PREFACE TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

This is a reprint of the sixth edition (1953) which is the latest published by the author who passed away on the 4th May, 1957. According to the author’s last wishes, the volume is presented to the public as it was finally revised by him.

The revision of the indexes has been done by Mrs. Uma Raychaudhuri, Ajayprasad, Sunanda, Sucheta and Bijayprasad. They are unfortunately not exhaustive. It is also a matter of regret that misprints and blemishes could not be avoided. For these we can only crave the indulgence of sympathetic readers.

We are grateful to Dr. D. C. Sircar, the present Carmichael Professor and Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, for a suitable foreword for this edition. We are also thankful for the co-operation we have received from the press.

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PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION

The Political History of Ancient India now arrives at a sixth edition. The continued illness of the author makes the task of revision extremely difficult. It has not been found possible to eliminate mistakes and misprints that may have crept into the volume.

Few important discoveries have been made in the domain of Ancient Indian History and Culture of the period dealt with in the following pages, since the publication of the fifth edition in 1950. It may, however, be noted that certain copper coins of a king whose name has been read as Rāmagupta have been collected by Śrī Advani and others at Bhilsa, bearing the figure of a lion on the obverse. The identity of the ruler is still undecided. The available evidence is not sufficient to indicate whether the ruler in question was a local prince or a scion of the imperial line of Guptas. Mention may also be made of a seal said to have been discovered in the Ghositārāma monastery in course of excavations at the site of Kauśāmbī carried on by the University of Allahabad. The seal is “impressed” with one of Toramāna, the famous Hun ruler, and seems to confirm the evidence of Somadeva, a Jaina contemporary of Kṛiṣṇa III Rāṣṭrakūṭa, regarding Hun penetration deep into the interior of the Ganges valley. The representation of Grumbates (of the Chionitai) as a Kushān ruler accepted by several scholars, is by no means certain.

The author has read with interest the learned notes on the Scythian period by Ludwig Bachhofer, Otto Maenchen Halfen, Dr. Lohuizen, and A. L. Basham, to whom recognition is due. His grateful thanks are also due to Professor Louis Renou of Paris for certain suggestion and constructive criticism.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA:
July 2, 1953.                         H. C. R. C.
PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION

A fifth edition of the Political History of Ancient India is now placed before scholars. The author, who has been in very poor health for a long time, has found the task of revision a difficult one. He is conscious of the fact that misprints and other faults justly open to censure have not been avoided. Fresh study of the subject and new discoveries have necessitated a thorough revision of several chapters, preparation of additional notes, omission of parts of the text and other amendments. No pains have been spared to bring the work up-to-date.

Help of various kinds, including revision of indexes, has been rendered by Mr. Durgadas Mukherji, Dr. Sudhakar Chatterji, Mr. Rabischandra Kar and Dr. Golapchandra Raychaudhuri to whom the author's acknowledgments are due.

The University of Calcutta:
March 1, 1950.

H. C. R. C.
PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

In placing the fourth edition of the Political History of Ancient India in the hands of students of Indian Antiquities the author takes the opportunity of expressing his grateful thanks to scholars and explorers who have made accessible the rich stores of ancient learning and the priceless memorials of vanished glory that hitherto lay hidden beyond the ken of students and investigators. Suggestions and criticisms that earlier editions of the present work received in recent times, though not always of an instructive and informed character, have enabled the author to restate his position in regard to many matters treated in the volume. While unwilling to dogmatise on controversial points the writer of the following pages thinks that he has adduced fresh evidence in support of some of the views that were put forward years ago, long before certain recent notes and dissertations on kindred subjects saw the light of the day. He has also sought to incorporate new material which, it is hoped, may be of some little use to the ever-widening circle of eager inquirers who are interested in the chequered annals of this ancient land.

The Cimmerian veil of darkness that enshrouds not a few obscure spaces in the spectrum of the early history of this country cannot be lifted by the wand of the magician or the trick of the conjurer. Even if such a feat were possible the author confesses that he does not possess the requisite implements.

Help in the laborious task of compiling the indexes has been given by Dr. D. C. Sircar and Professor G. C. Raychaudhuri to whom the author's acknowledgments are due.

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The volume that now goes forth before the public could not be made as free from mistakes as the present writer would have wished. Some of the errors and misprints have been noted and corrected but many blunders, justly open to censure, may have escaped attention. For these the author can only crave the indulgence of readers.

The University of Calcutta:

March 31, 1938.

H. C. R. C.
PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

The *Political History of Ancient India* now arrives at a third edition. An endeavour has been made to make it more accurate and up to date. Questions connected with certain dynasties, particularly of the Scythian period, have been treated afresh and several paragraphs have been revised in the light of the new information that may be gathered from literature as well as inscriptions discovered at Shahdaur, Maira, Khalatse, Nāgārjunīkonda, Guṇāighara and other places. Footnotes and appendices have been added to explain the author's viewpoint with regard to certain controversial matters. A new feature of the revised edition is the insertion in certain chapters, particularly of Part II, of introductory verses from literature to bring out some salient features of those chapters and incidentally, to show that poets and sages of Ancient India were not altogether unmindful of the political vicissitudes through which their country passed. The author craves the indulgence of the reader for certain misprints that have crept into the text. The labour of revising the indexes has been performed by Srijuts D. C. Raychaudhuri, G. C. Raychaudhuri and Anilkumar Raychaudhuri.

*The University of Calcutta:  
December 13, 1931.*  

H. C. R. C.
EXTRACTS FROM THE PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

A New edition of the Political History of Ancient India from the Accession of Parikshit to the Extinction of the Gupta Dynasty is placed before the public. The work has been out of print for some times and need has long been felt for a fresh edition. Therefore it goes forth once more having been revised and re-written in the light of the new information that is coming in so rapidly and in such vast bulk. No pains have been spared to bring the book up to date and make it more attractive to students. Material emendations have been made in almost every chapter. Some of the extracts in Sanskrit have been provided with English renderings.

A new feature of the present volume is the inclusion of a number of maps, and a few chronological and synchronistic tables, which, it is to be hoped, will increase the usefulness of the work. The incorporation of fresh material has necessitated a recasting of the indexes.

The present writer never intended his work to be a comprehensive survey of the political and dynastic history of every Indian province. He is chiefly concerned with those kingdoms and empires whose influence transcended provincial limits and had an important bearing upon the general course of political events in the heart and nerve-centres of the Indian sub-continent. Dynasties of mere local interest (e.g., the Tamil Prachanitas of the far south, or the Himalayan Pratyantas in the far north) have received
very brief notice, as these did not acquire an all-India importance till after the Gupta period when a Jayadeva Parachakra-kāma had intimate dynastic relations with several rulers of the Indian interior, a Lalitāditya pushed his conquests as far as Kanauj, and a Rājendra Chōla carried his arms to the banks of the Ganges.

Further, the author does not claim for the period from Parikshit to Bimbisāra the same degree of authenticity as for the age of the Mauryas, the Sātavāhanas and the Guptas. The absence of trustworthy contemporary dynastic records makes it preposterous to put forward such a proposition. In regard to the early period it has been his principal endeavour to show that the huge fabric of sacerdotal and rhapsodic legends is not based solely on the mythical fancy of mendacious priests and storytelling Diaskeuasts: that bardic tales sometimes conceal kernels of sober facts not less trustworthy than the current accounts of the dynasties immediately preceding the raid of Alexander; and that chronological relation of the national transactions before 600 B.C. is not impossible. In trying to demonstrate this he has not confined himself to literature of a particular type, but has collated the whole mass of evidence, Vedic as well as Purānic, Brāhmaṇical as well as non-Brāhmaṇical, Buddhist as well as Jain, Indian as well as Hellenic.

The writer of these pages wishes to acknowledge with sincere thanks his indebtedness to scholars and critics who have helped him with valuable suggestions, and especially to Dr. Barnett, Professor Schrader, Dr. Jarl Charpentier, Mr. H. Subbaiya and Mr. Asananda Nag. He is also grateful for the kind assistance which he received in many difficulties from his friends and colleagues, among whom Mr. Sailendranath Mitra, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Mr. H. C. Ray and Mr. J. C. Chakravorti deserve especial mention. His acknowledgments are also due to Srijut Golapchandra Raychaudhuri who gave him
much valuable help in the preparation of maps and the revision of the indexes. The author does not claim that the indexes are exhaustive, but he has spared no pains to include all important references.

The University of Calcutta:
April 12, 1927.                        H. C. R. C.
PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The object of the following pages is to sketch the political history of Ancient India from the accession of Parikshit to the extinction of the Gupta Dynasty. The idea of the work suggested itself many years ago from observing a tendency in some of the current books to dismiss the history of the period from the Bhārata war to the rise of Buddhism as incapable of arrangement in definite chronological order. The author’s aim has been to present materials for an authentic chronological history of ancient India, including the neglected post-Bhārata period, but excluding the Epoch of the Kanauj Empires which properly falls within the domain of the historian of Mediaeval India.

The volume now offered to the public consists of two parts. In the first part an attempt has been made to furnish, from a comparison of the Vedic, Epic, Purānic, Jaina, Buddhist and secular Brāhmaṇical literature, such a narrative of the political vicissitudes of the post-Pārikshita-pre-Bimbisārian period as may not be less intelligible to the reader than Dr. Smith’s account of the transactions of the post-Bimbisārian age. It has also been thought expedient to append, towards the end of this part, a short chapter on kingship in the Brāhmaṇa-Jātaka period. The purpose of the second part is to provide a history of the period from Bimbisāra to the Guptas which will be, to a certain extent, more up to date, if less voluminous, than the classic work of Dr. Smith.

The greater part of the volume now published was written some years ago, and the author has not had
the opportunity to discuss some of the novel theories advanced in recent works like the *Cambridge History of India*, and Mr. Pargiter's *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*.

The writer of these pages offers his tribute of respect to the Hon'ble Sir Asutosh Mookerjee for providing opportunities for study which render it possible for a young learner to carry on investigation in the subject of his choice. To Professor D. R. Bhandarkar the author is grateful for the interest taken in the progress of the work. His acknowledgments are also due to Messrs. Girindramohan Sarkar and Rameschandra Ray-chaudhuri for their assistance in preparing the indexes. Lastly, this preface cannot be closed without a word of thanks to Mr. A. C. Ghatak, the Superintendent, for his help in piloting the work through the Press.

H. C. R. C