

articles have been omitted and some political articles on the present situation in Afghanistan have been added.

Nevertheless, the larger part of the book deals with pre-revolutionary Afghanistan. For obvious reasons: the scientific material that became available after 1978 is very scarce and rudimentary. Academic exchanges between Afghanistan and the West have gradually petered out during the last six – eight years. None of the authors has – to my knowledge – visited Afghanistan after the fall of Daoud. The more recent information contained in the book was brought to Germany either by journalists (often via Pakistan) or by Afghan political refugees. Both sources can not, for obvious reasons, be recognized as genuine scientific material.

The editors were aware of these shortcomings. They also knew that Afghanistan is no longer a prominent topic of scientific research. They even knew that the publication of the book might be, in financial terms, a risky venture. Still, they decided in favour of publication, because they felt that the interest of the scientific community in Afghanistan should be kept alive. This moral attitude of the publishers deserves respect.

As a handbook for the analysis of Afghanistan's present political situation, the publication probably does not contain enough actual facts. As a resource-volume for the understanding of the background and the genesis of the present conflict, however, the book is extremely useful and commendable. If it helps to keep the memory of Afghanistan and of the Afghan people alive till a better future dawns for them, the book will have served its purpose very well.

Franz-Josef Vollmer

Atiur Rahman: *Political Economy of SARC.* Dhaka: The University Press Limited. 1985. x, 99 pp.

The South Asian Regional Cooperation (SARC) of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives was initiated by Zia-ur Rahman, the late Bangladesh president, and reflects Bangladesh's orientation towards South Asia after her attempts to join the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) were not welcomed by its members. Thus it reflects Bangladesh's search for a political 'home' after secession from Pakistan and her fear of her overpowering neighbour India. That these plans were taken up by all the other South Asian nations, above all by India and Pakistan, might be seen as an indication of their endeavours to steer clear of the geo-political controversies. After initiating SARC, however, Bangladesh seems to have lost the initiative, especially after the assassination of president

Zia in 1981.

The *Political Economy of SARC* is one of the first studies on SARC from Bangladesh. The author is a professional economist with a PhD from London University, presently serving at the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) in Dhaka. The booklet is intended as an introduction to SARC, but it also presents the – now more sceptical – Bangladeshi position: “Prospects for cooperation in South Asia apparently are quite limited. One cannot expect regional economic cooperation in South Asia similar to the EEC or other such organizations simply because of the politico-strategic environments. India’s role in the whole exercise is the most crucial element. India is the most dominant partner in the SARC. Each of the smaller states is suspicious about the future role of India in this regional grouping. ... How all SARC partners, particularly India ensure these accepted norms to be actually practiced will determine to a large extent the future of this venture. India has to moderate her role and has to be more accommodative.” (p. 68).

The book is written in a clear language, the author makes his points well understood. It is well referenced – especially with regard to other Bangladeshi works on the subject. The appendices comprise a chronology of SARC, the text of the 1980 working paper prepared by Bangladesh, two tables on the intra-regional trade in 1976, 1979, and 1982 (4 to 5 per cent of total foreign trade of the South Asian countries), and a list of the major export and import items traded by Bangladesh with its South Asian partners. The book is recommended as an introduction to SARC in general, and to Bangladesh’s position in particular.

Wolfgang-Peter Zingel

Hermann Kulke/Dietmar Rothermund (eds.): Regionale Tradition in Südasiens.
(Beiträge zur Südasiensforschung, 104). Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner 1985. 276 pages, DM 52.–

“Regional Tradition in South Asia” was the subject of a symposium held in Heidelberg in 1983. The participants were for the most part members of the newly founded South Asia Council of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Asienkunde. Dietmar Rothermund evaluates the impact of British rule on the various regions of India. Regional consciousness with its emphasis on regional languages was at first part of Indian nationalism rather than a threat to national unity. After independence federation, enacted through the creation of federal units based on language differences, was one answer to Indian regional differentiation and to the dominant position of the United Provinces. Regional conflicts within a linguistic state are the subject of Dagmar Grä-