

narrative, looks at the arrangement of events in time and space, and argues that the thread of time in *Heat and Dust* is broken and space becomes the take off point for movement from one time-frame to another. The analysis of the film deals with narratology and excavates the changes that have taken place in the narrative structure during the process of adaptation, and also ideates on the representation of the Empire in the film.

One can argue that adaptation, like translation, is also an act of interpretation. Sachdeva propounds that films based on literature deserve to be seen as independent texts, and not as being subservient to their 'original' sources, thereby problematising the idea of what is original. His research concludes with drawing attention to the codes and conventions, strengths and weaknesses, scope and limitation of both novels and films since each art form communicates according to its own creative conventions. *Fiction to Film*, instead of looking at cinematic adaptation in terms of fidelity, looks at them in terms of inter-textuality. Also, since the writer critiques the relationship between the novel and the film as being contoured and driven by intertextuality, rather reductive, not to mention obfuscating, questions of hierarchy, arche, origins, and the contentious 'which text is better?' do not arise in the first place. Such a perspective and conclusion destabilise structures while simultaneously utilizing them: it is, one can say, a manifestation of the post-structuralist streak in Sachdeva.

*Fiction to Film* is highly recommended not just to those working on Ruth Praver Jhabvala, but to any student or scholar working on film studies, adaptation studies, and narratology – especially if they are interested how culture, reader, and the medium shape the semantics and semiotics of the film-fiction dialectic in contemporary times.

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Saloni Mathur and Kavita Singh (eds), *No Touching, No Spitting, No Praying: The Museum in South Asia*, New Delhi: Routledge, 2017 (reprint), pp. xiv+269, Rs. 795/-, ISBN: 9781138084636.

*No Touching, No Spitting, No Praying: The Museum in South Asia*, edited by Saloni Mathur and Kavita Singh, brings together an important body of works on museums in India. Though well-established globally, heritage and museums studies are still at a nascent stage in India. Studies on museums in India have traditionally focussed on the technical aspects of

display and logistics, and the politics of museums have only been recently commented upon. This book includes essays that would be on the reading list of anyone interested in the history and politics of museums in India. The volume argues for examining the museum in India, on its own merit—noting its particular formative conditions and its contemporary usage—rather than thinking of it as a variant of the type established in the West. The interesting variety of museum forms discussed here offer much potential for developing theories of museums and heritage. This is a field which is dominated by studies on Western societies and this collection offers an opportunity to develop the field from the point of view of non-Western societies.

The book is divided into four sections, the first three following the chronological trajectory of India's history. The first titled, *Inaugural Formations*, is about the emergence of the museum in colonial India. The second, *National Reorientations*, explores the museum's new role as an institution responsible for preserving and showcasing the national culture in a newly independent India. The third, *Contemporary Engagements*, covers the new museum forms emerging in the last three decades. Each of these three sections includes three essays. The fourth section, *Museum Watching: An Introduction*, has short field notes on thirteen museums from different parts of India (and one from Pakistan).

Part one, *Inaugural Formations*, looks at the history of the museum in colonial India. It begins with Bernard Cohn's well-known work which discusses knowledge production in colonial India, through the processes of collection, classification and preservation of India's material remains. The ambitious surveys covering large regions of the subcontinent were conducted both by individuals and the English East India Company. Loot, following warfare was an additional source of material goods. Both these formed the basis of important collections in colonial India. The second and third essays in this section, by Tapati Guha-Thakurta and Gyan Prakash respectively, emphasize on the inability of the museum to meet the expected pedagogical role set by the British rulers, and see this gap as the zone where the agency of the colonised Indian visitors is activated. Both also discuss the reception of the museum as a 'wonder house' or *ajab ghar* or *jadoo ghar* by the locals. Guha-Thakurta writes on the close relationship between the history of archaeology and the history of the museum in colonial India. Prakash's essay focuses on the museums and exhibitions on natural history and sciences.

Part two, *National Re-Orientations*, looks at the life of the museum in the newly independent Indian nation. The three essays in this section cover two most important museums of India: the National Museum and the National Gallery of Modern Art, both in New Delhi. Kavita Singh's article is

a study of the National Museum at New Delhi. It discusses the idea of a 'national' museum in the newly independent India, and how this idea is manifested in the display. Singh argues that in the National Museum, 'national' is in name only and the museum is, in fact, a combination of the archaeological and industrial collections of the colonial period with very little attempt to reconfigure the idea of the 'national'. Another article on the National Museum shares the lesser known history of the making of the museum: the role of the American curator, Grace McCann Morley. This essay by Kristy Phillips, discusses the pioneering initiatives by Morley and her lasting impact in the field of museum work in India. The final essay in this section, by Vidya Shivadas, examines the history of the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi and a newly independent India's experiments with modernity both at the local and the global level. Shivadas explores this theme through a discussion of the formation of important collections at the museum, such as that of Amrita Sher-Gil's works.

Part three, *Contemporary Engagements*, discusses the dynamics of the museum in a globalised world and its relationship with political economy of heritage, consumption, and identity politics. Appadurai and Breckenridge's essay, *Museums are Good to Think*, is the first one in this section. The authors argue for reconsidering the museum in the India as a vibrant part of society's public culture and its informal learning space, especially the spheres of leisure, festivals and exhibitions which are heavily influenced by media. For Appadurai and Breckenridge, the interocular of these spheres affect the Indian public's interaction with the institution of the museum. Mary Hancock's study of Dakshina Chitra, a cultural centre in Chennai, demonstrates the contradictions of heritage industry in a neoliberal context. On the one hand, institutions like Dakshina Chitra are created to save traditions and heritage against the modernising drive of neoliberal economies. On the other hand, these institutions draw upon the entrepreneurial model and produce tradition for consumption, within a neoliberal logic. Mathur and Singh's essay in this section, discusses three ambitious museum projects in India: the Akshardham Cultural Complex in Delhi, the Khalsa Heritage Complex in Anandpur Sahib (Punjab), and the Maitreya Buddha in Kusinagar (Uttar Pradesh). These are grand, multi-media projects, which the authors note, have blurred the boundaries between a shrine, a theme-park and a museum. Mathur and Singh argue that these institutions are a result of rise of identity politics in a globalised world where non-state groups have the resources and the influence to present their cultural claims.

The final section titled, *Museum Watching: An Introduction*, is a collection of short write-ups extracted from a research

project on museums led by the editors. These field notes are produced by research scholars who visited museums across India between the years 2005 and 2009. This section introduces us to thirteen museums in all: twelve from the north, east, south and west of India, and one from Pakistan. It is successful in portraying the diversity of museum practices in India and includes museum projects by different patrons, including the state, non-state actors and individuals. Some of the museums covered in this section include, the Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra in Guwahati, the Lahore Museum in Pakistan, the Hanuman Sangrahalaya, Lucknow, the archaeological museum at the Mahabodhi Complex, Bodhgaya, the Padmanabhapuram Palace Museum in Tamil Nadu and the Stok Palace museum in Ladakh.

This section introduces the readers to the relatively lesser known institutions, which would ordinarily be overlooked in most discussions on museums in India. The research shared in this section also follows a different methodology from the essays in the first three sections: it is an ethnographical study of the museum. The field notes offer insights into the profile of the visitors to a museum, their interaction with the display and the museum space, and what value they ascribe to the museum. This is an important, and, in the Indian context, the least examined aspect of museum studies. Readers of this collection will no doubt want to know more and one hopes that more of this research is published. Many case studies in this section highlight the dynamic interactions between the visitors, the display and the museums space which modify our understanding of the secular and the sacred in the context of museums. They demonstrate that these seemingly distinct spheres (which were the hallmark of the museum in the West) engage in diverse ways in the Indian context. As the editors argue (in the preface), "it is now for art history to recast its frameworks and practices" in light of the museum's varied forms. Indeed, one could push the argument further to say that, museums—because they are a meeting point of local, national and global forces, as shown by this collection—can be the vantage point for studying some of the most important questions of contemporary Indian society.

Put together, the essays in this collection highlight the museum's characteristic as a popular space where *touching*, *spitting* and *praying* were and are carried out irrespective of the museum makers' objectives and desires. The visitors see the museums with wonder (the *ajajib ghar* in the Guha-Thakurta and Prakash); with devotion (Mathur and Singh on Akshardham and the Maitreya Buddha, Mukherjee on the archaeological museum at Bodhgaya, Puri on dioramas in Haridwar); and at leisure (Appadurai and Breckenridge on museum as part of the media spectacle, Jeychandran on Government Museum, Chennai). Accordingly, the

editors' comment that the history of the museum in South Asia shows its distance from the popular sphere appears inconsistent with the overall emphasis of the book. Further, this collection is dominated by Indian case-studies. More studies from other South Asian countries, which share so much in common, yet have diverse histories and societies, would have been a valuable and welcome addition to this book.

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Sumit Sarkar, *Modern Times: India 1880s-1950s*, Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2014, pp. xiv + 464, Rs. 535 (paperback), ISBN: 9788178243825.

Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India: 1885-1947*, New Delhi: Macmillan, 1983 (reprint 2007), pp. xvi + 486 (paperback), ISBN: 9780333904251.

In the early 1980s', historians were divided into three schools of historiography- the 'Nationalist', the 'Cambridge', and the 'Marxist'. Most historians were proud of their affiliation to and identification with a particular school. The Marxist and the Cambridge school were often in bitter ideological conflict with each other. In this belligerent environment, for a newcomer, history-writing was not only about learning how well you understand the past, it was also figuring out to which school you belonged. Since the last three decades, however, this era of history-writing is coming to an end. Though a number of historians still cling to the above mentioned simplistic but worn-out world view, a majority does not subscribe to it. The era of 'schools' is over.

This broad change in the Indian history-writing may be situated in the intellectual journey of Sumit Sarkar, a renowned historian of modern India. His two books— *Modern India* (1983) and *Modern Times* (2014)— which are situated thirty years apart, are representative of this broad trend in history-writing.

Since 1983, *Modern India* (*MI*) has remained a very well-known textbook on the theme through a Marxist perspective. Sarkar himself had no hesitation in acknowledging this. In his introduction to *MI*, he wrote, 'No historian can be free of bias, and unstated or unconscious bias is most dangerous of all; it is best therefore to baldly state at this point my principal assumptions' (pp.10-11). He stated four assumptions, which suggest influence of an admixture of Nationalism and Marxism in his work.

In contrast, his introduction to *Modern Times* (*MT*) does not make any such claims. Instead he argued,

Much has changed in the world of South Asian history-writing over the last three decades since I wrote a book entitled *Modern India* (1983). The passage of thirty years having rendered that work thoroughly dated, the futility of any attempt to revise it became increasingly clear to me, especially as over this period my own historical perspectives took new and unexpected directions. (p. xi)

In the following section, through examples, I have shown how Sarkar's approach to history-writing has changed from *MI* to *MT*. In *MI*, the first hundred pages offered a rich commentary on the historiography of modern India. While remaining chapters dealt with political history, these pages discussed social and economic history. *MT*, despite Sarkar's calling it a new work, appears to be an extended, revised, and re-worded version of this section of *MI*, with addition of a few new chapters. In both books, the themes discussed are conspicuously similar, only the interpretation and approach has changed. The discussion on 'deindustrialisation' in both the books is one such example. In *MI*, Sarkar had criticised Morris D. On Morris's article which called deindustrialisation a myth, he had called the arguments of Morris 'more conjectural' and 'dubious'. Against the arguments of Morris, he had cited the findings of Amiya Bagchi, who had then provided new data on deindustrialisation, which seemed very convincing. Sarkar also concluded that one has to be mindful of the 'sufferings of artisans', which he believed was caused by deindustrialisation.

In *MT*, on the contrary, a different understanding of deindustrialisation emerges. The confidence with which he wrote on deindustrialisation in *MI* seems to have waned. He finds this subject 'controversial', 'indeed peculiarly difficult to clinch in either direction'. Whether it took place or not is difficult to establish now. In *MT*, Sarkar writes,

[T]here is still sufficient room for debate, for such a large country, about the overall macro-economic trends...it was also indisputable that artisanal occupations, most notably handlooms, had far from vanished, and were in some cases even expanding. (p.207)

On this theme, his evaluation of the worth of some of the studies has also changed. In *MI*, he had dismissed the arguments of Daniel and Alice Thorner, but in *MT* he agrees with them and states that the statistics would not 'bear the burden that had been imposed on them'. On the contrary, Amiya Bagchi's arguments, which were given significant importance in *MI*, appear unimportant in the light of a subsequent critique by Marika Vicziany. In *MI*, Sarkar had unequivocally written in favour of the nationalist understanding of deindustrialisation, but in *MT* he seems to be indecisive. Though he has stated various positions on the deindustrialisation debate, he has kept a critical distance