

'Natural' Disasters and Everyday Lives

DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES ON CREATING A FAIRER SOCIETY

A fair society is one that is just, inclusive and embracing of all without any barriers to participation based on sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief, ethnicity, age, class, ability or any other social difference. One where there is access to healthcare and education, technology, justice, strong institutions, peace and security, social protection, decent work and housing. But how can research truly contribute to creating global equity and diversity without showcasing diverse voices that are underrepresented in academia or paying specific attention to the Global South?

Including books addressing key challenges and issues within the social sciences which are essential to creating a fairer society for all with specific reference to the Global South, *Diverse Perspectives on Creating a Fairer Society* amplifies underrepresented voices showcasing Black, Asian and minority ethnic voices, authorship from the Global South and academics who work to amplify diverse voices.

With the primary aim of showcasing authorship and voices from beyond the Global North, the series welcomes submissions from established and junior authors on cutting-edge and high-level research on key topics that feature in global news and public debate, specifically from and about the Global South in national and international contexts. Harnessing research across a range of diversities of people and place to generate previously unheard insights, the series offers a truly global perspective on the current societal debates of the 21st century bringing contemporary debate in the social sciences from diverse voices to light.

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'Natural' Disasters and Everyday Lives: Floods, Climate Justice and Marginalisation in India

BY

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Emerald Publishing Limited
Emerald Publishing, Floor 5, Northspring, 21-23 Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 4DL.

First edition 2024

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-83797-854-0 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-83797-853-3 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-83797-855-7 (Epub)



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

For the 181 people who lost their lives during the 2022 Assam floods, 56 from the Barak Valley, and 45 of them being from Silchar.

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About the Author

Suddhabrata Deb Roy is currently a PhD Finalist at the University of Otago, New Zealand. He is the author of four books: *Social Media and Capitalism* (Daraja Press, 2021), *Singing to Liberation* (Daraja Press, 2023), *Pandemic Fissures* (Routledge, 2024) and *The Rise of the Information Technology Society in India* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024). His writings have appeared in numerous journals and public forums including *Capital and Class*, *Critique*, *The Sociological Review* and *Notes from Below*, among others. This is his fifth book.

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Preface

This book was conceptualised during the 2022 Silchar floods, when my family and I were entrapped within our house for more than a week with limited food, no mobile connectivity and electricity. The 12 days of uncertainty coupled with the visions of poverty that I saw during that fortnight form the soul of this book. This book should have been completed long ago. However, as I was working part-time while writing this book, the process of writing became a more gruelling one than what it already was. The most difficult part of the entire process was revisiting the difficult times that I had lived through during those fateful days and reimagining the catastrophic visions of human tragedy that the floods had laid bare which continue to haunt me even today.

I was finally able to successfully handover the final manuscript to Emerald in May 2024, specifically sometime during the middle of May. However, as a mentor once told me, it is always a difficult task to chase a moving target and so was the case with this book as well. Merely a day after Emerald sent me the manuscript queries for this book, Silchar was hit by another flood, albeit of a lower magnitude. It became necessary to include the 2024 data in this book because without that, this book would not have been able to demonstrate the argument that I am trying to make. Although this book largely talks about the 2022 floods, there are instances where this book takes recourse to narrating the incidents and stories of people affected by the 2024 floods as well.

The 2022 fieldwork for this book was one of the most challenging fieldwork assignments that I have ever had, largely because I had to conduct fieldwork in a time when there was no electricity, no mobile connectivity and a significant risk of being affected by the floods personally because my own house was under water for around 12 days. In 2024, however, the task was much easier. All in all, writing this book has been an eye-opener for me, because it allowed me to explore deeply into my own everyday reality: a reality of which I might not *directly* be a part of today but definitely continues to be something which has shaped me and affected my understanding of the society quite deeply.

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Acknowledgements

A book like this which speaks directly of real-life and observed experiences can never be completed without the help of others. This book also is no exception to this general rule.

Thanks to my parents for their continued support throughout the process of writing this book.

Thanks to Marcelle for being a superb intellectual mentor and supervisor. A vote of thanks also goes to Simon and Annabel for their continued support.

Thanks to Kevin, Peter, Sandra, Kieran, Grace and Jonas for their voices of support, criticism and constant theoretical and political engagement.

Thanks to Debasreeta for keeping me motivated while writing this book. Thanks to her for helping me during the short 2024 fieldwork for this book as well.

Thanks to Sayan, Suraj, Nelson and Saraswata for their suggestions regarding this book.

Thanks to my friends, colleagues and students, conversations with whom always help me in better analysing an incident or process. The same was the case with this book as well.

Many thanks to Katy Mathers of Emerald, my commissioning editor at Emerald for this book who first told me that this was a project that they would be interested in. Thanks also to Abinaya Chinnasamy and Lauren Kammerdiener of Emerald who stood by me throughout the writing, editing and production process of this book.

At the end, thanks to all those people who shared their stories with me, without them, this book would have never seen the light of day.