drainage maps there are no direction arrows (Figures 2.1, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.6).

Marh's book will stimulate thinking on the fluvial geomorphology of the Himalaya as much as it will inspire scholars to investigate other similar rivers and those which have experienced different life history. This effort is a small but sure step in the seemingly intractable, complex terra incognita that the Himalaya still is.

A. B. MUKERJI

TERRES DE BONNE ESPERANCE DE MONDE TROPICALE (THE TROPICAL WORLD OF LANDS OF HOPE)

by

P. Gourou

(1982)

Price Rs. 100 f.; pp. 455, Figs. 24, Photographs 35

This important contribution by the doyen of French geographers must not escape notice of those working and working on the Tropical Lands of the world. Professor Gourou first major work on Tonkin Delta (Vietnam – which was then French Indo-China) earned for him an acclaim in the academic world. The second world war interrupted his academic career only to find him as a leader of the resistance movement "Macquis" against the Germans when they overran France. Presuming his academic activity after the war, Gouron taught at the Free University of Brussels, travelled widely in the tropical lands of South America, Africa and Asia. In 1947, in recognition of his scholarship, he was appointed as Professor in College de France; the highest honour in the French Scholarly World, which carries honorarium, with no strings attached by way of teaching or research, though many distinguished men of letters and science like Maurvois and J. Paul Sartre have made seminar contributions in their writings.

Professor Gourou's two important books 'Les Pays Tropicaux", (1947) and 'L Asic' (1953). The former was translated in English as "The Tropical World" made a deep impression on scholars working on different countries of the Tropical belt. His findings were, on the whole, pessimistic; he then saw little hope for countries like Brazil, Equatorial Africa, India and South East Asia.

In 1951, Gourou paid a visit to India and was with the present reviewer at Dharwad, for a few days. We did field trips in parts of North Karnatak and a memorable visit to Goa which was then under Portuguese rule. It was both interesting and instructive to travel with Gourou; his keen observations on landscapes and men, and his eminently practical suggestions for social and economic development. He, incidentally, paid a compliment to the reviewers recently published book "Western India" and agreed with the author that what India needed was application of small scale technology and training manpower, instead

of large hydro-electric and other projects. An observation which is now bearing fruit in Government's policies. After his studies of Ruanda Urundi, Africa (1953), and the Belgion Congo (1955), L'Afrique (1970), Le,cons de Geographic Humanie (1973) and L'Amerique Tropicale et Australe (1976), comes the present book which in its six parts covers topics ranging from Vietnam, effects of tropical Climates on man and his agriculture, effects of discoveries of the Americas by Europeans, and their increasing contacts with Asiatic lands, the under utilised Amazon basin, and the problems of its development, the vast agricultural perspectives of the Tropical lands and potentials for development in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, S. E. Asian countries, and the tropical lands of Central and South America, and the aid given by the developed countries to promote agriculture in the Tropics.

How has Gourou turned from a pessimist to a cautious optimist about the future of the Tropical lands? He once again exposes the myth of the Nature's bounty in the tropics and points out that soils and vegetations in the lands are a bounty accumulated over the ages, and tropical agriculture entails a rapid environmental deterioration, all the more degraded by growth in population. The impact of the Western colonial powers was selective; in that crops like spices and cocoa were commercially raised, but with a corresponding toll in ecological degradation. What was worse, lands of ancient civilisations like that of Cambodia and Indonesia ,were ravaged and neglected. However, there is now a new awakening on the international plane; tropical diseases can be more successfully combated; innovative agriculture suitable to tropics is making a headway in the form of better seeds, better agricultural practices, new fertilisers and better soil management. The tropical farmer, Gourou argues, needs to be inducted in to these and also a more effective chicks on population growth.

Gourou's observations on the future development of India are interesting and meaningful. India, the tropical giant has her population problems, but in many aspects there has been commendable progress; in irrigation, electric power, land reforms, in food production, and in industrial progress. He refers to the uneven regional development. If agricultural production is stepped up and population growths slowed down; India, he argues, is capable of finding solutions in her own cultural setting and yet adopting modern technology of production to suit her needs.

Finally, Gourou evaluates the efficacy of aid given to agriculture by Western countries to those of the Tropics, and favours indirect assistance that is really suitable and capable of being accepted by the indegenesis farm communities.

This book like its predecessors is regional geography – but with a difference. It is a skillful analysis and interpretation of man-environment relation in the Tropical lands and a good deal of its arises from direct experience gained by the author in the various countries. His suggestions for a better performance by there countries are marked by humanism and practicability. All together a scholarly study that deserves to be translated into English.

C. D. DESHPANDE