

and a large dispersed pool of assets/resources distributed across several owners in shared modes cannot be an organization that still believes in the Ford/Taylor schema of standardization and task simplification.

Biswatosh Saha
Strategic Management Group
Indian Institute of Management Calcutta

India's Turn: Understanding the Economic Transformation by Arvind Subramanian, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008. Price: Rs. 595

This new book, by Arvind Subramanian of the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington DC, is a collection of articles and papers written by the author over a period of around fifteen years. The earliest work which has been incorporated in the book was written in 1992 and the latest in 2007. This is exactly not a solo effort as among the eight chapters of the book, five of them are co-authored with others. There are two broad themes running across the book. The first four chapters relate to India's current and future growth. In the first four chapters, the author has also included some of his lighter articles, written for various newspapers and journals, in the form of summaries. Rest of the chapters in this book deal with various aspects of the liberalization process, which India has gone through in the last few decades.

The first four chapters of this book are eminently readable. The author argues that the turnaround in India's fortune is not totally due the policy packages adopted in 1991 but he suggests that the benefits owed a lot to the policies adopted during the planning period and during the 1980s when it developed a broad and diversified industrial base, set up a strong set of institutions and acquired a skilled workforce. This allowed India to take advantage of the reforms undertaken during the 1990s and allowed India to follow a growth trajectory that is not typical of a country with India's level of per capita income. In this section, the author has presented the arguments quite persuasively and has provided an interesting and engrossing hypothesis about India's growth process and its future prospects.

However, the four chapters in the second section are not of uniform quality. In fact, some of these chapters are outdated and therefore, in some cases, quite misleading. Take for example, the fifth chapter of this book titled "Uruguay Round text in

perspective”. This chapter does not discuss the final Uruguay Round text but actually deals with the Dunkel Draft. The Dunkel Draft went through some revisions before it was adopted as the final text. Therefore, the title, when it says “Uruguay Round Text” is somewhat misleading. Also, it does not make sense to replicate a 16 year old article without changing the obvious time references. The chapter starts “*In the past months, the text presented by Arthue Dunkel... has attracted considerable attention in India*” (pp 167). In a book published in 2008, the seventh year into the Doha Round of trade talks, such phrases are avoidable. Moreover, this is not a one-off example of such oversights. In the same chapter the author mentions that India does not have to undertake minimum access commitments because “*of the right it currently enjoys to maintain trade-restrictive measures on BOP grounds*” (pp176). India has lost that right in 2001- seven years before the publication of this book. Inaccuracies such as this make one wonder why the author has not taken any initiative to update his old articles especially when he is publishing them as chapters of a book. The air of casualness is there in editing of the book also. There are a number of typos strewn across the book. The Economist in the review of this book has mentioned that six typographic errors have appeared on a single page in this book¹. The present reviewer also managed to find a few.

The chapters on capital account convertibility and India’s participation in regional trade agreements do not treat the subject matters in a very balanced manner. In chapter on capital account convertibility (CAC), there is hardly any discussion about the possible negative effects of CAC and the benefits that India got because of capital account restrictions during the South-East Asian crisis. There is also almost no mention of the huge literature on the problems of CAC. Similarly, the chapter on regionalism promotes the cause of India-USA free trade agreement. However, it fails to point out the problems that exist in such North-South trade agreements. Not only there are problems with unequal bargaining power during North-South trade negotiations but there are also issues with the so called WTO-plus clauses being forced on developing countries via such trade agreements. In the context of these two chapters and the interconnects between the two topics, one finds its interesting to quote Willamson, who while writing why CAC for India is premature mentions “*When countries wanted to negotiate bilateral free trade agreements with the US, they found the treasury insisted that US negotiators demand that the partner country should commit itself to never reimposing effective capital controls for any length of time*” (*Economic and Political Weekly*, May 13, 2006, pp 1848).

Overall, the book is quite interesting to begin with but it loses its appeal pretty soon because of the uneven quality of the chapters. The author's attempt of compiling a set of papers written over a 15 year period without updating them has not worked for the book. There are a number of typographical errors which could have been easily avoided. On the whole, "India's Turn" does not quite turn it on for you.

Parthapratim Pal
Economics Group
Indian Institute of Management Calcutta

¹ Arvind v Arvind- The Economist, Jun 26th 2008

The Orderly Workplace: An Exploration into Holistically Disciplined Worklife, by Prem Chadha, New Delhi: Macmillan, 2007. Price: Rs. 585

This book is about institutionalizing orderliness at workplace. The author contends that the present-day organizations are characterized by chaos and disorder, and correcting this situation is the primary motivation behind his book. Drawing upon the experiences of several organizations, he suggests many ways of reducing disorder and increasing harmony at workplace. In fact the author often takes a wide sweep and draws from several disciplines (e.g., sociology, psychology) and sources (e.g., scholarly work, popular articles). This style of research and writing is both enriching and problematic. Such a diversity of sources is likely to appeal to the readers who have not cultivated a specialized interest in human behavior at workplace. However, the author has not been able to methodically fuse the diversity of perspectives and data sources into a coherent whole that will appeal to a researcher of organizational behavior.

The beginning of the book rightly highlights the critical role of people in organizations. The author then builds his argument by pointing out the inevitable uncertainties and chaos because of human behavior at workplace. The book is divided into three main sections: understanding orderliness, restoring orderliness, and institutionalizing orderliness. The author clarifies the concept of orderliness in the first section and discusses various elements of the societal and economic contexts that bear upon orderliness at workplace. The second section is about the strategies to bring about orderliness at workplace. In the last section, the author focuses on some of the time-

Copyright of Decision (0304-0941) is the property of Indian Institute of Management Calcutta and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.