

**HISTORY OF ANCIENT AND EARLY MEDIEVAL INDIA
PREHISTORY TO 1206 CE**

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UNIT I

Sources: Archaeological Sources - Literary Sources - Foreign Accounts: Prehistoric culture: Palaeolithic Mesolithic Neolithic -Distribution Tools Life of the people: Proto History - Harappan Civilization: Origin - Chronology - Extent - First Urbanization - Town Planning - Seals and Script - Trade Contacts Ancient Tamil Civilization: Adichanallur - Keeladi - Kondagai - Mayiladumparai – Sivagalai.

UNIT II

Vedic Period: Debate on the original home of the Aryans-Life during Early Vedic Age - Transformation from Early Vedic to Later Vedic Period Social Political Economic; Second Urbanization: Emergence of the Mahajanapadas - Formation of State: Republics and Monarchies Rise of Urban Centres Magadha: Haryankas Sisunagas - Nandas: Intellectual Awakening: Rise of Buddhism and Jainism -their impact on society in India and Abroad: Persian and Macedonian Contacts - Alexander's Invasion and its impact.

UNIT III

The Mauryan Imperial State: Chandragupta Maurya and his political achievements - Ashoka. his edicts and his policy of Dhamma: Spread of Religion: Mauryan Administration: Kautilya and Arthashastra - Megasthenes; Economy - Mauryan Art and Architecture - Disintegration of the Mauryan Empire; Post Mauryan Political, Economic, Social and Cultural developments: Indo-Greeks Sakas Parthians Kushanas Western Kshatrapas Development of Religions - Mahayana; Satavahanas of Andhra: their contribution to art and architecture.

UNIT IV

Guptas Polity and Administration Patronage to Art, Architecture and Literature-Educational Institutions: Nalanda Vikramashila Valabhi; Huna Invasion and Decline: Vakatakas: Polity and Economy: Harsha: The assemblies at Prayag and Kanauj - Hiuen- Tsung's account of India.

UNIT V

Peninsular India: Tamil country up to 12th Century- Chalukyas: some important attainments; Rise of Regional Kingdoms in Northern India up to 12th century:

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UNIT I**

SOURCES

Arachnological sources

The history of any ancient people is largely conditioned by the authenticity of the source materials. Where the sources are indirect, historians' job is beset with great difficulty and it is on their ability to choose the important ones leaving out those which are not of consequence that the quality of history writing will depend.

The absence of chronological historical writing about the ancient times of the Indian history has made it necessary to cull historical materials from indirect sources. In ancient India there was no dearth of literary works, but there was no attempt at writing history. There were certainly rulers in ancient India who must have been fond of getting the events of their reigns recorded by court panegyrist, but as Smith points out their writings did not survive the ravages of moths, insects and climate. But when we find that many literary works had survived despite ravages of moths, insects and climate, it is some-what unintelligible why the moths, insects and climate should have chosen historical writings for destruction, Smith's remark, therefore, is not much valid, True that the ancient Indians were not devoid of historical sense and not unconcerned about the need of chronology. This is proven from the Vedas, Jaina and Buddhist literature. Hiuen Tsang noticed the system of recording of events of especially auspicious and inauspicious nature in every province of India that he had visited, thus one thing is certain that there was no lack of historical sense or historical materials in ancient times in India but dearth was in respect of historical writers who could effectively use these materials to write authentic history. Although the ancient Indians showed their talent in various literary works, India lacked men like Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy or Tacitus who could write history. The source materials of the history of ancient India are therefore, indirect mostly, and to certain extent directly as well.

Literary Evidence:

The ancient Indian literature is an indirect but important source of the history of the ancient period. The Vedas give us an idea of the political, social and religious life of the Indians of that age. The Puranas, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata contain lists of kings dynastically. Such lists as well as the traditions and legends found in these works give us some historical materials for the reconstruction of the history of ancient India. But extreme care has to be taken in sifting the historical materials from the traditions and legends. Apart from the Vedas, Puranas, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Jaina and the Buddhist religious texts contain Touch Deepavamsa and Mahavamsa contain traditions which supply us some historical materials. Gargi Samhita, a book on Grammar of Panini and Patanjali also contains materials that help us in the reconstruction of the history of the ancient period of India,

From the second half of the ancient period of Indian history in from Gupta Age, literature, yet the genealogy of the local ruling dynasties and the panegyric and biographical sketches of rulers are replete with historical the dealing materials, These are entirely different from the traditions and legends and there is no doubt about the existence of their authors in those days, Among these writings there are not only panegyrics of kings and emperors but also political treatises dealing with the principles of administration. Kautilyas Artha sastra may be mentioned in these connections it was a work of the Maurya period. Among the historical work of ancient period Bana Bhatta, Harsha-Charit, dealing with the character historical works of and achievements of Harshavardhan as also history of his times, Bakpatiraja's Gaudabaho describing how Jasovarman conquered Gauda deserves special mention. Poet Bilhana described the history of the reign of Calukyas king Vikramditya VI in his Vikram Anka Charita SandhyakarNandi's Ram Charita is a description of the reign of Rampal, a king of the Pala dynasty of Bengal. Kahana's Rajatarangini is a valuable book on history of the king of Kashmir. Likewise, Padma Guptas Nabasahasanka Charit is a valuable historical work. These apart, Jai Sinha's Kumara I Charit, Hem Chandra's Dwasraya Kavya, Nyaya Chandra's Humpier Kavya, Ballal's Bhoja Prabodhan, Chand Bordo'i's Prithviraj Charit and Prithwiraj Vijay by an anonymous writer contain important historical materials. Although these works may not be considered historical works in the conventional sense, yet these contain enough materials for the reconstruction of the history of ancient India

Literary source

Although the ancient Indians knew how to write as early as 2500 BC, our most ancient manuscripts are not older than the AD fourth century and are found in Central Asia. In India, they were written on birch bark and palm leaves, but in Central Asia, where the Prakrit language had spread from India, manuscripts were also written on sheep leather and wooden tablets. These writings are called inscriptions, but they are as good as manuscripts. When printing was not known, manuscripts were very highly valued. Although old Sanskrit manuscripts are found all over India, they mostly relate to south India, Kashmir, and Nepal. Currently, inscriptions are largely preserved in museums ,and manuscripts in libraries. Most ancient books contain religious themes. Hindu religious literature includes the Vedas, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Puranas, and the like. They throw considerable light on the social and cultural conditions of ancient times, but it is difficult to use them in the context of time and place. The Rig Veda may be assigned to c. 1500-1000 BC, although such collections as the Atharva Veda, Yajur Veda, the Brahmanas, Aranyaka's, and the Upanishads date roughly to 1000-500 BC. Almost every Vedic text contains interpolations, which generally appear at the beginning or the end and rarely in the middle. The Rig Veda mainly comprises prayers, whereas the later Vedic texts comprise prayers as well as rituals, magic, and mythological stories. However, the Upanishads contain philosophical speculations. The Vedic texts it was necessary to study the Vedangas

or the limbs of the Veda. These supplements of the Veda comprised phonetics (Shiksha), ritual (Kalpa), grammar (vyakarana), etymology (Niurka), metrics (Chanda), and astronomy (Jerusha), and much literature grew around each of these subjects. They were written in the form of precepts in prose. A precept was called a Nutra because of its brevity. The most famous example of this writing is the grammar of Panini written around 450 BC. While illustrating the rules of grammar, Panini casts invaluable light on the society, economy, and culture of his times. The two epics and the major Puranas seem to have been finally compiled by C. AD 400. Of the epics, the Mahabharata attributed to Vyasa is older and possibly reflects the state of affairs from the tenth century BC to the fourth century AD. Originally, Origi it consisted of 8800 verses and was called Jaya or a collection dealing with victory. These were increased to 24,000 and came to be known as Bharata because it contains the stories of the descendants of one of the earliest Vedic tribes called Bharata. The final compilation increased the verses to 100,000 which came to be known as the Mahabharata or the Shatasahasri Samhita. It contains narrative, descriptive, and didactic material. The main narrative which relates to the Kaurava-Pandava conflict may relate to the later Vedic period, the descriptive portion may be of the post-Vedic period, and the didactic portion generally relates to the post-Maurya and Gupta periods. Similarly, the Ramayana of Valmiki originally consisted of 6000 verses which were raised to 12,000, and eventually to 24,000. Although this epic appears to be more unified than the Mahabharata, it too has its didactic parts which were subsequently added. The Ramayana composition started in the fifth century BC. After that, it passed through as many as five stages, and the fifth stage seems to have been as late as the twelfth century AD. As a whole, the text seems to have been composed later than the Mahabharat In the post-Vedic period we have a large corpus of ritual literature. Grand public sacrifices to be made by princes and men of substance belonging to the three higher varnas are set out in the Saurashtras, which provide for several ostentatious royal coronation ceremonies. Similarly, domestic rituals connected with birth, naming, sacred thread investiture, marriage, funerals, etc. are prescribed in the Grihyasutras. Both the Saurashtras and the Grihyasutras relate to c. 600-300 BC. Mention may also be made of the Sulvasutras, which prescribe various kinds of measurements for the construction of sacrificial altars. The mark the beginnings of the study of geometry and mathematics. The religious books of the Jaina's and the Buddhists refer to historical persons and incidents' earliest Buddhist texts were written in Pali which was spoken in Magadha or south Bihar, and was basically a form of Prakrit. They were finally compiled in the first century BC in Sri Lanka, but the canonical portions reflect the state of affairs in India in the age of Buddha. They tell as not only about the life of the Buddha but also about some of his royal contemporaries who ruled over Magadha north Bihar and eastern UP The most important and interesting portion of the non-canonical literature is provided by the stories of the previous births of Gautama Buddha. It was believed that before he was

actually born as Buddha passed through over 550 births, in many cases in the form of animals Buddhas. Each birth story is called a Jataka, which is a folk tale. The Jatakas throw invaluable light on the social and economic conditions of the period between the fifth and second century BC. They also make incidental references to political events in the age of Buddha.

The Jaina texts were written in Prakrit and were eventually compiled in AD sixth century in Valabhi in Gujarat. They, however, contain many passages that help us to reconstruct the political history of eastern UP and Bihar in the age of Mahavira. The Jaina texts refer repeatedly to trade and traders. We also have a large body of secular literature. To this class belong the law-books, called the Dharma sutras and Smritis, which, together with their commentaries, are called Dharma shastras. The Dharma sutras were compiled in 500-200 BC and the principal Smritis were codified in the first six centuries of the Christian era. They prescribe the duties to be performed by the different varnas as well as by kings and their officials. They set out the rule for marriage together with the laws according to which property is to be held, sold, and inherited. They also prescribe punishments for persons guilty of theft, assault, murder adultery, and the like an important law-book is the Artha shastra of Kautilya. The text is divided into fifteen books, of which Books II and III may be regarded as being of an earlier date, and seems to have been the work of different hands. This text was put in its final form in the beginning of the Christian era, but its earliest portions reflect the state of society and economy in the age of the Mauryas. It provides rich material for the study of ancient Indian polity and economy of the non-religious texts; the grammatical works are very important for historical construction. They begin with the Astadhyayi of Panini, Panini lived in the north western part of the subcontinent. He is not mentioned in the Pali texts which mainly represent Bihar and UP Panini is dated to around 450BC by VS. Agrawal, who has written about Panini's India in Both Hindi and English. In his view, no other text provides as much information about the Jana padas or territorial states of pre-Mauryan times as Panini's does. Patanjali's commentary on Panini, dated 150BC, supplies valuable information about post-Maurya times. They also have the works of Bhasa, Sudraka, Kalidasa, and Bana Bhatta. Apart from their literary value, they mirror the conditions of the times to which the writers belonged. The works of Kalidasa comprise kavyas and dramas, the most famous of which is Abhijnanashakuntalam. Besides being great creative compositions, they provide us with glimpses of the social and cultural life of the Guptas. In addition to Sanskrit sources, we have some of the earliest Tamil texts in the corpus of Sangam literature. This literature was produced over a period of three to four centuries by poets who assembled in colleges patronized by chiefs and kings. Such colleges were called Sangam, and the literature produced in these assemblies was known as Sangam literature. The compilation of the corpus is attributed to the first four Christian centuries, although they were really complete by the sixth century. The Sangam literature comprises about 30,000 lines of poetry arranged

in eight anthologies called Ettuttokai. The poems are collected in groups of hundreds such as Purananuru (The Four Hundred of the Exterior). There are two main groups Patinenkil Kannakku (The Eighteen Lower Collections) and Pattuppattu (The Ten Songs). The former is generally assumed to be older than the latter, and hence is considered to be of great historical importance. The Sangam texts have several layers, but at present these cannot be established on the basis of style and content, but, as shown later, they can be detected on the basis of stage in social evolution. The Sangam texts are different from the Vedic texts, particularly the Rig Veda. They do not constitute religious literature. The short and long poems were composed by numerous poets in praise of various heroes and heroines and are thus secular in nature. They are not primitive songs, but literature of high quality. Many poems mention a warrior or a chief or a king by name and describe in detail his military exploits. The gifts made by him to bards and warriors are celebrated. These poems may have been recited in the courts. They are compared with the heroic poetry of the Homeric age, for they represent a heroic age of warriors and battles. It is difficult to use these texts for historical purposes. Perhaps the proper names, titles, dynasties, territories, wars, and the like mentioned in the poems are partly real. Some of the Chera kings mentioned in the Sangam texts appear as donors in inscriptions of the first and second centuries. The Sangam literature is a major source of our information for the social, economics, and political life of the people living in deltaic Tamil Nadu in the early Christian centuries. The Sangam text refer to many settlements, including kaveripattanam whose flourishing existence has now been archeologically corroborated. They also speak of the Yavana's coming in their own vessels purchasing pepper with gold and supplying wine and women slaves to the natives. This trade is known not only from Latin and Greek writing but also from the Archaeological record.

Coins

Although a large number of coins and inscriptions have been found on the surface, many of them have been unearthed by digging. The study of coins is called numismatics. Ancient Indian currency was not issued in the form of paper, as is the case nowadays, but as metal coins. Ancient coins were made of metal-copper, silver, gold, and lead. Coin Molds made of burnt clay have been discovered in large numbers. Most of them relate to the Kushan period, that is, the first three Christian centuries. The use of such Molds -in the post-Mourya period virtually. As there was nothing like the modern banking system in ancient times, people stored money in earthenware and also in brass vessels, and maintained them as precious hoards on which they could fall back in time of need. Many of these hoards, containing not only Indian coins but also those minted abroad, such as in the Roman empire, have been discovered in different parts of India. They are preserved mostly in museums in Kolkata, Patna, Lucknow, Delhi, Jaipur, Mumbai, and Chennai. There are many Indian coins in the museums

of Nepal, Bangladesh, Thousands of ancient Indian coins have been discovered from which idea about the contemporary economics condition currency system development of the art has been obtained

As Britain ruled over India for a long time, British officials succeeded in transferring many of the Indian coins to private and public collections in Britain. Coins of the major dynasties have been catalogued and published. We have catalogues of the coins in the Indian Museum at Kolkata, of Indian coins in the British Museum in London, and so on. None the less, there are a large number of coins that have been yet to be catalogued and published Our earliest coins contain a few symbols, but the later coins depict the figures of kings, and divinities, and also mention their names and dates. The areas where they are found indicate the region of their circulation. This has enabled us to reconstruct the history of several ruling dynasties, especially of the Indo-Greeks who came to India from northern Afghanistan and ruled here in the second and first centuries. As coins were used for various purposes such as donations, a mode of payment, and a medium of exchange, they throw considerable light on economic history. Some coins were issued by guilds of merchants and goldsmith with the permission of the rulers. The largest number of Indian coins date to the post- Maurya period. These were made of lead, potin, copper, bronze, silver, and gold The Gupta issued the largest number of gold coins. Coins also pottery kings and gods, and contain religious symbols and legends, all of which throw light on the art and religion of the time After the fall of Mauryan Empire when the Bactrian Greeks occupied the north-western parts of India, they used to issue coins with their names and dates as well as the image of the rulers. But even before the coming of the Bactrian Greeks, Indian rulers used to issue coins with their images and certain unintelligible marks. In the coin of the Saka, Phalava, Kushana and the Gupta rulers some historical materials relating to the contemporary times have been found. The coins of theses rulers were made in imitation of the coins of the Greek and the Roman coins.

Inscriptions

Far more important than coins are inscriptions. Their study is called epigraphy, and the study of the old writing used in inscriptions and other old records is called palaeography. Inscriptions were carved on seals, stone pillars, rocks, copperplates, temple walls, wooden tablets and bricks or images, In India as a whole, the earliest inscriptions were recorded on stone. However, in the early centuries of the Christian era, copperplate began to be used for this purpose, even then the practice of engraving inscriptions on stone continued on a large scale in south India. We also have in that region a large number of inscriptions recorded on the walls of temples to serve as permanent records. Like coins, inscriptions are preserved in various museums of the country, but the largest number may be found in the office of the chief epigraphist at Mysore. The earliest inscriptions were written in Prakrit in the third century BC. Sanskrit was adopted as an epigraphic medium in the second century AD and its use

became widespread in the fourth and fifth centuries, but even then, Prakrit continued to be used. Inscriptions began to be composed in regional languages in the ninth and tenth centuries. Most inscriptions bearing on the history of the Maurya, post-Maurya, and Gupta periods have been published in a series of collections called *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, but not many inscriptions of the post-Gupta period.

Harappan inscriptions

period figure in such systematic compilations. In the case of south India, topographical lists of inscriptions have been published. Still, over 50,000 inscriptions, mostly of south India, await publication. The Harappan inscriptions, which await decipherment, seem to have been written in a pictographic script in which ideas and objects were expressed in the form of pictures. Most Ashokan inscriptions were engraved in the Brahmi script, which was written from left to right, but some were also incised in the Kharosthi script which was written from right to left. However, the Brahmi script prevailed virtually all over India except for the north-western part. Greek and Aramaic scripts were employed in writing Ashokan inscriptions in Pakistan and Afghanistan, but Brahmi continued to be the main script until the end of Gupta times. An epigraphist can decipher most Indian inscriptions up to about the seventh century if he has mastered Brahmi and its variations, but subsequently we notice strong regional variations in this script.

Inscriptions found on the seals of Harappa belonging to about 2500 BC: are considered symbolic by some scholars. For Indian history, the earliest deciphered inscriptions are Iranian. They belong to the sixth-fifth centuries BC and are found in Iran. They appear in Old-Indo-Iranian and also in Semitic languages in the cuneiform script. They speak of the Iranian conquest of the Hindu or Sindhu area. Of course, in India the earliest deciphered are Ashokan inscriptions. They are generally written in Brahmi script and Prakrit language in the third century BC. They throw light on Maurya history and Ashoka's achievements. In the fourteenth century AD two Ashokan pillar inscriptions were found by Firoz Shah Tughlaq, one in Meerut and another at a place called Topra in Haryana. He brought them to Delhi and asked the pandits of his empire to decipher the inscriptions, but they failed to do so. The same difficulty was faced by the British when in the last quarter of the eighteenth century they discovered Ashokan inscriptions. These epigraphs were first deciphered in 1837 by James Prinsep, a civil servant in the employ of the East India Company in Bengal.

We have various types of inscriptions. Some convey royal orders and decisions regarding social, religious, and administrative matters to officials and the people general. Ashokan inscriptions belong to this category. Others are votive records of the followers of Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and the like. They appear on pillars, tablets, temples, or images as marks of devotion. Yet other types eulogize the attributes and achievements of kings and conquerors, and ignore their defeats

or weaknesses. To this inscription regarding land grants, made mainly by chiefs and prince are very important for the study of the land system and administration in ancient India. These were mostly engraved on copperplates. They record grants of lands, revenues, and village made to monks, priests, temples, monasteries, vassals, and officials. They were written in all languages, including Prakrit, Sanskrit, Tamil, and Telugu

Monuments:

Palaces, tombs, mass oleum, buildings, temples etc are important sources of the history of architectural and artistic development in ancient India, the ornamental work on the walls, pillars, sculptural remains on the walls of palaces, temples etc., give us an idea of the artistic skill of the time. From the ruins of towns and cities, for instance, of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro we have not only been able to know about the town planning of the time but also the architectural excellence and the municipal amenities made available to the people of the time. The remains of the Indus valley civilization have borne testimony to the antiquity of the Indian civilization. Taxila, Sarnath, Nalanda etc, have revealed as a result of excavation, the cultural and religious history of the contemporary times. Yet it may be said that what we have been able to know of the ancient history from the relics excavated in different sites is not the whole of what can be known, For, more relics still await excavation and attention of scholars.

Accounts of the Foreigners

Materials of considerable historical value in respect of the ancient times of India may be had from the accounts of the foreign travellers. There are writings of the foreigners, not travellers, which contain observations on Indian subjects. The earliest foreign notice of India is to be found in the inscriptions of Darius. Herodotus who wrote late in the fifth century BC. contributed valuable information concerning the relationship between India and Persia, the fragments of the works of Ktesias, physician of Artaxerxes are, however, of meagre value. Both Herodotus and Ktesias had written about the relationship between India and the Persian empire by hearing from the travellers who came to India. Whereas the account of Herodotus contains some valuable historical materials, that of Ktesias contains much of which was imaginary, hence not of much value Quite a number among the Greeks who accompanied Alexander had left their accounts about India. It was from their accounts that the Europeans came to know of India veil of India. About a score of years after Alexander it came Megasthenes to the court of Chandragupta Maurya. He was sent by Seleukos his called Indica has not survived but the fragments of his work are to be found in the writings of the subsequent Greek writers from which it has been possible to know much of what he had written about India from the Greek author it is known that the king of Syria had sent Deimachos to the Maurya court. Deimachos was another Greek who visited India after Megasthenes from the writing of both Deimachos and

Dionysius corroboration of the observations of Megasthenes has been found. An anonymous Greek writer was responsible for writing a book named Periplus of the Erythraea Sea in which a very interesting account of the Indian sea ports and harbours as also of the maritime commerce of ancient India has been found. The date of the book is 80 AD.

The account of the journey from India to Greece left by Nearchus, an admiral of Alexander, contains much about the Indian geography of the time similar account is also found in the writings of Ptolemy of the time in the second century AD. But as he had depended on the stories told by travellers his work contains many geographical inaccuracies. Account of the Roman writer Pliny about the mineral and forest resources as well as the animals to be found in India in ancient times, is also full of inaccuracies as he also did not visit India from his own knowledge and experience. Yet all these works contain valuable materials for the reconstruction of the history of India. Apart from the above Greek and Roman writers, the works of Quintus Curtius, Diodorus, Arrian, Strabo, Plutarch etc and other Greek and Roman writers supply us with important historical materials about ancient Indian history. Philo Stratos, an Athenian wrote a philosophical romance in honour of Apollonius of Tyana which interesting observations about north-western India are found. Next to the Greeks were the Chinese travellers. Of course, most of the Chinese travellers came to India on pilgrimage, as such, their writing contained more of religious descriptions than social, political or economic. But occasional references to political, social, economic condition of India, manners and customs of the Indians are of great historical value. Suma-Chien, the Herodotus of China, has completed his work in the first century B.C. threw a flood of light in the annals of ancient India. He was called the father of Chinese history. A stream of Chinese pilgrims who continued to visit India for several centuries began with Fa-Hien. Fa-Hien visited India during the reign of Chandragupta Vikramaditya, during the years 399-414 AD, the most important Chinese pilgrim was Hiuen Tsang. He A.D. His account is a very reliable source of the history of the Gupta Age. The most important Chinese pilgrim was Hiuen Tsang. He visited India during the reign of Harshavardhana. His journey described in the work entitled Record of Western World is a storehouse of accurate information about India. Hwui-li, a friend of Hiuen Tsang, wrote the biography of Hiuen Tsang in which materials for the history of India are also found. In the seventh century A.D. I-Tsing, another Chinese traveller, visited India. He also left a very interesting account about the Indian Buddhism. Indirect references to the political, social and economic condition of the Indians of the time are also found in his work in the eighth century A.D. The Arabians came to India and occupied some parts of Sind. From that time some Arab writers wrote about India. Among the Arab writers the learned mathematician and astronomer Al-Biruni came to India, mastered Sanskrit language and literature and wrote a book entitled Tahkik-i-Hind, that is an inquiry into India. Important details of the Hindu manners and customs, literature, philosophy, mathematics,

astronomy, sciences of the contemporary India were recorded in this book. Alberni's book is an indispensable source for the writing of the history of that period. Apart from Alberni, Al Biladuri, Hasan Nizami, Al Masudi, Ibn-ul-Athir and other Arab writers also supply us with us materials for the history of this period.

Pre-Historic Culture of In India

The credit for the rediscovery of Indian pre-history goes to Dr. Primrose, an Englishman, who was the first person to discover pre-historic implements (stone knives and arrow-beads) in 1842 at a place called Lingsugor in the Raichur district of Karnataka, However, John Evans was the first to publish an account of worked flints discovered on the bed of the Narmada River near Jabalpur in 1853. In the second half of the nineteenth century Colonel Meadows Taylor published many excavation reports of megalithic burials in Hyderabad. Another person who enriched our knowledge about Indian pre-history was Robert Bruce Foote who, although a geologist by profession, discovered a large number of pre-historic sites in South India and collected Stone Age artefacts. In 1930, M.C. Burkitt published an account of the collection from the Krishna basin and in 1935 H. de Terra and T.T. Paterson studied the glacial sequence of Kashmir and Punjab and related their findings to the pre-historic stone industries of Punjab, the Narmada valley and Tamilnadu. These early efforts could not place India on the pre-historic map of the world. It was Sir Mortimer Wheeler whose efforts resulted in our knowledge of the entire pre-historic culture sequence of India, putting India firmly on the world stage of pre-history. The efforts of the 1940s resulted in the publication of Stuart Piggott's Prehistoric India in 1950. Since then, the explorations and excavations done have resulted in the identification and establishment of cultural sequences more firmly.

Early Man

The earliest evidence regarding the development of man in India is found in Pliocene deposits in the Siwalik's. This is known as Ramapithecus which is a type of early hominid. However, no fossils of early man have been found in the entire subcontinent, but their presence is indicated by stone tools dated around 250,000 BC. Some stone artefacts reported from Bori in Maharashtra are said to belong to a period as early as 1.4 million years ago. In 1983, at Riwat, near Rawalpindi, a group of artifacts was found in a Siwalik deposit, which was subsequently dated by the Paleomagnetic method to 1.9 million years. Some stone artefacts were found in the Indian Siwalik's which have been dated to 2.5 million years. Despite such discoveries no fossils of either hominids or humans have been discovered so far. But it is generally agreed that man settled in India later than in Africa even though the stone tool industry largely involved in a similar fashion in archaeological terms, the ability to create a culture differentiates man from early hominids and the ability to make stone tools is a cultural act. And this is the reason why stone artifacts form the basis of early evolution. This is also because all recognizable

stone artefacts are the product of highly developed craft traditions with far ranging socio-economic implications. The classification of early human cultures is thus based on the type of tools they made and used.

Classification

Based on the tool-making traditions, the entire Stone Age culture has been divided into three main stages that is Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic. The Palaeolithic stage has again been divided into Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic stages which is primarily based on tool typology and technology and generally on a relative chronology provided by geological stratigraphy. The tools of the Lower Palaeolithic age include mainly hand-axes, cleavers, choppers and chopping tools. The Middle Palaeolithic tools are based mainly upon flake industries and the upper palaeolithic is characterized by burins and scrapers.

The Mesolithic culture is basically characterized by the reduction in the size of well-established tool types. Sandwiched between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic the Mesolithic culture is known to be the transitional phase presupposing the advent of Neolithism. Although major changes appear around 10,000 BC the Mesolithic proper seems to have started between 9000 BC and 8000 BC and continued at certain places until 4000 BC. Thus there seems to be an overlap so far as the Mesolithic and Neolithic stages are concerned. The earliest Neolithic site in India is dated to 7000 BC at Mehrgarh: However, regular Neolithic attributes are not found from 5000 BC onwards. In South India Neolithic settlements appeared around 2500 BC. The main features of Neolithic culture are cropping, cultivation, animal husbandry and settled life. The first two came into existence in the last phase of Mesolithic period. Beginning from 7000 BC, the Neolithic culture continued upto 1000 BC at certain places.

Sometime around 1200 BC the use of iron seems to have begun in the Chalcolithic level itself. They were subsequently revolutionized the culture making process and by 800 BC a distinct iron age came into existence. The above discussion should not give the idea that at one point of time only one culture type existed. From Mesolithic culture onwards all the culture types co-existed and interacted with each other. Thus by 1000 BC we have evidence of the Neolithic, Chalcolithic and iron age existing simultaneously in India. Sometimes even the Mesolithic level of subsistence pattern could be located. In the Indian context, tools belonging to both Middle and Upper palaeolithic phases are found in the Deccan Plateau dating between 40,000 and 1500 BC.

Palaeolithic age

According to Prof. Basham India like Europe of the pre-historic age had passed through Ice-Ages, a hundred thousand years before Christ, men left traces of their stone tools discovered in the bed of the river Soan or Sohan in the Punjab. These were Palaeolithic stone, rough, blunt and crude the stone used was quartzite, hence the Palaeolithic men in India were known as Quartzite men Not only in the north but in the South India also, stone implements of the same period, e, of the Sohan men, have been discovered which the archaeologists call 'Madras Industry. In the Gangetic valley similar old Stone Age implements have been discovered. From the rough, crude stone tools used by the people of the Palaeolithic period, ne., Old Stone Age, we can at best form a vague, general idea of their life and living. "Palaeolithic man was a hunter and food gatherer and lived in very small communities" with no fixed homes. They were nomads, although a few might have made huts of shrubs and leaves. In course of time, they learned to produce fire, protect their body against cold by using tree-barks, leaves or animal skins and domesticated the dogs. They had no idea of agriculture. Their food was flesh of animals and birds they would hunt or fruits and vegetables they would gather. They were then food-gatherers from a modern point of view, the Palaeolithic men were savages not far removed from animals. However, it was on their culture and civilization that further improvements were made down the ages and we have reached our civilization that further improvements were made down the ages and we have reached our civilization today. About the people of the Palaeolithic Age of India, it is suggested that they belonged to race and were of dark complexion, woolly hair, flat nose and of short stature.

About the culture of the Palaeolithic men we must remember that a sparsely populated world without any systematic communications every region developed of its own and thousands of years must have passed before some very simple improvement in shaping a stone could be made Naturally the pace of development in different region was not the same Further the only evidences available to us are the imperishable stone materials These are not a fair index of the cultural progress or cultural pattern. It is also difficult to determine whether the hand-axes found in Madras and in Abbeville on the river some in Europe, although almost of the same workmanship belonged to the same period of time The palaeolithic people of India as all over the world this age for many thousands of years. But their knowledge and skill wee imperceptibly improving through the ages Along the arid central part of Rajasthan desert, some Palaeolithic artefacts were found. The calcareous in old stratified sand-dunes in the desert area of Didwana in Rajasthan, some Acheulean artefacts, including hand-axes belonging roughly 10,000 BC were excavated. Similarly, on the Saurashtra coast in the valleys of the Narmada, some Acheulean tools were found for which two thermoluminescent dates of c. 95,000 and 67,000 years ago were obtained. Such artefacts are totally absent from the regions south of the river Kaveri along the Western Ghats at Dina and Jalalpur in the Jhelum basin (Pakistan Punjab) many artefacts

including hand-axes dated by Palaeomagnetism to 500,000 to 700,000 years ago were found. The Cereal deposits in the Middle Son Valley were dated by the thermoluminescent methods to around 100,000 years ago. The Son and the adjacent Belan Valleys (Mirzapur, U.P.), provide a sequence of artifacts from Lower Palaeolithic to Neolithic stages. A surface site at Hongsi in the Southern Deccan in the valleys of two streams of the Krishna River system yielded groups of hand-axes and related to A few of the Hongsi sites are quite large where accumulations of debris from the manufacture of different artefact types were located. These were perhaps places where people frequently lived and made tools. Smaller sites in the area seem to have been temporary camping sites. Caches of finished tools were also found. Tools were made of hard limestone and dolerite. K. Pattaya and M.D. Petraglia, the investigators of this group, came to the conclusion that more than one group lived here on different sources of food such as game, fruit, root and seeds. In Sindh (Pakistan), a stone tool factory was found which is known as Milestone 101. Here, the use of raw materials belonging to every technological phase of the Palaeolithic stage have been noticed. The proportion of lower Palaeolithic material was high which included hand-axes and cleavers. Rodri hills to upper Sindh (Pakistan) also yielded lower Palaeolithic materials. Hand-axes were reported from Sukkur and Ziarat. Pir Shaban. The chief characteristics of Rodri Hills sites is that these were used not only during Palaeolithic phases but also during early and mature Harappan phases. Situated around Bhimbetka hill in central India near Hoshangabad on the Narmada River the caves and rock shelters have yielded evidence of Palaeolithic habitation. Many of the shelters show evidence of continuous occupation and tool making. Quite a few of them are rich in rock supplying extra material to understand their culture. These rock shelters roughly belong to 100,000 BC. Azamgarh hill in the same locality has also found Lower as well as Middle Stone age artefacts. The artefacts include hand-axes, chopping tools, ovals and a few cleavers. Attirampakkam. Buddha Manu Vanka and Gudiya cave near Madras showed a sequence of Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic artefacts. However, the occupation of the cave was irregular. Other localities in Peninsular and Central India, where evidence of Palaeolithic workings has been found, are Anaga wadi Bagalkot on the Gyanaprabha river in Karnataka, Chinki near Newasa on the Pravara River in Maharashtra, Mahadeo Piparia on the Narmada, MP, Pawagarh hill in central Gujarat (factory site), Kibbanhalli in Mysore etc.

Middle Palaeolithic

The Middle Palaeolithic has been viewed in general terms as a time of regional and local diversity in terms of both stone technology and tool types as well as in terms of increasing adaptability in the event of vast reductions in temperature, in this period the principal tools were varieties of blades, points, borers and scrapers made of flakes. Till the 1960s the Middle Palaeolithic was not recognized. It was established only in the 1960s and was named as Navassa after the type-site of Newasa in

Maharashtra Bhimbetka layer 5 has Middle Palaeolithic occupation. At Chirki near Navassa one phase of occupation represents a Middle Palaeolithic industry and habitation site. The Mesolithic Age: Hunters and Herders the Upper Palaeolithic age came to an end with the end of the ice age around 10,000 BC. It may be noted that the Pleistocene marked by a succession of ice ages coincided with the Palaeolithic age in the world context and lasted from two million years ago to 12,000 BC, and when it ended, the climate became warm and rainy, Climatic changes brought about changes advantage of adequate vegetation, and forest. Since then, no major changes have appeared in climatic conditions.

In 9000 BC began an intermediate stage in Stone-Age culture, which is called the Mesolithic age. It intervened as a transitional phase between the Palaeolithic and the Neolithic or New Stone ages. The Mesolithic people lived on hunting, fishing, and food gathering; at a later stage they also domesticated animals. The first three occupations continued the Palaeolithic practice, whereas the last developed in the Neolithic culture. Thus, the Mesolithic age marked a transitional phase in the mode of subsistence leading to animal husbandry. The characteristic tools of the Mesolithic age are microliths or tiny tools. Mesolithic sites abound in Rajasthan, southern UP, central and eastern India, and also south of the river Krishna. Of them, Bangor in Rajasthan is very well excavated. It had a distinctive microlithic industry, and its inhabitants subsisted on hunting and pastoralism. The site remained occupied for 5000 years from the fifth millennium BC onwards. Azamgarh in MP and Bangor in Rajasthan provide the earliest evidence for the domestication of animals in the Indian part of the subcontinent; this could be around 5000 BC. The cultivation of plants around 7000-6000 BC is suggested in Rajasthan from a study of the deposits of Sambhar, the former Salt Lake. So far, only a few finds of the Mesolithic age have been scientifically dated. The Mesolithic culture continued to be important roughly from 9000 to 4000 BC, and undoubtedly paved the way for the rise of the Neolithic culture

Upper Palaeolithic.

This Phase of palaeolithic culture coincide with the last phase of the Pleistocene which saw many changes in the environment. The most profound development in stone technology can be seen in blade making technique. With find evidence of long parallel-sided blades Belan and Son Valleys a number of Upper Palaeolithic sites have been unearthed. Prof. GR. Sharma's investigations during the 1960s in both the valleys have resulted in identifying cultural developments from Upper Palaeolithic onwards. In the Belan Valley the Upper Palaeolithic assemblages were dated by C14 method to 19,715,434 years before present. In the sun Valley this was 10,000 years ago. At Chou-Mando in the Belan Valley, a sequence of occupation from Upper Palaeolithic to Neolithic have been found. Chopani-Mando is an important site where fossil animal bones have been found in the gravels of all four depositional cycles of the Belan River. The third gravel contained bones of sheep and goats which

are not indigenous to the region. They, it is supposed, might have been brought by migrant human groups, either from the Himalayas or from the western border lands. The Upper Palaeolithic artefacts have been found in a cave at Reni Guntur in Southern Andhra Pradesh. Here a large collection of blades and burins have been found. Some Upper Palaeolithic artefacts have also been found in the valley of Rallakagava river. At Betamcherla in AP, many bone tools have been discovered. Artefacts from Visadi in Central Gujarat show a blend of the Upper Palaeolithic and Nevasan Middle Palaeolithic techniques. In Sholapur and Bijapur districts of Karnataka many Upper Palaeolithic sites have been found.

The Neolithic Age

In the world context, the New Stone or the Neolithic age began in 9000 B. The only known Neolithic settlement in the Indian subcontinent, attributed to 7000 BC, is in Mehrgarh, which is situated in Baluchistan, a province of Pakistan. Mehrgarh is located on the bank of the Bolan River in the Kochi plain which is called the 'bread basket' of Baluchistan. The settlement lay on the edge of the Indus plains. It is called one of the largest Neolithic settlements between the Indus and the Mediterranean. Although the earliest settlers raised domestic animals and produced cereals, they were disturbed around 5500 BC by floods. Agricultural and other activities were resumed around 5000 BC with the help of both stone and bone tools. The Neolithic people of this area produced wheat and barley from the outset. They domesticated cattle, sheep, and goats in the initial stage. Initially, goats predominated, but eventually cattle outnumbered the two other animals. Cattle rearing may have helped agriculture. Cereals were produced in substantial quantities and stored in granaries which have been discovered in different phases. Generally, granaries were made of mud bricks which were used for constructing dwellings. Many mud-brick structures, which are compartmentalized, appear to be granaries. The period 4500-3500 BC saw considerable agricultural expansion from the Kochi plain area into the Indus plain area, and also saw progress in pottery. Up to 5000 BC, the people did not make pots but after 4500 BC, the potter's wheel was known. Pots rapidly multiplied and they began to be painted. In the dried basin of Hakra, a tributary of the Indus, forty-seven Later Neolithic settlements have been found. Evidently, they paved the way for the rise of the Harappan culture.

Some Neolithic sites found on the northern spurs of the Vindhya are considered as old as 5000 but generally Neolithic settlements found in south India are not older than 2500 BC. In some parts of southern and eastern India, they are as late as 1000 BC. The people of the Neolithic age used tools and implements of polished stone. They particularly used stone axes, which have been found in large numbers in a substantial part of the hilly tracts of India. The stone axe was put to various uses by the people, and ancient legends represent Parashurama as an important axe-wielding hero, based on the types of axes used by Neolithic settlers, we notice three important areas of Neolithic settlements-north-

western, north-eastern. and southern. The north-western group of Neolithic tools is distinguished by rectangular axes with a curved cutting edge, the north-eastern group by polished stone axes with a rectangular butt and occasional shouldered hoes, and the southern group by axes with oval side and pointed butt.

Use of Bone Tools in the Sites of Burza Hom and Chirand

The north-west, Kashmiri Neolithic culture was distinguished by its dwelling pits, wide range of ceramics, the variety of stone and bone tools, and the complete absence of microliths. Its most important site is Burza Hom. which means 'the place of birch', situated 16 km north-west of Srinagar. The Neolithic people lived there on a lake-side in pits, and probably had a hunting and fishing economy, and seem to have been acquainted with agriculture. The people of Gufkral (literally the 'cave of the potter'), a Neolithic site, 41 km south-west of Srinagar, practiced both agriculture and animal husbandry: The Neolithic people in Kashmir used not only polished tools of stone, but also numerous tools and weapons made of bone. The only other place which has yielded considerable bone implements in India is Chirand. 40 km west of Patna on the northern side of the Ganges Made of antlers thorn of deer), these implements have been found in a late Neolithic settlement in an area with about 100 cm rainfall. The establishment of the settlement was made possible by the open land available at the junction of four rivers the Ganges, Son, Gandak, and Ghaghara and is marked by a paucity of stone tools. The people of Burza Hom used coarse Gray pottery it is interesting, but as Burza Hom, domestic dogs were buried with their masters in their graves This practice does not seem to be evident in any other Neolithic culture in India. The earliest date for Burza Hom is about 2700 BC but the bones recovered from Chirand cannot be dated earlier than 2000 BC and possibly belong to the late Neolithic phase We may place the Baluchistan and Kashmir valley Neolithic settlements in the north -western group. Another area from which Neolithic tools have been recovered is situated in the hills in the hills of Assam. Neolithic tools have been found in the Garo hills in Meghalaya on the north eastern frontier of India. The second group may include the settlements in Vindhya and the Kaimur hills we also find a number of Neolithic settlements on the northern spurs of the Vindhya in Mirzapur and Allahabad districts of UP Neolithic sites such as Koldihwa and Mahagra in Allahabad district are known for the cultivation of rice in the fifth millennium BC Senuwar in Rohtas district in the Kaimur hilly area is the most important site Also notable is the site of Taradih close to the Bodh-Gaya temple. The riverine site of Chirand may be included in the north-eastern group. This site forms an entity by itself because no stone is easily available in the riverine tract

Neolithic Settlements in South India

An important group of Neolithic people lived in south India, south of the Godavari River. They usually settled on the tops of granite hills or on plateaus near the river banks. They used stone axes

and also a kind of stone blades. Fire-baked earthen figurines suggest that they kept a large number of cattle, besides sheep and goats. They used stone querns for grinding corn, which shows that they were acquainted with the art of producing cereals. South India has the largest number of Neolithic settlements, because of the easy availability of stone, with over 850 settlements spread across AP, Karnataka, and Tamilnadu. Some of the important Neolithic sites or those with Neolithic layers that have been excavated include Maski, Brahma Giri, Hallur, Kodekal, Sangarakallu, Piklihal, and Takkalakota in Karnataka, and Paiyampalli in Tamil Nadu. Utnur is an important Neolithic site in AP. The Neolithic phase in south India seems to have covered the period from about 2400 to about 1000 BC. The Neolithic settlers in Piklihal were cattle herders. They domesticated cattle, sheep, goats, and set up seasonal camps surrounded by a fence made with posts and mud in which they accumulated dung. When it was time to move, the entire camping ground was a fire and cleared for the best session of camping. Both ash mounds and habitation sites have been found in Piklihal.

Farming and Cereals

The Neolithic settlers were the earliest farming communities. They broke the ground with stone hoes and digging sticks at the end of which ring stones weighing one to half a kilogram were fixed. Besides polished tools of stone, they used microlith blades. They lived in circular or rectangular houses made of mud and reed. It is held that the primitive people living in circular houses owned property in common. In any case, these Neolithic people led settled life and produced ragi and horse gram (kulathi), and even rice. The Neolithic people of Mehrgarh were more advanced. They produced wheat and barley, and lived in mud brick houses. During the Neolithic phase, several settlements became acquainted with the cultivation of cereals and the domestication of animals. So, they needed pots in which they could store their food grains, and also pots for cooking, eating, and drinking. Pottery, therefore, first appears in this phase, with handmade pottery in the early stage. Later, the Neolithic people used foot wheels to make pots. It seems that the potter's wheel came to Baluchistan from western Asia and from there it spread across the subcontinent. The Neolithic pottery included black-burnished ware, Neolithic celts, axes, adzes, chisels, and the like have been also found in the Orissa and the Chhotanagpur hills area, but trace of Neolithic settlements are generally few in parts of MP and the tracts of the upper Deccan. These tracts lack the types of stone which easily lend themselves to grinding and polishing.

Progress in and Limitation of the Neolithic Phase

The period between 9000 and 3000 BC saw remarkable technological progress in western Asia. The people developed the arts of cultivation, weaving, pot-making, house building, stock raising, writing, and the like. This process, however, started a little late in India. The Neolithic age in the Indian subcontinent began around the seventh millennium. Some important crops, including wheat and barley,

came to be cultivated in the subcontinent, and villages were established in this part of the world. What distinguished the Neolithic people was their use of stone celts which were edged and pointed. These celts mostly served as tilling tools such as hoes and ploughshares. They were meant for digging the ground and sowing seeds. All this meant a revolutionary change in the mode of subsistence. People no longer depended on hunting, fishing, and gathering, with cultivation and cattle husbandry providing them with food. With their tools, they also built dwellings. With new means of food and shelter, they were on the threshold of civilization. The people of the Stone Age suffered from one great limitation. As they had to depend almost entirely on tools and weapons made of stone, they could not find settlements far away from the hilly areas. They could settle only on the slopes of the hills in rock shelters and the hilly river valleys. Also, even with great effort, they were unable to produce more than they needed for bare subsistence.

Iron Age

The different parts of India there were no systematic succession of stone by copper-bronze or copper-bronze by iron. In Southern India use of iron came after the use of stone. In any case there were periods of overlapping in the use of stone, copper, bronze, and iron. Our only evidence of the transition from copper-bronze age to the Iron Age is the monuments like dolmens, cairns, cromlechs etc. These have been found in wide areas all over India, such as Assam, Bihar, Orissa, Central India, Gujarat and Kashmir. But by far the largest number has been found in south India, in Karnataka and the Deccan. These iron monuments appear to have belonged to both pre-historic periods. Some of these monuments have been found at Ranchi which are supposed to have been the work of the Asuras, that is, the ancient predecessors of the present-day Munda's. But these were found along with polished stone tools, wheel-made pottery, copper and bronze materials. It is, therefore, impossible to determine the date of the beginning of iron age in this area. Monuments discovered in Hyderabad, Mysore, Tinnevely district Coimbatore, Malabar, Penumburetc, also show varied stages of development. Neolithic Microlithic tools along with copper, bronze and iron implements have been discovered, making it difficult to identify the actual period of transition from copper-bronze age to the iron age. At this stage of our limited knowledge, no definite conclusion in this regard can be arrived at.

Proto-historic period

Proto-historic period is the age nearest to the historical period in so far as India is concerned the civilization of the Vedic period is the proto-history period. The hymns composed by the Vedic priests had perfected a poetic technique. These hymns were praise of their gods and were sung at sacrifices. These were not reduced to writing but were handed down by words of mouth. Even when the art of writing was widely known to the Indians, hymns were not committed to writing. "The period of the Vedas, Brahmanas and Upanishads", says Prof. Basham, "is a sort of transition from prehistory

to history". Naturally it falls in the proto-historic period of Indian history, that is nearest to the historical period, But as Prof. Basha points out, "If history, as distinct from archaeology, is the study of the human past from written sources, then Indian history begins with the Aryans. The Rig Veda, and the great body of oral religious literature which follows it in the first half of the first millennium B.C. belong to the Hindu tradition. The Vedic hymns are still recited at weddings and funerals, and in the daily devotion of the brahman. Thus, they are part of historical India, and do not belong to her buried pre-historic past, "But it cannot be denied that the Vedic period is not within the really historical period of India, for it is only the matter of religion about which we are fully informed. About other matters or events, we have only indirect and vague references. Thus, the Vedic Age of Indian history has to be regarded as the period immediately preceding the historical period; hence it belongs to the proto-historic period of India, a period which marks the transition from pre- historic to historic period of the Indian History.

Harappa Civilization

Origin

The urban culture of the Bronze Age found in Harappa was a path-breaking discovery. In 1853, A. Cunningham, the British who became a great excavator and explorer, noticed a Harappan seal. The seal showed a bull and six Much in the written letters, he did not realize its potentiality of the site of Harappa much later in 1921, potentiality of the site of Harappa was appreciated when an Indian archaeologist, Daya Ram Sahni, started excavating it. At about the same time, R D. Banerjee, a historian, excavated the site of Mohenjo-Daro in Sindh. Both discovered pottery and other antiquities indicative of a developed civilization. Large-scale excavations were carried out at Mohenjo-Daro under the general supervision of Marshall in 1931. Mackay excavated the same site in 1938. Vats excavated at Harappa in 1940. In 1946 Mortimer Wheeler excavated Harappa, and the excavation of the pre-Independence and pre-Partition period brought to light important qualities of the Harappan culture at various sites where bronze was used in the post-Independence period, archologist from both India and Pakistan excavated the Harappan and connected sites Suraj Bhan, M.K. Dhavalikar, J.P. Joshi, B.B. Lal, S.R. Rao, B.K. Thapar, R.S. Bisht, and others worked in Gujarat, Haryana, and Rajasthan.

In Pakistan, Kot Diji in the central Indus Valley was excavated by F.A. Khan, and great attention was paid to the Hakra and pre-Hakra cultures by M.R. Mughal. A.H. Dani excavated the Gandhara graves in the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan. American, British, French, and Italian archaeologists also worked at several sites including Harappa Now we have a wealth of Harappan material though excavations and explorations are still in progress. All scholars agree on the urban character of the Harappans culture, but opinions differ on the role of the Sarasvati identified with

the Hakra-Ghaggar river and also on the identity of the people who created this culture. The Indus of the Harappan culture is older than the Chalcolithic cultures that have been examined earlier but as a bronze using culture is far more developed than the latter it developed in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent. It is older than Harappan because this civilization was first discovered in 1921 at the modern site of Harappa situated in the province of Punjab in Pakistan. Many sites in Sindh formed the central part of pre-Harappan culture. This culture developed and matured into an advanced civilization that developed in Sindh and Punjab. The central zone of this mature Harappan culture lay in Sindh and Punjab, mainly in the Indus Valley. From there it spread southwards and eastwards. In this way, the Harappan culture covered parts of Punjab, Haryana, Sindh, Baluchistan, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and the fringes of western UP. It extended from the Siwalik in the north to the Arabian Sea in the south, and from the Makran coast of Baluchistan in the west to Meerut in the north-east. The area formed a triangle and accounted for about 1,299,600 sq. km which is a larger area than that of Pakistan, and certainly larger than ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. No other cultural zone in the third and second millennia BC in the world was as wide spread as the Harappan. Nearly 2800 Harappan sites have so far been identified in the subcontinent. They relate to the early, mature, and late phases of Harappan culture. Of the mature phase sites, two most important cities were Harappa in Punjab and Mohenjo-Daro (literally, the mound of the dead) in Sindh, both forming parts of Pakistan. Situated at a distance of 483 km, they were linked by the Indus. A third city lay at Chanhudaro about 130 km south of Mohenjo-Daro in Sindh, and a fourth at Lothal in Gujarat at the head of the Gulf of Cambay. A fifth city lay at Kalibangan, which means black bangles, in northern Rajasthan. A sixth, called Banawali, is situated in Hissar district in Haryana. It saw two cultural phases, Pre-Harappan and Harappan, similar to that of Kalibangan. To the Harappan period relate the remains of mud-brick platforms, and of streets and drains. The Harappan culture is traceable in its mature and flourishing stage to all these six places as also to the coastal cities of Sutkagendor and Surkotada, each of which is marked by a citadel. The latter Harappan phase is traceable to Rangpur and Rojdi in the Kathiawar peninsula in Gujarat. In addition, Dholavira, lying in the Kutch area of Gujarat, has Harappan fortification and all the three phases of the Harappan culture. These phases are also manifested in Rakhigarhi which is situated on the Ghaggar in Haryana and is much larger than Dholavira.

Town and Town planning

Towns and Town Planning: The first thing that strikes us is the town planning. Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa, Lothal or Surkotada were built according to a set plan. Two cities, Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, were built on a similar plan. To the west of each was a citadel built on a high platform. It was defended by a wall and on it were constructed the public buildings. Below this citadel was the town proper. Every-where the main streets ran from north to south and other streets ran at right angles to the

main streets. Houses, residential or others, stood on both sides of the streets. Both at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro houses were built of Kiln-burnt bricks. At Lothal and Kalibangan residential houses were made of sun-dried bricks, the drains, wells, bathing platforms were made of kiln-burnt bricks. An average house had, besides kitchen and bath, four to six living rooms. Large houses with thirty rooms and staircases suggest that there was large two or three storeyed buildings. Most of the houses had wells within them and a drainage system carried the waste water to the main underground drain of the street. There were also public baths with wells. The covered drains of the streets had soak-pits and manholes for clearing. There were also arrangements for streetlighting. Of the places where the relics of the Indus civilization have been discovered; the towns of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa are the most important. These two towns were also connected by land and their town planning was similar. Stuart Piggott is of the opinion that the towns of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa were the two capitals of the Indus civilization. But in the absence of more reliable evidence, it will not be proper, as Sir Mortimer Wheeler observes, to regard them as two capitals of the time of the Indus civilization. The city of Mohenjo-Daro had, besides numerous dwelling houses, a few very spacious buildings of elaborate structure and design. There were nine phases of rebuilding of this city on the same site. The lowest strata under sub-soil water have not been reached by archaeologists for obvious difficulties, but what is peculiar is that different strata do not show any sign of modification. Some of these buildings contained large pillared halls. One of the halls was as large as 24 meters square. Although the exact nature and the purpose of such buildings with spacious halls are not known, they are supposed to have been either palaces, temples or municipal halls. The most note-worthy structure the remains of which have been found was a large swimming enclosure with rooms and galleries on all sides. The water was supplied by a well located in one of the rooms. The water was discharged by a huge drain, the combined floor space of the twelve units would be about 838 sq. It was approximately of the same area as the great granary at Mohenjo-Daro. To the south of the granaries at Harappa lay working floors consisting of rows of circular brick platforms. These were evidently meant for threshing grain, because wheat and barley were found in the crevices of the floors. Harappa also had two roomed barracks which possibly accommodated labourers. In the southern part of Kalibangan too, there are brick platforms, which may have use of burnt bricks in the Harappan cities is remarkable because in the contemporary buildings of Egypt dried bricks were primarily used. We find the use of baked bricks in contemporary Mesopotamia, but they were used to a much larger extent in the Harappan cities. The drainage system of Mohenjo-Daro was very impressive. In almost all the cities, every house, large or small, had its own courtyard and bathroom. In Kalibangan many houses had their own wells. Water flowed from the house to the streets which had drains. Sometimes these drains were covered with bricks and sometimes with stone slabs. The remains of streets and drains have also been found at Bana

Wali. Altogether, the quality of the domestic bathrooms and drains is remarkable, and the drainage system of Harappa is almost unique

Economic life

From the relics discovered at Mohenjo-Daro in particular, and in other towns and cities we get a comprehensive idea of the economy life of the people. As in most of the other contemporary civilizations, agriculture was the backbone of the Indus economy. Although Mohenjo-Daro is an arid zone today, at the time when the Indus civilization had developed, there was adequate rainfall as can be imagined from the making of kiln-burnt bricks which needed abundant supply of wood. There must have been vast forest areas, and forests attracted rains, Further, the Indus, Ravi, Ghaggar, Sutlej, and Bhogavo ensured adequate water supply Harappa, Kalibangan, Ropar and Lothal, the main agricultural crops were wheat, barley, besides bananas, peas and melons. Cultivation of cotton was perhaps the most remarkable of all agricultural products of the Indus people. People ate besides cereals, fish, vegetables, mutton, fowl, beef and pork. Cat, dog, elephant, humped bulls also called Brahmani bulls, buffaloes, pigs, camels etc, and the bullock, the main beast of burden, were the domesticated animals. Whether horse was known to the Indus people is not known for certain. But Harappa people may have known the use of horse. This is deduced from the finding of a few horses' teeth at the lowest stratum of Baluchistan site of Rana Gunadi dating from several centuries earlier the foundation of Harappa.

Dress& Ornaments

Household Articles: For dress cotton fabrics were mostly used. From the portrayal of a man in Harappa it is supposed that people used something like a dhoti. Shawl was used as an upper garment. For warm textiles wool was used. Finding of buttons and needles among the relics shows that some of the clothes were stitched. Ornaments were used both by men and women. Some of the ornaments, such as neck-chain, fillets, finger rings, armlets and bangles were used by both men and women, but girdles, nose-studs, ear-rings, anklets were used only by women. The variety of ways in which the women dyed their hair and the ornaments that they wore from head to foot leave us in no doubt that the life of the women folk was not all work. The elaborate hair style as seen in the female figurines, find of a vanity bag and toilet jars at Harappa with remains of face-paints and cosmetics indicate that the women folk of the time were fond of personal elegance as their modern counterparts.

Among the household articles earthenware's of various shapes and sizes were made with the help of the potter's wheel. These were both plain and painted. Vessels were also made of copper, silver, bronze, and porcelain The Indus civilization belonged to a perfect Bronze age There was, however, not a trace of iron. The Harappa people manufactured lifelike miniatures of animals, especially interesting being the tiny monkeys climbing up and down a string and squirrels used as pinheads and beads. Little

toy carts, cattle with movable heads, whistles in the shape of birds, indicate their use in daily life. In one respect the Harappa people were technically ahead of their contemporaries, they devised a saw with teeth which allowed saw dust to escape from the cut automatically. This shows that in carpentry the people acquired a great skill. The Indus people had weapons of war like spears, axes, daggers, maces, slings but defensive armours like shield, hematite, were not found to be in use.

Seals

Terracotta seals, more than five hundred in numbers have been discovered in the ruins of the Indus civilization. Some of them have representations of animal figures as well as pictorial inscription on them. Animal features on the seal show a high degree of artistic excellence. A few stone images found at Harappa are of such high degree of artistic excellence that these may be compared with Greek statues. Needless to remark that the art of sculpture was highly developed. The seals discovered in the Indus valley have not yet been deciphered. It has, therefore, not been possible to get any idea of the nature of the political life and organization of the Indus people. Some of the seals were used for commercial purposes. The Indus people had trade relations with other parts of India as well as with countries beyond India. Finds of seals of Indus style in west Asian sites such as Ur, Lagash, Susa, Umma and Tell Asmar prove that there must have been trade contacts between the Indus people and those of West Asian countries. In recent years a seal of the Persian Gulf areas has been discovered at Lothal, the remains of a dockyard at Lothal have also been discovered. From these it is reasonable to conclude that there were both overland and maritime trade relations with the west Asian countries and the Indus people. Finds of precious stones like lapis lazuli, jade, turquoise etc, which were not found indigenously, suggest trade with Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Tibet and Central Asia. The chief merchandise was most probably cotton, which had always been one of India's main exports

Weights and Measures

A large number of weights belonging to a uniform system have been found at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappans well as in Chanhudaro and other smaller towns. The unit was ratio 16, as we even today calculate 16 annas to a rupee or 16 chittacks to a seer. The find of a broken scale engraved on a shell at Mohenjo daro showed a decimal scale of inches rising to a foot which was, however, 13.2 inches long.

Society, Professions

That the agricultural class constituted the largest section of the Indus population cannot be gainsaid. Among the industrial classes, potters, carpenters, weavers, blacksmiths, masons, goldsmiths, ivory workers, stone-cutters, sculptors, jewellers etc, need special mention. That there was a great technical advance can be understood from the use of the potter's wheel, kiln burnt bricks, highly aesthetic design and execution of metal and stone statues and figurines.

The People

The Indus people, particularly the city dwellers were of a cosmopolitan nature. The population included Proto Australoid, Mediterranean, Alpine and Mongoloid types. A few skulls of the Aryans have also been found which may have been of the Aryan invaders.

Religion:

As it happens with mixed population it is supposed that there was a variety of religious practices among the Indus people. Several seals have been found with a three-horned Yogin surrounded by wild and domesticated animals which naturally denote the early conception of Pasupati Siva. Phallic form of Siva cult is supposed to have been there in the Indus people because of the find of linga. Rituals with the use of fire places, suggested by find of such relics, presuppose the religious practices of the nature of Yajna. From the finds of articles of daily use in the graves it is supposed that the Indus People probably believed in life hereafter as did the Egyptians. The Indus people also worshiped a Mother Goddess which must have been the early form of Sakti. Traces of worship of primitive religious cult which is called animism have been found in Mohenjo-Daro. Worship of stones, trees, animals, Nagas and Yakshas in Mohenjo-Daro is clear from the traces of these found there. Indication of the existence of Bhakti cult has been found at Mohenjo-Daro. It may, therefore, be concluded that modern Hinduism was largely indebted to the Indus People. The seals and the inscriptions on them bear testimony to the fact that the Indus people were literate. Inscriptions have also been found on pottery and other household articles. This indicates that the literacy was not confined to select classes. The organized system of weights and measures testifies to the knowledge of arithmetic among the Indus People. From the above discussion it is clear that the Indus people had developed a civilization of very high order which was one of the earliest on earth.

The Harappan Civilization

The Harappan Civilization. Among the most distinguishing features of the urban Harappan Civilization was its city planning. Divided into two parts, most of the cities had a citadel and a lower town, including a granary. The citadels varied in length and height, most of them constructed with mud or mud brick. The streets formed a grid pattern laid along east-west, north-south corridors. Unique among the riverine civilizations, the Harappan Civilization had an underground drainage system, with, at one time, "soakage jars" placed outside each house or structure. The houses usually opened on the sides, with bare walls facing the street in order to keep the traffic dust from entering the dwellings. Most dependent houses had a courtyard in the center, much like an atrium bringing in fresh air and light; the four sides of the courtyard served as common spaces for household work and group recreation, whereas the rooms opening out from these common inner verandas served as family quarters or bed

rooms. These kinds of plans for single-residence homes that admit light but keep out the dust to combat the summer season are still popular in Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi.

Unlike the other riverine civilizations, there is an absence in the Harappan Civilization of palaces or very large mansions, which would indicate the absence of kingdoms or powerful principalities. This goes well also with the absence of weaponry and therefore the lack of large-scale warfare and conquest of large territories to bring them under a single ruler. Yet there were different sizes of dwellings, which suggests a certain amount of social stratification. There were independent houses with their own wells as well as multiple tenement structures with common facilities. The most notable of such public facilities is the Great Bath in Harappa, which must have been a common people. Ancient Mesopotamian texts talk of a culture on the side called Meluhai in India in the third millennium BCE in which ritual bathing played a crucial role. One wonders if they were referring to the Great Bath which offered residents a bath before performing rituals or a convenience to cool themselves in during the insufferable summer. Whatever it was, the Great Bath was an engineering marvel for the time. It measured thirty feet long, twenty-three feet wide and eight feet wide deep. It was placed in an open quadrangle with verandas backed by galleries and rooms on all sides with a flight of steps to go in and out of the bath. The construction of the water tank showed impressive engineering skills, as it was lined with brick laid in gypsum mortar and rain forced by a wall of burned bricks, creating an enclosure akin to a sauna facility. The wall of the houses was built with kiln-fired or sunbaked bricks, mostly in the ratio of four in length, two in width, and one in height, which 'enabled the masons to build the walls in alternate course of headers and stretchers, a technique that gave them the necessary strength.

Seals

Over two thousand seals and seal impressions have been found at Harappa sites. The majority of seals are made of steatite that has been coated with an alkali and then fired to produce a white lustrous surface. Usually, the seals are square in shape and have a perforated boss at the back for handling and suspension. They are generally small, averaging only a few centimetres across. Despite their small size, seals sometimes have elaborate intaglio designs showing animals, plants, geometric forms, and even scenes with humans or humanoids, as well as writing. The decipherment of the writing on the Indus seals is perhaps the most vexing problem for the interpreter of this ancient civilization, for its decipherment could summarily prove or disprove the numerous theories that have been put forth about the culture. Approximately four hundred different signs have been catalogued for this apparently pictographic script. To date, there has been no confirmed decipherment, although many announcements to that effect have been made. The analysis of the script and language is important because it may confirm the identity of at least some of the Harappa people. For example, if it relates to the Dravidian

languages, it would support the commonly held view about an important Dravidian component of the civilization, though this would not preclude the existence of other linguistic and ethnic groups among the Harappa peoples. The decoded language might also provide a key to the interpretation of the seals and their designs. However, the seals may have been used as the personal marks of identification of their owners and may contain only proper names or titles of individuals rather than explanatory material. As far as can be determined, the script as it survives did not develop over the centuries in which the Harappa culture flourished. Its origins and developments are therefore as enigmatic as the words it records. Elephants, rhinoceroses, and other animals appear on the seals, but the predominant zoomorphic motif is a profile representation of an animal standing in front of what has been called a manger. Since the animal appearing on such seals is depicted with only one horn, it has often been identified as a unicorn. Although the Indian context does provide some validity to the identification, for a one-horned creature is known in the later Jain religion, the fact that the head of the animal is invariably depicted in a strict profile, suggests that the two horns of the animal simply overlap, and that a unicorn is not being shown at all. Indeed, the form of the animal's body indicates that it is a bovine creature, regardless of any peculiarity in the number of horns. The "manger" is also difficult to interpret, for objects of this type have not yet been found in the excavations of Harappa sites. It may have been used in religious ceremonies or sacrifices or may simply have been a feeding trough. The implications of the double-ribbed pad or harness frequently shown across the shoulders of the animal are also unclear. In this seal, the subtlety of modelling and the anatomical precision evidenced in the best seals are clearly visible. Interestingly, naturalism seems to be reserved for the carvings of animals in the seals, while humans are normally depicted in a schematic and abstracted fashion. Yet, as was evident from the small red male statue, naturalism could also be a characteristic of the human figure, at least in some Harappa contexts. Observation of natural forms is further seen in the differentiation of various bovine animals on Indus seals, for at least three other specifically defined types appear. The first is a zebu an animal common in pre-Harappa cave painting as well the second is a bison like creature commonly shown as if feeding from a trough, though not in the example shown the third is a seldom represented type with widespread, arching horns, perhaps a water buffalo. These tiny carvings are often executed with great verisimilitude, indicating the artists' intimate visual knowledge of the anatomy of the animals and their possession of sophisticated artistic methods of modelling their forms. The emphasis on bovine animals in the Harappa civilization may partly be explained in economic terms. An agricultural society would have depended heavily on such animals as a source of milk, possibly meat and leather, and as beasts of burden. The females of the species would be important as propagators of future generations and as insurers of wealth's abundance. Nonetheless, bulls rather than cows are invariably depicted on the seals and in freestanding Harappa sculpture. We know from

later Hindu iconography that the bull became the vehicle [vahana) of Siva and also a symbol of sexual enjoyment. Therefore, perhaps the prowess of the bull is also used in the Harappa context to symbolize procreative and progenitive powers and the resultant abundance of the herds. The possible association between early depictions of bulls and later Siva forms is strengthened by the occurrence of linga in the Harappa context, for the linga eventually became an almost universal sign of the god Siva. Also, a number of male figures on several Harappa seals have characteristics that suggest associations with later Siva imagery. Thus, it is possible that some of the beliefs and practices of the Harappa civilization served as a foundation for aspects of later Indian religion. The best example of what has been called the “proto-Siva” on Indus seals shows a male figure seated in a posture with the soles of his feet pressed together, his legs splayed to each side. The arms extend away from the body and the thumbs rest on his knees while the fingers point downward. Neither the leg position nor the arm position is one that someone would casually assume. Rather, these are highly formal gestures and may represent a specific asana and mudra. The term asana refers to the different leg positions or sitting postures usually assumed by a person performing meditation or other religious practices in later Indian culture. The term mudra refers to the hand. Seal showing a yogi. From Mohenjo-Daro, Pakistan. Mature Harappa period. 2100 -1750 BC. National Museum, New Delhi. gestures used within the same context. While individual asanas and mudras came to have specific communicative content, it is difficult to go beyond the simple observation that this and other figures on seals in similar or related configurations may be performing a religious exercise or ritual. Meditation and the use of asanas and mudras are usually associated with yoga and yogic practices. Yoga, which means literally refers in the broadest sense to beliefs and practices by which a practitioner attempts to “yoke” or unify himself with the divine or universal. It is a pan-sectarian concept associated with virtually every major Indian religion, including Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism. Thus, the apparent reference to yogic practices in the Harappa civilization does not necessarily signify the roots of any one specific sect; it might represent a common source for all. It is important to note that the yogic concepts, as well as the use of asanas and mudras, probably reflect indigenous developments in Harappa art, rather than any that can be traced to western Asiatic sources. Because these seem to occur in a well-developed stage when first encountered in Harappa art, it must be assumed that a lengthy period of evolution preceded them. In contrast, a few elements of this seal suggest affinities to concepts and forms found throughout western Asia wearing a headdress, which is comprised of horns, implying the adoption of some of the beast’s characteristics. The figure might be a concept, if not in actuality, Mesopotamia, the wearing of a horned headdress by a ruler was believed to impart power or divinity to him; the horns shown here may thus indicate still another tie, even if indirect, between the Indus culture and ancient Mesopotamia. The tripartite form seen here seems to be distinctively Harappan, and, as has already been indicated, horned creatures clearly had

great supportance in Indie culture, even in per-Harapan times, in contexts like the Stone Age rock paintings, which do not necessarily suggest western Asiatic contacts. Thus, it is important not to overstress such possible connections, or to infer from them an indebtedness of one culture to the other. Since the later Hindu god Siva is strongly associated with the bull, the horned headdress has lent support to interpretations of this figure as a prototype of Siva. In addition, while it is to discern these features on such a tiny sculpture, it is possible that the figure has three faces, is ithyphallic, and either wears a tiger skin or has a tigerlike upper torso. Each of these features again can be related to later Siva as can the fact that the figure seems to be involved in yogic practices. Further, the four animals surrounding the central figure, an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros, and a buffalo, have been related to Siva's Pasupati aspect, in which he is Lord of Beasts. While many of these features seem to provide compelling arguments for relating the seal to Siva iconography and indeed it probably does it is important to remember that many of these characteristics are not exclusive to the god Siva. This early date, they might indicate a common pool of religious ideas from which many of the Indie systems developed. For example, arrangement of the four animals around the central figure suggests a mandala, a cosmological diagram known in Saivism and other Indie regions. The specific placement of a pair of elephants beneath the dais upon which the figure sits is primarily associated with later Buddhist iconography. The seat itself, and its more elaborate counterpart, the throne, is used in later Indie religions to signify the high rank of the person who sits upon it. It is probably most accurate to assume that the "bull-man" and the accompanying elements of this famous seal relate to many concepts found in later Indie religious systems, including Saivism, but that these ideas are not yet exclusive to any one of them. As such, the seal is an important document of a whole range of concepts fundamental to the religious outlook of a number of Indie sects. What is especially important about this seal is that, in contrast to the individual sculptures found at Harappa sites, whose meanings could only be discussed in the most speculative terms, in this small composition, we have definite proof of Harappa religious practices, involving perhaps an early form of yoga and possibly identity transferral in which a human takes on certain, probably symbolic, characteristics of other creatures. It is notable that while the designs of some of the bull seals, or those showing other animals, repeat among the corpus of Indus seals, this example and others showing human-type figures in which religious activity is definitely portrayed, seem to have been unique. As a group, such seals comprise only a handful of the thousands of seals that have been unearthed at Harappa sites. Perhaps these were the personal property of a few high-ranking individuals in the society, while the others may have been a generic type common to whole classes of people. Another seal shows a figure with a similar headdress standing in a U-shaped tree. The leaves are those of a pupal tree, which occurs on pottery as a motif as early as the pre-Harappa period. However, while the meaning of this tree in earlier contexts is unknown it may have been

depicted only because of the beauty and symmetry of its leaves it might be assumed that its depiction here is more significant. The pipal tree is one of the few identifiable plant species on Harappa seals. Its persistence as a symbol in South Asia, particularly in Buddhism, wherein it became Sakyamuni Buddha's tree of enlightenment, may not be merely accidental.

UNIT-II

Vedic period

Original Home of the Aryans:

There are diverse opinions about the original home of the Aryans and every now and then a new theory is put forward by the scholars. Most of the historians are still reluctant to agree to any one theory. Some of the theories on this subject are given below. But as they differ radically from one another it is quite an impossible task to reach any definite conclusions.

I. The Sapta-Sindhu Theory.

Most Indian historians, especially Avinash Chandra Dass and Dr. Sampurnanand hold the view that the Sapta Sindhu land (or Modern Punjab and Sindh) were the initial home of the Aryans. They draw this conclusion from the geographical features described in the Rigvedic hymns. There is nothing to suggest in the Rigveda that the Aryans came from any foreign land. Even the flora and fauna mentioned in the Rigveda conforms to what was found in the Punjab. Therefore these historians conclude that Aryans were not foreign invaders but an Indian race that spread to other countries.

II. The Tibetan Theory.

Several scholars like Swami Dayanand who have closely studied the Rigveda have proposed another theory, that Tibet was the original home of the Aryans. They hold that the Aryans came to India from nearby country which could be none but Tibet. They might have migrated from Tibet because of a rapid growth in their population as the small state of Tibet could not meet their growing needs. But most of the modern historians do not agree with this theory.

III. The Austro-Hungarian Theory

Dr. Giles and a new theory are put forward by Prof. Macdonell holds the view that the original home of the Aryans was on the banks of the Danube River in South-East Europe. They opine that all the languages now spoken in areas between Ireland and India belong to the Aryan family. Therefore, the ancestors of all these people must have lived together at a common place from where they migrated to other lands in different groups and branches. The animals like cow, horse and metals like iron, and numerous kinds of flora and fauna with which these people were familiar are found only in more South-

East Europe (or Austria and Hungary). Therefore, they maintain that Austria and Hungary were the original home of the Aryans

IV. The Central Asian Theory.

Prof. Max Mueller, who was a great German scholar, says that the original home of the Aryans was in Central Asia. He studied several languages of the world and drew the conclusion that most of the fundamental vocabulary in different languages bear close resemblance with one another. For example, 'Pitri' and Father and 'Matri and Mother sound quite similar, therefore the ancestors of the Indian, the Romans, the Greeks, the Germans and the English must have lived at a common place in ancient times. According to Max Mueller the ancestors of these people must have lived in Central Asia from where they spread to other parts of the world

(V) The Most Plausible Theory and the Reasons.

It is really difficult to claim which of the above theories is more plausible than the other as there is no conformity among the historians on this subject. Nevertheless, the Central Asian Theory of Max Muller seems more plausible due to the following reasons

- (i) A great number of historians believe this view
- (ii) The stone inscriptions discovered in Asia Minor prove that the Aryans gods like Indira and Varuna were worshipped in that country in ancient times
- (iii) In ancient times the land in Asia Minor was very fertile

to show that Sapta-Sindhu was regarded by the Vedic Aryans as their original home, Further, there is no reference to their coming in to India from any outside country and it is not possible that the Aryans had forgotten all about their original home if it were anywhere out of India, in fact, there is an emotional association with the land of the origin of all migrating people. But no such evidence has been found in the literature of the Vedic Aryans.

It has also been pointed out that linguistic affinity cannot be regarded as positive proof of immigration of the Aryans from any foreign country. For in the Sanskrit language largest number of vocables of the Aryan languages is found, but in parts of Europe, if it were the original home of the Indo Aryans, it is inexplicable why only very few vocables are found in the languages of the European countries. This is argued to be a pointer to the fact that India was the original home of the Aryans and from India the Aryan language and other languages of Aryan affinity came into existence due to the contacts between the migrating Aryans and non-Aryans out of India.

Another argument in support of this view is that the Vedic literature was the expression of the highly developed thoughts of the Aryans. If the Aryans had come to India from outside it would be natural to find some traces of their thoughts and literary activities in some of the places through which they had travelled. But no such record has been discovered at any place. To suggest that the Aryans

had attained the highly developed literary and intellectual acumen after coming into India does not justify the absence of any record whatsoever in any of the places through which they had travelled into India.

Another argument is that the original home of the Aryans was Lithuania on the basis that the language of the Lithuanians is archaic and has the greatest resemblance to the original Aryan language. But this by itself does not conclusively prove that the Aryans migrated to India from Lithuania.

Absence of the mention of tiger the Rigveda and the reference to Mrigahastin meaning elephant have been pointed out to be good grounds for the belief that tigers were actually not known to the Aryans when they came from outside and that Mrigahastin was anything but a poetic name. But the geographical data in Rig Veda show that the Punjab and the neighbouring regions were the home of the people who had composed the Rig Vedic hymns, such arguments have been put forward in support of the contention that the Vedic Aryans did not come from outside but were original inhabitants of India. But as we have already discussed before, the overwhelming majority opinion is in favor of regarding the Aryans as a people who had migrated into India

The Early Vedic Age Early Aryan Settlements

The territories which the Aryans had occupied by the time that they composed the Rig Veda, can be defined from the references to the names of the rivers and the geography of the areas mentioned in the Rig Vedic hymns. The rivers referred to in the Rig Vedic texts are the Indus, and its main tributaries, the five rivers of the Punjab, namely, the Satadru, Bipasa, Ravi, Chenab, and the Jhelum. From the Rig Vedic texts it has been possible to get a fair idea of the early Aryan settlements as well as of their centers of activities. Yet it must be remembered that the Rig Veda is not a book on Geography and absence of the names of places or rivers in the Rig Vedic texts does not mean that other places, not mentioned in the texts were not included in the early Aryan settlements. It may also be pointed out that reference to rivers, hills and mountains, races, territories, kingdoms in the Rig Veda cannot be regarded as conclusive proofs of the extension of the Early Aryan settlements.

There is reference to the Himalayas in the Rig Veda. That the influence of rivers on the religion and life of the Vedic Aryans was tremendous can be realized the mention of as many as twenty-five rivers in the Rig Veda itself out of a total of thirty-one, rivers mentioned in all the Vedas. Apart from the rivers already mentioned above, the names of the rivers Ganges, Jumna, Saraju and Saraswati are also found in the Rig Veda. From all this, we may generally conclude that the early Aryan settlements extended in the valleys of the rivers mentioned above. Reference to Sapta-Sindhava in the Rig Veda is taken to mean the territories along the courses of the five rivers of the Punjab, the Indus and the Saraswati. Historians like Ludwig, Lassen and Whitley are in favor of including the river Oxus in the

place of Saraswati. Mention of the rivers Krumu (Kurram), Gomati (Gomal) and Kubha (Kabul) and Suvastu (Swat) in the Rig Veda shows that the Aryan settlements extended to territories within the boundaries of present Afghanistan. Naturally the Oxus region was not unknown to the early Aryans. The main area of the early Aryan settlements was the Punjab; but there was a difference of opinion in this regard. It is supposed that the early Aryans had not extended their settlement into Bengal. Absence of reference to tiger in the Rig Veda leads to the conclusion that Aryan expansion in Bengal, Assam and the Deccan took place in later times. There are references in the Rig Veda to constant conflict between the Aryans and the Dasas, that is, the non-Aryans. In this conflict of the Punjab eventually. This is borne out in the Brahmanas. During 1500 to 800 B.C., that is the period when the Brahmanas were written the Aryan settlements had extended from the valley of the river Saraswati to the Gangetic doab. This vast plain became the main settlement of the Aryans. During that period Kurukshetra, Magadha, Kasi, Videha, Anga etc. acquired importance as Aryan kingdoms. During the Brahmana period the Kurus and the Panchal as were the most important and powerful Aryan kingdoms. From Videha or North Bihar to South and East Bihar, Bengal etc were not brought under the Aryans before 800BC This area was known as Prachi or Pracha. In course of time the Aryan settlements were also extended to the Brahmaputra and Irrawaddy valleys. It took a little longer time before Saurashtra, Avanti, that is present Malwa and Subir came under the Aryans. By 200 B.C. the Aryans spread all over the vast area from the Himalayas to the Vindhya and from the Arabian sea to the Bay of Bengal. It has been from that period of history that this vast area came to be known as Aryavata.

In course of time the Aryans crossed the Vindhya and moved into the southern parts of India. The story of Agastya Muni's crossing the Vindhya and Ram Chandra's expedition to Ceylon (Lanka) are supposed to be instances of the Aryan penetration into the south. It may, however, be mentioned that the Aryans did not succeed in bringing the whole of the south under their control. There were a large number of non-Aryan tribes which existed by the side of the Aryan settlements in the southern India. The Andhra's, Pulinda's, Nishad's may be mentioned as instances in point. In the Vindhya region reference to the existence of a non-Aryan tribe called the Sabars has been found in the far south the Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada speaking Dravidians continued to live.

Social life in the later Vedic Age

In the later Vedic Period the society underwent considerable changes. The four Varna, that is classes, were now taken in the same time period witnessed gradual hardening of the caste system and deterioration of the position of the Vaishyas and Sudras in relation to the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas. The Brahmans now became well-organised priesthood given to study and teaching of the Veda offering sacrifices for themselves and others and receiving gift. The Brahmans, however, could not

become kings nor could the Kshatriya become priests certain degraded Sutas like the Barytas and Nishadas were forced to reside outside the limits of the village town. The nation consisted of the upper class castes-the Brahman Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas, the Sudras being excluded from it.

The position of women did not improve during the later Vedic Period, rather their status marked a positive deterioration. Women could no longer attend the Assembly, that is the Samiti. They had no right to inherit properties. As marrying more than one wife was permissible among the upper classes, married women of these classes had to suffer the presence of rival wives. The lot of the queens was rather unenviable in this regard and although there was the practice of naming one of the queens as Rajmahisi or Chief Queen yet the lot of the other queens was one of neglect and lack of honour due to queens but they were allowed to participate in religious rites. Some of the women, such as, Gargi, Maitreya, Lopamudra, Mamita, received education of high order and even took part in philosophical disputation in royal courts. Raile of marriage underwent a great change and there was much rigidity in matters of marriage. Intercaste marriage was permissible but was not looked upon with favor.

The Upanishads are by themselves a living testimony to the high intellectual attainments during the later Vedic Age. That a very high standard was maintained in education is clear from the stories of Setauket and Satyakam and the instruction given to the student at the end of his studies as contained in the Taittiriya Upanishad. The subjects of study included the Vedas, Itihas, Purana, grammar, mathematics, astronomy, military science, ethics, dialectics, science of makes etc. Personal purity and good health were regarded as essential conditions for study. After the completion of the whole course of studies came the ceremony called samavartana, that is, convocation, and the students could become snataka, that is one who took ceremonial bath after the completion of studentship. Teacher that is the preceptor, was the pivot of the educational system and the State had nothing to do with education. Pupils had to show great respect to the teachers who also had to observe certain rules of conduct towards the pupils,

Economic Life in the Later Vedic Age

It may be mentioned at the outset that most people lived in villages and the village agriculturists were the true representatives of the economy of the period. It may be mentioned at the outset that most people lived in economy of the period is also denoted by the rites for putting the bullocks to the plough and for honouring the goddess of agriculture. Sacrifices were also offered to Kshetrapati that is. the Lord of the agricultural field.

Rice and barley were, as before, the staple food of the later Vedic People. Cattle was an invaluable possession and all the upper three classes were engaged in a man gradually growing. The Vaisyas were engaged in cattle-keeping. Cows were not merely a property and source of milk but a great reverence to them was gradually growing,

The Vaisyas were engaged in trade and commerce and several forest products, besides articles of food, clothing, figured as items of trade and commerce, e.g., Kutaja, Vamsa, Madhya, Ikohu etc. From Panini we know that a system of currency was in use although a large part of trade and commerce was managed by system of barter. Panini mentions coins like Pana, Karshapana, Vaha etc. Karshapana, Pada, Vaha etc. to

Implements and vessels of copper, iron, stone, and earthenware are mentioned. These were manufactured by skilled artisans. Gold and silver were also used for the manufacture of cutlery, such as the spoons, dishes etc. Clothes made of cotton, wool, silk and hemp were in use. From the above discussions it is clear that various occupations, professions, arts, crafts and industries were there. That the transport system was highly developed during this period is clear from references to bridges, roads, cross-roads, light two-wheeled wooden carriage etc. Horses, oxen were common draft animals, Horses, donkeys, camels, elephants were used for travel by land and raft and boats for travel by water.

Political Condition

In the later Vedic Age, a vast change had taken place in the political condition of the country. Many of the former tribal kings who were mutually at war had in the process developed into emperors by conquering the weaker kingdoms. The emperors took the honorifics like Ekkrat, Samrat, Rajchakravartins etc. These denoted the expansion of the territories and powers of the kings who had grown into emperors. But a highly intellectual and moral discipline was prescribed for the king. "He must be fully instructed in threefold sacred sciences, and in logic, and learn the management of chariot and the use of bow, he shall be holy in acts and speech, pure and of sub_ dude senses". His essential duties and functions were to protect the castes and orders in accordance with justice. He must support the learned Brahmins and the poor and the needy of all classes, and none in the realm must suffer from hunger, sickness, cold etc. He must be impartial to his subjects. The Sabha and Samiti of the Early Vedic Age do not figure in the later Vedic Age. In any case the powers of the Sabha and Samiti to regulate the affairs of the State and to control the powers of the king must have been very much reduced if not totally absent. Despite the increase in the powers of the king, it must be mentioned that he did not become despotic since he had to take an oath for doing his duties as narrated above and failure to do his duties would be visited with adequate penalties in this world and the world

hereafter This was considered to be a sufficient deterrent. The Brahmanas and the Purohit still exercised the same political control over the king. The kingship became normally hereditary in the period. For the efficient administration of the country, the king would appoint a regular hierarchy of officers for the three upper classes, i.e. the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas, but they must be pure, truthful. These officers would appoint subordinate officers under them, who must also possess the same quality Collection of taxes was one of the most important branches of administration. One-sixth, one-eighth, or one-tenth of the produce of the soil would be variously charged as land taxes. This variation was perhaps due to the variation in the quality of the soil. One twentieth of merchandise, one-sixtieth of roots, fruits, flowers, medicinal herbs, honey, meat, grass and fire wood would be payable as tax. Artisans and other manual workers had to do a day's work for the king every month. One-tenth of imports had to be handed over to the king

The king was remain always prepared for war He should lead his fighting forces in the battle He must be brave and fearless in the battle field. Ethics of war prevented the use of poisonous weapons in fighting. As in the former times the army consisted of the infantry, cavalry, charioteers, elephants etc the king was the highest civil and criminal judge but there is reference to a chief judge who was next to the king in matters of judicial authority The senani who was the commander-in-chief below the king did both executive and judicial functions in peace time Killing a Brahmana was the greatest crime Punishments ranged from death to physical disablement and expulsion from the country. Penalty of death might be commuted by gift of cow to the relation of the murdered

Impact of the Non-Aryans on the Aryan Society

It was by defeating the non-Aryan population that the Aryans established their settlements. This process of conquest went on for long after which some of the non-Aryans came to be reconciled to their fate and lived under their conquerors while many others moved away to other parts of the country. Long stay side by side gradually removed the original feeling of mutual hostility between the Aryans and the non-Aryans. This naturally led to mutual understanding and influence. The Aryan society gradually accepted and assimilated many of the social and religious customs and rites of the non-Aryans. The mixture of the Aryan and non-Aryan customs and rites etc, gave rise to the Hindu culture of India. It may be mentioned here that although the non-Aryans were less developed in civilization and culture compared to the Aryans, yet there is no reason to believe that they were uncivilized. In fact, the Dravidian civilization among the non-Aryan civilization was highly developed. The term non-Aryans meant nothing more or less than those who were not Aryans. It was not a term of contempt. It is, however, difficult to determine the quantum of contributions made by the

Aryans and the non-Aryans to the Hindu culture and civilization. Yet it is possible to refer to certain special impacts of the non-Aryans upon the Aryan society and religion.

When the Aryans came to India, their main stay of life was animal husbandry but when they settled in India they took to agriculture and adopted the method of cultivation followed by the non-Aryans. Cultivation of food grains, fruits, sugarcane etc. were learned by them from the non-Aryans. Preparation of molasses from juice of the sugarcane, building of houses, making of pottery with various paintings and decorations, boat-making and boat plying, manufacture of dresses, use of bricks etc. are supposed to have been learned by the Aryans from the non-Aryans. Use of horses, manufacture of articles from iron, use of milk products, and liquor, sewing of garments and charioteering etc. were also learned by them from the non-Aryans. The Aryans originally did not worship any image. They only worshiped different forces of nature as gods and goddesses. The non-Aryans, on the other hand, worshiped images of gods and goddesses. The image worship is supposed to have been adopted by the Aryans from the non-Aryans. Impact of the non-Aryans is also noticeable in the food habits of the Aryans. Meat and butter were used by the Aryans as their main food. But gradually they started to take rice, pulses, curd, ghee, oil, fish etc. as food as did the non-Aryans. In ceremonies like marriage etc. use of vermilion, coconut, betel leaf, incense etc. and animal sacrifice in certain religious ceremonies were learnt by the Aryans from the non-Aryans.

Emergence of the Mahajanapadas

Sixteen Mahajanapadas The period from the fall of the kingdom of Videha early in the sixth century B.C. till the rise of the kingdom of Magadha in the middle of the same century is known as the Age of sixteen Mahajanapadas. Reference to the Age of sixteen Mahajanapadas is to be found in the Buddhist Anuttara Nikaya, Reference is also to be found in the Jaina Bhagabati Sutra but the lists of Mahajanapadas in the Buddhist and the Jaina sources differ in respect of certain names. But both the lists contain the names of the comparatively large kingdoms. Dr. Raychaudhuri is, however, of opinion that of the two books Buddhist Anuttara Nikaya and Jaina Bhagabati Sutra the former was written at a time closer to the Age of Sixteen Mahajanapadas than the latter. He, therefore, thinks that the list of the sixteen Mahajanapadas given by the Buddhist Anuttara Nikaya is more reliable. The names given by the Buddhist source are: (1) Kasi, (2) Kosala, (3) Anga, (4) Magadha, (5) Vrije or Vajji, (6) Malla or Malava, (7) Chedi, (8) Vamsa or Vatsya, (9) Kuru, (10) Panchala, (11) Matsya, (12) Surasena, (13) Asmaka, (14) Avanti, (15) Gandhara, and (16) Kamboja.

Kasi

In the Age of the sixteen Mahajanapadas the kingdom of Kasi was the first to rise into prominence. Its capital was Varanasi which was more prosperous than the capitals of other

kingdoms. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri is of opinion that the kingdom of Kasi reduced the kingdom of Videha and not only that the kings of Kasi dreamed of conquering the whole of Jambu Wipa, that is, India. The Buddhist and Jaina texts also testify to the power and greatness of the kingdom of Kasi. Kings of Kasi attacked the kingdom of Kosala more than once. King Manoj of Kasi is said to have conquered Kosala, Anga and Magadha. The Jatakas testify to this achievement of King Manoj. The power and prosperity of Kasi particularly its capital Varanasi roused the jealousy of the neighbouring kingdoms. Once as many as seven of the neighbouring kingdoms jointly besieged the kingdom of Kasi the power, prestige and predominance of the kingdom of Kasi did not last long.

Kosala

The kingdom of Kosala comprised Kesh Putra and Kapilvastu regions and was surrounded by the rivers Gomati, Sar pika and Sada Nira and the Nepal hills. In the middle of the sixth century B.C. the small kingdom of Kapilvastu was compelled to accept the suzerainty of Kosala. Ajodhya, Saketa, Sarasvati etc. were very prosperous cities of the kingdom of Kosala and showed how great was the kingdom of Kosala. The kings of Kosala belonged to the Ikshaku dynasty, Sarasvati was the capital of Kosala.

Anga

The kingdom of Anga was situated in the west of the Raajmahal mountain range and east of Magadha. This kingdom acquired great power and prestige for a time and conquered a number of neighbouring countries. This is borne out by the Aiteriya Bhramar The capital of Anga was Champa which was on the confluence of the rivers, the Ganges and the Champa (modern Chandan). Anga was one of the six great kingdoms of India until the demise of Gautama Buddha. The capital of Anga-Champa, was particularly noted from the great volume of trade and commerce it had with other countries as well as for its great prosperity. Many a businessman would sail to the Suvarnabhumi for commercial purposes from Champa. It was after the name of Champa, the capital of Anga, that the Hindu colony of Annamin Indo-Chinawas named Champa.

Magadha

The kingdom of Magadha in the Age of sixteen Mahajanapadas comprised the modern districts of Patna and Gaya in Bihar. Magadha was encircled by the rivers, the son and the Ganges. Giri-braja was the original capital of Magadha. Later, however, its new capital was set up at Pataliputra. Of the different dynasties that ruled over Magadha the Sishunaga dynasty was the most noteworthy. At the time of Gautama Buddha Bimbi Sara was the King of Magadha He belonged to Hariyanka dynasty.

Vrije or Vajji

The kingdom of Vrije or Vajji extended from the north of the Ganges to the Nepal

Hills. It was a federation of eight tribal principalities. Among these tribal principalities Videha, Licchavi, Yatrika and Vrije or Vajji were particularly important. The capital of Vrije was Vaisali.

Malava or Malla

The kingdom of Malla or Malava was divided into two parts, each having its own capital, Pava was the capital of one and Kushinagar was that of the other. It was at Kushinara that Gautama Buddha breathed his last. Wilson, Cunningham and other archaeologists are of opinion that modern village called Kasai was the site of Kushinagar. Kushinagar, Pava was situated ten miles away from Kushinagar towards the east, Malla or Malava was originally a kingship but later adopted republican form of government. When Alexander invaded India Malava or Malla was a republic.

Chedi

Kingdom was near the Jumna. Its capital was Shikimate; Reference to the inhabitants of Chedi is to be found in the Rig-Veda. The kingdom of Chedi was on close friendly terms with the kingdoms of Kasi and Matsya. There was a highway connecting Chedi with Banaras. But journey along this road was very unsafe in those days.

Vamsa or Vatsya

The kingdom of Vamsa or Vatsya was on the south of the Ganges its capital was Kausambi. Many historians are of opinion that kings of Vamsa or Vatsya belonged to the royal dynasty of Kasi in Swapna Vasabaddatta, a work of Bhasa, King Udayana of Kausambi is described as a scion of the royal dynasty called Ratakul. Udayana, Gautama Buddha, Pradyot, King of Avanti Bimbisara and Ajatasatru of Magadha were contemporaries. The kings of Kuru according to Pali texts belonged to Hsthira Gotra. The capital of the kingdom was Indrapath Drapashtha. It was a vast city extending over seven Yojana. According to Pali texts the scions of Yudhishthira ruled over Kuru in the sixth century B.C. In the Buddhist Jataka reference, there is Hananjay Kauravya, Suttasoma etc. as the kings of Kuru. In a sense the real identity of the royal dynasty of Kuru cannot be ascertained properly.

Mala

The kingdom of Panchala comprised parts of the Central Indian and Rohilkhand. The northern bank of the river Bhagirathi called Uttar Panchal or North Panchal and the southern bank known as Dakshin Panchal or South Panchal. The king of attempted to occupy North Panchal and this led to a war.

Megasthenes

That Megasthenes frequently visited India recent writers, all with one consent, following Robertson, are wont to maintain; nevertheless, this opinion is far from being certain. He might have meant by the words that Megasthenes during his Embassy had frequent interviews with Chandragupta. Nor, if we look to the context,

does any other explanation seem admissible; and in fact, no other writer besides has mentioned his making frequent visits, although occasion for making such mention was by no means wanting, and in the *Indicia* itself of Megasthenes not the slightest indication of his having made numerous visits is to be found. But perhaps some may say that to this view is opposed the accurate knowledge which he possessed on all Indian matters; but this may equally well be accounted for by believing that he made a protracted stay at Pataliputra as by supposing that he frequently visited India

“The ancient writers, whenever they judge of those who have written on Indian matters, are without doubt want to reckon Megasthenes among those writers who are given to lying and least worthy of credit and to rank him almost on a par with ketosis. These same writers, however, seeing they have copied into their own pages a great part of his *Indicia*, cannot by any means have so entirely distrusted his veracity as one might easily infer they did from these judgments. And what of this, that Eratosthenes himself, who did not quote him sparingly, says in Strabo that “he sets down the breadth of India from the register of the Stathmi, which were received as authentic, a passage which can have reference to Megasthenes alone. The fact is they find fault with only two parts of the narrative of Megasthenes, the one in which he writes of the fabulous races of India, and the other where he gives an account of Heracles and the Indian Dionysus; although it so happens that on other matters also they regarded the account given by others as true, rather than that of Megasthenes

After the Salenkian War an era of peace and friendly relations began between the Maurya emperor Chandragupta and the Syrian court. Megasthenes was sent to the court of Chandragupta by Seleucos as an ambassador. Megasthenes was originally working at Arachosia with the satrap Sibtrios where from he was sent to Pataliputra where he stayed in Chandragupta's court and left an account of Indian affairs of the time. The work of Megasthenes has been lost but fragments of his work survive in the works of later classical writers such as Strabo, Arians, Diodorus, and others which have been collected by Schwanbeck and translated into English by Mcgrindle.

Although in certain aspects of his statements Megasthenes betrayed lack of critical judgment in cases of his secondary information, as Prof. Rhys David's puts it yet in matters which came under his direct observation he has been truthful.

The most important piece of information that we have from Megasthenes is the description of the capital city of Pataliputra. Megasthenes Palimbothra, i.e. Pataliputra stood on the confluence of the river Son and the Ganges, and was nine and half miles in length and one and three fourths' miles. The city was surrounded by a wooden wall and by ditch 606 feet wide and 30 cubits in depth. The wooden wall of the city had 570 towers and 64 gates.

Pataliputra was not the only city of the Maurya Empire. Arians remarks that ‘It would not be possible to record with accuracy the number of the cities on account of their multiplicity. Those which

were situated near the river or the sea were built of wood; for if they were built of brick they could not long endure on account of rain and because the rivers overflowing their banks fill the plains with water. But those which have been founded on commanding places are of stone.” The most important cities of Chandragupta’s time were Taxila, Kausambi, Ujjaini and Pundranga (in north Bengal).

The account of Aelian based on Megasthenes contains descriptions of the royal places. Chandragupta’s places within the city of Pataliputra was, according to Megasthenes, the finest in the whole world and forced admiration. Neither Susa nor Ecbatana the Persian places could vie with royal place in Pataliputra. The place had gilded pillars adorned with golden vines and silver birds. In the place park tamed peacocks, parrots and domesticated pheasants were kept. There were shaded groves and trees deftly interwoven by the woodmen. Artificial ponds were dug within the places grounds which contained fishes of enormous size. The imperial place is supposed to have stood near to the modern village of Kumrahar where ruins of Maurya pillar-hall have been unearthed.

From Strabo we learn that the king had female occasions only, namely in times of war, while sitting as a judge in the royal court, to offer religious sacrifice and while going on hunting expeditions that the king would go out of the places.

Megasthenes left us a detailed description of both municipal and military councils of Chandragupta’s time “each of the councils had six Boards with well-defined functions to perform. This gives us an impression of the highly developed urban administration prevalent during Chandragupta’s time. Some details of the equipped with javelins instead of bows, but wear a sword which is broad in the blade”

About the peace and prosperity of the people Megasthenes observes that the inhabitants having abundant means of subsistence grew taller than the ordinary stature as might be expected of people who inhale pure air and drink the finest of water. They are well skilled in various arts. Referring to the fertility of the soil Megasthenes mentions that profusion of rivers and stream facilities enables harvest cereals and plants of various kinds. Abundant rainfall enables harvesting of two crops. Megasthenes was so much impressed by the contentment and prosperity of the people that he made the sweeping remark that “famine has never visited India and that there has never been a general scarcity in the supply of nourishing food.” Megasthenes, however, justifies this remark by stating that even in times of war the Indians would never ravage by cultivated soil as was done by other nations but would fight their battles away from agricultural fields allowing the tillers of the soil to carry on cultivation even when battles were raging. The Indians regarded the husband men as sacred and inviolable. Besides they neither ravage an enemy’s land with fire nor cut down its trees”

It may be pointed out here that Megasthenes observation regarding absence of famine is factually incorrect for there are references in literary stalked the land within years of Megasthenes departure from India.

Due to agricultural prosperity by far the most numerous classes in the society was formed of the husbandmen but they did not prevent the growth of towns and cities. Megasthenes observed that the number of cities near rivers or seas were built of wood in order to save them from destruction by flood and rains, but those built on heights and away from rivers or seas were built of bricks and mud.

Megasthenes refers to the frugal nature of nature of the Indians but remarks that they were fond of fineries and jewelleries which fostered growth of trade and industry. A large number of persons were employed in producing of weapons of war ships for the navy as well as maritime trade and human transprt. Sailors of state-owned ships, and skilled persons appointed for building of war ships and manufacture of weapons were paid from the state coffers.

Megasthenes mentioned existence of seven castes in the then Indian society which was contrary to the traditional fourfold division of the caste system then prevalent. In fact, Megasthenes husbandmen Herdsmen, artisans, soldiers, overseers and councilors, obviously were a division with reference to the professional pursuits of different sections of the fourfold division of the society into Brahmins, kshatriyas, vaisyas and sundras. He in all probability was led by his knowledge of the division of the Egyptian society into seven castes betrayed lack of critical judgment. This was one such instance

Megasthenes notices a general contentment among the people and the treatment of the underdogs of the society then must have been so liberal that he observed that slavery by the Indians. But here again, there is a factual error. Obviously, it was the benignity of treatment of the slaves, their right to private property and source freedom unlike those of the Greek slaves who were no better than chattels of their master that must have been responsible for this error in observation but the fact remains that slavery existed in Indian at that time. This is borne out by the Arthasastra which says that no Aryan or freeman could be reduced to slavery. Reference to Dasas, i.e., the slaves in Asoka inscriptions also bear testimony to the existence of the institution of slavery in maurya India.

That Megasthenes account although available to us in fragments referred to by later classical writers is, to say the east, a unique document and the good words that he said about the administration, people and the political, social economic and cultural life of the Indians under the first Maurya redounds to the credit of our four bears of the time. It is particularly gratifying to read praises of the country and the people in the account of a foreigner.

THE MAURYA EMPIRE

THE MAURYA EMPIRE AT THE HEIGHT

The defeat inflicted upon the Greek hosts of Seleucus enabled Chandragupta to consolidate his mighty empire. It is unfortunately not yet possible to write a detailed account of his brilliant career. Nor can we trace the gradual steps by which an all-India empire, the unrealized dream of ages to come, was gradually brought into being. The available evidence, however, leaves no doubt that during the reigns of Chandragupta and his son and successor Bindusara, not only the whole of Deccan, excepting the eastern coastal region, formed part of their empire, but even a considerable part of the south Indian peninsula was either incorporated in their dominions or was brought within their sphere of influence. The Tamil poet Mamulanar, who flourished about the second or third century A.D., refers to a military expedition sent by the Mauryas to reduce some Tamil chiefs in the south. The epithet *vambha* (newly-risen) applied to the Mauryas seems to indicate that the references here are to the early Mauryas who were thus carried almost to the southern extremity of the Indian peninsula and the Mauryan banner wafted across the vast stretch of land, from Herat in the north-west, to Madura in the south.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

India was now a leading power in the world, and maintained diplomatic relations with outside countries. The house of Seleucus sent regular embassies to the court of Pataliputra. We know in particular two of these ambassadors, viz. Megasthenes, who lived in the court of Chandragupta, and Daimachus who replaced him at the time of Bindusara. We also hear of the exchange of friendly letters between Bindusara and Antiochus, the son and successor of Seleucus. There is also reason to believe that diplomatic relations existed about this time between India on the one side, and China and the central Asiatic powers on the other. Ptolemy Philadelphus, the Greek ruler of Egypt, also sent an embassy to the court of the Mauryas. The Maurya rulers too dispatched messengers to the far-countries as will be described in the next section.

MILITARY STRENGTH

A good idea of the power and magnificence of the Magadha Empire about this period may be formed from the account of Megasthenes and other Greek writers. The vast empire maintained a highly organized and well-equipped army, consisting of elephants, chariots, cavalry and infantry. The regular military establishment consisted of 600,000 infantry, 30,000 horsemen, 36,000 men with 9,000 elephants, and 24,000 men with nearly 8,000 chariots, men in all, excluding followers and attendants.

MILITARY BOARDS

There was a highly organized system of military administration. Six Boards, consisting of five members each, looked after the six departments, viz. (1) Admiralty (2) transport, commissariat etc. (3) cavalry; (4) infantry; (5) chariots and (6) elephants. The thirty members were no doubt collectively responsible for the whole military organization.

SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION

The Maurya emperor himself probably administered the government of Magadha and surrounding territories only. The distant provinces were under Viceroys who were very often selected from the royal family. The Central Government kept watch over their administration by means of a class of persons called news-writers Both in the central Government as well as in the provinces the administration was carried on by a number of departments each under a Superintendent aided by a host of ministerial officers There was a highly organized bureaucracy which efficiently managed the affairs of the vast empire. The different parts of the empire were connected by high-roads one of them traversing the whole breadth of India from the Sindhu to the mouth of the Ganga. Irrigation works were undertaken even in such distant parts of empire as the Kathiawar peninsula and on the whole the efficiency of the government was combined with peace prosperity and contentment of the people.

ASOKA THE GREATEST KING IN ANCIENT INDIA

Chandragupta and Bindlusara ruled for nearly half a century and or about 273 B.C the throne of Magadha passé on to Asoka one of the greatest names in the history of the world. No figure in ancient India history is more familiar to us and none leaves a more abiding impression of a towering personality than this immortal son of Bindlusara.

ASOKA INSCRIPTIONS

This is mainly due to the fact that for the first time in Indian history we come across original personal records of a king composed probably by himself engraved on imperishable rocks and stone-pillars the inscriptions of Asoka furnish a wealth of details about his life and reign such as we do not possess about any other king in ancient India. The more important of this inscription may be classified as follows

FOURTEEN ROCK EDICTS

A set of fourteen inscriptions incised on rocks at eight different places, viz. Shahbazgarhi (Peshawar District), Mansehra (Hazara District), Kalsi (Dehra Dun District), Girnar (near Junagadh in Kathiāwār), Sopārā Thānā District, Bombay), Dhauri and Jaugadā (Orissa), and Yerragudi (Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh, eight miles from Gooty Railway Station). A copy of the Seventh Rock Edict of Asoka in Shahbazgarhi is engraved on a bowl, originally found in the Gandhara region but now deposited in the Prince of Wales Museum in Bombay. This distribution is to be particularly noted as it is valuable direct evidence of the great extent of the Maurya Empire

MINOR ROCK EDICTS

An edict incised on rocks at thirteen different places, viz. Rūpnāth (Jubbulpur District), Bairat (Jaipur State, Rājputānā), Sasarām (Shāhābād District, Bihar), Maski (Raichur District), Gavimath and Pālkigundu (Kopbal Taluk in Mysore), Gujarra (Datia District, Madhya Pradesh). Ahraura (Mirzapur District., U. P.) Now, Delhi Rājula- Mandagiri (2 miles NNW. of Pattikonda in Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh), Yerragudi, and three neighboring places in Chitaldrug district in Mysore. The last five also contain a Supplementary edict.

SEVEN PILLAR EDICTS

These were engraved on dense fine monolith pillars, to be described in. The complete set of seven edicts is found only on a single pillar now at Delhi (removed from a place called Topra). The other pillars, found mostly in North Bihar, contain only six of the edicts. One of these, now at Delhi was brought from Mirat^{IV}. The remaining inscriptions engraved on rock, pillars and walls of caves, are of miscellaneous character. The most important of these, engraved on a pillar at Rumindei (Nepal Terai), records the visit of Asoka to the place (Lumvinivana) where Gautama Buddha was born, and marks that very site. Two short inscriptions, written in Aramaic script, have been found, one in Taxilā, and the other in Jalalā-bād District, Afghanistan. A bilingual inscription, written in Greek and Aramaic, has been found on a rock at Shar-i-Kuna near Kandahar in Afghanistan. Another similar record has also been found in the same locality. Four Asokan edicts have been found at a site between the villages of Shalatak and Qargha in the province of Laghman in Afghanistan in 1969. One of these texts is in Aramaic, and the other three are in "an old Indic language" (perhaps Prakrit). written in the Kharoshthi script.

IRANIAN AND MACEDONIAN INVASIONS

In north-east India smaller principalities and republics gradually merged with the Magadha empire. But the north-west India presented a different picture in the first half of the sixth century BC. Several small principalities such as those of the kambojas Gandhara and Madras fought one another. This area did not have any powerful kingdom like that of Magadha to weld the warring communities into one organized kingdom. The area was also wealthy, and could be easily entered through the passes in the Hindukush.

The Achaemenian rulers of Iran. Who expanded their empire at the same time the Magadha princes. Took advantage of the political disunity on the north-west frontier. The Iranian ruler Darius penetrated into north-west India in 516 B.C. And annexed Punjab, west of the Indus, and Sindh. This area constituted the twentieth province or satrapy of Iran, the total number of satrapies in the Iranian empire being 28. The Indian satrapy included Sindh, the north-west frontier and the part of Punjab that lay to the west of the Indus. It was the most fertile and populous part of the empire. It paid a tribute of 360 talents of gold, which accounted for one-third of the total revenue of France from its Asian provinces. The Indian subjects were Xerxes, the successor of Darius, employed Indians in the long war against the Greeks. It appears that India continued to be a part of the Iranian empire till Alexander's invasion of India

RESULTS OF THE CONTACT

The Indo-Iranian contact lasted for about 200 years. It gave an impetus to Indo-Iranian trade and commerce. The cultural results were more important. The Iranian scribes brought into India a form of writing which came to be known as the Kharoshthi script. It was written from right to left like the Arabic. Some Asokan inscriptions in north-west India were written in the third century B.C. in this script, which continued to be used in the country till the third century A.D. Iranian coins are also found in the north-west front-tier region which points to the existence of trade with Iran. But it is wrong to think that the punch-marked coins came into use in India as a result of contact with Iran. However, Iranian influence on the Maurya sculpture is clearly perceptible. The monuments of Asoka's time, especially the bell-shaped capitals, owed something to the Iranian models. Iranian influence may also be traced in the preamble of Asoka's edicts as well as in certain terms used in them. For instance, for the Iranian term *dipi*. The Asokan scribe used the terms *lipi* Further it seems that through the Iranians the Greeks came to know about the great wealth of India, which whetted their greed and eventually led to Alexander's invasions of India.

ALEXANDER'S INVASION

In the fourth century BC the Greeks and the Iranians fought for the supremacy of the world. Under the leadership of Alexander of Macedonia, the fear Greeks finally destroyed the Iranian empire. Alexander conquered not only Asia Minor and Iraq but also Iran. From Iran he marched to India, obviously attracted by its great wealth. Herodotus, who is called the father of ad history, and other Greek writers, had painted India as a fabulous land, which tempted Alexander to invade it. Alexander also possessed a strong passion for geographical inquiry and natural history. He had heard that the Caspian Sea continued on the eastern side of India. He was also inspired by the mythical exploits of

past conquerors whom he wanted to emulate and surpass. The political condition of north- West India suited his plans. The area was parceled out into many independent monarchies and tribal republics which were strongly wedded to the soil and had a fierce love of the principal city over which they ruled. Alexander found it easy to conquer these principalities one by one. Among the rulers of these territories, two were well known - Ambhi, the prince of Taxilā and Porus whose kingdom lay between the Jhelum and the Chenab. Together they might have effectively resisted the advance of Alexander. But they could not put up a joint front the Khyberpass remained unguarded.

After the conquest of Iran Alexander moved on to Kabul from where he marched to India through the Khyberpass in 326 BC. It took him five months to reach the Indus. Ambhi, the ruler of Taxilā, readily submitted to the invader, augmented his army and replenished his treasure. When he reached the Jhelum Alexander met Porus, the first and the strongest resistance. Although Alexander defeated Porus, he was impressed by the bravery and courage of the Indian prince. So, he restored his kingdom to him and made him his ally. Then he advanced as far as the Beas River. He wanted to move still further eastward but his army refused to accompany him. The Greek soldiers had grown war-weary and diseased. The hot climate of India and ten years of continuous campaigning had made them terribly homesick. They had also experienced a taste of Indian fighting qualities on the bank of the Indus which made them desist from further progress. As the Greek historian Arrian tells us in the art of war the Indians were far superior to the other nations inhabiting the area at that time. Especially the Greek soldiers were told of a formidable power on the Ganga. Obviously, it was the kingdom of Magadha ruled by the Nandas who maintained an army far outnumbering that of Alexander. So despite the repeated appeals of Alexander to advance, the Greek soldiers did not budge an inch. Alexander lamented: "I am trying to rouse the hearts that are disloyal and crushed with craven fears", the king who had never known defeat at the hands of his enemies had to accept defeat from his own men. Many small republics fell. On his return march Alexander reached the end of the Indian frontier. He left India for 19 months (326-325 B.C.) which were full of fighting. He had barely any time to organize his conquest. Still, he made some arrangements. Most conquered states were restored to their rulers who submitted to his authority. But his own territorial possessions were divided into three parts, which were placed under three Greek governors. He also found a number of cities to maintain his power in this area.

EFFECT OF ALEXANDER INVASION

Alexander's invasion provided the first occasion when ancient Europe came into close contact with ancient India. It produced important results. The Indian campaign of Alexander was a triumphant success. He added to his empire an Indian province which was much larger than that conquered by

Iran, though the Greek possessions in India were soon lost to the Maury rulers. The most important outcome of this invasion was the establishment of the direct contact between India and Greece in different fields. Alexander's campaign opened up four distinct routes by land and sea. It paved the way for Greek merchants and craftsmen and increased the existing facilities for trade.

Alexander was deeply interested in the geography of the mysterious ocean which he saw for the first time at the mouth of the Indus. Therefore he patched his new fleet under his friend Nearchus to explore the coast a search for harbors from the mouth of the Indus to that of the Euphrates so Alexander's historians have left valuable geographical accounts. They also have left clearly dated records of Alexander's campaign, which enable us to build Indian chronology for subsequent events on a definite basis. Alexander's historians also give us important information about social and economic conditions. They tell us about the Sati system, the sale of girls in market places by poor parents, and the fine breed of Oxen in North-West India. Alexander sent from their 200,000 Oxen to Macedonia for use in Greece. The art of carpentry was the most flourishing craft in India, and carpenters built chariots, boats and ships. By destroying the power of petty invasions paved the way for the expansion of the Maurya empire in that area. According to tradition Chandragupta Maurya, who founded the Maurya empire had seen sometimes of the working of the military machine of Alexander and had acquired some knowledge which helped him in destroying the power of the Nandas.

RISE OF BUDDHISM AND JAINISM

CAUSES AND ORIGIN

In post-Vedic times society was clearly divided into four Varna's: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. Each Varna was assigned well-defined functions, although it was emphasized that Varna was based on birth and the two higher Varna's were given some privileges. The Brahmins, who were given the functions of priests and teachers, claimed the highest status in society. They demanded several privileges, including those of receiving gifts and exemption from taxation and punishment. In post-Vedic texts we have many instances of such privileges enjoyed by them. The Kshatriyas ranked second in the Varna hierarchy. They fought and governed, and lived on the taxes collected from the peasants. The Vaisyas were engaged in agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade. They appear as principal taxpayers. However along with the two higher Varna's they were placed in the category of dvija or the twice born. A dvija was entitled to wearing the sacred thread and studying the Vedas from which the sutras were kept out. The sutras were meant for serving the three higher Varna's along with women were barred and along with Vedic studies. They appear as domestic slaves, agricultural slaves, craftsmen and hired laborers in post-Vedic times. They were called cruel, and greedy and thieving in habits.

some of them were treated as untouchables. The higher the Varna the more privileged and purer a person was. The lower the Varna of an offender, the more severe was the punishment prescribed for him. Naturally the Varna-divided society seems to have generated tensions. We have no means to find out the reactions of the vaisyas and the sutras. But the kshatriyas, who functioned as rulers, reacted strongly against the ritualistic domination of the Brahman's, and seem to have led a kind of protest movement against the importance attached to birth in the Varna system. The kshatriyas reaction against the domination of the priestly class called Brahman's, who claimed various privileges, was one of the causes of the origin of new religions Varthamana Mahavira who founded Jainism and Gautama Buddha. Who founded Buddhism belonged to the Kshatriyas clan and both disputed the authority of the Brahman's

But the real cause of these new religious lay in the spread of a new agricultural economy in north east India including the regions of eastern Uttar Pradesh and northern and southern. Bihar, has about 100 cm of rainfall Before these areas came to be colonized on a large scale, they were thickly forested. The thick jungles could not easily be cleared without the aid of iron axes. Although some people lived in this area before 600 B.C... they used - implements of bone, stone and copper, and they led a precarious life on lakes and river banks and river confluences, where land was opened to settlement through the process of erosion and flooding. In the middle Gangetic plains, large-scale habitations began in about 600 B.C., when iron came to be used in this area. On account of the moist nature of the soil in this area, too many iron tools of earliest times have not survived, but quite a few axes have been recovered from the layers belonging to circa 600- 500 B.C. The use of iron tools made possible clearance, agriculture and large settlements. The agricultural economy based on the iron plow-share required the use of bullocks, and it could not flourish without animal husbandry. But the Vedic practice of killing cattle indiscriminately in sacrifices stood in the way of the progress of new agriculture. The cattle wealth slowly decimated because the cows and bullocks were killed in numerous Vedic sacrifices. The tribal people living on the southern and eastern fringes of Magadha also killed cattle for food. But if the new agrarian economy had to be stable, this killing had to be stopped.

The period saw the rise of a large number of cities in north-eastern India. We may refer, for example, to Kaushambi near Allahabad, Kusinagar (in Deoria district of Uttar Pradesh). Banaras, Vaishali (in the newly created district of the same name in north Bihar). Chirand (in Saran district) and Rajgir (situated at a distance of about 100 km south-east of Patna). Besides others these cities had many artisans and traders time who began to use coins for the first time. The earliest coins belong to the fifth century BC and they are called punche-marked coins They circulated for the first time in

eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The use of coins naturally, facilitated trade and commerce, which added to the Vaisyas in the brahmanical society. The vaisyas ranked third, the first two being Brahman's and kshatriyas. Naturally they looked for some religion which would improve their position. Besides the kshatriyas, the vaisyas extended generous support to both Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. The merchants, called the set this, made hand some gifts to Gautama Buddha and his disciples. There were several reasons for it. First, Jainism and Buddhism in the initial stage did not attach any importance to the existing Varna system. Second, they preached the gospel of non-violence, which would put an end to wars between different kingdoms and consequently promote trade and commerce. Third, the brahmanical law books, called the Dharma sutras, decried lending money on interest. A person who lived on interest was condemned by them Therefore, the Vaisyas, who lent money on account of growing trade and commerce, were not held in esteem and were eager to improve their social status.

On the other hand, we also notice a strong reaction against various forms of private property. Old-fashioned people did not like the use and accumulation of coins made certainly of silver and copper and possibly of gold. They detested new dwellings and dresses new system of transport which amounted to luxury, and they hated war and violence. The new forms of property created social inequalities and caused misery and suffering to the masses of the people. .So the common people yearned to return to primitive life. They wanted to get back to the ascetic ideal which dispensed with the new forms of property and the new style form of property and Buddhism preferred simple, puritan ascetic living. The Buddhist and Jaina monks were asked to forego the good things of life. They were not allowed to touch gold and silver. They were to accept only as much from their patrons as was sufficient to keep body and soul together. They, therefore, - rebelled against the material advantages stemming from the new life in the Gangetic basin. In other words, we find the same kind of reaction against the changes in material life in the mid-Ganga plain in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. as we notice against the changes introduced by the Industrial Revolution in modern times. The advent of the Industrial Revolution made many people think of returning to the pre-machine age life; similarly people in the past wanted to return to the pre-iron age life.

VARTHAMANA MAHAVIRA AND JAINISM

According to the Jainas, the origin of Jainism goes back to very ancient times. They believe in twenty-four tirthankaras or great teachers or great teachers or leaders of their religion. The first tirthankaras is believed to be Rishabhadev who was born in Ayodhya. He is said to have laid the foundations for orderly human society. The last, twenty-fourth, tirthankaras, was Varthamana Mahavira who was the contemporary of Gautama Buddha. According to the Jaina tradition, most of the early

tirthankaras were born in the middle Ganga basin and attained nirvana in Bihar. The twenty third tirthankaras were parshvanath who was born in Varanasi. He gave up royal life and became an ascetic. Many teachings of Jainism are attributed to him. According to Jaina tradition, he lived two hundred years before Mahavira. Mahavir is said to be twenty-fourth

It is difficult to fix the exact dates of birth and death of Varthamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. According to one tradition Varthamana Mahavira was born in 540BC in a village called Kundagrama near Vaishali, which is identical with Basarh in the district of Vaishali in North Bihar. His father Siddhartha was the head of a famous kshatriyas can called Jnatrika and the ruler of his own area. Mahavir as mother was named Trishala sister of the Lichchhavi chief Chetaka, whose daughter was wedded to Bimbisara. Thus, Mahavira family was Connected with the royal family of Magadha.

In the beginning. Mahavira led the life of a householder, but in the search for truth he a bandoned the world at the age of 30 and became an ascetic. He would not stay for more than a day in a village and for more than five days in a town. During next twelve years he meditated, practiced austerities of various kinds and endured many hardships In the thirteenth year, when he had reached the age of 42, he attained kaivalya (Juan). Through kaivalya he conquered misery and happiness. Because of this conquest he is known as Mahavira or the great hero or jina, i.e. the conqueror, and his followers are known as Jainas. He propogated his religion for 30 years, and his mission took him to Koshala, Magadha Mithila, Champa, etc. He passed away at the age of 72 in 468 B.C at a place called Pavapuri near modern Rajgir. According to another tradition, he was born in 599 B.C

DOCTRINES OF JAINISM.

Jainism taught five doctrines: (i) do not commit violence, (ii) do not speak a lie, (iii) do not steal, (iv) do not acquire property, and (v) observe continence (brahmacharya). It is said that only the fifth doctrine was added by Mahavira the other four were taken over by him from previous teachers. Jainism attached the utmost importance to ahimsa or non-injury to living beings. Sometimes it led to absorb results, for some jain kings ordered execution of .Persons guilty of killing animals, Although Parshva, the predecessor of Mahavira, had asked his followers to cover the upper and lower portions of their body. Mahavira asked them to discard clothes altogether. This implies that Mahavira asked his followers to lead a more austere life. On account of this in later times, Jainism was divided into two sects: shvetambaras or those who put on white dress and digambaras or those who keep themselves naked.

Jainism recognized the existence of the gods but placed them lower than the Jina. It did not condemn the Varna system, as Buddhism did. According to Mahavira, a person is born in a high or in

a lower Varna in consequence of the sins or the virtues acquired by him in the previous birth. Mahavira looks for human values even in a chandala. In his opinion, through pure and meritorious life members of the lower castes can attain liberation. Jainism mainly aims at the attainment of freedom from worldly bonds. No ritual is required for acquiring such liberation. It can be obtained through right knowledge, right faith and right action. These three are considered to be the Three Jewels or triratna of Jainism. Jainism prohibited the practice of war and even agriculture for its followers because both involve the killing of living beings. Eventually the Jainas mainly confined themselves to trade and mercantile activities.

Spread of Jainism

In order to spread the teachings of Jainism, Mahavira organized an order of his followers which admitted both men and women. It is said that his followers counted 14000 which is not a large number. Since Jainism did not very clearly mark itself out from the brahmanical religion, it failed to attract the masses. Despite this, Jainism gradually spread into south and west India where the brahmanical religion was weak. According to a late tradition, the spread of Jainism in Karnataka is attributed to Chandragupta Maurya (322-298 B.C.). The emperor became a Jaina, gave up his throne and spent the last years of his life in Karnataka as a Jaina ascetic. But this tradition is not corroborated by any other source. The second cause of the spread of Jainism in south India is said to be the great famine that took place in Magadha 200 years after the death of Mahavira. The famine lasted for twelve years, and in order to protect themselves many Jaina went to the south under the leadership of Bhadrabahu, but the rest of them stayed back in Magadha under the leadership of Sthalabahu. The emigrant Jainas spread Jainism in south India. At the end of the famine they came back to Magadha, where they developed differences with the local Jainas. Those who came back from the south claimed that even during the famine they had strictly observed the religious rules on the other hand, they alleged, the Jaina ascetics living in Magadha had violated those rules and had become lax. In order to sort out these differences and to compile the main teachings of Jainism a council was convened in Pataliputra, modern Patna, but the southern Jainas boycotted the council and refused to accept its decisions. From now onwards, the southern.

The famine lasted for twelve years, and in order to protect themselves many a Jaina went to the south under the leadership of Bhadrabahu, but the rest of them stayed back in Magadha under the leadership of Sthalabahu. The emigrant Jainas spread Jainism in South India. At the end of the famine they came back to Magadha, where they developed differences with the local Jainas. Those who came back from the south claimed that even during the famine they had strictly observed the religious rules; on the other hand, they alleged, the Jaina ascetics living in Magadha had violated those rules and had become lax. In order to sort out these differences and to

compile the main teachings of Jainism a council was convened in Pataliputra, modern Patna, but the southern Jainas boycotted the council and refused to accept its decisions. It began to be called digambaras, and the Magadhans shwetambaras. The tradition which belongs to a later period and is which refers to drought as the considered doubtful. But it is beyond doubt that the Jainas were divided into two sects. However, epigraphic evidence for the spread of Jainism in Karnataka is not earlier than the third century A.D. In subsequent centuries, especially after the fifth century, numerous Jaina monastic establishments called basadis sprang up in Karnataka and were granted land by the king for their support. Jainism spread to Kalinga in Orissa in the fourth century B.C., and in the first century B.C. it enjoyed the patronage of the Kalinga king Kharavela who had defeated the princes of Andhra and Magadha. In the second and first centuries B.C. it also seems to have reached the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. In later centuries Jainism penetrated Malwa, Gujarat and Rajasthan, and even now these areas have a good number of Jainas who are mainly engaged in trade and commerce. Although Jainism did not win as much state patronage as Buddhism did and did not spread very fast in early times, it still retains its hold in the areas where it spread. On the other hand, Buddhism practically disappeared from the Indian subcontinent.

CONTRIBUTION OF JAINISM

Jainism made the first serious attempt to mitigate the evils of the Varna order and the ritualistic Vedic religion. The early Jainas discarded Sanskrit language mainly patronized by the Brahman's. They adopted Prakrit language of the common people to preach their doctrines. Their religious literature the texts written in and the texts were finally compiled in the sixth century A.D. In Gujarat at a place called Valabhi, a great center of education The adoption of Prakrit helped the growth of this language and its literature. Many regional languages developed out of Prakrit languages particularly Shauraseni, out of which grew the Marathi language. The Jainas composed the earliest important works in Apabhramsha and prepared its first grammar. The Jaina literature contains epics, Puranas novels and drama. A large portion of the Jaina writing is still in the form of manuscripts, which have not been published and which are found in the Jaina shrines of Gujarat and Rajasthan. In early medieval times the Jainas also made good use of Sanskrit and wrote many texts in it. Last but not the least, they contributed to the growth of Kannada, in which they wrote extensively

Initially, like the Buddhists, the Jainas were not image worshippers. Later they began to worship Mahavira and also the twenty-three tirthankaras. Beautiful and sometimes massive images in stone were sculpted for this purpose, especially in Karnataka, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Jaina art in ancient times is not as rich as Buddhist art, but Jainism contributed substantially to art and architecture in medieval times Gautama Buddha or Siddhartha was a contemporary of Mahavira. According to tradition he was born in 563 BC in a Shakya Kshatriyas family in Lumbini in

Nepal near Kapilavastu which is identified with Piprahwa in Basti district and close to the foothills of Nepal. Gautama's father seems to have been the elected ruler of T Kapilavastu, and headed the republican clan of the Shakyas. His mother was a princess from the Koshalan dynasty. Thus, like Mahavira, Gautama also belonged to a noble family. Born in a republic, he also inherited some egalitarian sentiments, Since his early childhood Gautama w showed a meditative bent of mind. He was married early, but married life did not interest him. He was moved by the misery which people suffered in the world, and looked for its solution. At the age of 29, like Mahavira again, he left home. He kept on wandering for about seven years and then attained knowledge at the age of 35 at Bodh Gaya under a pipal tree. From this time onwards he began to be called the Buddha or the enlightened.

Gautama Buddha delivered his m first sermons at Sarnath in Banaras, p He undertook long journeys and took w his message far and wide. He had a very strong physique, which enabled him to walk 20 to 30 km a day. He kept on wandering, preaching and meditating continuously for 40 years, resting only in the rainy season every year. During this long period he en-counterred many staunch supporters of rival sects including the Brahman's, but defeated them in debates. His missionary activities did not discriminate between the rich and the poor, the high and the low, and the man and woman. Gautama Buddha passed away at the age of 80 in 483 BC at a place called Kusinagar identical with the village called kasia in the district of Deoria in eastern Uttar Pradesh

DOCTRINES OF BUDDHISM

The Buddha proved to be a practical reformer who took note of the realities of the day He did not involve himself in fruitless controversy the grading the soul and the Brahma which raged strongly in his time he addressed himself to the worldly problems. He said that the world is full of sorrows and people suffer on account of desires. If desires conquered, nirvana will be attained that is, man will be free from the cycle of birth and death. Gautama Buddha recommended an eight-fold path (ashtangika marga) for the elimination of human misery. This path is attributed to him in a text of about the third century B.C. It com- prized right observation, right determination, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right exercise, right memory and right meditation. If a person follows this eight-fold path he would not depend on the machinations of the priests, and will be able to reach his destination. Gautama taught that a person should avoid the excess of both luxury and austerity. He prescribed the middle path. The Buddha also laid down a code of conduct for his followers on the same lines as was done by the Jaina teachers. The main items in this social conduct are: (1) do not covet the property of others, (it) do not commit violence. (iii) do not use intoxicants (iv) do not speak a lie, and (v) do not indulge in corrupt practices. These teachings are common to the social conduct ordained by almost all religion

SPECIAL FEATURES OF BUDDHISM AND THE CAUSES OF ITS SPREAD

Buddhism does not recognize the existence of God and soul (atman). This can be taken as a kind of revolution in the history of Indian religions. Since early Buddhism was not enmeshed in the clap-trap of philosophical discussion, it appealed to the common people. It particularly won the support of the lower orders as it attacked the Varna system. People were taken into the Buddhist order without any consideration of caste. Women also were admitted to the sangha and thus brought on par with men. In comparison with Brahmanism, Buddhism was liberal and democratic. Buddhism made a special appeal to the people of the non-Vedic areas where it found a virgin soil for conversion. The people of Magadha responded readily to Buddhism because they were looked down upon by the orthodox Brahman's. Magadha was placed outside the pale of the holy Aryavarta, the land of the Arias, covering modern Uttar Pradesh. The old tradition persists, and the people of north Bihar would not like to be cremated south of the Ganga in Magadha. The personality of the Buddha and the method adopted by him to preach his religion helped the spread of Buddhism. He tried to fight evil by goodness and hatred by love. He refused to be provoked by slander and abuse. He maintained poise and calm under difficult conditions, and tackled his opponents with wit and presence of mind. It is said that on one occasion an ignorant person abused him. The Buddha listened on silently, and when the person had stopped abusing, the Buddha asked "My son if a person does not accept a present what will happen to it?" His adversary replied: "It remains with the person who has offered it." The Buddha then said: "My son, I do not accept your abuse." The use of Pali, the language of the people, also contributed to the spread of Buddhism. It facilitated the spread of Buddhist doctrines among the common people. Gautama Buddha also organized the sangha or the religious order, whose doors were kept open to everybody, irrespective of caste and sex. The only condition required of the monks was that they would faithfully observe the rules and regulations of the sangha. Once they were enrolled as members of the Buddhist Church, they had to take the vow of continence, poverty and faith. So, there are three main elements in Buddhism: Buddha, sangha and dhamma. As a result of organized preaching under the auspices of the sangha, Buddhism made rapid strides even in the lifetime of the Buddha. The monarchies of Magadha, Koshala and Kaushambi and several republican states and their people adopted this religion. Two hundred years after the death of the Buddha, the famous Maurya king Asoka embraced Buddhism. This was an epoch-making event. Through his agents Asoka spread Buddhism into Central Asia, West Asia and Sri Lanka, and thus transformed it into a world religion. Even today, Sri Lanka, Burma (Myanmar). Tibet and parts of China and Japan profess Buddhism. Although Buddhism disappeared from the land of its birth, it continuous to hold ground in the countries of South Asia. South- East Asia and East Asia.

CAUSES OF THE DECLINE OF BUDDHISM

By the early twelfth century AD Buddhism became practically extinct in India. It had continued to exist in changed form in Bengal and Bihar till the eleventh century but after that this religion almost completely vanished from the country. What were the causes of the decline? We find that in the beginning every religion is inspired by the spirit of reform, but eventually it succumbs to rituals and ceremonies it originally denounced, Buddhism underwent a similar metamorphosis. It became a victim to the evils of Brahmanism against which it had fought in the beginning. To meet the Buddhist challenge the Brahmins reformed their religion. They stressed the need for preserving the cattle wealth and assured women and shudras of admission to heaven. Buddhism, on the other hand, changed for the worse. Gradually the Buddhist monks were cut off from the mainstream of people's life; they gave up Pali, the language of the people, and took to Sanskrit, the language of intellectuals. From the first century A.D. onwards, they practiced idol worship on a large scale and received numerous offerings from devotees. The rich offerings supplemented by generous royal grants to the Buddhist monasteries made the life of monks easy. Some of the monasteries such as Nalanda collected revenue from as many as 200 villages. By the seventh century A.D., the Buddhist monasteries had come to be dominated by ease-loving people and became centers of corrupt practices which Gautama Buddha had strictly prohibited. The new form of Buddhism was known as Vajrayana. The enormous wealth of the monasteries with degeneration, Buddhists came to look upon women as object of lust. The Buddha is reported to have said to his favorite disciple Ananda: "If women were not admitted in to the monasteries Buddhism would have continued for one thousand years but because this admission has been granted it would last only five hundred years. The Brahmins ruler Pashyamitra Shunga is said to have persecuted the Shungas is said to have persecuted the Buddhists. Several instances of persecution occur in the sixth-seventh centuries AD. The Hunan king Mihirakula, who was a worshiper of Shiva, killed hundreds of Buddhists: The Shaivite Shashanka of Gouda cut off the Bodhi tree at Buddha Gaya, where the Buddha had attained enlightenment. Hsuan Tsang states that 1600 stupas and monasteries were destroyed, and thousands of monks and lay followers were killed; this may not be without some truth. The Buddhist reaction can be seen in some pantheons in which Buddhist deities trample Hindu deities. In south India both the Shaivite and Vaishnavites bitterly opposed the Jainas and Buddhists in early medieval times. Such conflicts may have weakened Buddhism. For their riches the monasteries came to be coveted by the Turkish invaders'. They became special targets of the invaders; greed. The Turks killed a large number of Buddhist monks in Bihar although some of the monks managed to escape to Nepal and Tibet in any case by the twelfth century AD Buddhism had practically disappeared from the land of its birth.

IMPORTANCE AND INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM

Despite its ultimate disappearance as an organized religion Buddhism. Left its abiding mark on the history of India the Buddhists showed a keen awareness of the problems that faced the people of north-east India in the sixth century BC ploughshare agriculture, trade, and the use of coins enabled the traders the nobles to accumulate wealth, and we hear of people possessing eighty kotts of wealth. All this naturally created sharp social and economic inequalities. So, Buddhism asked people not to accumulate wealth. According to it poverty breeds hatred, cruelty and violence. To eradicate these evils the Buddha advised that farmers should be provided with grain and other facilities, the traders with wealth, and the laborers with wages. These measures were recommended to remove poverty in this world. Buddhism further taught that if the poor gave alms to the monks, they would be born wealthy in the next world.

The code of conduct prescribed for the monks represents a reaction against the material conditions of north-east India in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. It imposes restrictions on the food, dress and sexual behavior of the monks. They cannot accept gold and silver and they cannot take to sell and purchase. These rules were relaxed after the death of the Buddha but the early rulers suggest a return to a kind of primitive tribal society in which people practice trade and advanced agriculture for monks partially reflects a revolt against the use of money, private property and luxurious living which appeared in the sixth century BC in north- East India. In those days property and money were regarded as luxuries.

Although Buddhism tried to mitigate the evils resulting from the new material life in the sixth century BC. it also tried to consolidate the changes in the social and economic life of the people. The rule that debtors were not permitted to be members of the sangha naturally helped the moneylenders and richer sections of society from whose clutches the debtors could not be saved. Similarly, the rule that slaves could not join the sangha helped the slave owners. Thus, the rules and teachings of Gautama Buddha took full account of the new changes in the material life and strengthened them ideologically. Although the Buddhist monks had renounced the world and repeatedly criticized the greedy Brahman's, in several ways they resembled the Brahman's. Both of them did not participate directly in production, and lived on the alms or gifts given by society. Both of them emphasized the virtues of carrying out family obligations, protecting private property and respecting political authority. Both of them supported the social order based on classes; for the monks, however, the Varna was based on action and attributes but for the Brahman's It was based on birth Undoubtedly the objective of thing of the Buddhist teaching was to secure the salvation of the individual or nirvana

Those who found it difficult to adjust themselves to the break-up of the old tribal society and the rise of gross social inequalities on account of private property were provided with some way of escape, but it was confined to the monks. No escape was provided for the lay followers, who were taught to come to terms with the existing situation. Buddhism made an important impact on society by keeping its doors open to women and shudras. Since both women and shudras were placed in the same category by Brahmanism, they were neither given sacred thread nor allowed to read the Vedas. Their conversion to Buddhism freed them from such marks of inferiority. With its emphasis on non-violence and the sanctity of animal life, Buddhism boosted the cattle wealth of the country. The earliest Buddhist text in Suttanipata declares the cattle to be givers of food, beauty and happiness (annada, vannada, sukhada), and thus pleads for their protection. This teaching came significantly at a time when the non-Aryans slaughtered animals for food, and the Aryans in the name of religion. The brahmanical insistence on the sacredness of the cow and non-violence was apparently derived from Buddhist teachings. Buddhism created and developed a new awareness in the field of intellect and culture. It taught the people not to take things for granted but to argue and judge them on merits. To a certain extent the place of superstition was taken by logic. This promoted rationalism among people in order to preach the doctrines of the new religion, the Buddhist they enormously type of literature heir writings. The enriched Pali by their being divided into early Pali literature can be contained the three categories. The first contains the sayings and teachings of the Buddha. The second deals with the rulers to be observed by members of the sangha and the third presents the philosophical exposition of the dhamma in the first three centuries of the Christian era by mixing Pali with Sanskrit the Buddhists created a new language which is called Hybrid Sanskrit. The literary activities of the Buddhist monks continued even in the Middle Ages, and some famous Apabhramsha writings in east India were composed by them. The Buddhist monasteries developed as great centers of learning, and can be called Residential universities. Mention may be made of Nalanda and Vikramashila in Bihar, and Valabhi in Gujarat.

Buddhism left its mark on the art of ancient India. The first human statues worshiped in India were probably those of the Buddha. The faithful devotees portrayed the various events in the life of the Buddha in stone. The panels found at Gaya in Bihar and at Sanchi and Bharhut in Madhya Pradesh are illuminating examples of artistic activity. From the first century A.D. onwards the panel images of Gautama Buddha began to be made. The Greek and the Indian sculptors worked together to create a new kind of art on the north-west frontier of India, which is known as the Gandhara art. The images made in this region betray Indian as well as foreign influence. For the residence of the monks' rooms were hewn out of the rocks, and thus began the cave architecture in the Barabar hills in Gaya and in

western India around Nasik. Buddhist art flourished in the Krishna delta in the south and in Madura in the north.

EMERGENCE OF MAHAJANAPADAS FORMATION OF STATE REPUBLICS AND MONARCHIES

From the sixth century B.C. onwards, the widespread use of iron in eastern Uttar Pradesh and western Bihar created conditions for the formation of large territorial states .Because of iron weapons. The warrior class now played an important part. The new agricultural tools and implements enabled the peasants to produce far more food grains than they required for consumption. The extra product could be collected by the princes to meet their military and administrative needs. The surplus could also be made available to the towns which had sprung up in the sixth-fifth century B.C. These material advantages naturally enabled the people to stick to their land, and also to expand at the cost of the neighboring areas. The rise of large states with towns as their base of operations strengthened the territorial idea. People owed strong allegiance to the Janapada or the territory to which they belonged.

THE MAHAJANAPADAS

In the age of the Buddha we find 16 large states called Mahajanapadas. They were mostly situated north of the Vindhyas and extended from the north-west frontier to Bihar of these Magadha Koshala Vatsa and Avanti seems to have been considerably powerful. Beginning from the east we hear of the kingdom of Anga which covered the modern districts of Monghyr and Bhagalpur Champa, which shows signs of habitation in the sixth century B.C. We find a mud fort of about the fifth century B.C. Eventually the kingdom of Anga was swallowed by its powerful neighbor Magadha. Magadha embraced the former districts of Patna, Gaya and parts of Shahabad, and grew to be the leading state of the time. North of the Ganga in the division of Tirhut was the state of the Vajjis which included eight clans. But the most powerful were the Lichchhavi with their capital at Vaishali which is identical district of with the - Vaishali. The Puranas push the antiquity of Vaishali to a much earlier period, but archaeologically Basarh was not settled until the sixth century B.C

Further west we find the kingdom of Kashi with its capital at Varanasi. Excavations at Rajghat show that the earliest habitations started around 500 B.C., and the city was enclosed by mud embankments about the same time. In the beginning Kashi appears to be the most powerful of the states, but eventually it had to submit to the power of Koshala. Koshala embraced the area occupied by eastern Uttarpradesh. And had its capital at Shravasti which is identical with Sahet-Mahet on the borders of Gonda Bahratch districts in Uttar Pradesh. Diggings indicate that Sahet-Mahet did not possess any large settlement in the sixth century BC But see the beginnings of a fort. Koshala

contained an important city called Ayodhya, which is associated with the story in the Ramayana. But excavations show that it was not settled on any scale before the fifth century B.C. Koshala also included the tribal republican territory of the Shakyas of Kapilavastu. The capital of Kapilavastu has been identified with Piprahwa in Basti district. Habitation at Piprahwa is not earlier than C. 500 B.C. Lumbini, which lies at a distance of 15 km from Piprahwa in Nepal. Served as another capital of the Shakyas. In an Asokan inscription it is called the birthplace of Gautama Buddha and it was here that he was brought up. In the neighborhood of Koshala lay the republican clan of the Mallas, whose territory touched the northern border of the Vajji state. One of the capitals of the Mallas lay at Kushinara where Gautama Buddha passed away. Kushinara is identical with Kasia in Deoria district. Further west lay the kingdom of the Vatsas, along the bank of the Yamuna, with its capital at Kaushambi near Allahabad. The Vatsas were a Kuru clan who had shifted from Hastinapur and settled down at Kaushambi. Kaushambi was chosen because of its location near the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna. In the fifth century BC it had a mud fortification as can be gathered from excavations. We also hear of the older states of the Kurus and the Panchalas which were settled in western Uttar Pradesh, but they no longer enjoyed the political importance which they had attained in the later Vedic period. In central and the adjoining parts of Madhya Pradesh lay the state of the Avantis, it was divided into two parts. The northern part had its capital at Ujjain, and the southern part at Mahishmati. Excavations show that both these towns became fairly important from the sixth century B.C. Onwards, though eventually Ujjain surpassed Mahishmati. It developed large-scale working in iron and erected strong fortification. The political history of India from the sixth century B.C. onwards is the history of struggles between these states for supremacy. Ultimately the kingdom of Magadha emerged to be the most powerful and succeeded in founding an empire.

RISE AND GROWTH OF THE MAGADHAN EMPIRE

Magadha came into prominence under the leadership of Bimbisara, who belonged to the Haryanka dynasty. He was a contemporary of the Buddha. He started the policy of conquest and aggression which ended with the Kalinga war of Asoka. Bimbisara acquired Anga and placed it under the viceroyalty of his son Ajatashatru at Champa. He also strengthened his position by marriage alliances. He took three wives. His first wife was the daughter of the king of Koshala and the sister of Parsenajit. The Koshalan bride brought him as dowry a Kashi revenue of 100,000 which suggests that revenues were collected in terms of coins. The marriage bought off the hostility of Koshala and gave him a free hand in dealing with the other states. His second wife Chellana was Lichchhavi princess

from Vaishali who gave birth to Ajatashatru and his third wife was the daughter of the chief of the Madra clan. Different royal families gave enormous diplomatic prestige and paved the way for the expansion of Magadha westward and northward. Magadha's most serious rival was Avanti with its capital at Ujjain. Ullaisena Its fought Bumar radyo Mably the two thought it wise to become friends Later when Pradyota was attacked by Jaundice, at the Avanti king's request Bimbisara sent the royal physician Jivaka to Ujjain. Bimbisara is also said to have received an embassy and a letter from the ruler of Gandhara with whom Pradyota had fought unsuccessfully. So, through his conquests and diplomacy Bimbisara made Magadha the paramount power in the sixth century B.C. His kingdom is said to have consisted of 80,000 villages, which is a conventional number. The earliest capital of Magadha was at Rajgir, which was called Girivraja at that time. It was surrounded by five hills, the openings in which were closed by stone-walls on all sides. This made Rajgir impregnable. According to the Buddhist chronicles, Bimbisara ruled for 52 years, roughly from 544 B.C. to 492 B.C. He was succeeded by his son Ajatashatru (492-460 BC). Aided his father's reign saw he three for watermark of the Bimbisara dynasty, He fought two third. Through preparations for the end an aggressor his reign he pursued a policy of expansion, nation of keshains him a combination a hand Koshala. There began a war prolonged between Magadha and Koshala. Ultimately Ajatashatru got the best of the war, and the Koshalan king was compelled to purchase peace by giving his daughter to Ajatashatru and possession of Kashi. In sole Ajatashatru Ajatashatru was no respecter of relations. Although this helper was a Lichchhavi princess, this did not prevent him from making war against Vaishali. The excuse was that the Lichchhavis were the allies of Koshala. He created dissensions in the ranks of the Lichchhavis and finally destroyed their independence by invading their territory and by defeating them in battle. It took him full 16 years to destroy Vaishali. Eventually he succeeded in doing so because of a war engine which was used to throw stones like catapults. He also possessed a chariot to which a mace was attached, and it facilitated mass killings. The Magadhan empire was thus enlarged with the addition of Kashi and Vaishali. Ajatashatru faced a stronger rival in the ruler of Avanti. Avanti had defeated the Vatsas of Kaushambi and now threatened an invasion of Magadha. To meet this danger Ajatashatru began the fortification of the city. The wall he built at the confluence of the Ganga at Patna succeeded by Udayin (460-444 BC) the confluence he built the ten miles of the Ganga at Patna. The wall was done because of the Magadha kingdom, which now extended from the Himalayas in the north to Chotanagpur to the hills in the south. Patna's position, as will be seen later, was crucially strategic. Udayin was succeeded by the dynasty of Shishunagas, who rarely shifted the capital to Vaishali. Their greatest achievement was the destruction of the power of Avanti with its capital at Ujjain. This brought to an end the 100-year-old rivalry between Magadha and Avanti. From now onwards Avanti

became a part of the Magadhan empire and continued to be so till the end of the Maurya rule. The Shishunagas were succeeded by the Nandas, who proved to be the most powerful rulers of Magadha. So great was their power that Alexander, who invaded Punjab at that time, did not dare to move towards the east. The Nandas added to the Magadhan power by conquering Kalinga from where they brought an image of the Jina as a victory trophy. All this took place in the reign of Mahapadma Nanda. He claimed to be ekarat, the sole sovereign who destroyed all the other ruling princes. It seems that he acquired not only Kalinga but also Koshala which had probably rebelled against him. The Nandas were fabulously rich and enormously powerful. It is said that he had 10,000 infantry, 60,000 cavalry and 3000 to 6000 war elephants. Such a huge army could only be maintained through a ration system. It was because of this that he did not advance against Neander. The later Nandas turned out to be weak and unpopular. Their rule in Magadha was supplanted by that of the Maurya dynasty under which the Magadhan empire reached the apex of glory.

CAUSES OF MAGADHA'S SUCCESS

The march of the Magadhan empire during the two centuries preceding the rise of the Mauryas is like the march of the Iranian empire during the same period. The formation of the largest state in India during this period was the work of several enterprising and ambitious rulers such as Bimbisara, Ajatashatru and Mahapadma Nanda. They employed all means, fair and foul, at their disposal to enlarge their kingdoms and to strengthen their states. But this was not the only reason for the expansion of Magadha. There were some other important factors. Magadha enjoyed an advantageous geographical position in the age of iron, because the richest iron deposits were situated not far away from Rajgir, the earliest capital of Magadha. The ready availability of the rich iron ores in the neighborhood enabled the Magadhan princes to equip themselves with effective weapons, which were not easily available to their rivals. Iron mines are also found in eastern Madhya Pradesh, and were not far from the kingdom of the Avantis with their capital at Ujjain.

Around 500 B.C. iron was certainly forged and smelted in Ujjain, and probably the smiths manufactured weapons of good quality. On account of this superiority of weapons the pre-eminence of Magadha for the supremacy of north India, and Magadha enjoyed certain other advantages. Magadha enjoyed certain advantages. Magadha, the first at Rajgapatals the second at Pataliputra, Rajgir and the at very strategic points. Rajgir surrounded by a group of five forts, and so it was in those days where it was impregnable by cannons with iron fortifications such as much later. It was not to be in strong forts like Rajgir and not easy to destroy fifth century B.C. the Magadhan princes shifted their capital from Rajgir to Pataliputra, which occupied a pivotal position commanding communications on all sides. Pataliputra was situated at the confluence of the Ganga, the Gandak and

the Son, and a fourth river called the Ghaghra joined the Ganga not far from Pataliputra. In pre-industrial days, when communications were difficult, the army could move north, west, south and east by following the courses of the rivers. Further, the position of Patna itself was rendered invulnerable because of its being surrounded by rivers on almost all sides. While the Son and the Ganga surrounded it on the north and west, the Poonpun surrounded it on the south and east.

UNIT III

THE MAURYAS

Alexander had overrun the Punjab and while withdrawing from India left the areas west of the Indus in charge of the Greek satrap Philippos. The civil government east of the Indus was virtually left in the hands of the Indian princes. There was no intention to give up the conquered territories in India but to incorporate them permanently to the Macedonian empire. Soon after Alexander had left India Philippos was done to death and was succeeded by another Greek officer Eudemos. On Alexander's death his empire was partitioned between his generals after long struggle between themselves. But there was no desire to withdraw from the territories on the Indian border land. There was no quiet in those territories, in fact, even before Alexander left India disaffection against foreign rule had appeared in the Indian border land. The Brahmins of the lower Indus Valley had fomented a formidable rising which was however crushed and retribution fell heavily on the instigators. But the Indian avenger was a Taxilan Brahmin variously named Kautilya, Chanakya, Visnugupta who through his chosen pupil Chandragupta freed the parts of the country 'long harassed by outlanders'. The imperial crown of Magadha at that time was worn by a Nanda ruler who was universally 'detested and held cheap'. Chandragupta overthrew the Nanda ruler thereby freeing the country from the tyrannical Nanda rule. But whether the overthrow of the Nanda ruler, Dhananada, preceded the ouster of the vestiges of the Greek rule in north-west India is still controversial.

CHANDRAGUPTA'S ANCESTRY:

The rise of the Maurya Empire was a political phenomenon of great consequence in the history of India. It is as remarkable as captivating. The hero who ushered in this new age of unity and imperial rule was Chandragupta Maurya. Chandragupta's ancestry is not known for certain. In the maze of conflicting literary traditions it is difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion yet on the basis of modern researches it is possible to arrive at conclusions which stand to reasonable analysis. The Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jaina traditions are at great variance. The same is true of the Greek source.

The earliest available Brahmanical traditions which refer to the origin of the Mauryas are to be found in the Puranas. In the Puranas there is simple mention that the Nandas were uprooted by the Brahmana Kautilya who anointed Chandragupta as King. It was a commentator D on Vishnupurana who for the first time suggested by way of explaining his title Maurya that Chandragupta was base-born. According to this commentator Chandragupta was the son of Mura, a wife of the Nanda King. From Mura the title Maurya was derived. But according to Panini Mura is the name of a gotra and the word is a masculine word. It has, therefore, been held that the Commentator of Vishnu Purana was "guilty both of fictitious history and bad grammar". This Commentator, however, did not cast any aspersion on the mother of Chandragupta and unlike other writers did not call Mura, a Sudra or a mistress of the Nanda King. It was in a later drama Mudrarakshasa by Vishakhadatta, Chandragupta had been called a Vrishala, Kulahina which were taken by some writers to mean Sudra and social outcaste. But it has been suggested that epithet Vrishala applied to Chandragupta meant that "in regard to certain matters he (Chandragupta) did deviate from strict orthodoxy" + This has also been borne out, by implication, by the Greek evidence that Chandragupta was a follower of sacrificial religion, Further, the Puranic text applies the epithet Vrishala to the Andhra Dynasty which was Brahmin, ++ The expression Kulhina, it has been suggested, means that Chandragupta was only of lowly, i.e. humble origin is not necessarily low born. A Commentator on Mudrarakshasa, Dhundiraja by name mentions that "Chandragupta was the eldest son of Maurya who was the son of Nanda King Sarvarthasiddhi by Mura, daughter of a Vrishala". But when we remember that the expression Vrishala meant no more than 'unorthodoxy' then there is no ground to take it to mean Sudra. It may be pointed out that nowhere in the Purana texts, the Mauryas have been called Sudra or base born; no slur has as well been cast on the Mauryas. Further, reference to Chandragupta's consecration as king by Brahmin Kautilya, in the Puranas, leaves us in no doubt that Chandragupta was not a Sudra but a Kshatriya, for it was then the prerogative of the Kshatriyas to be rulers. This is also in conformity with claim made by the Buddhist Tradition recorded in Mahavamsa, Jaina Traditions recorded in Parisista parvana that the Mauryas belonged to the Kshatriya class. In Jaina Parisistaparvana Chandragupta is represented as the son of a daughter of the Chief of a village of peacock-tamers (Mayuraposaka). In the divyavadana, Bindusara, son of Chandragupta has been called Kshatriya Murdhabhisikta, i.e. an anointed Kshatriya. As H. C. Roychaudhuri points out the Moriyas were the ruling clan of the republic of Pippalivana during the sixth century B.C. In the fourth century B.C. they were reduced to great straits and Chandragupta grew up among the peacock-tamers in the Vindhya forest. From the name Mayuraposaka, therefore, was derived the epithet Mauryas. All this will lead to the conclusion that Chandragupta was a Kshatriya who originally belonged to a humble station of life but not of low or base origin. The Greek source based on the contemporary Indian tradition also points to the same

conclusion and fits in well to the story of the rise of Chandragupta. According to Justin Chandragupta was a "man of humble origin, but was stimulated to aspire to regal power"... Justin's reference to 'humble origin' at best means humble station of life not low born or base-born. This is in agreement with H. C. Roychaudhuri's observation that during the fourth century the Mauryas were reduced to great strait and Chandragupta grew up among the Peacock-tamers in the Vindhya. We may, therefore, conclude that Chandragupta Maurya was a Kshatriya and originally belonged to the ruling clan of the little republic of Pippalivana. This is also borne out by Mahaparinirvana Sutra, a Buddhist composition almost contemporaneous with the Mauryas of Pippalivana and the oldest of our evidences in this regard.

EARLY LIFE AND RISE TO POWER:

Alexander's campaigns had dislocated the Political Organisation of north-west India. This part of India had already passed under the grip and stranglehold of foreign rule. The Eastern India was under the tyrannical rule of the Nanda King Dhanananda. The atmosphere was full of frustration and depression. A battle of India's independence was the only way to shake off the yoke of foreign rule as well as to bring an end to the tyrannical rule of the Nandas. All this called for a leader of exceptional ability and vision who could infuse life and enthusiasm among the Indians and organise a national resistance. Fortunately, such a leader emerged in the person of Chandragupta. The story of Chandragupta's early life and rise to power is of absorbing interest. On the evidence of the Buddhist traditions Chandragupta's father who was the Chief of Pippalivana was defeated and killed in a battle with the ruler of the neighbouring kingdom. This had reduced Chandragupta's mother to great straits. Poverty and lack of personal security compelled her to seek shelter in Pataliputra, the Magadhan capital. She was then an expectant mother. In Pataliputra Chandragupta was born. He was adopted by a herd of a nearby village and Chandragupta began to grow among the cowboys. Here Kautilya saw the boy Chandragupta and having been impressed by certain signs in the boy that promised future greatness Kautilya purchased him from the cowherd on payment of one thousand Karshapanas. There are, however, minor discrepancies in the details given in different works. Kautilya then took the boy to his native city of Taxila, the most famous seat of learning of the time and "had him educated in the humanities and the practical arts and crafts of the time including the military arts". This confirms Plutarch's statement that Chandragupta as a young man met Alexander in his camp in the Punjab to seek Greek help for ousting the tyrannical Nanda rule in Magadha. Chandragupta was then, evidently, living in Taxila with Kautilya. It is also said that Kautilya or Chanakya went to the Imperial Court at Pataliputra but received insulting treatment at the hands of the Nanda reigning King. He then returned to the Vindhya where he met Chandragupta who had fled from Alexander's Camp because of his outspokenness which incurred Alexander's wrath and who ordered his men to kill the precocious,

intrepid youth. It was while living in the Vindhya as a tramp that a lion licked his sweat while he was asleep. This and some other good omens portended his rise to royal dignity. The minor discrepancies in details apart, the fact, however, remains that it was the famous Taxilan Brahmin Chanakya or Kautilya who taught and trained the boy Chandragupta to grow into the hero of India and first man who thought of independence from the foreign yoke as well as from that of Nanda Tyranny. It was Kautilya who infected his pupil Chandragupta with his hatred of foreign rule as an unmitigated evil and to avenge his personal insult at the hands of the infamous Nanda ruler, 'detested and held cheap by his people. Chandragupta with the assistance and guidance of Chanakya when came upon some treasure trove underground, raised an army 'robber' as Justin characterised it. But as McGrindle points out they were the republican peoples of the Punjab who played a prominent part in resisting Alexander. But that the army raised "Kautilya discovered Chandragupta in a village as the adopted son of a cowherd from whom, seeing in him the sure promise of his future greatness, bought the boy paying on the spot 1000 Kanhapanas (Karshapanas)" Chandragupta included the Choras, or Pratirodhakas, i.e., the robbers and the outlaws, is borne out by Kautilya himself. The reason for their recruitment was that they were most heroic fighters, obviously because of their habitual daring activities. But the main strength of Chandragupta's army was derived from the heroic republican military clans whose heroic resistance Alexander had to face and whom Curtius calls "fierce nations resisting Alexander with their blood". Chandragupta's war of liberation had two distinct parts, namely, to free the north-western India from the Greeks and Eastern India from the tyrannical rule of the Nandas. According to Justin Chandragupta after having raised an army solicited the Indians to overthrow the existing government. The use of the expression 'existing government' necessarily meant the Nanda government and his appeal was to all Indians also point to this conclusion. Any way, according to Nilkantha Sastri, R. K. Mukherjee and Thomas, Chandragupta directed his attention first to the overthrow of the Greek rule. But H. C. Roy-chaudhuri is of the opinion "Chandragupta's appeal to the Indians to overthrow the existing government meant overthrow of the Nanda rule" and he concurs with the view of Smith that "Sometimes after his acquisition of sovereignty Chandragupta went to war with the prefects or generals of Alexander and crushed their power". It stands to reason that Chandragupta and for the matter of that any other hero in the circumstances would seek to strengthen his position by overthrowing and thereby getting hold of the indigenous royalty before attempting to overthrow the foreign rule in small parts of India. Nilkantha Sastri places the accession of Chandragupta to sovereignty in 323 B.C., the year of the death of Alexander. It is, therefore, more reasonable to conclude that overthrow of the Greek Governors took place after the death of Alexander and the overthrow of the Nanda rule preceded that of the Greek Governors.

HIS CONQUESTS;

We have seen that Chandragupta raised a formidable army drafting recruits from the heroic republican clans such as the Kshudrakas, Malavas etc. According to Mahavamsa Tika both Kautilya and Chandragupta set out to collect recruits from different places. Chandragupta strengthened his position by an alliance with the Himalayan Chief Parvataka as mentioned in Sanskrit Drama Mudrarakshasa and

Jaina text Parishistaparvana. Thus military strength and statesmanship lay at the bottom of success of Chandragupta, plomacy of Chanakya and bravery of Chandragupta made the formidable army raised by both of them invincible in every battle field. The liberation of the Punjab and the overthrow of the infamous Nandas were not the only achievements of Chandragupta. According to Plutarch Chandragupta overran and subdued the whole of India with an army of 600,000 men, But his mission of conquests was aided materially by the prevailing internal condition. Leaving aside the controversy whether Chandragupta had dealt with the Greek rulers or the Nandas first, it may be pointed out that in both cases his success was aided by the then internal situation. The Nanda ruler 'was a man of quite worthless character and held in no respect' as Diodorus puts it. Plutarch also mentions that young Chandragupta reported to Alexander about the hatred of the people to the Nanda ruler for his wickedness and meanness of origin. But the Nanda ruler whom the name Dhana Nanda was given in the Pail Texts, was immensely rich-'a sovereign of untold wealth' and was very strong in military power. In Kathasaritsagara there is mention of Dhana Nanda's having kept 990 millions of gold pieces buried in a rock in the bed of the Ganges. The Buddhist sources compute his wealth at 80 crores. His greed for wealth led him to levy taxes on "Skins, gums, trees and stones". His army as Curtius estimates stood at 600,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 2,000 four-horsed chariots and 3,000 elephants. He was the sole sovereign (Ekkrat) of numerous states such as Aikshakus, Panchalas, Kasis, Haihayas, Kalingas, Asmakas, Kurus, Maithilis, Surasenas, Kosala and others. It was, therefore, not an easy task to defeat such a king in an encounter. Even Alexander did not venture an engagement with the Nanda ruler. From the Buddhist and the Jaina texts we come across some details about the initial defeats of Chandragupta because of the wrong military strategy followed by him. At first Chandragupta dashed victoriously from the borders of the Nanda Empire towards its centre without caring to leave any garrison to protect him from the rear. Because of this mistake in strategy Chandragupta met with defeat at the initial stage of the conquest of the Nanda Empire. Then he corrected the strategy and as he marched ahead, he left garrisons in, Conquered Janapada and besieged Pataliputra, the capital of Magadha, defeated and killed Dhana Nanda. A different version is given by Parishistaparvana where it is said that Chandragupta forced Dhana Nanda to capitulate and his life was spared and he was allowed to leave Pataliputra with his two wives and one daughter with as much as he could carry in one single chariot. According to tradition Chandragupta had to engage all his military strength, even

Greek mercenaries from the Punjab in his conquest of the Nanda King. In *Milindapanth* it is stated that one crore of soldiers, ten thousand elephants, one lac horses and five hundred charioteers were killed in the encounter between Chandragupta and the Nanda ruler whose army commander was Bhadrasala. This leaves us in no doubt that the battle between Chandragupta and the Nanda King was one of the bloodiest battles of India and Chandragupta had to strain his every nerve to win the victory. Conquest of the Nanda Empire made Chandragupta master of a vast empire to which was joined the land of the Punjab which, he conquered from the Greek Governors. While the universal hatred towards Dhana Nanda, the greedy, tyrannical ruler of the Magadhan Empire made the internal fabric of the empire weak and incoherent making it comparatively easy for Chandragupta to eventually conquer the empire, the local Greek rule in the Punjab fell into disarray since the murder of Nicanor and Philippos in 325 B.C. The process of Conquest of the Greek ruled areas of the north-west had begun even before the death of Alexander in 323 B.C. It was on the news of Alexander's death reaching India that Sandrakottas, as the Greeks called Chandragupta, shook off the yoke of servitude from the neck of India and put Alexander's governors to death. By 321 B.C. when Alexander's generals after a continued struggle for sharing Alexander's empire agreed to a second partition treaty of Triparadisus, we find no mention of Indus. Obviously, Indus, then had ceased to be a part of the Greek dominion. This is further borne out by the fact that the Greek Satraps in the Punjab in 321 B.C. lamented that unless strong reinforcement of Greek contingents were sent, it would be impossible for them to withstand the pressure of the Indian rulers. This leaves us in no doubt that the Indian King of the north-west must have made a common cause with the Kings of the area and furthered the cause of freeing the Punjab from the foreign rule. Had it not been the case how do we explain the absence of any campaign of conquest of the territories of the Indian rulers of the area. The Indian Rajas of the north-west must have accepted the overlordship of Chandragupta. In any case there is no evidence of any resistance on the part of the Indian rulers of this part to Chandragupta. After the death of Alexander his empire was partitioned between his generals after a long struggle. The eastern part of the empire fell to Seleukos, one of Alexander's generals. He became the King of Syria. He carried on several wars to recover other eastern parts of the empire of Alexander. He took Babylon, subdued the Bactrians and then made an expedition into India to recover the territories now lost to the Greeks, Seleukos reached the Indus about 305 B.C. The Greek writers such as Appianus, Plutarch, Strabo, Justin, etc, curiously enough do not give us any detail of the encounter between Seleukos and Chandragupta but merely record the result of the encounter. Even when viewed from the results, there can be no doubt that Seleukos could not make much head way and was obliged to conclude an alliance with Chandragupta ratifying it by a matrimonial contract between the two sides. R. C. Mazumder's observation that "Seleukos was worsted in his fight with Chandragupta", therefore, is the only conclusion that one can arrive at. It is generally

accepted that the matrimonial contract was a marriage between a daughter of Seleukos and Chandragupta and the cession of Herat (Aria), Kandahar (Arachosia), Makrarr (Gedrosia) and Kabul (Paropani sadai), can be rightly regarded as dowry to the bridegroom. But all this is not warranted by known facts. The only reasonable conclusion that we may arrive at is that Seleukos had to purchase peace by ceding to Chandragupta, the territories, namely, Herat, Kan dahar, Makrar and Kabul. Chandragupta reciprocated by presenting Seleukos 500 war elephants. Several scholars including Tarn have entertained doubts as to the cession of Herat, Kandahar, Makran and Kabul in their entirety to Chandragupta by Seleukos. According to Tarn "The Indians occupied a larger portion of Ariana which they have received from the Macedonians". But from the inscriptions of Asoka, Chandragupta's grandson proves the inclusion of the Yonas and the Gandha ras as vassals of the Maurya Empire. This means that empire of the Mauryas received extension upto Kabul under Chandragupta due to the cession of the territories mentioned above by Seleukos to Chandra gupta Maurya because there is no evidence of conquest of these areas either during the reign of Bindusara or that of Asoka, Chandragupta did not rest content with the overthrow of the Nanda rule, he ousted the Greeks from the Punjab and warded off the invasion of Seleukos. As Plutarch remarks he "overran and subdued the whole of India". Justin also observed that Chandra- gupta was "in possession of India". Such remarks leave us in no doubt that Chandragupta brought under his sway almost the whole of India and built up the first all India Empire. That his empire had extended upto Podiyil Hill in the Tinnevely district in the South is borne out by Mamulanar, a Tamil author. Certain Mysore inscription refers to Chandragupta's rule in Northern Mysore and Nellore. Thus when we take together the statements of Plutarch, Justin, Mamulanar and the Mysore inscription we may safely conclude that Chandragupta Maurya had conquered a considerable portion of the Trans Vindhyan, India. That Saurashtra in Western-India was a province of the Maurya Empire under Chandragupta and was ruled over by his Governor Pushyagupta is borne out by Junagarh inscription of Rudradamana I. Smith is, however, of the opinion that Chandragupta's all out effort to emerge from obscurity to imperial throne in North India left him no time to turn his attention to the South and it was more probable that the South was brought under the Maurya rule by Chandragupta's son Bindusara. Obviously Smith relies on the evidence of Taranatha that Bindusara destroyed "the nobles and kings of sixteen towns and made him master of all territories between the eastern and the western seas". This has been taken not only by Smith but also by some other scholars such as Hemchandra, Jayaswal, etc, to mean the annexation of the Deccan. But H. C. Roychaudhuri points out that at the Chandragupta's time the Maurya Empire extended from Saurashtra to Bengal (Gangaridae), i.e., from the western to the eastern seas. There is no early evidence of the conquest of the Deccan by Bindusara. The only reference to military activity under Bindusara was the suppression of the revolt at Taxila where Prince Asoka was sent for the

purpose. It goes without saying that extension of the Maurya Empire to the south was the work of Chandragupta. This is also in conformity with the view that Nanda-dera on the Godavari testifies to the extension of the Nanda Empire upto the Godavari. This will mean that Chandragupta Maurya who occupied the Nanda Empire had ipso facto become the ruler upto the Godavari wherefrom it was not difficult to extend the boundary further southward upto Mysore and Nellore, Jain tradition is that towards the end of his reign when there was a terrible famine in north India Chandragupta became a Jain and renounced the world and took a band of Jain Monks with him and went to Sravana Belgola in Mysore. The Maurya Empire under Chandragupta extended towards the north-west upto the borders of Persia, towards the east upto Bihar, in the west upto the seas bordering Saurashtra and the south upto the Chital Durg and Nellore districts of Mysore. Thus the whole of India from the borders of Persia upto parts of the Deccan, comprising Uttarpatha, Avanti, Dakshinapatha and Prachya was under Chandragupta. This is in consonance with remarks of Plutarch the Chandragupta "subdued whole of India" and Justin's statement that Chandragupta was in "possession of India".

CHANDRAGUPTA'S ADMINISTRATION

For Chandragupta's administration we have the unique evidence of the Greek ambassador Megasthenes, deputed to his Court at Pataliputra. Megasthenes's observations on the working of the Maurya administration acquired through personal knowledge have been confirmed in many respects by Arthashastra attributed to Chandragupta's minister Kautilya. This work although not definitely dated is generally regarded as a document of Maurya history and Prof. Thoma remarks that the work "clearly falls within or near the Maurya Period". The account of Megasthenes containing the details of the geography, products, social and political institutions of India of that period is lost but many extracts from it have been preserved in the writings of the later classical writers. The information obtained from these later classical writers like Strabo, Arrian, Diodorus and others, although fragmentary, is highly interesting and of immense historical value being recorded by an eye witness. These fragments of information quoted in the writings of the later classical writers were collected by Schwanbeck and translated into English by Prof. McGrindle. True that Megasthenes' *Indica*, as his account was called, contained some mistaken statements. As Prof. Rhys Davids observes, Megasthenes possessed very little critical judgement and was often misled by wrong information received from others or by his lack of understanding of the Indian System, for example, his misunderstanding of the Indian caste-system. But he is unquestionably a truthful witness in respect of matters which came under his personal observation. In such matters we have corroboration in Kautilya's Arthashastra and Asoka's Edicts. The King was the supreme head of the state and had fourfold functions: military, judicial, executive and legislative. According to Megasthenes Chandragupta was a very hard-working official. He remained in court whole day, did not sleep at day time and even when he would have his body massaged or his

hair combed and dressed he attended to public business and gave audience to his ambassadors. As the highest military commander he would consider plans of operation with his Senapati, i.e., the Commander-in-Chief, Chandra. gupta maintained a vast standing army of more than 600,000 men. He had an effective control over the military through a War Office comprising thirty members, obviously experts in different branches of military art and science. It was divided into six Boards of five members each; such as the (i) Board of Admiralty, Boards of (ii) Infantry, (iii) Cavalry, (iv) War-Chariots, (v) War Elephants, and (vi) Transport and Commissariat and Army service. This scientific division and control of the military administration stood Chandragupta in good stead and while made his army invincible in the battle field spoke eloquently of his efficiency and ability as the supreme head of the military administration. At the head of the judiciary stood the king himself. He personally adjudicated the cases that came before him. Judging of cases consumed a great part of his time in the court. He would never keep his petitioners waiting. He obviously followed the exhortations of Kautilya, his minister, who observed in his Arthashastra that 'when in the court, he (the king) shall never cause his petitioners to wait at the door, for when a king makes himself inaccessible to the people and entrusts his work to his immediate officers, he may be sure to be invincible in the battle field spoke eloquently of his efficiency and himself a prey to his enemies'. In his capacity as the head of the executive government, Chandragupta appointed all the high officials of the state such as, the Sachivas or Amatyas, Mantrins or the High Ministers, the Purohita or the High Priest, Spies, Adhyakshas, maintained correspondence with the Mantriparishad, received envoys Governors and Viceroy, etc. His legislative functions comprised issuing of rescripts, maintenance of Porana pakiti, i.e., ancient rules and customs. Kautilya calls the King Dharmapravartaka and this could be done by the king by issuing Rajasasana, i.e., royal rescripts. Chandragupta's government was divided into two parts, namely, the Central and the Provincial Governments. In the Centre there was the King who was the sovereign head of the state, and the Mantriparishad, Councillors and Assessors, that is the Mantrins or High Ministers, Sachivas or Amatyas. subdivided into districts. The exact number of provinces under Chandragupta, is not known but we know that there were five provinces under Asoka, grandson of Chandragupta, including Kalinga The last named province Kalinga was conquered by Asoka. Therefore, four provinces. This may be if we leave out Kalinga then we may arrive at the conclusion that under Chandragupta there were altogether four regarded as conclusive as we know that no additional territory was conquered by Bindusara, son of Chandragupta. The four provinces under Chandragupta were Uttarapatha with its capital at Taxila, Avanti with Ujjayini as its capital, Dakshinapatha with its capital Suvaritagiri, and Prachya, the Prasii of the Greeks, with its capital at Pataliputra. Prachya and the Madhyadesa, that is, Eastern and Mid-India, were directly ruled by Chandragupta himself. The provinces were under Governors or Viceroy who were princes of the royal

blood. Besides imperial provinces, there were a number of territories which enjoyed some measure of autonomy. At the centre, the king was assisted and advised by the Mantrins, the High Ministers and the Mantriparishad. Members of the Mantriparishad occupied an inferior position, this is borne out by the fact that while the Mantrins received 48,000 panas as salary per annum, the members of the Mantriparishad received only 12,000 panas per annum. Under the High Ministers there were various officers of varied grades who looked after water supply, maintenance of roads and putting milestones along the road, agriculture, forests, mines, metal industries, etc. The Magistrates who looked after towns and cities were called Nagaradhyakshya and those looking after the military were called Baladhyakshas. According to Megasthenes and later Greek writers like Diodorus, Strabo, Arrian etc. the Mantriparishad was very influential. Besides advising the King in matters of administration, it exercised great influence in the appointment of Governors, Viceroy, Deputy Governors, Treasurers, Generals, Admirals, Judges, Chief Magistrates and other High Officials, Kautilya's Arthashastra laid down certain specific tests to determine the suitability of appointment of persons as different Amatyas. In order that the Amatyas in charge of civil and criminal justice might be sufficiently religious-minded to adjudicate cases impartially they had to be purified by religious tests. Likewise those to be appointed as Chancellor of the Exchequer (Samahartri) had to be purified by money test, i.e., Arthopadhasuddha; those appointed to the Pleasure Gardens had to be purified by love-test, i.e., Kamopadhasuddhas, those who had to be employed in work which needed bold, immediate step had to be purified by fear test, i.e., Bhayopadhasuddha, Specially qualified persons were appointed Ministers plenipotentiary, Ministers of correspondence and Adhyakshas, i.e., Superintendents. The meeting of the Mantriparishad was also attended by the Maha-Mantrins or the High Ministers. The King would consult the Mantriparishad in all matters of importance and emergency. Although the Mantriparishad was an advisory Council, and the King was at liberty either to accept or reject its advice, yet it is easy to understand that King would honour the decision of the Mantriparishad remembering as we do that it was attended by no less a person than Kautilya. The municipal administration of Pataliputra, the capital city of Chandragupta, was of a unique character. From Megasthenes, corroborated by Arthashastra, we know that the Municipal Board comprised thirty members of six Boards of five members each. Each of these Boards was in charge of a particular type of function, The First Board was in charge of Industrial Art. It had to look after production of commodities, keep watch on the quality of raw materials used, decide the fair value of the articles produced and stamp the finished articles as evidence of their suitability to be marketed. The Second Board was in charge of looking after the foreigners.. Strabo, Diodorus state that the Maurya Government took special care of the foreigners. "Among the Indians officers are appointed even for foreigners, whose duty is to see that no foreigner is wronged. Should any one of them lose health, they send Physicians to attend him and take care of him otherwise,

and if he dies they bury him and deliver over such property as he leaves to his relatives". The Third Board was in charge of vital statistics. This Board would enquire how deaths occurred and register every birth and death. "The third Body consists of those who enquire when and how births and deaths occur, with a view to not only levying a tax, but also in order that birth and deaths among both high and low may not escape the cognizance of Government". The Fourth Board looked after trade and commerce. It kept watch over the weights and measures and saw to it that commodities were sold out before their quality did not deteriorate. It also saw that seasonal products were sold by public notice. No one was allowed to deal in more than one commodity but one could do so by paying double or three times the tax as according to the number of commodities dealt with. The Fifth Board supervised the manufactured articles. Public notice had to be given for the sale of manufactured articles. This Board kept strict watch so that newly manufactured articles were not mixed or piled with the old stock. The Sixth Board was in charge of collection of one-tenth of the prices of the articles or produce sold, as tax. Any fraud in payment of this tax was punishable with death. Megasthenes referred to the Municipal Board of the capital city of Pataliputra where he stayed, but it may not be unreasonable to conclude that similar Municipal Councils and Boards were there in other cities of the time such as Taxila, Ujjaini, Kaushambi, Pundranagar, etc, which were important cities under Chandragupta. The Arthashastra calls officials of the Military and Municipal Boards as Adhyakshas whom Megasthenes called Astynomoi, the Magistrates of Strabo. Smith is of opinion that Boards described by Megasthenes were unknown to Kautilya and the creation of the Boards might have been an innovation made by Chandragupta, But Roychaudhuri points out that Smith's confusion is due to his ignoring nagaradhyakshas and other officials referred to in the Arthashastra. We have already noticed that at the top of the judiciary stood the King. But besides the Royal Court which was the highest in the State there were tribunals of justice both in cities and the country sides. The city tribunals were presided over by Vyavaharika Mahamatras and the country tribunals were presided over by Rajukas. From the classical source we know that the judges also decided cases in which foreigners are concerned, with greatest care and would come down sharply on those who took unfair advantage of them. Punishment to persons held guilty by the court were very severe, Decapitation, amputation of limbs, fines and forfeitures were the different types of punishment prevalent at that time. Inhuman torture was resorted to for extorting confession from the criminals. The revenue of the State was mainly of two kinds: Bhaga and Bali. Bhaga was the King's share of the produce of the soil which was normally one-tenth. In special cases it was one-fourth or reduced to one-eighth. All lands were property of the Crown and the husbandmen paid, according to the Greek source, a land tribute besides one-fourth of the produce of the soil. Bali was originally this land tribute. In any case Bali was an extra import over and above Bali. one-tenth of the prices of the commodities sold is another important source of revenue. In certain

areas, the main sources besides tithes on the sale of commodities were birth and death duties, fines and forfeitures, etc.

A considerable part of the revenue was spent for the maintenance of the army, the war horses, war elephants and war-chariots, The artisans also received maintenance from the royal exchequer. Herd men were paid grains from the royal granary for their labour in clearing the land of wild beasts and fowls. The Philosophers, ie, the Brahmanas and the Sramanas received royal bounty. Construction of roads, buildings, forts, repairs of the existing constructions, etc. claimed a good part of the expenditure during the rule of Chandragupta. The land tax was collected by a class of officials called Agranomoi by Megasthenes. He also refers to various other classes of officials "who superintended the rivers, measure the land, inspect the sluices by which water is let out from the main canals into their branches so that every one may have an equal supply of it". Apart from such officers Megasthenes also mentions others who were in charge of Agriculture, Forestry, Timber Works, Metal Foundries, Mines, Roads, etc. Chandragupta maintained a body of spies called Overseers the Episkopoi of the Greek writers who kept watch on what was going on throughout the country and the cities and report to the King. Strabo says that the Ephori i.e., the Inspectors (Spies) were appointed from the most faithful persons. Appointment of different classes of spies is also borne out by Arthasastra which refers to stationary spies (Samstah) who are posted permanently at places and wandering spies (Sancharah) who wandered from place to place for collecting secret information. At the head of the Provincial administration was the Governor. During the rule of Chandragupta there were four Provinces into which the Maurya Empire was divided. These were Uttarpatha, Dakshinapatha, Prachya and Avanti. Both Kautilya and the classical writers mention the existence of autonomous tribes and cities during Chandragupta's time. Thus it may be said that the Maurya system of Government was a combination of morrharchy and autonomy. Besides the Governor or Viceroy who was at the head of the provincial administration and who would almost invariably be the Prince of the royal blood, there were a hierarchy of officials. The province was divided into Janapadas each under a Pradestri and a Samahantri. One-fourth part of a Janapada was put under an officer called Sthanika. A group of five to ten villages would be placed under an officer called the Gopa. Every village again was under an officer elected by the villagers and was responsible for the village administration. This officer was called Gramika. The Maurya administration was thus structurally in the nature of a pyramid with the Gramika at the bottom and the Emperor at the top. According to the Jaina traditions, Chandragupta became a Jain convert in his old age Towards the end of his reign a terrible famine stalked the land. According to the Hindu belief, famine or such other calamity was then regarded as the Divine visitation for the sin of the reigning King. Chandragupta Maurya abdicated his throne in favour of his son Bindusara when the famine overtook the land and repaired to Sravana Belgola in Mysore where he is said to have laid

down his life by voluntary starvation as religion, in the year 300 B.C. prescribed in the Jain religion. Megasthenes: After the Salenkian War an era of peace and friendly relations began between the Maurya Emperor Chandragupta and the Syrian Court. Megasthenes was sent to the Court of Chandragupta by Seleucus as an ambassador. Megasthenes was originally working at Arachosia with the Satrap Sisymbrius where from he was sent to Pataliputra where he stayed in Chandragupta's Court and left an account of the Indian affairs of the time. The work of Megasthenes has been lost but fragments of his work survive in the works of later classical writers such as Strabo, Arrian, Diodorus, and others which have been collected by Schwanbeck and translated into English by McGraw-Hill. Although in certain aspects of his statements Megasthenes betrayed lack of critical judgement in cases of his secondary information, as Prof. Rhys Davids puts it, yet in matters which came under his direct observation he has been truthful. The most important piece of information that we have from Megasthenes is the description of the capital city of Pataliputra. Megasthenes' Palimbothra, i.e. Pataliputra stood on the confluence of the rivers Son and the Ganges, and was nine and half miles (80 Stades) in length and one and three-fourths miles (15 Stades) in breadth. The city was surrounded by a wooden wall and by a ditch 606 feet wide and 30 cubits in depth. The wooden wall of the city had 570 towers and 64 gates. Pataliputra was not the only city of the Maurya Empire. Arrian remarks that "It would not be possible to record with accuracy number of the cities on account of their multiplicity. Those which were situated near the river or the sea were built of wood; for if they were built of brick they could not long endure on account of rain and because the rivers overflowing their banks fill the plains with water. But those which have been founded on commanding places are of mortar." The most important cities of Chandragupta's time were Taxila, Kausambi, Ujjaini and Pundranagara (in North Bengal). The account of Aelian based on Megasthenes contains descriptions of the royal palace, Chandragupta's palace within the city of Pataliputra was, according to Megasthenes, the finest in the whole world and forced admiration. Neither Susa nor Ekbatana the Persian Palaces could vie with the royal palace in Pataliputra, The palace had gilded pillars adorned with golden vines and silver birds. In the Palace park tamed Peacocks, Parrots and domesticated Pheasants were kept. There were shaded groves and trees deftly interwoven by the woodmen. Artificial ponds were dug within the palace grounds which contained fishes of enormous size. The imperial palace is supposed to have stood near to the modern village of Village Kumrahar where ruins of Maurya pillar-hall have been unearthed. From Strabo we learn that the King had female guards for his protection within the palace and it was on four occasions only, namely in times of war, while sitting as a judge in the royal Court, to offer religious sacrifice and while going on hunting expeditions that the King would go out of the Palace.

Megasthenes left us a detailed description of both Municipal and Military Councils of Chandragupta's time. "Each of the councils had six Boards with well-defined functions to perform.

This gives us an impression of the highly developed urban administration as also scientific military administration prevalent during Chandragupta's time. Some details of the equipment of the army are also given by the Greek ambassador. The foot soldiers carried a bow equal in length to the man who bears it. There is nothing which can resist an Indian archer's shot. Some are equipped with Javelins instead of bows, but wear a sword which is broad in the blade"

About the peace and prosperity of the people Megasthenes observes that the inhabitants having abundant means of subsistence grew taller than the ordinary stature as might be expected of people who inhale pure air and drink the finest of water. They are well-skilled in various arts. Referring to the fertility of the soil Megasthenes mentions that profusion of rivers and streams facilitates growth of cereals and plants of various kinds. Abundant rainfall enables harvesting of two crops. Megasthenes was so much impressed by the contentment and prosperity of the people that he made the sweeping rural fields allowing the tillers of the remark that "famine has never visited India and that there has never been a general scarcity in the supply of nourishing food". Megasthenes, however, justifies this remark by stating that even in times of war the Indians would never ravage the cultivated soil as was done by other nations but would fight their battles away from agricultural-soil to carry on cultivation even when battles were raging. The Indians regarded the husbandmen as sacred and inviolable. Besides, they neither ravage an enemy's land with fire nor cut down its trees".¹ It may be pointed out here that Megasthenes' observation regarding absence of famine is factually incorrect, for there are references in literary works to the occurrences of famine in India. A terrible famine stalked the land within years of Megasthenes' departure from India, Due to agricultural prosperity by far the most numerous class in the society was formed of the husbandmen. But they did not prevent the growth of towns and cities. Megasthenes observed that the number of cities was so large that 'it cannot be stated with precision'. Cities near rivers or seas were built of wood in order to save them from destruction by flood and rains, but those built on heights and away from rivers or seas were built of bricks and mud. Megasthenes refers to the frugal nature of the Indians but remarks that they were fond of fineries and jewelleries which fostered growth of trade and industry. A large number of persons were employed in production of weapons of war, ships for the navy as well as maritime trade and human transport. Sailors of state owned ships, and skilled persons appointed for building of war ships and manufacture of weapons were paid from the State coffers. Megasthenes mentioned existence of Seven Castes in the then Indian Society which was contrary to the traditional fourfold division of the Caste-System then prevalent. In fact, Megasthenes' division of the people into the Seven Castes, viz.: Philosophers, Husbandmen, Hardsmen, Artisans, Soldiers, Overseers and Councillors, obviously was a division with reference to the professional pursuits of different sections of the society. Megasthenes perhaps did not realise the import of the fourfold division of the society into Brahmins, Kshatriyas,

Vaisyas and Sudras. He, in all probability, was led by his knowledge of the division of the 'Egyptian. Society into Seven Castes, on professional basis. Prof. Rhys Davids observes that Megasthenes betrayed lack of critical judgment. This was one such instance. Megasthenes notices a general contentment among the people and the treatment of the underdogs of the society then must have been so liberal that he observed that slavery was unknown to India. Even the foreigners were not converted into slavery by the Indians. But here again, there is a factual error, Obviously it was the benignity of treatment of the slaves, their right to private property and source freedom unlike those of the Greek Slaves who were no better than chattels of their master that must have been responsible for this error in observation but the fact remains that slavery existed in India at that time. This is borne out by the Arthashastra which says that no Arya or freeman could be reduced to slavery. Reference to Dasas, i.e., the slaves in Asokan inscriptions also bear testimony to the existence of the institution of slavery in Maurya India. That Megasthenes' account although available to us in fragments referred to by later classical writers, is, to say the least, a unique document and the good words that he said about the administration, people and the political, social economic and cultural life of the Indians under the first Maurya redounds to the credit of our forefathers of the time. It is particularly gratifying to read praises of the country and the people in the account of a foreigner.

UNIT-IV

CHANDRAGUPTA:

HIS PERSONALITY AND ESTIMATE

Alexander's invasion of India in the last quarter of the fourth century before Christ brought out in bold relief two diametrically opposite characters of the Indian rulers of the time, one of craven heartedness and betrayal to the cause of the country, and the other of intrepidity, patriotism and defence of the cause of the country and the people. If Ambhi of Taxila and many others had betrayed the cause of the country by buying Alexander's overlordship, without any compunction, there were kings like Poros, republican tribes like the Malavas and Kshudrakas, who preferred death to dishonour and offered stubborn resistance to the Macedonian conqueror. But by far the greatest defender of freedom was the intrepid Chandragupta Maurya who rising from an obscure station of life won double freedom for the country and successfully defended it from one of Alexander's generals who possessed all knowledge of Alexander's military strategy. He freed the parts of the country from the Greek rule, overthrew the tyrannical Nandas bringing liberty to the people and warded off the invasion Seleukos. As a youth of no much experience he thought of invoking Alexander's help in overthrowing the vicious Nandas of Magadha and unknowingly was about to play the part of Sangram Singha who invited Babur to put an end to the rule of Ibrahim Lodi. But fortunately the plan did not materialise

and in the bargain he gave offence to the proud Macedonian conqueror and had to flee for life. All this did not damp his spirit. He organised an army with the assistance of his mentor Kautilya and eventually put an end to the foreign rule in the Punjab and overthrew the infamous Nanda ruler. Likewise attempt of Seleukos to recover the Greek conquests in India was foiled by inflicting a crushing defeat on him. All this shows Chandragupta as an intrepid soldier, a military organiser, patriot and a great defender of the freedom of the country and the liberty of the people. With his vast army Chandragupta has extended his empire from Afghanistan to Mysore. But if he had created the first politically United Indian Empire he did not fail to give it an efficient administration, profusely praised by Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador sent to Pataliputra by Seleukos. Chandragupta's military prowess and the friendly relations that had ushered in with the Greek world after Seleukos's defeat opened up a long and continuous process of friendliness with the West in general and the Greeks in particular. Chandragupta's government was a commendable compromise between autocracy and democracy capitalism and State socialism. Theoretically the king was the sovereign head of the State and his powers comprised legislative, executive, judicial and military decisions of ultimate nature. But although not bound theoretically by the advice of the Mantriparishad, in practice he could not flout it, remembering as we do that person of Kautilya's eminence was a member of the Mantriparishad. Further, from the Arthashastra we know that the king had to be guided by the majority opinion (Bhuyishthah). In matters concerning war or army development the king would consult the Commander-in-Chief (Senapati). It is needless, therefore, to say that Chandragupta's government was personal in character but not despotism, it was autocracy without authoritarianism, it was tempered by democracy. Well-being of the people was the fundamental principle of the Government. Kautilya's administrative scheme what must have been the basis of Chandragupta's administration provided for a large measure of nationalisation of industries. The state-owned vast estates and forests held State monopoly of mines and marketing of produce of the mines. The Government established factories for turning raw materials into finished goods; it also dealt in vast quantities of agricultural products and maintained a central reserve of food grains for current needs and for meeting natural calamities like famine etc.¹ Chandragupta's government, therefore, had a very modern outlook and economically it was a mixture of capitalism and State Socialism-as some writers hold. The elegance of the court life, the wonderful decorations in the gilded pillars studded with golden vines and silver birds, the palace garden with tamed peacocks and pheasants, artificial ponds with large fishes, trees and shrubs deftly done into beautiful shapes by woodmen betray a great artistic and aesthetic sense on the part of Chandragupta. Evidences are there that Chandragupta held discourses with Brahmana and Jaina Philosophers and folk lores (gathas), Sutras (sullas) etc. were composed during his time. Chandragupta spent long hours in attending to the business of the Court and administration. He showed both knack and ability to keep

an administrative control over the different branches of the government. He was rightly considered to be the greatest of all kings of the country by Aelian.

BINDUSARA (300-273 B.C.)

Chandragupta Maurya was succeeded by his son Bindusara in 300 or 299 B.C. According to Rajavalikathe, a Jaina text, name of Bindusara was Simhasena. In Hemchandra's Parisisthaparvana, Bindusara was the son of Chandragupta's queen named Duradhara. But historians like H. C. Roychoudhuri are of opinion that the name cannot be accepted as genuine.¹ Bindusara was also known by his epithet Amitraghata or Amitrakhada i.e., killer of enemies or devourer of enemies. Obviously this epithet was earned by him because of his success against enemies, but details are lacking. But whether the title or epithet Amritraghata or Amitrakhada was added to his name due to any spectacular success against any enemies is doubtful, for in Patanjali's Mahabhasya the word Amitraghata occurs as an epithet of princes and warriors in respect of their success against enemies. The Greeks called Bindusara Amitrachates or Allitrochates which Dr. Charpentier rendered into Amitraghata as well as Amitrakhada. In Arya-Majusri-Mula-Kalpa as also in the works of Hemchandra and Taranatha there are references to Chanakya's outliving Chandragupta and serving as Bindusara's minister and procuring destruction of 16 towns and making the "master of all the territory between the Eastern and Western Seas".

This was taken by some scholars such as Smith to mean Bindusara's conquest of the Deccan but from Rudradamana's inscription we know that Chandragupta's empire had already extended from Surashtra to Bengal, i.e., from the Western to the Eastern Seas. From Divyavandana we know that Taxila revolted during the reign of Bindusara and Prince Asoka was despatched to put it down. We may, therefore, conclude that at least one town was restored to the empire under Bindusara. That Bindusara was not of soldierly habits and was rather of a happy-go-lucky disposition, given to ease and luxury is corroborated by contemporary evidence. At best Bindusara succeeded in keeping the Maurya empire as he succeeded from his father Chandragupta in, tact, but he can hardly be credited with making any addition to the empire.

Bindusara maintained friendly relationship with the Greek rules initiated during his father's time. From Greek writer, Hegesander, we know of the most cordial relation between Bindusara and Antiochos, Greek King of Syrian to Diodoros. Bindusara has great love for the Graecians Bindusara once asked Antiochos 1, Soter, son of Seleukos to send some sweet wine, figs and a philosopher'. Antiochos complied with the request by sending sweet, wine and figs but expressed regret that law of his country did not permit deporting any Philosopher from the country. Antiochos sent Deimachos to the Court of Bindusara to succeed Megasthenes as ambassador. Pliny mentions that another Greek King Ptolemy Philadelphos of Egypt sent Dionysius as ambassador to the Court of Bindusara. The

period of Ptolemy's rule was from 285 to 247 B.C. from which some historians think that Dionysius was accredited to Bindusara's Court, although there is no clear evidence to dispel the doubt whether Dionysius presented his credentials to Bindusara or his son Asoka. We have no details about the administration or reign of Bindusara. We have noticed that he had sent Asoka, his ablest son to quell the rebellion at Taxila which was caused by the tyrannical conduct of the local officials (Dustamatyas). Asoka was also placed as his Viceroy at Ujjaini, capital of Avanti. Bindusara placed his eldest son Susima also called Sumana as Viceroy at Taxila and when rebellion broke out there and situation went out of Susima's control, Asoka was sent to quell the rebellion. Bindusara appears to have followed Chandragupta's system of appointing princess of royal blood as Viceroys and governors of imperial provinces.

ARTHASASTRA: DATE AND AUTHORSHIP

Science of Polity in ancient India was called by various names such as Arthashastra, Nitisastra, Rajniti, Dandaniti etc. which included political theory and organisation and matters related to State and Society. Kautilya's Arthashastra was regarded as the standard work on the subject and had cast into shade all the previous works of as many as thirteen individual writers due to masterly treatment and well-deserved reputation of Arthashastra, The book was somehow completely lost and it was not till the beginning of the present century that a copy was discovered by Dr. Sham Sastri from a pandit in Tanjore district. Two other manuscripts of Arthashastra were later found in the Munich Library and another "Seems to exist in Calcutta". Translation of some extracts of the manuscript of Arthashastra was published by Sham Sastri in 1905, a second edition in 1908 Translation of the book in full-fledged form appeared in 1915. The traditional Indian view is to regard the book as the work of Kautilya, also known as Chanakya and Vishnugupta, the minister of the first Maurya ruler. Keith is the foremost among the scholars of place the treaties in C. 300 A.D. According to him "That the was a product of C. 300 AD. Written by an official attached to work Court is at least plausible, if it cannot be proved". But Keith's view suffers from infirmity because elsewhere he himself assigned the work "to the first century B.C. while the matter, very probably, is older by a good deal than that"

But in the Puranic text there is a passage which refers to the revolution effected by Chandragupta with the help of Brahmin Kautilya who consecrated him. The dynastic change that took place as a result of the revolution is also referred to in Kautilya's Arthashastra, Kamandaka's Niti Sastra, the Mudrarakshasa, the Chanda Kausika, and the Ceylonese chronicles. Johnston, however, remarks that Kautilya's Arthashastra is not separated by a great interval from Asvaghosa and is distinctly earlier than Jatakamala of Aryasura who flourished in the fourth Century A.D. This naturally means that the Arthashastra was a work of a period later than the time of the First Maurya. An earlier date is also suggested because there is reference to Denarius in Book II, Chapters 12 and 19 of Arthashastra. But

men- tion of the Chinapatta and Chinabhumi in Book II, Chapter XI, precludes the possibility of a date earlier than the middle of the third century B.C. "The great silk-producing country (China) was clearly out of the horizon of the early Mauryas. Further, the imperial title Chakravarti mentioned in the Arthasastra is not found before the inscriptions of Kharvela. The researches of the German scholars, however, clearly estab- lished that the Arthasastra is a genuine ancient work of the Maurya period and rightly attributed to Chanakya or Kautilya, minister of Chandragupta Maurya, Hermann Jacobi remarks that the Artha sastra "is the work of the famous minister of Chandragupta, as estab- lished by both external and internal proofs". It may also be pointed out that many passages in the text of the Arthasastra expressly describe it as the composition of Kautilya who uprooted the Nandas, thereby clearly identifying him with the Prime Minister of Chandragupta. Roychaudhuri, however, remarks that "Nevertheless a critical examination of the contents has convinced some sholars that the text as it were not the work of a single indivi dual but of a school of politics, and that it could not be composed in the third century B.C. but probably received its present form from three or four centuries later. Although the view is now greatly accepted some distinguished scholars still regard the text as genuine and long lost work of Kautilya".

Although the German scholars, on the basis of their researche are more categorical about the authenticity of the work and its com- position by Kautilya, the Prime Minister of Chandragupta Maurya, Smith points out that "The German verdict, of course, does not ex- clude the possibility, or probability that the existing text may con- tain certain interpolations of later date, but the bulk of the book cer- tainly dates from the Maurya period". "But certain points have to be considered before any positive con- clusion is reached. (1) The language used in Arthasastra is Sanskrit and not Prakrit which was used by the Mauryas. (2) The wall of Kautilya's fort (Durga) was to be made of bricks and Kautilya had horror of wooden structure as "fire finds a happy abode in it" but from Megasthenes we learn that such cities as were situated on the banks of rivers or sea coasts were built of wood instead of brick. Pata- liputra was girded by wooden walls. (3) There is reference to the royal titles adopted by the Mauryas in the Arthasastra. On the con- trary title like Indra-Yama-Sthanametat mentioned in the Arthasastra is very much akin to the titles referred to in the Allahabad Prasasti. (4) Some of the official designations were found to be in use under the Mauryas but two important designations, viz., Samahartri and Sannidhatri were found in inscriptions of later times. (5) Chinapatta, Chinabhumi and Kambu, i.e., Cambodia wherefrom silk came into India, referred to in the Arthasastra shows that the treatise did not belong to the early Mauryas since China and Cambodia "were out- side the horizon of the earliest Mauryas". India's contact with China before the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. to 200 A.D.) is not indisputable. In view of these points raised about the date of the composition of the Arthasastra remains still controversial and awaits solution. We may, therefore, conclude that although, it is generally

accepted that the work was of Kautilya the Prime Minister of the First Maurya, Chandragupta, it contained references to contents of earlier works on the subject now lost, as well as certain later interpolations. In any event the treatise contains to be controversial and a subject matter for further researches

ASOKA

BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE: ACCESSION

The romantic hypothesis based on Seleukos entering into a matrimonial alliance with Chandragupta Maurya, Asoka's grand- father, which according to Sylvain Levi "introduced a Greek Princess in the Mauryan harem" that Asoka was either the grandson or son of the Greek Princess remains unproved. That he was not the son of the Greek Princess is proved on the evidence of Asokavadana, Divyavadana and Vamsatthapakasini. While both Divyavadana and Asokavadana give the name of Asoka's mother as Subhadra, daughter of a Brahman of Champa Vamsatthapakasini gives her name as Darma, There is a legend behind the name 'Asoka'. It is said that Queen Subhadra could not enjoy her rightful position of the royal consort due to some palace intrigue. When she ultimately gained her position as royal consort and a son was born to her she named him Asoka, i.e., no sorrow and when second son was born she called him Vitasoka, i.e., end of sorrow. Two points, however, emerge for consideration: (i) If the matrimonial alliance between Seleukos and Chandragupta means a marriage between a Greek Princess and Bindusara, then the palace intrigue in keeping the princess separate from the King (Bindusara) may have some meaning as the princess was of an outlandish origin. (ii) This may as well somewhat explain the opposition of some of the brothers of Asoka to latter's succession to the throne which led to a struggle accounting for the interregnum of four years from 273-269 B.C. On Bindusara's death his son Asoka succeeded him and with him begins a memorable chapter of the history of India. He has been called the 'Greatest of Kings' by H. G. Wells and by common consent he has been given the highest place of honour among the Kings and Emperors of the World. Our knowledge of the history of his reign is based on inscriptions left by him engraved on rocks and pillars which from the very nature of permanence stand unaltered and without any interpolation till today. But although his inscriptions are an excellent source of our information of his reign they do not throw any light on his early life. We have to depend solely upon the Buddhist texts like Divyavadana and the Ceylonese chronicles like Dipavamsa, Mahavamsa etc. According to Mahavamsa Asoka while a Prince was appointed as Viceroy at Ujjain. Two later Buddhist texts, the Asokasutra and Kunalasutra state that Asoka was the Viceroy at Taxila. But according to Asokavadana we know that a revolt took place at Taxila during the reign of Bindusara due to the oppressive rule of the local officials and Asoka was sent there to put it down. This fact is also corroborated by an Aramic inscription found in a house at Sirkap in Taxila: It may be that after the revolt had been quelled Asoka

continued to stay at Taxila for sometime. This might have led to the confusion in the Buddhist texts Asokasutra and Kunalasutra where Asoka has been stated as the Viceroy of Taxila, Most of the evidences bear out that Asoka was the Viceroy at Ujjain before he became the King. From Dipavamsa we have information regarding the personal life of Asoka when he was a viceroy at Ujjain. There he fell in love with a daughter of a merchant, named Devi or Vidisamahadevi whom he is said to have married and had two children through her: Mahendra and Samghamitra. Devi continued to remain at Vidisa, when Asoka ascended the throne at Pataliputra, obviously because, she was not of an appropriately high rank to become the Queen.

The Buddhist texts depict Asoka in his early career as a cruel, blood thirsty tyrant for which he earned the epithet of Chandasoka (ferocious Asoka), but after his conversion he became a Dharmasoka (religious Asoka). Asoka is said to have seized the throne on his father's death by slaying his ninety-nine brothers born of different wives of Bindusara. These are hardly credible and were introduced to glorify Buddhism by drawing a glaring contrast between Asoka's career before and after conversion into Buddhism. There is, however, a general agreement on the point that Asoka was not the heir-apparent and that there was a fratricidal struggle after the death of Bindusara and his sons. On the evidence of Divyavadana we know that Bindusara before his death desired to appoint his oldest son Susima as King. But his ministers, particularly his Chief Minister Radhagupta placed Asoka on the throne. At the time of Bindusara's death Asoka was the Viceroy of a province, according to some sources Taxila, according to others Ujjain. Mahavamsa mentions Asoka's slaying of his eldest brother and elsewhere the same work as also Dipavamsa mention that Asoka killed his ninety-nine brothers sparing only Tishya or Tissa the youngest of all. Asoka's slaying of his ninety-nine brothers born of different wives of Bindusara can be, without hesitation, dismissed as imaginary. There is no independent evidence of such a struggle. The story must have been introduced by the Buddhist writers to glorify the influence of Buddhism on Asoka showing the contrast between his nature before his becoming a Buddhist and after. This story is refuted by his inscriptions which mention of not only one brother, but several of them living in the thirteenth year of his reign both in Pataliputra and other towns of his empire whose household were of Asoka's most anxious care. In his 5th Rock Edict Asoka mentions officers who besides their other duties, had the special function of superintending the welfare of the families of his brothers, sisters and others relatives. However, from historical standpoint what the Buddhist stories suggest has two distinct matters to be considered, viz, (i) that there was a fratricidal struggle on the death of Bindusara and Asoka was involved in it and he had to remove all his brothers who opposed his accession to the throne, and (ii) that the delay that occurred between the year of the death of Bindusara, 273 B.C. and Asoka's coronation in 269 B.C. was due to the fratricidal struggle and this explains the period of interregnum of four years. As to the first, it may be pointed out that

there is no independent evidence to show that there was such a fratricidal struggle in which so many of his brothers had been done to death by Asoka. This must have been a fabrication of the Buddhist writers to show the contrast of Asoka's wickedness and piety before and after his conversion into Buddhism. Only point that has emerged as a historical fact is Asoka's supersession of the claim of his eldest brother

Susima, With regard to the delay between the accession and coronation, most scholars have accepted it as historical, particularly in view of Asoka's dating of the events of his reign from his coronation in all his inscriptions. But no satisfactory explanation has been given for this unusual course, "and it is a mere gratuitous assumption that the long delay may have been due to disputed succession involving much bloodshed" as Smith suggests. The Ceylonese chronicles simply state that Asoka's coronation took place four years after he "had won for himself the undivided sovereignty". This naturally raises a presumption that his sovereignty might have been disputed in parts of the empire. Asoka's grandson Dasarath also dated the events of his reign from the date of his coronation. Most of the scholars except Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar accept the view that there was a gap between Asoka's accession and coronation although no valid reasons have been adduced for it. The whole controversy over the legend of slaying of ninety-nine brothers and all that, boils down to one probability that there was a contest for the throne in which Asoka had succeeded against not the claims of his step-brother Susima, the eldest of the sons of Bindusara, with the help of Radhagupta the Chief Minister of Bindusara, On his coronation Asoka assumed the title of Piyadasi, i.e., Priya darshi, meaning of gainly looks. The fullest appellation by which Asoka styled himself is Devanampriya Priyadarsi Raja. He did not call himself Asoka, his personal name, except in the Maski Edict which sets at rest the question of identity of the Priyadarsi.

ASOKA'S FAMILY AND FAMILY LIFE

Some members of Asoka's immediate family have been mentioned in various sources. Asoka had several queens, the exact number is not known to us. There are references to at least three queens in chronicles and Buddhist texts like Mahavamsa, Divyavadana, etc. Asoka's Chief Queen for most of his reign was Asandhimitra who died four years before Asoka's death. On the death of Asandhimitra, Tissarakkha was raised to the position of the Chief Queen. It is said that this queen had a very great influence on Asoka, wherefrom a modern scholar suggests that she might have been married by Asoka late in his life, obviously on the assumption that young wives have always exercised undue influence on aged husband. The second queen of Asoka was Karuvaki, mother of Trivara mentioned in the Queen's edict. Another Queen referred to in the Divyavadana as his third wife was Padmavati who was the mother of the crown prince Kunala also called Dharmavivardhana. Fa-Hien also mentions

Dharmavivardhana as the son of Asoka who was the Viceroy at Gandhara. From Rajatarangini we have the reference to another son of Asoka, named Jalauka, and a third Tivara born of queen Karuvaki.

Asoka had two daughters, Samghamitra and Carumati, Fa-Hien's writing in the fourth century A.D, and following him Hiuen-Tsang two centuries later mentions Mahendra as brother of Asoka. But as we have already seen, Mahendra was the son of Asoka born of Devi of Vidisa, the beautiful daughter of a merchant. From all this, it is reasonable to believe that although a Buddhist he had a number of queens as well as 'left handed' wives as is evidenced from his mention of avarodhana, ie., harem. Asoka's reference to devikumaras besides his sons Aryaputras as distinguished from devikumaras, though his queens might have been born of his wives other than his queens. About Asoka's private life and habits we have very little information. From Rock Edic VI we have some indirect reference to how he would abide his time when he had no official business to attend to. "Evidently, therefore", remarks Dr. Bhandarkar in analysing the information found in the Rock Edict VI "when Asoka had no business to dispose of, and of course, was not asleep, he was to be found at his capital either regaling in the dining hall, engaged with the inmates of his harem, chatting in his retiring cabin, or inspecting the royal stud, or enjoying a horse ride or beguiling his time in the orchard" 1 About his tastes and fascinations, we have a little bit of information from his first Rock Edict wherefrom we know that even when he was carrying out his programme of stopping slaughter and injury to living beings he permitted only two peacocks and one deer to be killed for his royal dish, the killing of deer was not being very regularly done. This gives us an idea of the food that gratified his royal palate. As a King, before his conversion into Buddhism, Asoka seems to have done what the kings of ancient India would do. He feasted and amused his subjects, for which purpose he followed the celebration of Samajas. The Samajas were of two kinds, one for entertaining the people in a banquet, the chief item of food was meat. The other Samaja was one in which dancing, music, wrestling etc. were performed in an amphitheatre. Hunting was also a part of the entertainment in this kind of Samajas. The Samajas as Nilkanta Sastri mentions were unquestionably a diplomatic mode of keeping the people pleased and satisfied. But such Samajas were all stopped after Asoka began to preach his Dhamma.

THE KALINGA WAR

Asoka had given ample evidence of his ability as a soldier and a statesman even before becoming the king. He was the Viceroy of Ujjain and when there was a rebellion in Taxila and the situation went out of hands of Susima, his eldest brother, who was the Viceroy there, Asoka was sent there to quell the rebellion. To begin with Asoka followed the footsteps of his illustrious grandfather Chandra-gupta Maurya and launched upon a career of conquest and aggression. The Buddhist text Divyavadana mentions his conquest of Svasa (Khasa) country. But the only conquest referred to in his edicts took place in the ninth year of his coronation. In the thirteenth year of his reign and eight years

after his coronation Asoka made war against Kalinga, modern Orissa including Ganjam and included it into the Magadhan Empire. The conquered country was formed into a viceroyalty with its headquarters at Tosali. Parts of Kalinga were within the dominions of the Nanda Kings, the reconquest of Kalinga, therefore, was necessitated by its having severed connection with Magadha after the fall of the Nandas. If we go by the story of a general revolt under Bindusara during which Taxila revolted, it is not "unlikely that Kalinga like Taxila" remarks Dr. H C. Raychaudhuri "threw off the allegiance of Magadha during the reign of that monarch." But Dr. Raychaudhuri also mentions the evidence of Pliny, who based his work on Megasthenes' Indika, that at the time of Chandragupta Kalinga was an independent kingdom with an army of 60,000 foot soldiers, 1,000 horsemen and 700 elephants which was in "Proclivity of War". Thus the evidence of Pliny belies the presumption of a revolt by Kalinga during the time of Bindusara for it was already independent during Chandragupta's time. We now turn to the probability of Kalinga becoming independent after the fall of the Nanda rule in Magadha. According to R. S. Tripathy confusion occasioned by the overthrow of the Nanda rule by Chandragupta was taken advantage of by Kalinga and became independent. Dr. Tripathy remarks that Chandragupta Maurya's pre-occupation in setting the newly acquired sovereignty and building up the administration left no time at his disposal to turn to the conquest of Kalinga. A pertinent question that still remains is why Asoka instead of trying to conquer the Chola and the Pandya countries which his father tried to subdue proceeded to conquer Kalinga. Andhra which lay South of Kalinga had been conquered by Bindusara but when he proceeded to conquer the Chola and the Pandya countries, Kalinga an ally of the Cholas and the Pandyas attacked Bindusara from the rear and became the cause of Bindusara's failure. Thus Kalinga was an enemy of the Mauryas both because its breaking away from the Magadhan empire and particularly because of its turning into an ally of the countries Bindusara wanted to conquer. Kalinga as Nilkanta Sastri remarks became "a thorn in the body politic of his (Asoka's) dominions". "It was, therefore, perhaps supremely imperative to reduce Kalinga to complete subjection". This reasoning of Dr. Bhandarkar is, however, regarded as speculative by Nilkanta Sastri.

The major cause for the conquest of Kalinga was its military strength. We have seen how Pliny described the military strength of Kalinga. R. C. Majumdar remarks that Kalinga was a populous and powerful state. It had thrived on maritime trade. Thus wealth both human and material accounted for the strength of the country and her spirit of independence has been demonstrated by her assuming independent status after taking advantage of the confusion consequent upon the overthrow of the Nandas and her jealous guarding of independence by not allowing Bindusara to conquer her allies, the Cholas and the Pandyas. The huge casualties of the war as described in the Rock Edict XIII with one hundred fifty thousand taken prisoners, hundred thousand slain and as many number dead bear out the hugeness of the army of Kalinga and its highly populousness. Obviously, the Kalinga King must

have added to his army strength between the time of Megasthenes and that of the Kalinga War. For such a strong country remaining in proximity of war on the border of his dominions could certainly not be a matter of indifference to any emperor. Asoka, therefore, felt the need of subjugating Kalinga. The conquest and annexation of Kalinga left Asoka free to carry out his policy of conquest of Chola and Pandya countries to complete the conquest of the whole of the Indian peninsula. But soon after the Kalinga War Asoka became a Buddhist. For a year Asoka was lukewarm but thereafter he began strenuous efforts for promoting the Dhamma for his mind was fired by ennobling aspiration of becoming supreme on earth not through territorial conquests but through conquest of Dhamma and which stood for love, humanity, and nonviolence.

EXTENT OF ASOKA'S EMPIRE

The conquest of Kalinga marks the end of an era in the history of Magadha as also of India. It closed the career of imperial conquests begun with Bimbisara's conquest of Anga. While it ended the era of Magadhan imperial expansion, it marked the beginning of an era of peace and social progress, of brotherliness and religious propaganda, and consequent military inefficiency and political stagnation. The era of Digvijaya was over and the era of Dhammavijaya was to begin. It is worthwhile to consider the final expansion that the Maurya Empire had reached Asoka's conquest of Kalinga. We have a fair idea of the extent of the Maurya Empire under Chandragupta and his son Bindusara. It extended from Herat in the north-west to Mysore and Nellore district of Madras. Under Bindusara Andhra was annexed to the Maurya Empire. It was under Asoka that Maurya Empire reached its apogee in expanse. About the extent of Asoka's empire we have more precise knowledge than we had about the Maurya Empire under his predecessors. Our knowledge is derived from two sources, namely, the find spots of Asoka's edicts and the references in the inscriptions themselves. The peculiarity with Asoka's Rock Edicts is that they are found on or about the frontiers of his dominions. Again, whereas the Rock seems to be engraved in the capitals of outlying provinces, the Minor Rock Edicts are mostly found at places which separate his territory from those of independent or semi-independent neighbours. Thus the find spots of his Rock Edicts and Minor Rock Edicts give us almost a full picture of the extent of his empire. Now as we move from the east proceed westwards noting the findspots and proof of his edicts first come across that near the Bay of Bengal engraved in a village called Dhanli Bhuvaneshwar. One version of this edict is found inscribed in the town of Jaugada in the Ganjam district of the Madras Presidency. Both these versions of the Rock Edicts were put up in the newly conquered province of Kalinga which was the south-eastern limit of Asoka's empire. Towards the north a third copy of Asoka's Rock Edicts has been found near Kalsi in the Dehra Dun district. Two versions of the Rock Edicts have been found inscribed one at Mansera in the Hazara district and another at

Shahbazgarhi in the Peshwar district in the North-Western Frontier Province. Moving towards the South along the Western coast one version has been discovered at Junagarh in Kathiawar and another at Sopara in the Thana district. One set of the fourteen Rock Edicts of Asoka has been found at Yerragudi in the Kurnool district of the Madras Presidency. Mr. Lewis Rice discovered three copies of the Minor Rock Edicts of Asoka at three places in the Chitaldurg district in Mysore. From the find spots of the Rock Edicts of Asoka on the bordering areas of his dominions we get a fairly precise idea of his empire extending to the Bay of Bengal in the east, the northern districts of Mysore in the south, the Ganjam in the South-east, to the North-Western Frontier Province, to the Himalayan region in the north and to Kathiawar and Bombay towards the West. Thus we may say that the empire of Asoka extended from the Himalaya in the north to Madras in the south and from the North-Western Provinces in the west to Bay of Bengal in the east. Now turning to the evidence contained in the body of the Edicts we may find out what places have been named therein as within the dominions of Asoka. Asoka's Rock Edicts II and XIII give us the names of his frontager kings. Towards the north-west outside India reference is to Anittiyoka Yona Raja, i.e., the Yavana King Antiochus II of Syria whose kingdom bordered on the limits of Asoka's empire towards the north-west. This quite fits in with the indigenous and the Greek evidences that Seleukos made over Kabul, Kandahar, Makran and Herat to Chandragupta Maurya. Towards the south the Kingdoms on the borders of Asoka's empire were those Cholas, Pandyas, Keralaputra and Satiyaputra, and beyond India towards the south Tambapanni i.e., Ceylon. Asoka mentioned the following places as within his empire: Magadha, Pataliputra, Khalatikaparvata, Kosami, Lumminigama, Kalinga, Atavi, Suvarnagiri, Isila, Ujjaini, Takshasila. From the Greek source Kidw that Gangaridae, i.e., Bengal was within the empire of Asoka. From Hiuen-Tang's record and Kalhana's Rajatarangini it is known that Kashmir was included in the dominions of Asoka.

In Rock Edicts V and XIII Asoka refers to the outlying provinces of his kingdom. These are Yonas, Kambojas, Gandharas, Rastrika-Petenikas, Bhoja-Petenikas, Nabhaka-Nabhapamtis, Andhras and Parimdas. Except Nabhapamtis and Parimdas, it has been possible to identify all these places. Yonas have been identified with the Greek Colony of Nysa which lay between the Kabul and the Indus. Kambojas have been identified with the province to the South of Kashmir. Gandhara was a province of Asoka's empire with Taxila as its capital. The Rastrikas were the occupants of Nasik and Poona districts, and the Bhojas the occupants of Thana and Kolaba districts of Bombay and parts of Madhya Pradesh and Hyderabad. According to Senart the names mentioned in the Edicts have been placed in a definite order. If this is accepted then Nabhaka Nabhapamtis were somewhere in Baluchistan, and Parmidas as the name follows Andhras, it must have been somewhere in the easternmost part of Asoka's empire. This view is taken by both Hultzsch and N. K. Sastri. In the Cambridge History of India (Vol.

1) Rapson mentions the above areas to be under the sphere of influence of Asoka's empire. Some Scholars take these to be feudatory (Hida raja) states under Asoka. But as Dr. Bhandarkar points out, it was due to a misreading and misinterpretation of a phrase in Rock Edict XIII that they were regarded as feudatory chiefs. But the Girnar version of the same edict has proved beyond doubt that these were all subject peoples of Asoka. Dr. Roychaudhuri also points out that the fact of Asoka's appointing Dhamma Mahamatras in these places and peoples prove beyond doubt they were the subjects of his empire. If we compare the extent of Asoka's empire as we understand from the external evidence, that is the evidence of the find spots of Asoka's Edicts, with the internal evidence, that is, the evidence furnished by the inscription and other recorded sources, we get a dear and precise idea of the extent of Asoka's empire. It comprised whole of India except Kamrupa, i.e., Assam in the east and the Tamil States in the extreme south and upto the borders of the kingdom of Antiochos of Syria towards the north-west.

Administration of The Empire under Asoka

The empire of the Mauryas even under Chandragupta was vast enough to admit its being easily administered. Under Asoka the empire reached its utmost expansion covering almost the whole of the Indian sub-continent. An empire so vast and made up of parts so widely separated as Herat, Orissa and Mysore need a Hercules to administer it effectively and keeping it together in those days of distant past. Asoka, therefore, continued the policy of decentralisation of the administration as it existed under his grandfather and father making certain changes in its functioning. Asoka perhaps had a Deputy or Uparaja like his brother Tissa to assist him. Besides the Uparaja there were the Yuvaraja, i.e., the Crown Prince and Agramatya, i.e., the Chief Minister Radhagupta to help him in carrying out the administration of the empire. He also shared his administration with the Princes, the Kumaras or Aryaputras as they were called, who were appointed viceroys in the outlying provinces of the empire. Asoka's inscriptions mention four such viceroys ruling at Ujjaini, Taxila, Suvarnagiri and Tosali. The Buddhist text Divyavadana mentions Prince Kunala as viceroy at Taxila. Kunala was also known as Dharmavivardhana, referred to in the Chinese traveller Fa-hien's account. The empire was divided into viceroyalties under which were governorships. Obviously the Viceroyalties were divided into divisions, called Pradeshas and the Governors called Pradeshikas in the inscriptions. According to N. K. Sastri the empire was divided into a number of Janapadas or Provinces which were subdivided into Pradesas or divisions, each Pradesa was again divided into aharas or districts and aharas into Visayyas or talukas." There was hierarchy of officials beginning from the Viceroy downwards such as governors or Pradeshikas, and rajukas, or district officers; below the Rajukas came the Purushas, who were of three different ranks. Yuktas were district officers who kept accounts assisted by the Upa-Yuktas. In the separate Kalinga Edicts there has been reference to three Kumaras one in charge of each of the provinces such as Janapadas of Ujjaini, Taxila and Tosali (in Kalinga). In the fourth province with Suvarnagiri as its

capital, the Viceroy is called Arya-putra in the Minor Rock Edict I. The word Aryaputra, as N. K. Sastri says refers to Yuvaraja or the Crown Prince in this case. All the viceroys did not have same measure of autonomy. N. K. Sastri re-marks "we notice some differences with regard to the degree of authority they exercised in their provinces". Whereas the Kumara of Tosali ruled over Kalinga jointly with mahamatras subject to the control of the King himself. Mahamatras were high officials went to the control of Kumaras as in the cases of the Kumaras of Ujjaini and Taxila but were joint rulers with Kumara at Kalinga Asoka's inscriptions mention a few other categories of Officers such as Stryadhyaksha-Mahamatras, Vaprabhategories of Officers mahamatras. According to N. K. Sastri Anta-mahamatras appear to be high officials who accompanied Asoka's envoys to foreign countries. It is worthwhile to mention that the Viceroys had an official hierarchy modelled on that of the imperial government at the centre and were enjoined by the emperor to follow the same procedure in regard to circuit as was followed by the central government. Asoka had a Parishad or Council which he refers to in two of his edicts. In the 3rd Rock Edict the Council appears to act in a subordinate way, for it was being merely expected to order the Yuktas to register the new administrative measures adopted by Asoka. In the 6th Rock Edict the Council appears to have much greater authority. It appears empowered to discuss King's policy in his absence and suggests change or it may discuss emergent matters referred to it by the King. In such cases the decisions of the Council had to be reported to the King without loss of time. But the final decision rested with the King; this shows that the Council was more or less an advisory body. It may, however, be mentioned that the Council in which powerful minister like Radhagupta would be present its decision could not possibly be altogether ignored by the King. It may also be mentioned that King's control over the Council was gradually increased with appointment of new Councillors who were chosen by the King himself and such they were persons who were in favour of his policy. In provincial administration the Council of Minister had much greater power than its central counterpart and it acted, in fact, as a check on the power of the Prince and when occasion would demand, they could have direct contact with the King. At times the King would send direct orders to the ministers bypassing the Prince. The Mahamatras in the viceroyalties would be appointed by the King himself on occasions.

Asoka took punctilious care to see that justice was meted out to the people without any delay or injustice. In his separate Edict addressed to the mahamatras, Asoka emphasised the importance of just behaviour and impartial justice and cautioned them against weaknesses like anger, fatigue, laziness, impatience, etc., which might prejudice a judgment. The jurisdiction in the urban areas was in the charge of the mahamatras and that in the rural area in the hands the mjukas... In the Maurya penal system fine was the prevalent punishment. Those who could not pay the fine might accept bonda In lieu. Capital punishment was also practised. In spite of Asoka conversion to Buddhism in extreme

cases death penalty would given. Although Asoka was not in favour of capital punishment he did Bot do away with the practice. This was obviously an instance of Asoka's prudent statecraft which triumphed over his ideals.

Asoka kept himself informed of everything that was going within his dominions through Pulindas and Pativedakas, i.e., the special re king at all places and all hours. Asoka porters who had access to the king system of espionage was not so complex as to be found in Kautilyas Arthasastra. His reporters were not secret people, they were known to the population and the administration and they went from place to place and made reports to the king.

CHARACTER OF HIS GOVERNMENT

In one way Asoka's administration ushered in a new form of administration. Till we reach the Maurya period the system of government in India was of diverse nature comprising in it kingship small republics and confederation of smaller states. But it was under the 1st Maurya king that a centralised monarchy based on political union of a vast area of the country had emerged. Under Asoka this unity was further extended. Asoka desired a complete control over the country and it was under him that a centralised empire on such a vast scale was established in India. As set forth in the poli tical treatise Arthasastra every detail of the organisation and admi nistration of the State was aimed at giving the final control into hands of the king. According to the traditional concept of Indian kingship of the time the supremacy of the king's authority was meant for pro- tection of social usages and for the welfare of the people. To serve these purposes king's law might even supersede sastra. This gave a tremendous increase in the power of the king but under Asoka this centralised authority took the shape of paternalism. "The previously held idea of the king being a protector, remote from the affairs of his subjects, gave way to the belief that he had complete control over all spheres of social and political life." "All men are my children" defined Asoka's attitude to his subjects and welfare of the subjects became the basic character of his government.

HIS CONVERSION INTO BUDDHISM

Asoka till his conversion into Buddhism had the traditional devotion of the Hindu kings to gods and goddesses. The Kashmir Chronicler Kalhana identifies his favourite deity brought pleasure in splendour of the Maurya Imperial atmospher he took pleasure in hunting, gambling and war. He had no spluple in iter of men and animals. slaughter Like other Princes of royal blood he had no hesitation in defeating the claim of his eldest brother to the throne. Even if we reject the claim of the Buddhist texts and Ceylonese traditions that he had killed his ninety-nine brothers ex- cept the youngest as a fabrication, his struggle for the throne with the help of the Chief Minister cannot be brushed aside. All

this shows him in the true colour of the section of an imperial, house. Even his war of conquest of Kalinga was in complete conformity with his imperial ambition. But the Kalinga War which took place in the ninth year of his coronation and terrible carnage that it resulted in, and the untold miseries that it brought in its train appalled Asoka. The sight of miseries and bloodshed in the sanguinary campaign touched him too deep in his heart and roused in him a deep feeling of remorse and sorrow. In his own words in his inscription (R. E. XIII) he says: "Thus arose His Sacred Majesty's remorse for having conquered the Kalingas, because the conquest of a country, previously unconquered, involves the slaughter, death and carrying away captive of the people. That is a matter of profound sorrow and regret to His Sacred Majesty." Acting upto his feelings of remorse and sornow, Asoka abstained from aggressive war for the rest of his life. To seathe the sword at the moment of success which would have definitely led to further success by way conquest of the Tamil countries which his father had attempted but failed, is a unique experience in history of imperialism. It was at this time that Asoka came under the influence of Buddhism which stood for peace and non-violence. For about two years and a half Asoka remained a lay disciple after which he formally joined the Buddhist Order and became a Bhikshu. He then began to exert himself strenuously for the pro- pagation of Buddhism in which he found solace and peace of mind. As a monk he visited the holy places connected with the life of Buddha. He first visited Sambodhi, i.e., Bodhgaya the place where Buddha became Sambuddha or enlightened one. Later he visited Lumbini Park, the Bethelhem of Buddhism, the birth place of Buddha, where an inscribed pillar still stands to commemorate the emperor's visit. In these visits he was led by his preceptor Saint Upagupta. In due course Upagupta led his royal disciple to Kapilavastu, Sravasti and Kushinagar.

Asoka combined the functions of an emperor and a Buddhist zealot. He even dressed himself in the robe of a monk and at times retired to a monastery after making suitable arrangement for the administration of his empire. "What with the elevating intercourse with the Samgha, ie., monastery and the enthralling sanctity attaching to this place, he became completely transformed and forthwith deve loped into a zealot." Almost like Charlemagne of the Holy Roman Empire of Europe Asoka also adopted the position of the head of both Church and State during the last twenty years of his reign.

HIS ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

Asoka's conversion had its effects both upon internal and ex. ternal policies of the government. In the fourth Rock Edict and the Kalinga Edict Asoka expressed his unhappiness about several mattern in which maladministration in the provinces was a major one. To remove the maladministration Asoka adopted some measures of ad- ministrative reforms. He instituted two kinds of circuits (anusamyana), quinquennial and triennial of state officials like Yutas, Rajukas, Pradesikas and Mahamatras. The

Yutus, Rajukas and the Pradesikas had to go on tour of the different parts of the country every five years. According to H. C. Raichaudhuri their circuit or tour was mainly for propa ganda work. But they had also to look after, supervise and check the work of administration in different parts of the country. The circuit (Anusamyana) of the Mahamatras was triennial and was specially instituted for the purpose of checking miscarriage of justice, arbitrary imprisonment and torture in the outlying provinces like Kalinga, Ujjaini and Taxila. Asoka also created a number of new posts such as Dhamma Mahamatras and Dhamma-Yutas. The Dhamma-Mahamatras were given the protective mission among the people of all sects, the Brah manas, Jainas, Yavanas, Kambojas, Gandharas, Rastikas and all Aparantas. They were also appointed among the servants, masters, wealthy, the helpless, and the aged for freeing them from the wordly cares and propagation of the Law of Piety. They were also employed to grant remission of penalties or execution on the merits of the case. They were also to consider the motive behind the crime and if they found sufficient grounds might even release the convicted person. If the person was of advanced age, or committed the crime on instigation or had dependent children they might as well be released by such Officers.

Dhamma-Mahamatras were further engaged everywhere in the imperial dominions "or indeed in the whole world (Prithivi) as known to the Mauryas, among the Dhamma-Yutas with regard to the concerns of the Law, the establishment of the Law and the business of alms giving". This shows that Asoka appointed a new class of officers called Dhamma-Yutas for looking after the Law of Piety and alms giving. The border countries were placed under the special care of the Avutikas, a new class of officials. Asoka who was anxious to keep himself fully informed of the affairs of the State, whether there was any delay in public affairs, specially in the work of the Mahamatras, gave special direction to the Pativedahas, ie., reporters to report to him immediately whenever any urgent or important matter was committed to the Mahamatras or discussed in the Parishad, From the Kalinga Edicts and the Sixth Rock Edict it is clearly understood how Asoka himself kept an watchful eye on the Mahamatras, especially on those who were entrusted with the administration of justice in cities. He granted much freedom to the Rajukas in their function of awarding honours or penalties so that they might perform their duty with fullest freedom and without any fear. The Rajukas were placed over many hundred thousands of people. Grant of this freedom of action was made only to the Rajukas who obviously enjoyed much respect and confidence of Asoka. In order that there might be uniformity in penalties and procedure, he ordered that all condemned prisoners awaiting capital punishment must be given a respite of three days during which they might appeal to the higher authorities for pardon or prepare themselves for the other world. Asoka also issued regulations legally restricting the slaughter or mutilation of animals on certain occasions. He also effected jail deliveries almost once in every year. Twenty-five jail deliveries were ordered upto twenty-seventh year of his coronation,

CHANGE IN FOREIGN POLICY

Asoka's conversion to Buddhism had its immediate effects on the foreign policy of the country. He declared that it would be a matter of great regret to him if a thousandth part of the sufferings, death and maiming that took place in the Kalinga War were to come upon his people. Asoka assured the unsubdued peoples of the countries on the frontiers of his dominions that they should not be afraid of him, they should trust him and would receive happiness and not sorrow (Kalinga Edict 1). He even assured them that he would bear any wrong done to him, so far as it could possibly be borne with, He eschewed war and declared that the chiefest conquest was not the conquest by arms (Digvijay) but conquest by righteousness (Dhamma. Vijaya). Thus traditional Maurya policy of imperial expansion through wars of conquests was reversed and a policy conquering the hearts of the frontagers through friendliness, love, and peace was adopted instead. In pursuance of his policy of no-war Asoka declared with a feeling of exultation that the reverberation of his war drums (Bherighosa) has been converted into reverberation of Law of Piety (Dhammaghosa). Not content with eschewing war himself, he banned war of conquests by the sons and grandsons even. He declared: "From now my sons and grandsons should not go in for any conquests (Putre papotra me asu navam vijayam ma vijetavyam). In strict conformity with his profession Asoka in practice as well made no attempt to annex the frontier kingdoms of the extreme south such as Chola, Pandya, Satiyaputra, Keralaputra, Tambapamni (Ceylon) which he could have done in a trice should he so desired, The same policy he pursued in regard to the realm of Amtiyoko Yonaraja who has been identified with Antiochos II Theos, King of Syria and Western Asia. On the contrary, he followed a policy of extreme friendliness in his relations with them. Asoka's friendly relations were not confined to the frontagers only, but also kingdoms beyond. He had cordial friendly relations with Ptolemy II Philadelphos of Egypt, Magas of Cyrene in North Africa, Antigonas Gontas, King of Macedon and Alexander of Epirus. He sent his envoys to these countries for propagation of the Law of Piety and as H. C. Raichaudhuri remarks, "Buddhism doubtless, made some progress in Western Asian countries: But the Greeks apparently were not much impressed by the doctrine of non-violence. They seemingly remained friendly towards India for they were aware that Asoka's strong arm, in spite of his repentance, possessed the power to punish and as soon as Asoka was dead the Yavanas once more pounced upon the Kabul Valley, the Punjab, and Madhyadesa and threw these areas into confusion." Asoka's missions seem to have attained greater success in the South. In the Tamil countries of the South, Ceylon as well as in Suvarnabhumi the Law of Piety and through it the culture of India had an abiding influence. We have a clear and precise idea about the constituents of Asoka's Dhamma from the attributes he mentions that fall under the term as well as the specific practices thereof. In the 2nd and seventh Pillar Edicts Asoka mentions the qualities that constitute his Dhamma. These are: Sadhava or bahukayane, ie, much good, apasina, i.e.,

freedom from depravity, daya, ie., mercy, dane, i.e., liberality, Sache i.e., truthfulness, Sochaye i.e., purity and madave, ie., gentleness. Asoka also left indication of how these virtues could be practised or put into action. The enumeration of duties in this connection which vary slightly in different inscriptions are as follows: Daya means anarambha prananam and avihisa bhutanam, ie., non-slaughter of animate beings and non injury to creatures. Dane means liberal behaviour towards friends, acquaintances and relatives, also towards Brahmanas and Sramanas. Madave means hearkening to parents, elders, seemly behaviour to friends relatives, acquaintances, Brahmanas and Sramans. By Sadhava or Kayana he means work of public utility and refers to his own doings in this regard, such as planting of trees by roadside, digging of wells and inns for travelling public. Establishment of healing arrangements for both men and animals, etc. also fall under Sadhava or Kayana. These are all on the positive side of Asoka's Dhamma which one had to perform but there is also a negative side where one has to refrain from doing certain things. These are apasinava which mean freedom from asinava, i.e., sins like cruelty, anger, conceit and envy. Asoka also recommended self-examination and introspection to the followers of his Dhamma. He discouraged religious intolerance and stressed the virtue of Samavaya, ie., concord among peoples of different religions. He clearly pointed out that "those who out of dattachment to their own religion disparage the religion of others, in fact, do much harm to their own religion". Thus Asoka's Dhamma is a comprehensive moral code, comprising positive as well as negative duties as well as warnings against falling victim to normal weakness such as religious bigotry or intolerance. Now let us turn to the summum bonum or the ultimate end for which the Dhamma was to be practised. Even here his Edicts come to our help. In the 6th Rock Edict Asoka says that all his efforts are directed towards making his people happy in this world and in order that they may attain Swarga heaven in the next world. He also compares this world and the world hereafter by use of the terms hidata, palata, or hida-lokika, pala-lokika. In one place he mentions that performance of Dhamma begets endless merit in the next world and enables men to attain Svarga, ie. Heaven. Nature of Asoka's Dhamma The very simple character of the Dhamma taught by Asoka not in full conformity with Buddhism to which he had been converted. This has led Prof. Fleet to remark that Asoka's Dhamma was Raja-dharma, that is a code of conduct and duties prescribed for the kings. We have seen from what we have discussed about Asoka's Dhamma that it is not the duties prescribed for the kings and rulers but a code of conduct and duties for the people to follow for the leading righteous life and to attain happiness in this world and heavenly bliss in the life hereafter. V. A. Smith is of the opinion that Asoka's Dhamma had few, if any, distinctive features. The doctrine he preached was essentially common to all Indian religions. Smith also points out that the only difference of Asoka's Dhamma with Hindu religion is a tinge of Buddhism, rather saturation with ethical thought which lies at the basis of Buddhism. Prof. F. W. Thomas also does not regard Asoka's Dhamma to be Buddhism as it does not mention the "Four

Grand Truths" or the "Eightfold Path or the word Nirvana". Thus these scholars, namely, Smith and Thomas think the non-sectarian and the non-distinctive are not reconcilable with Buddhism. But scholars like Sinart are of the opinion that teachings of Asoka were in some points consistent with Buddhism and his inscriptions reveal the Buddhism of the time of Asoka which was purely moral doctrine and without dogmas or abstract theories. Dr. Bhandarkar, however, does not agree to this view and observes that Asoka's inscriptions do not portray those of Buddhism of his time. A modern scholar says, "if Dhamma was an attempt at preaching Buddhism it would have been inevitable for Asoka to have added that lay person should also pay special attention to the words of Buddhist monks and preachers. But Asoka's explanation of what he means by the Dhamma indicates that it was a secular teaching. For Asoka's Dhamma was a way of life, the essence of which he had called from the teachings of various thinkers known to him and probably his experience of life". Bhandarkar is of the opinion that most scholars do not remember that Buddhism always consisted of two parts—one for the monks and the nuns and the other for the householder and what Asoka taught was the latter form of Buddhism. Prof. B. M. Barua pointed out the institute called *gihī-vinaya*, i.e. institute for the householder and that Asoka was preaching the duties of the householders. The virtues like *daya*, *dāna*, *sādhā*, *sochāya*, etc. are also found in the *Dīgha-nikāya* of the Buddhist scriptures. Even Asoka's *Dhamma-mangalas* have been taken from Buddhist *Sutta-nipāta*. In the twelfth Rock Edict Asoka's exhortation to the people not to disparage other's religions is a development that is found in *Sutta-nipāta*, Prof. R. K. Mookerjee thinks that in his personal religion, Asoka was a Buddhist and the one he preached was different from Buddhism. Dr. Bhandarkar refutes the opinion of Prof. R. K. Mookerjee and concludes that Asoka's Dhamma was Buddhism and he was a Buddhist, About the nature of Asoka's Dhamma it must be mentioned that "he never discussed any metaphysical doctrines nor did he refer to God or Soul but simply asked people to have control over their passion, to cultivate purity of life and character in inmost thoughts, to be tolerant to others' religion, to abstain from killing and injuring animals and to have regard for them, to be charitable to all, to behave with decorum to parents, teachers, friends and ascetics, to treat slaves and their servants kindly, and above all to tell the truth". N. K. Sastri is of the opinion that Asoka was a Buddhist and the Dhamma he preached was not that simple piety which is common to all religions, as Smith thinks, but specific code of moral duties laid down for the lay followers of Buddhism. It was Buddhism for the householders simplified and made practical for the common people to follow. A modern scholar observes that from a study of Asoka's Dhamma it is clear that the ideas that he tried to communicate were socio-religious. Tolerance and humanism, non-violence and concord were the virtues that he wanted his subjects to inculcate. Long period of thirty years free from war was no mean achievement of Asoka and its peace permitted the realisation of the values of Dhamma he sought to settle in the minds of his people.

PROPAGATION OF DHAMMA

WITHIN HIS DOMINIONS

History bears testimony to the propagation of religion by kings and emperors, and the method almost invariably followed by them was the use of the sword. Wars have been fought for propagation of religion, untold numbers died by the sword of proselytising monarchs. Constantine and Charlemagne forced Christianity on their unwilling subjects. But Asoka's Dhamma taught him to sheathe his sword for all time and made him a combination of a saint and a ruler. Whatever might have been the true character of his Dhamma Asoka propagated for the loftiest end in view. He began with a feeling of indebtedness to his subjects, nay, to the entire living world, and whatever effort he made, he says in his 6th Rock Edict, he made in order to be free from his debt to the creatures and in order that he might render some happy in this world and they might gain heaven in the next world. Such were the lofty ideas he had set as his ideal and purpose of the propagation of Dhamma, Non-violence to life as such was the basic principle of his Dhamma and was in fullest conformity with his ideal of service to all living creatures. He took certain practical steps that ensured application of the principle of non-violence in a practical, though in a limited way. (i) He stopped Viharajatra, i.e., pleasure tours which involving killing of animals by way of hunting, feasting, etc. Instead he instituted Dhamma-Yatra, that is pilgrimage to Buddhist holy places on which occasions gifts were given to the brahmanas and sramanas. (ii) He also stopped killing of animals and fowls in the royal kitchen restricting the killing to two peacocks and one deer, but these were also to be given up within a short time as he announced. (iii) The offensive Samajas where public feasts and entertainment were held and which involved killing of animals for meat were ordered to be discontinued and instead Dhamma-Samajas in which the Law of Piety was practised, (iv) Asoka substituted the ordinary mangalas in which superstitious and worthless rites were performed, by Dhamma-mangalas which comprised practice and fulfilment of Dhamma. (v) Asoka in his 7th Rock Edict confesses that he was not the first king to think of propagating Dhamma, there were many others who tried to do so but with no success. He therefore gave this matter most serious and anxious thought. He clearly understood, whatever effort he might put for diffusing his Dhamma far and wide his mission was not likely to succeed if the missionary work was limited to himself. He, therefore, in the twelfth year of his reign commanded the district officials, the Yutus, the Rajukas and the Pradesikas wherever they would go on circuit every five years, to deliver instruction in Dhamma to people in the discharge of their official duties. Obviously, it was a novel and ingenious method of reaching all people of his realm. (vi) Preaching by the royal officials would not have gone very far if Asoka did not devise another method of impressing upon the people his religious instruction. He took his cue from the Buddhist work called

Vima-nawathu. In this work the rewards for virtuous men in the life here-after were described. These rewards were Viman-column supported palace, hastin, a celestial elephant, all white and well-caparisoned. Agikhandani, Gods with resplendent complexion compared to fire, lighting, star etc. Asoka devised to show these spectacles to the people in the Dhamma-Samaja in order to impress upon them the heavenly reward that awaited the virtuous. Such spectacles must have had much influence upon the common people. (vii) Asoka appointed a new class of officials whom he called Dhamma-Mahamatras, appointed among all classes of people even including his brothers' families to see to the establishment, inculcation and increase of the Dhamma, the Law of Piety as well as for the welfare and happiness of those devoted to Dhamma, In the 8th Pillar Edict Asoka says "The same (object) being in view, I have set up Dhamma-Stambhas, appointed Dhamma-Mahamatras and made Dhamma-Sravanas", i.e., proclamation of Dhamma and Dhammanusati, i.e., instruction in Dhamma. K. N. Sastri points out that Dhamma-Stambhas are not pillars in the material sense, it meant public utility work. (viii) The ideal of his Dhamma having been making the life of men and animals happy in the world, Asoka planted trees by the road sides, dug wells and set up inns for the benefits of both men and animals, He also made healing arrangements for both men and beasts. (ix) Asoka had much respect for the monkish Buddhism and in order to preserve the Samgha and to prevent Schism in the Buddhist Church he summoned a Council at Pataliputra and the decisions arrived at that Councils were embodied in his Sarnath Edict. Heresy was suppressed as a result of the Pataliputra Council, Asoka's missionary zeal did not make him inattentive to the growth of heresy in the Buddhist Church. (x) One of the most unique methods ever followed for propagation of Dhamma was Asoka's inscribing Edicts with Dhamma-lipi on rocks and pillars so that people might read them and follow the qualities and virtues enumerated there. The edicts were placed in such places that, as Asoka mentions, even foreigners might see them and inculcate the doctrines laid down therein.

OUTSIDE HIS DOMINION

Asoka did not rest content by propagating his Dhamma within his dominions. He maintained friendly relations with his frontagers as also with countries beyond taking advantage of the friendliness with those countries. Asoka sent his envoys there for the purpose of propagating his Dhamma. He also established charitable institutions in the countries of his frontagers. The Ceylonese Chronicles Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa refer to Asoka's sending as many as nine missions for the propagation of Dhamma. Of these nine, seven were sent to "the countries lying between the Himalayas and Peshawar in the north and southern portion of the Mysore State" in the south. Two remaining missions are said to have been sent to countries outside India, one to Suvarnabhumi or lower Burma and the other to Lanka or Ceylon (modern Sri Lanka). The mission to Ceylon was a complete success. King Tissa of Ceylon was a friend of Asoka and the mission was sent on his initiative either in 251 or 250 B.C.

Mahendra who has been variously described as a brother and son of Asoka was the leader of the mission. Mahendra was aided by his sister Sangha-mitra. The conquest through Dhamma that is Law of Piety was according to Asoka was considered by him to be the chiefest of conquests. The 13th Rock Edict says with confidence that this "has been achieved by the Beloved of the Gods here and in the bordering dominions even as far as six hundred Yojanas where dwell the Yavana King Amtiyoka and beyond this Amtiyoka, the four kings called Turamaya, down below, where we the Chodas, the Pandyas, as far as Tamraparniyas likewise here in the king's dominions among the Yavanas, Kambojas, Beloved the Nabhakas and Nabhapamtis, the hereditary Bhoja rulers, Andhras and Parimdas-every where they follow the teaching of the of the Gods in respect of Dhamma". Asoka also mentions that the conquest he achieved everywhere was a conquest flavoured with love. It goes without saying that Asoka's sending of missions to the countries enumerated in the 13th Rock Edict attained much success and although the effects on the Greek countries were less permanent than elsewhere. Prof. Rhys Davids, however, regards Asoka's claims of success of his Dhamma over whole of India, Ceylon, independent Greek States of Western Asia, Eastern Europe and Northern Africa were a "mere royal rodomontade". But when we consider certain important features in Christianity which are common with Buddhism such as confession, fasting, rosaries etc, and remember Asoka's sending of his envoys (dutas) in the Courts of the contemporary rulers we realise that Asoka's missions contributed in some measures in shaping the tenets of Christianity when infant Christianity met the full-grown Buddhism in those countries later. On Pre-Christian Judaism there was definite and noticeable influence on Christianity. According to J. K. Saurers "The mission of King Asoka are amongst the greatest entered countries for the most part barbarous and full of superstition, and among these animistic peoples Buddhism spread as a wholesome heaven". In the 6th. Rock Edict Asoka's declaration that there was no higher duty than welfare of the whole world and his efforts were all for freeing him from debt to the creatures seem to have been a well fulfilled duty. He obviously had taken his ideal from the Buddhist. Pali-Sutta which mentions the ideal to be followed by one who is aspiring to become a Chakravarti Dharmika Dharmaraj and Asoka had certainly become one such ruler by his righteousness, humanitarianism and his conquest through Dhamma of the world known to him,

EFFECTS OF ASOKA'S MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

The Maurya empire even under the first Maurya emperor Chandragupta extended from the Hindukush to the frontiers of the Dravidian kingdoms of the extreme south of the Indian peninsula, Under Asoka it received further extension by inclusion of the kingdom of Kalinga. Had not Asoka been influenced by the ideal of Chakravarty Dharmika Dharmaraja, the centripetal force that had been organised from the time of Bimbisara would have absorbed the entire Indian sub-continent within the Magadhan empire under the Mauryas making whole of India one nation and even making Pataliputra,

like Rome, the Capital of a world power. Here Asoka's policy of conquest through Dhamma stood in the way and "India was lost to nationalism and political greatness". If India, due to the missionary activity of Asoka, gained in cosmopolitanism and humanitarianism which have become characteristic of the Hindu Society, India lost politically. We have already noticed how Asoka's missionary efforts, his sending out of missionaries to countries like Suvarnabhumi and how through these countries Buddhism spread into China, Korea, Japan etc. in subsequent periods of history.

In the West Asian countries under the Greeks the influence of the Dhamma did not leave much permanent marks, yet the infant Christianity when came in contact with the mature Buddhism in those countries after two more centuries it came to be influenced in some of its aspects. Particularly, the gnostic Christianity was deeply influenced by Buddhism. The Pre-Christian Judaism, namely, the Essenes and Therapeutical sects had been influenced by Buddhism.

But one of the most important effects of the missionary activity of Asoka "was the immense stimulus it imparted to Indian art".¹ Indian architectural material till the time of Asoka was wood, but it was he that made it lithic. The art of stone-cutter was not unknown before the time of Asoka, in fact, it was already at a developed stage. Asoka's rock-cut inscriptions also was not altogether a novel thing, for the Persian monarch Darius had done so long time before Asoka. What Asoka's workmen did in a novel way was to bring stone columns for his inscriptions with artistically sculptured capitals.. Asoka was responsible for the construction of 84,000 Chaityas. The Sarnath Lion capital and the Dharma Chakra are excellent specimens of the lithic art of Asoka's time.

The walls of the hall within the rock-cut caves in the Barabar and Nagarjuni hills have a mirror-like glass even today. Asoka's pillars are specimens of the perfection in the cutting, dressing, chiselling and shaping stones at the time of Asoka, Travellers like Tom Coryate and Whittaker mistook them as brass pillars and Chaplin Terry thought them to be marble pillars, and Heber took them to be cast metal, Sir John Marshall remarks that Asokan pillars with figures of bulls and lions on the Crown are "masterpieces in point of both style and technique, examples of finest carving". The Pillars of Asoka which were on an average 30 feet in height weighing 50 tons must have been an engineering problem with regard to their transportation from the quarries where they were shaped to distances of five to six hundred miles which the people of the time must have solved easily. As late as the second half of the fourteenth century A.D., Sultan Firuz Tughlaq transported one Asoka pillar to Delhi, First 4,800 men and a 42-wheeled cart were engaged to carry the Pillar to the bank of the Jamuna where 20,000 men were needed to place it on boats. The re-erection of the Pillar at Delhi was another strenuous job. One more Pillar from Meerut was also shifted by Firuz Tughlaq to Delhi. The engineers of Asoka's time transported them by some other easier method obviously. "The Fabrication, conveyance and erection

of these pillars bear eloquent testimony to the skill and resources of the stone-cutter and engineers of the Maurya age." Another remarkable act of the Maurya engineers was the construction of the Sudarsana lake by artificially damming up some of the streams of the mountains Raivatak and Urjayat. One of the most noteworthy effects of Asoka's missionary activity as Saunders remarks was the humanising and civilising influence his missions had spread in countries outside India. Within India the contribution of Asoka's missionary activity was the abiding influence of non-violence and humanitarianism which remain ever today as the basic principles of Hindu Society.

What Asoka achieved by his missionary activity was to turn a local sect into a world religion and "More living men cherish his memory today than have ever heard the names of Constantine or Charlemagne", Two other boons that India enjoyed were (1) the communication between the Indian provinces became more frequent and brisk. This led to (2) the universal desire for a common language—a language that would be studied and understood in all provinces for both religious and secular purposes. "This led to the acceptance of Pali or monumental Prakrit as the lingua franca of India", and both secular and religious scriptures came to be written in Pali, Buddhist scriptures which were originally written in Magadhi dialect were now translated into Pali. This effected a sort of a cultural integration of India under Asok Character and Estimate of Asok Our knowledge about the early life and character of Asoka is derived from Buddhist texts like Divyavadana and the Ceylonese chronicles such as Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa, But for his later life we have excellent sources, namely, his Rock Edicts, Minor Rock Edicts, Pillar Edicts and other minor inscriptions from which we can form a dear idea about his personality and character. Difficulty about the Buddhist sources of information about his early life and character is that there has been deliberate fabrication in order to portray Asoka as an Ogre transformed into a saint by the magical effect of his conversion to Buddhism. We may easily ignore such exaggeration, Asoka was born in an imperial family and imbibed all its traditional characteristics. His love of hunting, love of feasting and merry-making, skill in fighting battles, quelling rebellion and administering provinces as viceroy and all that were but normal predilections one may expect in a progeny of an illustrious imperial house. He did not hesitate to put to death his brothers who were opposed to his aspiration to ascend the throne. He superseded the claims of his elder brother to the throne and in doing so he enlisted the support of his father's ministers. He had the normal princely weakness of marrying more than one wife, to have some left-handed wives in different points of the realm. His taste was no less royal and dishes were prepared for his table as suited to his palate. But the real man in Asoka was awakened by the shock of the Kalinga War. What more nobility did any of the great monarchs of the world demonstrate than Asoka's sheathing of his sword at the moment of his great victory? There are innumerable instances in history of monarchs who had been feeding their sword with blood and more blood and one victory leading them to another. Asoka is the solitary

instance of an emperor who shrank from war after victory which opened up opportunity for more victories. What was most peculiar about his character is that he was great both at war and peace. He knew how to field his men in a battle and to wrest victory from his most determined and powerful enemy, Kalinga, he knew no less how to follow the policy of peace and love, humanitarianism and non-violence. An able administrator, an impartial judge, a ruler solicitous of the well-being of his subjects, nay of all men, and animals both in this world and the world here- after, a statesman par excellence, Asoka sought to gather the treasures of wisdom not the trash after which thousands and thousands of rulers ran. Whether as a man or a ruler Asoka stands pre-eminently first among the myriads of rulers of the world that crowd the pages of history. Scholars have compared him with other rulers, ancient, medieval and modern, Hindu, Moslem, Christian and Pagan and have most ungrudgingly given him the highest place of honour. To estimate the achievements of such a monarch is bound to be of absorbing interest and no uniformity of opinions can reasonably be expected. Asoka's achievements divide themselves into two parts, viz., before his conversion, i.e., upto the Kalinga War and after his conversion to Buddhism, As a Prince Asoka assisted his father in the administration of the country as the viceroy at Ujjain and for a time at Taxila where he was sent to quell a rebellion and proved his worth both as an administrator and a general. He succeeded against his eldest brother's claim to the throne on the death of his father. But there can be no doubt that he was the ablest of the sons of Bindusara to ascend the throne. As a monarch he began his career with all the traditions of Maurya imperialism, taking pleasure in hunting, waging war and loving all the royal paraphernalia and liking royal delicacies. It is not a little curious that such a monarch was transformed into an apostle of non-violence, peace and common well-being. It was as if by a magic that he was metamorphosed into a new man and a new soul. The diabolism of the Kalinga War in which hundred thousands of people were done to death, many left wounded and many more carried away as prisoners changed monarch Asoka into Saint Asoka. The horrors of one war of conquest were enough to touch him at the very core of his heart, and the change came upon it, marked a new chapter in the history of the Maurya Empire and of India. The prospect of becoming a world conqueror which would have lured any other monarch and would have possibly turned Pataliputra into Rome of the East did not have any appeal to him. He turned to the service of his people, nay all men, and not only men again, but of all living creatures. The ideal that he wanted to subserve was to make them happy both in this world and the world hereafter. He himself practised what he professed and through administrative changes as well as by sending of missions both to countries within the Indian peninsula and to outside countries of Western Asia, South East Asia etc., he preached the Law of Piety, i.e., his Dhamma. It was no religion in the metaphysical sense of the term, but a code of love, righteousness and humanitarianism. Quinquennial and Triennial circuit of officials, appointment of Dhamma-mahamatras, Dhamma Yutas, etc, for the establishment,

inculcation and increase of Dhamma were the steps that he took within his dominions for the spread of his Dharma, both the material and spiritual aspects of the human life, Asoka brought about a change that transformed the whole concept of Kingship and the Maurya government was modelled the whole theocracy, tolerant of all lives and beliefs. In his personal life he practised what he professed and he became an ardent devotee of Buddhism and practised the most rigorous injunctions of a Saint's life avoiding the least transgression from what he believed and sought to preach. With regard to foreign countries he pursued the policy of love and friendliness. He transformed the reverberation of the war-drum into the reverberation of the drum of peace and he issued injunctions to his future generations against territorial conquests. He assured his frontagers not to be afraid of him, for they would receive nothing but love and peace from him. He made healing arrangements for both men and beasts within his own countries as also in the realms of his frontagers. He revolutionised the concept of the king's duties by declaring *Sabbe bhikkhava eva me putraya*, i.e., all men are my children and thinking that the king is indebted to his people and could be free from the debt by doing their welfare. If Europe could produce enlightened despots only in the eighteenth century, India produced one and the very best ever produced who placed the welfare of his subjects above everything, and it was Asoka. All the same Asoka has been held responsible for the rapid decline and fall of the Maurya Empire. "The martial ardour of imperial Magadha had vanished with the last cries of agony uttered in the battle fields of Kalinga. Asoka had given up the aggressive militarism of his forefathers and had evolved a policy of *Dhamma-vijaya* which must have seriously impaired the military efficiency of his empire."¹ The military weakness of India in the post-Asokan period is also testified by the Yuga Purana section of the Gargi Samhita. In pursuance of his policy of propagation of Dhamma and total withdrawal from the path of militarism and war he turned his civil administration into religious propagandists and "entrusted the fierce tribesmen of the North-Western Frontier and in the wilds of the Deccan to the tender care of the Superintendents of piety and did not rest till the sound of the war-drum was completely hushed" Dr. Bhandarkar also holds the same view when he says: "Asoka's new angle of vision, however, sounded a death-knell to the Indian aspiration of a centralised national State and World-wide empire. The effects of his policy became manifest soon after his death." Religious her question is whether the Maurya empire would have survived even if Asoka pursued the policy of aggressive militarism It would perhaps been possible to bring the Tamil Kingdoms of the South within his empire after the victory at Kalinga, knowing as we do that

Bindusara's attempt to conquer the Tamil countries of the south was frustrated by the support rendered to those countries by Kalinga Asoka's assurance to the frontagers that they had nothing to fear from him also bears out the position of strength that Asoka had in relation to the frontagers. If we hold for argument's sake that Asoka conquered the remaining independent Kingdoms and tribes within the Indian sub-continent would it have ensured permanence to his empire? Had his successors been not those capable of keeping the reigns of such an empire in their grip, the empire would have definitely fallen into pieces sooner or later. "But the moral ascendancy which Asoka was mainly instrumental in bringing about, remained for centuries as monument to his glory and has not altogether vanished even now after a lapse of more than two thousand years." History is replete with instances of mighty empires dwindling into nothingness, thrones eaten up by moths, sceptre kissing the dust, swords consumed by rust and monarchs forgotten in the moth-eaten chapters of history, but in India there was a monarch, Asoka, who instead of all earthly treasures, gathered the treasures of wisdom, peace, love and non-violence which have ever since been the proud heritage of India.

ASOKA AND AKBAR

It has been customary to compare Asoka with great monarchs of history, particularly Akbar the Great, True both Asoka and Akbar are the most conspicuous in the long roll of Indian monarchs, yet there are more things to be contrasted than compared between them. If one war was sufficient to change the heart of Asoka, Akbar remained all throughout his life a man of inordinate ambition eager to earn the fame of a conqueror. Again while Akbar conquered by the sword, Asoka conquered by love and humanitarianism. Akbar was diplomat but in the distinctly and obviously sincere concept both were zealous in discharge of charge of kingly duties, yet their concept of kingly duties and ideals were different. Both were men of good taste and both shared no pains to choose the best of men for their services and both did honest work. Both were also preachers of religion, but while Asoka's success as a preacher turned a local sect into a world religion, Akbar's Din-Ilahi, a political religion, proved a total failure. But above all both were solicitous of the well-being of their subjects, both were Catholic in their views and tolerant of others' religions and both left their impress indelibly on the canvass of history and deserve the epithet 'Great.

HIS PLACE IN HISTORY

To determine Asoka's place in history, it is necessary to remember the ideals that guided him and the motives that impelled him. From his different edicts it is possible to get a clear idea of the ideals that he had set before him. Prof. Charpentier's contention that Asoka's inscriptions concealed rather than expressed his own personality and his ideas and ideals, are not accepted by scholars. Welfare of the whole world was his ideal and he thought himself indebted to the creatures and what little effort he made was to make them happy in this world and that they might gain heaven in the next

world. (R. E. VI). Such were his ideals. His idea of welfare of the creatures comprised men, animals and creatures. The temporal as well as the spiritual well-being of the whole animate world were his concern. Again his welfare measures for the happiness of the men and beasts were not confined within his own empire but were spread to the countries of his frontagers. He declared "all men are my children"-Saba munise paja mama.

Asoka's motive was to become Chakkavatti Dhammika Dhamma- raja. It was through spiritual conquest, that is through love and humanism and not through terrestrial conquests that one might become a Chakravarti Dharmika Dharmaraja. He, therefore, eschewed war for good, geared his entire administrative machinery to the propagation of Dhamma, i.e., Law of Love and Piety. He set up edicts so that people might inculcate the moral virtues set forth therein. He sent envoys to foreign countries for the spread of his message of love and humanism. For temporal happiness of men and beasts he constructed roads flanked by trees, dug wells and rest-houses for the comforts for both men and beasts, travellers, made curative arrangements Curative arrangements were made by him/even in the countries of his frontagers. By this policy of Dhamma Vijaya he seemed to have attained what he had in his mind and the Buddhist Text Divyavadang actually calls him Chaturbhaga Chakravarti Dharniko Dharmarajo, Now what place could Asoka be assigned in history? According to Prof. Rhys David Asoka's conversion to Buddhism and his munificent endowments to the Samgha were the first step towards on the down ward path of Buddhism, the first step to its expulsion from India, just as the religious benefactions of Constantine were the cause of the spiri. tual decay of the Christian Church, But Dr. Bhandarkar points out that decay of Buddhism at a remote subsequent period of time could not be due to Asoka and also asks where is the proof of Asoka's mis directed endowments to the Buddhist Church. We must not forget that Constantine spread Christianity with the help of the sword, Asoka spread his Dhamma through love and humanism. If Constan tine tolerated other religions, it was for political reasons but Asoka's toleration was inherent in his Dhamma. Asoka has also been compared to Marcus Aurelius, Charlemagne, Omar Kaliff I, etc. There were others who might have been great warriors or administrators like Asoka. Some might as well have been superior to Asoka in mental culture (e.g. Marcus Aurelius) but in the totality of temporal and spiritual good done to the animate world, in humanism and toleration no prince is worthy of being compared to Asoka. In the estimation of the European Scholars Alexander, Caesar, and Napoleon are world's greatest monarchs. But H. G. Wells pertinently questions "what were their permanent con. tribution to humanity-these three who have appropriated to them- selves so many of the pages of our history ?" But Mr. Wells gives Asoka the first place of honour when he says "amidst the tens and thousands of monarchs that crowd the columns of history, their majes ties and graciousness and serenities and royal highnesses and the like, the name of Asoka shines, and shines almost alone a star. From the Volga to Japan his name is still honoured, China,

Tibet and even India, though it has left his doctrine, preserve the tradition of his greatness. More living men cherish his memory today than have ever heard the names of Constantine or Charlemagne". Dr. Copleston says, "Asoka was not merely the Constantine of Buddhism, he was Alexander with Buddhism for Hellas, an unselfish Napoleon..." Dr. Macabhai thinks that Saint Paul is the only historical character that can be rightly compared to Asoka.

SUCCESSORS OF ASOKA

The vast empire of Asoka extending from the foot of the Hindu-kush to the borders of the Tamil countries in the extreme South was incapable of being ruled over by any weaker kings. When after an eventful reign of thirty years Asoka died in 236 B.C. his sceptre which was "the bow of Ulysses" could not be drawn by any weaker hands. Unfortunately, after the wealth of historical materials for the period of the earlier Mauryas, particularly for that of Asoka, we enter into a period of obscurity and the genealogy after Asoka cannot be drawn up with certainty. We have to depend on scanty data supplied by one or two inscriptions and on the genealogical lists given in the Brahmanical, Jaina and Buddhist works which are both confusing and discrepant. The Brahmanical, i.e., the Puranic source, however, gives us more or less correct names of the later Maurya rulers as also the total span of the period they ruled (137 years). Asoka had many sons of whom the name of only one, Tivara, is found in the inscriptions, but the names of three other sons, Mahendra, Kunala also known as Dharma-Vivardhana, and Jalauka are referred to in literature, Tivara does not seem to have ascended the throne either because he predeceased Asoka or for any other reason we are not aware of. According to Vayu Purana Kunala succeeded Asoka, ruled for eight years and was succeeded by five rulers the last of whom was Brihadratha. Matsya Purana, however, gives a different list of the successors of Asoka and his immediate successor being Dasaratha-Vishnu Purana again gives a third list. The last king Brihadratha's name appears in all these lists and that of Dasaratha in more than one. Kalhana in his Rajatarangini mentions Jalauka as Asoka's successor in Kashmir. It is, therefore, difficult to reconcile the divergent versions given by different sources. From three brief dedicatory inscriptions on the walls of the rock-cut caves on the Nagarjuni hills, dedicated to the Ajivikas we come across the name of Dasaratha who adopted the epithet Devanampiya, who ruled for eight years and who was according to the Puranas was Asoka's grandson. Dasaratha's name was Kunala who was also known as Dharmavivardhana and probably also as Suyasa. From the Buddhist legend it is known that Kunala was the heir apparent of Asoka but he blinded himself "on account of the intrigues of his step-mother Tishyarakshita" thus his son Dasaratha became the immediate successor of Asoka. According to Vayu Purana Kunala's son was Bandhupalita. Bandhupalita may have been Dasaratha himself and Indrapalita who succeeded Dasaratha may have been Samprati. According to Dr. V. A. Smith Dasaratha and Samprati were brothers reigning simultaneously in two parts of the empire, Dasaratha over the eastern

part while Samprati ruled over the western part. Dr. H. C. Raichaudhuri points out that Dr. Smith's hypothesis is in- correct in-as-much as Samprati, according to the Jaina writers, ruled over both Pataliputra and Ujjaini. According to the Puranas al Dasaratha was succeeded by his son Samprati. The Jaina records speak highly of Samprati's efforts for the propagation of the Jain faith. Smith's view, therefore, has been rejected by the moder writers. In Acharya Jinaprabhusuri's Pataliputrakalpa it is stated that "In Pataliputra flourished the Great King Samprati, son of Kunala, lord of Bharata with its continents"." Samprati was succeeded by Salisuka. This is proved by the Vishnu Purana, Gargi Samhita and Vayu Purana. He is supposed to be identical with Vrihaspati, son of Samprati referred to in the Divva. vadana, The last of the imperial Mauryas was Brihadratha mentioned by the Puranas as well in Bana's Harshacharita. He was assassinated by his general Pushyamitra. With the assassination of Brihadratha the Maurya imperial line of Magadha came to an end after 137 years of rule in 187 B.C.

During the half century following the death of Asoka the Maurya empire was fast passing through a process of disintegration. Accord. ing to Rajatarangini Jalauka, one of the sons of Asoka set up an inde- pendent Kingdom in Kashmir, with himself as the ruler and con- quered Kanauj. He is said to have crushed off the invading "Mlechcha Horde". This is perhaps a reference to the invasion by the Bactrian Greeks which was to become a formidable menace in future. On the evidence of Taranath we come to know of another successor of Asoka who set up an independent Kingdom at Gandhara Poet Kalidasa in his drama Malavikagnimitram refers to Vidarbha as independent Kingdom. On the north- western frontier that a King named Sophagasenus, i.e., Subhagasena was ruling independently is referred to by Greek writer Polybius who wrote about 206 B.C. That the disintegration of the Maurya empire was speeded up by the centrifugal forces after Asoka's death and the Yavana invasion i.e., the invasion of the Bactrian Greeks. The final blow was adminis tered by Pushyamitra, Commander-in- Chief, who assassinated his royal master Brihadratha and established a dynasty known as the Sunga Dynasty.

DECLINE AND FALL OF THE MAURYA EMPIRE

The vast empire of the Mauryas that comprised practically the whole of the Indian Sub- Continent and beyond, and reared on the political theories of Kautilya, reached its tragic end with the assassins tion of the last of the imperial Mauryas, Brihadratha, at the hands of the traitor regicide Pushyamitra, Commander-in-Chief. The end came within barely fifty years of Asoka's death. That within half a century from the time when Asoka had to assure his frontagers that. they had nothing to fear from him, the empire became extinct, has given cause to scholars to identify the factors that speeded up the decline and fall of the Maurya empire. According to one school of thought, Asoka's religious policy mainly accounts for the debacle. The Chief exponent of this school of thought is

Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Sastri who is of the opinion that the reaction prompted by the Brahmanas against Asoka's policy of patronising Buddhism and deliberately humiliating the Brahmanas led to this reaction. He and others of his way of thinking see the hands of the Brahmanas in the revolution headed by Pushya- mitra. Haraprasad Sastri thinks that Asoka's edicts were directed against the Brahmanas and these were specially offensive as these were promulgated by a Sudra. Asoka's prohibition of animal sacrifice enjoined by Brahmanical religion, his appointing of Dhamma Maha- matras as superintends of morals among the Brahmanas thereby in- fringing the privilege of the Brahmanas, his introduction of Vyavasharasamata and Danda-samata i.e., equality in treatment as well as punishment of the Brahmanas with all other castes infringing the special consideration always shown to the Brahmanas have been enumerated as the causes prompting the Brahmanical reaction. Dr. H. C. Raichaudhuri argues at length that prohibition of: animal sacrifice was not specially directed to the Brahmanas, for long before Asoka, non-violence had been recommended in Sruti. Further it has been proved beyond doubt that Asoka's Grand-father, Chandragupta was not of Sudra extraction, but was a Kshatriya of the village Mayuraposaka in Pippalivana. Further, the Dhamma-maha- matras were no more superintendents of morals. They were entrusted with the duties of the promotion of welfare also of the Brahmanas and the establishment of the Law of Piety which included liberality to the Brahmanas. Again, there is nothing to show that Dhamma- mahamatras were all appointed from the non-Brahmanas. It has also been pointed out by Dr. Raichaudhuri that Brahmanas were not immune from principle of equality before Law and in punishment. In Brihadaranyaka Upanishad it is clearly laid down that a priest, i.e., Purohita (Brahmana) might be punished with death for treachery towards his master. Pandit Sastri's contention that as soon as the strong arm of Asoka was withdrawn the Brahmanas revolted against his successors. This is not borne out by history. In Rajatarangini we come across definite evidence that Jalauka and the Brahmanical Hindus of Kashmir were on most friendly terms. About Pushyamitra's revolt it cannot be said that he being a Brahmana his revolt was an expression of Brahmanical reaction. We must not forget that his revolt can be better accounted for his hold over the army rather than his leadership of a band of discontented Brahmanas,

According to another school of writers the root cause of the fall of the Maurya empire was Asoka's policy of non-violence which he had adopted as state policy and which totally sapped the martial ardour of imperial Magadha. He gave up the aggressive militarism of his forefathers and disabanded his army. He not only eschewed all wars but also enjoined upon his sons and grandsons to do so. All this had the natural effect of impairing martial spirit and military efficiency of the empire. But it was not, by itself, the only cause of the downfall of the empire. We must seek for other causes as well, The Maurya empire was ruled by a central authority, and it is no wonder that such a vast empire could not be kept together from the centre, particularly when weaker rulers succeeded to the throne,

Empires rose and fell not only in India but also in other parts of the world and nearly one and half centuries that the Mauryas empire endured cannot be considered too small a span of time. The Maurya empire had certain natural causes, also traceable in the factors of the downfall of other empires. These were the spirit of autonomy, oppressive nature of rule by the royal officials, rebellious disposition of the governors of outlying provinces, official treachery, palace intrigues and difficult communication with distant parts of the empire. Taxila was in repeated revolt. The oppressive rule of the local officials led to the revolt of Taxila once under Bindusara when Asoka had to be sent to put it down. Even under Asoka it once revolted. This attempt at repeated revolts was symptomatic of what were happening elsewhere of the empire. Even if there were no open revolts the willingness was definitely there. The Kalinga Edicts show that oppression by his officials was very much known to him and he did not hide his displeasure in this regard. If even under Asoka there was cause for anxiety at the neglect of duty, one can simply imagine what happened under Asoka's weak successors. That there were intrigues and treachery in the imperial court is evident from the treacherous conduct of Pushyamitra, Such treacherous conduct could not be the result of momentary impulse or short-time preparation, There are also grounds to believe that the Maurya Court after the death of Asoka was gradually divided into two factions one headed by Pushyamitra, the Commander-in-Chief, and other by the minister. The minister managed to place his son as governor at Vidarbha and the Commander-in-Chief his son as governor at Vidisa. To the above weaknesses should be added the invasion of the Bactrian Greeks from the north-west. From Syria to whole of Western.

DECLINE AND FALL OF THE MAURYA EMPIRE

Asia upto the borders of Hindukush were under Seleukos. About 250 B.C. two provinces of Bactria and Parthia revolted against the Selencidan dynasty and became independent. Attempt to reconquer them by Antiochos III, King of Syria, failed and in 208 B.C. independence of Bactria and Parthia was recognised. Soon afterwards, the Bactrian and Parthian Kings turned their eyes towards India. About 190 B.C. Demetrius invaded India, when Brihadratha was the Maurya emperor and wrested considerable portion of his empire in the north-west. The revolt of the Andhras, success of the raid of the Bactrian Greeks and loss of north-western part of the empire dealt a severe blow to the prestige of the empire and confusion reigned supreme in the country. Obviously, Pushyamitra, the Commander-in-Chief of the Maurya army, took advantage of the situation and killed his master Brihadratha while he was reviewing his army and thus put an end to 137-year old dynasty founded by Chandragupta Maurya, Yet, there need be no regret, for empire of Asoka would have gone the way of many more mighty empires of the world even if he had pursued the policy of aggressive militarism; it would be only a question of time. But the moral ascendancy of the Indian culture over a large part of

the civilised world which Asoka's policy had brought about has not vanished even today, after a lapse of two milleniums.

POST-MAURYA DYNASTIES (IN NORTHERN INDIA)

I. The Sungas (1871-75 B.C.)

With the fall of the Mauryas we enter into a broken, desultory period of Indian history the unity of which is lost for the time being, through the north-western gates of India hordes of outlanders poured in and established aggressive monarchies in Gandhara, Western Malwa, and the Punjab. The Andhras and the Kalingans had torn off from the empire. The connection of Madhyadesa, i.e., Central India with the valleys of the Indus and the Godavari had been snapped.

The continuity of the history of India would have been broken but for our sources of information such as the Puranas, Gargi, Sam. hita, the Mahabhasya of Patanjali, the Vedic Literature, the Divya vadana, the Mahavikagnimitra of Kalidasa and the Harshacharit of Bana etc.

The story given by the Puranas of the assassination of the last of the imperial Mauryas, Brihadratha by Pushyamitra, while the former was inspecting the muster of the imperial army is corroborated by Bana in his Harshacharit, a work about eight centuries later. Lack of direct evidences, such inscriptions, etc., has made the lineage of Pushyamitra a subject of controversy among scholars. The origin of the regicide family is wrapped up in mystery.

Panini traces the origin of Pushyamitra Sunga to the Brahmana class of Bharadwaja. The association of the Sungas with the ancient priestly fan families is proved by the Vedic literature. In the Brihadranyaka Upanishad the had the Saungayani. i.e., the descendant of the Sungas, is mentioned as a teacher in the Vamsa Brahmana. This view is also held by Keith and Macdonell. Kalidasa in his Malavikagnimitra refers to Pushyamitra as belonging to the Baimbaka family of Kashyapa clan. This also supports the view that the Sungas were Brahmanas,

Divyavadana, however, calls Pushyamitra a scion of the Maurya family. One writer even goes to the extent of calling the Sungas as Iranians because their names ended with 'Mitra' i.e., worshippers of Mithra (the Sun) like the Iranians. The Puranas mention Pushyamitra as belonging to the Sunga family. The balance of opinions is definitely in favour of the Brahmanical origin of the Sungas.

The assassination of Brihadratha in the very presence of the army and there being no reaction on the latter proves that Pushyamitra was preparing for the event from some time back and had the tacit support of the army behind. Pushyamitra's accession does not seem to have led to any mentionable opposition and the people seem to have acquiesced in the change of Dynasty as the later Mauryas had proved unworthy of rule and incapable of stemming the tide of the Greek invasion and keeping the parts of the empire together. Yet the "astute statesman took adequate measures to ensure against all eventualities". It was as a part of the scheme that a minister of late King Brihadratha was imprisoned,

The Crown-prince Agnimitra was appointed Viceroy at Vidisa. Another Viceroy at Kosala was probably a relation of Pushyamitra, Agnimitra's brother-in-law Virasena (wife's brother) was placed in charge of a fortress on the frontier of the Kingdom on the bank of the Narmada.

From *Malavikagnimitra* it is learnt that Yajnasena, brother-in-law (Sister's husband), a minister of Brihadratha established an independent kingdom in Vidarbha when there was the overthrow of the Maurya rule by Pushyamitra. This made him a natural enemy of Pushyamitra, Yajnasena arrested and imprisoned his cousin Madhavasena who was the governor of the frontier and a personal friend of Agnimitra. The latter asked Yajnasena to release Madhavasena but Yajnasena agreed on condition that his relation, a former minister of Brihadratha, who had been imprisoned by Pushyamitra must also be released. This enraged Agnimitra who marched against Yajnasena who surrendered. Vidarbha was divided between Yajnasena and Madhavasena and both acknowledged the suzerainty of Pushyamitra. This extended the sphere of influence of the Sunga King upto the Narmada region. Pushyamitra's dominions comprised only the central portions of the Murya empire. The north-western boundary was ill-defined but tradition credits the house of Pushymitra with having exercised con- Madhavasena and both acknowledged the suzerainty of Pushyamitra, was still the capital of the Sungas. Vidisa formed one of the vice-royalties under the Crown-Prince Agnimitra. Pushymitra was now the undisputed master of Northern India and in order to proclaim his sovereignty he undertook the performance of the asvamedha, i.e., horse sacrifice. In Ayodhya inscription of Dhanadeva, Pushyamitra is said to have performed two horse-sacrifices. No ruler can let loose the sacrificial horse unless he is sure of its safe return and any ruler or monarch who would feel himself stronger might catch hold of the horse which would lead to war with the King who has let loose the sacrificial horse and naturally no king aspires after a horse sacrifice ceremony if he were not sure of his strength and supremacy. The second horse sacrifice seems to have taken place at an advanced age of Pushyamitra, for his grandson Prince Vasumitra, son of Agnimitra, was an already grownup Prince to lead the escorting force along with a hundred princes who guarded the sacrificial horse. While the horse was wandering on the right banks of the Indus it was seized by a squadron of Greek horsemen of Menander, a relative of the Bactrian monarch Eukratides and King of Kabul and the Punjab who having formed a design to emulate Alexander, advanced with a formidable force into the interior of India. The horsemen who seized the sacrificial horse of Pushyamitra must have been an advance column of Menander. In a hotly contested battle between the Greeks and Vasumitra, the former were completely routed and the Greek King was obliged to retire to his own country. The sacrificial horse was brought back to Pataliputra and the horse-sacrifice was held. This means, that the territories of Pushyamitra extended upto the Sindhu, i.e., the Indus. There is a sharp difference of opinion with regard to the identity of this river Sindhu referred to in *Malavikagnimitra*. Prof. Rapson identifies it with Kali Sindhu, a tributary of the river Chambal near

Chitor. But Dr. H. C. Raichaudhuri adducing strong arguments has conclusively proved that the river referred to is the Indus. Pushyamitra is, however, supposed to have met with two reverses. According to Prof. Rapson, he lost Ujjaini to Andhra King Satakarni. He has come to this conclusion by identifying Sata with Satakarni, But recent discoveries have proved Prof. Rapson's identification Sata with Satakarni as incorrect, since Sata is an abbreviation of Satava- hana and not Satakarni,

On the basis of a statement in the Hatigumpha inscription of Kharvela of Kalinga, it has been suggested that Kharvela attacked Magadha and defeated Bahasatimita who is identified with Pushyamitra. But R. P. Chanda and Allan have demonstrated the incorrectness of the suggestion on the basis of epigraphical and Philological grounds. According to Allan the name cannot be read as Bahasatimita. Again Prof. Rapson's suggestion that Sakala, i.e., Punjab was wrested by Menander during Pushyamitra's life-time is untenable on the ground that reference to Greek invasion in the mahabhasya and Yugapurana must have been the invasion of Demetrius,

Pushyamitra ruled for 36 years (187-151 B.C.). According to Dr. Smith, his horse-sacrifices with all formalities of Brahmanical worship, marked the early stage of Brahmanical reaction. The exaggerated regard for the sanctity of animal life and prohibition of bloody sacrifice during Asoka's reign led to this Brahmanical reaction under Pushyamitra, which developed fully after a Samudragupta. few centuries under On the basis of semi-mythological stories of the Buddhist writers, Pushyamitra was not content with the peaceful revival of Hindu rites, but indulged in a savage persecution of Buddhism. He is said to have burnt Buddhist monasteries and put to death monks from Magadha to Jalandhar. Many Buddhist monks who escaped his sword took shelter in the Kingdoms of other rulers. Dr. Smith observes that "It would be rash to reject this tale as wholly baseless, although it may be exaggerated".

1 N. N. Ghosh as also K. P. Jayaswal are of the opinion that Pushyamitra cannot be exonerated from the blame attributed to him about persecution of the Buddhists. Jayaswal mentions the pitiless policy pursued by Pushyamitra against the Buddhists in the north. At Sakala Pushyamitra set "a price of 100 gold pieces on the head of every Buddhist". N. K. Sastri is, however, of the opinion that religious persecution in ancient India was an exception and when it is kept in mind that Buddhist writers have a general tendency to distort facts, for example, in characterising Asoka, we cannot give same credence to their stories. as some writers have done "while it may be conceded that some Buddhists, particularly the monks, may have suffered from certain disabilities the story of a general persecution of all and sundry is. evidently the invention of frustrated minds which found that the State patronage was rapidly being shifted to the Brahmins, and were aghast at the revival of ancient Vedic ritual of the asvamedha"

It is also suggested by N. K. Sastri that the overthrow of the Maurya Dynasty which was a bulwark of Buddhism made the Buddhist irreconciled to the rule of Brahman Pushyamitra and this. may have been political cause of their discomfiture. From K. P. Jayaswal's reference to pitiless persecution of the

Buddhists at Sakala which was a base of Menander, raises the pre- sump- tion that the Buddhists there may have allied themselves with the Greeks and thereby earned the punishment all traitors deserve. Had it been a policy of senseless persecution, how one can account for the survival of Sanchi Stupas, Bharut from Pushyamitra's fury? On the contrary some of the beautiful railings of these monuments were made during the Sunga rule, and a donation was made to a Stupa at Bharat. Dr. H. C. Raichaudhuri points out that Pushyamitra Sunga did not dispense with the services of his Pro-Buddhist ministers and the Oudh, Malwa Court of his son was graced by Pandit Kausiki. Mahavamsa testifie to the existence of numerous monasteries in Bihar, and adjacent provinces between 101-77 B.C. Dr, Raichaudhur observes that "Though staunch adherents of orthodox Hinduism, uri Kings of the line of Pushyamitra do not appear to have been as in. tolerant as some writers represent to be".

SUCCESSORS OF PUSYAMITRA SUNGA

There is divergence of opinion about the date of the death of Pushyamitra. But according to generally accepted chronology his rule ended in 148 B.C. (according some 151 B.C.) and his son Agni- mitra succeeded him in the same year.

Agnimitra was Viceory of Vidisa during the reign of Pushyamitra and reduced Vidarbha to submission to Pushyamitra's suzerainty. He is the hero of the playwright Kalidasa's Malavikagnimitra, For eight years he ruled over the Sunga dominions, but no events of this period are known. Unless the copper coins bearing the inscription Agnimitrasa in Brahmi scripts, discovered at Panchala can be ascribed to him no evidence of his time has been found.

Agnimitra was succeeded by Sujoyeshtha who ruled for seven years, No information about his period is available. He was in his turn, succeeded by Sumitra in 133 B.C. Sumitra has been identified with Vasumitra, Pushyamitra's grandson who led the escort with one hundred princes guarding the sacrificial horse let loose by Pushya- mitra and when an advance column of Merander's cavalry seized the horse, he defeated them. After his accession to the throne he, already a middle aged man, lost his vigour and martial spirit of his youthful days and gave himself up to ease and pleasure. This offered an opportunity to the forces of disintegration and disruption of the empire which began to raise their ugly heads. According to Bana Sumitra, i.e., Vasumitra met with the tragic end of life being assas- sinated by one Mitradeva or Muladeva, while he was enjoying a concert. Muladeva or Mitradeva was the lord of Kosala' who after killing his suzerain made himself fully independent. According to N. K. Sastri "this was the first secession from the empire" and with this loss the Sunga hold on the west of Magadha was lost. Kosala was not the only part of the empire to secede. We come across coins of rulers of Panchala, Kausambi and Mathura of about this period which presupposes that these areas also

tore off from the Sugna Empire about this period. The Sugna empire was thus reduced to only Central Indian Territories and Magadha. According to the Puranic list the next three kings were Andhraka, Pulindaka and Ghosha, But scholars are of opinion that there hattes pule inserted in the list due to some confusion of the editor of these texts. In fact, ajramith 123re not Sunga kings. Vasumire these seteeded by Vajramitra in 123 B.C. and not by Andhrakam is known of the reign of Meiramitra. He was succeeded by Bathing in 114 B.C. From an inscription of a fragment of a stone pillar of Bhagavata discovered at Bhilsa one Gautamiputra is credited with the setting up of a flag-staff in the honour of God Vishnu in the most important temple at Bhilsa. At Besnagar, a place two miles away from Bhilsa, on a Garuda Pillar there is an inscription which refers to the setting up of this pillar in honour of Lord Vishnu by Heliodorus, a Greek, who was sent by the Greek king Antialcidas of Taxila, in the fourteenth year of king Bhagavata. The Garuda Pillar set up by a Greek shows the friendly relations between the Indo-Greek kings in the Punjab and the Sungas, but also the vitality of the Indian culture that influenced the highly civilised Greeks who became devotees of Indian gods. Bhagavata ruled for 32 years and was succeeded by Devabhuti in 82 B.C. According to Bana Devabhuti was of dissolute nature, fond of women's company. He was murdered at the instance of his minister Vasudeva, by the daughter of a female attendant disguised as a queen. Devabhuti ruled for ten years before he was assassinated in 73 or 72 B.C. The curse that had descended on the Sungas with the murder of Brihadratha by Pushyamitra pursued the dynasty and it also met with the same fate of a tragic end at the instance of another traitor regicide. Vasudeva after contriving the murder of his master ascended the throne and founded the Kanva or Kanvayana dynasty. The Sunga dynasty was not, however, totally swept out. Vasudeva permitted the Sunga kings to rule former dominions. in obs obscurity in the corner of their Importance of the Sunga Period of Indian History Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri observes that "The rule of the emperors of the house of Pushyamitra marks an important epoch in the history of India in general and Central India in particular".

The Greek dynasties on the borderland of north-western India sought to emulate Alexander in invading India after the fall of the imperial Mauryas and by renewed incursions they threatened to submerge whole of Central India. But they received a check at the hands of the Sungas and had to revert to the friendly and peaceful policy during the whole of the Sunga period, of their Seleukidan precursors. Pushyamitra's rule is important not only for stemming the tide of foreign (Yavana) invasion but also for arresting the disintegration of the Magadhan empire which throughout the century of Sunga rule extended upto Bhilsa in central India and perhaps upto the banks of the Indus.

The Sunga period saw the beginning of the Brahmanical Hinduism as is exemplified by two horse-sacrifices at the time of Pushyamitra, which after a few centuries reached full development under the Guptas. The exaggerated stories of the cruel persecution of the Buddhists by Pushyamitra have

been refuted by historians by pointing out that pro-Buddhist officers were allowed to serve under the Government and the Buddhist monuments at Bharut, Sanchi, etc. remained undemolished; on the contrary the railings of Sanchi Stupa had been added to under the Sungas. Punishment to the treacherous Buddhists who may have sided with Greeks was well deserved. The Sungas were orthodox Hindus no doubt, but there is nothing to show their intolerance to Buddhists or any other religious sect. (iv) The inscriptions discovered at Vidisa and Ghosundi testify to the growing importance and prevalence of Bhagavata religion. Although the Sungas did not indulge in missionary activities on behalf of Hinduism, the influence of Bhagavata religion spread on the Greeks as is exemplified by the setting up of a Garuda column by a Greek named Heliodorus at Besnagar.

In both art and literature the Sunga period left impress of its genius on the history of India, comparable to the glory of the Guptas. Vidisa (Besnagar) grew into an important centre of ivory and stone-carving. The ornamental stone gate at the Sanchi Stupa was the work of the artists of Vidisa. Foucher remarks that "it was the ivory workers at Vidisa who carved, in the immediate vicinity of the town, one of the monumental gates of Sanchi". Rockcut stupa at Bharut is the most famous monument of the Sunga period. "They (the Sungas) were responsible for the fine gateway railings which surround the Sanchi Stupas built by Asoka." The gate and railings of the Sanchi Stupa stand even today as excellent specimens of lithic ornamental art of the Sunga period. The Sunga period also witnessed a revival of literature specially in central India. Gonarda was the birth place of Patanjali, the greatest literary genius of the period. His Mahabhashya, a commentary on Panini's grammar is a celebrated piece of Sanskrit literary work. This period also saw the development of Sanskrit language which gradually reached the peak under the Guptas.

II. THE CANVAS (75-30 B.C.)

The plot which killed the dissolute Sunga king Devabhuti brought the contriver of the plot Vasudeva, his Brahmana minister, on the throne of Magadha. Vasudeva's dynasty came to be known as Kativa or Kanvayana after the name of his gotra. The chronology of the Kanva dynasty is a matter of controversy. Kanva dynasty should be regarded According to Dr. Bhandarkar the Kanva contemporaneous with, the Sungas. But the distinct testimony of the Puranas and Bana prove that the rois faneant of the Sunga stock to lingered to rule in a corner of the former Sunga empire have not we considered as the Sunga kings the last of whom, Devabhuti, was killed by Vasudeva. Vasudeva was succeeded by three of his descendants and the entire dynasty comprising the rule of four kings covered a forty-five years. Vasudeva was succeeded by Bhumintintal, period of and Susarman. According to Dr. Smith the short period of forty-five years covered by four reigns indicates that the times were disturb- ed and the succession to the throne was often affected through violent means, Although in the

Puranas it is mentioned that the Kanvas would keep the neighbouring kings in subjections and would rule righteously, nothing really is known about the reign of any of the Kanva kings.

MAGADHA AFTER THE CANVAS

Dr. Raychaudhuri observes that very little is known about the history of Magadha proper after the fall of the Kanvas and the veil of obscurity is not lifted till the rise of the Guptas. It is, therefore, difficult to reconstruct the history of Magadha in the intervening period of nearly three hundred years. A number of copper coins have been discovered in Rohilkhand with names ending with 'Mitra', such as Agnimitra, Jethamitra, Bhumimitra as also Bhadrachosa. These kings have been identified with the Sunga and Kanva kings of the same name. But these identifications although plausible are not definite. It is not known in what relation these Mitra kings stood with the families of the Sungas and the Kanvas. The kings with names ending with Mitra seem to have been replaced eventually by the Scythian Satraps both in Pataliputra and Mathura, and the Scythians themselves were ultimately supplanted by the Naga and the Gupta kings. It may, however, be concluded that some of the Mitra kings might have ruled in Magadha after the fall of the Kanvas. In any case, it will be reasonable to hold that a large number of independent states flourished in Northern India during this period.

DISINTEGRATION IN THE POST-KUSHANA PERIOD;

The fall of the Kushanas and the Andhras was followed by a period of political disintegration and for about a century India was divided into a large number of independent States whose struggles and varying successes formed the main features of this period. For some time no great political power emerged in India. During the third century and early part of the fourth nothing definite is known about the dynasties that ruled over northern India except those of the Punjab. The imperial city of Pataliputra, however, continued to be a place of importance as far late as fifth century but little is known of the dynasty that ruled there in the 3rd century. V. A. Smith, therefore, remarks, "The period between the extinction between the Kushana and Andhra dynasties about A.D. 220 or 230, and the rise of the imperial Gupta Dynasty, nearly a century later, is one of the darkest in the whole range of Indian history". We have already seen how the local chiefs of different dynasties, such as the Nagas, Yandheyas, Malavas, Kunindas, etc., had torn the Kushana empire into pieces.

THE NAGAS

The most important of the local chiefs were the Nagas. They were a non-Aryan tribe of ancient India who worshipped serpent. Epigraphic and numismatic evidences show that the Nagas lived in different parts of India. In the Post-Kushana period the Nagas flourished at Vidisa, Kautipura, Mathura and Padmavati. According to the Puranas seven Naga kings ruled in Mathura after the downfall of the Kushanas. These rulers might have originally vassals of the Kushana kings. From numismatic

evidence we come across the name of Maharaja Ganendra or Ganapa at Padmavati. This king has been identified with king Ganapatinaga who was defeated by Samudragupta. We mere Canapatining Nagasena in Bana's Harshacharita. In the Puranas we come across the names of nine Naga kin of Padmavati, three of them might have been Bhavanaga, Ganapa Naga and Nagasena. Bhavanaga is also mentioned in the Vakatab who were Siva worshippers. to the family of Bharasivat. The most important contributions of the Bharasivas was, accord. ing to Jayaswal, the foundation of the tradition of Hindu freedom and Sovereignty. According to him the Bharasivas re-establish Hindu sovereignty in Aryavarta. "They restored the imperial throne and the national civilisation and gave a new life to their country. They revived Asvamedha after a lapse of some four centuries Jayaswal is also of the opinion that the Nagas were the founders of modern Hinduism and the edifice was reared by the Vakatakas and elaborated by the Guptas. Jayaswal's view is not accepted by modern scholars as an ex aggeration of the achievements of the Nagas. Further contention s not corroborated by any independent evidence. The fact, however, remains that the Nagas were local chiefs in different parts of India and made themselves independent when decadence set into the Kushana rule. That there were other Naga rulers in other parts of India is prov ed by the testimony of Harisena's Allahabad inscription where there is reference to Nagadatta, Nagasena, Nandi, etc., who are supposed to have been Naga rulers. Achyuta of Ahichhatra is also believed to be a Naga king. Marriage of Chandragupta II with Kuveranaga who is mentioned as Naga-Kulotpanna leaves us in no doubt that the princess belonged to the Naga lineage.

THE MAGHAS OF KAUSAMBI

From epigraphic and numismatic evidences we come across names of Bhimsena, Pothasri, Bhadramagha, Sivamagha, Satamagha, Vyayamagha who seem to constitute the dynasty called the Magha Dynasty. They originally belonged to Rewa and Vindhya Pradesh but in course of time extended their authority over Kausambi and the adjoining regions. From the Bandhagarh inscription it is found that Bhimsena was the first member of this Dynasty. He seems to have ruled in Rewa and parts of Allahabad district. His dates fall in the period of the imperial Kushanas and in all probability he was a feudatory of the Kushana emperor. He Kautsiputra Pothasri. His father did was succeeded by his son not strike any coins in his name as he was a feudatory chief. But Pothasoi minted coins in his own name and it is presumed that he assumed independent status when Vasudeba I was on the Kushana throne. Pothasoi seems to have ruled conjointly with his son Bhadrama- gha. The next ruler was probably Sivamagha. Two other Magha rulers are known from the coins. These were Satamagha and Vijay- magha. The line of succession of the Magha rulers has not been defi- nitely known to us.

Probably the last mentioned two rulers had been last of the Maghas before they were conquered by Samudragupta.

The other ruling tribes which shook off the Kushana suzerainty taking advantage of the weakness of the successors of the imperial Kushanas were the Yaudheyas, Kunindas, Kulutas, Madrakas, Aryunayanas, and the Malavas about whom reference has already been made.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE GUPTA DYNASTY

The source materials for the reconstruction of the history of the Gupta Dynasty are as varied as numerous. Besides epigraphic, numismatic and literary evidences of indigenous nature we have evidences of Chinese travellers for the Gupta period.

EPIGRAPHIC

Among the epigraphic evidence, Harishena's Allahabad Pillar inscription is the most important. It gives us a narrative of the imperial conquests of Samudragupta. The Eran and Bhitari inscriptions give us the details about Samudragupta's nomination of his successor Chandragupta II. Dr. Fleet's valuable work *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, a compilation of the inscriptions of the Gupta Kings from 360 to 466 A.D. and 484 to 510 A.D. gives us an extremely valuable source of information about the Gupta Kings. Eran inscription (Stone No. 2) of Samudragupta's time contains record of Samudragupta's power and achievements. Bhitari inscription of Skandagupta mentions his fight with the Huns and the Pushyamitras. This inscription also records the exploits of Samudragupta.

The Udaygiri Cave inscription, Sanchi, Mathura and Gandhara stone inscriptions of Chandragupta II Vikramaditya's time furnish us with religious attitude of the Gupta monarchs. Junagarh rock inscription, Indore copper plate inscription give us information about Skandagupta's reign. There are other minor stone inscriptions which also supply some details about one or the other ruler of the Gupta Dynasty.

NUMISMATIC

A number of coins belonging to the Gupta rulers have been discovered, from which most valuable information has been gathered about the taste, religious beliefs, etc., of the Gupta monarchs as also about their system of their time. Allan's work named *Catalogue the coins of the Gupta Dynasty* makes a systematic and chronological study of the coins of the Gupta Kings. Samudragupta issued coins with his parents Chandragupta I and Kumaradevi's images struck, coins with his commemorative inscriptions. In nature we have also variety of coins of Samudragupta depicting him as an archer, lion slayer, playing on a lyre, etc. He also issued Asvamedha type coins. The varieties of the coins of Chandragupta II Vikramaditya such as Chhatra type, Lion-Slayer type, Conch-type, archer type, similarly the Asvamedha type, tiger-slayer type, elephant rider type coins of Kumaragupta give us some idea of the

personal prowess, taste, etc., of the Kings. Coins were by and large made of gold. Chandragupta II. however, issued some silver coins. The legends on the coins some- times had poetic merit.

SEALS

A number of seals of different officers as well as of the queens and brothers of the rulers have been discovered. Mahadevi Dhruvasvamini, queen of Chandragupta, Govindagupta, Viceroy of Vaisali and officers of different status, high and low, affixed seals to authenticate their orders. These seals throw an interesting light on the gradation of State officials as well as on the provincial administration.

MONUMENTS

Monuments of the Gupta period illustrate the existence of different centres of art and architecture of the time. Mathura, Benares, Nalanda were the important centres of art and architecture. The seated Buddha image belonging to the Benares school of art, now preserved in Saranath Museum, is a masterpiece of sculptural art of the Gupta age. Temples of the Gupta age give us a fair idea of architectural technique and religious beliefs of the people. Temples of Vishnu, Siva, Durga, Buddha, Bodhisattva, Jaina, etc., show the different religious sects living at that time although the Gupta period marked a Hindu revival. From a temple at Udayagiri it appears that Ganga and Jamuna rivers were deified and worshipped as goddesses.

LITERATURE

Literature was by far the most important sources of our information for the Gupta period. Out of eighteen, five Puranas, namely, Vayu Purana, Matsya Purana, Brahmanda Purana, Bhagavat Purana and Vishnu Purana, are important with regard to the Gupta period. Scholars like Kirfel, Pargiter, Jayaswal have demonstrated the worthiness of the Puranas with regard to the dynastic list of the Guptas, the extent of the Gupta empire, in different provinces, etc. The Puranas also give us a clear idea of the dominions of the Guptas which were under direct imperial rule and the areas under Gupta suzerainty. Besides the Puranas which are an important source of information for the Gupta period the Dharmasastras, the Smritis of Vyasa, Pulastya, Harita, Pitamaha, etc., which were probably written during the Gupta Period furnish us with considerable historical information. Kamandaka Nitisara was a political treatise meant to be followed by the King. The work was written probably by Sikhara, the Chief Minister of Chandragupta II. It was based on principles comparable to Machiavellian ideas. The poetic-dramas (Kavya-nataka) like Setukavya, Devi Chandraguptam, Mudrarakshasa, Kanmudi Mahotsava, etc., give us an idea of the political condition of the Gupta period. Devi Chandragupta of Vishakhadatta, the author of Mudrarakshasa, is a political drama and like the latter gives us much historical information. The drama Mudrarakshasa refers to contemporary events leading to the founding of the Gupta Dynasty. It is a treatise giving political and diplomatic guidelines which also

throw light on religious condition of the time and spirit of toleration that characterised the Gupta rule. We get a list of the peoples and tribes during the reign of Chandra-gupta II, such as the Sakas, Kiratas, Yavanas, Kambojas, Parasikas, Gandharas, Maghas, etc.

ACCOUNTS OF FOREIGN TRAVELLERS

The Chinese traveller Fa-hien who visited India during the time of Chandragupta II left an account about India which is called Fo-Kuo-Ki which means Record of Buddhist Kingdoms. Although the primary purpose of Fa-hien was to collect Buddhist manuscripts and legends, yet he has incidentally left details of the Social, economic and religious condition of the people of the time. I-Tsing, another Chinese pilgrim, who visited India in the seventh century mentions a Gupta King Sri Gupta who built a temple at Mrigasikhavana. This Sri Gupta is taken by scholars to be the founder of the Gupta Dynasty.

ORIGIN AND FOUNDATION OF THE GUPTA DYNASTY

It has not yet been possible to disentangle the controversy about the origin of the Guptas. Our source of information is too meager to admit of any definite conclusion and origin of the Guptas still remains obscure and the Satavahana records refer to the name Gupta as far-fetched to connect these Guptas with the imperial Gu but it is far fetched in the Fourth Century AD. Not is it reasonable who flourished insha of Kaumudinahotsavas identificandragupla identify in penal Guptas. K. P. Jayaswal has identified the Gupta of the imperias has not been accepted by scholars, Dr. H. C. R the claim of Prabhavati Gupta, Chandragupta II's daughter, that she belonged to Dharanagotra Chaudhuri's argument based on her husband's gotra was different, that the Guptas might have been related to the queen Dharini, the Chief Queen of Agnimitra of ten Sunga Dynasty is rejected by R. C. Majumdar as highly hypothetical. Dr. S. Chatterjee in his History of Northern India remarks that in Panchobh inscriptions there occur names of Kings ending with the surname Gupta, who claim themselves as of Kshatriya origin and it is probable that the Gupta Kings were Kshatriyas. But the veil of obscurity about the origin of the Guptas has not been lifted as yet because of the different suggestions made by different scholars which remain highly hypothetical.

If the origin of the Guptas remains obscure and has given rise to a variety of problematic suggestions, the original home of the Guptas also remains equally controversial and no definite conclusion has been reached as yet. According to Allan and some other scholars the Guptas were rulers of a principality near Pushpapura which has been identified with Pataliputra. The Vayu Purana, Vishnu Purana and Bhagata Purana refer Magadha as the original Gupta territory and extended along the river Ganges up to North-west Bengal. K. P. Jayaswal on the other hand thinks that the Guptas were feudatory chiefs under the Naga Dynasty and originally belonged to the Allahabad region. There is yet

another opinion. Dr. D. C. Ganguly pointed out that the original home of the Guptas was Murshidabad in Bengal and not Magadha. He relies on the statement of I-Tsing who visited India in 672 A.D. that 500 years before his time, that is the second century, a Chinese traveller Hui-lun visited Nalanda and found that Maharaja Sri Gupta built a temple Mrigashikhavana for the Chinese priests and endowed twenty-four villages for its upkeep. It was 40 Yojanas to the east of Nalanda. Dr. Ganguly thinks 40 Yojanas along the course of the Ganga. Dr. Ganguly from Nalanda would bring one into Murshidabad and identifies the Gupta King who built the temple as the founder and identifies the Dynasty. Fleet and other scholars do not understand the Gupta on Maharaja Sri Gupta with Maharaja Gupta, for while the latter flourished in the third century A.D., the former as referred by I-Tsing flourished in the second century A.D. Dr. Ganguly. But Allan ultimately accepted the view of Dr. R. C. Majumdar on the other hand points out that in the picture of Stupa found in Nepal there is a label Mrigasthapana Stupa of Varendri. From this it is clear that it was Varendri, the original home land of the Guptas. Thus we find there are two opinions that the original home of the Guptas was Murshidabad, i.e., Radha and that it was Varendri, i.e., North Bengal. Now if we consider Dr. S. Chatterjee's suggestion that the temple referred to by I-Tsing which was 40 Yojanas, i.e., 240 miles east of Nalanda was in Malda and not in Murshidabad, our problem is somewhat solved. According to Dr. Chatterjee 240 miles east of Nalanda along the courses of the Ganges will bring one to Malda in Varendri but not to Murshidabad in Radha. But there remains yet another problem. According to the Puranas as also Allan the original home of the Guptas was in Magadha and it is also accepted that the Gupta empire included Bengal. This would mean that the Guptas were originally the rulers of a small principality near Pataliputra in Magadha and gradually rose into prominence and extended their sway upto Bengal. Conversely, the Guptas, as we find from the reference to Mrigashikhavana temple might as well have originally belonged to Bengal and extended their sway over Magadha. These are still in a conjectural stage and no definite conclusion can be reached at this stage of our knowledge.

THE GUPTA RULERS

From the evidence of Hui-lun referred to by I-Tsing as also from inscriptions we come across the names of the first three Gupta Kings. Maharaja Sri Gupta was the first Gupta ruler but we do not know who were his immediate successors. Two names which appear in inscriptions are those of Maharaja Gupta and his son Maharaja Ghatotkacha. In the Gupta records Ghatotkacha has been described as the son and successor of Sri Gupta. In the records of Prabhavati Gupta, daughter of Chandragupta, this Ghatotkacha is mentioned as the founder of the Gupta Dynasty. But with the next King Chandragupta I we find a marked difference in the title assumed by him from those adopted by his predecessors. When Sri Gupta, Ghatotkacha, etc., assumed title of Maharaja Chandragupta I was

the first King to adopt the more dignified title of Maharajadhiraj, i.e., King of Kings. This makes a difference. It seems Chandragupta was a King of a higher status than

his predecessors who it has been suggested might have been feudals. was the first ruler of the Guptas and was the real founder of the Gupta Dynasty, But this difference in titles is not very conclusive testimony since in the Plates Chandragupta I and even Samudragupta are called Maharaja of opinion that Chandragupta I was the first true sovereign of the line. He ascended the throne in 320 AD the initial year of the Gupta era.

CHANDRAGUPTA- I

With the accession of Chandragupta I, the history of the Gupta gets a continuity and assumes a political purpose which were absent from the time of fall of the Kushanas. Historians like Dr. Raychaudhuri, Dr. Smith, and some others have attached undue importance to the matrimonial alliance of Chandragupta with Kumaradevi, the Lichchavi princess. The union of the Gupta and the Lichchavi houses has been invested with a diplomatic wisdom by them which is not accepted by other scholars. Raychaudhuri thinks that Chandragupta I "Like the Great Bimbisara he strengthened his position by a matrimonial alliance with the powerful family of Lichchavis then controlling portions of Bihar and perhaps even Nepal. The Lichchavi princess Kumaradevi must have brought to her husband's family an enormous power and prestige." The importance of the Lichchavi marriage is supposed to be also borne out by the coins of Chandragupta with the image of Lakshmi with the legend Lichchavayah meaning the blessings of Lakshmi were due to the Lichchavis. It is also suggested that Chandragupta was raised by his Lichchavi marriage from the status of a local chief to that of a sovereign as his assumption of his title of Maharajadhiraja proved. Chandragupta also struck coins in conjointly with his name and that of his queen Kumaradevi. Further, his son Samudragupta took pride in describing himself as the son of the daughter of the Lichchavis. Dr. R. D. Banerjee's opinion is also very much akin to those of Dr. Raychaudhuri and Dr. Smith. Dr. Banerjee thinks that Chandragupta I's accession to strength due to the Lichchavi marriage helped him to liberate Magadha from the Scythian occupation. But liberation of Magadha by Chandragupta is not corroborated by any other evidence. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Allan, and some other scholars do not, however, accept the above view of Dr. Smith and Dr. Raychaudhuri. According to them the pride of the Guptas in their Lichchavi blood was due to the fact that the Lichchavis were an ancient lineage rather than to the material advantage derived from the marriage. According to Dr. Majumdar the Lichchavi marriage gave Chandragupta I political advantage, not social, nor material advantage any importance. According to Dr. Majumdar undue importance has been attached to this marriage by Dr. Smith and Dr. Raychaudhuri. In fact, the Lichchavis were the ruling clan of Vaisali in the sixth century B.C. but the time of the Guptas they ruled over Nepal Valley. Again there is nothing to show that the Lichchavis might have been ruling

over two adjoining regions and the marriage at best might have added to the power and prestige as a result of the unity of two kingdoms.

The Puranic verse, Anu-Ganga-Prayagamcha Saketam Magadhamstatha Etan Janapadan Sarvan Bhokshyante Guptavamsaja, which means that the Gupta dynasty would enjoy Prayaga (Allahabad) on the Ganges, Saketa (Oudh), and Magadha (South Bihar), has been taken by Allan and Pargiter to refer to the dominions of Chandragupta I. From the list of the conquests of Samudragupta it appears, these might have been within the dominions of Chandragupta I. According to Allan Vaisali was one of the earliest conquests of Chandragupta I. But Vaisali (North Bihar) was neither conquered by Samudragupta nor occupied by Chandragupta through Lichchavi marriage as the Lichchavis at the time of the Guptas ruled over region between Vaisali and Nepal. In the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta there is reference that Samudragupta's empire extended to the borders of Nepal. From this we may presume that North Bihar was within Samudragupta's dominions and may have been included in his time. According to the evidence of the drama Kaumudimahotsava Chandrasena usurped Magadha from King Sundarvarman who was ruling there and died in defending Pataliputra. Dr. R. K. Mukherjee identified Chandragupta I with Chandrasena and observes that after accession to strength as a result of Lichchavi marriage Chandragupta I conquered Magadha. Dr. R. C. Majumdar thinks that the identification of Chandrasena with Chandragupta I is extremely far-fetched and unacceptable as historical truth. Lack of reference to Pundravardhana, i.e., North Bengal, as a conquest of Samudragupta, in the Allahabad inscription has led Prof. Radhagovinda Basak to suggest that Pundravardhana was within the dominions of Chandragupta I. Prof. Basak would have his believes that Chandra of Merherauli Iron Pillar near Delhi was none else than Chandragupta I. This suggestion has been rejected by scholars. It is, therefore, highly uncertain whether the extent of the dominions suggested by different scholars, to have belonged to Chandragupta, is historically correct. The only reasonable conclusion that may be arrived at from the evidences referred to above and by following the process of elimination of the conquests under Samudragupta referred to in the Allahabad inscription, is that Chandragupta I ruled over Bihar, North Bengal, Oudh. We have no evidence as to the inclusion of Allahabad in his dominions. Chandragupta I was the founder of the Gupta imperial Dynasty and he is credited with the founding an era known as Gupta era and from 319 A.D. according to some scholars and 325 A.D. by others. An important act of Chandragupta I was his summoning an assembly of his councillors and the members of the royal family in whose presence he nominated Samudragupta to succeed him. This choice of his successor with the concurrence of the councillors and the members of the royal house which ensured a peaceful and smooth succession, gave the dynasty by far the greatest of the emperors. Some authors, however, basing their view on the evidence of some

coins of Kacha suggest that he was the eldest brother of Samudragupta and preference given to Samudragupta in matters of succession perhaps led to rebellion by him. But this is not certain.

SAMUDRAGUPTA

Samudragupta, son of Chandragupta I and the Lichchavi princess Kumaradevi, was declared successor to the Gupta throne in presence of the councillors and members of the royal family raises the presumption that Samudragupta was not the heir-apparent. From Harishena, author of the Allahabad Pillar inscription indicates that the assembly was held in tense atmosphere and Chandragupta's selection of Samudragupta as his successor caused disappointment among a section of the royal family. We must not also lose sight of the fact that Samudragupta was born of the Lichchavi queen Kumaradevi and this might have been one of the causes of his selection as the successor, besides the capabilities of Samudragupta. In fact, Chandragupta embraced his son and "in accent surcharged with emotions" declared "Thou art worthy, rule this world". The presumption that Samudragupta was not the eldest son of Chandragupta I is raised by the fact of the declaration in full court selecting Samudragupta as the successor as also by some coins issued in the name of Kacha who, it has been suggested, was the eldest brother of Samudragupta. Even if we agree to this view, there seems to have been no rebellion of any serious nature and had there been any rebellion by Kacha it must have been put down by Samudragupta, easily. Some historians identify Kacha with Samudragupta himself but it is by no means certain. The tense atmosphere in the assembly where Chandragupta I declared Samudragupta as his successor, and the disappointment in a section of the royal family have been due to the claim of a better legal claim. Samudragupta was great as a warrior, and a ruler often no less great as a man. Fortunately, the eulogy contained in the Allahabad Pillar inscriptionately we have Poet Harishena which gives us considerable details about the conquest, rule and personality of the monarch although about the events of the reign is difficult to follow due to damages of the inscription in parts. There are also a large number of coins of the time of Samudragupta which also supplement our knowledge of the reign and personality of the King. Samudragupta was a thoroughgoing imperialist, an Indian Napoleon who turned his arms against northern, central, and southern India and built a vast empire through conquests. Harishena in his panegyric classified Samudragupta's conquests into four categories geographically: (i) Nine Kings of Aryavarta or the Gangetic plain, (ii) Chief of the forest tribes of Central India, (iii) Eleven Kings of the South, and (iv) Rulers of the frontier Kingdoms and republics. A number of rulers, nine of whom are specifically mentioned in the Allahabad Prasasti felt the brunt of Samudragupta's aggressive policy. Samudragupta appears to have been a true follower of Kautilyan Machiavellism: "Whoever is superior in power shall wage a war. Whoever is possessed of necessary means shall march against his enemy." His campaigns against the Kings of Northern India was ruthless war of extermination. He defeated and crushed them

and annexed their territories to his dominions of these nine Kings of north, Ganapati-naga and Nagasena were of the Naga family who set up three Kingdoms at Padmavati, Mathura, and Vidisa. Achyuta and Chandravarman were Kings of Ahichchatra (near Bareilly) and Western Bengal (in Bankura) respectively. The Kingdoms of five other kings whose names are mentioned cannot be identified. They are Rudradeva, Nagadatta, Matila, Nandin, and Balavarman. But from the mention of the frontier Kingdoms and republics, it is possible to get a fair idea of the dominions which were under his direct rule. These frontier Kingdoms and tribal states which paid taxes, rendered obedience and obeyed orders of Samudragupta are well known to us. These were Samatata (South-east Bengal), Kamrupa (upper Assam), Nepal, Davaka (Nowgong district in Assam, or Dacca?) and Kartripura (Kartarpur in Jullundar district). These Were Tributary Kingdoms mentioned as situated on the frontiers of Samudragupta's dominions. Tribal territories which are mentioned as situated on the frontiers as feudatories, were the Malavas, Arjunayanas, Yaudheyas, Madras or Madrakas, Sanakanikas, Abhiras, Prarjunas, Kakas. If we consider the position of the tributary States on the frontier of Samudragupta's dominions, we can get cast it the extent this empire in the north. Towards the east it included Bengal, to its South-eastern extremity. In the north it ran grazing the any southern foothills. Towards the west it extended to Madra or Madraka in the Punjab and probably included the eastern district between Lahore and Karnal. From the Punjab, the boundary ran along the Yumuna upto Chambal and then southwards upto Bhils and Jubbulpore, and to the Vindhya range. The Atavi rajyas, ie forest Kingdoms of Central India were also within his dominions. The northern conquests must have been completed and the conquered territories absorbed in the dominions under Samudragupta's direct rule before he undertook invasion of the Southern Kingdoms, a task as Dr. Smith remarks "which demanded uncommon boldness in design, and masterly powers of organisation and execution". In his Southern campaigns he defeated King Mahendra of Kosala in the Mahanadi Valley, Vyagararaja of Mahakantara (forest region of Jey. pore in Orissa), Mahendra of Pishtapura (Pithapuram in Godavari district), Hastivarman of Vengi (Pedda-Vengi near Ellore), Ugrasena of Palakka (Nellore District), Vishnugopa of Kanchi (Conjeevaram), Damana of Erandapalla and Kuvera of Devarashtra. Four others Kings Mantroraja of Kaurala, Svamidatta of Kothera, Nilaraja of Avamukta, and Dhananjaya of Kusthalapura cannot be identified, Although some of the Kings of the south cannot be identified, yet it is presumed that Samudragupta proceeded along the Eastern and southern parts of Central India to Orissa and thence along the eastern coast upto the Kingdom of the Pallavas and probably beyond Madras Samudragupta was not without the genius of statesmanship. He captured the Kings of the Kingdoms of the South after defeating them. But he foresaw the practical difficulty in absorbing their territories within his dominions and to bring them under his direct control Samudragupta's farsightedness prompted him not to absorb his South Indian conquests to his dominions. He set the

Kings of the Southern Kingdoms free allowing them to rule over their own Kingdoms as his feudatories. The wisdom of this step is borne out by the fact that there was no permanent annexation of these southern States; "the triumphal victor admitting that he only exacted a temporary submission and then withdrew". According to Dr. Smith Samudragupta must have despoiled the rich treasures of the South, and came back with golden booty. Samudragupta's supremacy was acknowledged by the powerful Sakas of Western Afganist Western Malava, the Kushanasators of endia, Punjab and Afghanistan referred to in the Allahabad inscriptions is Daivaputre Shahishahanushahi. We have no details about the military campaign in these areas, nor have we any clear idea of the exact nature of Samudragupta's relations with these rulers. They, however, attended Samudragupta's Court, gave their daughters in marriage to the imperial family, used imperial coins as their currency. Discovery of coins with names as Samudra and Chandra as also use of Gupta coins by the Scythian rulers of the frontier Kingdoms indicate exercise of Gupta sovereignty over those areas. Now, to summarise the extent of his empire in full, we find the dominions under the direct control of Samudragupta in the mid-fourth century A.D. comprised all the most populous and fertile countries of the Northern India extending from the Brahmaputra on the east to the Jamuna and Chambal to the west, and from the foot of the Himalayas in the North to the Narmada in the South. On the borders of these wide limits there were the frontier Kingdoms of Assam and the Gangetic delta as also those on the Southern slopes of the Hima- layas; free tribes of Rajputana and Malwa which were attached to the empire by bonds of subordinate alliance. The Kingdoms of the south overrun by Samudragupta were compelled to acknowledge his suzerainty. The empire of Samudragupta was by far the largest that grew in India since the days of Asoka and the emperor of an empire so vast naturally commanded the respect of foreign powers.

HIS FOREIGN RELATIONS

Samudragupta, a hero of hundred battles by virtue of his military genius, statesmanship and personal prowess built up an empire which was both a source of terror and strength to the frontier Kings. The Kushana Kings referred to as Daivaputra-Shahi shanushahi of the north-west and Afghanistan sought to win the great favour of the great emperor Samudragupta giving personal attendance to his Court, entering into matrimonial alliance with his family and soliciting imperial charters confirming them in the enjoyment of their terri- tories. It is obvious that the Saka chiefs of north-west held a sort of a subordinate position to the emperor and probably sought his help for the Sassanian invasion as also to tide over economic crisis. From the Ceylonese source we know that the Buddhist King Siri Meghavarna of Ceylon who was a contemporary of Samudragupta sent two monks, one being his own brother, to visit Bodh Gaya. But the monks met with scant hospitality while in India

and on return complained to Meghavarna their difficulty in getting any place in India where they could stay in comfort. Meghavarna in order to ensure that pilgrims coming from Ceylon might find adequate and comfortable accommodation in India sent a mission to Samudragupta along with presents of precious stones and other valuable gifts request-ing permission for building a monastery for the Ceylonese pilgrims in India. Samudragupta was pleased to consider the gifts as a tribute and granted permission as requested. Similar interpretation might as well have been given to the friendly overtures by the frontagers and mentioned by the Court Panegyrist as token of subordinate status. A splendid convent was built by Meghavarna towards the north of the Holy Tree at Bodh Gaya. From the inscriptions discovered at Malaya it is presumed that the South-east Asian Hindu colonies such as Champa, Cambodia, Sumatra, Java, etc., maintained friendly relations with Samudragupta. As it was customary with the Hindu rulers of ancient India, Samudragupta performed horse sacrifice (Asvamedha) after completion of his campaigns. This rite was revived after a long period of time and perhaps that the last King before him to perform Asvamedha sacrifice was Pushyamitra. The revival of this rite indicates revival of Brahmanical Hinduism besides its importance as a mark of imperial status assumed by Samudragupta.

PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF SAMUDRAGUPTA:

His Estimate Court-poet Harishena has lavished praise to Samudragupta in his Allahabad Prasasti inscribed on an Asokan Pillar, which even when allowance is made for the possible exaggeration of a panegyrist gives us a faithful picture of the personality and achievements of the great emperor. He was not merely the first soldier of his age but a States- man of no mean order. He was a great warrior, but greater still as a man of culture. He was not one entirely thirsting for conquest and battle. "He appears to have a gentler and more civilised side, being described in the eulogy as a lover of poetry and music." He was a patron of learning, a celebrated poet and a musician. These attributes are not merely the exaggeration of the court panegyrist. This is borne out by his coins representing the emperor as playing upon a lyre. He had a tender heart that could be easily won over. Support of the poor, the helpless and the afflicted kept him busied. He has been liken- ed to Varuna, Indra, Dhanada, etc. He earned the title of the King of poets Kaviraja for his poetical compositions. He was a veritable God on earth. We are further told that he possessed a noble heart be loved of his father and the people at large. He was a devout Brahmani cal Hindu but he was tolerant of other religions as has been illustrated by his permission granting P to Meghavarna to construct the pilgrims from Ceylon. V. A. Smith has described him as Indian Napoleon but he was brilliant as general and statesman hand also pos full many qualities of head and heart better suited to a life of peace a convent for ful pursuits and which mark him as a versatile genius. The Buddhist records prove his catholicity in religious views which is illustrated in his appointing Vasubandhu as his minister. It is doubtless that Samudragupta

was a striking personality, almost unique in the history of India and ushered in a new age. His coins show him as a man of great prowess the prowess of a tiger. "The artistic execution of the gold coins of Samudragupta fully illustrates the wonderful progress of art which forms such a distinctive feature of the Gupta period and justifies its designation as the Classical Age in India."

Immediately after his accession to the throne Samudragupta plunged into war following the principle that "Kingdom-taking is the business of Kings". An ambitious monarch as he was Samudragupta cannot be expected to have rest contented to remain within his own borders. His ambition was to establish an empire controlled from the Capital at Pataliputra and including the entire sub-continent." Thus political unification of India, as was achieved by the Mauryas. must have been consciously or unconsciously influencing Samudragupta's aim.

He was a statesman who clearly saw the impracticability of absorbing the distant southern Indian States in the dominions under his direct rule. He played the part of Dharmavijayin in regard to the Southern States and rest contented with a formal recognition of his suzerainty by them while retaining their independence for all intents and purposes. The wisdom of this policy was demonstrated by the failure of any ruler of northern India to have a permanent hold over the south. Samudragupta broke the power of the tribal republics in the north-west which had disastrous consequences during the rule of the later Guptas when the Huns invaded north-western India and these tribal territories could no longer act as buffers for the Gangetic Valley.

Samudragupta was not a ruthless conqueror, on the contrary he tempered his military campaign with moderation and "restored the Kings fallen from their high estate, to wealth and fortune". He realised the need for religious toleration as a state policy and although he was a Brahmanical Hindu who held Asvamedha sacrifice, he did not hesitate to allow Buddhists to build convent in his country nor did he show any bias against the Buddhists being appointed to high posts of the State. Vasubandhu, an important Buddhist of his time, was his Prime Minister. Samudragupta was a patron of art and literature. He himself was a poet and a great connoisseur of poetry. The Allahabad inscription mentions his munificence which "removed the eternal discord between good poetry and plenty". His coins illustrated wonderful progress of art during his period. Samudragupta's variety of coins give us some idea of his physical appearance, his power, wealth, grandeur and an insight into his remarkable personality. His personal appearance so far as we can judge from his coins symbolise both the martial and peaceful pursuits of the King. His tall stature, good physique, fully developed chest indicated the bold, determined yet magnanimous mind he possessed. His reign considerably developed the cultural renaissance initiated by the Kushana and which was to reach its fullness under Chandragupta II his successor. After long five centuries of political disintegration and domination India was again near the "Highest watermark of moral, intellectual and material progress. It was the Golden Age which ins.

pired succeeding generations of Indians". The pinnacle was reached under his successor Chandragupta II, Vikramaditya.

SUCCESSORS OF SAMUDRAGUPTA;

RAMAGUPTA

From literary evidence such as Visakadatta's *Devi Chandragupta* and other literary works, as well as inscriptions of later period we come across a romantic episode which is of much interest but of little credibility. From these evidences we know that Ramagupta, son of Samudragupta, had succeeded his father. His queen was Dhruvadevi. In a conflict with the Sakas, Ramagupta was besieged and was placed in an extremely desperate situation. To save his people besieged with him he agreed to make over queen Dhruvadevi to the Saka King as a condition for the lifting of the siege. Ramagupta's brother, Chandragupta II, protested against this dishonourable agreement. He resorted to a stratagem and went in disguise of queen Dhruvadevi and killed the Saka King. This saved both the empire and honour of the Guptas. Chandragupta ultimately got rid of his elder brother Ramagupta by killing him and Dhruvadevi succeeded to the throne. He also married his elder brother's widow. This episode is not accepted as historical, for there has been not a single reference to the name Ramagupta in any one of the numerous coins of the Gupta period. Without any positive contemporary evidence it is difficult to accept it as true, although there may have been some elements of truth in it.

CHANDRAGUPTA II

Of the many sons of Samudragupta we definitely know of one son on of his chief queen Dattadevi whose name is Chandragupte son It is held by some scholars that there is a reference in an inscription of Skandagupta that his grandfather Chandragupta was selected by Samudragupta as his successor. But this view is regarded as uncertain as it is based on doubtful interpretation of an expression in Skandagupta's inscription. If we accept this as correct then Chandragupta II was the immediate successor of Samudragupta. It may be noted that Samudragupta himself was chosen by his father Chandragupta I as his successor. On the other hand if we accept the evidence of Vishakadatta and later literary works and inscriptions then Ramagupta was the immediate successor of Samudragupta. According to V. A. Smith before Samudragupta "passed away he had done his best to secure the peaceful transmission of the Crown by nominating as his successor, from among many sons, the offspring of his queen Dattadevi, whom he rightly deemed worthy to inherit a magnificent empire". It customary for scholars to give greater credence to the succession of Samudragupta by his son Chandragupta II who also took the title Vikramaditya (Sun of Power). Chandragupta II was the valiant son of a valiant father and inherited the military genius, the imperial dignity and the cultured mind of his father Samudragupta. Like his father, he also used his marriage relations as a principle of foreign policy and for strengthening his power. As Dr. Raichaudhuri mentions, matrimonial alliance occupies

a prominent place in the Gupta foreign policy". Chandragupta II married Kuveranaga, a Naga Princess and the daughter Prabhavati, from this marriage was given in marriage to Rudrasena II, the Vakataka King of Berar and the adjoining territories. Dr. Smith points out that the Vakataka King occupied such a strategic geographical position in which "he could be of much service or disservice to the northern invader of the dominions of the Saka satraps of Gujarat and Saurashtra. Chandragupta adopted a prudent precaution in giving his daughter to the Vakataka prince and so securing his subordinate alliance". Premature death of Rudrasena made Prabhavati the regent of her two minor sons Divakarsena and Prabhakarsena. This naturally all the more increased the influence of Chandragupta II on the Vakataka Court. From an inscription of Kakusthavarman, a Kadamba ruler of Kuntala, we learn that he gave his daughters to the Gupta rulers, Bhoja and Kshamendra also refer to the sending of an embassy to Kuntala by Chandragupta II. Thus Chandragupta copied Samudra. gupta's policy of entering into matrimonial alliance with ruling house for political advantages. deriving gupta's chief opponents were the Saka rulers of Gujarat and Chandragupta's Saka official, Sridharavarmans had set up an independent Kathia Kingdom in Malwa. These Saka rulers were known as the dependent Satraps. According to Dr. Smith, difference in race, creed and manners led to Chandragupta II's hatred for the Sakas. He desired "to suppress the impure foreign rulers of the West"! "Smith also states that Chandragupta Vikramaditya was an orthodox Hindu specially devoted to the cult of Vishnu, and although tolerant of Buddhism he must have found peculiar satisfaction in violently uprooting the Saka chieftains who probably cared little for caste rules. Whatever might have been the motive, Chandragupta's one major consideration must have been to liquidate the Western Satraps who were a potential danger to the Gupta empire. Chandragupta's desire to "conquer the whole world" as we know from the Udaygiri cave inscription of Virasena-Saba, was perhaps the special reason for his desire to annex the territories of the Western Satraps, The details of his campaign are lacking. The campaign was a prolonged one and on the evidence of Udaygiri inscription of Virasena-Saba, that of Sanekanika Maharaja, a feudatory chief and the Sanchi inscription of Amrakardava we know that Chandragupta had to stay for a long time at Eastern Malwa after he had conquered it before he succeeded in completely uprooting the Saka ruler Rudrasimha III and annexing his Kingdom in the Saurashtra and Kathiwar regions. This military achievement was of immense consequence to the Gupta empire, for it extended the borders of the empire to the Arabian Sea. According to Dr. Smith "The annexation of Saurashtra and Malwa not only added to the empire provinces of exceptional wealth and fertility, but opened up to the paramount power free access to the ports of the western coasts, and thus placed Chandragupta II indirect touch with the Sea-borne commerce with Europe through Egypt and brought his court and subjects under the influence of the European ideas which travelled with the goods of the Alexandrian merchants". The success of this campaign against the Western Satrap also liqui

dated the almost three centuries of foreign domination in north-western India. On the evidence of Mathura pillar inscription Dr. Bhandarkar suggests that Mathura and its neighbouring areas were wrested from the Kushanas by Chandragupta II. But this view of Dr. Bhandarkar is regarded as incorrect in as much as it was Samudragupta who had extirpated the Naga Kings and extended his empire in the West upto Eran. In the Mehrauli iron pillar inscription, i.e., the iron pillar near Kutub Minar at Delhi, of a King named Chandra, it is mentioned that he fought against a confederacy of powers in Vanga. Although there is no conclusive proof that this King Chandra was Chandragupta II, many scholars accept this identity. If we hold this view then we will have to take the inscription to mean that Chandragupta II defeated Vanga (Bengal) as also conquered Vahlika which is identified with Balkh at Bactria. According to Kalidasa Vanga denoted the regions between the Bhagirathi and the Padma. But on the basis of the Allahabad inscription we know that Samudragupta was recognised by Samatata, i.e., a part of Bengal as its suzerain. It is considered by some scholars as possible that the Kushana rulers of the north-west who had been subdued by Samudragupta had thrown off the yoke of the Gupta empire necessitating their subjugation by Chandragupta. Similar reason may have as well induced Chandragupta to conquer Vanga, i.e., Samatata. We are, however, not sure whether it was the motive of aggressive imperialism that led to Chandragupta's campaign against Samatata. Under Chandragupta II there was a remarkable change in the currency system. His predecessors issued only gold coins but Chandragupta II issued gold, silver and copper coins. The obverse of the silver coins were imitation of the coins of western satraps although the reverse, the usual Chaitya, was replaced by the bird Garuda, symbol of Vishnu. These coins were perhaps meant for circulation in the countries conquered from the western Satraps. There were nine varieties of copper coins with the image of the King on the obverse and Garuda on the reverse. Like Samudragupta's gold coins those of Chandragupta II were of equal fineness and brilliance and throw considerable light on Chandragupta II's imperial grandeur and prowess. There are, however, certain significant variations in the types of coins of Chandragupta II and of Samudragupta. While Samudragupta's coins depicted him as tiger-slayer and also as playing on lyre, Chandragupta's coins represent him as lion-slayer and as holding a flower instead of the lyre with the legend rupakriti. While it is supposed by scholars that the lion-slayer type coins denoted his conquest of lion-infested Gujrat, those with flower in hand represented his intellectual and artistic sense. There are other types of coins such as the King standing with his hand on the hilt of his sword and with a dwarf attendant with an umbrella. This is interpreted as his status of universal sovereignty, the dwarf representing his feudatories. Likewise his coins representing him riding on a horse depicted his personal prowess. A coin attributed to Chandragupta by some scholar which shows him standing in front of a deity, probably Vishnu, and stretching his arm for receiving Prasad in the form of sweetmeats. Fa-hien, the celebrated Chinese pilgrim who travelled into India

through the Gobi desert and the hilly terrains of Pamir, Khotan and Ghandhara and lived in India for ten years during the reign of Chandragupta II has left a very interesting account of contemporary India. He was a Buddhist pilgrim who came for pilgrimage and to study Buddhist religion. He did not, unfortunately, record anything about the political condition of India of the time. He did not even mention the name of the emperor in whose wide dominions he lived at least for five years. But whatever he recorded about the life of the people is of immense value. On many of his coins he is described as Vikramaditya and in some later records he is represented as the Lord of Ujjaini and Pataliputra. His valiance in killing the Saka Chief earned for him the titles of Sakari and Sahasanka. The Chinese traveller Fa-hien came to India by land route as described above, stayed in India for ten years (400-411 A.D.) and left by sea route embarking at the Tamralipti port. He spent three years in speaking and writing Sanskrit and in copying out the Buddhist disciplines. He came to India to collect Buddhist texts which were then unknown in China. He had four other Chinese with him but none of them has left any account about India.

During his travel through Central Asian countries he saw numerous Buddhists studying Indian language and Buddhist texts. In Khotan he saw thousands of Buddhists of Mahayana school. In Gomati Vihara alone he saw more than three thousand monks and as many as fourteen other monasteries in Khotan. In Afghanistan there were both Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhists. In Kashgarh he saw about a thousand Hinayana Buddhists. Fa-hien visited Gandhara, Taxila, Peshawar, etc. and saw numerous Buddhist monuments. In Mathura he came across ten thousand Buddhists and twenty monasteries. He also visited places connected with the life of Buddha, such as Lumbini, Vaisali, Bodh Gaya, Gaya, Nalanda and Rajagriha. Fa-hien referred to the area forming the heart of Chandragupta II's dominions as the Middle Kingdom. He observed that the people in this area were numerous and happy. Such was the general that they were not required to register their household contentment that they did not pay taxes to the magistrates or obey the their household masters who cultivated the royal demesne had to pay a part of the gain to the Government of the King. The people had fullest liberty of movement and could give up their places to move to any other of their choice and no punishment was ordinarily very simple and light, the normal punishment being flogging. The King governed without any physical punishment or decapitation. In cases of repeated attempts at rebellion the offender's right hand was cut off. Trade and commerce flourished and the people followed various arts and crafts. Fa-hien saw signs of wealth and luxury of the people and great contentment of the people. All this indicated most satisfactory economic condition of the people. Although Chandragupta was a follower of Vishnu the life of the people was largely influenced by Buddhist ideas of non-violence. Garlic, onion, meat, etc., were not taken by the people. Intoxicant liquor was not permitted to be sold in the open market. The only exceptions were the Chandalas. Such was the contentment and prosperity of the people in general that

theft was unknown, gold left on road could be recovered after days; no body would touch it. Highways was safe for travel- lers and merchants. Charitable institutions by the road sides as also along out of the way roads were built by the people. These were homes of charity where the travellers and wandering monks found food and shelter. Rooms with beds on mattresses, food and clothing were provided for resident monks. Pagodas in honour of Moggolan, Ananda, Sariputta and also in honour of Abhidhamma, Vinaya and the Suttas were built. Fa-hien also mentioned that the rich people instituted free hospitals for poor and helpless patients, orphans, widows and the crippled. Doctors attended them, food and medicine were supplied free, according to needs of the patients. Fa-hien was struck with wonder to see the city of Pataliputra and the palace of Asoka. He was so much impressed by the beauty of the palace which must have been then more than six hundred years old that he remarked that the halls and pillars must have been constructed by spirits. Near an Asokan Stupa Fa-hien saw two monasteries inhabited by Mahayana Buddhist monks. Fa-hien found the city is inhabited by and Bodhgaya jungle-infested. Kapilavastu and Kushinagara were also deserted cities.

The administration was highly tolerant of all religions and religion was not was administrative appointments. Virasenas Saba, minister of Chandragupta, was a follower of Siva while his general Amrakardava was a Buddhist. Fa-hien also mentions that King's body-guards and attendants were paidyulan salaries. I buying selling Cowrie was in use. Dr. Raychaudhuri remar buying and seems to have not come across the gold coins of the time which were used in cases of large transactions Fa-hien evidently which to small transactions with Cowries which he had occasion to make.

ESTIMATE OF CHANDRAGUPTA II VIKRAMADITYA

Dr. V. A. Smith remarks that "Little is known concerning his (Chandragupta II) personal character, but the ascertained facts of his career suffice to prove that he was a strong and vigorous ruler, well qualified to govern and augment an extensive empire"." As Dr. R. D. Banerjee points out, Chandragupta II raised the Kingdom left by his father to the status of an empire. He became the master of northern India and became the unquestionably the paramount sovereign of India. "Like Akbar and Shivaji, he was brave to the point of rashness, which is proved by his adventure in disguise with chosen band of followers in the city or camp of the Scythian King." He was an ambitious ruler and an excellent general and suc- ceeded in Kathiawar in his dominions. Samudragupta had extended the dominions of the Guptas, Chandragupta extended it further but what he did more was to con- solidate the Gupta empire. "The brilliant intellectual revival, mani- fested in arts, science and literature, which distinguished the Gupta age" was largely the contributions of Chandragupta II. The name Classical Age or the Golden Age by which the Gupta period is denoted was the result of the contributions of Samudragupta and more of Chandragupta II, to the culture and civilisation of the age. (See Separate Section Gupta Golden Age.) Chandragupta, not without reason, loved to use high sounding epithets

like Vikramaditya, Sahasanka, Sakari, etc., which proclaimed his martial prowess and was fond of depicting himself on his coins in combat with a lion as did the old Persian emperors. His use of the titles Vikramaditya and Sakari has led scholars to identify him with Vikramaditya of legend. He was a devout Vaishnava but not a bigot, for his catholicity in religious matters transcended all barriers of personal religion. The Buddhist Amrakardava was his general, Saiva Virasena Saba and Sikharasvamin were his ministers.

Identification of Chandragupta II with Sakari Vikramaditya means that his But all was adorned by nine gems including Kalidas Varahamihira. But all of the luminaries did not live at the same time. If Samudragupta is known more for his wars of conquests, his Chandragupta is remembered for things other than war, "for his patronage of literature and the arts-Kalidasa, the Sanskrit poet, being a member of his Court and for the high standard of artistic culture". Dr. Mazumdar remarks "Samudragupta, the victor of cultural wars, is a hero of history. Chandragupta II, who brought to maturity the new era of political greatness and cultural regeneration won a place in the heart of his people"

KUMARAGUPTA I

Chandragupta II was succeeded by his son Kumaragupta I some- times between 413 and 415 A.D. Bhilsa inscription puts the date of his accession at 415 A.D. and his last date in his silver coins in 455 A.D. Kumaragupta, therefore, had a long reign of 40 years. He was born of Chandragupta's Queen Dhruvadevi. The Gupta empire had reached its zenith when Kumaragupta ascended the throne. Kumaragupta himself does not seem to have conducted any military campaign. At least, there is no such evidence, but there is no doubt that Kumaragupta maintained his grip over the whole empire and kept it undiminished during his long rule for forty years. Kumaragupta also performed Asvamedha sacrifice and assumed the title Mahendraditya. He also used numerous variants of this name such as Mahendrakalpa, Mahendrasimha, Mahendrakumar, Asvamedha, Mahendra, etc. A large number of records of the feudatories and Viceroy of Kumaragupta have come to light, which give us a fair idea of the administrative machinery, strength and stability of the government. From these epigraphic records it is learnt that Chiradatta was the viceroy, a governor of Pundravardhana Bhukti corresponding to North Bengal. Prince Ghatotkacha Gupta was the viceroy of Eastern Malwa. Bhanubharman ruled at Dasapura. He is referred to as a feudatory in the Mandasor inscription. In an inscription of 436 A.D. Kumaragupta is stated to be the ruler of whole earth bounded by Sumeru and Kailash (Himalayas) in the north, the Vindhya in the south and the two oceans on the east and the west.

of the traditional Gupta liberalism. This is borne out by the fact that people worshipped diverse gods and goddesses as they chose. Vishnu, Siva, Sakti, Jina, etc. Endowments were made to the Brahmanas for helping them to perform their religious rites. Like his predecessors Kumaragupta also issued coins of various types such as Asvamedha type, lion-slayer, tiger-slayer,

Peacock-rider Elephant-rider types. For the use of Western India Silver coins were issued. The obverse legend of these coins is Jayati Diwan Kumarah and on the reverse is Sri Asvamedha Mahendra. The distribution of his coins indicate the vastness of his empire and in Satara district alone more than one thousand coins have been discovered. The long reign of Kumaragupta was both peaceful and prosperous but towards the end of his reign there came the first signs of a new invasion from the north-west. Besides, the prevailing peace of the empire was distributed by an unidentified people. According to Fleet the invading people belonged to the Pushyamitra tribe. But the Bhitari inscription on the basis of which Fleet identifies the invaders as the Pushyamitras, is not accepted by other scholars as the inscription is damaged where the name of the invading people is mentioned. According to H. R. Divakar the name should be read as Yudhyamitrams. There is, however, reference to a people named Pushyamitras in the Vishnu Purana. The Puranas associate the Pushyamitras with the inhabitants of Melaka in the Narbuda region. Reference to warlike activities of Melaka is also found in the inscriptions of the Vakatakas. From the Bhagat Plate of the Vakataka King Prithisena II, Narendrasena was the leader of the Pushyamitras. But it has been pointed out that Narendrasena possibly could not lead such an invasion for he himself was in a difficult situation due to the invasion of Bhavadattavarman. From the Junagarh inscription of Skandagupta we come to know that Skandagupta fought against hostile kings who raised their hoods "like so many serpents". The reference is taken by scholars to the invasion of the Pushyamitras whom Skandagupta as a prince had successfully warded off. Thus the fortunes of the Guptas threatened by enemies were saved.

Dr. R. C. Majumdar remarks that although the reign of Kumaragupta is generally regarded as uneventful and void of interest and importance, yet certain significant details are usually overlooked. From the numerous inscriptions only a reference to a solitary military campaign is found at the final stage of his reign, and there is no doubt that his long reign saw a peaceful and stable government over the undiminished vast empire extending from the western (Arabian) and the eastern (Bay of Bengal) Seas. The fact of the defeat of the Pushyamitras at the hands of the Prince Skandagupta towards end of his reign and the warding off of the Huna invasion soon and his testify to the continued efficiency of the imperial army over the long forty years of Kumaragupta's rule. The modern historians have been rather unusually niggardly in their praise of Kumaragupta than he actually deserves. It will be unfair not to credit him with maintenance of the vast expanse of the empire intact for long forty years, and to keep it in peace and prosperity without allowing the imperial administration as well as the army to weaken,

SKANDAGUPTA

Problem of Succession: In the midst of triumph of Prince Skandagupta over the Pushyamitras, Kumaragupta I, the old and aged emperor, breathed his last, even before Skandagupta's return to the

capital. The official record describes how Skandagupta "reported his victory over the enemies to his mother who received him with tears". Skandagupta, the hero of the nation, came to the throne in 455 A.D. There are good grounds to believe that Skandagupta's succession to the throne was not a peaceful one. The question of succession remains a ticklish problem with the scholars. In the Bhitari Seal Purugupta is mentioned as the son and successor of Kumaragupta I. But Smith, Raychaudhuri, Allan, etc., are of the opinion that Skandagupta was the immediate successor of Kumaragupta. Thus we find there were two successors and the question is which of them came first. Dr. Majumdar observes "there was a struggle between him (Skandagupta) and his half-brother Purugupta, son of the Chief Queen of Kumaragupta. Probably Skandagupta's mother was queen of an inferior rank and this gave an advantage to his rival (Purugupta). But Skandagupta triumphed in the end". Allan, Smith and Raychaudhuri are of the opinion that Skandagupta died childless and was succeeded by his half-brother Purugupta. This contention is also supported by Dr. Majumdar. That Skandagupta was the immediate successor, although after a struggle is borne out by Skandagupta's own official record where it is mentioned that the "Goddess of Sovereignty, of her own accord selected him (Skandagupta as her husband, having in succession discarded all other Princes". According to Dr. Majumdar Skandagupta had to fight for his claim with one or more rivals. He observes "It is probable, for example, that taking advantage of Skandagupta's absence in a distant campaign, his step-brother Purugupta ascended the throne immediately after his father's death, but was soon removed when Skandagupta returned from his victorious campaign." This is, however, a probable view and cannot be regarded as historically unquestionable. There are various other views expressed by different scholars but the consensus is in favour of regarding Skandagupta as the immediate successor of Kumaragupta who was in his return succeeded by Purugupta. War of succession or not, Skandagupta after his accession to the throne did not find much breathing time, for he had been faced with a sea of troubles. The danger of the Pushyamitra invasion was just averted, but he had to fight with hostile kings some of whom are described as mlechas in the contemporary records. In the first half of the fifth century, that is, during the reign of Kumaragupta I, the first signs of a new invasion from the north-west were noticed. A branch of the Huns known as white Huns or Ephthalites had occupied Bactria in the fourth century and were threatening to cross the Hindukush which they did when Skandagupta came to the throne. They conquered Gandhara and set up a king there, "who was cruel and vindictive and practised the most barbarous atrocities". He proceeded further towards "the heart of India and became a great menace to the Gupta Empire". Skandagupta had earlier, as the crown prince, saved the empire against the Pushyamitra menace, but the danger was now much graver one. He was now a man of mature years and ripe experience, and proved equal to the task and succeeded in inflicting a crushing defeat on the barbarian. So decisive was the victory that for nearly half a century the Gupta empire was safe from

their inroads. "It was a great achievement for which Skandagupta may well be drawn in history as the saviour of India. It will be easy to realise the full significance of this great event when we recall what the Huns had done to the mighty Roman empire and what the branch of the Huns even after their defeat at the hands of Skandagupta had done to Persia. They carried fire and sword, completely overwhelmed Persia and killed their king. After this Great exploit Skandagupta justifiably assumed the title of Vikramaditya in imitation of his grandfather Chandra- gupta II.

In the Balaghat Plates there are references to Vakataka Narendra- sena who had established influence over Kosala, Mekala, Malwa. But there is no reference to his actual occupation of these areas. On the contrary we find in the Junagarh inscription that Skandagupta "deliberated days and nights before making up his mind who could be trusted with the omottant task of guarding the lands of Surashtra" This spread the of Surashtra that region with the help of the local lords which worried Skanda- pans of the campens in sulnerable parts of the empire and appointed Parnadatta as one of these wardens in Surashtra. There is no doubt, according to Dr. Ray gupta's rule during his life time. Malwa, etc. were under Skanda-The last years of Skandagupta's reign was tranquil, but the mili- tary campaign against the Pushyamitras, Huns and perhaps also against the Vakatakas put a heavy strain on the resources of the empire. This is evident from the deterioration of purity of gold coins which were comparatively few and mostly of one type. But this did not stand in the public utility work. The Girnar inscription near Junagarh refers to the repairs of the Sudarshana Lake originally constructed by Chandragupta Maurya for supply of water to irrigation canals had burst its dams due to excessive rainfall during Skandagupta's time, but was promptly repaired by Parnadatta, Governor of Surashtra, and his son Chakrapalita, the local magistrate. The same lake had burst its dams once again three hundred years before and the damage was re- paired by the Saka Chief Rudradamana. From the inscription of Parnadatta we come to know that Skanda- gupta's empire which extended from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea was strong and united, under the vigorous administration of a benevolent ruler. The Junagarh inscription shows Skandagupta took special care in selecting his Governor and officials. Besides Parna- datta, he appointed Sarvanaga as the district officer of the Gangetic Doab and Bhimvarman as that of Kosam region. Like his predecessors, Skandagupta also followed the policy of toleration in religious matters. He was himself a worshipper of Vishnu but did not interfere with the religious beliefs of his officers or subjects. Bihar Pillar inscription mentions the construction of a circle of temples dedicated to Skanda and the Divine Mothers such as Chandi, Chamunda, Maheswari, Vaishnavi, Kaumari, etc. There is also a reference to the construction of a temple for Sabita, the Sun God by two Kshatiriyas merchants. On the evidence of Aryamanjusrimulakalpa Jayaswal remarks that Skandagupta was "the best-a wise justice-loving King". His- torians have regarded Skandagupta one of the greatest if not the greatest of the great Gupta Emperors. He alone had the honour of defeating

the Huns, three lakhs of whom attacked India, and saving India from the menace for almost half a century to follow. In 467 A.D. Skandagupta died with the supreme satisfaction of leaving the mighty empire he had inherited from his predecessor.

SKANDAGUPTA'S SUCCESSORS

Purugupta: Skandagupta was succeeded by his half-brother Purugupta, son of Kumaragupta I, by his queen Anantadevi. In the official genealogy of the later Gupta emperors Purugupta is shown as the immediate successor of Kumaragupta I and the name of Skanda. gupta is omitted. This might have been due to accession of Puru gupta immediately after Kumaragupta's death before Skandagupta had returned from his successful campaign against the Pushyamitras. But in the struggle for succession Skandagupta emerged victorious and it was after his death that Purugupta got the opportunity to ascend the throne. He must have been an old man then and ruled for six years only from 467 to 473 A.D.

Narasimhagupta Baladitya: From both epigraphic and numismatic evidence names of several kings are known whose exact position in relation to the Gupta family has not been known with certainty. According to Raychaudhuri Purugupta was succeeded by his son, Narasimhagupta Baladitya, in 473 A.D. He is identified with Baladityagupta who has been mentioned by Hiuen-Tsang as the King who imprisoned the Hun Chief Mihirakula or Mihirakula. Dr. Raychaudhuri, however, is of opinion that the conqueror of Mihirakula was a different Gupta Ruler.

KUMARAGUPTA II

In 474 A.D. we come across the name of Kumaragupta II, son of Narasimhagupta Baladitya. According to R. C. Majumdar he "might have been a son of Skandagupta". We also come across the names of several Gupta kings in the coins and inscription who ruled about the same time. The presumption is that they were "rival factions contending for the throne during the period immediately after Skandagupta's death. But we have no definite knowledge of the events of the period". There has been a considerable divergence of opinion among the historians about the line of the succession of the Gupta kings. In this book the list of succession given by Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri has been followed. Kumaragupta's reign appears to have terminated in 476-477 A.D. The reign of Skandagupta's successor-Purugupta, Narasimhagupta Baladitya and Kumaragupta II covers only ten years from A.D. 467 to A.D. 477.

BUDHAGUPTA

Budhagupta, son of Purugupta and his chief queen Chandradevi, ascended the throne in 477 A.D. and ruled for nearly twenty years. It is suggested that there were internal troubles before twenty years on the throne and he succeeded in establishing himself firmly on the throne and restoring peace and order all over the empire. A large number of inscriptions have been discovered which refer to Budhagupta. In one inscription Budhagupta is mentioned as Paramadivata-

Paramabhataraka-Maharajadhiraja-Sri Prithvipati. In his silver coins, Budhagupta describes himself as Avaniapati meaning lord of the world. From these titles it may be reasonably presumed that he ruled over a vast empire. From the records of Budhagupta's Governors of Malwa and Bengal it is learnt that under Budhagupta the solidarity of the empire was undisturbed at least to a very large extent of its expanse. But signs of decline of the imperial authority in the outlying provinces began to manifest themselves in his time portending the break-up of the empire at no distant future. General Bhataraka of the Maitraka family, governor of Surashtra with his capital at Valabhi made the governorship hereditary in his family. Bhataraka and his son Dharasena who succeeded him assumed the title Senapati, i.e., Governor. But the next Governor, a younger son of Bhataraka, named Drona Simha, assumed the royal title of Maharaja and although he paid nominal homage to the paramount ruler, i.e., the Gupta emperor, he was well on the way to complete sovereignty. Likewise the Governors of north Bengal at earlier times called themselves Uparika, now assumed the title of Uparika Maharaja, the Governors of Malwa now took the title of Maharaja. All this doubtlessly indicate that although the Gupta empire might have theoretically remained without substantial diminution its power and prestige were on the decline. In Bundelkhand region Maharaja Hastin issued land grants making a general reference to the Gupta sovereignty, but without mentioning the name of Budhagupta, which shows the near independent status of the family. This family had another branch ruling over an adjacent Kingdom with Uchchakalpa as its capital. King Jayamaths of this family ceased to owe any allegiance to the Gupta sovereignty towards end of the reign of Budhagupta. In the north and east of Bundelkhand, a dynasty called Pandu Vamsa was rising into prominence and by the end of the fifth century Budhising of this family there family is allegiance to the Gupta's reign Kingnty. Another branch of this family not mentioned in the Gupta sovereignant at Rewa State made itself if not wholly, at least partially independent of Guptas. From two copper-plates found at Allahabad and Rewa State we come across Maharaja Lakshmand who ruled during the reign of Botha gupas with his capital at Jayapura, not identified assumed de facto independence. Similar was case with Maharaja Subanded factor from the ancient town of Mahishmati on the river Narmada without any reference to Budhagupta. suffered In this way outlying provinces of the empire were gradually moving towards independence although outwardly its authority was still acknowledged as far as the Bay of Bengal in the east and the Arabian sea in the west, and the Narmada in South. In the circumstances, both internal and external, caused the decline that set in. The struggle for the throne after the death of Kumaragupta II and Skandagupta had sapped the vitality of the empire. From outside, the Vakataka King Narendrasena appears to have established suzerainty over Kosala-Mekala-Malava which raises the presumption that the Gupta empire was invaded from the South. The Huns whose invasion had been warded off by Skandagupta, reappeared probably during Budhagupta's reign although we are not certain about the

date. Thus the mighty edifice of the Gupta empire began to show fissures which gradually developed into wide chasms and the imposing imperial fabric fell into parts not in distant time. Our information about the part played by Budhagupta is rather scanty. Under him the outward structure of the Gupta empire remained more or less intact, and he was the last Gupta emperor to enjoy sovereignty over a vast expanse of territories. Yet, the empire was passing through a very critical period and the empire was soon to fall apart after his death.

TATHAGATAGUPTA:

BALADITYA

Death of Budhagupta was a signal for internal dissensions which led to the partition of the empire. The renewed Hun invasion made matters worse. The sequence of events and the line of succession during this period are difficult to pursue. From different sources different names have been found and historians have drawn different lines of succession. According to Beal's *Life of Hiuen T-Sang* Budhagupta was succeeded by Tathagatagupta and after him Baladityagupta. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri accepts this line of succession. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, basing his opinion on certain official documents places Narasimhagupta, brother of Budhagupta, as the latter's successor; and Narasimhagupta was succeeded by his son. But there are other names such as Vinayagupta and Bhanugupta. Vinayagupta's solitary record has been found in Tipperah district in Bengal. It is suggested by Dr. Majumdar that his dominion was confined to Bengal. Bhanugupta's inscription refers to a battle in the Sugar district's inscriptions of Goparaja, in which the latter lost his life. Dr. Majumdar's ruling leads to the conclusion that in the western empire Bhanugupta ruled, while the eastern part was simultaneously ruled by the Vainyagupta. Part of the famous battle fought by Bhanugupta along with the vassal Goparaja, according to Dr. Majumdar, is a reference to a battle with Toramana, the Hun Chief. But all this is more or less conjectural. The fact that Bhanugupta could recover completely from the hands of the Huns, who had taken possession of the empire in spite of the high praise bestowed on him for his exploit of defeating Toramana, son of Mihiragula or Mihirakula, fact remains that forces of disintegration were at work and convulsed the empire which was hastening its downfall.

THE HUNS

The scourge of the Gupta empire was the barbarians called the Huns. We would rather turn our attention to the Huns, here, who administered a mortal blow to the Gupta Empire. The Huns are known to have been living on the Chinese border. They came in conflict with the Yue-chi, a neighbouring nomadic tribe, which led to a displacement of races, and the Scythians and Kushanas pushed into India about the first century of the Christian era. Later the Huns also began migrating towards the west and divided themselves into two branches, one moved towards the Volga and the other to Oxus. The

branch that moved towards the Volga played havoc with the Roman empire. The branch that moved towards the Oxus valley became very powerful during the fifth century A.D. They are called Ephthalites after the name of the ruler's family. The Greeks called them White Huns. In 484 A.D. the Huns became extremely powerful under their chief Akhschounwar and defeated and killed Firuz, the Sasmanian ruler of Persia and occupied Persia. The Huns built up a vast empire with their main capital at Balkh. Towards India they occupied Gandhara after crossing the Hindu- Inush but their further progress into India was checked by Skandagupta about A.D. 464. But either at the end of the fifth or beginning of the sixth century A.D. the Hun Chief Toramana conquered a large part of Northern India and penetrated as far as Eran, i.e., Saugar district of Madhya Pradesh. The Hun conquest must have taken place not long after Budhagupta's time, if not towards the end of his reign. We have no definite evidence about the Huns, yet we come across two names Toramana and Mihirkula who are generally taken as Hun Chiefs. Toramana coins testify to his foreign origin and to his rule over parts of U.P., Rajputana, Punjab and Kashmir. Dr. Majumdar suggests that Toramana was probably connected with the Hun ruling family of Gandhara. According to a Jaina work *Kuvalayama* Toramana got converted into Jainism and lived on the bank of the river Chandrabhaga, i.e., Chenab. Toramana was succeeded by Mihirgula or Mihirkula. According to Hiuen T-Sang Mihirkula's capital was Sakala, i.e., Sialkot and he ruled over India. *Rajatarangini* refers to the Mihirkula as a very powerful ruler of Kashmir and Gandhara, who conquered Southern India and Ceylon. *Rajatarangini*'s reference to Mihirkula's inhuman cruelty agrees to the narrative of Hiuen T-Sang but the period assigned to his rule in *Rajatarangini* is too remote to possibly be accepted as a historically reliable source. From the Chinese ambassador Sung-Yun to the Court of Hun King at Gandhara, i.e., Mihirkula, the Hun King, according to this Chinese source, was cruel and vindictive and perpetuated most barbarous activities. He worshipped Demon and did not believe in the law of Buddha. He had 700 war elephants and was constantly with war. Sometime later a Greek named Cosmas in his *Christian Topography* wrote that "Higher up in India, that is further to the north, are the White Huns. The one called Gollas (Mihirgula) when jointly to a war takes with him no fewer than two thousand elephants and a great force of cavalry. He is the lord of India, and oppressing the people, forces them to pay tribute". He calls the river Indus as river Phison and remarks that this river separates all the countries of India from the Country of the Huns. Dr. Majumdar thinks that Sung-Yun, the Chinese ambassador, visited the court of Mihirkula. In the interval between the time of Sung-Yun and Cosmas the Hun suzerainty must have been extended over Indian kings for Cosmas calls him "Lord of India". Hiuen T-Sang also remarks that Mihirgula subdued whole of India. It is presumed that Mihirkula was a powerful ruler who, according to an inscription dated A.D. 530 extended his sovereignty upto Gwalior. It appears from all accounts that Mihirkula was a powerful king who overran a large part of northern India. But Hun ruler Mihirkula

was not destined to enjoy his sovereignty for long. He was checked and defeated by Yashodharman. In the Mandasor inscription Yashodharman claims that respect was paid to him even by the powerful king Mihirkula "whose head had never (previously) been brought to the humility of obeisance to any other save (the God) Sthanu (Siva) and embraced by whose arms the mountain of Story (the Himalayas) falsely pride itself on being styled as inaccessible fortress notwithstanding on that he ruled in Kashmir and the adjoining regions of snow indicates been advancing into the interior of India when he was defeated by Yashodharman, a local Chief of Malwa. But this defeat did not destroy the power of Mihirkula and soon after Yashodharman's patnese reappeared in the scene. This time he had to face Narasimhagupta Baladitya. But long account of praise of Baladitya who defeated Mihirkula, Dr. R. C. Majumdar considers, it an overstatement. The only provisional conclusion that may be arrived at is that Baladitya defeated Mihirkula which crushed the Hun supremacy in India. The Huns no doubt existed in small principalities even after this defeat but they no longer appear to have been any disturbing element in the Indian history.

In the coins of the late Guptas there is reference to the defeat inflicted upon the Huns by the Maukhari King Ishanvarman. Dr. Majumdar thinks that the Maukhari King fought as a feudatory of the Gupta emperor Baladitya in the latter's campaign against Mihirkula. It is true that the Maukharis issued coins in imitation of the Hun Kings and ruled over the territories which formerly were under the Huns. But the Maukharis did not have any war against the Huns independently. The collapse of the Hun political power was not simply caused by the defeat and death of Toramana and his son Mihirkula but it was mainly due to the crushing blow it received from the combined forces of the Turks and the Persians in the Oxus region which was the central authority of the Huns. The groups of Huns that continued to live in India were gradually absorbed in the Indian Society. Mihirkula was a Siva-worshipper as is indicated by his coins. In the Gwalior inscription there is mention of Mihirkula's causing Sun Temple to be built. He might as well have been a worshipper of the Sun. But there are evidences of his persecution of the Buddhists. The short rule of the Huns in India was not without significance. While politically the Hun invasions were largely responsible for the downfall of the Gupta empire, their stay in India after they had lost their political power, introduced a new racial element in the Indian society. They married Indian wives and gradually got absorbed in the Hindu Society. The origin of the Rajputs can be traced from the Huns. Dr. Smith mentions that of the thirty-six Rajput clans - he was called by the name Hun. Havell also points out that the numerous ramifications of the Rajput clans of the present day are the result of the assimilation of foreign elements by the Indo-Aryan society. Culturally the Huns were a very backward people, cruel and ruthless. Their invasions of India proved to be destructive of works of art, monasteries, temples and monuments. They destroyed many specimens of Gupta art, burnt valuable records, proved themselves to be a curse to the cultural life of the time. As Havell

remarks, "The strong infusion of Hun blood lowered the high ethical standards of Indian Tradition and favoured the growth of many of the vulgar superstitions which were never countenanced by the Philosophers and spiritual teachers of Aryavarta." The Huns were also responsible for importing despotism in the political life of India. According to Havell, "Despotism was of Tartar or Mongolian creation; and most probably the Indians borrowed it from the Mongoloid Huns".

YASHODHARMAN

The Hun invasions under Toramana and Mihirkula must have contributed in large measure to the disintegration of the Gupta empire, decline of which had started under Budhagupta. Centrifugal forces had already been in action under him and the feudal chiefs and viceroys, high State official and royal princes gradually began to assume power and authority, ultimately helping them to become fully independent. From the inscriptions of the time it is known that it was a period of unrest and disruption. The Huns from the north-west and the Vakatakas from the Deccan invaded the Gupta empire. Malwa had been experiencing troubles due to the invasions of the Huns and the Vakatakas. The hold of the Guptas over that region, naturally became weak. A local chief Yashodharman took full advantage of this weakness and assumed independent authority and became sufficiently powerful to stem the tide of the Hun invasion by defeating the Hun chief Mihirkula and to defy Gupta suzerainty. Very little is known of the early life and career of Yashodharman. According to some scholars Yashodharman had some connection with family of the feudatory chiefs who were ruling in Malwa or parts of it. But till his rise into prominence we practically know nothing about him. About his military achievement, however, we have records inscribed in duplicate on two stone pillars at Mandasor. From this Prasasti we know that Yashodharman's suzerainty was acknowledged over the vast area bounded by the Himalayas in the north, Mahendra giri in the Ganjam district in the South, the Brahmaputra in the east and the Arabian Sea in the west. He is credited with conquering territories which were conquered neither by the Guptas, nor by the Huns. The Hun chief had to pay respect to his feet. All this naturally raises the presumption that Yashodharman was the All this naturallyster of Northern India but Dr. Majumdar remarks that "we should hardly be justified in regarding Yashodharman as one sole undisputed monarch of Northern India" But he concedes some truth in this puted monarch by the culat he defeatandasor inscription and says the assertion made believe that he defeated Mihirkula" and that he rose into distinction and earned popularity by defeating the Hun chief Mihirkula and stemming the tide of the Hun inroads into the interior of India. This must have added to his power and prestige which enabled him to expand his dominions at the cost of the Gupta empire. It has not been possible from the available evidence to determine the limits of his dominions. In any case he could not finally annihilate the Gupta empire nor could he destroy the power of Mihirkula. It was Baladitya, the Gupta

monarch, who finally crushed the power of Mihirkula. "Yasho-dharman", remarks Dr. Majumdar, "rose and fell like a meteor between A.D. 530 and 540, and his empire perished with him".

OTHER FEUDATORIES

The assumption of independence by Yashodharman was a signal for other feudatories of the Guptas to assume independent status. Of these, the Maukharis and the latter Guptas were specially important. They played an important part in Indian history later on. The Maukhari's who ruled as feudatories of the Guptas in Bihar and U.P. gradually rose into power and strength, and ultimately founded an independent kingdom. The latter Guptas who were distinct from the imperial Guptas but related with them and were at first feudatories of the Guptas but like the Maukharis ultimately became independent in Malwa and Magadha. Likewise Vanga, i.e., South and East Bengal shook off the suzerainty of the Guptas, the gradual process as in the cases of other feudatories. Vinayagupta, a feudatory of the Guptas in East Bengal, assumed the title of Maharaja and later made himself independent. That the Vanga assumed independence is testified by the assumption of the title Maharajadhiraja by the ruler of Vanga and striking of gold coins as did the Gupta emperors. Gauda, i.e., West Bengal also assumed prominence at that time and a Maukhari Chief claims as having defeated them. The latter Guptas are also credited with defeating the people who lived on the sea shore. According to Dr. Majumdar, the reference is to the people of West Bengal. We may conclude that the example of Yasodharman was imitated by other feudatories and there was legend, "Yasodharman himself was probably the first victim to perish in the conflagration that his own action had brought about".

THE GUPTA ADMINISTRATION;

There is a sharp difference of opinion as to whether the Gupta administrative system was originated by the Gupta rulers themselves or was a continuation of the traditional system of administration that descended down the years from the time of the Mauryas. According to Dr. R. D. Banerjee the inscriptions of the Gupta emperors do not show any trace of the retention of the old Maurya official terms. But Dr. R. N. Sabore, the Gupta administration, was not genuinely original; it was founded on the historical traditions of the past although improved and adapted to suit contemporary conditions. The Gupta administration assumed a very imposing form due to the vastness of its structure comprising the (i) King, (ii) Council of Ministers, (iii) Great Assembly, (iv) Feudatories, (v) State departments, (vi) Bureau-cracy from Centre down to villages. Dr. R. C. Majumdar also observes that "The Imperial Guptas continued the traditional machinery of bureaucratic administration with nomenclature mostly borrowed from earlier times". "During the Gupta period monarchy was the prevailing form of government but there were a few republics still in existence in the Punjab and Rajasthan such as, the Madras or Madrakas in the Central Punjab, Kunindas in the Kangra Valley, Yaudheyas in South-eastern Punjab, the Arjunayanas in Agra-Jaipur, the Malavas in Central Rajasthan.

In Central India there were the Sanakanikas, Prarjunas, Kakas and the Abhiras. But by the beginning of the fifth century A.D. these republics disappeared. Much information about the Gupta administration has been found in the account of the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien, contemporary inscriptions and the royal rescripts. Administration was divided into two parts: the Central Government and the Provincial Government.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT: KING

The Gupta emperor was at the top of the administration of the entire empire. From the Allahabad inscription we find that the emperor is described as Achintya Purusha, that is incomprehensible Being, Dhanada-Varunendrantaka -sama, i.e., equal to Kuvera, Varuna, Indra, Yama, also as Loka-dhama-deva, i.e., God on earth etc. Thus the king was regarded as a divinity. But the Gupta kings did not claim any infallibility; on the contrary, they had to respect the elders, study the art of government and cultivate righteousness. Haughty,

THE GUPTA ADMINISTRATION

Tyrannical or irreligious ruler was held in contempt. An ideal king was to be both physically and mentally fit for doing the ideal king administration.

The Yuvaraja or the Crown Prince would help the king in his administrative work and had his separate civil and military establishment and could even issue orders to the Provincial governments with the consent of the king. Where the king was old, the Crown Prince carried the major burden of administration.

The Gupta emperors assumed high-sounding titles such as Maharajadhiraja, Prithvipala, Paramabhataraka, Paramesvara, etc. The emperor had diverse powers which may be enumerated as political, administrative, military and judicial. Politically all powers emanated from the king. He was the highest executive and in that capacity appointed all governors and important civil and military officers. All of these appointees had to work under the direct orders and supervision of the king. He was sometimes his own commander-in-chief and all lands within the empire were his property. Unclaimed property would escheat to the king. He was also the highest judge. They also nominated their successors in some cases. For instance, Samudragupta was nominated as his successor by Chandragupta I and likewise Kumaragupta I nominated Skandagupta as his successor. Such nominations were, however, not the rule. Succession to the throne was hereditary.

LIMITATIONS TO THE POWERS OF THE KING

The Gupta King was the repository of all powers of the State no doubt, but this did not mean that he was a tyrannical despot. He was theoretically the unquestioned authority over all departments of the government but in practice his powers were limited by the (i) traditional ideal of Kingship which meant honouring the age-old customs and solicitude for the well-being of the people. (ii)

The Council of Ministers, that is, Mantriparishad, the high ministers, etc. also put a check in the powers of the king. Although it was perfectly within the rights of the king to either accept or reject the decision of the Mantriparishad or of the high ministers, yet it will be reasonable to conclude that the king would not normally go against the decision of the Mantriparishad or the high ministers. This is evident from the existence of an officer named Kanchuki or Chamberlain who was a liaison between the King and the Mantriparishad. There was a special class of officers called Amatyas who had to keep the king in touch with the decisions of the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers, i.e., the Mantriparishad at times acted as the Council of Regency. There was possibly a Great Assembly which was consulted by the king on special occasions. Such an assembly was summoned by Chandragupta I when he declared Samudra gupta as his successor. In the Great Assembly members of the royal family, the councillors and the counsellors, i.e., were summoned. State Officials among other high officials at the centre had references Ma Amon kriter (Commander-in-Chief), Mahadandanayaka (General) Mahabalari (door keeper), Sandherai inter Mahaprad war or foreign minister), Mahasvapuri (Chief Cavalry Of Peace Mahapilupari (Chief Officer-in-Charge of elephants), etc. Kalidasa), Mahante ministers, namely, the chief Minister, Minister of Finance, Minister of Law and Justice. According to Kalidasa the ministers were expected to be experts in their respective duties. "The Gupta emperors employed a vast number of officers for the efficient administration of the empire. They continued the traditional machinery of bureaucratic administration with nomenclature mostly borrowed from the Maurya times. Apart from the high officials referred to above the Gupta emperor employed a large number of officers to carry on the administration of the country with efficiency. The link between the Central and Provincial government was maintained through officials called Kumaramatyas and ayuktas. We have come across officers called amatyars during the Maurya period. The name Kumaramatyas who belonged to the class of high imperial officers and to personal staff of the emperors the Crown Prince and other must have been the creation of the Gupta emperors. The origin of the Ayuktas may be traced to Yugas of Asokan inscription. Ayuktas were some times entrusted with the task "restoring the wealth of the kings conquered by the emperor and sometimes placed in charge of districts or metropolitan towns". Among other civil officers the more important were the Rajapurusha, Rajanyaka, Kanchuki, Rajamatya Mahasamanta.

The revenue department of the Gupta administration separated from the police administration. The important officials of these departments were the Upasika, Chauradharanika, Dasapardhika, Dandika, Dandapashika, Kothapala, Angaraksha, etc. Mahakshapatalika was probably the Great Keeper of Records. High officials like Kumaramatya, Upasika, Dandapashika, etc., each had his separate Adhikarana. If we take the term to mean "a court" as Dr. Sabore has done, then it is probable that these performed judicial duties. Kalidasa refers to Dharmasthana, Dharma dhikaras which most

probably were judicial courts. Punishment during the Gupta rule was very lenient. There was no system of capital punishment. Criminals were fined in proportion to the nature of the crime committed. Even in cases of repeated attempts at wicked rebellion only the right hand of the offender was cut off. In cases of theft the thieves when caught were handed over to the guards called Rakshinas. It may be pointed out here that the testimony of Fa-hien to the effect that the Gupta emperor ruled "without decapitation" is not borne out by literary evidence. Vishakadatta in *Mudrarakshasa* describes how Charudatta was condemned to death for murdering Vasanasena and led in a procession to the Vadhyasthana, i.e., place of execution. In the same work there is also description of how Arthapala was condemned to death for stealing by a very cruel method of crushing under the feet of an elephant. Scoring out of eyes, trial by ordeal of fire, etc., were also mentioned in the literature of the time.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

From epigraphic records of the Gupta period we come to know of the administrative divisions of the Empire from the apex to the base. The empire was divided into provinces called Bhuktis, Pradeshas and Bhogas. We have references to Ainikina Pradesha, Nagarabhukti, Tirabhukti, Pundravardhanabhukti, Uttaramandala-bhukti. Provinces were divided into Vishayas which were again subdivided into Vithi under which there were unions of villages called Pethaka and Santaka. Smaller divisions of a village were called Agrahara and Patha.

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Provinces called Bhuktis, Pradeshas and Bhogas had been placed under officers variously known as Uparikas, Goptas, Bhogikas, Bhogapati, etc. In some cases Princes or Rajaputras were also appointed as governors with such title as maharajaputra devabhattacharya, a prototype of Kumara viceroys of Asoka's time. Province which was divided into districts called Vishayas were ruled over by officers called Kumaramatyas, Vishayapatis or Ayuktas. The special characteristic of the Gupta administration was the principle of decentralisation. The district officers, as we know from the inscriptions, were nominated by the provincial governors, although in exceptional cases such appointments might be made by the emperor himself. There are references to a host of provincial officers who had the provincial governor in carrying on the administration efficiently, These officers were heads of different branches of military and civil administration of the Province. At the head of the Provincial army was the Baladhikaranika, the officer-in-charge of the Police administration was Dandapashika, Likewise Audrangika was the tax-collector, Vinaya-sthitisthapaka was the officer-in-charge of law and order, Pustapala (record keeper), Tadayukta (Treasury Officer) were other important provincial officers. The District Officer called Vishayapati was assisted in his administrative work by Saulkikas (Tax-Collector), Gaulmika (Officer-in-charge of forts and forests), Dhruvadhikaranikas (Land Revenue Officers), Mahattaras (Village elders), Gramikas (Village Headmen),

Bhandagaradhikrita (Treasurer), Ralavataka (Accountant), etc. The district archive was called Akshapatala which was under an officer called Mahakshapatalika. There are also references to Lekhakas (writers), Karanika (clerks), etc. A number of inscriptions from North Bengal refers to the association of popular element in the provincial, district and village administration as well as in the municipal administration in towns. The business of sale of the government land was carried out by the prince- viceroy, the district officer in cooperation with the Municipal Boards, District office, and at other times times by the astakuladhi Karana with the village headman, house-holders, etc. What was actually the astakuladhikara meant is not clear but it is said to have been headed by the village elders. In cities and towns the Municipal Board consisted primarily of four members: the President of the Guild, the chief merchant, chief artisan and the chief scribe. This special aspect of association of popular element with local administration was one of the boldest and unique experiments of the Guptas. The seals recovered at Vaisali probably indicate the functioning of District and Municipal Boards functioning in North Bihar under the Guptas. The evidences of North Bengal inscriptions and of the Vaisali Seals raise presumption that similar arrangements existed also in other provinces. The Gupta Emperors realised the need of showing generosity certain conquered States both monarchical and republic. This is due to their political far-sightedness that distant conquests were not made integral part of the dominions under their direct rule. These states were allowed to retain their independence under the Gupta imperial suzerainty. We have seen how Samudragupta left a number of conquered States in a position of subordinate independence. In later period ruling in the region are now called Bundelkhand issued landgrants recognising the suzerainty of the Gupta Emperors. It may, however, be mentioned that the status of feudatories varied and the quantum of their independence differed according to their relative strength in comparison with the imperial authority. Details of judicial administration during the Gupta period are lacking except in so far as there are references in the account of Fa-hien. We have already seen that the traditional powers of the emperor included highest judicial function. This is also borne out by Katyayana. We have also noted the high officials of different grades had some judicial function to perform in their Adhikarana. The sources of revenue of the Guptas have been recorded in different inscriptions of the time. An important source of revenue was landtax (Udranga). According to Fleet Uparika was a tax levied on cultivators who had no proprietary right on land. Fines realised from the offenders, salt tax, tax on sale and purchase, tax on the produce of the mines. Some villages were granted exemption from payment of taxes and forced labour. From this it may be deduced that forced labour was resorted to at that time. From what we have known about the administration of the Gupta empire we may unhesitatingly conclude that the Gupta administration was well organised both at the Centre and the Provinces. The Central administration was linked up with the village administration through a hierarchy of officials. One special characteristic

of the Gupta administration was the decentralisation of the government. The administration of justice was a happy blend of law and humanity. The Gupta kings were followers of Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi. But there are references to their worshipping gods like, Siva, Devi (Durga) and Kartikeya. There was no sectarianism among the Gupta rulers. Surya cult appears to have become popular during the Gupta period and the Gupta rulers patronised the Surya cult as is evident from the Indore copper plate of Skandagupta. According to Dr. Dikshitar the Gupta emperors were followers of orthodox Hinduism and their religious beliefs cannot be described by sectarian definition as Vaishnavism, Saivism, etc. The Gupta rulers were tolerant of other religions such as Buddhism, Jainism, etc. and even made endowments to the Buddhists. Chandragupta II endowed a Buddhist Vihara at Sanchi for the maintenance of the Buddhist Bhikshus.

THE GUPTA CULTURE

More than two centuries of Gupta supremacy may be easily regarded as the most glorious epoch in Indian history. The period saw a wonderful outburst of intellectual activity in art, science and literature which has been variously called Gupta Golden Age, Classical Age as well as the Periclean Age of Indian history. It was Barnett who remarked that "The Gupta period is in the annals of classical India almost what the Periclean Age is in the history of Greece" Dr. V. A. Smith compares Gupta cultural achievements with those of the Elizabethan period of English history. "Politically, the Gupta age was one of integration in the history of India. After more than three centuries of political disintegration and foreign domination northern India rallied herself to political unity under the far-sighted, a man of culture and a patron of arts and letters, he (Samudragupta) became the symbol and architect of a mighty creative urge among the people which, while drawing vitality from tradition and race memory, took on a new shape and power" which found expression in succeeding generations in an intellectual and symbols of tremendous national upsurge. Life was never happier, our culture never more creative than during the Golden Prime of India." In a stagnant civilisation intellectual horizon seldom gets a chance of expansion and creative urge ceases to exist. It is through interaction of diverse cultures that newer and more virile culture emerges. The series of foreign invasions and foreign domination for about three centuries resulted in a comingling of cultures which assumed a new shape and power. This new vitality was to be witnessed in the outburst of intellectual activity during the Gupta age. Conquests of Samudragupta and Chandragupta II and the consolidation of the empire brought about that imperial peace which made possible the progress of culture and civilisation. The new era of political greatness reached maturity under Chandragupta II and the cultural regeneration that followed won the hearts of the people. Added to these was the liberal patronage extended to scholars and litterateurs by the Gupta emperors. Coins of Samudragupta contain illustration of his love of fine arts music, while the couch type coins of Chandragupta II suggested his artistic and intellectual tem-

perament. The Gupta period witnessed political unity and prosperity which combined with the great patronage extended to Sanskrit literature and learning resulted in the flourishing of every branch of knowledge. In fact, this period produced the best authors in almost all branches of literature as well as in sciences like Astronomy and Mathematics. This is borne out by the fact that dramatists and poets like Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti, Bharabi and Magha, prose writers like Dandin, Subandhu and Bana, grammarians like Chandra, Vamana and Bhartrihari, philosophers like Gandapada, Kumarilbhatta and Prabhakara, rhetorician like Bhamaha, lexicographer like Amara, astronomers like Aryabhata, Varahamihira and Brahmagupta flourished during this period. Dr. V. A. Smith who compares the Gupta period with the Elizabethan age of the English history aptly remarks that as the brilliance of Shakespeare alone outshone all the lesser authors of the time in England so did Kalidasa outshine all other lesser lights of contemporary India. Again even if Shakespeare were not born the Elizabethan age would have gone down in history as a golden age of English literature, similarly even if there were no works of Kalidasa, the Gupta age would still be regarded as a golden age of literature. Such had been the variety and volume of literary and scientific work done by scholars in the Gupta age. At one time it was held by some scholars including Maxmuller that the Gupta period saw a revival of Sanskrit language and literature. This view has been now discarded as incorrect. For the Sanskrit language and literature had never been altogether eclipsed in the ages preceding that of the Guptas. Its influence continued to exist without break despite use of Prakrit during the Maurya period. During the Kushana period Asvaghosa wrote in Sanskrit. Bhasa in his Pratima Nataka used Sanskrit. Thus it is evident that Sanskrit continued to be used without break during the periods preceding the Gupta age. The Allahabad inscription and the Mandasor inscription show a highly developed poetic style which could not have been attained except through a continuous process of progress. Hence to say that the Gupta age witnessed a revival of Sanskrit is not factually correct. During the Gupta period full development of the Puranas and the final phase of the Smriti literature were reached. Probably, the Epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, also took their present shape during the Gupta period. The Puranas, eighteen in number, were written long before the Gupta Age, originally seems to have meant "old narrative". Some of the eighteen Puranas, particularly the Vayu Purana, had been written down in its existing form during the Gupta period. The Puranas, like the Epics, were originally composed by bards. Later on these fell into the hands of the Brahmanical priests who added a good deal of new matters to them and took more or less a sectarian character. The importance of the Puranas was great in the development of Hinduism and cannot be over-estimated for they give us an insight into the Hindu mythology, idol worship, Hindu theism, Pantheism, Love of God, Hindu Philosophy, Superstitions, Ethics, etc. According to Pargitar the Puranas were originally composed in literary Prakrit but were re-written in Sanskrit later on. Dr. Hazra has shown that different sections of the Puranas dealing with orthodox rites and customs

were added to some of the different Puranas at different stages of the Gupta period. Some of the Dharmasastras which definitely belonged to the Gupta Period were Smritis of Katayana, Devala, Vyasa. It was during the closing years of the Gupta Age, that Bhasya, i.e., commentaries on different Smritis began. The principal systems of Philosophy of the period were those of Isvarakrishna's Sankhya-Karika, which expounded Sankhya system of Philosophy, a work called Paramarthasaptatic written by Vasubandhu was a criticism of Shasti-tantra. Gandapada better known as Siddhasena Divakara was the Paramguru (teacher's teacher) of Sankara and the first systematic exponent of monistic Vedanta. Bhartihari's work Vakyapadiya of this period has a great affinity with those of Sankara,

Kalidasa was the most brilliant luminary in the literary firmament of the Gupta age who shed enduring lustre on the secular Sanskrit literature. He was the greatest poet and dramatist that ever lived in India and his works have been enjoying an unparalleled reputation and popularity through ages, which remain undiminished even today. Unfortunately we have no definite idea about the time in which he flourished nor any knowledge about his life. Scholars differ as to the date of Kalidasa but the general opinion is in favour of regarding him as the court poet of a Gupta Emperor, most probably Chandragupta II Vikramaditya, tradition ascribes Nabaratna, i.e., nine gems of literature with King Vikrama of whom Kalidasa was the most resplendent: But most scholars think that all the nine gems could not have been Kalidasa's contemporaries. Dr. Smith says, "Although, it is difficult to fix the dates of the Great Poet's career with precision, it appears to be probable that he began to write either late in the reign of Chandragupta II or early in the reign of Kumargupta II. The traditional association of his name with Raja Bikram of Ujjain is thus justified by sober criticism". A close study of his works shows that Kalidasa "was a pious Brahmin of Ujjain and a liberal Saiva by belief, who had acquired a knowledge of the various branches of Brahmanical learning". He was familiar with Sankhya, Yoga, Dharmasastras, Kamasutra, Natya-Sastra, Vyakarana, Jyotih astra, even fineta Comusic and painting. "His versatile genius tins acquaintance with Court etiquette, his shrewdness, his modesty, without a due sense of self-respect, and his poetic talent are very well reflected in his works which are all permeated with a feeling of ease and contentment, perfect satisfaction with the existings of case things". The greatest and best work of Kalidasa is his drama Sakuntala which is considered not only the best in Sanskrit literature, but is the literature of the world. Two of his earlier works were Malavikagnimitram and Vikramovarsiya. Two of his epics Raghuvamsa and Kumarasambhava and his lyrical poem Meghaduta "are universally regarded as gems of Sanskrit poetry". "Kalidasa is unquestionably the finest master of Indian poetic style and both in drama and poetry he stands unsurpassed and unrivalled even today. He is inimitable in the use of the metaphor and simile." Two other remarkable dramatists that flourished during the period are Sudraka, author of Mrichchakatikam (The Little Clay Cart), and

Visakadatta, author of *Mudrarakshasa*. Visakadatta is also supposed to have been the author of another remarkable drama named *Devi-Chandraguptam*. Bharavi, author of *Kiratarjuniyam* and *Sisupalbadha* also flourished during this age. Dr. Smith states that "the Laws of Manu, as we now know the book, may be dated from about the beginning of the Gupta period". Evolution of the fables as a form of Sanskrit literature reached its fullness during the Gupta period and its best example in *Pancha-tantra*. The author was Vishnusarma. The book not only earned wide popularity all over India but became a distinct part of the world literature through its translation in more than fifty languages and with about two hundred versions. In India three versions can be traced in (i) *Brihatkathamajari* and *Kathasaritsagara*, (ii) *Tantra-khyayika*, and (iii) *Hitopadesa*. Another work of fable form belonging to the period is *Gunadya's Brihatkatha* written in Paisachi prose. Among the romantic story writers mention may be made of Dandin who is supposed to have flourished during this period. His *Kavyadarsa* and *Dasakumarcharita* demonstrate his power of characterisation and daring realistic scenes of life in easy style full of wit and humour. Varahamihira was a great versifier who used a large number of Sanskrit metres in his *Brihat-Samhita* and *Brihat-jataka*. Although lexicography in India can be traced back to Vedic texts, yet lexicon in the real sense of the term can be noticed for the first time in *Amar's Namalinganusasana* usually called the *Amara kosa*. He was also responsible for beginning contributing to medical lexicons like those of *Dhanvantari*. In the field of sciences the Gupta age is adorned by the illustrious names of *Aryabhatta* and *Varahamihira*. *Varahamihira* in his *Panchasiddhantika* preserved the account of five astronomical works of his time some of which, according to scholars, indicate a knowledge of Greek and Roman astronomy. The four works preserved in *Varahamihira's* work *Panchasiddhantika* are *Romaka Siddhanta*, *Paulisa Siddhanta*, *Vasistha Siddhanta*, *Paitimaha Siddhanta*, and *Surya Siddhanta*. From *Varahamihira* we come across the names of several other astronomers of the time such as, *Lata*, *Simha*, *Pradyumna*, *Vijayandin*, and the famous *Aryabhatta*. *Brahmagupta* was another great astronomer and mathematician of this age. He anticipated *Newton* in the theory of gravitation. *Aryabhatta*, besides having been an astronomer, was one who first treated Mathematics as a distinct discipline and dealt with different branches of the subject including algebraic identities. He was also the first to hold that the earth is a sphere rotating on its axis and that eclipses were the shadow of earth falling on the Sun or the Moon. *Aryabhatta's* unique contribution was the system of decimal now used all over the world. Besides the subjects mentioned above, there were other fields in which the period witnessed a remarkable development. *Vatsyayana* in his *Kamasutra* dealt with the art of love. Likewise works on subjects like architecture, music, dancing, painting, etc. were also produced during this period. *Harishena*, the general and foreign minister of *Samudragupta*, was also the royal panegyrist who was responsible for composing the *Allahabad Prasasti* inscribed on an Asokan Pillar at Allahabad in poetic form. The Gupta Art & Architecture In

art, architecture, sculpture, painting and terra-cotta the Gupta period witnessed unprecedented activities and development all over India. In architecture the period marks a parting of ways. While the period saw the culmination and exhaustion of the earlier tendencies and age which is particularly noticed in the architectural style of the temples. In it initiated temple or chid formative period for the foundation a typical Indian architecture. In the rock-cut architecture, the conventional types reached their culmination. The rock-cut caves mostly Buddhist, but also Hindu and Jain, had the conventional two parts: the proper shrine called the Chaitya and the monastery, i.e., the Vihara or Sangharama, saw the culminating point of development. The most notable of these are to be found in Ajanta, Ellora, Aurangabad (Hyderabad), and Bagh (Central India). Brahmanical rock-cut shrines although lesser in number than those of the Buddhists, were not rare either. Reference may be made in this connection to the Udaygiri series of shrines near Bhilsa in Bhopal State. The shrines are both rock-cut Brahmanical shrines and are also to be found at Badami in the Bijapur district. Jain caves are to be found at Badami as also at Aihole. Structural buildings in altogether new style was initiated. Formerly structural buildings, temples, etc., were constructed of perishable materials like wood, bamboo, etc., but during this age with the application of principle of architecture and pre-planning the Indian architects began to build monuments in permanent materials like bricks, dressed stones, etc. Contemporary epigraphic evidence refers to the building of numerous temples and cities with lofty edifices with the new materials. Flat-roofed temples, temples with Sikharas, rectangular temples, circular and square temple survive today as specimens of the new architectural style and system. Sanchi temple, Parvati temple, Meguti temple, Baigram temples may be mentioned in this connection. The temples at Sanchi, Tigawa, and Eran are the best preserved among the structural temple of the period. The most well-known Sikhara temple is that of Dasavatara at Deogarh. Brick temple of Bhitargao in Kanpur may be referred to as one of the new structural temples built with the new material, bricks. The allied art of sculpture of the Gupta period had human figure as its pivot. At Mathura and Amaravati human figures of men and women around whole at Sanchi and Bharut vegetal world find predominance. The art of this period "indicates a deeper qualitatively meaningful transformation of human figures". The vegetal life also shows transformation. The most noteworthy features of the Gupta art are its elegance, simplicity of expression and its spiritual purpose. Gupta art are its elegance, simplicity of expression and its spiritual purpose. "A largeness of conception endows the human figure with a mental and physical discipline that discards the earthiness of Mathura and sensuousness of Vengi and elevates it to a state of experience of either a subtle spiritual or deeper rational or a sturdier and more vital existence. The face is lit up with this experience which is wisdom itself, which the eyes with drooping eyelids, instead of looking out into the visible world, seem to look within where every thing is at rest in contemplative concentration". It may be mentioned that the Gupta plastic conception had its birth at

Mathura and spread to Sarnath, Sravasti, Prayag, and other places. At Sarnath the plastic conception of Mathura school with all its elegance reached perfection in figure of seated Buddha in Dharma-Chakra-Pravahthana attitude, The perfection is also noticed in a few specimens found in the figures of Siva, Kartikeya, etc., at Malwa, and partly noticed in the Durga mahishamardini and bust of Siva at Bhumara. The Siva-Parvati relief at Kosam and the Ramayana panels at Deogarh are, however, good specimens of art although less refined and different in connection and elegance from the Sarnath School. Yet these are more homely and closer to day to day life. Reference may be made, in this connection, to similar homely specimens in the Brahmanical bas-reliefs at Chandimau. The quality of the Aihole reliefs is rather mediocre both in composition and plastic execution, The art of painting, including terra-cotta and clay modelling, assumed a secular character during this period and became more popular than stone sculpture. Vatsyana's work Kama-sutra includes painting as one of the sixty four Kalas, i.e., arts and Yasodhara, commentator of Vatsyana refers to Shadanga, i.e., Six limbs of art: distinction of types (rupabheda), ideal proportions (pramanas), expression of mood (bhava), embodiment of charm (Lavany-yojana), points of view (Sadrisya) and preparation of colours (Varnakabhanga). All this and other references prove the intellectual ferment of the Gupta period and the detailed thinking about the theory and technique of painting. The best specimens of painting of the period are to be found on the walls of the Ajanta caves, Bagh cave in Gwalior, Settannavasal temple at Puddukkottai and at Badami. Incidents of life of Buddha were the subject matter of the Gupta painters. The painting 'Dying Princess' in one Ajanta cave has earned the admiration of Gurgess, Fergusson, Griffiths and many others. The Gupta art of painting has been praised by art critics for its brilliance of colour, richness of expression and delicacy of execution. The artists of the Gupta age were experts in casting metals and making of copper statues. The wrought iron pillar at Delhi made at the time of Samudragupta is a marvel metallurgical skill of the Gupta period artists. Dr. R. D. Banerjee rightly remarks that Gupta art is really a renaissance due to the transformation of the ideals of the people of Northern India in the fourth and the fifth centuries. This renaissance was based on an assimilation of what was old, an elimination of what was exotic and foreign, and finally a systematic production of something entirely new and essentially Indian.

The coins of the Gupta period while furnish us with a lot of historical information show the artistic temperament, valiance, personality of the Gupta emperors. Both the gold and silver coins of the time give us a clear impression of the development of the currency system as well as the fineness of the coins and artistic representations of figures both human and religious on them.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION UNDER THE GUPTA

According to Dr. K. N. Ghosal the Gupta Age was a period of Brahmanical reaction against ascendancy of Jainism and Buddhism. The age-old division of the society into four fundamental varnas

seems to have shown a tendency towards intensification with the supremacy of the Brahmanas. The Buddhist and the Jaina reforms movement and the predominance received a direct check due to the Counter-Reformation by Brahmanical Hinduism. On the evidence of Varahamihira's Brihat-Samhita we know that different quarters were assigned to cities for the Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and the Sudras. But in spite of this stratification of the four Varnas according to the Smriti law, there were instances of Brahmanas and Kshatriyas adopting occupations of the lower varnas, that is, of the Vaisyas and Sudras and the Vaisyas and Sudras adopting the occupations of the higher varnas, that is, of the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas. There are also examples of inter-marriages between varnas. In the Sanskrit literature of the period there are mentions of Brahmanas and Kshatriyas marrying daughters and even female slaves of courtesans. Smriti laws were thus followed not with unexceptionable rigidity. Apart from the age-old four varnas there were numerous other mixed castes. Chandalas occupied the lowest rank in the society and they had to live outside the towns or villages. The Smriti laws laid down strict rules for avoiding pollution of other classes of the society by their contact. Fa-hien bears testimony to the residence of the Chandalas outside the boundaries of towns and how they had to strike a piece of wood as a warning to others to keep away from them, when they would come to towns or market places. There were aboriginal tribes like the Sabaras, Pulindas, Kiratas, etc., who lived in forests of the Vindhyas, far removed from the Aryan society and practised reprehensible rites as offering human flesh to their deities and live on hunting. Slaves

the Gupta Age there were certain changes in the Smriti law about the Katyayan puts greater emphasis on the classification of the rules of slavery to the higher Jainavalkya society and in this respect he is more categorical than Yajnavalkya and Narada. According to Katyana a Brahmana could not be reduced to slavery. He also modifies the earlier rules relating to slavery by prescribing that in case of apostasy which a Kshatriya or a Vaisya was to be made a slave, a Brahmana was only to be banished. Sale or purchase of a Brahmana woman was to be ipso facto annulled. According to Katyana a free woman marrying a slave would become a slave herself, but a child born of a free man and a slave woman would become free from slavery. The drama Mrichchakatika also bears out the rules of slavery referred to above.

MARRIAGE:

POSITION OF WOMEN

During the Gupta period the older Smriti laws relating to marriage remained practically unaltered. There was, however, a tendency to lower the marriageable age of girls and it was enjoined that girls must be given in marriage before attainment of puberty. Vatsyana's view was, however, at variance with the Smriti laws of marriage. From his work it appears that marriage both before and after attainment of puberty by girls was prevalent at that time. According to Vatsyana a young man could marry a girl of his choice by courtship or even by trickery and violence. Girls choosing their own

husbands, i.e., Svayambara as prescribed by the Smriti laws is also mentioned by Vatsayana, Brahmanical sacred law had from a long time before the Gupta period prohibited study and utterance of the Vedic mantras by women. But on the evidence of Vatsayana it is learnt that girls of high families, daughters of nobles and Princess acquired knowledge of the Sastras. Vatsayana mentions a long list of subsidiary branches of knowledge recommended for women. Again referring to the qualifications of a good wife Vatsayana says that she should be sufficiently educated to frame family budget and regulate domestic expenditure. The virtues of a Hindu wife Vatsayana explained in greater details than in the Smritis, are self-restraint and service as also household management. ministers to the comforts of her husband at table; attends religious She festivals, observes fast ald along with him. She serves her father-in-law and mother-in-law and obeys their commands. All these qualities remain as the hallmark of Hindu wives down to the present day.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION UNDER THE GUPTA

During the Gupta Age the widows were required to follow the rules prescribed by the Smritis from earlier times. The widows had to live a life of strict celibacy, but according to Brihaspati sidows had burm herself in the funeral pyre of her husband. In the Gupta Age the widow followed the carlier Smriti laws and lived a life of purity, fasts and vows. She was also allowed to inherit her husband's pro- perty. According to some writers the custom of Sati was highly praised while others condemned it. On the whole it may be said that during the Gupta Age the widows lived a chaste and pious life prescribed by the Smritis. Widow remarriage was not forbidden although held in disfavour. The system of female courtisans (ganika) was also prevalent dur-ing the Gupta period as of old and in certain temples Devadasis were retained. In the temple of Mahakala at Ujjain such girls were pre- sent during Kalidasa's time. The trend towards denigrating the status of women in society which began previously continued during the Gupta Age. Yet there were certain changes for the better. For examples, women's right to property was recognised along with women molested by robbers and other anti-social persons. Women also exercised public rights as is exemplified by Prabhavati-Gupta's ruling over the Vakataka Kingdom. Use of veils by women of high social standing while appearing in public seem to have been prevalent under the Guptas. Literature of the Gupta Age as also the account of the Chinese traveller Fa-hien point to the high standard of living during that period. There are other evidences which prove the luxury and wealth of the people of the time. Jewels were used not only by the members of the royal family but also by others. Ornaments of various types, for the head, forehead, neck, ears, forearms, arms, waist, fingers, legs were in use. Garments of men and women had two distinct parts, for the upper and the lower parts of the body. Women had their bodices, petticoats, and winter cloak reaching the feet. From Amara- kosa we come to know that high standard of cleanliness and comfort was maintained during the Gupta period. Scented hair oil, hair lotion, perfumes, etc., were presumably in

use, for the formulas for their preparation are found in in Amarakosa. Rice, wheat, barley, pulses of different kinds, butter, oils, molasses, coarse sugar, fish, meat and liquor were taken as food and drink by the people of the time. Fa-hien's remark that killing of animals, inking wine, eating onions and garlic were unknown in the Middle Kingdom, i.e., the dominions under the direct rule of the Gupta emperor was an exaggeration. But it gives us a general impression of the Buddhistic influence on the life and habits of the people of the People seem to have believed in omens, portents, spells and divination. Common people believed in superstitions. But intelligent and educated people, the kings and princes were above all such super. stitious beliefs. Contemporary literature gives us a picture of the gay life of the townsmen during the Gupta period. Works, both poetic and prose, describe the splendour and magnificence of many of the well-known cities and towns of the period. The nature of life was one of refined Epicureanism. Houses consisted of two parts, outer one for the males and reserved for "their amorous enjoyment", and the inner one for the women of the family. A garden of trees and flower plants was at tached to every house. Pet birds, domestic animals were also kept by the householders of the city. The townsmen had their periodical enjoyments since as the Samajas, Ghatas, i.e., assemblies, social gather- ings, public sports, drinking parties, etc. Every fortnight or every month the people assembled at the temple of Saraswati, the goddess of learning and arts. During the Gupta period a highly cultured urban life was evolv ed. Even in daily life "a high and refined, delicate and elegant art of toilets and cosmetics" could be noticed. Doing of hair and scenting of the face, body and dress with aguru incense and other perfumes and powders and paste were prevalent. "Indeed whatever was done to beautify the body and the soul during this period was raised to the standard of lalitakala or fine art in which simplicity, delicacy, refine- ment and elegance were the main watch words."!In the field of economy, the Gupta period witnessed a great pro-gress in agriculture, industry, trade and commerce and banking. Agri- culture was both intensive and extensive. Epigraphic evidence of cultivation that it was not easy to find or follow, uncultivated or un- settled land even for the purposes of charitable grant. Grant of mas- sive plots of land was an impossibility and small plots in different parts would be included in such grants if made. So great importance was attached to agriculture that grant of lands to educational institu- tions would require the institution to keep adequate labour and draught animals for cultivating the land given as grant. In the Gupta Age there were guilds of various types. Guilds, called Srenis, were there for industry, trade and banking. We have references to guilds of merchants, artisans, traders, bankers, oilmen, weavers, etc., as well as federation of guilds of the same kind as federation of artisans' guild or of the bankers' guilds. The guilds used to receive deposits as trustees and pay stipulated amount to the beneficiaries. There were also irrevocable endowments to guilds for the benefit of Viharas and temples. These institutions were maintained out of the endowments made to the

guild. Extensive number of coins of gold, silver, and copper of the Gupta period reveal the fineness of the coins as well as the development of the currency system of the time.

Public utility works like the repair of dams, for example, of the Sudarsana lake, digging of wells, tanks, reservoirs of drinking water, lakes, building of temples with halls, causeways and laying of parks and gardens were undertaken during the Gupta Period. Among the industries of the time mention may be made of textile industry which produced Silk, muslin, calico, linen, wool clothes. Amarakosa refers to various qualities of cloth, coarse and fine, cloth meant for making male and female garments. Dresses, both stitched and unstitched, were made at that time. Benares, Mathura, Pundra, i.e., North Bengal were specially noted for silk cloth and rare type of cotton cloth. Metallurgy was also highly developed during this period. The iron Pillar of Chandra at Delhi is illustrative of this development. For manufacture of different medicine use of bowls and instruments of gold, silver, lead, copper, and bronze is recommended by Charaka. Ornaments of gold and silver with pearls and jewels set skilfully in order to have best colour effect and brightness. Ivory was in extensive use for manufacture of furniture, seals, etc. The specimens of sculpture and architecture of the time indicate a high degree of excellence attained in the stone-cutters' job at that time. Trade and commerce, both maritime and over land, used to be carried on with Ceylon, Indo-China, etc. A good deal of the material prosperity and high standard of living was due to the brisk trade, particularly carried on from the ports on the western and eastern coasts of India. Tamralipta was one of the most important ports for export of commodities to Ceylon and South-East Asian countries.

RELIGION

Religious movement during the Gupta period shows a positive swing towards concrete from abstract. The Vedic pantheon and sacrificial worship receded into the background and ceremonial worship of the images of Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesvara (Siva) as well as other gods such as Surya, Kartikeya, Saraswati, etc., became popular. Temples, sometimes very magnificent ones, were erected for the gods and goddesses mentioned above. But the old ideas of sacrificial worship of the Vedic Hinduism were retained by a progressively dwindling number of orthodox votaries. The transformation that took place in the Brahmanical religion led to the evolution of a new pantheon whose history and glory are told in the Puranas. The characteristic features of the religious life of the period were, first, wide prevalence of the images of gods. The idea that was current is that "worship and meditation are possible only when the Supreme Being is endowed with form". Thus iconographic evolution was a distinct trait of the period. Secondly, another important characteristic feature of the period was the spirit of toleration among the followers of different religious sects. "One aspect of this tolerant spirit was the attempt to establish the unity of different gods like Vishnu and Siva and to combine in a single iconographic motif the attributes of different gods. The very idea of the trinity of

Brahma, Vishnu and Siva is an evidence of the same spirit, which is further displayed by regarding Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu." What was true of the Brahmanical Hinduism was also true of Buddhism and there was transformation of the austere moral code of the Mahayana Buddhism into Vajrayana and later approach of Buddhism nearer and nearer to new Hinduism helped Buddhism to be gradually absorbed by Hinduism. But the failure of Jainism to adapt itself to new ideas and environment prevented it from acquiring that popularity which Buddhism acquired within and without India. During the Gupta period the religious condition in India assumed a complex character due to the prevalence of various religious sects side by side. But this at least proved the great spirit of religious toleration that characterised the period.

Some scholars, among whom Dr. Keith is most prominent, remark that the Gupta period signified a revival of Brahmanical Hinduism. But this view is only partially correct for although since the time of Asoka Buddhism became the predominant faith and continued to be the state religion for major part of the time, Hinduism did not vanish. It was only pushed into the background. But with the coming of the Sungas to power Brahmanical Hinduism regained its position of pride and Pushyamitra who was a Brahmana himself celebrated Asvamedha sacrifices thereby reviewed the Brahmanical religion. This was also the case with the Kanvas and the Andhras. Even before the Guptas, the Nagas popularised Brahmanical religion by holding ten Asvamedha sacrifices. But under the Gupta rulers Hinduism staged a fullest come back through the patronage it received from them. Yet it will be a mistake to think that there was any Hindu reaction since the Gupta rulers extended toleration to other religions and religious sects.

CAUSES OF THE DOWNFALL OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

LATER GUPTAS

It was after the reign of Skandagupta that decline of the Gupta empire began. By the middle of the 6th Century A.D. (550 A.D.) the Gupta empire became extinct. Under Skandagupta's successors Pusyaputra, Narasimhagupta, Kumarditya, Kumaragupta-II, Vishnugupta, Budhagupta, Tathagatagupta, Bhanugupta etc., the Gupta empire broke up and on ramified parts different rulers related to the Guptas were ruling. Although the Gupta empire broke up small families related to the Guptas were found to rule in some parts as local rulers upto the eighth Century A.D. The last King of the Gupta dynasty was Jivitagupta-II.

CAUSES OF THE DOWNFALL OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

In the fourth century when the Roman empire in the West was declining, in India the Gupta empire, noted for its exceptional cultural advancement and dissemination, had emerged. Not since the days of the Mauryas had India been a united political power before the emergence of the Guptas, but in the fifth century decline had set in the Gupta empire and it tottered to its fall by the middle of

the sixth century. The Gupta empire which was built by the labour and genius of Samudragupta and Chandragupta-II and which had reached the highest watermark of cultural achievements under Chandragupta-II was on its decline from the end of the fifth century. The causes of the decline and break up of empires in India, whether the Maurya, Sultanate or the Mughal empire, show a family likeness. The Gupta empire also had similar causes behind its decline and fall. From the contemporary historical sources the causes of the fall of the Gupta empire may be mentioned as (i) the internal dissension in the royal family, (ii) rebellion of the feudatories, (iii) assumption of independence by the Provincial Satraps, (iv) foreign invasions, (v) lack of military and administrative abilities on the part of the later Gupta rulers. (i) Decline of the Gupta empire had set in, for all practical purposes, during the reign of Skandagupta. True, he had successfully constrained the Pushyamitra and the Huna menace but the jolt that the imperial fabric had received, loosened the enduring grit of the empire. While the forces of decay were at work, the princes of the royal blood engaged themselves in mutual conflict in furtherance of their selfish gains and even began to take sides with the struggle between the local rulers. All this denigrated the power and prestige of the Gupta empire which was soon parcelled out between the princes, local rulers, and high officials. Skandagupta's wars since the empire from external attacks had heavily told upon the finances of the government and the proof was found in the debasement of the gold coins of his as also in the lesser number of gold coins issued during his reign. (ii) Removal of strong rule at the centre, and distinctly after Budhagupta brought the centrifugal forces in action and Kathiawar, Bundelkhand, North Bengal became virtually independent. The process of disintegration once set in began to run its course and when external invasions further weakened the empire break-up of the empire was simply a question of time.

(iii) With the growing weakness of the central authority due to struggle for succession among the princes of royal blood and personal inefficiency of the rulers, the feudatories of the Gupta empire began to raise the standard of rebellion and eventually tore off their local areas from the Gupta empire. Yasodharman, a feudatory of the Gupta empire in central India with his capital at Mandasor, was valiant soldier and a capable ruler who earned the fame of warding off the Huna invasion. He naturally made himself independent of the Gupta emperor and carved out a large dominion by conquest of northern India. His example emboldened other feudatories who began to follow his foot-steps and made themselves independent. The Maukharis set up an independent Kingdom in Uttar Pradesh, the Maitrakas who were military governors of the Gupta emperors at Valabhi made themselves independent. A branch of this dynasty made itself independent in western Malwa. In the sixth century, that is, about the same time when other parts of the Gupta empire were falling off South, West and East Bengal shook off Gupta sovereignty. (iv) The greatest scourge of the Gupta empire was the external invasion. Samudragupta in his statesmanship realised that the Vakatakas would be either of great service or disservice to the

Gupta empire and therefore left them unmolested during his Deccan campaign and Chandragupta-II went one step further to strengthen his power by entering into a marriage alliance with the Vakatakas. But the prudent policy pursued by Samudragupta and Chandragupta-II was forsaken by the later Gupta rulers and during the reign of Budhagupta, Vakataka King Narendrasena invaded and exercised a great influence over Malwa-Kosala-Mekala and his orders were obeyed there. Malwa and Gujarat had later on been conquered by the Vakatakas. The Vakatakas were not the only invaders from outside. The Huns had administered the most shattering blow to the Gupta empire. Although their invasion during the reign of Skandagupta had been successfully warded off yet the Huns reappeared and carried on devastation in Gujarat passed under India and Gandharan deyas Malwa and Gujarat passed under their control. Their prog Punjab. wards Central Han checked by Yashodheres to Mandasor. The Hun Chief Mihirkula was abjectly defeated at his hands. The last defeat of the Huns was at the hands of Narasimhas tupea. The common opinion that the Hun invasion was the principal cause of the break up of the Gupta empire, has been refuted by Dr. R. C. Majumdar. According to him "There is a general belief among historians that the Hun invasion was the principal cause of the downfall of the Gupta empire. But it is difficult to subscribe to this view. The gates of India were successfully barred against the Huns throughout the fifth century A.D. In spite of temporary successes, first of Toramana and then of Mihirkula, the Huns never counted as a permanent factor in Indian politics save Kashmir and Afghanistan which lay far beyond the frontiers of the Gupta empire. So far as evidence goes, the death-blow to the Gupta empire was dealt not by the Huns but by ambitious chiefs like Yasodharman". But it cannot be denied that the repeated Hun invasions had shaken the Gupta imperial fabric violently enough thereby making it possible for Yasodharman and other feudatories to administer the death blow to it. (v) One of the contributory factors leading to the downfall of the Gupta empire was the competition among both the civil and military officials for furthering their own interest when foreign invasions had thrown the administration out of gear. Lack of discipline and sense of duty contributed the weakness of the administration which was certainly one of the contributory factors.

(vi) The Gupta emperors like Samudragupta, Chandragupta, Skandagupta were patrons of Hinduism in a militant form. Celebration of Asvamedha is a point in illustration. But later Guptas had Buddhist leaning and even their names like Budhagupta, Tathagatagupta, etc., exemplified this. This transformation in religious attitude had its repercussion on the policy of the government and what had actually happened to the intense Buddhistic attitude of mind of Asoka, could be seen to some extent at least among later Gupta rulers. If the story of Hiuen T-Sang that Baladitya who had taken Mihirkula prisoner set him free at his mother's behest, thereby leaving the enemy unharmed is true, it must be said that this was a misplaced kindness which in a king desirous of maintaining the integrity of his

empire and defending it against external invasion was a sign of weak- Dess. All these factors combined to accomplish the break up of an empire so vast in expanse and so advanced in culture.

FOREIGN IMPACTS ON THE GUPTAS

Dr. V. S. Smith rightly points out that the "contact or collision of diverse modes of civilisation is the most potent stimulus to intellectual and artistic progress". The Gupta period saw an unprecedented cultural excellence in the Indian history due to its contacts with civilisations, both of the east and the west. The conquest of Malwa and Surashtra during the reign of Chandragupta-II opened up communication between India and western countries which facilitated reception of European ideas. The result of the impact of foreign contacts can be noticed in the coins of the Gupta kings in which imitation of the Roman coins is obvious. The astronomy of Aryabhata was undoubtedly influenced by the Alexandrine School of astronomy. Varahamihira's Surya Siddhanta appears to have been equally influenced by the Greek and Roman astronomy. In art and literature, Dr. Smith rightly observes, it is difficult to measure the impact of the foreign influence. The sculpture of the Sleeping Vishnu at Deogarh has a close resemblance with the Graeco-Roman works represented by the Endymion at Stockholm. Prof. Basham endorses the view but he remarks that the Indian sculpture of the Gupta period represents Greek spirit in Indian form. In the intellectual and artistic output of the Gupta period the influence of the Roman is suggested by Dr. Smith. According to Mr. Keith there was close relation between Indian and Greek mathematical science. "Some critics have thought that Chinese ideas may be traced in the Ajanta frescoes and they may be right". All this is but one side of the picture. The Indian culture when it had attained fullness under the Guptas transcended its physical limits and through commercial relations spread into the South-East Asian countries like Sumatra, Java, Bali, Cambodia, Anam, Borneo, etc. During the Gupta period we find many rulers in these countries who bore Indian names. In these countries Indian religion, social and cultural life, language and script had spread. Between the second and the fifth centuries Indian colonies were established in the countries of South-East Asia and continued to exist for a period of a thousand year

UNIT: V

In the examination of the past, historians primarily examine two categories of historical sources. These are primary and secondary sources of history. A primary source of history is something that originates from the past. It can be a chronicle, a piece of potter or coin found in an archaeological site, and so on. On the other hand, a secondary source of history is a work that comments on the past. Typically, this is a recently written book that describes past events, often written by a historian or trained scholar familiar about the time period and civilization in question. While examining Tamil history, historians examine literary, archaeological, epigraphic and numismatic sources. The foremost

source of ancient Tamil history is the Sangam literature, generally dated to the last centuries BCE to early centuries CE. The unit will examine the sources of Tamil history in detail. It will begin with a discussion on the geographical features of Tamil Nadu.

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF THE TAMIL COUNTRY

It is a general conception that geography and physical features influence the course of human history. Geography governs the social and economic aspects of history. The geographical features of a country like its mountains and rivers, its climate and natural resources determine in a large measure the nature of the social and economic life of its people. The choice of occupations on the part of individuals, their physical and mental efficiency, their standard of life as well as their social customs and institutions bear the imprint of the geographical features of the land in which they live. The distinctive characteristics of people are themselves products of accumulated geographical influences extending over a vast span of time. Extraneous factors like religion and achievements of great personalities from time to time as well as fortuitous circumstances like wars and famines, are prone to leave their impress on the progress of a people. The share of each of these factors in shaping the life of a people might vary from country to country. But the history of a place and man is certainly dominated by geographical features and on all account man is largely subjected to it. For instance, the sea-faring tendency of the Tamils was largely the product of geographical influences. Tamizhagam, the land of the Tamil language, is the southernmost part of the Indian sub-continent. Tamizhagam, as a geographical unit, lies to the south of 15 Latitude. Nakkirar in his commentary on Iraiyanar Ahapporul states that Tamizhagam at the time of the first Tamil Sangam extended to the south and east than to the present confines of Tamil Nadu and comprised forty nine major divisions. The statement that, “Vada Venkadam

Tenkumari Ayidait Tamil Kuru Nallulagathu” indicates the southern and northern limits of Tamizhagam of the Sangam Age. It is bound on the south by the Indian Ocean, on the northwest by the Mysore plateau. The Tamils divided this land into Kudapulam, Kunapulam and Thenpulam. Venkadam area itself consisted of impenetrable forests which lay beyond the territories of Pulli. At Cape Comorin, where the three seas merge it symbolises the unity of waters. It is a place of pilgrimage. Pilgrims appear to have kept up the link between the north and southern India. The people who lived north of Venkadam were called Vadukar. Close to the north of Tamizhagam above the Ghats were Tulunad, Coorg and Konkanam. Sri Lanka situated like a foot rest to the southeast of peninsular India. It is a geographical and cultural continuation of Tamil Nadu, though it has been generally politically independent. Between Ceylon and India was the island of Manipallavam which was at a distance of

thirty yajanas, south of Puhar, the ancient sea-port at the mouth of the Kaveri. A ship sailing from the coast of Madurai to Java touched Manipallavam. To the west of Ceylon were the islands inhabited by a naked, nomad race called the Nagas. The land stretching south from the Konkan along the coast, now comprising the Kerala state was a part and parcel of Tamizhagam, through out the early period of South Indian History. After the 9th century A.D., Tamizhagam came to be divided into Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Malayalam, the mother tongue of the Kertalites, evolved from konduntamil. Tamizhagam was divided in to twelve Nadus or Provinces as Pandi Nadu, Kutta Nadu, Kuda Nadu, Karka Nadu, Venadu, Puli Nadu, Panri Nadu, Aruva Nadu, and North Aruva Nadu, sita Nadu, Mal Nadu, and Punal Nadu. These nadus can be summed up into forming the Pandynad, the Cheranad, the Cholanad, the Kongunadu and the Velirnadu. The Pandynad corresponded to the land stretching south of Kaveri, and comprised the modern districts of Madurai, Ramnad, and Tirunelveli. It was the land south of the river Vellar, north of Cape Comorin, east of Peruveli and west of the sea. It had many Kurrams or sub-divisions. Chaste Tamil or Sentamil was then spoken there. The capital and the chief inland town of Pandynad was Madurai which is situated on the banks of the river Vaigai. It was a fortified city having towers. Hence the name “Nan-Madak-Kudal” the tamil poets used the title “Thakkana-Madurai” or Southern Madurai only to distinguish it from the Mathura of Northern India. Korkai on the mouth of the river Tamiraparani was the harbour of Pandynad. Pearl-fishing was the main occupation of the people of Korkai. Villinam and Saliyur, other seaports were always busy in the export and import trades. The Cheranad corresponded to the modern districts of Tiruvanandrum, Cochin, Coimbatore and a part of Salem. It had twelve sub-divisions. It was bound on the north by the Palani hills and on the south by the sea. The capital city of Cheranad was Thiruvanchikkalam which was situated on the banks of the river Periyar. The town was strongly fortified. The most conspicuous buildings of the capital were a temple of Vishnu, a Buddhist Chaitya and a Nigrantha monastery. Near the mouth of the river, Periyar, was Musiri, an important seaport. Thondi was another flourishing sea-port on the western coast. Beyond Panrinad, was Punalnad or the Chola kingdom. The name Punalnad signifies the land of floods. It is the land east of Kottaikkarai, west of the sea, and north of Vellar. The Chola capital was Uraiyur which was situated on the southern bank of the river Kaveri. Puhar or Kaveripattinam, which stood at the mouth of the river was a great emporium of trade. Puhar was divided into two parts- Maruvurp-pakkam and Pattinap-pakkam. The capital had many palatial buildings. The land east of Pavalamalai, south of Venkada hills, was Kancheepuram. It was ruled by Tiraiyans. Later, the Pallavas occupied that territory and extended their sway over the whole of the Chola kingdom. The Kongunad was bounded on the north by Thalaimalai, on the south by Vaihavoor or Palani, and on the West by Velliangiri. Originally it included Coimbatore and the southern parts of Salem. The seven Velir chiefs had their separate kingdoms and capitals. viz; Parambunad, Thagadur, Kovalur, Aykudi, Nanjilnad,

Mohoor, Kuthiraimalai, and Chenkanama were the important chieftaincies. 1.2.1 Topography The peninsula projects into the Indian ocean between the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal and narrows to a point at Cape Comorin. From Cape Comorin, the Malabar and Coromandal coasts extend for a thousand miles. There are a few good natural harbours along either coast, though the west coast is little better than the Coromandal coast in this respect. "Situated almost mid-way on the maritime routes between China and the Mediterranean Sea, Tamizhagam was admirably located for the purpose of embarking on an active sea-borne commerce with lands on the west and east." It is notable, that the seafaring activities were developed in Tamizhagam inspite of the lack of many natural harbours. For instance, Musiri and Thondi on the west were not harbours of a large size. They appear to have been suitable for the country ships of early time. On the eastern coast, however, there are some broken edges with large lagoons which form the back waters of Kerala. These backwaters had facilitated the development of internal as well as external trade. Both these coasts were frequently storm-swept. Storms and erosions are largely responsible for encroachments of sea into land and the destruction of several places. The ports of Kayal and Korkai, Kaveripattinam and Mahabalipuram are in their ruined state. That would have been the case with the Kumarik-Kandam also. 1.2.2 The Western and Eastern Ghats "Mountains, hills, forests, jungles, rivers and cultivated plains with infertile land interspersed offer a geographical variety suggestive of economic selfsufficiency." The Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats run parallel to the west and east coasts of the peninsula. The Western Ghats form an excellent natural frontier or gigantic sea-wall, from Kasargod in the north to Aramboli in the south, where they abruptly end. They are a steep and rugged mass of hills, little more than 2,000 feet about the eastern ghats meet the western ghats after making a sweep from the other side of the peninsula. "The Nilgiri plateau receives abundant rainfall, and it is famous for its luxurious vegetation and excellent scenery." Between these mountain ranges there are extensive plain lands where rich civilizations flourished. The Western Ghats is pierced by numerous passes. Though the Palghat Gap is twenty-four miles wide, on account of its rugged terrain and impenetrable forests were infested by wild animals and snakes, This affords access from the Carnatic to the Malabar. This easy road into the Carnatic from Cochin and Calicut and other ports on the west has played an important role all through history. As the Palghat gap was dangerous, the highway of traffic between Kerala and her eastern neighbours was the Shencottah and Aramboli routes. Countless had been the raids and inroads through Aramboli route and numberless had been the battles fought in this region. For this reason, it has been called the cockpit of Kerala. The Palani, Kodai, Sabari, Podiyil and Anamalai hills are important points on the southern stretch of this mountain chain. The Anamalai hills consist of peaks rising to over 8,000 feet. The vegetation includes the dense forests of valuable teak, rose-wood, and the wild-bamboo, coffee and cardamom. They have been the dwelling places of the tribal people like Kadas, Irulas and

Pulaiyans even today. The Eastern Ghats possess little of the magnificence gained by the regular structure of the Western Ghats. They are scattered, broken, and of much lower altitude. Geologically they seem to be distinctly older than the Western Ghats; they are different in productivity and scenery. They are a series of detached and discontinuous hills. Beginning in Orissa, they run parallel to the eastern coast. But, at Madras, they strike south-westwards to form the southern edge in the Deccan Plateau. Isolated masses of hills like the Palani and the Shervaroy hills, in and near Salem district, branch off from the main range. Most of the major rivers of Tamizhagam rise on the crest of the western ghats and course down all the way to the Bay of Bengal, cutting across down all the way to the Bay of Bengal, cutting across the Eastern Ghats. So, free- intercourse was possible between the plateau and the coastal plain. Tamizhagam of the past was triangular in shape, with it's apex towards the south. The two ranges of the Ghats provided a basic unity to the plains of Tamizhagam, down to Nilgiris. Thereafter, the general unity has been seriously affected. The spurts and hillocks jutting into the interior have been responsible for a division of the country into several small units of territory. This was primarily responsible for the absence of political unity in the past. Therefore, it was possible for the Cheras, Cholas, Pandyas, Tiraiyars and the Velir chiefs to carve out independent kingdoms for themselves. Political unity in Tamizhagam was achieved only during the reign of able monarchs like Karikalan, Senguttuvan, Nedunjelian, Rajaraja I and Rajendra I. Differing customs and manners too led to social isolation. The hilly region, forest country, agricultural land, coastal area, desert region developed distinct characteristics suited to and influenced by environment. "This isolation was gradually broken with the layout of trunk roads and the construction of railways these days. 1.2.3 Rivers Tamizhagam is fortunate, in having rivers like the Kaveri, the Palar, the Vaigai, the Pennar, the Velar, the Tamiraparani, the Paraliyar, the Bharathappuzha and the Periyar. Though, they are short and less in number they supply a substantial amount of water needed for cultivation. The rivers except the Bharathappuzha and the Periyar, rise in the crest of the Western Ghats and flow through the present Tamil Nadu into the Bay of Bengal. The two rivers in the Western Ghats, flow through the Kerala State into the Arabian Sea. The Kaveri, is the most prominent river which was celebrated in Tamil literature and history. The river, 475 miles long, takes its course at Coorg or Kudagu. It runs, smoothly through sacred spots like Srirangapatnam and Sivasamudram in the Mysore states and Srirangam in Tamizhagam. About nine miles west of Tiruchirapalli, it bifurcates into two branches-Kollidam and Kaveri. Before it reaches the sea, it splits up into many branches and covers the entire delta with a vast network of irrigation canals. Nineteen centuries ago, Karikalan controlled the frequent floods which wrought much damage in Punalnad. He raised high banks along both sides of the river and constructed the Kallanai. Because of this river, Tanjore has come to be called" the rice bowl of Tamizhagam." The Palar originates from Nandidurg in Mysore. It runs through the North Acrot District and falls into the

Bay of Bengal. The towns of Vaniyambodi, Vellore, Acrot and Chingleput are situated on its banks. It irrigates a limited area. The Pennar rises in Chennanarayanapettai in Mysore. It passes through Bangalore and Salem. It reaches the sea to the north of Cuddalore. It irrigates the land of its terminus.

The Vaigai commences from the Palani hills, flows through the town of Madurai and falls into the Bay of Bengal. Now-a-days, it is almost dry. The Vaigai dam constructed on it waters a limited area including Sholavandan. The Tamiraparani is the river mentioned in the Indica of Megasthenes. This has its origin in the wooded hills of the Southern part of the Western Ghats (Podiyil). It flows through Tirunelveli District. The South-west monsoon waters it. It falls into the Bay of Bengal creating a large delta at its mouth. Here was situated the famous sea-port, Korkai. The Bharathappuzha is the longest river (156 miles) in the Kerala State. On its banks stand Chittor, Palghat., Thirunavay and Ponnani. The Periyar (146 miles) rises in the Ayiramalai, sacred to Goddess Korravai. It flows through Kaladi and Alwaye. One of its branches flows through Kodunagallur, the capital of the Chera kings. Of the many rivers which flow through South Travancore, mention is to be made of Paraliyaru or Pahruli river. It takes its course at Mahendragiri, passes through Nanjilnad and falls into the Manakkudi estuary. In our memory of the Pandyan rulers, the Pandyan Anai was constructed in it. The coastal strip of short rivers is for the most part covered with low-level laterite, red-gravel and clay. Therefore, it is not very productive. The delta country is a regular granary of rice and produces many other valuable crops like tobacco, cotton and sugarcane, one of the songs of Avvaiyar in Purananuru states that the ancestors of Adigaman Neduman Anji of Thagadur introduced sugarcane into Tamizhagam. Generally, the courses of the rivers influence for civilizations. River valleys provide the people with the necessities of life. There is scope for fishing and cultivation. In the deltas of the Kaveri, the Palar and the Periyar, all the great historical kingdoms of Tamizhagam had their capitals and the unnumbered temples of indigenous arts and of almost pre-historic industries could be found there.

1.2.4 Soils and Minerals

The soils of Tamizhagam vary in their nature and fertility. It has the fertile alluvial soil of the deltoid region, the black cotton soil of the plain and the red-ferruginous soil of the central regions. The black cotton soil is fertile and is employed in the cultivation of paddy, millets, pulses etc. The red soil is rarely fit for cultivation. Open treeless plains with isolated hills and masses of rock scattered in the plains constitute the red soil regions. These regions are dry and have hot climates. Large-scale cultivation is possible in riverine lands. The mineral wealth and mineral industries of Tamizhagam are poor when compared with those of north India. A number of contributory materials like magnesite, chromite, quartz, bauxite, limestone and dolomite, besides iron ores are available in Salem district. A considerable quantity of gypsum in sedimentary rocks and a less quantity of iron-ores are found in and around Tiruchirappalli. In the tertiary rocks near Pondicherry and Vriddhachalam, we have lignite the

'mother of industries'. In the dry beds of streams and in the beach sands of the Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts, we have monazite, which provides the raw material for the production of thorium nitrate and fertilizer. Gneiss rocks, found in Pallavaram, South Arcot, Tirunelveli and Nanjilnadu, are used in the construction of temples and other massive buildings. Therefore, the art of stone carving developed tremendously in ancient Tamizhagam. Sandstone, widely quarried near Satyavedu, Nagalapuram and Kancheepuram, is used as good building and decorative material. Crystalline limestone, found in the vicinity of Sankaridurg and in Talaiyuthu near Tirunelveli, is utilized in the cement factory and in the manufacture of bleaching powder.

1.2.5 Rainfall, Irrigation and Agriculture

"Tamizhagam has been one of the thirstiest regions in the south. She has looked up to the heavens rather literally for survival. The monsoons are normally punctual. Sometimes they fail for many years leading to drought and famine. Kerala including a small area in the Kanyakumari district receives the largest amount of rainfall, mostly from the south-west monsoon (June to October). The North-East Monsoon (October to mid December) provides the heaviest rainfall for Tamizhagam as a whole. The source of all water is no doubt, rainfall. Modern devices for the conservation of water resources depend largely on monsoons. Artificial irrigation is employed wherever possible in order to make amends for the inadequacy of rainfall. Wells, canals, lift-irrigation and artesian springs are the most successful methods of irrigation in Tamil Nadu. Though, these methods need quite a good amount of money, the government of Tamil Nadu implements them with the aid of modern machines. The Tamils had a four-fold division of their land according to rainfall at the time of Tholkappiyam. They are hilly tracts, pasture land, cultivable land and the literal land. But at the time of Ilango Adigal, the Tamils included one more division with the four-the desert land. These divisions had their separate people, god and occupation. Agriculture was the main occupation of a good number of people in Tamizhagam. In the chapter on 'Uzhavu' Tiruvalluvar had elaborately dealt with the importance of cultivation Rice, Cholam, Kambu, Ragi, Varagu are cultivated in large quantities. Commercial crops like groundnut, cotton, and sugar cane are also grown up. Apart from cereals, oilseeds, and groundnuts, gingelly, ginger, and castor are grown in different parts of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Pulses or grams of different varieties like red gram, black gram and green gram are grown in various parts of the land. Besides these, the cultivation of coconuts, arecanuts, mangoes, chillies and tobacco, plantains, betel and vegetables is widespread. Coconuts, mangoes, jackfruits and plantains have wide markets in Tamil Nadu. Pepper, pearls, ivory, cloves, sandalwood, teak, rosewood and cardamom, some unique natural products are in great demand in foreign countries. There are references to the export of rice to Mesopotamia, pearl to Rome and spices, timber and coir to Europe.

1.2.6 Climate and Winds

South India lies near the Equator and the entire region of Tamizhagam lies within the Tropical Zone. Cape Comorin lies hardly 80 above the Equator. Therefore, we have fairly a high temperature throughout

the year. During April, May and June, the worst part of the year, Tamizhagam experiences the hottest climate, 85o F and above. In November, December and January the temperature is below 80o F. Charged with moist or dry, hot or cool vapour dependent on the varying conditions of the places in their tract, the winds play an important part in determining the climate of the different localities. Generally the surface winds blowing near the hilly tracts have a high velocity. They are violent and stormy in and near the gaps of Palghat, Shenkottah and Aramboli. In the western part of Tamizhagam, by and large, the wind is fairly strong during the months of July and August. Owing to the general reversal of the wind system that occurs on the eve of the North-East Monsoon, the velocity of the wind becomes very low in October and it dries down in September. Tamizhagam was famous for her handicrafts like textiles which were highly popular in foreign countries. Potteries and urns excavated in the south go to prove that the artistic skill of the artisans of ancient Tamizhagam. The mint unearthed in Arikamedu near Pondicherry indicates that extensive trade between Tamizhagam and the west was a regular feature. The Roman coins found in Tamizhagam are testimonies to the seafaring activities of both the countries. All the factors have given the Tamils a distinct existence and helped to develop a culture of their own. The situation of Tamizhagam in the extreme south of the peninsula has to a greater extent reduced the exotic cultural and political influences thrust of north India. Ancient literature, indigenous as well as foreign, alludes abundant references to the glorious past of the TAMILIAN culture. The flourishing maritime activities of the residents of Kaveripattanam, Korkai and Thondi are described in glowing terms by the Greek, Egyptian, and Roman writers. The history of any culture reveals that it has developed from slavery, passed through barbarism and reached the stage. This holds good to Tamizhagam also.

The need and necessity of sources cannot be minimised or underestimated by the historians for writing the history of any country. So also the sources are immensely useful for the reconstruction of history from the Sangam age to modern period of the Tamil Country.

SOURCES: AGE TO MODERN PERIOD

we will touch upon the following topics like Sangam Age, The Kalabhras, The Pallavas, The Pandyas, The Cholas, The Nayaks and Archival Sources (Modern Period). Sangam Age the sources for the study of the History of the ‘Sangam age’ can be broadly be divided into two categories. They are 1.Literary Sources and 2. Archaeological Sources. Literary Sources: The literary sources are again classified into 1.Indigenous Literary Sources and 2.Non-Tamil literature. The Indigenous literature

known as Tamil literature (Sangam literature) is the most copious and valuable sources for the Sangam age. The Sangam literatures are mainly the Tolkappiam, the eight anthologies and the ten Idles.

Tolkappiam

The very name traces it to ancient classics. It was written by Tolkappiar. He was one of the disciples of Agastya. It is the greatest grammatical work on Tamil. It contains 1276 sutras. The date of Tolkappiam should be second century B.C. This work contains three chapters viz Eluttatikaram, Solladhikaram and Poruladhikaram. The Poruladhikaram is immensely valuable for the writing of the social and economic life of the people. The Eight anthologies:

Narrinai, Kurunthogai, Aingurunuru, Padirrupattu, Paripadal, Kalitogai, Ahananuru & Purananuru. The Ten Idyles:

Thirumurugarrupadai, Porunararrupadai, Sirupanarrupadai, Perumpanarrupadai; Mullaippattu, MaduraikKanchi, Nedunalvada, Kurichippattu, Pattinappalai and Malai padukadam. The Eighteen Kilkanakku:

Naladiyar, Nanmanikkadigai, Inna narpadu, Iniyanarpadu, Kar narpadu, Kalavalinarpadu, Ainthinai Aimpadu, Ainthinai Elupadu Tinaimali Aimpadu, Tinnaimalai Nurraimpadu, Kainnilai, Kural, Tirikadugam, Acharakkovai, Palamoli, Sirupanchamoolam, Madumoli Kanchi and Eladi. The post Sangam works reflecting the Sangam culture, polity and society are:

(i) Silappadikaram, (ii) Manimakalai and (iii) Certain poems like Tagadur Yattirai and Perundevanari's Bharatam. Non-Tamil Literature: The Ramanayana and Mahabharata say something about the Pandyas, Kapatapura of the Pandyas is referred to in the Ramayana. Kautilya's Arthashastra also mentions about the Pandyas.

Foreign Accounts: Many foreigners visited India either for commercial purpose or for visiting important pilgrimage centres. Their accounts about India become a valuable source. Megasthenese: Megasthenese wrote what all he heard about the south His work, Indica refers to the Pandyan Kingdom. He says that, "the Kingdom was organised into 365 villages and each village has to bring the royal tribute to the treasury everyday". Besides, giving some valuable historical information, he also furnishes some unbelievable matters like, one legged man, gold digging ants, winged horses, seven years old girl giving birth to a child, ear of a person touching the floor etc. Strabo: He belonged to Rome. His work, Geography gives a vivid picture of the socio-economic life, particularly commerce and trade of the Tamils in the Sangam Age. He refers to the Pandyan embassies to Augustus and describes the nature of their duty. His reference about 120 ships from Hermus to Tamil Nadu, throws much light on export and import ventures of the Sangam people. Pliny: He is also a Roman historian. His account is also useful for writing the history of Tamil Nadu. His work Natural History throws light

on the commerce of Tamizhagam. With Rome, which drained Roman wealth to the extent of 55 million Sesterces every year in the return for pearls, ivory, muslin and other luxuries. The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea: The name of the author of this work is not known. He is a native of Egypt. This work belonged to the fourth quarter of the 1st century A.D. Musiri, Tondi, Nirkunram, etc. are some of the seaports found in his work. He also refers to the contact of the Romans with the sea-ports of western India. Ptolemy: Ptolemy, the Alexandrian geographer, prepared the famous "Map of the World". He belonged to the 2nd century A.D. He collected and derived information from other writers and drew the map. The map is very useful to get geographical knowledge of India. His reference to the important sea-ports and towns help us to compare them with the Tamil literatures.

The Ceylonese Chronicles: The Ceylonese chronicles Mahavamsa, Dipavamsa, and Rajavali give very valuable information to fix the age of Sangam. Through these chronicles, it is identified that there occurred three deluges which destroyed a large southern part of Ceylon. Archaeological Sources: The Archaeological sources are classified into 1. Epigraphy 2. Numismatics and 3. Monuments. Epigraphy: The inscriptions which can be considered to throw some light on Sangam history are the following in the chronological order: (a) The Asokan inscriptions were found in Siddhapuram and Brahmagiri in the Mysore areas, Maski (Hyderabad) and Yerragudi (Kurnool District). The only information which the Asoka Rock Edict II (middle of the 3rd century B.C.) supplies is its knowledge of the five independent states of 1. the Chodas (Cholas) 2) the Pandyas 3) the Satyaputra (whom we identify with the Kosars of Tulu Nadu) 4. the Keralaputras (the Cheras) and 5. the Tamraparni (Ceylon) as neighbouring places. But these were independent states beyond the southern pale of the Asokan Empire. Those references point to the existence of independent Tamil states during Asoka's reign period. (b) The Hathi gumpah inscription of Kharavela (first half of the 2nd century B.C.) mentions a league of Tamil States strong enough to constitute a threat to the safety of Kalinga. This league existed for about 113 years. Mamolanar narrates (Aham 251) about Maurya's attempt to conquer the Tamil countries. (c) The Velvikkudi grant of Parantaka Nedunjadayan (765-815) is helpful for it mentions Pandyan Palayagasalai Mudukudumi Peruvaludi who was a famous Sangam king. (d) The larger Sinnamanur plates refer to Nedunjelian of Talayalanganam fame in a similar manner and so mention a Sangam king. (e) Another important inscription is the 'Kudumiyanmalai Music inscription'. This belonged to the later Pallava period dated during the rule of Mahendravarman I. (c.A.D. 600-630).

In the Thirukkavalur Inscription, there is a reference to the 'selfimmolation of Kapilar', the court poet and close friend of Pari, who was the chieftain of the Sangam Age. It refers to the social custom during the Sangam Age. Other Inscriptions Inscriptions found at Tirupparankundram, Karur, Nagamalai, Anaimalai, Sirkannavayil, etc. of the Sangam age also throw light on the historicity of the Sangam Age. A lot of information is available from the Kasakkudi Plates about the Kalabhras. Besides we get more

information from Tiruppugalur, Kanchi Vaikunda Perumal inscription and Kuram Plates. Numismatics: The rulers of Tamil Nadu did not give much importance to coins. It is due to various political and social reasons, the coins were not used much for a long time till the rise of the later Pallavas. The great controversy of the chronology of the Sangam period can definitely be fixed on the basis of the Roman coins excavated at Arikamedu, and Madura. Schoff remarks “most of the coins of Tamil Nadu belonged to Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero and some of them to Vesparian and Titus”. The coins excavated at Madurai bear the imperial head and the Roman soldiers. The Yavanas issued coins at Madurai and Puhar on their own accord for their own use. The ancient Tamil rulers had issued punch marked coins. Though barter system occupied an important place, coins were also in usage. The main defect of these coins is the absence of any legend on it. The recent discovery at Andipatti in North Arcot District clears the doubt that the Sangam chieftains had also issued coins. These coins were issued by Sentan, who belonged to the 2nd century A.D. Kaviripumpattinam and Kanchi were the places where coins were minted. Some blocks were found out here. Archaeological Findings Monuments: Arikamedu, Adichchanallur, Uraiyur, Kilaiyur, Tirukkampuliyur, Kanchi and Tanjavur, are some of the sites which show the condition of the Sangam Age.

Arikamedu: Jouvea Dubreuil discovered this site in 1937 and excavation was conducted in 1941. Sir Martimer Wheeler discovered a Roman factory at Arikamedu. The findings are the Mediterranean pottery, coins, gems, and glass bowls of the Roman Empire. These discoveries corroborated with the references found in the Sangam poems. This shows the close commercial contact with the Roman Empire. Ptolemy refers to the place as “poduke”. Adichchanallur: It is found on the southern banks of the river Tamraparani in the Tirunelveli district. Bruce Foote discovered this place. Iron swords, daggers, gold and bronze diadem, animal figures, bronze utensils etc. are some of the findings of his excavation. This place shows the existence of Muruga worship. Uraiyur: The excavation at this place reveals the existence of roulette was dated to the 2nd century B.C. and to the 2nd Century A.D. Kilaiyur: The Archaeologists unearthed a Buddhist vihara, constructed by burnt bricks, a votive stupa, a reservoir, a massive brick platform etc., in this site. Tirukkampuliyur (Trichy) a massive structure probably a granary for the agrarians, consisting of two compartments with a verandah is excavated in the place. Kanchi: The amphora for storing wine, the pot shell with Brahmi letters, 15 Satavahana coins, sixteen feet habitation deposits etc are some of the noteworthy discoveries of this place. Tanjavur: Roman pottery, coins, etc were unearthed here. 2.2.2 The Kalabhras When the political autonomy of the Sangam Tamils came to an end in the middle of the 3rd century A.D. and that from the middle of the third century A.D. to the end of the sixth century A.D. we do not hear of any Tamil dynasty ruling the Tamil country For want of sufficient source materials, we may well conclude that period must be a dark period .During the period, the Kalabhras who ruled the whole or considerable

parts of the Tamil country, after having overpowered the traditional crowned monarchs of Tamizhagam. Later, political order was restored only when they were defeated at the hands of the Pandyas the Pallavas as well as the Chalukyas of Badami. We have as yet no definite knowledge of the Kalabhra. But we hear of a certain Accutavikkanta of the Kalabhrakula from some Buddhist books. In his reign Buddhist monasteries and authors were patronised in the Chola country. Accuta must have been a Buddhist and he should have brought about this political revolution prompted of course by religious hatred. They uprooted many adhirajas and abrogated brahmdeya rights. Sources Apart from Tamil Navalar Charitai, a literary work which throws some light on the rule of the Kalabhras, we have a few epigraphical evidences to know about the Kalabhras. (a)The Kasakkudi Plates refer to Simhavishnu's quest of the Kalabhras late in the 6th century A.D. (b) The Thiruppugalur inscription speaks of Kalappala raja by name Nerkumdram (c) The Korramangalam plates of Nandivarman (these refer to the Kalabhras as the enemies of Pallavamalla). (d)The Velvikkudi plates of Nedunjadayan mention the Kalabhras who were defeated and destroyed by Kadungon in 600 A.D.) (e)The Kuram plates of Narasimhavarman I Pallava mention his conquest of the Cholas, Keralas, Kalabhras and the Pandyas the Kalabhras might have continued to hold political power in different parts of the country. But it was only from the early 4th century A.D. to the early 7th century A.D. (their domination was perhaps at the highest). The Pallava occupation of Kanchi during the days of the Kings of the Sanskrit charters must have resulted after the Kalavar had moved southwards to overthrow the Cholas and the Pandyas.

2.2.3 The Pallavas

The end of the Kalabhra power in the middle of the sixth century heralded the beginning of a new wave of classical civilization in the history of the Tamils. Sources: A wide variety of sources for historical reconstruction are available for the Pallavas. Principal among them are epigraphs, monuments and literature. Traditions embodied in Guruparamparavaibhavam and quasi-historical works like the Tondaimandala-satakam provide supplementary evidences. The Pallava period is the golden age of copper-plates and lithic records. The generalised observation of Dr. Fleet that we are ultimately dependent on inscriptions in every line of Indian research is not in its application to the medieval history of Tamizhagam. Remarkable among the early Pallava charters are the Mayidavolu and Hirahadagalli plates of Sivaskandavarman, and the British Museum plates of Charudevi. The Kuram plates of Paramesvaravarman I, the Kasakkudi, Korrangudi and Udayediram plates of Nandivarman II, the Velur-palayam plates of Nandivarman III and the Bahur plates of Nirupatungavarman are among the monuments of the imperial Pallavas. The Vayalur Pillar inscription of Rajasimha is a unique record registering the genealogy of the Pallavas down to Narasimhavarman II. The inscriptions of the Gangas, Chalukyas, Pandyas and Rashtrakutas throw light on their relationship with the Pallavas. The Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta, the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II, the Kendur and Vakkaleri plates of Kirtivarman are among the corroborative

records. Most inscriptions are donative in character, recording the gift of land, lamps or gold to temples or private individuals. Thus the sculptural motifs of the Vaikunthaperumal temple of Kanchi are taken into consideration for solving the problems connected with the accession of Nandivarman II. The earliest literary source for Pallava studies is the Perumbanarrupadai with its reference to Tondaiman Ilantiraiyan. The Tirumurai literature and 4000 Divyaprabandam are important for social history with rare indications to political events. The Paramechura Vinnagara-Padigam of Tirumangai Alvar mentions the exploits of Nandivarman II. The Periyapuram is a class in itself narrating the biographies of Kadavarkon Kalarsingam, Aiyadigal and Paranjothi were Pallava Kings and general. Gunapara from the ecclesiastical point of view Meypporul Vanar and Narasinga Munaiaraiyar were Pallava feudatories. The Nandikkalambakam is an anonymous work dedicated to the exploits of Nandivarman III. Sanskrit works like the Mattavilasaprahasana of Mahendravarman, Lokavibhaka of Sarvanandi Nyaapravesa of Dingnaga, Kiratarjuniya of Bharavi and Avantisundarikathasara of Dandin may be mentioned. The Mattavilasaprahasana presents a peep in to the religious strife of the age.

The Avantisundarikathasara refers to the Simhavishnu-Vishnuvardhana synchronism. Foreign accounts such as the travelogues of Hieun Tsang, the “Chinese Annals” and Ceylonese history works like the Mahavamsa are of much value. The maritime contact of the Pallavas with South East Asia is well attested by the inscriptions found at Takua-pa (siam) etc. Secondary sources on the subject are many. The patient efforts of scholars working in the wilderness of inscriptions and literature have brought Pallava history to the lime-light.

2.2.4 The Pandyas

To reconstruct the history of the Pandyas who ruled the Tamil Country, with the exception of the Sangam age, it could be classified and understood in three different phases of their rule as stated below: Early Medieval Pandyas (A.D.550-1000), Medieval Pandyas (A.D.1000-1371), and Later Pandyas of Later Medieval period (A.D.1371-1650). A wide variety of sources from the traditional literary masterpieces to the foreign accounts of Marco Polo, Wassaf, Zia-ud-din Barani and Amir Khusru are available for the reconstruction of Pandyas history. Of which epigraphy constitutes the mainstay. Most inscriptions are donative in character and record the grant of land, lamp or sheep to temples, brahmanas or other institutions. Till the time of Chola conquest Vattelluttu was employed and later at the influence of the Cholas, the Tamil script came into use. Notable among the lithic records are those found at Anaimalai, Tirupparankunram. Perumpulli (near Dindigul), Solavandan, Sinnamanur, Sermadevi, Kurralam, Ambasamudram, Nanguneri, Anaiyur, Pallippadai, Tiruchy, Tirukkodikkaval, Tiruchchaturai etc. The Sermadevi inscription (50-43 of 1911) presents interesting details about the land revenue administration. The Velvikkudi plates of Nedunjadayan Parantaka (in the British Museum) and the two sets of Sinnamanur plates of Rajasimha are unique charters of much historical value which contain a marvelous account of the vicissitudes of the Pandyan empire from the end of the Kalabhra power to

the regime of Nadunjadayan. The Dalavaypuram plates (Madras Museum) of Jatilavarman, Sivakasi Plates of Vira Pandya and the Tiruppuvanam plates deserve special mention. The inscriptions of the Pallavas, Chalukyas, Cholas, Hoysalas, Kakatiyas, Telugu-Cholas. Kadavarayas, Sambuvaraya, the Nayaks etc. provide corroborative materials.

The historical theme embodied in the sthalapuranas and puranas throw occasional flashes of light on Pandyan history, The Tiruvilaiyadalpuranam of Perumbarrupuliyur Nambi Gangaadevi's Madura Vijayam, and Paranjoti's record an unbroken genealogy, containing the names of more than seventy Pandya kings the Sanskrit sthalapuranas, like the Halasymahatmay and other Bhakti literary works may be mentioned in this context. The Cholas Epigraphy is the main-stay of the student of Chola history. Thousands of inscriptions have been edited and published by distinguished scholars. Famous among the Chola records are the copper plates of tamarasanas. Most inscriptions are donative in character recording the gift of land or donations to individuals or institutions by kings or Yuvarajas or feudatory rulers. Rajaraja I inaugurated the practice of prefixing historical introductions (meykirtis) to inscriptions which records the personal deeds and heroic ventures of their donors. These supply the inquisitive historian with ample information for reconstructing political history. Most inscriptions are in Tamil and some bilingual. The Tiruvalangadu plates of Rajaraja I are in both Tamil which slowly replaced Vatteluttu and relegated the latter into disuse. The Madras Museum plates of Uttama Chola, the Anbil plates of Sundara Chola, the Tiruvalangadu plates and Karandai plates of Rajendra I and the Leyden plates of Kulottunga I are conspicuous among the copper plates of the Cholas. Among the lithic records the Uttiramerur inscription of Parantaka I, Tanjore inscription of Rajaraja I, Tirumukkudal and Kanyakumari inscriptions of Vira Rajendra may be mentioned. Literature: The Saiva Thirumurais and Vaishnava Prabandams codified in the Chola period by Nambi Andar Nambi and Nathamuni are important for social history and they showed occasional light on political events. The Periyapuranam of Sekkilar is important for religious and social history. The Kalingattupparani of Jayankondar is a historical work dealing with the expedition of Karunagara Thondaiman to Kalinga. It sketches Chola history from its mythical heroes to Kulottunga I in the canto on Rasaparamparyam. The three ulas of Ottakkuttar along with his Kulottunga Cholan Pillaitamil and Takkayagaparani are quasi historical works. The Yapperungalam and Yapperungalakarikai of Amidasagara, Virasoliyam of Buddhamitra and Dandiyalangaram are other noteworthy productions of the age. The Vikramangacharitam of Bhilhana is an important work providing materials for Chola-Chalukya relationship. The Cholavamsa charita is a stalapurana type of literature. The Srirangam Koyillolugu, Guruparamparai and Divya-suri-charitam are important Vaishnava hagiologies. The Kongudesa Rajakkal in Tamil and Brihadiswara Mahatmya in Kannada deserve worthy of mention as semihistorical works. The gold, silver and copper coins of the Cholas are available in good many

numbers but hardly serve to solve any problem connected with Chola history. From the lower Krishna to the Cape Comorin hundreds of Chola monuments survive and provide materials for cultural history. Prof. K.A.Nilakanta Sastri observes “when monuments standing on the surface have received scant attention, it is no wonder that more ancient monuments buried in the soil remain undisturbed”. Foreign sources especially Ceylonese throw a flood of light on Chola-Ceylonese relations Chinese sources have ample reference to Chu-lin (Chola) affairs but are faint and flickering. The last stage of the Chola history is corroborated by the Arab, Turkish and European travel accounts.

2.2.6 The Nayaks

The sources of information for the history of the Nayaks of Tamil Nadu are mostly epigraphic as well as literary. The epigraphic sources are inscriptions, found on the walls of the temples and copper plate grants. Among the literary sources are the letters of the Jesuits, chronicles written by court poets, ballads composed for the purpose of recital at local festivals and the factory records of European merchants. Except the letters of the Europeans, the other sources are not of specific interest but it cannot be said of the ballads, for they were composed even in later periods. Nevertheless these sources furnish a comprehensive account about the rise and fall of the Nayak powers in the land of the Tamils.

Epigraphical Sources: Inscriptions are found in Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese and Sanskrit. Col. Mackenzie in his Collections, Robert Sewell in his lists of Antiquities and V.Rangacharya in his inscriptions of the Madras Presidency and Burgess and Natesa Sastri in their Tamil and Sanskrit Inscriptions furnish copious of these evidences relating to the history of the Nayak powers. Many of them, tell of the grants made by the rulers and chieftains to the Brahmins and temples. They also refer to matters relating to taxation, irrigation, local institutions, public works, charitable institutions and the like. The Nayak powers built or re-built numerous temples, choultries and mandapas. Many of these structures had perished because of the indifference of the administration, yet a few of them have continued to survive. These monuments and the paintings on them throw light on the social, economic and cultural history of the age of the Nayaks.

Literary Sources: The literary sources consist of chronicles, ballads, memoirs and epistolary works. William Taylor had collected, translated and edited many of the local records and published them in his *Oriental Historical Manuscripts* in 1835. The *Catalogue Raisonne of Oriental Manuscripts* published by him in three volumes between 1857 and 1862 is a collection of abstracts of local documents. He took painstaking effort in gathering and editing these sources. However, it cannot be denied that because of his western orientation, the translations do not always convey the original meaning. Colonel Mackenzie too had collected numerous chronicles and memoirs and recorded the statements and notices that he received. Though he made no clear distinction between what was authentic and not and what was useful and not, his collections reflect upon the traditions of the land, known as the Mackenzie Manuscripts. They furnish a variety of information on the history of the Telugu powers. Among the chronicles of the period, Ganga Devi’s Sanskrit work, Mathura Vijayam,

describes the expansion of the Vijayanagar Empire to the Madurai country. Mritunjaya Manuscripts and the Pandyan Chronicle not only shed light on the history of the times but also give dates of events. The Telugu work, Thanjavuri Andhra Rajula Charitra and the Sanskrit work Raghunathabhyudayam give valuable information on the history of the Nayaks of Tanjavur. The Sanskrit works, Sahityaratnakara and Rukmini Parinayam, too furnish glimpses of information. The Kannada works Kanthirava Narasaraja Vijaya, Chikkadevaraja Vijaya and Chikkadevaraja Vamsavali describe the extension of Mysorean sway over the Nayak powers in a language of glorification. They are of importance for the rich material that they give on diplomacy, strategy of war, fortification and the like and for the elegance of language in which historical facts are presented.

The Letters of the Jesuit Mission to Rome are the epistolary sources. Originally written in Latin, Italian and Portuguese languages, they were translated into French by Father J.Bertrand and published as *La Mission du Madure* in four volumes between 1847 and 1854. John Lockman's *Travels of the Jesuits* published in two volumes in 1762 and John Nieuhoff's *Voyages and Travels into Brasil and East Indies* primarily deal with Jesuit missionary activity in South India. J.Z.Kiernander's *Religious and Missionary Intelligence*, published in 1847, is an account of the Protestant missions in South India. These letters deal not only with religion but also with polity, society and economy of the country. They narrate the efforts that they took in gaining converts and building chapels, the difficulties they encountered, condition of towns and other matters like civil wars, famines and epidemics. They also give descriptions about the Nayak rule in Gingee, the conflict between the Telugus and the Maravas and the wars between Madurai and Thanjavur. Extensive learning, keen interest that they took in studying local languages and intimate knowledge of the customs of the inhabitants made these missionaries eminently qualified to deal with the developments in the country. The accounts given by them not only withstand internal scrutiny but prove very reliable in the light of the information, furnished by local chronicles and Muslim accounts. Also they serve as corrective to the biased or incomplete notices furnished by the local chronicles, when they wrote on the rulers of Karnataka, Nayaks of Tamil Nadu and the Temple of Srirangam. Yet it should be asserted that the fundamental interest of the Jesuits was with Christianity. In consequence they had given favoured treatment to the rulers, when they tolerated their activity and condemned others, when they persecuted them. Yet with adequate margin being given to the angle from which they viewed at the events, it is possible to utilize them profitably for reconstructing the history of Tamil under the Telugus. Apart from these, there are accounts given by Muslim writers and records preserved in European settlements. The works of Nuniz and Domingo Paes, translated by Robert Sewell in his *A Forgotten Empire* throw side lights on the history of the Nayaks and the Muslims in South India. Among the factory records are those of the

Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danish and the English. These European merchants erected factories and entered into trade with the Nayak kingdoms. Their primary interest was trade.

The political situation in the country directly affected their commercial interests, they took an abiding interest in the internal developments and recorded their impressions accordingly. The letters exchanged by them with the Nayak princes and the grants obtained from the kings and the chieftains are of much benefit to the historian of the period for ascertaining the political developments and social conditions. 2.2.7 Archival Sources: (Modern Period) The attempt of a scholar to write the history of the later period of Tamil Nadu. i.e. the British period is endowed with abundance of archival materials consisting mainly of official records and reports. Among them the Revenue records of the alien administration is given utmost significance. They all throw light on the socio-economic problems of the region and the reaction of the Court of Directors to those problems like Sati, Slavery, Village lease and other revenue matters, Village communities, prohibition of certain religious practices like hook-swinging and animal sacrifices and other information about cultivation, industry and trade are also found. General reports sent to the Court of Directors deal with the general economic policy of the company. Collectorate Records in the form of various letters containing clarifications on important revenue matters and replies to various queries raised are equally useful. The Annual settlement reports mention the state measures to promote the prosperity and happiness of the people. In addition to this, the Annual Reports from select committees on the Affairs of East India Company, Manual of Madras Administration, gazetteers, census reports and the like form the bulk of the Archival materials meant for the purpose. Newspapers like the Hindu, Madras Mail, Swdesamitran, Kerala Patrika and Vitutalai supply a lot of information to understand the Tamil Society in a proper historical perspective.

Cholas (300 to 1300 CE)

- **The Tamil Chola dynasty** ruled in **southern India** and is considered one of the longest-ruling dynasties in history.
- The earliest datable references to it are in Ashoka inscriptions from the third century BC. The dynasty ruled over various sized territories until the 13th century AD.
- **The Cholas** were based in the fertile valley of the Kaveri River, but at their peak from the late 9th century to the early 13th century, they ruled over a much larger area.
- The Cholas left behind a legacy that includes **Tamil literature and the great living Chola Temples.**
- They established a disciplined bureaucracy and pioneered a centralized form of government.
- The Chola school of art spread throughout Southeast Asia, influencing architecture and art.

- Records available after the Sangam Age show that the Cholas remained in the Kaveri region as subordinates to the Pallavas.
- The resurgence of the Cholas began with the conquest of the Kaveri delta from Muttaraiyar by Vijayalaya (850–871 CE).
- In 850, he founded the Chola kingdom and built the city of Thanjavur. As a result, historians refer to them as the **Later Cholas or Imperial Cholas**.
- The Cholas trace their ancestry to the **Karikala**, the most well-known of the Cholas of the Sangam age, according to copper plate documents of his successors.
- The progenitor of their lineage is an eponymous king named 'Chola,' according to their genealogy.
- In these copper plates, the names Killi, Kochenganan, and Karikalan are mentioned as members of the line.
- From Parantaka I (907–955) to Kulothunga III (1163–1216), Vijayalaya's illustrious successors brought the Cholas glory and fame.
- Parantaka Chola set the tone for territorial expansion and broadened the base of governance.

Cheras

Cheras (9th to 12th Century)

- The Cheras were a Dravidian sovereign dynasty from Tamil Nadu. They were the first in the area to establish a medieval ruling dynasty, ruled over vast stretches of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, respectively, in south-eastern and south-western India.
- There were two distinct periods in this dynasty. The Early Chera governed between the 4th and 5th centuries BC, and the Later Chera (also known as the Kulasekharas) ruled between the 8th and 12th centuries AD.
- The Chera dynasty was one of the most significant dynasties of the **Sangam period** in regions of Tamil Nadu and the present-day state of Kerala.
- In the early centuries of the Common Era, the early Cheras was known as one of the three major powers of ancient Tamilakam, alongside the Cholas of Uraiyur and the Pandyas of Madurai.
- They were also referred to as '**Keraputras**,' and their kingdom was located to the west and north of the Pandya kingdom.
- The Cheras' history has been marked by constant conflict with the Cholas and the Pandyas.

- Uthiyan Cheralathan is regarded as the earliest known ruler of the Chera line as per Tamil scriptures. His ruling base was in Kuzhumur in Kuttanad, Kerala.
- Whereas, **Kulasekhara Alwar** was the first king of the later Chera kingdom, which later evolved into the Kulasekhara dynasty.
- For more than five centuries, there was no trace of a Chera monarch, but Kulasekhara Alwar appeared on the scene, claiming to be a descendant of the Chera.
- Most likely he ruled around 800 AD from **Tiruvanchikkulam** in the present state of Kerala and he ruled for more than 20 years.
- Then throne was held by **Ramavarma**; Kulasekhara Perumal, Ramar Tiruvati, or Kulasekhara Koyiladhikarikal was his name. He was the **last ruler** of the Later Chera dynasty.

CHALUKYA DYNASTY

The Chalukya dynasty refers to an Indian royal dynasty that ruled large parts of southern and central India between the sixth and twelfth centuries. During this period, they ruled as three closely related, but individual dynasties. The earliest dynasty, known as the Badami Chalukyas, ruled from their capital Badami from the middle of the sixth century. The Badami Chalukyas began to assert their independence at the decline of the Kadamba kingdom of Banavasi and rapidly rose to prominence during the reign of Pulakesi II. After the death of Pulakesi II, the Eastern Chalukyas became an independent kingdom in the eastern Deccan. They ruled from the capital Vengi until about the eleventh century. In the western Deccan, the rise of the Rashtrakutas in the middle of eighth century eclipsed the Chalukyas of Badami before being revived by their descendants, the Western Chalukyas in late tenth century. Those Western Chalukyas ruled from Basavakalyan till the end of the twelfth century.

SIGNIFICANCE

- The rise of the Chalukyas marks an important milestone in the history of South India and a golden age in the history of Karnataka.
- The political atmosphere in South India shifted from smaller kingdoms to large empires with the rise of Badami Chalukyas.
- For the first time in history, a South Indian kingdom took control and consolidated the entire region between the Kaveri and the Narmada rivers.
- The rise of that empire also saw the birth of efficient administration, rise in overseas trade and commerce and the development of new style of architecture called Vesara.

- Around the ninth century, it also saw the growth of Kannada as a language of literature in the Jaina Puranas, Veerashaiva Vachanas and Brahmanical traditions.
- Further, the eleventh century saw the birth of Telugu literature under the patronage of the Eastern Chalukyas.

SOURCES OF CHALUKYAN HISTORY

- Inscriptions constitute the main source of information about the Badami Chalukya history. Important among them are: the Badami cave inscriptions (578) of Mangalesa Kappe Arabhatta, record of 700 Peddavaduguru inscription of Pulakesi II, the Kanchi Kailasanatha inscription and Pattadakal Virupaksha Temple inscriptions of Vikramaditya II.
- Hiuen-Tsiang, a Chinese traveller visited the court of Pulakesi II. At the time of that visit, as mentioned in the Aihole record, Pulakesi II had divided his empire into three Maharashtra or great provinces comprising of 99,000 villages each.
- That empire possibly covered present day Karnataka, Maharashtra and coastal Konkan. Vidyapati Bilhana, the famous poet in the court of Vikramaditya VI of the Western Chalukya dynasty of Kalyana, mentions a legend in his work, Vikramankadeva Charita, which has been used to reconstruct History as well.

HISTORY OF THE CHALUKYAS

CHALUKYAS OF BADAMI

In the sixth century, with the decline of the Gupta dynasty and their immediate successors in northern India, major changes began to happen in the area south of the Vindhyas the Deccan and Tamilaham.

PULAKESI I

Established the Chalukya dynasty in 550. He took Vatapi (Badami in Bagalkot district, Karnataka) under his control and made it his capital. They ruled over an empire that comprised the entire state of Karnataka and most of Andhra Pradesh in the Deccan. Further, Pulakesi II had been perhaps the greatest emperor of the Badami Chalukyas. Pulakesi II extended the Chalukya Empire up to the northern extents of the Pallava kingdom and halted the southward march of Harsha by defeating him on the banks of the river Narmada. Later, the Badami Chalukya dynasty went into a brief decline following the death of Pulakesi II due to internal feuds. It recovered during the reign of Vikramaditya I, who succeeded in pushing the Pallavas out of Badami and restoring order to the

empire. The empire reached a peak during the rule of the illustrious Vikramaditya II. Eventually, the Rashtrakuta Dantidurga overthrew the last Badami Chalukya king Kirtivarman I in 753.

CHALUKYAS OF KALYANI

The Chalukyas revived their fortunes in 973 C.E., after over 200 years of dormancy when the Rashtrakutas dominated much of the Deccan. The reign of the Kalyani Chalukyas had been a golden age in Kannada literature. Tailapa II, a Rashtrakuta feudatory ruling from Tardavadi-1000 (Bijapur district) overthrew Karka II and re-established the Chalukyan kingdom and recovered most of the Chalukya empire. This dynasty came to be known as the Western Chalukya dynasty or Later Chalukya dynasty. Scholars widely considered Vikramaditya VI the greatest ruler of the dynasty; his 50 year reign called Chalukya Vikrama Era. Later, the Western Chalukyas went into their final dissolution 1180 with the rise of the Hoysalas, Kakatiya and Seuna.

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EASTERN CHALUKYAS

PULAKESHIN II

conquered the eastern Deccan, corresponding to the coastal districts of modern Andhra Pradesh in 616, defeating the remnants of the Vishnukundina kingdom. After the death of Pulakeshin II, the

Vengi Viceroyalty developed into an independent kingdom and included the region between Nellore and Visakhapatnam. After the decline of the Badami Chalukya empire in the mid-8th century, territorial disputes flared up between the Rashtrakutas, the new rulers of the western deccan, and the Eastern Chalukyas. Later, the fortunes of the Eastern Chalukyas took a turn around 1000 C.E. Initially, the Eastern Chalukyas had encouraged Kannada language and literature, though, after a period of time, local factors took over and they gave importance to Telugu language.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The period of Badami Chalukya dynasty saw art flourish in South India. It brought about some important developments in the realm of culture, particularly in the evolution and proliferation of a new style of architecture known as Vesara, a combination of the South Indian and the North Indian building styles. One of the richest traditions in Indian architecture took shape in the Deccan during that time, called Karnataka Dravida style as opposed to traditional Dravida style. The Kalyani Chalukyas further refined the **Vesara style** with an inclination towards Dravidian concepts, especially in the sculptures. They built fine monuments in the Tungabhadra – Krishna river doab in present day Karnataka.

BADAMI CHALUKYAS

More than 150 monuments attributed to the Badami Chalukya, and built between 450 and 700, remain in the Malaprabha basin in Karnataka. The rock-cut temples of Pattadakal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Badami and Aihole constitute their most celebrated monuments. This marks the beginning of Chalukya style of architecture and a consolidation of South Indian style.

LITERATURE

The rule of the Chalukyas embodies a major event in the history of Kannada and Telugu languages. During the ninth – tenth century, Kannada language had already seen some of its greatest writers. The three gems of Kannada literature, Adikavi Pampa, Sri Ponna and Ranna belonged to that period. In the eleventh century, the patronage of the Eastern Chalukyas, with Nannaya Bhatta as its first writer gave birth to Telugu literature. Famous writers in Sanskrit from that period include Vijnaneshwara who achieved fame by writing Mitakshara a book on Hindu law. Somesvara III became a great scholar and king, compiling an encyclopedia of all arts and sciences called. From the period of the Badami Chalukya no major Kannada literary work has been recovered, though many works have been referenced in later centuries.

The extant Kappe Arabhatta record of 700 in tripadi (three line) metre represents the earliest work in Kannada poetics. The literary work Karnateshwara Katha, quoted later by Jayakirti, belonged to the period of Pulakesi II with the great king himself as the hero. Other Kannada writers of that time included Syamakundacharya of 650 who wrote Prabhritha, the celebrated Srivaradhadeva also called Tumubuluracharya of 650 (who wrote Chudamani, a commentary on Tattvartha-mahashastra in 96,000 verses) Badami Chalukya Government.

ARMY

The army consisted of infantry, cavalry, elephant corps and a powerful navy. Rashtrakuta inscriptions use the term Karnatabala referring to their powerful armies. The government levied taxes called Herjunka, Kirukula, Bilkode, and Pannaya.

LAND GOVERNANCE

The empire was divided into Maharashtrakas (provinces), then into smaller Rashtrakas (Mandala), Vishaya (district), Bhoga (group of ten villages). Later, many autonomous regions existed ruled by feudatories like Alupas, Gangas, Banas, and Sendrakas. Local assemblies looked after local issues. Groups of mahajanas (learned brahmins), looked after agraharas (like Ghatika or place of higher learning) like the ones at Badami (2000 mahajans) and Aihole (500 mahajanas).

COINAGE

The Badami Chalukyas minted coins of a different standard compared to the northern kingdoms. The coins had Nagari and Kannada. They minted coins with symbols of temples, lion or boar facing right, and the lotus. The coins weighed four grams, called honnu in old Kannada and had fractions such as fana and the quarter fana, whose modern day equivalent being hana (literally means, money)

RELIGION

The rule of the Badami Chalukya proved a period of religious harmony. They initially followed Vedic Hinduism, as seen in the various temples dedicated to many popular Hindu deities with Aihole. Later, from the time of Vikramaditya I, the people took an inclination towards Shaivism and sects like Pashupata, Kapalikas and Kalamukhas existed. They actively encouraged Jainism, attested to by one of the Badami cave temples and other Jain temples in the Aihole complex.

SOCIETY

The Hindu caste system appeared. Sati may have been absent as widows like Vinayavathi and Vijayanka are mentioned in records. Devadasis' appeared in temples. Sage Bharata's Natyashastra the precursor to Bharatanatyam, the dance of South India had been popular as seen in many sculptures and mentioned in inscriptions. Women enjoyed political power in administration. Thus, the Chalukya era may be seen as the beginning in the fusion of cultures of northern and southern India making way for the transmission of ideas between the two regions. This becomes clear from an architectural point of view as the Chalukyas spawned the Vesara style of architecture including elements of the northern nagara and southern dravida styles. The expanding Sanskrit culture mingled in a region where local Dravidian vernaculars had already become popular. During the Chalukya rule, the Bhakti movement gained momentum in south India in the form of Ramanujacharya and Basavanna later spreading to north India. A celebration called Chalukya utsava, a three-day festival of music and dance, organised by the Government of Karnataka, is held every year at Pattadakal, Badami and Aihole. The event is a celebration of the achievements of the Chalukyas in the realm of art, craft, music and dance. The program, which starts at Pattadakal and ends in Aihole, is inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Karnataka. Singers, dancers, poets and other artists from all over the country take part in this event.

RASHTRAKUTA

The Rashtrakuta Empire dominated the Deccan for almost 200 years till the end of 10th century and also controlled territories in north and south India at various points of time. It was not only the most powerful polity of the time but also acted as a bridge between north and south India in economic as well as cultural matters. It promoted and expanded north Indian traditions and policies in south India. Significantly, India touched new heights of stability and achievements in the field of polity, economy, culture, education and religion. There was no power in northern India strong enough to interfere with the affairs of the Deccan which provided an opportunity for the emergence of Rashtrakutas.

There were several branches of the Rashtrakutas ruling in different parts of India in the early medieval period. The earliest known ruling family of the Rashtrakutas was founded by Mananka in Malkhed, having the Palidhvaja banner (flag) and the Garuda-lanchhana (bird symbol). Another Rashtrakuta family was ruling in the Betul district of Madhya Pradesh. The Antroli-Chharoli inscription bearing the Garuda seal dated 757 CE mentions four generations: Karka I, his son Dhruva, his son Govinda, and his son Karka II belonging to a collateral branch of the Malkhed line holding sway in the Lata country in Gujarat. Lata is identified as the area between Mahi River in the north and Narmada or Tapi River in south. Bharuch is a major city and former capital of the region.

DANTIDURGA

Dantidurga was the founder of the Rashtrakuta empire who fixed his capital at Manyakheta or Malkhed near modern Sholapur. He seems to be the contemporary of Karka II. Dantidurga attacked Kanchi, the capital of the Pallavas, and struck up an alliance with Nandivarman Pallavamalla. Dantidurga captured the outlying territories of the extensive Chalukyan empire in 753 CE and then assaulted the heart of the empire and easily defeated Kirtivarman. The Samangadh inscription of 754 CE records that Dantidurga overthrew the last Chalukya ruler of Badami called Kirtivarman II and assumed full imperial rank and described himself as: Prithivivallabha, Maharajadhiraja, Parameshvara, and Paramabhataraka. Dantidurga describes his territory as comprising four lakhs of villages, which probably included his sway over a little more than one half of the Chalukyan Empire of Badami. Dantidurga died childless, which led to a dispute between Krishnaraja I his uncle and other family members.

KRISHNARAJA I

Krishnaraja, I succeeded in seizing the throne in 756 CE because of his popularity. He had the titles Shubhatunga (high in prosperity) and Akalavarsha (constant rainer) mentioned in Bhandak Inscription of Krishnaraja I of 772 CE. The newly established Rashtrakuta kingdom expanded in all directions under him. He started with the overthrow of the Chalukyas of Badami. The Bhandak plates of 772 CE show that the whole of Madhya Pradesh had come under his rule. Southern Konkana was also conquered and brought under his sway by Krishnaraja I. He also expanded his empire in the southern direction by establishing lordship over the Ganga kingdom. The Rashtrakuta empire under Krishnaraja I may, thus, be taken to have extended over the whole of the modern Maharashtra state, a good part of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, with Vengi farther east acknowledging its supremacy and a large portion of Madhya Pradesh. Krishnaraja, I died sometime between 772 CE and 775 CE and was followed on the throne by his son Govinda

II. GOVINDA

Govinda II (774–780 CE) bears the titles Prabhatavarsha (profuse rainer) and Vikramavaloka (the man with a heroic look). His name is omitted in some of the later grants of the line. It was due to civil war for the throne between him and his younger brother Dhruva ruling in the region of Nasik and Khandesh as governor. The first war between brothers ended disastrously for Govinda

II. DHRUVA:

Dhruva (780 – 793 CE) assumed the titles: Nirupama (unequaled) Kali-vallabha (fond of war) Dharavarsha (heavy rainer) Shrivallabha (the favourite of fortune) Dhruva severely punished all kings

who assisted Govinda II in the late civil war after securing the throne. He made his younger but ablest son Govinda III king during his lifetime.

GOVINDA III:

Govinda III (793-814) became one of the greatest Rashtrakuta rulers who had the titles of: Jagattunga (Prominent in the world) Kirti-Narayana (The very Narayana in respect of fame) Janavallabha (Favorite of the people) Tribhuvanadhavala (Pure in the three worlds) Prabhutavarsha (The abundant rainer) Shrivallabha He first quelled the rebellions of his elder brothers in the south. In the north, after a successful expedition against Nagabhatta of Kanauj and the annexation of Malawa along with Kosala, Kalinga, Vengi, Dahala and Odraka, Govinda III again turned to the south. Performing better than his father's expectations, he spread the fame of the Rashtrakuta empire literally from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin through his skills both in diplomacy and on the battlefield. Govinda's successor became his only son Maharaja Sarva better known as Amoghavarsha I.

AMOGHAVARSHA I.

Amoghavarsha I (814-878 CE) like his father, proved himself as one of the greatest of Rashtrakuta monarchs. He had the titles: Nripatunga (exalted among kings) Atisayadhavala (wonderfully white in conduct) Maharaja-shanda (best of the great kings) Vira-Narayana (the heroic Narayana) He was genuinely interested in the religious traditions of contemporary India and used to spend his time in the company of Jaina monks and other forms of spiritual meditation. His inscriptions count him among the most prominent followers of Jainism. He was not only an author himself but also a patron of authors. Jinasena, the author of Adipurana, was among the Jaina preceptors of Amoghavarsha I. He not only promoted Jainism but also the Brahmanical religion and also performed several rituals for the welfare of his subjects. His death was followed by the accession of his son Krishna II in about 879 CE. Krishna II: Krishna II (878–914 CE) had the titles Akalavarsha and Shubhatunga. He was not wholly successful in curbing rebellions. The only success of his reign was the termination of Lata viceroyalty. The wars he undertook against Vengi and the Cholas got him on the whole nothing but disaster, disgrace, and exile for some time. Indra III: Indra III became king in 915 CE.

INDRA III HAD THE TITLES:

Nityavarsha (constant rainer) Rattakandarapa Kirti-Narayana Rajamarathanda Amoghavarsha I's grandson Indra III re-established the empire. The advance of the Rashtrakuta forces through Lata and Malawa right up to Kalpi and Kanauj and the dethronement of Mahipala were, no doubt, significant military achievements of Indra. After the defeat of Mahipala and the sack of Kanauj in 915 CE, Indra III was the most powerful ruler of his times. Indra III's reign comes to a close towards the end of 927

CE. He was followed on the throne by his son Amoghavarsha II and reined for one year according to the Bhandana grant of Silahara Aparajita (997 CE).

KRISHNA III:

Krishna III was the last in a line of brilliant rulers. Krishna III defeated the Chola king Parantaka I (949 CE), annexed the northern part of the Chola empire and distributed the Chola kingdom among his servants. He, then, pressed down to Rameshwaram and set up a pillar of victory there and built a temple. After his death, all in late 966 CE or very early in 967 CE his opponents united against his successor half-brother Khottiga. The Rashtrakuta capital Manyakheta was sacked, plundered and burnt in 972 CE by the Paramara kings and the emperor was forced to abandon Manyakheta.

ADMINISTRATION

The warrior kings of the Rashtrakutas created a vast empire in south India which was touching the northern parts of India comprising approximately seven and a half lakh villages. The Rashtrakutas not only won and created a vast kingdom but also maintained it well. Monarch and Feudatories based administration: A powerful monarchy was the core of the empire, assisted by a large number of feudatories. Interestingly, the realm was getting feudalized more and more with the maturity of the reign of each Rashtrakuta king. The system of administration in the realms was based on the ideas and practices of the Gupta Empire and the Harsha's kingdom in the north, and the Chalukyas in the Deccan. As before, the monarch was the fountainhead of all powers including the head of administration and the commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

LAW AND ORDER:

The king was responsible for the maintenance of law and order within the kingdom and expected absolute loyalty and obedience from his family, ministers, vassal chiefs, feudatories, officials, and chamberlains.

SYSTEM OF HEREDITARY SUCCESSION:

The king's position was generally hereditary, but the rules about succession were not rigidly fixed. The eldest son often succeeded, but there were many instances when the eldest son had to fight his younger brothers and sometimes lost to them. Thus, the Rashtrakuta ruler Dhruva and Govinda IV deposed their elder brothers. Kings were generally advised and helped by many hereditary ministers chosen by them from leading families.

IMPORTANT ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS:

From epigraphic and literary records, it appears that in almost every kingdom there was a chief minister, a minister of foreign affairs, a revenue minister and treasurer, chief of armed forces, chief justice, and purohita.

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE AREA:

In the Rashtrakuta kingdom the directly administered areas were divided into: Rashtra (province) Vishaya Bhukti.

ADMINISTRATION OF DIVIDED AREA:

The Vishaya was like a modern district under Visayapati, and the Bhukti was a smaller unit than it. A body of assistants called the Rashtramahattaras and Vishayamahattaras respectively assisted provincial governors and district level governors in the Rashtrakuta administration. The roles and powers of these smaller units and their administrators are not clear. It seems that their primary purpose was the realization of land revenue and some attention to law and order. It appears that all officials were paid by giving them grants of rent-free land. The village was the basic unit of administration. The village administration was carried on by the village headman and the village accountant whose posts were generally hereditary. Grants of rent-free lands were paid to them. The headman was often helped in his duties by the village elder called grama-mahajana or grama-mahattara. In the Rashtrakuta kingdom, particularly in Karnataka, there were village committees to manage local schools, tanks, temples and roads in close cooperation with the headman and received a particular percentage of the revenue collection. Towns also had similar committees, in which the heads of trade guilds were also associated. Law and order in the cities and areas in their immediate vicinity was the responsibility of the koshta-pala or kotwal. The petty chieftainship and the increased hereditary elements weakened the power of village committees. The central rule also found it difficult to assert his authority over them and to control them. It implies that the government was becoming feudalized.

DEFENCE INSTALMENTS OF THE RASHTRAKUTA:

The Rashtrakuta kings had large and well-organized infantry, cavalry, and a large number of war-elephants mentioned in the chronicles of Arab travelers. The large armed forces were directly related to the glamor and power of the king, which was also essential for the maintenance and expansion of the empire in the age of wars. The Rashtrakutas were famous for a large number of horses in their army imported from Arabia, West Asia, and Central Asia. The real power of the Rashtrakutas is reflected from their many forts garrisoned by special troops and independent commanders. The infantry consisted of regular and irregular soldiers and levies provided by the vassal chiefs. The regular forces were often hereditary and sometimes drawn from different regions all over India. There is no reference to war chariots which had fallen out of use.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The Rashtrakutas contributed heavily to the Deccan's architectural legacy. Maharashtra reflects Rashtrakuta's contributions to art and architecture through magnificent rock-cut cave temples at Ellora and Elephant. Among the 34 Buddhist caves that were built in the sixth century, Ellora is one. At the Ellora, Jain monks also resided. In addition to renovating the Buddhist caves, the Rashtrakutas decided to devote themselves to the rock-cut temples. Amoghavarsha I practiced Jainism, and five Jain cave temples at Ellora date from his reign. The monolithic Kailasanatha temple at Ellora is the most magnificent and lavish creation of the Rashtrakutas. The walls of the temple are adorned with spectacular sculptures of Hindu mythology figures including Ravana, Shiva, and Parvathi.

KAILASANATHA TEMPLE:

The Kailasanatha temple is the largest of the rock-cut Hindu temples at Ellora Caves in Maharashtra, India. After Rashtrakuta rule expanded into South India from the Deccan, King Krishna I, commissioned the Kailasanatha Temple project. Karnata Dravida is the architectural style adopted. The main shrine, an entry gateway, the Nandi pavilion, and a courtyard with courtyards encircling are the temple's four principal components. The Kailasa temple is an architectural wonder with its amazing sculptures. The sculpture represents the Buffalo monster being slain by the Goddess Durga. Ravana was attempting to move Mount Kailasa, Siva's home, in another sculpture. The walls were also covered with Ramayana images. The Kailasa temple has a more Dravidian aspect.

ELEPHANTA CAVES:

The Elephanta Caves, located on an island, which is known as Sripuri (It was previously named Sripuri, but the inhabitants called it Gharapuri) near Mumbai. It was later named for the big Elephant sculpture held. Ellora caves and the Elephanta caves have lots of similarities that demonstrate the continuity of artisans. The elephanta caves' entrance includes enormous dwara-palaka sculptures. On the wall enclosing the prakara around the Sanctum are sculptures of Nataraja, Gangadhara, Ardhanarishvara, Somaskanda, and Trimurti.

NAVALINGA TEMPLE:

Amoghavarsha I or his son Krishna II, a ruler of the Rashtrakuta Dynasty, constructed the Navalinga temple complex in the ninth century. Kukkanur is the town where the temple is situated. It is situated in the Koppal district of the Indian state of Karnataka, north of Itagi and east of Gadag. The nine temple clusters in South India were built in the dravidian architectural style. Its name, Navalinga, comes from the presence of a linga, the common representation of Shiva in Hinduism.

PRATIHARA

The Gurjara-Pratiharas came to prominence in the second quarter of the 8th century, when they offered successful resistance to the Arabs during the time of Nagabhata I. Bhoja was the Pratihara dynasty's greatest emperor and the actual founder of the empire. The Pratiharas who ruled over Kannauj for a long time are also called Gurjara-Pratiharas. In the eastern and central portions of Rajasthan, the Pratiharas founded a number of principalities.

The expansion of the Gurjara-Pratihara Kingdom involved constant conflicts with other contemporary powers such as the Palas and Rashtrakutas. They fought with the Rashtrakutas for Malwa and Gujarat, and subsequently for Kanauj, which meant control of the upper Ganga valley. Dhruva and Gopal III of the Rashtrakuta Kingdom defeated the early Pratihara emperors' attempts to expand their dominion over the Malwa region and the upper Ganga basin. The Rashtrakutas defeated the Pratiharas in 790 and again in 806-07, after which they withdrew to the Deccan and cleared the way for the Palas. The poet Rajashekhara, associated with the court of the Gurjara-Pratihara King Mahendrapala and his son Mahipala.

NAGABHATA I (730 – 760 AD):

The foundation of Pratihara dynasty's magnitude was positioned by Nagabhata I, who ruled between 730-756 C.E. His rule was prominent because of his successful confrontation with the Arabs. He defeated the Arabs while the caliphate was being propagated. He established an empire extending from Gujarat to Gwalior and defied the Arab invasions towards further east of Sindh. He fought against King Dantidurga the Rashtrakuta ruler as well and was defeated. Conversely the success of Dantidurga was short-term and Nagabhata left for his successors a far-reaching empire which included Gujarat, Malwa and parts of Rajputana. Nagabhata I was succeeded by his brother's sons, Kakkuka and Devaraja.

VATSARAJA (780 – 800 AD):

Devaraja was succeeded by his son **Vatsaraja** who proved to be an influential ruler. He ruled from **775 to 805 AD**. He seems to have consolidated his position and made Ujjain as his capital. He was on the verge of his imperial career in **Western India**. He increased his control over a sizable portion of **north India**. He in trying to be ruler of Northern India annexed the territories upto **Kanauj** and **central Rajputra** by defeating **Bhandi**, the ruling dynasty probably related to the **Vardhanas**. **Kannauj (Western Uttar Pradesh)** became his capital. His ambition to capture **Kannauj** led him into conflicts with the **Pala ruler Dharmapala of Bengal and the Rashtrakuta ruler Dhruva**. In the tripartite struggle, **Dharmapala (the Pala king)** was defeated by **Vatsaraja**, who was then defeated by **Dhruv (the Rashtrakuta king)**. He succeeded in defeating **Dharmapala** in the **Doab region** and vanquished **Northern India** including the **Ganga**

Yamuna valley. Dhruva defeated him later on and captured **Kannauj**. **Vatsraja** was succeeded by **Nagabhata II**.

NAGABHATA II (800 – 833 AD):

Nagabhata II who succeeded Vatsaraja revived the lost prestige of the empire by conquering Sindh, Andhra, Vidarbha. After the defeat of Vatsaraja by Dhruva the Pratihara empire was limited only to Rajputana. Nagabhata II revived the policy of conquest and extension of the empire. He defeated the rulers of Andhra, Saindhava, Vidarbha and Kalinga. He subdued Matsayas in the North, Vatsas in the East and Turuskka (Muslims) in the West. Nagabhata attacked Kannauj and after defeating Chakrayudha occupied it. He also succeeded in defeating Dharmapala and entered into his territories as far as Munger in Bihar. But he could not enjoy his success for long. Nagabhata II was initially defeated by the Rashtrakuta ruler Govinda III, but later recovered Malwa from the Rashtrakutas.

He rebuilt the great Shiva temple at Somnath in Gujarat, which had been demolished in an Arab raid from Sindh. Kannauj became the center of the Gurjar Pratihara state, which covered much of northern India during the peak of their power. Rambhadra, the son and successor of Nagabhata II proved incapable and lost some of his territories, probably, to Pala ruler, Devapala. He was succeeded by his son Mihirbhoj who proved to be an ambitious ruler. Nagabhata's control extended over parts of Malwa, Rajputana, and Gujarat. Later Gurjara-Pratihara kings, including Nagabhata II, moved into the Kanauj region.

BHOJA I/MIHIR BHOJA (836 – 885 AD):

The best known Gurjara-Pratihara king was Bhoja, grandson of Nagabhata II. A glorious chapter of the history of the Pratiharas begins with the accession of Mihirabhoja. Mihirabhoja ascended to the throne in 836 AD. He ruled the Pratiharas for more than 46 years and is regarded as their most popular king. He reorganized and consolidated the empire inherited from his ancestors and ushered in an era of prosperity for the Pratiharas. Kannauj which was likewise known as Mahodaya was regarded as the capital of his empire. The Skandhavara military camp at Mahodaya is mentioned in the Barrah Copper Plate inscription. He was a great follower of Vaishnavism and assumed the title of "Adivaraha". The Arabs of Sindh, the Chandalas, and the Kalachuris all acknowledged his supremacy. The Pratihara rulers reportedly had India's strongest cavalry, according to Arab travelers. Al-Masudi, an Arab traveler, gave him the title "King Baura."

MAHENDRAPALA (885 – 910 AD)

He significantly contributed to the expansion of the Pratihara Empire, which extended across the Narmada and north to the Himalayas, east to Bengal, and west to the Sindh border. The title "Maharajadhiraja of Aryavarta" was bestowed upon him (Great king of northern India). Rajashekhar, a renowned Sanskrit poet and critic, graced his court. Karpuramanjari (written in Sauraseni Prakrit), Kavya Mimansa, Balabharata, Bhrinjika, Vidhasalabhanjika, Prapanch Pandav, and other works are among his works.

MAHIPALA I (913 – 944 AD):

During his rule, the Pratiharas began to fall apart. The Rashtrakuta king, Indra III, beat him and devastated Kannauj. Al-Masudi writes in his accounts that the Pratihara kingdom "had no access to the sea," which led to the Rashtrakutas gaining dominance of Gujarat.

RAJYAPALA (960 – 1018 AD):

Krishna III of Rashtrakuta defeated the Pratihara king. When Mahmud Ghazni stormed Kannauj, Rajyapala was forced to leave the battle. Vindyardhar Chandela was the man who killed him.

YASHPALA (1024 – 1036 AD):

He served as the Pratihara dynasty's last ruler. The Gandhavalas took control of Kannauj about 1090 AD. Rajashekhar's drama, the Vidhashalabhanjika, was staged in the court of Yuvaraja in order to celebrate the victory against the Rashtrakutas.

ADMINISTRATION

The Gurjara-Pratihara history, kings occupied the highest position in the state and had enormous powers, kings adopted big titles such as 'Parmeshwara', 'Maharajadhiraja', 'Parambhaterak'. The appointment of the samantas and singing on giants and charities were also the works of the kings. The samantas used to give military help to their Kings and fought for them, the advice of the high officers was taken in matters of administration. However, there is no reference of mantriparishad or ministers in the inscriptions of that period.

There are eight types of different officers in the administration of the Pratiharas such as

- Kottapala: Highest officer of the fort.
- Tantrapala: Representative of the king in samanta states.
- Dandapashika: was the highest officer of the police.
- Dandanayaka: look after the military and justice department.
- Dutaka: carry order and grants of the king to specified persons.
- Bhangika: was the officer who wrote orders of charities and grants.
- Vynaharina: was probably some legal expert and used to provide legal advice.
- Baladhikrat: was the chief of army.

- The entire state was divided into many bhuktis.

There were many mandals in each bhukti.

Each mandala had several cities and many villages as well.

Thus, the Pratiharas had organized their empire into different units for administrative convenience.

- The samantas were called Maha samantahipati or Maha Pratihara.
- The villages were locally administered.
- The elders of the villages were called Mahattar who looked after the administration of the village.
- Gramapati was an officer of the state who advised in matters of village administration.
- The administration of the city was looked after by councils which are referred to as Goshti, Panchakula, Sanviyaka and Uttar sobha in the inscriptions of the Pratiharas.
- Thus, the administration of the Pratiharas was quite efficient.
- It was on account of the efficient administration that the Pratiharas were able to defend India from the attacks of the Arabs.

Social conditions Existed under Pratihara's rule

- Caste system was prevalent in India during Gurjara-Pratihara period and the reference of all the four castes of the Vedic period is found in the inscription as well.
- The inscription refers to the Brahmans as Vipra and several Prakrit words are used for Kshatriyas.
- The people of each caste were divided into different classes.
- Chaturveda and Bhatta groups were prominent among the Brahmans.
- Among the Vaishyas the Kanchuka and Vakata groups were prominent.
- The Arab writer Ibdal Khurdadab has referred to seven castes in the time of the Pratiharas.
 - According to him, there existed the classes of Savakufria, Brahman, Kataria, Sudaria, Bandalia and Labla.
- King was selected from the Savakufria class whereas people of the Brahman class did not take wine and married their sons with the daughters of the Kataria class.
- The Kataria classes were regarded as Kshatriyas.
- The people of Sudaria were regarded as Sudras and usually did farming or cattle rearing.
- Basuria class was the Vaishya class whose duty was to serve other classes.
- The people of Sandila class did the work of Chandals.
- The Lahuda class was a low and wandering tribe.

- The above description of the Arab writer indicates that the Vaishyas did the work of the Sudras and the Sudras did the work of the Vishyas.
- It appears that the caste system was slowly and gradually breaking in a nice manner.
 - The Brahmans started marrying kshatriya girls and the vaishyas performed the work of the sudras as well.
- The Muslim attacks had begun during this period and many Hindus of the conquered states had been becoming the followers of Islam.
 - It also appears that the Hindu society had allowed the purification of such Hindus.
- Smriti Ghandrayana Vrat, 'Biladuri' and the writings of Aluberni and other Muslim writers also confirm this fact.
- Some references of inter-caste marriage have also been found.
 - The prominent Sanskrit scholar Rajasekhar had married a Kshatriya girl named Avanti Sundari.
- Kings and the rich classes practiced polygamy.
 - However, usually men had only one wife.
- It can also be known from some reference where on the death of their husbands, women had burnt themselves along with their husbands.
 - Thus, sati pratha was there though it was not very much prevalent.
- There was no purdah system among the women of the royal families.
- According to Rajasekhar women learnt music, dancing and paintings.
- Women were very much fond of ornaments and also used oils and cosmetics.
- People of rich families used to wear very thin clothes.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The **Gurjara-Pratihara** rulers were great patrons of arts, architecture and literature. Mihir Bhoj, was the most outstanding ruler of the dynasty. Notable sculptures of this period include **Viswaroopa** form of **Vishnu** and **Marriage of Siva and Parvati** from **Kannauj**. **Beautifully carved panels** are also seen on the walls of temples standing at **Osian, Abhaneri** and **Kotah**. The female figure named as **Sursundari** exhibited in **Gwalior Museum** is one of the most charming sculptures of the **Gurjara-Pratihara art**. The most important groups of **architectural works** generally credited to the early **Pratiharas** are at **Osian** in the **heart of Gurjara**, to the **east in the great fort at Chittor** and at **Roda** in the **south** by the border of modern **Gujarat** which the **Pratiharas** had absorbed by the end of the **8th century**. They had also reached **north-central India**, where several temples around Gwalior are comparable to the later works

at **Osian**. The extraordinary **Teli-ka-Mandir** in **Gwalior fort** is the oldest surviving large-scale **Pratihara work**.

The early works at **Osian** have **five-bay mulaprasadas** with **porch** and **open hall** but no **vestibule or ambulatory** and several have **five-shrine complexes (panchayatana)**. In addition to **ghana-dwaras** for the principal manifestations of the deity in the central projections. Open halls are surrounded by **vedika** with '**seat-back**' coping supporting truncated **purna-kalasha columns** and their internal pillars, square with projections, often have **purna-kalasha** for both capital and base to provide the extra height needed in the center of halls, as in the **Surya Temple** and **Hari-Hara I**. The shrine portal of **Hari-Hara III** is typical of non-architectonic compositions with **lotus**, pearl and **mithuna jambs** rising from **Ganga** and **Yamuna** and **dikpalas** but Surya's richly incised pilasters support a prasada. Porches and the balconies of **Hari-Hara III** have flat roofs and even the later halls have two or three superimposed slabs without additional superstructure. Early ceilings are **flat**, later ones **corbelled** and **embellished** with carving. **Hari-Hara III's** nine-square hall is unique in having curved side vaults. Most of the works at **Roda** have **five-bay mulaprasadas** without **ambulatory**, like the temples at Osian, but they generally have only a porch.

Sometimes with platforms, they have **socles** unlike those of early **Pratihara** works elsewhere. For instance, one piece of architecture in Roda, has a **slab-like plinth** with a semi-**kumbha**, a recessed zone and a festooned floor slab surmounted by a minor padma, all below a heavy dado which includes **khura**, **kaiasha** and **kapota**. Walls are usually relieved only by **ghana-dwaras**. **Shikharas** are all of the **Latina variety**, similar in their stunted profile and bold central bands to the predominant type at **Osian**. **Porches** sometimes have **pitched roofs** in superimposed tiers with bold blind dormers, like those of the **Maitrakas**. Pillars are usually exquisite examples of the square type with **purna-kalasha capitals** and the **sanctuary portals of Roda IV and III** well represent respectively the non-architectonic and architectonic approaches - the deeply carved pilasters of the latter, conforming to the type of the attached pillars outside, bearing a particularly elegant suite of five niches assimilated to the prasada motif.

Dedicated to a Shakti cult, the Teli-ka-Mandir at Gwalior consists of an elevated rectangular **mulaprasada** and a **double oblong shikhara** and a **closed portico**. There are two principal projections to the back with **ghana-dwaras** bearing tiered **kapotas** and **miniature lunettes**, like those of the sides, **flanked** by **aedicule** with various **shikhara** like

superstructures. On a simple platform and stepped base, the unorthodox dado has a double recession with *kaiasha* and *kapota*.

The **stepped superstructure** over the **portico** is modern but the **Kameshvara** at Auwa the **Teli-ka-Mandir contemporary** has one of the earliest surviving examples of a **Phamsana roof**, for which precedents may most plausibly be found in the Maitraka tradition. Thus, in these early works the various elements of the mature northern complex had appeared **Latina mulaprasadas** with varied planes accommodating **ambulatories, balconies, open halls** with **full vedika** and closed ones matching the **mulaprasada, Phamsana roofs, richly faceted supports** with varied **purna-kalasha** or **padma-kumbha capitals**.

In the next phase of their development the **Pratiharas** turned their attention to the elaboration of the **socle** and the **superstructure**. The **Ghateshwara at Baroli** has a **Phamsana** in two registers over its **square, portico** with parapets bearing **elaborate aedicule** and **miniature Latina shikharas** at the corners. In this and several other features the **Baroli temple** anticipates the sumptuous practice of the Chandelles in particular: The **shikhara** is taller, more **elegantly curved** than hitherto, and has central bands which penetrate up into the zone of the **amalaka's base**. The partly excavated **Gyaraspur Temple** is more advanced in plan, with **ambulatory** as well as **vestibule** and closed hall with balconies and porch making it cruciform.

Its **shikhara**, with nine miniature Latina forms clustered about its base, is perhaps the oldest surviving Sekhari example in the central domain of the Pratihara Empire. The roofs of both hall and porch are **Phamsana**. The dado with **kaiasha** and **kapota** is raised on a high podium. The **Ambika Matha** at Jagat is an early and exquisite example of the further elaboration and synthesis of the various elements so far encountered: five-bay **mulaprasada**, with **ambulatory**, and **equilateral projections** suggesting a **diagonal** as well as **octagonal** grouping of facade elements in response to the clustered composition of its **Sekhara shikhara, Phamsana-roofed, cruciform closed hall** with richly detailed aedicule matching those of the **mulaprasada, porch** with **high vedika, seat-like coping and prominent chadya, elaborately carved purna-kalasha pillars** with **prominent bracket capitals**. The **Vishnu and Someshwara Temples at Kiradu** may be taken as representative of the still more sumptuous culmination of the **Pratihara tradition**.

ARAB INVASION OF SIND

Rise of Islam is an important incident in the history of Islam. Prophet Muhammad was not only the founder of a new religion, but he was also the head of a city-state. Muhammad left no male heir. On his death claims were made on behalf of his son-in-law and cousin Ali, but senior members of the community elected as their leader or caliph, the Prophet's companion, Abu Bakr, who was one of the earliest converts to Islam. Abu Bakr died after only two years in office, and was succeeded by Umar (r. 634-644), under whose leadership the Islamic community was transformed into a vast empire. Umar was succeeded by Usman (r. 644-656), who was followed by Ali (r. 656-661), the last of the four "Righteous Caliphs." Owing to his relationship with the Prophet as well as to personal bravery, nobility of character, and intellectual and literary gifts, Caliph Ali occupies a special place in the history of Islam, but he was unable to control the tribal and personal quarrels of the Arabs. After his death, Muawiyah (r. 661-680), the first of the Umayyad caliphs, seized power and transferred the seat of caliphate from Medina to Damascus. Three years later the succession passed from Muawiyah's grandson to another branch of the Umayyad dynasty, which continued in power until 750. During this period the Muslim armies overran Asia Minor, conquered the north coast of Africa, occupied Spain, and were halted only in the heart of France at Tours. In the east the Muslim empire was extended to Central Asia, and, as we shall see, it was during this period that a part of the Indian subcontinent was annexed. In the course of these conquests, the Arabs became subject to older civilizations.

THE ARAB CONQUEST OF SIND

It was against this background of rapid expansion that the first contacts between Islam and India took place. Since time immemorial spices and other articles from India and Southeast Asia had been in great demand in Egypt and southern Europe, with the transit trade largely in the hands of Arabs, who brought merchandise from the Indian ports to Yemen in southern Arabia. The goods were then sent by land to the Syrian ports to be shipped again to Egypt and Europe. The rise of Islam did not, therefore, give rise to the connection with India, but it added a new dimension. Trade continued after the Arabs had embraced Islam, and the first major conflict between the Indian subcontinent and Muslim Arabia arose out of developments connected with Arab sailors plying their trade about the Indian Ocean.

CAUSES FOR INVASION OF SIND BY THE ARABS

The Arabs had been the carriers of Indian trade to Europe for centuries. After conversion to Islam, they cast their covetous eyes on the fabulous wealth of India as well as they were eager to propagate their new religion in India. However, the opportunity to invade Sind came to the Arabians in the beginning of the eighth century. With the passage of time, the History of India,

after the occupation of Sind had entered into its medieval phase. The widespread political instability in India after the death of Harshavardhan, the last independent Hindu King had inspired the foreign elements once again to attack and enter India. The Arabs were no exception to it. After the rise of Islam, the Arabs having successfully implanting it in Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Persia had cast a covetous eye on Sind. In 712 A.D. they were successful in occupying Sind. Several factors were responsible for the Arab invasion on Sind.

Fabulous Wealth of India: India was known to the world for her fabulous wealth and splendor. So like other invaders of the past, it had tempted the Arabs to grab her wealth. **Political Condition of India:** The then Political condition of India was also a major factor behind the Arab invasion of Sind. There was mutual rivalry and wars among the kings of petty provinces of India. Dahir, the ruler of Sind was unpopular and not liked by many. The Arabs took full advantage of it.

The Immediate Cause: The immediate cause of the Arab invasion of Sind was the looting of the eight Arab ships which carried the gifts and treasures sent by the king of Ceylon to the Caliph, at the port of Debal near Sind. Some Historians have opined that the ships were also carrying some beautiful women as well as valuable articles for the khalifa. This unlawful act of piracy was strongly protested by Hajaj, the governor of Iraq. He demanded compensation from Dahir, the king of Sind. But Dahir refuted Hajaj's demands by saying that he had no control over pirates. This infuriated Hajaj who decided to send military expeditions to Sind. He also obtained permission from the Caliph in this regard. However, the first two expeditions sent by Hajaj against Sind were beaten back by Dahir. Enraged at the repeated failures, Hajaj sent his nephew and Son-in-law Imaduddin Muhammad- bin-Qasim at the head of a huge army to Sind. Muhammad-bin- Qasim was an able and young commander-in chief.

INVASION OF SIND BY MUHAMMAD-BIN-QASIM:

Muhammad-bin-Qasim was a young man of hardly seventeen years when he was entrusted with the work of invading Sind. He was very bold, courageous and ambitious. The story of his adventures, —Writes Stanley Lane-poole, is one of the romances of history. Reflecting of his rise to power, his achievements and his fall, Ishwari Prasad writes, —His blooming youth, his dash and heroism, his noble deportment throughout the expedition and his tragic fall have invested his career with the halo of martyrdom. However towards the end of 711 A.D. Muhammad-bin-Qasim at the head of a huge army consisting of three thousand infantry, six thousand cavalry and six thousand Iraqi camelmen appeared at the north western border near Makran.

CAPTURE OF DEBAL

Muhammad-bin-Qasim led his army towards Debal, a famous seaport, where the Arab's ships were looted by some pirates. The port town Debal was well protected by strong fortifications, and

it was not easy on the part of the Qasim's army to penetrate into it so easily. A nephew of Dahir was the governor of Debal. Though he had an army of very small size with him, he tried to resist Qasim. But it became futile, when a treacherous Brahmin deserted the fortress and gave Qasim all the information's regarding the secrets of its defence. He also came to know from the Brahmin that the strength of the Sind army lay in the massive Hindu temple inside the fort of Debal and as long as the red flag fluttered atop the temple, he could not defeat the Hindus. The temple was also garrisoned by 4000 Rajput's and 3000 Brahmins serving at the temple. However, after a fierce battle Qasim brought down the red flag and the Arabian army resorted to a massacre. Despite a bold fight, the Hindus of Debal were defeated by the Arabs. The nephew of Dahir who was the governor fled away. Debal was captured and a huge booty with a large number of women fell into the hands of the Arabs. The people were given the option of accepting Islam or death. Many thousands of Hindus including Brahmins were mercilessly killed on their refusal to embrace Islam. The massacre continued for three days. It was very unfortunate that Dahir who had prior information of the Arabian attack, did not care at all.

FALL OF NIRUN

Flushed with success, Muhammad-bin-Qasim marched towards Nirun, which was under the charge of Dahir's Son Jai Sindh. With the approach of the Arabs, Jai Sindh fled away after handing over the fort to a priest. Qasim captured it without a fight. It is said Nirun fell because of the treachery of some Buddhist citizens. Whatever may be the fact, Dahir had taken the matter lightly and did not attempt to check the further advances of the Arabs.

FALL OF SEHWAN

After capturing Debal & Nirun, Muhammad-bin-Qasim marched against Sehwan, a town which was under the charge of the cousin of Dahir named Bajhra. The town was mostly inhabited by the merchant class and the priests. Bajhra could not defend the town in the face of the Arabian attack and fled away with panic. After his flight, the people of Sehwan surrendered to Muhammad-bin-Qasim. Sehwan fell because of poor defence.

FALL OF SISAM AND VICTORY OVER THE JATS

Sisam also met the same fate as had happened to Sehwan. It was the capital of the Jats of Budhiya and was ruled by Kaka, a Jat king. Kaka had given shelter to Bajhra after his flight from Sehwan. Muhammad-bin-Qasim defeated the Jats who in turn surrendered to the Arabs. But during the encounter, Bajhra and his followers were killed. When so much had happened, yet Dahir did not raise his little finger to check the invader. Muhammad-bin-Qasim then reached the river Mihran where he was detained for some months because most of his horses of his army died of scurvy and he had to wait for fresh re-inforcement from home. Dahir could have taken the full advantage of

this opportunity to attack and destroy the Arabs. But he remained inactive. He also did not check the Arabs when they crossed the river Mihran. Probably, Dahir was confident to defeat his enemy in a single encounter and that's why he was waiting for it at Rawar on the bank of the Indus.

THE BATTLE OF RAWAR

Dahir, the powerful king of Sind was waiting for the Arab invader with a huge army of 50,000 sword men, horsemen and elephantry at a place called Rawar. He was determined to finish the enemy once for all. He did not know that the Arab army led by Muhammad-bin-Qasim was also equally strong to face any challenge. After waiting for some days, both the armies started fighting on 20th June, 712 A.D. It was a serious and severe battle. Dahir was a great warrior. He was fighting with a great spirit and was leading his army from the front. By riding on an elephant he was at the front and was attacking the opponent with great courage and valour. In the mean while an arrow attached with burning cotton struck Dahir's 'howdah' and set it flame. At this the elephant got frightened and rushed towards the river Indus. This made Dahir very much disturbed at the mid of the war. He became restless, inconsistent and inattentive. At this moment he was injured by an arrow and fell from his elephant. Although the elephant was brought to control, Dahir did not wait for it. He immediately rode a horse and resumed fighting. But as he was not seen on the back of his elephant, his soldiers became panicky and fled away from the field of battle. However, Dahir gave a heroic fight and laid down his life after two days of his bloody battle. His widow Queen Ranibai refused to surrender the fort of Rawar and fought the invader to the bitter end. She performed jouhar along with some besieged ladies of the fort. Muhammad-bin-Qasim became victorious. Nevertheless he took about eight months to acquire control over Sind because his army had to face tough resistance by the local people of many other towns and palaces including Alor and Brahmanabad.

OCCUPATION OF MULTAN

After conquering Sind, Muhammad-bin-Qasim marched towards Multan, a major city situated in the upper Indus basin. On the way he had to encounter tough resistance by the local people but overpowered them. On reaching Multan he found the city strongly fortified and people in full revolt. But at Multan he was also fortunate to get the help of a traitor who gave him the information regarding the source of water supply to the city. Muhammad-bin-Qasim cut-off the source. The people of Multan surrendered at last after fighting bravely against the Arabs. Thus the city fell into the hands of the invader in 713 A.D. The Arabs massacred and plundered the city. Women and children were made captives and a large quantity of gold was collected by the Arabs. He obtained so much gold that they named the city as the 'city of gold'. After completing his mission in Sind and Multan, Muhammad-bin-Qasim was planning to proceed more into the interior of India. In the mean while there came a tragic end to his life. He was put to death by an order of Caliph, the

religious head of the Islamic world.

DEATH OF MUHAMMAD-BIN-QASIM

The Death of Muhammad-bin-Qasim has been put to debate as there are two divergent views by different historians. Historian Mir Massum in his —Tarik Sind‘ has described an interesting story about the death of Muhammad-bin-Qasim. Muhammad-bin-Qasim during his campaign of Brahmanabad had captured the two virgin daughters of Dahir. They were Surya Devi and Parimal Devi. They were sent to the Caliph as gifts from Muhammad-bin-Qasim. These two girls were determined to take revenge on Muhammad-bin-Qasim. So when they reached Caliph, they told him that they had been used and dishonored by Muhammad-bin-Qasim before they were sent to him. This made the Caliph so much angry that he at once ordered that Muhammad-bin-Qasim should be put to death and his body, being sewn up in the raw hide of an ox, should be despatched to him. His order was immediately carried out. When Muhammad-bin-Qasim’s coffin was opened before the Caliph, the two girls were delighted at having avenged on the enemy and killer of their father. Their mission was completed and so they declared that Qasim was innocent. This made the Caliph furious. At his order, the two sisters were tied to the tails of horses and were dragged to death. But the other view regarding the death of Muhammad-bin-Qasim has been ascribed to a political cause. Some modern historians believe that Muhammad had become a victim of the court intrigues of the Caliph. Caliph Walid died in 715 A.D. and was succeeded by his brother Sulaiman who had enmity with Hajaj, the governor of Iraq and father-in-law of Muhammad-bin-Qasim. He could not tolerate the importance of Hajaj as a result of Muhammad’s victorious campaigns in India. To bring an end to this Caliph might have ordered to kill Muhammad-bin-Qasim. Whatever may be the fact? Muhammad-bin-Qasim got a tragic end of his life.

CAUSES OF ARAB SUCCESS IN SIND

Many factors have been ascribed to the success of the Arabs in Sind and Multan. Sind had a heterogeneous population consisting of the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Jains, the Jats, the Meds etc. There was no good relation among them as the subjects of Dahir lack unity at social level. Instead, there prevailed hatred among them. So, at the time of Arab invasion of Sind, they could not be united for the cause of their motherland. Some historians have opined that it was due to lack of social solidarity among the people of Sind; the country had

UNPOPULARITY OF DAHIR

Dahir was not liked by some sections of his subjects as he was proud and arrogant and mainly as a son of an usurper. Dahir’s father was a minister who had murdered his king and married the widow queen. Thus Dahir, being the son of an usurper, was not liked by the people. Besides Dahir had enmity with his cousin brothers for the throne which had led the kingdom to a stage of civil

war. Further Dahir 's governors were almost semi-independent princes and did not co-operate him at the time of crises. Because of his personal nature he was also not liked by his subjects who were mostly non-Hindus. Owing to his unpopularity he did not get the support of the people of his own kingdom at the time of foreign invasion

BETRAYAL AND TREACHERY:

It was the betrayal and treachery of some Indian citizens that had contributed a lot for the success of the Arabs. Debal fell because of a Brahmin traitor who exposed secrecy of the Temple and flag which was inside fort of Debal. At Nirun the Buddhists played treacherous role by joining hands with the invader. At Multan, a traitor informed the invader the source of water supply to the city. Some historians have viewed this as the role of the Fifth column in bringing about the fall of their own country

POVERTY AND BACKWARDNESS

Sind was a poor, backward kingdom with a sparse population and limited resources. So it was not possible on the part of the Dahir to finance for a large army or to wage a protracted war. This also had tempted the Arabs to invade Sind.

ISOLATION OF SIND

Isolation of Sind from the rest of India was also a factor for the Arab's success in Sind. Though there were powerful dynasties like the Pratiharas of Malwa and Kanauj they did not come to the help of Sind. None of them bothered or cared for this incident which marked the beginning of Muslim rule in India.

RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM OF ARABS

The Arabs were inspired by a new religion and had become fanatic. They thought that they were the forces of God and were engaged in a mission to destroy the faiths of the infidel and spared the blessings of Islam. The Arabs had also a great sense of patriotic feelings. The Indians on the other hand had no such religious enthusiasm or patriotism. Rather they had an indifferent, tolerant and cosmopolitan attitude towards other faiths and other people. Undoubtedly this had resulted, the Arab 's success in Sind.

STRONG ARMY:

The Arab army under the leadership of Muhammad-bin-Qasim was superior to that of Sind of Dahir in strength and technique. They were also well-equipped. Dahir's army only at Rawar was nearly on par in number with that of the invader. But they were very poorly equipped as the majority of them were hastily recruited on the eve of the war and had not sufficient military training. This had caused the defeat of Dahir.

RESPONSIBILITY OF DAHIR:

Dahir was largely responsible for the success of the Arabs owing to his initial lethargy and foolishness. He had remained inactive while Muhammad-bin-Qasim was conquering Debal, Nirun and Sehwan one after another. Even he had remained inactive when Muhammad crossed the Mihran to enter into Rawar. It was foolishness on the part of Dahir to hope that he would finish the enemy in a single stroke at Rawar. At Rawar also Dahir committed a blunder by not commanding the army as its leader. Instead of commanding the army, he fought like a soldier and died.

ARAB ADMINISTRATION IN SIND

The Arab administration in Sind followed the general pattern adopted by the Arab conquerors in other countries. The normal rule was to employ local talent and make minimum changes in local practices. Caliph Umar, acknowledged as the chief creator of the Arab system of administration, had laid down the working principle that Arabs should not acquire landed property in conquered territories. Under his system the conquering general of a new territory became its governor, but "most of the subordinate officers were allowed to retain their posts." Available evidence about Sind shows that these injunctions were observed. The Arabs established themselves in large towns, which were also military cantonments, and provided the military garrisons, but civil administration was left largely in the hands of the local chiefs, only a few of whom had accepted Islam. The administrative arrangements which Muhammad ibn Qasim made with the non-Muslims after his victory over Dahir are often referred to as "the Brahmanabad settlement." The basic principle was to treat the Hindus as "the people of the book," and to confer on them the status of the zimmi (the protected). In some respects, the arrangements were even more liberal than those granted to "the people of the book" by the later schools of Islamic law. For example, according to later opinion the zimmi could not repair their places of worship, although existing ones were allowed to stand. The question of repairing a damaged temple came up before Muhammad, who referred the matter to Hajjaj. The latter, having consulted the 'ulama of Damascus, not only granted the permission asked for, but declared that so long as non-Muslims paid their dues to the state they were free to live in whatever manner they liked. "It appears," Hajjaj wrote, "that the chief inhabitants of Brahmanabad had petitioned to be allowed to repair the temple of Budh and pursue their religion. As they have made submission, and have agreed to pay taxes to the Khalifa, nothing more can properly be required from them. They have been taken under our protection, and we cannot in any way stretch out our hands upon their lives or property. Permission is given them to worship their gods. Nobody must be forbidden and prevented from following his own religion. They may live in their houses in whatever manner they like. According to one early Muslim historian, the Arab conqueror countenanced even the privileged position of the Brahmans, not only in religious matters, but also in the administrative sphere. "Muhammad ibn Qasim maintained their dignity and

passed orders confirming their pre- eminence. They were protected against opposition and violence." Even the 3 percent share of government revenue which they had received during the ascendancy of the Brahman rulers of Sind, was conceded to them. In his arrangements for the collection of taxes, Muhammad ibn Qasim also made an attempt to provide some safeguards against oppression, by appointing "people from among the villagers and the chief citizens to collect the fixed taxes from the cities and the villages so that there might be the feeling of strength and protection." When the Abbasids overthrew the Umayyads in 750 they sent their own officers to Sind. The Abbasid governor, Hisham, who came to Sind in 757, carried out successful raids against Gujarat and Kashmir, but no permanent additions to Arab dominion were made. Later, through preoccupations at home, Arab control over Sind weakened, with the process of disintegration being accelerated by tribal conflicts among local Arabs. One governor went so far as to revolt against Caliph al-Mamun. The rebellion was put down, but Musa (son of Yahya the Barmakid, the famous wazir of Harun-al-Rashid), who was placed in charge of the affairs of Sind, nominated as his successor on his death in 836 his son Amran. The caliph recognized the appointment, but the beginning of the hereditary succession to governorship meant a weakening of the hold of Baghdad. An energetic ruler, Amran dealt firmly with the disturbances of the Jats and the Meds, but internecine quarrels among the Arabs flared up and he lost his life after a brief reign. In 854 the Hibbari family became hereditary rulers of Sind, with Mansura as their capital. In course of time, Multan became independent and the Hindus reestablished themselves in Rohri. The severance of contacts with Baghdad made Sind and Multan a happy hunting ground for the emissaries of the rivals of the Abbasids, the Ismaili rulers of Cairo. Their first missionary came to Sind in 883 and started secret propaganda in favor of the Ismaili caliph. After the ground had been intellectual contact came in 771, when a Hindu astronomer and mathematician reached Baghdad, bringing with him a Sanskrit work (Brahma Siddhanta by Brahma-gupta) which he translated into Arabic with the help of an Arab mathematician. Titles of three other works on astronomy translated from Sanskrit have been preserved by Arab bibliographers, but Siddhanta, which came to be known in Arabic as "Sindhind," had the greatest influence on the development of Arab astronomy. In mathematics the most important contribution of the subcontinent to Arabic learning was the introduction of what are known in the West as "Arabic numerals," but which Arabs themselves call "Indian numerals" (al-ruqum-al- Hindiyyah). Indian medicine received even greater attention; the titles of at least fifteen works in Sanskrit which were translated into Arabic have been preserved, including books by Sushruta and Caraka, the foremost authorities in Hindu medicine. One of the translated books was on veterinary science, and another dealt with snakes and their poisons. None of these translations are now known to exist, except a rendering of a book on poisons, which was originally translated into Persian for Khalid-alBarmaki, the Abbasid wazir, and later was translated into Arabic. Indian doctors

enjoyed great prestige at Baghdad, and although their names, like the titles of their works, have been mutilated beyond recognition in Arab bibliographies, their number was very great. One of these men, Manka, was specially sent for when Harun-al-Rashid fell ill and could not be cured by Baghdad doctors. Manka's treatment was successful, and not only was he richly rewarded by the grateful caliph, but he was entrusted with the translation of medical books from Sanskrit. Another Indian physician was called in when a cousin of the caliph suffered a paralytic stroke and was given up for lost by the Greek court physician. Many Indian medicines, some of them in their original names such as atrifal, which is the Hindi tri-phal (a combination of three fruits), found their way into Arab pharmacopoeia. Astrology and palmistry also received considerable attention at Baghdad, and titles of a large number of books translated from Sanskrit on these subjects have been preserved. Other books which were translated were on logic, alchemy, magic, ethics, statecraft, and the art of war, but literary works gained the greatest popularity. Some of the stories of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments are attributed to Indian origin, and Arabic translations of the Panchtantra, popularly known as the story of Kalila and Dimna, have become famous in various Arabic and Persian versions. The games of chess and chausar were also brought from India and transmitted by Arabs to other parts of the world. Sind also made a contribution in spheres other than science and learning. While the debt of the Sufis, the Islamic mystics, to Indian religion in general is not certain, the links of Sind with Islamic Sufism are fairly definite. The great early Sufi, Bayazid of Bistam, had a Sindhi as his spiritual teacher. "I learned," he said, "the science of annihilation (ilm-i-fana) and unity (tauhid) from Abu Ali (of Sind) and Abu Ali learned the lessons of Islamic unity from me." The close association of Sind with Sufism is maintained to this day, and one of the most marked features of Sind is the dominant place which Sufism occupies in her literary and religious life. Our knowledge of India's impact on Arab cultural life is based on contemporary Arab sources, but it is far from complete. No title of any Sanskrit book on music translated at Baghdad is available, but it is known that the music of the subcontinent influenced Arab music. That it was appreciated in the Abbasid capital is indicated by the famous Arab author Jahiz (fl. 869), who wrote in his account of the people of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent that "Their music is pleasing. One of their musical instruments is known as Kankalah, which is played with a string stretched on a pumpkin." This would seem to be a reference to an Indian instrument, the kingar, which is made with two gourds. Another indication of widespread knowledge of Indian music is a reference by an Arabic author from Andalusia to an Indian book on tunes and melodies. /10/ It has even been suggested that many of the technical terms for Arab music were borrowed from Persia and India and that Indian music itself has incorporated certain Perso-Arab airs, such as Yeman and Hijj from Hijaz and Zanuglah, corrupted into Jangla. No connected history of Sind and Multan after the recall of Muhammad ibn Qasim is available, but works of Arab travelers and geographers enable us to fill the gap. In particular Masudi, who visited

what is now West Pakistan in 915- 916, has left a brilliant account of the conditions in the Indus valley, from Waihind in the north to Debul in the south. Ibn Haukul, another traveler, visited the area some years later. Both agree that the principal Arab colonies were at Mansura, Multan, Debul, and Nirun, all of which had large Friday mosques. Non- Muslims formed the bulk of the population, and were in a preponderant majority at Debul and Alor. The relations between the Arabs and the non-Muslims were good. Unlike the historians of the sultanate period, the Arab travelers refer to the non-Muslims as zimmi and not as kafirs (infidels). Soon after the conquest of Sind and Multan, the killing of cows was banned in the area. The reason may have been a simple desire to preserve the cattle wealth, but regard for Hindu sentiments may also have been partly responsible for this step. Some Hindu chiefs showed a sympathetic interest in Islam, for in 886 a Hindu raja commissioned an Arab linguist from Mansura to translate the Quran into the local language. Another indication of the integration of the population into the general life of the ruling class was the use of Sindhi troops in Arab armies. Contemporary records mention their presence in areas as distant as the frontiers of the Byzantine empire. Arab rulers adopted local practices to a much greater extent than the Ghaznavids did later at Lahore, or the Turks and the Afghans at Delhi. According to Masudi, the ruler of Mansura had eighty war elephants and occasionally rode in a chariot drawn by elephants. The Arabs of Mansura generally dressed like the people of Iraq, but the dress of the ruler was similar to that of the Hindu rajahs, and, like them, he wore earrings and kept his hair long. After Muhammad ibn Qasim there were no large-scale Arab immigrations, and Arab influence gradually diminished; but Sind and Multan remained in contact with the Arab countries, particularly Iraq and Egypt. At the time of Masudi's visit Arabic and Sindhi were spoken in Sind, but Iranian influences were also strong, particularly after the rise of the Dailamites, when the use of Persian became more prevalent, especially in Multan. Arab rule produced men of note in Sind and Multan, some of whom achieved fame and distinction in Damascus and Baghdad. One of them, Abu Maashar Sindhi (fl.787), an authority on the life of the Prophet, was so eminent that when he died in Baghdad the reigning caliph led the prayers at his funeral. A number of other scholars and poets connected with Sind are also mentioned.

Consequences of Arab Conquests of Sind;

The Arab conquest of Sindh is quite significant in the history of India as well as in Arabia undoubtedly it did not help in the future establishment of Muslim empire in India. According to Stanley Lane-Poole, "The Arabs had conquered Sindh but the conquest was only an episode in the History of India and of Islam, a triumph without results." According to Sir Wolseley Haig, "Of the Arab conquest of Sindh, there is nothing more to be said. It was a mere episode in the History of India and affected only a small portion of the fringe of that vast country. It introduced into one frontier tract the religion

which was destined to dominate the greater part of India for nearly five centuries, but it had none of the far-reaching effects attributed to it by Tod in the Annals of Rajasthan. Mohammad-bin-Quasim never penetrated to Chitor in the heart of Rajputana; the Caliph Walid First did not 'render tributary all that part of India on this side of the Ganges'; the invader was never on the eve of carrying the war against Raja Harchund of Kanauj much less did he actually prosecute it; If Harun-ur-Rashid gave to his second son, al-Ma'-mun, 'Khorasan, Zabullisthan, Cabulisthan, Sindh and Hindusthan', he bestowed on him at least one country which was not his to give; nor was the whole of Northern India, as Tod maintains, convulsed by the invasion of the Arabs. One of these, as we have seen, advanced to Adhoi in Cutch, but no settlement was made, and the expedition was a mere raid: and though the first news of the irruption may have suggested war-like preparations to the princes of Rajasthan their uneasiness cannot have endured. The tide of Islam, having overflowed Sindh and the lower Punjab, ebbed, leaving some jetam on the strand. The rulers of states beyond the desert had no cause for alarm. That was to come later and the enemy was to be, not the Arab but the Turk, who was to present the faith of the Arabian prophet in a more terrible guise than it had worn when presented by native Arabians." According to Prof. Habibullah, "The Arab was not destined to raise Islam to be a political force in India. Whatever its cultural implications, politically the Sindh affair led to a dead end. It touched only a fringe of the Indian continent and the faint stirrings it produced were soon forgotten. In the Islamic Commonwealth the Arab soon began to lose ground; geography stood in the way of his expansion in India; and by the tenth century, his conquering role having been played out, the Indian princes recognised in him only the enterprising and adaptable merchant of old." When the Arabs settled in Sindh, they were dazzled by the ability of the Indians. Instead of influencing them, they were themselves influenced by them. The Arab scholars sat at the feet of the Brahmanas and Buddhist monks and learnt from them philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, medicine, chemistry, etc., and later on transmitted the same to Europe. It is contended that the numerical figures which the Europeans learnt from the Arabs were originally learnt from the Indians. The Arabic name for figure, Hindsa, points out to its Indian origin. During the Khilafat of Mansur in the 8th century A.D., Arab scholars went from India to Baghdad and they carried with them the Brahma Sidhanta and Khanda-Khandvaka of Brahma Gupta and those were translated into Arabic with the help of Indian scholars. The Arabs also learnt from them the first principles of scientific astronomy. Hindu learning also was encouraged by the ministerial family of Barmaks during the Khilafat of Harun from 786 to 808 A.D. They invited Hindu scholars to Baghdad and asked them to translate Sanskrit books on medicine, philosophy, astrology etc., into Arabic. They also put the Hindu physicians in charge of their hospitals. According to Havell, from a political point of view, Arab conquest of Sindh was a comparatively insignificant event but its importance on account of its effect upon the whole culture of Islam was great. For the first time, the

Nomads of the Arabian Desert found themselves in the holy land of the Aryans in close contact with Indo-Aryan civilization, which from all points of view politically, economically and intellectually had reached a far higher plane than their own. To the poetic imagination of the Arab tribesmen, India seemed a land of wonders. In all the arts of peace, India then stood at the pinnacle of the greatness. The Arabs were charmed by the skill of the Indian musicians and the cunning of the Hindu painter. The dome of the temple Mandapam became the dome of the Muslim Mosque and tomb. The simplified symbolism of Muslim ritual was all borrowed from India. The pointed arc of the prayer carpet and mihrab was a symbolic arc of the Buddhist and Hindu shrines. The cathedral mosques of the Muslim royalty were like the Vishnu temple. The entrances of the mosque corresponded to the temple Gopuram and gates of the Indian villages. The Minars of the Mosques were adaptations of the Indian towers of victory. Havell points out that in Sindh, the Arab Shaikhs had their first practical lessons in Indo-Aryan statecraft under the guidance of their Brahman officials. They learnt to adapt their own primitive patriarchal policy to the complicated problems of the highly organised systematic government evolved by centuries of Aryan's imperial rule. The court language, etiquette and literary accomplishments were borrowed from the Iranian branch of Aryan civilisation. All these scientific elements which made the Arabs famous in Europe were borrowed directly from India. Islam was able to tap the inexhaustible resources of India, spiritual and material and became the agent for their distribution over the whole of Europe. The Indian Pandits brought to Baghdad the works of Brahmputra and those were translated into Arabic. In the palmy days of the great Harun, the influence of Indian scholars was supreme at the Baghdad court.

Hindu physicians were brought to Baghdad to organise hospitals and medical schools. Hindu scholars translated Sanskrit works into Arabic. The Arabs also went to Indian universities for acquiring knowledge. Havell points out that it was India and not Greece that taught Islam in the impressionable years of its youth formed its philosophy and esoteric religious ideals and inspired its most characteristic expression in literature, art and architecture. The Arabs never won for themselves a permanent political footing in India nor did the Western School of Islam ever take any strong hold upon the mentality or religious feeling of the Indian Muslims. It is wrong to maintain that the Arab conquest of Sindh had absolutely no effect on India. It cannot be denied that the Arab conquest of Sindh showed the seed of Islam in India. A large number of persons in Sindh were converted to Islam. The footing got by Islam in Sindh proved to be permanent. The legacy of the Arab conquest of Sindh lies in the "debris of ancient buildings which proclaimed to the world the vandalism of the destroyer or a few settlements of a few Muslim families in Sindh as the memorial to Arab conquest of Sindh." A question has been raised whether the Arab invasion of Sindh was inspired by religion or not. The view of Dr. Tarachand is that it was not. In support of his view, he points out that a number of prominent and influential Hindus

favoured Quasim. Among them were Sisakar, the Minister of Dahir, Moka Bisaya, chief of a tribe, Ladi, Dahir's queen, who married Quasim after her husband's death and actually induced the besieged Hindus of Bahmanabad to surrender. On the other side, Allafi, an Arab Commander of Arab horsemen, fought on the side of Dahir and was his advisor. No Hindu ruler came forward to help Dahir against the Arabs. His son also appealed for help to his brother and nephews and not to the Hindu chiefs of the country. The Hindu chiefs surrendered in many cases without resistance merely on the assurance that they will be treated kindly. The Hindu defenders submitted and were not molested. The only exceptions were men bearing arms. Quasim took Sisakar into his confidence and told him all his secrets. He relied upon Moka Bisaya to lead foraging parties against Jaisiya. He appointed Kaksa, a cousin of Dahir, as his Vazier with precedence over all Muslim nobles and army commanders. All these facts show that the invasion of Sindh was not a religious crusade. Dr. Tarachand says that even the results do not justify this conclusion. It is doubtful whether many Sindhis were converted to Islam by the invaders. Their places of worship were not damaged as is proved by the case of the temple at Multan. Many Brahmans were employed in the administration. The Sumras who ruled over Sindh bore Hindu names. The Hindu Amils were the official class under the Kalhoras and Talpurs. The history of Sindh shows that the factor of religion has been exaggerated. It is stated in Chach Namah and Futuh at Buldan of ATBH adhuri that Hajjaj, the Governor of Iraq, who had dispatched Quasim had a balance sheet of the war prepared which showed that 60,000 silver Dirhems was the expenditure and 120,000 Dirhems was the income from the campaign. The expedition was as much a business enterprise as a venture for the expansion of the empire.

4.1.9. Conclusion The Arabs had been the carriers of Indian trade to Europe for centuries. After conversion to Islam, they cast their covetous eyes on the fabulous wealth of India as well as they were eager to propagate their new religion in India. However, the opportunity to invade Sind came to the Arabians in the beginning of the eighth century. The death of Harshavardhana, resulted in political instability in India, this situation inspired the foreign elements once again to attack and enter India. The Arabs were no exception to it. In 712 A.D. they were successful in occupying Sind. The Arab conquest of Sindh is quite significant in the history of India as well as an Arabia undoubtedly it did not help in the future establishment of Muslim empire in India. According to Stanley Lane-Poole, "The Arabs had conquered Sindh but the conquest was only an episode in the History of India and of Islam, a triumph without results."

