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Singh, Anjana

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“The triumph of territorial nationalism overshadowed the long history of transnational revolt.... [T]here was, in fact, a strong transnational element to Indian nationalism” (p. 118). He thus draws our attention to a variety of individuals, movements, and initiatives—migration within the British Empire, the “India-house,” pan-Islamism, Gandhi’s experiences in colonial South Africa, and Subhas Chandra Bose’s Indian National Army—to suggest that the “narrowing down” of the anticolonial mind only came on the eve of independence, when the imperatives of a centralized state-form worked its logic in an ethnically heterogeneous yet communally polarized society. Charting the transnational sources of nationalist movements of the region is therefore integral to Talbot’s effort to reframe the transformation of modern South Asia through the lens of the wider world.

In the remaining chapters, Talbot largely follows the traditional thematic foci and periodization assumed by other textbooks, and diplomatically rehearses several of the key debates that have featured prominently amongst historians of South Asia in recent decades, whether regarding the role of colonial knowledge production in society and politics, the causes of the partition of British India, or the nature of the transition to colonial rule, among others. Inevitably, there are some important omissions, yet the overall narrative does indeed attend to events, developments, and personalities of widest significance. Unlike some other contenders within the genre, the prose is less burdened with excessive detail, and could likely make for greater accessibility for undergraduates entirely unfamiliar with the history if not the existence of South Asia—a fairly widely observed predicament shared by students in the United States—who are occasionally overwhelmed by the plethora of names, concepts, and developments they encounter in such texts.

Despite the many merits of Talbot’s achievement, there remain some issues that may perhaps be addressed in future editions. While the book helpfully closes with an assessment of the region’s international relations, a note of conclusion might have enabled a tying together of the various threads of analysis pursued over the preceding chapters and, in particular, the unique angle of vision pursued. As it stands, the account ends a touch abruptly. More cosmetically, a number of minor errata could easily be pruned by a slightly more mindful editorial staff: one learns, for instance, of “Kerela” or “Moraji Desai,” or that Bangladeshi, Indian, Sri Lankan, and Pakistani migrant workers remitted billions of dollars over the early years of the twentieth century. None of these aspects, however, compromise this reviewer’s sense of the immense value of Talbot’s *A History of Modern South Asia* to introductory courses and to generating a more global-historical awareness about the modern South Asian past. Students, instructors, and lay readers alike will gain in equal measure from an engagement with Talbot’s impressive synthesis.

DWAIPAYAN SEN
Amherst College
dsen@amherst.edu

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Since the publication of Kenneth Pomeranz’s book *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton

University Press, 2000), historians have reentered, with much vigor, the debate on the “rise of the West.” History writing in the past seventeen years illustrates the dynamic nature of this debate within the discipline of history.

The Eurocentrists and the Revisionists, backed by the California School, have been putting forward opposing views that have mostly focused on Europe and China. Recently, research on South Asia has also contributed to the debate from a revisionist perspective. *India, Modernity and the Great Divergence* by Kaveh Yazdani, which focuses on the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, analyses socioeconomic, techno-scientific, military, political, and institutional developments in two regions of South Asia: Mysore in the south and Gujarat in the northwest. It is a major and important contribution to the great divergence debate and global history.

The book is voluminous. It has five chapters, including the introduction and an epilogue. Every chapter runs into ten or more sections and every section is further divided into subsections. In total there are sixty-six long and short essays (subsections) to read on various topics connected to the socioeconomic and political history of South Asia and the great divergence debate. It is a thorough and systematic work where problems of quotation and transliteration are dealt with efficiently. The book is illustrated with maps, tables, and diagrams. There is an extensive glossary and indices of persons, places, and subjects. The bibliography alone runs to sixty-six pages. There are 2,261 footnotes in total. They are very extensive, often covering more than half of the page, thereby dominating and distracting one from the main text of the book.

An extraordinary range of material has been used to uncover the socioeconomic features of Mysore and Gujarat in the long eighteenth century. On an archival research trip to India, towards the end of his journey, Yazdani was robbed of his bags and lost all his collected material. The fact that he still finished his PhD dissertation at the University of Osnabrück within four years and published the book is remarkable.

Although presented as a single book—and I write this as a compliment—it is actually three books in one. The first is on the concept of early modern and modern. Yazdani challenges and rejects the standard definitions of these two concepts. He questions why the period of early modern must begin circa 1500 and end circa 1800. He also questions why early modernity and modernity are associated with transformations in Europe. Is it not essential to allocate an intermediary transition between early modernity and modernity? He proposes a tripartite division: an early, middle, and late phase of modernity. The proposal is to extend the period to include more centuries, from the classical medieval period, and rethink the watersheds in order to better understand world history. Thus, the new early modern would begin in the tenth century. This was when Song China and Abbasid West Asia were most dynamic in terms of socioeconomic, techno-scientific, and intellectual developments. Advanced parts of Europe entered the new early modern period in the thirteenth century. Middle modernity would basically align with the traditional early modernity, that is, the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. The late modern period would be from circa 1830 to the 1960s.

The inspiration for this call for change comes from the works of Anthony Giddens, Shmuel Eisenstadt, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, and David Washbrook, among others. They have also argued for the necessity of expanding the concept of modernity and early modernity and emphasized multiple, parallel, and connected modernities. The new periodization would be less Eurocentric and suitable for analyzing global historical processes. Thus, contributions of different core areas of the world—Europe, China, South and West Asia, Africa, and the Americas—would be included. In this way, Yazdani also unravels the differences in the emergence of modernity between the West and the rest and

contributes to the analysis of when and why divergences and convergences in world history took place.

The other two books are on the history of Gujarat and the history of Mysore, which Yazdani has so ingeniously put together. These two contributions, micro-historical studies, fill a huge gap in the great divergence debate as well as in the history of South Asia that often centers on more popular sultanates, kingdoms, and empires. Yazdani often places the micro-histories or developments in these two regions in a larger global or macro-historical perspective by constantly comparing and connecting them to other parts of the world. Throughout the book, transregional and transcontinental encounters and entanglements have been traced. This shows how dynamic the two regions were. On many topics, like economy, mobility, transport and infrastructure, education, political structure, and so forth, entries can be found under both Gujarat and Mysore. Special attention has been given to the status of women, an important marker for modernity.

India, Modernity and the Great Divergence surely contributes a better understanding of why Western Europe took off on a path towards global supremacy and why there was a simultaneous socioeconomic decline or falling behind of the rest of these two regions of South Asia. The internal structural shortcomings as well as exogenous contingent and contextual conjunctures are well analyzed and presented in an objective way.

The French historian Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie once stated, “*L'historien de demain sera programmeur ou il ne sera plus*” (The historian of tomorrow will have to be a programmer or he will not be one at all). Le Roy Ladurie, in my understanding, meant management of data, not the art of writing. A book or e-book is not a website where endless information is posted without the constraints of word limits or creative presentation of analysis and ideas. It is painful to see such wonderful, credible, painstaking research and intelligent analysis being presented in the form of a 700-page log-book of entries with subheadings rather than a solid narration that makes engaging reading. This criticism aside, *India, Modernity and the Great Divergence* should be on the desk of every historian of South Asia and global history. Economic historians; historians of science and technology; scholars of gender studies; and those interested in the history of education, military and naval history, legal history, and colonial history will find delightful details, extensive bibliographies, and never-before-used sources in this work. No doubt, more publications from this author will be eagerly awaited.

ANJANA SINGH
University of Groningen
anjana.singh@rug.nl