

## Shivaji and Savarkar

Hi, Everyone! Anyone who has read Savarkar's biography, even in a cursory manner, is conscious of the immense admiration and respect Savarkar had for Shivaji—from the earliest childhood. Savarkar's chapter on Shivaji in his book *Hindu Padpadshahi* (find an e-book @ [www.savarkarsmarak.com](http://www.savarkarsmarak.com)) gives a very good idea of this too. Time and again Savarkar has hailed Shivaji as the heroic king who wrested back large portions of India from the Mughals and actively chased a "Hindavi Swaraj."

It seems utterly preposterous and ridiculous to me that anyone should point accusing fingers at Savarkar saying he disrespected Shivaji. It is inconceivable!

Yet we live in an imperfect world—when mud is slung at anyone it tends to stick, particularly when it is accompanied by a sensationalized, wanton act of vandalism like burning copies of (Savarkar's) books. And so, much though it goes against the grain to give even an appearance of credibility to such fallacy by mentioning it or offering vindication for Savarkar, I have decided to do it.

Here are some examples which illuminate just what place Shivaji held in Savarkar's heart and soul.

- In 1902, Savarkar composed an *aarti*, a song of worship, in honor of Shivaji. Every Friday as a part of the Ferguson club activity, this *aarti* was sung before a picture of Shivaji.
- In 1903, Savarkar composed the poem *Shivaveer* (Shivaji: the Hero) in honor of Shivaji.
- He has also composed another poem, *Hindunrusimha*, praising Shivaji.

(I have given all the three poems at the end of this post.)

- The very first function organized by Savarkar's Mitra Mela was a celebration of Shivaji Jayanti (birth anniversary.) This is a practice he continued to follow down the road.
- In 1905, his group popularized his ballads on Sinhagad and Baji Prabhu. Both ballads extolled the heroics of Shivaji with Tanaji and Baji Prabhu. Using these incidents of guerilla warfare, Savarkar subtly promoted the idea of freedom. The people in Maharashtra just loved the ballads.
- Sometime after this a Shivaji festival was celebrated at Raigad. These ballads were sung there. The audience was enthralled by them, but Daji Khare, who was presiding over the event, became nervous by their inflammatory words. So fiery were the words that when the audience joined in the singing, Khare, a friend of Tilak, told him to close the show down as he did not want to be party to any unconstitutional activity!
- Babarao published this ballads in 1906 and three years later the Government proscribed them.

Unfortunately, I have not translated these ballads yet.

- In the women's organization, parallel to Savarkar's Mitra Mela, each member was required to take this pledge: "In the name of the Motherland, Shivaji Raja who won freedom through war, and Bhavani Mata who gives strength, I hereby give witness before Shivaji and Bhavani Durga Devi that I shall use swadeshi goods only, love my country more than my life, strive for my country's freedom and help those who are doing so."
- In 1906, in the patriotic song, *Priyakar Hindustan (O Beloved Hindustan)*, which Savarkar specially composed for the occasion commemorating the death anniversary of Guru Govind Singh, organized in a grand manner at Caxton Hall, London on December 29, 1908, he most certainly included Shivaji as one of the virtues of Hindustan.

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Here too was born of Jijabai, Chatrapati Shivaji,

And maidens who embraced the pyre for their honor.

Bricked to death here were the Sons of the Guru,

So staunch were they in their loyal fervor!

- Again in 1908, when he composed another patriotic song, *Hind Sundara Ti* (*Hind, the Beautiful One*,) he makes a mention of Shivaji.

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To Rana Pratap, Shivaji, Banda Bairagi, lo

And Guru Gobind Singhji too

She gave birth, beginning, n' inspiration so!

- Savarkar followed Shivaji's precept of manipulating a powerful enemy any which way, especially from a position of great weakness. He also advocated others to do so too. To give an example, he quoted instances from life of Shivaji to convince the political prisoners in Andman who had received amnesty to sign the pledges. I am giving here the incident as I have written it in my novel *Burning for Freedom*:

“Soon enough, general amnesty was granted to several of them here but not unconditionally.

They had to sign a pledge refraining from any political activity for a specified time. This offended most of them. It was an infringement upon their rights! A slur upon their patriotism! Sign a pledge? Never! Savarkar was very heartened to see that despite all their sufferings, they were still such staunch patriots. Such Sons of India should definitely be free to fight for their country!

‘Brothers, there is nothing wrong in signing this pledge. Sign it and be free—free to work for the freedom of our motherland.’

‘Tatyarao, with the signing of this pledge our hands are tied! It forbids us to do just that very thing.’

‘Ah, but do you have to follow its dictate?’ asked Savarkar passionately. ‘No! A pledge imposed upon us by a foreign enemy power is worth only the paper it is written on. There is no reason to stay committed to it! It is merely a means to an end—only an avenue to break the locks of this jail.’

‘But that would be deceitful, Tatyarao!’

‘Deceitful to whom?’ exclaimed Savarkar. ‘When we have no constitutional rights and are crushed into subjugation by arbitrary laws of an enemy power, honesty as you mean it is not a luxury we can indulge in!’—he raised the palms of his hands—‘the only honesty and truth for us is reinstating the honor of our beloved Hindustan. We follow any path that circumstances force us to take. If the British rule us by unlawful means, we go against this law of theirs to gain freedom. When under duress we make petitions and even sign pledges!’

‘Yes, Tatyarao, there is much in what you say. But it still seems cowardly to sign such papers. The blood of heroes like Shivaji flows in our veins! What, shall we supplicate before the enemy? History will label us as cowards and hypocrites!’

‘We cannot swerve from our path by fear of adverse public opinion! Shivaji was very brave indeed. Yet when needed, he took a conciliatory position with Aurangzeb. At one time, Shivaji suffered many losses from the mighty Mughal forces led by Mirza Raja Jaisingh and Dilerkhan. He made a small capitulation and signed the Treaty of Purandar. He was forced to hand over to Aurangzeb many forts and go to Agra. Here he was treacherously imprisoned by Aurangzeb. Shivaji sent petition after petition professing loyalty to him, all the while planning his escape! It was his strategic move to lull the enemy. Can Shivaji be accused of cowardice? Change of heart? Never! We must also admire the forethought with which he killed the mighty Afzal Khan by ripping open his stomach with the tiger claws. If he had not broken his promise of being unarmed in that meeting, Afzal Khan’s plot to crush him to death would have been successful!’

‘Tatyarao, indeed, we did not see it in this light.’”

- Time and again Savarkar had said India needs a Shivaji. Keer writes in his biography of Savarkar that in 1952, in one of his lectures he said that “if God were to ask him to beg for a boon, he would pray him to bless India with a Chandragupta or a Shivaji to wipe

out the despondency prevailing in the minds of the younger generation and make the nation valorous and great. He said he preferred a rule of a benevolent great leader like Shivaji to an ignorant, weak-kneed democracy.”

- In 1953, when addressing a big meeting at the Jackson Garden in Nasik, he declared that the name of the garden should be changed to Shivaji Garden. He also stated that Indian Statesmen should follow the tactics and policy of Shivaji, who was a real statesman.

After reading this (and the poems below) there should be no doubt in anyone’s mind in just how high an esteem Savarkar held Shivaji.

- Anurupa

### **Hindunrusimha**

Click [here](#) for PDF



## Savarkar Poem: Hindunrusimha

हे हिंदुशक्ति-संमूल-दीपकम-तेजा  
हे हिंदुतापस्या-पूरा ईश्वरी ओजा  
हे हिंदुश्री-नीलमय-भूतिपवा साजा  
हे हिंदु नृसिंहा प्रभो शिवाजीराजा  
करि हिंदुचण्ड हैं तुजें । वंदना  
करि अंतःकरणज तुज अग्नि-वंदना  
तव चरणिं भक्तिपया चर्चा चंदना  
गुहाशा पुर्वीं त्वा न कर्भुं शक्तो ज्या  
हे हिंदुनृसिंहा प्रभो शिवाजीराजा ।

हा भग्न लट असे गडागडाचा अजी  
हा मग्न आज जखदुनी आसवांगजी  
हि भवतिथी हवा पुन्हा गंजली घरा  
ते म्हणुनि भवानी दे न कुणा आघात  
गड कोट जंजिरे सारे । मंगले  
जाहली राजधान्योपी । जंगले  
परदासव-पराक्रावि सारीं । मंगले  
या जगतिं जगूं ही आज गमतसे लज्जा  
हे हिंदुनृसिंहा प्रभो शिवाजीराजा

जी बुद्धि इद्रवापी रामदासशिर दुलवी  
जी बुद्धि पांच शाहीस शत्रूच्या झुलवी  
जी युक्ति कूटनीतीस खलंसी बुडवी  
जी शक्ति बनोमदत्तास पदतनीं तुडवीं

ते बुद्धि हेतुची कर्मी । राहु दे  
ते बुद्धि भावद्वया जीवां । राहु दे  
ते शक्ति शोणितगाजी । राहु दे  
दे पुन्हा मंत्र तो दिले समर्थ तुज ज्या  
हे हिंदुनृसिंहा प्रभो शिवाजीराजा ।

Hail, You of Glowing Splendour, Might of Hindus O,  
Divine brilliance blessed by Hindu penance so!  
You prosperous Hindu destiny nonpareil,  
O Godlike Shivajiraja, Hindu-Nrusimha incarnate, hail!

This Hindu nation bows to you O  
Heart and soul we applaud you, so  
With chandan we anoint you, lol  
Ye who fulfilled our unspoken yearnings,  
O God-like Shivajiraja, Hindu-Nrusimha incarnate, hail!

Every fort rampart is in ruins frayed,  
Jayadurga is with tears sprayed,  
Rusted once more is the Bhevani blade,  
What wonder then, she withdraws her aid.

Every fort and coastal stronghold, wrecked!  
Every capital city, wilderness unchecked!  
Enslaved fortune in foreign coil, necked!

Living in these ignominious times, oh shame!  
O God-like Shivajiraja, Hindu-Nrusimha incarnate, hail!

Acclaimed by Ramdas: purity of heart yours,  
Routed the five Shahi enemy: intellect yours,  
Your strategy that so many villains razed  
Your strength that vanquished a tyrant crazed

May that purity of purpose sustain!  
May our simple souls that intellect obtain!  
May such strength in our blood reign,

Grant us the mantra that Ramdas gave, do  
O God-like Shivajiraja, Hindu-Nrusimha incarnate, hail!

<sup>1</sup> Nrusimha (नृसिंह, Nrusimha): known primarily as the 'Great Protector' who specifically defends and protects his devotees in times of need.

Also known as Narasimha (Sanskrit: नरसिंह, Narasimha,) Narasingh, Narsingh and Narsingha, he is an avatar of the Hindu god Vishnu and one of Hinduism's most popular deities, as evidenced in early epics, iconography, and temple and festival worship for over a millennium. Narasimha is often visualized as half-man/half-lion, having a human-like torso and lower body, with a lion-like face and claws.



## Savarkar Poem: Shivaveer

### Shivaji: The Hero

यवनांचा झाला, अजनीला भार  
सुंदर मंदिरे भंगीली पार ॥

वेद-शास्त्रे नष्टांनी क्षुधविली सारी  
गोमाता देखतां हरहर मारी ॥

ब्राह्मण मत्तानी लत्तानी हागिला  
प्रभुवर भूवर शिववीर आला ॥

अधर्मासी नाशोनी देशोदाराला  
प्रभुवर भूवर शिववीर झाला ॥ १ ॥

हिंदूंच्या देशाचे बघुनीयां हाल  
जगलायी जमनी ती जाहली लाल ॥

यवनांना क्रोधाने वधण्यासी आई  
शिवनेरी शिवबासी जन्मासी देई ॥

सुरवरां किन्नरां आनंद झाला  
प्रभुवर भूवर शिववीर आला ॥ २ ॥

रामा कौसल्या कीं कृष्णा यशोदा  
शिवराजा जिजाई साजे जन्मदा ॥

श्रीरामे राक्षस-हननासी केले  
यवनांना नशीन तैसे मी बोले ॥

सुकलांनी शशीसम तो वृद्धिंगल झाला  
प्रभुवर भूवर शिववीर आला ॥ ३ ॥

जयजयजी रघुवीरा, गर्जेना झाली  
श्रीरामदासांची मूर्ती उदेली ॥

शिवभूरे पायीं दड भालाला केले  
स्वामींनीं मस्तकीं हस्ता ठेविले ॥

Oh the invaders have weighed Mother Earth down,  
Beautiful temples they have razed to the ground!

Oh the wicked ones kill the sacred cow on sight!  
Vedas-Shastras: so tainted is their plight!

The Brahmins with kicks of Arrogants were flayed,  
So the Almighty as valiant Shivaji was incarnate!

For deliverance and that the wicked shall be slayed,  
The Almighty as valiant Shivaji was incarnate ॥ 1 ॥

Beholding the persecution of the Hindu Land,  
Mother Earth became red and so very hot!

In rage, to annihilate the assailants,  
The Mother at Shivaneri Shivaba begot!

Gods, Demi-gods, heavenly singers celebrate  
The Almighty as valiant Shivaji was incarnate! ॥2॥

To Rama-Kaushalya, Krishna-Yashoda is, lo  
Well-matched the mother-son Shivaba-Jija duo

How Sri Rama the Demons did vanquish,  
Just so the invaders Shivaba will banish!

With talents just like the waxing moon burgeoning,  
The Almighty as valiant Shivaji was incarnate ॥ 3 ॥

"Victory to Shri Rama" everywhere was heard,  
The great Saint Ramdas before Shivaji appeared.

Shivaraya his forehead on Swami's feet placed,  
Swami then Shivaba with blessing graced,





देश धर्म लारी, उपदेश दीला  
प्रभुवर भूवर शिववीर आला ॥ ४ ॥

माराता अफझुल्ला खवनांत भारी  
तुळजापुरी भंगी भवानी सारी ॥

करकर धावोनी अधरांता धावे  
शिवरायाधैवरि, परि दुःखाला पावे ॥

उदरा वीटारोनी मोघाला वधिला  
प्रभुवर भूवर शिववीर आला ॥ ५ ॥

स्वातंत्र्यदेवीचा गौधळ केला  
यजमानस्वामी श्रीशिवराय आला ॥

सांवळ्या रंगधे शूर गावळे  
पेमाने अभिमाने गौधळी झाले ॥

पारलंब्याचा मग झोकड चिरिला  
प्रभुवर भूवर शिववीर आला ॥ ६ ॥

धर्माला तारिवले अरिवर मारियले  
स्वातंत्र्य संपादुनि देशा शोभविले ॥

अवतार कृत्याला पूर्णत्वा नेले  
छत्रपती शिव नृप मग निजधर्मी गेले ॥

सविनायक कविनायक गती कवनाला  
प्रभुवर भूवर शिववीर आला ॥ ७ ॥

"Save the Country and Dharma" advice he tendered!  
The Almighty as valiant Shivaji was incarnate ॥ 4 ॥

The enemy, Afzal is the one to most dread,  
Tuljapur Idol of Bhavani he shred,

He rushed at Shivaba with intent to kill  
Lo, instead Shivaba his blood did spill!

The Evil One, stomach ripped open, was sent to his fate!  
The Almighty as valiant Shivaji was incarnate ॥ 5 ॥

The Goddess of Freedom was ritually hailed,  
As the Guest of Honor, Shivaraya prevailed,

The dark-skinned and brave Mavala  
With love, with pride in the ritual revel,

Together the Foreign Yoke they did subjugate!  
The Almighty as valiant Shivaji was incarnate ॥ 6 ॥

Dharma he saved, enemies were slain  
Radiant was the country by freedom attained

Only fulfilling his incarnation's duty's worth  
Did Chhatrapati Shivaji depart this Earth

Now Ganesha and the best of the poets sing,  
The Almighty as valiant Shivaji was incarnate ॥ 7 ॥



### Aarti on Shivaji composed by Savarkar

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