

Sarvadarśanasamgraha that Cārvāka (materialism) is “hard to drive out” because it rationalizes desire for sense-pleasure. Brown concludes: “But today, it may be harder to drive out because it has the unanticipated support of Darwinian evolutionary theory” (p. 235). He also thinks natural selection has “anti-teleological implications” (p. 65).

Many would disagree with these conclusions. Brown’s analysis would be all the more sophisticated if it noted what historians of Western science know well: scientific theories are received and interpreted in a wide variety of ways, and that notions of a single, unified interpretation of any scientific theory are ill founded (e.g. John Brooke, *Science and Religion*, Cambridge University Press, 1991). Again, the fundamental problem is essentializing science and religion, seeing them as uncontested, neat categories, with obvious metaphysical and theological conclusions. The problem is only compounded by the fact that Brown’s book lacks deep philological reasoning, e.g. getting behind the English translations of the thinkers examined, thus giving us a sense of what words like “science” and “religion” might have meant to the Indian thinkers in their native languages and intellectual contexts.

In conclusion, Brown’s book makes important contributions to Indology, science and religion, and the history of science and religion in Hindu contexts, and would be a useful volume for research scholars concerned with the issues of design and creation, and their intersection with theology and science.

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ALLISON BUSCH:

Poetry of Kings: The Classical Hindi Literature of Mughal India.
(AAR South Asia Research Series.) xx, 339 pp. New York: Oxford
University Press, 2011. £45. ISBN 978 0 19 976592 8.
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The numerous citations in the recent scholarly literature of Allison Busch’s 2003 University of Chicago PhD are a remarkable tribute to the rapidity with which the importance of her work came to be widely recognized. If that was one of those rare doctoral dissertations which open up the way to a paradigm shift in thinking about a whole set of related issues in its field, its substantial revision and expansion in the elegant and substantial monograph under review should now certainly prove to be a key reference point not only for specialists in Hindi literary studies, but for all serious students of pre-modern Indian cultural history.

Informed by a very keen literary sensibility which has been honed both by close reading of a wide range of hitherto under-explored Brajhasha verse texts and by the indispensable first-hand appreciation of their creative relationship to the Sanskrit poetic tradition, the book shows how the dominant understandings of pre-modern Hindi literature have for too long been fundamentally skewed by an almost exclusive concentration on the devotional *bhakti* poetry at the expense of a devaluation of the significance of the courtly *rīti* tradition. Busch shows how this approach, which was originally developed in the colonial period to meet the perceived needs of nation-

building, has continued also to affect the orthodox line of Western literary scholarship.

She argues that this focus on the pre-modern religious poetry composed in Hindi by such canonical figures as Sur or Tulsī has been maintained for too long, to the detriment of a proper appreciation of the long-neglected literary beauties of non-devotional Brajbhasha courtly poetry and thereby of any real awareness of the crucial literary and cultural significance of that poetry for a rounded understanding of the rich complexity of the multilingual courtly culture of Mughal India.

In suitable recognition of the need to overcome the generally unsympathetic attitudes towards elaborately crafted courtly poetry which characterize most contemporary critical understandings, Busch deploys a carefully structured strategy of drawing the reader into an appreciation of the world of seventeenth-century Brajbhasha poetry, which is progressively revealed through a series of chapters on interlinked themes. After an introduction which establishes the broad critical and historical context, she begins with a rounded portrait of the founding father of the Brajbhasha *rīti* tradition, Keshvadas of Orchha, whose copious and varied oeuvre is shown to reveal a great deal about the nature of the crucial relationships between Sanskrit and Hindi courtly poetry and between Hindi poets and their Rajput and Mughal patrons. The character of the poetry itself, which is presented throughout the book in representative illustrative samples in clearly crafted English translations, accompanied where appropriate by Brajbhasha originals in transliteration, is then discussed in detail in the second chapter, which is particularly helpful in its lucid discussion of how the poetry is informed by the recondite rules of Sanskrit *alanīnkāraśāstra* and of how many of its distinctive features are due to the poets' creative adaptations of these rules.

The next chapters together build up a most revealing picture of the importance of Brajbhasha courtly poetry in the cultural life of north India during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The third chapter profiles the poets as "Brajbhasha intellectuals" who were engaged in the ambitious enterprise of re-stating the poetic principles long articulated in Sanskrit in a quite new vernacular idiom. Busch then goes on to describe the interactions of these poets with each other and with their patrons, whether at the Mughal court or in the establishments of the numerous sub-imperial Rajput dynasties scattered across vast areas of northern India. The fluency of Busch's account often makes it difficult to remember the sheer difficulty with which its elements have had to be painstakingly assembled from often recondite sources before they have been processed for us by a sympathetic and sophisticated understanding of just what literary texts can be made to reveal if they are closely examined.

There is a great deal in these chapters which will appeal to all sorts of students of the period, starting with the rather novel demonstration that Brajbhasha poetry was in some ways hardly less important than Persian in the construction of Mughal cultural identity. The author also shows some of the ways in which the analysis of the literature of the period needs to be seen in the context of the often more sophisticated approaches characteristically applied to the other arts, like music, architecture and painting. And she undertakes a very suggestive exploration of the similarities and differences between the parallel worlds of Mughal and Rajput patrons, including the well-argued hypothesis that it was almost certainly the Mughals rather than the Rajputs who provided the original model for the patronage of Hindi poetry.

Much of this seems quite counter-intuitive to all of us who continue to be consciously or unconsciously influenced by the understandings of Indian cultural history propagated by such influential figures as the early twentieth-century

Hindi literary historian Ramchandra Shukla. The final chapter of the book is appropriately devoted to questioning this received picture of the rapid collapse of a supposedly degenerate tradition of Brajbhasha poetry and its deserved replacement by the sturdier literature of modern standard Hindi. It is the great achievement of *Poetry of Kings* to have demonstrated just how misleading this received picture is, and to have shown us just how much we have been missing. This is without a doubt one of the most stimulating and enjoyable books to have appeared for quite a while in the field of pre-modern Indian literary and cultural studies.

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EILUNED EDWARDS:

Textiles and Dress of Gujarat.

248 pp. Ahmedabad: Mapin Publishing Pvt. Ltd in association with V&A Publishing, 2011. £35. ISBN 978 1 851776 45 0.

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This book is a valuable new addition to the study of textiles and clothing in the Indian subcontinent, with particular reference to the work done in recent years in the state of Gujarat. The abundant and high-quality illustrations make for an extremely attractive book. These illustrations contain images of the textiles being worn by local people. In addition, illustrations of craftspeople at work provide a record of recent and current practice. The author's familiarity with this region has helped her in the recording of contemporary craft production and she covers the areas of embroidery, woven textiles, and the dyeing, painting and printing of textiles. There is, in addition, a useful appendix on the analysis of garments.

Eiluned Edwards has spent considerable time in the Gujarat over the last twenty years, working with local people, recording their activities in all the aspects of the textile crafts in this region. Her experience has resulted in this book, which brings together her doctoral research and her work at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the London College of Fashion.

The section entitled "Contemporary dress" carefully covers the various modes to be found in the Gujarat; caste dress; modesty and veiling; adornment and auspiciousness through the role of the tailor. This could have been cross-referenced to other chapters had the book incorporated an index.

There are images of various types of festive and everyday clothing worn by the people of this region. Naturally, changes have occurred in the lifestyles of the people during the last half-century. Tourism has increased dramatically and Westernization through television and other modern information technology has had an impact on the lifestyles of the indigenous people. Political and boundary changes have had their effects on the lives of those who were previously migrants, those in the north of the region now having largely settled near the southern border of Pakistan.

The obvious focus of this book is on dress and textiles in one Indian state; however, its appeal is not limited to students in the field of textiles and costume. Many