It was as a student of the Post-Graduate, Department of History, Burdwan University, that I had an opportunity to develop an interest in early mediaeval history of Northern India. As a Research Fellow belonging to the same Department, my choice was to work on a select geo-political area in the early mediaeval period. Following an academic dialogue with my teacher and supervisor, I decided to work on the history of Mewār from the sixth to the beginning of the fourteenth century A.D. Because, the problems that were thrown up before me were thought-provoking enough to arouse my zeal for an investigation. Although eminent scholars had already made valuable contributions toward the reconstruction of the history of early mediaeval and mediaeval Mewār, I thought that a fresh study in the light of both literary and epigraphic records would be rewarding, especially in view of the fact that a considerable number of epigraphic records came to light in recent times.
While tracing the political history of Mewār, we have focussed our attention on the rise and fall of the Guhila power. It was from the Guhila line that the Rawāls and the Sesodias were descended and played a significant role in mediaeval Indian History. For the reconstruction of the history of Mewār, one has to depend, to some extent, on the bardic tradition and the accounts left by the court-chroniclers. We have relied more on epigraphic records than bardic tradition. Of course, it remains true that in some cases the bardic tradition has been inducted in the epigraphs by their composers. In those cases, we had no alternative but to accommodate the tradition as far as it is acceptable on reasonable grounds. We have not only consulted the original sources, both published and unpublished, but also have taken into consideration the interpretations of the relevant data as given by previous scholars. We have critically examined the views of the previous scholars and have discarded or accepted them, depending on the data as furnished by the original sources.

We have not only traced the political history of Mewār under the Guhila rule, but, to make the
historical study complete, have also made an attempt to draw an outline of the administration, society, economy and culture of Mewār during the period under study. While tracing the political history we have not only taken into consideration the epigraphic records attributed to the main branch of the Guhilas but also the records belonging to the collateral branches of the Guhilas. Besides, we could not put aside the records of the contemporary ruling dynasties like the Pratihāras, Paramāras, Chāhamānas and Chaulukyas who were directly involved in the politics of Rājputānā, in general, and of Mewār, in particular. Again, while making an attempt to draw an outline of the non-political history of the Guhilas, we have considered the data furnished by the epigraphs, coins, sculptures, temples and literary texts. In this connection, we have also taken into consideration some mediaeval records, because the mediaeval period may be reasonably supposed to be historically, culturally and traditionally a continuity of the early mediaeval period. Except the change of ruling dynasties in Mewār, there was practically little hiatus between early mediaeval and mediaeval period.

In Chapter I, we have introduced Mewār in its geographical and ethnological background. In Chapter II, we have traced the origin of the Guhilas. Scholars
previously laid an emphasis on the caste-position of the Guhilas, whereas we have attempted to indicate their ethnological origin. The caste-position appears to have been later attributed to the Guhilas by the court-chroniclers. In Chapter III, we have traced the genealogy and chronology of the early Guhilas. Scholars previously formed divergent views in regard to the chronological and genealogical position of the early Guhila rulers. A reasonable solution to the controversial problem has been suggested on the basis of a comparative study of different epigraphic lists of the Guhila rulers. In Chapter IV, an attempt has been made to examine the circumstances in which the Guhilas gradually rose to power. Although they made their advent in the arena of politics in the latter half of the sixth century A.D., they rose to power after the decline of the Pratihāras, sometime in the middle of the tenth century A.D. In Chapter V, we have traced the history of the Guhila rule in Āghāṭa that was, more often than not, disturbed by the intervention of the Chāhamānas and the Paramāras in the affairs of Mewar. We have made a fresh examination of the Guhila–Chamāna and the Guhila–Paramāra political relations. In Chapter VI, we have examined the circumstances in which the Guhilas shifted their capital from Āghāṭa to Nāgahrada, their earlier stronghold. It was during their rule in Nāgahrada that the Chaulukyas of
Gujarat made an intervention in the affairs of Mewar. The position of the Guhilas in relation to that of the Chaulukyas has been re-assessed. Chapter VII indicates the process of the climax and fall of the Guhila power. The climax was reached in the first decade of the thirteenth century A.D., when the Guhila power was gradually consolidated. The Guhila capital was transferred to Chitor, sometime towards the close of the second decade of the thirteenth century. Chitor was in a flourishing state till the beginning of the fourteenth century A.D. The fall of Chitor by Ala'uddin Khalji's invasion (A.D. 1303) marked the fall of the Guhila power in Mewar. Incidentally, we have examined the role of the Guhilas against foreign aggressions from time to time. In Chapter VIII, we have drawn an outline of Guhila administration. The administrative set up of the Guhilas, despite repeated political interferences from outside, ensured political stability in Mewar. An attempt has been made to trace whether the Guhila administrative system was feudalistic in character. In Chapter IX, we have made an attempt to reconstruct the socio-economic set up and trace the cultural progress in Mewar under the Guhila rule. The social hierarchy, based on the varna-system, and the economy, mainly based on the prevailing land-system, formed the foundation on which the superstructure of culture was set up. In tracing the cultural progress,
we have made a study of the religious beliefs and practices, attainments in the fields of art and architecture as well as literary activities.

In conclusion, we have much pleasure to acknowledge our indebtedness to the Central Library, Burdwan University, the Museum and Art Gallery, Burdwan University, the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, the National Library, Calcutta, the Indian Museum, Calcutta, the Rājputānā Museum, Ajmer, the Jaipur Museum, Jaipur, and the Numismatic Society of India, Vārāṇasī. I remain grateful also to the Rājākiya Saṃgrāhālaya, Udaipur, wherefrom I have obtained some valuable information. I owe my indebtedness to different Book-Sellers and Publishers of Agra, New Delhi, Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, who supplied me valuable books by post. I remain grateful to my mother Smt. Durga Chattopadhyay, who carefully looked after my health during the period of study and always gave me inspiration for research-work. The teachers of my Department have always encouraged me by their valuable suggestions. Above all, it is my sacred duty to put on record that my teacher and supervisor, Dr. Bhaskar Chattopadhyay, Professor of History, Burdwan University, has kindly provided me with his guidance at every stage, for which I hardly find suitable words to express my indebtedness and gratefulness to him.

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