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RANI TARABAI the nemesis of Aurangzeb

The forgotten warrior queen who didn't allow the tyrant to trample upon Hindu rule which was passing through its darkest phase. Courage and resilience. A falling empire, personal tragedies and a vicious enemy. None could shake her.

(Thread)



Tarabai, the Maratha queen (1675-1761), is perhaps one of the most important contributors to the breakup of the M0ghul empire. She prevented the Maratha rule from disintegrating when it was at its lowest with almost all forts in M0ghul hands.(1)

Aurangzeb’s dream of a pan India dominion was destroyed in the hills and forts of western Deccan.(2)

First she survived the M0ghul onslaught, later on carrying the battle into M0ghul territory, raiding and then creating permanent outposts. Had she buckled there may not have been Maratha hegemony in the 18th century, which reduced the M0ghul control to a small area.(3)



She was the daughter of Hambir Rao Mohite, Shivaji's cmdr in chief, and got married to Shivaji's younger son Rajaram. She was well trained in sword fighting, archery, cavalry, military strategy, diplomacy and other subjects of statecraft.(4)

After Shivaji passed away in 1680, his son Sambhaji succeeded him and continued raiding the territories of Bijapur and M0ghuls. In 1682, Aurangzeb arrived in the Deccan to fulfill an old M0ghul ambition of conquering the region.(5)

With his classic combination of large armies and bribing opponent officers, the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda fell to Aurangzeb in 1686 and 1687.(6)

Focusing solely on the Marathas, he marched into western Maharashtra. Fort after fort fell. Sambhaji was captured from his forest hideout in 1689. Aurangzeb asked him to convert to which Sambhaji refused and was executed.(7)

Sambhaji's brother Rajaram became the leader of Marathas. Realizing that he had to escape the region he took refuge at the fortress of Jinjee in TN. Rajaram started directing guerilla operations on M0ghuls from there.(8)

The fort of Jinjee was besieged by the M0ghuls but the siege did not meet its desired objectives as Rajaram made his way out of there while simultaneously being able to conduct guerilla operations.(9)

In1697 Rajaram made his way back to Maha with his family and established his new capital at Satara.(10)

In 1700 Rajaram untimely passed away.The Marathas now had 2 widows to hold the helm with their infant sons. Aurangzeb was content assuming Marathas were over. He was in a celebratory mood of sorts.(11)

He never imagined that one of the widowed women would turn into a hybrid of Machiavelli and Joan of Arc. Diplomat and a military leader. This woman was pure steel.(12)



25 yo Tarabai declared her 4 yo son the king under the name Shivaji II. In the 7 year period 1700-07, Tarabai directed the Maratha defence against Aurangzeb’s army.(13)

She led attacks from the front, travelling between forts, mobilizing resources and motivating her commanders. Erudite, she also mastered Aurangzeb’s strategem of bribing commanders on enemy's side.(14)

Tarabai proved to be a stronger ruler than her husband. She regulated things so efficiently that not a single Maratha leader acted without her orders.(15)

She won the confidence of her of■cers, and under her Maratha power started to grow. Tarabai’s greatest strategic move was to send large forces beyond the Marathi speaking Deccan deep into Mughal domains to the north, like Malwa and Gujarat.(16)



Hers were more than just raids. She was establishing permanent revenue collection centres in the M0ghul territories, which had been denuded of troops by Aurangzeb for his Deccan campaign.(17)



Tara Bai placed an anchor of permanence wherever she penetrated by appointing revenue collectors. This was a daring move as it was happening in M0ghul territory just that Aurangzeb didn't have the required forces to ensure tax compliance.(18)

This way she ensured that the Marathas would never face problems due to lack of revenue. Tarabai put up one of the stiffest resistace ever to the M0ghul army, beating them back repeatedly.(19)

It was not just beating back the M0ghuls, she also expanded the Maratha empire all the way upto Karnataka as well as the Western coast upto Surat and Bharooch.(20)

Aurangzeb made his way out to Aurangabad where he passed away in 1707 without having quelled the Hindu resistance. His Deccan campaign ending in frustration for huge amounts of men and material had been lost with his arch enemy getting stronger.(21)



Goes on to show that nothing can hinder the path of a Hindu woman who is resolute to defend her family and faith from invaders.(22)

