



# Maharaja: The Splendour of India's Royal Courts

*Anna Jackson and Amin Jaffer*

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The word 'maharaja'- literally, 'great king'- conjures up a vision of splendour and magnificence. This lavishly illustrated book examines the real and perceived worlds of the maharaja, from the early eighteenth century to 1947, when the Indian princes ceded their territories to the modern states of India and Pakistan. Jackson and Jaffer explore the spectacular material culture of India's rulers, showcasing rich and varied objects that reflect different aspects of royal life. Indian and Western works from a wide range of media, including paintings, photographs, textiles and dresses, jewellery, jewelled objects, metalwork and furniture are considered within the broader historical context, giving readers an understanding of royal status and identity, court culture and patronage; while attractive feature spreads highlight particular maharajas. Essays by leading international scholars explore Indian concepts of kingship, the public aspects of princely life, architecture of the princely court, palace life and recreation. and the important role of the princes as patrons of traditional arts. Published to accompany a major V&A exhibition and tour, *Maharaja: The Splendour of India's Royal Courts* is an indispensable examination of the extraordinary culture of princely India and provides a deeper understanding of kingship and power in India.

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