

Book Notes*

Kamal Siddiqui (ed). *Local Government in South Asia: A Comparative Study.* Dhaka: University Press Limited. 1992. 345 pp.

This is the first book on local government in South Asia based on both primary and secondary sources in which the author attempts to delineate, in a comparative framework, the major trends of both urban and rural local governments in the South Asian Countries – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

Two distinct trends in South Asia are discussed in this book; the first which looks at strengthening local government bodies, and the second that deals with the proliferation of the Non-Government Organisations and the privatisation of services. The final chapter provides an overview – highlighting the differences and similarities among South Asian Countries, identifying the underlying reasons for these, summing up the major findings of the study, and indicating possible areas of future activity, both nationally and regionally.

I. S. A. Band. *Forms of Production and Women's Labour: Gender Aspects of Industrialisation in India and Mexico.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1992. 321 pp.

This study is concerned with changes in women's employment during the process of industrialisation. The issues discussed are the extent to which gender plays a role in the differential access of men and women to various types of employment; the extent to which women workers are marginalised within different types of production units focusing on women production workers rather than entrepreneurs or professional managers; the effect of technological changes on the nature of work and relative employment of men and women; and the differences in wage levels and the degree of bargaining power derived from productive work and income.

In order to examine these problems the author has presented detailed case studies in several agro-industrial sectors in India and Mexico, focusing on shrimp processing and textiles in India, and the Mexican shoe industry.

The conclusions from the field data are that women consider their employment more important when the wage level and security are high; an increase in subcontracting leads to a greater number of women being employed in more casual forms of labour relations with less job security and lower incomes; women's employment is affected by mechanisation.

The book is a major contribution to understanding the role of women in the process of industrialisation in developing countries.

Berch Berberoglu. *Class, State, and Development in India.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1991. 329 pp.

The eleven essays in this volume focus on the numerous transformations that India is undergoing in the social, political, and economic spheres. Taken together, these essays provide a comprehensive

*Prepared by Sabiha Ibrahim, Faculty Member at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad.

historical perspective for an understanding of the root causes of stability and change in present-day Indian society. With emphasis on the relevance of the Marxist approach, the issues discussed go to the heart of the problems confronting Indian society today.

The book discusses major controversies in Indian political economy and will interest a broad audience including sociologists, political scientists, and economists.

Gamani Corea. *Taming Commodity Markets: The Integrated Programme and Common Fund in UNCTAD.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1992. 271 pp.

This is an incisive account of the negotiations which led to the establishment of the Integrated Programme for Commodities and the Common Fund, the major contributions of the UN Conference on Trade and Development to trade for the less developed countries. A former Secretary-General of the UNCTAD from 1947 to 1984, the author analyses, from a highly informed position, the course of the negotiations and the long road to ratification of the agreement.

The book offers a first-hand insight into a key episode in the development of international economic policy and law. It is essential reading for students and scholars of international law, economics, and politics; as well as for those working for international organisations and governments.

Sysana B. C. Devallen. *Discourses of Ethnicity: Culture and Protest in Jharkhand.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1992. 279 pp.

This book examines the relationship between historical structure, human experience, and social consciousness in the construction of ethnicity. The argument moves from a universal level of theory to a specific level, the problem of Adivasis of Bihar's Jharkhand region in India. It relates the visible aspects of the phenomenon (ethnicity as a language for political expression, overt actions, and movements) to the other aspects which are not so visible (class expressed in cultural terms, cultural protests, etc.).

The book discusses basic issues concerning class, culture, social classification, and modes of protest, thus bridging the theoretical gap between social anthropology and social history.

Gilbert Etienne. *Asian Crucible: The Steel Industry in China and India.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1992. 304 pp.

Beginning with a review of the political framework and overall performance of the economics of both the nations, the author evaluate the present situation of the steel industry and its future potential in both China and India. Issues that are discussed are the extent to which one should import foreign technology rather than rely on locally available equipment; and whether domestic financial resources will suffice or whether it will be necessary to borrow. Other problems which are related to economic factors, such as human resources, the degree of autonomy enjoyed by the steel industry, and the role of government, are also discussed. The concluding part provides a comparison of the steel industries in China and India *vis-à-vis* other developing countries.

This important book will interest economists, development experts, policy-makers, planners, and others interested in the steel industry.

Hans Linnemann (ed). *South-South Trade Preferences: The GSTP and Trade in Manufactures.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1992. 236 pp.

As its title indicates, the book focuses on trade control measures (TCMs) and their actual and potential use to influence the level of trade between developing countries. The volume analyses the

merits of various approaches towards a preferential lowering of the trade barriers between developing countries to stimulate the South-South trade in manufactures. Utilising empirical data the contributors establish what factors induce the LDCs to adopt a protectionist stance, and they analyse it in detail.

The seven papers of this volume, taken together, constitute an economic analysis of the prospects for trade in manufactured products among developing countries. The emphasis is on how these prospects are affected by preferential trading arrangements within the South, in particular by the recent establishment of the Global System of Trade Preference.

Though written by separate authors, the seven original essays that comprise this volume were conceived as chapters of an integrated study. The volume will be of particular interest to economists studying international trade and development economics, and to politicians and policy-makers in the Third World countries who are engaged in the search for a New World International Economic Order.

E. A. Mann. *Boundaries and Identities: Muslims, Work, and Status in Aligarh.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1992. 212 pp.

This book is a study of Muslims living in Aligarh, a town in West Uttar Pradesh. The author deals with three main topics: relative styles of occupation, status differences, and being a Muslim in India.

The study provides an understanding of the relationship between social structure and work, and of the fragmented concepts of identity in relation to economic and social life among Muslims.

Subroto Roy and William E. James (eds). *Foundations of India's Political Economy: Towards an Agenda for the 1990s.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1992. 339 pp.

This book defines India's possible goals in different aspects of its social, political, and economic life. The topics covered are the state of Indian politics, language and religion, the balance of power between the central and the state governments, economic policy and foreign trade relations, the aims of Indian planning, public finance and government spending, and the policies relating to food, agriculture and industrialisation.

Amply documented and persuasively argued, the essays present a cogent picture of India's agenda for the nineties and delineate the effects on the country of the political and economic decisions taken in the present climate.

Kripa Shanker. *Product Diversification, Growth and Profitability in the Corporate Private Sector in India.* Bombay: Bombay University Press. 1991. 167 pp.

This is an attempt to present a systematic and comprehensive analysis of various aspects of diversification of the companies in the Indian Corporate Private Sector.

The author analyses the extent, magnitude, trend source, and directions of diversification; and the relationship of diversification with size, growth, profitability, and age of industrial houses and companies. The findings are presented industry-wise as well as aggregatively.

It is the first comprehensive and detailed study of various aspects of product diversification in India. In view of its coverage of a number of issues, and the in-depth analysis attempted, this study will continue to remain an important source of reference on the problem of diversification for some time. The study will also be useful from a practical standpoint to government, corporate planners, and financial analysts.