

## **POLITICAL HISTORY OF ANCIENT INDIA**

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FROM THE ACCESSION OF PARIKSHIT TO THE  
EXTINCTION OF THE GUPTA DYNASTY

BY

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PUBLISHED BY THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA  
1923

PRINTED BY BHUPENDRALAL BANERJEE,  
AT THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY PRESS, SENATE HOUSE, CALCUTTA

Regr. No. 13B,—28.8.23—500.

To

Sir Asutosh Mookerjee

in token of grateful regard and esteem.

## PREFACE

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 Mediæval 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 Raychaudhuri 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.

*July 16, 1923.*

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50	15	Triśaṅku	Trīśaṅku
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170	33	Yudhisthira	Yudhishṭhira
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186	33	Kielhorn's	Kern's
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221	23	inentified	identified
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254	14	Zeroastrian	Zoroastrian
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264	34	matronymic	metronymic
268	19	Pallava	Pahlava
276	32	colair	Colair

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286	26	Vishyapati	Vishayapati
301	3	Dabhbālā	Dabhbālā
303	24	Gaudas	Gaudas

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<b>A. H. D.</b> ...	... Ancient History of the Deccan.
<b>Ait. Br.</b> ...	... Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.
<b>Alex</b> ...	... Plutarch's Life of Alexander.
<b>App.</b> ...	... Appendix.
<b>A. V.</b> ...	... Atharva Veda.
<b>Bau. Sūtra</b> ...	... Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra.
<b>Br.</b> ...	... Brāhmaṇa.
<b>Brih. Up.</b> ...	... Brihadāraṇyaka Upanishad.
<b>Bud. Ind.</b> ...	... Buddhist India.
<b>Camb. Ed.</b> ...	... Cambridge Edition.
<b>Carm. Lec.</b> ...	... Carmichael Lectures, 1918.
<b>Chh. Up.</b> ...	... Chhāndogya Upanishad.
<b>C. I. I.</b> ...	... Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. iii.
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<b>Dialogues</b> ...	... Dialogues of the Buddha.
<b>Ed.</b> ...	... Edition.
<b>E. H. I.</b> ...	... Early History of India, 1914.
<b>Ep. Ind.</b> ...	... Epigraphia Indica.
<b>Gaz.</b> ...	... Gazetteer.
<b>G. E.</b> ...	... Gupta Era.
<b>Gop. Br.</b> ...	... Gopatha Brāhmaṇa.
<b>Hariv.</b> ...	... Harivamśa.
<b>H. and F.</b> ...	... Hamilton and Falconer's Translation of Strabo's Geography.
<b>Ind. Ant.</b> ...	... Indian Antiquary.
<b>Ind. Lit.</b> ...	... History of Indian Literature.
<b>Inv. Alex.</b> ...	... Invasion of Alexander.
<b>J.</b> ...	... Jātaka.
<b>J. A. S. B.</b> ...	... Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
<b>J. B. O. R. S.</b> ...	... Journal of the Bihār and Orissa Research Society.
<b>J. R. A. S.</b> ...	... Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
<b>Kaush. Up.</b> ...	... Kaushītaki Upanishad.

## ABBREVIATIONS

Kaut.	...	... Arthaśāstra of Kautilya, Mysore, 1919.
Life	...	... The Life of Hiuen Tsang.
M.	...	... Majjhima Nikāya.
M. A. S. I.	...	... Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.
Mat.	...	... Matsya Purāṇa.
Mbh.	...	... Mahābhārata.
M. R.	...	... Minor Rock Edict.
N.	...	... Nikāya.
P.	...	... Purāṇa.
Rām.	...	... Rāmāyaṇa.
R. V.	...	... Rig-Veda.
Sans. Lit.	...	... Sanskrit Literature.
Sat. Br.	...	... Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.
S. B. E.	...	... Sacred Books of the East.
Ś. E.	...	... Śaka Era.
S. I. L.	...	... South Indian Inscriptions.
Ved. Ind.	...	... Vedic Index.
Viz. Dist. Gaz.	...	... Vizagapatam District Gazetteer.
Z. D. M. G.	...	... Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.

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## APPENDIX.

Page ii, l. 7.—For some spurious plates of Janamejaya, see Ep. Ind., VII, App., pp. 162-163.

Page iii, l. 18.—The present Rāmāyaṇa (VI, 69,32) apparently refers to the Purāṇic episode of the uplifting of Mount Govardhana (parigṛīhya girin̄ dorbhyāṁ vapur Vishnūr viśambayan). For other Purāṇic allusions see Calcutta Review, March, 1922, pp. 500-502.

Page iv, l. 4.—The present Mahābhārata (I. 67, 13-14) refers to King Aśoka who is represented as an incarnation of a Mahāsura, and is described as “mahāvīryo-parajitah.” We have also a reference (Mbh. I, 139, 21-23) to a Greek overlord (Yavanādhipah) of Sauvira and his compatriot Dattāmitra (Demetrios?). The Sānti Parva mentions Yāska, the author of the Nirukta (842,78), Vārhaganya (318, 59) the Sāṃkhya philosopher who flourished in the fifth century after Christ, (J. R. A. S., 1905, pp. 47-51), and Kāmandaka (123, 11), the authority on Dharma and Artha, who is probably to be identified with the famous disciple of Kauṭilya.

Page 2, l. 33.—There is no Janamejaya after Parikshit I., also in the Kuru-Pāṇḍu genealogy given in the Chellūr or Cocanada grant of Vīra Choṭa (Hultzsh, S. I. I., Vol. I, p. 57).

Page 3.—The Bhāgavata Purāṇa (IX, 22,25-26) distinctly mentions Tura Kāvasheya as the priest of Janamejaya, the grandson of Abhimanyu, and the son of Parikshit II.

Page 12, l. 5.—The battle of Kurukshetra is very often described as a fight between the Kurus and the Śrīñjayas (Mbh. vi. 45,2 ; 60, 29 ; 72, 15 ; 73, 41 ; vii. 10, 41 ; 149, 40; viii. 47, 23; 57, 12; 59, 1; 93, 1). The unfriendly feeling between these two peoples is distinctly alluded to in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa (Vedic Index, II, p. 63).

Page 12, l. 22.—The polyandrous marriage of the Pāṇḍavas does not necessarily indicate that they are of non-Kuru origin. The system of *Niyoga* prevalent among the Kurus of the Madhyadeśa was not far removed from fraternal polyandry (Mbh. I. 103, 9-10; 105, 37-38), while the Law (Dharma) of marriage honoured by the Northern Kurus was admittedly lax (Mbh. I. 122,7). See also my "Political History" pp. 95-96, Journal of the Department of Letters (Calcutta University), Vol. IX.

Page 73n.—Several scholars reject the identification of Vāsudeva Kṛishṇa of the Mahābhārata with the historical Kṛishṇa of the Chhāndogya Upanishad (iii. 17). But we should remember that—

- (a) Both the Kṛishṇas have the metronymic Devakī-putra.
- (b) the teacher of the Upanishadic Kṛishṇa belonged to a family (Āngirasa) closely connected with the Bhojas (Rig-Veda III, 53,7), the kindreds of the Epic Kṛishṇa (Mbh. ii, 14,32-34).
- (c) the Upanishadic Kṛishṇa and his Guru Ghora Āngirasa were worshippers of Sūrya. We are told in the Sāntiparva (335,19) that the Sātvata vidhi taught by the Epic Kṛishṇa was *Frāk Sūrya-mukha-niḥṣrita*.
- (d) an Āngirasa was the Guru of the Upanishadic Kṛishṇa. Āngirasi Śruti is quoted as "Śruti-nām uttanā Śrutiḥ" by the Epic Kṛishṇa (Mbh. viii. 69, 85).
- (e) the Upanishadic Kṛishṇa is taught the worship of the sun, the noblest of all lights (Jyotiruttamamiti), high above all darkness (tamasaḥ pari), and also the virtues of Tapodānam ārjavam-ahimsā satya-vachanam. The Epic Kṛishṇa teaches the same thing in the Gītā (xiii, 18—jyotiṣāmapi tajjyotis tamasaḥ param uchyate ; xvi, 1-2—Dānam damaścha yajnaścha svādhyā-yam tapa ārjavam abiḥnsā satyam).

Page 86, l. 15.—The number of four queens was exceeded even in the Brāhmaṇic period. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (VII, 13), for instance, refers to the hundred wives of King Harischandra.

Page 89, l. 31ff.—The Abhisheka was preceded by an oath taken by the King to the priest. Keith takes “*utkroṣṇa*” to mean proclamation. Trivedī takes it in the sense of *gupakirtana*.

Page 99, l. 18.—The realm of Ālavaka is probably identical with the Chan-chu country visited by Hiuen Tsang. Dr. Smith seems to identify the country with the Ghāzipur region (Watters, Yuan Chwang, Vol. II, pp. 61, 340).

Page 101, l. 18.—For the employment of princes as *senāpati* see Kauṭilya (Mysore edition, 1919), p. 34.

Page 112, l. 7.—Susunāga, according to the Mahāvaiśatikā (Turnour's Mahāvāṁsa, xxxvii), was the son of a Lichchhavi rājā of Vaisālī. He was conceived by a *nagara-sobhini* and brought up by an officer of state.

l. 20.—Avantivardhana was a son of Pālaka according to the Kathāsaritsāgara (Tawney's translation, II, p. 485).

Page 115, l. 24.—Yogananda (Pseudo-Nanda) is the name given to the reanimated corpse of King Nanda (Kathāsaritsāgara, Durgāprasād and Parab's edition p. 10).

Page 120, l. 22; 121, l. 5.—“The youngest brother was called Dhana Nanda, from his being addicted to hoarding treasure . . . He collected riches to the amount of eighty kotis—in a rock in the bed of the river (Ganges) having caused a great excavation to be made, he buried the treasure there . . . Levying taxes among other articles, even on skins, gums, trees and stones he amassed further treasures which he disposed of similarly.” (Turnour, Mahāvāṁsa p. xxxix.).

Page 139, l. 25.—Regarding the conduct of Saṅgrāma Siṁha see Tod's Rājasthān, Vol. I, p. 240n(2).

- Page 147, l. 83.**—Another minister (or *Pradeshtṛi*?) was apparently Maniyatappo, a *Jatilian*, who “conferred the blessings of peace on the country by extirpating marauders” (Turnour’s *Mahāvāñsa*, p. xlvi).
- Page 170, l. 8, 4.**—Cf. Ajātaśatru’s treatment of Bimbisāra, and Udayana’s treatment of Piṇḍola.
- Page 213n.**—See JASB, 1922, pp. 269-271.
- Page 251, l. 6-7.**—Rājatarāṅginī I, 173; Harshacharita (Cowell) p. 252; Watters, Yuau-Chwang, ii, p. 200.
- Page 251, last line.**—The Kadphises Kings meant here are Kujula (Kadphises I), and Vima (Wema) and not Kuyulakara Kaphṣa whose identification with Kadphises I is a mere surmise. Even if Kuyulakara be identical with Kujula and the Kushān King of the Taxila inscription of 136, it may be pointed out that it is by no means certain that the date 136 refers to the Vikrama era.
- Page 256, l. 4.**—Some idea of the great power of Bhava Nāga’s dynasty and the territory over which they ruled may be gathered from the fact that they performed ten Aśvamedha sacrifices and “were besprinkled on the forehead with the pure water of (the river) Bhāgirathī that had been obtained by their valour,” (C. I. I. p. 241; A. H. D. p. 72). The performance of ten Aśvamedha sacrifices indicates that they were *not* a feudatory family owing allegiance to the Kushāns.
- Page 284 l. 5.**—Meghadūta (I, 31) and Kathāsaritsāgara (Tawney’s translation, Vol II. p. 275).

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