

Contemporary Society: Tribal Studies. Volume Five, Concept of Tribal Society¹

Edited by Georg Pfeffer² and Deepak Kumar Behera³

Introduced by Lawrence F. Van Horn⁴

Concept of Tribal Society is Volume Five in a *Contemporary Society – Tribal Studies* series intended by the editors to show the relevance of anthropology to everyday life. Another purpose is to provide an anthology in each instance that is soundly based upon ethnographic fieldwork, geographically and theoretically comparative, instructive to students, and useful by way of example to practitioners.

Published in New Delhi, India, by the Concept Publishing Company, one section of the book focuses on India. The other section includes articles on Afghanistan, Canada, Iran, Mexico, Oman, Uganda, and the United States. A fair range is represented of the world's indigenous peoples and of associated anthropological field interests. What is a tribe? What are the world-view implications if one is a member of a tribal society? These are classic anthropological questions seen in modern perspective, especially in light of the editors' ambitious publishing effort of a series devoted to tribal studies in various domains such as structure and process, transition and change in light of development, social concerns, and social realities. These respectively approximate the titles of the first four volumes.

All of the volumes are richly eclectic, in that topics like kinship, gender, identity, and ethnicity can appear in any given book, yet each is oriented toward a theme. *Volume One, Structure and Process*, deals with social organization and social structure with specific cases of gender dynamics and inequalities along with similar considerations for age categories and aging. *Volume Two, Development Issues: Transition and Change*, includes the importance of history as context in the socioeconomic tribal development that incorporates appropriate levels of new technologies in health care, education and literacy promotion, craft production, and the lingering variables of differential status and other social interactions. Tradition encountering tourism is included also. *Volume Three, Social Concern*, concentrates on planning for the future and features applied anthropology and related research. *Volume Four, Social Realities*, speaks of relationships among ethnicity, politics, and group revitalization. *Volume Five, Concept of Tribal Society*, of course, is

commented upon in some detail here by three United States reviewers. *Volume Six, The Tribal Situation in India* is in the works.

Deward E. Walker, Jr., editor of the *High Plains Applied Anthropologist* (HPAA), suggested that *Concept of Tribal Society* be given a multi-review treatment, and Peter Van Arsdale of the State of Colorado, David Ruppert of the National Park Service, and Richard Stoffle of the University of Arizona – all members of the High Plains Society for Applied Anthropology – agreed to act as reviewers. The enthusiastic cooperation of the volume's editors followed and is much appreciated – Georg Pfeffer of the Free University of Berlin in Germany and Deepak Kumar Behera of Sambalpur University in Orissa, India. This multi-review approach, while common for *Current Anthropology*, is new for the *High Plains Applied Anthropologist*. If you as an HPAA reader are favorably inclined toward the multi-comment format and feel that it should be employed more in the future, please let Deward know (walkerde@colorado.edu).

Notes

1. New Delhi, India: Concept Publishing Company, 2002. 424 pages: introduction, two sections, 17 chapters, bibliography, index, notes on contributors. Cloth, \$38.00 U.S.

Along with the other volumes in the series, this book is conveniently available with courteous and prompt service from Vedams Books from India, which offers free airmail shipping, a web site (www.vedamsbooks.com) with secure online ordering, and an e-mail address for queries (vedams@vedamsbooks.com). Personal checks in U.S. currency are accepted, as well as money orders and credit cards. The mailing address is: Vedams eBooks (P) Ltd., Vardhaman Charve Plaza IV, Building 9, 2nd Floor, KP Block Commercial Center, Pitampura, New Delhi, 110 034, India.

2. Georg Pfeffer is a cultural and social anthropologist who obtained his Ph.D. in 1970 from Freiburg University in Germany. He currently serves as a professor of social anthropology and as the director of

the Institute of Ethnology at the Free University of Berlin. He can be contacted at: gpfeffer@gmx.net, or: Institute of Ethnology, Free University of Berlin, Drosselweg 1-3, D-14195 Berlin, Germany.

3. Deepak Kumar Behera began teaching social anthropology in 1985 at Sambalpur University in India upon completion of his Ph.D. there. He continues as a member of the Sambalpur anthropology faculty and can be contacted at: dkbehera@sancharnet.in or at: Department of Anthropology, Sambalpur University, Sambalpur, 768 019, Orissa, India.

4. Lawrence F. Van Horn received his Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from the City University of New York in 1977. He currently serves as a cultural resource specialist in the Planning Branch, Planning and Site Design, Denver Service Center, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. He is a contributor to *Concept of Tribal Society* and helped arrange this multi-review. He can be contacted at: larry_van_horn@nps.gov, or at: 303-969-2255, National Park Service, DSC-PSD, 12795 West Alameda Parkway, Denver, CO, 80225-0287.

