

Dutch-Maratha relations under Shivaji during 1660-80: A survey of the research done till date, new discoveries and importance of Dutch records for studying the life of Shivaji.

Nikhil Bellarykar.

Email: nikhil.bellarykar@gmail.com

Abstract

The wide-ranging engagements of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in India have spawned a huge body of literature. Surprisingly, this literature so far has not produced any study of the relations between the Dutch and Marathas. The equally large & rich Historiography of Maratha History also happens to be largely silent about the same. Given the importance of both the VOC and the Marathas in early modern India, such a study would indeed fill up a great number of gaps in the Historians' understanding of both VOC & Marathas. In this paper, a survey of the relations between VOC and Shivaji is presented, thus making a small but important advance over the work done till date. The recently discovered direct correspondence between the two in the Nationaalarchief at The Hague has been used for the very first time here. And also the importance of Dutch records for studying the life of Shivaji is outlined.

Keywords: Shivaji, Maratha History, Dutch East India Company, VOC.

Introduction

We will, first of all, set the context for Dutch-Maratha relations as a whole. We will then see how the representatives of the VOC (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, also known as Dutch East India Company) came into contact with Shivaji. After giving a sketch of Dutch-Shivaji relations as gleaned from existing sources, the recently discovered new sources at the Nationaal Archief, the Hague would be described in brief, thereby showing how the blanks in the currently existing picture would be filled.

The case for Dutch-Maratha relations in early modern India

The History of early modern India (1600-1800 CE) is distinguished from that of other periods by the immense quantity and variety of primary documentary sources available, among many other factors. After the decline of the Mughal empire since Aurangzeb, Marathas went on to control majority of the subcontinent for the greater part of the 18th century CE. The fortunes of various European colonial powers in India also waxed and waned simultaneously until the steady rise of the British after the battle of Plassey in 1757 CE, which paved the way for British colonization of India. As a result, one of the pertinent themes of this period in History is the study of the relations between Indigenous powers and European powers. As the Maratha confederacy was the only truly pan-Indian power after the Mughals, a study of the relations of Marathas with Europeans is very important for understanding the military, political & economic conditions prevalent within India at the time.

This fact was recognized early on by British and other administrators & Historians in colonial

times, and also Indian Historians. Their approaches can be very roughly summarized as being either "Indo-centric" or "Euro-centric"¹, the former treating the issue as a part of Indian History, while the latter treating the issue as a part of European colonial expansion. The "Indo-centric" (more specifically "Maratha-centric" in this case) tradition accordingly produced studies devoted to Anglo-Maratha, French-Maratha and Portuguese-Maratha relations, while "Euro-centric" tradition also produced analogous studies. However, while Indo-Dutch studies till 2001 boast of around one thousand² works, the study of Dutch-Maratha relations is conspicuous by its absence.

Considering the influence of Maratha polity on India, the longstanding Dutch presence in India from 1602 till 1810 & their influence in the maritime trade in India, and the extensive interaction between the two within this timeframe as attested by the voluminous & mostly unpublished records within the Nationaalarchief, a study of Dutch-Maratha relations is long overdue.

A brief History of the usage of Dutch records for Maratha History

Within Maratha Historiography, the greatest variety of sources have been used to study the life & tiems of Shivaji and Dutch records were no exception. The very first Dutch records used for Maratha History were the volumes Batavia Dagregisters for 1624-1682 CE. These were published in 1890-1920s. The complete set of these volumes was extensively used by Indian researchers. Further, during 1920-30s, the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhan Mandal of Pune and Dr. Bal Krishna³, a famous economic Historian, then based in Kolhapur, wrote separately to the archivists in the Hague for the complete copies of the letters mentioned in the respective Dagregisters.

These were translated by Prof. R.D. Wadekar from Pune. The Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal used them for their 3-volume series in Marathi, titled *Shivakalin Patrasar Sangraha*, which contained summaries of important diplomatic documents from all languages pertaining to the life of Shivaji. It was published during 1930-36. Of the documents translated, Prof. Wadekar published 3 letters separately in another book named *Shivaji Nibandhawali*, also published by the Mandal. On the other hand, Bal Krishna at that time was working for his 4-volume biography of Shivaji, titled *Shivaji the great*, last volume of which was published in 1940. He used the 3 documents translated by Wadekar, after having them checked and corrected by Dr.E.C. Godee Molesbergen, who was the government archivist at Batavia (current Jakarta) at that time. Dr. Molesbegen also translated some other documents from Batavia as well. In addition, Mr.C.C. Remmerswaal from the Netherlands translated another set of documents from the Hague for Bal Krishna. The later also wrote a small paper about the rise and fall of Dutch in India⁴. Apart from this, the famous Bengali Historian S.N.Sen published the remarkable "Foreign biographies of Shivaji" during 1920-27, where a few Dutch letters were cited, some of which were transcribed by Sen himself and the remaining by Miss L.M.Anstey from the India office of the British library in London. The same book also included a translation of the description of Surat by Francois Valentijn's famous work *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, which was done by Miss. M.J.Bremner.

Around the same time, Dr. Nilkanta Sastry published a paper in 1939 in the proceedings of the 3rd Indian Historical congress, where he briefly translated a few kauls⁵ given by Shivaji & his officials to the VOC. The background of some of these kauls was summarized in the account of the famous Dutch polyglot Herbert De Jager's meeting with Shivaji. The famous Pune Historian G.H.Khare came across the mention of this account in 1949, and after corresponding with the Hague archivist Mary Juriaanse in 1954, obtained the complete copy of it. He got it translated from Tapan

1 The terminology is taken from *Dutch sources on South Asia, vol.1*, pp. 23-29.

2 Ibid., pp.33-79. The number of such works in 1st volume itself is 805.

3 Author of the famous treatise "Commercial relations between India & England" among many others.

4 Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records commission in 1939, XV, pp. 38-50.

5 Letters of assurance, from Arabic qaul.

Raychaudhuri, a famous Historian based in Delhi and finally published it in the quarterly of the Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal in 1969. He also published its condensed Marathi translation in 1973 in a booklet, wherein he described the publication History of the same. Thereafter, one kaul of Shivaji has been intermittently referred to by researchers on account of an anti-slavery clause in it, the latest of which is by Dr. G.C.Kruijtzter in his book *Xenophobia in 17th century India*⁶ in 2008-09. In addition, the present author has, for the first time, published a complete translation of these kauls in two papers in 2016⁷.

From the short account presented above, it can easily be seen that the usage of Dutch records for studying Maratha History has been rather meagre, to say the least- and not a single study devoted to Dutch-Maratha relations exists, to the best of my knowledge.

Timeline of the relations of the Dutch with Shivaji from existing literature

Ever since the first fleet of the VOC set sail in 1602, The Dutch had tried and at length succeeded in establishing their presence across the long coastline of India. They had four directorates on the Indian coastline- Surat, Malabar, Coromandel and Bengal. The Dutch directorate of Surat was established around 1616⁸, and the first factories on the Coromandel region were established around 1605⁹. In 1637, a factory at Vengurla on the Konkan coast was established¹⁰, which directly reported to Batavia till 1673, was under Surat for 1673-76, and then under Malabar till 1685, after which it was abandoned shortly. The Dutch presence in Malabar was relatively late, confined to a few unfortified trading settlements till the capture of Cochin in 1658, while in Bengal things progressed similarly as Malabar.

Shivaji's kingdom started in what is today the Pune district in the state of Maharashtra in western India. From 1650s onwards, his territories expanded continuously along the long chain of adjoining forts in the western ghats, and also comprised of almost the entire Konkan coast. In 1676-77, he embarked on the famous Dakshin-digvijay aka the conquest of the south, which brought a piece of the rich Coromandel coasts to him¹¹.

The two came into contact with each other during the early 1660s, when Shivaji expanded his kingdom around the South Konkan coast. The earliest known Dutch document mentioning Shivaji is a letter from Vengurla, sent to Batavia on 5th May, 1660. It mentions him as "Siwasie, the son of Sahasie" and notes that "he has been revolting against his majesty (meaning Adilshah here) since last 10-12 years"¹². As with the English records¹³, the earliest mention of Shivaji is about the famous incident when Shivaji killed the prominent Adilshahi nobleman Afzal Khan. During February-April 1661, Shivaji's troops reached the principal Adilshahi port Dabhol and conquered it. The port of Rajapur was also conquered¹⁴. The southernmost town in this region under Shivaji was Kharepatan. After acquiring this new territory, Shivaji returned to Rajgad in June 1661¹⁵. He further returned to

6 pp. 192 of the same.

7 Sanshodhak, year 84, pp. 1-15 & The quarterly of Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, year 92, pp. 57-71.

8 L.T., I., L.M., Document No. 502; Cambridge History of India, V. pp.33.

9 Raychaudhuri, Jan company in Coromandel, pp. 15.

10 Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico Indicum, vol.1, pp. 294-97.

11 Mehendale, G.B., Shivaji- his life and times, pp. 241, 258, 282-92, 516-52.

12 Bal Krishna, Shivaji the great, vol.1, part 2, pp. 474-75.

13 Paranjape, B.G., English records on Shivaji, vol.1, pp.1.

14 Fawcett, English factories in India, 1661-64, pp. 4-5.

15 Paranjape, B.G., English records on Shivaji, vol.1, pp.31.

the region in May-June 1663 and entered in the district of Kudal & occupied it. He conveyed to the Dutch resident at Vengurla that the Adilshah had ceded the district to him¹⁶.

In January 1664, Shivaji raided the famous and extremely rich Mughal city of Surat, where the Dutch had a factory. Dirck van Adrichem was the director of it, and when they heard of Shivaji coming to Surat, they hastily enlisted soldiers, and further secured their house with two cannons. They also sent servants to get information, who were captured by Marathas, disarmed and then released in the evening¹⁷. On 7th January, Shivaji sent a Greek merchant named Nicholas Colostra to the Dutch house and demanded money, to which the Dutch replied in the negative and reminded him of the good conduct he had shown to the VOC at Vengurla. Their preparations and menacing posture kept the Marathas away from them and the matter wasn't pursued further¹⁸.

Soon after the 1st sack of Surat, an Adilshahi force opened an offensive against Shivaji in south Konkan in May 1664. The principal town of Kudal was captured in May/June 1664 and the Adilshahi general Khawas Khan was appointed as the chief of army there. Shivaji began his attack on Khawas Khan on 30 October. The town of Vengurla was only 30 km from Kudal, therefore the Dutch resident at that time sent a letter to Shivaji, requesting their safety. Since Shivaji didn't have any time for replying them via a written letter, he sent a verbal message to them that assured them of their safety. On account of heavy exchange of rockets, the bearers of the Dutch letter were then forced to return to Vengurla¹⁹. Within November 1664, Shivaji managed to defeat Khawas Khan and reclaim the district of Kudal. On the approach of Shivaji's forces, the governor of Vengurla left the place and fled to Goa, where he arrived at 5th December 1664 with some goods, but then soon returned to Vengurla. The Dutch hadn't been shown "any discourtesy whatsoever by Shivaji's officials²⁰". Soon afterwards, Shivaji started pillaging the Adilshahi territory, when the Dutch at Vengurla also suffered. They had bought some cotton yarn and cotton sheets, most of which were plundered²¹. At the same time, Vengurla saw a lot of maritime action too, when Marathas attacked many ships belonging to Portuguese and others. On December 7, 1664, a small ship belonging to the brokers of VOC, viz. Kashiba and Santuba Shenvi, was captured and taken to Kharepatan. Soon afterwards, the Dutch resident at Vengurla, Lenartsz received a message from Shivaji's governor Raoji to send a reliable person for discussing an important matter. Lenartsz sent a Hindu clerk, to whom Raoji confided that he was aware of the discord between the Dutch & Portuguese and that he would help the former against the latter for the capture of Goa. He also warned that the offer not be made known if the news of Dutch-Portuguese discord was not true. This arrangement didn't go any further, on account of the vigilant protection of Goa by the Portuguese.²²

Six years after the first sack of Surat, Shivaji again sacked it during 3-6 October 1670. This time, Shivaji sent a messenger to the Dutch, and assured them that if they would remain quiet, they wouldn't be harmed. Shivaji also asked them for "the best plan to despoil the principal merchants" the next day, but when the Dutch representatives were ready to meet Shivaji the next day, they found out that the latter was already gone. Two of Shivaji's men who had come to escort the Dutchmen were thus stranded in the city, who were then safely conducted out of it at night²³.

16 Batavia Dagregister 1663, 14th November.

17 Foreign Biographies of Shivaji, pp. 375.

18 Ibid., pp. 376-79.

19 Bal Krishna, Shivaji the great, vol.1, part 2, pp. 526-28, vide VOC 1245, folios 487-96.

20 Ibid., pp. 523-24.

21 Ibid., pp. 523-34.

22 Ibid., pp. 538.

23 Ibid., pp. 330-31.

In 1673, on the background of the recently started Anglo-Dutch war in Europe, the English had received intelligence (probably a rumour) that the Dutch admiral Rijkloff van Goens had made an agreement with Shivaji, whereby the latter would assist the Dutch in capturing Bombay. But this arrangement, even if true, didn't have any effect as the Dutch never came close enough to Bombay.²⁴ Just before this, the Dutch "Accomptant" Abraham Lefeber went to Raigad and met Shivaji & gave him presents worth 450 golden pagodas. The Dutch letter dated 20th September 1672 mentions that the presents were rather meagre and hence it was unlikely to be of much use²⁵. The reason behind this visit seems to be to secure trading privileges in the light of constant deprivations on Konkan coast by various powers.

Soon after this, Shivaji was coronated in a grand ceremony during May-June 1674 at Raigad. Two years later, left his homeland for a grand *Dakshin-digvijay* aka the conquest of the south in October 1676. When he was just short of reaching Hyderabad, Dutch merchants living there sent an envoy, one Jan van Nijendaal, with few others. He gave Shivaji some dried fruits and other gifts which were 1000 florins worth in total. Shivaji received the Dutch civilly and guaranteed safe conduct to them²⁶. This meeting took place in March 1677.

As the southern campaign of Shivaji progressed, he went deep into the Adilshahi karnataka. The Dutch representatives Herbert De Jager and Nicholas Clement met Shivaji on 6th August, 1677 at Shivaji's camp, at Valikandapuram in today's Tamil Nadu. They secured from him a kaul that reaffirmed their earlier trading rights, except that of purchasing slaves. This kaul has been cited many times, but the first complete English & Marathi translation of that was first published only in 2016, by the current author, alongwith the discussion of other interesting points²⁷.

Soon after this meeting, Shivaji returned to Raigad. The Dutch then started negotiations with Shivaji's officers for opening a factory at Porto Novo, an important port on the Coromandel coast, which was under Shivaji. The request was granted by the lower echelon of administrators, but Gopaldas Pandit, a governor, opposed the move on the grounds that the Dutch might fortify the town and soon occupy the whole of it themselves. As retaliation to this, the Dutch then refused to issue passports to any ship going out of Porto Novo and thus the trade there was in shambles. The issue then went to Raghunath Pandit, the highest official appointed by Shivaji in the south. He permitted the Dutch to erect a factory there, provided that it was not fortified. The issue was thus resolved and trade soon prospered there. This issue has been discussed in detail by the present author in another paper, again for the first time²⁸, the earlier literature only discussing it in passing.

It should be mentioned in passing here that Shivaji's half-brother, Ekoji, captured Tanjore in 1676 and thereafter the Tanjore Maratha kingdom had extensive relations with the Dutch for many years thereafter, but we will not deal with those here because of the choice of topic and also because those deserve a separate study of their own.

Discovery of direct correspondence between Dutch & Shivaji

The above sketch of Dutch-Shivaji relations has been made entirely on the basis of the correspondence between the Dutch factors in India and their superiors in Batavia. Indeed, as G.B.Mehendale remarks in his Marathi biography of Shivaji (first published in January 1999) that "Shivaji and his officials must have corresponded with the Dutch. But no such letter is known till

24 Paranjape, B.G., English records on Shivaji, vol.1, letter no. 345, dated 28th March 1673.

25 Bal Krishna, Shivaji the great, vol.1, part 2, pp. 305-06.

26 Paranjape, B.G., English records on Shivaji, vol.2, letter no. 539.

27 Bellarykar, Sanshodhak, year 84, pp. 1-15.

28 Bellarykar, The quarterly of Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, year 92, pp. 57-71.

now²⁹".

Now, the value of direct correspondence for Historical research can hardly be overrated. Out of all European powers, the correspondence of Dutch & French with Shivaji is missing from the available literature. As outlined above, relations with Dutch is certainly a noteworthy chapter in Shivaji's life. Therefore, the discovery of such a corpus of letters is certainly very important for researchers specializing in 17th century India in general & Deccan in particular.

The recent series *Dutch Sources on South Asia* has 3 volumes that have a thorough inventory of the Dutch sources related in one way to the other to the History of India during 1600-1824 CE. This series proved immensely helpful for forming a basic idea of how to wade through the immense mass of VOC archives.

Armed with this background, I visited the Nationaalarchief in the Hague, Netherlands during July-August 2016, when I met Dr. Gijs Kruijtzer & Dr. Lennart Bes. The pointers provided by both proved very effective, as no less than fifteen such letters were discovered, along with a huge mass of records that was both unpublished and and was helpful for information on Shivaji's life. The translation and analysis of these is in progress. It is hoped that many new insights would thus be gained from these letters and accompanying correspondence.

All the letters thus found are within 1670-80, with the earliest being in 1673 and the latest in 1680. As expected, the letters are either from the factory of vengurla or the Coromandel division. Most of these are the letters written by Shivaji & his officials to the Dutch. The letters written by Dutch to Shivaji or his officials are relatively few, with only three such letters being found so far. All of the letters were found in the Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren (OBP) section of the Amsterdam chamber of VOC, from 1660-80.

Summaries of letters

The letters in 1673 mention a certain merchant named "Polpotneyk", whose name keeps popping up in many Dutch records of the time. Apparently he had created some nuisance to Shivaji's officers in vengurla, and had fled to an island under Dutch control, nearby the Canara coast. One or two of his ships were seized by Shivaji as well as Portuguese³⁰, and Shivaji mentioned all this in the letter, citing the "old friendship with the Dutch" as the reason why he handled the issue with relative lenience, to which the admiral Rijkloff van Goens replied that he would do the needful³¹.

In 1676, alarmed by the constant warfare nearby Vengurla and the subsequent lack of trade there, the Dutch approached Shivaji & his great governor of the province, Anaji Pandit and requested them to recognize their old privileges (granted in 1637-41 by Muhammad Adilshah³²). After many rounds of discussion between the Dutchmen Abraham Lefeber & Rombout Lefer and Shivaji, his elder son Sambhaji & great governor Anaji Pandit from January-April 1676, their trading rights were finally recognized, albeit with an additional fee of 1000 pagodas per year. The accompanying correspondence also mentions that Shivaji had a great need of copper at the time, which the Dutch satisfied. The copper was imported from Japan, and the surge in the import of copper during 1676-78 is indeed reflected in the OBP volumes for the respective periods³³.

29 Mehendale, G.B., Shri Raja Shiva Chhatrapati, vol.1, part 1, pp. 21, footnote no. 94.

30 Batavia Dagregister 1673, pp. 299-301.

31 Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, VOC 1295.

32 Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlandico Indicum, vol.1, pp. 294-97 & pp.358-60.

33 Ryuto Shimada, The intra-Asian trade in Japanese copper, pp. 11-18.

During 1677, when Shivaji was on his way to his southern campaign, the Dutch sent him a letter, congratulating him for having conquered the fort of Gingee and nearby regions, also mentioning their discussions with Janardan Pandit, the brother of Raghunath Pandit, about the kaul given to them. During the same year, one Santoji Bhosle, who was earlier allied with Ekoji, the half-brother of Shivaji, joined the army of Shivaji. A Dutch spy was present inside his army and wrote back to the Dutch bosses. He mentions in detail the condition the camp, the strength of the army and their further movement. At one point he mentions that the Nayak of Madura had also helped Santoji, and that as per a letter from Shivaji, he intended to deal with one "Ambiragua".³⁴

After Shivaji's southern campaign was over, the protracted negotiations for starting a Dutch settlement at Porto Novo produced a considerable mass of correspondence between the two parties. In 1680, Raghunath Pandit wrote to the Dutch, saying that he had gone through all the negotiations and that he had given the necessary instructions to his subordinate officers, and that he wished for the VOC to prosper. He then issued many "bevelschriften" aka "order-letters" to his subordinates, detailing out the work to be done and informing them of the progress of negotiations done till then. In 1680, just after Shivaji's death, the VOC wanted to build a lodge at Tegenepatnam as well, for which they similarly wrote to Raghunath Pandit. He then wrote to them similarly, along with his officers.³⁵

Importance of Dutch records as sources for the study of life of Shivaji

The Dutch records hitherto published reveal a great deal of information about the life & times of Shivaji. Along with English records, they offer one of the most extensive foreign records on his life. Description of a few campaigns of Shivaji is only found from the Dutch records, while in other cases they offer more detailed description of the concerned events. The VOC was a highly bureaucratic organization, that relied on extensive reports sent to their superiors at Batavia and then back to the Dutch republic. As George Roques, who served the French East India Company during 1686-1693, writes about the Dutch³⁶:

They thus know definitely the amount needed to maintain each of them and, maintaining the sound system, they clearly see their profits and losses every year so that they can withdraw from places which prove to be unprofitable. This is what they do not do although they have several posts too many of which bring them no profit but a lot of expenses; even so they do not give them up. They are there, and there they want to stay, whatever be the cost. Those who have but a light job, endeavour to inform the head factory about what the others are doing, and about whatever happens there and all around down to the smallest detail. The Council takes its resolution on it, in order to go forward. By this excellent policy they know everything that happens in India, by sea and land, in order to profit from it.

The subordinate Dutch factories wrote the reports of events happening nearby them to the headquarters of the respective division, from where they were sent to Batavia and further to the Dutch republic. In the process, the events got successively concise. Even then, using the Batavia Dagregister volumes, which describe the events happening throughout a given year, and the series which was named as "Koloniaal Archief" in the old system and "Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren" or OBP in the new system, plenty of information about Shivaji's campaigns etc. Has been extracted. Following are a few important aspects in these records:

34 Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, VOC 1324.

35 Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, VOC 1360.

36 George Roques as translated by Indrani Ray in L. Subramaniam (ed.), The French East India Company and the Trade of the Indian Ocean: A Collection of Essays by Indrani Ray (Delhi, 1999), p.73.

1. Shivaji's south Konkan campaign during May-December 1664 has been reconstructed chiefly with the help of the Dutch records of the Vengurla factory.
2. Along with English records, the Dutch records have one of the earliest references to the existence of overseas trade to Arabian peninsula as initiated by Shivaji, in 1664.
3. During November-December 1675, The Abyssinian ruler of Danda-Rajpuri, called Siddi, attacked the south Konkan coast, where he fought with Shivaji's navy. The details of that battle and the fact that the Siddi launched assault from land in two directions, alongwith the number of people who were either affected or died has been till now only found in Dutch records. Same applies to some other campaigns of Shivaji around Phonda, Belgavi, etc.
4. Shivaji and his officials issued many kauls to the Dutch, especially during the former's year long campaign in the Adilshahi karnataka. The details of those kauls reveal many fascinating aspects of Shivaji's rule. The most famous of these kauls is the one given to Jaques Caulier, the governor of the Coromandel division of the VOC, issued on 26th August, 1677. Therein, he recognized the old trading rights of the VOC but with the stipulation that the latter may no longer purchase slaves from Shivaji's domain. Considering the extent of the slave trade prevalent at that time, this is indeed a revolutionary announcement and reveals an entirely different side of the character of the man. This provision has been known only from Dutch records till now. It has been discussed in detail by Dr. Gijs Kruijtzter³⁷ and the present author³⁸ in their respective works.
5. From 1678 to 1680, the Dutch tried hard to open a trading lodge at Porto Novo, an important port under Shivaji. After initial successes in the negotiations, Gopaldas Pandit, the Subhedar of the region under consideration, vetoed the same. This led to the blockade of the port by Dutch, as a result of which the trade there stopped completely. The matter went to Raghunath Pandit, the great governor of the province of Adilshahi karnataka, who then allowed the construction of a Dutch lodge at Porto Novo, provided that it was not fortified. The kauls given for this also reveal the measurements of the land given to Dutch as well as its precise location³⁹.

The treatment of the Dutch by Shivaji's officials in this matter closely mirrors the general prescription given in the Adnyapatra, a manual of statecraft, prepared by Ramachandrapant Amatya, Shivaji's finance minister. A direct & concrete example of the prescriptions in the Adnyapatra has till now only been found in the Dutch records.

6. After his coronation in 1674, Shivaji ordered a huge amount of copper from the Dutch, presumably for striking coins. The intent behind it is not known, but only the Dutch records

37 Kruijtzter, G.C., Xenophobia in 17th century India, pp.188.

38 Bellarykar, Nikhil N., Sanshodhak, year 84, pp. 1-15.

39 Bellarykar, Nikhil N., The quarterly of Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, year 92, pp. 57-71.

mention this huge purchase. During January-September 1676, the Dutch negotiated multiple times with Shivaji and Annaji pandit, the minister of land revenue of Shivaji for the resumption of trade and their trading rights at Vengurla. The negotiations have survived in no less than 6 letters, 1 kaul and 40 pages of accompanying correspondence, which reveal the stages of negotiation, taxation policies (especially the changes introduced in them by Shivaji) and trade figures⁴⁰. The letters exchanged reveal how the typical diplomatic correspondence worked during those times, i.e. First the subordinates made a request and then their superiors. A paper on this round is awaiting publication.

7. Shivaji's policies about traders are explicitly spelled out in the kauls issued to the Dutch, e.g. That the traders won't be molested, won't be forced to pay more than the amount already agreed upon, and that the traders will have the right to punish their own people according to their own law in some cases, etc. This also accords well with the Adnyapatra, which explicitly states "Traders are the glory of the state".

But this still begs the question- exactly how beneficial was Shivaji's rule to the traders? Fortunately the figures of the annual trade volume of VOC in Coromandel do shed some light on the matter, which is unique in that no other European records discovered till now show the effect of Shivaji's rule, albeit only in the larger scheme of things. Tapan Raychaudhuri, in his book "Jan company in Coromandel", has given the trade figures for the company from 1626 till 1690. As can be seen from the figures there⁴¹, the profit of the VOC grew successively from 1675 to 1684, the longest such streak in the whole 17th century. The profit in 1684 was around 1.2 million florins, the highest value in the whole 17th century. Therefore, it can reasonably be argued that Shivaji's rule proved beneficial to traders, although the bigger contributor towards this can be debated, i.e. His trading policies vis-a-vis the stability brought by his rule.

8. The direct correspondence between the Dutch and Shivaji & his officials reveals the names of certain officials of the latter, which were previously unknown. Till now, around 400 officials of Shivaji have been known, from lowest to highest echelons of the government⁴². The Dutch records reveal at least seven new names of Shivaji's officials in Vengurla and Coromandel regions, e.g. Mahadaji Shankar, Balazi Suro, Nattesi, etc. This new information sheds new light on the rule of Shivaji and specific cities under his rule.
9. The direct correspondence also contains two letters⁴³ written by a Dutch spy about the movements of troops of Shivaji's generals and others. Till date, no such letter has been known from other sources on Shivaji, only a concise reporting of the accounts of spies⁴⁴. This not only reveals new information about Shivaji, but also about how espionage was used by various powers in 17th century India.
10. The Dutch records on Shivaji are not restricted to the VOC archives alone. There are many travelogues and Historical books in Dutch that report many of these events. For example, Olfert Dapper's 1672 book titled "Asia, of nauwekerig Beschrijving van het rijk van den grooten Mogols" mentions the first sack of Surat, one of the earliest mentions of the

40 VOC 1321, pp. 956-76 & Ryuto Shimada, The intra-Asian trade in Japanese copper, pp. 11-18.

41 Raychaudhuri, Jan company in Coromandel, pp. 219-20.

42 I thank Mr. G.B.Mehendale, the author of the influential & arguably the most detailed Marathi biography of Shivaji, titled "Shri Raja Shiva Chhatrapati" for this information.

43 Overgekomen Brieven en Papieren, VOC 1324.

44 Foreign biographies of Shivaji, pp. 379-80, vide the Dutch account of 1st sack of Surat in 1664.s

incident. Also, the oldest known, contemporary portraits of Shivaji were all found in Dutch collections of Witsen Album and others originally⁴⁵, except the ones in Louvre, Paris. The Dutch portraits of Shivaji have served as the model for later copies, and the inscriptions on them helped identify without doubt about whose painting it was.

Conclusion

From the small survey presented above, it is evident that the importance of Dutch records as sources for life of Shivaji can't be underestimated. The extensive historiography of the VOC in India amply demonstrates the importance of Dutch records in the History of India from 1600 till 1800 CE. Owing to various reasons, their study for Maratha History has not been made till now. With my earlier two papers and this one, there has been a small beginning in this direction. I hope that this field will emerge as an important one in the years to come, because the extant records are enormous and also a large number of Historians exist who have expertise in either Maratha History or VOC.

45 For a detailed discussion of the contents of Witsen Album, pl. Refer to Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, "Het Witsenalbum: zeventiende-eeuwse Indiase portretten op bestelling." *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 44,3: 167-254.