

politics begins with the reception of the tradition of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the Iranian tradition of ethics and statecraft but moves onto Ibn Khaldūn's theories on society and state and more modern reformist discourses including feminism.

The main conclusion of this brief whirlwind tour of philosophical reasoning in the world of Islam is not only to insist that philosophy played a vital role in Muslim societies and cultures but also to suggest that a more expansive sense of what is philosophy – which retaining its significance for our modern engagements with philosophy – allows us to see the course of philosophical reasoning in a variegated mode in different contexts all the way up to our own times. Critics will quibble about the lacunae and the choices of discussion but there is little doubt that the volume represents the wide contours of interests in Anglophone writings on philosophy in the Islamic world. The volume should be profitably read alongside the Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy edited by Peter Adamson and Richard Taylor more than ten years ago. This short introduction will be invaluable for students of the study of Islam and also those interested in contemporary trends in the study of inter-cultural philosophy and the history of philosophy. What is now needed is a collaborative effort to produce a new far more comprehensive history of philosophy in the world of Islam that adequately grapples with the complexities and the varieties and builds upon the growing picture of the intellectual history of Islam that we now possess. s.h.rizvi@exeter.ac.uk

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KNOWLEDGE, MEDIATION AND EMPIRE: JAMES TOD'S JOURNEYS AMONG THE RAJPUTS. By FLORENCE D'SOUZA. pp. 261. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2015.
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James Tod holds a particular interest for the Royal Asiatic Society. He was the Society's first librarian and a generous donor of manuscripts, coins, miniature paintings and topographical drawings, collected during his twenty-two years in India. Although best known today for his two-volume work *Annals and Antiquities of Rajast'han*, published in London in 1829 and 1832, in fact he only lived in Rajasthan for four years at the end of his career in the East India Company. D'Souza does not include much biographical detail, stating that her book "is limited exclusively to the background and reception of Tod's texts during Tod's time" (p. 6). This will put readers at a disadvantage unless they are familiar with Jason Freitag's *Serving Empire, Serving Nation: James Tod and the Rajputs of Rajasthan* (2009) or other recent works by Giles Tillotson and Norbert Peabody. A further difficulty is for those unfamiliar with the *Annals*. A lot of stamina is needed to go through what was described as "one of the chief English Classics upon India" but which was also of enormous length – "as long as eight ordinary novels". The first edition was enlivened with romantic lithographic illustrations, which are not commented on nor reproduced here. Neither do we learn how many copies were published (by Routledge & Kegan Paul), whether they sold out, or how the print run was funded; surely all matters of interest in a textual study.

Tod began his Indian career as a cadet in the Bengal Army in 1800. His family already had connections in India. Although born near London, his family were of Scottish descent and he was sent to Scotland for his education. It took him thirteen years to reach the rank of Captain, which argues that his skills were not in army life, but in engineering, surveying and intelligence, all of which he undertook. Not until 1818 was he appointed Political Agent at Udaipur, one of three senior positions in the newly-formed Rajputana Agency, a loose grouping of autonomous Rajput states. Tod's task was

to advise the Mewar ruler, Maharana Bhim Singh (r. 1778–1828), whose kingdom had been ravaged during the Maratha wars. Following the treaty of Gwalior in 1817, the Rajput rulers accepted the East India Company as the paramount power and the presence of British Agents at their Courts. The Agents in turn reported to the Governors General in Calcutta.

Udaipur, the capital of Mewar, remained extraordinarily isolated, both politically and geographically well into the early 1960s. It was this isolation, this lack of contact for months with any of his fellow countrymen, except by letter, that undoubtedly turned Tod inwards, to study that which was around him, interpreted by the Rajput men with him. (He said on his return to Britain: “I did not see a white female face for ten years.”) Tod becomes imbued with stories of Rajput chivalry: “listening to the tales of times that are past” . . . “there is not a petty state in Rajast’han that has not had its Thermophylae”, he declares “and scarcely a city that has not produced its Leonidas”. He imbibes the prejudices of his daily companions, which leads him to become less than objective at times, and somewhat inaccurate in his interminable histories. Tod claims the lack of “pure native Hindu history” is attributable to eight centuries of subjection by barbaric and bigoted enemies, mainly Muslim, but he does, nevertheless, manage to find enough material for his own study, using heroic, bardic poetry and oral genealogical legends of the princes. His wide-ranging education allows him to draw imagined similarities between the Rajputs and feudal systems of medieval Europe. He gets particularly hung up on the Indo-Scythians, and deduces common ancestries not only of people, but of etymological origins too. “Connection of the Rajpoots with the Scythic tribes” is one pithy chapter heading.

If this makes him a man who was able to step across the lines of taboos and territories forbidden to ‘outsider’ British officials in India, as the author claims, then he was certainly not the only one to do so. Other isolated, intelligent Britons similarly made the best of their surroundings in lonely Indian postings. Although not explicitly stated, this is a PhD thesis, with a literature review, and outline of chapters in the Introduction. Clearly a large amount of research has been carried out but which at times overwhelms what the author is trying to say. For example, page 74, in ‘Tod’s Practice of Science’ chapter lists 13 contemporary botanists, Indian botanical gardens and briefly describes Linnaeus’ system of classification. But how does this relate to Tod’s occasional descriptions of fruit trees and vegetables? Had he met any of the botanists? Did his habit of using both local and English names really show “his basic empathy for the region of his adoption” or was he simply noting that the *phool-gobi* (cauliflower) was doing rather well? Similarly Tod’s use of Scottish terms like glen, dell and craig in describing the scenery of Rajasthan, hardly justifies the conclusion that he was manifesting “a typical Enlightenment-influenced approach of proceeding rationally through ground observation . . .” (p. 26).

D’Souza is on firmer ground with her two chapters on Romanticism and Tod’s Romantic Approach. Tod, with his Scottish background, was quick to draw parallels between the Highland clans in their almost impregnable forts, the play of light and shade on the massy mountains and the deep dark glens, with the gallant Rajputs in their forts and the rugged countryside around Udaipur. *Rob Roy* and *Ivanhoe* are mentioned by Tod and there is a certain Gothic grandeur, if not Gothic horror about endless tales of battle, sacrifice, chivalry and female immolation. However, although this is in part a useful commentary on Tod’s writings, its conclusions are often simplistic and unconvincing, not helped by the structures and sometimes obscure language of thesis-writing. rosieljai@clara.co.uk

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