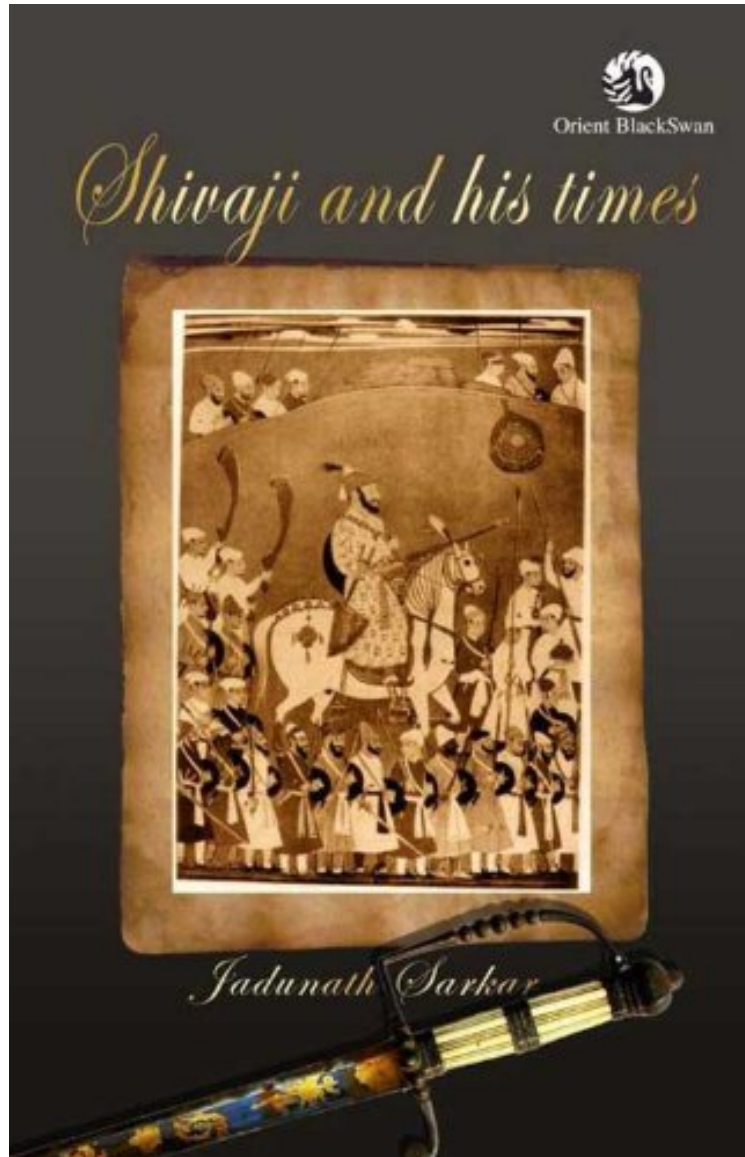


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Shivaji and His Times (Paperback)

Jadunath Sarkar

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Jadunath Sarkar : Shivaji and His Times (Paperback) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shivaji and His Times (Paperback):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An awe-inspiring book about a most inspiring man by a most remarkable historian!By Not an Unexamined LifeJadunath Sarkar was a legend. He is the last word on the subject of the History of Aurangzeb and the History of the Marathas. That said, the rest of the review is probably superfluous,

but I am so inspired by this book, that I thought I'd try and share my feelings. There have been many books on the life of Shivaji, but not many that are so detailed, unbiased and thoroughly based on primary sources like the present volume. The author covers not only the events of Shivaji's life, his source of inspiration, his character and achievements, the causes for the failure of his state, and his place in History. One of Shivaji's many achievements was in identifying and nurturing talented people, putting the right people in the right roles. Still, he was not able to root out casteism that had such detrimental effect on Hindu society. Jadunath Sarkar says, "...the national glory and prosperity resulting from the victories of Shivaji and Baji Rao I created a reaction in favor of Hindu Orthodoxy; it accentuated caste distinctions and ceremonial purity of daily rites which ran counter to the homogeneity and simplicity of the poor and politically depressed early Maratha society..." I'd agree, in part. I'd also contend, however, that it was the times that Shivaji lived in, with an all pervading Muslim influence that exacerbated the caste differences. Shivaji was not quite able to establish that ideal he craved to due to the shortness of his reign and the lack of leadership qualities of his successors. I am especially awed when I read about how he carved out his kingdom from the crumbling edifices of the Mughal empire in the North and the Bijapur kingdom in the South. He had to fight internal issues like, casteism, the Jagir system, intrigues of the courtiers, lack of faith in their own national character and abilities. In Jadunath Sarkar's words, "When he chose to declare independence, the Mughal empire seemed to be at the height of its glory. Every local chief who had, anywhere in India, revolted against it had been crushed. For a small Jagirdar's son to defy its power, appeared an act of madness, a courting of sure ruin. Shivaji, however, chose this path and he succeeded." Shivaji has shown that the tree of Hinduism is not really dead, that it can rise from beneath the seemingly crushing load of centuries of political bondage, exclusion from the administration, and legal repression; it can put forth new leaves and branches; it can again lift its head up to the skies. "I am sure this text book was not meant to be inspirational! It is an analysis of true events that lead to the creation of an empire. It brings back one's pride in Indian Culture and its achievements. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Shivaji was not a communal or racist as the modern day Hinduthwa has made him out to be. In fact he is human and a hero. By Thinker Writer It just reconfirmed my firm belief that Shivaji was not at all communal nor racist. He wanted power as everybody else did in that era. It so happened that Muslims were in power at that point of time and he had to naturally fight them. Even if a Hindu was in power he would have fought them. Did the Marhathas not fight the Brits. later and finally lost? But later the Brits and then the Hindu Mahasabha made it a war between Hindus and Muslims. It was not. Shivaji had Muslims fighting with and for him as did Aurangzeb who had a number of Hindus working with and for him. It was the policy of divide and rule of foreign powers and then electoral politics that brought about this artificial divide among Indians for narrow political gains thus harming the national ethos fraternity of people living in the sub-continent. This idea that Shivaji was a Hindu king and Aurangzeb a Muslim king must be laid to rest. Both were Indian kings, born in India and died in India. They took nothing out of the country. It was just some jostling for power that is about all. Both were honored Indians and both were respectable and both were heroes. After reading so many books on Shivaji, Aurangzeb, Indian history and the excellent relations our ancestors and we have enjoyed with all communities I have come to this conclusion.

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