PREFACE

THE PRESENT VOLUME is the first of a multi-volumed Project on the Sources of the History of India covering the entire Indian sub-continent and all the three periods of history—ancient, medieval and modern. It is intended to fill up a great void in Indian historiography. Although serious researches in Indian history had started from the second half of the nineteenth century and considerable progress had been made during the last hundred years or more, there had been no attempt made so far in collecting the available source material in different Indian and foreign languages and preserved in different parts of the country. Nor had any attempt been made to ascertain the extent to which the available source material had been utilised by historians and the gaps that still remain to be filled up. Our primary objective in undertaking this multi-volumed Project is to help advanced students of history, researchers and teachers in getting to know the wealth of historical source material lying scattered in different parts of the country and in different languages.

In the context of our historical studies during the last one hundred years the time has come to make a comprehensive compilation of the available source material of all kinds—archaeological, epigraphic, numismatic, written records, etc.—which will help the historians to reconstruct the past, and to ascertain the extent to which this reconstruction had been achieved, the fields that still remain uncovered and the source material still remaining unutilised. It is in the nature of a stock-taking of the progress already made and of the path that still lies ahead. The present Project is a pioneer venture, and it is to be hoped that it will serve its main objective as a path-finder to the present and future generations of historians.

India is a vast country and a land of diversity—ethnological, cultural, religious, regional and linguistic. For a proper study and reconstruction of Indian history a central or all-India
approach will be quite useless and superficial. The basic approach should be regional, at least from the point of view of the source material available. Indian society is not monolithic in the same sense as many other societies in the world. No doubt India is in the broadest sense one country and Indians have many things in common. But it would be quite unrealistic for a historian to ignore the regional diversities. So far as India is concerned, national history can be reconstructed only through a regional approach and on the basis of regional diversity. This is the approach we have followed in planning the multi-volumed Project of source material for the history of India.

Since our Sixth Annual Conference held at Srinagar (Kashmir) in 1968 we have always followed the practice of having as the second theme of papers and discussion Sources of the History of the particular State in which the Annual Conference was held. On this theme we accepted papers covering all the three periods of Indian history, ancient, medieval and modern. So far we have covered ten different States or regions and we hope to cover the remaining States or regions during the next ten years. We shall then be in a position to complete our Project on the Sources of the History of India. In the present volume we are covering four States—Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Goa. In each of the subsequent volumes we propose to cover four or five States. It may, no doubt, take a long time to complete the Project for the whole of India, but this, in our opinion, is the only rational way of presenting the source material in different languages and available in different parts of the country. Our second volume will also appear soon, but the next three volumes will take more time.

In order to make an exhaustive study of the source material available in any region or State and in different languages and also to ensure uniformity of treatment of the subject we had laid down a broad pattern for the writers to follow. The pattern is given below for the information of our readers and to enable them to follow more intelligently each of the papers included in the volume irrespective of the region or period covered.
I. Nature of source material in general.
II. Classification of source material.
III. A critical review of the extent and dependability of the different categories of source material.
IV. The extent to which the source material has been utilised by historians and the fields which remain to be covered.
V. Any problem or difficulty in using the source material.

The pattern, as given above, will bring out clearly the exhaustive nature of study aimed at in our present Project and the way in which the Project is intended to help future research workers. Our study is not only in the nature of a stock-taking of what has been achieved already but also in the nature of an indication to future research workers about the fields which remain uncovered and the source material still remaining unutilised.

While outlining the main objective of our study as given above we do not, however, claim that all the papers included in the present volume, covering four States, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Goa, fully conform to the set pattern. Some of them have closely followed the set pattern while some others have deviated from the pattern and are merely compilations of source material without any critical examination of their comparative importance and dependability. This shortcoming, however, readers should understand, is inherent in a co-operative Project where rigid uniformity of approach and treatment cannot be enforced. On the whole, however, most of the papers have kept close to the set pattern laid down by us, thus fulfilling the main objective of the Project.

Another shortcoming that will strike the readers is that in some cases the papers included do not make an exhaustive study of the subject relating to any particular period. There are still several gaps for which additional papers should have been included. We are quite conscious of this shortcoming, but we can only offer in explanation the hard fact that in spite of our best efforts we could not secure the additional papers necessary to round off our study. We, no doubt, waited sufficiently long
for these papers, but in the end we had to decide between waiting indefinitely and publishing the papers we could get without further delay. This again is an unfortunate but unavoidable difficulty in a co-operative Project and we hope our readers will appreciate the point.

In spite of the shortcomings noted above, we do feel that the present Project will go a long way in filling up a great void in Indian historiography. When the Project is completed covering all the States and regions of India, it will be deemed as the most important and valuable contribution to the compilation of source material for Indian history as a whole. It will also be valued as an assessment of the importance of each type of source material and as an indication of the source material still awaiting the attention of historians. From this point of view, the present and the subsequent volumes of the Project will undoubtedly be most useful to advanced students and research workers. The volumes taken together will constitute an invaluable reference work, first of its kind in India, and will be deemed as a must in every centre of advanced study in Indian history and for every research supervisor and research student.

We need not be too modest to claim that we have stolen a march over the Government-sponsored and Government-financed historical organisation, the Indian Council of Historical Research. This expensive white elephant had been created at the beginning of 1972, and one of its ambitious research Projects was to compile in several volumes Source Material of Indian History. An unbelievably large amount had already been spent by the I.C.H.R. on this Project. Nothing has come out in seven years, and possibly nothing will come out in the next half a century. It is time for the Government of India to examine honestly this aspect of the Public Sector in historiography and to determine the justifiability of maintaining expensive white elephants at the cost of the poor tax-payers. It is not money but sincerity and devotion which can produce the desired results.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Contributors of papers whose kind co-operation has rendered
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