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978-1-107-43214-7 - The Commerce Between the Roman Empire and India

E. H. Warmington

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THE COMMERCE  
BETWEEN THE ROMAN EMPIRE  
AND INDIA

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THE COMMERCE  
BETWEEN THE ROMAN EMPIRE  
AND INDIA

by

E. H. WARMINGTON, M.A.

*Sometime Scholar of Peterhouse,  
Reader in Ancient History in  
the University of London*

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AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
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TO  
DR W. H. D. ROUSE  
THIS BOOK IS  
DEDICATED

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## PREFACE

IN this book I have attempted to give, from a western point of view, a history of the commerce between the Roman Empire and India from the triumph of Augustus to the death of Marcus Aurelius. The full story of its decline, of the oriental commerce of the Byzantine era, and its development into the commerce of the Middle Ages would form another volume and finds no place here. Various problems, too, which are incidental to Rome's commerce with the East, have been indicated rather than discussed and I hope to deal with them elsewhere. Readers will find that many items of Rome's trade with Africa and Arabia have been included; this was inevitable in view of the geographical position of India and the development of a special sea-traffic between that region and Roman Egypt. Some of my critics will question the wisdom of separating the Imperial age from the centuries which went before, but there are limits to a work which goes into any detail, and like Mr Charlesworth, I risk willingly the imputation that, in this book on one aspect of ancient commerce, I have given a description of which the beginning and the end are absent.

I wish to thank the Adjudicators for the Le Bas Prize of 1925, and in particular Professor Rapson, in return for valuable suggestions and indispensable criticisms, and the University for allowing me to publish beyond the time-limit. My thanks are due also to Mr L. Eaglesfield of Mill Hill, London, for constant clerical assistance, particularly in reading through the proof-sheets of the

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978-1-107-43214-7 - The Commerce Between the Roman Empire and India

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

PREFACE

narrative, and I owe a special debt of gratitude to Miss E. Abbey of South Kensington for helping me in the translation of M. Khvostoff's monograph in Russian on the oriental trade of Graeco-Roman Egypt. Acknowledgements and thanks are due to W. de Gruyter and Co. of Berlin for permission to insert the illustration which faces page 143. Lastly, I thank the Cambridge University Press for its patience and care.

This book is based upon original sources, but I am much indebted to the work of others, especially for details upon subjects of which I cannot claim expert knowledge, and the extent of my indebtedness is shewn in the notes.

Two points about geography. I have used the expression "Indian Ocean" as including the Arabian Sea, and the expression "East Africa" means the African coast from Bab-el-Mandeb eastwards.

E. H. WARMINGTON

*Mill Hill, London*

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## CONTENTS

## PART I

THE OPENING UP AND PROGRESS OF  
ROME'S COMMERCE WITH INDIA

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	<i>page</i> 1
Chap. I. THE TRADE-ROUTES BETWEEN ROME AND INDIA	
1. Egypt and the Sea-Route to India . . . . .	6
2. The Land-Routes to India . . . . .	18
II. EARLY DEVELOPMENTS: THE DISCOVERY OF THE MONSOONS: RESULTS . . . . .	35
III. THE COMMERCE FROM THE REIGN OF NERO TO THE DEATH OF MARCUS AURELIUS. THE DECLINE . . . . .	84

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978-1-107-43214-7 - The Commerce Between the Roman Empire and India

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

## CONTENTS

## PART II

THE SUBSTANCE OF ROME'S COMMERCE  
WITH INDIASECTION A. THE OBJECTS OF IMPORTATION  
FROM INDIA

Chap. I. ANIMALS AND ANIMAL-PRODUCTS . . . . .	<i>page</i> 145
II. PLANT-PRODUCTS . . . . .	180
III. MINERAL-PRODUCTS . . . . .	235

SECTION B. THE OBJECTS OF EXPORTATION TO INDIA  
AND THE "DRAIN" OF SPECIE THITHER

IV. A. ARTICLES OF EXPORTATION . . . . .	261
B. THE ADVERSE BALANCE . . . . .	272
CONCLUSION . . . . .	319
ABBREVIATIONS . . . . .	323
NOTES . . . . .	330
INDEX . . . . .	395

## ILLUSTRATIONS

SILVER DISH FOUND AT LAMPSACOS . . . . .	<i>facings</i> p. 143
MAP SHEWING TRADE-ROUTES . . . . .	(in colour)

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Impiger extremos curris mercator ad Indos.

HORACE, *Ep.* I. I. 45.