

This book discusses important developments emerging around the land question in India in the context of India's neoliberal economic development and its changing political economy. It covers many issues that have been impinging the political economy in land and livelihoods in India since the 1990s, examining the land question from diverse methodological standpoints. Most of the chapters rely on evidence generated through primary surveys in different parts of the country. The book, via its diversity of approaches and methodologies, brings out new and hitherto unexplored and/or less researched issues on the emerging land question in India. The range of issues addressed in the volume encompasses contemporary developments in the political economy of land, land dispossession, SEZs, agrarian changes, urbanisation and the drive for the commodification of land across India. The authors also examine role of the state in promoting the capitalist transformation in India and continuities and changes emerging in the context of land liberalisation and market-friendly economic reforms.

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'land' as a resource and as a commodity, the institutional histories of land management have also created specific challenges for developing an equitable and efficient land policy. Land is also a source of power and wealth in many rural, agrarian contexts. The legacies of unequal access to and control over land are being renewed under the new circumstances, often leading to adverse consequences for traditionally marginalised groups. With the consolidation of neoliberal ideas, the power relations that govern and mediate access to land, mainly through the state institutions, have undergone significant changes. As governments compete with each other to attract domestic and internal capital, the ability to provide land cheaply, with reduced transaction costs, and without much delay has emerged as a critical aspect of being attractive to capital. The challenge of meeting the expectations of capital in an electoral democracy, where those who are involuntarily displaced from their land or livelihoods also have a voice, is formidable. The studies included in this book attempt to explore the unravelling of these questions in India in specific regional contexts.

Most of these studies were initially presented and discussed at a seminar in 2017 at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla. We express our gratitude to the authorities and the staff of the institute for providing us with all the necessary support. The conversations around the theme of land and livelihood continued in the following months, and the chapters have been revised and updated for the volume. We are immensely thankful to the authors who have contributed to the edited volume for their patience and support throughout the process of developing this volume. We are grateful to Prof. Raju Das, York University, Toronto, and the anonymous referees of Palgrave Macmillan whose insightful comments on previous drafts have been helpful to revise the chapters. We appreciate the editorial and academic support of Mr. Krishna Surjya Das, a research scholar at the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, JNU.

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The Gendered Transformation of Land Rights and Feminisation of Hill Agriculture in Arunachal Pradesh: Insights from Field Survey

Vandana Upadhyay

1 INTRODUCTION

The land tenure system in the hill areas of India's north eastern region, inhabited mostly by the tribal population, is significantly different from the system that is prevalent in the plain areas of the region. Like most other parts of India, in the plains of north east region too individual rights over land holdings are transferable and buying and selling of rights is normally not restricted. However, this is not the case in the hill areas where individual rights over land have not taken the form of full property rights in the sense that there are certain restrictions imposed on the transfer of these rights, if not practically possible (Bezbaruah 2007; Mishra 2015b; Mishra and Upadhyay 2017). The non-transferability of holding rights makes the land unsuitable as collateral for the purpose of securing institutional credit to land holders, which in turn acts as a constraint on the

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