

district, illustrate the impact of the Maoist insurgency at a micro level, while Marie Lecomte-Tilouine concentrates on the relationship between the ethnic activism of the Magar community and the Maoist movement. Pratyoush Onta examines the ambiguous nature of the position of the intelligentsia of the main post-1990 parliamentary political parties towards the Maoist movements. Finally, Mandira Sharma and Dinesh Prasain investigate the role and the growing active involvement of rural women in the Maoist insurgency.

Part III includes the essays which focus on the geopolitical and comparative perspectives on Maoism in Nepal. Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka analyses the political and institutional framework of the post-1990 Nepalese State and its shortcomings as crucial factors in the emergence of the Maoist insurgency, while Saubhagya Shah provides insights on the role played by India's imperialistic policies towards Nepal in generating a favourable terrain for the radicalisation of the Maoist movement. The conclusive paper by Philippe Ramirez proposes a comparative analysis of different Maoist movements across the world.

The final section consists of an essay by Hari Roka on Nepal's present political situation since the deployment of the Royal Army against the Maoist insurgents, and upon possible future developments. Judith Pettigrew's essay provides a detailed case study of the militarisation of life in rural Nepal following the breaking-out of the armed conflict amongst the Maoists and the security forces.

Thanks to the diversity of the professional and academic backgrounds of its contributors, *Himalayan "People's War"* offers a great variety of methodological approaches and perspectives on the Maoist movement in Nepal, and this proves to be the very strength of the book. The collection of essays successfully provides the expert reader as much as the neophyte with a multidisciplinary analysis and invaluable insights to gather a deeper understanding of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal. *Himalayan "People's War"* should be part of the essential bibliography for anyone claiming to have an interest in the vicissitudes of the Himalayan kingdom.

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Harald Fischer-Tiné, *Der Gurukul-Kangri oder die Erziehung der Arya-Nation. Kolonialismus, Hindureform und 'nationale Bildung' in Britisch-Indien (1897–1922)* (Würzburg: Ergon 2003), xv + 399 pp.

Within the lively current debates about 'tradition' and 'modernity', linked to the nature and extent of *hindutva*, certain axioms have developed over time and the Arya Samaj has been seen as promulgating religious fanaticism and militant communalism. The excellent study under review finds, however, that the Gurukul Kangri was anything but a backward-looking traditional institution (p. 339) and that the Arya Samaj movement is extremely complex in itself and, ultimately, engaged in a hybrid discourse of modernity, containing the roots of today's postmodernity, although this is not mentioned in so many words. Fischer-Tiné demonstrates convincingly, generally for the Arya Samaj and with particular reference to the role of the Gurukul in Kangri, that several earlier one-sided

assessments in the literature will need to be revised as they are not doing justice to the early developmental processes of Indian nationalism which can be reconstructed from an enormously rich primary literature, much of which is found in Hindi.

Here, then, we have a fine example of modern indological study driving a coach and horses through a field occupied by modernist social scientists and their hegemonial texts or accounts (p. 272), written without taking the trouble to research primary material in languages other than English. Brilliant-looking, academic 'global' theories may collapse as soon as someone with access to 'real' sources throws the searchlight on critical details. As in the globalisation/globalisation debates elsewhere, nothing is just black or white, as we are learning here too. Reality remains, as always, a hybrid field of conflicting, mutually assimilating forces. The present study demonstrates a remarkably efficient method of approaching this kind of challenge, and it is good to read that, at the end, the author expresses his satisfaction that the transcultural methodology chosen has indeed proved remarkably fruitful (p. 340).

This reworked PhD thesis (supervised by Dietmar Rothermund in Heidelberg) contains all the elements of a formal German doctoral dissertation, with the necessary apparatus to document the findings and methodology of this study. The analytical framework is neatly structured, so that reading this book becomes a pleasure. Although not many parts of this study are directly focused on the Gurukul and its development, everything ultimately boils down to assessing the role and contribution of the Gurukul and its students and teachers in the development of a specific form of resistance to colonial oppression.

Evidently, this went as far as the Gurukul being treated as a terrorist organisation (p. 123), with accusations of subversiveness that are familiar in our days. While this may have contributed to a softening of otherwise more explicitly Hindu nationalist tendencies, the author unravels how, within the Gurukul movement itself, there was a central internal struggle between the traditionalists, relying on Brahmin-dominated, Sanskrit-focused scholarship and training, and the more modern, almost secular approaches within the movement. And it is the modernists who won the day, for a number of good reasons. So the Arya Samajis of Kangri were not militant communalists, they were first and foremost concerned to develop a system of 'good' and 'manly' Arya education that took many aspects from colonial models and gave them some indigenising colourings, such as the emphasis on character development through *brahmacarya*.

Education was and is considered a matter of great national importance, though it remains even today an under-researched playing field for the elite, and insufficient patchy efforts are made to link ivory tower academia with local needs. The historical study under review is quite rightly focused on the colonial scenario, but also contributes to postcolonial debates about the construction of nationalism and the role of educational institutions. The Gurukul Kangri, strategically located near Haridwar, is one of the most radical and ambitious attempts by a certain type of Hindu elite to develop an educational model for the emerging nation. The study shows, though, that rather than a return to the 'golden past' of Arya history,

the developments reflected in the genesis of the Gurukul Kangri and its impact over time show all the signs of modern hybridity.

This reflects the tendency of colonial subjects to ape the rulers, a notion with which the book begins. The attempted intellectual decolonisation or Indianisation of education, clearly part of a wider reaction to Macaulay's well-known haughty statements of 1835, needs to be related by readers of this journal to the current context of worldwide discussions about multiculturalism and the changing debates about assimilation of South Asian (and other) migrants and their descendants in major Western countries in today's reversal of colonialism.

The major aim of the book is to demonstrate, through the case study of the Gurukul Kangri as an anti-colonial institution, how even radical movements for indigenisation could not avoid the influence of colonial discourses and thus ended up as hybrid ideological concepts and practices (p. 3). Chapter 2 (pp. 27–74) discusses the early genesis of the Gurukul project in detail, while chapter 3 (pp. 75–158) examines the period 1902–22, which is marked by a slow, disappointing pattern of growth and huge internal politics, leading to hybrid ideological and practical developments (esp. pp. 135, 156).

The daily details of practical education in the Gurukul and its implications are examined in chapter 4 (pp. 159–236). Given that the qualifications acquired in the Gurukul were not officially recognised, practical subjects like Ayurveda and chemistry, rather than Vedic philosophy, dominated the pupils' choice of options, making the Gurukul appear to be a modern institution (p. 187). Another key result is found at p. 196. Based on the observation that many Gurukul students were closely linked to Gandhi (who visited the Gurukul twice) and the Indian National Congress, the author finds a need to revise the teleological constructs of many historians and political scientists about how Hindu nationalism developed from Arya Samaj roots to later, more radically nationalist movements. Interestingly, this then also questions assertions about the Congress as an 'island of secularism', an aspect which needs to be further researched. Incidentally, many little gems are found here, for example how to tame the 'monster of *Kama*' (p. 217) and 'cricket in Sanskrit' (p. 225).

Chapter 5 (pp. 237–328) examines various aspects of the construction of the Arya nation. Discussions about Herbert Spencer's theories and eugenics and frequent reference to child marriage and its pernicious consequences, display a neo-brahmanical discourse which must be seen in the light of 'invention of tradition' debates. The call for a 'Hindu' history was answered by Gurukul staff in the form of Ramdev's history book (p. 283) and many other projects of providing educational materials in Hindi. In history, the main effort was to construct a kind of anti-history. In this context, I noted with interest and concern that Manu's lawbook appears on the screen (pp. 300, 302) and that Hindu law itself is perceived in far too positivistic a light, another example of constructing one's image in the light of the enemy's concepts. Readers interested in the construction of Hindi as a national language in various contexts and the impact of Gurukulis in this field will find a very useful, detailed discussion at pp. 308–27.

The conclusion (pp. 329–41) reiterates that the process of mental decolonisation involved incorporation of the values of the enemy. While there were various

forms of Sanskritisation, there was also a simultaneous trend towards modernising education. Hence, the traditionally assumed division into 'progressive' and 'conservative' is misleading (p. 338), and other accustomed binaries are sent to the wastebin, too. The detailed English summary (pp. 343–6) reinforces the central findings that several common scholarly distinctions are now of limited use and that 'modern' concepts played a large role in the emergence of Hindu nationalism as a hybrid phenomenon.

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