

Cohen studies the form of monuments in the Nolambas' kingdom in chapters 3–5, demonstrating that they have indeed a distinctive style. Their forms share little with temples built during the same years in the Chola homeland, nor are they simply a pastiche of shapes deployed in other neighboring regions. But if these temples are not “Chola” in style, must they be “Nolamba”? Cohen acknowledges that few temples “have irrecusable Nolamba royal sponsorship of construction” (p. 30). Given such tenuous links between dynasty and temple construction, I would suggest applying the critique of dynastic nomenclature here, too, and calling these the temples and style of the Nolamba *region* rather than of the Nolambas themselves.

This book makes a number of welcome contributions to the history of Indic art. The only other recent study of temples in the Nolamba region is a section in volume 1.2 of *The Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture*. Few have studied these temples because they are so difficult to reach. The temples are far from urban centers and along unusually poor roads, as I learned in following even his less ambitious footsteps this winter. Reaching them took hours, sometimes days; at several sites, Cohen spent nights on the temple floor. Many monuments have fallen into disuse, become entangled with thorns or enclosed within private fields, and lost to the memory of local residents. Though art historical fieldwork in India is often strenuous, these sites demand especially persistent efforts of those who would research them.

Cohen's extensive technical descriptions of temple forms are important contributions as they correct errors in the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture* and make these remote monuments available for comparative studies. His map (p. 134), though oddly captioned, reveals intriguing patterns of the temples' geographic distribution by pulling together regions the *Encyclopaedia* divides among several maps. He amplifies our understanding of several sites by reintegrating the sculptural fragments now dispersed in museums in Chennai, Bangalore, and Mysore into his discussions of the temples they once adorned. Cohen is also to be commended for his energy in collecting and checking inscriptions. The illustrations are disappointingly blurry, a reminder that we are lucky to have this book at all given publishers' current reluctance to invest in Indic art history. Readers can at any rate find good photographs of many of these temples published in the *Encyclopaedia* and Cohen's articles (*Artibus Asiae* 1992, 1997).

Cohen's intrepid fieldwork and ambitious study of theory provide a provocative survey of monuments that are important, understudied, and difficult to reach. I would recommend this book for any library supporting undergraduate or graduate research on Indian art.

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*Gender and Genre in the Folklore of Middle India*. By JOYCE BURKHALTER FLUECKIGER. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996. xiii, 351 pp. \$19.95 (paper).

Flueckiger's *Gender and Genre in the Folklore of Middle India* examines a wide range of Chhattisgarhi folklore genres, focusing on their interconnections and contextually shifting social meanings. A child of missionary parents, Flueckiger spent the early years of her life in Chhattisgarh and is able to converse fluently in the local dialects. When she returned years later to investigate regional variants of the Ramayana, her

hosts and informants viewed her as part insider and part outsider to the region. Her research quickly developed into a more encompassing study of the Chhattisgarhi “public” folklore repertoire, in which she aims to uncover local systems of genre classification and community identification. She advocates a “performance-centered” approach, one that pays attention to social context and the politics of *who* is doing the categorizing. For the people of Chhattisgarh, “public” folklore, as distinguished from genres performed in more intimate settings, most represents Chhattisgarhi tradition. Local classification emphasizes the ‘exteriority,’ or surface features of genres (e.g., genre name, social group, and performance context), over the ‘interiority’ of the texts. Genres most frequently identified as Chhattisgarhi folklore include *bhojalī* rituals, performed by women to celebrate ritual friendships and worship local goddesses—*suā nāc* (parrot dance), a genre of harvest songs and dance identified with the *adivasi* (tribal castes)—and professional performances of *candainī* epic and the Nal and Damayanti episode from the Mahabharata.

Flueckiger does not, however, restrict her analysis to conventions of native exegesis. While people in Chhattisgarh most commonly classify genres in terms of regional affiliation, her own observations enable her to distinguish more narrowly defined “folklore communities” based upon affiliations of caste, class, age, and gender. She also discovers features of which her local informants were entirely unaware. For example, in comparing *bulkari* performances in two different regions of Chhattisgarh, she notes that in Phuljhar the primary participants are unmarried prepubescent girls, who form ritual friendships, whereas in the Chhattisgarhi heartland, married women perform the ritual and the emphasis is on becoming possessed by the goddess.

Throughout her study, gender is a focal point of analysis. Flueckiger claims that women in Chhattisgarhi have a higher status than in North India, as is demonstrated by their greater participation in wet-rice agriculture, a higher percentage of *ādīvasī*, a lack of heavy *pardah* restrictions, and customs of bride-price as opposed to dowry. In Chhattisgarhi variants of the *candainī* epic, she shows that the lead female character plays a central role as the initiator of the plot, exhibiting qualities of independence, strength, and courage in contrast to her more passive and dependent role in the Uttar Pradesh variants. She also shows how women use their performances as vehicles of resistance against male-dominated, brahmanical values. For example, the bawdy *ḍālkḥāī gīt* sung by *ādīvasī* women provide social commentary on various hardships women endure. However, in recent times, village authorities have banned the *ḍalkḥāī* festival, and one is left with the overall impression that women’s status is declining. Relatively few women become professional performers, and there are no public performance genres in which men and women jointly take part. With rare exception, men play the role of women in the professional performance troupes of *paṇḍvānī* and *candainī*.

Flueckiger places less importance on the role of caste and class in her analysis. She explains that while the upper castes are more likely to associate themselves with pan-Indian genres, Chhattisgarhi tradition is identified by upper and lower castes alike as having originated from the *ādīvasī*. Differences between rural versus urban folklore are dealt with only briefly. According to Flueckiger, as cassette recordings of traditional *sūa nāc* songs are being regularly played in tea stalls and broadcast on All India Radio, bounded face-to-face performance communities are being replaced by imagined communities of shared listeners.

Flueckiger demonstrates how local systems of folklore classification are used to construct gender, ethnic, and regional boundaries, while simultaneously demonstrating the interplay among “public” folklore genres within and across

communities. Her study also traces the effects of broader social changes, especially the influx of mass media, on shifting identifications of genre and community over time. Accessibly and cogently written, this book is useful to specialist and nonspecialist audiences alike who are interested in South Asian folklore, performance, and gender studies.

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*Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean, 1750s–1960s.*  
 Edited by U. FREITAG and W. G. CLARENCE-SMITH. Leiden: Brill, 1997.  
 x, 392 pp. \$116.00 (cloth).

*Hadhrami Traders, Scholars, and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean* is an anthology of twenty papers originally presented at a workshop on Indian Ocean migrations held at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in 1995. The purpose of the book is to examine Hadhrami (people originating in the Hadhramaut region of southern Yemen) migrations within the context of "diaspora studies," with a diaspora defined as "ethnic minority groups of migrant origin residing in and acting in host countries, but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin" (p. 1). Among the issues examined are the time frame of migration, the motivations (coercion or choice), the occupational status of the diaspora, relations with the homeland, scale of migration both in terms of numbers and geographic extension, and the cohesiveness of the diaspora. The overall thesis of the book is that the Hadhrami diaspora is the major factor in understanding the history of Hadhramaut, as the interaction between the large numbers of Hadhramis residing abroad and those remaining at home influenced every aspect of activity within the region.

The book is divided into six sections. In the introduction coeditor William Clarence-Smith, Reader in Asian and African Economic History at SOAS, discusses the theoretical framework of the volume and presents a summary of the contents. This is followed by a more detailed theoretical discussion of Hadhramaut and Hadhrami migrations as a diaspora. Section 2 examines the political context of the Hadhrami diaspora with six papers. The first two focus on domestic politics in nineteenth- and then twentieth-century Hadhramaut while the remainder turn to the Hadhrami role in politics in India, Malaysia, Indonesia, and general international issues. The third section looks at the issue of social stratification, with papers examining the status of *muwalladin* (Hadhramis of mixed parentage) in Hadhramaut, the social structure of Hadhramaut, and Hadhrami communities in East Africa, the Malabar Coast of India, and Java. In section 4 four papers discuss religious and social reform within the Hadhrami diaspora, beginning with an examination of saint worship and religious reform in Hadhramaut itself and then turning to religious links between Hadhramaut and the Malay-Indonesian region, and then two specific examples of Hadhrami diaspora religious influence in the form of the al-Irshad modernist movement in Java and the career of Indonesian-Hadhrami religious scholar Sayyid 'Uthman. Section 5 focuses on economic dynamics, with three papers addressing the impact of foreign remittances on the local economy of Hadhramaut, the economic impact of the Hadhrami diaspora in the broader Red Sea region, and then the role of Hadhrami businessmen in Malaysia. Finally, coeditor Ulrike Freitag, Lecturer in Modern Middle