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A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies

Environmental Justice in India?

Examining the Compatibility between Sustainability, Social Justice and the Gandhian Legacy

Antje Linkenbach

Abstract

This paper argues that in context of environmental justice, many followers of Gandhi have been involved in social activism and solidarity campaigns to support the struggles of individuals and groups whose present and future life chances are endangered as a result of commercial exploitation, destruction or conservation of their natural environment. The 'environmentalism of the poor' in India (Guha and Martinez-Alier) is a part of a broader movement for environmental justice. Environmental justice is an environmental care or sustainability. In this paper, meaning and implication of both the concepts are investigated and the question is raised whether or under which conditions these two aspects might be compatible. Based on Indian scenario, the paper observes that the well being of humans cannot be separated from that of nature. The paper further argues that while Gandhi was definitely not an environmentalist, we have to recognize him as a pioneer in environmental justice. Not only is the Gandhian critique regarding the dominant model of development still very valid, on a micro-level also the Gandhian way of protesting and challenging authorities continues to be regarded as one of the most effective methods.

Keywords: Environment, Justice, Gandhi. Sustainability, India, nature

Rehabilitation Strategies to Overcome Multiple Deprivations

Lessons Learnt from Singoor Project M.Gopinath Reddy and S.Galab

Abstract

This paper presents Resettlement and Rehabilitation experience of the project affected Persons (PAPS) under water supply project known as Singoor Project meant to supply water to twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. It also presents the involvement of the Non Governmental Organization (NGOs) in the rehabilitation measures launched by the Rehabilitation Authorities. This paper tried to capture on Action Research experience of a research institution namely. Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) in the rehabilitation process of the Project Affected Families (PAFs). On the basis of Action Research carried out in one project affected village, this paper argues that "a comprehensive planning exercise needs to be taken place by the NGOs / CBOs to develop a blueprint of development for the PAFs. This is possible by having continuous exchanges and interactions with the affected population on their choices and capabilities". It also argues for the meaningful involvement of the Gram Sabhas, the panchayats and the CBOs in developing a realistic R&R plan.

Keywords: Development, Displacement, Rehabilitation, Singoor Project

Tank Irrigation in Tamil Nadu

Special Reference to palar Anicut System

K Sivasubramaniyan

Abstract

This paper examines patterns of agriculture, characteristics and conditions of water supply in the palar Anicut System (PAS) between 1906 and 2016. General features of tanks served by the system are discussed in relation to size of ayacut and the storage capacity of tanks. Major factors determining the realization of water and its discharge from the Anicut has not been diverted equitably among the four main channels. Diverted Anicut has not been diverted equitably among the four main channels. Diverted Anicut supply is more favourable in northern section channels than the southern section. This is due to defective intake point coupled with poor infrastructural facilities. The paper suggests that the PAS can be improved if physical facilities (inlet channels, bunds, channels beds, sluices) are properly maintained, if necessary to be modernized; and the officials are given proper training to effectively monitor and manage water flows at the Anicut.

Keywords: Palar, Anicut, tank, irrigation, ayacut channels, storage, water realization, discharge.

Critique of Brahmanical Hegemony
Understanding Indian Caste System through Gramsci
Deep chand

Abstract

This paper has attempted to discuss how Gramsci access to the question of religions in contemporary India. The objective of this paper is to understand the role of religion in the socioeconomic, cultural and political arena of India from Gramscian perspectives, specifically in the context of the subaltern group of people of India. Moreover, religion, is a significant factor in the subaltern groups' experiential life. It plays a crucial role in their struggle to achieve recognition within the civil and political sphere of society. The religion of subaltern defines 'common sense' and philosophy of masses'. In addition to this, the paper will also discuss certain questions which are essential to deal with contemporary debate. 1) Why is 'Religion' relevant for the subaltern group and for Gramsci as well? 2) What is the relationship between religion and civil political society for both Gramsci and subaltern group? 3) Similarity and contrast between Ambedkar's notion of religion and Gramsci's notion of religion. 4) How the 'Dalit' organic intellectual becomes a central theme to discussions on religion in contemporary India if arguments about 'organic intellectual' would be posed from the Gramscian perspective?

Keywords: Subaltern, Religion, common sense, Organic Intellectual, Dalit, Civil Society

ANSISS Section

Cohesive Development: An Alternative Paradigm?
Key Reflections from International Seminar
Sunil Ray, Neetu Choudhary, Rajeev Kamal Kumar

The world history has telling evidences on how states have belied people's expectations of a free. Secure and dignified life. And the contemporary world is continuously unfolding stories of discontent and indignation manifested out of ruthlessness of neoliberal forces. He disillusionment with extremities of neo-liberalism and a lost hope in statesmanship, have given way to a surge of debates and discussions, on what kind of development paradigm we choose to follow and which kind of path we may trust. To be reasonable, it is difficult to define development as such, and what we have come across after much discourse is certain goals and ideals that characterize development. Thus we look up for a development paradigm that allows for equity, inclusion and environmental sustainability. However, while talking of development, it is important to speak of the process, since the ideal state may always be imprisoned in the future. It is in this realm, that the notion of 'cohesive development' comes to the forefront and such a notion certainly brings more questions than it can answer right away. Incidentally, traces of cohesiveness in development process are already noticeable across the globe including the globe south where people such as informal workers, villagers and so on, have come together to demand for what are their rights or to protect what is their livelihood including the nature. In latin American, for example, such initiatives have also begun to receive public support. What is needed now perhaps is cohesiveness in approaches to study those scattered initiatives and to connect them to an alternate development paradigm, which itself is yet in making.

It is against this backdrop that the A N Sinha Institute of Social Studies organized the International seminar on "Cohesive Development: An Alternative Paradigm?" on February 24-25, 2017.