

imperialism. It become almost grotesque, however, when he tries to apply this concept to all periods of Indian history and, reaching the seemingly logical conclusion, characterizes the caste system as a system of domination and exploitation instituted by the Aryans and 'revealing all the features of imperialism as described by Galtung' (p. 395). Exaggerated structuralism leads here to a total levelling of decisive differences, a clear instance of a lack of historical thinking.

One must admit that the authors of this volume assess their work correctly when they describe the last part as a first tentative step towards a geography centered on problems of development (p. 11).

Despite all the criticism there is no denying the specific value of this geography book. In conjunction with a critical analysis it is quite useful, providing as it does a detailed compendium of data on India in a well ordered, easily comprehensible form, and, not least, at a very reasonable price.

Clemens Jürgenmeyer

Manfred Domrös, Sri Lanka. Die Tropeninsel Ceylon. (Wissenschaftliche Länderkunden, Bd. 12). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1976, 298 pages.

It is no doubt a difficult undertaking for one author to write a comprehensive account of any given country. Even though he may not be aware of it he might not succeed in avoiding a biased selection of topics and materials according to his individual training and specialization.

After reading the book 'Sri Lanka - Die Tropeninsel Ceylon' by M. Domrös one gets the impression that in this particular case a highly qualified geographer, specialized in climatology, has made his own personal selection. Domrös presents a very valuable description of the island of Sri Lanka; it can be considered a thoroughly systematic account of all the important areas as seen by traditional geography. As such Domrös has concentrated on the geographical (physical as well as anthropo-geographical) foundations of Ceylon's society and economy with particular emphasis on the climatic conditions of Sri Lanka and its agrarian economy.

In his introductory chapter the author approaches the theme by listing relevant historical and contemporary 'problem areas', a most welcome departure from the over descriptive approach of traditional geography. It is a pity, however, that in spite of this promising introduction the major part of the book is lacking in this kind of problem orientation. At the beginning, for example, Domrös talks with justification about the problems arising from the exportorientation of Ceylon's economy. Later on, however, the space reserved for external economic relations (four pages) seems inadequately short.

Generally speaking the author may be criticized not for what he has written but for what he has not written. One looks in vain for information on the socio-

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political context within which economic development takes place. Social dynamics are not given adequate consideration and the reader is left without any of the background information which might explain the potential conflicts in Ceylonese politics since independence. Thus one reads, for example, next to nothing about the symptoms and implications of Sri Lanka's welfare state politics or the dysfunctionality of its schooling system which has led to an alarmingly high degree of unemployment amongst educated people, resulting indirectly in political instability. Apart from that the author does not consider the existence of newspapers (in a highly literate society!), trade unions (in a highly politicized society!) or foreign aid - just to give a few examples - though all of these are important enough to warrant treatment as part of Ceylon's socio-political and economic development. This is all the more surprising since there are six pages on 'winds in Ceylon' and three pages on frost (!) on this tropical island. This allows the conclusion that these omissions are not due to lack of space but rather to the selective approach.

Despite these shortcomings the book is highly competent in the areas the author covers. In addition, the comprehensive bibliography will be a very valuable guide to students of Ceylon.

Eckehard Kulke

Ulrich Teichler, *Hochschule und Gesellschaft in Japan*. Vol. I: Geschichte und Struktur des japanischen Hochschulwesens. 385 pages. Vol. II: Das Dilemma der modernen Bildungsgesellschaft - Japans Hochschulen unter den Zwängen der Statuszuteilung. 438 pages. Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1975/76. DM 49. - each.

The author, a staff member of the Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung in West-Berlin, is a recognised specialist in the field of Japanese education. In two instructive volumes which provide numerous valuable data he presents a thorough and extensive study of Japanese higher education and society. Based on a two-year research stay in Japan (1970-72), it shows Teichler's reading of a wide range of relevant materials. Looking at the Japanese education system from a sociologist's point of view, Teichler regards Japan almost as a prototype of industrialised "educative society" with equalized educational opportunities and wider access to higher education. He believes that Japan is ahead of other nations in modernity and can exhibit trends which will also appear in Western countries in the future. At the same time he does not ignore the shortcomings of the Japanese system and carefully inquires into the seamy side of *kogakureki shakai* (i.e. modern education society). Contrary to widespread fears in West-Germany that any considerable expansion of higher education would inevitably create "overqualification" and frictions on the labor market, Teichler cites Japan's experience as a case in point. He argues that Japanese reality produces evidence of the employment system's ability to accommodate