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Book Reviews

Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last, Robert Chambers, Intermediate Technology Publications, London, U.K., 1997. Pp. xx+297. £ 3.25.

I am reminded of Heilbroner (1980) saying: "Since he came down from the trees, man has faced the problem of survival, not as an individual but as a member of a social group. His continued existence is testimony to the fact that he has succeeded in solving the problem; but the continued existence of want and misery, even in the richest of nations, is evidence that his solution has been, at best, a partial one." However, people did not remain unconcerned with a complete solution. Over the times, poverty eradication has become a central issue for human development and welfare. But still, why does a complete solution elude us? Where are we going wrong? How to go about?

This issue is heart of the matter in Robert Chamber's thought provoking book. He analyses the problem from various perspectives - why we have been failing for so long? Shortcomings in our traditional approaches of development efforts are plenty. PRA (participatory rural appraisal), a recently evolved approach, can overcome many shortcomings. This is the essence of this thesis well written with a lot of passion towards welfare of the rural poor. The first five chapters set the background and Chapters 6 to 10 deal with the evolution of PRA, comparison with rapid rural appraisal (RRA) and other approaches, why PRA works, experiences and insights gained from practical applications, diverse aspects of poor peoples' realities, emerging new paradigms of development, etc. Many practical experiences are cited almost all through this book packed with information. Though quite often repetitive in exposition, the book covers a very wide range of issues. Given the page constraint for me here, only some highlights are picked up below.

Chambers begins noting that economic and social changes, occurring all over the world, in the 1990s are so fast that future becomes harder to foresee. Disappointment is that the changes are not for better. "There are now more very poor and vulnerable people in the world than ever before" (p. 7). There is urgent need to put these people first in our priorities - in terms of their well being, livelihood, capacity, equity and sustainability. We the professionals have so far been only committing errors in our efforts for development. Some are embraced ('fail forward') errors while others are embedded and sustained errors. We often commit the latter variety which have long-term damage impact. The author points out several such puzzling errors with respect to policies relating to macro economics, food security, famine analysis, wood fuel, environment, etc. With respect to macro economics, he points out: "One can see a succession of massively damaging mistakes: first, to expect weak states to do so much through central planning and direct government action; then to drive them deep into debt with enormous loans; and then, when they were in no position to argue, to thrust on them policies of structural adjustment which made life worse for the poorest. The policies were flawed, but at the time most professionals, especially economists, thought them right" (p.16). Why don't we the development professionals have some *self-doubt*? Why not learn, how and where are we going wrong so often and for so long?

The contempt that the author has towards professionals as well as realities constructed by them comes out very sharply in Chapter 3. The ideas, values, methods and their behaviour (maintained as a means to status, power and wealth) underlying normal professionalism

creates and sustains its own, but false, 'reality'. In other words, the reality as constructed by professionals is not real. The author views, reduction of reality into terms of poverty lines, measures of production and employment fits 'things' more than 'people'. According to him, the highest-status professionals (physicists, biochemists, surgeons, mathematicians, economists, computer scientists, etc.) visualise the people "as though they were things". Whereas, the lowest-status professionals (social workers, nurses, traditional medical practitioners, agriculture extensionists, etc.) face people as people - not as things. The former are too obsessed with measurements and precision. When rules of thumb would often be reasonable, "Mathematics ... masquerades with bogus precision" (p.41). It indulges in reductionism by simplifying the complex, focusing on parts instead of the whole structure. The author emotionally laments at the influence of economists and their erudite arrogance, and wonders at economists outnumbering sociologists and social anthropologists at the World Bank. He considers that both economists and physicists are dangerous. "Macro-econometricians and nuclear physicists have both endangered life on a large scale but in different ways: nuclear physicists by being right about things and producing bombs, and macro-econometricians by being wrong about people and producing policies" (p. 52). Later on, he analyses with a dogged determination, the behavioural differences between economists and dogs. The author's perceptions and vision astound me! Surprisingly, there isn't any self-doubt on his own part (except in Chapter 10 in a different context). May be, because he is also a development professional! Or, is he displaying his 'optimal ignorance' that he argues for later on? However, I agree with the point he makes that the reality as constructed by isolated professionals may misfit with that of the "other world, out there."

Power and dominance of the professionals come in the way of their learning. In this sense, power deceives not allowing them to realise the phantasm in the realities constructed by them. Given this, the bad done to the poor exceeds the good done. "One can ask, how much more hurt has been done and will be done on a vast scale by the normal professionals of the IMF, the World Bank, the EU and other centres of power, to countries and people who are variously too weak, vulnerable, distant, prudent and polite to answer back or be heard" (p. 100).

Poor peoples' realities are local, complex, diverse, dynamic and unpredictable. Age, gender, social and ethnic group and wealth (if any) condition their preferences and priorities. The author rightly distinguishes between physical and personal realities, and between personal physical and personal social realities, followed by a discussion on upper-lower status, emerging dominance of some groups and resulting subordination of the others. There are excellent discussions on teaching culture, career development, bureaucracy, strengths and weaknesses of standardisation, top to down-centre to outwards models of technology development and extensions (with three examples provided).

Survival strategies of the poor reveal their risk-reducing diversity and concerns for long-term security. Normal professional procedures do not provide a good understanding. Chambers discusses at length the inadequacy of several proxy indicators, in particular poverty-income in understanding the ill/well being. "Income, the reductionist criterion of normal economists, has never, in my experience or in the evidence I have been able to review, been given explicit primacy. PRA analyses from Pakistan, Zambia and Bulgaria throw light on this issue" (p. 178). Professionals and local people "differ more generally in their values and preferences. What local people, especially the poor, want and need is often

not what they are taught by professionals to want and need, or what professionals themselves want" (p. 179).

In this background, the author poses the question: Whose reality counts: of us the uppers and outsiders or of the lowers and the insiders? He argues that the dominant professionalism has been collapsing. New approaches, applied social anthropology, farming systems research, action-reflection approach, agro-eco system analysis, rapid rural appraisal (RRA), etc., contributed to evolution of participatory approaches. Participant rural appraisal (PRA) is one such approach that provides satisfactory development effort. PRA approach enables better to express, analyse and act.

As I see, one issue is to have all the relevant information. What is relevant information and how to get it reliably? The author does not favour survey methods in (his) view of high costs, time, money, delays, bias towards uppers' realities and the discredit they bring to social sciences. In his view, apart from "providing employment for enumerators, evidence of benefits from such surveys is often slender" (p. 122). RRA approach is non-participatory, only extractive. PRA is, however, based on participation with the concerned community/group/people. Its approach lies more on realising local people's capabilities and their attitudes, with outside professionals only facilitating and empowering the locals with a long-term view on sustainability. Outsider is only a catalyst facilitating them in the process of development. Manuals, blue prints, measurement precision, etc., are considered unimportant. Rigour of relevance is more important than rigour of measurement. PRA distinguishes itself from other approaches by shared visual representations and allowing locals to analyse themselves. Success of PRA rests on three pillars: behaviour and attitudes (facilitate, not dominate); methods (shifting from normal professional practices); and sharing and partnership (between locals and outsiders). Its fundamental principle, adopted to encourage creativity, is "use your own best judgement at all times". Let us 'hand over the stick' to them and help them do it themselves. Several PRA experiences provided insights that, both, we (the professionals) and they (the locals) did (do) not know that they are quite knowledgeable, can analyse and do several things themselves using local materials. They only need self-confidence; hence let us provide for it with a good rapport and trust built between us.

A brief history of the evolution of PRA is given. Kenyan and Indian experiences along with others, and NGOs as well as government organisations contributed a lot to its development. The emphasis, impact, focus, location (rural and urban) and analysis under PRA, now practised in more than 100 (developing as well as developed) countries, widened over time. The applications of RRA and PRA range from natural sciences management, agriculture, people-poverty-livelihood, health and nutrition, urban issues to several other areas. These approaches could bring out policy relevant understanding of local realities. Several examples are provided. Also provided are comparisons in a number of cases between the findings of RRA/PRA approaches and questionnaire survey methods and a conclusion that the outcomes based on the former are more valid, timely, useful and could be obtained cheaper. One of the several cases he reports is a study by NCAER (1993). "The demographic data derived from the participatory mapping was much closer to the recent national census than that derived from the normal questionnaire survey" (p. 144).

Given the contrasting 'realities' and the reality, the ultimate question "whose reality counts?" can be answered more and more with 'Theirs'. How do we go about now? "The

issue is whether we, as development professionals, have the vision, guts, and will to change our behaviour, to embrace and act out reversals," (p. 236). It is uppers, not the lowers, who have to change. We need to reverse our attitudes, shift our orientation: from closed to open, from individual to group, from verbal to visual, from measuring to comparing, from higher to lower, and reserve and frustration to rapport and fun. The spirit of PRA is to find out what is it that works and then to empower the local lowers (building up their knowledge base, confidence, awareness at individual and community levels, analytical capabilities, conflict resolution, etc.). Start a process rather than gather data.

We require a new paradigm of development, "people as people" (of people first, and lowers first of all). This will lead to a new high ground where decentralisation, democracy, diversity and dynamism (4Ds) combine. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank (contrary to much of its style and culture), etc., have started moving in this direction.

One cannot disagree. But also, one may not agree with everything that has been expressed. (i) I have already reacted above to the author's views on economists, etc. There is a lot more in the book on science, etc., and I had not reacted due to space constraint. (ii) The author says, there are many more poor people in the world now than in the past. But it could equally be said that many more people are brought out of poverty now than in the past. (iii) Having said that professionalism of International Monetary Fund, World Bank, etc., hurts rural poor, how to reconcile that reality of rural poor is only local? (iv) I do not think, survey methods are to be discarded lock, stock and barrel. All said and done, PRA is localised affair. When conclusions at an aggregate level are to be drawn, the regions to be covered could be vast and many. How many PRAs would become necessary in such a context is anybody's guess. Just as PRA needs some basic discipline to make it a success, survey design and implementation require some unavoidable discipline to make it successful in obtaining right and relevant information. For that matter, science of statistics allows to compute the confidence levels with which any inferences are made - an advantage of principle of measurement that the author refuses to appreciate. (v) The author provides an example from Haryana where rankings of forest development investment strategies differed widely between foresters and local communities. Foresters preferred land development strategies whereas the communities preferred immediate fruit bearing trees. For ultimate benefits one is a long-term strategy and the other is a short-term one. How to judge relative worth of these two kinds? In the absence of any vested interests, differences arise only as a matter of perspectives. (vi) Finally, one important aspect has been ignored. The success/failure of development does not depend just on dominant professionalism versus vulnerable poor. There is also a powerful rich group against the poor developing. Not only professionalism, even PRA would fail unless that political economy is taken into account.

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Agricultural Diversification and Development of Mountain Regions with special reference to Himachal Pradesh, Ramesh Chand, M.D. Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1997. Pp. xii+416. Rs. 700.00.

The book is the outcome of the research work of the author at Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi under a National Dairy Development Board funded project relating to potential and prospects for agricultural diversification in Himachal Pradesh. Agricultural diversification has been viewed as a powerful strategy for employment generation and sustainable agricultural development. However, the success of this agricultural development strategy requires suitable region-specific diversification alternatives, relevant institutional and infrastructural facilities along with effective implementation of the strategy.

The book is organised in three parts - Part I embodies district level analysis and has five chapters; Part II deals with micro-level investigations and also has five chapters; and Part III contains the main findings and implications and has three chapters. There are 13 chapters in total starting from Introduction (Chapter 1) and Conclusions and Policy Implications (Chapter 13).

A case for agricultural diversification is made in Chapter 1 and it is stated that diversification is imperative for agriculturally developed as well as undeveloped regions in the country. Diversification is necessitated by unsustainable resource use and changing domestic and international trade scenario.

The micro-level goals of agricultural diversification are stated to be increase in household income and reduction in production and income variability. The macro-level objectives of agricultural diversification seek to increase labour absorption in agriculture and non-agriculture activities, growth of sectoral and total output and earning foreign exchange. Overall, the above objectives need to be fulfilled on a sustainable basis.

The study reveals that vegetable growing as an activity is an alternative for agricultural diversification in Himachal Pradesh. Particularly off-season vegetables possess immense potential for diversification. The concept of off-season is related to main season in the plains of Himachal Pradesh and neighbouring states. The off-season vegetable cultivation in hills makes vegetables available during summer months when vegetables are usually not available from plain areas. Therefore, off-season vegetable growing in hills has comparative advantage. However, it is not clear from the study as to how much of vegetable cultivation in the state is off-season.

The other alternatives for agricultural diversification reported in the study are fruits, floriculture, mushroom and dairy. The suitability of these alternatives would, of course, vary from location to location depending on agro-ecological conditions and market infrastructure.

After going through 405 pages of the book, the reviewer felt that it was an excellent exposition of agricultural diversification well supported by statistical data and analysis at the macro and micro levels in Himachal Pradesh. There is a lot of talk about diversification these days. In this context, the book is a meticulous investigation in the area of agricultural diversification in Himachal Pradesh. It would be of particular interest to those interested in the development of Himachal Pradesh and other hilly states in the country. Overall, the

book is an excellent contribution to the profession of agricultural economics in the area of agricultural diversification where there is a dearth of systematic research studies like the one presented in this book.

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Essays on Kerala Economy, M.A. Oommen, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1993. Pp. xiii+226. Rs. 175.00.

Kerala's development experience, featuring justly famous transitions in demography, health and education despite general economic backwardness, is nonetheless an enigma. The enigma, now widely shared by the state's polity and society, consists in the fact that the even thin production base of the economy is tending to a collapse after decades of stagnation and erosion. If and when it comes, the collapse might undermine the very achievements in social sectors. With the nicknames of 'consumer state' and 'money order economy' gaining currency, is the Kerala 'model' of development then doomed? Leaving the poser at this level and seeking a simple, general answer is both unwieldy and hopeless. One may note two requirements here. First, the question needs to be broken down to its elements till the processes at work become transparent. Secondly, the search for an appropriate strategy for rejuvenating the state's productive forces must not be weighed down by received, eurocentric, visions of development, if only because Kerala's experience thus far defies precisely this received wisdom. We shall return to this. As it happens it is in meeting the first requirement, namely, in understanding the pathology of the problem that the potential value of an anthology, such as the one under review, lies.

The selection by Oommen has twelve essays written over three decades and for different readerships. The themes covered are wide-ranging: agriculture and banking history to public finance and people's participation. Not to be left out are unemployment, small capital and the power sector. The first essay, on land reforms, is a dispassionate account of how the Kerala experience, though creditable, left much to be desired. Titles to land to a significant extent were acquired by intermediaries and absentee operators. Further, unaccompanied by other organisational changes, land reforms alone could not be expected to deliver the goods. The following three essays, on cropping pattern, food deficits and income distribution in agriculture, are situated in the sixties. The analysis of cropping pattern brings out the tension between geo-physical conditions, economic calculus and institutional structures. A crop regime that is loaded against foodgrains raises the issue of chronic food deficit at the regional level which must be viewed in the context of national policy. The author's analysis of income distribution reveals how discrete income-distributional shifts within agriculture could not be expected in a regime of essentially small-holder cultivation in the pre-Green Revolution era, although improved farm wages could affect distribution at the margin.

The chapter tracing the evolution of banking in Kerala is a comprehensive survey that

brings out the role of the region's early exposures to foreign trade, and of plantations, indigenous banking and the church in making Kerala one of the pioneers of banking in the country. The next essay, on the migration of Kerala's small entrepreneurs to the neighbouring states, is interesting not only because it takes issue with conventional theory of industrial location based on economic costs and returns, but because it draws upon primary data. Why did the small entrepreneurs move out of their state despite the industrial estates and availability of finance? It is suggested insightfully that "Labour cost broadly defined not only in terms of the wage and welfare cost, but inclusive of the loss and inconveniences due to strikes and disputes, appears to be an important reason. It appears that this is a more significant factor than even the advantage of cheap and sustained power supply" (p. 101). It would indeed seem that the 'labour-cost hypothesis' in the context of Kerala is often rather narrowly posed. What seems to frustrate the prospective entrepreneur is evidently not high wages *per se* (which in the general case of industry can always be passed into higher prices, for a given profit margin) but a credible threat of labour militancy that is disruptive of the very process of production. In such a circumstance the vacuity of statistics showing a decline in man-days lost due to strikes and lockouts is obvious. There are numerous instances of little or no production taking place, without there being a formal strike or lockout.

A second aspect of the problem that escapes our attention is that in a primarily 'consumer state' the cascading impact of high wages is decidedly in the sphere of circulation, where there is little value addition, rather than in the sphere of production where a rise in wage-share would be salutary through dynamic demand linkages. The stance of the all-powerful head-load workers unions of Kerala, being a freak combination of a high degree of proletarian consciousness and pure extortion, has consequences for the production economy, as indeed for the cause of a progressive working class movement in the state.

Oommen begins his chapter on the unemployment problem by showing that Kerala recorded the highest unemployment rate among the Indian states in 1987-88 (p. 107). Why is it then that states like Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh whose economies are no better than Kerala's, record much lower rates of unemployment? There is obviously something here to the concepts and measures of employment themselves. While the author's explanation of high wages, high unemployment and labour shortage, taken separately, is unexceptionable, the attempt to fix the phenomena in terms of 'two paradoxes' by implicitly invoking a demand-supply theory of the labour market seems to run into some logical difficulty. The one paradox of high wages and high unemployment, and the other paradox of high unemployment and labour shortage cannot both hold at the same time within the demand-supply framework.

From the remainder of the themes taken up in the book, the one relating to district planning (Chapter 8) stands out. Relying on a case study in Kerala, the author shows how local-level planning in India has tended to be a mechanical exercise of preparing maps and inventories of local resources, rather than being a systematic attempt to design and nurture people's institutions. The book covers a wide ground, as noted, although one might have wished to find a chapter on Kerala's traditional industries and, in particular, a rounded introduction

to the book tying the various strands together and perhaps bringing the discussion up-to-date in many cases. The latter role, to an extent, is assigned to the last chapter which seeks to situate the problem of Kerala in the nineties. For all this, the book is an informed primer on the Kerala economy.

To end we return briefly to a postponed question. What should be the appropriate strategy to rejuvenate the state economy? The central question in economic development everywhere is the way a given society is able to organise its 'social labour' which is the primary means as well as the ultimate end of economic development. Such organisation of labour, as Adam Smith showed, involves a progressive rise in the proportion of 'productive' labour, i.e., labour whose product would be in demand by other productive sectors in the system. It is true that in the early stages of development, agriculture tends to be the cradle of productive labour with industry taking over as development proceeds. The problem with Kerala is that the peculiar combination of its geography, demography and politics have not favoured a broad-based agriculture or industry. Not only has there been a flight of industrial capital to the neighbouring states, even traditional industries run by workers' co-operatives are grinding to a halt. Yet the prime mover of the regional economy has been the remittance from non-residents, within India and abroad, which would not have been possible without the investments at home in education and health. A long-term strategy of Kerala's development must then involve three components: (a) the nurturing of a progressive and socially responsible workers' movement; (b) the development of modern small-scale industry including information technology, and (c) the continued development of its social development infrastructure. Policy makers worried about somehow raising paddy production and somehow raising the credit-deposit ratios of banks could be barking up the wrong tree.

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Economic Reforms and Poverty Alleviation in India, Edited by C.H. Hanumantha Rao and Hans Linnemann, Indo-Dutch Studies on Development Alternatives - 17, Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1996. Pp. 271. Rs. 350.00.

This volume is based on eight papers and an address presented at a Seminar on 'Structural Adjustment and Poverty in India: Policy and Research Issues' organised by the Dutch Branch of the "Indo-Dutch Programme on Alternatives in Development" (IDPAD). All the papers in the volume except one by Rolph van der Hoeven focus exclusively on the Indian experience with structural adjustment. The paper by Hoeven reviews the experiences in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia for the eighties. The overall evidence that emerges from the study is that the economic reforms worked better in countries that have egalitarian system combined with efficient economic management.

Among the rest, six papers concerned themselves mainly with the experiences of stabilisation measures in India during the short period, 1991-94 and therefore are reviewed

together. The papers bring out that reduction in fiscal deficit under the stabilisation measure is achieved essentially through reduction in capital expenditure on infrastructure and cuts in social expenditure on health, education, etc. This adversely affected growth and poverty. Between the years 1990-91 and 1993-94, as many as 9 out of 15 major states recorded a decline in the proportion of total revenue expenditure devoted to social services. The trends in urban development revealed a segmentation of large cities into rich and poor colonies while paucity of resources placed small and medium towns into difficulties of providing basic amenities. The findings from National Sample Survey data suggest that the stabilisation period is characterised by a reversal of trends in the rural unemployment which recorded a decline in the period prior to 1990-91. The number of poor both in rural and urban areas has risen significantly, again representing a reversal of the pre-reform trend. The usage of public distribution system is low despite its re-extension to new areas; the coverage of poverty alleviation programmes has fallen and social expenditure in general has shown a decline. The role of inflation in worsening poverty has also been clearly brought out in the papers.

In the final chapter of the volume, Kaushik Basu raises basic issues pertaining to the pre-requisites for market reform within the frame of a democratic organisation. According to him, a more efficient democratic organisation requires the system of partitioned rights so that the bureaucratic red tape could be reduced by promoting more room for individual decision-making. Two basic principles, namely, the principle of contract and the principle of efficient pricing are suggested towards promotion of this goal. He attributes the slow growth of India to the adverse legal environment which makes contracts inflexible and to introduction of an element of what he calls 'deadweight price' which arises from democratic red tape in addition to buyer's transfer price.

The editors provide a useful summary of each of the eight papers. In addition, they assess the gaps in research, provide an agenda for future discussion of the topic and spell out the policy implications.

The following research gaps are identified: The long-term consequences of the structural reform could not be assessed since the period of stabilisation has been too short. There is little discussion of lessons to be learnt in terms of the content and sequence of the reform package for India. There is no exploration of the so-called counter-factual or what would have been the course of development without adjustment policies. Alternative reform packages, with differing content and sequencing for savings-investment, growth, employment, inflation and poverty would indeed be useful for policy purposes. The important issue of stabilisation in relation to environment and the poor is not addressed. The impact on women in poverty is also not explored in depth. Finally, the analysis is essentially in terms of economic reasoning and how the prevailing socio-economic structure influences policy making towards an optimal reform package, is not discussed.

The following discussion agenda are provided by the editors. An important issue in the context of the significant rise in poverty is whether the rise in poverty is an inevitable short-run consequence of economic reform. That this need not be so is demonstrated by East Asian experience. Another finding of the papers is that the impact of economic reform on poverty depends on initial conditions. Therefore in a country like India, where structural transformation in the pre-reform period was not conspicuous, the poorer sections could be expected to be particularly vulnerable to the shocks of adjustment. The poor might be

expected to be less vulnerable in states characterised by egalitarian socio-economic structures. The rise in poverty in the immediate post-reforms period is attributable not so much to structural adjustment but to macro economic stabilisation measures. The latter measures may have affected poverty and inequality in two important ways: first through the direct impact of fiscal measure and second through the rise in inflation. While the negative impact of cuts in tax rates are immediate, there is a considerable time lag in the enlargement of revenues following tax reforms. Moreover, the slow growth of revenues from the Union Excise Taxes and Income Tax following the cut in tax rates has meant a significant erosion of resources of the states. Since per capita transfers to less developed states are higher, such states have suffered the most with reduction in the revenues of the Centre.

The policy implication of the significant rise in poverty in the post-reforms period is that development policy has to be more inclusive, concerned not merely with structural adjustment to make the economy market-friendly, but also with structural change with a view to simultaneously making markets friendly to the poor, basically by strengthening their socio-economic position. An important policy implication emerging from the papers is that the benefits flowing from investment in agriculture may outweigh those from the efficient allocation of resources through liberalisation. Public investments are essential for broad-based and employment-oriented growth. Agricultural growth should no longer be limited by the goal of self-sufficiency but aim at generating export surpluses. The need for public investments raises issues relating to content and place of tax reforms. Raising the potential of direct taxes and removing open and hidden subsidies become important policy aims. These measures will call for harder tasks of debureaucratising the management of public enterprises, decentralisation and meeting the resistance of vested interests. If subsidies on irrigation, power, fertilisers, credit and so on cannot be reduced in a democratic policy owing to competitive populism, the only course left is to privatise services in order to improve efficiency and recover costs. All these call for political will.

The volume will be found useful by policy makers and researchers for the immense light it throws on the impact of economic reforms. In particular, the contribution of the editors of the volume on research gaps, on agenda for future discussion, and on policy implications of the papers will be found extremely helpful by young researchers pursuing studies on economic reforms and their impact.

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Meanings of Agriculture: Essays in South Asian History and Economics, Edited by Peter Robb, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1996. Pp. x+389. Rs. 495.00.

The volume under review is an outcome of a project sponsored by the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, which was initiated under the chairmanship of the editor, Peter Robb. The project aimed at understanding the specific problems and some fundamental issues relating to South Asian agriculture by approaching them from a new perspective. Accordingly, in July 1992, a conference was held on "Meanings and Purposes of Agriculture in South Asia". Thus the purpose of the present volume which is a collection

of the selected conference papers is to evolve "a fundamental rethinking of the connections between the different forms and functions of agriculture in practice, and the theoretical analysis of agriculture-related issues, especially economic change and development" (p. 5); and, at the very outset, one has to compliment the editor for succeeding in his endeavour in a major way.

The volume contains eleven contributions on various themes in the discourse along with an elaborate (35 pages) introduction by the editor spelling out the implications of the various findings of the contributors for future research and policy. Robb clearly delineates several purposes of agricultural activities such as food, profit, status, and so on; and therefore considers erroneous treating agriculture as a 'single universal category'. In every pursuit the purpose, scope, function, and strategy are different, ultimately culminating in different perceptions of agriculture. And, hence the title: 'Meanings of Agriculture'.

David Ludden emphasises the multiplicity, conditionality and temporal specificity of various meanings in agricultural terminology in South India, particularly Tamil Nadu. He argues that rural sayings and proverbs reflect the meanings and purposes of agriculture. "Farmers, astrologers, doctors, poets and kings produced archaic formations of knowledge in which hares chasing hounds, rain filling poets, frogs tied to winnowing fans, deities dragged around temples, constellations, sunspots, and hair on a bull's back had agricultural meaning" (p. 55). All this however reflected a large amount of heterogeneity in agricultural activities. This heterogeneity reduces the applicability of any 'scientific' norm seeking to explain agricultural practices. However, the introduction of 'science' replaced the very heterogeneity in agricultural pursuits, and thus, in course of time the formations became 'archaic'. Even the institutions like 'caste' underwent some change.

B.B. Chaudhuri's essay deals with 'commercialisation of agriculture' and 'dependent peasantry'. He gives a brief but illuminating history of commercialisation of agriculture during the British rule. On the basis of information relating to crops like indigo and opium, Chaudhuri seeks to refute the argument of economic historians such as Romesh Dutt and B.M. Bhatia that the commercialisation of agriculture in India was forced by the Britishers, and that the Indian peasantry was 'dependent'. He puts forth alternative sources of credit and the possibility of growing alternative commercial crops as an evidence in support of his conclusion. Rajat Datta too deals with a somewhat related theme, viz., dynamics of peasant production and agrarian commercialism in the eighteenth century Bengal. Two main findings of his paper are: the cultivators' choice was restricted by their urgent needs for cash as also for repayments; and they are at relative disadvantage when they participate in the market.

Benedicte Hjele has pondered over the diversity of Indian agriculture; British understanding, or misunderstanding of this diversity; and the latter's impact on the socio-economic policies vis-a-vis India. She studies in minute detail the pattern of land use and management in a number of villages in South India during the transition to the East India Company. With rigorous use of statistical data (20 pages), she concludes that as regards the resource mobilisation the record of British regime was dismal.

Eric Meyer's essay seeks to study how the farmers' strategies are constrained by ecological factors, tenurial systems, and state policies relating particularly to land legislation and taxation. He confines to the experience of Kandyan region of Sri Lanka before 1940. He rightly concludes: "A 'peasant strategy' is not to be analysed in strictly rational economic

terms", and one "has to take into account ideological motivations, which are more easily manipulated, and may run counter to the apparent economic interests of those who adopt them" (p. 225).

Ravi S. Srivastava picks up an interesting theme, viz., 'agrarian change and the labour process'. He attempts to examine the nature of an uneven agrarian transition on the basis of the experience of changes in the labour process in two villages in the eastern and western Uttar Pradesh. Srivastava points out that though the methods of labour appropriation undergo subtle changes during the period of transition, the relationship of the labouring classes to the dominant classes is the most crucial one. Yet another diverse topic is pursued by Sumit Guha. In his essay, he emphasises the significance of defining and measuring labour in Indian agriculture. According to him, the issue is not merely 'economic' in nature, but of 'wider social control'. He however confines to one of its aspects, viz., its relevance for the management of agricultural work in a complex agrarian society. In substance, Guha argues that given the tremendous heterogeneity of labour, labour-time is an imperfect measure of work done in Indian (and possibly every) agriculture. Guha then argues for the superiority of D.R. Gadgil's method of measuring the amount of labour in agriculture which takes into account (a) the monetary value of standard labour unit making allowance for whether or not the land is irrigated; (b) conversion of all hired labour into standard labour units; and (c) the money cost of unpaid family labour. It is in this background that Guha questions Utsa Patnaik's celebrated exercise of using number of days spent by the hired labour as a criterion for the differentiation of peasantry. On the basis of the work of untouchable landless women labourers in Aruloor village in eastern Tiruchirapalli district of Tamil Nadu, Karin Kapadia maintains that 'internalisation' of discipline is a powerful tool that helps the employer to exercise his control over the agricultural workforce. According to Kapadia, it is particularly so when the piece-rate method of work and payment is adopted; because in such cases the workers supervise themselves. S.S. and Chitra Sivakumar have sought to understand 'the meaning of social order in the Tamil Country'. In this longish essay (54 pages), the authors have questioned "the existing paradigms of the agrarian social order, most of which, among economists, have relied upon a belief that it is necessary only to establish an analytically consistent set of abstract propositions of human behaviour, relaxation of the assumptions of which leads to completeness" (p. 384). They have studied in greater detail almost all the elements of the 'social order' in the Tamil Country that are sociological (caste and kinship), economic (production process and pattern), and political (exercise of power) in nature. They have also explained how this underwent change during the British rule and subsequently after India's Independence. They have conceptualised this as a 'transaction regime'.

Two essays, one by Utsa Patnaik, and the other by Abhijit Sen, address contemporary issues of peasants' food security in the historical context of the international commoditisation of production, and the probable impact of globalisation on the Indian agriculture respectively. The main thrust of Patnaik's essay is that the "market-friendly policies are seldom people-friendly" and that the "policies which are over market-friendly have destroyed Third World peasants' food security and created the conditions for famine in the past, and continue to have this effect in the contemporary world" (p. 286). She forcefully argues that 'forced' commercialisation of subsistence agriculture to secure a sustained increase in the volume of agricultural exportables as a fall-out of the World Bank-imposed structural adjustment programme has resulted in the growing erosion of the food security in the peasant economies

of the Third World. Similarly, Sen disagrees with the World Bank's approach to agriculture, viz., agriculture should be viewed primarily as a source of exports and that the prices should constitute the basis of decision-making in the agricultural sector. The major concern of Sen is that the primacy of unrestricted price mechanism and consequent reduction in 'genuine' state intervention would reduce agriculture's protection in India. This would harm the interests of agriculture particularly in a scenario when the non-agricultural sector is unable to release the burden of population on agriculture.

On the whole, Robb has been successful in presenting an integrated picture of diverse 'meanings (realities) of agriculture'. Also, the volume contains the historical and socio-logical significance, and hence becomes a good reading for the researchers in those areas.

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Production and Marketing Management of Marine Fisheries in India, R. Sathiadas, Daya Publishing House, Delhi, 1997. Pp. x+193. Rs. 360.00

Books on empirical studies in fisheries economics are not many. This book is based on the author's Ph.D dissertation study carried out in Thiruvottiyorkuppam and Pudumani-kuppam in Chengalpattu district; Cuddalore in Cuddalore district; Nagapattinam, Kee-chankuppam, and Akkaraipet in Nagapattinam district; Mallipattinam in Pudukkottai district; Theresuram, Tuticorin fishing harbour, Tuticorin south and Alenthalai in Tuticorin district; and Kadiapattinam, Muttam, Colachel and Mulloorthurai in Kanyakumari district during 1989-90. Primary data on fish catch per unit effort, costs and returns, production and marketing, and economic and social aspects collected from the selected fishermen and secondary data obtained from research institutes and development organisations were analysed by employing statistical and econometric tools including Cobb-Douglas production function and policy recommendations drawn. The book is well organised into ten chapters, besides the bibliography and subject index. The analysed data are neatly presented in 83 summary tables and 22 figures including line drawings of important fishing gears.

The first chapter contains five specific objectives and an equal number of hypotheses and points out certain limitations of the study due to spatial and temporal variations in, say, landings and prices of marine fishes. The setting of the study is presented in Chapter 2 and it concludes with a justification of the study in view of scanty literature especially based on micro level studies. Chapter 3 briefly deals with the methodology of the study with emphasis on sources of data and method of sampling of fishermen to represent artisanal, motorised and mechanised fishing craft categories as well as different combinations of fishing gears used by the respondents in marine fishing. The general profile of the marine fishery economy in Tamil Nadu presented in Chapter 4 indicates the large scope to enhance its production and marketing for improving the quality of life of fishermen by adopting suitable management measures. Chapter 5 deals with technological options and capital investment and points out that the co-existence of different craft-gear combinations owing to seasonality in fishing is a reality and for investment decisions, data on costs and returns are indispensable.

Chapter 6 discusses elaborately the costs and earnings of different craft-gear combinations in artisanal, motorised and mechanised sectors in marine fisheries of Tamil Nadu. It brings out the profitability of technological options and investment ranges which will be useful for preparing bankable projects at the micro level and investment plans for the development of marine fisheries at the macro level. The estimated production functions for trawlers, motorised catamarans with hooks and lines and pair trawlers reported in Chapter 7 indicate that there is scope for increase in fishing effort both in the motorised and mechanised categories. The suggestion to increase the number of fishing trips with extended operation in deeper waters leaving the nearshore zone to the artisanal fishermen deserves to be noted. This chapter also provides information on comparative economic efficiency of different categories of fishermen that will be useful for development planners and administrators. Price behaviour over different time periods and price spreads for different marketing channels presented in Chapter 8 suggest that there is need for instituting a support price for different varieties of marine fish through a public agency having storage, processing and distribution facilities. Discussing the socio-economic conditions of marine fisherfolk in Chapter 9, the author emphasises the need for making easy and sufficient institutional credit available to the fishermen for the purchase of fishing implements and for revitalisation of fishermen co-operatives to provide credit for production and marketing. Areas for future research and policy implications of the study highlight the need for diversification of fishing crafts and gears, deep-sea fishing, reduction of inter-group conflicts, improvement of marine fish marketing and the formation of a coastal zone development authority in each maritime state to look after integrated coastal area development.

The book is a useful addition to the fast developing field of fisheries economics. Those concerned with Fisheries Biology and Fish Population Dynamics will also find it useful. There are a few syntax errors which could be rectified in the subsequent editions. The strong database is appreciated.

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Social Structure and Change, Volume 4: Development and Ethnicity, Edited by A.M. Shah, B.S. Baviskar and E.A. Ramaswamy, Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1997. Pp. 261. Rs. 300.00.

A festschrift for Professor M.N. Srinivas is the primary motive for the series of social structure and change. One of the aspects of social change that Srinivas has reflected on is the effort of nation building. Ethnicity and development are of interest to him as they are the two processes that have positive potential for national integration and negative potential to disintegrate nations. According to him, the fundamental factor for the existence of Indian nation is the dual goals of reform and freedom pursued by the westernised elite. The reforms as pursued in the development agenda after Independence, according to him, lacks the normative commitment to equality and social justice. Without such a commitment it is bound to be politically explosive. While freedom as pursued in the nation building agenda

amounts to recognition and respect for the ethnic diversity of India. Without a normative commitment to one nation, 'runaway ethnicity' has the potential to disintegrate nations. Given these concerns of Srinivas, the ten articles contribute to elaborating the processes of development or ethnicity or both.

When agricultural development through green revolution does not take place, as in the case of southernmost Tamil Nadu, it accounts for a new form of social change. This, according to Pauline Kolenda, is conceptually better represented by the 'circulation of elite' paradigm rather than the Marxian paradigm of domination and class struggle.

Within the development paradigm, modernisation agenda promoted by the westernised elite, visualised bringing tribal groups in the national mainstream. Resistance by 'Todas', and acceptance by the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), are interesting narratives covered here. David Mandelbaum contends that attempts of modernisation of 'Todas' were in order to propagate a certain type of cultural hegemony, which was resisted by them as an ethnic group using 'modernity'. But to consider the entire Kerala State's population of 25 million as a homogeneous group accepting modernisation for a comparative analysis is conceptually problematic. A more nuanced account of the other ethnic groups within the state would have been more appropriate here. Contrasted against this, Sachchidananda illustrates the re-emergence of ethnicity in the form of reviving traditions, as a response to fight for equality and distributive justice in Chotanagpur region by the JMM. Thus they used 'modernity' to attain the goal of modernisation.

Development when visualised purely in terms of economic growth is problematic as pointed out by Chitra Sivakumar and S.S. Sivakumar, and G.S. Aurora at different levels. Models of development dominated by economists ignore the social and historical realities and hence such policies have disastrous results. But the former paper is rather confused related to the application of historical and participant observation methodologies as proactive planning strategy. Their application to improve an ex-post analysis of a situation to have better understanding is within the premises of liberal thought within which the methodologies have developed, but the prediction and subsequent control of human development process, is negated by these methodologies. Therefore, application of these methodologies for improving development policy raises moral ethical issues that need to be addressed, but is not done in the paper. That economic development leading to improvement in material conditions implies a shift from low energy consumption subsistence economies to high energy consuming economies that have negative ecological consequences as demonstrated by Aurora, is a point well taken. But the assumption that ecological equilibrium had existed, before the high energy consumption patterns were imposed on Arunachal Pradesh, is rather naive and simplistic. The ecological adaptation of human societies to their physical environment is full of struggles, dead ends and contestations.

As social movements cause social change, within the development paradigm, they assume importance. T.K. Oommen suggests a typology of social movements within a three-dimensional matrix of ideology, methodology of the movement, and the state response. Conceptually the paper is lucid and makes convincing arguments related to state response. He concludes it with a feedback loop, where state response in a democracy is in turn influenced by the response of the collectivity to the state action. But the use of environmental milieu to represent ideology and value is misleading. It needs to be qualified as cultural environment or social environment or world view. Promotion of co-operative movements

by the state occupies a cell in the conceptual matrix of Oommen, but the nuanced account of the growth and dynamics of the co-operatives in the two states of Maharashtra and Gujarat and the lucid comparative structural analysis of the complexity of development process by B.S. Baviskar indicate the importance of detailed studies.

Positive discrimination as strategy for economic development of backward classes is another aspect of the paradigm. Unpacking of the process behind caste as a criteria for identification of backward class is done by B.K. Roy Burman very lucidly, but the conclusion that the importance of reservation in government services is likely to decline seems far fetched, in the light of slowing down of the economic liberalisation and especially since 1998 international economic sanctions.

In line with Srinivas, S.C. Dube argues that social construction of tradition can be used instrumentally to construct ethnicity to promote nation building agendas. But the role of state also needs to be rethought in the light of raising ethnic tensions the world over, according to him. A sliding scale of inter-ethnic relations from domination to intolerance and conflict is constructed by him.

Conflict in three Asian countries of Malaysia, India and Sri Lanka have escalated due to economic stagnation as per V. Selvaratnam. He traces the origins of ethnicity to colonial policy of divide and rule. He suggests that it is on the rise because it is easier for the polity to cater to cultural aspirations than promoting economic growth. But the cause-effect relationship between economic growth and ethnic conflict is not very clearly spelt out.

To conclude, the volume makes an interesting reading. It does not overtly discuss any pre-determined relationship between development and ethnicity. It is possible to discuss such a relationship and the volume has enough material to explicate this, as it covers the theoretical and methodological issues of development and ethnicity in the process of nation building since Independence. Hopefully, the other dimension of development will be covered in some form in the other volumes.

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Farm Business Accounting, Joginder Singh, R.S.G. Publications, Ludhiana, 1995. Pp. 100. Rs. 95.00.

Unlike subsistence agriculture, modern agriculture came to increasing use market-purchased inputs such as fertilisers, seeds, pesticides, and various kinds of agricultural implements and thus has become more like a business. Obviously, it has become more costs-returns conscious; because along with the optimum selection of agricultural enterprises, subject to resource constraints, it is the cost management vis-a-vis the 'expected returns' that determines the profitability of a farm enterprise. This underscores the importance of farm business accounting.

In this relatively thin book under review, the author has made a business-like attempt to present, in an integrated manner, all issues relating to 'farm business accounting'. It spells out the goals of farm business under scarce resources having alternative uses; explains the stages involved in the decision-making and the factors influencing these decisions; gives the details of how to keep farm records; and also addresses the related questions. Again,

the record keeping is discussed in two stages: physical records, and financial records. There is a separate chapter on 'farm inventory', which explains the various points with mathematical illustrations. Then, on the basis of analysis of farm records, we get balance sheet with the classification of assets and liabilities, as also various ratios such as current, working, and net capital ratio. The discussion logically culminates in deriving a financial statement with the estimation of returns to various factors of production that are employed. It is gratifying to observe that while estimating the returns the author has used various 'cost concepts' that are currently applied in Indian agriculture.

The exercise is very useful to farmers as 'a guide' to farm business accounting inasmuch as it is full of tables and illustrations which further enhance its usefulness.

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Peasant Agriculture and Share Tenancy in Orissa: Examining the Neo-Classical and Marxist Approach, Mamata Swain, Commonwealth Publishers, New Delhi, 1998. Pp. xx+346. Rs. 575.00.

The subject of share tenancy has been a favourite topic of discourse for several decades. The issues have been (i) its dogged persistence and (ii) widespread prevalence under varied agro-economic situations, and (iii) its allocation efficiency. This book under review seeks to throw light on these issues among others.

The early wisdom on share tenancy, based on the writings of Adam Smith (1776) and Alfred Marshall (1920), was that share tenancy is an inefficient system (Basu, 1994, p. 4). The charge of inefficiency is however not the only one against share tenancy. It has a corollary according to which it is irrational for a landlord to lease out his land on share contract instead of a fixed rent contract or wage contract.

But by the seventies doubts began to arise. Instead of being committed to the Marshallian model of tenancy or its variants and treating rural landlords as irrational, economists began to re-think on their model. And from the mid-seventies the focus of the share tenancy literature has shifted over to showing why sharecropping may indeed be the dominant tenurial arrangement where it occurs (Basu, 1994, p. 4).

Several explanations are offered as to why share tenancy could be rational. Sharecropping is one mechanism through which owners of means of production acquire access to others' labour. Share tenancy is explained as a device to stabilise family income which is popularly known as the agricultural ladder hypothesis. It is a method of resource adjustment between two parties who have unequal resource endowments, and thereby makes production feasible. Under imperfect market conditions there are high transaction costs in rural markets because of risk, uncertainty, indivisibility, information asymmetry and moral hazard problems. According to Cheung (1969), a noted neo-classical economist, the choice of contractual arrangement is made so as to maximise the gain from risk dispersion subject to the constraint of transaction cost. Rao (1971) suggested that the choice between sharecropping and renting in agriculture is more closely tied to the provision of entrepreneurial ability than to the allocation of risk between landlords and tenants. Share tenancy can be construed as a

screening device by which the most efficient and entrepreneurial labourers will self-select themselves by entering into fixed rent contracts and the moderately efficient and the least efficient will opt for hiring out labour. The small farmer enters into tenancy transactions with a large holder who can advance production as well as consumption loans at the time of his need. The role of tenancy as a credit system has been emphasised by the classical writers including Adam Smith and Turgot.

Mamata Swain reviews briefly all these explanations in a succinct manner. Basu offers the limited liability axiom as an explanation of share tenancy. This axiom says, no matter what contract is used, the tenant has the right to renege on making payment if the harvest fails totally. Since such risk-taking will go against the landlord's interest, the landlord will try to devise a contract which steers the tenant to choose less risky projects and thereby minimises the tension between the landlord's and the tenant's interests (Basu, 1994, pp. 5-6).

But most of the preceding explanations which have their origin in the neo-classical writings ignore the socio-economic contexts in which the tenancy contracts are agreed upon. Economic rationality is isolated from the class dimension of a differentiated peasantry. Marx considers sharecropping as a form of transitory system and a method of surplus appropriation. The book under review gives a detailed account of Marxian explanation of share tenancy. The author cites from Bhaduri (1983), an eminent Marxist theoretician, who argues that class relations embody market relations and that exchange is a surface phenomenon of economic and social organisation of production. Involuntary involvement in the market results in a cumulative process of forced commerce and unequal exchange by inter-linking transactions in other markets like tenancy, produce, assets, labour and so on.

In the classical and Marxist approach the dynamics of the share contract have been emphasised by considering share contract as a stage in the movement of society from feudalism to capitalism.

After a close examination of the recent literature on share tenancy, Mamata Swain concludes that almost all of the studies have been framed in a narrow framework which can broadly be divided into three categories. The first category includes the studies by Bhaduri (1983), and Scott (1978), which consider share tenancy as an intra-village phenomenon and explain it in terms of prevailing relations of production which are exploitative in Bhaduri's framework, and are based on village subsistence ethics in Scott's analysis. The second category consists of historical studies where sharecropping is analysed in an historical perspective as a consequence of imperialist domination, i.e., as an offshoot of colonial exploitative policy which deindustrialised the colonial economy and created a large unemployed reserve army which led to the creation of an absentee landlord class and a varied layered tenant class. The third category of studies which are more numerous, explains share tenancy at the individual household level in terms of rational behaviour either in a competitive, monopolistic, game theoretical or principal agent framework. Thus the three categories of studies approach the problem from three levels, i.e., the village in the first, historical development in the second, the individual household in the third approach.

The primary objective of this study is to analyse the emerging trends in tenancy relationship in Orissa in recent years. The questions asked are: Is share tenancy a transitory phenomenon which will disappear with commercialisation of agriculture, or is it versatile enough to persist by adapting itself to the changing socio-economic conditions? Is it efficient

in comparison to fixed tenancy and owner cultivation? If it is inefficient, why doesn't the society get rid of it? In this study an attempt is made to examine the appropriateness of two approaches, i.e., the neoclassical and the Marxist to the problem of tenancy, reasons for its occurrence, its impact on the farm economy and its dynamics. The study is based on the findings of a survey of three villages in Orissa in the eastern region of India, an area which is known for its poverty and backwardness. The three villages are chosen from the view-point of level of advancement, the most advanced village, the moderately advanced village and the least advanced village or the backward village.

Mamata Swain reviews briefly the alternative theories of share tenancy, i.e., neoclassical theory and Marxian theory, and draws testable hypotheses from the theories relating to share tenancy and efficiency in Chapter 8 entitled 'Share Tenancy and Efficiency'. This chapter provides evidence from the field studies on various measures of efficiency by tenurial systems, i.e., for owner cultivators, part-tenants and pure tenants. Since the sample is small the difference between the three groups is tested by applying non-parametric test, i.e., Mann-Whitney test. A comparison of yield performance on owned and tenanted land does not provide conclusive evidence of inefficiency of tenancy in the advanced village. In the middle level village evidence is mixed and not conclusive. In the non-irrigated village there is no significant difference between owned and tenanted land. She finds no conclusive evidence on inefficiency if one considers allocative efficiency in a static set-up.

The testing of Marxian hypothesis with micro-level data provides some support to Bhaduri's assertion that share tenancy is a method of surplus extraction under the threat of survival.

Chapter 9 "Share Tenancy and Interlinkage" examines the applicability of neo-classical and Marxian approaches to interlinkage. Tenancy and interlinkages are found better explained by Marxian rather than by neo-classical approach, but enmeshed in a macro framework of changing power relation with respect to changes in macro variables like overall population growth, the unemployment rate, the rate of industrialisation, unbalanced regional development and the other economic factors like migration caused by overall development. She concludes that historical antecedents and the role of the state should also be integrated into the analysis to provide a holistic view.

The book is a good contribution to the literature on share tenancy and provides an excellent model of research which could be emulated by young scholars.

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Principles of Microeconomics, D.D. Tewari and Katar Singh, New Age International Pvt. Limited, New Delhi, 1996. Pp. xi+343. Rs. 170.00.

This book is a valuable addition to the stock of textbooks in the field of micro-economics. It is divided into six parts. Part I of the book introduces the reader to micro-economics subject matter, its usefulness and the limitations of economics sciences. The three chapters in Part II discuss elaborately consumer behaviour and demand analysis. Both numerical and mathematical exposition would help the reader to understand the subject matter clearly. Elasticity of demand and their application have been illustrated graphically as well as numerically. The elasticities have been derived using functional analysis clearly explaining the same. This should prove very useful to research students. Advanced topics in demand analysis have been covered in an exclusive chapter on it. This is where the reader would find this text different from other texts available in the market in India. Each of the chapters includes useful references at the end together with questions and exercises.

Part III deals with product costs and supply behaviour. The authors have discussed theory of production, costs and producers' behaviour. All these topics have been dealt with extensively, graphically and through functional analysis. Price determination under various foci of market structure has been discussed in three chapters in Part IV, viz., perfect competition and price monopoly; imperfect competition. The theory of factor markets is discussed in one chapter exclusively.

General equilibrium analysis and social welfare maximisation are discussed in Part V. One Chapter has been devoted to market failure and Government intervention. These topics have been given sketchy treatment. It seems that the authors wanted to expose students to this area which is normally not discussed in other text books.

The students have been exposed to many other topics. These include decision-making under risk. Various risk models have been discussed in a brief manner. Time preference theories have been summarily discussed.

Finally, four appendices have been attached introducing the students to basic knowledge of calculus, linear programming and some econometric concepts that are essential to go through the book. This textbook will prove helpful to the students to understand micro-economic theory as they proceed solving some numerical exercises and attempting to answer the questions raised at the end of each chapter. The text has been made comprehensible. Students going through the text should have grasped the matter discussed in appendices. The book has been written in a systematic and methodical way.

The authors need to be congratulated for this attempt. It is after a long time that a textbook of this nature has been put out in the market for Indian post-graduate students within a reasonable price range.

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