Seeing the State

Poor people confront the state on an everyday basis all over the world. But how do they see the state, and how are these engagements conducted? This book considers the Indian case where people’s accounts, in particular in the countryside, are shaped by a series of encounters that are staged at the local level, and which are also informed by ideas that are circulated by the government and the broader development community. Drawing extensively on fieldwork conducted in eastern India and their broad range of expertise, the authors review a series of key debates in development studies on participation, good governance, and the structuring of political society. They do so with particular reference to the Employment Assurance Scheme and primary education provision. Seeing the State engages with the work of James Scott, James Ferguson and Partha Chatterjee, and offers a new interpretation of the formation of citizenship in South Asia.

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Seeing the State

Governance and Governmentality in India

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realize that our questions must have seemed odd at times, not to mention time-consuming, and that very few of our respondents will get to see (let alone read) this book. Nevertheless, the book is very respectfully dedicated to the people whose stories are at the heart of this volume, and we hope that we shall in time be able to repay their many kindnesses in other and perhaps more practical ways.

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**Glossary**

**Abhikarta**
executing agent or foreman

**adivasi**
original people; preferred name for Scheduled Tribes

**artha**
worldly (self-)interest

**Backward Classes**
the ‘weaker sections’, or the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and Other Backward Castes

**Bhadralok**
upper or respectable folk; gentlemen (Bengali)

**crore**
ten million

**dada**
big brother or political boss

**dalaal**
broker

**Dalit**
Marathi word for the oppressed (the ex-Untouchables)

**dharma**
the traditional moral order

**dirigiste**
state-directed or dominated, in the context of economic development

**garibi hatao**
an ‘end to poverty’ (slogan of Indira Gandhi)

**Gram Panchayat**
village council; the lowest tier of the panchayat system

**gram baithak**
informal meeting

**gram sabha**
formal village meeting provided by government statute

**gram sansad**
statutory village meeting; smallest panchayat constituency

**Harijan**
‘children of god’; Gandhi’s term for the ex-Untouchables, now Scheduled Castes

**izzat**
honour or dignity

**jati**
caste in the sense of named birth group

**Kayastha**
scribal caste of north India, now seen as high caste

**kisan**
peasant
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kuccha</td>
<td>unfinished (of infrastructure); often earthen works</td>
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<tr>
<td>lakh</td>
<td>one hundred thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukhiya</td>
<td>headman of village, now of a panchayat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naxalites</td>
<td>organized left insurgents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neta</td>
<td>leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Backward</td>
<td>socially and educationally deprived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes/Castes (OBCs)</td>
<td>communities, not including Scheduled Castes or Tribes, for whom compensatory actions are now authorized by the state</td>
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<tr>
<td>panchayat</td>
<td>council, official institution of local government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Panchayat samiti</td>
<td>Block-level council</td>
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<tr>
<td>panchayati raj</td>
<td>official system of local self-government</td>
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<tr>
<td>para</td>
<td>neighbourhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pradhan</td>
<td>President of the gram panchayat*</td>
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<tr>
<td>pucca</td>
<td>‘finished’ (of infrastructure); permanent, often concrete-built</td>
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<tr>
<td>pyraveekar</td>
<td>political fixer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sabhadhipati</td>
<td>President of the zilla parishad*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sabhapati</td>
<td>President of the panchayat samiti*</td>
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<tr>
<td>sarkar</td>
<td>government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>those castes recognized by the Constitution as deserving special assistance in respect of education, employment and political representation (other than the OBCs); in effect, the ex-Untouchables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>in effect, the official term for India’s adivasi populations; those communities recognized by the Constitution as deserving special assistance in respect of education, employment and political representation (other than the Scheduled Castes and OBCs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>tola</td>
<td>hamlet, or small neighbourhood within a village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zamindar</td>
<td>revenue collector and landholder under British rule</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zilla parishad</td>
<td>District-level council</td>
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* – used here of West Bengal
Abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ABPTA</td>
<td>All-Bengal Primary Teachers' Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADM</td>
<td>Assistant District Magistrate</td>
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<tr>
<td>AE</td>
<td>Assistant Engineer</td>
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<tr>
<td>AEO</td>
<td>Additional Executive Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAO</td>
<td>Block Agricultural Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>BDO</td>
<td>Block Development Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEO</td>
<td>Block Education Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>Bihar Education Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>BKU</td>
<td>Bharatiya Kisan Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>CACP</td>
<td>Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices</td>
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<td>CDP</td>
<td>Community Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Community Organizer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPI-M</td>
<td>Communist Party of India, Marxist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI-ML</td>
<td>Communist Party of India, Marxist-Leninist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDC</td>
<td>Deputy Development Commissioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development, UK</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFO</td>
<td>Divisional Forest Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>District Magistrate or Collector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPEP</td>
<td>District Primary Education Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPSC</td>
<td>District Primary School Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>DWCRA</td>
<td>Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAS</td>
<td>Employment Assurance Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>EGS</td>
<td>Employment Guarantee Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EGS(MP)</td>
<td>Education Guarantee Scheme, Madhya Pradesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIRFP</td>
<td>Eastern India Rainfed Farming Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPPG</td>
<td>Enhancing Pro-Poor Governance (action research project)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESRC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Research Council, UK</td>
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List of abbreviations

GIAN Gujarat Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network
GP Gram Panchayat
ICDS Integrated Child Development Scheme
INC Indian National Congress
IRDP Integrated Rural Development Programme
JE Junior Engineer
JFM Joint Forest Management
JRY Jawahar Rozgar Yojana
KRP Key Resource Person
KSSP Kerala Sashtra Sahitya Parishad (people’s science movement)
MCC Maoist Communist Centre
MFAL Marginal Farmer and Agricultural Labour programme
MKSS Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghatan
MLA Member of the Legislative Assembly
MLC Member of the Legislative Council
MP Member of Parliament
NCPRI National Campaign for the People’s Right to Information
NDA National Democratic Alliance
NGO Non-Governmental Organization
NPC National Planning Committee (of the INC)
NTFP Non-Timber Forest Product
OBCs Other Backward Castes (or Classes)
PDS Public Distribution System
PPD Perspective Planning Division
PRI Panchayati Raj institutions
RJD Rashtriya Janata Dal
RSS Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SAC School Attendance Committee
SCs Scheduled Castes
SFDA Small Farmers Development Agency
SGSY Swarajayanti Gram Swaroznar Yojana, a village self-employment programme that replaces the IRDP
SI Sub-Inspector (of primary schools)
SIPRD State Institute of Panchayats and Rural Development
SITRA Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans
SAP Special Area Programme
SSA Sub-Saharan Africa
STs Scheduled Tribes
TDA Tribal Development Agency
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>Total Literacy Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td>TI</td>
<td>Transparency International</td>
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<tr>
<td>TMC</td>
<td>Trinamool Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VEC</td>
<td>Village Education Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>VHP</td>
<td>Vishwa Hindu Parishad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VLW</td>
<td>Village-Level Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
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