

of “jobless growth” whereby most new jobs are created in the insecure informal sector reduces the possibility that rapid economic growth will reduce poverty. Mungekar’s conclusion is that preexisting social inequality based on caste will ensure that the Dalits will be excluded from any benefits associated with the reforms. A good deal of the chapter is devoted to the issue of reservations policy and thus some important issues are overlooked. For instance, the author opens up a space for an interesting analysis of the dominant coalition in India’s political economy in terms of caste rather than class but this is not followed up.

As suggested above, the weakness of this book lies in its brevity. Ten chapters are squeezed into this slim volume. Thus some interesting arguments are introduced but not developed. However, what is irksome for a specialist reader may be a boon for a general reader who could pursue other more detailed literature with the aid of the bibliographies at the end of each chapter. As is often the case with writing on Dalit issues several of the writers make clear their normative positions in the course of the chapters and as a result the book has a committed feel to it. The book concentrates on material from western India though there are references to other regions, such as the Punjab and Tamil Nadu. The book serves as a useful introduction to debates about untouchability. It also provides an interesting and welcome sample of an alternative and distinctively Dalit approach to writing about religion, society, culture, and politics in India.

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Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs. By CHRISTOPHER PINNEY. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. 240 pp. \$55.00 (cloth); \$29.00 (paper).

Frame 1: A group of naked Andamanese girls is made to pose for a photograph in 1872, taken by a British zoologist deputed to study these island tribes. That the central figure in the photograph had in the meantime been “civilised,” dressed and made an inmate of the British Orphan school on Ross Island did not detract from the pressing colonial anthropological concern, here, with staging “a vision of an authentic primitiveness salvaged from imminent extinction” (pp. 46–47).

Frame 2: A middle class Indian lady in traditional attire poses with a photograph album against the Victorian paraphernalia of drapery, ornate furniture and floral backdrop in the studio of Ramchandra Rao and Pratap Rao, the Indore State Photographers, around 1900 (pp. 88–89). The demeanor and expression of the lady, like the carefully wrought artistry of the image, stand typical of the new subjectivities and visual potentials that the art of photographic portraiture opened up for modern urban Indians at the turn of the twentieth century.

Frame 3: In a contemporary chromolithograph, Shiva and Parvati with their two sons Ganesh and Kartick pose, as if for a cosmic photographer who urges them to smile and move closer (pp. 116–17). In a parallel crop of colorful photographic montages produced by several small-town studios of Madhya Pradesh, faces of wedding couples gaze out of flower petals or the wings of a butterfly (p. 133), while celestial backdrops immortalize the images of villagers who stand before these. While the gods in all their godliness impersonate modern-day mortals, the human subjects of popular photography are rendered iconic by the craft and magic of the medium.

These three frames encapsulate the three cardinal moments in the history of Indian photography conjured by Christopher Pinney in this remarkable book, which takes us on an odyssey from the beginnings of photography by colonial officials in the late nineteenth century to the radically ingenious photographic practices of small local studios in today's India. Social and cultural histories of photography remain a small and rare genre. The wide-ranging analysis that a book like this brings to bear on its Indian material makes it a major intervention within this field. The strength of its account lies precisely in that it makes no attempt at presenting a composite history of the development of this complex visual media in India. Rather, it revels in its selective (often idiosyncratic) focus on what it singles out as the main representative trends that characterize the three historical entities of colonial, elite Indian, and small town popular photography in the past and in the present. Conceived as three separate essays, each chapter sets out to explore a central problem in the uses and meanings of camera images in these different chronological and social contexts. Binding them together is one common theme: "the public photographic representation of the face and body" (p. 10), with each chapter probing the diverse kinds of work human visages and likenesses are made to do within specific types of photography.

The first chapter is primarily concerned with the newly perceived "truth" and "indexical" value of photography and its widespread deployment by colonial Indian civilians and officers to classify and fix the ethnographic identities of the peoples under their governance. As it goes deep into the project of the photographic documentation of Indian tribes, trades, and castes, it addresses the extent to which such images served the purposes of knowledge and surveillance. The second chapter enters a wholly different milieu of individual and family portraiture that was served by the proliferating crop of Indian photographers and photographic studios over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Here a close complicity emerges between those who wield the camera and those who pose before it, in the fashioning of new social and moral identities. The art of photography here, it is argued, strategically bonds with various inherited aesthetic conventions of enhancing and embellishing images, freeing itself from its "indexical" role to serve as keys to internal ethical or emotive states of persons. In this essay, we encounter not only the early genre of Indian painted photographs and the works of celebrated pioneers like Lala Deen Dayal, but also lesser-known agendas like that of the Theosophist G. S. Arundale, who set up a gallery of portraits of great men in Indore in 1923 for the moral uplift of the nation.

The core of the book lies in the third essay, where photography is seen to enact its sharpest break from these dominant paradigms to perform its alternative functions of magic and masquerade. As we are swept through the recent work of the photographic studios of the industrial town of Nagda and the photographs that adorn the homes of the neighboring village of Bhatissuda, we are engulfed by a myriad world of images that range from the juxtaposition of figures against gaudily painted backdrops of Kashmir or the Taj Mahal or their interpolation with divine and celluloid icons to some highly sophisticated cut-and-paste montages of multiple faces and poses. These additions and excesses never erase photography's central promise of delivering the "real." However, as Pinney labors to underline, it allows the medium to produce a more potent hyperreality, where the main expectations from it are the creation of new memorialized selves that are many steps removed from the ordinariness of everyday lives. It is in these humble, rural environs that the photographic technology remains enmeshed in its once fantastic aura and exercises its immense transformative powers over both the living and the dead.

That the author's obsession centers around the popular photographic practices of this obscure town and village in Madhya Pradesh where he did his fieldwork becomes obvious from the length and narrative indulgence of this last essay. This does create a degree of imbalance and unwieldiness in the overall flow of the book. It also leads to a flabbiness of structure, as Pinney allows himself not only to include an infinite number of personal photographic profiles but also to digress into the wider "inter-ocular" field of popular painting, divine iconography, and cinematic mythological imagery within which photography resides. But, overwritten though it is, this chapter, with nearly seventy black-and-white and colored illustrations, clearly constitutes the heart and soul of this study. This is where the author comes to life as an anthropologist, possessively embracing "his" Nagda and Bhatissuda, excavating the work of every small studio, recording life history after life history, becoming one with his informants to a point where his touched-up photographs against local studio backdrops are hardly distinguishable from theirs. This is also where the book's title, *Camera Indica*, takes on its sharpest edge—where the universal subject of photography, tipped out of the "insular security" of its Euro-American history (p. 8), assumes some of its most compelling local color and inflection, continuously redefining the lines of reality and plausibility within the genre.

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Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India. By GYAN PRAKASH. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999. xiv, 304 pp. \$49.50 (cloth); \$17.95 (paper).

In *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India*, Gyan Prakash seeks (as he explains on p. 7) to investigate "science's history as a sign of Indian modernity." This project is carried out in seven chapters discussing various aspects of science in British India: colonial museums and exhibitions ("Staging Science"); appropriation by Western-educated elites of modern scientific disciplines ("Translation and Power"); Indian representations of indigenous scientific traditions ("The Image of the Archaic"); colonial and nationalist programs for public health ("Body and Governmentality"); colonial and nationalist programs for public works ("Technologies of Government"); and the views of Nehru and Gandhi on science in the Indian nation ("A Different Modernity").

It is quite a bit of information to examine in fewer than 250 not very dense pages of text; consequently, only a few of the themes and events germane to these topics can be explored in depth. Prakash's selections among these possibilities are largely determined by his "concern to identify science's functioning as culture and power" (p. 8). Thus, he focuses on issues such as the contradiction between Western science's roles as an instrument of colonial power and as a universally accessible form of free inquiry; nationalist "hybridization" of Indian science from modern and traditional sources; and the importance of these newly negotiated concepts in imagining India as a modern state. The presentation of the relevant arguments from contemporary sources is generally careful without being corrective or critical: seeking to demonstrate the significance of these claims without arbitrating them, Prakash refrains from judging their merits. (His detachment often seems excessive in what is, after all, a work of history: many nonspecialist readers will emerge from Prakash's intense