



ROMILA THAPAR

THE
PAST AND
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NATIONAL BOOK TRUST, INDIA

Delivered as the Sardar Patel Memorial Lectures over All India Radio in 1972, the present collection of three lectures discusses the challenging task facing the historian of India confronted with prejudices on the ancient Indian past. These often derive from the ideological context of recent times and relate to theories such as the supremacy of the Aryan race, the notion of Oriental Despotism and the concept of a static society. Weighing carefully these stereotypes against the evidence from sources relating to early Indian history, the author indicates the need for a re-interpretation of the past both in its totality and (inasmuch as it is possible) in its concrete actuality.

Romila Thapar has to her credit important books and papers relating to historical studies and research. Among these may be mentioned a detailed study of the reign of the emperor Asoka, entitled *Asoka and the Decline of the Maurvas* and also the first volume of *A History of India*. Further research on early Indian social history is reflected in *Ancient Indian Social History : Some Interpretations* and *From Lineage to State*.



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