

Book Notes*

Rekha Kaul. *Caste, Class, and Education: Politics of the Capitation Fee Phenomenon in Karnataka.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1993. 276 pp. Hardbound. Indian Rs 275.00.

The educational structure anywhere depends on the nature of the society and the state. Focusing on the capitation fee phenomenon, which has been used by various classes and social groups to strengthen their political and social base for economic gains, the author has examined nineteen privately-run professional colleges in the state of Karnataka, where this phenomenon has been widespread and where caste, class, and power combine to treat education as an enterprise.

Beginning with a critical examination of education in the colonial period, when higher education was in the hands of the upper caste, namely, the Vokkaligas and Lingayats, and the upper strata of the society, it then traces the evolution till after Independence. The book further attempts to establish the combination of forces that were responsible for the rise of the capitation fee and finds that the caste as a source of power and, later, the profit-motives, along with government policies and intervention at various levels, including legislative measures, were also responsible for this.

Finally, there is a discussion on the socio-political and educational implications of the capitation fee phenomenon—how it reflects persisting inequalities and the elitist base of the education system while lowering educational standards. To counter these consequences, the author suggests possible interventions and corrective measures both at the state and the grassroots level.

James Manor. *Power, Poverty, and Poison: Disaster and Response in an Indian City.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1993. 197 pp. Hardbound. Indian Rs 220.00.

This book provides an understanding of the political, social, and economic conditions prevailing in urban India today, taking the Bangalore tragedy as an example, where more than 300 people died after consuming illicit liquor.

It is divided into two parts. The first part describes the tragedy and explores why the poorer residents of Bangalore are compelled to drink, and how the liquor came to be lethal. It also examines the relationship between the producers of the illicit liquor and the state excise department, the main agency responsible for enforcing the laws dealing with alcoholic drink.

The second assesses the response to this tragedy—of a number of political, bureaucratic, and social institutions, namely, private hospitals, state-run hospitals, medical services, the press, the courts, the police, and the average citizen. The final chapter seeks to understand the 'system' as a whole and assess possible changes that might prevent further calamities and enhance the capacity of various institutions to respond as they recur.

The work is based on original research and interviews with a cross-section of the residents of Bangalore.

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Nirmal Sengupta. *User-Friendly Irrigation Designs.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1993. 147 pp. Hardbound. Indian Rs 185.00.

For some time, irrigation development has been facing severe problems, such as steep escalation in costs and negative environmental consequences. This book is based on an examination of suitable strategies of the existing traditional techniques of irrigation and water management in India. This provides valuable insights into the quality of irrigation data. Also discussed are the sustainable approaches to traditional farming techniques.

The author's conclusion is that there is a need for an imaginative approach to irrigation development based on time-tested local practices, which would help in better flood control, efficient water management, soil conversion, and balanced regional development.

Anju Vyas and Sunita Singh. *Women's Studies in India: Information Sources, Services, and Programmes.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1993. 257 pp. Hardbound. Indian Rs 235.00.

This compilation of information sources and services relating to women's studies in India till 1990 is divided into sixteen chapters and briefly introduces. These sources are categorised as bibliographies, directories, biographies, dissertations, journals, popular magazines, seminars, government policies and programmes, indexing and statistical services, women's organisations and research centres, and funding agencies.

The volume will serve as a basic reference tool for library professionals and researchers, students, academics, and all those interested in women's issues.

C. T. Kurien. *The Economy: An Interpretative Introduction.* New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1992. 436 pp. Hardbound. Indian Rs 295.00.

An analytical description of the working of the Indian economy, in terms of its diverse basic units as well as its complex interactions, offered here. The first part is devoted to the understanding of the term "economy" itself and then three major functions common to all economies are identified: (1) the manner in which the resources are owned and controlled, (2) the way they are combined with labour to produce goods and services, and (3) finally, how these are distributed.

The author also discusses the advantages and limitations of the market as a social institution, provides a critical appraisal of exchange and its transformation over time, and gives a view of the functioning of the capitalist and socialist economies.

The second part analyses the Indian economy from 1947 to the present, with particular attention to the factors behind the growing affluence of a small section of the society as compared to the poverty of the vast majority.

Dilesh Jayantha. *Electoral Allegiance in Sri Lanka.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1992. vii + ix 220 pp. Hardbound. US \$10.00.

Sri Lankan electoral allegiances since 1947 have been examined here in three electorates: Bluville, Greenville (both of which are rural constituencies), and Red Town, which is an urban constituency. These areas each exhibit a different ecological, economic, and social setting.

The author observes that it is not the notion of caste which is the basis for electoral allegiance but rather the strength of the Patron-Client bond and the geographical spread of the patronage network that contributes to the electoral success of the candidates. These networks, especially in the rural areas,

were initially based on private wealth. After 1956, as the state expanded, they came to be based on the control of state institutions.

This is the first detailed comparative analysis of electorates in Sri Lanka as it addresses issues quite relevant to South Asia as well as other developing countries.

Kuttan Mahadevan and Parameswara Krishnan (eds). *Methodology for Population Studies and Development*. New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1993. 469 pp. Hardbound. Indian Rs 375.00.

This pioneering volume by different contributors explores various aspects of the research methodology related to assessing the interaction between development and population behaviour.

Discussed in this volume are: theory and research design; interdisciplinary methods; Third World development; models for data analysis, projection and old age survivorship, and action research.

Part I examines the theoretical assumptions of research design, gives an overview of the various theoretical frameworks in social demography, namely, mortality and fertility, and reviews the causal analysis techniques most appropriate for cross-sectional data.

The nine papers in Part II deal with interdisciplinary methods for population research drawn from anthropology, geography, mathematics, systems analysis, psychology, and sociology. The discussion deals with certain conceptual and methodological strategies.

In Part III, a comprehensive and holistic model of development, which emphasises the quality of life, is presented.

Part IV addresses some of the methodological and related conceptual issues in developing the household (private household only) and family projections, drawing from the statistics of Canada's experience in the application of the well-known headship rate approach and ways of estimating old-age survival. The final section is devoted to action research, which is an essential part of all developing programmes.

S. K. Chakraborty. *Managerial Transformation by Values: A Corporate Pilgrimage*. New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1993. 215 pp. Hardbound. Indian Rs 195.00.

Godrej and Boyce Manufacturing Company Ltd. (GBL) is a diversified and widely respected business name in India that has four product divisions, namely, (1) Consumer Durables (2) Office Equipment (3) Electronic and Business Equipment, and (4) Industrial Products. This book is an account of the challenge to adopt and communicate the timeless elements of classical Indian psycho-philosophy to all groups of employees in Godrej—from the top management to the staff associations and from the unionised employees to the company school teachers. This was undertaken by a series of educational programmes, workshops and follow-up sessions.

Based on the personal accounts of the participants, it will be useful to those involved in management studies, personnel management, the behavioural sciences, besides being a historical document for future GBL managers.

Timothy J. Scrase. *Image, Ideology, and Inequality: Cultural Domination, Hegemony, and Schooling in India*. New Delhi: Sage Publications. 1993. 178 pp. Hardbound. Indian Rs 200.00.

Theories of social and cultural reproduction in the context of schooling in India is the central theme of this book. Questions of educational inequality from the perspective of critical cultural analysis

and the interplay between education, society, and polity are also addressed.

The central focus of the study is on the selection of the English language textbooks prescribed for use in West Bengal. The author argues that these textbooks reproduce the established class-defined patterns of hierarchy, culture, and social order of the middle class permeating the Indian society.

The study will interest teachers, cultural analysts, and educationists.

G. J. Gill. *Seasonality and Agriculture in the Developing World: A Problem of the Poor and Powerless.* New Delhi: Cambridge University Press. 1992. 343 pp. Paperback. Indian Rs 45.00.

The problem of the seasonal variation in employment, income, nutrition, and sickness in the rural areas of the Third World has been of great interest recently. This book provides an overview of the seasonality problem and seeks to achieve two consecutive aims. The first is to demonstrate the nature and importance of the seasonality-rural poverty nexus, paying special attention to the economic aspects. Its second aim is to explore the ways in which the measures to confront this issue might be usefully incorporated into the processing of planning and policy formulation. The analytical framework consists of consumption issues—as any adverse effect of seasonality is strongly felt—and the production and distraction aspects together. The exercise is useful for the planning and policy efforts to counter the ill-effects of seasonal deprivation.

The book is divided into nine chapters. It considers the importance of seasonality, explores its climatic and social roots, and its impact on those to whom it matters most, the disadvantaged. This is examined by recent literature on the subject within the framework of the seasonal consumption model. It also examines the ways in which environmental diversity can modify the effects of seasonality to create an array of potentially complementary “economic seasons” within a given geographical area. This is important because it helps to seek the micro and macro level complementarities that provide the basis for effective counter-seasonal strategies. The counter-seasonal strategies used in the developing and developed world discuss two basic features of such strategies: the growth of a system of specialisation and exchange through the market mechanism, and the application of science and technology to seasonal problems, such as the uneven capacity utilisation and the need to match seasonal supply to seasonal or non-seasonal demand. The survival mechanism for agricultural labour, “seasonal labour migration”, which is different from hunting, gathering and nomadic pastoralism, has been discussed to solve the problem for the disadvantaged.

Finally, the book examines some special problems which affect developing countries—market failure, market distortions, and technological change in a changing environment.

WHO AIDS Series II. The Global AIDS Strategy. Geneva: World Health Organization. 1992. 23 pp. Paperback. Sfr. 9.00.

This is a review of the global strategy originally drawn up in 1985-86 for the prevention and control of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The main objectives of the strategy were (1) to prevent infection with HIV, (2) to reduce the personal and social impact of HIV infection, and (3) to mobilise and unify national and international efforts against AIDS.

In particular, the 1992 global strategy provides the necessary framework within which each national AIDS Programme can set its own objectives and select and implement the strategies best suited for the decade ahead.