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We are told how the War Depot at the Survey of India Office in Calcutta (now Kolkata), then, the capital of East India Company's empire in India, began producing single-sheet maps showing the deployment of Company's troops and how they were being sent to the army officials in their planning—movements of troops and their timely replenishment (Susan Gole). Maps which had been prepared systematically, beginning with Rennel's in the 1770s, now bore fruit. Incidentally, the maps of Lucknow and Cawnpore prepared earlier by the British came very handy to them in their attempts to crush the anti-British elements or 'Rebels' as they were called. Maj. Gen. Stubbs's 'History of the Organization, Equipment, and War Services of the Regiment of Bengal Artillery' in three volumes, published in 1877, came out with both manuscript maps and descriptions of forts such as Fatehgarh, Simri and Siketa, and a few more on placements of guns in towns such as Sagar, Daundia Khera, Agra, Aurangabad and Risalpur. The official histories and private journals were based on such lithographed maps.

There are problems in handling old documents and maps as those who work with such archival materials know that they turn faint and are difficult to decipher with pages turning yellow, even while they continue to 'supply much details unavailable elsewhere'.

Among the photographers whose works have been used in this collection is Raja Deen Dayal and Sons, one of the rarest of rare Indians engaged in this business, and the well-known Bourne and Shepherd, the latter, however, is missing in the Index, certainly an oversight. Incidentally, it happens to be the subject matter of a recent article—'From Princely to Barbaric: Indian Masculinities as Colonial Landscape in Bourne and Shepherd's Photographs' by Xavier Guegan in Motrescu-Mayes and Banks (ed.) *Visual Histories of South Asia* Primus Book, Delhi (2018).

Some authors have also used The Bengal Hurkaru, The India Gazette, Delhi Urdu Akhbar, The Englishman, The Observer, The Royal Cornwall Gazette, The Illustrated London News among other source materials. It is an interesting book and may help in keeping alive an interest in the events of 1857–58.

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**Neera Misra and Rajesh Lal (Eds.), *Indraprastha Revisited*. Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 2017, ₹3000, ISBN: 9789386223678.**

DOI: 10.1177/0376983618804055

A proposed archaeological park in and around Purana Qila was about to be named Deenpanah, as this was the name of the capital set up by the second of the Mughal kings, Humayun. The problem was that the Delhi area, even the area of Purana Qila, had a much earlier authenticated history stretching back to at least 1000 BC. Its association with Indraprastha, the Pandava capital of the Mahabharata, was beyond dispute because this was the name under which Purana Qila was known to the locals, much before anybody thought of setting up an archaeological park here. This apparent disdain of the neglect of a major part of Delhi's ancient heritage by keeping eyes only on Humayun, upset Neera Misra to such an extent that she ran from pillar to post to get

the issue sorted out at the highest level of the Ministry of Culture. She eminently succeeded in her mission, organised even an academic seminar on Indraprastha in the process. Organising seminars is a long-standing Indian way of burying a vexing issue, and one hopes that before inflicting a term like *Deenpanah* on the unsuspecting public of Delhi in future, culture vultures in the corridor of power in India's capital will try to think beyond their petty interests and take into consideration the many-splendoured dimensions of this city's past.

The Delhi area's prehistoric past is discussed by A.K. Sharma. Mudit Trivedi's piece on the Delhi Palaeolithic should not have been left out by him. This distribution area of Palaeolithic and later sites is a continuation of the broader Aravalli zone. Working archaeologically in the Aravalli valleys in winter can be exciting in the enchanting, if somewhat dusty, view of the ranges at this time of the year, and one hopes that each and every corner of the Aravallis will soon be surveyed by the motley crowd of historians which now infest Greater Delhi's universities, both public and private. B.M. Pande puts the city in the context of its inscriptions, the most ancient of which is the Ashokan Minor Rock Edict not far from, and below Kalkaji temple, the most important relic of an undated but presumably early tradition of mother goddess worship in the wooded landscape of the ridge. It is indeed curious that before arriving at the citadelled remains of Indraprastha the travellers coming from the deepest corners of the Indo-Gangetic plain could, if they so wanted, have a look at this royal message by the wayside.

In the recent past, B.R. Mani's excavations at Lalkot have been an outstanding effort to throw light on the Rajput and early Sultanate past of Delhi. In this volume he shares some of his observations on this past with readers.

The Mahabharata occupies justifiably a significant portion of this volume. With all respect for our national epic tradition, I am constrained to wonder if somewhat esoteric dates of various astronomical configurations mentioned in this text lead to anything positively historical. Can we really correlate these dates to anything tangible in ancient Indian history? India has been a home of humanity from about two million years ago. We do not have to champion the glory of India's ancient past by offering disjointed and somewhat grotesque dates for our texts. Unless these dates can be related to what is known securely about India's ancient history, such exercises must be said to hang only in a vacuum. The only secure frame of India's ancient past before the birth of the Buddha rests on archaeology, and we must know before accepting dates like 3012 BC for the date of the Kurukshetra war as narrated in the Mahabharata, how these can be meaningfully correlated to the chronological frame of historical India. We fully understand that most of our texts incorporate ancient traditions, but to try to date these traditions to fixed dates is more or less a pointless exercise. The nation may take justifiably enormous pride in the many thousands of ruins and material remains of the ancient periods of our landscape and the glorious philosophical veins of our ancient thought, but to enter nebulous territories of speculation beyond them will not be a happy and logical endeavour. Equally puerile are attempts to link things essentially Indian to what is vaguely perceived to be 'Eurasian mythology and culture'. Everybody can pursue his or her chosen obsessions but unless these are firmly rooted in the ground, one must not claim for them the status of historical knowledge. Or, do we really care for historical knowledge? It is only archaeology with its vast body of tangible historical remains

which can effectively and pointedly illuminate the nation's ancient past. The shameless lack of care with which archaeology is generally pursued in modern India has more than adequately been reflected in the pages of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) report on the Archaeological Survey of India and some museums and learned bodies. One can rummage as much as one wants for references to the dynastic names in texts like the Bhagavata Purana but can one proceed to the actual domain of history on that basis? In India, in the name of scholarship one undertakes various journeys accompanied or unaccompanied by Aryans or such other mythical groups. It is also in the name of scholarship that we try to view the course of Indian history in the light of sundry 'theories' which originated in the foreign universities, but we would not like to view the Indian land in terms of what actually lies before us on the ground for the simple reason that this would involve hard and focused work.

The region in which Delhi is located epitomises in various ways the various colourful threads of ancient Indian history. B.B. Lal has done more than most to highlight the epic tradition of Delhi's past. If we wish to move beyond the epics now, I would humbly submit that the most exciting aspect of Delhi's ancient past is that India's 'Indus Civilisation' past seems to merge in and forms the basis of the core traditions of the land in the Ganga-Yamuna plain. First, the sheer number of Indus tradition sites in this region takes one by surprise. They extend right up to the shadow of the Manasa Devi hill in Haridwar. Second, the late Harappan tradition of Ochre Coloured Pottery complex extends as far south as Prayag (not actually Prayag but Sringaverpur where this complex occurs is not far from Prayag). The true womb of Indian tradition is the frame of the Indus civilisation development. The sooner we realise this the better.

Meanwhile, Ms Neera Misra and Air Vice Marshal (retired) Rajesh Lal have put all of us in their debt by editing this volume and reminding us that Delhi is far more than its complex of Muslim architecture. It is a core area of the country's ancient past deriving its strength from the Indus tradition.

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**Jonathan Eacott, *Selling Empire: India in the Making of Britain and America, 1600–1850*. New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2016, xiv+456 pp., ₹1230, ISBN: 978-81-250-6129-8.**

DOI: 10.1177/0376983618804373

*Selling Empire: India in the Making of Britain and America, 1600–1830* by Jonathan Eacott, a new addition to the integrative and comparative global history genre, is of special interest to students of Indian and American history. The detailed and meticulously researched work delineates the interconnections between Britain, America, India and Africa and the ways in which ideas of colonisation in America impacted colonisation in India and vice versa.

Eacott argues that Britons sold the idea regarding the viability and profitability of the empire in America by using notions about India and its valuable products, which