



Managing Conflicts in India: Policies of Coercion and Accommodation

Bidisha Biswas

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Bidisha Biswas explores the question of how a democratic state chooses between policies of coercion and accommodation when dealing with political violence by addressing an important, yet under examined, topic—India’ approach to internal conflicts. In *Managing Conflicts in India*, Biswas selects three cases of conflict: the separatist campaign in Punjab during the 1980s; the protracted insurgency in Kashmir; and attacks on the Indian state by left-wing extremists, also known as Maoists and Naxalites, a campaign that has existed in different forms since the 1960s. Using archival research and fieldwork, Biswas shows that the Indian state has chosen a mix of tactics in dealing with these insurgencies. She argues that the government’s responses have often been dictated by immediate political concerns, rather than a strategic vision. While the integrity of the Indian state remains intact, its democratic quality and credibility have been seriously compromised. By focusing on the choices—and missteps—that the Indian government has made, Biswas sheds light not only on the insurgencies themselves, but also on the overall processes that impact effective conflict management.

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