

such questions if it is to make use of the editors' insight that the essays in this volume can show how "the emotions . . . contribute to the praxical modes of religious 'being-in-the-world'" (p. 36).

Ironically, this book's attempt to think with South Asia's theoretical pasts has convinced me that a history of emotions would do well to think with a less monolithic category than the modern "emotion". Pre-moderns, whether in Europe (as Anastasia Philippa Scrutton has long argued) or South Asia, typically had recourse to far more diverse, nuanced and flexible vocabularies. We ought to understand them better.

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GEORGE MICHELL:

*Late Temple Architecture of India, 15th to 19th Centuries: Continuities, Revivals, Appropriations and Innovations.*

351 pp. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015. Rs. 2,315. ISBN 978 0 19 945467 9.

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This wide-ranging volume invokes pertinent questions for the reviewer concerning the nature of knowledge production on South Asian art and architecture, while accepting that it introduces a range of unexplored material for general readership. First, the author must be commended for providing a useful overview of late temple architecture in India between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries using non-technical, accessible language and a format which will be helpful to both specialists and non-specialists. The book is intended as an introduction, offering 300 case studies on a pan-Indian basis covering a 500-year timespan, and in this sense does the work of an anthology, as opposed to a detailed study of the production of temple architecture. Further, knowledge about late temples that otherwise remains scattered in specialist publications and websites (i.e. photographs, plan illustrations and the examples themselves) has been presented in a new arrangement, drawing attention to the immense transculturations that builders and patrons aligned themselves to during the period of study.

In addition to highlighting a range of temple building traditions through these case studies from different geographical settings (including the extreme north, central India, eastern India, western India, Malwa and the Deccan, the western coast and southern India), the book aims to overcome a bias among art and architectural historians that privileges early Indian art and architecture. Scholars wishing to acquaint themselves with temple architecture of India are only too conversant with the problem of encountering a cut-off point of perceived architectural ingenuity, which seems to be settled around the thirteenth century, assuming that building activity thereafter is less worthy of study or is a fossilization of early examples. Michell's motivations for the book are fuelled by the fact that the bias is accompanied by more than adequate documentation of Hindu and Jain monuments prior to the thirteenth century such as in the several volumes of the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, with relatively little known about the period covered in the book. It may be added that the bias persists in academic writings not only on the "late" temples covered up to the nineteenth century, but also in relation to the works of contemporary hereditary temple architects currently engaged in a global production of temples, such as the Sompuras of western India and the *sthapatis* of south India.

Published at a time when India's political landscape is increasingly and worryingly being equated with Hindutva, this timely publication highlights not only the shared practices of temple-making in relation to Sultanate, Mughal and European architecture, bringing them in relation to patronage and devotional cults, but also brings to attention the diversity, hybridizations and innovations at work in the built form. One refreshing aspect of this publication is that it steers away from teleological and evolutionary explanations of temple architecture, alluding to more localized contingencies.

The book is divided into three parts. Parts 1 and 2 deserve special attention as they are the nerve centre of the book, setting up the social, cultural and political scene for patterns of building activity. They bring into their ambit the practices of redeploying dismantled places of Hindu and Jain worship for mosques through the twelfth–fifteenth centuries and later, followed by the repair of damaged temples and then the commissioning of entirely new ones. Michell notes that the above redeployment is not necessarily a mark of religious superiority: instead he poses the question of whether Hindu and Jain temples were wilfully dismantled or already in a ruinous state. The repair and the commissioning of new temples is discussed in the context of regional specificities and patronage across India under the interpenetrating categories of “continuities and revivals”, “appropriations” and lastly “innovations”. This analysis is interwoven with an idea of two “contrasting vehicles of transmission”: textual and verbal, accompanying actual building practices particularly in western India, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Orissa. Parts 1 and 2 offer a stimulating and critical read, where architectural production is seen as a co-production of various actors and agencies, enlivened by stories of patronage, temple architects, political expediencies, calculations and the encounter of regional and global currents.

It is then surprising to turn to Part 3 – which forms the bulk of the book and where the monuments are represented over 17 geographical zones – to encounter standardized and monotonous descriptions of architectural form alone. These tend to be described as one-off cases whereas in reality, they might be better considered as part of ongoing fluid and adaptable traditions. Understandably the broad reach of an already ambitious work such as this leaves little room for in-depth analysis, but the awkward juxtaposition of the earlier parts with the third prompts serious questions to do with *how* architecture is described in addition to *what* is being described, for description alone is not neutral. My point is exemplified in examples where colonial sources, among others, are cited in the “further reading” section found at the end of each chapter. In such instances Michell's descriptions continue the lineage of thought as found in colonial sources, the example of Shatrunjaya hill in Palitana, Gujarat being a good case in point. It is hard not to miss the reverberations with James Burgess's and James Fergusson's writings on Palitana, both of whom have by now been amply critiqued as agents of colonial knowledge production. It is also striking to note that Michell places himself in a long lineage of historians who have written on late temple architecture, where James Fergusson uncritically occupies a prime position. One is led to ask if it is not pertinent to make distinctions between different forms of modern historical knowledge and whether art and architectural history can rise to the challenges posited by postcolonial critique. Despite this minor awkwardness, the book as a whole makes a valuable and immensely rich contribution to an emerging field of academic enquiry.

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