

was ultimately paid for the ship and goods, Roggeveen's journal remained unknown until 1836. An account of these later events is pieced together by Mr Sharp in an epilogue. The many misadventures of the voyage add to its human interest, however, and Mr Sharp's editorial task was well worth undertaking.

In sheer readability, the other volume covered in this review has the advantage. Readers of Professor Dunmore's first volume, on the eighteenth century, could not fail to look forward to the second. Together they will certainly become the standard account of an important segment of French maritime exploration, complementing the work of Faivre, *L'expansion française dans le Pacifique*, which discusses Baudin's voyage more fully but in general is more concerned with policy. The names of D'Urville and to a less extent Laplace and Du Petit-Thouars are familiar enough in New Zealand and D'Urville's accounts of New Zealand have been translated and edited by Miss Olive Wright. Baudin's expedition has been the subject of much scholarly work. But of this second volume, as of the first, it may be said that no similar consecutive account of the work of these French explorers as a whole has been available even in French. There is less that is new than in the first volume, though Dr Dunmore has consulted numerous manuscript sources in the Archives Nationales, Marine (in Paris) and elsewhere. Most of the voyages were the subject of voluminous publications after the event, including the journals not of the commander only but of his chief officers, so that not very much in the way of detail remained to be told. Duperrey's was an exception, ending (as the reviewer found to his dismay when consulting it many years ago) in the middle of a word. Publication was in fact interrupted by the French Revolution of 1830. Though an account by Lesson was published later, Professor Dunmore's use of the unpublished journals of other officers is particularly useful here. All the main voyages (and a number of minor ones) are placed in their background. The editing is scholarly throughout and altogether this volume, like its predecessor, will be indispensable to all students of Pacific exploration. One minor slip may be noted here. 'King Tubou' cannot have been 'that same Tahofa against whom the French had fought' (p. 362n): Josiah Tubou, who had taken that name in December 1827, had earlier been known as Alea-motua. Readers of the first volume may note that the bibliography and index at the end of this volume belong to both.

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*Soundings in Modern South Asian History.* Edited by D. A. Low. A.N.U. Press, Canberra, 1968. xi, 391 pp. Australian price: \$6.30.

*The Transition in Bengal, 1756-1775. A Study of Saiyid Muhammad Reza Khan.* By Abdul Majed Khan. C.U.P., Cambridge, 1969. xvi, 376 pp. U.K. price: £4.50.

*Elite Conflict in a Plural Society: Twentieth-century Bengal.* By J. H. Broomfield. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968. xviii, 349 pp. U.S. price: \$8.50.

*Western India in the Nineteenth Century.* By Ravinder Kumar. A.N.U. Press, Canberra, 1968. xii, 347 pp. Australian price: \$6.90.

*Rural Credit in Western India, 1875-1930.* By I. J. Catanach. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1970. xii, 269 pp. U.S. price: \$8.50.

*Ahmedabad. A Study in Indian Urban History.* By Kenneth L. Gillion. A.N.U. Press, Canberra, 1969. x, 195 pp. Australian price: \$7.

THREE POINTS of considerable importance emerge from the collection of essays edited by Anthony Low, all three of them confirmed and illustrated by the remaining five books under review. The first is that Australasia has, in recent years, become one of the major areas for research in Indian history. Four of the authors represented in this cluster of books are New Zealanders (Catanach, Broomfield, Gillion, and Graham) and one other (Khan) teaches in this country. The remainder are either Australians or India specialists teaching in Australia. To this list other names can be added — Basham, Rizvi, Potts, Oddie, and Masselos in Australia, Timothy Beaglehole in New Zealand. The number is impressive and, as these books demonstrate, quantity is matched by the quality of work currently being produced.

The second issue pointed up by the Low collection is, as the editor himself says, that 'regional studies, within the orbit of an awareness of the overall story, are now of quite vital importance' (p. 5). The subjects covered by individual authors in these six books illustrate the point. None attempts an all-India theme. This was possible when historians were primarily concerned with the history of the British in India. When, however, the historian concedes that Indian history concerns Indians as much as Englishmen he is at once confronted by a degree of complexity which, for the modern period at least, imposes an obligation to study particular regions.

This approach introduces new problems of source-material, of language, and of interpretation. This is the third issue raised specifically in *Soundings* (by van den Dungen) and implicitly by the other five books. It is an issue which most authors still avoid, and although the authors covered by this review are obviously aware of the danger most of them are, in varying degrees, its victims. All rely largely upon English-language sources and to a considerable extent upon the products of Englishmen. No one is going to suggest that the National Archives in New Delhi can be ignored, nor that their importance is less than fundamental. Official documents are, however, inadequate for the kind of research now required and so too are the other English-language sources which must prove so tempting to the foreign historian. Even the valuable series of provincial *Reports on Native Papers* (so skilfully used by Broomfield) are inadequate. There can be no sufficient substitute for Persian and the various vernacular sources available in all regions of India. Whereas total immersion in a regional culture may be an impracticable ideal for the foreigner there can nevertheless be little hope of understanding for the historian who makes no effort to penetrate it.

Let it be repeated, and with emphasis, that the authors represented in this review have all demonstrated their awareness of this need. Their awareness has plainly tempered the use which they make of the standard English-language sources and wherever possible (as in the case of the *Reports on Native Papers*) they have moved beyond them.

One other general comment should be made before we turn to the individual reviews. Three of the books suffer unnecessarily from their titles. Kumar's title is misleading in that it implies a much wider range than the book actually covers. The other two (both from the same publisher) conceal positively exciting reading behind titles which can only serve to deter many readers. These are the titles chosen by Catanach and Broomfield. Although both titles are accurate and will attract a certain range of specialist readers others could conceivably have been attracted by a more appealing form of words. Both books deserve more than a narrowly specialist attention and potential readers who may be discouraged by their titles can be assured that both are eminently readable.

This criticism does not apply to Abdul Majed Khan's aptly titled *The Transition in Bengal*. Indeed, the reverse could be held to apply, for this is a work which requires some effort by the reader. The needed effort is, moreover, increased by the absence of a glossary. Readers who are already familiar with such terminology as *faujdar*, *gumashtah*, *mutasaddi*, *naibat*, *khilat*, and grants in *altamgha* will have little difficulty. Others should arm themselves with Wilson's *Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms*, or alternatively compile their own by noting definitions as they occur.

The book is, in other words, a work for the initiated. For the initiated it covers an important gap, one which had previously been bridged but never with the superstructure of detail now provided by Khan. In it he supplies a detailed narrative of the transition from the pre-Plassey Mughal system of administration in Bengal, via theoretical dualism (the *diwani* period), to the direct rule of the East India Company. In theory dualism divided power between the Nawab who, as nominal representative of the Mughal emperor, held the *nizamat*, and the Company which exercised the *diwani*. In practice the Company controlled both the *nizamat* and the *diwani*, choosing during the transitional period to exercise the former through their nominee. This man was Muhammad Reza Khan and it is for this reason that the book bears the appropriate sub-title *A Study of Saiyid Muhammad Reza Khan*.

The focus upon Bengal as a region becomes much sharper in Broomfield's excellent study *Elite Conflict in a Plural Society*. Within this area it concentrates upon a particular social group during the period 1912-27. This was the *bhadralok*, the 'respectable people' who as a group comprised the three upper castes of Bengali Hindu society. Of the *bhadralok* Broomfield declares: 'Politics was their business' (p. 154). The sentence epitomizes the content of his book. Following a summary introduction to cover the period leading up to 1912 he conducts us through the political struggles of a highly significant fifteen years, concluding with another summary to carry us up to Partition. Recent events in Bengal have imparted a particular relevance to this book and for an understanding of Bangla Desh it should be regarded as required reading.

Broomfield's interest in the *bhadralok* has proved to be most rewarding and it is a measure of his success that the term has now passed into everyday usage within the fraternity of South Asian historians. One is, however, left with a feeling that the emphasis has been a little too one-sided. We can be grateful for all that we have learnt about the *bhadralok* and yet at the same time find ourselves wishing that the Bengali Muslims had been subjected to the same closeness of scrutiny. This is not to suggest that they have been overlooked. Quite the reverse is the case and much

of the material is repeated in one of Broomfield's two contributions to *Soundings*. Nevertheless one puts down *Elite Conflict in a Plural Society* with a feeling that some basic questions of Muslim political motivation have not yet been answered. On Muslim methods Broomfield is strong and at the very end of the book (pp. 326-28) he indicates, tantalisingly, that he is in fact well aware of the importance of the more fundamental issues. One can only wish that these had been subjected to the same perceptive analysis as those which concerned their political opponents. But let not this criticism obscure the quality of the book. It is a valuable contribution to an important period and it is exceedingly well written.

From Bengal we move to Maharashtra. Ravinder Kumar's *Western India in the Nineteenth Century* is the mistitled work to which reference was made above. The book is not a general social history of the area, but rather a study of the changes in land settlement and revenue introduced by the British, and of the social discontent arising from these changes. Within these redefined limits it is thoroughly competent and one can only hope that writers of like skills will produce corresponding works dealing with other regions. The book is, moreover, commendably venturesome in that it seeks explanations not merely in contemporary British economic theory but also in Maharashtrian social patterns. One may question some of its theories, notably those which relate to the role of devotional religion and the degree of unity achieved within Maharashtrian society. What one cannot question is that the analysis of such factors is of vital importance and that having given them a regional significance the author has set some valuable examples.

Ravinder Kumar's book dovetails neatly with Ian Catanach's *Rural Credit in Western India*. The earlier book stresses the importance of rural indebtedness and the consequent need of rural credit. The later book, quite coincidentally, takes up these issues at the point where Kumar drops them. Because the problem had to be faced by a British administration the attempted solution (the 'co-operative society') was, predictably, an essentially western method. It is precisely because he is so sensitive to this aspect that Catanach handles his subject so well. As such he is a necessary complement to such men as Sir Malcolm Darling, a variety of administrator whom he obviously understands very well. Although Darling himself of necessity appears only incidentally the treatment accorded other British officials is perhaps the most distinguished feature of the book.

Kenneth Gillion's *Ahmedabad* gives the impression of a good idea worked out with a certain excess of haste. Whereas the treatment of the Mughal period is adequate and that of the nineteenth century very good, the final chapter is sketchy and its conclusions rushed. The idea is, however, an excellent one and the bulk of the book is very rewarding. The intention was to study the history of a particular city within the context of its surrounding region. Apart from the concluding chapter the intention has been well and usefully fulfilled.

Gillion enables us to conclude where we began. 'This book reflects my conviction that in the study of Indian history not enough attention has been paid until recently to regional differences within India' (p. 3). Together these six books confirm that the change is under way.