



Mysore Modern: Rethinking the Region under Princely Rule

Janaki Nair

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Mysore Modern reconceptualizes modernity in India using the history of the Princely State of Mysore. In this forcefully argued work, Janaki Nair critiques earlier notions of the native states of India as spaces that were either defined entirely by the dominant narratives of colonial/national modernity or were relatively untouched by them.

Grounded in political history, and deriving insights from a wide range of visual, social, and legal texts and issues, *Mysore Modern* reperiodizes the modern by connecting these apparently discrepant registers to build up a case for a specifically regional, “monarchical modern” moment in Indian history. Nair examines mural and portraiture traditions, as well as forms of memorialization and nationalization of art and architectural practices. The volume also considers bureaucratic efforts centered on the use of law and development as instruments of modernity.

As Nair demonstrates, the resolution of struggles about the significance of the past in the present, the control of women’s sexuality and labor, and the role of the bureaucracy in Mysore reveal the imperatives of taking the region as the inaugural site for writing a history of Indian modernity.

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