

the Jaina *Rāmāyana*, where Rāma and Rāvaṇa are humans rather than a god and a demon.

The main purpose of P. S. Jaini's "Jaina Purāṇa: A Purāṇic Tradition" is to show the significant changes that occurred in the Jaina version of the story of Kṛṣṇa. The Jaina writers established the two categories of divine beings, the Baladevas and the Vāsudevas, with the former "leading the life of an ideal Jaina layman, subsequently renouncing the world to become a Jaina monk, and . . . [the latter] as the hero's companion, who is capable of carrying out terrible destruction regardless of the evil consequences that may ensue" (211). The Jaina writers cast Rāma as a Vāsudeva and his brother Lakṣmaṇa as a Baladeva, but reversed the categories for Kṛṣṇa and his brother Balarāma. As Jaini states, "In retelling their versions the Jaina authors shrewdly made a major change that was to accomplish at a single stroke both the elevation of Rāma to the status of a Jaina saint and the consignment of Kṛṣṇa to hell" (213).

The demise of Buddhism in India is attributed in part to the expert debating skills of the Hindu sage Śaṅkara (788–820), but Jaini advances several other reasons, contending that the Buddhists erred in adapting Śiva Lokeśvara as Avalokiteśvara and not protesting enough when Hindus made the Buddha an avatar of Viṣṇu. The Jains, on the other hand, aggressively maintained their own religious heritage and adapted Hindu myths only on their own terms.

Nicholas F. GIER
University of Idaho
Moscow, Idaho

GOLD, ANN GRODZINS. *A Carnival of Parting: The Tales of King Bharthari and King Gopi Chand as Sung and Told by Madhu Natisar Nath of Ghatiyali, Rajasthan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. viii+366 pages. Illustrations, charts, map, appendices, bibliography, index. Cloth US\$45.00; ISBN 0–520–07533–1. Paper US\$17.00; ISBN 0–520–07535–8.

Ann Gold has provided us with sensitive commentaries on Rajasthani culture in the past (GOLD 1988). In this volume she presents a critical study and translation of two interrelated epic narratives, providing a reflexive discussion of the contextual dimensions of an oral performance tradition. The bard is Madhu Natisar Nath, an aged man from Ghatiyali, the Rajasthani village in which Gold has conducted ethnographic fieldwork for nearly fifteen years. The Naths, living widely throughout the northern portions of India, are seen by anthropologists as representing both a social group or caste (*jāti*) and a spiritual lineage (*saṃpradāy*).

The narratives that Madhu Nath sings are localized versions of stories well known throughout North India. Because the Naths are found everywhere in the north, their oral narratives and legends are sung and discussed from Punjab and Rajasthan in the west to Bengal and Orissa in the east. Although a semi-codified system of esoteric beliefs heavily steeped in tantric and yogic practices relating to austerity and "perfection of the body" (*kāyā siddhi* [39]) connect the disparate Nath communities of North India in theory and ritual, a great deal of variation exists in local contexts. This may partially account for the oral variants of the narratives sung by Madhu Nath.

The two central epic stories discussed by Gold concern the key events in the lives

of King Bharthari and Gopi Chand. These two narratives seem to have been independent cycles at one point in time, but intersected somewhere in mid-North India a few centuries ago (60). According to the author, the story of King Bharthari precedes that of Gopi Chand both chronologically and conceptually, even though the latter is more prominent in Madhu Nath's repertoire: in Gold's transcriptions, the bard's King Bharthari narrative runs for approximately 75 pages, while the Gopi Chand narrative is about 140 pages. This is curious, since, according to tradition, King Bharthari was a historical figure reigning in the nearby city of Ujjain, while Gopi Chand is said to have ruled the medieval Bengali kingdom of Gaur.

Why should the favored narrative be the one of the more distant king? Gold does not really dwell on this issue, but it may have something to do with the marginal character of the Gopi Chand narrative. Bengal has often been perceived as a marginal place by other North Indians, a magical locus fraught with peril, mystery, and intrigue. This image, however fantastic it may be, serves as an excellent storytelling vehicle, and may have helped the Gopi Chand narrative develop more audience appeal over the centuries than the story of King Bharthari. Whatever the case may be, the two narratives currently seem to be part of an epic cycle, united both thematically and philosophically.

The central theme in both narratives is the conflict between the life of the householder and that of the renunciant, a topic that the author deals with at length (37-46). This theme is reflected in social reality as well as in song. That is, although the textual ideal of the Nath practitioner as a celibate ascetic still remains a vital part of the tradition, many Nath live normal married lives. British surveyors of the caste in the nineteenth century were perplexed by this apparent contradiction, but as Gold points out, current anthropological speculation has proven "that there are many kinds of renouncers, many degrees of asceticism, and many transitions, both gross and subtle, between those degrees" (47). However, the tension between the polar extremes does, in fact, exist in everyday life. The epics of King Bharthari and Gopi Chand deal with these existential problems in an instructive and witty way. Through the various dilemmas encountered by the characters in the narratives, audience members learn about the pros and cons of worldly renunciation.

There is also another function that these epic narratives serve: entertainment. Having heard such narratives being performed myself, I can say with certainty that a translation cannot capture all of the interesting nuances of the original. Gold is aware of this, describing the act of translation as an oscillation between "inexpressible delight and human disability" (25). Out of her struggle to produce a readable yet accurate rendering, Gold has brought us a lively, entertaining work. The translation is a pleasure to read, and its various sections are accompanied by brief introductions and copious footnotes.

It is unfortunate, though, that even though the author invited a competent linguist (David Magier) to append a descriptive grammar of Rajasthani to the text (335-50), no extended examples of the original are included. Although the author does mention that she is willing to provide tapes or transcribed text to interested parties (xx), it would have served other specialists best to have printed the entire texts for reference, as in SMITH 1991. Admittedly this would have made the book unwieldy, but a second appendix consisting of representative samples of the original text surely would not have been unreasonable. Despite this reservation, the volume will make a nice addition to any South Asian folklore library, since so few performed Indian epics are available in full translations.

Lastly, although the book as a whole has very few production errors, the full-page print of the cover of Balakram Yogishvar's Hindi drama of *Gopi Chand* is reproduced backwards (67). It is my hope that these few matters will be attended to in the second edition.

REFERENCES CITED

GOLD, Ann Grodzins

1988 *Fruitful journeys: The ways of Rajasthani pilgrims*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

SMITH, John D.

1991 *The epic of Pābūjī: A study, transcription and translation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Frank J. KOROM

Museum of International Folk Art
Santa Fe, New Mexico

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Z'GRAGGEN, JOHN A. *And Thus Became Man and World*. Edinburgh, Cambridge, Durham: Pentland Press, 1992. xvi+143 pages. Glossary, references. Hardcover £12.50; ISBN 1-872895-54-4.

In the good old days when anthropologists lacked sufficient field data concerning the diverse cultures of mankind, one of the main tasks of the anthropologist was to visit unknown "primitive" peoples in remote areas of the world and collect as much information as possible on their customs and institutions. Field researchers provided their colleagues with anthropological raw material in the form of ethnography, and analysis of the data was carried out later by themselves or someone else. In a sense this still holds true—not a few contemporary anthropologists believe that their main task is to expand the anthropological archives with new data obtained in the field. John Z'graggen's new book—an anthology of myths mainly from Madang Province in Papua New Guinea—is to be recommended primarily to those who hold this view, and to comparative mythologists, specialists in New Guinean studies, and educators who agree with "the president of the Catholic University of America . . . [who] recommends that readings in other cultures than one's own should be compulsory in the curriculum of schools of higher learning" (p. xiv).

This book is full of anthropological raw material in the form of mythical texts transcribed and translated from Tok Pisin or Pidgin English, the lingua franca of Papua New Guinea. The texts are, however, presented with little or no analysis. It is clear that the author, a missionary linguist who has spent much time in Papua New Guinea, does not intend this to be a scholarly book. In fact, in his introduction he directs readers interested in a more academic approach to a number of other works in the field of Papua New Guinean myth.

If there is something original in this book, it is the order of the texts: the author arranges the myths in the same order as the Book of Genesis. In order to bring this arrangement to completion, he is kind enough to insert, when necessary, mythical texts from provinces other than Madang! The book begins with the chapter "Origin of World and Man" and ends with "Death." In between you can find myths concern-