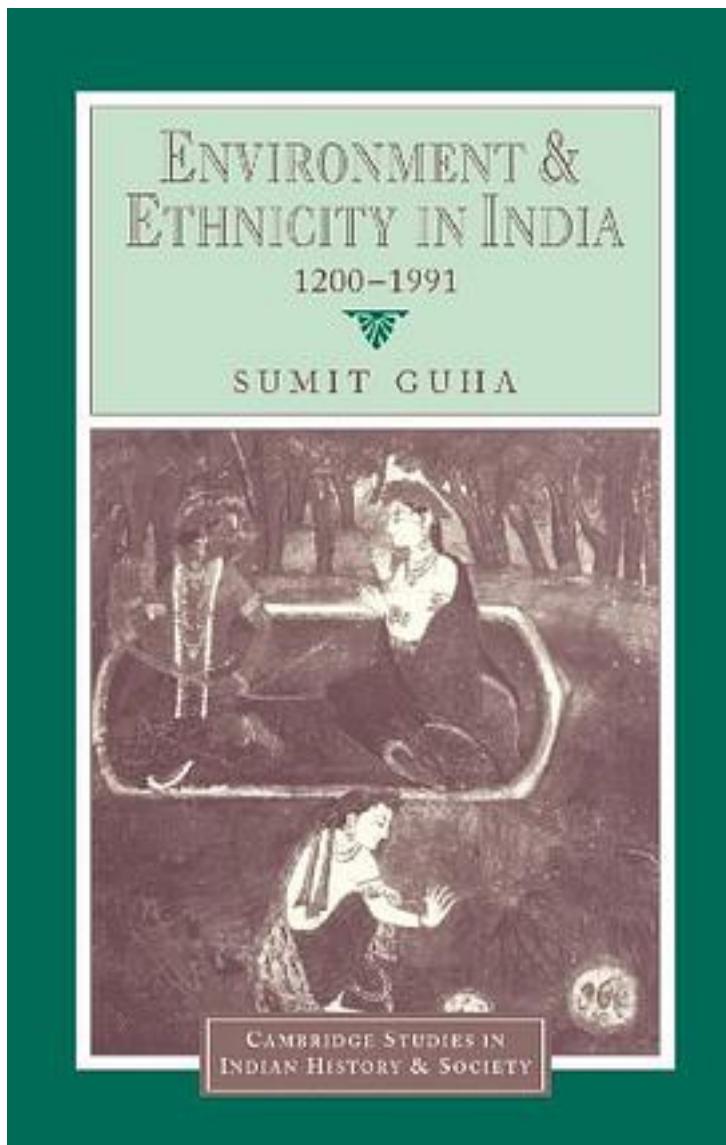


Environment and Ethnicity in India, 1200-1991



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Drawing on a rich collection of sources, Sumit Guha's 1999 book reconstructs the history of the forest communities in western India to explore questions of tribal identity and the environment. In so doing, he demonstrates how the ideology of indigenous cultures, developed out of the notion of a pure and untouched ethnicity, is in fact rooted in nineteenth-century racial and colonial anthropology. As a challenge to this view, the author traces the processes by which the apparently immutable identities of South Asian populations took shape, and how these populations interacted politically, economically and socially with civilizations outside their immediate vicinity. While such theories have been discussed by scholars of South-East Asia and Africa, this study examines the South Asian case. Sumit Guha's penetrating and controversial critique will make a significant contribution to that literature.

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