



Creative Pasts: Historical Memory and Identity in Western India (1700-1960)

By Prachi Deshpande

Orient BlackSwan, New Delhi, India, 2013. Softcover. Book Condition: New. The Maratha period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when an independent Maratha state successfully resisted the Mughals, is a defining era in Indian history. Prachi Deshpande examines this period for various political projects in the country at large, including anticolonial Hindu nationalism and the non-Brahman movement, as well as popular debates throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries over the meaning of tradition, culture, colonialism, and modernity. Deploying a rich body of literary and cultural sources, Deshpande highlights shifts in history writing in early modern western India, as well as the deep connections between historical and literary narratives. She also shows how historical memory provided a space for Indians to negotiate among their national, religious, and regional identities, pointing out history's pervasive potential for shaping politics within thoroughly diverse societies. A study of quite extraordinary penetration and breadth, *Creative Pasts* mines Maratha history and Marathi sources as never before to analyse historiography, popular memory, and the socio-literary impact of colonialism on regional societies and cultures. Expanding from this base, the book succeeds also in showing how many of the significant patterns of Indian modernity derive from the interplay of cultural...



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