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Title:	Caste and the Frontiers of Post-Colonial Capital Accumulation
Authors:	Bandyopadhyay, Ritajyoti (/jspui/browse?type=author&value=Bandyopadhyay%2C+Ritajyoti) Samaddar, R. (/jspui/browse?type=author&value=Samaddar%2C+R.)
Keywords:	Caste Accumulation Economies of scale Industrial organization
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Citation:	Accumulation in Post-Colonial Capitalism, pp. 189-214
Abstract:	<p>In this chapter, the authors explore the complex relation between caste and post-colonial capital accumulation in India. Their evidence comes from the state of West Bengal which till date remains in the margins of the caste historiography, particularly economic historiography. The authors closely study the small- and medium-scale engineering industry in Howrah, an industrial city near Calcutta, between the 1940s and 1970s in the context of the participation of a particular middle-caste group—the Mahisyas—in various sectors of the industry in the prolonged boom period (1939–1961). It is often argued that caste works differently in West Bengal. It is argued that caste question in West Bengal appears to be subsumed in the larger issues of class and communalism that accounts for the continued hegemony of the upper caste 'gent' in society, polity and culture. Further, it is said that here exists a neat ethnic separation between the composition of the commercial–industrial elite and the cultural–political elite. Often, scholarly discussions on capital accumulation in West Bengal exclude the caste structure among Bengalis and focus on the management of family and kinship capital of the Gujaratis and Marwaris from western India. While discussing entrepreneurialism among members of religious groups other than the Hindus, scholars tend to look into family and kinship infrastructures without necessarily taking a caste optic. This chapter addresses this research gap through the dialectics of caste and capital in West Bengal.</p>
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