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developing countries. Researchers and students wanting to understand the complex issues involved in the eradication of poverty would benefit much from the breadth and depth of the discussion provided in this book.

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***Markets and Indigenous Peoples in Asia: Lessons from Development Projects.* By Dev Nathan, Ganesh Thapa, Govind Kelkar with Antonella Cordone.** New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. 220.

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The development agenda of a country has to constantly strike equilibrium between economic growth and social well-being. This presents a daunting challenge for policy-makers to formulate a comprehensive developmental plan that allows the fruits of growth to reach every nook and corner of society. However, not all sections of society benefit from growth; there are marginalized sections on the “periphery”, which are excluded from the developmental chain. In this light, there is renewed focus on what has been termed “inclusive growth” with the aim of “including” the “excluded”.

Keeping this policy compulsion in mind, one can observe the workings of Polanyi’s “double movement” where, at a time when a laissez-faire free market was being propagated, a counter movement to protect the social rights of citizens from the dangers of a self-regulating market was also taking root (Polanyi 1944). “Indigenous people” are one such group often living in physical, social, economic, political and cultural isolation, excluded and marginalized from mainstream policy coverage. The authors of this book suggest that it is therefore necessary to engage with Polanyi’s second movement. The book covers varied cases from Asian countries including India, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Laos and Vietnam. Divided into twelve chapters, it is organized thematically

around market-mediated interventions effecting the lives and well-being of tribal people. A wide array of topics ranging from identity, infrastructure and communication, production, the role of tourism value chains, settlement of tribal communities, changes in norms and property systems, gender relations, indigenous knowledge and technology, biodiversity and local governance form the book’s core agenda.

The authors try to make a meaningful intervention at the intersection of the challenges of “exclusion” and the state’s push for neo-liberal economic policies. The dominant narrative on “exclusion” suggests that market forces displace excluded indigenous communities and adversely affect their livelihoods and subsistence. The authors present an alternative narrative by exploring this central question: do “market-facilitating and market based interventions lead to an increase in well-being for the indigenous peoples?” (pp. 6–7). In the context of indigenous communities, the development continuum is represented on one end by “influential forms” of indigenous norms, and by market-oriented development on the other. While indigenous norms help in protecting traditional cultural forms and resources, they may also constrain well-being, emergent aspirations and new forms of economic practices. Market-oriented development, on the other end of the development continuum, can positively impact indigenous communities by increasing specialization, economies of scale and introducing new methods of production. However, market interventions may also lead to inequality, and the depletion and dilution of resources and traditional culture. The authors carefully locate their argument at a mid-point along the development continuum where the positive effects of indigenous norms and market based interventions meet. They argue that their proposed market intervention model for the well-being of indigenous peoples can recreate the positive aspects of traditional cultural forms within the “new structures of [the] market economy” (p. 10).

This is demonstrated by evidence from selected International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) projects in Asian countries. For instance,

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improved communication through infrastructural development led to changes in the local political economy of the north Sayaboury region of Laos, bordering Thailand. Cloth traditionally woven and embroidered by the local women for the domestic consumption has now become a commercial commodity for the Thai market. The case studies also demonstrate that changes in methods of production have resulted in an increase in productivity and income, thus mitigating poverty at multiple levels.

Interventions have also resulted in the creation of “new knowledge” alongside indigenous knowledge. A unique policy lesson is drawn from one of IFAD’s projects named RUPES or Reward the Upland Poor for the Environmental Services, where the local community is compensated for the use of environmental services and biodiversity. This system of benefits/rewards in lieu of environmental services can be seen in the case of Lake Singkarak in Indonesia, where taxes are paid by the hydropower authority to the province to compensate for environmental damages from the hydropower project and to fund social programmes (p. 165). It is suggested that local governments have to forge a synergy with existing indigenous institutions, such as a council of elders as well as state institutions of governance such as village assemblies. Project interventions can make local governance more democratic and participatory as seen the case of the North Eastern Region Community Resource Management Project (NERCORMP) in Meghalaya, which has enabled women and the youth to get involved in village communities. In Meghalaya, this process has culminated as legislation in the form of the Khasi Autonomous District Council (ADC).

The authors of this insightful work make a valid case for mitigating the challenges of exclusion through market intervention. Indeed, policy prescriptions drawn out from the selected cases highlight the possibility of exploring such a trajectory. Nevertheless, I would like to point out some issues with the line of argument postulated in this important work. Firstly, the policy prescriptions outlined in this book emanate from project interventions. In this light, it is not

clear how generalizable these “experiments” are. A second, related, issue is that this book adopts a case study methodology to highlight the possibility of a market-mediated increase in the well-being of indigenous communities. Therefore, the book documents micro-patterns that are case- and region-specific. It would perhaps be more convincing if these micro-patterns were connected to existing macro-level patterns, which in many instances reveal the massive displacement of indigenous communities due to market-driven policies such as mining and the acquisition of land for development. I am not entirely convinced that the cases have significance beyond the limited framework they operate in.

My third concern relates to the conspicuous absence of the state or its role in the entire analysis. It is not as if these projects or market interventions are operating in a vacuum. The state’s role is important in creating an enabling or disabling environment. Take, for example, the Chenchu tribes of Andhra Pradesh — the successful implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has also contributed significantly to their settlement. Lastly, the argument can easily be accepted that indigenous societies encounter changes occurring in the wider social environment they interact with. This “socialization” often creates indigenous “will” among community members for change. One is left wondering how much of the changes narrated in the cases illustrated in the book are results of external project intervention and how much can be attributed to internal indigenous impetuses within the societies themselves. These gaps and concerns notwithstanding, this book illustrates the possibility of exploring a unique and alternative policy trajectory for including “excluded” communities.

#### REFERENCES

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