

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.

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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

of the illustrations feature, for example, jewellery, interior textiles, animal adornments, etc.

The importance of this region in the study of the crafts and occupations of indigenous peoples is that it is situated on the edge of an area with a history stretching back to the Harappan civilization. Motifs found on objects in those times can still be found today, embroidered, woven and printed on Gujarati textiles. They can also be found in archaeological finds in Egypt, an example of the extensive trade in which Gujarat has engaged and still engages.

By the first century CE, India was at the heart of a trading network that extended from the Mediterranean to China. Indian textiles were key commodities of the period, in demand from west to east.

Textiles found in Egypt illustrate how people from the Gujarati region traded with those from far afield, as well as showing how some parts of the industry have changed very little over the centuries. There, could, perhaps, have been a wider discussion of the spread of trade in these crafts, both historically and in the present day, in particular, trade down the eastern coast of the African continent. There are still examples of small businesses who work extensively for export to the Middle Eastern countries.

Those readers interested in trade and identity will find this publication an excellent source. Also, the relationship between those textiles worn today and those to be found in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection makes for an excellent visual relationship through time. This study of developments in textiles and costume over the years can only reinforce the view that we should continue to add to collections like this. Thus, we can continue to record the ongoing story that should be on hand for future scholars. Perhaps the book itself is an example of recording and documenting contemporary practice. We see the textiles being made and worn, giving context to pieces that so often sit silently in museum stores.

The book should be of interest to anyone studying history, lifestyles, imagery and meaning as well as the status that some textiles give to the wearer within a community. The clothing, and particularly the section on garment analysis, makes for dress in this region to be seen as worthy of international comparison. Certainly the historical technologies and science, found in the sections that deal with dyestuffs, weaving, block making and production of cotton, are more than useful to those interested in these technologies.

A number of economic and cultural changes have resulted in specific developments in the textile arts and crafts in this region. This volume brings the reader up to date with the current evolution of work in this field. Above all, it is perhaps the images of everyday people making and wearing the clothes, and engaging in ceremonies and daily tasks that are a wonderful context for the textiles and dress of Gujarat.

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