

BOOK REVIEWS

Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History and Significance

Edited by Christian W. Troll
327 pp., Maps, Pictures, Index
Oxford University Press, Delhi (1989).

The book *Muslim Shrines in India* edited by Christian W. Troll has been divided for the benefit of lay readers into four parts: Documentary, Interpretive, Theological, and finally Reviews of various other books written on the wider topic—Sufism and Muslim Religious Thought. It is amply illustrated and also contains maps of Dargahs of Patna, Ahmedabad and early Chisti Dargahs.

Sufism developed in India in the thirteenth century. During this period, the Chisti, the Suhrawardiya, the Firdausiya and the Kubrawiya orders were active in different regions of India. These Sufi orders exercised 'a deep social, political, economic and cultural influence in India' through their Khanqahs and their Dargahs became centres of pilgrimage.

This book has a series of articles written on various aspects of the Sufi Dargahs, their location, history, life of the saints attached to them, the reasons for their popularity or disuse, their impact on local life and culture, etc. Some articles are of subjective nature, other are objective and analytical, while some are critical appraisals of works written on various Dargahs.

I.H. Siddiqui gives the historical background of the venerable Chisti saints, the causes of their popularity and the festivities at the Dargahs. Tahir Mahmood draws a life sketch of Sayyid Salar Masud Ghazi of Bahraich. Great deal of architectural details of the Dargah and its associated with it are mentioned. I.H. Siddiqui in another article on the same subject draws elaborately on the Persian sources of Salar Masud.

Timrizi in continuation of the first article gives a detailed account of the available Mughal documents of the reign of Akbar and Jehangir relating to Muinuddin Chisti. Moini gives further details of various festivals celebrated at the Ajmer Dargah.

Z.A. Desai shifts to the West and details the major Dargahs of Ahmedabad, the grand scale of architectural forms and the causes of the lack of spiritual lustre. Paul Jackson provides a lot of information on Dargahs at Patna: in his article he 'deals with perceptions of dargahs, and perceptions are influenced by the conditioning of the person who perceives, as well as the circumstances of the perceiving' (p. 110).

D. Pinto gives a subjective experience of the participants in the rituals at Nizamuddin Dargah. He has borrowed the Weberian methodology of *verstehen* for analysis. The miracles observed here are discussed at length. The next few chapters deal with the analysis of Sufi doctrines and philosophy. Nanda and Talib's choice of the title 'Soul of the Soulless' is intriguing. The material aspect of the shrines is dealt very lucidly by E.A. Mann. The Wahabi's criticism of the Dargahs is brought out by Gaboriau.

Five books have been reviewed here which sum up the general history of Sufism in India. Various cults associated with venerable saints of different order have been discussed.

This is perhaps the first work of its kind where almost all the major and minor saints and their cults and Dargahs have been listed and discussed in great depth. Various aspects, political, religious, social and cultural, of the cults of the saints are highlighted and five books have been reviewed, together which is a godsend for the not so avid reader. Detailed work on one Dargah or one saint has been undertaken earlier—The Cult and the Shrine of Muinuddin Chisti—but light reading

material on Sufism and its saints has been ably provided in this edited book by Troll.

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Indian Immigrants in Great Britain

By Sodhi Ram

709 pp., *Figures, Tables, Graphs, Index.*
Inter-India Publications, New Delhi (1989).
Rs. 592.00 (Cloth).

Sodhi Ram's book is a sociological and geographical study of the history of immigration of certain Indian ethnic communities to Great Britain. A period of three decades (1950-1980) is examined to gauge the nature of migration patterns and make predictions for the future of ethnic communities in Britain, particularly of the cities of Lancashire and Yorkshire and Bradford.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I of the book is largely descriptive and also lays down the methodology used and certain analytic premises. It has ten chapters that describe and analyse the history, future and socio-economic and spatial implications of the migration process, and has certain conclusions, that reveal an effort to go down to the minutest of details. These are supported at every step by elaborate statistics. The second part of the book, the 'appendices' is devoted to detailed supplementary statistical tables, figures, graphs, survey formats, area maps and notes, in support of Part I.

A vast array of source material has been used by the author. These include the census reports and the register of electors which however did not provide sufficient information and were thus supplemented by household and labour-force surveys. In fact to aid in the research work Sodhi Ram has created a 'directory' of the names of members of the ethnic communities present. The findings on the Indian communities have been compared with data on the other non-British communities in Britain.

The main aim of the book as just stated was

to study the Indian ethnic groups 'exclusively and in detail' and also compare them to others. Besides, the spatial patterns of the Indians on the national and local level, immigration patterns, demographic and social changes, economic conditions, the histories of the members of the Indian community and the further development of the Indian population in Bradford are examined.

The introductory section outlines the basic issues at hand, and enumerates the literature and information already available before Sodhi Ram's own study. These earlier works help him to create his framework of study and research and make the task of defining and enumerating the community easier. In chapter two of the book, the main aims mentioned above are briefly discussed and the pace set for detailed research on the same. A major conclusion reached through the task of enumeration is that, Indian community in Britain is composed of three generations and come from three different birth places, and each is clear about their community membership even though official records are not.

Chapter three offers an overview of the Indians in Britain and concentrates on their spatial distribution and changes in its nature over a period of time. A districtwise analysis is carried out to enable this. Factors such as communities are considered. The chapter reveals that between 1960-1980 the pattern, rate and ratio of immigrants changed and from individual migration due to economic needs, the later decade (70s) has seen entire families migrating and family reunions taking place. This migration process was numerically significant in the 1950s. Most immigrants are localised where unskilled labour was needed.

Chapter four onwards begins a detailed study of the Indian population in the Bradford Metropolitan district, where their concentration is the highest. Since 36 per cent of the Indian population lives here, any changes in the spatial distribution, migration patterns, and socio-economic shifts, have significance for the total Indian population. There have indeed occurred changes in the position of the Indians in and around Bradford particularly in terms of the residential distribution.

Chapter five is devoted to a classification of the Bradford community using information from the register of electors. This classification is based on factors such as religious and regional background. The shortcomings in the source material become most apparent in this context. It is found here by the author that the Hindus made up half of the Bradford population, 4 per cent of the other half were Sikhs and Muslims and others made up 3 per cent of the community in 1981.

Chapters six to eight are concerned with more detailed information gathering an analysis of the community in Bradford, criteria such as names of individuals, household structures, social and demographic aspects and the historical reasons for the immigration of households. Chapter eight looks more directly at the intra-urban migration patterns between 1971-1981, which had a relationship to the religious identity of the migrants.

Chapter nine makes predictions about the future of the Indians in Bradford over the years 1981-2011, by carrying out a spatial and demographic analysis of the Bradford community. Other factors such as ethnic identity, age and sex composition, mortality and fertility rate are also considered. In the decades to come, Sodhi Ram predicts that there will be a larger available labour force as well as a greater number of dependents in the non-working bracket.

Chapter ten puts together a summary of the study and raises certain issues as well as states certain conclusions. To state a few, the changes in patterns of migration are related to political changes in the British governmental policy regarding immigration. Over the decades a certain amount of upward social mobility has occurred within the Indian population. A greater number of female migrants have also arrived over the decades.

As mentioned before, Part II of the book is the appendices. It is simply amazing, how about 300 pages of statistics, figures, graphs, tables and maps have been put together to supplement the analytic and descriptive part of the book. The reviewer feels that, this book under review is a must for all research students setting out to do

their first survey or fieldwork, just to be able to realise to what extent the tools of research can be employed to reveal the most detailed of information on a topic of research.

The book contains hypotheses, data, analysis and is almost a document on the process of migration and its pros and cons that can well be used to chart out the future of many attempting immigration. The work is indeed 'enormous' in this sense. Unfortunately, the enormity of the work is also its bane as it makes the book too long to read and has created a repetitiveness in the presentation of data. One fears it may get confined to the reference section of libraries and not be read as it should.

Further, the book is replete with typographical errors from page one itself and the shoddiness of production, particularly in the presentation of the graphs and figures where much is illegible due to bad printing does injustice to Sodhi Ram's painstaking efforts.

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Women and the Household in Asia-4 **Gender and the Household Domain: Social and Cultural Dimensions**

Edited by Maithreyi Krishanraj and
Karuna Chanana, Series Editor: Leela Dube
264 pp., References, Index, Sage Publication,
New Delhi (1989). Rs. 175.00 (Cloth).

There have been family studies in India for several decades. None of earlier studies focused on the impact on women or on the nature of intra-family relations and the value systems that governed day-to-day behaviour. The toll that poverty, illness, unemployment, drudgery of work, etc., took on different family members in poor households was not seen. In the last two decades women studies has taken a different turn. It has challenged, particularly, the assumption that the family is a homogenous group or that all the members of the household derive equal ben-

efits, and has highlighted women's overwork, deprivation and new forms of oppression! There has been a new focus on the urban and rural poor and their struggle for survival.

This, the fourth volume in the series on *Women and the Household in Asia* combines eleven original papers dealing with the structural and cultural dimensions of intra-household relations in South Asia. Inter-linkages between the family structure and intra-household relations, work and production have been explored in these papers. These two themes are central to the analysis of gender. It exposes the erroneous view of a common, undifferentiated Asian model of the position of women and for gender relations. This volume is divided into two parts, The cultural matrix and the gender dimension of health, each with a separate introduction. Out of the eleven papers seven are based on India, two on Bangladesh and two introductions.

The two editors, Maithreyi Krishnamurthy and Karuna Chanana gave introductions to the two themes. Important regional Comparative as well as theoretical issues have been brought in to focus. Their styles and emphases are different but in the final analysis these differences have enriched our knowledge.

This volume is concerned mainly with relations within the household, and neglects the diversity in their structures as well as their constitution in new settings. Usha Kanhere in her paper examines the nature of differential socialisation of boys and girls in the family on the basis of data collected from a purposively selected sample of 130 families belonging to some Gujrati Hindu, lower strata castes communities settled in the city of Ahmedabad. The differential treatment given to girls and boys, springs from their different expected adult roles. K.M.A. Aziz's paper highlights the role of seclusion of women as an ideology in Bangladesh. There is a prescribed space and clearly defined allocation of gender based responsibilities resulting in the social powerlessness of women, even though the contribution of women through their economic activities, to the family resources is considerable. Kamala Ganesh's paper also high-

lights the role of seclusion of women as an ideology but its manifestations vary in pattern and degree. This paper deals with small subcaste called Kottai Pillaimar from Tamil Nadu, among whom an extreme seclusion of women continues to exist as an accepted and respected institution. The author has stressed that the seclusion of women among the Kottai Pillaimar and other high castes is a device to control their sexuality, which in turn, is considered to be cruel to the maintenance of the ritual purity of the caste. Hanna Papanek deals with persistent puzzle of absence of women from the enumerated labour force in the middle ranges of occupational status, class background, household income and educational attainment. Meneher's paper examines the work that women in agricultural households of Kerala and Tamil Nadu do in relation to food production, and the degree of autonomy their earnings bring for them. These three papers of rural Bangladesh women in rice growing area (Aziz), urban slums (Kanhere) and marginal farmers of Kerala (Meneher) provide contrasts in the structure of opportunities available to the household.

The part II deals with the Gender dimension of health, focussing on the need to embed policies relating to nutrition and health of girls and women within the household. Four papers included in this section, present quite a comprehensive and analytical view of women's health and nutrition and the related state policies and programmes in India and Bangladesh, but they do not answer issues like internal inequalities among members of a household and factors like male preference which result in unequal distribution of literacy and food. The papers of Shamima Islam and N. Mahtab discuss the Bangladesh situation while those of Chatterjee and Miller focus on India. While Chatterjee and Mahtab focus on policies and are country-level analyses, Miller and Islam's articles are based on micro-level data. Miller, relates policy to its impact on the survival of the girls in the son preference culture of Punjab in India. Islam presents case studies to demonstrate the effect of seclusion or *Parda* on the health of pregnant women, the survival chances of their children and the contribution of the

traditional mid-wives. Chatterjee and Islam highlight the fact that policies are neither receptive to the needs of women nor do they appreciate the importance of women's informal role as health care providers.

Meera Chatterjee's paper points out the paradox in the Indian situation where women are the chief provider of health care within the household but are the most neglected so far as their own health is concerned. They have little access to external health care facilities provided by the government, especially in the rural areas.

This book is interesting for all those involved with women's issues—whether at universities, research institutions, government departments or lay persons. Drawing on primary research, the papers in this volume examine the dominant theme of seclusion as an ideology that restricts women's lives—be they in Tamil Nadu or Bangladesh. They also examine prevailing notions of the 'proper' roles for women across caste and class, which not only influence the upbringing of boys and girls, but also adversely affect women's access to health and education. The point has been made clear by the contributors that no single factor—be it property, income, or education can guarantee women equality or power. It is the special blend of the structural and cultural aspects in each situation, coupled with the opportunities available, which determine the precise outcome.

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Fertility and Family Planning in Rural Areas —(A Longitudinal Study)

By A.K. Sharma

viii + 164 pp. Tables, Figures, References, Index,
Mittal Publications, Delhi (1987), Rs 110.00 (Cloth).

That India's population growth rate may be lower than that of some other developing countries, it provides little consolation in view of the current population level. It is generally felt that while India unequivocally supports family planning, the record of the country in this sphere calls

for some soul-searching. Literature reveals that most of the past studies made to capture the springs of fertility movements were cross-sectional in nature and very few longitudinal studies in fertility and family planning were conducted in India. The present book is based on the findings of a longitudinal study conducted in India. Besides that, the study is also rural-oriented. India, which is mostly rural, it is appropriate that any study or family planning programme's thrust should be mainly towards these areas.

The study was conducted in 1978-79 in a selected rural area in Uttar Pradesh, focussed on the fertility change, family planning acceptance, nuptiality, aspirations, sex preference, husband-wife communication etc. The base-line data were obtained from a subsample of Kanpur Project (1971) which was jointly sponsored by the Centre for Population Planning, University of Michigan, USA, and Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. The book is divided into six chapters and the chapterisation shows expediency. The book begins with a lucid introduction of the framework of the study. It also presents reviews, regarding the economic, sociological and psychological approaches to study the reproductive process. The author then differentiates between the cross-sectional and longitudinal demographic studies and expresses that while the former definitely contributes to action plans, the latter is more useful in the long run.

The second chapter presents the sampling procedure of the original Kanpur study and the resurvey, type of information collected and a brief description of the problem faced in the two surveys. Both the method and the procedure is elaborate and appropriate.

Social, economic and demographic characteristics of the respondents in sample is of great importance because these characteristics largely affect their attitudes and behaviour.

The third chapter deals with the background variables which are often hypothesized to correlate with the reproductive goals and behaviour: age, education, occupation, size of land holding, proxy variables for income, caste and

age at marriage. This section also describes certain salient characteristics of the villages in which the resurvey was conducted; concept of development as perceived by people and problem faced by them; the role of traditional *dai* and ANM in the rural health care system; and the possible reasons behind the change in the infant mortality. It also presents factor analysis of the village data on the socio-economic and demographic variables to establish the correlates of fertility at village level. This part is well-conceived and tries to provide story background matrix.

The next chapter is concerned with the three basic issues which concern those who are interested in studying the change in fertility in a population; these are predispositions for change, behavioural changes and the relation between predispositions and behaviour at a point of time. These changes can be studied both at macro (aggregate) and the micro (individual) level. This chapter gives a description of the magnitude and direction of change in a number of study variables, namely, ideal number of children, attitude towards family planning, family planning acceptor status and fertility. Step-wise regression technique is applied to the births during the inter-survey period (1971-78). The independent variables like desire of additional children revealed in the original survey, socio-economic and educational status give a clear insight of the prevalent scenario.

Attitudinal changes over a period of time although not universal, it is frequently encountered as far as the reproductive behaviour is concerned. The fifth chapter explores some plausible answers for the change in thinking towards the ideals for reproduction and family planning practices if respondents' answers in the two surveys differed. This chapter also deals with the characteristics of family planning acceptors, perception of child mortality and husband-wife communication. Additional data on sex preference, ideal age at marriage, educational aspirations, emergency experience, and seasonal variations in births are also discussed.

The sixth and the last chapter briefly summarizes the whole study and concludes judiciously that painstaking research is needed in the management

aspects of communication, innovation and adoption of birth control technology, effect of planned and natural social processes on fertility and cost-benefit and suitability of various incentives-disincentives schemes in the rural content.

This study can be commended for its nature alone, and its outcome will prove valuable for researchers, planners etc.

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Concepts of Ecology

By E.J. Kormondy

XVI + 298 pp. References, Index, Tables, Figures,
Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd.,
New Delhi (1989). Price Rs. 35.00 (Cloth).

This is the third edition and fifth Indian reprint of the book, which amply speaks of the success of the book. Various aspects of ecology have been covered in a planned manner and arranged in six chapters. The first chapter covers the terms and concepts in ecology. It also deals well with the nature of ecosystems. Various populations use different pathways for using solar energy to carry out biological activity. How energy flow occurs in different ecosystems has been dealt with in the second chapter. In chapter 3, three basic biogeochemical cycles, viz. hydrologic, gaseous-nutrient and sedimentary nutrient cycles have been covered. The carbon cycle and the nitrogen cycle have been focussed in the gaseous nutrient cycle, whereas, the sulphur cycle and the phosphorus cycle with special reference to movements in lake have been elucidated in sedimentary nutrient cycle. The internal and external nutrient budgets and their relationship with ecosystem have also been a part of this chapter. Demographic aspects of population have been grouped in chapter 4. Salient characteristics of population growth, age structure and distribution of populations have been included in this section. This chapter also discusses the maintenance of equilibrium in populations living at various levels of economic subsistence. Chapter 5 covers the organisational and

dynamic aspects of various ecological communities. The way this chapter deals with various kinds of ecosystems and their functional aspects is worth appreciating. The final chapter, i.e. Chapter 6, deals with Human Ecology and provides perhaps, the best reading of the book. Special mention needs to be made the way the book tackles the complex problems of human population growth, natality and mortality and specifically the problems of air and water pollution.

The book, now available in India for a meagre cost of Rs. 35/- only, would be very useful for the students of ecology. I strongly recommend this book for graduate and post-graduate students of biology interested in ecological studies.

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**Verrier Elwin, Philanthropologist:
Selected Writings**

Edited by Nari Rustomji

385 pp., Preface, Contents, Plates. North-Eastern
Hill University Publications and Oxford University
Press, Delhi (1989), Rs. 275.00 (Cloth).

Has Elwin been forgotten within twenty five years of his death? Yes, to a considerable extent, although he is selectively remembered, perhaps for archival value in most cases, especially when approaches to tribal problems are threaded out; some with unparalleled vehemence reject the great lover of India's tribals as having championed, with vested interests as they say, the policy of isolationism, while others pardon his sins committed in the last chapter of his *The Baiga* (1939) by considering him as having fortified the ever-cherishing premises of tribals' integration with the mainstream of Indian society, and his *A Philosophy for NEFA* (1957) was oft-quoted when Jawaharlal Nehru's contribution to tribal development was one of the themes discussed in his birth centenary year.

At a time when Elwin is read less by the newcomers in anthropology (and almost by none in sociology)—except for those who happen to work in a tribal society earlier studied by him, it is heart-

ening to meet anthropologists and others who hold him in high esteem. Some have been touched by his philanthropy—Elwin being rated as 'one of the most outstanding champions of tribal people' in the words of Rustomji, the editor of the present anthology of Elwin's selected writings; others admire the beauty of the tribals, who three or four decades before India's independence dwelled almost not-so-easily-approachable landscapes where Elwin was one of the few anthropologists that embarked on their study, that was captured in his lively, gripping, moving, vivid and detailed monographs; and here he achieved what his predecessors as well as contemporaries failed to do, and this pertained to a description of the sexual life of the people. Such descriptions were avowedly tabooed in academic works (remember how Malinowski's *Sexual Life of the Savages* was treated, although it was on family life and norms rather than on sex *per se*) and anthropologists almost desexualized their subjects assuming similarity in sexual behavioural patterns all over. But Elwin was different. Notwithstanding his background and training, he treated sex as an important principle in tribal societies and fearlessly described what all he saw, what all he was told and what all he inferred. Descriptions of youth dormitories, sexual myths and attitudes of the people to them, did pose hindrance to the publication of his works—especially *The Muria and their Ghotul* (1947), as he tells us in his *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin* (1964)—but he pursued the case of his monographs with his publishers successfully.

And so resulted his philanthropy carefully weaved in all his monographs—he loved the people with whom he lived; and he was committed to solving their problems, as he wrote, 'The essence and art of anthropology is love. Without it, nothing is fertile, nothing is true'. As a true Gandhian, he had unshakable faith in action, and understood in this spirit, his idea of creating a tribal reserve for the Baigas was not to isolate them in an 'anthropological zoo' but to protect them against any event of exploitation and oppression by the outsiders.

Such a reserve in his opinion was imperative for the life of a people's culture as the latter bestowed upon them the meaning of their existence. Unfor-

Unfortunately the social workers, the missionaries and the administrators were ignorant of the mythology, cosmology, customs and practices, and social organization of the people, and each one in the name of a kenner spokesman and tribune of the people imposed on them what they considered proper—if shifting cultivation was deemed bad by them, they forcefully made the plough-haters to step into the role of a *hashtakar*, leaving behind their axes and hoes. Such zealous reformers and experimenters, and the administrators given the charge to change the people, in fact destroyed the fabric of tribal societies, and the anthropologist—the “invisible man” as Elwin believed—in such situations instead of relating himself to the people dispassionately, or shedding tears on their mystery and predicament, should take up the peoples’ problems with the administration and should convince the executive authority on the issues of culture. For Elwin, applied anthropology, as we understand it now, was not a separate discipline; its core and commitment was contained in the very act of doing anthropology.

This edited anthology includes those writings of Elwin which were for the anthropologists and for the general readers. His childrens’ fictions were very popular; and his poems very touching. He has been meticulous in recording the anthropological details—examples of which can be taken from his study of *ghotul*, the cases of murder and suicide among the Marias, the wall drawings on Saora houses, and folktales, fictions, folksongs, riddles, etc., of tribal societies. One is really impressed by the reproduction of wall paintings in his *The Religion of an Indian Tribe* (1955), which he called *ikon*, from the Saoras and the reasons for making them. And it is really incredible that in his attempt to make a holistic study of the people, he has collected data on everything and anything concerning their culture. Elwin’s work on tribal fiction and folk-songs is referred to by students of literature, especially Devendra Satyarthi.

When Elwin has covered such a wide ethnographic zone—of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Nagaland and NEFA—and provided detailed monographs on them, working for several years

on each one of them, and has always defended the interests of the tribals, whether they were enshrined in the idea of tribal reserve or integrating the people with the mainstream, why is it that he has been forgotten? Rustomji is one of those hoping to revive interest in Elwin’s work—Elwin Memorial Lecture is another idea commemorating the great author. But apart from these sentimentally carried out attempts, which for a moment revise Elwins’ contribution, he is not greatly invoked for anthropological analyses, and, if I may say, besides the debate on isolation versus integration, there is hardly any other analytical or applied perspective in his writings for which he is remembered.

Every anthropologist, I think, has a lot of respect for Elwin’s monographs, although in contemporary anthropology, with a critical acceptance of reflexivity and deconstructionism, the concept of writing ethnography has qualitatively changed—in that sense, Elwin’s monographs could be best regarded as providing cultural data; his ethnography may be holistic but certainly is not analytical. One is, for example, impressed by detailed descriptions of wall motifs in his book on Saora religion, but it suffers from a lack of analysis—it seems as if the data have been simply (and coolly) put together. In his study of Naga practices, the feast of merit and head hunting, for example, have been detailed out; in an ethnological perspective, they have been compared with other such practices—the feast of merit is compared with Vedic sacrifices, but the question of their impact on society is not handled. How leveling mechanisms are facilitated through the feasts of merit? What is the relation of head hunting with social stratification? And so on. Similarly, though Elwin provided rich material on tribal fictions and poetry, it all was devoid of analysis. Such writings are enriching to the students of literature and lay public, but anthropologists gain little unless the data are thoroughly analyzed with one or another perspective. The tribal story concluding with, “If a man has two wives we know that the elder was a deer in her previous life and the younger was a bitch”, or the one of sisters with goitre, or the one explaining why the dogs help in hunting, or the one which tells why rats

ruin the harvest (in this story footnote 29 is missing, p. 339), etc., they are all embedded in their respective cultural milieus, and their analyses would have been really profitable. But perhaps, anthropology at Elwin's time was more committed to digging out the facts of other cultures, collecting cultural oddities, and presenting them in a facile manner, and in this sort of anthropology, cross-cultural comparison with ethnocentrism reigned primarily. Anthropology today is not what Elwin or his contemporaries thought of it.

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Development Dynamics in Command Areas of Major Irrigation Projects

By Dr. R. Mohan Rao and Dr. S. Srinadri
270 pp., Illustrations, Tables, Bibliography, Index. Inter-India Publications, New Delhi (1989) Rs. 210.00 (Cloth).

The book is a representative case study of economic as well as human impact of major irrigation projects in post-independence India. The data collected pertains to the command area of Sriramsagar project constructed on river Godavari in Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh. The comparison of the processed and mapped data for pre-project 1961-71 and post-project 1971-81 periods has been used to find out the nature and degree of change.

The authors have made an important point by deducing that even such projects providing assured irrigation may fail to usher an era of socio-economic transformation for majority of the local farmers for whom these are constructed. The whole study comes round to the basic question of finding some answer to this human failure. The findings dispel the fallacy of any automatic trickling down process of the accruing economic benefits among all sections of people. Nor can an equitable provision of facilities considered vital for the social uplift of people be taken for granted. It is no less alarming to know that the reason for an inadequate social amenities even in such lucky areas is 'that a few socially advanced people do not want these services to come into the villages apprehending that

this would affect the availability of labour and prevent its exploitation because of its resistance in asserting their democratic rights.' The incongruity found between such economic change, provision of social amenities and social harmony, though supported by this base-line study, would need its further confirmation from elsewhere.

The opening introductory chapter is followed by examining the effects of assured irrigation facilities in respect of population, agricultural, human, social and developmental aspects. The last seventh chapter sums up the major findings and visualises complementary strategies of multi-sectoral development for betterment of people. Authors notice positive changes in distribution and density of population in areas away from the river belts as a result of rise in the productivity of land and security of agriculture in irrigated tracts. Yet the explanation of an overall fall in growth rate of rural population in 1971-81 period in project's command area despite the release of irrigation waters and decline in the expected rate of in-migration is left for another fuller investigation. The cause of steep rise in urban population is ascribed to the setting up of alternative urban homes because of the fear generated by Naxal movement. This in turn has its seeds in economic buoyancy coupled with social inequality in the post-project period. Such answers hinging upon the central idea running through the book would still need a cross-checking elsewhere by more field observations. An increase in the proportion of agricultural workers at the cost of fall in that of non-agricultural workers is understandable because of more profitable intensive cultivation. As it is more due to a rise in the proportion of female workers, (their in-migration being ruled out) and is reverse of what happened in the command area of neighbouring Nagarjuna Sagar, some authenticated explanation was required. How this takes place is also left as debatable in the absence of reliable data. A baffling prevalence of a relatively low level of literacy in irrigated parts is also largely unanswered. Agreed that schooling facilities might be lacking, the quantum of usually unrecorded child labour preferring to pick up more of the profitable work available was required to be determined to a possible extent.

'Does economic prosperity has no bearing in increasing the educational consciousness of people'? Marks rather an unprobed philosophic end to this query.

The discussion on agricultural system is much more thoroughly taken up supported by maps showing decadal variation in its important components. Some maps on decadal variation of demographic aspects in the preceding chapter would have enhanced the scope of understanding had they been included.

The impact of increasing irrigation on various components of agricultural system is not uniform. It is observed that there is a greater overall increase in net sown area and area sown more than once, both positive and negative changes at taluka-level within the command area, no change in the total cropped area and a greater increase in per capita availability of food cropped area. Such a changing agricultural scenario strengthens authors' conclusive remark that the entire command area being in a state of transition, no definite trends in change in the agricultural system are discerned which indicates only its partial adaptation to the new situation. Authors conveniently leave a question mark whether a fall in the proportion of forest area (and also pastures) in the irrigated portion would be disturbing the ecological balance? Some local field observations could have supplied a partial answer. The status of traditional tank irrigation and its possible use to make up the reported deficiency of water felt at the tail end of canals are nowhere mentioned. An appraisal of the agricultural efficiency has been made on the basis of five groups of 16 indicators considered responsible for promoting agricultural development. How a moderately efficient region in 1971 has turned into a low efficiency region in 1981 and how a few areas of high agricultural efficiency in 1971 have turned into moderate category in 1981? One is left only to guess the answers to these important questions.

An unenviably faster growth in the number of large sized settlements at the cost of a corresponding decline in the case of smaller villages in the irrigated part of the command area is marked. It is hardly an adequate answer that it

may due to the non-percolation of all benefits of irrigation and other factors. Parts still largely inaccessible to medical facilities and a reliable network of motor roads etc. could be more usefully shown as shaded chunks on maps. In a like manner a cartographic representation of the frequency of bus services could bring out a vivid contrast between their continuing concentration in already developed and virtually blank undeveloped levels of settlement.

The general account of social setting makes an interesting reading. The physical changes in the environment and the pace of economic development have changed the relative importance of caste groups thereby transforming the social and caste-associated occupational structure. Each catalytic agent included in the authors' inventory has played its role in replacing 'caste-occupation syndrome' by 'monetary-benefit linked occupations'. According to authors the rising rural incomes are being siphoned off to newly rising urban centres without any recycling in village development. It needs to be anticipated how far it is likely to efface the rural-urban barriers inbuilt in our psyche over the ages? How far it would otherwise continue to widen the gap between rural and urban sectors in predominantly farming areas? Here also the dominant caste groups/greater variation in number of caste households' data could better be represented on maps.

The statistical methodology to determine levels of development has been explained at length. A spatial representation of the three categories of development levels on map alongwith an elaborate analysis would not have been out of place.

Inter-relations among the strategies of agricultural, social and industrial development is the keynote of formulation of plans for the improvement of command area. While agricultural development strategy has been fully outlined, a hasty discussion of industrial and intra-structural potential has been brought to an abrupt end.

References cited with only two chapters could also be a part of the bibliography given at the end.

The worth of this research study lies in achieving maximum objectivity by all means and in carrying the evaluation of project's benefits to the

grassroot levels of society inhabiting the command area.

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Population Dynamics in Indian States

By K. Mahadevan

viii + 325 pp, Tables, Figures, References. Mittal Publications, New Delhi (1989). Rs. 250.00 (Cloth).

The study of population dynamics is receiving major global focus today than ever as day by day the approaching future is giving signals in the form of ever-enveloping crisis in all spheres be it food scarcity to overall environmental degradation and the world is stressed to the limit; therefore man is desperately searching for plausible answers to the same. Developing countries, like India, are much more prone to these problems and whose sheer numbers now threatening to outnumber even China, is posing a grave concern for everyone today.

For years, various claims and creeds on this subject have been put forward as proven facts and literature too was permeated with too many information but the overall development of the country remain endangered with the continual baby boom.

So, it is felt that this study by Mahadevan appears at a time when a decisive turn in policy formulation and implementation based on regional factorial analysis is needed. This work clearly depicts that any pertinent hypotheses require much more carefully conducted research and points to a thorough revision and better understanding of current views on the factors which exert their influence on the dynamics of population.

This book is an outcome of a major national study carried out in 1984 in three diverse ecological, developmental, socio-cultural regions of India. The contents of the book is divided into three parts. In the part one, the author has tried to focus the attention on the relationship between fertility and "family formations variables"—used as a synonym for the determinants of family size. While part two examines the infant mortality differ-

entials and also the impact of the determinants on the same, part three firstly discusses the interaction between fertility and mortality and secondly the implications of "unwanted living babies" i.e. children born as a result of varied perceptions of parents to have an optimum number of issues.

It seems that the author does not restrict himself to typical conventional research but has attempted to uncover the effects of certain innovative variables vis-a-vis fertility and mortality. Quite a few valuable results have been achieved in this field by him. While he has covered the background and customary analysis as depicted by the population pyramids and by different rates and ratios; a multitude of factors which are known to exert their impact on the population dynamics are also probed viz. housing conditions, value of children, family type, educational and economic status of the couples, type of occupation, duration of breastfeeding, weaning practices and family planning practices etc.

The innovative variables which attract commendation are—the reasons for early age at marriage of girls, late marriage of daughters, significance of "Gauna" system, value of brothers in fixing marriages, cost of marriage expenses, the opportunity costs of couples etc. for fertility differentials and—fasting during pregnancy, nutritional status etc. for mortality differentials.

Religion (as discussed in the third chapter) has always played an important role and has persisted as a singular detriment in the path of adoption of family planning methods in some regions and communities. The diverse viewpoint of the three persons professing Islam is well researched and provides useful ideas for strengthening communication and education amongst the people who uses religion as a pretext for non-adoption of family planning methods.

The analysis of the determinants of completed fertility in the seventh chapter is found to be as important as it accentuates the overall understanding of the amount of pressure exerted by the determinants on the forces of population and this may further help in formulating specific family welfare programmes.

The ninth and the twentieth chapters also

deserve special attention as the discussion of implications of individual factors and certain recommendations are welcome.

However, the author unfortunately could not make the presentation fool proof and certain minor acts of omission have inadvertently crept in. For instance, the case studies or the view points of Caste Hindu, Scheduled Caste and Christians etc. if considered, may also have uncovered certain points. It is also felt that in Uttar Pradesh where the age at marriage of boys is also considerably lower, should also have been taken into account. The effect of age at menarche etc. have also been overlooked; and I hope that the author may highlight the same.

However in order to shed light on the problem of population dynamics and the state of unsatisfactory affairs in implementation of the family welfare programme, the author has chosen an impressive way.

The book is a good survey of case studies and would evoke great interest in discerning researchers and students in the field of population studies.

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**The Shrine and Cult of Muin al-din
Chishti of Ajmer**
(Oxford University South Asian Studies Series)

By P.M. Currie
220pp., Plates, Index Oxford University Press,
Delhi (1989) Rs. 180.00 (Cloth).

Mysticism as a concept is important in both Hindu and Muslim tradition. The origin of mystic ideas in Islam has become a source of controversy. Aziz Ahmad, Yusuf Husain, and others confine the origins to the Quran and traditions of the prophet. Mohd. Habib traces it to Persia; R.C. Zaehner emphasises the Hindu-Buddhist heritage of Sufism. The popularity and success of the Chisti order was due to their understanding of the Indian conditions and aspirations of the people (K.A.Nizami).

The book under review has ten chapters on various

aspects of the history, life, legends and festivals, and administration of the dargah of Muin al-din Chisti. The second part contains a survey of various inscriptions, documents and texts relating to him. There is a large bibliography and a well arranged index.

Christian Troll's edited *Muslim Shrines in India* (another Oxford publication of 1989) could be a wonderful background for a lay reader. If he wishes to delve deep into the reasons for a dargah's popularity, the mystic elements surrounding a shrine or the cult of a particular Wali or Auliya or Pir, should pick up Currie's monograph on the famed and glorified Chisti saints of today whose yearly Urs is attended by millions of people of all religions, sects, creed, class and status. Currie writes, "The figures of the attendance at the urs between 1879 and 1976 show that Muin al-din has lost none of his popular appeal: from 20,000 pilgrims in 1879, the figures have risen steadily, to about 100,000 every year" (pp. 117-118). The offerings thrown in the *deg* outside the tomb has currencies of various denominations and countries, South Africa, Canada, Yemen, United Kingdom, Pakistan, etc.

The introductory chapter in Currie's book is very probing. It deals with the mystic element in Islam and the place and role of a pir/murshid, whether the Chisti, Suhrawardi, Qadiri, Naqshbandi *silsilas* are *be-shara* or *ba-shara*. He quotes from the Quran in support of both views.

Currie has undertaken a laborious task of disentangling the Muin al-din of history from the Muin al-din of faith and legend. Since the three contemporary historians do not mention him—Minhaj al-Siraj Juzjani, Fakhr-i Mudabbir and Sadr al-din Hasan Nizami—the information that is present has been gleaned from the *malfuzat*, *maktubat* and *tazkirat*. In the second rather lengthy chapter, Currie has presented all the records available and also tried to bring out the similarities and contradictions, ambiguities and lacunae in these works.

The legends built around this revered saint were first found in the *Siyar-al-Aqtab* of mid seventeenth century. A translated version of its various sections has been given a thorough treatment. All the later hagiographies constructed their

pictures of Muin al-din from the four texts, *Siyar al-Awliya*, *Siyar al-Arifin*, the *mafiyat*, and the *Siyar al-Aqtab*. Currie suggests that the 'immense reputation' of Nizam al-din Awliya made it imperative that some information about Muin al-din be sought (p. 85).

Next few chapters deal with the topographical, textual, factual details of the shrine itself and the royal personages who granted the shrine. A detailed map with key and photographs is also included. The figures of attendance at the urs between 1879 and 1976 have been given too. The details of the *ziyarat*, presentation of the *chadar* and various practices involved in the pilgrimage give us an idea of the elaborate rituals that have sprung up. Reasons for the pilgrimage such as material gain, cure of ailments, desire for child, spouse, success in business, ritual and spiritual motives have been delineated.

The *khuddam* or 'servants of the shrine' look after the ceremonial life of the mausoleum as well as the pilgrim's have been referred to in Chapter 6. The history of twenty-nine *sajjada-nishin* (who inherit the spiritual authority or *wilayat*), the endowments and finances of the dargah and its administration have separate chapters to themselves.

Currie deserves admiration for his efforts in unravelling the mystical aura that surrounds Sufi saint, in clearing away the cobwebs of legends and myths surrounding the life and history of the venerable Chisti, and in bringing to light the inner working of the dargah, the work and role of its inmates and servants and its financial and ceremonial administration.

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The Indian Monsoon and its Frontiers

By V.S. Katiyar

360 pp, Illustrations, Tables, Bibliography, Index.
Inter-India Publications, New Delhi (1990).

Rs. 325.00 (Cloth).

The book has touched different aspects of the Indian Monsoon incorporating the work of a large

number of investigators. Its plus point is that it can serve as a general reference more for the compendium of its factual information. A serious reader will have to be cautious in keeping track of the central ideas underlying a lot many descriptions replete with avoidable generalities. The author has succeeded in supplying a non-mathematical treatise on a topic which is becoming much more technical day by day. Alongside the contributions by numerous European scientists, the author has lent justified support to the work of a long line of Indian thinkers in recording astronomical observations and fluctuations of Indian climate from ancient to modern period. The recognition of the role played by a host of India's meteorologists over the span of last four decades in understanding the intricacies of the monsoonal phenomenon has been rightfully noted.

The all-inclusive nature of the monsoonal issues has been pinned down by broadbasing the term 'monsoon' in a global and multi-dimensional setting. Here we come across the terms like 'European monsoon', 'Stratospheric, thermal and free tropospheric monsoons', 'Polar monsoon', 'True monsoon' (of southern & S.E. Asia) versus 'Pseudo monsoon', equated with seasonal winds and seasonal weather changes. The really basic statement that much of the present-day meteorological research is focussed on how the whole system of low-level and high-level winds is connected into a perpetual three dimensional circulation strikes the urge for an in-depth study. The pick of the book involving much hard work in assemblage of data lies in summing up of different schools of thought on monsoon, its dynamics, genesis, jet streams' concept, behaviour of Indian monsoon and the four major types of climates found in our country. The author does not miss to refer to the complex physical phenomenon of the snow melt and glacial discharge aggravating the monsoon floods as through rivers in North-eastern India having their sources in the glacial discharges. It is at the same time timely to point out that theory of the monsoon is yet in its formative stage. Much of the recently collected data is subject to scrutiny and

analysis and much of the work done is experimental in nature. In conformity are cited the observations of Indian scholars regarding the northern and meridional limits of the moist air crossing equator from the southern hemisphere, the potency or otherwise of its massive transport over 6400 km of ocean surface in influencing the Indian monsoon and origin of the Arakan sea branch in either of the two hemispheres. On the contrary the author leaves no ambiguity in recognising how the subsiding continental air in arid north-west of the sub-continent overlies a thin wedge of rising monsoonal air makes an inversion, prevents convection and often yields little or no rainfall in summer months.

The appendage of 'Bio-climatological aspects' (part 3) is practically more general and far less specific to the underlying theme of the book. Why must we not concentrate alone on air pollutants in monsoonal lands *vis-a-vis* their effects on monsoonal regime and life of man in the region? Modification of land surface made by man and its effects on macro as well as micro climates within the parameters of monsoonal regime should rather have been more elaborate. The author has made excellent though brief remarks about human activity responsible for modifying the tracks and a predictable behaviour of tropical cyclones. Much of the material in this part of the book is nothing short of a redundant overload.

Admitting the general effects of climate on man, author's remarks at many places in chapter on 'Man & Climate' sound too deterministic to hold ground today. His views are coloured by the colonial and racial bias of the white man expressed through misplaced categorical observations of some earlier geographers. One fails to corroborate that 'the intellectual activity is handicapped in tropical half of the world' as there has been no dearth of creative minds even in the humid tropical climates. Nature itself provides compensating factors and goes to strengthen human alternatives to counter many inhibiting effects of climate in the course of time. The author has unfortunately fallen an easy prey to the plethora of likewise conclusions by remark-

ing that people of the warmer zones are noted for their passionate natures, their ready abandonment to physical pleasures and tend to be weak, timid, indolent, sensitive to pain or pleasure *vis-a-vis* the people living in middle zones in the cold climates.

The book suffers from a number of failings—wrong spellings, expressions grammatically and textually unclear at places and punctuation marks missing. The write-up would need a serious proof-reading combined with some re-editing. The statement like 'the source of circulation is in the cold hemisphere and sink in the warmer hemisphere—a thermodynamic paradox' (p. 33) can enrich the text by making it more explicit. Mis-spellings, factual or explanatory errors are evident from instances like 'seasonal warning' (p. 29), 'mechanism of Indian monsoon attributes to origin to the thermal effects of ...' (p. 29), 'free convection on a large scale' (p. 32), 'Tibetan plateau has an area of about 1.7×10^6 km²' (p. 63), 'Incoming radiation' (p. 67), 'NEFA' (p. 246) and '9-12 F' (p. 48-51) in place of the current usages.

One fails to appreciate the logic of putting all maps together out of their specific context at the end of the book. There is a scope to enrich the understanding of the text by adding a few schematic diagrams on chapters dealing with theory and genesis of the monsoonal circulation.

While respecting the liberty of author's choice with respect to the existing chapter scheme, at least the chapter on Historical resume can better form a sort of introduction to the book after some re-pruning.

Probably the words 'And its Frontiers' in the title are taken to justify the avoidable mixing of generalities with the phenomenon of monsoon splashed across many pages in the book. The explanation on the Heat Budget of the Monsoon and et al (chapter 3) can be put into a sharper focus by making the generally known facts about the Heat Budget of the Earth and the oceans and Heat transmission to air very very precise and direct. The reading becomes much more coherent by clubbing appropriately the write-up on 'man with famines and floods' (p. 267) with 'moisture excesses and deficiencies' (p. 155-164).

Taking an overview the book is not without its much utility for all those interested to keep abreast of the growing literature on Indian Monsoon and in geographical study of the Indian climate.

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Family Planning Programme in India

By Shanta Kohli Chandra

xvi, 265 pp., Tables, Figures, Bibliography, Index.
Mittal Publications, Delhi, Rs. 140.00 (Cloth).

There is an urgent need to review the population problem in the country and radically change the existing family welfare programmes as it has achieved only marginal success. Any developmental pursuits in India is negated by its teeming millions.

Indian people are bound by tradition, ignorance, poverty and unemployment and underemployment, the socio-religious customs are such that a couple wants to have atleast one or two sons.

The author in the book justifiably points out that this programme needs to be made peoples' movement. Once the people feel the pinch of the population growth their cooperation would automatically give impetus to the movement. Ironically, India was one of the first countries to adopt Family Planning programme in 1952.

The period of reference is the seventies and the authoress asserts that this period is significant because it witnessed notable achievements as well as diverse policy directives. However, it is felt that while the programme proved to be successful in some parts of India, other parts show negligent results.

The book is divided into nine chapters and covers various aspects of the family planning programme in depth. The data analysis has been done with the help of different methods such as time-trend analysis, need-effective analysis and goal-effective analysis.

The first three chapters are an exposition of the nature, scope and methodology of the study

followed by a review of studies conducted in the seventies and then presents the historical perspective of the programme. The fourth chapter discusses the population policy and indicators of its implimentation. Administrative setup of the family planning programme in India—is the title of the next chapter which highlights the infra-structural setup for executing the programme. In this chapter it is rightly pointed out that "Management perspective and skills are often missing from family planning programme and as the major responsibility of the programme rests with the Central Government, the State Governments often feel helpless to bring about innovation in the same because the local condition are not uniform for the states in India. The sixth chapter emphasises the significance of demographic and socio-economic factors in the field of family planning and population control programme. State-wise analysis of the programme is the subject of the seventh chapter.

This shows the understanding on the part of the authoress for acknowledging local variations and it underlines the need for more critical analysis on that basis in formulation of schemes as well as approaches towards implementation.

The eighth chapter gives an account of the rural - urban perceptions on the subject. The data is based on the field study of a rural and urban area of Delhi. The survey shows that awareness of family welfare programmes and the importance of small family norm is very high among the people and many are keen on adopting family planning programme. But an array of factors either refrain them from adopting the same or if adopted the age of adoption negates the desirable results. The ninth chapter presents an overview of the present study. It asserts that any population control programme must be made a people's programme instead of a government programme, with the common people understanding its benefits and willingly going for it. The administration would also as well be little more flexible to accommodate local differentiations.

This study is a welcome addition to the existing literature and attitudinal metamorphosis of the

people as well as the administration may make a headway in solving the prevailing ineffectiveness.

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**The Problem of Change: A Study of
North-East India**

By B.P. Singh

xii + 230 pp., Bibliography, Index.
Oxford University Press, New Delhi (1989)
Rs. 110.00 (Cloth).

The problem of change has yet to gain clear definition, cohesive theoretical formulation and academic legitimacy. It has been for last forty years, a special component of disparate disciplines: sociology, anthropology, public health, psychology and planners each of which has generated correspondingly little understandings. The meaning of development and change itself eluded planners for long. In the early years of independence development meant only economic change which could be measured in terms of gross national product (GNP). The human dimension of development and change was ignored altogether. The prominence which the human element has acquired recently will therefore require the development and social change to be approached in a different manner. However, the people centred development presupposed a first-hand knowledge of the people concerned.

This is a second impression with appendices. This work has grown out of a project, 'An inquiry into the adequacy of the administrative system in Assam: imperatives for change', and has a longer history, spanning the years from 1965 to 1985. North-East India, comprises the states of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, and Tripura. Till 20th February 1987 Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh formed part of the North-East. This whole region has witnessed changes in demography, production technology, political institution, religious practices, attitudes towards languages, changes in the environment of social security as well as in consumption patterns and

the responses of people to these new realities. This region has been viewed as 'troubled' and afflicted with one 'crisis' or the other. North-East India has disturbed its traditional societies more radically than elsewhere. The political and administrative arrangements in the region have altered more drastically than in the other areas: once synonymous with the state of Assam, the North-East now contains seven states created out of the same territory. The ethnic variety and range of the area is the most complex in India—there are over 200 Scheduled Tribes here, and its non-tribal population, too, contains a rich variety of ethnic groups. The introduction of modern technology, new political and administrative institutions, programmes of planned change and developmental schemes have created opportunities as well as problems that have transformed the region as volatile.

In this timely book, author analyses the problems and prospects of change in the region in the light of its complex history and major socio-economic and political developments which have taken place in the past four decades. Author's approach towards the problem of change is not that of a trained anthropologist, economist or historian. It is the perspective of an administrator who has worked in the area at various levels over the years. Being an I.A.S. officer, the author has followed, which he calls a traditional district officer's approach: before recording opinions one sees the ground talks of the people concerned and consults the available records. This work represents the culmination of years of personal and intellectual exchange with scores of colleagues and friends in administration, in academia, in public life, and from contact with the life of the common people.

This volume of IX chapters gives a comprehensive account of the North-East India through the eyes and experience of an I.A.S. In this book the author attempts to survey the problems of change in most rapidly changing and varied region of India with freshness and novelty of treatment. It is an exceptionally well written, comprehensive and thoughtful study. He has studied the problem in detail taking all the factors

and future perspectives. Although the book is intended for scholars and their students in the several social science disciplines who are concerned with the problems of social change, it also has another audience: the development planners and policy makers who perform a strategic role in the achievement of development objectives.

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Ladakh: The Wonderland

By Brigadier Tej Bahadur Kapur
176 pp., Illustrations, Index. Final Publication,
Delhi, Rs 150.00 (Cloth).

Ladakh: The Wonderland, is the outcome of well over two years' intimate and affectionate contact with its people and over a decade of scholarly study by the author. It thus blends first hand field experience with considerable textual knowledge.

Stretching like a landscape high in the remote regions of the Karakoram mountains, the plateau of Ladakh, wild, vast and barren, is one of the most inaccessible and forbidding regions of the world. It has a compelling charm and beauty of its own. Nature has gifted Ladakh with the most wonderful mountain ranges, the sparkling rivers and the scintillating lakes which adds to the beauty of the country side and serve as an Oasis in this vast and freezing high altitude desert. The Geographical location of Ladakh makes it most challenging and fascinating to a visitor. Ladakh has attracted travellers from ancient times and still continues to do so. Ladakh, the north-eastern region of Jammu and Kashmir, retains its distinctive characteristics. It is a fabulous land with most interesting geography, history and habits and customs. In this book an effort has been made to describe the geographical, historical and sociological aspects, so that the interested readers, may learn about this still little known wonderland called Ladakh.

The book has been arranged in two Chapters along with an Introduction about Ladakh. In the first Chapter, the author has tried to cover almost

every physical feature of Ladakh. The second Chapter deals with the history of Ladakh. The author has presented a concise picture about the geography and history of Ladakh, however, the book lacks in many aspects. By the term "Ladakhis" he means Buddhist Community only, though this term is also applicable for certain Muslim and Christian communities, thus the book fails to represent a concise information about the populations of Ladakh.

Ladakh is a model of cultural and environmental stability. So, it is an ideal place to study the interaction between people and environment. Certainly, the readers will find themselves transported, through the book's descriptions, into the picturesque land of Ladakh, for long strounded in mystery and it is more like an open invitation to come to learn about the people of Ladakh.

This book may be useful for the readers who are interested in the history and geography of the region. However, the authors endeavour lacks certain finesse as far as the interests of sociologists and anthropologists are concerned.

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Reviews of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology Volume 110

Edited by George W. Ware
190 pp. Tables, Figures, References, Index.
Springer-Verlag, New York (1989) Cloth.

These reviews series are in continuation of Elsevier's "Residue Reviews", the first volume of which was published in 1962. They attempt to provide concise critical details of timely advances, philosophy and significant areas of accomplished or needed endeavour in the total field of new synthetic chemicals in any segment of the environment, as well as toxicological implications. In addition, they also refer to analytical chemistry and its methodology, biochemistry, physiology regulation and mode of action in bioassay techniques in toxicology studies. These reviews are serving as an integrating factor both

is focusing attention upon these matter requiring further study and in collating for variously trained readers present knowledge in specific important areas involved with chemical contaminants in total environment.

The present volume illustrates these objectives with reference to Alachlor and Metolachlor - used as herbicides; Lewisite - an organic chemical war gas; and Termiticide use and its effects in the indoor Air Quality of U.S.A.

The first review article "Environmental fate of Alachlor and Metolachlor" by Gordon Chester along with his team of co-workers have detailed out the physico-chemical properties and use patterns, mode of action and its geographical extent of contamination through adsorption, movement and transformation in soils, aquatic ecosystems, plants and mammals and finally toxicological studies with reference to mammals in relation to reproductive effects, teratogenicity, mutagenicity, oncogenicity and immunotoxicological effects of these two herbicides.

The authors of this review have made recommendations which are intended to highlight research gaps and future research programmes for these herbicides. Some of them are as follows:

1. Experimental set up to investigate the mode of action of these chemicals.
2. For geographic distribution and extent of residue contamination data, extensive survey work is required to generate data for mathematical model.
3. Lack of clear relationships between laboratory and field investigations is particularly acute in leaching studies of these herbicides.
4. Losses of chloracetyl herbicides through surface runoff and erosion is poorly documented in literature.
5. Degradation of herbicides is of major concern with reference to human health. So methods for identifying parent compounds and metabolites, confirming their composition, and cost effectively analyzing them at low concentrations in complicated admixtures and complex media are desperately needed.
6. Toxicological significance of alachlor and metolachlor have been investigated at high con-

centrations and their oncogenic and mutagenic effects are reported. But methods to test toxicological effect of these herbicides at low concentrations normally encountered in the environment need further investigations.

Finally, it is suggested that research and development on innovative management practices is essential if we are to meet the goal of using predictive tools to determine how and where such chemicals can be used and to evaluate the health and environmental risks they pose.

The second review article "Lewisite: its chemistry, toxicology and biological effects" by Max Goldman, deals with chemistry, toxicology, mechanism of action, and its effects on fishes and amphibians. In addition it deals with Carcinogenicity, Mutagenicity and Teratogenicity effects of Organic Arsenic on animals.

It has been reported that Organic Arsenic compounds are toxic due to their ability to combine with thiol groups which are essential for the activity of a variety of enzymes. However, no conclusive evidence is available to prove that Lewisite is either carcinogenic, mutagenic or teratogenic. Similarly, a review of toxicological studies of other organic arsenical has produced no evidence that they might be carcinogenic, mutagenic or teratogenic.

The third review deals with "Termiticide Use and Indoor Air Quality in United States" by Eldon P. Savage. In this article hazards of use of Chlordane and heptachlor as termiticides in the houses have been discussed. The extensive use of Organochlorine insecticides to protect buildings from termite damage, has been of great concern for United State Environmental Protection Agency. This is specially due to potential effects on human health through high levels of these termiticides in indoor air of dwelling units. Most of these chemicals are lipophilic, ubiquitous in the environment, and persistent for long time after their initial use. Because of increased instances of indoor air contamination, several new alternatives have been developed for termite control to reduce the potential for chemical exposure in indoor air of the houses treated with termiticides. Some of the new techniques include

use of growth regulators and newer less hazardous chemicals such as, methoprene, fenoxycarb and synthetic pyrethroids. These chemicals are safe from the point of view of toxicity and indoor air pollution, but none are as effective as chlordane or heptachlor. Finally, it has been suggested that there is a serious need for further research in the area to further develop environmentally and health-safe termiticides. Research should focus on biological controls and safer chemicals to ensure a safe indoor environment.

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Humanitarian Law

Edited by R.C. Hingorani

156 pp., References, Index

Oxford and IBH Publishing Co.,

New Delhi 2nd Edition (1991) Rs. 145.00 (Cloth).

The book is a collection of thirteen essays written by several eminent persons of the legal profession. The subject of the book itself, humanitarian law, is a topic of much relevance in the world today, living as we are amidst strife torn, war ridden, territories; communalism and terrorism having spread its tentacles deep into human life. It is thus a timely venture to sit up and salvage whatever little we have left by way of humanity. In a situation where fellow human beings are heaping distress and suffering on other humans, the role of the law, both at the national and international level to alleviate this suffering is worth evaluating.

The various essays in this book deal with multifarious problems of large scale human sufferings especially those caused by state action on particular populations. Some of the issues tackled include those of refugees, prisoners of war, protection of journalists and children during war and the sufferings caused by terrorism.

What emerges from these essays is that not only is law important but the human factor involved in its implementation is more important. K.M. Baye in an essay on African Commission

of Human and People's rights makes this clear by the following statement regarding the people who should be put on the Commission. "If it is composed of superior persons, competent and independent, and if its members collectively are animated by the will to accomplish their mission of protecting human and people's rights, it will in a way, give satisfaction even to those who are most demanding" (p.24).

Human factors such as clash of interests and public opinion have also been emphasized. Nowhere do clash of interests come up more clearly than in the case of refugees on which there are four essays in this collection. The law of refoulement states that a country to which a people, persecuted in their own country want to take shelter cannot refuse permission for entry, till such time as the refugees want to go back willingly. However, the problems faced by the host country are not taken into account. The four very interesting essays tackle the multifaceted problems of refugees including the social dimension. In countries of Asia, already burdened with scarcity of resources and large populations, the problems for the local populations can be serious. Feliciano, on p. 23 describes the feeling of deprivation suffered by the Thai villagers who saw the greater degree of prosperity enjoyed by the Kampuchean refugees supported by the UNMCR.

Hingorani, on p. 131 has given some very useful suggestions in this regard. Significant among these being to place the onus of exodus on the erring country itself and to make the maintenance of refugees on international responsibility.

The clash of political interests in matters relating to war and refugees, terrorism and torture can only be properly handled by a non-political organization such as the ICRC. In discussing the ICRC, Perruchaud makes a telling point on the existence of a law in abstraction and its implementation by human agencies. "The mechanisms for implementing the law become increasingly abstruse and sophisticated to the point that it is sometimes difficult to ascertain who, in the final analysis, has the responsibility of applying it" (p.97) In this context the rights and privileges of

an institution like the ICRC become significant because the most humanitarian aims become meaningless if the power assigned to the agency is ineffective in relation to the power exerted by the offending party.

Public opinion becomes a powerful tool both for and against human rights violations. The role of proper communication of laws is very important in this regard. People must know their rights, also what they are violating. "The principle effort should in our view bear on the diffusion of the law: One cannot respect what one knows badly" (p. 108).

A knowledge of the laws, proper communication, and mutual respect are essential conditions for the effectivity of humanitarian laws. Veuthey (p. 41) points out, "Practically speaking, however, mutual respect for humanitarian rules is essential. Even adversaries of different ideologies and different means of waging war develop, with the passage of time, a degree of mutual respect which can lead to real solidarity, perhaps more easily understood, on the battle-field than in foreign ministries". The message is clear. Laws are meaningless in abstraction, they exhibit their real importance only in the living battle-field of human interactions, both between Nations and within the Nation. It is for the 'boat people' the people on the Gaza strip, for the Chakma refugees on the Indian border that humanitarian law manifests itself in all its poignancy.

The various essays in this book also take up issues such as terrorism, protection of children and journalists during war and the role of the Peace keeping forces. The law as for the Peace keeping forces is not merely remedial but it is also protective. In writing about P.K.F., Ramachandran (p. 62) writes, "Direct protection must go hand in hand with indirect protection. Education, teaching, training and the dissemination of information are the keys to the future."

L.R. Penna's essay on Terrorism brings to light some of evolutionary aspects of the State as a

responsible agent in law enforcement. As anthropologists we know that in pre-state kinship groupings played an important role in law-enforcement but only with evolution of state does law as it is known today as a formalised system came into existence. In fact by definition terrorism is violation of Internal Laws by one state against the other. But in the equations as he says, "States, like individuals, are often concerned with their rights rather than with their duties." Meaningfulness emerges when not everyone wants their rights only but are aware of their responsibilities as well.

A proper awareness of responsibilities both at individual and at state level would mitigate much of human sufferings. Whether it is our responsibility towards fellow citizens, or aliens, or children or refugees, it is humanitarian considerations that are most essential. The whole thrust of the book is aptly summed up by Veuthey's observation that, "every person and every community will be fully aware of their rights and duties and the need to respect them. Without this awareness, the law is but a fragile paper barrier against inhumanity, with it, there will hardly be a need for long treaties or commentaries to understand and accept spontaneously the need for humanity" (p. 43).

It goes to the credit of the authors of this volume that they have presented their papers in lucid style and minus legal jargon, making it an extremely readable volume even for the lay person. The theme being most relevant this book should find a wide audience. It is already gone into second edition and should find more readers.

The publishing quality is of a high order and considering the quality of the work, a very reasonably priced volume.

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