

Fashioning a national art: Baroda's royal collection and art institutions (1875-1924)

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Deskripsi Lengkap: <http://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=20469883&lokasi=lokal>

Abstrak

With a vibrant history of art and architecture, the city of Baroda is a much-sought-after destination for art education. Much of this could be credited to Sayajirao Gaekwad III, the maharaja of the erstwhile princely state of Baroda, and his art collecting practice that shaped Barodas modern art and craft institutions and industries. It was during his reign that the renowned artist Raja Ravi Varma, Sankheda lacquered wares, and the famed Patan patola debuted on the national and international trail of exhibitions. With the help of rare archival data, back-room surveys, and exhaustive research, Fashioning a National Art discusses how a native prince not only patronized and collected the local arts but also mediated a cross-cultural dialogue between the European and indigenous art techniques. A scientific and progressive thinker, Sayajirao encouraged Barodas alternative experiments in art, craft, and even design. The book also unravels him in a scarcely documented role: a lender of the royal collection to regional and international exhibitions. Additionally, it not only traces the history of elite patrons, famous artists, and European sculptors such as Augusto Felici, but also delves into the stories of subalterns such as master craftsman Neelakandan Asari, wood-worker Keshav Mistry, and others.