Twitter Thread by Engineer Who



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A long but must read thread. Udaybhan Rathore and myth making in Maratha history: An analysis. This is the thread on Udaybhan Rathore, who he was and how over the time period, his life was portrayed in maratha chronicles and pseudo history. (1/n)

Udaybhan rathore was the head of Bhinai thikana (84 villages) in Ajmer. He was the direct descendant of the famous Rao Chandrasen, Raja of Marwar (4th generation) who resisted Akbar all his life and never made any alliance with mughals like Maharana Pratap. (2/n)

Later in 1783, Maharaja of Jodhpur gave title of Raja to Bhinai family for their military service. Bhinai family and their direct descendant Raja Sh Mayuraj Singh still lives in Ajmer. Anyway coming to Udaybhan Rathore and story of Tanaji. (3/n)

Jai Singh's march on Shivaji and treaty of Purandar (1665) is a well known episode to repeat here. After getting the hill forts from Shivaji under the treaty, Jai Singh didn't have enough man-power to man every one of the small forts because of his next (4/n)

campaign against Bijapur. Jai Singh personally took over a couple of important forts like Kondhana (Sinhgarh), Purandar etc. Others were given to some mughals or their fortification walls destroyed. Jai Singh died in 1667 near Burhanpur while enroute to the north. (5/n)

The fort of Kondhana was under Udaybhan Rathore placed by Jai Singh not sent specially by Aurangzeb as shown in the movie. In 1670 the fort was captured by marathas after a sanguinary fight in which the maratha army leader Tanaji Malusare and Udaybhan Rathore both died. (6/n)

The reality was simple, marathas under Tanaji captured the fort from Udaybhan Rathore but as we will see, slowly this story expanded to one of the biggest fiction in maratha history. Start with contemporary evidence, there is not a single contemporary evidence of this. (7/n)

First mention of this fight is in Sabhasad bakhar written almost 30 years after the battle. The Sinhgadh campaign is given in detail, that there was one Tanaji malusure who commanded the army. Although this battle is described in detail, there was no exaggeration (8/n)

about Udaybhan which were made later. Udaybhan was only mentioned as a great warrior who was the commander of the Kondhana fort. And that Tanaji climbed the fort with help of mawle soldiers who were expert in mountain climbing. (9/n)

Even Chitnis Bakhar which was written about 130 years later doesn't say anything wrong about Udaybhan. The event is also mentioned vividly by British historian Grant Duff's in his 'History of Mahrathas' written in 1826, story is same as Sabhasad bakhar. (10/n)

Nothing wrong against Udaybhan here too. Later in British period this story is deformed to another level. In 19th century one powada was composed allegedly by one Tulsidas shahir. The powadas are ballads; songs sung by wandering performers, there is nothing historical abt it(11/n

In this powada Udaybhan is made a monster, some description about Udaybhan is as follows, Udaybhan eats one cow, one goat and more than a maund of rice in ONE MEAL. He has 18 wives and 12 sons (which is also fake as he had only one son and which wasnt in kondhana)(12/n

He remains drunk and doesnt go to fight until all his fake 12 sons get killed. Cherry on the top, it is shown that he also converted to Islam, goes to mosque and when he died he cried "Allah". In the ballad there are many other unbelievable things like how (13/n)

a ghorpad (monitor lizard) helps Tanaji to climb up the fort which was not true according to Sabhasad Bakhar, and like how ghorpad stopped climbing midway and then Tanaji asked her to climb but when she doesnt, Tanaji threatens her (14/n)

that he will cook her and will eat her if she doesnt climb. Then the ghorpad again starts climbing. HG Rawlinson who wrote 'shivaji the maratha' added an english translation of the powada, he himself say that there is no contemporary evidence of this story. (15/n).

There are many other geographical mistakes too like how Rajgarh is confused with Raigarh by the composer. Although the story has little historic value, the story being interesting was copied by some colonial and pune writers. (16/n)

Later comes a man named Hari Narayan Apte, a historical novel writer who is hailed as Walter Scott of Marathi literature. He wrote in 1903 a novel named Gad aala pan sinh gela. He btw also wrote a novel named "Tiger of Mysore" on Tipu Sultan. He went a step further (17/n)

from Powadas and added in this an extra story of Kamal Kumari. And also made Udaybhan rathore an illegitimate son of Mewar Rana from a slave girl. And how did illegitimate son of a sisodia rajput adopted Rathore surname is a mystery that Apte didn't think over. (18/n)

Anyway in his story Udaybhan kidnapped Kamal Kumari, a Rajput widow against her wishes, she wanted to become Sati. Udaybhan is shown in much disgust in this book. Finally a man of honour Tanaji frees Kamal Kumari from Udaybhan's clutches so she can commit sati. (19/n)

This book of Apte gained quite popularity and became anchor point for further writings on Udaybhan and Tanaji. Many works on this were composed later, to name a few Acharya Chatursen a hindi novel writer's book "Sayadri ki Chattane" follows the

same story of Udaybhan. (20/n)

There were marathi films made on this story before independence. And finally a hindi film Tanhaji in 2020 by a Marathi film maker Om Raut. This film is on another level, it takes all the story from these fictions but remove all those impossibles (21/n)

like eating cows and all to make story believable and also specifically mentions that Udaybhan is Rajput which was removed by censor board. He shows Aurangzeb as a simple guy weaving caps but made Udaybhan a vilest guy you could imagine, there was also (22/n)

a scene of Udaybhan killing his own mother because she was "neecha khoon", all this was removed by censor board not by film maker but by censor board. This is how character of Udaybhan was ridiculed beyond any imagination by slow process of fictional myth making (23/n)

The truth is much simpler, that Udaybhan was a mere soldier and was appointed by Jai Singh and was doing his duty. For siding with mughals, even Shivaji attacked many forts while serving under mughals. Shivaji's son Shambhaji also served under mughals. Shivaji's father (24/n)

Shahji also served under Mughals, Bijapur and Ahmadnagar Sultans as it suited him. But looks like Udaybhan got in the wrong side of Maratha myth-making. Finally I expect atleast descendants of Udaybhan in Bhinai and Badanwara would raise some awareness on this. (25/25)

For people asking in DM abt dialogues in the movie, read the 1st change in the list of changes made by censor board. This is at 1hr 26 min in the movie where Kamal's brother tell the story of Kamal and Udaybhan's past to captured Tanaji.

Cut List Details

Sr. No.	Reel No.	Description	Guidline
1	1.25 hours	Replaced the words Rajput in Udaybhaans dialogue aur main sirf ek Rajput. 1.26.57. Also removed the words goli, naukrani and neecha khoon tha tu. Also deleted the reference to (visuals and dialogue) Udaybhan killing his mother at 1.27.	2(xviii), 3(ii)
2	55 mins	Corrected the dialogue of Udaybhan at 55.43.16 with clear spacing between the words considering the innuendo therein	2(vii)
3	beginning	Inserted in English as well as Hindi disclaimer regarding Animal cruelty and CG graphics used in the Film (as mentioned in AWBI NOC). This disclaimer should be on separate slate than the main disclaimer of the Film.	2(iii-c)
4	beginning	Inserted disclaimer with Hindi Transcript (The film makers do not intend to support or promote in any manner the practice of child marriages)	2(iii-a), 3(ii)
5	beginning	Inserted disclaimer in English and Hindi that the word Maratha used in the Film is a general term referring to all soldiers (entire army) of Chhhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, and not used to refer to any community.	3(ii)
6	beginning	Replaced first line of disclaimer with the sentence " This Film is a fictionalized representation inspired by life of warrior TANHAJI MALUSARE. Inserted disclaimer in Hindi maintaining it for 30 sec.Mentioned the name of History consultant for Film.	3

For more info on the Tanaji powada do read this nice thread by @therajaputra https://t.co/sGkkpsNEuF

> The reality of history of Udaibhan Rathore and Tanaji Malusare.
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> I wanted to do a thread on this myself, didn't reach the trigger point to carry on with it though. Thanks, @Engr_Who for saving me the effort \U0001f605. https://t.co/FnqJcHJnlC
>
> — The R\u0101japutra (@therajaputra) January 2, 2021