

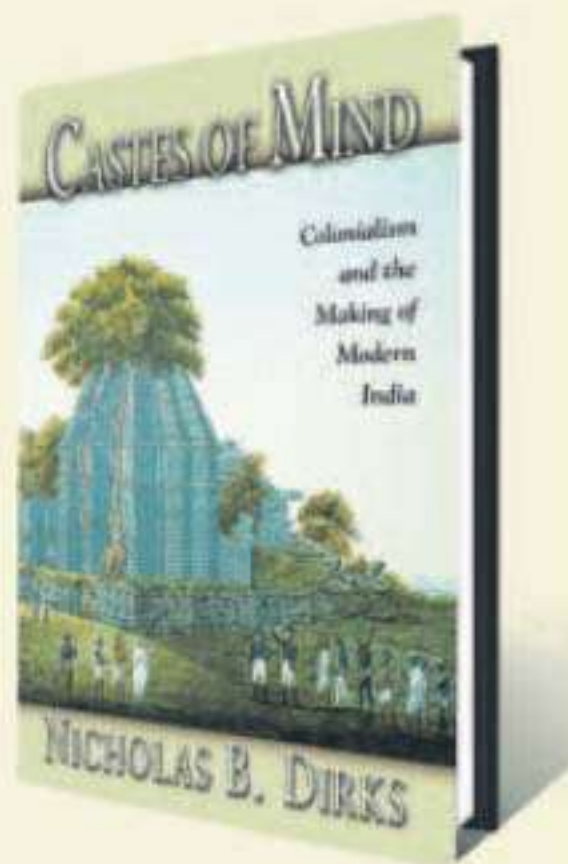
{ **EDITOR'S PICK** }

HT's editors offer a book recommendation every Saturday, which provides history, context, and helps understand recent news events

## COUNTING CASTE

**C**aste will be enumerated in the next Census. Opinion on what its ramifications could be is divided — will it fractionate society further or will it finally mean social justice for marginalised caste groups? Against this backdrop, we recommend Nicholas B Dirks's *Castes of Mind* (1992).

*Castes of Mind* traces the path of caste as a form of identity across periods in Indian history, with a specific focus on its consolidation during the colonial years. Dirks argues that caste co-existed along with other forms of identity and markers of belongingness to categories in almost all major epochs of the subcontinent's history. *Castes of Mind* posits, while colonial governance didn't invent caste — as is the belief in certain quarters — it did further caste's congealing as an identity and category, through insistence on enumeration. The richness of the historical information in the book and Dirks's razor-sharp insights make this an important read as India revives the caste census.



**Castes of Mind**  
Nicholas B Dirks  
1992