

icy which, due to vested interests of political groups has been relegated to the background and that too at a time when rapid population growth is the single-most important problem facing the country and which has consistently nullified the benefits of growth in the Indian economy from filtering down to the vast sections.

The book contains some excellent papers by acknowledged experts in their respective fields which makes it a useful source reference to

those looking for a more holistic picture of the problems emanating from rapid population growth and its wider implications for developed countries.

At Rs. 350/- the book is somewhat overpriced and one would expect a better quality publication - atleast a more attractive get-up : which reminds one of the old adage : judge not the book by its cover because delving deeper can be quite a rewarding experience as this reviewer has found out.

Urbanisation : Trends, Perspectives and Challenges

Edited by JAYMALA DIDDEE AND VIMLA RANGASWAMY

Published by Institute of Indian Geographers, Distributors Rawat Publications, 1993. pp. 238,
Price Rs. 300/-

Reviewers generally find it difficult to review edited volumes which include a large number of papers on disparate themes. Happily, this first number in the thematic series of the Institute of Indian Geographers (IIG) does not pose this problem. The editors have done well in arranging the contributions in four sections, each devoted to a particular dimension of urbanisation.

Section I deals with the urbanisation scenario in the Third World. Section II focuses on the Indian urban context; section III is devoted to some vital dimensions of Indian urbanisation; and section IV draws attention to the urbanisation experience of some selected countries outside the Third World.

Urbanisation studies in social science research have by now reached a point of maturity. Beginning with urban historians significant contributions have also been made by demog-

raphers and urban sociologists. The geographers' foray into this domain is also quite significant which is clearly reflected in the research trends in population and urban geography. The initiative taken by the IIG in bringing out the present volume also bears a testimony to not only the importance of urbanisation as a theme of inquiry but also the focussed attention it has received from Indian as well as foreign scholars. While the editors have carefully arranged the articles on the basis of overriding perspectives into sections, this is not indicated in the contents. Also (because of the anxiety of the editors to bring out the volume as per schedule !) there is error in page numbers indicated against each article.

Considering the tremendous labour which must have gone into the writing of individual papers contributed to this volume, it may be useful to examine the contents in more detail. Shrestha

and Truman have presented an excellent historical overview of Third World urbanisation highlighting the nature of urban growth in the pre-colonial period, the attendant distortions, various interventions through the planning process in the post-colonial era and the impact of imported industrialisation on urbanisation. R. B. Singh has presented a comparative view of regional dimension of urbanisation in Latin America, Asia and the Pacific relating these with the process of development in these regions. Swapna Banerjee's write up is concerned with the process of underdevelopment and the emergence of a vast urban informal sector in the Third World Countries. An incisive critique of the strategy proposed by the National Commission on Urbanisation has been presented by Shekhar Mukherji highlighting the conceptual and methodological shortcomings. Some of the neglected dimensions of Indian urbanisation have been examined by Gopal Krishan and Nina Singh using a political-economy perspective—a refreshing treatment indeed. Equally interesting is the evaluation of the gender dimension in a spatial - historical context. K. D. Sharma examines the cantonment towns as 'islands of serenity' in the otherwise chaotic urbanisation stream. The urgency of working out a rational strategy for meeting the growing demand for water in the metropolitan cities of India has

been highlighted by Daksha C. Barai. On the basis of a detailed comparative study of two towns in Gujarat, Anjana P. desai and Ami U. Rawal have raised some vital issues related with regional planning. The impact of land rights and housing policies in urban planning as a strategy for space management in East Asia is the central theme presented by Denis. And lest we get obsessed with India and the Third World we are rescued. Tracing the evolution of urbanisation in Australia Chris Maher views it with optimism for the continent's future.

Henk Meijer examines the changing strategy in Netherlands and, in particular, points out the failings in various policy documents in this regard.

The book is indeed a welcome addition for the teachers and students alike. The absence of maps in the volume would disturb geographers unless the editors have some convincing reason other than the cost factor. Or is it signal that we must now look beyond maps and patterns and come to grips with the intricate interplay of processes operating to create these patterns?

—Swarnjit Mehta
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Coastal Geomorphology of Konkan

edited by SHRIKANT KARLEKAR

Aparna Publications, 4 "Ankur", 573/4 Bibwewadi, Pune 411 037, 1993, 325 p., Rs. 125/-.

This collection of fifteen papers, including three by the editor, is the outcome of a sustained research effort in coastal geomorphology by Dr S. Karlekar and his students. The papers deal with varied landforms of the

Konkan coast between the Dharmatar creek in the north and Ratnagiri in the south. With approximately the same number of studies in each area, they center around three coastal stretches : the Jaigarh creek in the south,