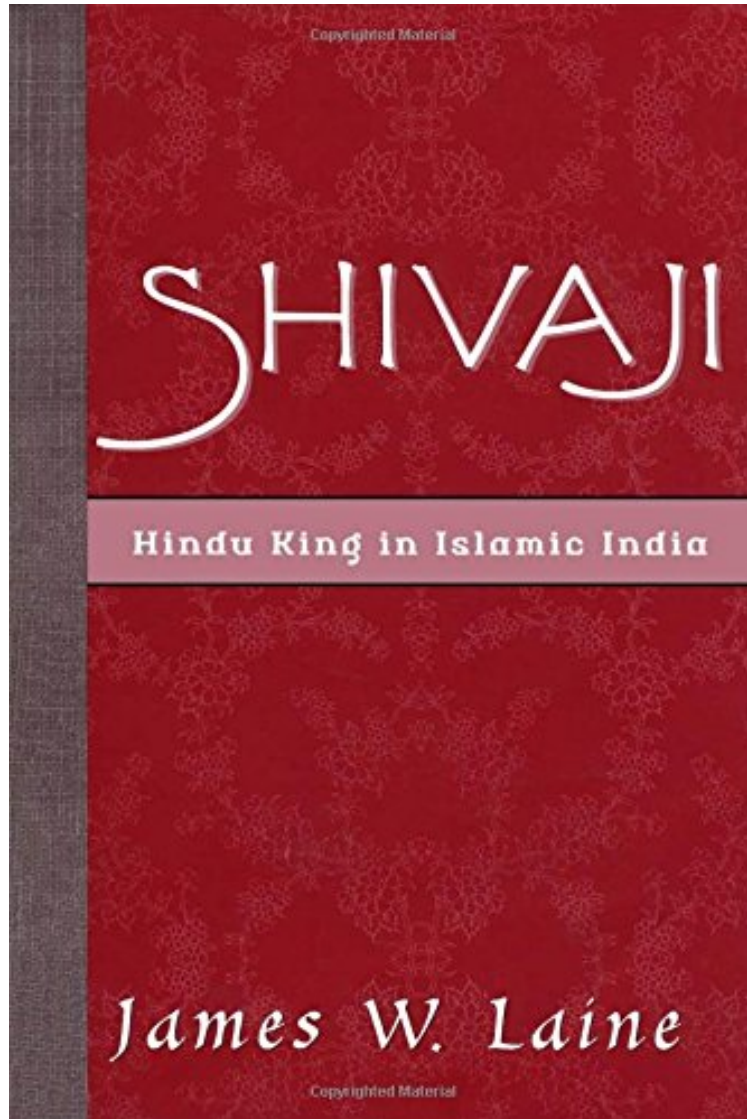


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Shivaji: Hindu King in Islamic India

James W. Laine

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James W. Laine : Shivaji: Hindu King in Islamic India before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shivaji: Hindu King in Islamic India:

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Nitin Purohit Excellent book 1 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A good way of knowing Indian premodern history By Miguel Angel Ortiz Being recently in India for the first time, many doubts invaded me during the visit and after it referring to the characteristics of Indian different races. All the people I asked there couldn't give the answers to my questions (probably linguistic troubles affected the comprehension because my original language is Spanish and Indian people speak English non

understandable to me and my companion)so I started to investigate after the trip and found this book about Shivaji a heroe and king of Maharashtra Region who represent (I'm starting to know now) an unavoidable reference to the modern society of India.I'm starting to read this book and I expect to fill many lagoons I have in my mind about this "rich" country.4 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Shivaji was at least never communal as the Congress Party wasBy Thinker WriterI wish Laine had gone beyond the legends and myths and stuck to the actual history. He has not done that. He has failed to point out with emphasis that Shivaji like so many other Kings wanted power and territory which he was successful in doing. He was never against Muslims although he may have been agianst Muslim Kings. Even if it was some other Hindu if not Afzal Khan, Shivaji would have still gone with tiger claws to a peace meeting and tore him in the embrace. We cannot judge his deeds now. His top officials were all Muslims even his commander in chief and the court language was Persian and definitely never Marathi. In his time Hindu Muslim was never an issue.It was only when the British took over they exploited the religious differences and followed the policy of divide and rule and most unfortunately The Congress party did the same and introduced communalism that was the cause of so many problems. The major problems have been partition of the country, invasion of Hyderabad and the Kashmir problem all based on The Hindu Muslim issues. Laine unfortunately could not do justice to history.

Shivaji is a well-known hero in western India. He defied Mughal power in the seventeenth century, established an independent kingdom, and had himself crowned in an orthodox Hindu ceremony. The legends of his life have become an epic story that everyone in western India knows, and an important part of the Hindu nationalists' ideology. To read Shivaji's legend today is to find expression of deeply held convictions about what Hinduism means and how it is opposed to Islam. James Laine traces the origin and development if the Shivaji legend from the earliest sources to the contemporary accounts of the tale. His primary concern is to discover the meaning of Shivaji's life for those who have composed-and those who have read-the legendary accounts of his military victories, his daring escapes, his relationships with saints. In the process, he paints a new and more complex picture of Hindu-Muslim relations from the seventeenth century to the present. He argues that this relationship involved a variety of compromises and strategies, from conflict to accommodation to nuanced collaboration. Neither Muslims nor Hindus formed clearly defined communities, says Laine, and they did not relate to each other as opposed monolithic groups. Different sub-groups, representing a range of religious persuasions, found it in their advantage to accentuate or diminish the importance of Hindu and Muslim identity and the ideologies that supported the construction of such identities. By studying the evolution of the Shivaji legend, Laine demonstrates, we can trace the development of such constructions in both pre-British and post-colonial periods.

"A succinct, cogent study that is admirably well organized and consistently insightful. Though brief, it makes a significant contribution to the study of Indian history and religious studies."--Journal of the American Academy of Religion"Shivaji is a succinct, cogent study that is admirably well organized and consistently insightful. Though brief, it makes a significant contribution to the study of Indian history and religious studies. In one of the first studies to trace the longitudinal developments in the biography of a major precolonial figure of India, Laine employs an innovative approach that could well be adapted to other figures. In addition, Laine makes valuable observations about the precolonial history of 'Hinduism'"--Journal of the American Academy of ReligionAbout the AuthorJames W. Laine is a Professor of Religious Studies at Macalester College.