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Book Reviews

balanced introductory description of the area as seen by those actually living there, I do not recommend it.

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MURRAY J. LEAF

MARRIAGE, THE FAMILY, AND WOMEN IN INDIA. By V.V. Prakasa Rao and V. Nandini Rao. New Delhi: Heritage Publishers/Columbia, Missouri: South Asia Books. 1982. x, 244 pp. US\$19.50.

THIS BOOK CONSISTS OF reprints of articles published by the authors from 1973 to 1980. There is some new material: the introduction, a brief essay on the status of women, and the conclusion. Perhaps the idea was to make the articles more readily available in India; but why not organize them more sensibly and take the opportunity to rewrite and update them?

The chapters are arranged oddly with respect to the survey research on which they are based. The surveys—of attitudes towards marriage arrangements, family type, and sex roles—were carried out in 1967 among 40 pairs of sisters in Hyderabad (chapters 10 and 11); in 1973 among 182 college students in Hyderabad (chapters 2 and 7); and in 1975 among 585 college students in Karnataka (chapters 3–6, 8, and 12). Notice that the findings from these three different research-efforts are scattered, rather than grouped together, in the book. Since the previously published articles apparently have been reprinted without changes (I did not check them all), there is a good deal of repetition which consolidation and editing could have eliminated. And no attempt has been made to compare the results from these three different times, places, and populations, although many of the questions seem to have been similar. (Only a schedule on familism is reproduced, so that we can see the wording of questions.) An attempted comparison might have justified republication of these data.

While the overall organization of the book is confusing, each chapter (or article) follows a consistent pattern. An introduction gives the authors' view of the norm for each topic: arranged marriages, ideal age at marriage, etc. Then there is a review of the literature, revealing a lack of recent references which is particularly striking in the chapters on choice of family system, familism, the status of women, and employed mothers. Only in the introduction do the authors cite references later than 1975 (save for their own publications). There then follows a statement about each study and its methodology, and a presentation and discussion of the findings.

As for the surveys and findings, the study of forty pairs of sisters—one sister employed and one not employed—appears to have been well designed. Structured interviews found significant differences between

the two matched groups with respect to standard of living, decision-making power, and leisure-time activities; there were fewer differences with respect to household chores and the nature of the relationship between husband and wife.

The surveys of college students are less satisfactorily described. They were lengthy questionnaires, administered by teachers in college classrooms. Variables such as the religion and caste of the respondents have been broken down rather generally, into Hindu and non-Hindu, Brahmin and non-Brahmin, thus throwing together Muslim and Christian, Kshatriya and Untouchable. Although specific findings are presented, discussed, and repeated in several chapters, I found it difficult to sort them all out and even more difficult to assess their significance. For example, the authors found that “[f]emales, medical students and Brahmins expressed low degree of nuclear family integration, extended family integration, and familism compared to males, commerce and liberal arts students, and non-Brahmins” (p. 169). Specialists in this type of research may find material of interest here.

Aside from their specific research findings and explanations of them, the opinions expressed by the authors are generally conservative: women’s employment is viewed as a threat to the family (pp. 7–11), and the Moghuls are blamed for the seclusion of women and the disappearance of female education in India (p. 177). The final chapter, subtitled “Summary and Conclusion,” is just a shorter version of chapters 3–6 and 8 (not 2–5, as a footnote indicates).

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TWENTY-FOUR STORIES BY PREMCHAND. *Translated by Nandini Nopany and P. Lal. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House (distributed in North America by Advent Books, New York). 1981. vi, 191 pp. US\$17.95.*

PREMCHAND. *His Life and Work. By V.S. Naravane. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House (distributed in North America by Advent Books, New York). 1981. viii, 291 pp. US\$20.00.*

SEVERAL INDIAN PUBLICATIONS have recently been issued to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Premchand, the pioneering Hindi novelist of the 1920s and 1930s. Nopany and Lal have translated twenty-four short stories spanning Premchand’s career, presenting them in chronological order to suggest the author’s development. Unfortunately, at least fifteen of them have already been published in other translations, and a comparison of these with earlier efforts does not do much credit to the current translators. While