

Contestations and accommodations: Mewat and Meos in Mughal India

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Abstrak

Contestations and accommodations charts the social, economic, and political history of the Mewat region of north India from the 13th to the early 18th centuries. Denting the conventional image of communities in medieval India as self-sufficient, changeless, and autonomous entities, it takes up the case of the Meos of Mewat to argue that these communities have regularly undergone profound socio-economic changes, which are an integral part of their histories. The volume offers a historically nuanced perspective of the evolution of the identity of Meos. Delineating Mewats ecology and its impact on the economy, it lays bare the process of community formation among the Meos in the wake of their peasantization and Islamicization. Exploring the contours of this transformation in the larger backdrop of the establishment of a centralized state under the Sultanate and the Mughal rule, this work also throws light on the emergence of a new class of zamindars, namely the Rajputs and the Jats, at the cost of the old landed elites, namely the Khanzadas and the Meos-a phenomenon that generated significant agrarian turmoil in the rural society at large.