

spiritual sphere of Hinduism. The papers by Owen Lynch, Paul Toomey, Peter Bennett, and Charles Brooks all deal with one remarkable area of this vast domain: *bhakti* (devotional) worship in the great pilgrimage region of Braj, south of Delhi, where Krishna allegedly was born and lived. The remaining paper, by Frédérique Marglin, reconstructs the meaning and experience of temple dance in Orissa, but it too has a similar story to tell.

Each of these stimulating papers informs us of the remarkable efforts made by worshipers to immerse themselves completely in stereotypical emotional relationships with God. This type of reverence, which aspires to a willed transformation not only of ideas, but also of feelings, is an offshoot of classical Sanskrit poetics where the eight basic human sentiments (*bhava*) are purified through artistic performance into detached and uplifting aesthetic experiences (*rasa*, literally the "juice" of the sentiment—taste, rather than sight, is apparently the prevailing symbol for the Indian experience of the aesthetic and the holy).

In *bhakti* practice an analogous transcendentalizing of mundane emotions occurs as the believer becomes an actor in the cosmic play that recapitulates Krishna's life and his various experiences of sublime love. The roles and the type of adoration they entail are five: awed worshiper, devoted slave, playful friend, and—the two most prevalent—erotic lover and nurturant mother. Each of the parts in the drama has its own conventional characteristics and specific emotional tone, which the devotee strives to manifest outwardly and experience inwardly, thereby attaining blissful union with the deity.

The cases used as illustrations of this process of self-transformation are fascinating and compelling. They include: the Brahmin Chaubes, whose habitual emotional stance of *mast* (heated and heedless intoxication) is the defining characteristic of personal and group identity; the Vallabhites, "gourmets of India," whose stupendous food offerings to Krishna are a metonymical means for the stimulation of maternal and nurturant feelings; the Chaitanyaites, who arouse within themselves the frustrated love of a *Gopi* longing for the touch of her absent lover; and the temple dancer-prostitutes who lose personal identity in the compulsive practice of erotic dance, refining the base emotion of lust until it is transformed into union with the divinity.

As with all good studies of Indian symbolism, these articles have a dizzying quality because of the marvelous intertwining and transmutations of the limitless aspects of God that make up the Hindu pantheon and inform Hindu practice. Though short and necessarily incomplete, these pieces give the *rasa* of the complex totality; in addition, they make a very good argument that emotional states in Hinduism are not conceptualized or felt as personal surges of passion, but as dialectically constituted multiplex apprehensions of a relationship with God which, through cultivation and practice, can lead to bliss. From my perspective, these cases may be seen as illustrations of techniques of ecstasy—ways of overcoming existential issues of human alienation through stimulating merger in an emotionally charged group.

However, the emphasis in these essays is not on universal processes of ecstatic self-transformation, but on the distinctive construction of Indian emotional life and belief. The material presented argues forcefully for this distinctiveness in a manner that makes for a challenging volume, well written and well worth reading.

***Intimate Relations: Exploring Indian Sexuality.* SUDHIR KAKAR. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. 161 pp., notes, index. \$18.95 (cloth).**

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Intimate Relations is a straightforward psychoanalytical interpretation of India's gender relations interpreted as narrative, "storied," sexual, and irrational viewpoints of actors (p. 141). Kakar selects data from precious few case histories, Gandhi's autobiography, literature, movies, and such, for use as "the raw material of family case histories" (p. 7). His basic assumption is that the bedrock of "common psychological reality" is "the infantile discovery, struggling against wishes and fears which would have it otherwise, that we are either one sex or the other" (p. 143). Such universality, however, doesn't homogenize; cultures variously emphasize the wishes, fears, and gender identifications. A second assumption, and the book's primary focus, is that for the analyst the male's relationship with women begins with the mother (p. 86).

Kakar's main argument is that the goddess Devi "in her manifold expressions as mother in the inner world of the Hindu son" (p. 131) portrays India's "hegemonic narrative." Goddess Parvati's two sons, Ganesha and Skanda, illustrate the narrative's opposing wishes: Ganesha seeks surrender and fusion with the good mother at the cost of masculinity symbolized by his broken tusk, while virile Skanda seduces the gods' wives only to suffer punishment from an illusory "good mother" in paramours and, thus, celibacy. The goddess is also the violent, demon slaying, naked Devi, the sexual mother symbolized for the male as the protective snake in folklore and the movie, *Nagina*. Thus, an "unconscious fantasy of maintaining an idealized relationship with the maternal body" (p. 125) fueled Gandhi's espousal of socially creative celibacy with its inner struggle against the whore-mother-wife, as well as his desexualization of women as mothers and idealization of them as goddesses. Indian spirituality, as was Gandhi's according to Kakar, is "preeminently a theory of 'sublimation'" (p. 118).

The hegemonic narrative, more than mass escapism, drives the regressive fantasy of the audience-author of Indian cinema wherein scenes of the humiliated or raped woman writhing across the screen allow the male's Skanda to enjoy the woman (sexual mother-whore), while his Ganesha idealizes and desexualizes her in scenes of the ideal mother. Rape scenes also portray the female's "universal fantasy" (p. 3) of the "good penis" (p. 59)—presumably her hegemonic narrative—allowing her to enjoy unconsciously the villain (normally seductive father, p. 144).

The allegorical *Tota Myna* (parrot, starling) and snake folktales, mostly stories of hate between the genders on Kakar's reading, further elaborate the hegemonic narrative. In them the wife is a defensive mask for male anxiety about either the sexually voracious yet attractive mother or the devoured-devouring mother proffering protective fusion along with threatening loss of individuation. For the female these stories illustrate the untrustworthy and fickle lust of the husband whose only attachment is parental. In love, her choice is appeasement or masochistic surrender, which Kakar's interviewed slum women, Janak and Basanti, actually live and bear because Indian slum women, presumably unlike slum women in other parts of the world, maintain an identity-sustaining attachment to their culture's female ideal: the *jori*, the romantic pair of dutiful wife and loving affectionate husband—culturally symbolized by *ardhanarishwara*, Shiva as half male and half female, a wished-for oneness rather than a twoness of mortal spouses—and the “good penis”—iconically the snake of Indian folktales. Denial of the ideal's actualization more than infidelity fuels hatred for their husbands because “unlike the spouse of most women in the higher classes, the slum husband is apt to be shiftless” (p. 67).

Kakar's interpretations are interesting, although conventional. Because the hegemonic narrative is really *his* Western psychoanalytical interpretation, it and his hermeneutics of suspicion raise serious reservations. First, Kakar's governing metaphor, psychic life as narrative, reveals insofar as it requires tension between the protagonists to hold attention (p. 141), but also conceals hegemonically insofar as living “happily ever after” ends, rather than begins, narratives. Thus, Kakar portrays dark, hate-impelled fantasies as all there is to India's “inner theatre of love” and comes to a stark conclusion: India's gender relations and those of all patriarchal societies (p. 143) “seem impelled more by hostility than tenderness or love . . . as much by hatred and fear as by desire and longing” (p. 141). Tenderness, affection, love, and attachment between the sexes are relegated to the female projection of the ideal *jori*, at least for slum women. Second, Kakar states that “Indian myths constitute a cultural idiom that aids the individual in the construction and integration of his inner world” (p. 135). But Kakar gives not one case history exemplifying that statement. Rather, his interpretation of literature, movies, and other material, is hegemonic and used to illuminate the case histories, leaving the “storied” plot of Indian gender relations normative and his claim to present the actors' viewpoint untold. Third, a consequence of those missing exemplifications is an unfortunate view of culture (notably Indian culture) as a function of unconscious desire in Western psychoanalytical terms, and as a constraint, not also an enabler, for the Ego. Finally, lacking documentation, Kakar's sweeping generalizations about slum versus upper-class husbands (above); about differences between Indian and other slum women in inner adherence to *their* cultures' ideals (p. 68); and about gender perceptions similar to India's in all “patriarchal” societies (p. 143) seem to be class or culturally biased stereotypes.

Sitar Music in Calcutta: An Ethnomusicological Study. JAMES SADLER HAMILTON. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1989. xlix + 310 pp., maps, charts, musical transcriptions, figures, tables, appendixes, bibliography, glossary, notations glossary. \$29.95 (paper).

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It is widely believed in India today that the sitar was invented by Amir Khrushrau in the 13th century. Ravi Shankar perpetuates this idea in program notes he provides for his concerts. For a May 1990 concert at University of California at Santa Barbara, for example, he wrote that the sitar “has existed in its present form for approximately seven hundred years.” Over the last few decades, however, scholars have come to realize that the sitar evolved much later, in fact, in the 18th and 19th centuries. Examples of 19th-century sitars in New York's Metropolitan Museum stand as evidence in support of the recent date of the evolutionary process.

In India today, it is also common to conceive the world of sitar performance in terms of a twofold division represented by Ravi Shankar on the one hand and Vilayat Khan on the other. Sitar students are often asked to which of these two traditions they belong. Greater familiarity or closer investigation, however, reveals a number of divisions beyond these two. These are but two of the common misconceptions that Hamilton's work lays to rest.

Hamilton studied the sitar first in Canada and then during extended periods in Calcutta where he obtained an M.A. in instrumental music in 1979 (p. xvii). His main teacher was Radhika Mohan Maitra (d.1981). The present book is a revised version of a doctoral dissertation written at Queen's University of Belfast under the guidance of John Blacking (p. xxi).

The book begins with an ethnographic preamble focusing on Indian beliefs and customs regarding the human body, social structure, pollution and purity of material objects (including some musical instruments), time, and cosmology. It also includes an introduction to the physical and cultural geography of the city of Calcutta. This introduction should fulfill a need in introductory classes since it compiles a large amount of information of the kind that ethnomusicologists like to convey to their students. However, disregard of much of this material in the subsequent chapters pinpoints the challenge ethnomusicologists face in relating sociocultural data to musical aspects of their study.

Chapter 1 divides the world of sitar and *sarod* performance into six stylistic/hereditary lineages called *gharānās*. Hamilton gives historical and genealogical data of the main figures in these *gharānās*. Those who are familiar with the sitar and *sarod* players discussed in Hamilton's book, either through concerts or recordings, will appreciate the wealth of data that he provides. Those wanting additional information on pre-20th-century figures should consult a little-known doctoral dissertation by Allyn Miner (*Hindustani Instrumental Music in the Early Modern Period: A Study of the Sitar and Sarod in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, Banaras Hindu University, 1981). The chapter also