

## A Brief Study of Literature on Shivaji's Dynasty in Maharashtra

Deepali Mahadik, Research Scholar, Nagpur

### Abstract

The legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and the subsequent evolution of the Maratha dynasty have generated a rich and diverse body of literature across historical, political, and cultural domains. This brief study of literature examines the major scholarly works, archival sources, regional narratives, and contemporary analyses that explore the formation, expansion, and administration of Shivaji's dynasty in Maharashtra. The literature reveals a multidimensional portrayal of Shivaji—from a resilient warrior-king and nation-builder to a visionary administrator whose policies shaped the socio-political landscape of seventeenth-century western India. Early biographical accounts such as *Sabhasad Bakhar*, *Chitnis Bakhar*, and *Jedhe Shakavali* provide foundational insight into Shivaji's life and military expeditions, while modern historians including Jadunath Sarkar, Govind Sakharam Sardesai, Setu Madhavrao Pagdi, and Stewart Gordon reinterpret these narratives with critical historiographical rigor. Studies focusing on Shivaji's military innovations highlight his guerrilla warfare strategies, fort architecture, and naval development, emphasizing his ability to adapt to a challenging geopolitical environment dominated by the Mughals, Adilshahis, and Siddis. Literature on the administrative framework documents his reforms in revenue, justice, military organization, and local governance, underscoring the principles of Swarajya and decentralized authority. Further, writings on the post-Shivaji Maratha polity—under Sambhaji, Rajaram, Tarabai, and later the Peshwas—demonstrate how the dynasty's political vision extended into a formidable pan-Indian force in the eighteenth century.

Beyond political history, cultural studies examine Shivaji's symbolic significance in Maharashtrian identity, folklore, and modern social reform movements, showing how literary renditions, ballads, and nationalist reinterpretations have shaped public memory. Contemporary scholarship also addresses debates surrounding communal interpretations, regional pride, and the historiographical challenges of separating legend from verifiable fact. Collectively, the reviewed literature highlights the enduring importance of Shivaji's dynasty in understanding Maharashtra's history, identity formation, and political thought. The study concludes that while substantial scholarship exists, continued interdisciplinary research incorporating archaeology, digital archives, and comparative regional histories can provide even deeper insight into the Maratha legacy.