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978-1-107-02118-1 - The New Cambridge History of India: III · 3: The Economy of Modern India from 1860 to the Twenty-First Century: Second Edition

B. R. Tomlinson

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THE ECONOMY OF MODERN INDIA

Second Edition

Rapid economic growth has put India at the centre of current debates about the future of the global economy. In this fully revised and updated text, B. R. Tomlinson provides a comprehensive and wide-ranging account of the Indian economy over the last 150 years. He sets arguments about growth, development and underdevelopment, and the impact of imperialism, against a detailed history of agriculture, trade and manufacture, and the relations between business, the economy and the state. The new edition extends the coverage right up to the present day, and explains how one of the largest countries in the world has sought to achieve economic progress and lasting development, despite institutional weaknesses, rigid structures of political and social hierarchy, and the legacy of colonialism.

B. R. TOMLINSON is Emeritus Professor of Economic History at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

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THE NEW CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF INDIA

III · 3

*The Economy of Modern India
From 1860 to the Twenty-First Century*

Second Edition

B. R. TOMLINSON

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

In the twenty years since the first edition of this text was completed, many things have happened to the Indian economy, and to the writing of its history. The recent phenomenon of rapid and sustained economic growth has put India at the centre of current debates about the nature of development, and the future of the global economy. This, in turn, has stimulated considerable interest from economists, economic historians and others, who had previously seen India as a special case outside the conventional story of economic progress. The contemporary Indian economy is much discussed and widely taught; these changes have created the opportunity for a second, revised, edition of this economic history to connect recent events to their historical context. This edition contains new material which extends the account of recent history from 1970 to the present day. The sections of the text that deal with history before 1970 have also been reviewed: a small amount of new matter has been added, and the whole has been revised for clarity, and to sharpen the exposition and argument. A new supplementary bibliography highlights recent specialist literature that has opened up new perspectives on our subject.

A number of colleagues have played significant roles in encouraging me to revise and extend this work. Notable among these are Aditya Mukherjee, whose dedicated supervision of the Institute for Advanced Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi provides an ideal base for research and discussion; Tirthankar Roy, whose own work plays such an important part in opening up new insights into our subject; and a number of Japanese scholars, especially Shigeru Akita, Shoichi Watanabe and Natsuko Kitani, who have helped to advance my interest in the history of modern India in an Asian context. Over the years the circle of connections has also contracted, and a number of the colleagues whose work provided the underpinnings of the original edition are no longer active. In particular we must mourn the loss of two of the founding figures of our subject – Dharma Kumar (1928–2001) and Morris David Morris (1921–2011), who brought wit, precision and imagination to the analysis of the Indian economy and its history. We all stand upon their shoulders, and this edition is dedicated to their memory.

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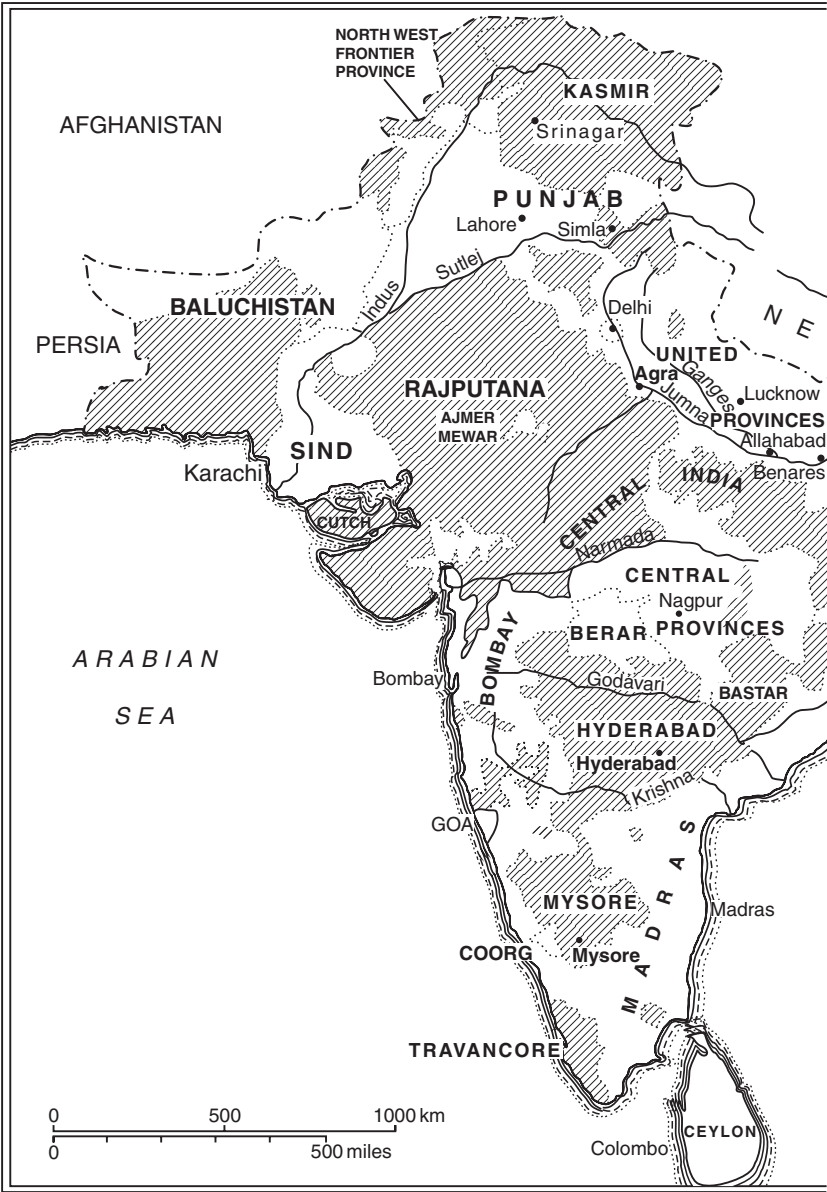
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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The writing of this book has benefited enormously from the criticism, advice and companionship over the years of a large number of fellow scholars, many of whom have produced the work that is discussed in its pages – including Amiya Bagchi, Chris Baker, Crispin Bates, Chris Bayly, Sugata Bose, Raj Brown, Raj Chandavarkar, Neil Charlesworth, Robi Chatterji, Kirti Chaudhuri, Prami Chaudhuri, Clive Dewey, Omkar Goswami, Partha Gupta, John Harriss, Dharma Kumar, Michelle McAlpin, Morris David Morris, Aditya Mukherjee, Terry Neale, Rajat Ray, Tapan Raychaudhuri, Peter Robb, Sunanda Sen, Colin Simmons, Burton Stein, Eric Stokes, Dwijendra Tripathi, Marika Vicziany and David Washbrook. I am also grateful for the tolerance and confidence of Gordon Johnson, who has waited for this part of the *New Cambridge History of India* with grace and patience.

The text was begun while I was a Visiting Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Economic History at the University of Melbourne during the antipodean winter and spring of 1990 – a visit which was made enjoyable, stimulating and productive by the efforts of many people, notably David Merrett, Boris Schedvin and Allan Thompson. My colleagues at Birmingham, especially Peter Cain, Rick Garside, Tony Hopkins, Leonard Schwarz, Henry Scott and Gerald Studdert-Kennedy, have provided constant encouragement and support, while Suzy Kennedy made learning word-processing easy. Above all, my family – Caroline, Sam, Charlie, Martha and Edward – made possible the effort that created this book, which I dedicate to them in return.

B. R. Tomlinson



Map 1.1 India in 1938-1939

