

CHAPTER - I

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## CHAPTER - I

### INTRODUCTION:

Shivaji the Great, founded the Hindavi Swarajya in the 17th century and died in 1680. After Shivaji's death his eldest son Sambhaji (1680-89) succeeded to the throne. Later Aurangzeb assassinated Sambhaji on 11th March, 1689<sup>1</sup> and Zulphikarkhan, the Noble of Aurangzeb besieged the Raigad, the Capital of Maratha and arrested Yesubai, the queen of Sambhaji, his eight year old son Shahu and the other members of the royal family.<sup>2</sup>

After the imprisonment of Yesubai and Shahu, Rajaram, the younger son of Shivaji the Great, became the head of Maratha State. Rajaram continued the wars against the Mughals till his death on 2nd March, 1700.<sup>3</sup> After his death, his widow, Tarabai, made her little son, Shivaji, the Chhatrapati and herself continued the administration of the State as well as the struggle against the Mughals.<sup>4</sup>

Emperor Aurangzeb died in 1707 and the twenty-five year old violent struggle between Marathas and Mughals came to an end. After the death of Aurangzeb, his son Ajimshah, while going to the North, relieved Shahu from Mughal captivity.<sup>5</sup> Then Shahu returned to the Swarajya. But Tarabai denied his inherent claim as a Chhatrapati. Eventually there began a long-drawn conflict for the Maratha throne between Shahu and Tarabai. In this conflict Tarabai lost her battle against Shahu at Khed in October, 1707.<sup>6</sup>

FORMATION OF SEPARATE KOLHAPUR STATE:

After losing the battle against Shahu, Tarabai , the daughter-in-law of Shivaji the Great, made Panhala, the seat of her political power, proclaiming her son Shivaji, as the Chhatrapati of the newly founded Maratha State of Kolhapur in 1710. Shahu remained at Satara as a Chhatrapati. Thus, Tarabai founded a separate Maratha State at Panhala which was later shifted to Kolhapur and this State existed till 1949. In this way in 1710, the Maratha State founded by Shivaji the Great, was divided into two separate branches, viz. Satara and Kolhapur, between his two grandsons viz. Shahu and Shivaji.

The Chhatrapatis of Kolhapur occupied an important status as they were the direct descendants of Shivaji the Great. They continued Shivaji's system of Ashtapradhan Mandal for administration in Kolhapur State. But in the new changed circumstances, they gave jahagirs to the members of Ashtapradhan Mandal rather than paying them in kind or cash as ~~the~~ Shivaji the Great had done. As a result of this new system of giving jahagirs some others also, who rendered yeomen services to the State, were given jahagirs at various places in the Kolhapur State.

The Kolhapur State, founded by Tarabai lasted nearly 250 years. It flourished, developed and was ~~protected~~ protected by the heroism of many sardars and warriors,

coming from brave families. The State of Kolhapur was protected from the invasions from the Peshwas, Nizam, the Portugees, Haidar, Patwardhan and Sawantwadikar. The credit of its security went to the Chhatrapatis as well as the heroism and deeds of some sardars.<sup>7</sup>

The Chhatrapatis of Kolhapur granted jahagirs to many such heroic sardars. Out of them nine were most important. They were known as feudatory states and saranjams under Kolhapur State. In these nine feudatories , Vishalgar, Bavada, Kagal(sr.) and Ichalkaranji were four major and remaining Torgal, Kagal(Jr.), Kapashi, Sarlashkar Bahadur and Himmat Bahadur, these five were minor jahagirs.

Here an attempt has been made to study the 'History of Torgal Jahagir ( 1710 to 1853)', which is one of the important jahagirs, in Kolhapur State and rendered great services for the protection of it.

To understand a history of this Torgal Jahagir, here it is also essential to take the survey of the geographical situation, the antiquity of Torgal and how the Jahagir of Torgal came into existence. \*

#### GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION OF TORGAL:

The village Torgal is now situated in Ramdurg Taluka, District Belgaum. It is on Belgaum-Ramdurg highway nearly 10 kilometers westwards from Ramdurg. It is on the

banks of the Malprabha river.<sup>8</sup> It is nearly 100 miles away to the South-East of Kolhapur.<sup>9</sup> Former Ramdurg State lies at the East and the South<sup>10</sup> and the Mudhol State lies at the North of Torgal Jahagir, while there is Parasgad Taluka at the West of it.<sup>11</sup> The Torgal Jahagir was situated in latitude 15<sup>0</sup>-54' to 16<sup>0</sup>-6' and longitude 75<sup>0</sup>-9' to 75<sup>0</sup>-20'.<sup>12</sup>

The territory of Torgal Jahagir was compact and the area was about 167 square miles.<sup>13</sup> Its climate is temperate.<sup>14</sup> Its soil is chiefly rocky and rarely black. Though it is on banks of Malprabha, the river water is scarcely used for irrigation. With the exception of a few water wells it mostly depends upon the monsoon.<sup>15</sup>

The river Malprabha coming through the Khanapur Taluka of the Belgaum District, traverses the rocky southern part of the Torgal Jahagir, in the north-easterly direction. The river has contributed alluvial soil to a few villages along its bank. From the look of the country, the expose of the Torgal town and masonry ~~xx~~ ramparts of the hill fort near it, one is inclined to think that the country must have been once rich.<sup>16</sup>

The Torgal Jahagir was completely separated from Kolhapur by the Collectorate of Belgaum and was situated on the confine of Dharwar Talooka. It contained 78484 beegas of cultivated land and 30,000 inhabitants dwelling in 32 towns and villages and yield a revenue of Neelkunthee Rs. 52194 or Company's Rs. 28967.<sup>17</sup>

TORGAL FORT : PRESENT DESCRIPTION:

There is an ancient strongest fort at Torgal. There are many legends developed around the place. There is a legend that the village Torgal was established by one Bhutankush in 1100 A.D. He built a fort on the plain ('Bhuikot') and constructed a huge wall round it. This fort is situated in Ramdurg Taluka, District Belgaum and is nearly 100 miles south-east of Kolhapur. Narsojirao, the member of Shinde family and the founder of Torgal Jahagir, made Torgal the seat of his power in 1690. He built the inner stonewall. There are four magnificent gates in four directions, of which the eastern gate is very remarkable. The fort consisted of nearly 100 acres of land. The inner most citadel covers almost 5 acres of land. The outer and the inner walls are approximately 50 feet in height and 15 feet in breadth.

The Malprabha river flows by eastern direction of the fort and there is a protection of high mountains from the other three directions. The fort is built of the white-Yellow-Reddish shahabadi stone available in that area. One can clearly see the ~~remains~~ reminiscences of the fort and inhabitation from a long distance. There is a historical ditch of nearly 20 feet deep and 15 feet width round the fort. There is an arrangement that the water of the river

and the western lake can easily enter the ditch. There are some inscriptions in Kannada and Persian languages engraved on the outer wall. They dated back to 10th or 16th century.

There is a spying centre with a shelter, on the outer wall after every 200 to 300 feet distance. There is an arrangement for four <sup>Cannons</sup> ~~guns~~ in four directions, on the outer wall. The two <sup>Cannons</sup> ~~guns~~ out of them are still present. There are ancient temples and mosques, still in good condition. The temple of Bhutanath is built in Chalukyan style. It is very peculiar. There is a throne of the Shinde family lying in the dust.

There are the remains of horse stable , Government Offices, Justice Court, Prison and the under-ground store houses for ammunition. The total location of the fort is like a deep and flat saucer. The old and broken remains of the fort remind of the past glory of the Shinde family.

After seeing site of Torgal fort one can remind that this fort was built on the model of Hamphi fort , the Capital of Vijayanagara. The style and construction of the temples and the sculpture are in the Chalukyan and the Hemadpathi style. It shows that the Yadavs of Deogiri,

the Chalukyas of Kalyani and the Hindu Emperors of Vijayanagara had held sway over this region. Later on this fort was captured by Adilshah of Bijapur from the Vijayanagara. Later Narsoji Shinde captured it from Adilshah. He made Torgal the permanent seat of his Jahagir. Then Narsoji and <sup>his</sup> descendents ruled over Torgal region for nearly 150 years. They used this fort as the centre of their activities and played an important role in the expansion of Maratha Empire in the South.\*

Being affiliated more to the Belgaum District than to the District of Kolhapur, Torgal Estate, soon after its merger, was included by the Government of Bombay in the Collectorate of Belgaum.<sup>18</sup>

THE EARLY HISTORY OF TORGAL:

THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME 'TORGAL':

The old and wise inhabitants of Torgal, by their legendary knowledge tell that the name of the village

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\* Personal visit to Torgal and an interview with Shri Ramachandra Govindrao Shinde, a 70 year old and the State servant of late Narsojirao Shinde, the last Senakhaskhel (1932-49) of Torgal. He furnished the above information about the site and its antiquity.



was originally 'Orgal' in the days Vijayanagara Empire. The same Orgal then became 'Torgal' by the corruption of the word and the same name continued afterwards. Thus 'Orgal' became 'Torgal'.

There are two words in Torgal viz. 'Tor' and 'gal'. 'Tor' in Kannada language means 'upheaved' and 'gal' or 'kal' means 'stones'. So Torgal means 'upheaved stones'. Today also there are seen many black and shahabadi stones upheaved in Torgal area. Hence the etymology of Torgal ( upheaved stones) seems to be correct.

THE REFERENCES OF TORGAL IN EARLIER HISTORY:

There are many back references of Torgal found in history from the earlier period of 10th century. Torgal has also been ~~ak~~ called as Toragale in inscriptions (presently also known as Hale Torgal, in Kannada Hale means old) and was the headquarter of the Toragalenadu, a 6000 province under Seunas(1187-1318) and Vijayanagara(1336-1565) also continued this place to be the headquarter of a province. Dr. Fleet has published a chronicle of the place found in Karnatak in which the history of the place from the days of Bukkaraya(1356-1377) has been narrated and it

speaks of the Vijayanagara ~~an~~ officer called Nagaraja who had taken captive by Ali Adilshah.

Of the two Persian inscriptions of the place found on the walls of the fort, one is of the days of Ibrahim I da ted Shuhur 935 (1535 A.D.) speaking of the construction ( perhaps extension) of the fort by one Ismail, son of Abdul Aziz. Another with a few Kannada lines at the bottom is of Ibrahim II of AH 991 (1583 A.D.) speaks of the construction ( perhaps addition) to another part of the fort. The fort of the place is an imposing structure.

The two other Kannada inscriptions in later Chalukyan character are preserved in the 'wada' of Shindes and one of them is of the Gove Kadambas and it speaks of Taila (973 to 997 A.D.) and Suggaladevi the overlords and a grant to some temple.<sup>19</sup>

#### THE CHALUKYAN STYLE TEMPLES:

The Bhutanath temple, has twin Chalukyan temples facing each other. The earlier one has a 'Shikara' with a 'Shukanasa' over its 'garbhagriha' and a cross shaped 'navaranga' with parapets and 'kakhasana' around.

The entrance of this from the front is the common entrance to the other temple too, and the other temple with a similar plan and size has a female deity installed in the 'garbhagriha'. This Bhutanatha is the God Shiva and female deity is Devi Parvati. To the south of this twin temple are three more temples of which the one in later Chalukyan style has a 'kadambanagara' 'shikara'. There is another Shiva Temple near this 'kadambanagara' 'shikara'. While entering the complex from the north gate there is small Ganapati shrine of Vijayanagara style. Altogether there are nine temples here and of these only Bhutanatha has sculptures around its 'garbhagriha' and its parapets have some erotic sculptures.<sup>20</sup>

The town had one Pattada Devara Gacchina and one Mahanteshwara Math of 600 years old and there are Basavanna and Durga temple also. The place has three old mosques. There are four 'Dargahs' of which that of Jinde Madar Shah is on the hill nearby and described as a contemporary of Afzalkhan.<sup>21</sup>

#### TORGAL AND ADILSHAHI:

The references of Torgal are found in the Adilshahi Court of Bijapur.

The first reference is of the year 1565. The year 1565 was a turning point in the history of South India. In that year the decisive battle of Talikot fought between the Raja of Vijayanagara and the confederacy of Deccan Shais headed by Bijapur, crushed for ever the last glorious Hindu Empire of Vijayanagara. Then the territory of Vijayanagara was occupied by Bijapur ruler and others. After his success in Talikot battle, the ruler of Bijapur invaded other smaller states which were formerly under the domain of Vijayanagara. There is a reference that Torgal near Belgaum was besieged by Adilshah of Bijapur for seven months and was finally captured.<sup>22</sup>

The second reference is of the year 1637. In those days many Maratha families migrated from the North India had settled in the South. They were in the beginning serving in the court of Adilshah of Bijapur. The Adilshah of Bijapur granted the jahagirs to those who had proved their abilities and valour in various battles. Ghorpade, Ghatge, Jadhav, Bhosale etc. were such families.

Shahaji Bhosale, the father of Shivaji the Great, was serving in the court of Adilshah of Bijapur

for many years. He had complained against Prataprao Ghorpade, the grandson of Cholraja. Regarding the complaint of Shahaji the Adilshahi ruler had passed an order in which there is a reference of Torgal.<sup>23</sup>

There is also another reference . In the year 1641 Mahamad Ibrahim Adilshah had passed an order in which the name of Torgal is also mentioned.<sup>24</sup>

#### TORGAL AND SHIVAJI THE GREAT:

The reference of Torgal is found in the days of Shivaji, the founder of Maratha Empire.

The first reference is after the coronation of Shivaji in 1674. In this year he sent one Appaji Suro and Malaji Mirasaheb Bhosale, with the title of Sahebsubha and an army with 12 divisions to capture the tract in the Deccan. Accordingly they remained at 'Tegur' ( means Torgal) in the Deccan and by their activities, from that place, captured Nargund. In that army there was one Murarrao Shinde, a head of cavalry of Malaji Mirasaheb Bhosale. He was Patil of Bendri in Tasgaon, Satara District. He proved himself a wise counsellor and a brave soldier. Not only Malaji Mirasaheb convinced of his tact and valour but even the

Chhatrapati Shivaji the Great, came to know of his great qualities and entrusted to him the big army and asked him to conquer the part of the Deccan.

Some years later, this Murarrao Shinde and his sons Narsojirao, Jiwajirao and Sultanrao proved their valour in the Deccan. Narsojirao Shinde besieged the Torgal fort and finally captured it.<sup>25</sup>

The second reference is of the time of Shivaji's own Karnatak expedition. After the fall of Vijayanagara Hindu religion was in danger. So Shivaji founded the Hindavi Swarajya for the protection of Hindu religion and Dharm. He fought with the Adilshah and Mughals and coronated himself as an independent Hindu King in 1674. Vyankoji, the step brother of Shivaji was in the Karnatak. After his coronation Shivaji decided to set for expedition in Karnatak with the purposes such as to expand his Hindavi Swarajya and to assimilate Vyankoji in the high motives of the Hindavi Swarajya. But Vyankoji did not agree with him. Shivaji started his expedition in January 1677 and returned in April 1678.

While returning from this expedition Shivaji wrote a letter to Vyankoji in which there is a reference of Shivaji's stay at Torgal. The following letter furnishes the reference about Shivaji's visit to Torgal.

" ..... let us make a division and take our respective shares and live with goodwill towards eachother. But you like Duryodhan, intended evil and were determined not to come to any arrangement, but to fight. Then I had some urgent business on the Raigad side so I left Santaji Raje and Raghunathpant and Hambirrao there and myself rode of to Torgal. There I received the news that listening to the advice of the mussalmans and thinking of fighting with my men you have collected your troops and sent them against my men..... that your men were defeated..... "26

From the above references it seems that Torgal was an important political centre in the days of Shivaji and perhaps Shivaji had visited it with the intention to ~~assist~~ assimilate the Killedar of Torgal in his Swarajya expedition.

Thus even before 1690, that is before Narsoji Shinde became the Chief of Torgal, Torgal had a political importance in the history.

CREATION OF TORGAL JAHAGIR:

After the death of Shivaji the Great, Rajaram the younger son of Shivaji was made Chhatrapati by his mother Soyarabai. Sambhaji, the elder son of Shivaji then escaped himself from his confinement at Panhala. He came to Raigad and putting Rajaram in confinement ascended himself to the throne as Chhatrapati on 20th July, 1680.<sup>27</sup>

During the reign of Sambhaji (1680-89) Akabar, the son of Aurangzeb revolted against his father and proclaimed himself as an Emperor. He came to Deccan to get the help and shelter of Sambhaji against his father. Thus Akabar created a dangerous situation against his father in Deccan. So, Aurangzeb came to Deccan to suppress the revolt of his son Akabar and to fulfill his desire to capture the Maratha Kingdom, which was not fulfilled during the days of Shivaji.

Aurangzeb came to Deccan in March 1682 and stayed at Aurangabad.<sup>28</sup> Chhatrapati Sambhaji also prepared himself against the invasion of Aurangzeb. Thus there began a prolonged struggle between Marathas and Mughals.

During this atmosphere of panic and fear many



Maratha sardars took part in this Maratha-Mughal struggle. one of them was Murarrao Shinde, the Patil of Shendri-Bendri, in Satara District. He formed his army and made a havoc in Karnatak and distinguished himself by his deeds. He had three sons viz. Narsojirao, Jiwajirao and Sultanrao. All the three were brave as Murarrao Shinde and created jahagirs at different places. Narsojirao created the jahagir at Torgal, Jiwajirao at Manoli and Sultanrao at Nesari. Their descendents remained in power in future, in their respective jahagirs.<sup>29</sup>

In this way Narsojirao Shinde created his jahagir at Torgal.

NARSOJIRAO SHINDE : THE FOUNDER OF TORGAL JAHAGIR:

Torgal Jahagir has a history of its own and dates previous to the creation of the principality of Kolhapur itself. Narsojirao Shinde, the son of Murarrao Shinde, and the founder of Torgal Jahagir, had warlike tendencies, and had collected mercenary troops and made Samangad near Halkarni his headquarter and led expeditions into the territory of enemies. He was collecting Moka Bab from his enemies for the expenses of his troops.<sup>30</sup>

This was in the years from 1679 to 1689. Narsojirao had certainly the blessings of Shivaji the Great and might have been greatly encouraged by him in his work.<sup>31</sup>

It is said that Narsojirao and Jiwajirao the sons of Murarrao Shinde, were in the service of Shivaji the Great, the founder of Maratha Empire and distinguished themselves by valorious deeds during his military expeditions against Bijapur.<sup>32</sup>

At this time Sambhaji, the King of Marathas was captured by the Mughals and Aurangzeb put him to death in 1689, in a very cruel and inhuman way. These acts of Mughal Emperor created panic and consternation throughout the Deccan. Narsojirao saw the atmosphere of panic prevailing and grasped the favourable ~~xxx~~ situation offered for the operation and extension of his enterprizes.<sup>33</sup>

Narsojirao Shinde conquered a vast territory in Karnatak from the Kingdom of Bijapur. He appeared before the fort Torgal, besieged it and cut off the supplies of the garrison, stationed there by the Government of Bijapur for the protection of the fort and territory under it. The fort and territory were then under the control and management

of one Kushalsing, the Governor appointed by Bijapur Court. Kushalsing put a stiff fight with Narsoji for three years but being harassed by his own garrison for payment and being despaired of any help from the Government of Bijapur, he was compelled to surrender the fort with all the territory under it to Narsojirao on condition that his garrison be paid. Narsojirao accepted the condition, paid the garrison and took the possession of the fort and the territory under it. This was about the year 1690 . Narsojirao then fortified the fort in or by the year 1700 and made it the ~~xxxx~~ Capital seat of his acquisitions.<sup>34</sup>

At that time there was no authority powerful enough to ~~xxxx~~ contest the acquisition and Narsojirao, therefore, did not feel the necessity of cloaking his conquest under the name of some power or other. He and his family dealt with the territory conquered as complete masters being the only supreme authority there.<sup>35</sup>

Major D.C.Graham (1844-53), the Political Sperintendent of Kolhapur State had stated in his report of 1853 about the Torgal family that ... "The family of Torgal date there origin about the year 1690 when their

ancestor Narsojirao, son of Murarrao Shinde, commanded a large force under Rajaram Chhatrapati and being successfully employed in taking the outlying the fort of Torgal which belonged to the Bijapur State and was rewarded with Jahagir and title of Senakhaskhel."<sup>36</sup>

He further mentioned in his report that no little deeds or sanadas of Torgal were discovered in the record room of Torgal, neither in the Kolhapur State papers. The absense of Torgal sanadas may be accounted for from the early date of acquisition which is affirmed to have been at a period long prior to the separate independency of Kolhapur. He also stated in his report of 1853 that the rights of present family to the Estate have never been in any way questioned. The family of Torgal Chief has been in the peaceful ~~enjoyment~~ enjoyment of the property for 170 years, till the year of report i.e. 1853.

There is another evidence about the acquisition of Torgal Jahagir by Narsojirao Shinde which runs as under.

In the succession enquiry of Subhanrao Shinde, the then Senakhaskhel, who died on 12th March, 1878, the Kolhapur State Karbhari reports to the Political Agent,

..." The ancestors of the deceased sardar appear to have much distinguished themselves in the days of Maratha Supremacy. As the old records are not available, full details of the important services rendered by the family cannot be obtained but there is no doubt the Estate is one of the oldest among the feudatory jahagirs of Kolhapur State having been conferred on Narsoji Shinde by H.H. Rajaram Chhatrapati at a period long prior to the separate independency of Kolhapur on account of the military ~~and~~ services rendered by his son Subhanrao Shinde, (the great- great grandfather of deceased sardar)."<sup>37</sup>

TORGAL JAHAGIR : A UNIQUE CASE:

While most ~~of~~ of the states in India owed their origin to grants or subsequent confirmation from some paramount power or other, the origin of Torgal Estate is very different from them. Torgal's is a very peculiar and unique case.<sup>38</sup>

Therefore, the fort Torgal and its surrounding territory was, in no sense any grant from any power for service rendered or to be rendered, either civil or military, nor it is granted as a saranjam or a paragana vatan or as inam person or otherwise. It is an acquisition by conquest from the Kingdom of Bijapur. The acquisition of Torgal Estate

is, thus , the fruit successful marauding expedition.

In this way Narsojirao Shinde created an independent Torgal Jahagir by his own abilities round about 1690.

Thus, the Torgal Jahagir of Narsojirao Shinde has an ancient history. It underwent various vicissitudes under the Chalukyas of Kalyani, the Sevunas of Devgiri, Vijayanagara, Adilshahi, Marathas and finally Narsojirao Shinde became the owner of it and he made Torgal a permanent seat of his power and continued Torgal and surrounded area as their Jahagir under his descendents.

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