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A sumptuously illustrated narrative tracing the rise and fall of India's leading royal house through the dramatic fortunes of their crown jewels. Famed since antiquity as a supreme source of jewels, India's kings, with the help of western jewelers, created magnificent symbols of power and prestige.

From Library Journal For a nation with a dismal economy, India has enormous gold reserves in the personal jewelry of the vast majority of the Indian people. However, the authors of this well-documented and beautifully illustrated volume focus on the jewelry of Indian maharajas and royalty, who saw it as a source of power and prestige. The six chapters span several thousand years, from Mughal times to the present, covering tales of untold riches and a history of exploitation by the Portuguese, Dutch, and British, who exported precious gems and jewelry to the royal houses of Europe. Following India's independence from Britain, most of these treasures disappeared or went underground. Now this jewelry is once again on view in this spectacular work, highlighting the renowned Baroda pearls, Indore pears, and Arcot diamonds as well as creations by Boucheron, Cartier, Garrard, Harry Winston, and Van Cleef Arpels. Weaving together mystery, intrigue, symbolism, and astrology, this fascinating book is a welcome addition to any library collecting books on jewelry. Stephen Allan Patrick, East Tennessee State Univ. Lib., Johnson City Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author Katherine Prior is a historian specializing in the British Empire, focusing on India. She has a Ph.D. from Cambridge University. She is regularly published in books and academic journals, and is also an exhibition consultant for the Museum of the British Empire. She lives in London. John Adamson has studied at Devon and the Universities of Edinburgh and Geneva. He has worked at the Cambridge University Press, was head of publications at the National Portrait Gallery, and now runs a publishing house in Cambridge.