

The author has obviously not had the opportunity to revisit the villages or follow later events. This would have been most interesting, since much must have happened since. "In accordance with other studies" he tells us that spending patterns have developed over time, starting with repaying the debt incurred for funding migration, "marrying off" daughters and sisters, building houses and buying land. But the familiar complaint that too much of remittances is used for "honour" (prestige) and consumption might need differentiation. If we use a wider definition of investment and include education ("human capital"), we usually find that child labour disappears, and boys and later girls as well go to school etc. What Lefebvre describes as examples of wasteful consumption, like buying TV sets in households that are not connected to the electricity net, may simply have been done in expectation of such a connection. There are few alternatives anyway, since investing in agricultural implements does not make much sense for villagers with little or no land, who constitute most of the migrants studied. There is no mention of savings behaviour, something which the villagers may be reluctant to disclose, though the government saw to it that the nationalized banks opened branches in all the rural areas.

The book concludes with a list of organizations consulted, a list of castes in one of the villages in 1876, 1886, 1905 and 1994, a glossary, an extensive bibliography, and an index. Except for a minor flaw (7 *tolas* are not 1.12 kg, p. 184; correct on page XIII), the book makes good reading and will be of interest not only for anthropologists but for everyone interested in the development of rural South Asia.

Wolfgang-Peter Zingel

SELIG S. HARRISON / PAUL H. KREISBERG / DENNIS KUX (eds), *India and Pakistan: The First Fifty Years*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 215 pages. £ 37.50, ISBN 0-521-64185-3 (hb.). £ 13.95 ISBN 0-521-64585-9 (pb.)

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the independence of India and Pakistan the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars organized a conference of leading scholars in the USA aimed at assessing the progress, problems, and prospects of the two countries. Political, economic, and social developments plus foreign and security policy were analysed separately for India and Pakistan. The editors were well suited for the task: Selig S. Harrison looks back at half a century of watching and analysing events in South Asia as correspondent, senior journalist and analyst. Paul Kreisberg served as a diplomat in India and Pakistan and moderated a series of "second track" dialogues between the two countries, while Dennis Kux served as senior diplomat and intelligence coordinator in and on South Asia.

The first part deals with economic development. India's well-known achievements in democracy are listed (Paul R. Brass: "India: Democratic progress and

problems”), but also the drawbacks of central interference in state affairs and the fact that most “legislation passed both by the central government and the states does not emerge from parliamentary debate and open discussion in the press, but through ordinances issued by the government and later ratified by the legislature” (p. 31). Written before the nuclear tests of 1998 it is emphasized that “the Indian state has failed to provide Indians with the national self-respect they seek from the rest of the world” (p. 40). The neighbouring country is equally critically reviewed (Robert LaPorte: “Pakistan: a nation in the making”). Four “governmental constructs” for the first four decades are distinguished, namely the “nonrepresentative parliamentary government” of pre-Ayub years, the “tutelary democracy” of Ayub times, a non labelled one for the return to democracy under Yahya to Zia and the “semidemocracy” of the last years under Zia. That “Pakistan has moved toward becoming a full democracy”, as a fifth construct, is an assessment made under the impression of the Eighth Amendment which had given the president far-reaching rights. As we know, Pakistan again moved away from democracy, when Nawaz Sharif became more and more autocratic. On 12 October 1999 the army took over once more. To say that the troika, namely the presidency, the prime ministership, and the military “was rather like an unsteady three-legged stool” (p. 51) may sound a bit unbalanced (after all, three-legged stools can be very steady), except that a four-legged one is meant, where one of the legs (parliament?) is missing. But the prediction has come true: “The most likely consequence of another failure of parliamentary government will be yet another period of military rule” (p. 60). Although what happened in 1999 was not so much a “failure of parliamentary government” as the outcome of the power struggle between the chief (civil and military) executives of the country.

When it comes to economic development, neither India (John Adams: India: Much achieved, much to achieve) nor Pakistan (Marvin G. Weinbaum: “Pakistan: Misplaced priorities, missed opportunities”) give much reason for optimism, although the respective authors try to see positive developments. India’s development is divided into three phases: “Nehruvian Planning, 1950–64; Contrary Currents, 1965–80; and the Golden Growth Path, 1981–98” (p. 66). Any positive future development depends on a number of “ifs”, not the least the relaxing of tensions between India and Pakistan (pp. 86–87). In Pakistan, the heavy drain of defence expenditure and the absence of democratic institutions are seen as main hindrances to the country’s economic development. Hopes for the future are very modest indeed, like averting bankruptcy. As so often, the analysts turn out to have been poor predictors: the impressive performance (mainly in India) in services (IT-related) exports and even more, the economic dividend of the “War against Terrorism” after 9/11 as well as the unprecedented and unimaginable flow of foreign exchange into India and Pakistan (mostly of nationals living abroad) could not be foreseen by the authors.

As for social development, neither of the countries has been a success story. In the case of India (Sonalde Desai and Katherine F. Shreedhar: “India: Growth and inequity”), some astonishing facts are presented, e.g. that discrimination

against girls and women is highest in both the poorest and the richest states: "one study found that educated mothers in Punjab were far more likely to discriminate against their daughters than were uneducated mothers." (p. 115). As for Pakistan (Anita M. Weiss: "Some progress, sobering challenges"), the deplorable state of the country becomes evident from the low values of social indicators (notably in education, especially that of the female population) and the country's ranking among the least developed countries according to the Human Development Index. Weiss quotes the "Father of the Nation", Mohammed Ali Jinnah, and his famous statement (to little effect) that it "is a crime against humanity that our women are shut up within the four walls of the houses as prisoners ... There is no sanction anywhere for the deplorable condition in which our women have to live" (p. 144) and cites the fact that as early as 1994 the government of Pakistan passed the Compulsory Education Act (p. 137), also to little effect. What is said of India could also have been said for Pakistan, i.e. that it is not a failure of law, but a failure of implementation (p. 126).

The final papers deal with foreign and security policy. The chapter on India (Sumit Ganguly: "India: Policies, past and future") is basically a short history of events and one may disagree on minor details: There is no trijunction between India, Nepal and Bhutan (p. 165), the "insurgency" in Kashmir broke out before December 1989 (*ibid.*), and the "Hindu rate of growth" was 3.5 per cent and not 3 per cent (p. 166). "Three visions of the future" are presented: firstly, traditional nonalignment, secondly, the pursuit of a muscular military posture, and, thirdly, a path in pursuance of the 1997 Gujral regime, favoured by the author of the paper, i.e. improving relations with her neighbours, strengthening the economic ties with ASEAN, continuing the liberalization process and security policy. The chapter on Pakistan (Thomas Parry Thornton: "Pakistan: Fifty years of insecurity") follows the same chronological pattern. Pakistan's policy has been dominated by her perception of being threatened and the search for reliable partners. Pakistan is seen as an "insecurity state", even more than in 1947, "because of weaknesses in its national unity, political system, social infrastructure, and economy" (p. 187). Nevertheless, the post-Cold War world appears to offer more promise than the first half-century. Apart from the editors' introduction the last contribution is the only one which deals with both states, albeit only with regard to their relations with the USA (Stephen Philip Cohen: "The United States, India, and Pakistan: Retrospect and prospect"). More precisely, the relations of the United States with India and Pakistan are discussed. The analysis proves to be quite prophetic: "Can the United States organize itself to deal with the one-fifth of the world that is not a threat to U.S. security interests, that does not show signs of calamitous collapse, that has not yet (and is unlikely to) become a major economic partner, and that persists in expanding a political ideology that is not hostile to American values?" (p. 201) As we know, the danger of the South Asian conflict becoming nuclear and the threat to U.S. domestic security posed by international terrorist organisations has led the USA to take a more active interest in the region.

There is a detailed index and each chapter is followed by a list of suggested readings. The book is an excellent reader on South Asian affairs, especially for anyone with a particular interest in one of the two states but with less knowledge of the other. It is also a fine résumé of developments over the first fifty years and can thus be strongly recommended as an acquisition for any South Asia collection. Comparisons, however, of the two countries have to be made and conclusions drawn by the readers themselves.

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WERNER F. MENSKI, *Modern Indian Family Law*. Richmond: Curzon Press, 2001. XIV, 432 pages, £ 50.00. ISBN 0-7007-1316-6

The book is primarily a collection of essays by the author published in different legal journals, mostly in the *Kerala Law Times*, during the course of his teaching of the subject for nearly a quarter of a century at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. It also includes a few of the responses of other scholars to his writings. The essays have been arranged under different themes classified into six chapters, viz., marriage, divorce, polygamy, maintenance, joint family and property, and the uniform civil code. An introduction prefaces the essays and a concluding analysis is appended to them. A list of abbreviations at the beginning, a table of cases, list of statutes, bibliography and index at the end, beautiful print and binding give it the impressive look of a major treatise on the subject. It is not a treatise to the extent that it covers only the limited, albeit most important, topics and not everything on Indian family law. These topics have, however, been more thoroughly examined than would have been possible in a treatise. They contain different dimensions and insights that go into the realm of jurisprudence and socio-legal theories relevant for the understanding and development of the law.

As is widely known, India's general diversity is also represented in its laws. It has as many family laws as the major religious communities in the country. Among these communities Hindus and Muslims account for approximately 94 per cent of the population, c. 82 and 12 per cent respectively. The book deals with the law that applies to these two communities in family matters and is known as Hindu resp. Muslim law. They are also known as the personal laws of these communities. The coverage of these two laws in the book is almost in proportion to the population of these two communities, i.e., much more coverage is given to Hindu than to Muslim law. As the author started teaching and researching on the two laws at the beginning of the 1980s, the book primarily analyses the legal developments since then. Menski observes remarkable legal developments in India during the 1980s and 1990s, which are of significance not only for India but also for Indian Hindus and Muslims living in other countries such as Britain, Canada, USA and Australia. He finds a new awakening in the Indian law and legal system since the Emergency of 1975-77 which made