

Saberwal stresses that the modern state in India – as elsewhere in South Asia – grew out of the imperial state of the nineteenth century that was not required to seek the mandate of the people. It was also seen as an external agency, imposing law and order, not as an outgrowth of the social order. All of these diverse ideas are brought together by Saberwal in an unusual concluding autobiographical chapter where he discusses the personal and academic problems inherent in his method of analysing Indian society.

Ainslie T. Embree  
Columbia University

Stein Tonnesson and Hans Antlöv (eds), *Asian Forms of the Nation* (Guildford, Curzon, 1996), 362 pp. £45.

This collection of essays is an important contribution to the study of nationalism as exemplified in the continent of Asia and seeks to bring Asia within the mainstream of analysis of the origins and growth of nationalism as a political ideology around the globe. There are eleven essays devoted to a number of individual Asian states and an introductory essay expertly attempts to bring the issues together and valiantly asks: 'Can new theory come out of Asia?' The countries discussed are Japan, Siam (Thailand), Vietnam, India, Philippines, the Himalayan states, Burma, China and Malaysia.

The introductory essay reviews the literature relating to nationalism, noting that this literature is primarily focused on the European experience. This Europe-centric literature interprets nationalism as part of the process of modernisation ushered in by the industrial and the French revolutions that spread into a number of societies leading to the creation of nation-states, at first in Europe and then in the Americas and Asia. In this interpretation, European colonialism played a major role in shaping the spread of nationalism in Asia directly or indirectly. Nationalism in Asia thus follows a linear progression along paths initiated in Europe. A subtle variant of the modernisation theory is what has been called a post-modernist approach pioneered and eloquently expressed by the social theorist Benedict Anderson. This theory, while conceding the role of modern means of dissemination of ideas through education, the print and visual media, postulates a constantly dynamic process of interaction between local communities and the wider milieu, thus creating and recreating nationalism in new forms and freshly imagined categories. This approach provides scope for the explanation of nationalism in local and autochthonous terms, for its richness and diversity.

Another strand of explanation of nationalism is the ethno-cultural approach of which the most powerful exponent is Anthony Smith. Here the ethnic and cultural core of a society becomes the foundation for the rise of nationalism. This core can be formed out of a mix of factors that embrace language, kinship ties, religion, customs and habits, art forms, territorial contiguity, shared historical past. Ethno-cultural explanations have been found appropriate to understand nationalism all over the globe but particularly in studying Asian nationalism. In Asian societies, with their long pre-modern historical traditions, these cultural factors that promote ethnicity are found to be strong components of contemporary nationalism.

With this background of nationalist theory, the authors of the several essays in this volume have expertly analysed specific features in the growth of nationalism in the countries they have studied. It will be tedious to isolate and recapitulate the arguments of each essay – a more fruitful enterprise would be to bring out common themes in Asian nationalism that the essays have brought out individually. A powerful theme that comes through in a number of essays is the significance of territory and space in defining identity. Tessa Morris-Suzuki picks it up in the first essay on Japan where she discusses the relationship between space and

time in the process of integrating communities living on the frontiers into the Japanese nation. The essay on Siam also underscores the importance of territory in defining the Siamese nation. Tributaries and distant parts were absorbed by constantly redrawing the map of Siam until the modern nation-state was created. The essay on Vietnam confronts the problem of space versus ethnicity when it discusses the tensions between a wider Indo-China space and a narrower ethnically defined Vietnam where the latter ultimately triumphed.

Two essays on India explore a different theme – the relationship between religion and nationalism, specifically Hindu nationalism. They examine the roots of Hindu nationalism in past religious tradition and note how dormant elements were activated in a context of contemporary political conflict. Both essays show how the modernisation process and the rising middle class formed out of upwardly mobile castes are crucial to understanding the success of Hindu nationalist parties in different parts of India. This is strikingly demonstrated in West Bengal where a long period of domination of state politics by Marxist parties has provoked the response from groups, castes, communities on the outer utilising Hindu nationalism to try to topple the Marxists from power. An interesting concept that is touched on but not explored further is that of 'civilisational' nations. Here nationalism is interpreted as being based on the concept of a civilisation which is adhered to by the broad mass of the population occupying the nation-state. India and China are said to be classic examples of civilisational states as is also Japan. Both in China and Japan the state was the agent for upholding this civilisation but this does not happen in the case of India. A common civilisation does not preclude the rise of regional variations with claims to nationhood as the Indian case demonstrates. Yet another concept that emerges is that of 'nations of intent' by which is meant alternative concepts of nationhood shared by sections within the state. This would apply to a number of Asian states where there is absence of a consensus on the nature of the nation. Analysts of nationalism should then examine not only the officially recognised qualities of a nation but also alternative versions. It helps not only in understanding what a nation is but also what it is tending to become.

All in all, here we have a collection of excellent interpretations of Asian nationalism by specialist authorities on the regions they have studied. It has contributed to bringing Asian forms of nationalism into the mainstream of thinking on global nationalism.

S. Arasaratnam  
University of New England

Dane Kennedy, *The Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj* (Berkeley, Univ. of California Press, 1996), xiii + 264 pp. US \$38.

With this book Dane Kennedy joins a recently emerging group of American historians who come to British India with an initial research accomplishment in other parts of the empire. In Dr Kennedy's case the earlier orientation towards settler society and culture in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia from 1890 to 1939 seems highly appropriate. In another historiographical age 'the leap from one continent to another' might have prompted an explicitly comparative approach to the exercise of authority but here there is no mention of the African experience.

Dr Kennedy observes that in the beginning the hill stations were sanatoria where European invalids could restore their health. The analogy with Thomas Mann's fictional Alpine sanatorium leads her to adapt his title to her own and to introduce each of her chapters with a quotation drawn from his masterpiece. These epigraphs seem less intrinsic to the book as it develops, for its main theme is that the hill stations became pivots of power rather than resorts for recuperation. It is suggested that there is a deeper parallel, in that Hans Castorp's