BOOK REVIEW

GEOGRAPHY OF CROWDING AND HUMAN RESPONSE

by

K. M. Kulkarni

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pp. 151, Figs. 23, Maps & Diagrams 26, Tables 26, Appendices, Bibliography

In this study, the author has explored a field of Urban Geography, which badly awaits research. The study area is Ahmedabad city. It is a well-formulated research design, which starts with a discreet use of secondary data, selection of sample areas to represent "high", "moderate" and "low" density categories, statement of hypothesis, two level sampling (house and wardwise) with the help of questionnaire and field observations and data processing and analysis of data by competent use of quantitative methods.

The author has clearly defined the concepts of "crowding", which means "the number of animate and inanimate objects per unit area" and "crowding", which denotes "the nature of concentration over space, with various aspects, such as, physical, social, economic and psychological." The author has involved indicators for each of these aspects.

Four aspects, such as, urban crime, infectious diseases, literacy and levels of density and sense of crowding. The author has made a comparative study of the walled city and the outer areas – the industrial east and the residential-cum-cultural western part. His main findings are: densities have a positive association with upper house population, size of household and family proportion; highest concentration is in the walled city; labour force dwells in the slum areas of the industrial eastern part; these findings accord with one's general perception. What is interesting is that the crowded wall city is better in literacy and social amenities. Communal tensions and petty crimes are common in the walled city; infectious diseases are more prevalent in the labour residential areas of the east.

As regards the sense of crowding experienced by the residents, ground and first floor and increased number of families lead to this feeling. Children's education is better in "moderately" crowded areas. Two important findings are:

1) the larger the size of the family, the greater is the feeling of crowding and

2) crowded localities use the outer space of pavement and streets for sleeping and even washing.

The overall picture presented by the author is that crowding is taken as a way of life and the residents get adjusted to it and that if at all the crowded locality people desire a shift of residence, it is to the better organised western part of the city.

These important findings are significant in the similar studies of urban dwellers and their attitudes are necessary for other Indian cities and in planning a policy decision. The study helps to know what are the scales of preferences of the dwellers in their civic needs.

The author's attempt to quantify data necessarily related to psychology of perception is bold though it could be further refined. His study amply shows how the living core of the Indian city is totally different from that of western city. With its neatly drawn maps, useful tables and clear expression, the book comes as a useful study for the advanced students, the town planners and the policy makers.

P. R. KARMARKAR

GEOMORPHOLOGY OF THE RAVI RIVER

by

B. S. Marh

(1986)

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Himalayan geology is an old established branch of geology that the Indian geologists have been cultivating for well over a hundred years. In their research there are scattered discussions on some aspects of physio graphy which for want of a systematic discipline could not be considered by them as geomorphological findings. Yet they raised issues which are fundamentally geomorphological in nature and which could, legitimately, be considered as constituting the foundation of what later emerged as Himalayan geomorphology. Himalayan geomorphology is not merely regional geomorphology. The Himalayan geomorphic landscape is the creation of an extremely complex set of endogenous and exogenous processes operating on a vast range of lithological formations. Literally, all the known geomorphic agents and related geomorphic processes, structures, and tectonic movements have been involved in different times and places in the evolution of the Himalayan geomorphic landscape. The Himalayan context, however, has been so radically different from other settings that the Himalayan geomorphology cannot be interpreted simply as the modification of universal geomorphic evolution model by the Himalayan context. The Himalayan geomorphology is a member of the genre of mountain geomorphology but more significantly, these are some of the youngest folded mountains, not older than middle Miocene, they constitute the domain of sedimentaries, and they are subject to midlatitude high mountain climates made more complex by the effects of monsoon airmasses. The Himalayan geomorphology is truly Himalayan in dimension.

Three agents, river, glacier, and wind, have produced the Himalayan geomorphic landscape. Its complexity arises from their conterminous (contemporaneous and coterminous) operation even though their spatial and temporal domains can be easily charted out and distinguished. Of the three the Himalayan rivers have no spatial or temporal specificities. There is no part of the entire Himalayan cordillera that does not bear the imprint of its rivers. The rivers have not been the mute witnesses of the colossal transformation experienced by the Himalayas. In their character can be discovered the essential lineaments of the evolution of the Himalayan geomorphic landscape. In every sense the rivers have been the participant witnesses responding in a dynamic pattern to the Himalayan convulsions. Terraces,