

## **Mini-India: The Politics of Migration and Subalternity in the Andaman Islands**

“Mini-India” focuses on political, social, economic and cultural effects of migration to the Andaman Islands. Its main actors are migrants who stem from criminalised, low-class, low-caste, *dalit*, *adivasi*, landless, refugee, repatriated and other backgrounds groups of the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. As a result of their migration to this “new world”, called “Mini-India”, many individuals and groups have achieved social mobility, while others have remained disenfranchised and marginal. Investigating the ways in which people(s) of these formerly “deviant” groups have risen in the socio-economic hierarchy and why, in turn, others have remained excluded, the study enlightens the relationship between the state and the population. It examines and interprets Andaman society through the lens of subaltern theory and makes explicit contributions to Political Anthropology, Migration Research and Postcolonial Studies.

The dissertation is divided into three parts: Part I “Theory, Methodology and the Field” can be read as a general introduction to subaltern theory and the Andamans as a fieldwork site. Part II “Islands of Subalternity: Migration, Place-Making and Politics” concentrates on the island society as a multi-ethnic conglomerate of subaltern communities in which stakes of history and identity are negotiated. Part III “Landscapes of Subalternity: An Ethnography of the Ranchis of Mini-India” focuses on the Ranchis, one particular community of 50.000 subaltern Adivasi migrants from the Chotanagpur region. It highlights the exploitative history of their migration and their continued disenfranchisement, their sociocultural adaptation to life in the margins of the state and their political struggles in the light of anarchist anthropological theory.