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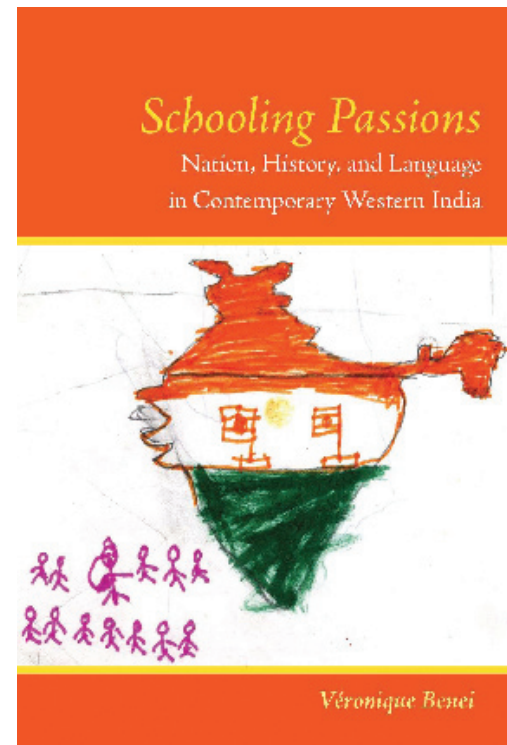
*Nation, History, and Language
in Contemporary Western India*

Véronique Benei

This book explores how regional and national senses of belonging are produced and transmitted in elementary schools in western India.

S*chooling Passions* explores an important, yet often overlooked dimension of nationalism—its embodied and emotional components. It does so by focusing on another oft-neglected area, that of elementary education in the modern state. Through an ethnographic study of schools in western India, Véronique Benei examines the idioms through which teachers, students, and parents make meaning of their political world. She articulates how urban middle- and lower-class citizens negotiate the processes of self-making through the minutiae of daily life at school and

extracurricular activities, ranging from school trips to competitions and parent gatherings. To document how processes of identity formation are embodied, Benei draws upon cultural repertoires of emotionality. **T**his book shifts the typical focus of attention away from communal violence onto everyday "banal nationalism." Paying due attention to the formulation of "senses of belonging," this book explores the sensory production and daily manufacture of nationhood and citizenship and how nationalism is nurtured in a nation's youth.



"Benei's compelling ethnography is much more than a book about schooling; it's about schooling in the service of the nation, how schooling functions to create citizens, and how nationalism is inculcated in our youth. I have seldom read a more powerful, beautifully written book."

— Susan Wadley,
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Véronique Benei is Visiting Senior Fellow at the London School of Economics, Department of Anthropology where she has taught since 1997, and holds a permanent position as Senior Research Fellow with the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (LAIOS/IIAC). She has also taught at Princeton University and Yale University.

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"Schooling Passions is a major contribution to the study of nationalism and to the burgeoning field of anthropology of emotions. Benei's book is a rich ethnographic study of mundane educational practices based on a deep understanding of their historical context. She pays meticulous attention to the details of language use, to songs and to the everyday disciplines of schooling in western India. Benei's broad theoretical scope enables her to analyze emotions and the corporeal, while also reminding us that language is at the heart of cultural and political passions: what matters is how, when, and in which style, one declares one's love for the nation."

—Thomas Blom Hansen,
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