

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.

Quite interesting is the fact that apparently not only the Indiamen of the East India Company were used as troop transports but also country ships of private merchants, which were leased or hired by the British government. As Anne Bulley vividly illustrates, the Egypt expedition of 1801 in the course of the Napoleonic Wars could not have been accomplished without the conversion of a huge number of country ships as well as Indiamen to troop transports or even men-of-war. Britain was able to wage a fully fledged war across continents because her capabilities in global logistics, organisation and finances were unrivalled at that time. The author might have pointed out that Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control of the East India Company and temporary War Minister, and Prime Minister William Pitt (the Younger) successfully pursued Britain's "blue water policy", which emphasized the economic, financial and personnel resources of the British Empire.

Very impressive is the author's prosopographic reconstruction of the Indian as well as British country traders. Bulley admits that hardly any information is available but nonetheless she is able to paint a rough but colourful picture of several persons involved in the country trade business. We also get information about the *lascars*, i.e. persons employed on a ship besides the Europeans and the *nacdots*, mainly Muslim, and captains of country ships. But most of their story has been told before in bits and pieces, so we do not become acquainted with many new aspects. This points to one of the basic detriments of the book. It is well founded, more or less exclusively, on archival material, which speaks for the scrutiny of the author. But many aspects have already been dealt with in the existing literature. Some basic works have been missed out, like Michael Greenberg's *British Trade and the Opening of China* which still gives a valid account of the East India Company's opium policy and the organisation of the illicit trade by country merchants. Instead, the reader has to cope with a two page long quote on the arrival of a country ship in the estuary of the Pearl River (Canton-Lintin-Macao). This is paradigmatic for most of the book: it is more descriptive than analytical and the professional historian might miss the author's own interpretation.

Rather disappointing is the chapter on shipbuilding and timber trade on the Malabar coast, because Anne Bulley only describes the difficulties in the organisation of the latter. Lack of draught animals, mostly elephants, hampered procurement of a sufficient supply of timber for the shipyards in Bombay and the other minor shipbuilding ports. Rather abruptly Bulley ends the (hi)story within three lines and, as for the timber trade, it too, so it would seem, met with an equally abrupt end: "The forests of Malabar had been plundered. It took some time for the Bombay Council to realize that strong measures must be taken to preserve the apparently inexhaustible supply." (p. 96) No further explanation is given. No comment on the fairly distressing situation of the Bombay Council and the Marine Board. Apparently Bulley was short of archival material and had no information on the early British forest policy on the Malabar coast. Standard works like E. Stebbing, *The Forests of India* (2 vols), London 1921-25, and B. Ribbentrop, *Forestry in British India*, Calcutta 1900, would have served as basic literature with hints on first attempts at a timber conservation policy.

Though the book is well outlined, some chapters would have benefited from a clearer internal structure. At first glance the table of contents seems to be very im-

balanced, since chapters are called "Parts" and part one consists of two subchapters, part three of five, but part four and the conclusion of just a single subchapter. Though the book is well written and contains a vast amount of valuable information, its layout and quality is not very professional. But it abounds in lovely details which make *The Bombay Country Ships* relaxing and sometimes amusing reading.

Michael Mann

MARTIJN VAN BEEK, KRISTOFFER BRIX BERTELSEN, POUL PEDERSEN (eds.), *Ladakh: Culture, History, and Development between Himalaya and Karakoram. Proceedings of the Eighth Colloquium of the International Association for Ladakh Studies held at Moesgaard, Aarhus University, 5-8 June 1997*. (Recent Research on Ladakh 8). Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1999. 414 Seiten, US\$ 34,95. ISBN 87-7288-791-5

Ich glaube nicht, dass sich eine zweite derart schwer zugängliche Forschungsregion mit nur etwa dreihunderttausend Einwohnern insgesamt finden ließe, zu der in nur zwanzig Jahren so viele Arbeiten unterschiedlicher Disziplinen erschienen sind wie über Ladakh. Die 1987 gegründete International Association for Ladakh Studies beschreibt die schnelle Entwicklung des eigenen Forschungsgegenstandes so (S. 10/11):

"Only in the last two decades has Ladakh (northwest India) been readily accessible for study, but in that short time it has been the focus of much attention by students in many disciplines. These have been attracted by the interest of its physical situation at high altitude in the rain-shadow of the geologically active Himalaya; by the natural ecology of this rugged desert and the skilful adaptations of pastoralism and agriculture; by the sociology, history and cultural tradition, especially as a surviving example of Tibetan Buddhism; and by the problems presented by modern development and conservation. Informal study groups organized international colloquia on Ladakh in 1981 at Konstanz (Federal Republic of Germany), in 1985 at Pau (France) and in 1987 at Herrnhut near Dresden (German Democratic Republic).

The fourth IALS Colloquium was at Bristol (UK) in 1989; the 5th at the SOAS in London in 1992; the 6th in Ladakh in 1993; the 7th at Bonn in 1995. The proceedings of these have been published. The 8th was at Aarhus, Denmark, on 5-8 June 1997.

At Herrnhut the International Association for Ladakh Studies (IALS) was formed with an international committee of distinguished scholars. The functions of the IALS are to provide contacts between all who are interested in the study of Ladakh, and to disseminate information about proposed and completed research and publications. To do this the IALS organises colloquia, arranges publication of the proceedings, and publishes a bi-annual newsletter, *Ladakh Studies*. This includes information about conferences, planned and current studies, requests for specific information and help, short reports, publications and general information about Ladakh.

The close integration of resources, culture and religion in Ladakh demands a holistic approach, and members of the IALS are concerned with a wide variety of topics."