DRUNKARDS BEWARE!: TEMPERANCE AND NATIONALIST POLITICS IN INDIA IN THE 1930’S

Indians have historically eschewed drink; Indian nationalists agitated for greater access to alcohol while Indian radicals invoked the image of the Abstemious Indian as a symbol of national purity. But at the height of the Indian freedom struggle in the late 1930s, nationalists sought to impose on the population of India, many of them drinkers, a new standard for moral behavior based on an imagined past. The once rhetorical Abstemious Indian inspired the inclusion of prohibition as state policy in the Constitution of Free India.

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