

that the speaker is a laywoman while Schmidt suggests that a layman is involved. This gender difference has important implications for Tumshuqese noun morphology. Thirty-five years after Emmerick's edition, a new one, containing insights from both scholars and perhaps from other more recent work (D. Maue, H. Ogihara, C. Ching have been active), has still not appeared.

The chart on noun inflection (p. 110) needs correcting on two lines. Correct are "Instr.-Abl. -āna [-āna]" and "Lok. -ya [-¹a]." P. 111 typo *hvatā* > *hvatā*.

Chapter VIII, "Zu den ältesten iranischen Lehnwörtern im Tocharischen," had a year earlier been published as a contribution to W. Winter's *Festschrift* (n. 1053; Schmidt 1985) and so should be well known to the scholarly community. It is puzzling to me why Zimmer chose to reproduce this chapter, apparently entirely, which had already appeared in print, apparently entirely, while the preceding chapter which only partly appeared in print is reproduced only in part.

Chapter IX is the bibliography. Chapter X has several indexes: 1. Subject. 2a. Sanskrit, with Kuchean correspondence, but no translations. Although advertised as complete ("vollständig") I notice the absence of *bhagavat-* and *tathāgata-*. 2b. Tocharian, with Sanskrit correspondences but again no translations. One has to look under the stem to find a particular word, which can be a drawback for non-experts. To find *śmalñe* or *kekamoṣ* one must look under *kām-*. There is no Tumshuqese index.

This book is challenging to describe. Some parts are critically useful while others are of dubious value. Still, I suspect the volume will be a much-consulted reference in many scholarly libraries for some time.

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Brahmā's Curse: Facets of Political and Social Violence in Premodern Kashmir. By WALTER SLAJE. *Studia Indologica Universitatis Halensis*, vol. 13. Halle an der Saale: UNIVERSITÄTSVERLAG HALLE-WITTENBERG, 2019. Pp. viii + 53. €48.

The present volume—in fact a mere pamphlet, published however in an elegant hardback—is comprised of two short chapters, each of twenty-two pages. The first is entitled "A Glimpse into the Happy Valley's Unhappy Past: Violence and Brahmin Warfare in Pre-Mughal Kashmir," the second "What Does it Mean to Smash an Idol? Iconoclasm in Medieval Kashmir as Reflected in Contemporaneous Sanskrit Sources." The former prints a lecture delivered at Harvard University in March of 2018, the latter one at the University of Tokyo in March of 2019. Both examine social and political life in Kashmir's pre-Muslim antiquity, with the explicit goal of putting "the picture of premodern realities of life in Kashmir a bit into perspective" (p. viii).

The perspective Slaje offers is one of the Kashmir Valley not as a “happy” place, but as a society and polity beset by “social misery, disasters, violence and war” (p. vii). Thus the title of this item, which refers to a popular myth that Brahmā cursed the people of the Valley, a curse, as Slaje notes, of perennial mention in Kashmir. The myth of the malediction is related as told by Sāhib Rām (d. 1872), who in turn drew from (unpublished) *māhātmyas*, among them the *Amareśvaratīrthamāhātmya* and the *Kapaṭamunimāhātmya*, as well as, perhaps, the much-discussed *Nīlamatapurāṇa* (see pp. 8–9 n. 48). A king, the story goes, inadvertently served the human flesh of a secretly murdered Brahmin to others, when in fact a demon deceived that king so as to effect the same. The curse that the Valley’s Brahmins cast on the king was consequently turned by Brahmā back onto them, with interminable consequences. Indeed, as Slaje notes, from Sāhib Rām’s perspective it was Brahmā’s curse that “as a sort of maximum damage to the valley . . . also caused the Islamization” (p. 9).

The particular value of *Brahmā’s Curse* lies in its point of view. Slaje is right that some corrective is needed to balance the picture of Kashmir that is intimated (though in my view inadvertently) by the primary foci of the relevant extant scholarship, which often, though by no means exclusively, privileges intellectual history and examines the contents of Kashmiri philosophical and literary works at the expense of any robust acknowledgement of the often brutal, contemporaneous difficulties that the authors of those works, not to mention those less privileged, were forced to endure. Indeed, as the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*s make plain, the Valley was perennially host to every sort of calamity, whether of human or natural cause—earthquakes, flooding, famine, civil war, corruption, the sufferings of authoritarian rule, and everything in between.

The first chapter of *Brahmā’s Curse* addresses political violence, particularly warfare, noting that Kashmiri Brahmins often eschewed non-violence for active engagement in combat, the struggle for political power, and the occupation of the royal throne. Similarly, members of “untouchable” classes, Caṇḍālas principally but also Śvapacas, engaged in political violence and in one instance at least joined with a Brahmin to assassinate a king (p. 21). As Slaje notes, warfare “formed part of everyday culture, and could not be avoided by even a single generation of Kashmiris” (p. 20).

The second chapter studies the looting of Hindu temples and Buddhist sites, iconoclasm in particular. Slaje notes that such acts were committed in Kashmir both by Hindus who shared with those they victimized a “common conviction of a physical presence of the deities in their sculptures,” and by Muslims who held that “sculptured gods were mere stones, dead matter to put it another way” (p. 26). Each desecrated religious objects or sites, but for different reasons. The former desecrated images before stealing their precious metals, the desecration, Slaje explains, serving to expel the deities therefrom (p. 33). The latter “polluted” sacred sites to render them unusable, which amounted to a tool conducive to conversion. Muslims “profanized” Puṣkara Lake in Rājasthān, for example, by having their menstruating wives bathe in it and by using it as a tank for fishing (p. 41). The “happy Valley,” like much of premodern South Asia, was not so easily inhabited, after all.

Several questions may be raised about this work, however, even if they are likely the result of inadvertent phrasing in the text, explicable, too, by the brevity with which the present concerns are treated. First, the book implicitly seems to equate Kashmiri Hindus (if not Brahmins in particular) with Kashmiris *tout court*, with Muslims in general, and not just Mughal invaders, sometimes almost identified as foreigners, like Afghans, the British, and Sikhs (see, e.g., p. 35). Similarly, Slaje leaves one with the impression that Kashmiri Hindus did not wish to live there. Reference to the fact that the famed “gates” to the Valley were used forcibly to keep Kashmiris home (pp. 10–11, 36–37); that Somadeva’s *Kathāsaritsāgara* says it was written to cheer Queen Sūryavatī “for just a moment” (pp. 6–7), after the suicide of her husband and before her own in an act of *satī*; the notion that much of the praise of the Valley found in Sanskrit literature may be attributed to incidental appreciation for its natural beauty or, in the case of the *Nīlamatapurāṇa*, to the boiler-plate recitation of tropes endemic to the literary genre it imitates (the *māhātmya*); and the fact that various Kashmiris were, in fact, men and women utterly lacking in virtue (see, e.g., pp. 4–5)—all of this guides the reader toward the conclusion that Kashmiris uniformly disliked Kashmir and their countrymen. Finally, Slaje’s quick prose even almost suggests—again, inadvertently—that premodern Indian society is best organized by normative caste divisions (see, e.g., at pp. 18–19).

Brahmā's Curse begins with a short preface that declares that “while it is . . . little astounding to learn that Indian philosophers did not make the political and social settings of their times a subject matter of philosophical consideration and debate, it is astounding to observe that Indologists, too, paid very little attention to the societies these philosophers were part of, and to the everyday realities they had to endure in their days” (p. vii). This book seeks—rightly—to correct the latter problem. And yet, in doing so it sometimes too simply defines the problem or monochromatically interprets the evidence (such that, for example, the first part of the statement just cited is given as an uncomplicated fact).

Slaje's erudition is legendary, and this work offers instructive instances of it—not just for coverage of the items featured in its two chapters, but also his treatment, for example, of types of weapons in Kashmir (p. 20) (which he has handled elsewhere, as well, in greater detail). Yet, brevity renders the work one of too little nuance to avoid the kinds of simplification elsewhere *never* associated with Slaje's brilliant pen. *Brahmā's Curse* is a useful item, and I am happy to have read it, bound though it is by brevity to at least some inadvertent overgeneralization.

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Jesuits and Matriarchs: Domestic Worship in Early Modern China. By NADINE AMSLER. Seattle: UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON PRESS, 2018. Pp. ix + 258. \$95 (cloth); \$30 (paper).

By seeking to fill a gap in scholarship on Chinese Catholics in the seventeenth century, particularly how women in China were introduced to Catholicism and contributed to its development and spread, Nadine Amsler makes crucial contributions to many different fields of study in this slim, tightly organized book. While its primary audience will be those interested in the history of Catholicism in China, reflected in the justly earned laudatory blurbs from such scholars on the jacket, this book ought to be read by anyone interested in women's devotional lives in the early modern world (not only in China), histories of East–West cultural exchange, and cross-cultural constructions of gender.

Concurrently, one of the key issues at the heart of Amsler's study is what sources are “suitable” for historians, and how obscured history can be uncovered by means of source materials that, while they might not answer historians' questions directly, give credible answers nonetheless, if only we know how to listen to them. Such a creative approach, in the hands of a less careful researcher, might lead to disaster. But in Amsler's meticulous, considerate ones, “reading . . . against the grain” (p. 11) has resulted in a study that allows us real glimpses through the screens that elite women retreated behind when men, including Jesuit missionaries, visited their homes.

Studies of Chinese women's religious practices in the domestic sphere have been relatively popular in recent scholarship, although these studies generally focus on Buddhist devotional activities and popular religious texts. Now, Amsler's book provides a point of comparison that brings us a more complete picture of early modern Chinese women and their agency within the social limitations of gender expectations. This is an enormous task, one that requires multiple layers of framing and reframing.

Seventeenth-century Chinese Catholic women left no written records of their own religious experiences (p. 168 n. 43). Consequently, Amsler spends the first four chapters of the book focusing her analysis on the Jesuits themselves and their growing comprehension and re-interpretation of Chinese gender norms—for both men and women—so that we might better grasp the five short case studies of female religious experience that close the book. It is only by unpacking how thoroughly Jesuits in China sought to shape their identities along the lines of Confucian literati elites, and all the etiquette and gendered performances that went along with that, that the pregnancy and childbirth rituals (chap. 5), women's congregations (chap. 6), family networks of religious women (chap. 7), convent-like homes of chaste widows (chap. 8), and textiles embroidered and donated to churches (chap. 9) are able to show us the central importance of women and their homes in the development of Chinese Catholicism at its earliest stages. In doing so, Amsler's study joins those she cites on the Americas,