was free of orientalizing comments on the depravity of Asia, which makes this source unique and rationale to the standard of the seventeenth-century texts.

doi:10.1017/S0165115318000463 Deepshikha Boro, *Independent Scholar*

Teena Purohit. *The Aga Khan Case: Religion and Identity in Colonial India*. Harvard University Press, 2012. 198 pp. ISBN: 9780674066397. $49.00.

This book's rigorous research addresses local cultural syncretism and the influence of Islam on the Khoja community, a group in western India that follows a *pir* or saint. Teena Purohit reveals the exchange of cultural elements during the colonial period and how continuities refract through the case of the Aga Khan. In addition to within the Khoja community, syncretism is frequently encountered in South Asian due to Sufism. Sufi culture evolved in Indian due to an extended interface between two religions—Hinduism and Islam. The extended period of association between these religions reveals an exchange of cultural elements, which is still widely prevalent in South Asia. Purohit's book depicts a broader framework beyond mere syncretism by employing an extended case study method. It includes an introduction as well as a conclusion and addresses the Ismaili sect in nineteenth-century Bombay, a sectarian showdown regarding the Aga Khan case of 1866, reading religion against the judicial archive, comparative formations between the Khoja's and other sects, and sect and secularism in the early nationalist period.

Purohit starts her study by addressing identity and the Ismaili sect during the nineteenth century. She traces the turmoil within the Khoja community, particularly in Bombay. The book deals with the alliance of Aga Khan and British, which is well documented and deals with questions of religious identity and legitimacy. It additionally deals with Sir Charles Napier's observations that the image of Aga Khan was like a God among the Ismaili sect. It not only describes the increasing strength and status of Khoja community but the powerful emergence of *shetias* (i.e., leaders of Khoja caste), and the inclusion of the Parsi population as well as Hindu, Jain, Bania, and Bohra groups of Bombay. It reveals how shetias and others played significant roles in the *jamat* (i.e., community) decisions. As the Bombay Khoja community increased its wealth, the jamat grew and began to exercise control over a significant amount of property for collective welfare and religious activities. Purohit finds that, until the 1860s, the Khoja jamat in Bombay followed both Hindu and Muslim traditions (e.g., system of inheritance as well as dress and birth ceremonies) without any real conflict over simultaneously practicing aspects of both religious communities.

Purohit analyses the historical roots of Khoja community, its spread, and traditions, as well as how it emerged as a group in western India from Sindh or Cutch. She describes how the group converted from Hinduism about four hundred years ago by a pir named Sadr Din and describes it as a case of cultural syncretism. Purohit gives quotations and many references to trace the social history of Khoja community. The study based on in-depth historical analysis through various archives and documents as well as contemporary fieldwork. One entire chapter focuses in-depth on the analysis of "Readings of Satpath against the Judicial Archives" and utilizes various interdisciplinary tools and techniques.

The book beautifully narrates the history of the Ismaili sect in Bombay and addresses a series of frictions within the Khoja community between 1830 and 1866. It focuses on the Aga

Khan (i.e., the Khoja leader), Khoja supporters, and the ruling British government. The internal frictions emanate from the Aga Khan including his family and supporters in the Khoja community. There are two-fold reasons for this friction. The first reason was payments demanded by Aga Khan and the other a sectarian divide between Aga Khan (a Shia) and his supporters (Sunnis). This conflict widened into friction with open disputes in 1847 and 1851. These disputes raised questions about self-governance and control over the community affairs. The British Justice Perry concluded this conflict with his decision that the *Dasavatar*—the core treatise of Khoja community—was a synthesis of Hinduism and Islam, therefore unidentifiable along sectarian lines.

Dasavatar contains ten chapters and illustrates various incarnations or avatars. First nine avatars correspond to the Hindu order of Vishnu's incarnations (i.e., Matasya, Karma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parashurama, Rama, Balarama, Krishna, and Buddha), but the tenth diverges from this tradition and is not *Kalki* but the Ismaili Nakalanki. This avatar represents a rupture and disjuncture between conventional Hindu and Ismaili conceptions of time and divine epiphany. The portrayal of the Buddha also differs from traditional representations of avatars in that it is messianic rather than a depiction of a munificent being that helps lead humanity towards divinity. This messianic character is an Indo-Islamic articulation that empowers the leader of Khoja community through devotional hymns that assign authority.

Purohit's book addresses comparative sects (e.g., *Satpanthi, Swaminarayan,* and others) whose followers—like the Kwojas—spread across Gujarat and Maharastra. The Hindu Swami Narayan sect also followed the incarnation theory of ten avatars but with the charismatic Lord Shree Krishna in the centre. Swami Sahajanand was the founder of this sect which emerged to control female infanticide. The early nineteenth century of India shows the period of socio-religious reform which has played significant contribution of social change in different parts of this subcontinent. Most important of these reforms supported the British administration's law and judiciary and played significant roles in social change. Purohit addresses these matters in Bombay presidency with great empirical detail and range of resources.

Purohit devotes a full chapter to sect and secularism in the early nationalist period. It discusses crucial changes in Ismaili identity in connection to secularism. It describes how secular values developed since the rise of Sultan Muhamad Shah's authority and legitimacy as well as how the charismatic transformation of his grandfather, Aga Khan I, continued. The author not only describes the legitimacy but redefinition of hymns to actively assert a Muslim identity, both in the public sphere of colonial politics and the private one of devotion. The influence of nineteenth-century Muslim reformists is visible (e.g., Sir Syed Ahmad Khan) during a period when participation in political life and the privatization of religion became a secular value. In response, Sultan Mohamad Shah attempted to correct and remodel the ideals of the Khoja community by denouncing excessive ritualism as well as enhancing the status and role of women. The Quran was also viewed as rational text and considered a practical guide for followers. Purohit concludes that Sultan Mohamad Shah's leadership reflected two distinct but incompatible forms. In the public sphere, he discussed the importance of pan-Muslim unity and secular values (i.e., western education and development) but exclusively within Ismaili devotion, which steered the community toward Shia Islam. Purohit views these two approaches of Mohamad Shah as paradoxical rather than as instances of two interconnected trends within the history of Islam: reform and accretion. These two aspects of Sultan Mohamad Shah's approach reflect dual roles for imbibing new secular values as a way to continue as the leader of the Ismaili community.

Subaltern critique argues that "the history of society is the history of the aristocracy". In the context of Purohit's book, this argument has merit since it is a case study of the Aga Khan and the Ismaili community's interface with other communities. The book's analysis is less on culture and society. When the life and contribution of one individual are so historically focused, it can lead to less alertness to collective social and cultural processes. Nonetheless, a core focus of Purohit's research is on cultural change and syncretism. In pursuit of this focus, the author not only makes use of interdisciplinary techniques and but rich primary sources.

doi:10.1017/S0165115318000475 Pradeep Kumar, *Indira Gandhi National Open University*

Sean M. Kelley. *The Voyage of the Slave Ship Hare: A Journey into Captivity from Sierra Leone to South Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. 304 pp. ISBN: 9781469627687. $30.00.

This book is excellent, remarkable for the breadth of the research it embodies and the clarity of its exposition. It is an exercise in microhistory, tracing the voyage of a single slave ship from Newport, Rhode Island, in 1754-1755. It is not the first of its kind. As the author is quick to acknowledge, Robert Harms published a similar study in 2001 on the *Diligent*, a French slaver that sailed from Vannes in the 1730s. *The Voyage of the Slave Ship Hare*, however, takes microhistory of this sort to a new level, bringing a fine-toothed archival investigation to some of the most significant questions in Atlantic History.

Kelly analyses the trading community of Newport in a brisk yet insightful opening chapter. Although Newport was British North America's principal slaving port, its slave merchants operated at a disadvantage when compared to their counterparts in major European ports. Merchants in Liverpool, say, had a rich hinterland at their disposal from which they could source locally made manufactures or in-demand items from further afield like Indian cotton. New England slavers drew upon a much more limited range of trade goods. Indeed, they were heavily reliant upon locally distilled rum, which was not the best commodity to bring to areas of West Africa where Islamic influence was strong. It meant that New England slave captains had to spend a good deal of time on the African coast trading with other captains, exchanging their liquor for other wares to acquire a more attractive basket of trade goods. The captain of the *Sally*, another Rhode Island slaver which sailed a decade after the *Hare*, did the same, as the *Sally*'s accounts at Brown University (now digitised at http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/sally/) reveal.

Captain Caleb Godfrey of the *Hare* acquired his captives in Sierra Leone. He did so slowly, buying victims from European and Eurafrican traders along a two-hundred-mile stretch of coast from Rio Nunez (in present-day Guinea) in the north to Sherbro Island in the south. This process was not bulk buying. Godfrey bought 76 slaves from 24 traders; most transactions involved the acquisition of just 1, 2, or 3 slaves.

One of the great strengths of this book is the sustained effort that goes into tracking the routes that brought the *Hare*'s captives from the interior. (Only a minority appear to have originated in the coastal zone.) The jihad that had raged through the Futa Jallon highlands between the 1720s and 1740s provides the context. The state that emerged from that struggle was strongly expansionist and furnished a stream of captives who ended in the hands of coastal traders. Kelley argues that most of these enslaved in the interior spoke languages that were part