

saint. The implications of this argument are far-reaching, even if Amin reaches for them obliquely.

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CHRISTIAN LEE NOVETZKE. *The Quotidian Revolution: Vernacularization, Religion, and the Premodern Public Sphere in India*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016. Pp. xxiv, 402. Cloth \$65.00, e-book \$64.99.

Christian Lee Novetzke's task in *The Quotidian Revolution* is to explain two intertwined aspects of the medieval western Indian past: first, how did Marathi rise as a language of expression—public, sacral, and political—and, second, how did the concerns of everyday life, and of the common person, permeate the literary and religious imagination? This emergence of a new language of everyday sacrality and everyday politics in the thirteenth century, Novetzke offers, eventually gave shape to a pivotal geography for early modern and modern India: that of Maharashtra. Excavating the birth of newness is a challenge for any historian of India and, in the case of origins of languages and politics, this challenge is considerably magnified due to contemporary religious and ethnic politics. Novetzke's careful study provides a model for how issues of considerable scholarly importance as well as cultural sensitivity can be addressed in the same monograph.

The Quotidian Revolution is divided into three parts. Overall it focuses on two texts written in Marathi (or Old Marathi), on their political and cultural worlds, and on their ethical domains: the *Līlācaritra* (ca. 1278 C.E.) and the *Jñāneśvarī* (ca. 1290 C.E.), associated with Chakradhar (ca. 1194 C.E.) and Jnandev (ca. 1271 C.E.) respectively. These texts are the sacral foundations for, and inheritance of, major Vaishnav sects in contemporary India—the Varkaris and the Mahanubhavs. These texts, alongside others such as Hemadri's *Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi*, have long been studied as sources for the Yadava (or Sevuna) polity which ruled from 1189 to 1317 C.E. In part I of *The Quotidian Revolution*, chapters 1 and 2 focus on the Yadava polity (roughly analogous to the contemporary region of Maharashtra) centered at Devgiri (now Daulatabad, Maharashtra). The Yadava were a non-Brahminic west Indian polity that participated in, per Novetzke, the Brahminic ecumene, wherein the uppermost caste—the Brahmin—were engaged with the state in various capacities such as instruction in or composition of religious texts in Sanskrit, production of rituals, maintenance of royal genealogies, running of temples and monasteries, patronage of schools of theory, instruction in sciences and arts, and the training of bureaucratic and literary classes (58). Novetzke argues that the relative stability of the Yadava polity, as well as this concern of the few with the few, opened up spaces for spiritual and literary entrepreneurs. Chakradhar and Jnandev were two such entrepreneurs who (as Brahmins) critiqued social inequality and argued for the production of sacral texts in Marathi. Chapter 3 turns to the received biographies of Chakradhar and Jnandev and presents them as “authors” of radical everydayness outside the later hagiographies.

Part II examines the *Līlācaritra* for capturing the vernacularization in progress for medieval western India in the late thirteenth century. In vernacularization Novetzke tackles a complex of ideas: a (performative) language of the public that renders an ethos and sacrality, in contradistinction to the male, Brahminical Sanskrit; a mode of “indigenizing” discursive mediums such as gender subversion, art, dance, dress, architecture, politics, and literature; a method of highlighting the everyday livelihoods in highly aestheticized genres of representation. Reading the didactic and performative aspects of *Līlācaritra*, Novetzke reflects on passages and dialogues concerning intermingling of castes, roles of women, and the specific ways in which Chakradhar and his early followers “decenter” the temple as a node in the Brahminic ecumene. As he describes: “the vernacularization was about place, the temple and the networks that surround temples, and about the economy that formed around the entrepreneurial spiritual teachers of the age” (167). Chapter 5 examines the necessity of the Marathi language for the *Līlācaritra*. Here Novetzke argues that both the social critique of Brahmin caste practices as well as the desire to propagate the teaching of Chakradhar to an audience unattached to the Yadav royalty drove this vernacularization of piety.

Part III focuses on *Jñāneśvarī* and tackles in chapter 6 the question of language and social purity by exploring why this Marathi commentary on the *Bhagavad Gītā* was written to bring the message of Krishna and Arjuna to “women, low castes, and others” (xiii, 15, 235–237). The *Jñāneśvarī* offers a (somewhat) radical availability of salvation and ethics for the Marathi publics. In chapter 7, Novetzke offers a compelling reading of the *Jñāneśvarī* and the ways in which difference and transgression intertwine to open up possibilities of critique and empathy across caste strictures. He posits a “sonic equality” where the Marathi public sphere could hear the possibilities of caste equality, albeit still from a socially conservative position (283). It is in this chapter that the diffuse categories of public, common, and everyday coalesce as the “quotidian” for Novetzke's argument.

Novetzke remarks in the beginning that the Yadava polity already rested within Sanskrit, Kannada, and Marathi literary cultures (51–53). But, we can make it even more complex. Already for nearly five hundred years, Arabic had been a language of the port cities and desert forts of medieval western India, influencing vocabularies from Gujarati to Konkani. Persian would enter Devgiri in the late thirteenth century when the last of the Yadava rulers, Ramachandra (r. ca. 1271–1311) was captured by 'Alauddin Khilji in 1294. The capture (and ransoming) of Devgiri provided so much wealth for 'Alauddin that he was able to catapult himself onto the throne at Delhi and proceed for another decade to send expeditions to Devgiri. The Yadav capital—much like Warangal, the capital of the southern Indian Kakatiya polity—were integral nodes of the temple economy that Novetzke describes as being disrupted by these vernacular “entrepreneurs.” Yet, what stays marginal to Novetzke's analysis are the Persianate polities from Delhi (almost 800 miles due north from Dev-

giri) that also disrupted and transformed the quotidian and sacral lives in Gujarat, in Maharashtra, and, after 1398 C.E., in the Deccan. While the Muslims' arrival is temporally right at the end of Novetzke's time frame, conceptually it forms the genesis of the historical memory of these Vaishnava sects. The *Līlacaritra* survived the Khilji campaigns because it was committed to memory by a female devotee, Hiraisa (180), and subsequently "recovered"; and Chakradhar in some cases actually prophesied the arrival of the "impure" Muslims (199). In other words, the historical development of both the sacral traditions, and the textual commentary discussed by Novetzke are fully within an Indic Muslim milieu. It is thus necessary to incorporate Persianate sources in the excavation of Indic revolutionary pasts. Novetzke's emplacement of key medieval Marathi texts deepens our understanding of the long thirteenth century and invites us to think ever more broadly about Indic pasts.

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KAMA MACLEAN. *A Revolutionary History of Interwar India: Violence, Image, Voice and Text*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pp. xx, 342. \$29.95.

The visual turn in history has expanded the archive beyond the mass of official images that were always a part of it to include the wider world of visual materials circulating in culture more broadly. From a drawing in of heterodox familial, religious, commercial, and political images has come a widening of historians' engagements with anthropology, art history, and media studies, and a dramatic shift in how we think with images, how we "read" them. If they are no longer to be viewed as inert evidentiary objects that merely support arguments that have been crafted largely with texts—what Carlo Ginzburg once called a "physiognomic" reading of artistic material—then how do images function differently from texts? Indeed if images are now understood to not only bear histories of their own but actually generate questions of their own, how do they allow historians to intervene in existing historiographic debates, and, perhaps most importantly, offer a different "sensibility" to the politics of the past?

Kama Maclean's *A Revolutionary History of Interwar India: Violence, Image, Voice and Text* takes on a question that pioneers of the visual turn in South Asian history Christopher Pinney and Sumathi Ramaswamy had already signposted—how does one explain the enormous presence of revolutionary figures in popular visual culture versus their relative marginality in the actual historiography of the anticolonial struggle? Maclean offers a compelling history of revolutionary activity in the 1920s and 1930s in which, firstly, she considers the visual repertoire of the revolutionaries as integral to their very strategies of anticolonial resistance, and, secondly, she seeks to unsettle the presumed opposition between violence and non-violence, the revolutionaries and the Gandhian Indian National Congress party, that renders the former peripheral to the history of Indian nationalism.

With a focus on the Hindustan Socialist Republican Army (HSRA) and its most charismatic figure, Bhagat Singh, the chapter entitled "That Hat" is arguably the most vital of the book. In this chapter Maclean traces the making of the most widely recognizable image of Bhagat Singh, as a Western-dressed young man in a rakish hat—an iconic image comparable to Alberto Korda's 1960 photograph of Che Guevara, "Guerrillero Heroico," to show its integral role in the revolutionary politics of colonial India. The author suggests that Singh (and fellow revolutionaries) self-consciously posed for photographic portraits in studios. They then organized for the dissemination of copies of these images to the nationalist press, just before they undertook the Legislative Assembly bombing in April 1929. As one such portrait, the image by which Bhagat Singh is best known to us is no accident—it was crafted with political purpose.

It is here that Maclean's attention to the details of revolutionary organizing, the pragmatics and binds of secrecy versus the imperatives of dissemination and mobilization, is the most illuminating. It is a strength in the rest of the book as well.

As an underground movement, the HSRA knew their burst of violent action on the one hand gave them a dramatic stage for their ideas, and on the other hand risked their being cast out as simply "terrorists" without an ideology. If their action was going to be effective as an anti-colonial force they had to subvert the heavy hand and heavy censorship of the colonial state. In anticipation of Singh's arrest, trial, and death sentence, it was his photograph that secured life after death, by offering an image of a "martyr" with unabashed youth and charm, and in western dress. As such, Singh's photograph, taken with his full awareness of his anticipated death, thwarts the association of violence with terrorism and places in circulation instead the heroic iconography of martyrdom.

Another image stands out from the book—it is of Gandhi baring his chest to reveal the faces of Bhagat Singh and two other revolutionaries, as if they are close to his heart, albeit in concealment (fig. 53 [189]). Maclean argues that the textual archive, including Gandhi's article "Cult of the Bomb" (*Young India*, January 2, 1930) and HSRA's rejoinder, makes the opposition between Congress and the revolutionaries appear much more pronounced than it was. This, she proposes, was an opposition carefully cultivated so that Congress could deny knowledge of the revolutionary movement in its negotiations with the colonial state. In actuality, the two were much more deeply intertwined, as the fusions in popular visual imagery suggests. In addition to images, Maclean draws on oral histories that were recorded with former revolutionaries after independence, and this provides another kind of personal narrative that elucidates relationships on the ground. It has been generally understood that most members of the HSRA came into politics through participation in the Gandhi-led noncooperation movement of the 1920s, and who then radicalized when Gandhi controversially called off the movement, after his followers burned down a police station at Chauri Chaura (107). The oral histories, including those with women in