

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Electoral Geography of India* by S.K. Dikshit, Vishwavidyalaya Prakashan, VARANASI,  
1993, pp. 136, maps & appendices, price Rs.250/-

The book is an admirable effort by the author to examine the voting preferences in parliamentary elections of India as an electoral response to Socio-economic attributes of a region, related to the composition and quality of its electorate.

The three introductory chapters, viz i) Geography of Elections, ii) Political Geographical Background, and iii) Constituency and Party system, are a useful prologue to those not quite conversant with Indian electoral system and provide the background and set the tone of the book.

Taking parliamentary constituencies as spatial units, Dikshit has analysed the results of the sixth & seventh Lok Sabha elections in terms of the seats won and lost by different national and regional outfits which are explained correlating them with the demographic attributes of the population. In so doing, the author has adopted a simple correlation technique, regressing one dependent variable, i.e. electoral performance against a single independent variable. This raises many questions, the most

significant of which is the assessment of the relative importance of each variable and the extent to which it explains the variance. A factorial analysis should have proved more rewarding.

The book contains a lot of statistical information and the approach is essentially statistical, where an extremely elongated scatter in a narrow vertical band makes the results suspect and the plotting of residuals less meaningful. The reviewer is of the opinion that an outright discarding of the qualitative process oriented historical approach has detracted from the quality of the work. An exhaustive bibliography and the listing of constituencies will be of use to the researchers who are working in the area of electoral geography.

In an overall assessment, the book is a sincere effort and carries the stamp of dedicated hard work of a young geographer. The book will be undoubtedly useful to those who would like to be introduced to parliamentary elections in India.

*Dryland Farming in India : Constraints and Challenges*(ed) J. L. Raina, Pointer Publishers  
Jaipur, 1994 pp.34. Price Rs. 500/-.

The book has resulted from putting together of sixteen essays, more than half of which are written by geographers. The book opens with the essay 'Dry land farming in India : Past, Present & Future' written by R.P. Singh. The

paper talks of many things & virtually equates Dryland farming with rainfed or non irrigated farming. A.K. Gupta focusses his attention on the perception of the scientists and the constraints of dryland farming. The paper