

The book might be used for first information, but as there are no bibliographical notes at all, it is of almost no help for serious research.

To be sure, a reference tool like the one the author must have had in mind is far beyond the reach of an individual, so one should refrain from blaming Mr. Garg too much for the obvious shortcomings of the book. One cannot but hope that a board of scholars will take up the plan - or, as Mr Machwe puts it in his foreword: "Let such individual efforts be blessed by institutions. Only such dedication can result in some desired *magnum opus*." (p. VIII)

Rainer Kimmig

**Hagen Berndt:** Rettet die Bäume im Himalaya. Die Chipko-Bewegung im Spiegel der indischen Presse. (Berliner Studien zur internationalen Politik Bd. 8). Berlin: Quorum Verlag, 1987. 131 pp.

The chipko-movement gained popularity both in India and abroad by the mere symbolism of its name: *chipko* (*cipko* according to the scholarly transliteration), from Hindi *cipaknā*, means 'embrace!', and in fact the idea of people, often women, embracing trees to protect them against the greedy axes of professional wood-cutters is sure to affect our sensibility. However, a critical analysis of the 'movement' itself reveals a reality - political and social - that is more complex than suggested by the world *chipko* which soon became a powerful slogan, specifically in the Himalayas.

Hagen Berndt's study tries to reconstruct the history of the movement from the data available in the Indian press and other publications, including books and pamphlets by leading personalities of the movement like Sunderlal Bahuguna and C. P. Bhatt. As indicated by the subtitle, the author is well aware of the ambivalence of his source material which he treats as an integral part of the history of the movement itself. In fact, there can be no doubt that the leading newspapers and periodicals played an important role not only in producing an ecological consciousness among the Indian middle classes, but also in defining the self-consciousness of both the movement and its leaders. Therefore, it seems justifiable that Berndt, after somewhat academic reflections on methodology and on the press in general, begins with an analysis of the Indian press system, including a short survey of its history (almost *ab ovo*) and an attempt at a critical evaluation of the political attitude of some of the leading Hindi newspapers and periodicals (e. g. *Navbharat Times*, *Dharmyug*, *Dinman*). This

chapter (chap. 2), however, is the weakest part of the book, as it is based almost exclusively on an analysis of those articles in June 1975 that comment on the announcement of the emergency state. The stance taken at that time might be significant to some extent, but as the situation was an extreme one (and, to be sure, not the same for every publishing house!), I don't think it will allow for easy generalisation. (Personally, I doubt Berndt's rather simplifying conclusions as regards *Dinman* and the implied judgement on the moral integrity of its chief editor at that time, Raghuvir Sahay.)

The main part of the book (chap. 3 - 6) consists of a history of the events and a short but excellent discussion of the various aspects of the movement - ecological, economic, social, political and religious. Data from different sources are contrasted effectively to produce a picture that is vivid but never spectacular. It is often said that only rich societies can afford ecological scruples, but Berndt's analysis leaves no doubt that many 'uneducated' villagers, especially women, have developed a keen sense for the necessity of resistance against capitalist - and, as is argued: colonialist (p. 52) - exploitation of the forests leading to the denudation of the Himalayan hill slopes with its disastrous and almost irreparable consequences. This growing ecological consciousness is partly rooted in the cultural and religious heritage of the local people, but often conflicts with traditional forms of economy. Thus the chipko-movement becomes a model for any ecologically orientated movement in the so-called 'underdeveloped' societies which is perhaps also one of the reasons for the international recognition for some of its leaders like Sunderlal Bahuguna.

Berndt's German rendering of the Hindi passages quoted is competent and generally does justice to the original (which, for comparison, is given in the notes).

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**Walter Schmitt:** *Vierzig Ich-Erzählungen Premcands. Beiträge zur Form- und Inhaltsanalyse. (Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik. Dissertationen Bd. 2).* Reinbek: Dr. Inge Wezler 1986. XIV, 420 pages, DM 56,—

Premcand is the best known writer of the first period of modern Hindi literature in the early 20th century. Some of his major works have been translated into several languages, and he holds a prominent position in every history of