Literature Review:

Aurangzeb held Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in captivity. Mohiudin Muhammed Aurangzeb, the elder son of Mumtaj Jahan and Shahjahan enthroned as first Alamgir. Aurangzeb was born at Dohad on October 24, 1618.¹

Maloji Raje had two sons, the first was Shahji and another was Sharifji. Maloji died in a battle at Indapur on July 3, 1606. The rights of ‘Vatandari’ went to Shahaj Raje.²

Shahji Raje was awarded jahagiri of Bengaluru in 1639. He gathered 15,000 to 20,000 solders and took control of the city in his hands. He smade arrangement of those who reached Karnataka to serve honestly. Thus, Shahaji started ruling Bengaluru independently.³

Chhatrapati Shivaj Maharaja was the founder of Swaraj. The historians had differences about the birthday of Shivaji Maharaj. But, the date of ‘Jedhe Shakavli’ was considered important. As per this calendar, Shivaji Maharaj born to Shahji and Jijabai at Shivneri on February 19, 1630.⁴

Shivaji Maharaj defeated and killed Afzal Khan on November 10, 1659. About the incident, S M Garge says that the defeat and murder of Afzal Khan was an important event in the history of Maratha. After the incident, the confidence of Shivaji Maharaj increased and he realized his capability.

He started taking control of forts for the expansion of ‘Swaraj.’⁵
The foundation of Swaraj in Maharaj by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was an important incident in the history of India.

According to Ferozshah Mehta, the name of Shivaji Maharaj was in the mind of every Maharashtrain.6

Chhatrapati Sambhaji was the father of Shahu Maharaj. Sambhaji was born to Shivaji Maharaj and Saibai at Purandar on May 14, 1656. After the death of elder son of Jijabai, they christened their son, the name of Shivaji’s son. Jijabai did upbringing of Sambhaji.7

Various responsibilities put on the should of Sambhaji when he was just 14-year-old. The reason is that he should get experience of ‘Swaraj. At the age of 17, Sambhaji was sent to Khandesh along with army. The then French traveller Abbey Carey described Sambhaji as the brave and skilled fighter.8

Chhatrapati Shahu turned Swaraj into empire taking further the heredity of his father.

At the time of coronation of Shivaji Maharaj, Sambhaji Maharaja was made crowned a prince. Shivde says “The youths in Bhosale clan were sons of jahagirdar or sardar. But Sambhaji Maharaj was the crowned prince.”9 Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj became prince of Marathwada empire as per the tradition.

After holding in captivity by the soldiers of Mughal, Sambhaji Maharaj was brought before the Emperor Aurangzeb. Bendre says about that Emperor Aurangzeb has seen such troubling enemy in his whole life. At that time
Aurangzeb said that the almighty destroyed his enemy, so, he thanked god. Such kind of disaster was not experienced by Emperor Aurangzeb in his life. ¹⁰

Rajaram Maharaj shifted his throne to Satara after living for some months at Vishalgadh. The reason is that Satara was an important place to keep watch on the movements of the Emperor. At the other end, Emperor Aurangzeb who was unhappy with commander-in-chiefs, took the charge of a war in his hand.¹¹

Many letters were published about the systematic administration of Maratha empire during the rule of maharani Tarabai. The ‘vatan’ has broad meaning in the society at that time. Social status and honour is given on the basis of caste. Agriculture system was termed as ‘vatandari’.¹² What kind of ‘vatandari’ existed in Maratha empire before Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj was mentioned in the book.

Important posts were given to Muslims in Maratha empire before Shahu Maharaj. Also honour and status was given to them. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj appointed Siddhi Hillal Khan as senior chief in his army. Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj followed in the footsteps of Shivaji and took efforts for peace and harmony among Hindu-Muslims.¹³

Sambhaji Maharaj had his first child daughter ‘Bhavani.’ As he had no son, he asked ‘Shivyogi’ for solution to have male baby. Shivyogi did ‘Putrakameshti Yadnya’ for Sambhaji who final had a son in the form of Shahu Maharaj. Shivaji Maharaj was born after a vow.¹⁴
The army of Aurangzeb surrounded the Raigarh fort where Chhatrapati Shahu, Chhatrapati Rajaram, Maharani Yesubai and many big chiefs. When it was realized that the fort will go into the hands of Mughal army, Maharani Yesubai and Chhatrapati Rajaram were advised to leave the fort. Chhatrapati Shahu was asked to remain in fort and save Maratha empire.\textsuperscript{15}

Shahu Maharaj was given the title of ‘Mansabdari’ when he was in the captivity of army of Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb convened a meeting of ‘Diwan-e-Khas’ about the nature of Mansabdari. Hamiduddin Khan Bahadur was selected a manager of Shahu Maharaj.\textsuperscript{16} The description about selection Hamiduddin Khan was taken from this book.

Aurangzeb was over-exerted himself to destroy Maratha empire, but, he could not. He had only one option before him, that his releasing Shahu Maharaj from the captivity and signing a pact with Shahu. Maratha army chief Raibhanji Bhosale was made a mediator for this purpose. But, the emperor did not get success.\textsuperscript{17}

Shahu Maharaj reached Maharashtra after his release from the captivity of Aurangzeb. Some servants was accompanying him. Shahu had support of Jaisinha (in South) and other Rajputs. Swami Bhakti and Savai Jaisinha had old friendships.\textsuperscript{18} It is seen that Shahu Mahraj took efforts to expand Maratha empire with the help of Swami Bhakti and Savai Jaisinha.

After his release from the captivity, Shahu Maharaj reached Ahmednagar. He tried to sign an agreement with Tarabai for peaceful relations and expansion of the empire. However, he did not get success. Tarabai did not recognize the right on State, on the contrary, she spread rumours that Shahu was a fake. Tarabai
reaslised that these rumours were not helping her, so, she sent a letter to Shahu, refusing to give the power of the State. Tarabai and Shahu fought a war for hereditary right. Shahu won the war and took the reigns of Maratha empire in his hands. 19

Shahu Maharaj left the impression of his personality on during his 42 hours rule. His thoughts, decisions and duties created different place in the history of India. It is seen that he has achieved the highest peak of Maratha power by his wisdom, intellect and political policy. 20

Chhatrapati Shahu brought Satara fort in his control within eight months from leaving Malwa. He made Satara fort, the capital of Maratha state and carried out his coronation on January 21, 1708. He established ‘ashtapradhan mandal’ after the coronation. 21

The major part of Swarj founded by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was under the control of Emperor Aurangzeb.

A struggle to regain was going on with the Emperor under the leadership of Tarabai. Some portion of Swaraj was under the control of Mughals even when Shahu reached in south.

Shahu Maharaj accepted the supremacy of the Emperor who gave some part of Swaraj to former. It is found that the Emperor gave this title to Shahu in May 1719. 22
Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj gave ‘Dargah Dan’ in 1718. The letter of this incident still exists. In the letter, it is seen that Shahu adopted the policy of tolerance, impartiality and communal harmony.\(^23\)

Chhatrapati Shahu Mahraj founded Shahunagar in 1721.

Shahu Mahraj and Peshwas would meet and take important decision from the place. Shahu turned the Maratha state into Maratha empire from the same place.\(^24\)

It is necessary to study Mughals while doing research on Chhatrapati Shahu. The struggle for power was going on not only Maratha empire but also in Mughals. Azam Shah and Shah Alam fought a war in 1707 and the former was killed at the end. Shah Alam took the ‘khitab’ of ‘Bahadurshah’ and enthroned himself in Delhi.\(^25\)

The relations between Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj and Nizam were not good. When Nizam in South, he did not allow Marathas to collect ‘chauthai.’ Also, he was keeping keen watch on Delhi politics. Nizam was appointed Subhedhar of Malwa in 1719.\(^26\) Chhatrapati Shahu heaved sigh of relief after Nizam’s transfer.

Nizam created his domination in South and started taking action against Shahu Maharaj. P N Deshpande writes that Bajirao and Nizam met first time at Balapur’s battle in 1721.

The important point of the meeting was who was the real ‘Chhatrapati’ (Shahu or Sambhaji) was. The meeting also had discussion about who has right to collect ‘chauthai.’\(^27\)
However, the meeting remained inconclusive.

The objective of Shahu Maharaj and his chiefs was not to hurt the religious feeling of other community members. They wished to have good relations with the Emperor, Rajputs and Nizam.

The pact signed by Shahu and Emperor helped for the expansion of Maratha empire.\(^2\)

After the assassination of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj in 1689, the Maratha State was passing through a difficult time.

One thing was the death of Maharaj and another was attack launched by ‘Idit Khan’ on Maratha state. The crowned prince of Maratha was just 7-year-old. So, Yesubai took the control of the state and appointed Rajaram as Chhatrapati. She tried to avoid reducing the problem by doing these things.\(^3\)

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