

Acknowledgments

This is a book about artistic renderings of the moods of places. In recounting memorable times, why do we often start by describing the feel of a place where relevant episodes unraveled? We deploy stories and look for pictures. We turn to descriptions and tropes adopted by others, embedding our experiences and imaginings into their representations, even mixing times, actors, and vignettes. We exaggerate; we censor. We strive to capture the precise mood of the place conjured up in mental images, even if that means idealizing evocations, adapting details, and using imprecise associations. Nonetheless, each representation of moods and their effects is unmistakably historically contingent. *The Place of Many Moods* tells the story of such deep investments in picturing the moods of a place in the long eighteenth century. From the vantage point of Udaipur—India's city of lakes—it acknowledges the unacknowledged powerful emotional work of objects, images, places, and sustaining lands. The overpowering ability of the city's material and visual artifacts to make familiar places visible in unfamiliar ways reveals pasts, politics, and passions not always recorded in words.

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