

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Locational Analysis in Agricultural Geography

BY RAINA J. L.

Pointer Publishers, Jaipur, p. 146, Rs. 145, 1989

After von Thunen's classic work on the Location of agricultural land use zones, 'Der Isolierte staat. . . .' was published in 1826, many scholars have contributed to the problem of locational analysis in agricultural geography. Many empirical studies followed which supported, rejected or modified Thunen's ideas.

In the present book under review, the author has applied Thunen's model and tested the hypothesis, analysing the landuse patterns in Jammu district of Jammu & Kashmir state. First chapters describe the physical background, systems of irrigation, distribution of crops and the factors affecting the distribution of crops in the study area. Next two chapters explain in detail the von Thunen's model and its application in other parts of the world. Chapters 7, 8 and 9 form the core of the study.

The author has carried out a landuse study of 137 villages in order to analyse the impact of distance from urban settlement on the intensity of landuse and cropping pattern, as well as the impact of the irrigation facilities and intensity of

irrigation on double cropping and the type of crops to be grown. For this he has considered 1) Zoning around the urban settlement of Jammu, (2) Zoning around the Ranbir canal and (3) Zoning on the basis of number of tubewells. The author observes that the intensity of land use does not show any relationship with the distance from the settlements. It is mainly the availability of irrigation facilities which influences the location of the crops.

The author further tests the model at the village level. Also an attempt is made to test the weightage assessment matrix as devised by Prof. Shafi. The author concludes that besides irrigation facilities, other factors like soil fertility, technology, crop preferences of different castes etc. also influence the cropping pattern.

This book would certainly prove useful to the research workers who are interested in the problem of location of agricultural landuse. The book is well organised, with good cartographic work.

V. S. Datye

### Rural Settlements: A Cultural Ecological Perspective

SAVITA ANAND SHARMA,

Inter-India Publications, 1986, New Delhi, Rs. 225/- pp. 214.

Since India still lives in her villages, Ms. Savita Anand Sharma's contribution in the area of rural settlements is especially

significant. Using the concept of cultural ecology, a serious attempt has been made to explore the lesser studied attributes of

rural settlements, viz. the processes of settling, pattern of folk-houses and farmsteads, and the field types. The major focus of the book is aimed at providing a holistic view of the forces which operate in the transformation of the natural landscape into a cultural one, in the context of simpler agrarian societies. The underlying assumption being that in different ecologies, different cultures set into motion diverse culture-ecological processes, to create a corresponding wide spectrum of cultural landscapes, which would find expression in the rural (settlement) landscape patterns.

In the introduction, the author briefly summarises the personality of the study area and the methodology adopted, while spelling out the hypotheses which require validation, Ms. Sharma chooses a single district-Solan-in the lesser Himalaya to verify the various assumptions made and questions raised. Her main argument in defending her choice of area is that though compact, the region possesses remarkable physical and cultural diversity, by virtue of its location at the tri-junction of three states — Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

The ten chapters which make the book have been arranged in two separate sections. Chapters one to six, in section

A, deal with generalisations and prepare the necessary background, while impressing upon the reader, the importance of the different elements of rural settlements. In section B, with the help of detailed and empirical surveys, conducted for five uni-clan settlements, belonging to Brahmins, Gujar and Kanetes, the three major culture/caste groups in the area, Ms Sharma examines the validity of the various assumptions made earlier. Paying attention to the minutest detail, Ms. Sharma painstakingly and with remarkable skill unravels the evolutionary processes operating in the formation of the culture-landscape. The author is alive to the processes of cultural landscape, — and that is her forte — as is clear from her sensitive portrayal of the inter play of culture and ecology in shaping the unique features of rural settlements observed in the area.

In the overall analysis the book is bound to attract the attention of both, the serious student, as well as the casual reader, who is looking for a well conceived, documented and penetrating survey of rural settlements, in the lesser Himalayan realm. written in a cogent and racy style. The extensive bibliography cited in the text should be valuable to those whose interest lies in cultural geography, though the maps unfortunately have lost clarity in reduction.

Jaymala Diddee

### Disha Guides : MADRAS

Orient Longman, VIII + 166 pp. (includes maps and gazetteer), Price Rs. 15.-

This is perhaps the first of the series of the 'Disha Guides' planned by Orient Longman, as it is clear from the absence of any mention of any other 'guide' any where in the book. This little booklet though intended for a tourist is a mine of information. Elegantly brought out, it gives a brief history of the city growth in the introduction and includes informa-

tion on a variety of themes like transport, conducted tours, museums and library, art sports, shopping, restaurants, accommodation, annual events and travel. The booklet does not confine itself to Madras city, but talks equally of the places of interest, towns and monuments on different routes followed in a tour of Tamilnadu. Thus there is a description