

Auch im Basar werden Grundnahrungsmittel und billige Gebrauchsgegenstände zu meist zu Fixpreisen gehandelt. Weiss bringt es auf den Punkt: „Ein wesentliches Merkmal der Basar-Ökonomie ist der chronische Mangel an objektiver Information. Es existieren weder Massenmedien, die über Angebot und Nachfrage, über Qualität und Preis von Waren berichten noch Organisationen zur Marktforschung und zum Konsumentenschutz. Im traditionellen Einzelhandel sind Trademarks oder Güteklassen unbekannt ...“ (S. 43) Der Basar reflektiert das Lebensgefühl einer Gesellschaft in einem traditionell gewachsenen Raumgefüge, das auf Moscheen und Karawanseiden wie auf Basaren gleichsam beruht.

Kapitel 3, ‚Handwerker und Händler – ihre Arbeit, ihre Waren‘, bietet eine detaillierte Beschreibung ausgewählter Produktgruppen und auch eine kleine Kulturgeschichte der einzelnen Handelsgüter – der Weg der Teppiche vom Knüpfstuhl in den Salon wird genauso nachgezeichnet wie der Alltag von Drechslern und Schwertmachern und die Rolle von Tabak und Kaffee für den orientalischen Alltag.

Schließlich gibt Kapitel 4, ‚Brennpunkte des Lebens – die schönsten Basare im Portrait‘, einen historischen Überblick über die kulturellen Hochburgen des Islam und damit die wirtschaftlich bedeutendsten Stadtregionen in Geschichte und Gegenwart; der Bogen der Fallbeispiele erstreckt sich von Marokko und Ägypten über den Nahen und Mittleren Osten bis in die ehemaligen Zentren der Seidenstraße im Bereich des heutigen Usbekistan.

Eine aussagekräftige Zeittafel, ein Glossar mit den wichtigsten Fachbegriffen und eine ausführliche Bibliographie runden dieses Werk ab, das sowohl für den interessierten Laien als auch den Spezialisten wissenswerte Informationen über Geschichte, Wirtschaft und Politik des islamischen Kulturkreises bietet, sich nicht in banalen Polemiken verliert und fundierte Fakten interessant und lesbar aufbereitet.

Günter Spreitzhofer

WILLIAM A. BROWN, *The Gilgit Rebellion 1947*. William A. Brown Estate, 1998. XV, 298 pages, pRs. 1350,-

These memoirs of the last British commander of the ‘Gilgit Scouts’, which are sold at least in Northern Pakistan, inform the reader: “Privately produced and printed. This edition is not intended for commercial distribution.” The book is obviously based on Major William A. Brown’s diary, which he lost in 1948. It deals especially with his service as a British officer in different military units in present Northern Pakistan and eventually as the commander of the ‘Gilgit Scouts’, a paramilitary unit responsible for the defence of the Indian frontier in the high Karakoram mountains. The British Empire had leased the ‘Gilgit Agency’ from the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir in order to gain better control over the frontier areas adjoining the czarist empire in Central Asia.

Apart from his own memoirs, this book also contains reprints of several of Major Brown’s official reports, which are partly registered at the ‘India Office Records’ in London as well. Additionally, there are facsimiles of telegrams dealing with the accession of local feudal states to Pakistan, as well as 27 black and white photos.

Major Brown, who was just 25 years old when India and Pakistan gained independence, had been on his second post in Gilgit. From August 1943 till July 1946 he had been second in command of the 'Gilgit Scouts' and 'Assistant Political Agent' in Chilas. During his services in Gilgit, he made it a point to establish contacts with all feudal rulers of the tiny mountain territories and to gain insight into local customs. Especially during his second service he acted as an officer and as a diplomat. He had sympathies for the Muslim population of Pakistan and of these frontier territories and understood the population's wish for accession to Pakistan instead of to the Hindu-dominated state of Jammu and Kashmir. Brown explains in detail his situation as a British officer under the command of the Maharaja of Kashmir – the British Empire had returned the 'Gilgit Agency' on August 1, 1947, two weeks prior to the independence of India and Pakistan – and also describes his confidential preparations for the support of the "freedom struggle". He had been aware of the risks and implications of refusing to obey the Maharaja's orders and had prepared himself accordingly.

Particularly the account of the "Gilgit Rebellion", including the imprisonment of the Kashmiri Governor in Gilgit, the rebellion of the non-commissioned officers of the 'Gilgit Scouts' and of the Kashmiri troops near Gilgit against their Sikh and Dogra officers as well as of the tug of war between different influential politicians in Gilgit, provides an exciting addition to the historical research on this region. In his memoirs Brown repeats his wish to avoid the loss of lives as his prime objective. Above all, he wanted to avoid ethnic violence against Sikhs and Hindus who lived in the Agency as government servants and traders. He also tried to mediate between various political actors and the self-empowered caretaker government. Major Brown constantly feared a military attack by Kashmiri and Indian troops since India also laid claim to territories which had not hitherto been under the Maharaja's direct control. Officially, he as well as the 'Scouts' ranks and non-commissioned officers had refused to obey the Maharaja's command and had the status of mutineers.

To assure his diplomatic plans, Major Brown discussed all his activities with feudal rulers, especially those of Hunza and Chitral. He also tried to mediate between the different Muslim sects. Even then, distrust between Shia and Sunni Muslim sects was prevalent in Northern Pakistan. The commander also communicated directly with the new Pakistani authorities in Peshawar and Karachi. His objective had been to strengthen the numbers and capabilities of the 'Scouts' and to ask for the delegation of a Pakistani 'Political Agent'. However, while recruiting and training new ranks for the 'Scouts', Major Brown and his second in command, another British officer, had been replaced by officers of the Pakistani army.

These memoirs, which had remained unknown until Brown's death in 1984, provide interesting insights into the routines of British officers along the frontiers of British India. Brown also describes his interest in the different languages and traditions of these culturally diverse territories. No British officer would have been successful there without a sound knowledge of languages and local power structures. Brown also describes in detail, his friendly relations with feudal rulers, such as the Mir of Hunza or the Mehtar of Chitral, which were based on their common interest in polo as well as the exchange of gifts. Based on such strong relations, Brown managed to cover his risky plans.

In his memoirs Brown also reflects the role of being a British officer during and after the partition period. He voices his disagreement with the premature official British withdrawal from the subcontinent, and he also condemns the then obvious pro-Hindu policies of influential British politicians and officers. Major Brown's personal accounts will not solve the Kashmir conflict. However, they are a valuable addition from an eyewitness perspective, which is not necessarily unbiased. The assessment of these memoirs still has to be undertaken by historians. They might find contradictions especially regarding current views on the history of Pakistan. It is not up to the reviewer to comment on the unknown editor's remarks that Brown played a unique role directly after the termination of the 'British Raj' and that he ensured Pakistan's direct access to China and Central Asia. The memoirs of Major Brown, who was honoured posthumously with the 'Sitara-i-Pakistan' on the Independence Day in 1993, are really worth reading and enrich the discussion on this strategically still important region.

Jürgen Clemens

ANNE BULLEY, *The Bombay Country Ships, 1790–1833*. Richmond, Curzon Press, 2000. XVI, 288 pages, 6 maps and 12 illustrations, £ 45.00 (hb.). ISBN 0-7007-1236-4

Much has been written on the "country trade" in the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, the Java and the Yellow Sea, but little is actually known about the construction of the vessels, the proprietor's social and familial background, the manning of the ships and the everyday problems of private trade in the eastern seas. Except for a scholarly article on "Bombay's 'Country Trade' with China (1765–1865)" by N. Benjamin (*Indian Historical Review* 1 (1974), pp. 295–303) hardly anything has been written on this trade, let alone its organisation. We do know quite a lot about the opium trade with China which is by no means the most important, though certainly the most lucrative branch of the "country trade", but so far only financial and statistical data met with special interest. Other fields of commerce and most important, its logistic and personnel background have been neglected.

This gap is now filled with Anne Bulley's study *The Bombay Country Ships, 1790–1833*. For the first time the "country trade" is analysed and described with a lot of substantial information, little stories, delightful anecdotes, and plenty of data. The "country trade", which is the private trade of British and Indian merchants along the coasts of the Indian Ocean and China, was financed through British Agency Houses and Indian capital. Indians, mostly Parsis, as well as Europeans were the owners of the ships, and the voyages were very often organised as joint ventures. In fact, Indian capital and knowledge dominated the "country trade" from the very beginning. Even the construction of ships was solely in the hands of Indians who built the vessels according to European design but with Indian fitting and finishing. Teak wood and other tropical timber was more durable than European timber. Therefore, the long established shipbuilding industry on the Malabar coast expanded during the first decades of the 19th century. While the British concentrated their activities in Bombay, some smaller ships were still constructed at Surat, Baipur and Kochi.