

FROM AFRICAN SLAVE TO DECCANI MILITARY AND POLITICAL LEADER: EXAMINING MALIK AMBAR'S LIFE AND LEGACY

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the career of Malik Ambar (1549-1646). Originally an African slave soldier, he gained power in the regional politics of medieval India. Study of his life illustrates the dynamics, complexity, and politics of military slavery in the Deccan and India.

INTRODUCTION

Although fewer Africans were transported to the Indian subcontinent than to the Americas, they played a significant role in Indian history.¹ Malik Ambar gained control of a sizable Deccani sultanate and transcended the traditional role of slave by resisting the Mughal Empire's armies and maintaining the socio-economic structure of the Deccan. Despite his accomplishments, Ambar he has been forgotten by historians for a variety of political, religious, and ethnic reasons.

A note on terminology: in this paper, the word *slave*, unless otherwise indicated, connotes people of African heritage in involuntary servitude. The term *Habshi* refers to African slaves from the hinterlands of Ethiopia and the Sudan.²

THE DECCAN: GEOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

The Deccan, the principal geological region of Central India, is divided into five major areas: the Western Ghats, comprised of the Sahyadri range and coastal region near those mountains; the Northern Deccan plateau; the Southern Deccan plateau; the Eastern plateau; and the Eastern Ghats, including the Bengali coastal region. Its landscapes and climates vary from cold mountains to warm coastal plains.³

Moreover, the region was populated by speakers of Sanskrit, Tamil, Gujarati, Marathi, Persian, and Urdu and practitioners of Hinduism and Islam. Culturally, the Deccan was settled by four groups: Hindus, who considered themselves the natives of the Deccan; the so-called Westerners, who came from the Persianate north; Arabs, who sailed from the Middle East;⁴ and a large number of slaves of African-descent, involuntarily moved to the region.

HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE SUBCONTINENT AND THE DECCAN

Between the 12th and the 15th centuries, India experienced tremendous change. The once powerful empires of the Mauryan, Pala, and Gupta dynasties declined. In the north, local Hindu kingdoms carved out territories and fought amongst themselves. Beginning in the 12th century, Turkic invaders from the Central Asian steppe plundered the subcontinent's vast riches, establishing dynasties and bringing Islamic and Persian influence. Between the 13th century, when sultanates began consolidating power in the north, and the mid 16th, when the first Muslim empire in India emerged, north India was ruled by Islamic dynasties: chronologically, the Khilji, Tughlaq, Sayyid, and Lodi.

Northern political and cultural influence was relatively slow to enter the Deccan – not until 1296 when Alauddin Khilji, sultan of Delhi, invaded the Devagiri and Warangal regions. The successors to the Khiljis, the Tughlaqs, nominally controlled the region until 1347, when Alauddin Hassan Bahman Shah, the Tughlaqs' governor of the Deccan, revolted and established the Islamic Bahmanid Sultanate.⁵

Since the Delhi sultanates still controlled the north following the Bahmani revolt, land routes into Central Asia were no longer viable for Deccani traders. This increased Deccani Indian Ocean maritime trade. The Deccan benefited from its rule of coastal areas along the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal.⁶ Arab seafaring

merchants transported luxury goods, Persian horses, and slaves into the Deccan in exchange for Indian clothes and spices.⁷

By the late 1400s, however, the differing socio-political goals of those who considered themselves Deccani (speakers of local languages and of non-Persian heritage) and Westerners (who considered themselves Persian and spoke and read Persian or Urdu) created discontent and weakened the Bahmani state. Starting in 1490, successive regions broke away.⁸ By 1528, the sultanate was replaced by five separate kingdoms, called the Deccan Sultanates: Ahmadnagar, Berar, Bidar, Bijapur, and Golconda. While tensions bedeviled them, they fought together to weaken their southern rival, the Vijaynagar Empire, finally prevailing in 1565 at the Battle of Talikota. Thereafter, the Deccan sultanates enjoyed a period of autonomy and prosperity.

Meanwhile, new groups were entering the subcontinent. In the south, the Portuguese landed near Calicut in the spring of 1498,⁹ followed by other Europeans seeking wealth and territory.¹⁰ In the early 16th century, the Persianate Timurids invaded India. By 1550, commanded by Babur, they defeated the last of the Delhi Sultans and formed a new Delhi dynasty. The Mughal era had begun. Babur's immediate successors consolidated Mughal control of the region; by the time of Akbar ascended the throne in 1556, the Mughal kingdom had become one of the largest to rule India. Under Emperor Akbar, the Mughals skillfully incorporated almost all of northern India, even sections of the Central Asian steppe, into their empire. By 1600, it claimed most of the subcontinent and the imperial war apparatus was preparing to conquer the Deccan.¹¹

SLAVERY IN THE DECCAN

Slavery had existed in India since the Vedic era.¹² Sources written during the Bahmanid period contain the earliest known references to African slaves in the Deccan. Court historian Rafi al-Din Ibrahim Shirazi noted that Sultan Taj al-Din Firuz (ruled 1397–1422) owned several *Habshi* in his harem and maintained a contingent of African slave attendants and guards.¹³ Indeed, a well structured system for importing African slaves into the Deccan via the Indian Ocean was already in place by the 14th century. Muslim traders probably brought the first African slaves to southern Indian ports in the 12th century; this traffic continued well into the 19th century. While most slaves entering the subcontinent from the north were of non-African, there was a long history of importing African slaves into Southern India and the Deccan.¹⁴

Records indicate that, by the early 13th century, Muslim rulers owned many African slaves, who came primarily from the Horn of Africa, especially Ethiopia. Ethiopian demand for luxury goods from the East generated a flourishing market in which Indian products were exchanged for gold, ivory, and human captives. Though the Christian rulers of Ethiopia forbade the exportation of Christian slaves to foreign countries, pagans and non-Christian prisoners of war or those caught in raids by slavers in the Sudan were sold.¹⁵ The first Portuguese travelers to reach Ethiopia recorded seeing Ethiopians dressed in fine Indian cloths exchanging slaves for goods that "Moorish" merchants brought to market.¹⁶ Other travelers reported silks exchanged for fixed numbers of slaves.¹⁷

The demand for slave soldiers grew from the 12th century onwards as Islamic rulers extended their states or settled into newly conquered territories. The new rulers believed that foreign slave soldiers would remain more loyal and defend their commander's interests better than natives.¹⁸ African slaves were employed in military service, armed protection, and administrative duties and as concubines and aides.

The relationship between master and military slave was complex – based on mutual dependence rather than hostility, in contrast to the Atlantic system.¹⁹ Instead, the *Habshi* looked after vital interests of his master, who reciprocated with an almost patriarchal attitude towards his slaves. Many *Habshi* entered their master's service as youngsters, completely alone in a foreign country. A good owner would not only provide for a slave; he would educate, reward loyalty, and become the conduit through whom a slave might gain prestige and social standing.²⁰

The trusted role of the *Habshi* in the military was evident in Ibn Battutah's chronicles of his travels in India from 1333 to 1342. He noted that *Habshi* served as royal guards, navy escorts, even ranking officers commanding royal armies.²¹ By the time European traveler Tome Pires explored India (1512 to 1515), the important roles *Habshi* played in royal courts, government, and military administration were unmistakable:

“seemingly the People who govern the kingdoms are Abyssinians. These are looked upon as knights . . . greatly esteemed. . . . After the king it is to this people that the kingdom is obedient from fear.”²²

MALIK AMBAR: BIOGRAPHY OF A SLAVE TURNED DECCANI LEADER

Malik Ambar: Biography of a Slave Turned Deccani Leader

Malik Ambar was born in Ethiopia in 1546. One Deccan source claims that his original name was Shambhu;²³ another, Chapu, and that he was from the Kambata region of Ethiopian highlands.²⁴ Both are probably unreliable.²⁵ Contrary to earlier scholars' assertions that Ambar's parents were destitute Christians, Richard Eaton argues persuasively that Ambar was of non-Christian parentage since Ethiopian law prohibited the exportation of Christian slaves, especially to Arab slave traders.²⁶

Like many *Habshi*, Ambar was brought from Africa to the slave markets of the Persian Gulf in the mid 16th century. At *al-Mukha*, Yemen, he was allegedly sold for a sizable sum²⁷ and carried to Baghdad where Mir Qasim al-Baghdadi purchased Ambar and took him to the Deccan. There, he was sold at least two more times. His last master was Mirak Dabir, styled the Chengiz Khan, prime minister to Murtaza Nizam Shah I (premier 1565–1586) of Ahmadnagar. Initially, Ambar was just one of the thousands of slaves in his master's army. The paucity of information about this stage of Ambar's life suggests that it was fairly routine.²⁸ He was probably taught to read, write, and administer the Khan's affairs and given training in military tactics, particularly mounted warfare.

Radhey Shyam observes that Ambar's intelligence and dignity made him a favorite of the Khan, who is said to have employed him as his personal aide in governing Nizam Shah's domains. Under the Khan's guidance, Ambar rose steadily at court.²⁹ However, the court was rife with intrigue and Ambar's master and benefactor died suddenly,³⁰ after which, Ambar was granted his freedom and became a foot soldier.

He entered the sultanate just as the Mughals first invaded the Deccan. Internal unrest and foreign threats led to the decline of Nizam Shah as rival groups jockeyed for power.³¹ Ambar then moved to Bijapur Sultanate, where, serving as a mid-ranking military officer, he was neither promoted nor treated well.³² Subsequently, Ambar returned to Ahmadnagar, which was torn by a war of dynastic succession between Bahadur Nizam Shah and Miran Shah Ali. Seizing the opportunity, Ambar joined a senior Abyssinian slave soldier, Abhang Khan, in rebelling against Bahadur Shah's rule. As a result, Ambar obtained his first sizable military command: squadron leader of 150 cavalrymen.

In the autumn of 1600, taking advantage of Deccan infighting, Mughal armies captured Ahmadnagar's fortifications and deposed the sultan. The dynasty to which Ambar owed allegiance collapsed.³³ When Abhang Khan was captured by rival troops, Ambar inherited his commander's sizable force. Recruiting other anti-Mughal soldiers, he soon led a highly skilled army of Abyssinians, Marathas, and Muslims from the Deccan that routinely attacked local Mughal positions, raided supply convoys, and entered northern Mughal beyond the Deccan.

Meanwhile, the Ahmadnagar Sultanate was in disarray. The Nizam Shah dynasty had seemingly ended, the sultanate overrun by its enemies. In these circumstances, Ambar, now a powerful military leader, decided to revive the Nizam Shah lineage. In 1600, he installed Murtaza II³⁴ as the new Nizam Shah. To consolidate his own position, Ambar married his daughter to the new Nizam, who appointed him regent, acknowledging Ambar's de facto rule.

Although a puppet regime, the sultanate rallied Deccanis against the Mughals. Men from various ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds formed a single army, pitting Deccani regional identity against Mughal imperialism. Loyalty to the Nizam Shah was given great significance, likened to a “fidelity to salt.”³⁵ As the conflict continued, Ambar further secured his position by defeating (in 1606) his chief rival, Raju Dakhni, leader of a separate guerilla war against the Mughals, who had controlled the northwestern territories of the Nizam Shah.

Despite the Mughals' failure to win any substantive victories in the Deccan, they continued to maintain a presence in the region; a large force was stationed in forward positions along the Mughal-Deccani border. However, at the time of Emperor Akbar's death in 1605, imperial troops had yet to succeed in annexing the Deccan. The new Mughal Emperor, Jahangir, renewed imperial efforts, charging his commanders to defeat Ambar, capture Murtaza II, and control the area. They were unsuccessful. For instance, in 1610, Ambar routed the Mughal occupiers of Ahmadnagar's fort and shifted his own court from

provincial Junnar to Daulatabad, center of the former Tughlaq dynasty. European travelers who accompanied the Mughal expeditions noted their defeats by Ambar's much smaller forces. Joannes De Laet, a Flemish geographer and philologist who worked at the Mughal court, recalled how in 1611 Ambar resisted joint armies commanded by Mughal general Khan Jahan Lodi and governor of Gujarat, Abdullah Khan.³⁶

Despite Ambar's great power, in the early 1600s, Sultan Murtaza II assumed a more active role in court affairs. Ambar, as the *perhwa* (chief minister and regent), considered these his own sphere of influence. In 1610, Ambar took offense at a minor quarrel between the Sultan's two wives and had Murtaza II and his senior queen assassinated.³⁷ Ambar appointed the five-year-old son of the deposed ruler king – Sultan Burhan III – and then dominated affairs of the state. Through his daughter's marriage to the deposed sultan, Murtaza II, Ambar now had official ties to the country's nobility. Furthermore, Ambar's family also enjoyed kinship ties to a *Habshi* aristocratic family in Bijapur.³⁸ He had become the most powerful figure in Ahmadnagar and much of the Deccan.

In 1612, having defeated another Mughal campaign against him, Ambar moved the court from Daulatabad to Khirki. Then he declared war on the Portuguese for levying duties on maritime trade that, he thought, reduced Ahmadnagar's revenues.³⁹ Having killed the Portuguese commandant, Balthazar Rabello de Almeida, Ambar's men seized several enemy forts before negotiating a ceasefire.⁴⁰

Ambar continued to build alliances, defending Ahmadnagar against Europeans and Mughals, and solidifying the Nizam Shah dynasty's position. From 1612 to the mid 1620s, he took an active role in Ahmadnagar's military campaigns and civil administration. In 1625, under Ambar's direction, Ahmadnagar defeated a sizable invasion from a neighboring sultanate, negotiated territorial boundaries with the Mughal representative, met with representatives of the British East India Company, and formed an alliance with the Portuguese. On May 14, 1626, Ambar died, aged 80, at a fort in Khirki.⁴¹

MALIK AMBAR'S MILITARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As a resistance leader, and later as prime minister, he proved himself a brilliant tactician and commander. Many primary sources, especially the Persian histories, focus on his military deeds.⁴² Ambar's renown as a soldier began during his service to Chengiz Khan in the late 1500s. However, not until restoring the Nizam Shah dynasty while resisting the Mughals did Ambar's fame become widespread. From a cohort of 150 cavalymen, Ambar's charisma and leadership drew soldiers to his armies until, by the late 1500s, he commanded many thousands.

Knowing his enemies' superior numbers and strength in conventional warfare, Ambar trained his men in guerilla tactics, weakening the imperial army by attacking its supply lines and encampments. The Mughals' elaborate formations and slowly moving columns were no match for Ambar's quick, elusive troop,⁴³ which routinely raided Mughal territory.⁴⁴

Ambar's army was multiethnic and multireligious, including fellow *Habshis*, Deccani Muslims, Hindus, and Persians. He recruited large contingents of Marathi light cavalry, skilled in mounted warfare and well adapted to fighting in mountainous terrain.⁴⁵ By 1618, they alone numbered over 60,000 horses.⁴⁶

Ambar was a highly pragmatic soldier who retreated when he knew he could not win.⁴⁷ Unlike many of his Mughal foes, he was not driven by pride, and his troops prevented Mughal domination of the region. Perhaps the best testament to Ambar's skill is found in a eulogy attributed to Emperor Jahangir: "In the art of soldiering Ambar was unique."⁴⁸

MALIK AMBAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN CIVIL GOVERNANCE

Traditionally, prime ministers in the Deccan wielded civil and military authority but remained subordinate to the sultan.⁴⁹ However, while the Nizam Shah Sultans retained their position as head of state, Ambar made the office purely ceremonial.⁵⁰ By the early 1600s, Ambar's dominance was obvious; his official seal appeared on court documents that traditionally bore only the sultan's.⁵¹ European travelers and ambassadors to Ahmadnagar often referred to it as simply the "kingdom of Mellieque (Malik)"⁵² and to Ambar as "King of the Deccan."⁵³ Still, he never assumed a position greater than regent or prime minister. In fact, he retained (at least in appearance) the traditional court structure. This gave Ambar a degree of legitimacy (by preempting accusations of usurping the throne), which insulated him from open attacks by jealous foes, royalists, or noblemen. Indeed, it is a testimony to Ambar's political skill that he maintained

almost total control of the state until his death, even though many courtiers were growing resentful of Ambar's authority.⁵⁴

As prime minister, Ambar instituted several major state reforms. Although the state previously asserted that it owned all land within its territory, Ambar renounced such claims. He thus recognized the *Mirasi* land tenureship rights of the landed population.⁵⁵ Ambar's decision had several advantages. The landed gentry now had a vested interest in maintaining Nizam Shah (and Ambar's) rule over Ahmadnagar and thus aided resistance to the Mughal presence in the Deccan.

Moreover, Ambar reorganized Ahmadnagar's inefficient feudal revenue system. Based on his land tenureship reforms, Ambar developed a tax policy that relied on accurate assessments of field cultivation and commodity values. Consequently, the state collected as revenue two-fifths of produce in kind and one-third of the nominal worth of produce in coins. The new tax structure successfully generated steady revenues for the state without overburdening taxpayers. Thus the state and Ambar further won the support of the population.⁵⁶ He also generated new revenues by dealing efficiently with the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the British East India Company.

With increasing state revenues and the spoils of war, Ambar improved Ahmadnagar's infrastructure by undertaking noteworthy building projects. He designed the *Neher*, a complex irrigation system that brought a steady water supply to the city of Aurangabad, which had previously faced severe water shortages. He constructed a pillared aqueduct system that tapped into underground water tables in the northern mountains. Despite the complexity and size of the project, under Ambar's direction, it was completed in less than fifteen months at a cost of only two hundred and fifty-thousand coins.⁵⁷ Ambar also enriched the region's cultural heritage by commissioning several large black granite monuments. The tomb he built for himself at Khudabad was one of the most intricate and ornate mausoleums in the Deccan.⁵⁸

CONCLUSIONS

Malik Ambar's military and political achievements were impressive. Are they more so, given that the institution of Islamic military slavery dates back to the late Umayyad and Abbasid eras? In Indian history, several military slaves rose to great power and influence: most notably, the Mamluk slave kings of Delhi, the commander Muhammad Khilji, and the slave king of Bengal, Barbek Shah. However, Ambar is different. Unlike the Mamluks or Khilji, Ambar did not assert his control by reordering the prevailing socio-political structure. Whereas Khilji, as a product of the early Islamic presence in the subcontinent, undertook massive expansionist campaigns to increase the sultanate's domain and spread Islam, Ambar who lived in a later, less proselytizing period, did not.

Unlike Ambar, the slave kings of Bengal lasted less than a decade. In 1486, the Bengali Sultan, Jalaluddin Fath Shah, was deposed by his chief eunuch, Sultan Shahzada, who was quickly deposed by Shamsuddin Muzaffar Shah, a *Habshi* slave loyal to Jalaluddin. Unlike Ambar's moderate and inclusive rule, Shamsuddin Shah's was heavy handed and brutal, premised on altering the very structure of the Bengali court by eliminating the nobility and replacing them with fellow slaves. However, Shamsuddin Shah, who quickly alienated his own military, was assassinated in 1493. Shah's actions prompted a backlash against Africans in the Bengal region; those *Habshi* who were not lynched were expelled from Bengal.⁵⁹ By contrast, the popular Ambar ruled for more than two and a half decades.

In the Deccan, no other *Habshi* slave rose to the political station attained by Ambar. No other Deccani figure who had been a slave ever achieved the power twice to depose a ruling sultan, command massive military operations, and undertake large civilian projects.

Perhaps Ambar was so successful because he remained within accepted social and cultural bounds. Furthermore, his administration was inclusive, based not on religion and race but loyalty and ability. Perhaps historical circumstances helped Ambar gain prominence – a period of uncertainty and turmoil resulting from the near collapse of the Nizam Shah dynasty and the Mughal invasion of the Deccan allowed a former slave to rise to power. But it does not detract from Ambar's unique achievements.

Despite his many accomplishments, Ambar rarely appears in narrative Indian history. What might account for this absence? Ambar was a difficult figure to classify in the often ideologically driven histories of the subcontinent. As an Abyssinian, he was regarded as an outsider. His status as a slave might further

have diminished him in the opinion of chroniclers. Indeed, princely figures with lesser accomplishments have been accorded far greater historical representation.

Religion might also have played a role. Hindus have been emphasized in India's traditional past; Ambar was a devout Muslim. Furthermore, as a *Shi'a*, Ambar did not even fit into the narratives of modern *Sunni* South Asian Islamic countries. Pakistan's early history, for example, features Mughal *Sunni* figures and culture.

Unlike Ambar, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (1627–1680) has been fully incorporated into the grand narratives of Indian history. Comparisons of the two are apt since Ambar and Shivaji were closely linked. Shivaji's grandfather, Maloji Raje Bhosale (d. 1620), was Ambar's trusted officer. Shivaji's father, Shahaji Raje Bhosale (1594–1665), joined Ambar's son, Fath Khan, in fighting the Mughals and appointing Murtaza III sultan of Ahmadnagar.⁶⁰ Indeed, Shivaji epitomizes the archetypical figures of the subcontinent's nationalist histories. As a Maharathi, his ethnicity was certain. His noble birth and militancy against the Mughals guaranteed Shivaji a prominent place in history.⁶¹ Furthermore, Shivaji fits snugly within established religious categories. While unsupported by historical facts, Shivaji and his anti-Mughal resistance movement have been presented within a Hindu-Muslim framework.⁶² In fact, in recent revisionist history, Shivaji falsely has been presented as anti-Islamic.⁶³

Grand cultural narratives sometimes distort and exclude. Thus, despite his many accomplishments, Ambar has not been accorded a more distinguished place in history. While Shivaji and others have been elevated to lofty positions in the pantheon of the Indian subcontinent's cultural and proto-nationalist heroes, Ambar has been neglected. But as historians know, forgotten figures are often the most rewarding.

NOTES

¹ Emmanuel Akyeampong, "Africans in the Diaspora: The Diaspora and Africa," *African Affairs*, no. 99 (2000): 190.

² The word is derived from the Arabic *Habashi* (Abyssinian, Ethiopian). See Hans Wehr, *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J. Milton Cowan (Ithaca: Spoken Language Services, 1980).

³ H. K. Sherwani and P. M. Joshi eds., *History of Medieval Deccan, 1295–1724* (Hyderabad: Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1973), 1: 4–7, 14–26, 144–145.

⁴ Richard M. Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan, 1300–1761: Eight Indian Lives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 61–62.

⁵ Sherwani and Joshi, 1: 149–150.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 207.

⁷ Eaton, 59–60.

⁸ Sherwani and Joshi, 1: 261.

⁹ M. N. Pearson, *The Portuguese in India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 5–6.

¹⁰ Om Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-colonial India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 172–74.

¹¹ Sherwani and Joshi, 1: 255.

¹² Dev Raj Chanana, *Slavery in Ancient India: As Depicted in Pali and Sanskrit Texts* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1960).

¹³ Rafi al-Din Ibrahim Shirazi, *Tadhkirat al-Muluk: A Manual of Safavid Administration*, trans. V. Minnorsky (Oxford: Gibb Memorial Trust, 1943).

¹⁴ Daniel Pipes, *Slave Soldiers and Islam: The Genesis of a Military System* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 52–53.

¹⁵ Richard Pankhurst, *A Social History of Ethiopia: The Northern and Central Highlands from Early Medieval Times to the Rise of Emperor Tewodros II* (Trenton: Red Sea Press, 1992), 111–112.

¹⁶ Eaton, 108 quoting Father Francisco Alvares, *Prester John*, 1: 455.

¹⁷ Eaton, 109 quoting C. F. Beckinghad and G. W. B. Huntingford, *Some Records of Ethiopia, 1593–1646 being extracts from The History of High Ethiopia or Abassia by Manoel de Albeida together with Bahrey's History of the Galla* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1954), 162.

¹⁸ Pipes, 63–75.

- ¹⁹ Ibid., 86–93.
- ²⁰ Eaton, 111.
- ²¹ Ibn Battuta, *Rehla of Ibn Battuta: India, Maldives Islands and Ceylon*, trans. Agha Madhi Hasan, 2nd ed. (M. S. University: Baroda, 1976).
- ²² Armando Cortesao, *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires* (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2005), 1:178.
- ²³ Hashim Beg Astarabadi, *Futuh-at-I 'adil Shai*. For a detailed discussion of Ambar's original name, see D. R. Seth, "Life and Times of Malik Ambar," *Islamic Culture* (April 1957): 142.
- ²⁴ Eaton, 105.
- ²⁵ Radhey Shyam, *Life and Times of Malik Ambar* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1968), 34.
- ²⁶ Eaton, 108–109.
- ²⁷ W. Ph. Coolhaas, *Pieter van den Broecke in Azië* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), 148–149.
- ²⁸ B. G. Tamaskar, *The Life and Work of Malik Ambar* (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I, 1978), 28.
- ²⁹ Shyam, 36.
- ³⁰ The Khan most likely had been assassinated by rival courtiers. Tamaskar, 18.
- ³¹ Shyam, 5.
- ³² Ibid., 37.
- ³³ Eaton, 115.
- ³⁴ Murtaza II was the son of Miran Shah 'Ali. Shah 'Ali was brother of the last sultan of Ahmadnagar. Eaton, 116.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 118.
- ³⁶ Johannes De Laet, *Description of India and Fragment of Indian History* as translated by J. S. Hoyland, *The Empire of The Great Mogol* (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I, 1928), 185–188. See also *A Contemporary Dutch Chronicle of Mughal India*, trans. Brij Narain and Sri Ram Sharma (Calcutta: Susil Gupta (India) Limited, 1957), 45.
- ³⁷ Coolhaas, 149.
- ³⁸ Malik Ambar had his son, Fath Khan, married to the daughter of Yaqut Khan, the most powerful noblemen of Bijapur. Eaton, 119–120.
- ³⁹ Sherwani and Joshi, 1:265.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Eaton, 123.
- ⁴² Tamaskar, 4–10.
- ⁴³ Shyam, 76–77.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 38.
- ⁴⁵ Eaton, 122.
- ⁴⁶ Shyam, 96–97.
- ⁴⁷ Sherwani and Joshi, 1:264–265.
- ⁴⁸ Jahangir, *The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, or Memoirs of Jahangir*, trans. Alexander Rogers (Delhi: London Royal Asiatic Society, 1909).
- ⁴⁹ Shyam, 203.
- ⁵⁰ Tamaskar, 203–204.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., 206.
- ⁵² Ibid., 29 quoting Monques de Reino, no. 8, Ano de 1601 to 1602, folio 18.
- ⁵³ Ibid., 30 quoting Monques de Reino, no. 9, Ano de 1604, folio 22.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., 205 quoting Muhammad Hashin Fuzuni Astrabadi, *Futuh-at-i-Adils'ahi*, Folio 273a (Sarkar's translation).
- ⁵⁵ H. K. Sherwani and P. M. Joshi, eds., *History of Medieval Deccan, 1295–1724* (Hyderabad: Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1973), 2: 558–559.
- ⁵⁶ Sherwani and Joshi, 1: 561–562.
- ⁵⁷ P. A. Sadgir et al., "Traditional Wisdom in Medieval Water Management of Aurangabad City," *International History Seminar on Irrigation and Drainage* (1987).
- ⁵⁸ Sherwani and Joshi, 1: 261.

- ⁵⁹ R. R. S. Chauhan, *Africans in India: From Slavery to Royalty* (New Delhi: Asian Publication Services, 1995), 3.
⁶⁰ Eaton, 123–224.
⁶¹ Malavika Vartak, “Shivaji Maharaj: Growth of a Symbol,” *Economic and Political Weekly* (May 1999): 1126–1127.
⁶² *Ibid.*, 1128.
⁶³ J. J. Roy Burman, “Shivaji’s Myth and Maharashtra’s Syncretic Traditions,” *Economic and Political Weekly* (April 2001): 1228.

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