

Shorter Notices

Peter Knorringa. *Economics of Collaboration: Indian Shoemakers between Market and Hierarchy.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 219 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 295.00.

Having a durable relationship with major clients is a significant asset for an entrepreneur. This aspect is often ignored or undervalued by scholars in economics. This book emphasises the less tangible but crucial aspects of economic relations such as informal control, professional collaboration, interdependency, and trust. It is argued that business relations founded on these elements are long-lasting and have more capacity to cope with the pressures of change.

This book is divided into two parts. In Part I, the author argues that small-scale enterprises should not be studied in isolation as they stand a much better chance of survival as an interdependent part of a larger chain. Further, it is elaborated how the understanding of vertical economic relations can improve by including trust and the extent of professional collaboration as explanatory variables. A unique analytical framework is developed which uses elements of transaction-cost economics, socio-economics, and network theory to demonstrate producer-trader relations in vertical marketing. In Part II, a detailed field study of producer-trader relations in the footwear industry in Agra is reported. Institutional settings of this industry are highlighted and it is explained how these settings hinder professional collaboration and shape the objectives of individual entrepreneurs. With its unusual focus, this book adds a new theoretical perspective to the study of small-scale production in non-factory settings.

C. T. Kurien. *Rethinking Economics: Reflections Based on a Study of the Indian Economy.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 272 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 335.00.

There is general agreement that the role of economic theory is to analyse economic problems, and to aid economic policy. But there have been instances where the very nature of economic theory has prevented it from performing this role. This book identifies the real essentials of the economy and provides insights into the kind of changes required in economic theory in order to make it more responsive to real-life problems.

After studying different aspects of the Indian economy for four decades, the author utilises the experience to critically examine the basic presuppositions of economic theories, including the utility-maximising individual as the primary unit of analysis and the centrality granted to the notion of equilibrium, pointing out that these ignore spatio-temporal specificities and the social relationships that contextualise the individual. It is argued that these limitations of neoclassical theory distort real-life economic problems. Further, it is explained that these are the outcome of pioneering efforts which shape economics along the lines of Newtonian physics; the later theorists have followed the same tradition. An alternative concept is presented in this book, one in which the economy is viewed as an evolving and complex social system. This alternative approach treats groups of individual human beings organised as communities through institutional arrangements as the primary unit of the economy. The units-and-works approach is used to identify those essential features of the economy that differentiate it from other social relationships.

This book will be useful to those who want to understand the meaning of economics as well as for those concerned with economic theory and economic sociology.

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Vineeta Hoon. *Living on the Move: Bhotiyas of the Kumaon Himalayas.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 254 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 345.00.

All around the world the impact of decreasing resources and increasing population is felt most by the people living on the margins of society—politically, economically, and ecologically. This book is about transhumant and nomadic communities which live in a harsh mountain environment, with relatively low productivity levels, and in relative isolation.

The Bhotiyas of Kumaon are taken as an example to describe how communities practising nomadism and transhumance all over the world are in a state of transition. Their traditional lifestyles and cultural values—and how they are still able to maintain themselves despite the intrusion of the forces of modernisation and global politics—are explained. A unique feature of this study is that it considers the Bhotiyas own perceptions of their needs and how these are fulfilled by the use of the primary resources of time, space, and energy. Simple diagrams are used to show the inter-relationship among these three variables. In conclusion, it is argued that transhumant and nomadic communities are in a fragile state, and that external factors are largely responsible for this. There is a need for appropriate strategies and policies to avoid any danger of imminent collapse. This book has, thus, provided some unusual insights for anthropologists, sociologists, and environmentalists who deal with nomadic communities in general.

T. Nirmala Devi. *Population and Development in SAARC.* New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1996. 140 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 160.00.

There exists a complex and varied relationship between population and development. Trends in population growth influence socio-economic processes and development, which, in turn, influence population growth and its structure. Population growth is of great concern in the SAARC countries. Many studies have evaluated family planning programmes in the region, but this study attempts to collect, for the first time in a systematic manner, all the available information concerning population parameters of the SAARC countries and their detrimental effect on socio-economic development.

With the help of a large quantity of information collected from different sources, it assesses the negative externalities of population growth to understand its implications for education, health, employment, and the environment. Multiple-regression techniques are used to analyse the association between social and economic variables as well as demographic variables. The population policies of individual SAARC countries are also evaluated and their weaknesses are identified. In conclusion, some major policy implications are provided.

Hossain Zillur Rehman and Mahabub Hossain. *Rethinking Rural Poverty: Bangladesh as a Case Study.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1994. 307 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 325.00.

Widespread and acute rural poverty remains the single most important feature of much of the developing world. Viewing poverty as a multi-dimensional reality, and taking Bangladesh as a case study, this book highlights many aspects of poverty as a condition and as a process.

This volume has seventeen essays based on a nationwide household survey. An important feature of these essays is the economic analysis of rural poverty which has been extended in several new directions, most notably in the analysis of routine crisis, ecological reserves, differentiation of the poor, and the political economy of poverty-alleviation. Using primary data, the methodological problems of rural poverty research are evaluated and many innovative contributions in the use of self-evaluations by the rural poor are offered. It is argued throughout that one has to see the poor not as passive clients for assistance, but as social actors whose initiative and labour power can serve as a great asset in the struggle against poverty.

Ashish Kothari, Neena Singh, and Saloni Suri. *People and Protected Areas: Towards Participatory Conservation in India.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 276 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 350.00.

Public support is needed to protect India's enormous diversity of wild plants and animals. Conservation policies have succeeded in stemming the environmental destruction to some extent but, at the same time, have created enemies of the people who have historically been the strongest conservationists: traditional forest and wetland dependent communities. The contributions in this book explore possible ways of resolving the conflicts between conservationists and local communities. The focus is on the vast network of national parks and sanctuaries in India, which not only contain a significant part of the country's surviving ecosystems and wildlife, but also serve as the home and livelihood base for several million people. The general thrust throughout the book is on participatory management of protected areas as one possible way of involving local communities in wildlife conservation.

The first two parts discuss various aspects of participatory management, including its problems and prospects, legal and policy implications, and institutional and procedural issues. In the third part, some specific proposals are presented for the participatory management of protected areas. In the final part, the experience of participatory management around the world is used to draw lessons for India. This book provides useful insights for environmentalists and for those engaged with conserving wildlife and biodiversity.

Shalini Bharat. *Family Measurement in India.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 319 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 395.00.

This comprehensive book is the outcome of a growing realisation among family researchers in India of the need to draw attention to the methodology that deals with research on the family. It examines the status of major issues related to family measurement in India.

The volume is divided into two parts. Part I consists of 12 selected papers in which contributors review critically the existing standardised measures and the material on family-related topics. They present an overview of current approaches to family measurement within the social science disciplines. While bringing together the perspectives of both researchers and practitioners, a shift from purely quantitative to a qualitative approach to family assessment is recommended, and stress is laid on the need for developing indigenous multidisciplinary and culturally appropriate approaches to understand the family. Some of the contributors argue in favour of measurement techniques within a given theoretical and conceptual framework while others point to the importance of incorporating a gender-sensitive perspective when constructing tools. The second part compiles abstracts of 94 indigenous standardised instruments for assessing various aspects related to family and marriage in India.

This pioneering work for examining measurement issues in family research in India would be interesting for those in the fields of sociology, demography, psychology, and social science methodology.

Susan S. Wadley. *Struggling with Destiny in Karimpur, 1925–1984.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 299 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 395.00.

This book is a portrait of an Indian village, Karimpur. It describes changes in agriculture, labour relations, politics, education, and the family over a period of six years. All the details are based on the personal viewpoints of the villagers. There is a contrast between the views of men and women, the rich and the poor, the high and the low caste. With the help of cultural documents, songs and stories, as well as data on household budgets and farming practices, the author has explained the difference between men

and women as well as between the rich and the poor. It has also been demonstrated that women and members of low-caste are equal so far as subordination is concerned.

In recent years, the situation has changed considerably towards greater complexity. Media is playing an important role in their lives. Educated residents have moved out of the village for employment. The poor have begun to rebel against the landlords and, in the family, the sons and daughters-in-law against the strong head. They have lost their traditional values. This unavoidable change has created problems for them and they are struggling hard to cope with them.

Sumi Krishna. *Environmental Politics: People's Lives and Development Choices*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 303 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 350.00.

In less than two decades, environmental advocacy has matured very rapidly, from protest against environmental damage to questions about the character and course of development. This thought-provoking book is an in-depth inquiry into why Indian environmentalism has not yet had a greater impact on people's lives or on development policy.

The book is structured in three parts. In Part I, the stress is on the heterogeneity of the environmental movement as it encompasses diversity of views and ideological positions. Different environmental approaches and strategies are examined. In Part II, the author challenges several ideological assumptions relating to environmental issues and questions the effectiveness of environmentalism in dealing with such complex problems as population growth, technological choice, and conflict over the use of resources. Finally, Part III, examines how the rhetoric and the myths of environmentalism evolve. It is recommended that environmentalism should be directed towards a broader agenda aimed at progressive changes in the structure of society. The argument that environmentalism should extend the range of choice to the poor is also highlighted.

This book will be extremely useful for institutions, development policy planners, professionals, and researchers dealing with environmental issues.

Marshall Wolfe. *Elusive Development*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 198 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 280.00.

This book is an exploration of the process of development. The author has reviewed this process over the last four decades and expresses his scepticism about all currently fashionable ideological and technical theories, and recommendations for humanity at large and for the state in general. The thrust here is not to demolish what has been said or done in the name of development but to point out the existing approach to development as a "Sisyphean task of trying to impose a measure of value-oriented rationality on realities that will remain permanently recalcitrant to such rationality" (p.10). And this is because the main actors involved (state, social group, development agencies, individual experts or market) can never be assumed to be either helpful or consistently rational.

After elaborating "why elusive development?" in the first chapter, in the rest of the book the author examines different views explaining the meaning of development. These include the search for a unified approach; the crisis of state and the role of other actors in development; practical difficulties in targeting the poor; the impact of new agendas like environmental concerns, human rights, gender, population growth, and the probability of frequent changes in future when the contradictory factors of the centre and the periphery interact.