CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521364248 - An Agrarian History of South Asia - David Ludden
Frontmatter
More information

An Agrarian History of South Asia

David Ludden's book offers a comprehensive historical framework for understanding the regional diversity of agrarian South Asia. Adopting a long-term view of history, it treats South Asia not as a single civilisation territory, but rather as a patchwork of agrarian regions, each with its own social, cultural, and political histories. The discussion begins during the first millennium, when institutions of ritual, conquest, and patriarchy formed an archipelago of farming regimes that steadily displaced and assimilated pastoral and tribal communities. It goes on to consider how, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, the concept of modern territoriality evolved as farmers pushed agriculture to its physical limits and states created permanent rights to all the land. Subsequent chapters focus on the development of agrarian capitalism in village societies, which emerged under the British and which formed the bedrock of the modern political economy. In contemporary South Asia, the book argues, economic development and social movements continue to reflect the influence of agrarian localism and the shifting fortunes of agrarian regions with histories which can be traced back to medieval times.

As a comparative synthesis of the literature on agrarian regimes in South Asia, the book promises to be a valuable resource for students of agrarian and regional history, as well as of comparative world history.

DAVID LUDDEN teaches South Asian and world history at the University of Pennsylvania. His publications include *Making India Hindu: Community, Conflict, and the Politics of Democracy* (1996) and *Peasant History in South India* (1985).

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521364248 - An Agrarian History of South Asia - David Ludden
Frontmatter
More information

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF INDIA

General editor GORDON JOHNSON

President of Wolfson College, and Director, Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge

Associate editors C. A. BAYLY

Vere Harmsworth Professor of Imperial and Naval History, University of Cambridge, and Fellow of St Catharine's College

and JOHN F. RICHARDS

Professor of History, Duke University

Although the original **Cambridge History of India**, published between 1922 and 1937, did much to formulate a chronology for Indian history and describe the administrative structures of government in India, it has inevitably been overtaken by the mass of new research over the last sixty years.

Designed to take full account of recent scholarship and changing conceptions of South Asia's historical development, **The New Cambridge History of India** is published as a series of short, self-contained volumes, each dealing with a separate theme and written by one or two authors. Within an overall four-part structure, thirty-one complementary volumes in uniform format will be published. Each will conclude with a substantial bibliographical essay designed to lead non-specialists further into the literature.

The four parts planned are as follows:

I The Mughals and Their Contemporaries

II Indian States and the Transition to Colonialism

III The Indian Empire and the Beginnings of Modern Society

IV The Evolution of Contemporary South Asia

A list of individual titles in preparation will be found at the end of the volume.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521364248 - An Agrarian History of South Asia - David Ludden
Frontmatter
More information

THE NEW CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF INDIA

IV · 4

An Agrarian History of South Asia

DAVID LUDDEN
University of Pennsylvania

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521364248 - An Agrarian History of South Asia - David Ludden
Frontmatter
More information

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, United Kingdom
http://www.cup.cam.ac.uk
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011–4211, USA http://www.cup.org
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

© Cambridge University Press 1999

The book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1999

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeset in Garamond 10.5/13pt [CE]

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

Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data
Ludden, David E.
An agrarian history of South Asia / David Ludden.
p. cm. – (The new Cambridge history of India)
Includes bibliographical references (p.).
ISBN 0-521-36424-8 hb
1. Agriculture – Economic aspects – India.
2. Agriculture – India – History.
I. Title. II. Series.
DS436.N47 1999
630′.954–dc21 98-43856 CIP

ISBN 0 521 36424 8 hardback

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521364248 - An Agrarian History of South Asia - David Ludden
Frontmatter
More information

FOR ROCHONA

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521364248 - An Agrarian History of South Asia - David Ludden
Frontmatter
More information

CONTENTS

General editor's Preface *page* xi
Acknowledgments xiii

Introduction 1

1 Agriculture 6

Historicity 7
Seasons 17
Maps 36
Landscapes 48

2 Territory 60

Peasantry 69
Dharma 76
Conquest 87
Patriarchy 96

3 Regions 113

Frontiers 113
Sultans 121
Land 130
Culture 140
Administration 153

4 Modernity 167

Mofussil 168
Development 180
Mobilisation 190
Locality 217

Bibliographical essay 231
Index 249

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521364248 - An Agrarian History of South Asia - David Ludden
Frontmatter
More information

GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

The New Cambridge History of India covers the period from the beginning of the sixteenth century. In some respects it marks a radical change in the style of Cambridge Histories, but in others the editors feel that they are working firmly within an established academic tradition.

During the summer of 1896, F. W. Maitland and Lord Acton between them evolved the idea for a comprehensive modern history. By the end of the year the Syndics of the University Press had committed themselves to the *Cambridge Modern History*, and Lord Acton had been put in charge of it. It was hoped that publication would begin in 1899 and be completed by 1904, but the first volume in fact came out in 1902 and the last in 1910, with additional volumes of tables and maps in 1911 and 1912.

The *History* was a great success, and it was followed by a whole series of distinctive Cambridge Histories covering English Literature, the Ancient World, India, British Foreign Policy, Economic History, Medieval History, the British Empire, Africa, China and Latin America; and even now other new series are being prepared. Indeed, the various Histories have given the Press notable strength in the publication of general reference books in the arts and social sciences.

What has made the Cambridge Histories so distinctive is that they have never been simply dictionaries or encyclopaedias. The Histories have, in H. A. L. Fisher's words, always been 'written by an army of specialists concentrating the latest results of special study'. Yet as Acton agreed with the Syndics in 1896, they have not been mere compilations of existing material but original works. Undoubtedly many of the Histories are uneven in quality, some have become out of date very rapidly, but their virtue has been that they have consistently done more than simply record an existing state of knowledge: they have tended to focus interest on research and they have provided a massive stimulus to further work. This has made their publication doubly worthwhile and has distinguished them intellectually from

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521364248 - An Agrarian History of South Asia - David Ludden
Frontmatter
More information

other sorts of reference book. The editors of *The New Cambridge History of India* have acknowledged this in their work.

The original *Cambridge History of India* was published between 1922 and 1937. It was planned in six volumes, but of these, volume 2 dealing with the period between the first century AD and the Muslim invasion of India never appeared. Some of the material is still of value, but in many respects it is now out of date. The last fifty years have seen a great deal of new research on India, and a striking feature of recent work has been to cast doubt on the validity of the quite arbitrary chronological and categorical way in which Indian history has been conventionally divided.

The editors decided that it would not be academically desirable to prepare a new *History of India* using the traditional format. The selective nature of research on Indian history over the past half-century would doom such a project from the start and the whole of Indian history could not be covered in an even or comprehensive manner. They concluded that the best scheme would be to have a *History* divided into four overlapping chronological volumes, each containing short books on individual themes or subjects. Although in extent the work will therefore be equivalent to a dozen massive tomes of the traditional sort, in form *The New Cambridge History of India* will appear as a shelf full of separate but complementary parts. Accordingly, the main divisions are between I. *The Mughals and their Contemporaries,* II. *Indian States and the Transition to Colonialism*, III. *The Indian Empire and the Beginnings of Modern Society*, and IV. *The Evolution of Contemporary South Asia*.

Just as the books within these volumes are complementary so too do they intersect with each other, both thematically and chronologically. As the books appear they are intended to give a view of the subject as it now stands and to act as a stimulus to further research. We do expect the *New Cambridge History of India* to be not the last word on the subject but an essential voice in the continuing discussion about it.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
0521364248 - An Agrarian History of South Asia - David Ludden
Frontmatter
More information

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book has taken a long time to finish. I thank everyone connected with *the New Cambridge History of India* for their patience, especially Chris Bayly and Marigold Acland. Along the way, my thinking has been improved by Romila Thapar, Muzaffar Alam, Neeladri Bhattacharya, Sugata Bose, Ayesha Jalal, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Tosun Aricanli, Rosalind O'Hanlon, Burton Stein, Nick Dirks, Sheldon Pollock, James Boyce, Gyan Prakash, Dina Siddiqi, Ahmed Kamal, Michelle Maskiell, David Rudner, Binayak Sen, Zillur Rahman, Arun Bandopadhyay, M. M. Islam, and David Washbrook. Cynthia Talbot, Ahmed Kamal, Robert Nichols, James R. Hagen, David Gilmartin, M. M. Islam, Minoti Chakravarty-Kaul, R. Vasavi, and K. Sivaramakrishnan gave me unpublished manuscripts that were vitally important. I benefited from seminars at the Yale Center for Agrarian Studies, University of Calcutta, the University of Melbourne, the University of New South Wales, Curtin University, the University of Chicago, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Columbia University, the Indian Institute of Technology (Madras), The Power and Participation Research Centre (Dhaka), and the University of Pennsylvania. I have used research funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Philosophical Society, the American Institute for Indian Studies, the University of Pennsylvania, and Fulbright-Hays. I thank the professional staff at the National Archives of India, the Library of Congress, the Tamil Nadu Archives, the National Archives of Bangladesh, the National Library of India, the India Office Library and Records, and the Madras Institute for Development Studies. The library staff at the University of Pennsylvania are a constant help, and I especially thank Kanta Bhatia and David Nelson. Thanks to Robert Nichols, Supti Bhattacharya, Amy Iwata, Vivek Bhandari, Sarah Diamond, Jeremie Dufault, and Teresa Watts for their able research assistance.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org