

## BOOK REVIEWS

**COMMERCIALIZATION OF HINTERLAND AND DYNAMICS OF CASTE, CLASS AND GENDER IN RURAL INDIA**, by Supriya Singh, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017, PP.148+XVI, Price: £58.99

The book under appraisal explicates the nature, dimensions and consequences of social mobility in the aftermath of increasing land transactions in the neighbourhood of a metropolis. It is based on extensive conceptual exposition of land transactions in the peri-urban area of Lucknow in Marxian and Weberian perspective. It is careful and cogent analysis of the impact of land transactions on the social aspects of the life's of the people. The aspects of mobility have been examined at the micro-level of the households. In the last two decades land transactions, either voluntarily or under state policy of acquisition, have increased a lot, particularly in the vicinity of big towns all over India. The author emphasizes that these land transactions have influenced significantly the geography, economy, society and polity of rural society close to cities. These land transactions have induced the process of socioeconomic mobility significantly in the fringe areas.

There are a number of studies dealing with mobility in terms of caste and class, but there is a lack of studies focusing on mobility induced by land transaction. Departing from the general trend, the present book attempts to focus on mobility as a consequence of the increasing land transaction in the vicinity of an Indian metropolis. The book explicates, from a sociological perspective, the nature, dimensions and consequences of social mobility in the aftermath of increasing land transactions on the basis of an intensive study of the selected villages of Lucknow.

The study is divided into nine sections. In the first section a review of salient studies of Indian rural life, social mobility and land transactions has been attempted. The first section primarily focuses on providing a sound theoretical footing to the present study by putting forward the context of the present study both theoretically and substantively along with relevant reviews of the village studies in the field. The section not only includes the review of books but it incorporates articles from national and international journals, periodicals as well as matter available on websites.

The second section explicates relevant and appropriate methodological tools and techniques for the study with a special emphasis on the selection of the research problem, choosing the appropriate research design as well as the relevant techniques used in the research. The section starts with the illustration of occasion of inquiry in the context of the present study. It also provides the review of the Debate of single village versus more than one village study. The third chapter contextualizes the selected villages in a political economy model. Section third focuses on the political economy of land transactions and acquisition from national to local level. The section describes in detail the differential relationship between land and state, right from Mughals to Britishers and tries to link it with the present scenario.

The fourth chapter presents the profile of area and studied villages. The attempt is to describe the profile of villages in terms of cultural, socioeconomic, political and educational

features. The fifth chapter is an endeavour to pinpoint and explain the aspects and conditions of increasing land transactions in urban neighbourhoods. The section tries to correlate the necessary, sufficient and contributing conditions which work together as an incentive and backdrop for land transactions in rural areas. The sixth chapter deals with caste and mobility. The section highlights that as an outcome of land transactions the nature of class, status as well as power have undergone drastic changes in the villages. The seventh section delineates the nature, aspects and dynamics of the rural middle class along with relating depeasantization and economic, socio-cultural and political embourgeoisement with the emergence and growth of the rural middle class. The seventh section attempts to locate a rural middle class in the aftermath of land transactions due to increasing urbanization and industrialization. The section emphasizes that not only the consumer middle class but a middle class on the pattern of the urban middle class has started evolving in rural areas. In this context the following relevant issues have been analyzed in this section: (i) the nature, aspects and dynamics of the rural middle class, (ii) depeasantization and the growth of the rural middle class, and (iii) economic, socio-cultural and political embourgeoisement and the rural middle class.

The eighth section deals with mobility among women and tries to examine the impact of land transactions on the status of rural women. It illuminates the impacts of land transactions on rural women in terms of being *de jure* owners of land, some turning into *de facto* ones. The last section which concludes the present study is a sociological appraisal of the land transactions and concomitant changes in rural society. The desperation among landowning villager to come out of agrarian deadlock through land transactions and consequent accelerating social mobility has been aptly analyzed in the last chapter.

The book concludes that villages in modern India, particularly near cities, are no more homogeneous, simple and integrated communities, rather more heterogeneous, complex and mobile significantly impacted by urban expansion, globalization and penetration of corporate capital. The book culls out noticeably the social implications of land transactions and explains findings theoretically, thereby it provides a fresh sociological understanding and insight. By and large, is useful for those readers who are interested in knowing the changing political economy due to commercialization of land and its subsequent consequences on caste, class and power over the rural society. It makes an important contribution to the disciples of economic anthropology and sociology, besides it is a good addition to the village studies.

Post Doctoral Fellow  
Department of Sociology  
University of Lucknow  
Lucknow

**Shailendra Kumar**

**WASTE OF A NATION: GARBAGE AND GROWTH IN INDIA, by Assa Doran and Robin Jafferey, LCCN 201704157, ISBN 9780674980600, ISBN (for Indian Edition) 9780674410947, XIV + 393, Hard Bound, Price Rs. 799**

The contents of the book include three major parts, called Introduction (pp 1-15), 7 Main Chapters(pp 16-254), and Conclusion (pp 255-266). It is preceded by a List of Maps, Illustrations, Preface, Note on Transliteration and followed by an Appendix (pp 267-273), Notes (pp 273-328), Glossary(pp 329-332), Bibliography (pp 333-374), Acknowledgements (pp 375-378), and of course an Index (pp. 379-393). Arrangement of the analysis and its varied material presented in the book bears the stamp of the brand Harvard University and is

somewhat different that even the ones usually followed by the Indian branches of prestigious foreign publishers such as the Sage and Oxford University Press! It is not just another ordinary research analysis that one encounters in a typical research-based book on an Indian major national issue! On the contrary, Doran and Jafferey present their account of waste in a complex country like India from multiple perspectives: historical, anecdotal, economic, ethnographic, and technological details including administrative and political! Their analysis deftly reflects on the complexity of Indian culture and its environment that has led to its struggles with the huge and complex task of waste management in the country.

Before evaluating the Modi's Swachh Bharat Mission(SBM) , Doran and Jafferey outline the contours of the problem of urban waste in India. They state that waste in India is grounded in social relations and everyday fears. Indian population generally distinguishes between waste as dirt or filth and the pollution associated with religious impurity (page 2). Consequently, ideas and practices of caste haunt India's efforts to cope effectively with the waste of vast, urbanizing population . And not surprisingly for the country of this nature, it is the most socio-culturally discriminated segment of the Indian population—the Dalits – that perform the most dangerous ,filthy and unpleasant array of tasks in collecting and disposing its waste, and that too without the attendant technical gear and machinery and necessary safety measures! The country has not rid itself of caste discrimination even in 2019. It is therefore not surprising that it framed the Solid Waste Management Code only in 2000! The very definition of waste is a very tricky issue and its creation and disposal is a complex physical and psychological process! And ,on a historical time scale ,waste disposal received a late and sudden hyper attention only due to some huge tragedies like the Surat Plague in 1997! It is of course known that poor sanitation is closely associated with generation of varied forms of waste and its delayed disposal with deadly diseases and accompanied deaths. However, culturally, the Indian society has always possessed a marked cultural indifference towards generation and disposal of waste since in most of its leading occupations –like farming -- generated waste had uses as feedstock for associated activities. Doran and Jefferey outline in the First Chapter how they propose to analyse growth of consumer capitalism in India and cultural beliefs and practices relating to waste, technical and policy nostrums deployed to deal with the perils of pollution, and the political compulsions that drive decisions at local ,state and national levels. Since its volumes of waste and refuse are huge ,the authors feel that contemporary India must redefine its relationship with waste. They indicate that this tryst with waste in India has had a mixed journey so far but hope that India's tryst with waste of a huge nation does not include poor and marginalised people!

In an Appendix, the authors provide the details of sources and experiences from which Modi supposedly formed his stance, shape and substance of his Swachh Bharat Mission(SBM). Modi's Surat and Moorabi experiences emphasized the need of convergence of activities pertaining to environment and public health(and hygiene and sanitation) in the ambit of waste management. Eventually, it acquired its specific expressions in stopping open defecation and waste collection and removal, and also improving health status of the poor.

Given the lived cruel reality of the fact that most of the programmes and policies of the Modi Government are more of slogans than concrete achievements on the ground, it was always on cards that Doron and Jefferey would come down heavily on the SBM! And also given the fact that Doron and Jefferey are thoroughbreds as researchers, their conclusion on waste management via the Swachh Bharat Mission by October 2019 by successfully creating a cleaner India is expectedly very scathing! They assert that this would involve change to the physical landscape , public culture and civic consciousness of the country(page

256). This cannot be done in isolation ! Besides the areas of health and sanitation, what are the other attendant requirements in realizing this goal? Modi has selected only one mode. Doron and Jefferey plead for combining practices of public hygiene with policies calibrated for local conditions and to foster cooperation which , among other things, gives adequate powers and of course attendant resources to local governments and programmes attaining a good fit with the local knowledge and customs informed policy and practice directed at self improvement (page 256). What has been practiced under SBM is focused on the middle class, the better-off and marginalizes the poor (their lack of health and hygiene ignoring the fact that they lack resources to do so). Muscular brand of Hindu nationalism built in to the SBM, a trait so visible in the other areas of the Modi government too, tends to exclude everyday activities of hawkers, peddlers and street vendors (page 257). Those handling waste in most parts of India face economic exploitation, social discrimination and of course ill-health. The SBM has now included solid waste management of the rural areas in its ambit in a belated realization of its huge shortcoming in July 2019 but even so it would need to be evaluated in terms of usage, social attitudes, and long term public health outcomes. The UN indicators on this issue put India in the lowest rung of the comity of nations included in different UN indices!

India has two problems that have some characteristics of a huge and binding crisis i.e, air pollution, alarming levels of childhood stunting and infant mortality strongly related to open defecation. Doron and Jefferey note that India has asset of NGOs to tame waste. However, the problem with waste is that it does not wait for anyone! And this has not only been not recognized by those in the Governments dealing with waste at local, municipal, urban and rural levels and majority of the Indian population ! Like many of its development policies and programmes, Modi's SBM solution not only bypasses the marginalized and the poor but also ignores its available and effective ingenious local native solutions!

Given what the book has dealt with in fact, I am quite definite that the title of the book should have been Urban Waste in India since it completely leaves out different dimensions of waste in rural India! And rural waste --and largely its non-disposal /inappropriate disposal-- is hitting the urban environmental problems just as badly as the urban waste! A recent UNICEF study on faecal indica bacteria from Odisha villages for instance indicates that villages that are not yet free from open defecation are 12 times more likely than the open defecation free (ODF) ones to carry the risk of faecal contamination of ground water resulting in a large number of water-borne diseases to the resident population. And all over other Indian villages where Narendra Modi's Swachhtata latrines have been built and are under varied use but without necessary periodical clearing of accumulated faecal deposits in their shallow pits, this problem of sub-soil water contamination immediately affects drinking water that is extracted from rural sub-soil based hand pumps and used by 100% of rural households ! And, as has been demonstrated to you so vividly in the world's most polluted city of Delhi, the periodic wholesale burning of crop stubs pollutes its urban areas tremendously as to make the urban population easy prey to respiratory diseases on a mass scale!

The book is a must read not only for public health professionals but all segments of the vast Indian society!

Sociologist-Planner  
Baramati (Pune).

**Harnam Singh Verma**

**SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN TRIBAL INDIA, by S.N.Chaudhary (ed) (2016), Rawat Publications, Jaipur**

The title of the book aptly justifies the vision and strength of tribals in India, thus making social movement in Tribal India. The book gives share to the Adivasis people for the construction and sustenance of indigenous knowledge and attributes of civilisations though being in geographical remote circumstances but socially responsible. The book depicts that they had the ownership rights on the natural resources- Jal, Jungle and Zamin which they used prudently for survival and prosperity but the statist approach in the name of development took away their rights. So efforts were made to restore their human rights by different agents in the form of the state and development projects but due to alien and modern interventions which is beyond their capacity, even after several decades, made their plight pitiable. The book has interdisciplinary articles with conceptual-theoretic and empirical framework with an inter-regional and cross-cultural variations in an historic and contemporary perspective of the 'collective voice of protest or social movements' by the tribals. The articles show how the social institutional and civil societies framework responded to their demands to reconstruct the model of development for them, environment, human rights and social justice. The book also takes into account the local and the non-local people in the times of globalisation, market culture, middleclass ethos, individualism and primarily, preservation and sustenance of tribal movement in the socio-political context. The book begins with M.N.Karna's article reflecting issues of ethnicity and nationalism in North-East India. Next article by K.Gopal Iyer has emphasised the influence of tribal movement of Jharkhand in resisting structural change and its militant character for formulating Forest Right Act-2006. Further, D.C.Sah's writings highlighted the role of civil society institutions, political insurgency and alien intervention in the name of development, displacement creating Adivasi Mukti Sangathan and Narmada Bachao Andolan. The book flow follows further with enriching articles by various eminent scholars. S.N. Tripathy has advised to focus on reorganising our policies for the indigenous communities. Y.G. Joshi has analysed inverse relationship between resources and development as the cause of local people's discontent. The editor of the book S.N.Chaudhary has described the 'richness of tribal culture and their cordial relationship with local ecology' and also the issue of development projects, livelihood and culture of them, and environment degradation. Here the author has given institutionalised solution for the reinstatement of tribal dignity and rights. Ravi P. Bhatia pointed out the methods used by adivasis for improving their condition without affecting the environment. R.K. Mohanty highlighted contemporary movement in Odisha against mining and industrial projects causing 4Ds – discrimination, deprivation, dispossession and displacement of the tribals. Rahul Banerjee highlighted rejuvenated tribal cultural heritage for creating a new assertive identity for themselves so as to help them to negotiate in the complex social, economic and political spheres in modern times. Debashis Debnath has explored persistence of 'conversation ethos and sub-nationalistic ethnicity' among tribals creating 'self-initiated forest protection or environmental movements' and 'new pro-poor and pro-people forest policy' by participatory forestry. Swapan Kumar Kolay has discussed militarization of PESA affecting development of area and tribals. Tapas Kumar Dalapati highlighted state's disturbance in the social relations of the people in the process of 'production, distribution and consumption' of the material in Kondh dominated area of Odisha. Subhendu Maiti has discussed the role of Naxalite movement of 1961-71 in formulating land reforms to appease the agitated peasantry including tribals. Mita Sarkar (Das) has reviewed the forest satyagraha, issue of autonomy by the tribals, industrial houses and development projects in Chhattisgarh. Jaya Phookan has explored conflict for competing claims for forest,

rights for victim of ecological degradation which challenged the meaning of development and made notable changes in forest policy. The book has given a wide range of spectrum of tribal India issues and concern to ponder upon. It is the reader to relate it to the different issues like ethnicity, language, culture, marriage, family, gender role, economy management, political participation, capacity building in Skill India formula or in world of advance knowledge, etc. This book also opens up to the issues of migration, migration of not only males but also of female migration that too for not only conventional marriages but for the cross-cultural or cross-regional marriages by purchase for the low sex-ratio hit states. The solution is provided by the developed or developing states like Orissa, Jharkhand, Bihar or also Kerala to the developed states like Gujarat, Rajasthan or also Punjab, for continuity and change in social institutions like family, marriage, kinship, economy, education etc. Here the role of tribal women along with the other marginalised community women has to be taken in the account who is trapped in the embodiment and cultural framework where she is multi-folded exploited by the family of orientation and procreation, community of bribe in selling and purchasing states, the agents, un-updated laws states and etc.

Centre for studies in Society and development  
Central University of Gujarat, Gandhi Nagar

**Jayashree Ambewadikar**