

## Book Reviews

### I

**AnnaLee Saxenian (2007) *The New Argonauts: Regional Advantage in a Global Economy*, ISBN 9780674025660**

The *New Argonauts: Regional Advantage in a Global Economy* is a work which started from the interest in development of regional economies. It can be traced back to the research done by two important scholars (Piore & Sabel, 1984) who made an effort to discuss about the mass production system in early 20th century United States and its postwar emulation in other developing countries. This further paved the way for research interest about the economic development of special industrial districts like Third Italy, Germany's Baden-Württemberg and Silicon Valley in US. It is from this chain of research, the author of this book did her early research on aspects of regional economic development and production networks in Silicon valley and Boston's route 128 (Saxenian, 1991; Saxenian, 1994). The important part which contextualizes the interest and its further cascading effect on other cross-country regional economic development was the unanticipated dynamism of these industrial districts. Since then the importance to study and understand regional economic development started to get more academic attention. Further the work done by Michael Porter (Porter, 1998) related to regional economies and clusters provided more scope in this area for understanding interconnected nature of specific industries in terms of specialized parts, products, skills, information and its linkages to entrepreneurship and innovation. The author mentions the lack of concern by economists and policy makers about small firms, specific regional economic perspectives and entrepreneurship which provided the impetus for research in this area.

It is interesting to find in the book that author has combined several theoretical frameworks and used them in the context of economic anthropology. The term economic anthropology is important here since author has traced the root of the development of different regional cities and the role played by Chinese, Taiwanese, Israeli and Indian diaspora. Here as discussed in the first paragraph the discussion of regional

economic development is contextualized in terms of important role played by networks of diaspora in their native as well as host countries. How ethnic ties, cultural closeness and interactions in Silicon Valley helped Chinese, Taiwanese, Israelis and Indians to form different associations and groups to work together and to help people coming from their native countries. Concepts of regional economic development, supply chain clusters, knowledge networks, organizational and industry structure is used to understand the Silicon Valley model and four other cities Hsinchu, Shanghai, Tel Aviv and Bangalore. Further these concepts are discussed and studied keeping the new Argonauts in the center.

In this context the rise of Silicon Valley was studied as a regional economic success, which became a hub for computer software, hardware and semiconductors industry for the entire world and was the basis for cross-country regional economic development. Here four important cities Tel Aviv, Israel, Hsinchu, Taiwan, Shanghai, China and Bangalore, India come into the picture of the study. The regional economic development of these cities with help of the new Argonauts is the main focus area of the study. Author calls the new Argonauts small number of highly educated and trained immigrant professionals of science and engineering who studied in United States and worked mainly in Silicon Valley for many years. They returned to their native countries when there was economic slowdown in US in 1980s, and found more economic opportunities in their native countries and when US stock market corrections took place in 2001. The author also mentions that apart from these reasons related to lure of better lifestyle, cultural closeness and desire of more recognition attracted them to their native countries.

It is what the author calls brain drain to brain circulation, which holds an important aspect to understand the role played by these new Argonauts. This was done with help of their ethnic professional networks by having formal and informal communications, cultural background, knowledge of different cultures & societies which they used in establishing of firms and startups in their native countries. This process of brain drain to brain circulation provides advantage to these people since they work in two countries, constantly travel and always have complex knowledge and information of multiple markets. This makes the new Argonauts like hybrid entrepreneurs who have information & knowledge of multiple geographies; they are related to a network of professional community who are from their

immigrant and native countries having inter-country, inter-cultural and inter-generational knowledge. This could also be understood with help of institutional economic with the analysis of networks of relationships which entrepreneurs have within a firm and outside a firm, this helps their mental models to take economic decisions which would be based on this knowledge and information (Coase, 2007; North, 1993). It is also related fundamentally to what author calls as social structure of the new Argonauts which is derived from the learning and knowledge which takes place in the work culture of Silicon Valley and includes decentralized and fragmented business, constant information flow, collaboration and learning from failures. Entrepreneurship and firms in Silicon Valley are catered by these factors which constantly provide a rapid source of economic change. Here the role of local professional community is important, with reference to this the author mentions about the formation of professional associations and alumni networks prominently by Chinese and Indians. How these professional networks (CIE, SIPA, TiE) helped these returning entrepreneurs to establish business in their native countries.

Author connects formation of these professional and ethnic networks and association as one of the important factors playing role in return of these engineers from USA to their native countries. It marks as a reentry point of these engineers through and using the platform of these associations in their native countries. These associations provided necessary information and business intelligence to returning engineers who wanted to setup their own startups. Entrepreneurship and startups marks an important aspect related to new Argonauts and development of the regional technology hubs like Tel Aviv, Hsinchu, Shanghai and Bangalore. But there are other important factors which author discuss as simultaneously playing important role in development of these technology hubs and also shows without these measures returning Argonauts would have not been able to achieve much what they were able to achieve.

These important factors are related to role of government policy, economic measures, clusters of supply chain, education and investment in R&D and encouragement for entrepreneurship. This could be well related to development of security and military communication entrepreneurship in Tel Aviv, Hsinchu Science Park, Shanghai technology hub and software development in Bangalore. Here the case of native social and cultural background of these new Argonauts matters for example, Israel due to its

security requirements has made compulsory provisions for military training of its citizens. This could be understood that why many of the returnee Israeli engineers started firms related to military electronic communications and security. The context of the background of Taiwan's computer gaming industry is also important to understand the development supply chain clusters in Taiwan. Here the role of government, private firms, R&D firms, universities, financial systems, legal systems, supply chain all worked together to provide the necessary ground for the new Argonauts in Israel, Taiwan and China with exception of India. So without the presence of this complex actor-network mechanism much would have not been possible in these cities, it can be understood by some questions why Hsinchu Science Park failed initially? Why did Silicon valley bank and investment firms move to these cities? What other factors hampered the returning entrepreneurs? These questions are connected to the essentially to the factors related to organization of capital markets and financial systems, development of venture capitalism, international investment and co-ordination of various local institutions to work together for the development these cities. How family based financing and support of Israeli army help returning Israeli entrepreneurs to setup their firms. How in Taiwan introduction of venture capitalist in Hsinchu Science Park changed the game, rigid economic system hampered returning Chinese entrepreneurs. How in India linkages between government, universities, private firms, R&D institutes and private investments hampered entrepreneurship from the very beginning and still does to a great extent.

But as author discusses the case of these countries more specifically Taiwan, China and India she has posed an important question that why Silicon Valley will always remain a technological leader? This question is related to the historical nature of business and market functioning of Silicon Valley and the connection it has with these cities as regional technology hubs. Taiwan became the source of manufacturing and production of hardware and Integrated Circuits (ICs) for Silicon Valley firms and big American computer firms like Dell, IBM, Apple and HP. As manufacturing of semiconductors and computers was shifted from Taiwan to China in terms of cost advantages foreign companies carried the same nature of manufacturing and production collaborations in China. The case of Indian software industry is also same as it from the very beginning catered to the demands and business requirements of foreign clients. Bangalore became a hub of cost affective source of high level software products. These points

relate to the fact that it is Silicon Valley and western business that is deriving and sustaining business of Taiwan, China and India. Silicon Valley remains the ultimate hub of future and advanced level of technology design and development. This question is further discussed by author in terms of strength of Silicon Valley.

Author discusses strength of Silicon Valley system based on decentralized and fragmented market, open labor markets, continuous trial and error and jointly creating new markets. But this couldn't be said for United America as whole which the author highlights; that the post war period attracted and still continues to attract thousands of students and professional from developing countries. The best of talent, mixed with ideal economic, social and political factors provided all the grounds for the development of Silicon Valley as successful global technology hub. Why couldn't it be replicated exactly in these cities? The answer lies in the fact that the structure of Silicon Valley is build on a cosmopolitan and global workforce having diverse knowledge and learning experiences from the time of its genesis. Ways in which the technical community is organized and flow of information and knowledge which they have termed as ubiquitous knowledge spillovers, is not present in other cities like Bangalore. On the contrast this type of social structure is not build in these cities and economies, where they have their own contextual social, cultural and political factors which impacts business and development of entrepreneurship.

Author has not discussed specific aspects of theoretical framework but by reading the book one can find that author has used and synthesized different aspects of economic and anthropological analysis. It would have been much better to theoretically grasp the book if there was a dedicated chapter which could have talked about conceptual framework and theoretical base. Furthermore, one important thing which author mentions in the introductory chapter about neglect of economist and policy makers to study regional success stories and entrepreneurs, but in the concluding part author has not completely synthesized the linkages between regional economic development and several anthropological aspects related to different diaspora which she has studied in her work. But the strength of the book is based on the fact that it deals with one of the most important aspects of global economy which is networks of people. The complex interplay between cultural connections and professional accomplishments is one key thing which is highlighted in the book. How with help of networks

these Diasporas have extended the markets for Silicon Valley and make these regional technology hubs integrated with the Silicon Valley in terms of access for latest technology design and developments. The case of next generation IC design, future technologies, new product development, client operations and advanced technology managerial skills are always defined by Silicon Valley. That's why the author ends by saying that new Argonauts will always remain vital for regional economic development; this is related to the fact that they carry with them most advanced knowledge and learning experience.

Rajiv K. Mishra, Research Student,  
Center for Studies in Science Policy,  
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New  
Delhi. He may be contacted at: "Rajiv  
Mishra" <rajiv.csss@gmail.com>

## II

**Audebert, Cedric and Dorai, Mohamed Kamel (eds.) (2010);  
Migration in a Globalized World: New Research Issues and  
Prospects (IMISCOE Research), Amsterdam University  
Press; pp. 211, ISBN: 978 90 8964 157 1**

Migration in today's globalized world is an extremely contemporaneous issue which has the attention of academics and policy makers all over the world. It is a matter of great concern to the socio-political and economic landscape of a country, and as such it is vital that a holistic view of the various aspects of international migration, particularly in the light of ever opening of national barriers, emerges. It is towards this goal that this book ostensibly moves towards. Edited by the International Migration Research and Cohesion in Europe (IMISCOE) Research network, this book tries to classify various issues related to international migration through contributions by scholars in the field which give a stylized account of the increasing scope of international migration as well as a critique of the various methodological approaches that engage in it.

The scope of the book is put forward in the introduction given by the editors,

Audebert and Dorai giving an insight into the various issues regarding new patterns of international migration and the ways in which they are being researched, laying a platform for the rest of the book. The book then makes a useful separation of the contributions into four broad sub sections- namely international migration and the challenges of social cohesion, migration and transnational approaches, migration and development, and forced migration. The reader, thus, gains an insight into the scope of the book and its discussions.

This first part relating to migration and the challenges of social cohesion is perhaps the most interesting part of the book with an extremely relevant topic being discussed. While Pennix gives an insight into the evolution of migration policies and debates in Europe over the years and the challenges IMISCOE faces in building a comprehensive framework of analysis, Waldinger and Hanafi present opposite perspectives on a multicultural society brought on by immigration. Waldinger using data provided by the International Social Survey Programme (2003) module on National Identity, analyses to present the views on various topics relating to immigration and multiculturalism as viewed through the eyes of the native population, also presenting a case study of perhaps the two most famous immigrant receiving countries- France and the USA. By doing so, he also presents an impressive breakdown of various issues as perceived by natives on either side of the socio-political spectrum. Waldinger finds view is both countries convergent on reducing overall migration flows, but divergent on issues of retaining ethnic identities of the migrants, with majority respondents in the US for it and in France against it. Hanafi, on the other hand, treads on a very sensitive issue regarding the role of cultural hegemony and freedom of speech and the space in which the immigrant finds oneself in this debate. While Hanafi has used the example of the infamous Danish cartoon controversy in 2005, we have this very debate taking centre stage in the light of the recent terrorist attack on the Charlie Hebdo office in Paris earlier this year. This makes Hanafi's account and reflection all the more relevant in the current context.

The next sub section deals with the use of transnational approaches to migration studies. This section consists of contributions by Faist, Monsutti and de Tapia and they argue on the pros and cons of using transnational approaches to migration studies. Faist argues for the transnational approaches ending the myopic , segregated view with which migration

studies are generally seen by adding a more holistic, less territorialized, and hence, more dynamic view of the migration phenomenon, while Monsutti attempts to find a more robust approach than the one transnational studies provides. de Tapia reflects on the prevalence of various diasporas and their re-construction of community in their articulation of migration in their languages to gain a better understanding of migration studies from these societies, with which traditional research into transnationalism should catch up with.

The next two sub-sections deal with contributions on the mutual dependence of migration and development studies. Skeldon reviews the past twenty years of studies on this topic, particularly with regards to remittances, the use of diasporas in development and the issue of brain drain. He then looks forward into the importance of this view of taking migration and development and mutually re-enforcing phenomena. This is a view concurred by Gonin who argues that immigrants as “frontier-runners” of development between their countries of origin and destination, building connections and intermediaries among various levels of multilateral development efforts. Gonin hopefully looks at various instances of migrants’ role in “co-development” in the areas of origin in terms of remittance and transfers of “know how” as a major way forward in bridging the development gap between the two countries.

The last section deals with the issues of forced migration and the importance of refugee experiences in order to provide a perspective on how it affects the socio-political landscape of the area. Here, Agier tackles the important issue of forced migration and subsequent challenges of “statelessness” among refugees in the destination country, with a strong criticism of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and their handling of the situation. Citing examples from Afghanistan and Sudanese refugees in Egypt, almost goes as far as accusing the UNHCR of abandoning these refugees when they required support the most. A similar criticism is seen in Lassailly-Jacob’s essay, which gives a case study based analysis of forced migration and return of asylum seekers to their homeland, from the African continent. She finds an overall difference between policies of international agencies like the UNHCR and the Organization of African Unity on the return of asylum seekers and the consequent problems it creates. A final chapter by the editors then neatly summarizes all the arguments presented in the book to round off the discussion.

While the book does an admirable job of presenting various topics of discussion in the realm of international migration studies, there is clearly much more that can be debated in this realm. For example- the prevalence of migration between developing countries is just as widespread as migration from developing to developed countries. Although the book addresses this issue in passing, there is much that can be discussed in this context and how it intersects the various sub- topics that the book makes. The section on forced migration, a very important topic, could have done with a larger overview along with the two contributions already there. The look on transnationalism and the role it could play in migration studies in a globalized world has been discussed well and along with the section on social cohesion and its challenges provides some compelling insights. The main question, however, is that- does the book eventually justify the title and give us an insight in to problems on researching migration problems in an increasingly globalized world? The answer is both yes and no. One feels that the scope of the title being so big, the reader is unlikely to gain any concrete understanding of the subject and the book is also limited in its ability to convey the complexity of it. Having said that, though, what the book does achieve is to provide a starting point, if not a comprehensive view, into analyzing the various issues present in the study of international migration. This could be a valuable foundation for someone who would be interested in picking up on ones of the topics for further study. Perhaps with some more work from here, a more comprehensive compendium can be made.

Ashwin Kumar, Ph.D. Scholar, School of Interdisciplinary and Trans-disciplinary Studies, IGNOU, New Delhi. Email: ashwin@subsmail.com

### III

**Khun Eng Kuah-Pearce (eds) (2008) Chinese Women and the Cyberspace, Edited by Amsterdam University Press, ISBN-13: 978-9053567517.**

Cyberspace originated from “cybernetics” a word introduced by Norbert Wiener for his pioneering work in electronic communication and control science (wiki). Oxford Dictionaries defines cyberspace as the notional environment in which communication over computer networks occurs. Webopedia.com elaborates; like physical space, cyberspace contains objects (files, mail messages, graphics, etc.) and different modes of transportation and delivery. Unlike real space, though, exploring cyberspace does not require any physical movement other than pressing keys on a keyboard or moving a mouse.

Consisting of twelve chapters divided into two sections the first of its kind book on oriental women in cyberspace covers aspects of Chinese women both in Mainland China and outside with regards to the significant current socio-economic and political environment and how these women explore and negotiate the cyber-highway for their needs. While the first section deals with work, leisure, politics and identity, the second discusses love, sex and marriage. The book broadly covers both rural and urban settings as well as most areas under the rubric of cyberspace engagement.

Most of the early research on cyberspace has been either done in the western context or by western scholars. The east especially the two most populous countries, India and China are now playing catch. This book has research papers from an international symposium in 2004 on the theme: ‘Log on: Chinese women and the cyber-networks’ that was organized under the Centre for Anthropological Research at the University of Hong Kong. Published in 2008 it could be deemed outdated vis a vis the pace with which web technology has moved yet it is topical with much relevance to the Indian context.

The Internet has become an important gadget for the young and educated. The importance of Internet can be understood from the fact that in June 2007, China had 162 million Internet users, representing a penetration rate

of 12.3 per cent (Xinhua 2007a). As in 2007, more than 70 percent of these Internet users were under 30 years old, and 58.3 per cent of them were male. The two largest age groups for users were eighteen to 24, with 35.2 per cent, and 25 to 30, with 19.7 per cent. There is a gender divide in terms of the usage of Internet yet it seems that is being bridged. Internet has been both a boon and a bane for the Chinese women who have been informants for the studies on which these research papers contained in this book have been written on.

Internet is the most unregulated communication network in today's world, presenting immense challenges to national and international regulation and enforcement. Legislation controlling the usage of the Internet is still very immature in the global community. Nevertheless many governments have set up regulations and conducted crackdown campaigns against unlawful activities conducted via the Internet. In the chapter *On Sale Package, Chinese Female Bodies as Commodities in Cyberspace*, Leung Maggi W H writes about how sharing of sex tour experiences is only one of the many diverse Internet usages that relate to the trading of female bodies and their images online. She charts the reach of Internet pornography, online prostitution and other forms of female-trading (e.g., mail-order brides) with emphasis on the situation of Chinese women in the national context and global market. She explains how the new communication and information technologies has brought about a global revolution in the access to, and exchange of, information on practically all branches of the economy and how the sex industry has been eager and effective in adopting every new IT technology to enhance their business.

In spite of the above the cyberspace allows Chinese women to meet men whom they cannot reach otherwise, or at least not so easily. As in the chapter *Sex & Life Politics Formed Through the Internet: Online & Offline Dating Experiences of Young Women in Shanghai* the authors PEI Yuxin & HO Sik Ying show how cyber activities have become a part of the everyday life of their women informants and how these women use them for their life politics. They use cyber contact or cyber flirting as a tool to approach their potential sexual partners, and to change their offline lives, including their sexual lives, as well as their social and economical status.

These informants are able to formulate multiple strategies from their online experiences communicating with many different men and in the absence

of this they would not have had such rich experiences or come up with so many strategies. This study sheds light on how women struggle to survive in a big city by making use of sex and whatever limited resources they have. The sexual relations and experiences are then used for personal growth and social positioning. Sex via the Internet is not just about sex. It is also their politics. Net love is such a rage that the Chinese mass media has a term for it, 'wanglian'.

The cyberspace is used by the Chinese women for forming myriad online communities and as Wellman stated, computer networks are inarguably social networks, 'loosely bounded and sparsely knit' which help to increase people's social capital. However along with Giulia she argued that besides the above, people also bring their 'gender, stage in life cycle, cultural milieu, socioeconomic status, and offline connections to their online relationships. It is not like a whole new society getting formed online.

In the chapter *Electronic Park Benches: Online Mothers in Hong Kong Using the Baby Kingdom*, Caplan Victoria writes about how Pregnant Chinese women and mothers in Hong Kong have begun to use the Baby Kingdom as a springboard to exercise their power in the household and in the broader community, a sort of an 'electronic park bench' where women meet, gossip, exchange information and stories, plan later meetings, swap or sell goods, and even plan for political action.

She explains why communication in Chinese on the Internet is not easy due to technology issues and hence why some women write in English occasionally not knowing how to input Chinese characters or a they lack of Chinese software at home or in the office. The replies received are usually in Chinese, which they answer in English. It is not uncommon for writers to intersperse the use of Chinese with some English words. Hence it is a new venue for community supplementing the other ways of meeting and relating in real life. As such, it can be a source of empowerment, as women learn and share information, ideas, and experiences.

The author goes on to add that with the empowerment the site provides it is also a place where oppressive norms and practices are perpetuated for example exercising unreasonable power over foreign domestic helpers, or working to keep women without Hong Kong ID cards from giving birth in public hospitals.

In the chapter *Cyberactivism in the Women's Movement: A Comparison of Feminist Practices by Women Organizing in Mainland China and Hong Kong*, LIU Ting explores the issue of cyberactivism in the complex cultural context of contemporary China, Specifically Chinese cyber feminist activism as it responds to and functions within different underlying political and economic conditions. The chapter explores the emergence of feminist activities in cyberspace across websites maintained by nine feminist websites in China and two in Hong Kong. The author states that the feminist websites were all established with the explicit goals of furthering gender equality and/or protecting women's interests.

Tang Wesley Siu-hang & Ho Petula Sik-ying in their chapter *Cyber Self-centres? Young Hong Kong women and their personal websites* write about how gender implication being often overlooked by researchers who analyze the sociocultural influences of emerging digital media i.e. online diaries and personal websites. Most popular assumptions made are about how the Internet allows users especially women to express and actualize themselves. However from the interviews of the women the authors feel that Cyberspace besides providing a highly-accessible medium for computer literate young women also set the limits of such freedom: such resistance is by and large set by the 'real' society they are living in and the kind of gender socialization that they have been subject to.

The social and communal support they have received from their self-representation projects in cyberspace (on-screen) is not particularly helpful to these young women in the way they deal with various kinds of performative constraints in their real life settings (off-screen). On the contrary, these personal websites often contribute to the conflicts between the web-masters and their boyfriends. Their projects of the self, these women feel, should also be hidden from the sight of their parents because the complicated feelings they express online often contradict their presentations of themselves as good daughters and conforming girl friends.

In *Internet as Social Capital and Social Network: Cyberactivity of Hong Kong and Shanghai Women*, Kuah-Pearce Khun Eng finds the overall usefulness of the Internet with 35 percent of Hong Kong women rating it as being very useful and another 32 per cent rating it as useful. Only 3 per cent rated it as not useful at all. Likewise, 37 per cent of Shanghai women rated it as very useful and 34 per cent rated it as useful. 2 per cent rated it

as not useful at all.

The Internet tends to reinforce social and interactive communication among friends. This is especially so in modern society where global migration results in movements of people and the need for them to be connected to their family, friends, political and business bodies.

The authors wonder if women's access and ability to use technology such as the Internet is significant in determining how they set agendas and reposition themselves in the 21st Century. Will women be able to use their individual set of socio-cultural capital and transform it into collective sociocultural capital to usurp the existing social structure and recreate different sets of social relationships that are more gender friendly and egalitarian?

They feel that it remains to be seen whether the women will be able to institutionalize the cyber-structure and use it to restructure the social and gender relationships that have been embedded within our existing social structure. They feel till it is done their set of socio-cultural capital remains personalized enabling them to express and negotiate their identities and needs in their daily routine life.

The area where Internet has been most beneficial is where it can ease access to skilled job for Chinese immigrants in Canada as has been detailed by Greve Arent and Salaff Janet in their chapter Can the Internet Help? How Immigrant Women from China Get Jobs: A Survey on PRC Immigrants' Employment Status in Canada.

They feel Internet offers advantages in getting around institutional discrimination in Canada. The ability to reach out more widely to new circles by using online access to job postings broadens their possibilities. The Internet has been extolled as value free, based on sophisticated technology available to all, connectivity through search engines, not personal relationships, and text based neutrality. Access to the Internet gives immigrants a chance at breaking into the wider labour market through broadening job information, thereby widening job searches, and reducing signals that convey discriminating attributes. The Internet's unique characteristic is its ability to link widely. The Web can widen circles of information about available jobs and candidates. Through Internet postings, people learn about vacancies beyond what their personal friends

can tell them. Both employers and job seekers get more information online. The various downsides to jobs through the Internet have also been detailed in the chapter.

It has been widely argued that friends formed over the cyberspace necessarily remain in the cyberspace for a variety of reasons, mostly because the topic for interactions tend to be topical in nature and the netizens' interests shift along with new interests and topics for discussion. However at the same time, netizens might adopt one or more personas and this again shifts along with their changing interests. As such, netizens often shift from one site to another in search of their new interests and hence make new cyber-friends.

This euphemistic cyber-relationship serves as a constraint to the establishment of permanent social relationship yet acts as a liberating force to allow for short-term but more varied types of cyber-interaction and hence the jury on increase of social capital is still out there.

The book is a must read for students of Diaspora, Cybermedia and Women studies. Even though some papers repeat themes and ideas and the papers are written in the early days of web 2.0 it is still relevant to the Indian context as India shares a similar set of socio-economic issues with China, hence digital engagement of Indian women will mirror aspects as detailed about Chinese women. Cyberspace is the grand new frontier as it is changing the real world interactions and in turn is getting changed by those interactions.

Abhay Chawla is a journalist and a visiting faculty in CIC, Delhi University. He teaches online journalism and his Ph.D topic is – "Marginalizations and consumption of new media". [Email:drabhaychawla@gmail.com](mailto:drabhaychawla@gmail.com)

## IV

**Angeliki Dimitriadi (2018). Irregular Afghan Migration to Europe: At the Margins, Looking In, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 204 p, ISBN: 978-3-319-52958-5**

Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

These above lines are part of the famous poem “The Second Coming” by William Butler Yeats, which perfectly fits to the migratory theme of the book. The issue of irregular migration has taken over the centerstage in world politics as it has been considered amongst one of the most critical non-traditional security threats being faced by the Westphalian states. The book is largely based on the author Angeliki Dimitriadi’s doctoral and postdoctoral work, which provided her with the first-hand accounts of issues involved in Afghan migration. The book primarily focuses on Afghans who seek to transit through Greece and Turkey. Author has beautifully incorporated personal narratives with the migrants and the policies formulated by the states to bring the larger debate of asylum, hospitality and transit migration with its underlying nuances. The book becomes quite relevant as incumbent US President Donald Trump has decided to withdraw American forces from Afghanistan after the ongoing talks with the Afghan Taliban. This decision has wider repercussions for the Afghans who are already facing a fragile state due to multiple reasons, and it can compel them further to leave Afghanistan for better life prospects. The book has adopted an interdisciplinary approach to discuss the decision-making process of Afghan migrants.

The book has been divided into six chapters widely covering theoretical debates, human rights violations, decision-making patterns and empirical research. The first chapter titled “Introduction: Delineating the Linkages” presents the complex issues involved in the grant of refugee status by the host states. It also deals with the highly complex role and importance of transit countries like Greece and Turkey for Afghans to enter Europe and how these countries act as crossroads between the Global North and the

Global South. The second chapter “Deciding to Be Mobile” describes the reasons of emigration of Afghans from Afghanistan and Iran. Afghanistan facing “absence of rule of law, weak governance, reemergence of regionalized alliances and financial insecurity” are amongst some reasons which compel Afghans to seek for a better life and in some cases for survival (p. 35). Iran’s discriminatory policy-change for Afghans, especially after Khomeini rule, compelled them to emigrate from Iran to Europe. Author has beautifully described the crucial role of smugglers in providing information and path to the Afghans who seek to reach their desired destinations. Author has also attempted to showcase the restrictive measures adopted by the states which ultimately affect Afghans’ attitudes and bodies during the migratory journey to the destination.

The third chapter “In-Between Spaces: The Journey to Europe Goes through Turkey” describes concepts of borderlessness and border discipline with special reference to Afghans’ migratory journey. The author has insightfully mentioned the role of Turkey as a transit and destination for the Afghans. As Turkey usually becomes the first country of arrival and transit for Afghans, it plays a very crucial role in determining the future course of direction for the Afghans. The decisive role of employment in Turkey largely leads to decision-making by Afghans regarding their period of stay in the country. Moreover, the difficulties faced by Afghans in Turkish society regarding economic incentives and societal acceptance has also been covered by the author in a detailed manner.

The fourth chapter titled “Greek Policies on Migration and Asylum: An Exercise in Creative Ambiguity” provides the overview of Greek policies on migration and asylum and their implementation at the ground level. It gives insights on Gate-keeping and Gate-fencing policies being adopted by Greece. Author has categorically attempted to divide the Greek policies into prior and post-2010 to analyse the Afghan narrative of Greece. It also deals with the issue of detention which was being used as a tool to deport refugees and now has become a tool to punish, forewarn and deter them. The chapter also highlights changes in Greek policies after the verdict of European Court of Human Rights in *M.S.S. vs Belgium and Greece* case regarding the dysfunctions of the Greek asylum system. The fifth chapter “Afghans in Greece: Transit, Immobility and Return” largely focuses on the role of Greece in arranging the arrival, stay, detention and deportation of Afghans. It also covers the recent changes brought out in Greek policies

due to a large amount of migration of people from conflict-ridden Syria to Greece. Moreover, the author has given the detailed accounts of the formation of Xenios Zeus policy and its subsequent adverse impacts on Afghan refugees. The description of detention sites and reception places provides a deeper look into several issues relating to decision-making process of migrants.

The last and the concluding sixth chapter has been titled “Transit no More” to elaborate the lack of capacity in Greece for receiving refugees and therefore being labelled as a ‘bad host’. It also presents the picture of the changed scenario after the EU-Turkey deal which adversely affected Afghans. The chapter also gives an account of the de-facto opening of Western Balkan route which paved the way for refugees to travel from Greece to Central Europe without any need of smugglers. For Dimitriadi, the “Fortress Europe” is a problem rather than a solution to deal with the migration crisis in Europe (p. 197). The Author criticises the “safer” areas approach of some European countries to justify the returns of Afghans to Afghanistan. The final chapter evokes larger debate for policymakers to identify the patterns of Afghan migration which includes vast amount of issues which are not going to be limited to the Afghans.

Personal accounts and narratives of the refugees and migrants have made the book an interesting read as it provides varied emotions ranging from fear, trauma and quest for survival, security and satisfaction. However, some aspects like Pashtunwali could have been elaborated further to give the proper insights to the readers as of how does the Pashtun code of honour become one of the determining factors that lead to Afghan migration from Afghanistan to the other regions of the world. The role of non-governmental institutions could have been given more space and elaboration to provide a complete picture of the issues involved in the whole migratory journey. Overall, the book is a valuable contribution in the field of irregular migration as it has interwoven the government policies, international law, migrants’ emotions and insecurities through a particular case study of Afghans. The book can cater to the needs of policy-makers, human-rights advocates, academicians and research scholars who have an interest in the field of Diaspora, Migration, Politics and Sociology.

Abhishek Yadav, Senior Research Fellow and PhD Research Scholar at the Centre for South Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, E-Mail: abhishekyadavjnu2015@gmail.com

## V

**Basu, Sudeep (2018). In Diasporic Lands: Tibetan Refugees and their Transformation since the Exodus, Orient Black Swan, © Orient Black Swan Private Limited 2018. ISBN: 978-93-52870-85-1.**

Refugees are considered as one of the resilient communities in the host-land as they try to survive against all odds. The problems of refugees are very critical and challenging worldwide. They are uprooted from their original land and forced to go another land. There are several socio-economic and political factors behind such forceful migration. Historically, the exile and refugees' communities have faced forcible movement, struggle for living and challenges to search safe and secure place for survival. In today's scenario, the refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, South Sudan are facing challenges to search destination for survival. Tibetan refugees in India are considered as distinct refugee communities owing to their culture and social organization. They are scattered largely in different south Asian countries such as in India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan. Some even resettled in Canada and Switzerland afterwards. Though smaller in number Tibetans have a formidable transnational network today. There are still very few serious academic works on Tibetan refugees.

The title of the book is 'In Diasporic Lands: Tibetan Refugees and their Transformation since the Exodus' is written by Sudeep Basu in the year 2018. He has been familiar with the field as he has been working and studying on the Tibetan refugees since his graduation days. Based on his ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Darjeeling town, West Bengal, the book tries to explore the changing dynamics of identity its redefinition and transformation over a period of time.

The book encompasses seven interconnected chapters dealing with the theoretical and empirical evidences of Tibetan refugees in India and their lived experiences in Darjeeling. The book has mainly discussed that the identity of Tibetan refugees in India has been changing socio-economic and cultural terms in negotiating their 'belonging' to an alien country over the time. It also studied that how the concept of refugee, host-dynamics and plural identities plays out in the case of Tibetan refugees in India. However, it moved away from the stereotypes of creating plural identities by Tibetans in host-country, India. The ethnographic analysis of the study reflects the past and 'exile present' in India and articulated to understand the 'lived meanings' that Tibetan refugees in Darjeeling attach to their life in exile and to the spaces they live and work in. It also provides insights on how this 'sense of place' adds meaning and purpose to refugees lives.

The first chapter titled Tibetans as 'Refugee Diasporas' deals with introduction of the Tibetans' exile and status of Diaspora community. It provides an outline of the research problem in relation to the identity and community consciousness of the Tibetan refugees. It also discusses the rationale of the study focusing with the reflexive notions of Tibetan refugee identity and culture as part of diasporic world. The Tibetan exiles are increasingly represented themselves through socio-economic and cultural dimensions in host-country. It further provides the plan of the book in detail discussion.

The second chapter titled Methodology and Imperatives in Refugee Research deals with the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of the Tibetan refugees. The term 'refugees' and 'exile' has been used interchangeably to denote the Tibetan community because of their political status of exile before the time they benefitted from 'refugee' status since India is not a signatory of the UN Refugee Convention. Secondly, they commonly refer to themselves as both. It gives analytical usages and dimensions of the concept of 'refugee' and 'exile'. This chapter gives analytical usage and dimensions of the concept of 'refugee' and 'diaspora'. The chapter discusses the detailed methodology of fieldwork and data collection process. Various tools and strategies adopted in the field are discussed such as access, key informants, role of researcher in the field, interview-schedule, trust and sampling strategy primarily to gather field visit data from Darjeeling town. The third chapter titled The Tibetan Exilic Paradigm discussed the Tibet and Tibetan refugees in exile and brings out innovative ideas of various socio-

cultural dimensions broadly. It represents the identity issues of Tibetan refugees and their rich socio-cultural heritage in exile. Theoretically, the chapter focuses on the past and present of the Tibetans' exile with empirical description and the aftermath of the political intrusion by China. It also analyses the role and organization of Tibetan institutional structure in exile in India and how it functions regular and systematic ways. It also highlights the governance of Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), the government in exile and their interaction with exile communities formally and informally with various means and processes. It further argues for the significance of monastic institutions in exile and their religious orientations required for integrating them together and strengthening their will to take their original homeland.

The fourth chapter titled *Tibetan Question: A Reappraisal* examines a set of claims about Tibetan identity and the character of pre-exilic Tibetan society and culture. Drawing from the historic evidences and texts, the chapter examines the identity of Tibetans and their pre-exilic society and culture and questions of who the Tibetans are as a people, nature of their claims to their homeland. It highlighted the controversies move around the status of Tibetans since early 1960s during the time of their exile and how the world considers their socio-cultural and political issues at global platform. The chapter tries to discuss the historic evidences of Tibet, China and territorial confusions with China. It also discusses the rise of the Han and the Mongols and the cultural and social restructuring in Tibet.

The fifth chapter titled *Organising for Exile* discussed the description of Tibetan settlements in India with a view to provide a comparative assessment of the Tibetans lives in Dharamsala-administered centers and other spontaneously settled refugee settlements in India. Drawing from the fieldwork data analysis, the author has analyzed the socio-economic and occupational categories of the Tibetan refugees in India. Based on the Darjeeling as the primary field site, the chapter thoroughly deals with the socio-economic conditions and livelihoods opportunities of Tibetans. It provided the organizational structure of the refugee settlements namely; Bylakuppe Settlement, Mundgod Settlement. It gave comparative framework of Tibetan refugees through their diasporic modes of identification in India.

The sixth titled *Preservation, Integration and Pragmatics of Diasporic*

Identity focuses on the lived meanings that exile can have for Tibetan refugees in Darjeeling town. It draws attention to the differences in the construction of their categorical identities like ‘refugeeness’ and ‘Tibetannes’ and their ties with specific settings in the town, such as the Tibetan Refugee Self Help Centre (TRSHC) and the neighborhoods where Tibetans work and reside. In this chapter, the author has demonstrated the detailed discussion on the field area, Darjeeling town with its geographical, political, social and cultural distinctiveness. The chapter elaborates the role and importance of self help groups for the formation of occupational and livelihood opportunities in Darjeeling for Tibetans.

A range of occupations such as agricultural activities, farms, handicrafts, woolen making, and all other art and craft activities of Tibetans ensures economic means as refugee community in India. With the pictorial demonstration, the author has provided their living and housing conditions. In Darjeeling, they are provided with medical care and education facilities with well-furnished hospitals and schools facilitated by Centre Tibetan Administration (CTA). It also discusses the involvement of the Tibetan women in handicrafts, woolen-making and agricultural activities. It does not delve into the issues and challenges of the Tibetan women being exilic identity. This chapter has discusses about the inter-generational change among Tibetans in India. The young Tibetans are more adaptive towards socio-cultural values, customs and language than their parents. The children are enrolled in English-medium education from CTA funded schools in Darjeeling. Unlike their parents and ancestors, they are more assimilated to culture, society and people. They speak and understand Hindi language and participates in various activities such as sports, hiking and cultural festivals etc.

The author has discussed the issue of identity crisis and problems of assimilation of Tibetans with natives and local people. They are labeled as Bhutias, Nepalis by locals because of their look alike features. The author has raised the issue of citizenship and their emotional and patriotic feelings towards Tibet as motherland. This chapter debates on the identity of the Diasporic community under refugee status and its association and belongingness with the place of residence.

The seventh chapter titled Dwelling and Movement in Exile dealt with the survival of the Tibetan refugees and their experiences of displacement and

refugeehood in the host land. It gives insight into the lived meanings of the place where they live and work in and how they see themselves and are seen by others as part of the wider Tibetan Diaspora in India. The chapter attempts to analyse that how identities become ally to the places where the diasporic communities live in and work in. It further highlighted the role of host-country and the responses received from the place of residence. This chapter discusses on how the acceptance of diasporic land as their own 'home' by ethnic communities while living away from their original homeland since long decades. It also discusses the re-orientation of their cultural and traditional rituals, religious practices and festivals in the place of residence.

The book is a detailed and insightful reading to understand the existence of ethnic community being a refugee identity and their transformation of their identities in an alien land. It enriches the knowledge on sociology of ethnic communities, refugee rights and identities and challenges of diasporic community in context of Tibetan refugees in India. This book adds value to the area of refugee and exile communities in India and contributed into the Diaspora studies. Based on the field work in Darjeeling town, the book provides the contour and dynamics of Tibetan exile, occupational profile, cultural and traditional heritage and the redefining identities. The book, however, should have a brief comparison between Tibetans in Darjeeling and in other parts of India, with special focus on the identity transformation and livelihood opportunities. Further it should also have some insights on refugee policy special attention to Tibetans in India as these are the much needed issues at the national and global level.

Monika Bisht, PhD Research Scholar,  
National Institute of Educational  
Planning and Administration (NIEPA),  
17-B, Sri Aurobindo Marg, Opp. Adchini  
Road, Pin-Code-110016, New Delhi, India.  
Email: monika4bisht@gmail.com