



Sri Lanka in the Modern Age: A History

By Nira Wickramasinghe

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Sri Lanka in the Modern Age recounts the modern history of the island in an accessible yet unconventional manner. Where other histories have tended to focus on the state's failure to accommodate the needs and demands of minority communities, Wickramasinghe places their claims alongside the political, social and economic demands of other communities, parties, associations and groups, tracing their lineages to the colonial period. This updated second edition carries the book into the present, covering the brutal end of Sri Lanka's civil war and the making of oppressive stability that has grown in its wake.

Drawing on recent work as well as on her own research in the field, Wickramasinghe has written above all a history of the people of Sri Lanka rather than a history of the nation-state.

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Editorial Review

Review

"For those wanting to understand the origins of the disputes which have kept the island of Sri Lanka in turmoil for the past thirty-five years, Nira Wickramasinghe has written a packed and comprehensive account of the historical developments which have shaped the nation now known as Sri Lanka."--*Asian Affairs*

"Sri Lanka in the Modern Age is a refreshing departure from historiography's standard treatment of South Asia. By putting a people-centred politics of identity at its centre, the book offers a different take from those proffered by historians on the relationship between state-building and the violent defence of territorially-based categorical identities in Sri Lanka; what it shows is that state-building does not consolidate an immanent nation, but rather works to produce certain people as the native, the national, the majority, the citizen through the simultaneous disavowal of others as the outsider, the minority, the migrant."--*Contemporary South Asia*

"A neatly crafted, well documented historical narrative. A significant contribution to the discipline of history in Sri Lankan society."--*Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*

About the Author

Nira Wickramasinghe is Professor and Chair of Modern South Asian Studies at Leiden University in the Netherlands. Her most recent books are *Metallic Modern: Everyday Machines in Colonial Sri Lanka* and *L'invention du vêtement national au Sri Lanka: Habiller le corps colonisé*.

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