

History Research in Mahārāshtra

1

# BIRTH-DATE OF SHIVAJI

BY

D. V. APTE, B. A.

M. R. PARANJPE, M. A., B. Sc.

THE  
MAHARASHTRA PUBLISHING HOUSE, Ltd.  
POONA.

(Ten Annas or One Shilling)

---

1927.

## FOREWORD.

---

For over thirty years the late Mr. V. K. Rājwāde and his co-workers have been collecting letters and documents, pictures and manuscripts which would throw fresh light on the medieval history of Mahārāshtra and their efforts have by now secured enough material to keep a group of research-workers busy with them for over a generation. Some of the documents collected by these gentlemen have also necessitated revision of the current notions about the history of the Marāthās and to one who has access to them, many events and personalities appear in a different perspective.

A very large portion of the collection is in the possession of the Bhrāt-Itihās-Samshodhak Mandal (an Association of Research Workers in the History of India), Poona. Much of this, however, is in the Marathi language and the late Mr. Rājwāde and his co-workers have published all their researches also in Marāthi. Those who do not know this language are thus prevented from using their conclusions excepting those few which are made available by Prof. Sarkār or Mr. Kincaid, in their books. We propose removing this deficiency to some extent by publishing a number of bulletins *re* some important questions in the history of the Marāthās. In these bulletins an attempt will always be made to present the evidence, and to draw conclusions therefrom, in an impartial manner and whatever be the personal views of the compilers of the bulletins, the evidence will be marshalled without any prejudice whatsoever.

For the first bulletin in this series we choose the controversy which has arisen at present in this Province over the date of the birth of Shivāji. We choose this not only because it presents a topic of wide interest but because it shows in a striking manner the openness of the mind of the workers in this field, the care with which they test each new piece of evidence, the peculiar opportunities one has for cross-examination and the possibilities of obtaining fresh evidence from the most unexpected quarters. On reading the pages hereafter it will be seen that the problem has been under in-

vestigation for over twenty-five years. The late Mr. V. K. Rājwāde stated it first in the introduction of the fourth volume of his "Materials for the History of the Marāthās" published early in the year 1900 and the late Mr. B. G. Tilak discussed it in his paper (Kesari) in the April of that very year. In 1916 Mr. Tilak raised the same question again when presenting to the Bhārat-Itihās-Samshodhak-Mandal a new document which had come into his possession. The date given in this document differed from the usually accepted date by about three years, and striking though the announcement was, it was but coldly received at the time. New evidence, since obtained, supported this document in a remarkable manner and this needed careful sifting of all the available evidence and that was done.

The bulletin, therefore, presents a problem which has been disturbing the Marāthā historians for over twenty five years and which has been under close scrutiny for ten years at least. Whether the conclusion becomes acceptable or not is another matter; but there is no doubt that a very strong case is made in favour of the year 1630 A. D.

It is needless to add that these bulletins are essentially non-technical compilations, their chief aim being the creation of interest in the subject, in the minds of laymen. They are not intended to serve as source-books for the history of Mahārāshtra, although even a serious student of Marāthā history may profit by the many references given.

*N. B.*-Readers not familiar with the Hindu Calender will do well to read the Appendix first.

*Poona, 10th May, 1927.*

D. V. APTE.  
M. R. PARANJPE.

## APPENDIX.

### The Hindu Calender.

Readers who are not familiar with the Hindu Calender may find it somewhat difficult to follow the details, although care is taken in every case to make them self-explanatory. The following, therefore, may prove useful.

The Hindu year consists of twelve Lunar months and is approximately of 355 days. In three years, it thus lags behind the Solar year by about 30 days and this lag is corrected by having every third year, a year of thirteen months. The correction is automatic and nearly accurate. Each month the sun crosses a zodiacal sign, but once in three years appears a Lunar month in which this crossing does not take place. It may take place, for instance, on the last day of the preceding month and the first day of the succeeding month. The month without a crossing is thus an extra month and bears the name of the succeeding month. Once (or twice) in a century it also happens that the sun crosses two zodiacal signs in the same Lunar month and then a month is passed over i. e. omitted. The year is then of eleven months only.

In the Deccan they follow what is known as the Shālivāhan era and the figures for a year are preceded by the word *Shake*. This era begins about 78 years after the Christian era and to obtain the Cristian from a Shaka year one must add to the latter 79 or 78 according as the month is approximately before or after March, for the new year's day in the Deccan is somewhere about vernal equinox. In the North they follow the Vikram era which is distinguished by the word *Samvat*. This begins about 56 years before Christ and to obtain the Christian year from a Samvat year one must subtract about 56 years from the latter. The new year's day in this case comes somewhere in November. Mathematical tables are now available and we can find the European dates corresponding to the Shaka or Samvat dates and vice versa from 1630 A. D. to 1900 A. D.

The Hindus also recognise a cycle of sixty years and each year of this cycle (Samvatser) bears a name. This fact has been extremely useful to a research student of Marāthā history. A number of entries are discarded or are treated as doubtful and wanting corroboration because a wrong name of the year is mentioned. For instance, Shake 1549 was Prabhav, but some documents give Shake 1549 Raktākshi. Now either 1549 is wrong or Raktākshi is wrong, or both are wrong. The entry therefore is not trustworthy.

A year has twelve Lunar months\* and a month has four weeks and two fortnights. A week has seven days corresponding to the seven week days in the European calendar. The first fortnight is called the bright half and ends on the Full-Moon day; the second fortnight is called the dark half and ends on the New-Moon day. The whole month is a period between two New-Moon days and consists of about 29 to 30 days.

[In some places in northern India, a month is a period between two Full-Moon days. Their first half is the dark half and the second half is the bright half. The month in the Deccan is thus Amānt, ending on a New-Moon day; while that in Northern India is Purnimānta, ending on a Full-moon day. (See Page 15). Thus, the bright half of Phālgun would be the same everywhere in India, but the dark half of Phālgun in the Deccan would be the dark half of Chaitra in the North.]

Every day of a fortnight again has a name and the number of days in a fortnight is not arbitrary but is made to depend on the movements of the Moon through the heavens. The Hindu calendar is thus a complex affair and this complexity also has helped a research worker in Mahārāshtra in no small measure.

A day is the period from Sun-rise to Sun-rise and is divided into sixty equal parts called Ghatis. Each Ghati is further divided into sixty Palas, and each Pala has sixty Vipalas. A Ghati is thus equal to 40 minutes, and a Pala is equal to 40 Seconds.

---

\* The names of the months are—Chaitra, Vaishākh, Jyeshtha, Ashādha, Shrāvan, Bhādranada, Āshvina, Kārtika, Mārgashirsha, Pausa, Māgha, Phālgun.

Thus when a Hindu astronomer records the birth of a child he gives :

1. The number of the year ( Shake or Samvat )
2. The name of the year ( Samvatsar )
3. The name of the month.
4. The nature of the fortnight ( bright half or dark half
5. The day of the fortnight ( Tithi )
6. The week day
7. The time of day, beginning from sunrise (Ghatis and Palas)
8. The position of the moon at birth (Nakshatra)

If a particular entry gives all these or most of these and mathematical calculations show them to be *all* correct we can without hesitation take it as genuine. For it is extremely difficult to forge an accurate entry. It can be done only by a clever mathematician armed with modern aids to calculation.

The dates in the Bakhars are all rejected for this reason ; their details are hopelessly incorrect.

The date in the Jedhe Chronicle which is the same as that in Shivbhārat or that in the Jodhapur horoscope is accepted as correct, because it is mathematically accurate.

BY THE SAME AUTHORS.

IN PREPARATION.

No. 2 The Battle of Pānipat.

No. 3 The Life of Shahāji.

No. 4 Pitfalls in History Research.

*Book your orders with*

- (1) Vishvanath Ganesh and Co., Poona.
- (2) D. B. Taraporevala and Co., Fort, Bombay.
- (3) Bombay Book-Depot, Girgaum, Bombay.
- (4) Oriental Books-supplying Agency, Poona.

---

Printed at the Aryabhushan Press, Poona City by A. V. Patvardhan  
and Published by V. G. Tahmankar, Managing Director,  
The Mahārāshtra Publishing House, Ltd.  
Poona City.