

# KRISHAK

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[\*Krishak: bengali term for farmer]

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62 photographs, 65 x 50 / 90 x 70 cm

Millions of smallholder farmers in Asia and Africa produce the majority of food on very small plots of land. This stands in contrast to the parallel development of increasingly large, energy- and resource-intensive farming systems, which are promoted worldwide through open markets or targeted subsidies.

The term 'non-simultaneity', coined by the philosopher Ernst Bloch, describes that not all social groups experience modernization processes at the same pace or reach comparable levels of development. In India, which exhibits diverse social and economic differences, this non-simultaneity is evident throughout the country.

While the country is fully integrated into international competition and participates in the global market, the growing prosperity of an upper- and middle-class segment, compared with the everyday lives of much of the population—whose daily work is primarily focused on meeting basic needs—reveals social disparities.

Rural areas of India are often characterized by traditional, subsistence-based forms of life. Many smallholder farmers do not have access to capital-intensive methods for increasing yields, such as mechanization, fertilizers, or land expansion. Even in Bengal, not far from the city of Kolkata, rice is partly still cultivated and harvested largely as it has been for centuries. Harvesting and threshing are carried out almost entirely manually. The harvested plants are transported on the head, by bicycle, or using a yoke to threshing sites in the villages. At first glance, the dynamic economic development of India is not immediately apparent here.

The photographs convey life in rural areas visibly and show the daily working conditions. They also raise global questions: How can sustainable agriculture be achieved within the tensions of ecological and social demands?