

Book Review

Priti Nath

Brij Mohan. (2022). *Rediscovery of Society: A Post-Pandemic Reality*. New York, NY: Nova Science Publishers, 130 p. ISBN-13: 978-1-68507-321-3 (PB).

“Philosophers have merely interpreted the world, the point however is to change it” (Karl Marx). Almost all political and social philosophers from Plato to Marx and beyond have dealt with various problems emanating from society in various countries with varied situations over centuries.

Brij Mohan, a social analyst, theorist, and scientist has based his empirical work on two premises—that democracy is dying and there is an urgent need for a new social contract since our social institutions are faltering.

The author has also used a political-historical approach to prove his point. He has discussed a case study of American and Indian societies and related them to various variables—state’s delivery of goods is the largesse trickling down to the poorest of poor, citizens facing xenophobia, oppression of various types, alienation, and so on.

It is because of “fractured democratic institutions” that the post-pandemic issues began to threaten human survival. This led to economic drain at individual and state levels, fear of inequality, injustice, and a fall of economic freedom. True, Abraham Lincoln’s idea of democracy—government of the people, for the people and by the people—has been replaced by Pareto’s market democracy. Also, democracy now exists in theory and not in practice. I am reminded of Michells regarding the elite theory of democracy.

Brij Mohan further talks of a utopian world order for peace, justice, and equality which reminds me of Laski who said the state exists for the good of the individuals. His new contract is different from Hobbesian (absolute), Lockean (political),

Priti Nath is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Government Post Graduate College Panchkula (affiliated to Kurukshetra University), India. She can be contacted at pritinath493@gmail.com.

and Rousseauian (popular) sovereignty. It seems Brij Mohan's view of the current state of democracy is Hobbesian clothed in Rousseauian humanism. If so, Lincoln's definition will have to stand the test of Popperian falsification.

Brij has related his new model of social contract to art, reason, and truth.

If Democracy is dead or dying, and social institutions are in disarray, then I am afraid, Aristotle's view of revolution and classification of states will prevail. This would imply that democracy is the worst form of government and monarchy is the best. Are we heading close to Aristotelian concept? The rise of authoritarianism across nations seems to validate this darkness on the horizon.

The author finds a solution of contract amongst citizens to overcome phases of thesis and anti-thesis in society. His dream of a new civil welfare society for all is akin to Bentham's utilitarianism or Gandhi's Sarvodaya. The new social contract and development as envisaged by the author are very relevant for policymakers worldwide. The book was a wonderful read.