *Peśvās* tried to assert their authority over others with a good degree of success up to Mādhavrāv.

During Jānoji's *Senā Sāheb-Subhāship* Puruṣottam Divākar alias Devājipant Corghade of Nārkhed rose into prominence. He secured for Jānoji huge sums of money required for war. In his dealings with Mādhavrāv *Peśvā*, Divākarpant was his chief adviser. Mādhavrāv considered Devājipant as the Machiavelli at the Nāgpūr Court. He was a full wise man out of the three and a half wise men of the day.³ For some time towards the end of Jānoji's career Divākarpant lost his master's confidence and fell on evil days. But he was always looked upon as the inevitable man on critical occasions because of his keen grasp of events. Very few original papers are available about this diplomat of Nāgpūr. He died in 1781. Among other persons of note of Jānoji's times may be mentioned Bhavānipant Munśi, Bhavāni Kālo and Gaṇeś Sambhāji. Bhavānipant Munśi became Jānoji's counsellor when Devājipant fell from his favour. Bhavāni Kālo rose to the position of the general. For

¹ NPI., pp. 181-183.

² NPI., p. 174.

³ The three and a half wise men were popularly known as Devā, Sakhyā, Viṭthal and Nānā. Devā stood for Devājipant, Sakhyā for Sakhārām Bāpū Bokil, Viṭthal for Viṭthal Sundar at the Court of the *Nizām* and Nānā was the famous Nānā Phadnis.

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sometime he was the *subhedār* of Kaṭak. He constructed the temple of Bālāji at Vāsim and installed the image. The last, Gaṇeś Sambhāji too acted as the *Subhedār* of Kaṭak.¹

Jānoji Bhosle had no son. He had decided to adopt Raghuji, the eldest son of his brother, Mudhoji. After the treaty of Kanakpūr, he was on good terms with Mādhavrāv *Peśvā*. Jānoji travelled to Thevur near Poonā, where Mādhavrāv was on his death-bed and secured his consent to Raghuji's adoption. From Thevur he went to the holy places, Paṇḍharpūr and Tuḷajāpūr. He died at Yeral (Naḷdurg), on his homeward journey on 16th May 1772, owing to severe stomach-ache. Mudhoji built a monument in honour of Jānoji and secured some land from the *Peśvā* for its maintenance.²

After the death of Jānoji the house of Bhosles was plunged into family feud worse than the one that was witnessed at the death of Raghuji I. Prior to his death Jānoji had secured the consent of the *Peśvā* for regularising the adoption of Raghuji II, as he was himself without a son. But the actual adoption ceremony had not been gone through. Neither was the title of *Senā Sāheb Subhā* conferred on Raghuji II, officially. Exploiting these lapses Sābāji the younger brother of Mudhoji approached Mādhavrāv *Peśvā* for the grant of *Senā Sāheb-Subhāship*. As Mudhoji was a partisan of Raghunāthrāv, Mādhavrāv sent the robes of *Senā Sāheb-Subhāship* for Sābāji with his agent Rāmaji Ballāl Guṇe. At the same time Daryābāi the widow of Jānoji, joined Sābāji and declared that she was pregnant and would give birth to a posthumous child. This created an embarrassing situation for Mudhoji³. The success of the parties at Nāgpūr thus depended upon the powerful personality in the family dissensions of the *Peśvās* at Poonā. Family disputes for power and position broke out in every Marāṭhā confederate state. Neither the Bhosles nor the *Peśvās* were an exception to this state of affairs.

As a safety measure Mudhoji sent his family members into the fort of Cāndā and collected a force of 25,000 strong to face Sābāji. The armies of the two brothers met at Kumbhāri near Akolā in 1773. After a few engagements the two brothers decided to close the fight. It was agreed that *Senā Sāheb-Subhāship* should go to Raghuji II and actual administration should be looked after jointly by Mudhoji and Sābāji.⁴ The Prabhu brothers Vyaṅkat Kāsi and Lakṣmaṇ Kāsi were deputed to Poonā for securing the robes of *Senā Sāheb-Subhāship* for Raghuji. At this time Nārāyanrāv was the ruling *Peśvā*. This arrangement proved unsuccessful as Sābāji was dissatisfied with it. In the rivalry between Nārāyanrāv and Raghunāthrāv, Sābāji took the side of the former while Mudhoji supported the latter. Sābāji sought the aid of the *Peśvā* and the

¹ NPI., pp. 187-193.

² *Ibid.*, p. 187.

³ NPI p. 195.

⁴ NPI p. 197.

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Nizām, and the combined forces laid siege to Ellicpūr as its *Navāb* was a partisan of Mudhojī. But in 1773, when Nārāyaṇrāv *Peśvā* was murdered, Sābājī's party was considerably weakened and he openly supported the *Bārabhāīs*. Mudhojī's cause was greatly strengthened when Raghunāthrāv assumed power after murdering his nephew. A compromise was brought about between Mudhojī and Sābājī, which in its own way was destined to be short-lived. The *Nizām*, who had taken the side of Sābājī, drew upon himself the wrath of Raghunāthrāv. The *Nizām* was attacked and forced to enter into treaty with Raghunāthrāv. With the Bhosles, the *Nizām* formed the treaty of Sixty-Forty.¹

The family dispute between Mudhojī and Sābājī was finally set at rest when the latter was killed in the Battle of Pāñcgaṇv near Nāgpūr on 26th January 1775. In this battle Mudhojī was joined by the *Gārdī* Muhammad Yusuf, one of the murderers of Nārāyaṇrāv.² The Pāñcgaṇv battle gave Mudhojī a free hand in the political affairs of Nāgpūr. Daryābāi and the other partisans of Sābājī quietly surrendered to Mudhojī.³

For some time in 1775, the *Bārabhāīs* instigated Sīvājī Bhosle of Amrāvati to rise against Mudhojī. They promised *Senā-Sāheb-Subhāship* to Sīvājī. This move was deemed necessary by them as their rival Raghunāthrāv had the support of Mudhojī Bhosle. On 6th March 1775, Raghunāthrāv entered into an alliance with the British at Surat in order to oppose the *Bārabhāīs*. The rising of Sīvājī Bhosle of Amrāvati could not assume any serious proportion due to the timely mediation of Divākarpant.⁴

The fratricidal wars among the Marāṭhās were fully exploited by the English for the expansion of their power. In 1773, when the Poonā court was faced with extraordinary situation following the assassination of Nārāyaṇrāv, the British forces moved from Bombay and took the fort of Thānā. In fact the British had been casting their covetous eyes on the island of Sāṣṭī (Sālsette), since long, for the safety of Bombay. The fort of Thānā surrendered on 28th December 1773.⁵ This was the actual beginning of the First Anglo-Marāṭhā war which terminated in the Treaty of Sālbye in 1782. Raghunāthrāv, in his quarrel with the *Bārabhāīs* finally embraced the British giving them the long sought opportunity of interfering with the internal affairs of the Marāṭhās. Raghunāthrāv became a British protege by the Treaty of Surat, (6th March 1775). With a view of curbing the growing ambition of the British and their aggression Nānā Phaḍṇis proposed an anti-British Confederacy consisting of the *Peśvā's* Government, the *Nizām*, Haidar Ali and the Bhosles of Nāgpūr. At this time the prestige of the British had suffered a set back in the eyes of the Indian powers due to the unscrupulous methods of Warren Hastings. This was rather the

¹ NPI., p. 202.² NPI., p. 205.³ NPI., p. 205.⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 209.⁵ NHM., Vol. III, p. 43.

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opportune time for the Marāṭhās to move against the British as they were engaged in a long war with the French. But the well-conceived quadruple alliance could not be worked out because of the machinations of Warren Hastings. Realising the danger of the alliance proposed by Nānā Phaḍṇis, Hastings restored Cuntūr to the *Nizām* and detached him from the Confederacy. His next move was the seduction of the Bhosles of Nāgpūr.

According to the plan of Nānā Phaḍṇis, the Bhosles were to attack the English in Bengal, Haidar Ali to proceed against Madrās and the Poonā forces to harass the British in Gujarāt and Bombay. To execute a part of this joint plan, a large force under Khaṇḍojī Bhosle popularly known as Cimanājī marched towards Orissā. Cimanājī was a man of courage and action. He was instructed to invade Bengal for the collection of *cauthāi* which was in arrears. But at the eleventh hour he was prevented from stepping into Bengal by the advice of his crafty minister Divākarpant Corghade. Hastings was able to purchase the loyalty of both Khaṇḍojī and Divākarpant by bribing them heavily. By the end of 1778, Goddard had secured Mudhojī's permission for the passage of his army through the latter's territory into Gujarāt. Nānā was enraged at this and immediately sent for Raghujī and Divākarpant and secured their support to his four-party alliance.¹ But the two never kept their word.

Mudhojī Bhosle who was a sworn member of the Confederacy was the first to inform Hastings of Nānā's plan. It was he who prevented Khaṇḍojī Bhosle from invading Bengal. Mudhojī, in all these activities had violated the Treaty of Kanakpūr between Jānoji and Mādhavrāv. It was presumed that he would observe the treaty to which his elder brother Jānoji was a party. But at the critical juncture he cast the previous bindings to the winds and went ahead recklessly allying himself with the British and their protege Raghunāthrāv for selfish gains. The role played by Mudhojī, Raghunāthrāv and their supporters is indicative of the state of affairs prevailing among the ruling Marāṭhā noblemen.

In 1785, Mudhojī had been to Poonā with his army to help Nānā Phaḍṇis in the war against Tipū Sultān. The battle was fought at Badāmī—1786 in which the *Nizām*, the Bhosles and the *Peśvās* jointly defeated Tipū. Cimanābāpū distinguished himself in this war. On his homeward journey Mudhojī payed a visit to the holy places in Mahārāṣṭra and returned to Nāgpūr. Mudhojī died at Nāgpūr on 19th May 1788,² after a very active political career of over two decades.

Towards the end of Jānoji's career Divākarpant had fallen from his grace and was imprisoned. His property too was confiscated. Mudhojī who needed his help most released him. Divākarpant was soon restored to his former position and served Mudhojī as his

¹ NHM., Vol. III, pp. 97, 98.² NPI., pp. 213, 214.

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principal Counsellor. Mudhoji was never loyal either to the *Bāra-bhāus* or to Nānā Phadnis. Throughout his career he supported Raghunāthrao. At one time he was prepared to serve as the vassal of Warren Hastings severing his relations with the *Peśvā*. Divākarpant had to tow the line of his master. But in doing so he could have impressed upon his master as to what was ultimately good for the Marāṭhā nation as a whole. This naturally required a man of high moral character. It could not be expected of Divākarpant who was enjoying the confidence of Warren Hastings, to rise above self-interest. Divākarpant was bribed by Hastings in order to dissuade the Bhosles from the quadruple alliance of Nānā Phadnis. Thus, 'the full-wise man' out of the noted three and a half-wise men of the Marāṭhā country, proved to be otherwise in the large national interests.

The title of *Senā Sāheb-Subhā* was finally conferred on Raghuji in 1775, during the *Peśvāship* of Savāi Mādhavrāo.¹ Actually he was designated for this title much earlier but sanction for the same could not be had from Poonā, because of the strained relations between the *Peśvās* and the Bhosles. Raghuji assumed power after the death of his father Mudhoji.

Raghuji's relations with Nānā Phadnis were amicable. In the Battle of Khardā, 1795, Raghuji sent his army under Viṭṭhal Ballāl *Subhedār* to help the *Peśvā*. Viṭṭhal Ballāl distinguished himself in this war and was highly honoured by Nānā. Raghuji's gains in this war were substantial. He received territory worth three and a half lacs from the *Nizām* for the *ghāsdānā* of the Gaṅgthadi region. The *Nizām* agreed to pay his arrears to Raghuji amounting to Rs. 29 lacs. It was decided that both should share the revenues of Berār as in the past. New *sanads* of the territory to the south of the Narmadā were granted by the *Peśvā* to Raghuji. *sanads* of this territory were granted to the Bhosles by Nānāsāheb *Peśvā* but the officers of the latter had not given the actual possession so far. Raghuji got the possession of Huśaṅgābād, Caurāgaḍ and Bācāi. Raghuji stuck to the party of Nānā Phadnis even after the tragic end of Savāi Mādhavrāo. In appreciation Nānā gave Raghuji Rs. 5 lacs in cash and the possession of Gaḍha-Manḍlā.

The *Rājā* of Sāgar gave Raghuji a part of his territory for the help he had rendered in the event of an attack by one Amīrkhan. Similarly, the fort of Dhāmoṇi was secured from a petty Rajput Chieftain and Huśaṅgābād from the *Navāb* of Bhopāl by Raghuji. Thus, by 1800, Raghuji's kingdom was at its zenith. It was the largest of the Marāṭhā states towards the close of the eighteenth century.

¹ NPI., pp. 300-302.

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The following account might give some idea of the territory and its revenue under Raghuji II¹ :—

Territory	Revenue Rs. (in lacs)
1. Devagaḍ, including Nāgpūr	30
2. Gaḍha-Manḍlā	14
3. Huśaṅgābād, Śivani-Mālvā, Caurāgaḍ, etc. ..	7
4. Multāi or Multāpī	2
5. Half the revenue of Berār and of Gāvilgaḍ, Narnālā, etc. ..	30
6. Orissā and the other feudatory states in the area.	17
7. Candrapūr or Cādā	5
8. Chattisgaḍ and the other feudatory states like Bastār, Sambalpūr, Sirgūjā, Kaṅkar, Kalahaṇḍi, Jasāpūr and Gaṅgpūr.	6

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These figures of revenue from the different parts of the territory under Raghuji appear to be true. Raghuji, however, was destined to see the decline of the Bhosle house when called upon to face the powerful East India Company.

In 1798, Lord Wellesley came to India as the Governor-General. His objective was to bring the Indian States under 'Subordinate Isolation' by his most potent weapon of 'subsidiary system'. Mysore was the first of the Indian States to be forced to accept the subsidiary alliance. The *Nizām* was the next to enter it for self-protection. Bājirāo II in his wars with the Marāṭhā potentates and in particular with Yaśvantrāo Holkar, embraced the subsidiary treaty in 1802. Thereafter the Marāṭhā states one after another sold their freedom for a mess of pottage. Under the circumstances, it was not easy for Raghuji to keep himself out of the iron trap laid by Wellesley. As early as 1799, Mr. Colebrooke was sent to Nāgpūr to persuade Raghuji to enter the subsidiary alliance. He stayed in Nāgpūr for two years but was not successful in bringing Raghuji under the alliance².

The Treaty of Bassein in 1802, by which Bājirāo II bartered away his freedom was highly resented by Yaśvantrāo Holkar. Daulatrāo Sinde and Raghuji Bhosle, too, were upset by Bājirāo's decision. After the Treaty of Bassein Lord Wellesley had been pressing upon Daulatrāo and Raghuji to enter into a similar alliance with the British without delay. It was clear that Wellesley was trying to hold aloof Daulatrāo and Raghuji. Col. Collins was deputed for negotiations with the two chiefs. They evaded a definite reply in order

¹ NPI., p. 310.

² NHM., Vol. III, p. 402.

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to gain time, whereupon, Col. Collins left the Sindes' camp. On 7th August 1803, General Wellesley proclaimed a war against Bhosles and the Sindes, and called upon the general populace to keep itself aloof from the struggle.¹

The fort of Ahmadnagar which was equipped with munitions and supplies was attacked by Wellesley. Sindes' European Officers who were bribed and seduced went over to the English. Sindes' Brāhmin keeper of the fort finding the position untenable surrendered the fort on 12th August 1803. The Bhosle's army joined the Sindes near Jālanāpūr and a stiff action took place culminating in the battle of Assai on 24th September. The Marāthās fought well but were finally defeated. The loss on the English side was heavy, 663 Europeans and 1,777 Indians were killed in action. Stevenson next captured Burhānpūr and Āsirgaḍ, the two strongholds of the Sindes. These successes of the English depressed both the Sindes and the Bhosles. On the 6th November Sindes' agent Yaśvantrāy Ghorpade came to Wellesley's camp to arrange the terms of peace.²

The Bhosles were now singled out by Wellesley and Stevenson advanced against the fort of Gāvilgaḍ. The Sindes sent their force to help the Bhosle, violating the truce they had made with the English. The two armies met on the vast plane between Ādgānv and Sirasolī. The Marāthā guns played havoc among the English army forcing them to flee. But the English Generals collected their forces again and attacked the Marāthās. In the last action the Marāthās were defeated. The battle of Ādgānv thus decided the fate of the Marāthās on the 29th November 1803. The fort of Gāvilgaḍ fell on 25th December when its keeper Benisingh Rajput died fighting.³

On 17th December Raghujī Bhosle signed a treaty at Devagānv near Elliepur with the English.

The terms of the treaty of Ādgānv were as follows :—

(1) The Bhosle should surrender the territory to the west of the river Wardhā as also the provinces of Kaṭak and Bālāsore. The Bhosles were to retain for themselves the forts of Gāvilgaḍ and Narnālā and the territory under these forts worth Rs. 4 lacs; i.e., the paraganās of Akoṭ, Ādgānv, Baḍnerā, Bhātkuli and Khātkali.

(2) Any dispute between the Nizām, the Peśvā and the Bhosle should be settled through the mediation of the English.

(3) The Bhosles should have no relations with any European Power. The English too should have no relations with either the enemies or relatives of the Bhosles.

(4) The Bhosles should have no relation with any members of the Marāthā Confederacy.

(5) Both the parties should have the envoy of the other at their Courts.

¹ NHM., Vol. III, p. 402.

² Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 410, 411.

³ Ibid., Vol. III, p. 412.

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(6) The Bhosles should respect the treaties which the English have formed with the former's feudatories lying between Orissā and Chattisgad.¹

Berār was given to the Nizām for the help he rendered to the English. By this treaty the Bhosles practically lost their independent status. The territory under them was now confined to Nāgpūr and the neighbouring area.

The English were successful in keeping Yaśvantrāy Holkar out of the picture in their struggle with the Sindes and the Bhosles. They fully utilised the hostility between Daulatrāy and Yaśvantrāy. The long cherished dream of the English to secure the coastal strip stretching from Calcutta to Madras was fulfilled.

Daulatrāy Sindes too, signed a treaty with the English at Surajī-Āñjangānv on 30th December 1803.

According to the 5th terms of the treaty of Devagānv, Mount Stuart Elphinstone was sent to Nāgpūr as the British resident. He forced Raghujī to give up his sovereignty over the States to the east of Nāgpūr. Smarting under the recent defeat he had suffered at Devagānv, Raghujī was trying to reorganise his army and secure news about Yaśvantrāy Holkar's movement so that he might take revenge upon the English if a suitable opportunity permitted such action. But the Resident kept a close watch over Raghujī's movements and desisted him from keeping any contact with Holkar and his men.²

With the fall of the Sindes and the Holkars the marauding bands of the *Peṇḍhāris* became the scourge of the restless times. They fell upon the peasants and the citizens and looted their property. Where resistance was offered they indulged in killing and raping. With the fall of their supporters, the Sindes and the Holkars, the cruelties of the *Peṇḍhāris* became all the more wanton. They have been rightly described as the scavengers of the Marāthā army.

One of the leaders of the *Peṇḍhāris*, Amīrkhan attacked Jubbulpore in about 1809. The local *Subhedār* of the Bhosles, Jijābā Ghātge tried his best to defend the city but was defeated and forced to take shelter in the fort of Maṇḍlā. In order to defend the Narmadā region from the *Peṇḍhāri* inroads Raghujī appointed Viṭṭhal Ballāl *Subhedār*, Benisingh Jāmdār, Raghunāthrávbājī Ghātge and Muhammad Amīrkhan of Sīvanī.

At one time the *Peṇḍhāris* looted Rāmṭek and Bhaṇḍārā and appeared in the suburbs of Nāgpūr. The Bhosles' officers Siddik Ali Khān and Mālojī Ahīrrāv were finally able to force them to retreat.³ It was Lord Hastings who exterminated the *Peṇḍhāris* by conducting an all out campaign against them.

¹ NPI., p. 344.

² Ibid., pp. 361-362.

³ Ibid., pp. 373-375.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 877-78.

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During the Bhosle-English wars the *Navāb* of Bhopāl had taken Huśaṅgābād and Sivaṇi from the Bhosles. In 1807, Raghuji sent his army and captured Cainpurvāḍi and Cāṅkigaḍ of the Bhopāl territory. Later he entered into an agreement with the Sindes for a concerted attack on Bhopāl. The two armies besieged Bhopāl fort in 1814. But Raghuji withdrew his forces when the *Navāb* of Bhopāl asked for British help.¹

Sambalpūr and Pāṭṇā (near Orissā) were granted back to Raghuji in 1806.

After the battle of Āḍgāṇv the Governor-General was trying to persuade Raghuji to accept the subsidiary alliance. Jenkins, who succeeded Mount Stuart Elphinstone as the resident of Nāgpūr, once again appealed to Raghuji that he should allow the stationing of the British army at Nāgpūr. But Raghuji skilfully avoided all such appeals. In 1811, when the *Peṇḍhāris* burnt some wards of Nāgpūr city Raghuji asked for British help, but was refused as Raghuji was not willing to enter into the subsidiary alliance.

In 1801-02, on the occasion of the *Sinhastha Parvaṇi*, Raghuji with the members of his family had been to Dharmapuri on the bank of the Godāvari for a bath.²

Raghuji's relations with his brother Vyaṅkoji *alias* Manyābāpū were not happy. Manyābāpū enjoyed the title of *Senādhurandhar*. He was brave and adventurous. He died at Kāśī in 1811.³

Mr. Colebrooke the great Sanskr̥t scholar, who was deputed to Nāgpūr as an envoy in 1799, has left a lively description of Raghuji. Raghuji lived in a spacious palace surrounded by gardens. The palace had six quadrangles or *cauks* each of which had a three storeyed structure. The drawing hall in the palace was well decorated with chandeliers and pictures. The hall which was meant for the *Rājā* had beautiful carving. The garden around the palace had good roads enclosed by fencing.

Raghuji was not fond of pomposity either in dress or manners. He was sweet-tongued and behaved in a friendly manner even with his subordinates. He was, however, careful in maintaining the decorum and discipline of the *darbār*. During leisure hours all were entertained by singing and dancing. Raghuji was fond of hunting, so much so that when a tiger was reported in the neighbourhood he often hastened to the place with his party leaving the office work. He, however, never neglected administrative duty. Śridhar Lakṣman Munśi and Kṣṇarāv Ciṭṇis were the most trusted courtiers of Raghuji.

The *Dasarā* festival during Raghuji's reign was a brilliant spectacle displaying his grandeur and glory.⁴

¹ NPI., pp. 377-378.

² *Ibid.*, p. 308.

³ NPI., p. 386.

⁴ NPI., pp. 312-14.

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Raghuji loved his kith and kin and was extremely fond of children. Bakābāi was his favourite queen. He was pious and devoted to his mother. But Raghuji lacked quick decision and courage. In the war with the English he often left his fighting forces. He was willing to wound yet afraid to strike. In diplomacy he was no match for the contemporary Englishmen with whom he was required to deal.

After the treaty of Devagāṇv, Raghuji, it seems, was in financial difficulties. His anxiety for wealth grew with age bringing him into disrepute. He was nicknamed the big *baniyā* for the methods he used in collecting money. Raghuji who had the good fortune of witnessing the glory of the Bhosle house at its zenith was also destined to see its decline. He died on 22nd March 1816.

Raghuji II was succeeded by his son Parasoji in 1816. Parasoji was paralytic, blind and mentally deranged. His father's efforts to improve him proved fruitless. Bakābāi, Parasoji's step-mother brought him to her palace and took charge of the administration with the help of Dharmāji Bhosle, Nārobā Ciṭṇis and Gajābādādā Gujar. Dharmāji was an illegitimate son of Raghuji and was the custodian of the royal jewellery and treasury.

Next to Parasoji the only other claimant to the Nāgpūr *gādi* was Āppāsāheb Bhosle. He was a smart young man having support of many courtiers, as Parasoji was practically insane. Rāmchandra Vāgh and Māṇbhaṭ were prominent among his chief supporters. They were trying to seduce the partisans of Parasoji. Thus after the death of Raghuji Nāgpūr Court had two factions, one headed by Āppāsāheb and the other led by Bakābāi, Dharmāji and others with Parasoji on the ancestral *gādi*.

Āppāsāheb had no claim over the *gādi* as Parasoji was the son of Raghuji. The army was under the command of Dharmāji, Siddik Ali Khān and Gajābādādā. Āppāsāheb impressed upon the courtiers that it was not desirable that Dharmāji, a bastard, should manage the affairs of the Bhosle house. The resident Mr. Jenkins was secretly backing Āppāsāheb as he was counting upon him to accept the subsidiary alliance which Raghuji had been carefully avoiding all through his life. When Siddik Ali Khān smelt this his loyalty to Parasoji and Bakābāi wavered. He sat on the fence ready to jump to the side of the winning party. Āppāsāheb called Dharmāji for meeting on 11th April 1816 and got him arrested. He took possession of the *Rājā* and his treasury. Without any further loss of time Āppāsāheb ceremoniously performed the coronation for Parasoji. He personally held the *cauri* over Parasoji's head and walked bare-footed in the procession taken out in honour of the *Rājā*. A grand *darbār* was held in which the *Rājā* was made to proclaim the appointment of Āppāsāheb as his regent. Mr. Jenkins graced the occasion by his presence, lending stability to Āppāsāheb.

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Dharmāji was murdered on 5-5-1816¹; Āppāsāheb's evil intention of occupying power for himself was thus finally fulfilled. He entered the subsidiary alliance with the English on 28-5-1816, bartering away the independent status of Nāgpūr which Raghuji II had maintained with great difficulty. The important terms of this alliance were—

(1) For the protection of Nāgpūr the English were to maintain six platoons of foot-soldiers and one of cavalry. The king was to pay seven and a half lac of rupees for the maintenance of this force.

(2) The king was to grant territory worth this amount in case of his failure to pay it.

(3) The king too was to keep a contingent force of 3,000 soldiers and 2,000 horses at his own expense, to be supervised by the Resident in respect of its pay, discipline, provision, etc.

(4) All foreign affairs should be conducted only through the English Resident.

(5) The king should not engage in wars with the friends of the English.²

This alliance was brought about through Āppāsāheb's envoys Nāgojipant and Nārāyan Panditji. The former received an annual pension of Rs. fifteen thousand from the English for his successful mediation.

Part of the English subsidiary force moved from Ellicpur to Nāgpūr under General Dovetone and the rest was stationed at Kaḷameśvar near Nāgpūr to strengthen Āppāsāheb's position. Afraid of the machinations of the rival party Āppāsāheb's left the palace and took residence in the *Telankheḍi* Garden.

On the morning of 1-2-1817 Parasoji was found dead in his bed. Āppāsāheb was out of station. It was rumoured that Āppāsāheb managed to throttle Parasoji to death by seducing his body-guards Sādikmānu *Bhāldar* and Jānu Bansod. The Resident absolved Āppāsāheb of the murder charge which was thickly rumoured at this time, but later, when he tried to break the bonds of subsidiary alliance he was conveniently made the culprit.³

After Parasoji's death, Āppāsāheb being the only heir to the Nāgpūr *gādi* his succession ceremonies were gone through quietly on 21st April 1817. The moment Āppāsāheb assumed charge of Nāgpūr he began to feel the weight of British supremacy which he had accepted by the subsidiary alliance. His efforts hereafter were directed to overthrow the British yoke. The Resident suspected that Āppāsāheb was in contact with Bājirāv *Peśvā* and the Sindes. The agents of one of the *Peṇḍhāri* leaders Ciṭṭu were openly honoured in the *darbār* by presenting dress. As a precautionary measure Col. Adams was asked to move his force to the south of the Narmadā to meet any emergency. Similarly, Scott left Rāmṭek for Nāgpūr.

¹ NPI., p. 397.

² NPI., p. 399.

³ NPI., pp. 403-404.

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It was in this atmosphere that Āppāsāheb decided to receive the robes of *Senā Sāheb-Subhā*, formally, from Bājirāv *Peśvā*. 24th November 1817 was decided as the day for receiving the robes in the *darbār*. Āppāsāheb invited the Resident for this ceremony. But the latter declined it as war had broken out with the *Peśvā* in Poona, and informed Āppāsāheb that he should not receive the honours from the enemy of the British. In spite of this opposition Āppāsāheb received the robes and the title in the *darbār*. This was considered as a breach of the subsidiary treaty by the Resident and a war with Āppāsāheb seemed imminent.¹

Like Bājirāv, Āppāsāheb too wanted to free himself from the shackles of the subsidiary treaty. He was helped in this task by Mānbhaṭ, Rāmcandra Vāgh, *Subhedār* Nimbālkar and Nārāyan Nagāre. Āppāsāheb's Arab soldiers occupied a position between the city and Sitābulḍi. He had a total force of 18 thousand men and 26 guns while the English force numbered only 1,800.

Having come to know the movements of the Marāṭhā army, the Resident ordered Lt. Col. Scott to occupy the Sitābulḍi hills. Scott had two battalions of Madras Native infantry, two companies of Native infantry and three troops of Bengal Cavalry. He was equipped with four six-pounder guns. Strategically the Marāṭhās committed the first blunder in allowing Scott to occupy the hills.

The *Rājās* palace was in the present Mahāl area which was protected by the *Šukravār darwājā*. This was the fort.

The English had taken shelter in the Tuḷśibāg, about the 24th December 1817.

The English residency was situated to the west of the Sitābulḍi Fort, i.e., on the site of the present Nāgpūr *Mahāvīdyālaya*. The English had their treasury to the west of the smaller hill of the two Sitābulḍi hills. The southern hill spreads from east to west and is the bigger one. The smaller one is to the north. The two hills roughly rise above the ground to a height of hundred feet and are separated by the same distance.²

Peace talks were in progress when both the sides were preparing for war simply to gain time. On the evening of 26th November 1817, the Arabs of Āppāsāheb opened fire on the smaller hill. He sent a message to the Resident saying that this had been done against his orders. Āppāsāheb throughout this war was wavering making the position of his loyal supporters like Mānbhaṭ most awkward. It is possible that the mercenary Arabs might have acted on their own without waiting for the orders of their master but this speaks for Āppāsāheb's lack of leadership. Āppāsāheb, after his defeat, pleaded that his Arabs opened fire on the orders of Mānbhaṭ.³

¹ NPI., p. 408.

² NPL., pp. 411-13.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 417.

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The fire of the Arabs was well replied by the English guns on the hills. Captain Lloyd was in charge of the bigger hill. Captain Sadler was killed by a shot while he was defending the small hill. On the morning of 27th the Bhosle's forces approached the hill. The smaller hill was attacked and occupied. The English were in a confused state. The Arbas were preparing to launch an attack on the bigger hill. The English would have lost the battle but for the brave and spirited attack of Captain Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald's determined onslaught pushed the Marāṭhās back and they broke in all directions. This infused new spirit in the English soldiers who were drooping from fatigue. A combined attack of the cavalry and infantry finally won the day for the English.¹

It was Māṇbhaṭ and his Arbas who really fought well bringing victory within easy reach for the Marāṭhās.² But lack of concerted action and Āppāsāheb's vacillation were mainly responsible for the defeat of the Marāṭhās. Āppāsāheb in order to save himself pleaded to the Resident that all was done by Māṇbhaṭ without his orders. Bakābhāi too towed his line. Thus, in war, Āppāsāheb proved to be a coward and in defeat acted most disgracefully. Māṇbhaṭ, Rāmcandra Vāgh, Gaṇpatrāv Subhedār and their supporters were against any talk of peace. When Doveton was preparing to attack the city, Āppāsāheb walked into the protection of the Resident on 16-12-1817, at about 9 o'clock in the morning.³ The masterless Marāṭhās fought one more battle known as the battle of Sakkardārā, only to lose.⁴ Māṇbhaṭ with his Arabs and North Indian soldiers totalling 5,000, defended the city from behind the fort.

But he was helpless when the Arabs in a divided state of mind were seduced by the English. They left Nāgpūr on the 30th when the arrears of their pay were cleared. The Union Jack was hoisted on the old palace of the Bhosles on the same day. Poor Māṇbhaṭ was arrested and later died in prison.⁵

Āppāsāheb signed a treaty on 6-1-1818 with the English in which he was bound by terms stricter than those of the subsidiary alliance.

The terms of the treaty were :—

1. Āppāsāheb was to surrender the forts of Gāvilgaḍ, Narnālā and the territory attached to them, along with the states, Sirgujā and Jaspūr.
2. The civil and military administrations of Nāgpūr was to be conducted through the Resident.
3. Āppāsāheb was to stay in Nāgpūr under the supervision of the Resident.

¹ NPI., p. 422.

² *Ibid.*, p. 423.

³ NPI., pp. 428-29.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 430.

⁵ NPI., p. 434.

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4. Āppāsāheb was to pay the arrears of pay of the subsidiary army.
5. He was to surrender any fort which might be asked for by the English.
6. He should hand over all those who acted against his order in the war.
7. The Sitābuldī hills were to be surrendered to the English along with the neighbouring area they might ask for.¹

This sealed the fate of Āppāsāheb as also of Nāgpūr once for all. These terms of the treaty were ratified by the Governor General.

With the surrender of Āppāsāheb Bhosle the outlying posts of Jubbulpore, the forts of Sivanī Dhruḍ (south-east of Nāgpūr), Gāvilgaḍ, Caurāgaḍ, Narnālā and Maṇḍlā fell to the English without much resistance. The fort of Maṇḍlā which was protected by the river Narmadā offered resistance for sometime. But when its keeper Rāyā Hajārī ran away, the beleaguered force numbering 1,100 surrendered.²

After his surrender, Āppāsāheb was reinstated on his ancestral *gāḍī* and allowed to stay in the palace. For three months things appeared to move smoothly. On 19th February 1818, Bāpū Gokhale, the last great general of Bājirāv fell fighting in the battle of Aṣṭā. Bājirāv lost all hope of regaining his position and took to heels begging for help till his surrender to Malcolm. During his flight he was at Vāsim for a while and then camped at Pāṇḍhārkavaḍā. He was accompanied by Gaṇpatrāv Subhedār one of the generals of Āppāsāheb. It was rumoured that Bājirāv would be joined by Āppāsāheb and both would march to Cāndā which was yet in the hands of its keeper Gaṅgāsīngh. Jenkin's suspicion that Āppāsāheb was in correspondence with Bājirāv was strengthened when a letter from Āppāsāheb to Bājirāv was intercepted by Elphinstone and sent to him.³ He at once arrested Āppāsāheb on 15-3-1818. Āppāsāheb along with Rāmcandra Vagh and Nāgopant was sent to Prayāg, as his presence in Nāgpūr was considered dangerous.

The fort of Cāndā fell on 30th May 1818. Its keeper Gaṅgāsīngh fought desperately till he fell dead along with his trusted followers.⁴

On his way to Prayāg Āppāsāheb escaped from the English camp at Rāicūr on 13-5-1818. Hereafter began the long flight of Āppāsāheb.

Āppāsāheb took shelter in the Mahādev hills of Madhya Pradesh and was helped by Mohansing Thākūr of Pañcmadhi and Cain Sāh of Harāi. A few petty Goṇḍ Kings too supported Āppāsāheb in his last days. The English forces under Adams, MacMorin and Scott combed out the Hills and arrested the Goṇḍ leaders. Mohansing

¹ NPI., pp. 435-36.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 438-444.

³ NPI., p. 445.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 473.

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and Cain Sāh were taken into custody. Appāsāheb made good for the fort of Aśirgaḍ, the gateway of the Deccan, on 1st February 1819. He was escorted by the *Peṇḍhārī* leader Ciṭṭu and his followers. Appāsāheb was received into the fort by Yaśvantrāv Lāḍ, its keeper. The fort was yet in the possession of the Śindes. It was admirably suited for defence. The English moved their men and material from Mālvā, Poonā, Nāgpūr and Hyderābād. Prior to the surrender of the fort on 9th April of 1819, Appāsāheb had escaped towards Khairi Ghāt to the north-west of Aśirgaḍ and taken shelter with a Brāhmin at Burhānpūr. From there Appāsāheb travelled through the territory of the Śindes, Holkars, Jaipūr and Jodhpūr begging for asylum and took shelter for sometime with Ranjit Sing. The *Rājā* of Mandī gave Appāsāheb protection for a short time. Finally Appāsāheb was found with the *Rājā* of Jodhpūr. The *Rājā* refused to hand over Appāsāheb to the English in keeping with the chivalrous traditions of the Rajputs. In 1829 Appāsāheb's wandering career came to an end and he spent the remaining part of his life as a guest-cum-royal prisoner at the court of Jodhpūr. He died in 1840.¹

During his luckless days Appāsāheb desperately moved from court to court begging for help. But he was too late. Had he shown sufficient courage and determination in the battle of Sitābulḍi the chances of success were brighter. He let down his honest supporters like Mānḥaṭ and Rāmendra Vāgh. In expecting aid from Bājirāv, Appāsāheb was leaning on a reed. After his confinement at Jodhpūr nobody seems to have been really sorry for the unfortunate Appāsāheb. In his fight his wife Umābāi supplied him money secretly. His other wife Sāvitrībāi who was enjoying a pension at Nāgpūr did not go to him even after she came to know of his stay in Jodhpūr.²

RAGHUJI III.

When Appāsāheb was arrested the Resident Mr. Jenkins decided to adopt Bājibā, the son of Banubāi, as the successor to the Bhosle *gāḍi*. Banubāi was the daughter of Raghuji II. The adoption ceremony was performed on 26-6-1818 and Bājibā was renamed Raghuji III. He was then only ten years old. It was the Resident who took the entire administration into his own hands during the minority of Raghuji III. Bakābāi was to look after the palace affairs. Her ambition to rule may be said to have been fulfilled at least partly. Prior to his retirement the Resident held a grand *darbār* and read out the terms of the treaty with Raghuji III on 1-2-1826. It was ratified by the Governor General on 13-12-1826.

The terms of the treaty were—

(1) The terms of this treaty which were not contradictory to the subsidiary alliance of 1816 were accepted by the *Rājā*.

(2) The *Rājā* was not to have any relationship with the other Marāṭhā States. He was to retain the title of *Senā Sāheb-Subhā* but was to relinquish the honours connected with it.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 465.

² NPI., p. 466.

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(3) The *Rājā* should give to the English territory worth Rs. 7.5 lacs for the maintenance of the subsidiary force. He was hereafter not required to keep the contingent force as decided previously by the subsidiary alliance of 1816. The English promised to continue the *rāj* in the house of the Bhosles perpetually.

(4) The *rāj* was given over to the King as he had come of age.

(5) Cāndā, Devagad, the territory up the Ghāṭs, Lāñji and Chattisgaḍ were to be under the English along with the feudatories of these regions. The *Rājā* was to receive Rs. 17 lacs from these territories after deducting the expenses. The *Rājā* was to rule over Nāgpūr and the rest of the territory.

(6) the *Rājā* should act on the advice of the English in respect of the appointment of officials, the *Rājā's* privy purse and the laws of the territory. The English had the right to inspect the Kings treasury and the accounts of his kingdom.

(7) In the event of maladministration the English were free to appoint their own officers and manage things.

(8) The English were free to take over Sitābulḍi or any other fort they required.

Mr. Jenkins gave charge of his office to Captain Hamilton on 29-12-1826 and proceeded to Bombay for further journey.¹

Jenkins deserves praise for the peace and good administration he gave to the Bhosle *rāj* during his ten years' career. He was able to turn the deficit of the kingdom into a surplus treasury. His treatment of the Bhosles was far more considerate than the one meted out to the *Peśvās* by Malcolm. He could have easily annexed Nāgpūr to the British territory had he meant so.

Jenkins took care to educate Raghuji III. Raghuji was introduced to the Three R's and had working knowledge of Persian and Marāṭhī though he had no inclination for learning.² In the early part of his royal career Raghuji took keen interest in administrative matters but later neglected them. He loved music and dancing and later indulged in gambling to the neglect of his duties. He was addicted to drinking and during his last illness he drank desperately. Apart from these personal vices Raghuji was on the whole a just and good administrator. He was a popular King.

Raghuji was not blessed by progeny though he had in all eight wives. He had one son who died in infancy after whom he probably did not get any issue. He does not seem to have cared for his successor. He probably considered his sonlessness as a blemish and left the question of succession to its own fate. This,

¹ NPI., pp. 486-88.

² *Ibid.*, p. 482.

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however, proved to be detrimental to the Bhosle House as is borne by facts. Raghuji was not on good terms with Resident Mansel. This might have adversely affected the succession question.

Raghuji had been to Kāśī, Gayā and other holy places on a pilgrimage in 1838. He was accompanied by Captain Fitzgerald with his Madras contingent. Raghuji died at the age of 47 after a long illness of 25 days on 11th December 1853. His obsequies were performed by his nephew Nānā Ahirarāv and it was decided to adopt his son Yaśavantrāv as the next successor.¹

ANNEXATION OF
NAGPUR.

The question of adoption to the Nāgpūr *gādī* was discussed thrice prior to the death of Raghuji III. In 1837 the Resident Mr. Cavenish stated that Raghuji III had no right to adopt as his territory had been conquered by the British and given back to him and his sons. In the absence of an heir apparent or a posthumous child, therefore, the Rājā's kingdom should escheat or laps to the British. The views of Resident Wilkinson were in favour of Raghuji. In 1840 he opined that Raghuji or after his death his queen had the right to adopt a son as successor to the *gādī*. The case of Nāgpūr was in no way different from that of Gwālior or Hyderābād. Actually, according to the treaty of 1826, when Mr. Jenkins was the Resident, the British had promised to continue the *rāj* of the Bhosles in perpetuity. But this term was very conveniently set aside and the Court of Directors in England concurring with the views of Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General, ordered that "it had been determined on grounds, both of right and policy, to incorporate the State of Nāgpūr with the British territories."¹ Mr. Mansel, the then Resident, had suggested that Nāgpūr should be annexed. The fateful decision of the Court of Directors was proclaimed by Lord Dalhousie, and Mr. Mansel was ordered to take charge of Nāgpūr as the first Commissioner. He started working in this capacity from 13th March 1854.

¹ NPI., pp. 507-508.

CHAPTER 8*

THE MARATHAS AND THE NIZAM

THE MARATHA-NIZAM RELATIONS MARK THE MOST IMPORTANT PHASE in the history of Mahārāṣṭra during the 18th and 19th centuries. Firstly, because as the *subhedār* of the Deccan, the founder of the ex-Hyderābād State, Nizām-ul-mulk Asaf Jāh controlled more than 3/4ths of the territory of the present Mahārāṣṭra and secondly, because till very recently his successors were the rulers of the five districts of Marāṭhvādā division covering about one fifth of the State of Mahārāṣṭra. The Nizām family belonged to Central Asia. Khvājāh Abid, the grandfather of Nizām-ul-mulk on his way to Mecca, first came to India in 1654. On his return he joined Aurangzeb who was then engaged in the war of succession. After holding a number of posts under the emperor, he accompanied the latter to the Deccan in 1681 A.D. Khvājāh Abid died in the siege of Golconda in 1687. His son, Sahābuddin, known to history by his titles Gāziuddin and Firoz Juṅg had also migrated to India in 1670 and had taken up service under Aurangzeb. Like his father, he was also a principal general of Aurangzeb in his war against the Marāṭhās. He outlived Aurangzeb and died towards the end of 1710, when he was the governor of Gujarāth.¹

His son was Mir Qamaruddin,² generally known by his various titles, Cinqilic Khān, Asaf Jāh and Nizām-ul-mulk, the founder of

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¹ For the last twenty years of his life Sahābuddin was blind, having lost his eyesight in the epidemic at Bijāpūr, in 1688 A.D.

² Nizām-ul-mulk was born on 14th of Rabiul Akhar, 1082 (August 1671). He was named Qamaruddin by Aurangzeb. He received a *mansab* of 450 horse when he was six years old. In his boyhood, he received the title of Cinqilic Khān meaning boy swordsman. He was a favoured nobleman of Aurangzeb. He took part in the Moghal siege of Parali in 1700 A.D. In the 45th year of the emperor's reign, he was appointed the governor of Bijāpūr province and put in charge of Talkoṅkan and Azamnagar (Belgānv), as *faujdār* and of Sampagānv as *thānedār*. In the 49th year of the emperor's reign (H. 1116), he was made the *faujdār* of Bijāpūr-Karnātak. He accompanied Aurangzeb in the siege of Vāṅkheḍā. In the war of succession ensuing after the death of Aurangzeb, he did not take any side. When Muāzzam ascended the throne in 1707, under the title of Sāh Alam Bahādur Sāh, Nizām-ul-mulk was called to the court. He was confirmed in his *mansab* and appointed the governor of the province of Oudh and *faujdār* of Lucknow. Shortly after, he retired from service. After the death of Bahādur Sāh, Jahāndār Sāh, the son and successor of Bahādur Sāh, called him to the court, gave him a *mansab* of 7,000 and the title of Firoz Juṅg Bahādur.

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INTRODUCTION.

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the Nizām dynasty of Hyderābād. At the time of the death of Aurangzeb on 20th February 1707, he was the governor of Bijāpūr. He was disliked by Bahādūr Shāh for his leadership of the Turānī faction in the Moghal court. Historians of this period invariably refer to two principal parties of the nobles at the court, viz., (1) the Moghal or Turānī or foreign party which included all adventurers who came from Persia or from beyond the Oxus. The Afghans were also included in this group; and (2) the Hindustani or home-born party which was made up of Muslims born in India, many of them being descendants in the second or third generation of foreign immigrants. The Rajput and Jāt chiefs attached themselves to this party as also did the official Khatri class of the Punjab.¹ During the later part of the reign of Bahādūr Shāh (1707-1712), Nizām-ul-mulk led a retired life. After Bahādūr Shāh's death and with the enthronement of Farrukhsiyār² and rise to the power of the Sayyad brothers,³ Nizām-ul-mulk was offered the viceroyalty of the Deccan⁴ which he gladly accepted (February 1713).

Viceroyalty in
the Deccan,
1713-1715.

The situation in the Deccan at this time was intriguing. The Marāṭhās had succeeded in their uphill struggle against the Moghal invaders. However, their right of collecting *cauth* and *sardeśmukhi* from the six *subhās* of the Deccan, viz., Khāndēs, Aurangābād, Berār, Bidar, Bijāpūr and Hyderābād depended partly upon their relationship with the Moghal *subhedār* and partly upon their capacity to enforce it. The Marāṭhā State was in great disorder. Administration had become loose and the Marāṭhā noblemen who had fought so gallantly with the Moghals for over 25 years were now wavering in their loyalty to the Marāṭhā State. In such a situation, Nizām-ul-mulk assumed the viceroyalty of the Deccan.⁵ The Nizām had been with Aurangzeb throughout his Deccan campaign. He knew the terrain as well as the people who inhabited it. His was a cautious approach to the Marāṭhā problem because he knew the pitfalls which had led Aurangzeb to his discomfiture in his war with the Marāṭhās. He was a past-master in diplomacy. It was against such a redoubtable adversary that the Marāṭhās had to contend. The Nizām was bent upon re-establishing the Moghal supremacy in the Deccan. The Marāṭhās were equally determined to assert their rights. But it was not an easy task. The ascendancy to power of Shāhū⁶ was not to the liking of his cousin, Sivāji, who had set up a separate State of Kolhāpūr. After Sivāji had been deposed, his

¹ W. Irvine, *Later Mughals*, I, 272-75.

² Farrukhsiyār ascended the throne on 31st December, 1712.

³ The Sayyad Brothers of Bārḥā Abdullāh Khān and Hussain Ali Khān who rose to prominence in 1712, played the role of king makers for the next eight years till their power was overthrown in 1720.

⁴ This was consequent upon the death of Zulfikār Khān, who was till then the Viceroy of the Deccan.

⁵ *Māsire Nizāmi* of Lala Mansaram, in 18th Century Deccan p. 49.

⁶ Shāhū was crowned King, on January 12th, 1708.

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step-brother Sambhājī continued his activities against Shāhū. He allied himself with Nizām-ul-mulk. The Nizām tried every means to curb the power of the Marāṭhās. Later he seduced to his side Sambhājī and Marāṭhā generals, Candrasen Jādhav¹ and Sultānji Nimbālkar. Shāhū and his *Peśvā*, Bālājī Viśvanāth tried their best to check the Nizām but without much success. However, in 1715, the Nizām was recalled to Delhi and his place was taken by Hussain Ali Khān,² the brother of the Moghal Vazīr Sayyad Abdullāh. He tried to continue the policy of the Nizām and was engaged in a struggle against the Marāṭhās. Hussain Ali Khān was, however, driven to come to a compromise with the Marāṭhās, owing to the intrigues of the emperor against him and the Vazīr Sayyad Abdullāh. Sayyad Hussain Ali Khān conceded the demand of Shāhū for *cauth*, *sardeśmukhi* and *Svarāj*.³ A Marāṭhā force accompanied Sayyad Hussain Ali Khān to Delhi and following the downfall of Farrukhsiyār,⁴ succeeded in securing the *sanads* of grants for *cauth*, *sardeśmukhi* and *Soarāj*. These grants were acquired in March 1719. The *sanads* were personally received by the *Peśvā*. Their acquisition marks a distinct phase in the Moghal-Marāṭhā relationship. For the first time, the Marāṭhās became the rightful collectors of *cauth* (dated 3rd March, 1719), and *sardeśmukhi* (dated 15th March 1719). Recognition was given to the Marāṭhā State.

Acquisition of the
Sanads by the
Marāṭhās.

Nizām-ul-mulk was appointed governor of Mālṡā in 1719. He left Delhi for Mālṡā on 15th March 1719. His relations with the Sayyad brothers deteriorated rapidly. Under these circumstances he refused the invitation of the Sayyad brothers to go to Delhi and instead, marched straightaway to the Deccan. He crossed the Narmadā in May 1720. In the battles of Ratanapūr⁵ and Bālāpūr⁶ (1720), the Nizām defeated Dilāvar Ali and Alam Ali Khān, the partisans of Sayyad brothers and assumed full control of the province of the Deccan. After this battle, a meeting took place between Bājūrāv and the Nizām at Cikaithānā on 4th January 1721.

Eclipse of
Sayyad
brothers.

¹ On the recommendation of Nizām-ul-mulk, he was made a *mansabdār* of 7,000 horse and received *jahāgir* at Bhālki in the *subhā* of Bidar.

² *Māsire Nizāmi* in 18th Century Deccan, p. 55.

³ For details see P.D. 30, 222. Also See *Treaties and Agreements*, Edited by Mawji and Parasnis, 1914.

⁴ The dethronement of Farrukhsiyār was followed by a reign of terror let loose. After his deposition, he was cruelly killed two months later. The Sayyad brothers put on the throne two young Princes—Rafi-ud-darjāt and Rafi-ud-daulā, who together ruled for 9 months. The Sayyad brothers then raised to the throne, Prince Rošan Akhtar, a grandson of Bahādūr Shāh, with the title of Muhammad on September 18th, 1719. Muhammad Shāh ruled till his death in April, 1748.

⁵ In this battle Nizām-ul-mulk defeated Dilāvar Ali, a partisan of the Sayyad brothers. The battle was fought in June, 1720. Dilāvar Ali was killed.

⁶ The battle of Bālāpūr was fought between Nizām-ul-mulk and Alam Ali, a nephew of the Sayyad brothers, in August, 1720. In this battle the Marāṭhās took a dominant part on the side of Alam Ali. Alam Ali was killed in the battle.

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The Nizam
marches to
the Deccan.

THE FIRST
SIGNS OF
MARATHA-NIZAM
CONFLICT.

It is very difficult to say what transpired at the meeting. It is possible that a chance understanding between the Marāṭhās and the Nizām took place in 1724 and it was decided that the latter should not interfere in the expansionist aims of the former beyond the Narmadā and the former should not interfere with the aspirations of the latter in the Deccan.¹ After the downfall of Sayyad brothers,² Nizām-ul-mulk became the prime minister of the Emperor Muhammad Sāh in 1722.³ He was soon tired of the intrigues and corruption at the Moghal court and returned to the Deccan in 1724. The emperor ordered Mubārīzkhan, the deputy viceroy of Hyderābād, to oppose the Nizām. In the battle of Sākharkhedā fought in October 1724,⁴ Mubārīzkhan was defeated and killed. Although the emperor conferred the viceroyalty on the Nizām, yet for all practical purposes the Nizām became independent from 1724. There was no one to oppose the Nizām in the Deccan and the Delhi emperors were too weak to put a check upon their recalcitrant noble.⁵ A new State was thus born.

The Marāṭhās under the forceful leadership of Bājirāv, who had become the *Peśvā* in 1720, now aspired to become an all-India power. They were fast obtaining footholds in Gujarāth and Mālvā. The Nizam was not going to be a silent spectator of these turn of events. He was determined to counter the Marāṭhās in every field—political, diplomatic and military. How the Marāṭhās succeeded in reducing the Nizām to the position of a third rate power is the story of 18th century Deccan.

The Nizām in the first instance challenged the rights of the Marāṭhās (conceded by the 1719 agreement) as represented by Chatrapati Śāhū by pointing out to the latter that besides Śāhū, there was the other claimant viz., Sambhājī of Kolhāpūr and the Nizām as the Moghal viceroy of the Deccan could not allow the

¹ This could be substantiated from the anecdotes of Nizām-ul-mulk by Lala Mansaram in *18th Century Deccan*, p. 122, where the Nizām is quoted as saying, in 1724 "—— God willing, I will enter into an understanding with them (Marāṭhās) and entrust the *Mulukgiri* on that side of the Narmadā to them——".

² Hussain Ali Khān was murdered in September, 1720. Sayyad Abdullah was captured by the imperial forces in November, 1720, and executed on 11th October 1722.

³ He was appointed prime minister in 1722. He left Azduddovlāh Aivaz Khān as his deputy in the Deccan. During his stay in Delhi, Nizām-ul-mulk consolidated his hold over Mālvā and Gujarāth.

⁴ A Persian Chronicle enumerates a letter by Nizām-ul-mulk to Śāhū, which is full of praise for Bājirāv (*Shahamat Panah*), Sultānījī (*Tahavur Dastagah*) and Pilājī (*Jaladat Intibah*), for their outstanding work in the battle against Mubārīzkhan. (*Māsire Nizāmī in 18th Century Deccan*, p. 59).

⁵ After the victory, the emperor bestowed upon the Nizām, the title of Asaf Jāh, perhaps the only wise course of action he could have adopted under the circumstances. The Nizām was also confirmed in the *subhedārship* of the Deccan, under an imperial *farmān* which was received on 20th June 1725.

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Marāṭhās humble
Nizām at
Pālkhed.

collection of *cauth* and *sardeśmukhī* by his (Śāhū's) chiefs unless the dispute between the two claimants was resolved.¹ The Nizām had with cunning and diplomacy appropriated unto himself the role of an arbitrator between the States of Sātārā and Kolhāpūr.² Knowing well the weak position of Sambhājī, the Nizām lent his unqualified support to him. He also persuaded the chief, Pratinidhi to oppose Bājirāv if he assumed a role contrary to the interests of the Nizām. The Marāṭhā noblemen of the old order advised Śāhū to follow a policy of caution, as otherwise an indiscreet step by an adventurous *Peśvā* might land the Marāṭhā State into unsurmountable difficulties. But the stubborn *Peśvā* convinced Śāhū of the correctness of his policy of meeting the Nizām on his own grounds. He outlined the dangers that were involved in the unholy combination of Sambhājī and the Nizām.³ As a result, Śāhū gave up the policy of appeasement. War started in October 1727. It was a long drawn out war. The Nizām wanted to draw the Marāṭhās in the open and annihilate them by the force of his artillery.⁴ Bājirāv avoided an open encounter with the Nizām⁵ and by following guerilla tactics trapped the Nizām at Pālkhed (25th February 1728). Driven to despair by hunger and fearing complete annihilation, the Nizām sued for peace. The Nizām was forced to concede the demands of the Marāṭhās such as *cauth* and *sardeśmukhī*. He also agreed to recognise Śāhū as the head of the Marāṭhā State and not to entertain any political relations with Sambhājī of Kolhāpūr. The convention was signed at Muṅgī Śev-gānv, on 6th March 1728.⁶ This convention is important in many ways. According to it the issue, viz., Śāhū's claim to *cauth* and *sardeśmukhī sanads* granted by the Delhi Emperor in 1719, which the Nizām had tried to avoid for about 10 years was finally settled; secondly, the treaty set aside any claim which Sambhājī might have

¹ In this connection see letter written by Sambhājī to *Senāpati Candrasen* agent, Rāyājī Malhār, on 23rd July, 1721 (*Raj.* 3.559); a letter by Bājirāv to Śāhū expressing doubts about Nizām's intentions, dated 25th November 1725 (*S. R.* 14, 157); and Sambhājī's letter to Candrasen of February, 1726 [*Dalvi's History of Jadhav Family*, p. 81].

² He even seduced Cinnājī Dāmodar (Śāhū's Rājādnyā) and offered him Sambhājī's *Peśvāship*.

³ Sambhājī left Kolhāpūr on 24th September, 1726, and joined hands with Nizām with whom he was for a period of three years (*R. K.* 8.94,96). He even toured Poonā district in 1727 and granted *sanads* in his name to local officials. How deep rooted was the plot the Nizām had envisaged for the destruction of Marāṭhā power, is outlined in the letter which the Nizām wrote to Savāi Jaisingh (See text of the letter translated by Sarkar in "*Islamic Culture*").

⁴ The Nizām in the initial stages carried sword and destruction in the Marāṭhā country near Poonā, with the help of his Marāṭhā commanders. It was in 1727, that he alongwith Sambhājī entered Poonā district and made Poonā his headquarters for sometime.

⁵ Bājirāv left Poonā in September, 1727, and ravaged Berār. But hearing of the Nizām's descent on Poonā, he swooped upon Burhānpūr and Aurang-ābād to draw away Nizām-ul-mulk. His tactics proved to be correct.

⁶ For details of the treaty, see P. D. 15, 86-89.

CHAPTER 8.

The Marathas
and the Nizam.THE FIRST
SIGNS OF
MARATHA-NIZAM
CONFLICT.Marāthā-Nizām
confrontation
at Bhopāl.

had to the Marāthā State; and lastly, it brought home to the Nizām that the Marāthās were a force to reckon with and that any intransigence on his part would not go unpunished.

The battle of Pālkhed and the severe reverses the Nizām had suffered at the hands of the Marāthās were not expected to keep the Nizām inactive for a long time. Nor did the Marāthās rest content with adopting a complacent attitude by assuming that there would no longer be any trouble from the Nizām. The Nizām decided to throw his weight in favour of Dābhāde, the Marāthā General, who was now at loggerheads with Bājirāv *Peścā*.¹ The Marāthās also noticed the meeting between the Nizām and Muhammad Khān Baṅgaṣ, the governor of Mālṡā, on March 17th, 1731.² However, before the forces of the two could join hands, Bājirāv fell on Dābhāde at Dabhaī and routed the *Senāpati*'s forces on 1st April 1731. The Nizām was once again frustrated. The Marāthās utilised this opportunity to consolidate their hold on Gujarāth. The years that followed witnessed a superficial calm in the Marāthā-Nizām relationship. The acquisition of Gujarāth had roused Marāthā ambitions of further expansion of their power. They had already obtained a foot-hold in Mālṡā which was the gateway to Northern India. This time Mālṡā was invaded early in January, 1737. The motives of the Nizām could best be left to conjecture. A faction in the Moghal court considered it opportune to concede the demands of the Marāthās in respect of these provinces. But the Nizām responded to the call of the anti-Marāthā party at the imperial court for succour³ against the Marāthās. It was thus that in 1737, the Nizām marched to the North. In 1738, Bājirāv once again confronted the Nizām at Bhopāl. This was the second direct confrontation between the Marāthās and the Nizām. The latter proved no match to the tactical superiority of Bājirāv and found himself besieged at Bhopāl by the Marāthā forces. He had no alternative but to surrender. A formal treaty was signed on 7th January 1738, at Dorāhā Sarāi under which the Nizām undertook to obtain for the Marāthās the province of

¹ When Śāhū came to know of the activities of Trimbakrāv Dābhāde in conjunction with the Nizām, he wrote a strong letter, admonishing him severely (P.D. 17.12).

² The Nizām marched with his army to Gujarāth. He invited Baigaṣ, the governor of Mālṡā, to meet him on the Namadā to form a plan of joint action against the Marāthās. But the defeat of Dābhāde broke this combination and the Nizām returned to Deccan (*Nizām-ul-mulk Asaf Jah*, I, 196/97, by Yusuf M. Khān; *Later Mughals*, II, 251, by Irwine). The forces of Nizām numbering over 5,000, took part in the battle of Dabhaī, fought between Bājirāv and Dābhāde, (Gense and Banaji, *The Gaikvāds of Baroda*, I. 11).

³ On reaching Delhi he received the viceroyalty of the Provinces of Akbarābād, Āgrā and Mālṡā, on the promise that he would render help to the emperor in containing the Marāthās (*Tārikhe Rāhat Afzā in Marāṭhe Va Nizām*, p. 20). The Emperor also agreed to appoint the nominees of Nizām-ul-mulk to the *subhās* of Allāhābād, Ajmer and Gujarāth.

CHAPTER 8.

The Marathas
and the Nizam.THE MARATHA
AIMS.

Mālṡā under imperial seal. This was indeed a great triumph for the Marāthās. Within a period of 30 years after the death of Aurangzeb, they had seized Gujarāth and Mālṡā. The Nizām was humbled.

Why then the Marāthās, when they had the opportunity to destroy the Nizām first at Pālkhed and then at Bhopāl, did not destroy him completely? In the first instance, the Marāthā resources were not adequate to deal with such an eventuality. The Marāthā confederacy was itself divided and any posture by the Marāthās aimed at the complete destruction of the Nizām would have raised against them the entire power and resources of the Moghals which the Marāthās would have found difficult to overcome. Though independent, the Nizām could always count upon the vast resources of the empire. Moreover, in 1727 complete destruction of the Nizām was not the aim of the Marāthās.¹ They wanted the Nizām to be reduced to the position of a subordinate ally and the confrontation between the two was occasioned only when the moves of the Nizām conflicted with the aims of the Marāthās. Nizām-ul-mulk had aimed at the complete annihilation of the Marāthā power and intended to achieve for himself complete suzerainty over the Deccan.² These aims were frustrated due to the masterly leadership of Bājirāv. The wishes of the Nizām are succinctly brought out in what he confided to his associates. Says the Nizām "Some friends suggested to me that I might as well seize the provinces of Bengal, Bilār and Orissā as they were not properly managed, but I refused the idea".³ "This shows the aspirations of the Nizām. At one time or other he had possessed himself of Gujarāth, Mālṡā, Ajmir and Āgrā.

In April, 1740, Bājirāv died, soon after inflicting a heavy defeat on Nāsir Jung, the son of Nizām-ul-mulk in January-February of 1740.⁴ The Nizām must have heaved a sigh of relief when he learned of the death of Bājirāv, who represented the expanding power of the Marāthā State, on 28th April 1740.

¹ It is very interesting to note that after the battle of Pālkhed, Śāhū wrote to Bājirāv "You must on no account inflict any loss upon Nizām-ul-mulk or injure his susceptibilities. We enjoin this on you as a sacred obligation to the memory of your revered father."

² Read in this connection the communication addressed by Nizām-ul-mulk to Abdul Nabi Khān, in April, 1730, translated by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in "Islamic Culture".

³ 18th Century Deccan.

⁴ Persian chroniclers of Nizām-ul-mulk such as Sayyad Muhammad Ali-Tārikhe Rāhat Afzā, Gulam Ali-Khajānā i Amirā and others give a wrong version of the battle between Nāsir Jung and Bājirāv, claiming that Bājirāv was heavily defeated. Grant Duff in his *History of the Marāthās*, adopts the same line. This view is positively wrong because if Nāsir Jung was a victor, why did he cede Haṇḍia and Khargānṡ to Bājirāv? These two districts were handed over to the Marāthās by the treaty of Muṅgi Sevgaṅv signed on February 17th, 1740.

CHAPTER 8.

The Marathas
and the Nizam.BALAJI BAJIRAV
AND NIZAM,
1740-1760.The Marāthās lose
Tāmilnād to
the Nizām.The death
of the
Nizām.NEW PHASE IN
MARATHA-NIZAM
RELATIONSHIP.

The mantle of the leadership of the Marāthā nation now fell upon the shoulders of young Bālājī Bājirāv¹, son of Bājirāv. Taking the young *Peśvā* to be an amateur in the game of politics, the Nizām grew evasive about the cession of Mālṡā promised to the Marāthās. But Bālājī marched on towards Delhi and by a threatening posture compelled the emperor to agree to the cession of Mālṡā². The Marāthās had thus succeeded in checking the territorial ambitions of the Nizām. However, the failure of the Nizām in curbing the northward ambitions of the Marāthās did not prevent him from confronting the Marāthās wherever possible. It was when Bālājī and Raghuji Bhosle of Nāgpūr had come to grips in the North and when no succour was expected that the Nizām descended with a huge force in Tāmilnād and drove the Marāthās out in 1743.³ The Marāthā possessions in Tāmilnād were thus permanently lost to them.⁴ It was the last confrontation between the first Nizām and the Marāthās. Nizām-ul-mulk died at Burhānpur on 21st May 1748. His age at that time was 77 years. He was perhaps the greatest enemy of the Marāthās after Aurangzeb. By every means at his command he had tried to weaken the Marāthā power, though without success.

The death of the first Nizām and, after an year, that of Chatrapati Śāhū,⁵ put the Marāthā-Nizām relationship in a different context to the changed political situation in the Deccan. With the death of Nizām-ul-mulk, the State of Hyderābād entered a difficult period. At Sātārā, the death of Śāhū resulted in the transfer of the political scene from Sātārā to Poonā, and the *Peśvā*, now unhindered by any binding obligations towards the Chatrapati, became free to follow his policies according to his own choice. The second son of the Nizām, Nāsir Juṅg, succeeded Nizām-ul-mulk as the Nizām and the viceroy of the Deccan. Nizām-ul-mulk had, on the whole, succeeded in maintaining his possessions in the Deccan and the South. Though the Marāthās had many notable achievements to their credit in their confrontation with the Nizām till 1748, the greater part of Mahārāṣṭra was still under the yoke of the Nizāms. A time had now come for the Marāthās to carry the expansion of the Marāthā power into the Deccan as they had done in Central and Eastern

¹ Bālājī Bājirāv was invested with the robes of *Peśvāship* on June 15, 1740.

² The deed granting the *subhā* of Mālṡā was ratified on 4th July, 1741, under the emperor's seal and final orders were issued on 7th Sep'tember, 1741.

³ He first took possession of Arcot and appointed his nominee Anvar-uddin Khān as its governor. He captured Tricinopoly on 29th August, 1743 from the Marāthās (*Parasnis Itihās Saṅgraha*, Ati, *Stihale*, Tricinopoli).

⁴ Chatrapati Śivājī had effected the conquest of Tāmilnād in his campaign of the South, during 1677-78. The Marāthās had lost the province in 1698. They had occupied it, under Raghuji Bhosle in 1741.

⁵ Śāhū died on 15th December 1749.

India by the acquisition of Gujarāth, Mālṡā and Bundelkhaṇḍ¹ and by the extension of their activities in Bengal, Bihār and Orissā. Nāsir Juṅg, who had succeeded the Nizām, did not survive long. He was killed on December 16th, 1750 in the war against his nephew,² Muzaffar Juṅg (son of Nizām-ul-mulk's daughter), who was helped by the French who had now started taking a leading part in the political affairs of the Deccan. Muzaffar Juṅg also met with the same fate as his maternal uncle when he was killed on 14th February 1751, by the disgruntled Pathāns in his army. The French, who now practically controlled the court of Nizām, raised Salābat Juṅg, the third son of the Nizām, to the throne in 1751 A.D.³ The fratricidal war that was raging in the Nizām family gave the Marāthās the opportunity they were waiting for. The *Peśvā* invaded Aurangābād and subsequently marched to meet the Nizām who was returning to his dominions with the French general Bussy.⁴ The shrewd minister of the Nizām, Rājā Raghunāthdās prevailed upon him to seek compromise with the Marāthās temporarily. The Nizām agreed to pay the ransom demanded by the *Peśvā* under the terms of the treaty of Pāngaḷ signed in April, 1751.⁵ But no sooner had the *Peśvā* retired than the Nizām started playing the old game of his father. At the connivance of Tārābāi (wife of Rājārām), who was at Sātārā, a plot to overthrow the *Peśvā* was contrived by the shrewd minister of the Nizām.⁶ Both the Nizām and his minister, backed as they were by the disciplined troops under the French, were confident of overthrowing the *Peśvā* and destroying Marāthā power in the Deccan. The Nizām left Aurangābād on 31st October 1751. The *Peśvā* had already left Poonā on 4th October. The Nizām fought his way to 12 miles from Poonā when intrigues and lack of supplies brought his army to a halt. The intrigues at the court of the Nizām initiated by Sayyad Laṣkar Khān who favoured a settlement with the Marāthās forced the Nizām to fall back⁷ and hostilities came to an end with the signing of the treaty of Śiṅgṡā on 6th January 1752. This was positively not a favourable settlement from the point of view of the Marāthās. Not only that but they had every reason to be apprehensive of the growing strength of the Nizām, backed as he was by the French. The *Peśvā* was

¹ For details see *Tārikhe Rāhat Afzā in 18th Century Deccan*, pp. 197-98.

² See P. D. 25. 93, 94, 95

³ R. K. 3.377, A; P. D. 25. 105, 109, 110.

⁴ No formal *sanad* about the *subhā* of Gujarāth was issued by the emperor. The Marāthās in fact possessed the whole of Gujarāth. Mālṡā was acquired in 1742. For the expansion of Marāthā power in Bengal, Bihār and Orissā, Raghuji Bhosle was mainly responsible.

⁵ It may also be mentioned here that the *Peśvā* likewise hesitated to open hostilities with the Nizām, backed as the Nizām was with the powerful French artillery. See R. K. 3.377, 378; N. R. 52; P. D. 25. 115, 117, 118, 123.

⁶ For the activities of Tārābāi, see R. K. 3.71, 73. Also *Purandare Daftar*, pp. 172, 178.

⁷ For details of the battles see *Pur. Daf.* 1.372, *Pur. Roj.* p. 73; R. K. 6.232; 3.400.

CHAPTER 8.

The Marathas
and the Nizam.NEW PHASE IN
MARATHA-NIZAM
RELATIONSHIP.Intrigues in
the Court of
the Nizām.

Treaty of Śiṅgṡā.

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The Marathas
and the Nizam.NEW PHASE IN
MARATHA-NIZAM
RELATIONSHIP.Marāṭhā victory
over the Nizām
at Bhālki.

now eager to find a delicate spot in the political armour of the Nizām whereby he could strike a hard bargain.¹ The opportunity occurred unexpectedly in the person of Gāziuddin, the eldest son of the late Nizām-ul-mulk.² He promised to pay the Marāṭhās 50 lakhs of rupees and cede the province of Khāndeś permanently to the Marāṭhās if the latter would agree to instal him in place of his brother, Salābat Juṅg, as the viceroy of the Deccan.³ The time was opportune because the scheming prime minister of the Nizām, Rājā Rāmdās, had been murdered by his soldiers on 30th April, 1752. The Marāṭhās could now, not only succeed in destroying the influence of the French in the court of the Nizām but also be in a position to reduce the Nizām to the status of a subordinate ally. Gāziuddin started his march from Delhi towards the Deccan and it seemed as if circumstances would play into the hands of the *Peśvā*. But fortune favoured Salābat Juṅg, as Gāziuddin died of illness shortly after his arrival in the Deccan on 16th October 1752,⁴ suspected to be from the effects of poisoning. The Marāṭhās, however, would not allow their plans to go waste. They attacked Salābat Juṅg at Bhālki and forced him to fulfil the promise of the cession of the province of Khāndeś made out to them by Gāziuddin. The convention of Bhālki was signed on 24th November 1752.⁵ The affairs at the court of the Nizām were not, however, very happy. The French had become all powerful. Sayyad Laṣkar Khān, the prime minister, was dismissed and his place was taken by Sāh Navāz Khān⁶ who too resented the growing influence of the French. If not for anything else at least with a view to weaken that influence, he decided to be friendly towards the Marāṭhās. The Nizām co-operated with the Marāṭhās in their campaigns in Karnāṭak in 1756. The Marāṭhās were not happy at the brilliant performance of the French-trained forces in this campaign. They wanted to destroy the influence of the French and humble the power of the Nizām. The *Peśvā* planned a brilliant strategy to entangle the Nizām in the web of family dispute and suggested to him to dismiss Bussy and to free his brothers Nizām Alī, Basālat Juṅg and Mir Moghal who were in detention.⁷ The Nizām freed his brothers. They were posted as governors of Berār,

¹ The manoeuvres of the *Peśvā* at this stage are described in R.K. 3.405-421.

² P.D. 25-127 states that a *farmān* was issued by the emperor appointing Gāziuddin to the *subhedāri* of the Deccan.

³ The Marāṭhā partisanship has been finely brought out in *Kāvyē San. Patre. Yādī*, 102, 103, and P.D. 25.144.

⁴ It is said that he was poisoned by some maid servants belonging to Nizām Salābat Juṅg. Some allege that the mother of Nizām Alī invited him for meals at Aurangābād and poisoned him.

⁵ P.D. 25.144, 147, 149; 26.202.

⁶ He was appointed prime minister in December 1753.

⁷ *Tārikhe Rāhat Afzā in 18th Century Deccan*, p. 209.

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The Marathas
and the Nizam.
NEW PHASE IN
MARATHA-NIZAM
RELATIONSHIP.

Exit of the French.

Bijāpur and Aurangābād, respectively. Bussy then left for his *jāgirs*.¹ The opportunity for which the Marāṭhās were waiting had arrived. Differences developed between the Nizām Salābat Juṅg and his prime minister Sāh Navāz Khān who invited the Marāṭhās to invade the Nizām's State.² He offered the Marāṭhās 30 lakhs of rupees as compensation for the expenses involved in the expedition. The Marāṭhās invaded the territory of Hyderābād with a large army.³ The Nizām was forced to sign the treaty of Sindkhed (1758) involving a cession of territory yielding 25 lakhs of rupees. The compromise was hurriedly effected on the news of the return of Bussy from the east,⁴ neither side wanting the French to regain the influence they had lost in the court of the Nizām. Of all the sons of Nizām-ul-mulk, Nizām Alī Khān, the governor of Berār was the most ambitious. Meanwhile, Bussy had returned to Aurangābād. Hyder Juṅg, a protege of Bussy wanted to destroy Nizām Alī Khān and assert himself at the Nizām's court. But he himself was treacherously murdered on 11th May 1758, at the connivance of Nizām Alī Khān. Though the subsequent events do not concern the Marāṭhā-Nizām relations, it needs to be mentioned here that the murder of Hyder Juṅg led to the murder of Sāh Navāz Khān by the agents of the French. This happened in 1758.⁵ When the conditions at the court of the Nizām were thus full of dangerous possibilities, the Anglo-French hostilities in Europe led to the recall of Bussy. Nizām Alī Khān, the governor of Berār and the younger son of Nizām-ul-mulk, marched to Hyderabad and became the *de facto* ruler of Hyderābād, in 1759. With the French out of the picture, the Marāṭhās now decided to invade the territories of the Nizām. An army of Marāṭhās under Sadāśiv Rāy Bhāū annihilated the rear guard forces of the Nizām in February 1760, at Tānduljā.⁶ The Nizām agreed to a truce and ceded a territory yielding an annual revenue of 60 lakhs of rupees by the treaty of Udgir.⁷ This included the forts of Ahmadnagar and Daulatābād and the districts of Solāpūr, Ahmadnagar, Nāsik and Bījūpūr. Two-thirds of the present Mahārāṣṭra now came to be the part of the Marāṭhā Rāj. When the Marāṭhās were steadily liquidating the Nizām, the great disaster of Pānipat fell upon them in 1761. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Marāṭhās took long to recover from this terrible shock. This was the opportunity for which the Nizām Salābat Juṅg and his brother Nizām Alī Khān were eagerly awaiting. The *Peśvā* Bālājī

The defeat of the
Nizām at Tānduljā
(Udgir).

¹ R.K. 1.25.

² The details of this could be found in *Ātīhāsik Lekh Saṅgraha*, 1.10.

³ For additional information about this campaign, see R.K. 1.73-119; 11.100.

⁴ *Tārikhe Rāhat Afzā in 18th Century Deccan*, p. 212.

⁵ All these happenings are graphically described in "*Tārikhe Rāhat Afzā in 18th Century Deccan*", pp. 213-16.

⁶ The details of the Udgir campaign could be found in P.D. I, P.D. XXV, 202.275, R.K. 1.154.165.

⁷ P.D. 25.281.

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The Marathas
and the Nizam.PESHVA
MADHAVRAV
AND THE
NIZAM.

Bājirāv had died of the shock of Pānīpat on 23rd June 1761. In the north, the Rajputs, Jāts and others had risen against the Marāṭhās. At this crisis, what was required was a man of strong will power who would regain the lost glory and put down the enemies of the Marāṭhās. Such a person was Mādhavrāv, the second son of Nānāsāheb, who assumed *Peśvāship* on July 20th, 1761. But, in the initial years, all authority was wielded by his uncle Raghunāthrāv. When the Nizām marched against Poonā¹ in November 1761, Raghunāthrāv, to gain his support in his future disputes with Mādhavrāv, came to an agreement with him at Uruḷi Kāñcan on 5th January, 1762, by offering the Nizām territory worth 27 lakhs of rupees.² Nizām Alī Khān had nothing to lose but all to gain. He retraced his steps to Hyderābād fully satisfied with the outcome of events. He deposed Salābat Jūng, the Nizām, and³ seized all power. As the Nizām he was to rule in Hyderābād for nearly forty years. The rift between Mādhavrāv and Raghunāthrāv widened and Raghunāthrāv went over to the Nizām and invited him to attack Mādhavrāv.⁴ Forced with the bleak prospects of the destruction of Marāṭhā State, Mādhavrāv surrendered to his uncle⁵ (13th November 1762), who foolishly handed over to the Nizām all the territory acquired from him after the battle of Udgīr.⁶ The Marāṭhā State was now in wilderness. The pressure of Hyder Alī of Mysore was increasing and the wily Nizām with the help of his prime minister Viṭṭhal Sunder was posing a great threat to the Marāṭhā State. He even offered the Chatrapatiship to Jānoji Bhosle,⁷ and marched with a great force against the Marāṭhās. Both the Nizām and the Marāṭhās devastated each other's territories.⁸ The Nizām sacked Poonā in April-May, 1763,⁹ whereas the Marāṭhās laid waste the Nizām territory from Aurāṅgābād to Hyderābād.¹⁰ On the news

¹ The Nizām in his march desecrated Hindu temples and burnt villages. The sack of Poonā was felt imminent and people started evacuating Poonā. *P.D.* 38.30, 32, 38, 47, *R.K.* 1.44, 52.

² *P.D.* 20.128; *R.K.* 10.2; *Aitihāsik Patre*, 103.

³ July 1762. Salābat Jūng was confined in the fort of Bidar. He was killed at the instance, it is said, of Nizām Alī Khān, on September 9th, 1763.

⁴ Raghunāthrāv fled from Poonā towards Nāsik on 29th August 1762. He entertained Muhammad Murād Khān, an officer of Nizām-ul-mulk. The state of mind of the people is graphically described in a letter written by Śahāji Bhāpkar to the *Peśvā* at this time (*P.D.* 19.2).

⁵ *P.D.* 19.14; *Purandare Daftar*, 3.10.73.

⁶ The Nizām met Raghunāthrāv on 24th November 1762, when this deed was executed.

⁷ *Aitihāsik Patre* 104; *P.D.* 20.134, 137; 38.78, 79, *Aitihāsik Tippe*, 1.32.

The Nizām and Jānoji Bhosle agreed in a meeting on 9th February, 1763, near Gulburgā that 60 per cent. of the new acquisitions as a result of their joint endeavours should go to the former and the remaining 40 per cent. to the latter.

⁸ The graphic details of this running battle are given in *Khazana-i-Amira* of Bilgrami in *18th Century Deccan*, pp. 239-40.

⁹ *P.D.* 38.102.

¹⁰ *P.D.* 38.83.

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The Marathas
and the Nizam.PESHVA
MADHAVRAV
AND THE
NIZAM.The battle of
Rākṣasbhuvan.

of the sack of Poonā, the Marāṭhās hurried towards Poonā. On the way, they seduced Basālat Jūng, the brother of Nizām Alī Khān, with a promise of raising him to the Nizāmship in place of Nizām Alī Khān. The Nizām now knew that he was caught in a trap. He hurriedly started his retreat towards Aurāṅgābād. On the way, his chief ally Jānoji Bhosle left him. While the Nizām was camping at Rākṣasbhuvan on the southern bank of the river Godāvari, the Marāṭhās struck at him on the 10th of August, 1763, and completely routed his forces killing 10,000 of his troops.¹ He was hotly chased upto Aurāṅgābād where he was surrounded. It was the same story as that of Pālkhed, Bhopāl and Udgīr. With no alternative left, the Nizām surrendered to the Marāṭhās a territory yielding an annual revenue of 80 lakhs of rupees. The treaty was signed on 25th September, 1763.² His prime minister Viṭṭhal Sunder had been killed in the battle of Rākṣasbhuvan. His place was now taken over by Ruknuddovlāh³ who was a nominee of the Marāṭhās. The Marāṭhās virtually forced the Nizām to accept a prime minister of their choice. The humiliation of the Nizām at Rākṣasbhuvan completely changed the complexion of Marāṭhā-Nizām relationship. The Nizām no longer remained a menace that he was before. It had taken the Marāṭhās nearly half a century of diplomacy, tact and military manœuvring to reduce the Nizām to a third rate power. From this position he never recovered, even after the destruction of his arch enemies, the Marāṭhās, at the hands of the English. In the Marāṭhā-Mysore wars, the Nizām played a secondary role. In 1769, the *Peśvā* Mādhavrāv decided to punish the recalcitrant Jānoji Bhosle for the role he had played in the sack of Poonā. In this campaign, the Nizām played a role subsidiary to the Marāṭhās. The *Peśvā* Mādhavrāv died on 18th November, 1772. His brother and successor Nārāyanrāv was murdered on 30th August, 1773. Raghunāthrāv was a party to the plot. A civil war broke out. Raghunāthrāv assumed power and marched against the Nizām.⁴ In the battle fought at Bidar, the forces of the Nizām were defeated.⁵ The Nizām concluded a peace by offering a territory worth 12 lakhs of rupees to the Marāṭhās. But the position of Raghunāthrāv had become shaky at Poonā. He was deposed by the council of *Bārbhāis* who declared in favour of the still unborn child of Nārāyanrāv. The Nizām backed the *Bārbhāis*.⁶ Raghunāthrāv solicited the help of the English, with the result that

Death of Mādhavrāv and subsequent confusion.

¹ For details of this battle see *Madhavrāv Roj.* 1.343; *Aiti. Tip.* 3.29; *P.D.* 38.105-06; *Aiti. Patre*, 105; *R.K.* 10-21.

² See for details *Aiti. Tip.* 2.18, 3.29; *Mād. Roj.*, 1.243, *K.S.P.Y.* 33.492.

³ *Tārikhe Rāhat Afzā in 18th Century Deccan*, p. 254. His name was Mir Moosā Khān Bahādur Ih'isām Jūng.

⁴ The territory of Nizām was invaded between November 1773 and February 1774. See *Tuzuke Āsafia in 18th Century Deccan*, pp. 281-282.

⁵ The action was fought on 29th November, 1773.

⁶ *Tuzuke Āsafia* has given details about the meeting between the Nizām and Sābāji, Trimbak Māmā, Tāroji Akade, Cimnāji Pandit and others representing the Marāṭhās (3rd March 1774). The Nizām himself undertook a campaign against Raghunāthrāv. *18th Century Deccan*, pp. 283-285.

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The Marathas
and the Nizam.

PESHVA
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the first Anglo-Marāṭhā war broke out which lasted till 1784. In this struggle, the Nizām maintained a neutral attitude.

After the conclusion of hostilities against the English, the Marāṭhās and the Nizām marched against their common enemy, Ṭipū Sultān of Mysore in 1785.

The Marāṭhā-Nizām campaign against Ṭipū was indecisive and came to an end with the treaty of Gajendra Gaḍ in 1787. The English now, took a lead and a tripartite alliance against Ṭipū consisting of the English, the Marāṭhās and the Nizām, was formed on 1st June 1790. The allies defeated Ṭipū. The Mysore campaign came to a close in 1792, when Ṭipū was deprived of half of his possessions.

The Marāṭhās were now free to settle their accounts with the Nizām. The Nizām who had been offered a treaty of guarantee by the English assumed that they would support him in his conflict with the Marāṭhās.

The battle of
Kharḍā and after

The English, however, maintained a strictly neutral attitude throughout the conflict.¹ The Nizām was completely humbled at the battle of Kharḍā fought on 11th March, 1795. This was the last of the series of battles fought between the Marāṭhās and the Nizām. The Nizām had to yield a territory worth 35 lakhs of rupees. This covered practically the whole of the present Marāṭh-vāḍā. The treaty was, however, never implemented. The tragic death of Savāi Mādhavrāv, the *Peśvā*, in October, 1795, threw the Marāṭhā State into confusion. Bājirāv II, the son of Raghunāth-rāv, became the *Peśvā*. In the intrigues which preceded his accession, the Nizām was freed from implementing the treaty. The agreement of Mahād [1796] by which the Nizām received back all that he had lost at Kharḍā was ratified by the *Peśvā* Bājirāv.

The Nizām be-
comes a vassal of
the English.

The Nizām, initially suspicious of the English, was driven by his fear of the Marāṭhās to accept the subsidiary alliance with the English by the treaty of 1800 A.D. He thus became their vassal. The Nizām was guaranteed protection against all the powers including the Marāṭhās. When in September, 1803, the Sīnde and the Bhosle invaded the Nizām's territory, the English went to the latter's help and decisively defeated the Marāṭhā forces at Assaye.² Under the terms of the treaty of Devgāñv, signed on 17th December 1803, between the Bhosles and the English, the Bhosles were forced to give up all claims on Berār, west of the river Wardhā. This province was fully restored to the Nizām. The Sīndes were also forced to make territorial concessions to the English under the treaty of Surjī Añjangāñv signed on 30th December, 1803 with the English. The territory lying

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between the Ajañṭhā and the Godāvari taken from the Sīnde was handed over to the Nizām by the British. In 1818, when the territories of the *Peśvā* were taken over by the British, the Nizām was freed from the obligations of *cauth*. Till 1853, the Nizām continued to hold Berār. In that year, the East India Company took over Berār (in the nature of mortgage) from the Nizām. The province was never returned to him. Even with these losses, the Nizām's State covered an area of more than 82,600 square miles, of which the Marāṭhī speaking districts covered about 24,050 square miles. This was roughly about one-fifth of the present State of Mahārāṣṭra. These districts formed a part of the State of Hyderābād till 1956 A.D. when they finally became a part of the present State of Mahārāṣṭra.

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¹ R.K. 22-32; Hastings' Frazer, *Appendix Q*.

² The battle of Assaye was fought on 23rd September, 1803.

CHAPTER 9 MARATHA SOCIETY AND CULTURE

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COUNTRY.

MAHARASHTRA, THE WESTERN PART OF THE DECCAN, is the homeland of the Marāṭhās. It lies between the 16th and 22nd degree of north latitude extending from Daman to Goā on the west; the Satpuḍā range forms its northern boundary; an irregular line joining Cāndā to Goā and passing through Nānded, Bidār, Solāpūr and Belgānv, marks off the south-east limits of the region.

The establishment of the independent Marāṭhā State and its expansion in the 18th century were responsible in fixing these boundary lines. Grant Duff writing in 1826 remarks, 'Mahārāṣṭra is that space which is bounded on the north by the Santpoora (Satpuḍā) mountains; and extends from Naundode on the west, along those mountains, to the Wyne Ganga (Waingangā), east of Nagpoor (Nāgpūr). The western bank of that river forms a part of the eastern boundary until it falls into the Wurda (Wardhā). From the junction of these rivers, it may be traced up the east bank of Wurda to Manikdroog (Mānikdurg), and thence westward to Mahoor (Māhur). From this last place a waving line may be extended to Goā, whilst on the west it is bounded by the ocean.'¹ Elphinstone practically bears out what Duff has said.

The region is divided in three distinct parts; the Konkan borders on the sea with its fast running rivulets opening into creeks and small ports, its humid climate, its torrential rains, and its rice crop, is divided from the mainland by the massive watershed of the Sahyādri or the Western Ghāṭs which run parallel to the sea-coast right from Surat down to Goā and beyond a few miles inland. This mountain-range about twenty to twenty-five miles in breadth is the distinctive feature of Mahārāṣṭra. It determines the rainfall, the vegetation, the character of the people and has had a decisive influence on their history. The heavily-laden rain-clouds that the south-west monsoons drive before them, burst against this massive wall of granite and inundate the coastal strip, the hilly region and

* This Chapter is contributed by Dr. V. G. Dighe.

¹ Grant Duff, *History of the Marhattās* (1921 ed.), Vol. I, p. 3.

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the valleys. A belt of deep forest formerly covered the hills and spread for some distance to the plains. Pressure of advancing agriculture has denuded the plains of forest, but the hills yet remain wooded. All along the hills the summits are frequently crowned at the top by large flat basaltic rocks. These huge blocks of granite, have been transformed into fortresses which look impregnable. In many of them there are springs of good water; a supply can be secured in tanks from the rains from June to October. During the rainy season with cascades tumbling down the hills, with the rivers in spate and valleys inundated, the hill-sides become inaccessible and are completely isolated from the outside world. In fair season the tangle of brushwood and thick forests, and the winding paths in rugged hills make the movements of large troops in the tract difficult, if not impossible. The terrain offers every advantage to the defenders.

The *Deś* country or the open plateau is the main Marāṭhā country. The valleys of the Godāvari, the Bhīmā, the Nirā, the Kṛṣṇā are fertile, but the rest of the country is barren. The main crop is not wheat, but the hardy millet—*Jovār* or *Bājṛā*—which is the staple food of the people.

South of the Satpuḍā, there are four great ranges of hills running west to east extending beyond the ordinary spurs of the Sahyādri mountains. The Cāndore hills passing through Nāsik district extend from Rāhūrī to Berār, the Ahmadnagar hills from Junnar to Bhir, the Poonā range from Bhor to Indāpūr and the Mahādev hills cover the Sātārā district. The general aspect of Mahārāṣṭra is thus hilly. Though the climate is salubrious, the country on the whole is rugged and rough, the soil is poor and rainfall precarious. The toil of the peasant brings but a moderate reward. There is little scope for the accumulation of wealth.

Under these circumstances no big cities and no thriving marts grew in the region and the forbidding aspect of nature had little attraction for invaders. Though the Muslim conquerors occupied the central plains, the hill-sides and valleys were left to the local chiefs in nominal allegiance to the Sultāns. The niggardly nature and his wild surroundings bred in the Marāṭhā, the virtues of simplicity, manliness, self-reliance, perseverance, courage, a sense of social equality and pride in the dignity of man. It also made him narrow, parochial and selfish.

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What kind of people occupied this tract in the 18th century and made it famous in history? To outsiders the people of Mahārāṣṭra are known by the generic term Mahrattas or Marāṭhās, though in the State itself the term is restricted to the community which follows the agricultural profession and forms the backbone of its society. Though there are divisions of castes and sub-castes, the

differences are not so sharply marked as in other States and the striking feature of the homogeneity has been remarked upon by anthropologists from the days of Risley (1908). The reasons for this homogeneity lie in the racial composition of the people, the rise of the Marāṭhā language and its use by all classes of people, the religious reform movement of the middle ages which attacked Brāhmin orthodoxy, breathed a liberal spirit and made men feel equal, and the prominent part played in the political history of the country by the great peasant community of the Marāṭhās, from which sprang not only Śivājī, the founder of the Marāṭhā State but several other notable families and which in a way moulded the way of life of the people of the region.

The people of Mahārāṣṭra are of mixed origin: the migrating *Āryans* from the north came in contact with the earlier residents of the region and in the course of centuries came to form the Marāṭhā people. The *Āryans* came in three waves as is evinced by the *Purāṇic* legends of Paraśurām and Agastī; they came much earlier than the *Sakas* or *Scythians* who came on the scene much later and who were supposed to be the progenitors of the Marāṭhās. The latest position has been so lucidly stated by Dr. Mrs. Iravati Karve that one cannot do better than summarise her argument.

“Anthropometric data reveals the following facts. The tribals inhabiting the north-west corner of Mahārāṣṭra and the northern mountainous region are in a class by themselves and fall apart from the rest of the population of Mahārāṣṭra. They are short, dolichocephalic with broad flat noses. Among these the *Vārli*, the *Bhils*, etc., have very small heads and very broad noses. The *Gonds*, *Govārs* belong to a slightly different category. The *Bhils*, *Vārli*s, *Gonḍ*ls, it is surmised, are the original inhabitants of the country. When a pastoral people cleared the valleys and plains these aborigines retired to the mountainous regions. There are references to *Niṣāds* and *Kirāts* in Sanskrit and Pāli literatures. They seem to be the first colonisers in this country, and belong to the Australoid or the Veddāh races. Though these forest tribes are on the border of Mahārāṣṭra, there has been some admixture from them among the rest of the Marāṭhā population. The immigrant people employed the tribals as labour on land and some of them took tribal wives and their mixed progeny formed new castes. The process of mixing continues even now. Almost all castes (Brāhmins, peasants, artisans), in Mahārāṣṭra show a small element of admixture with the tribals.”

“The second category is comprised of the Marāṭhā peasantry. A few of them broad-headed are found in the eastern and western region, but the numerous and powerful Marāṭhā peasantry are medium-headed with prominent noses. The *Mādhyandin* Brāhmins in no way differ from the Marāṭhās.”

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"Closely related to this category, but with heads slightly bigger and wider is the third category in the western region. The members of this category now follow professions other than agriculture, but the main stock is Marāṭhā. Mixing with later migrants from the north may be responsible for the slight variations in the physiognomy of the category."

"The *Āgris*, *Khaire Kunbis*, *Mānes* are very near the tribals. The *Mahārs* and *Māngs* come midway between the tribals and the Marāṭhās. *Mādhyandin* Brāhmins cannot be distinguished from the Marāṭhās. *Āgvedi Deśastha* Brāhmins stand midway between the Marāṭhās and the western located group. This leads to the conclusion that the Marāṭhās, most of the Brāhmin castes, the Prabhus bear such close resemblances to each other as to be included in one common category. This class came in lesser or greater contact with the early dolichocephalic tribes and other tribals and gave rise to other castes. Some castes appear to have come from the north in modern times. Caste groups are formed not on the basis of social status but on the principle of geographical distribution. The natural divisions of Mahārāṣṭra are the central plateau, the valley of the Purnā and the Waingangā, the Koṅkan, Bombay island and the mountainous region. The shape of the head changes as one travels from Bombay to the east. The anthropometric data is clear on the point that the Marāṭhās are racially different from the Rajputs. Wherefrom the Marāṭhā and the kindred Marāṭhā castes came is not clear. The Rajputs are heard of from the seventh century. But much before this the Sātavāhana kings are reported to be opposing Saka or Scythian invasions. The Sakas entered Mahārāṣṭra from the north through Gujarāt. Their invasions occurred over a long period. The Sātavāhanas might belong to one of the early waves of invaders. Though they ruled from Paṭṭhaṇ on the Godāvari, their important inscriptions are found in western Mahārāṣṭra. The words Mahārathi and Mahārathini occurring in their writings, it has been conjectured, refer to the Marāṭhā people. The Marāṭhās had settled in Mahārāṣṭra long before the Rajputs appeared on the stage of history and established their kingdom."¹

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Taking her cue from Purāṇic legends Dr. Mrs. Karve suggests a much earlier date for the infiltration of northern or *Āryan* elements in Mahārāṣṭra. According to her the colonization of Mahārāṣṭra by *Āryans* speaking Sanskrit or a near related language, occurred in three waves. The legend of the flight of Paraśurām after killing the Haihaya king Kārtavīrya of Mahiṣmati into Aparānta is well-known; this story is interpreted as indicating that *Āryan* colonization of Aparānta or Koṅkan started about 1700 to 1600 B.C., as Paraśurām was contemporary of Rājā Hariṣcandra whose reign has been

¹ *Marāṭhī Lokāñci Saṃskṛti*, by Dr. Mrs. Iravati Karve (1951), pp. 153-54.

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approximately dated about 1700 B.C., by Pargiter. This wave of colonizers entered Aparānta from the north-eastern corner and developed the Koṅkanī language. This part of the country on account of the broken nature of the ground, its hills reaching the sea, its swift flowing rivers, its forests and its consequent lack of communication, remained undeveloped. Koṅkanī remained a spoken dialect without its literature receiving permanent form in writing.

The second wave broke into Vidarbha or modern Berār. The legend of Agasti in the *Purāṇas* says that the sage crossed the Vindhya and arrived South. This route has been used by later kings for their southern conquests and brought the conquering hordes right into the valley of the Waingangā river. In this region the northern *Āryans* came into conflict with the aborigines. The colonizers by keeping constant contact with the north, refused to merge with the forest-dwelling people. If we are to accept the stories of Lopāmudrā, Damayanti, Rukmiṇī, Indumati—all princesses of Vidarbha, wedding princes and heroes of the north, Vidarbha appears to be the spear-head of *Āryan* civilization expanding to the south. Pargiter fixes the time of these Vidarbha princesses between 1500 B.C. and 1000 B.C., the period of the great war of Mahābhārata. The *Āryan* rule of Vidarbha attained great eminence and the Vākātakas later on continued the tradition.

The main story of Mahābhārata centres round the rivalry between cousins. It also contains a sequel about the meeting or conflict of two cultures—the *Āryān* and the Nāga. The Mahābhārata contains several names of Nāga families. Arjuna burnt down the Khāṇḍava forest of Takṣaka. Takṣaka retaliated by destroying Parikṣit. His son Janmejaya to avenge the death of the father, put to death innumerable Nāga families. The story is interpreted as a ruthless struggle between the advancing *Āryans*, a pastoral people who cleared the forests for their agriculture and for their cattle and the forest-dwelling tribes who were forced to retire into inaccessible mountains and valleys. The *Baigas*, the *Gonds*, the *Kolis* of Madhya Pradesh claim a kinship with the Nāgas which lends support to the thesis of *Āryan*-Nāga conflict in the region. Anyhow as ancient literature in Sanskrit or Pāli contains no reference to *Dravids* *Dramils* or *Tāmils* contesting the ground with the expanding *Āryans*, it is safe to assume that the people who opposed the *Āryan* advance in Mahārāṣṭra were Nāgas, the ancestors of the hill tribes of the present day.

Khāndeś, the third region to be colonized by the northern people, known as *Aśmaka* or *Mulaka*, appears to be an offshoot of Vidarbha. *Aśmaka* had its chief town at Pratiṣṭhān; both names appear to be imported from the north. Under the Sātavāhanas of Pratiṣṭhān *Aśmaka* rose in importance, Mahārāṣṭri was patronized and helped the rise of Marāṭhī. Before the Sātavāhanas the country, according to Kathā Sarit Sāgar of Somadeva, was ruled over by Nārasinha. The

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popularity of the name of Nārasinha or Nārasayya in the Deccan, the presence of numerous temples of Nārasinha in this region and the frequent reference to Nārasinha in folk-tales of the Deccan tribals, bear out Somadeva to a certain extent. Was he the last king of the Nāgas? The words Nāg-Narsobā so frequently appearing together in Marāṭhī folk literature, the presence of many townships in Mahārāṣṭra such as Nāgpūr, Nāgoṭhanā and the popularity of Nāga worship in Mahārāṣṭra are rather significant.

The Nāga people were probably overcome by people coming from the North on horseback. Sātavāhana or Sālivāhana means those who used sāta or sāla as their transport. Sāli in Mundāri or Nāga language may mean a horse. The retreating Nāgas felt that the conquering hordes derived their superior strength from the horse and called them Sālivāhana. For want of more convincing evidence one can only conjecture that in the course of over a millennium elements from the north arrived in Mahārāṣṭra in trickies, mingled with the aborigines and came to form the Marāṭhā people.

Fargiter's chronology cannot be accepted in the light of the latest research on the subject and dates will have to be advanced by almost half a millennium. Basham remarks that the Aryans entered India in the Second Millennium B.C. (about 1,500 B.C.). It must have taken quite a few centuries for the Aryan tribes to spread to the east and then probe southward. Sir Mortimer Wheeler states the position as under in the latest edition of Oxford History of India. "Although there is no reason to believe that any large Indo-Aryan tribal body ever marched into the peninsula the peaceful penetration of the Deccan by Indo-Aryan emissaries began many centuries before the Christian era. Tradition credits the Vedic Rṣi Agastya or a name sake of his with the introduction of Aryan ideas and institutions into the Dravidian South." Prof. Nilakanta Shastri makes a guess that the Aryanization of the South took place about 1,000 B.C.

The above discussion may give us an idea of the early colonization of Mahārāṣṭra and of the elements that have gone in the making of the Marāṭhā people. The Deccan plateau has been the meeting ground of the Aryans and their successors Yavanas, Sakas, etc., from the north, with the original inhabitants of the land.

How the people came to be called Marāṭhās is a matter of conjecture and the word continues to baffle historians and philologists. The etymology suggested by Molesworth, the first lexicographer of the Marāṭhī language in the 19th Century, that it meant either the great country (Mahā Rāṣṭra) or the country of the Mahārs (Mahār Rāṣṭra) has not found acceptance, as the first explanation is obviously the Sanskritized interpretation of later writers and the second has been rejected on the ground that there are no instances of a country being called after a low caste. The present accepted theory is that it is a compound of Mahā : great and Rāṣṭrika : either a Sanskrit form of Raṭṭa, the name of the northern tribe or a term applied generally to petty Chiefs ruling in the Deccan.

From ancient literary sources it has been surmised that the Raṭṭas commenced a southward movement from the country of the Kurus north of Indraprastha in Vedic times and entered northern Koṅkan by way of Rājasthān and Gujarāt. Another body of these Raṭṭas found their way into Vidarbha through Bundelkhaṇḍ. These bodies were perhaps led by Paraśurām and Agastī. In the period of the Brāhmaṇas, the Haihaya tribe colonized western and northern parts of Dakṣiṇapatha. The Yādavas likewise moved into Saurāṣṭra and Vidarbha. The Raṭṭas of Aparānta crossed the Sahyādri range and established themselves in the valley of the Bhīmā, while those in Vidarbha, spread to Āśmak (Khāndeś), south of the Sātpuḍā. In the absence of a strong organized government, the Raṭṭas became all powerful and began to exercise royal authority in their petty principalities. In the time of the Sātavāhanas (200 B. C. to 200 A. D.), they had become powerful enough to call themselves Mahārāṭṭas and marry their daughters in the royal family. They were, as is obvious from the Nāneghāt and Beḍṣā inscriptions, at that time well-established in central Mahārāṣṭra and the Chāṭmāthā of the Sahyādri range.

After the fall of the Sātavāhana dynasty Mahārāṣṭra was invaded by Indo-Bactrians, Scythians, Abhīrs and Mālvās. Some of these invaders remained behind and established themselves in separate colonies. Most of them however merged with the people of the country and became Marāṭhās.

The interregnum between the dissolution of the Sātavāhana power (220 A. D.) and the rise of the Cālukyas (500 A. D.) was a period of comparative anarchy when the Marāṭhās entrenched themselves in their villages and districts. Their later career under Cālukya, Rāṣṭrakūṭa and other dynasties is too well-known to need reference.

The earliest known mention of Marāṭhās is found in an inscription of about 100 B.C. of the Nāneghāt leading from the Koṅkan into the north of the Poonā district. The term used here is *Mahārathā-graṇikoviro* which probably means the hero-leader of Mahārāṭhās. In the Beḍṣā caves in the same locality there is a reference to a queen described as *Mahārathini*, dated in the first century A.D. Other similar references are found in the Bhājā and Kārlā caves. It is not easy to decide whether the terms *Mahāratha* and *Mahārathini* indicate simply great charioteers or residents of Mahārāṣṭra or designate the individuals by their tribal name, the early form of Marāṭhā. Support is lent to the latter interpretation by Rock Edict V of the Mauryan Emperor Aśoka of 245 (B.C.) wherein it is recorded that the emperor despatched Buddhist missionaries to Rāṣṭikas, Peṭenikas and Aparāntas. It is known that Peṭenikas refers to Paithāṇ on the Godāvari while Aparānta is the old name of northern Koṅkan.

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Rāṣṭikas therefore indicates some people resident in the Deccan, possibly the Rāṣṭas. It is suggested that the Rāṣṭas called themselves Mahā Rāṣṭas i.e. Mahārathas.¹

The Erān inscription of the 4th Century is perhaps the earliest reference to Mahārāṣṭra.² A century later was read in Sinhalese chronicle the Mahāvamsa (A.D. 480) of the country of Mahāratha and in A.D. 634, the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsiang styled the kingdom of the Cālukya dynasty of the Deccan Mo-ho-lo-cha which is the Chinese transliteration of Ma-hā-ra-tha. In the middle of the seventh century, an inscription at Aihole near Badāmī in Bijāpūr district relates how a king of the Cālukya dynasty Pulakeśin II gained the sovereignty of the three Mahārāṣṭras with their 99,000 villages. About 1020 A.D. the Arab geographer Al Biruni mentions *Marhāt deś* as a country to the south of the Narmadā. Foreign travellers who visited this country from 1,000 A.D. onward always refer to it as the country of the Marāṭhās.

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Two distinguishing features marked the organization of Marāṭhā society and gave it security and stability—religion of the mass of the population of Mahārāṣṭra and the caste system and the village. Hinduism advanced in the south with the march of the Indo-Āryan civilization, but the movement was slow and many of its concepts though accepted superficially, did not obtain the same hold in this region. The Hindu theory that mankind is divided into four *Varnas* or group of castes—Brāhmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śudra—was foreign to the people of the Deccan. Though some castes affected to be of Kṣatriya origin, the only distinction in society was between Brāhmins, the general mass of the people known as the Marāṭhās and the untouchable Mahārs. The forest dwelling tribes like *Phils*, *Rāmośis*, *Koḷis*, *Vārḷis* and *Kātkaris* were outside the pale of civilized society. They were literally hewers of wood and were not disturbed so long as they confined themselves to the jungle and remained quiescent. Whenever for some reason or other the forest-dwellers raided villages on the border, punitive expeditions were sent against them and they were hunted like wild beasts.

Brāhmins.

The Brāhmins were a priestly class and enjoyed social privileges. Only a small part, however, engaged in religious duties. They studied the Śāstras, acted as temple worshippers, and preached the traditional religion to the masses by reading Purāṇas and by holding religious concourses, popularly known as *Kirtans* and *Bhajans*. At these *Kirtans* would be expounded the philosophy of Hinduism that the world was a mirage and only the *Brahman* was real and the

¹ R. G. Bhandarkar, *Early History of the Deccan* (3rd Ed., 1928), p. 18.

² Discovered by Prof. V. V. Mirashi and published in *Ātithāsik Samkirṇa Nibandha* of B. I. S. Mandal of Poona, Vol. 5. It says that "Satyanāga Mahārāṣṭri raises this pillar to commemorate the memory of the soldiers who died in the field".

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realization of the *Brahman* in the self should be the aspiration and endeavour of life. This could be done by study, contemplation, piety, charity and by everybody doing his appointed duty in this life; the exposition was followed by the recitation of a popular story from the *Purāṇas*—like that of Pralhād or of Bhakta Dhruva—to the accompaniment of music. The object was to drive the moral to the listeners—the triumph of good over evil, of the godly over the ungodly. Many of the temple-worshippers would attach themselves to families in the locality, officiate on occasions like birth, marriage and death, read horoscopes, and perform worship for their patrons on specially holy or auspicious days such as *Ekādaśī*, *Sivarātri* etc.

The class which strictly followed the tenets of the Faith and devoted their lives to the study of divine ordinances was held in esteem, but otherwise there was no special veneration for the Brāhmin character. Many of them had taken to mundane activities and were working as merchants, bankers and soldiers. But the profession in which they excelled was the clerical one. Because of the illiteracy of the general population the secretarial part of the administration at all levels—village, district and the centre—fell into the hands of the Brāhmins who acted as village accountants and district accountants; they kept records; they were in charge of land measurement and assessment; and they acted as *divāns* to *jāgirdārs* and ministers and managed their estates. With the establishment of *Svarāj*, the Brāhmin clerks and accountants nearest to the king, became ministers of the realm. Śivājī's *Peśvā* or chief minister, Moropant Pingḷe, was a Brāhmin; his finance minister, Anṇājī Datto, was a Brāhmin. Rāmcandra *Amātya* and Nāro *Sankar Saciv* who directed the war of independence against Aurangzeb were Brāhmins. Bālājī Viśvanāth who founded the family of the *Peśvā* which later usurped royal authority was a Brāhmin.

There were several sects of Brāhmins in Mahārāṣṭra; the more important were the *Deśastha* from Central Mahārāṣṭra and *Koṅkanastha* or *Citpāvan* from Koṅkan. In the early days of the Marāṭhā state, *Deśastha* Brāhmins were in greater prominence in administration, but with the rise of Bālājī Viśvanāth *Peśvā* they lost their pre-eminent position to the *Citpāvanas*.

The Brāhmin was thus an important factor in the population. Though the percentage of Brāhmins to the general population was barely five, the small minority wielded much greater political power than could be warranted by its strength. The *Peśvā's* court in Poona in its later days came to be known as "*Brāhmaṇi Daulat*", Brāhmin-dominated state and roused feelings of jealousy among the masses owing to the favoured position of the Brāhmin class.

The next class in importance was the Marāṭhās. The term had a much wider connotation than at present. It included not only

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the peasantry, but the shepherds and cowherds. With the exception of a few prominent families they were looked on as Sudras, the fourth class in the society. Col. Tone an officer in the *Peśvā's* army writing in 1798, remarks,¹ "the *Marāṭhā* holds a very inferior situation in the scale of rank and eminence of Hindu institutions. He is happily free from observances in respect of washing, praying and eating. He can eat all kinds of food with the exception of beef, can dress his meals at all times and at all seasons, can partake of victuals dressed by any caste superior to his own; washing and praying are not indispensable in his order. These advantages point out the *Marāṭhā* as eminently qualified for a military life. His caste by which he belongs to the labouring population of the country endures him to fatigue and the vicissitudes of weather The *Marāṭhās* are the most numerous of the Hindu people, which circumstance promises hopes of success in every military undertaking".

Col. Tone further adds that the *Marāṭhā* people were closely knit by a certain primeval plainness operating upon the whole people. There was no distinction of sentiment to be seen: the prince and his domestic thought alike and expressed themselves in the same terms. It was not unusual for a great chief warming himself round a fire or conducting his affairs sitting on a plain saddle cloth surrounded by his subordinates. The simplicity of manners of the *Marāṭhās*, their democratic feeling of equality surprised strangers who had seen servility of conduct of Muslim Courts. The ruler was from a *Marāṭhā* family; the big confederates *Śinde*, *Bhosle*, *Gāikvād*, the *Pavārs*, were all *Marāṭhās*. The *Marāṭhā* peasantry was the dominant element in the army. *Marāṭhās* everywhere were *Pāṭils* of villages and *Deśmukhs* in districts, or chief landholders. Their total strength was about one-third in the entire population, and besides the *Brāhmins*, they were a powerful element in the population.

Varis.

The next group was made up of artisans and traders, each organised in separate castes. The artisan plied his trade in the village in the traditional way and served its simple needs. The trader was often a *bania* from *Gujarāt*. The carpenter, the smith, the copper-smith, the oil-man, the barber, the fisherman were all functional groups and differed little from the general *Marāṭhā* community in their religious and social outlook. Each caste had a sort of religious and moral government among itself, conducted by a council of elders. Any breach in the performance of the religious and social rites of the caste brought upon the individual the wrath of the elders. The government in most cases upheld the decision of the elders. In cases of disputes between castes, the matter was referred to the *Brahma Sabhā* of a holy place like *Nāsik*, *Paṭhan* or *Wāi*. The general tone of society was conservative and the ruler saw that the traditional way of life was upheld.

¹ W. Tone in Indian Annual Register, Vol. I, *Illustrations of some Institutions of the Marāṭhā People*.

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The last in the social scale, was the *Mahār*. In the village community, he was assigned such low jobs as scavenging, clearing away dead animals, keeping watch at night and acting as a messenger and guide to government officials and strangers passing through a village.

Thus, though *Marāṭhā* society under influence of *Brāhmānic* culture, had adopted many of its concepts, caste distinctions were not sharp and strict as in the north. The great peasant community, despite its low standing in the social scale, held a dominant position and set the general tone of society.

Writing in 1818, Elphinstone reported to Government "The whole population of the *Marhatta* (*Marāṭhā*) country are *Marahattas* (*Marāṭhās*), and all have some attachment to their nation and feel some interest in its greatness, but the common people are devoted to husbandry."¹

Village communities present the next striking feature of *Marāṭhā* society of the 18th century. Towns were few and the majority of the people lived in villages. The village was the base on which rested the administrative structure.²

VILLAGE
COMMUNITIES.

A village in the Deccan is called *gāv*; when not a market town, it is known as *maujā*; when so, it is known as *kasbā*. Every village was a self-contained unit. It was made up of a cluster of huts of the peasants, of the houses of the village officials and of the village temples. All the surrounding land with the exception of inaccessible mountains was attached to it and was divided into fields and the village commons where the cattle grazed. The boundaries of its lands were defined and encroachments were resisted. The arable land was divided into fields, each field had a name which together with the name of the owner, was entered in the register. The inhabitants were principally cultivators and were either *Mirāsdārs* or *Upri*. "The *Mirāsdār* belonged to the village," held his land in hereditary and could not be dispossessed of it so long as he continued to pay the rent. He could sell and transfer his fields and had the right to sit in the village council. The *Upri* was an outsider, a mere tenant-at-will and cultivated the land so long as his lease continued.

¹ Poona Residency Correspondence, Vol. XIII, p. 395.

² Authorities for the following discussion are *Selection of Papers from the Records at the India House*, Vol. IV, especially Elphinstone's report and the reports of Chaplin, Robertson and other officers; also *Poona Gazetteer*, (old edition), Vol. II, Chapter 8.

³ The word is derived from Arabic *mirās*, *mirāsi*, *mirāsdār* and these from *wāris* to inherit, *mirāsdār* being a holder of hereditary property: *Upri* means a stranger, a mere renter in opposition to hereditary occupant.

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Besides the cultivators, there also resided in the village the village officials, *Pāṭil*, *Kuḷkarnī*, *Caṅgulā* and the artisans known as *Bārā Balutā*¹. The most useful and legitimate employment of the artisans was that of labouring for the villagers in the several lines of their drafts, but they also held another position as the village staff and attendants on the *Pāṭil* and assistants in the various social and festive ceremonies of the village.

The *Sutār* or carpenter was at the head of the artisans, his services being most in requisition. He made the villagers' ploughs and repaired their carts, the owners finding the material; for any other work as building a house or making a cart for other than agricultural purposes, he was paid. The *Lohār* or smith made the hoes of the ploughs and other implements. The *Cāmbhār* made all leather buckets, halters, whips, ropes and bands for agricultural purposes, the owner finding the leather himself. He also mended the farmer's shoes, though they had to pay him for new ones. He also had to furnish gratuitously the *Deśmukh* and the *Deśpāṇḍe* of the district and the *Pāṭil* and *Kuḷkarnī* of his village with a new pair of shoes each, annually.

The above three were the principal artisans. They possessed several perquisites above the others, among which was the privilege of sowing in every farmer's field a strip of land with *raḷla*, each strip consisting of four furrows. The farmer tilled the land, and the artisans merely brought each his basket of grain which was sown by the farmer and reaped by the recipient when ready.

The *Kumbhār* or potter supplied the village with earthenware—frying pans, ovens, pitchers, water-pots and jars—according to the casualties and needs of each house-hold, receiving a cake of bread on the supply of fresh article. When the crop was ripening he took a jug and water vessels to each field for those engaged in watching the crops, receiving in turn his *nimboṛ* (or ears of corn). The other artisans, *Mahārs* and the village staff generally claimed their pottery free, but the *Kumbhār* stipulated for some service in return. He had also to supply any government servant on his arrival at the village with what vessels he might require. He found the several images at festivals receiving in return a little grain.

The *Nhāvi* shaved all the farmers; to the *Mahār* he merely lent a razor. He attended at the *Pāṭil's* wedding. On the occasion of weddings or festivals in the village it was his duty to convey presents from one party to another.

¹ *Balutā* derived from *Bali* a share in the grain of the peasant. *Balutā* means yearly allowance of grain for service rendered to the community. The detailed description of the artisans is based on 'Village Communities in the Deccan', by N. R. Goodine, 'Bombay Govt. Selection.' (1852).

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The *Parit* or washerman washed the clothing of the men-folk of the village. He spread white clothes as carpets for passage-over of a wedding party or of some great personage at a festival.

The *Mahār* was the village watchman, scout and messenger. He was verily the 'village eye'. His situation made him acquainted with everybody's affairs, and his evidence was required in every dispute. Should two cultivators quarrel respecting the boundaries of their fields, the *Mahār's* evidence often decided it. The *Mahār's* duties were numerous. In large villages they were divided into two or three heads; these were *veskārs* or porters at the village gates; the *Khale-veskārs* or guards of the stack-yards, the *gaon-veskārs* or *Mahārs* appointed to attend at the *cāvḍi* and the *gaon-mahārs* or those for general duty of the village. Different *Mahār* families performed these duties in rotation. In small villages one family guarded the gates, kept an account of persons who came and went, attended to travellers, conveyed government letters and cash. During harvest time he guarded the stack-yard and kept a fire burning at night and made himself generally useful. His remuneration was a government *inām*, a tithe upon everything grown; presents of bread and other victuals; small imposts of oil, sugar and condiments begged from shopkeepers.

The *Māṅg* provided the villagers with ropes and prepared the hides for the *Cāmbhār* to work, the *Gurav* looked after the local temples, a *Mulānā* took care of the mosque and tombs; a bard and astrologer were the other concomitants of larger villages.

The fees in kind to the artisans depended very much on the state of the crops and also upon the extent of services performed. Col. Jervis who made inquiries about the percentage of the share the *Balutedārs* claimed from the peasants, was informed that it was as high as twenty-five, which he did not believe. Other sources reveal it as about ten per cent. But there is no doubt that the arrangement added to the burden of the peasantry.

The *Pāṭil* was the first among the cultivators and the chief village officer, the *Caṅgulā* was his immediate assistant and both were Marathā by caste. The office descended from father to son; when there was no capable person to perform the duties, a near relation was chosen. A succession always required confirmation from government and vacancies caused by disappearance or desertion, were filled by government nomination. The *Pāṭil* held rent-free lands and had several perquisites. His position as a government dignitary and the social predominance and various financial advantages he enjoyed gave him a prestige in the community and the dignity of the post was much valued.

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The person next to the *Pāṭil* was the *Kulkarni*, the clerk or registrar who kept the records in respect of the fields, kept the rental accounts and acted as a general writer for the inhabitants. Being perhaps the only literate person, he wielded far greater influence than was warranted by his position. He had rent-free lands and other perquisites only inferior to that of the *Pāṭil*. He was mostly a Brāhmin, some times a *Kāyastha* Prabhu.

The *Caugulā* and the *Mahār* made up the village establishment. The *Mahār* was useful as a village watchman and attended to strangers. His duties have been already enumerated.

The *Pāṭil's* principal duty was to supervise cultivation and collect government assessment. As the latter depended on the state of the crops, the *Pāṭil* had to use all the skill and persuasion he was capable of, to make the *ryots* work harder and better. He induced them to bring as much land under the plough as they could, attracted tenants to take up fallow land, fixed the rent they had to pay, arranged advances for agricultural operations and helped government agents to make correct assessment and realize the rent from the *ryots*.

He was also in charge of peace and order. Trifling offences he punished himself, redressed wrongs, and intervened to settle the villagers' disputes. The village *Cāvdī* was the place where people with grievances came and related them to him. The *Pāṭil* knew everybody well, and could immediately sense what was wrong and tried to set things right with admonitions to the offender. When disputes took a serious turn and could not be settled by this informal method, he induced the parties to compromise the matter, but if necessary, he called some of the inhabitants best acquainted with the dispute and submitted the case for arbitration. This was called a *Pañcāyat*. Crime of a trifling nature was attended to by the *Pāṭil* but serious offences were reported to the district officer.

In addition to his revenue and magisterial duties, the *Pāṭil* was responsible for the defence of the village. He sent for the villagers to sleep at the village *cāvdī* and keep watch at the gate when disturbances were reported in the surrounding country. Funds needed to strengthen the village-wall or repair the temples and wells were collected with the help of the village elders and spent under his direction. He was responsible for entertaining government dignitaries, *Sibandi*, holy men and *Sanyāsīs* passing through the village. He also sometimes provided the villagers with amusement and recreation by inviting jugglers and tumblers to perform.

For all practical purposes the village managed its affairs, and followed the even tenor of its life almost forgotten by the world outside and undisturbed by upheavals beyond the narrow range of its

interests. Elphinstone thought that "these village communities were an excellent remedy for the defects of a bad government as they saved the people from negligence and served as a sort of barrier against its tyranny and rapacity."¹

The Marāṭhā administration as it developed in the 18th century was a compound of elements borrowed from ancient works on Hindu polity, elements taken over from the Muslim States of the Deccan and modified by the genius of the founder of the Marāṭhā State to suit its special needs and changes that took place when the guiding hand of that great architect was removed. The administrative structure in mediaeval times was a simple one, government activities centering round defence from foreign enemies and security from turbulent elements at home. Defence calls for an efficient army which for its proper functioning needs unity of command. The leader of the hosts who can successfully beat back the enemies, naturally comes to occupy the first place in the State. He becomes the King. For internal security the monarch looked to the support of the aristocracy. This privileged order at the centre formed the King's court and advised him on the conduct of administration. Outside the capital members from the class managed districts on his behalf.

Thus in Marāṭhā polity we find political power resting in the highest executive, the crowned prince. *Sivājī* directed all the activities of his state and ruled as well as reigned. As his field of activity grew wider, he appointed advisers to assist him—a minister who would look after collection of revenues and audit accounts, another to take charge of relations with neighbouring powers, a third to look after defence, a fourth to look to the records, a fifth to administer justice, a sixth to take charge of ecclesiastical matters and so on. Though the *Rājā* received advice from the ministers and often accepted their suggestions, the responsibility for formulating policy, unlike that of the British Cabinet, was his; his ministers were his secretaries—his subordinates who carried out his orders. It is wrong to compare the *Aṣṭa Pradhān Maṇḍal* or the Cabinet of eight Ministers of *Sivājī* with that of the English Cabinet. The English Cabinet is free in the choice of its decision. While the ministers have a free-hand in the routine administration, the general directive comes from the Prime Minister. The sovereign reigns but does not rule. In *Sivājī's* Council, no minister possessed over-riding authority. This was left in the hand of the sovereign himself.

Sivājī's successors did not possess his tireless energy and came to rely more and more on their councillors. *Sambhājī* (1680-1689) resigned his authority to his minister *Kalaśa*, while in the fugitive

¹ Selection of East India Papers, Vol. IV, p. 158.

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Rājārām's time (1689-1700), the exigency of the situation required that the King should give a free hand to his advisers. In his absence in the south, Rāmcandra *Amātya* and *Sanikarāji Saciv*, directed Marāṭhā activities on their own initiative. Even at Jīnījī, Rājārām resigned himself to the advice of another minister, the *Pratinidhi*. These ministers lacking the prestige of the King's position, were obliged to purchase the loyalty of their adherents by making appeals to their self-interest, by holding out promises of large rewards, in the shape of fiefs or *Jāgirs*, with which the Marāṭhā was already familiar and which the Moghal emperor was bestowing on renegades. Sivāji always insisted on regular payment from his treasury to his officers. But during the protracted war with Aurangzeb, little treasure could be found with which to pay the chiefs and their men. It was found necessary to assign them territories and ask them to fend for themselves.

Feudalization.

In the interregnum from Sambhājī's capture to the home-coming of Sāhū in May 1707, conditions in Mahārāṣṭra were abnormal. The machinery of government as devised by Sivāji broke down. A number of Marāṭhā captains raised forces on their own, led expeditions in Moghal provinces and made collection of revenues from which they reimbursed themselves. Sāhū when he returned home with a handful of body-guards, was called upon to establish his superior claims against local Moghal officers and the protégé of his aunt Tārā Bāi and set up his authority over the warlords. At first the patriotic tradition of his grand-father, the bitter memory of the sufferings of his father and the support of Zulfiqar Khān, enabled him to hold his own against his rivals. But this initial advantage needed to be buttressed by the personal valour and leadership in a country bristling with arms. Sāhū lacked the commanding talents and energy of his grand-father, and the patriotic tradition could not help him long; he was scarcely able to hold his own against the party of his aunt, when the support of Zulfiqar Khān was gone. Bālājī Viśvanāth who became *Peśvā* in 1713, in face of mounting difficulties came to realize that it was no longer possible to adhere to Sivāji's old constitution under which the King, aided by his eight ministers, was the sole ruler of his dominions. The King's position as against the warlords who had made themselves practically independent in several parts of the Deccan, had deteriorated. The only way to save the kingship being submerged and the country being involved in civil war and turmoil, was to accept the chiefs as vassals, with practically free reins in their territory, to acknowledge them as hereditary *Jāgirdārs* who would bring their armies to the common standard when called upon, but otherwise, would have a free hand in the management of their fiefs. Sāhū accepted the advice of his minister, concluded an agreement with Āngre on these lines, and gave similar freedom of action to other chiefs. A revolution in feudalizing the Marāṭhā State began.

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Sāhū's stay-at-home policy accelerated the process of feudalization, and the want of capacity in his successors completed it. The chiefs who raised men and money for distant expeditions on their own, could not be expected to be subservient to royal commands and render minute accounts to court officers, when the sovereign himself gave no directive and showed little interest in distant operations. The *Peśvā* or Chief-Minister who could have saved royal authority from falling into disuse, himself became the leading feudal chief and kept his conquests on the west-coast and in Hindustan to himself. The example set by the *Peśvā* was copied by other ministers and chiefs. The *Pratinidhi*, *Saciv*, *Senāpati* and other cabinet members though they retained their nominal rank, became transformed into hereditary feudatories and the new warlords that had sprung during the war with Aurangzeb, swelled their ranks.

The old members of the cabinet looked on the *Peśvā* as an usurper and withheld co-operation in his schemes of conquest. The *Peśvā* had to look to able assistants to uphold his authority in distant quarters. These assistants, Śinde, Holkar, Pavār, Jādhav and others, in course of time, became transformed into feudal chiefs. The spirit of feudalization came to stay and invaded Marāṭhā administration in all its branches. Even small civil and military posts came to be endowed with *Jāgirs* and alienated revenues¹.

The feudal organization lacks coherence, suffers from want of unity of command and can never pull its full weight in a crisis. As the sovereign does not deal direct with his subjects, his hold on their allegiance is nominal. The subjects readily follow the immediate chiefs with whom their lives and welfare are tied than the legendary monarch on whom they rarely set their eyes. The freedom the subordinate chiefs enjoy in the management of their *Jāgirs*, breeds a spirit of defiance, they affect independence and resent interference from central authority. Should this authority pass into weak hands, the centrifugal tendencies become accelerated and the structure collapses. The Marāṭhā State could not escape this fate of feudal Governments. Its atomisation sapped the foundations and it could not stand the attack of the organized power of the British at the end of the century.

Malcolm's comments are worth repetition. He says, "The constitution of the government and army of the Marhattas (Marāṭhās) was more calculated to destroy than to create an empire. The fabric had no foundation. The chiefs were from the first, almost equal; and as the armies they led, depended principally on success

¹ According to Elphinstone's calculation out of the total revenue of the *Peśvā* of Rs. 2,15,00,000, more than half was in the possession of *Jāgirdārs*. This does not take account of the *Jāgirs* of the bigger chiefs like Śinde, Holkar, Bhosle and Gaikvād. See Poonā Residency Correspondence Service, Vol. XIII, p. 396.

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for pay, the leaders were necessarily invested with powers for the collection of tribute, or revenues, from the provinces into which they were sent. But though a share was claimed by Government, the application of the greater part in the payment of his troops and other expenses, raised the successful general into a ruler of the countries he had conquered. This everywhere produced the same effects, and the public interest was lost sight of in the desire of individuals to promote their own ambition. The early example of the *Paishwah's* (*Peśvā*) usurpation was followed almost by all to whom opportunity offered; and this was aided by the form of their village governments having been carried into the state; every office, from that of *Paishwah* (*Peśvā*), or prime minister, to the lowest employ became hereditary. This practice, by giving rights, limited patronage and weakened the heads of the empire, among whom divisions early arose. Notwithstanding the military reputation which some of the *Paishwahs* (*Peśvā*) added to their other pretensions to supreme authority, all that superior intelligence which their habits and education gave them, was unequal to keep in check the ambition of enterprising chiefs who, intoxicated with success, soon forgot their obligations to the Brāhmin princes by whom they were elevated to command. One part of the policy of the *Paishwahs* (*Peśvā*) tended greatly to accelerate the independence of those leaders—the fear of their disturbing the peace of their native country, or consuming its resources, led to their constant employment in foreign expeditions, where they were subject to little or no control; and to attain the object of keeping a successful general and his adherents at a distance, the superior was satisfied with nominal allegiance¹.

Rise of the
Peśvās.

For quite some time the revolution was not apparent. The King's authority was bolstered up by his very able *Peśvās* Bālājī Viśvanāth, Bājī Rāv I and his son Bālājī. The *Peśvās*, with other ministers, attended the *Rājā's* court, and when absent on campaigns were represented by their deputies. The king was kept informed of happenings outside and was formally consulted on all matters of importance. But as the Marāṭhā state expanded the *Peśvās* showed themselves great leaders of men and far out-stripped other ministers. It was *Peśvā* Bālājī Viśvanāth who obtained for his sovereign the *sanad* of *Scarāj*, *Cauth* and *Sardeśmukhi* and thus legitimized *Rājā* Śāhū's position. Then again it was Bālājī's son Bājī Rāv who defeated the great *Nizām* when the latter challenged the *Rājā's* authority in 1727. The *Senāpati* who had started intrigues both against the *Rājā* and the *Peśvā* was destroyed in 1731. The neighbouring powers on the west coast were reduced by the *Peśvā's* exertions, who also tore away Mālṡā and Bundelkhand from the imperial grip. No wonder that the grateful Sovereign came to rely more and more on the *Peśvā* than on other ministers who chose the ease of the capital and kept at home, contenting themselves with giving advice. The result was that the *Peśvā* who originally was one of the eight ministers, came to occupy the first position in the king's council.

¹ Malcolm, John, *A Memoir of Central India*, Vol. I (1880, ed.), pp. 60-62.

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This was confirmed by *Rājā* Śāhū himself. On his death-bed he wrote two wills or rescripts. The first says "We order that you should command the forces. The Government of the empire must be carried on. You are to take measures to preserve the kingdom. Our successors will not interfere with your post."¹ The other paper was a solemn injunction to the *Rājā's* successors to maintain the *Peśvā* in power.

Armed with these documents, the *Peśvā* called a meeting of the council and declared that he would also administer the kingdom on behalf of the dead *Rājā's* successor. The successor being an inexperienced youth brought up in humble circumstances, was in no position to oppose the *Peśvā*, and gave his written sanction that the *Peśvā's* authority should be obeyed. The *Pratinidhī*, Raghujī Bhosle, and others who showed themselves recalcitrant, were overawed. Thus from 1750 the supreme authority in the Marāṭhā Government came to be exercised by the Brāhmin *Peśvā* in the name of the Marāṭhā Sovereign, who became a shadowy figure, a mere cipher. Though he continued to be publicly honoured and issue ceremonial dresses he had no authority in the conduct of administration and even his household expenses came to be controlled by the Vice-Regent.²

The usurpation of the *Peśvās*, Scott Waring justly remarks "neither attracted observation nor excited surprise. Indeed, the transition was easy, natural and progressive". Its greatest disadvantage according to Rawlinson, was that "it aggravated the centrifugal tendencies of the Marāṭhā State, especially the enmity between the Brāhman and Marāṭhā, which were at least kept in check while a member of the house of Bhosle actually ruled; after the *Peśvā's* prestige was shaken by the defeat of Pānīpat, the disintegration became more and more evident."³

The rise of the *Peśvā* not only emphasised the feudalizing process, but also marked the triumph of orthodoxy. The Marāṭhā state was born on the crest of a movement of social and religious reform which had attacked the sacerdotal authority of the Brāhmin and laid stress on social equality. Under its impetus all castes and classes had participated in the work of liberation. Śivājī in his administration emphasised merit and talent wherever he found them. His army consisted of local Marāṭhā peasantry, while Brāhmins, Prabhus and Sārasvats manned his civil establishment. As the *Peśvās* rose in importance the complexion of the services slowly began to change. From the time of Bālājī Rāv (1740-61) his castemen found favour in clerical as well as military services. The Marāṭhā administration became Brāhmānical and "the Principal offices of government were", according to Malet, "either in the possession of Brāhmins

¹ Kincaid and Parasnis, *A History of the Marāṭhā People*, p. 455.

² *Poonā Residency Correspondence*, Vol. XIII, p. 29; Elphinstone here records his view on the *Peśvā's* position.

³ *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 412.

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or so disposed as to be under their control.”¹ Other communities felt neglected by the monopolization of power by Brāhmins, and made them apathetic to the fortunes of the State.

Justice Rānade makes significant observations on this subject. He remarks², “One other general feature, which distinguishes the first period under Śivājī and Śāhū from the period which followed the establishment of Peśvās’ power at Poonā, relates to the fact that while most of the great military commanders in the earlier period were Marhattas (Marāṭhās) with the notable exception of the Peśvās themselves, the men who rose to the distinction in the latter half of the century were for the most part, Brāhmins. This infusion of the racial and caste element among the military leaders of the nation had disastrous effects. There were parties within parties, with little chance of a common and active sympathy throughout all the classes, who had been held together with such successful results by Śivājī, Rājārām and Śāhū. The first half of the century was singularly free from these racial and caste jealousies. In the latter half, they had attained such prominence that concert was impossible, and each great leader naturally cared to pursue his own interest to the sacrifice of the common weal. The Brāhmins at this time came to regard themselves as a governing caste with special privileges and exemptions, which were unknown under the system founded by Śivājī, All these distinguishing features of purely sacerdotal or caste ascendancy characterised the close of the century, and introduced a demoralisation of which few people have any correct idea. The State ceased to be the ideal protector of all classes, and upholder of equal justice. Rāmdāsa’s high ideal of the religion of Mahārāṣṭra was lowered down to one in keeping with the belief that the State had no higher function than to protect the cow and the Brāhmin, and the usual consequences followed such a decadence of virtue”.

Secretariat.

The secretariat known as *Huzur Daftar* was a big establishment consisting of about 200 clerks headed by the *Phaḍṇis* or Chief Secretary. This establishment was in charge of all sorts of accounts. It received and checked accounts of districts and other subordinate offices and drew up estimates and authorized budgets for the ensuing year. Accounts of all alienations of public revenues, whether *Sarañjāms*, *Ināms* or otherwise, of the pay, rights and privileges of the Government and village officers, accounts of the strength and pay of troops and expenses of all civil, military and religious establishments were all submitted to the Secretariat. There were daily registers, abstracts of registers, estimates of revenue and expenditure, abstracts of actual receipts and expense, and based on them, were the authorized budgets for districts. The whole of this were consolidated and exhibited in a comprehensive view in “*Tarjamās*”.

¹ Poonā Residency Correspondence, Vol. II, p. 342.

² M. G. Ranade, *Miscellaneous Writings*, Vol. I (ed. by D. C. Wacha), pp. 347-48.

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It was really through the district administration that the impact of government was carried to the people at large. Each revenue division called indiscriminately as *parganā* or *prānt* was under an officer who, in a large district, was known as *Māmlatdār*, and in a small one *Kamāvisdār*. The appointment was for a year but cases were not uncommon when the same *Māmlatdār* continued to hold the charge for twenty-five or even thirty years. In the prosperous days of the Peśvās, the *Māmlatdārs* were men of honesty and integrity and managed their charge with ability. The *Māmlatdār* had under him inferior agents for smaller units known as *Taraḍdārs*, *Kārkuns*, *Śaikdārs* whom he nominated himself. His district establishment consisted of eight members, *Divān*, *Mazumdār*, *Phaḍṇavis*, *Potnis*, *Potedar*, *Citnis*, *Karkhānis* and *Sabhlāsad* — hereditary officers who were directly responsible to government, whose signatures were necessary to all documents and who were bound to give information of all the misdeeds and malpractices of the *Māmlatdār*. The *Māmlatdār*’s salary was calculated at one per cent. on the revenue of his charge and varied from five to six thousand rupees a year.

The district officer was responsible for every branch of administration, civil and criminal justice, the control of militia and the police, the investigation of social and religious questions, agriculture, and trade. As revenue collector he fixed the assessment of each village in consultation with the *Pāṭils*, collected the revenue, heard and decided complaints against village officers. In his judicial capacity he supervised the administration of justice by giving effect to decisions of *Pañcāyats* or ordering fresh inquiry in case of appeal, apprehending criminals, putting down gang robberies and petty risings. He was also responsible for the general welfare of the district and was expected to attend to popular needs.

In remote provinces such as Khāndeś, Gujarāt or Karnāṭak there was an officer between the *Māmlatdār* and the Government who was called the *Sarsubhedār*. Like the *Māmlatdār* he was responsible for revenue as well as general administration. Both of them were helped in their work by *Śibandī* or irregular foot soldiers and a party of horse.

The base of the administrative structure was the village community which has already been described. In the absence of a developed central government village communities throughout the centuries had been left to manage their affairs. Marāṭhā rulers were no innovators and abstained from disturbing the villages in their internal management. The changes that Śivājī effected were in the system of cash payment and direct revenue management. Śivājī perceived that much of the disorder in old times arose as a result of entrusting the collection of revenues to *Zamindars* of districts and villages. They collected more from *ryots* and paid less to government, and used their resources and situation to create disturbances and resist the authority of government. Śivājī dispensed with the *Zamindār* class and appointed paid men as *Kamāvisdārs*

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and *Subhēdārs* to collect land-revenue direct from the *royts*. These revenue officers surveyed fields, visited villages and entered into agreements with the *Pāṭils* about the revenue each village was expected to pay. This beneficial change was continued till almost the end of the Marāṭhā State. It was in the days of the last *Peśvā* that the farming system was revived with disastrous effect on village communities.

The chief source of public revenue was land and the ruler had to use all his ingenuity to obtain maximum return without drying up the source. In ancient times Hindu rulers demanded one-sixth of the actual produce which demand was raised in emergencies such as war, coronation, marriage in the royal family, etc. Collections of revenue in kind was possible when kingdoms were small. By the 17th century however the demand had been commuted into money payment, though payment in kind continued in hilly regions and as a means of provisioning forts. Land was measured and assessment related to the quality and the produce of the soil by Akbar's minister, *Rājā* Todar Mal. Todar Mal's methods were copied in the Deccan by the Nizāmshāhī minister, Malik Ambar (1605-1626 A. D.). His settlement was based on a correct knowledge of the area of the land tilled and of the money value of the crop and the determination to limit the state demand to a small share of the actual value of the crop. He converted his grain demand into fixed cash rates. These conversion rates did not vary with the fluctuations in the price of grain and from their extreme lowness when they were fixed, were very favourable to the *ryot*. Under Malik Ambar's system arable land was divided into equal areas or *bighās* and the demand on these areas varied according to the quality of the soil. After this had been determined, arable land was divided into *Khālsā* or land which yielded revenue to government and *ināmat* or land whose government rental had been alienated through favour or in return for service. After deducting *ināmat* land, the *Khālsā* land was entered as containing so much *Bāgāyat* or garden land and so much *Jirāyat* or dry land. Malik Ambar is supposed to have fixed the share at less than one-third which had been the usual exaction before his time. The records showed the details of rent-alienated land. Those owned by *Vatandārs* were known as *Dumālā* or two-owned *ināms*, while those granted to temples and mosques and village servants were wholly *ināms*. The details of rent-alienated land were followed by details of revenue-paying land and of the various cesses levied on the craftsmen, the shop-keepers and village-servants or *balutās*.

Under the system, though the amount of cesses varied, the bulk of the demand on each village remained constant. There was no reference to waste land and once the rental was fixed, the management of the village was left entirely to the *Pāṭil* with orders that he

¹ For detailed study of the topics, see Baden Powell, *Land-system of India*, three volumes, *East India Papers*, Vol. IV, esp., the reports of Elphinstone, Chaplin and Robertson.

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was responsible for collecting the amount. The *Pāṭil* thus became the representative of the village with wide powers to exploit waste lands. The holder of the land was likewise responsible to pay his share of the rental to which his land was liable whether he tilled it or not.

It is said that Malik Ambar's demand on a *bighā* (4/5 of an acre) came to about 5 annas, which according to prices in 1820, amounted to Rs. 1½ to Rs. 2. The low rates fixed by Malik Ambar greatly enriched the country. The *Pāṭils* let out waste lands on favourable terms and thus encouraged cultivation and the country which had been depopulated before, began to show signs of prosperity. Malik Ambar's settlement is known as *Ṭaṅkhā*.¹

Sivājī in his *jāgir*, succeeded to the Nizām Shāhī rule and continued the *Ṭaṅkhā* assessment. The rates were those that obtained before, government taking one-third and leaving two-third to the producer. The settlement was *mauzevār*, based on the actual state of the crop, the village making good a lump sum. Malik Ambar's survey however, had not been very careful. Sivājī introduced a standard measure of a *Kāthī* or measuring rod. The *Kāthī* was to be five cubits and five fists in length.² Twenty rods square made a *bighā* and one hundred twenty *bighās* made a *chahur*. The unit of measurement being fixed a fresh survey settlement was ordered, and the work was entrusted to Annājī Datto.

Annājī Datto fixed the rent at 33 per cent. of the gross produce, but Sivājī afterwards demanded a consolidated rent of 40 per cent. when all the extra taxes and cesses were abolished.³

The rates introduced by Sivājī were revised by his successors. As the 18th century advanced, there was an increased abundance of money, partly caused by the continuous working of American mines, and partly because money was flowing into Mahārāṣṭra as Marāṭhā power expanded and tributes were levied on surrounding states. The effect was a fall in the value of money and consequent reduction in government share of the produce of the land. To make good this loss, fresh cesses were levied from time to time. Ultimately to do away with the irregularities and uncertainties *Peśvā* Bālājī Rāv (1740-1761) ordered a new survey and settlement. Lands were measured, classified according to the nature of the soil and the produce they grew, and new rates were levied. For irrigated and garden lands growing sugar-cane and opium they charged rates varying from Rs. 5 to Rs. 6-8 and Rs. 10 per *bighā*, dry crops were assessed at Re. 1 to Rs. 1-8, per *bighā*.

¹ According to Baden-Powell, the name *Ṭaṅkhā* is derived from the silver coin which was used in lieu of the old copper '*takkā*', but the term has become synonymous with a fixed assessment in the lump on a village. Vol. III, p. 205.

² The *Kāthī*, Chaplin says, was about nine feet in length.

³ Outline of Sivājī's system is given in *Sabhāsād Bakhar*, pp. 28-29.

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The *Peśvā's* assessment came to be known as *Kamāl* standard or the highest possible. This was twice as high as Malik Ambar's settlement, but there was a difference. In levying the village rental the area actually under tillage and not the whole arable area was taken into consideration.

The social framework of an agrarian economy and the production and distribution of wealth are conditioned by land tenures. According to ancient Hindu concepts the individual who cleared unclaimed land and brought it under the plough, became the proprietor paying part of the produce for the protection he enjoyed from the state. The *Mirāsi* tenure of the Deccan is the normal outcome of this concept. It was Malik Ambar who gave a firm and definite shape to this idea by making land private property of the cultivator, attaching to the proprietary right the power of sale and granting other lands as the joint property of the village community.

In the Marāṭhā country under the *Peśvā's* Government, there had developed two well-defined tenures: *Mirāsi* and *Upri*. The *Mirāsi* tenure was undoubtedly that of the highest order. The holding descended from father to son, according to the law of inheritance, that of equal partition among the male heirs; the holder's position could not be disturbed except for non-payment of government demand in respect of land, which was fixed and not subject to enhancement. Should the *Mirāsdār* at any time abandon his lands, he or his heirs were entitled after any lapse of time to reclaim them and this right was not barred by any statute of limitations. The land was saleable and could not be seized for debts. Even if the *Mirāsdār* failed to pay his assessment, the most government could do was to put pressure on him and his brother *mirāsdārs*. The tenure gave the holder a right to sit in the village council. Although there is some doubt about the point, the general opinion is that the *mirāsdār* was liable for the rent of so much of his land which he actually cultivated being exempt from any payment in respect of the uncultivated portion.

Elphinstone who made particular inquiries about tenures in Mahārāṣṭra reported "that a large portion of the *ryots* were the proprietors of their estates, subject to the payment of a fixed land-tax to government; that their property was hereditary and saleable, that they were never dispossessed when they paid their tax, and that they had for a long period the right to reclaim their estates on paying government dues. All the land which did not belong to the *Mirāsdār* belonged to government or those to whom government assigned it. The property of the *Zamindars* in the soil had not been introduced or even heard of, in the Marāṭhā country".

The *Upri* was a tenant-at-will of the government, having no rights except that of temporary cultivation, as provided for by the term of his agreement. He took up from year to year as much land as he

wanted to cultivate and paid assessment proportionate only to the crop which he obtained. His assessment was liable to enhancement.

The *Gat-kuḷ* (owner disappeared), *Kauli* (taken on lease) and *Khāshbandi* were other tenures which were but variations of the *Mirāsi* and *Upri* and need not detain us.

The position of the *Mirāsdār* looked, in theory, very strong. His lands had been measured out and classified, and the standard demand on them had been fixed. If, however, the rains failed, if the village suffered from war or pestilence or if a family calamity intervened, he could always seek remission. Complaints against over assessment, he could take to the *Huzur*.

All the advantages of the position of the *Mirāsdārs* arising out of a fixed standard rent for his fields were however rendered ungainful by the practice of the levy of extra cesses. Extra cesses were levied in the name of village expenses, presents in kind to village officers (*gānv kharc*, *sādli-vārid*) Old hereditary district officers (*Deśmukh* and *Deśpāṇḍe*), though defunct, demanded their perquisites in kind; district officers, their clerks, their peons and even the distant courtiers struggled to batten on the labour of *ryot*.

Elphinstone mentions some of the cesses in his report. "*Mirās Patṭi*, an additional tax levied once in three years on *Mirāsdārs*, *Mhār* (*Mahār*) *Mhārkee*, a tax on the *enāms* (*ināms*) of the *Mahārs*; *Inām Tījāyee*, payment by *ināmdārs* of a third of the revenue from their *inām* lands; *Vihir Hunḍā*, an extra tax on lands watered from wells; *Char Patṭi*, house-tax levied from all but Brāhmin village officers; *Daikā*, tax for the right to beat a drum on particular religious and other occasions; *Kharidi Jinnas* (Purveyance), the right to purchase articles at a certain rate generally commuted for money payment; *Lagan Takkā*, a tax on marriage; *Pāt Dām*, tax on the remarriage of widows; *Mhais Patṭee*, tax on buffaloes; *Bakrā Patṭee*, a tax on sheep. There were also occasional contributions in kind called *Faḷ Farmais* such as bullock's hide, charcoal, hemp, rope, ghee, *tup*, *tel*, curds, fowl, etc., which were often commuted for fixed money payment. Other taxes were on traders alone. These were *Mohtarfā*, a tax on shop-keepers in the village; *Balutee*, a tax on the twelve village servants; *Bazār Baithak*, a tax on stalls at fairs; *Kumbhār Khan*, a tax on earth dug up by the potters. Ultimately they were paid by the peasants for whom the traders and artisans plied".

Besides all this and the *gānv kharc*, there were taxes to defray the district expenses not provided for by government, in which were included many personal expenses of the *Māmlatdārs* and a large fund known as *Darbār Kharc* or *Antastha*, which was a sort of bribe to the district officer, his staff and the court officials, which had official recognition.

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Other Taxes.

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"In addition to all these exactions, there were occasional impositions on extraordinary emergencies, which were called *jāsti Pattee* and *Yek Sāli Pattee*. If these happened to be continued for several years, they ceased to be considered as occasional impositions and fell into regular *Sevāi Jamā*. Until the introduction of the farming system these were however rare."

The independent spirit of the Marāṭhā peasantry and a succession of mild rulers and good administrators saved the country from rack renting, but the inherent weakness came out when *Peśvā* Bājī Rāv II came to power, sold districts to the highest bidders and let loose on the country a swarm of rapacious harpies.

Other Sources
of Revenue.

The other sources of public revenues were, (1) *Zakāt*, (2) Forest, (3) Mint and (4) Courts of Law.

Zakāt or *Inland Customs* :—When goods passed from one district to another they were subjected to transit duties which were computed on the basis of bullock-loads. Rates varied in proportion to the value of the article, the highest being eight rupees. As duty was levied separately in each district much inconvenience resulted owing to frequent stoppage and search of property at custom-posts. To remedy this, *Hundekaries* undertook to carry goods over long distances by arranging to pay custom officers in lump sum. *Zakāt* was always farmed out. According to Elphinstone, *Zakāt* before the cession of Poona, produced about five lakhs of rupees.

Another source of revenue was the *mint*. Coining in *Peśvā's* time was done both by government, as well as by private agency. The goldsmith paid a royalty for the right of minting money and was expected to maintain purity of coinage. Breach of this was met with fine and forfeiture. Several coins minted at different places were in circulation. Copper coins were in common use, but silver rupees and gold *Mohurs* were also in circulation.

Abkāri did not yield more than Rs. 10,000, the use of spirituous liquor being forbidden at Poona and discouraged everywhere. The result was sobriety among the general mass of the populace, though Marāṭhā chiefs like Daulat Rāv Śinde, Tukojī Holkar and Bhosles were known for their inebriating habits.

Forests were not a very great source of income. For cutting wood for building and fuel purposes, a licence fee was levied which was about four annas per bullock-load. For works of public utility, building materials were sometimes given free. *Kurans* and pasture lands brought in a modest sum.

Fines from losers in a suit and fees from winners were also added to the revenues from the districts.

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of Revenue.

*Mulk giri*¹.—Another source of considerable yet uncertain revenue was *Mulk giri*—tribute levied on neighbouring States. Year after year Marāṭhā armies would move out of their homeland to collect tribute—*cauth* as they called it. In the early days of the Marāṭhā State, *Mulk giri* was no doubt a necessity. The State was surrounded by enemies and only a powerful army could hold them at bay. Where else could the ruler find sustenance for his armies, if not in enemy territory? Śivājī's expeditions in Khāndeś, Aurangābād, Gujarāt, Karnātak and the subsequent moves of Marāṭhā armies in Mālva and Bundelkhand, originated in the exigencies of the State.

The exigency was followed as a matter of policy by later rulers. Marāṭhā armies spread all over India demanding *cauth* from Rājās of Rajputānā and Bundelkhand, *Navābs* of the Deccan, Gujarāt, Oudh and Beṅgāl, and the *polygars* of Karnātak. "When the Marāṭhās proceeded beyond their boundaries, to collect revenue and make war were synonymous", says Grant Duff. "Whenever a village resisted, its officers were seized and compelled by threats and sometimes by torture, to come to a settlement. Ready money was seldom obtained, but securities from bankers, which later were exchanged for bills payable in any part of India." It was a principle of Marāṭhā commanders to increase the amount of their exactions whenever possible, but in no case to recede from the demands of their predecessors.

This levy of *cauth* has been defended as a measure adopted by the Marāṭhā State for the protection of its own subjects against foreign aggression and as a means of preparing ground for the establishment of its complete sovereignty. A powerful state requires no protection against weak neighbours; in fact these neighbours look to the suzerain authority for defence against external and internal enemies. The Marāṭhā policy of nibbling at the sources of the neighbouring states brought them little strength. Very little of the *cauth* reached the central treasury; it was swallowed by the armies and their officers. But the odium it brought on the Marāṭhā name was to prove disastrous to Marāṭhā cause. The policy of *Mulk giri* found the Marāṭhās friendless and isolated when they faced the Abdālī at Pānīpat. The amount the foreign tribute brought was so uncertain that no attempt has so far been made to estimate its yield.

Though one may not wholly agree with Munro's verdict that "the Mahratta (Marāṭhā) government from its foundation has been one of the most destructive that ever existed in India,"² one cannot but conclude that the debit side of *Mulk giri* weighs heavily against the credit side. For want of consolidation Marāṭhā conquests proved ephemeral; the tributaries raised their heads the moment the tide

¹ See Jadunath Sarkar, *Śivājī and his Times*, (5th ed.), p. 373. Forbes, *Rasmālā*, Vol. I, p. 234, Vol. II, pp. 53-55, 119. Grant Duff's History of the Marāṭhās, Vol. I, p. 464.

² Gleig, *Life of Sir Thomas Munro*, Vol. II, p. 14.

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Total Income of
Marāṭhā State
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Peśvā's Debts.

of invasion receded. "The sympathy which the religious aspect of the State might have drawn from Hindus was dissipated by the aspect of plunder which was applied as ruthlessly to Hindus as to Muslims. The peaceful Bengālī and the martial Rajput were equally subjected to it and equally welcomed deliverance from Marāṭhā hands."

The total income of the Marāṭhā State has been a matter of speculation. It is always difficult to reckon the income and expenditure of a State the boundaries of which were shifting from day-to-day. In the absence of a close study of the *Peśvā* archives we have to depend on statements made by British administrators and writers. Elphinstone at the time of taking over the *Peśvā*'s territories (1818) reported to the Governor-General that "the *Peśvā*'s whole revenue before the last treaty amounted to Rs. 2,15,00,000 of which Rs. 95,00,000 was paid into the treasury and Rs. 1,20,00,000, allotted to *Jāgirdārs*." About this time the Marāṭhā confederacy had been wound up and the several States were operating as isolated units. Malcolm who was in charge of Central India Agency has put down the revenue of Śinde, Holkar and Pavārs at Rs. 1,27,68,459, Rs. 17,96,183 and Rs. 3,76,000, respectively. This estimate excludes the revenues of two other great Marāṭhā feudatories, the Gāikvāds of Baroḍā and Bhosles of Nāgpūr.

Lord Valentia, who passed through India in the early 19th century, estimated the revenues of the *Peśvā*'s State at Rs. 71,64,724. Mr. J. Grant of the East India Company estimated the total revenue of the Marāṭhā empire at six crores of rupees towards the close of the 18th century.

The historian of the Marāṭhās, Grant Duff, has a significant passage on this topic. "The nominal revenue of the whole Marāṭhā empire at the period of Māhdoo Rāv's (Mādhav Rāv's) death (1772), was ten crores or one hundred millions of rupees; but the amount actually realized including the *Jāgheers* (*Jāgirs*) of Holkar, Sindhia (Śinde), Jānoji Bhosle and Damāji Gāekvār (Gāikvād), together with tributes, fees, fines, contributions, customary offerings and all those sources independent of regular collections, which in the State accounts come under the head of extra revenue, may be estimated at about seventy-two millions of rupees or about seven millions of pounds sterling annually. Of this sum, the revenue under the direct control of the *Peśvā* was about twenty-eight millions of rupees."

The major part of this revenue was spent on military operations, garrisoning forts, equipping armies and maintaining the court and the feudatories. On account of their constant wars, the *Peśvās*

¹ Elphinstone to Lord Hastings, G. G., 18th June 1818, P. R. C., Vol. XIII, pp. 396-97.

could never rid themselves of debt. *Bāji Rāv I* writing to his *guru* says (in one of his letters) that "mounting debts were his constant worry". The Diaries of the *Peśvās* show that the debts contracted by *Bāluji Bāji Bāv Peśvā* between 1740 and 1760 amounted to a crore and a half rupees. This *Peśvā* always talked of bringing rivers of gold from north and south and effecting their confluence at Poonā. The defeat at Pānīpat disorganized Marāṭhā finances and *Peśvā* Mādhav Rāv died with a debt of Rs. 24,00,000 hanging over his head. The last *Peśvā* had apparently no debts to pay, and was able to collect a large private treasure of his own.

Nation building activities such as education, improvement of agriculture and industry, road-making, building of canals and culverts, public sanitation were conspicuous by their absence. Public roads were dirt-tracks which turned into quagmire and rivers became impassable during the rains. Where ferries were set up by enterprising persons, government swooped down to demand fees. According to Gordon, the first metalled road in Mahārāṣṭra was constructed in 1835. In consequence of poor communications passenger traffic was limited to the horse and palanquin, and goods traffic to the bullock. In difficult terrain the bullock was displaced by the human being. This limited exchange of goods and emphasised isolation.

The expenditure on the military in the ultimate analysis reached a part of the people; but this class—the soldiery—made little contribution to the national income. Some of the rulers distributed charities to Brāhmīns and holymen, but these eleemosynary grants whatever merit they might have conferred on the donors, helped neither the cause of learning nor led to increased production.

Religion played an important part in the life of the mediæval people and the people of Mahārāṣṭra were no exception to the rule. By sixth century India—north and south—had been culturally knit together and had come to share the same religious beliefs and ideas. The new Hinduism which had risen by absorbing the best in Buddhism turned its back on abstract nature worship and the accompanying sacrificial rites, and accepted the metaphysics of the Upaniṣads. The philosophical speculations, however, were reserved for the learned and the erudite. A simple form of worship, worship of idols, emblems of deities and relics of saints, found favour with the masses. The *Smṛtis* gave their blessings to this new form of worship and a great mythology in the form of *Purāṇas* was created to sustain it and to explain the universal order.

¹ Religious practices of the people is the subject-matter of much of Marāṭhā poetry, right from Dnyāneśvar to Rām Jośī. Early British historians like Mill, Elphinstone, Duff devote a few pages to describe this aspect of the peoples' life. The Gazetteers (old edition) give detailed description of the religious life of the community.

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Maratha Society
and Culture.
PUBLIC
FINANCE.
Total Income of
Marāṭhā State
and
Peśvā's
Debts.

RELIGION.¹

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The basis of this religious fabric was that the great Divine Being pervaded the Universe, that the soul of every human being was part of that great spirit and it was his duty to seek perfection and reunion with *Brahman* by undergoing a process of purification. The highest bliss—*Mokṣa* was the ultimate reward of the good, while the wicked were punished by being reborn in forms distant from the reunion. The soul which animated the body of the Brāhmin was nearest to this state of bliss, provided he fulfilled the ordinances of the faith; but if he did not, his soul would be detained in purgatory after death until sufficient torture had been inflicted to expiate the sins and then sent back to reanimate some other form on earth. Deliverance from countless births a man could obtain by being born Brāhmin and by winning merit to merge with the Ultimate. Sadhus and Sanyāsis, by their extreme piety and renunciation, could however attain *Mokṣa* direct and escape being born over and over again. This encouraged a large number of people to turn to the orders of recluse and take to the yellow robe.

The Divine Being, however, was not the active agent who called the universe into existence and made it move. This was the work of *Prakṛti*. The Divine Nature urged by *Prakṛti* took the form of Brāhmā, the Creator, Viṣṇu, the Preserver, and Śiva, the Destroyer. Brāhmā, Viṣṇu and Mahēś, with their consorts, became incarnate, assumed a number of forms on the earth to fulfil their missions. These incarnations are the *Avatārs*. Besides the *Avatārs*, the Triad produced a host of deities which amounted to thirty-three crores. Of these, only a few like Indra, the God of heavens, Varuṇa, the ruler of waters, Vāyu, the lord of winds, Yama, the lord of Death, Kuber, the God of wealth and Kāma, the God of love, were remembered; and fewer still like Gaṇapatī, Kārtikeya, Sūrya became the objects of veneration. Most of the temples in Mahārāṣṭra were dedicated to Śiva, Viṣṇu, Gaṇapatī and Devī Bhavānī. They occupied prominent places in towns, were raised on lonely peaks, by lakes and river-sides and studded the country-side.*

The ten *Avatārs* of Viṣṇu are famous and include with the Fish, the Tortoise, the great Boar, the Buddha who had revolted against Hinduism. Viṣṇu appeared in these forms to destroy tyrants and to preserve his world order. His exploits as Saviour are the subject-matter of the two great epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata and of the *Purāṇas* which came to be rendered in Marāṭhī in the 16th and 17th centuries by *Eknāth*, *Mahipati*, *Sridhar* and other Marāṭhī poets and saints and were recited at *Kathās* and other religious gatherings which were very popular in old days. Viṣṇu

* The following are the chief places of pilgrimage in Mahārāṣṭra: Aundhā Nāganāth, Chrsneśvar of Ellorā, Vaijanāth of Parali, Bhīmā Saṅkar and Tryambakeśvar, all dedicated to Śiva; Viṭhobā of Paṇḍharpur and Kālā Rām of Nāsik dedicated to Viṣṇu; Gaṇapatī temples are at Morgāñv, Theur, Rāñjañgāñv, Lenyādri, Ozar, Siddhatek, Madh and Murud. Famous Devī temples are at Kolhāpūr, Tuljāpūr, Jogaicā Amṛbā, Māhūr, Saptasrñgi, Kurkamb, and Aundh. Famous Khaṇḍobā shrines are at Jejuri, Pāli and Pemūr.

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was worshipped as Nārāyaṇā with his spouse Lakṣmī or Rāma with Sitā by his side, Rāma's name was sacred and would be on the lips of a dying man. Gaṇapati was a god of happy omens and the remover of difficulties and would be invoked on all auspicious occasions. Śiva's cult was a popular one. Śiva was worshipped in the form of the phallus, obviously a relief of the prehistoric past and a compromise of Brāhmānism with pre-Āryan cults.

Śiva's consort Bhavānī was as much an object of adoration as Śiva himself. She is always represented in her beneficent form, shown as a beautiful woman riding a tiger in a menacing attitude to destroy the demons of sin and darkness. With Khaṇḍobā, Bhavānī occupies the position of the tutelary deity of the Marāṭhās. Śivāji the founder of the Marāṭhā state derived inspiration from the Goddess Bhavānī¹. He had a shrine built in her honour at Pratāpgad. Another famous temple dedicated to the Goddess stands at Tuljāpūr. Marāṭhī ballads always begin with invocation to Bhavānī.

Khaṇḍobā: Khaṇḍobā, literally "Sword Father" guarded the country. He was the "Īśvar Dev" or Guardian Deity of the Deccan. As a guardian he is shown at his chief shrine at Jejuri, as a king, the great protector, and more often as horseman with a sword in his right hand, and his wife, Mhālsābāi, sitting beside him. He was the chief household god of all Hindus in the Deccan from Brāhmins to *Mahārs*. His house image was always of metal, never of wood or of stone. He drove away the evil which caused sickness.

Māruti: Māruti, also called Hanumān, is the Monkey God. Very few villages in the Deccan were without their Māruti a rudely embossed monkey — figure, sometimes within the village and sometimes without but generally near the gate. He was supposed to be the guardian of the village and its crops. He was a special favourite of the celibate and the sportsman.

Equally important with the public or communal worship was the worship of the family deities. Every household would have a corner assigned to worship and here would be a small collection of the *Ārūdhya Daivata*, the *Kulsvāmī* or the tutelary deity, which in many cases would be Devī Bhavānī or Khaṇḍobā. There would be small brass idols representing Bālkrṣṇa, Pārvatī and Gaṇapatī, *śaligrām* representing Śiva, and a few *tāks* which represented the family ancestors. A Marāṭhā after ablution in the morning would spend some time in the *Pujā* before starting the work of the day. The higher castes spent more time and money over the daily rituals. Special days and occasions were marked for the public worship of particular deities by offering them incense, flowers and fruits and other gifts through Brāhmin priests. The *Ekādaśī* of *Aṣāḍha* and *Kārtika* became occasions for pilgrimage to Paṇḍharpur; *Mahā Śiva Rātri* was dedicated to Śiva and there were special days for public worship of Rāma, Gaṇapati and Dattātraya.

¹ Sabhāsad, *Life of Śiva Chatrapati*, pp. 11, 23, 32, 37, 49.

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The family priest or Upādhyāya advised the family about religious and social observances. But its keeper of conscience was a saintly person of repute. In Hindu religion *Sādhus* and *sanyāsīs* have always been held in respect on account of their selfless life and renunciation of worldly affairs. Some of these *sanyāsīs* would get such celebrity that people would flock round them for advice and instruction. Such a person was styled a *Guru* or a *Mahāpuruṣ*. *Sivaji*, the founder of the Marāthā State, respected *Rāmadās* and on one occasion made a gift of his kingdom to his *Guru*; he likewise respected *Mauni Bāvā* of *Pātgarī* and found time to visit him amidst his busy rounds of duties. *Brahmendra Svāmī* was the spiritual guide of the *Peśvā* family and much respected at *Sāhū Rājā's* court. Marāthā chiefs sought his intercession in their affairs. Mahādji Sinde used to seek advice of a Muslim *Pir Sāh Mansur* and was accustomed to prostrate himself at his feet daily.

Despite the general prevalence of Hindu beliefs the worship of pre-*Āryan* tribal gods continued to thrive. The general mass of the people were ridden by superstition and Brāhmin priests did little to discourage queer ceremonies and strange rites. In villages, temples to Bhairobā and Jotibā were common. Bhairav was kept happy by application of oil and *śendūr* and cured snake-bites. He also forecasted the success or failure of undertakings. Mhasobā, Vetāl, Vāghobā, Satvāi, Tukāi were other godlings the villagers feared and worshipped. These aboriginal godlings had been transformed into manifestations of Śiva and his consort, and were supposed to look after the health and welfare of the villagers. The nearby fields and orchards, and hills had their spirits to be appeased with buffaloes, goats and fowls, depending on their degree of malevolence. There was not a river ford or tank which was not haunted by spirits and ghosts. Even the gates and walls of forts were not free from their influence.¹

The *Bhakti movement* of the middle ages was a protest against the ritual of Brahmanism and the superstition of the masses. The supremacy of one god was the first creed with everyone of the saints. The various forms in which god was worshipped were believed to merge finally into one supreme providence. The grovelling concepts prevalent among the people, the aboriginal and village gods, their frightful rites and sacrifices were denounced in forceful language. In the annual concourses at *Paṇḍharpur* and *Jejuri* men forget their caste distinctions and hailed each other as brothers united in a common endeavour. The movement had a general liberalizing influence on society and created a healthy democratic atmosphere, rare elsewhere in India.

STATE OF
LEARNING.²

The Marāthās, generally speaking, were an unlettered people. The priestly class studied a few religious tracts and memorised ritual

¹ Mss. Accounts of forts Rāygaḍ, Sinhgaḍ, Purandar, etc., in the *Peśvā Daftar*.

² Based on *Selection of Papers from the Records at the India House*, vol. IV, evidence of Elphinstone, Thackeray, Briggs, Chaplin.

which enabled it to conduct religious worship at temples and at private houses and ceremonies on occasions of birth, initiation, marriage, death, etc. The Purāṇiks read to the gatherings the stories from Purāṇas and mixed their recitation with philosophical dissertations about the nature of God, of the universe and of human destiny in the scheme. The rest of the Brāhmins and Kāyastha Prabhus were literate, but their learning did not go beyond the knowledge of reading, writing and a little arithmetic. Good handwriting and knowledge of accounts were looked on as great assets and found for the possessor a place in the establishment of a big *ināmdār*, *jāgirdār* or *Māmlatdār* of the district. If he had a patron at the court he would go to the capital and be absorbed in the central secretariat, the *Daftar*. The *Peśvā* and the chiefs as a mark of their interest in learning would collect manuscript copies of religious tracts and the Purāṇas and would distribute charity to learned Brāhmins once a year in the month of *Śrāvan*. The Sāstri well-versed in Vedas got the highest reward of a *śawl* and a few hundred *upees*, others got them in a descending scale. In the days of Nānā Phadnis the Poonā Government was annually spending Rs. 60,000 on the *Śrāvan Dakṣiṇā*. The expenditure increased in the time of his successor, not because there was more learning, but the charity became indiscriminate.

This encouragement to Sanskrit learning made little impact on the life of the people, resulted in no mechanical improvements and brought no tangible gains to society. No attempt was made to know the phenomena of the physical world and stock the mind with useful knowledge. If the object of education is to set the mind free to inquire and to rationalise, the primitive type of education that was in vogue in the eighteenth century Mahārāṣṭra, could not achieve it. No great universities comparing with Oxford or Cambridge rose and no great development in philosophy, literature or political thought, took place. The result was a thickening gloom of superstition and an irrational fear of the unknown.

Rājwāde has put the matter in a forceful manner in his Introduction to Volume I. He says "The fact of the matter was Marāthā culture had become stagnant and showed itself impervious to new knowledge and new ideas. Learning of those days ran into three types—Vaidik, Sāstrik and practical. The practical type of educated men found useful in administration and business of everyday life. The Vaidiks and Sāstiris received royal patronage while school teachers looked to popular support. Practical learning consisted of the knowledge of three "R"s — reading, writing and arithmetic. *Bakhars* of Marāthā and Muslim kings, tales of Vikram, Vetāl, chronicles based on stories in the *Rāmāyaṇā* and the *Mahābhārata* or on the legendary accounts of Hindu and Muslim kings, knowledge of account-keeping, land measurements, of correct forms of address and a little religious poetry completed the stock-in-trade of a literary person of the day. Most of the Brāhmins, traders and upper class Marāthās acquired this type of learning. These three

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CHAPTER 9. classes had little knowledge of the world outside their personal experience. The geographical knowledge of even diplomats and soldiers did not extend beyond what they acquired by their personal exertion. These people were little aware of countries and people outside India. The rulers on account of their contacts with foreigners naturally came to know more. Compared to the wide extent of information of Western rulers, their knowledge was contemptible. There was none at the *Peśvā's* Court who showed awareness of the existence of European Sciences, none knew of schools, colleges, conferences, museums, associations in which study of critical sciences was encouraged."

Superstitions. Belief in omens and prognostics was common to all classes. Not only thunder, lightening hail-storm and earth quakes filled men's mind with alarm but the hooting of an owl, chirping of a bird at an unusual hour or even twitching of the eye, frightened them and made them run to the priest to seek appeasement of the evil. Even forts and jāgirs were supposed to suffer from the presence of evil spirits which could be exorcised with the help of priestly mediation.

In 1763 when Rāghobā was besieging the fort of *Miraj*, Govind Hari Patvardhan was assured in his dream by the *Pir* of the place of ultimate victory. *Rāghobā* often fasted and denied himself food so that his nephew whom he hated should come to harm. In 1774-75, ghosts played such havoc in Southern Konkan that special officers were appointed to punish persons who had raised the spirits. The dead wife of Amṛt Rāv, son of Rāghobā, took to walking at night and frightening people. These irrational fears were carried to an excess and continued to dominate the minds of men in Mahārāṣṭra for a long time.

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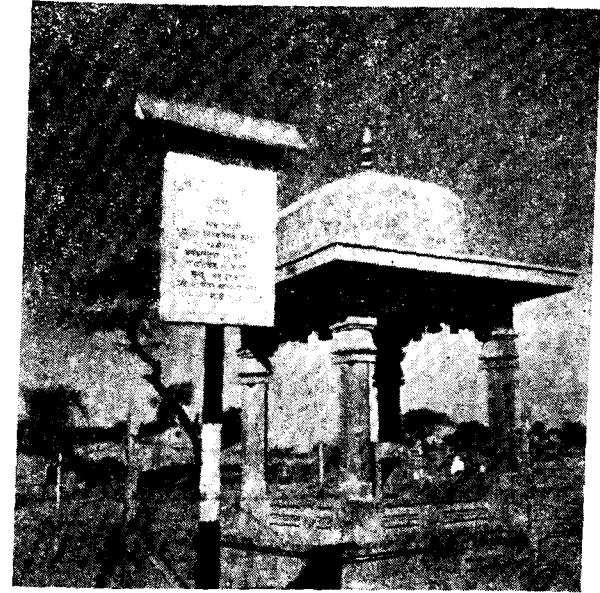
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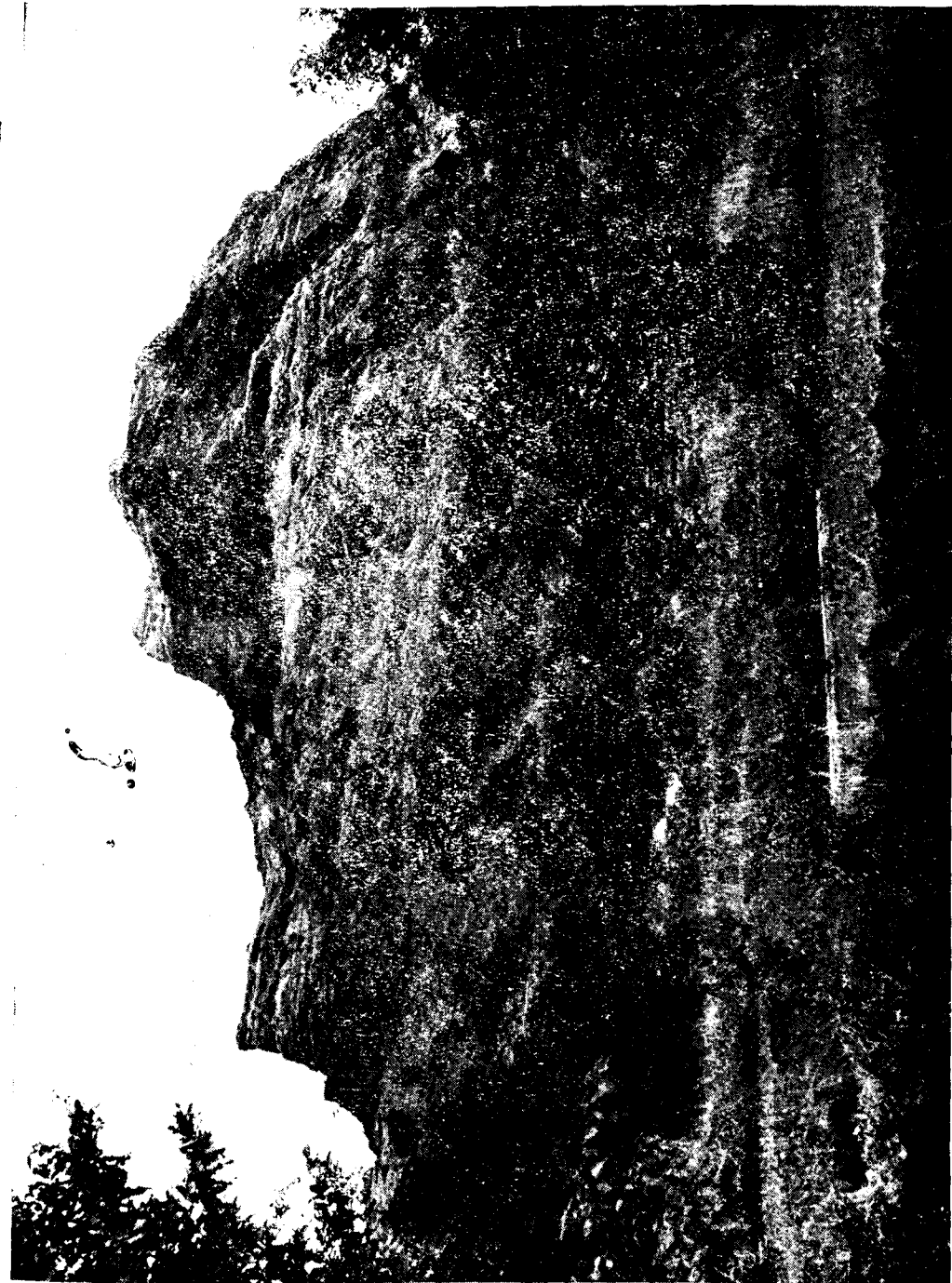
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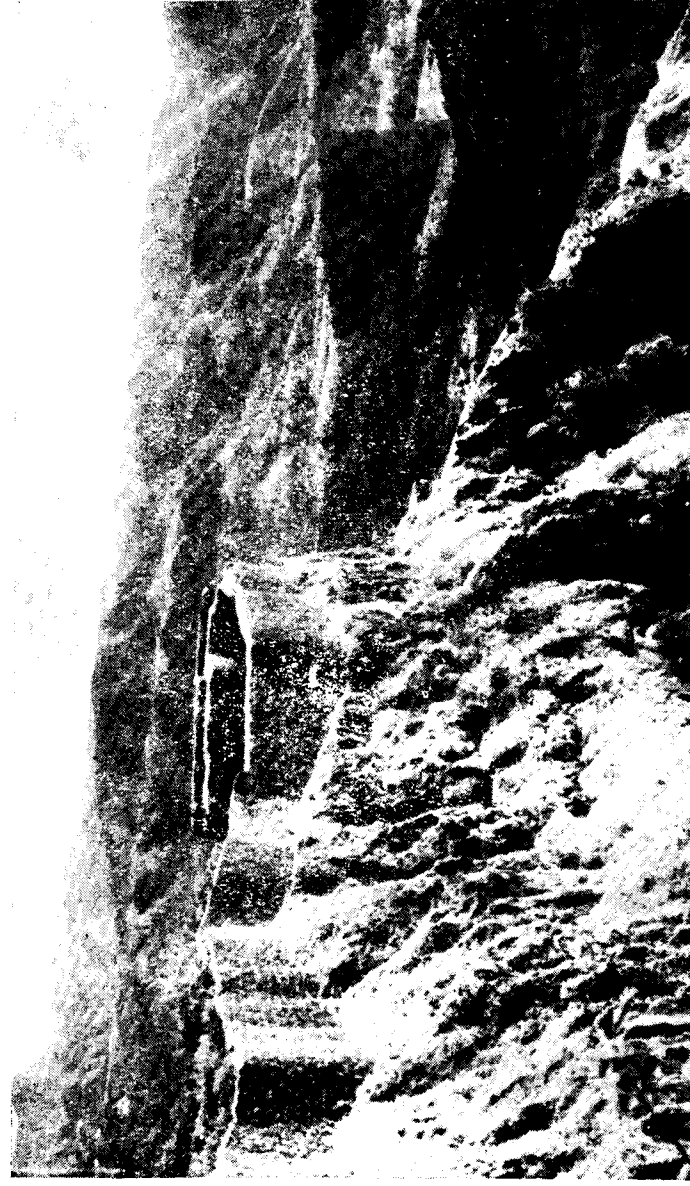
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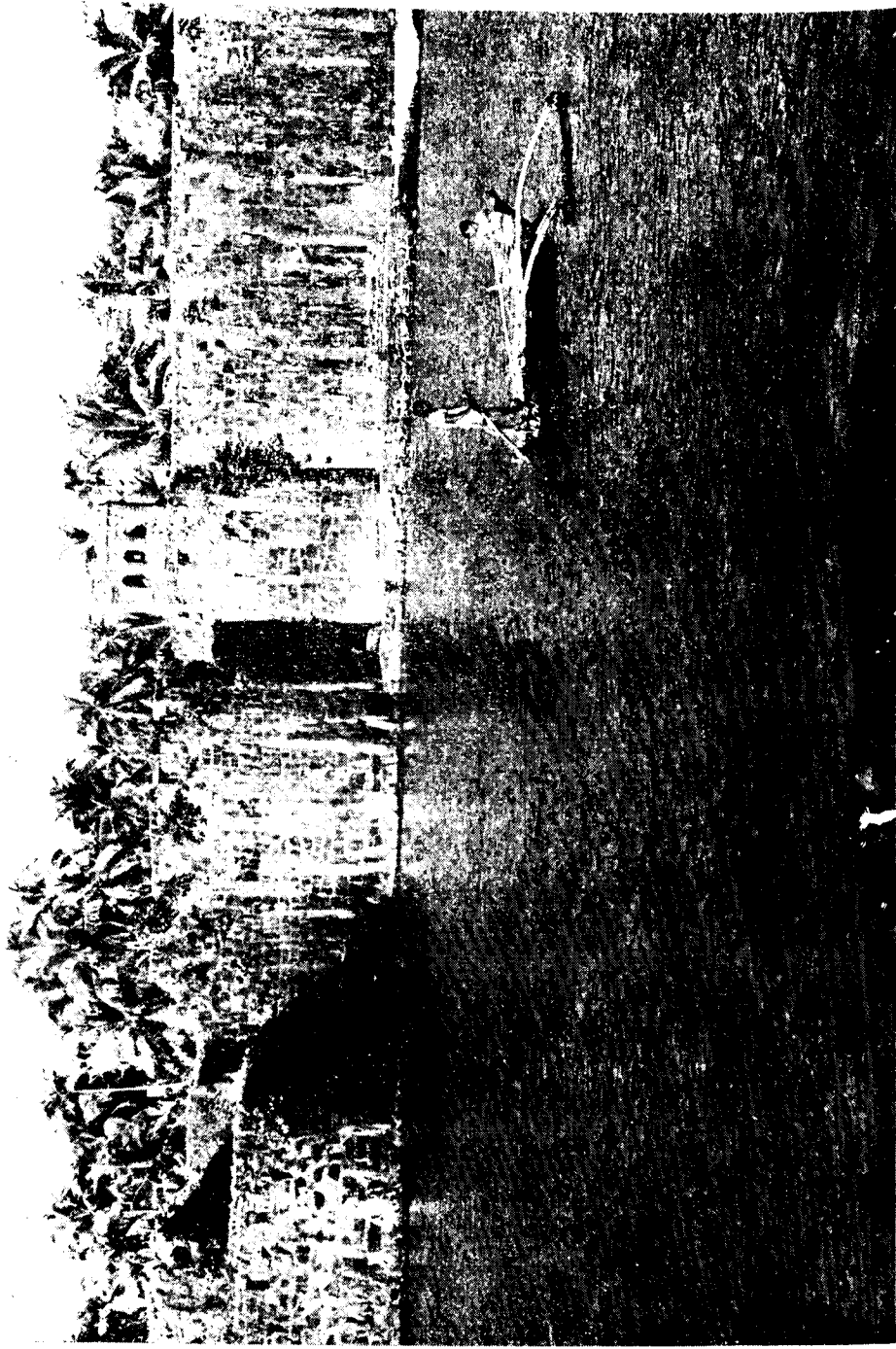
Kille Rayagad, Kolaba district



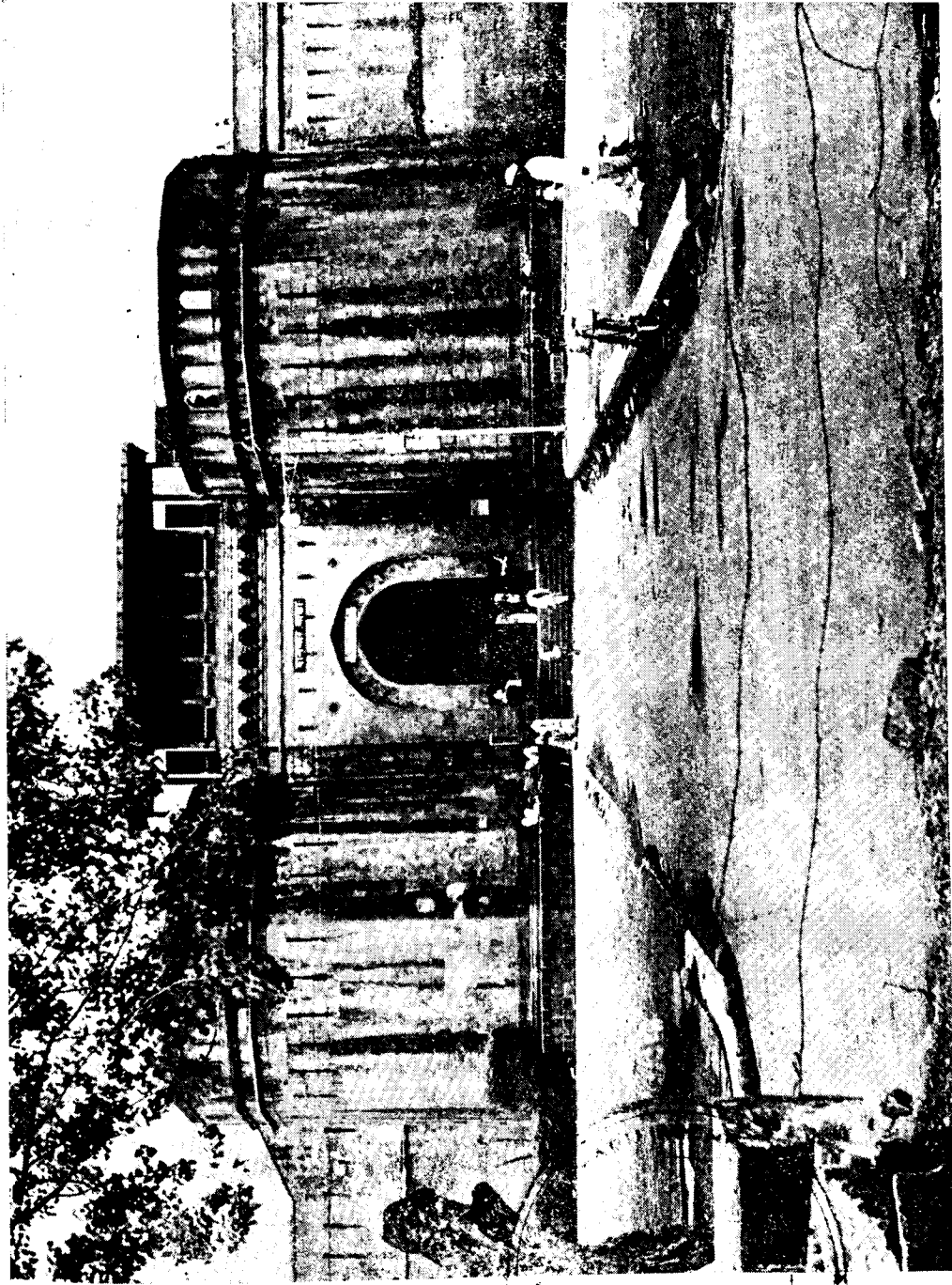
Panoramic view of Pratapgad, Satara district



An observation post at Pratapgad



Kille Sindhudurg, Malwan, Ratnagiri district



Shaniwar Wada, Poona