

Society, Economy and Polity: 18th Century India

Course Instructor: Rajat Datta

List of themes to be discussed in lectures.

This course is designed to analyse the main developments in eighteenth century India along the following axes

- (1) an overview of the Mughal polity;
- (2) the breakdown of Mughal imperial system and the emergence of regional political formations as distinct, and not merely, 'successor' regimes;
- (3) the social and cultural contexts of regional growth and the shaping of interconnected regional economies;
- and (4) the ramifications of the early-colonial intervention.

The break-up of the themes is as follows:

- I. The Mughal Empire in the late 17th and early 18th centuries: a historiographical and thematic overview:
 - historiography of the decline of the Empire.
 - the legacy and the crisis;
 - centralization question;
 - emerging fissures in the imperial system;
- II. The politics of reorganization of the old regime:
 - the centre, local society and the countryside;
 - the urban and the urbane in the new milieu;
 - consolidation of religious gentries: inam, madad-i-ma'ash and la-kharaj;
 - the 'new' social groups and their political participation;
 - landed magnates and control over local societies;
 - the regional political orders within the Mughal political ambit and without: some regional case studies.
- III. Economic implications of regionalization:
 - 'military fiscalism' and zones of military resource consumption in the regions;
 - local resource controllers and regional economies;
 - bankers, local business and regional state finance;
 - money and agrarian financing: the ijaradari;
 - landed and religious gentries;
 - production and market networks;
 - merchants and the profile of intra-regional trade.
- IV. The coming of the East India Company:
 - the emergence of new political equations: some regional case studies;
 - changing notions of authority and jurisdiction;
 - state and landed property;
 - new revenue experiments in Bengal;
 - the Permanent Settlement;
 - economic intervention: monopoly trading and the spread of private trading interests;
 - impact on indigenous capital and business;
 - state and market;
 - the nature of agrarian commercialism;
 - the drain of wealth: quantities and implications.
- V. Tradition and Transition in the 18th century:
 - Ideological, social and cultural constituents of the new regimes
 - The end of early modern India?

Please note: Journal Articles will be referred to separately

First Readings:

- Alam, Muzaffar, *The Crisis of the Empire in Mughal North India: Awadh and the Punjab, 1707-1748*, Delhi, 1986.
- Barnett, Richard, *North India Between Empires: Awadh, the Mughals and the British, 1720-1801*, Berkeley, 1980.
- Bayly, C.A., *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*, Cambridge, 1988.
- Chandra, Satish, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1740*, 3rd edition, Delhi, 1979.
- Datta, Rajat, *Economy, Society and Market: Commercialization in Rural Bengal, c.1760-1800*, Delhi, 2000.
- Eaton, Richard, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*, Delhi, 1994.
- Fisher, Michael, *Clash of Cultures: Awadh, the British and the Mughals*, Delhi, 1987.
- Fukazawa, Hiroshi, *The Medieval Deccan: Peasants, Social Systems and States, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries*, Delhi, 1991.
- Furber, Holden, *John Company at Work, A study of European Expansion in India in the Late Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge, Mass. 1951.
- Gordon, Stewart, *Marathas, Marauders and State Formation in Eighteenth-Century India*, Delhi, 1998.
- Kumar, Dharm with Meghnad Desai (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol.II, c.1750-c.1970 (Indian edition)* Delhi, 1984.
- Marshall, P.J., *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, 1977.
- Marshall, P.J. (ed.), *The Eighteenth Century in Indian History*, New Delhi, 2003.
- Marshall, P.J., *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India and America, c.1750-1783*, Oxford, 2005.
- Mukherjee, Tilottama, *Political Culture and Economy in Eighteenth-Century Bengal. Networks of Exchange, Consumption and Communication*. New Delhi, 2013.
- Stein, Burton, 'Eighteenth Century India: Another View', *Studies in History*, new series, vol.5, no.1, 1989.
- Subrahmanyam, Sanjay (ed.), *Merchants, Markets and the State in Early Modern India*, Delhi, 1990 (selected articles).
- Travers, Robert, *Ideology and Empire in Eighteenth Century India: The British in Bengal*, Cambridge, 2007.
- Trivedi, Madhu, *The Making of the Awadh Culture*, New Delhi, 2010.
- Wilson, Jon, *The Domination of Strangers: Modern Governance in Eastern India, 1780-1835*, Hampshire and New York, 2008.
- Wink, Andre, *Land and Sovereignty in India: Agrarian Society and Politics under the Eighteenth Century Maratha Swarajya*, Cambridge, 1986

Further Readings: (selected chapters or portions of text)

- Alavi, Seema, *Sepoys and the Company: Tradition and Transition in Northern India, 1770-1830*, Delhi, 1995.
- Banga, Indu, *Agrarian System of the Sikhs*, Delhi, 1978.
- Bayly, C.A., *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 178-1870*, Cambridge, 1996.
- Chatterjee, Kumkum, *Merchants, Politics and Society in Early Modern India, Bihar: 1733-1820*, Leiden, 1996.
- Chandra, Satish, *The Eighteenth Century in India: Its Economy and the Role of the Marathas, the Jats, the Sikhs and the Afghans*, Delhi, 1986.
- Chaudhury, Susil, *From Prosperity to Decline: Eighteenth Century Bengal*, Delhi, 1995.
- Datta, Rajat (ed), *Rethinking a Millennium. Perspectives on Indian History from the Eighth to the Eighteenth Century*, New Delhi, 2008.
- Fisher, Michael, (ed.), *The Politics of the British Annexation of India, 1757-1857*, Delhi, 1991.
- Frykenberg, Robert E. (ed.), *Land Control and Social Structure in Indian History*, Delhi, 1979.
- Furber, Holden, *John Company at Work*, Cambridge, Mass, 1948.
- Guha, Ranajit, *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of the Permanent Settlement*, Delhi, 1982 (first published, 1963).
- Habib, Irfan (ed.), *Resistance and Modernization under Haidar Alai & Tipu Sultan*, Delhi, 1999.
- Prakash, Om and Lombard, Denys (ed.), *Commerce and Culture in the Bay of Bengal, 1500-1800*, Delhi, 1999.
- Robb, Peter (ed.), *Meanings of Agriculture: Essays in South Asian History and Economics*, Delhi, 1996.
- Husain, Iqbal, *The Rise and Decline of the Ruhela Chieftaincies in 18th Century India*, Delhi, 1994.
- Jafri, Saiyid Zaheer Hussain, *Studies in the Anatomy of a Transformation, Awadh: From Mughal to Colonial Rule*, Delhi, 1998.
- Islam, Sirajul, *The Permanent Settlement in Bengal: A Study of its Operation, 1793-1819*, Dhaka, 1979.
- Karim, Abdul, *Murshid Quli Khan and His Times*, Dhaka, 1963.
- Khan, Abdul Majed, *The Transition in Bengal, 1765-1775: A Study of Saiyid Muhammad Reza Khan*, Cambridge, 1969.
- Kolff, Dirk H.A., *Naukar, Rajput and Sepoy: The Ethno-history of the Military Labour Market of Hindustan, 1450-1850*, Cambridge, 1990.

- Leonard, Karen, *Social History of an Indian Caste: the Kayasths of Hyderabad*, Berkeley, 1978.
- Ludden, David, *Peasant History in South India*, Delhi, 1989 (esp., chapters 4 and 5).
- Marshall, P.J., *Bengal. The British Bridgehead*.
- McLane, John R., *Land and Local Kingship in Eighteenth-century Bengal*, Cambridge, 1993.
- Nightingale, Pamela, *Trade and Empire in Western India*,
- Ray, Ratanalekha, *Change in Bengal Agrarian Society*, Delhi, 1979.
- Islam, Khurshidul and Russell, Ralph (ed), *Three Mughal Poets. Mir, Sauda, Mir Hasan*, New Delhi (OUP), 1998.
- Siddiqi, Noman Ahmad, *Land Revenue Administration under the Mughals, 1700-1750*, Bombay, 1970.
- Singh, Dilbagh, *The Peasant, Landlord and the State: Eastern Rajasthan in the Eighteenth Century*, Delhi, 1991.
- Singha, Radhika, *A Despotism of Law: Crime and Justice in Early Colonial India*, Delhi, 1998.
- Trivedi, Madhu, *The Emergence of Hindustani Tradition. Music, Dance and Drama in North India, 13th to 19th Centuries*, New Delhi, 2012.
- Webster, Anthony, *The Twilight of the East India Company. The Evolution of Anglo-Asian Commerce and Politics, 1790-1860*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2009.