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***Hindu Art and Architecture.* By George Michell. pp. 224, 186 illus., 77 in colour. London, Thames & Hudson, 2000.**

Crispin Branfoot

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland / Volume 12 / Issue 01 / April 2002, pp 111 - 112  
DOI: 10.1017/S1356186302360152, Published online: 12 March 2002

**Link to this article:** [http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract\\_S1356186302360152](http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S1356186302360152)

**How to cite this article:**

Crispin Branfoot (2002). Review of George Michell 'Hindu Art and Architecture' Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland, 12, pp 111-112 doi:10.1017/S1356186302360152

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of spelling. It is clear that the book could have done with another close editing before it went to press.

Despite these problems the book still represents a major contribution to the literature on the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century economy of Bombay and the country trade. By bringing this considerable body of archival material into print, Bulley's work will be necessary reading for anyone working on the economic history of the empire, or India in this period. It is, however, a book for experts and specialists on eighteenth-century British India, and even in that respect, it may more often be of use as a work of reference rather than as a comprehensive narrative of the topic.

CARL A. TROCKI

HINDU ART AND ARCHITECTURE. By GEORGE MICHELL. pp. 224, 186 illus., 77 in colour. London, Thames & Hudson, 2000.

George Michell's latest book in Thames & Hudson's *World of Art* series is a welcome addition to the growing number of affordable, well-illustrated books that introduce Indian art to a wider audience. Michell is well known for his numerous publications in the field of Indian art and architecture, especially Hindu, over the last twenty-five years. This volume stands alongside two other books in the *World of Art* series, Roy Craven's *Indian Art* (1976, revised 1997) now rather out-of-date, and Robert E. Fisher's useful *Buddhist Art & Architecture* (1993) that includes material from throughout Buddhist Asia and not just India.

Deciding what to include in a book about Hindu art is as problematic as defining "Hinduism", and whilst acknowledging the problem of isolating Hindu art from the broader Indian artistic tradition, Michell adopts a narrow definition of Hindu art as "being confined to shrines consecrated to Hindu divinities, semi-divine personalities and mythological narratives" (p. 8). This would seem to be a wise decision, however awkward it is to present, for example, the later Hindu art of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries in relative isolation from the wealth of both contemporary secular or Islamic paintings and architecture. This is a book about Hindu art in South Asia, primarily India, so interested readers will have to look elsewhere for details of the Hindu art of Khmer, Cambodia or indeed the West in the past century.

Following a short preface outlining the format of the book, the first chapter introduces the main themes in the study of Hinduism and its visual expression: a broad survey of the development of Hinduism over four thousand years, the use of images, the iconography and myths of the main deities, narrative traditions, the architectural setting for much Hindu art, and the impact of royal patronage. The subsequent five chapters each cover a period of a few centuries with titles suggesting the broader developments of the Hindu visual tradition over two thousand years – Beginnings, Early Maturity and Culmination for the period second century BC to thirteenth century AD, and following the Muslim invasions of north India c. 1200. Revival and Lesser Traditions for the period from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries. Subheadings divide the wealth of material into more manageable sections, defined by region and/or dynasty.

This book is particularly notable for its ambitious aim to cover the whole two thousand years of the Hindu visual tradition, demonstrating artistic continuities down to the present day. Many previous books have highlighted the earliest material up to the Muslim conquest in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries and either ignored or only cursorily covered the great numbers of Hindu monuments and sculptures produced after that in both the North and the South. Mention is therefore made of the temples built in Rajasthan and the Mathura-Vrindaban region in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, the wall-paintings of Kerala and Tamilnadu, and the narrative cloth-paintings from all over India that only survive from recent centuries. The historical breadth of this book admirably complements

Richard Blurton's *Hindu Art* (London, 1992) with its more iconographic approach to the Hindu visual arts, from the monumental to the "popular" or "folk" arts of the present.

Hinduism is a very visual culture and so both the author and publishers are to be congratulated for producing such a richly illustrated book. There are 186 illustrations in the book, 77 in colour, so almost every double-page spread has one or more illustrations, often occupying a full page. This allows several views of the most important monuments: the mid sixth-century cave-temple at Elephanta, for example, is illustrated with an annotated plan, a general view of the interior and two details of the sculpted panels (pp. 66–9). Many of the monuments, sculptures and paintings illustrated are familiar but there are plenty that are of unusual sites, such as the Shantadurga temple near Ponda in Goa built in 1738 (p. 167), or objects from little-studied artistic periods, such as the late sixteenth century copper image of Yashoda seated with Krishna from Tamilnadu in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (p. 186).

*Hindu Art & Architecture* is recommended as an excellent introduction to Hindu art in India for the student or general reader, with a generous number of high-quality illustrations and at an affordable price of £8.95 in paperback.

CRISPIN BRANFOOT

THREE SANSKRIT TEXTS ON CAITYA WORSHIP IN RELATION TO AHORĀTRAVRATA. By RATNA HANDURUKANDE. (*Studia Philologica Buddhica* 16). pp. xxv, 132. Tokyo, International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2000.

This slim volume presents three rare and interesting works relating to the practice of the *ahorātravrata*, a religious observance which – as its name implies – extends over a day and a night. The works presented include the *Ahorātravratacaityasevānuśaṃsāvādāna* (AVC), and two texts bearing the title *Ahorātravratākathā*: one in verse (AVK) and another in prose (AVK(P)). In all, these texts provide valuable insights into a certain mode of Buddhist discipline as related to the cult of the *caitya* and its subtending and legitimating narratives. In general, scant attention has been paid in Indological circles to such "practical" literature, and one values the publication of these works in a readily-available edition. However, one wishes more care had been taken with the production of the book as a whole.

The AVC is a work in 356 verses, which was edited on the basis of five manuscripts from Calcutta, Tokyo, "London", and "Berlin" (the latter two being microfilm copies of these MSS hailing from Bonn and the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project). The AVK edition is based on five manuscripts – four from Tokyo and one from "Berlin". This work is also chiefly in verse (140 total), with a small prose section at the outset. The last work, the AVK(P), was edited on the basis of the sole testimony of a "very faulty" MS found in the library of Tokyo University. It is a very brief prose version of the AVK. The texts are presented in Roman transliteration with word divisions indicated where possible. Proper names mentioned in the works are indicated with italic type, which is helpful.

As mentioned above, although the author specifies that the texts were established on the basis of "manuscript copies", he appears to mean "copies of manuscripts". The MSS described as deriving from "London" and "Berlin" are specified as being microform copies of these manuscripts. As the author does not indicate as much, we must assume that these copies were not checked against the originals – in principle an essential task for anyone attempting to establish a proper critical text, though one often overlooked in practice by Indologists. One assumes the MSS deriving from the Tokyo library were consulted directly, though this is not specified.

Very little is done with regard to exploring the nature and history of these texts. Indeed, despite a