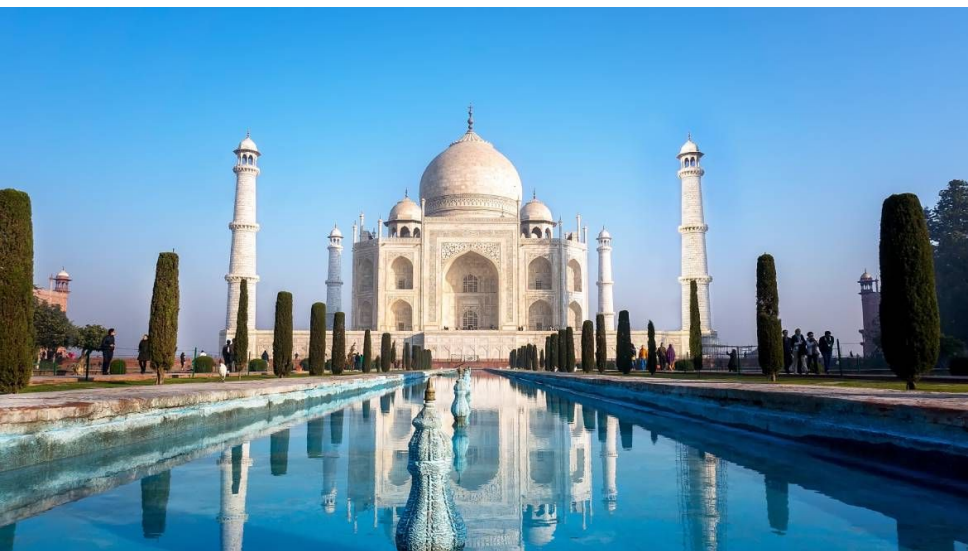


EARLY HISTORY OF NORTH INDIA

**SUDHAKAR
CHATTOPADHYAYA**

**FROM THE FALL OF THE MAURYAS
TO THE DEATH OF HARSHA c. 200
b.c.—a.d. 650**



PREFACE

An attempt has been made in the present volume to trace the political history of North India from the fall of the Mauryas to the death of Harṣa. The idea of writing such a book suggested itself to me when I was a Lecturer at the University of Calcutta and when I found that in most of the works the archaeological sources have not been properly adjusted in the background of other available materials. Further, scant attention is paid in these treatises on the Central Asiatic affairs that had undoubtedly important influence on the political destiny of the then India. After I came to the Viśvabharati University, my late lamented teacher Dr. P. C. Bagchi, Vice-Chancellor of the Institution, encouraged me to undertake the task and suggested the plan for the work. But alas! he is no more to see it in its finished form, to appreciate its merit, if there be any, or to point out its shortcomings.

On many crucial points, I have ventured to differ from my *pūrva-sūris*, but I may humbly assure my readers that I have always been on the guard not to be led astray from the *terra firma* of solid facts by an eagerness for theorising. In the *Introduction*, I have tried to point out some of my conclusions, but they are certainly not all. Among the literary works, I have tried to utilise all the available Chinese sources, mostly in their French and English translations, and Dr. Bagchi himself kindly supplied me with some important data.

After the book was sent to the press some new works e.g., *A Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. ii, A. K. Narain's *The Indo-Greeks*, etc., were published and I had not the opportunity to discuss some of the novel theories advanced in them. But my conclusions, I think, are in no way affected by them.

I pay my humble tribute of respect to Āchārya Dr. Nandalal Basu, who kindly prepared for me the drawing embossed on the cover of this book and to Pandit Sukhamay Śāstri, *Sapta-Tīrtha*, who helped me in interpreting several Sanskrit passages. My thanks are also due to Sri Santanu Ukil who sketched the block of my publishers at my request. I am indebted to Sri Kalyan Kumar Sarkar, M.A., and to Sri Biswadeb Mukherjee, M.A., formerly my pupils and now my colleagues, for helping me in proof-

reading and other works. My sons Dipankar and Bhaskar drew up the map appended at the end of this volume. Lastly, my best thanks are due to Sri Sushil Kumar Basu, Proprietor of the "Progressive Publishers", without whose generosity this book would not have seen the light of day.

I am painfully aware that in spite of my best efforts and care some misprints and omissions have crept into the work and for this I crave the indulgence of the readers.

SANTINIKETAN

S. CHATTOPADHYAYA

ERRATA

P. 159 — L. 9	for <i>Eastern Rajasthan</i>	read <i>Ajmir</i>
P. 197 — L. 14	for <i>c.520 A.D. and hence</i>	read <i>c.510 A.D. but</i>
P. 197 — L. 18	for <i>Mihirakula</i>	read <i>Toramāna</i>

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABORI	Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona
AHD	Ancient History of the Deccan by G. Jouveau-Dubreuil. Pondicherry, 1920 .
AIU	The Age of Imperial Unity, ed. R. C. Majumdar and A. D. Pusalker. Bombay
Allan, Catalogue	A Catalogue of Indian Coins in the British Museum (Ancient India) by J. Allan. London, 1936
AMMK	<i>Ārya-Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa</i>
ASR or ASIR	Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports
Arch. Surv. West. Ind.	Archaeological Survey of Western India
Bayana Hoard	Catalogue of Gupta Coins found in the Bayana Hoard by A. S. Altekar
BDU	Bulletin of the Dacca University
BEFEO	Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient, Hanoi
Begram	Recherches Archaeologiques et Historiques sur les kouchans, Memoires de la Delegation archaeologique francaise en Afghanistan, Tome XII, by R. Ghirshman
Bhandarkar no.	A List of Inscriptions of Northern India, by D. R. Bhandarkar (Appendix to Ep. Ind., xix-xxiii)
BMC	British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India by P. Gardner. London, 1886
Bom. Gaz.	Bombay Gazetteer
BSOS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London
CA	The Classical Age ed. R. C. Majumdar and A. D. Pusalker. Bombay, 1954
CAGI	Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India ed. S. N. Majumdar Sastri. Calcutta, 1924
Cal. Rev.	Calcutta Review
CII, II (i)	Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum; Kharoṣṭhī Inscriptions, ed. Sten Konow
CGD	Catalogue of Gupta Coins by Allan, London, 1914
CHI	Cambridge History of India, Vol. i, ed. Rapson

Corpus, III	Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. iii, ed. J. F. Fleet
CSHI	Cambridge Shorter History of India
DHI	Development of Hindu Iconography by J. N. Banerjea, Calcutta, 1956
DHNI	Dynastic History of North India, Vol. i. by H. C. Ray
Dh.S	<i>Dharmasūtra</i>
DKA	Purāṇa Texts of the Dynasties of the Kali Age ed. F. E. Pargiter
DKM	Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha by B. P. Sinha
EECA	The Early Empires of Central Asia by W. M. McGovern
EHl	Early History of India by V. A. Smith (4th ed.)
Ep. Ind.	Epigraphia Indica
GBI	The Greeks in Bactria and India by W. W. Tarn (1951)
HB	History of Bengal, vol. i, ed. R. C. Majumdar (Dacca)
HC. Trans.	<i>Harṣacarita</i> , Eng. Trans. by E. B. Cowell and F. W. Thomas
HIL	History of Indian Literature, Vol. i, by M. Winternitz. Eng. Trans. by Mrs. S. Ketkar
HK	History of Kanauj by R. S. Tripathi
HMHI	History of Mediaeval Hindu India, Vol. i by C. V. Vaidya
HNI	History of North-Eastern India by R. G. Basak, Calcutta, 1934
HOS	Harvard Oriental Series
HSL	History of Sanskrit Literature by A. B. Keith
IC	Indian Culture
IHQ	Indian Historical Quarterly
IMC	Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Vol. i ed. V. A. Smith
Ind. Ant. or IA	Indian Antiquary
Intro.	Introduction
JA	Journal Asiatique, Paris
JAHRs	Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society

JARS	Journal of the Assam Research Society
JASB	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
JBORS	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society
JBRS	Journal of the Bihar Research Society
JDL	Journal of the Department of Letters, Calcutta University
JGIS	Journal of the Greater India Society
JIH	Journal of Indian History
JKHRS	Journal of the Kalinga Historical Research Society
JNSI	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India
JPASB	Journal and the Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland
JRASB(L)	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (Letters)
JUPHS	Journal of the U.P. Historical Society
Keilhorn, no.	A List of Inscriptions of Northern and Southern India. (Appendix to Ep. Ind. v, vii)
Life (Beal)	The Life of Hiuen Tsang, by Shaman Hwui Li, with an Introduction etc. by S. Beal, London, 1914
Luders, no.	List of Brāhmī Inscriptions (Appendix to Ep. Ind. x)
MA SI	Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India
Mbh	<i>Mahābhārata</i>
NHIP	Same as VGA
NIA	New Indian Antiquary, Bombay
Num. Chron. (NC)	Numismatic Chronicle
Periplus	The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea ed. W. H. Schroff
PHAI	Political History of Ancient India by H. C. Raychaudhuri (5th edition, 1950)
PIHC	Proceedings of the Indian History Congress
PMC	Catalogue of the Coins in the Punjab Museum, Vol. i by R. B. Whitehead
POC (AIOC)	Proceedings of the Oriental Conference
Ptolemy	McCrindle's Ancient India as described by Ptolemy, ed. S. N. Majumdar Sastri
Rapson, Catalogue	British Museum Catalogue of the Coins of the Andhra Dynasty, Western Kshatrapa Dynasty, the Trai-

	kuṭaka Dynasty and the Bodhi Dynasty ed. E. J. Rapson
Records (Beal)	Buddhist Records of the Western World (Si-yu-ki) by S. Beal
Select Ins.	Select Inscriptions bearing on Indian History and Civilization, Vol. i. ed. D. C. Sircar, Calcutta, 1942
SHAIB	Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal by B. C. Sen, Calcutta, 1942
SI	The Śakas in India by S. Chattopadhyaya
SPIH	The Scythian Period of Indian History by Von Lohuizen-de Leeuw, Leiden, 1949
Suc. Sat.	The Successors of the Sātavāhanas by D. C. Sircar
Thom. Com. Vol.	Thomas Commemoration Volume
VGA	A New History of the Indian People, Vol. vi: <i>The Vākāṭaka-Gupta Age</i> , ed. R. C. Majumdar and A. S. Altekar. Banaras, 1954
Vizag. Dist. Gaz.	Vizagapatam District Gazetteer
Watters	On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India by T. Watters. London, 1908
Wylie	Notes on the Western Regions: Trans. of ch. 96, part i and ch. 61 <i>fols.</i> 1-6 of the <i>Tsien-Han-shu</i> of Pan-ku. Journal of the Anthropological Institute, Vol. x, 1881
Wylie I	Translation of Ch. 96, part ii of the above. <i>Ibid.</i> Vol. xi, 1881
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft

INTRODUCTION

In the middle of the third century B.C., the great Seleucid empire of Western Asia betrayed signs of disintegration, and two of the easternmost provinces, *Bactria* and *Parthia*, gradually became independent states. The events thus happening outside the natural frontiers of India produced, however, important repercussions on her political fortune. Hemmed on the west by the new state of Parthia and on the east by the nomads of Central Asia, Bactria naturally wanted an outlet to the bigger world for her very economic existence. She turned her attention towards the rich plains of India, and Demetrius, an young and energetic ruler of the state, invaded the land and even knocked at the doors of Pāṭaliputra, the royal metropolis of the great Aśoka and his successors. It will be seen in the subsequent pages, that this invasion offered an opportunity to the Maurya general Puṣyamitra who killed his master Br̥hadratha and usurped the throne for himself. Though for a time he maintained the Imperial tradition of the Mauryas, the invasion dealt a heavy blow to the *Cakravartin* ideal and the spirit of local autonomy now came to the forefront. Archaeological evidences clearly prove that the descendants of Puṣyamitra were not Imperial suzerains but became reduced to the position of a petty local dynasty at Vidiśā, and the Ganges-Jumna valley, including the Rajasthan, became studded with petty states, some monarchical and some in the nature of republics. Thus it appears to be a misnomer to think of a Śuṅga age in Indian history, and, the account of the Purāṇas also does not really go against such a view (p. 23-4). By this time, on the other hand, the Punjab and the North Western Frontier Province came under the occupation of the Greeks, who, however, became involved in civil war and thus there arose, two different ruling houses among them. Menander, who flourished in the first century B.C. (not in the second century B.C., as thought by Rapson, Tarn and others) evidently brought a new trend in the Hellenistic rule over the land. It is difficult to agree with the view that he belonged to the house of Euthydemus. He appears to have been plebeian (p. 35) and thus it is difficult to determine exactly the lineage of the Greek kings who ruled after him.

In the middle of the second century B.C. (c. 165 B.C.) there began a great tribal movement in Central Asia. Toynbee points

out that at a cycle of 600 years the steppes of Eurasia see alternately the increase and decrease of humidity and aridity of the climate, and the consequent periodic increase in the fertility of the soil attracts denser population, and the subsequent decrease of fertility and the consequent shortage of food supply drive the nomads in search of new homes. (*A Study of History*, Vol. iii. pp. 395ff). But in case of the large scale migration of the tribes in the second century B.C., we find altogether a different process at work, a process created not by nature but by man. In any case, as a result of this movement, a Śaka kingdom became established in Kashmir, and the history of this kingdom can be traced in brief outline upto c. 7 B.C. (pp. 51-2), after which Kashmir became a part of the kingdom of the Śaka king Maues, who ruled not about 80 B.C., as suggested by some scholars, but evidently at the close of the first century B.C. and the beginning of the first century A.D. (pp. 53ff). Maues supplanted from Taxila the rule of the Greeks who, however, still continued to thrive on the other side of the Indus. The Śaka successors of Maues put an end to the rule of the Hellenistic princelings, excepting in the Kabul valley, and then the Scythians in their turn had to make room for the Parthians. The greatest of the Parthian kings Gondoparnes began his rule in Eastern Iran in 19 A.D. (not in Taxila at that date as suggested by Tarn and others), and sometimes before 64 A.D. the Kuṣāṇas came and occupied the dominion ruled over by the successors of the Parthian monarch. It was evidently due to this Parthian pressure that the Śakas of the North Western Frontier Province and the Punjab were forced to move towards the south and thus the Śaka rule came to be established in Western India. The date of the Śaka king Nahapāna has been a moot question with the Indologists, and attempt has been made in the subsequent pages to show that the dates in his inscriptions refer to his regnal year, and not to the Śaka era of 78 A.D. (pp. 101ff).

The history of the Kuṣāṇa kings in India presents some difficulties. An attempt has been made to show that Kaniṣka I, who was originally a governor of Vima Kadphises, came to power in the Gangetic valley, and then conquered the Indus valley region from the hands of his rivals, and one such rival is evidently referred to in the Taxila Silver Scroll record of the year 136 (p. 75). The theory of Ghirshman regarding the date of Kaniṣka I has been fully discussed and additional arguments have been brought forth in support of the 78 A.D. theory (pp. 74ff). After Kaniṣka I, Vāsiṣka ruled for four years, and then there was

possibly a partition of the Kuṣāṇa empire, though for a temporary period only (p. 89 & pp. 98f). The disintegration of the Kuṣāṇa empire began from the eastern side. Epigraphic and numismatic evidences show that as early as c.130 A.D., when Huviṣka had been ruling, Kauśāmbī became an independent kingdom (pp. 114ff), while the Muruṇḍas extended their rule from Magadha to Ayodhya on the west (pp. 117ff). The Kuṣāṇas maintained a precarious existence in the Mathura region, wherefrom they were ultimately driven out by the Nāgas in conjunction with several republican states of Rajasthan and the Eastern Punjab. Thus North India was in a highly chaotic political condition, and though the descendants of the great Kaniṣka carved out for themselves a kingdom in the North Western Frontier Province and the Western Punjab, ere long they had to acknowledge the supremacy of the Sassanids of Iran who now extended their sway as far as the Avanti region and even the successors of Rudradāman I had to take on them the yoke of foreign servitude (pp. 130-5).

With the rise of the Guptas in the first quarter of the fourth century A.D., India enters into a new phase of her history. The question of the original home of the dynasty has been discussed afresh (pp. 36ff) and I have also tried to solve the problem of successions after Skanda Gupta. It has been shown further that the Epthalites could not have occupied the interior of India before 510 A.D., for the evidences of the Chinese sources, as pointed out by Chavannes, bearing on the history of the tribe appear to be conclusive on the point.

In Ch. viii, the history of the Maukharis, who became the Imperial lords after the fall of the Guptas in c.551 A.D. has been critically discussed and I have tried to show that the clash of the dynasty with the *so-called* Later Guptas was confined to the reign of Iṣānavarman alone, while the notion of a long-standing rivalry between the two is really based on a wrong interpretation of an epigraphic passage. It has been shown also that a Tibetan invasion of Eastern India in the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. paved the way for the rise of Śaśāṅka and the evidence of the Rhotashgadh Seal should now be interpreted in a different way in the light of the *She-kia-fang-che*.

In Ch. ix, the chronology of Harṣa's campaigns has been discussed fully, and in the light of the available Chinese evidences we may possibly conclude that his *dig-vijaya* was really undertaken during the period 618-624 A.D., and that he possibly defeated Śaśāṅka.

I have given above only some of the new points that I have tried to emphasise upon. I would humbly request the readers to consider further my treatment of minor details here and there, and I shall feel myself amply rewarded if my book be of any service to them.

CHAPTER I

PUṢYAMITRA AND THE BACTRIAN GREEKS

I

THE YAVANA INVASION AND THE FALL OF THE MAURYS

The *Purāṇas* inform us that "the ten Mauryas will enjoy the earth full 137 years. After them it will go to the Śuṅgas. Puṣyamitra, the Commander-in-chief, will uproot Bṛhadratha and will rule the kingdom for 36 years."

The *Harṣacarita* of Bāṇabhaṭṭa gives us a few details about the incident:

"While reviewing the army, under the pretext of showing him his forces, the base-born (anārya) general Puṣyamitra crushed his master, Bṛhadratha, the Maurya, who was weak in keeping his coronation oath".¹

From the above account the following facts emerge:

- (i) Since it is supposed that the Imperial Maurya dynasty came to existence in c.324 B.C., Puṣyamitra became king in c.187 B.C.
- (ii) That Puṣyamitra was anārya i.e., a man of low origin, and that he ruled for 36 years.
- (iii) That the last Maurya king was killed while he had been reviewing his army, which was either a mere routine duty or occasioned by some emergency.

We shall take up the third of the above items first as it is connected with many cognate problems. Writing in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1910, p. 261, Mm. H.P. Śāstri observes: "At first he (Puṣyamitra) led the Maurya armies against the Greeks, who advanced year after year to the very heart of the Maurya empire. After a successful campaign he returned to Pāṭaliputra with his victorious army, and the feeble representative of Aśoka on the throne accorded him a fitting reception. A camp was formed outside the city and a review was held of a large army. In the midst of the festivities an arrow struck the king on the forehead. The king expired instantly". We do not know on what authority the account is based, but it shows at any rate that Mm. Śāstri is inclined to think that a Greek invasion

¹ *HC. Trans.*, p. 193; *IA*, II. p. 363.

of India took place the very year when the Maurya dynasty came to an end.

On the evidence of Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* scholars generally believe that there was really a Yavana invasion during the rule of Puṣyamitra. While illustrating the use of the affix *lan*, which denotes *an action that happened out of sight, but within the range of the sight of the narrator*, Patañjali gives the examples, *aruṇaḍ Yavanaḥ Sāketam*, *aruṇaḍ Yavanaḥ Madhyamikām*,^{1a} 'the Yavana besieged Sāketa (Ayodhyā), the Yavana besieged Madhyamikā (near Chitor)'. Patañjali was a contemporary of Puṣyamitra since while illustrating the use of the present tense (Pāṇini, III. 2. 123, Vār. 1) he gives the example '*Tha Puṣya-mitraṃ yājayāmaḥ*', 'here we are causing Puṣyamitra to perform sacrifice'.

From the illustrations of Patañjali, however, it does not absolutely follow that the Yavana invasion of Sāketa and Madhyamikā occurred during the reign of Puṣyamitra. It is not unlikely that the event took place before Puṣyamitra ascended the throne but it was still remembered or rather was "*within the range of sight*" of Patañjali. In this connection it may be noted that the *Yuga Purāṇa* section of the *Gārgī Samhitā* speaks of a Yavana invasion of North-India sometimes after the reign of the Maurya king *Śāliśūka* in the following words: "Then the viciously valiant Greeks, after reducing Sāketa, the Pañcāla country and Mathurā, will reach (or take) Kusumadvaja".²

The mention of Sāketa in both the *Mahābhāṣya* and the *Yuga Purāṇa* accounts shows evidently that the same event is alluded to, as pointed out by B. C. Sen, de la Vallée-Poussin and other scholars, and, as it occurred before the time of Puṣyamitra's sacrifice, it is not unlikely that it occurred when Bṛhadratha had been marshalling his forces. For further light on the topic we have to turn to the history of the Bactrian Greeks.

Bactriana, comprising the present province of Balkh and Sogdiana, was transformed into a military colony when Alexander the Great visited the place in c.328 B.C. Later on, it became a part of the Seleucid empire with its capital at Syria. From the accounts of the Classical writers, we learn that about the middle of the third century B.C., when the Seleucid Emperors were pre-occupied in the west, Diodotos I, the governor of the thousand cities of Bactria, revolted and assumed the title of king. Accord-

^{1a} *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini, III. 2. 111.

² *JBORS*, xiv. 1928, p. 402.

ing to Justin, he was succeeded by his son Diodotos II. The numismatic evidences show, however, that the revolution was a slow process, and it is doubtful whether Diodotos I ever assumed the title of king as he issued no coins in his own name. We have coins of Diodotos II showing that the revolution really became complete in his time. Tarn thinks that the movement started possibly after 246 B.C. and Diodotos II "who took the royal title, was on the throne in 228 or 227".³ According to Justin, almost at the same time when Bactrian revolt began, Parthia in Northern Iran also revolted under Arsaces, though at first there was no common tie between the two. On the contrary, Justin informs us that out of the fear of Diodotos I, Arsaces always kept his army in readiness, specially after he seized Hyrcania. Diodotos II made alliance of peace with Parthia, and this was evidently a prelude to his declaration of full and formal independence, as proved by the issue of the coins in his own name.

Macdonald assigns three reasons for the revolt of these two Seleucidan provinces. *Firstly*, the Seleucidan kings "Antiochus II (261-246), like his two immediate successors, Seleucus II (246-226) and Seleucus III (226-223) was too much preoccupied with wars and rumours of wars in the west, to maintain a proper hold over his eastern dominions." *Secondly*, the example of the great Maurya empire must have inspired them; and, *thirdly*, the pressure of the nomadic tribes in Central Asia was a constant threat to their existence, specially to Bactria, and "Diodotos may well have felt that an independent kingdom strong in its new-born sense of national unity, was likely to be a more permanent bul-work against barbarian aggression than the loosely attached extremity of an empire whose head was in no position to afford efficient protection to his nominal subjects."⁴

Diodotos II must have died before 206 B.C. for when in that year Antiochus III the Great, the Seleucid king, went to recover the lost province, the throne of the country was occupied by one Euthydemus, a native of Magnesia. Polybius informs us that Euthydemus requested Antiochus to desist from attacking him on the ground that "he was not a rebel. Others no doubt had rebelled. He had put the *children* of the rebels to death and that was how he happened to be the king".⁵ This statement has been interpreted by most of the scholars to mean that Euthydemus killed Diodotos II and usurped the throne for himself. If, how-

³ *GBI*, p. 74.

⁴ *CHI*, p. 439.

⁵ Polybius, xi. 34.

ever, the above translation is correct, it gives us entirely a different meaning. The term 'children' is significant in the above passage. It shows evidently that Diodotos II died a premature death (his coins show the portrait of a young man), leaving minor sons, the natural heirs, who were killed by Euthydemus, and Diodotos II was the rebel in the true sense of the term.

In any case, when the siege was going on, Euthydemus sent his young son Demetrius for negotiations, and we are informed that Antiochus was so much impressed at the talk and demeanour of the young prince that he not only recognised the independence of Bactria but also gave his own daughter in marriage to him. The whole story indeed reads like a romance. The presence of the nomads near by in the steppes of Central Asia really solved the problem. Euthydemus threatened to call the Śakas if the siege was not withdrawn "and pointed out the general disaster which would ensue; and Antiochus wisely made peace, left him his kingdom, and concluded an alliance".⁶

From the description of Polybius it appears that after the Bactrian affairs, Antiochus the Great crossed the Caucasus (Hindukush) and descended into India and "renewed his friendship with Sophagasenus, the king of the Indians; received more elephants, until he had 150 altogether, and having once more provisioned his troops, set out again personally with his army, leaving Androsthenes of Cyzicus, the duty of taking home the treasure which this king had agreed to hand over to him". Sophagasenus or Subhāgasena may have been a grandson of Aśoka, as Prof. F. W. Thomas suggests, "quoting the statement of Tārānātha, the Tibetan historian, that Aśoka's son Virasena was the king of Gandhāra and observing how names in —sena run in families". Thus we find that in c.206 B.C., the Mauryas were still ruling in India, and that the Bactrian invasion of India had not yet begun.

Euthydemus now got a free hand to extend his empire. His coins indicate that he conquered Arachosia, Seistan and the Paropamisadae. Tarn has adduced good grounds for believing that Euthydemus died about 189 B.C., when his son Demetrius came to the throne.⁷ We have seen that the Maurya dynasty came to an end in 187 B.C. and if in that year there was any Yavana invasion (*supra*, p. 2), which may have indirectly contributed to the fall of the Imperial dynasty, its leader naturally

⁶ *GBI*, p. 82.

⁷ *Ibid.*

had been Demetrius. As the Classical account on the conquest of India by the Bactrian kings is somewhat confused one, we shall first take up this topic and then discuss the question of chronology.

On the authority of Apollodorus of Artemita, Strabo ascribes the conquest of India partly to Demetrius and partly to Menander, while Justin, on the authority of Trogus, to Apollodotus and Menander. From this Rapson has concluded that "it seems probable that Apollodotus and Menander, as well as Demetrius, belong to the house of Euthydemus, and that all these three princes were contemporary."^{7a} Tarn also accepts the theory of Rapson that Demetrius, Apollodotus and Menander were contemporary, and thinks further that Apollodotus was a younger brother of Demetrius, while Menander was a general under Demetrius and later on married his daughter Agathocleia. It is further assumed that when Demetrius invaded India, the Greek army was divided into two distinct divisions, one under the general Menander advanced towards the east as far as Pāṭaliputra, while Demetrius himself led the other army down the Indus valley.^{7b}

Rapson's theory is based chiefly on the fact that some of the square copper coins of Menander and Eucratides "are so similar in style that they may reasonably be assigned not only to the same general period, but also to the same region—a region which must have passed from one rule to the other".⁸ Demetrius was a contemporary of Eucratides, as we shall see later on, and hence of Menander as well. It is however somewhat difficult to agree with Rapson, for such deduction from the evidence of one series of coins only is often risky. Thus the round coins of Demetrius, with types "*Elephants' head; Caduceus*," agree very closely with some of the round issues of Maues,^{8a} but nobody would think that Maues was a contemporary of Demetrius. Gardner and Whitehead are of definite opinion that by the usual style of type and technique the coins of Menander must be pronounced decidedly later than the splendid money of Demetrius. In this connection we should also consider the evidence of the Shinkot inscription of Menander mentioning Viyakamitra, a feudatory under him. This Viyakamitra has been identified with Vijayamitra, who is known from the coins as the father of Indravarman or Itravarman, father of Aspavarman, who served at first as a

^{7a} *CHI*, p. 543.

^{7b} *GBI*, p. 142.

⁸ *CHI*, p. 551.

^{8a} *SI*, p. 15.

strategos under Azes II and later on transferred his allegiance to Gondopharnes, the Parthian monarch.⁹ From the Takht-i-Bāhi inscription we learn that Gondopharnes had been ruling in 45 A.D. and that he came to the throne in 19 A.D.,¹⁰ and as Vijayamitra was remote by only three generations from him, his date must be in the first century B.C., when consequently Menander also ruled. The identification of Vijayamitra with Viyakamitra, however, is not accepted by all scholars. Thus while editing the Shinkot inscription in the *Epigraphia India*, xxiv. pp. 1ff, N. G. Majumdar concluded that they were different persons, belonging to the same dynasty. He thinks that the whole record may be divided into two parts, the earlier portion (A & B) being composed during the time of Viyakamitra, and the later portion (C, D & E) at the time of Vijayamitra. He thinks, however, that "the difference in age between the two sets of inscriptions was probably little more than fifty years". Thus even if we do not accept the proposed identification, it shows that Menander and Demetrius cannot be contemporary.^{10a}

As Eucratides restruck the coins of Apollodotus it appears that the latter was a contemporary of Demetrius. Apollodotus was evidently a sub-king under Demetrius, and as he has no extensive coinage showing a long reign, it is not unlikely that he was killed by Eucratides who then occupied his dominion and restruck his coins.¹¹ The *Periplus* however informs us that his coins, along with those of Menander, were in circulation in the port of Barygaza in its time — (60-80 A.D.).

Having thus shown that the leader of the Yavana invasion referred to in the *Gārgī Saṃhitā* and the *Mahābhāṣya* was Demetrius, let us now turn to the question of chronology. Tarn thinks that the invasion "could not have begun till after the battle of Magnesia, 187 being the most probable year. How long it took cannot be said, but Demetrius cannot have crossed the Hindukush till very distinctly later than 187. The other terminal point is given by the account in the *Yuga Purāṇa* of the *Gārgī Saṃhitā*, which says that after the occupation of Pāṭaliputra, the Greeks would not stay in the Middle Country (say roughly the district between Mathurā and Pāṭaliputra) because of a terrible civil war which would break out among themselves; the reference is of

⁹ *Num. Chron.*, 1944, pp. 99-104; *IC.* xiv. p. 205f.

¹⁰ *Infra*, Ch. iii.

^{10a} According to the *Milinda-pañho*, Milinda or Menander flourished "500 years" after the Parinirvāṇa. (*Milinda-pañho*, ed.: Trenckner, p. 3).

¹¹ For the coins of Apollodotus, *PMC*, pp. 40-49; *BMC*, p. 34.

course to the invasion of Eucratides, because there is no other civil war to which the words 'an awful and supremely lamentable strife' can refer. It was therefore Eucratides' invasion which caused the abandonment of Pāṭaliputra . . . a date of c.175 for the occupation of Pāṭaliputra cannot be far wrong".¹²

Indeed a critical study of the *Yuga Purāṇa* throws welcome light on the problem. After stating that the Yavanas will advance as far as Kusumadhvaja or Pāṭaliputra, the work relates:

- (i) "The Yavanas will command, the kings will disappear".
- (ii) "The Yavanas intoxicated with fighting, will not stay in the Madhyadeśa; there will be undoubtedly a civil war among them, arising in their own country, there will be a very terrible and a ferocious war".¹³

The first statement means that there was no Indian king, evidently in Pāṭaliputra, during the period of the Yavana occupation. Here three alternatives are possible; *firstly*, that the Yavanas occupied Pāṭaliputra and Puṣyamitra was killed; *secondly*, that the Yavanas occupied Pāṭaliputra sometimes during the rule of Puṣyamitra, who fled away leaving the kingdom to his enemy; and, *lastly*, that the Yavanas occupied Pāṭaliputra immediately after the murder of Brhadratha, when the country was in confusion and Puṣyamitra drove them out and occupied the throne.

The first alternative is untenable as from the account of the *Mahābhāṣya* it is clear that the Yavana occupation of Sāketa etc., took place before Puṣyamitra performed his sacrifice. (*supra*, p. 2). For the second alternative, there is absolutely no evidence to show that Puṣyamitra ever went into wilderness leaving the country to his enemy. So by the process of elimination we can come to the conclusion that the Yavanas under the leadership of Demetrius advanced as far as, and occupied, Pāṭaliputra immediately after the murder of Brhadratha. This would show that the army review, referred to in the *Harṣacarita*, was for a special purpose to meet the invading barbarians, though we must admit that there is no direct evidence bearing on the point.

The interpretation of the second statement of the *Yuga Purāṇa*, quoted above, has often misled the scholars to think that the Yavanas quitted the Madhyadeśa because a civil war broke out in their own country. A study of the original passage shows

¹²GBI, pp. 132-33.

¹³JBORS, xiv. 1928; p. 403.

that it contains two distinct statements without any necessary causal connection between the two. We cannot hold on the evidence of the *Yuga Purāṇa* that the rise of Eucratides about 171 B.C. (infra, p. 14f) had anything to do with the withdrawal of Demetrius from the Gangetic valley. The Classical writers also simply state that one Eucratides occupied the throne of Bactria when Demetrius was out on his Indian conquest, but nowhere it is stated that this conquest was being carried on in the Gangetic valley country. We shall see later on that Demetrius went in the south as far as Sindh and it is not unlikely that Eucratides usurped the throne of Bactria during such conquests. According to Justin, Eucratides came to power almost at the same time that Mithridates ascended the throne among the Parthians. Mithridates ruled from c.171 to 138/7 B.C., and we may thus assume that the Greek civil war referred to in the *Gārgī Saṃhitā* occurred about 171 B.C.

II

THE REIGN OF PUṢYAMITRA

Our chief sources for studying the history of Puṣyamitra's reign, besides the *Purāṇas*, the *Harṣacarita* and the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, as already indicated, are: (i) the *Theravāli* (genealogical or succession-table of the kings of Ujjayinī) by Merutuṅga, a famous Jaina author, who flourished in the first half of the fourteenth century A.D.; (ii) the *Mālavikāgnimitram* of Kālidāsa; (iii) the Ayodhyā inscription of Dhanadeva, *Ep. Ind.*, xx. p. 57; and, (iv) the concluding portions of the *Divyāvadāna*; xxix. Jayaswal has drawn our attention to the fact that there is an indirect hint to Puṣyamitra in the *Harivaṃśa* as well.

Merutuṅga says that, after the Nandas, the Mauryas ruled for 108 years, and "after the Mauryas, Puṣyamitra ruled for 30 years". Now, the *Matsya Purāṇa* assigns 36 years to Puṣyamitra, while the *Vāyu* and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas* state that Puṣyamitra ruled for 60 years. Pargiter prefers the *Matsya* account and rejects the other one (60 years) as copyist's error. It will be seen in this connection that while the *Purāṇas* attribute a period of 137 years to the Mauryas, Merutuṅga splits the period into two parts, 108 years for the Mauryas, and 30 years for

Puṣyamitra. Merutuṅga was a late writer and hence his attribution of 30 years reign-period to Puṣyamitra may not be strictly correct. But if we remember the fact that the Jaina account is written from the point of view of Avantī while the *Purāṇa* account from the point of view of Pāṭaliputra, we may possibly conclude that for the last few years of Maurya rule, Puṣyamitra was the de facto ruler in the Avantī region, and held simultaneously the position of the commander-in-chief under the Imperial Mauryas.^{18a} He thus to some extent may be compared with Rāṇā Mān Singh of Ambar during Akbar's time. Thus when the *Vāyu* and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas* state that Puṣyamitra ruled for 60 years, they evidently take into account a portion of his rule in the Avantī region prior to his accession to the throne at Pāṭaliputra, and hence we can hardly reject the account at once as a case of copyist's error.

It may of course be argued that in such a case, the reign of Puṣyamitra becomes abnormally long one. But if we remember the fact that in the *Mālavikāgnimitram* his grandson Vasumitra is described as being in charge of the sacrificial horse of his grandfather and as fighting against the Yavanas, showing that he must have been quite mature in age, we can possibly conclude that Puṣyamitra really had a very long life. Thus 60 years of reign (cf. George III of England) —24 years as a subordinate ruler and 36 years as independent one (cf. the Matsya account) —may not be impossible in his case.

The *Mālavikāgnimitram* supplies us with the following three interesting informations:

- (i) that Agnimitra, son of Puṣyamitra, belonged to the *Baimbika-kula*;
- (ii) that Puṣyamitra with the purpose of performing an Aśvamedha sacrifice let loose a horse under the leadership of Vasumitra, son of Agnimitra, who was accompanied by hundred other royal princes. The horse entered the territory of the Yavanas on the bank of the river *Sindhu* and a terrible fighting ensued in which the Yavanas were defeated;
- (iii) that Puṣyamitra's son Agnimitra was his father's viceroy at Vidiśā while the kingdom of Vidarbha lay to the south under its king Yajñasena. There followed a war between Vidiśā and Vidarbha in which the former was victorious. Vidarbha was divided

^{18a} Cf. *IHQ*, I. pp. 92-3.

into two parts with the river Varadā (Wardha) forming the boundary between the two states, one remaining under Yajñasena and the other under Mādhavasena, a cousin of Yajñasena and a partisan of Agnimitra.

(i) The *Purāṇas* make Puṣyamitra the founder of the Śuṅga dynasty. Pāṇini connects the Śuṅgas with the well-known Brāhmaṇa family of the Bharadvājas, whereas in the *Harṣacarita* of Bāṇa, Puṣyamitra is described as *base-born*, showing that he was not a Brāhmaṇa. The *Divyāvadāna*, on the other hand, makes Puṣyamitra the last king of the Imperial Maurya dynasty, a statement which seems to support the *Harṣacarita* account, for according to the Brāhmaṇical tradition the Mauryas were Śūdras i.e., base-born. Jayaswal points out that in the *Harivaṃśa* we have got the account of a Senānī, a certain Brāhmaṇa of the Kāśyapa family, who performed the horse-sacrifice in the Kali age, and he is given further the epithet of *Audbhijja*, 'one who suddenly rises from underground', indicating that the uprising Senāpati or Senānī is no other than Puṣyamitra. It is thus apparent that while the sectarian Brāhmaṇical works like the *Purāṇas* and the *Harivaṃśa* describe him as a Brāhmaṇa, the non-sectarian work like the *Harṣacarita* represents him as a Śūdra. As Dr. Raychaudhuri points out: "It is, however, to be noted that the *Harṣacarita* never applies the designation Śuṅga to Puṣyamitra himself, but only to one of the latest kings in the *Purāṇic* list. The *Purāṇas* may have combined the Baimbikas and Śuṅgas under the common name of Śuṅga".¹⁴ The term Baimbika may be connected with the river Bimbikā mentioned in the Bharhut inscriptions.¹⁵

(ii) The mention of the fact that Puṣyamitra's men defeated the Yavanas on the bank of the river Sindhu is very interesting showing that the Yavanas had already left the Madhyadeśa country. There has been some controversy regarding the identification of the river, and Rapson thinks that "the choice seems to lie between the Kālisindhu, a tributary of the Charmanvatī (Chambal) flowing within a hundred miles of Madhyamikā (near Chitor), which was besieged by the Yavanas, and the Sindhu, a tributary of the Jumna which would naturally be passed by invading forces on the route between Mathurā (Muttra) and Prayāga (Allahabad)".¹⁶ A third alternative is also possible and

¹⁴ *PHAI*, p. 369, f.n. 2.

¹⁵ *Bharhut Ins.* ed. Sinha and Barua, p. 8.

¹⁶ *CHI*, p. 520.

the Sindhu may be identified with the Indus. The fact that in the *Mālavikāgnimitram* the court of Vidiśā is represented as absolutely ignorant of the whole thing and that Agnimitra first learnt about the victory from a letter written by Puṣyamitra seems to indicate that the Sindhu where the operations took place was far away from Vidiśā, and points to the identification of the river with the Indus.¹⁷ After this victory, Puṣyamitra performed a horse-sacrifice, in which Patañjali possibly officiated as the high priest. In the Ayodhyā inscription of Dhanadeva, Puṣyamitra is described as the performer of two horse-sacrifices, one of which is evidently referred to in the drama of Kālidāsa, and the other was possibly performed immediately after his accession to the throne, and after he had driven out the Yavanas from the Madhyadeśa country, as referred to before. (supra, p. 7).

(iii) We know practically nothing about Yajñasena, the king of Vidarbha, with whom Agnimitra came to a war. In the *Cambridge History of India*, it has been supposed that either he was an Andhra or a feudatory of the Andhras.¹⁸ If the *Purāṇas* are to be believed, however, the Andhras or the Sātavāhanas came to power not only after the fall of the Śuṅgas but of the Kāṇvas, for it is stated that the first king of the Andhra-Sātavāhana dynasty, Simuka, overthrew Suśarmaṇ, the last Kāṇva king. Rapson and many other scholars, relying on the testimony of the *Matsya Purāṇa* that the Andhras ruled for four centuries and a half, assign Simuka towards the close of the third century B.C. calculating backwards on the well-established fact that the Sātavāhana rule came to an end in the first quarter of the third century A.D. Now, on this point the *Purāṇic* accounts contradict each other. While the different *Mss.* of the *Matsya Purāṇa* assign to the Andhras a period of more than 400 years, in certain *Vāyu* manuscripts it is 272½ years. R. G. Bhandarkar has shown that the *Matsya* account really includes besides the Sātavāhanas proper, the names of princes belonging to all the collateral branches of the Andhra-bhṛtyas, while the *Vāyu* refers to the main branch. Thus there is practically no difficulty in accepting the unanimous *Purāṇic* account that the last Kāṇva king was overthrown by Simuka c.50 B.C. It is not unlikely that Yajñasena was a minister of the last Maurya king Bṛhadratha and after the *coup d'état* of Puṣyamitra carved out a kingdom for himself in the Vidarbha region. After his defeat at the hand of Agnimitra, Puṣyamitra's

¹⁷ R. C. Majumdar, *IHQ*, I. p. 217.

¹⁸ *CHI*, p. 519.

son and viceroy, he possibly acknowledged the suzerainty of the Senāpati ruler.

From the *Divyāvadāna* it appears that Puṣyamitra resided at Pāṭaliputra which was evidently his capital. The work has recorded his activities against the religion of the Śākyamuni and there is no reason to disbelieve the account. The Tibetan historian Tārānātha also says that Puṣyamitra burnt a number of monasteries from the Madhyadeśa as far as Jālandhara.¹⁹ The *Divyāvadāna* states that once he proceeded to destroy the Kukkuṭārāma monastery but was frightened by the roar of a lion at the gate and returned to Pāṭaliputra. After reaching Śākala, he issued a proclamation to the effect that whoever would present him with the head of a Śramaṇa would be rewarded with 100 dināras. Ultimately, however, he failed in his attempt and was killed by a Yakṣa named Kṛimīśa.²⁰ There are indeed some supernatural elements in these stories, but at the same time we cannot ignore the apathy of the Buddhist writers towards him. The Buddhists may have suffered in his hand that led to the invention of such stories, and it is not unlikely that the stūpas at Bharhut and Sanchi were constructed after his death, and that he had nothing to do with them.

From the meagre evidences available it appears that Puṣyamitra continued the frame-work of the administration prevailing in the days of the Mauryas. Princes of the royal blood were appointed governors in the provinces. Puṣyamitra's son Agnimitra was one such governor in the province of Vidiśā, while another of the same rank may have been the governor of Ayodhyā, for the inscription of Dhanadeva discovered from that place describes the latter as "the sixth (in descent) from Puṣyamitra".²¹ Royal princes were also placed in charge of the army, at least at the time of war, as is apparent from the appointment of Vasumitra as the guardian of the sacrificial horse. Patañjali refers to the sabhā of Puṣyamitra,²² while the *Mālavikāgnimitram* mentions the *amātya-parīṣad* of Agnimitra. Here also the Maurya pattern was followed. In the R.E. VI of Aśoka we have reference to the *parīṣā*, while the Maurya kumāras were also assisted by a body of mahāmātras.²³

¹⁹ *IHQ*, I. p. 219.

²⁰ P. C. Bagchi, *IHQ*, xxii. pp. 81ff.

²¹ *Select Ins.* p. 96, f.n. 3.

²² *Mahābhāṣya* on Pāṇini, I. 1. 58; *Vārtika*, 7.

²³ *Ep. Ind.* iii. p. 137.

III

THE GRECO-BACTRIAN KINGS

We have already seen that the Bactrian king Demetrius, who was a contemporary of Puṣyamitra, possibly invaded the interior of India and occupied Pāṭaliputra in c.187 B.C. Demetrius' Indian coins are extremely rare and they have been found only in the North-Western India. This shows clearly that the Madhyadeśa region was under his occupation for only a very short period of time, and credit is due to Puṣyamitra for driving the Yavanas out of the Ganges-Yumna valley. A critical study of Strabo's account of the conquests of Demetrius and Menander shows that many of them should be ascribed to Demetrius alone. Thus Strabo says "They got possession not only of Patalene (the Indus Delta), but of the kingdom of Saraostos (Surāṣṭra or Kathiawad) and Sigerdis which constitute the remainder of the coast. . . . They extended their empire even as far as the Seres and Phryni".

The terms Seres and Phryni evidently refers to the Chinese and the peoples of the Tarim basin. Tarn points out that there can be no doubt that the Bactrian nickel, used in coins, came from China.²⁴ Central Asia may have been brought under the orbit of the Bactrian trade by Euthydemus and Demetrius possibly brought the region under his semi-political control. In the first century B.C. when Menander flourished the region of Tarim basin was under the control of the nomads and as the *Shi-ki* and the *T'sien-Han-shu*, the leading authorities on the history of Central Asia in this period, speak nothing about the Greeks it follows that Menander had nothing to do with the region.

Patalene, the country of Patala, is the Indus delta. A scholion to the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali mentions a town *Dattamitri* among the Sauvīras and states that it was founded by Dattamitra. The *Mahābhārata* also refers to the Yavanādhipa Dattamitra in connection with Sauvīra. A Nasik cave inscription (No. 18) speaks of a Yonaka hailing from Dattamitri.²⁵ These references prove clearly that the Sauvīra country (the Lower Indus valley) formed a part of the dominion of Dattamitra or Demetrius. In conquering the region Demetrius appears to have been influenced more by economic considerations. The

²⁴ *GBI*, p. 87.

²⁵ *Ep. Ind.* viii. p. 90.

Achaemenids had already founded a port at Patala, modern Bahamanabad, and later on Alexander also used it.²⁶ The empire of Demetrius was hemmed on all sides by two strong political powers and naturally it wanted an outlet which was supplied by the conquest of the Sauvīra country.

There is no direct evidence of Demetrius' connection with Saraostos or Surāṣṭra. The Periplus states that the coins of Apollodotus and Menander were in circulation in its time in the port of Barygaza or Broach. This may point to the fact that it had once been under the control of both the Greek kings, and as Apollodotus was possibly a sub-king under Demetrius the latter may have the port under his sway.

The identification of Sigerdis is unknown. Tarn thinks that "it can only mean the country between Patalene and Surastrene, including Cutch",²⁷ and thus if Saraostos formed a part of the dominion of Demetrius, Sigerdis was also naturally included within the same.

Some scholars think that Euthymedia, identified with Śākala or Sialkot, was the capital of Demetrius in India, and it was named after his father. We have already seen that Śākala was included within the dominion of Puṣyamitra where he was killed by Yakṣa Kṛimīṣa. If we accept the identification of Kṛimīṣa with Demetrius then we have to conclude that Puṣyamitra's reign came to an end before c.171 B.C. for as we shall see later on, Demetrius possibly died in that year. Though the dating goes against the *Purāṇic* chronology, there is still something to be said in its favour.²⁸ In that case we may assume that Demetrius occupied Śākala after killing Puṣyamitra. Otherwise, we have to assume that Puṣyamitra occupied Śākala after the death of Demetrius (c.171 B.C.) when the Bactrian empire in India was passing through a great crisis.

Rapson points out that "the princes of the house of Euthydemus who reigned both in Bactria and in kingdoms south of the Hindukush are Demetrius, Pantaleon, Agathocles, and probably also Antimachus".²⁹ As Demetrius was the last of his house to rule over Bactria, the other three princes were possibly sub-kings under him. We have already stated that about 171 B.C. one Eucratides occupied the throne of Bactria, while Demetrius was still engaged in his Indian conquest. Demetrius hurried

²⁶ Chattopadhyaya, *The Achaemenids in India*, Ch. iv.

²⁷ *GBI*, p. 148.

²⁸ *PIHC*, 1954, p. 101ff.

²⁹ *CHI*, p. 546.

back home, and Justin informs us that he blockaded Eucratides with a force of 60,000 strong. In spite of tremendous difficulties, Eucratides put up a strong resistance and ultimately Demetrius had to withdraw his siege. Eucratides' career thus began amidst difficulties, Justin informs us that he had to fight against the Sogdians. Possibly the Sogdians took up the cause of Demetrius and refused to acknowledge the usurper, or they may have tried to snatch away a portion of the Hellenistic territory.

The '*Zeus enthroned*' type of his coins possibly show that he was in possession of Kāpiśa. As these are often coins of Apollodotus restruck, it is clear that he snatched away a portion of the Indian empire of the house of Euthydemus. Rapson observes: "The conquest which Eucratides carried beyond the Kabul valley into the region of Eastern Gandhāra (Takṣaśīlā) seem to be represented by the coins bearing the type '*Dioscuri*'which was continued by Diomedes..... Whether the type '*Victory*' denotes that Eucratides was at some time in possession of Nicaea on the Jhelum must remain doubtful".³⁰

The rise of Eucratides against Demetrius had a very deep significance. Eucratides was a cousin of Antiochus IV, the Syrian king, and when the former invaded Bactria it appeared to be an indirect attempt of the Syrian king to recover a lost province of the empire. The Arsacids of Parthia naturally watched the event with dismay, for they apprehended that their kingdom may also be torn asunder sooner or later in a similar way. But Antiochus IV died suddenly (c.163 B.C.), when his elder brother, the Seleucid Demetrius I, came to the throne. Eucratides refused to acknowledge the new king as a suzerain, while Timarchus, the Seleucid general of the province of Media, also rose in revolt and took the title of the king of Media and Babylon. Timarchus issued coins in imitation of the tetradrachm of Eucratides³¹ and this has been taken as an evidence of an alliance between the two kings. Thus the Seleucid empire was in confusion, and this gave the Parthian king Mithridates I the opportunity to crush his rival Eucratides. The evidence of the classical writers and the coins on this point, however, needs a critical consideration.

Strabo states that the Parthians deprived Eucratides of the Bactrian satrapies of Aspionus and Turiva, possibly Aria and Arachosia. We have at least two coins of Mithridates I which are

³⁰ *Ib.*, p. 556.

³¹ *Ib.*, p. 457.

exact copies of Eucratides' *Dioscuri*.³² Orosius, the Roman historian, informs us that Mithridates I conquered the region between the Indus and the Hydaspes. If this Hydaspes can be identified with the Jhelum, then we may possibly infer that the empire of Eucratides extended beyond the Indus, upto the Jhelum at least. Rapson identifies the river with the Medus Hydaspes of Virgil,³³ and according to this theory then the Indus would form possibly the eastern boundary of the kingdom of Eucratides in India. But we must also consider critically whether we can take this statement of Orosius who flourished about 480 A.D. as sober history, specially when there is no other earlier account corroborating the same.

It is really difficult to determine exactly when Mithridates I conquered the region upto the Indus or the Jhelum. Tarn thinks that Mithridates made an alliance with Demetrius II, one of the four sons of Demetrius, and attacked Bactria. "It was Mithridates' attack which recalled Eucratides from India. He may have hurried back with only part of his army; in any case the allies met him and defeated and killed him, and Demetrius II in his hatred refused burial to the corpse".³⁴ If we accept Tarn's account then we have to infer that Mithridates first attacked Bactria and then after killing Eucratides occupied his Indian territory upto the Indus or the Jhelum.

It is really difficult to determine how the career of Eucratides came to an end. Tarn's theory is based on a statement of Justin which runs to the effect that Eucratides was "killed by a son who was a joint king and who drove the chariot over his body and ordered that his corpse should lay unburied". Tarn identifies the son in question with Demetrius II, son of Demetrius I on the ground that 'Justin does not say a *filio ejus*, but simply a *filio*'.³⁵ But in the same passage he calls the son '*parricidio*', thus making it quite clear that the '*filio*' was in fact, a son of Eucratides himself.

The son of Eucratides who committed this parricide has been identified with Heliocles, who, if our interpretation of Justin's account be correct, had been a joint king with Eucratides. The coins attributed to this king may be divided into two groups; first, those having the figure of Laodice with a diadem and Heliocles with a bare head; and, secondly, the coins of Agatho-

³² *GBI*, p. 222, f.n. 2.

³³ *CHI*, p. 568.

³⁴ *GBI*, p. 222.

³⁵ Justin as quoted in *GBI*, p. 220 f.n. 1.

cleia and Strato I restructured by Heliocles. The first series has been interpreted in various ways,³⁶ but we think that it shows that Heliocles was the king by the right of his queen. Tarn may be right in his conjecture that Laodice was a Seleucid princess, and it is not unlikely that at the time of the invasion of Mithridates I, the Parthian king, there was an alliance between the house of Eucratides and the Seleucids, and Heliocles owed his throne to the help rendered by the latter. Heliocles wanted to prove evidently that he was governing on behalf of the Imperial suzerain. The second series shows that he had made some conquests on this side of the Hindukush and had deprived the house of Euthydemus a portion of its empire. This event evidently happened after Heliocles had been compelled to leave Bactria under the pressure of the nomads. Thus Strabo informs us that "the best known of the nomad tribes are those who drove the Greeks out of Bactria—the Asii, the Pasiani, the Tochari and the Sacarauili, who came from the country on the other side of the Jaxartes, over against the Sacae and Sogdiani, which country was also in occupation of the Sacae".³⁷ Trogus, however, simply states that "the Saraucae and the Asiani siezed Bactria and Sogdiana".³⁸ Trogus' account has often been criticised by some scholars who think that it generally suffers from the combined errors of two persons—Trogus Pompeius and Justin who epitomised the account, plus the copyist's mistake. At many points the account is very compressed, but in this particular case, as pointed out by Debevoise and others, it is more reliable than Strabo. While there is no doubt that the Sacarauili is identical with the Saraucae, the Asii, the Pasiani and the Tochari of Strabo appear to be one and the same people and identical with the Asiani of Trogus. Trogus informs us that the Asiani were the kings of the Tochari. From this it appears that the Asiani was a tribe of the Tochari clan, just as the Licchavis of India were the ruling tribe of the Vajjian clan of Vaiśālī. Pasiani is evidently a copyist's duplication for Asiani, and the identity of the Asii and the Asiani has been recognised long ago.

Thus according to the Classical writers, the inroads of the Śakas (Sacarauili) and the Asiani, who as we shall see later on were identical with the Yueh-chi, caused the downfall of the Greek kingdom of Bactriana. Tarn thinks that "the Saca con-

³⁶ *CHI*, p. 454; *GBI*, p. 196-7.

³⁷ Strabo, xl. 5, 11.

³⁸ Trogus 41-42; *CHI*, p. 459.

quest of Bactria is a myth", and observes: "I have said that Chang-kien is quite clear that the conquest of Ta-hia (Bactria proper) was the work of the Yueh-chi. But almost every modern writer known to me attributes that conquest to the Sacas driven southward by Yueh-chi, who are supposed to have occupied the country until the Yueh-chi expelled or subdued them. Chang-kien who was there knows nothing about this, and no scrap of evidence for it exists; it arose originally from a misunderstanding of a simple passage in Strabo, and for many years one writer just copied it from another, till it has become an obsession; every form of Saca—Sacaraucae, Sai-wang, even Tochari—has been pressed into service, and the theories to which this belief has given rise have done more than anything else to obscure the history of this time. Certainly, Strabo says that the Sacas occupied Bactria but the most cursory perusal of the context shows that throughout the whole section, he is talking, not of the second century B.C., but of a time long before that—he calls it Achaemenid, but it was really the seventh century—the time of the great Saca invasion, well-known from Assyrian sources, which had played its part in the fall of Nineveh and had penetrated as far as Armenia and Cappadocian Pontus".³⁹

The passage of Strabo, of which Tarn speaks of so much, is indeed confused one. It is difficult to agree with the view that Bactria was conquered by a mixed horde of the Śaka and the Yueh-chi.⁴⁰ As pointed out by McGovern, it is absolutely clear from the Chinese annals that the Yueh-chi occupied Ta-hia (Bactria) at a later period, after it has been conquered by the Śakas. We shall discuss later on the history of the tribal movement in Central Asia (*infra*, Chap. III), and here we only want to point to the fact that the Indian evidences prove the connection of the Śakas with Bactria. According to a Kanheri inscription the daughter of the mahākṣatrapa Rudra claimed descent from the Kārdamaka family. Rapson points out that the name Kārdamaka is evidently derived from the Kārdama river (Zarapsan), which is in the Persian satrapy of Bactria. The *Uttara Kāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* connects a line of Kārdama kings with Bālhi or Bālhiḱa (Bactria).⁴¹ This shows that a branch of the Śakas who came and ruled in India in the second century A.D. hailed originally from Bactria—a fact which goes against Tarn's theory.

³⁹ *GBI*, p. 283.

⁴⁰ *SPIH*, p. 41ff; *JAOS*, 1941, p. 223-50.

⁴¹ *PHAI*, p. 437, f.n. 2.

CHAPTER II

THE AGE OF POLITICAL DISINTEGRATION

I

THE RISE OF NEW STATES

About the middle of the second century B.C. the history of North India entered into a new phase. Puṣyamitra was dead (c. 151 B.C.), and there is no evidence that his empire survived him. North India became divided into a number of petty states, while the descendants of Puṣyamitra remained contented with a kingdom in and around Vidiśā. In the *Cambridge History of India* Vol. I., p. 527, Rapson holds that "in the present state of Indian archaeology it seems impossible to trace the extension of the rule of those kings of Vidiśā who reigned after Puṣyamitra beyond the region in which the Jumna and the Ganges meet, i.e., the ancient kingdom of the Vatsas (Kauśāmbi) and the present district of Allahabad". A critical study of the evidences, however, show that this empire of Vidiśā was hardly such extensive one. Rapson has chiefly depended for his inference on the evidence of the Pabhosa inscriptions. The first of them (Lüders, no. 904) records the excavation of a cave by Āsādhasena, the son of Gopāli Vaihidari and maternal uncle of rājan Bahasatimita, for the Kasyapiya arhats, in the tenth year of the reign of Udāka. The second one (no. 905) carries the genealogy of Āsādhasena further and describes him as "the son of Vaihidari and of rājan Bhāgavata, the son of Tevani, the son of Vaṃgapāla, the son of Sonakāyana, rājan of Adhichatra". Bahasatimita's coins have been found in Kosam. Now, following Jayaswal, Rapson identifies Udāka with Odraka, the fifth king of the Purāṇic list of the Śuṅgas, and thus concludes that the Śuṅga empire at this time extended from the Pañcāla capital of Ahichatra, in the Bareilly District of the U.P. to Kosam on the Jumna in the Allahabad District, and had under it at least two subordinate dynasties, one ruling at Ahichatra and another at Kauśāmbi.

The palaeography of the Pabhosa records goes clearly against any such interpretation. The *angular* forms of the letters and also the *serif*, the developed sign of medial *i*, the curved base of *n* and the developed medial *u* show their affinities with the inscriptions of the Śakas of Mathurā, and hence, the record can hardly be pushed back earlier than the last *quarter* of the first

century B.C., while according to the chronology of the Purāṇas, Odraka ruled in the middle of the second century B.C. Thus the theory of Jayaswal falls through altogether. The combined testimony of the Pabhosa records and the coins shows that Pañcāla and Kauśāmbi were two independent kingdoms that arose on the ashes of the empire of Puṣyamitra.¹

Rapson thinks that Mathurā was the seat of a royal line subordinate under the Śuṅgas (loc. cit. p. 526). But here one stands on very uncertain grounds. A Mathurā inscription (Lüders, no. 125) refers to the dedication of one Dhanabhūti, the son of Vātsi, while the same person is mentioned in the Bharhut inscription referring to the reign of the Śuṅgas.² Now, both at Mathurā, "the city of the gods", and at Bharhut people from different parts of India used to go and make dedications, and the same practice we find at a later period in Nālandā. From this we can hardly infer that Mathurā, Bharhut or Nālandā was under the sway of a particular donor. The specific mention of the rule of the Śuṅgas in the Bharhut inscription shows that the region was under their rule, but as the same donor is silent regarding his overlord in his dedication at Mathurā, it shows that the latter place had no connection with the Śuṅgas.

Allan in his *Catalogue* divides the *early* coins of Mathurā belonging to the second and first centuries B.C. into *two* distinct groups. In *one* group he has given the coins of Brahmamitra, Dṛdhamitra, Sūryamitra, Viṣṇumitra, Puruṣadatta, Uttamadatta

¹ There has been a great controversy whether the kings known from Pañcāla, Kauśāmbi and other tribal coins should be regarded as belonging to the dynasty of the Śuṅgas. Carlleyle and Rivett-Carnac were the pioneers who identified the Mitra kings of the coins with the Śuṅgas. (*JASB*, xlix, p. 21ff, p. 87ff). Jayaswal (*JBORS*, iii, p. 476ff; xx, p. 279ff), Dr. Raychaudhuri (*PHAI*, p. 392) and de la Valle-Poussin (*L'Inde* etc. pp. 175-6) also favour such a view. On the other hand, Cunningham (*Coins of Ancient India*, pp. 79-80), Allan and others think that the dynasties of Pañcāla etc. had no connection with the so-called Śuṅga dynasty of the Purāṇas. While dealing with the coins of Pañcāla, Smith calls the issuers of these coins "lords of North Pañcāla and Kośala". We are also not in favour of regarding these kings as belonging to the Śuṅga dynasty for, coins bearing names like Agnimitra etc., have never been found in the Vidiśā region which became the capital of the so-called Śuṅgas after the death of Puṣyamitra. Even Carlleyle and Rivett-Carnac regard, on the grounds of palaeography and style, Agnimitra of the Pañcāla series much later than Agnimitra, the son of Puṣyamitra. Allan thinks that the Pañcāla dynasty was in existence even before the Śuṅgas. (*Catalogue*, cxxi). As Puṣyamitra's dominion, however, extended in the west up to the Punjab (supra, p. 12), it is better to think that the Pañcāla dynasty came into existence, after the death of Puṣyamitra. Similarly, the kings who ruled in Kosam, belonged to a dynasty entirely different from the Śuṅgas. For the Kauśāmbi coins, *Catalogue*, 148ff.

² *Select Ins.* p. 90.

and Rāmadatta. In the *second* group, he places the kings who bear the title of rājan; Rāmadatta II, Kāmadatta, Śeṣadatta, Bhavadatta, Uttamadatta and Balabhūti.³ We think that the kings of *Group II* ruled earlier than the kings of *Group I*, for, the coins of Balabhūti is associated by the style and type with the coinage of Bahasatimita, who as we shall see later on, ruled in the first century B.C., while the coins of Brahmamitra, Ḍṛdhamitra, Sūryamitra and Viṣṇumitra are identical in type with the coins of Gomitra, whose rule was supplanted by the Śakas in Mathurā in the first century A.D.

Coins bear further testimony to the fact that in the plains and the mountain fringe of the Punjab there arose several independent states, some republican and some monarchical. The most notable among these were the Yaudheyas and the Ārjunāyanas. On the coins dated in the late second—first century B.C. we can read the word *Yaudheyānām*,⁴ while on some coins of the first century B.C., there is the legend *Mahārājasa*, 'Of the Mahārāja', showing "that the Yaudheyas had a monarchical constitution until a fairly late date".⁵ Close to the Yaudheyas, were the Ārjunāyanas lying "within the triangle Delhi – Jaipur – Agra"⁶ and their coins bearing the legend *Ārjunāyānām jaya* have been assigned to the second century B.C.⁷ It is difficult to determine the exact significance of the legend but it possibly signifies that they achieved independence after hard fight. At a later period the Yaudheyas also issued similar coins.

Of the Himalayan states two deserve our special attention—the Audumbaras and the Kunindas. The coinage of the Audumbaras copy the types of Demetrius and Apollodotus I and this may indirectly prove that they became independent immediately after the death of Puṣyamitra. Four kings are known from the coins and one of them Mahādeva takes the title of 'king of kings', used possibly for the first time by an indigenous sovereign.⁸ The Kunindas rose in the first century B.C. possibly under their king Amoghabhūti. "Economically the silver coins of the Kunindas

³ Allan, *Catalogue*, cx. "The coins of the Hindu kings of Mathurā cover the period from the beginning of the second century to the middle of the first century B.C." (*ib.* cxvi).

⁴ *ib.*, p. 267.

⁵ *ib.*, cxlvii.

⁶ *ib.*, lxxxiii.

⁷ *ib.*

⁸ For the Audumbaras, J. Przyluski, *JA*, 1926, 1ff. The Audumbaras occupied the Gurdaspur and the Hosiarpur Districts, and manufactured a fine cotton cloth, Kotumbara. From the evidence of their coins, it appears that they possibly followed Buddhism.

represent an attempt of an Indian ruler to issue a native silver coinage which would compete in the market with the later Indo-Greek silver. It is probable that Amoghabhūti's political history was similar. He was probably an Indian chief who founded a short-lived kingdom at the close of the periods of Greek dominion in the Punjab in the last half of the first century B.C. which was soon swept away by the Śaka and Kuṣāṇa invaders".⁹ Ptolemy in his *Geographike* speaks of the country of *Kulindrene* in which the rivers Beas, Sutlej and the Jumna rise, showing that the tribe occupied the region at the foot of the Siwalik hills and the adjoining territories.¹⁰

From the above discussions it is thus quite clear that there was no empire of the Śuṅgas after the death of Puṣyamitra and it is, therefore, a misnomer to think of a Śuṅga age in ancient Indian history. North India was, in fact, studded with various petty local states¹¹ without any political cohesion. Some scholars point to a few similarities between the names of kings occurring in the Śuṅga-Kāṇva list of the Purāṇas and those occurring on the tribal coins of the period and conclude that a North Indian empire was in existence even after the time of the early Śuṅga kings. We may here note what Allan has very appropriately stated on the subject: "Attempts have from time to time been made to identify rulers of this (Pañcāla) dynasty with names in the Purāṇic lists of the Śuṅga dynasty, but without success. The only name found in both lists is Agnimitra, which is too common a name for any deduction to be made from it. Sujyeṣṭha or Vasujyeṣṭha has been identified with Jyeṣṭhamitra (Jeṭhamitra), but the latter has no connection with the Pañcāla series, even if we accept the possibility of this contraction. Bhadrageṣa is identified with Ghoṣa of the Purāṇic list, which is very unlikely. Bhūmitra is identified with the Kāṇva king of the same name, but his coins cannot be removed from the middle of the Pañcāla series, while the Kāṇva was the second of the successors of the Śuṅgas".¹²

⁹ Allan, *Catalogue*, ciif.

¹⁰ Ptolemy has possibly made the country of the Kunindas too large in the hill tracts. Their coins have been found in Upper Eastern Punjab and in Saharanpur as well. In the literature, the name of the tribe generally appears as Kulinda. On the interchange of *n* and *l*, see Levi, *JA*, 1915, p. 101.

¹¹ The evidence of the existence of these local states is furnished by the coins: see *Catalogues* of Cunningham and Allan.

¹² Allan, *Catalogue*, cxx. Rapson says: "Whether the Agnimitra, whose coins are found in North Pañcāla and who was therefore presumably king of Ahicchatra, can be identified with the Śuṅga king of that name is uncertain". (*CHI*, p. 520). *contra*: de la Valle Poussin, *L'Inde* etc.,

The Ayodhyā inscription of Dhanadeva evidently shows that after the death of Puṣyamitra his governors declared independence. Thus while Dhanadeva describes himself as the sixth in descent from Puṣyamitra and also as Kośalādhīpa, and also as coins of various rulers have been discovered in Ayodhyā pointing to their independent status and evidently an independent dynasty, it may be inferred that originally Ayodhyā was a province in the empire of Puṣyamitra, but later on became independent. Similar also may have been the case with other provinces of the empire.¹³

As Rapson has stated there is no evidence to show that the successors of Puṣyamitra were in any way connected with the royal city of Pāṭaliputra; on the contrary, they appear to have been confined in the Vidiśā or Bhilsa region. This is proved in the first place by the evidence of the Bharhut Pillar inscription referring to "*Suganam raje*", and also indirectly by the account of the Besnagar, (Gwalior), Garuḍa Pillar inscription of the time of Bhāgabhadra. The inscription records the erection of the Garuḍa Pillar in honour of Lord Viṣṇu, by one Heliodoros who was sent as an ambassador by king Antialkidas of Taxila, to the court of the king Kāśiputra Bhāgabhadra who has been identified with the fifth Śuṅga king Bhadraka. Had Bhadraka been living in Pāṭaliputra, there is no reason why the Taxila ambassador would go to the Gwalior region on his way. This evidently points to the fact that the capital of the fifth Śuṅga king was near by, and this finds corroboration from the Bharhut inscription referred to above.

The facts thus appear to have been something like this. Puṣyamitra was an imperial figure residing at Pāṭaliputra but his successors were reduced to the position of a petty local dynasty at Vidiśā. The Purāṇas were giving simply the account of the dynasty without any reference to its kingdom and capital, and so the narrative was continued after Puṣyamitra. The Kāṇvas also

p. 174ff; *PHAI*, p. 392. ".....We should remember that 'Mitra' coins, even those which undoubtedly belong to the so-called Pañchāla series were a local dynasty of North Pañchāla". As the coins are often carried from one place to another, we can only draw the inference of "*provenance*" from the find of a hoard. A stray coin found in a place can hardly justify that the rulers mentioned therein held sway over the region where it has been found.

¹³ In the Ayodhyā inscription, Dhanadeva describes himself as '*Puṣya-mitrasya ṣaṣṭha*'. (*Select Ins.* 96). The expression evidently means "sixth in descent from Puṣyamitra either from the side of the father or that of the mother. The interpretation is supported by the palaeography of the record. Sanskrit usage would require Puṣyamitrāt; but the language of the record is influenced by Prakṛit. The interpretation 'sixth brother of Puṣyamitra' is out of the question".

evidently ruled in the same region after the Śuṅgas and so they also found a place in the Purāṇic account, and as the Sātavāhanas captured the same region their names also have been recorded in the sacred lore. This shows that upto the time of Puṣyamitra, the Purāṇas describe the royal dynasties from the point of view of Pāṭaliputra, but after his time the angle of vision shifted to the Madhya-Bhārat.

The dynastic list of the Śuṅga kings in the Purāṇas is as follows :

1. Puṣyamitra	..	36 or 60 years
2. Agnimitra	..	8 "
3. Vasujyeṣṭha (Sujoyeṣṭha)	..	7 "
4. Vasumitra (Sumitra)	..	10 "
5. Odraka (Andhraka etc.)	..	2 or 7 "
6. Pulindaka	..	3 "
7. Ghoṣa	..	3 "
8. Vajramitra	..	9 or 7 "
9. Bhāga (Bhāgavata)	..	32 "
10. Devabhūti	..	10 "

II

THE LATER SUNGAS AND THE KANVAS

Agnimitra must have succeeded his father Puṣyamitra at an advanced age inasmuch as the *Mālavikāgnimitram* represents his son Vasumitra sufficiently grown up to be in charge of the sacrificial horse while he was still a viceroy at Vidiṣā. The Purāṇas may, therefore, be correct in assigning to him a short reign of eight years only.

Nothing is known about the third king Vasujyeṣṭha who may have been the eldest son of Agnimitra and was succeeded ultimately by his younger brother Vasumitra. The Purāṇas are evidently wrong in making Vasumitra the son of Vasujyeṣṭha, for, according to the *Mālavikāgnimitram*, as we have already seen, he was the son of Agnimitra and was deputed by his grandfather Puṣyamitra in charge of the sacrificial horse. Of him, the *Harṣacarita* states : " Sumitra, son of Agnimitra, being over fond of the drama, was attacked by Mitradeva in the midst of actors, and with a scimitar shorn, like a lotus stalk, of his head".¹⁴

¹⁴ HC, Trans., p. 192.

Rapson observes in this connection: "Who Mitradeva was we can only conjecture; but it seems not improbable that he may have been the king's minister and a Kāṇva Brāhmaṇa of the same family as Vāsudeva, who is said to have brought about the fall of the dynasty through the assassination of the last king Devabhūti. It may be that we have here an indication of the growth of that influence, which so often in Indian history has transferred the real power in the state from the prince to the minister, from the Kṣatriya to the Brāhmaṇ".¹⁵

In the different Mss. of the Purāṇas, the name of the next king appears variously as Andhraka, Bhadraka, Ādraka, Antaka, Odruka etc. Jayaswal identifies him with king Udāka mentioned in the Pabhosa inscription, but, as we have already stated, the theory can hardly be accepted. (supra, p. 19). Some scholars think he should be identified with king Kāsīputra Bhāgabhadra mentioned in the Besnagar inscription of Heliodoros in the fourteenth year of whose reign the Yavana ambassador installed a Garuḍa Pillar of Vāsudeva at Vidiśā, Besnagar. (supra, p. 23). Rapson proposes to identify Bhāgabhadra with the ninth Śuṅga king Bhāgavata, who, according to the Purāṇas, ruled for 32 years.¹⁶ Rapson's theory has been criticised on the ground that in Bhilsa we have got another inscription belonging to the twelfth year of the reign of king Bhāgavata, and "it is incredible that a king who is called Bhāgavata in an inscription of the twelfth year of his reign could be designated by radically a different name like Bhāgabhadra two years later in an inscription on a pillar installed in the same city".¹⁷ The argument has got certainly some force, and, on the face of it, it seems better that Bhāgabhadra should be identified with the fifth Śuṅga king, and it should be assumed further that the Purāṇas are wrong in assigning to him a short period of two or seven years, when the Besnagar record states he ruled for 14 years at least.

The tenth or the last king of the line Devabhūti or Devabhūmi was murdered by his minister Vāsudeva who founded the Kāṇva line of kings. Thus the *Harṣacarita* states: "In a frenzy of passion the over-libidinous Śuṅga was at the instance of his minister Vāsudeva reft of his life by a daughter of Devabhūti's slave woman (dāsī) disguised as his queen."¹⁸

¹⁵ CHI, p. 521.

¹⁶ *ib.*, p. 521.

¹⁷ IHQ, v. p. 610.

¹⁸ HC, Trans., p. 193.

With the murder of Devabhūti the main Śuṅga line ruling at Vidiśā came to an end. There are some statements in the *Purāṇas*, however, that have caused confusions. Thus it is stated: "The minister Vāsudeva, forcibly overthrowing the dissolute king Devabhūmi, because of his youth, will become king among the Śuṅgas (or will become the Śuṅga king)". Again, it is stated: "The Āndhra Śiśuka (or Sindhuka) with his fellow tribesmen, the servants of Śuśarman, will assail the Kāṇvāyanas and him (Śuśarman, the last Kāṇva king), and destroy the remains of the Śuṅga's power and will obtain the earth".¹⁹

From the above accounts, R. P. Chanda has inferred that Devabhūmi or Devabhūti, ruler of Magadha, was a nominal head of the Śuṅga federation, and Vāsudeva Kāṇva usurped that position by assassinating him, but probably did not interfere with the other Śuṅga principalities.²⁰ We have already stated that the successors of Puṣyamitra evidently had no connection with the Magadha country, and, it is further hard to believe that there was any Śuṅga federation of which these kings were the heads. The Purāṇic account simply shows that when Vāsudeva became king or the Andhra Śiśuka or Śimuka overthrew the last Kāṇva king, there were other principalities ruled by the scions of the Śuṅga family, as we have stated before.

In the *Cambridge History of India* Vol. I. p. 522 and also in the *Early History of the Deccan*, Ch. vi by R. G. Bhandarkar, it has been held that the Śuṅgas and the Kāṇvas for sometimes ruled contemporaneously, and it has been held by Bhandarkar further that "the 112 years that tradition assigns to the Śuṅgas include the 45 assigned to the Kāṇvas". There is hardly any reason for such a theory when the *Purāṇas* assign 45 years to the Kāṇvas after 112 years of the Śuṅgas. The Kāṇvas were contemporary not of the ten Śuṅga kings who ruled for 112 years, according to the *Purāṇas*, but of others (the rulers of neighbouring states that arose after the fall of Puṣyamitra and survived the rule of the ten Śuṅga kings as proved by the evidence of the coins).

The *Purāṇas* speak of the following four Kāṇva kings:

1. Vāsudeva	..	..	9 years
2. Bhūmitra	..	..	14 ..
3. Nārāyaṇa	..	..	12 ..
4. Suśarman	..	..	10 ..

¹⁹ Pargiter, *DKA*.

²⁰ *IHQ*, v. p. 612.

III

THE INVASION OF KHARAVELA

The political condition of North India was thus highly confused one in the first century B.C. and it naturally fell an easy prey to the invaders from South India. According to the *Purāṇas* Śiśuka or Śimuka put an end to the rule of the last Kāṇva king, and the Malwa region apparently passed under the rule of the Sātāvāhanas. An inscription on the southern gateway of the Stūpa, I of Sānchi records "the gift of Ānanda, son of Vāsithī (Vāśiṣṭhī), and the superintendent of the workshop of king Siri-Sātakani". Siri-Sātakani has been identified with king Śrī Sātakarnī, the third monarch of the Āndhra-Sātāvāhana dynasty. As Sānchi was a place of pilgrimage, the inscription alone cannot prove the dominance of the Sātāvāhana over the Malwa region, but when studied in the background of the *Purāṇic* account, the record appears to have some value from the point of view of political history. According to the *Purāṇic* chronology the Kāṇva rule came to an end c.30 B.C. which would consequently be a date during the reign of Śimuka, and thus Sātakarnī would rule at the end of the first century B.C. or the beginning of the first century A.D.²¹

The Hathigumpha inscription of king Khāravela proves that about this time the Kālīṅga king also invaded North India. The date of the record has been a moot question and a considerable literature has grown up on the subject. Fortunately now the problem appears to be almost solved one. As Dr. Sircar has stated "the angular form and straight bases of letters like *b*, *m*, *p*, *h*, and *y*, which are usually found in the Hathigumpha record suggest a date not much earlier than the beginning of the first century A.D. On grounds of palaeography, it is to be placed later probably than the Nanaghat records and certainly than the Besnagar inscription of Heliodoros. It is interesting in this connection to note that authorities on Indian art believe that the sculptures of the Mañchapuri cave (in which there is an ins-

²¹ There is some controversy regarding the period when the Sātāvāhanas came to power. A group of scholars maintain that the dynasty rose in the end of the third century B.C., contemporaneously with the Śuṅgas. According to the *Purāṇas*, however, Śimuka, the first king of the Sātāvāhana dynasty was a contemporary of Suśarman, the last Kāṇva king whose rule came to an end c.30 B.C. If Sātakarnī mentioned in the Hathigumpha record be identified with Sātakarnī I, then the *Purāṇic* account appears to be correct. For the meaning of the term Sātakarnī, Sātāvāhana etc., see, de la Valle Poussin, *L'Inde* etc. p. 206ff.

cription of Khāravēla's queen) 'are considerably posterior to the sculptures of Bhārhut'.²² Further, as in l. 4 of the record, Khāravēla claims Sātākarnī, identified with the Sātavāhana king Sātākarnī I, as one of his contemporaries, we may assign the record to the period, with which we are dealing here. We are furnished with the following details regarding the achievements of the king in North India:

- (a) "In the eighth year of his reign, with a large army having stormed the *Gorathagiri*, he tormented *Rājagrha*; by the (very) sound of his achievements, the *Yavana-rāja Di(mita)* fled with his army to Mathurā.".
- (b) "In the twelfth year of his reign. with an army of thousand strong he frightened the kings of Uttarāpatha (*Utarāpatha rājānō*). causing great fear in the mind of the people of Magadha he made descend the elephants and the horses in the Ganges; he compelled *Vahasatimita* and (the king of) Magadha (*Māgadham ca rājānam Bahasatimitam*), to adore his feet. brought treasures from Aṅga and Magadha".

The exact interpretation of the account given above is, indeed, very difficult, as the record is in a very bad state of preservation, and secondly, as we have no other record to corroborate and elucidate the cryptic statements. It appears that in the eighth year of his reign Khāravēla came to Rajgir, Dist. Patna, Bihar, but as nothing is said of the king we may possibly infer that the ruler of the place was either a very petty monarch or there prevailed a republican form of government at the time. A clay seal obtained at Gaya bears in Maurya characters the legend *Mokhalinam*, "of the Maukharis" showing that the clan held some sway over the region.²³ As it refers to the clan in general, we may possibly infer that it shows the Maukharī republic held sway over the region. Dr. Barua has brought to our notice some inscriptions from Bodh-Gaya mentioning the names of kings Indrāgnimitra and Brahmanimitra and concludes that they held sway about this time over the Magadha region.²⁴ But as we have stated

²² B. M. Barua, *Old Brāhmī Inscriptions*, no. 1; *IHQ*, xiv. p. 261ff; K. P. Jayaswal and R. D. Banerjee, *Ep. Ind.*, xx. p. 72f; Bühler, *Indian Studies*, iii. p. 13; Fleet, *JRAS*, 1910, p. 242ff; p. 824; Lüders, *List*, no. 1345; K. P. Jayaswal, *JBORS*, iii. p. 425ff; iv. p. 364f; xiii. p. 221ff; xiv. p. 150ff; Sten Konow, *Acta Orientalia*, i. p. 12ff; F. W. Thomas, *JRAS*, 1922, p. 83f.

²³ Fleet, *Corpus III*. p. 14.

²⁴ *IHQ*, vi. p. 7f.

before, inscriptions from sacred places like Bodh-Gaya and others can hardly throw any light on the dominion of a particular king mentioned in the epigraphs, for outsiders also used to flock there and made dedications. The case appears to be particularly so when we find in Bodh-Gaya the record of a gift by Bodhirakṣita, "the Tāmraparṇika—a man belonging to Tāmraparṇī". Indrāgni-mitra and Brahmanimitra may have ruled at Pāṭaliputra, since the king of Magadha is referred to in the inscription of Khāravela.

The second part of the statement is very interesting and intriguing. It shows that a Greek king had advanced as far as Magadha, and made a retreat at the fear of Khāravela. Konow reads the name as Dīmītra and identifies him with Demetrius I, which is, however, impossible in view of the date of the record. Chanda thinks that he may have been a refugee from Mathurā who was compelled to leave his kingdom when the country was occupied by the Scythians. In any case, it shows that in the last decade of the first century B.C. evidently there was a fresh Yavana inroad into the Gangetic valley, and this Dīmītra may be identified with Timitra mentioned in a Besnagar seal.²⁵ If the seal had not been carried to the place from outside, and this appears to be the case, it shows that the Besnagar region passed under the Yavana domination. The seal is very interesting one and reads as follows:

*Timitra — datrisya (sa) — ho(tā) —
p(o)tā-maṇṭra — sajana(? i).*

Dr. Bhandarkar makes the following observations on the above seal: "The meaning of this legend, as just remarked, is not quite clear, but the words *hotā*, *potā* and *maṇṭra*, which are technical to sacrificial literature, indicate that the sealing is really connected with the Yajñśālā. And the import of the legend appears to be: 'Of the donor Timitra accompanied by Hotā, Potā, hymn-kinsmen...'"²⁶

In this connection we may note that a Ghosundi (near Nagari, Chitorgadh District, Rajputana) inscription²⁷ written in Brāhmī characters of circa. second half of the first century B.C. refers to king Sarvatāta who performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice. Some

²⁵ Some scholars think that Timitra of the Besnagar seal is identical with Demetrius I, but the palaeography of the epigraph is clearly against such an early date.

²⁶ ASI, 1914-15, p. 77.

²⁷ Select Ins. p. 91.

scholars think that Sarvatāta was a Kāṇva king, but as his name is not mentioned in the Purāṇic list, it is more probable that he was a local ruler who possibly took part in defeating the Yavana Timita and later on performed the horse-sacrifice as a mark of his victory.

In the twelfth year of his reign, Khāravela is said to have frightened Utarāpatha rājāno...i.e., the kings of the Uttarāpatha (accusative-plural), showing again that North India was divided into a number of petty principalities without any supreme overlord. The expression *Māgadham ca Rājānaṃ Bahasatimitaṃ* causes some difficulty. The *ca* between *Māgadham* and *Rājānaṃ Bahasatimitaṃ* seems to show that the Magadha king was a different person from Bahasatimita. If, however, we regard *ca* as redundant then Bahasatimita may be regarded as the king of Magadha. Dr. Barua thinks that he was the immediate successor of king Brahmanitra mentioned in the Bodh-Gaya inscriptions (supra p. 28). We have already seen that Bahasatimita is mentioned in a Pabhosa inscription, while there is another record from Mora, Mathura, recording the gift of his daughter.²⁸ As the Pabhosa record is dated in the tenth year of the reign of Udāka who was evidently a local king of the Kosam region we may possibly infer that for some time at least Bahasatimita was a subordinate ruler. Later on, however, he became independent as the evidence of his coins and the inscription of Khāravela shows. It is also not unlikely that while Bahasatimita was ruling in Magadha, Udāka had been ruling in Kosam, and as the record was incised in the latter's territory he has found a prominent mention. Allan thinks that there was one Bahasatimita I who ruled "not later than the first half of the second century B.C., and might even be as early as the third century",²⁹ and another Bahasatimita II who ruled at the end of the second century B.C. or first century B.C.. Allan further thinks that while the Pabhosa record may be assigned to Bahasatimita II, the Mora inscription belongs to Bahasatimita I. We are, however, inclined to think that both the Bahasatimitas were one and the same person and the fine distinction between the Aśokan and the so-called Śuṅga character of the scripts need not be stressed too much. If Bahasatimita was the king of Magadha, then the discovery of his coins in the Kosam region may be explained by the supposition that they had been carried thither by the traders.

²⁸ *supra*, p. 17, *JRAS*, 1912, p. 120.

²⁹ Allan, *Catalogue*, xcvi.

IV

THE INDO-GREEK KINGS

While thus the heart of North India was being parcelled into a number of petty states since the middle of the second century B.C., the Punjab and the North-Western Frontier Province had been faring no better. We have already seen that under the pressure of the nomads the Greek rule came to an end in Bactria, and Heliocles carved for himself a kingdom to the south of the Hindukush region, extending probably in the east as far as the river Jhelum, at the cost of the house of Euthydemus. (supra, p. 17f). Thus henceforth we have two houses of the Yavanas in India proper often at rivalry and war. As Rapson says : "No connected account of these two rival Yavana houses has been preserved; and practically nothing is known about the personal character or achievements of the leaders who directed the affairs of a period which must have been full of stirring events. A few isolated references in literature, Greek, Roman and Indian, a single Indian inscription, and the coin legends of about thirty Greek kings and two Greek queens supply the evidence which enables us to retrace very imperfectly a few outlines in the history of the successors of Alexander the Great in India during the second and first centuries B.C."³⁰ Since Rapson wrote in 1922, the discovery of the Shinkot inscription³¹ has necessitated a little change in his scheme, which, otherwise, is a monumental contribution in the field of Indology.

Rapson's account, which has also been mainly followed by Tarn and others, may thus be summarised :

- (a) The house of Euthydemus ruled mainly in the Eastern Punjab till it was supplanted by Azes I in c.58 B.C. To this house belonged Demetrius II, Menander, Strato I, Strato II, Apollodotus II, Dionysius, Apollophanes, Zoilus, Nicias, Hippostratus etc.
- (b) The house of Eucratides ruled in the region to the west of the river Jhelum :
 - (i) in Puṣkalāvātī after the reign of Heliocles ruled —Diomedes, Epander, Philoxenus, Artemidorus and Peucolaus ;
 - (ii) in Takṣaśīlā, after the reign of Antialkidas, ruled Archebius ;

³⁰ *CHI*, p. 541.

³¹ *Ep. Ind.* xxiv. p. 7.

(iii) in the Upper Kabul valley, after the reign of Antialkidas, ruled Amyntus and Hermaues.

Maues wrested from the Yavanas Puṣkalāvati after the reign of Artemidorus, and Takṣaśilā after the reign of Archebius about 75 B.C. The Yavana rule in the Upper Kabul valley came to an end under the pressure of Spalirises, the brother of Vonones about 25 B.C.

It is quite clear that here we are dealing with one of the most confused chapters of ancient Indian history. At the outset we beg to differ from Rapson mainly on these points, viz., Demetrius and Menander were not contemporaries, as already shown before; *secondly*, that the Śakas occupied Taxila at the end of the first century B.C., as it will be shown in the next chapter, and hence the Greek rule continued at least upto that period; and, *thirdly*, the Greek kingdom in the Kabul valley possibly continued till the time of Gondopharnes. (vide, Chap.III.,*infra*).

When we find that about thirty rulers have to be placed within a period of less than 170 years (Demetrius-Eucratides to the advent of the Śakas in the Punjab), we have naturally to assume that either many of them were sub-kings or ruled contemporaneously over different small kingdoms. But as we have no other source throwing light on the point, the history of the period must remain dark to a great extent.

We have already seen that Heliocles restruck the coins of Agathoclea and Strato I of the house of Euthydemus, and hence they must be regarded as contemporaries. Rapson, Tarn and others think that Agathoclea was the daughter of Demetrius and wife of Menander.³² This theory can no longer be maintained as Menander possibly flourished in the first century B.C. (*supra*, p. 5f). Strato I, later on, issued coins in his own name, and still later on in association with his grandson, Strato II Philophator.³³ Though it is difficult to determine who was the immediate predecessor of Strato I the evidence of coins shows that he became the ruler not long after Demetrius I. The nomads occupied Bactria about 145 B.C. which compelled Heliocles to move to the south of the Hindukush.³⁴ It may thus be inferred that in 145 B.C. Strato I was a minor and Agathoclea had been acting as the

³² *CHI*, p. 552, and specially f.n. 1; Tarn thinks that Menander who was a commoner "legitimatised his rule by marrying Demetrius' daughter Agathoclea; the evidence that she was his queen seems conclusive". (*GBI*, p. 225).

³³ *CHI*, p. 553, Rapson, *Corolla Numismatica*, 1906, p. 245ff.

³⁴ cf. *JIH*, xii. 19; *contra*, *SPIH*, ch. I. The date 145 B.C. tallies with other evidences.

regent. As on his later coins he is represented "with toothless jaws and sunken cheeks", Rapson has inferred that he possibly lived for more than 70 years.³⁵ If we are permitted to assume that in c.145 B.C. Strato I was 15 years old then we can possibly infer that his reign came to an end c. 90 B.C. The debased art of the latest coins of Strato I shows that the empire must have been passing through some crisis which was evidently caused by the attacks of the rival house. As the coins of Apollodotus II Philophator, Dionysius and Zoilus bear common monogram with those of Strato,³⁶ they appear to have been sub-kings under the latter. Another such sub-king may have been Apollophanes.

The critical stage through which the kingdom of Strato I had been passing in the later years was evidently caused by the rise of Antialkidas, of the house of Eucratides, for whose reign fortunately we have an important inscription from Besnagar, referred to above. The record states that the column with the figure of Garuḍa on it was erected by one Heliodoros, the son of Dion, an inhabitant of Takṣaśilā, who came to the court of king Kasi-putra Bhāgabhadra in the latter's fourteenth regnal year, as an ambassador of the Yavana king Antialkidas. The inscription is very interesting as it shows that the Taxila region had now definitely passed under the house of Eucratides; that there was diplomatic relation between the Śuṅgas and the Yavanas; and, that even the foreigners had adopted the religion of Vāsudeva showing the proselytising character of the faith. It also indirectly helps us in determining approximately the time when Antialkidas flourished. If Kāsi-putra Bhāgabhadra be the fifth king of the Śuṅga line, as we have suggested before, then according to the scheme of Purāṇic chronology, we have to place Antialkidas after 126 B.C., possibly about 112 B.C. This also makes him a contemporary of Strato I. Dealing with the evidence of the Besnagar record, Marshall observes: "The purpose of the embassy is not stated, but it seems more than likely that Antialkidas was seeking to make common cause with the Śuṅga king against their mutual rival Strato I, whose dominions in the Eastern Punjab lay wedged in between their own. No doubt it was part of the political propaganda of Antialkidas for his ambassador to proclaim himself a follower of Viṣṇu (Bhāgavata) and set up a pillar in honour of that deity; and indeed it is quite possible that in the Punjab itself Antialkidas was playing up to the Brāhmanical fac-

³⁵ *CHI*, p. 553.

³⁶ *BMC*, under the various kings here mentioned; for Kharoṣṭhī on the coins, Whitehead, *NC*, 1923, p. 314f.

tion and making such use of it as he could to determine the power of the Euthydemids east of the Jhelum".³⁷ Thus pressed between the Śuṅgas and the descendants of Eucratides Strato I had been maintaining a precarious existence which is reflected in the later issues of his coins.

We have certain coins of Antialkidas issued conjointly with Lysius,³⁸ and there has been some controversy whether Lysius was the son or the father of Antialkidas. The problem has been solved by Marshall who points out that in the BM. Cat. Pl. xxxi. no. 2 there is the figure of a unique copper coin on which the name of Lysius appears on the obverse and the name of Antialkidas on the reverse. As in case of such coins we find the name of the senior partner on the obverse, it shows that Lysius was the father of Antialkidas. As on all coins Lysius "appears as a quite young man", he evidently had a short reign, and Marshall thinks that he was the immediate successor of Heliocles and ruled possibly for a decade between 135 and 125 B.C., when he was succeeded by his son Antialkidas.³⁹

Some of the coins of Lysius bears the type: '*Bust of king wearing elephants' scalp: Heracles standing*'. This type resembles the type of Demetrius, and hence it has been assumed by Tarn that there was some rapprochement between the two houses during his time.⁴⁰ Rapson thinks that "it is perhaps equally probable that the types introduced into India by Demetrius had become characteristic of a particular district, and, therefore, continued to be used in that district after it had passed from the house of Euthydemus to the house of Eucratides".⁴¹ This certainly appears to be a more convincing explanation.

After Antialkidas the Taxila coins (type '*Pilei*') are continued by Archebius,⁴² but after him it is no more used by any Yavana ruler while it is again found on the coins of Liaka Kusulaka, the satrap of the Śaka king Maues, and hence it is believed that after Archebius the Śakas occupied Taxila. As we have already stated the Śakas occupied Taxila at the last quarter of the first century B.C. and hence there may have been some other causes operating to the state of affairs.

The type '*Pilei*' was the characteristic of the issues of the house of Eucratides, and it came to an end after Archebius evi-

³⁷ Marshall, *Taxila*, vol. i. p. 37.

³⁸ BMC, p. 166.

³⁹ Marshall, *l.c.* p. 37.

⁴⁰ GBI, pp. 314-15.

⁴¹ CHI, p. 559.

⁴² Whitehead, NC. 1923, p. 315.

dently due to the rise of Menander who for the time being eclipsed the glory of the rival house, and who, as we have already stated, flourished in the first century B.C. He was one of the greatest of the Indo-Bactrian monarchs, while his coins show that his authority extended over the Punjab, the Gandhāra, Afganistan and possibly also Sind. The '*Athene Alkes*' type shows his authority over the Eastern Punjab,⁴³ while the '*Bull and tripod*' type over Gandhāra. Marshall thinks that his type "*Elephant and club (of Heracles)*" was possibly designed to commemorate his recovery of Eastern Arachosia and its re-union with Taxila.⁴⁴

The Pali work *Milinda-pañha*⁴⁵ has immortalised his name. The work states that he was born at the village of Kalasi in the dvīpa of Alasanda which was 200 yojanas distant from Śākala. The measurement, evidently approximate one, shows that this Alasanda should be identified with the Alexandria under the Caucasus. The account raises in itself two important issues: *first*, at the time when Menander was born, Alexandria under the Caucasus, was a part of the dominion of the house of Eucratides, and so by his birth he was a natural subject of the house; *secondly*, as Tarn has pointed out, "whether the unknown name Kalasi be correct or not, we have the invaluable fact that Menander was born in a village. Hellenistic queens did not live in villages, neither was Hellenistic princes born in them; consequently—and this is the point which matters—Menander was born a commoner, and was not therefore a Euthydemid".⁴⁶

Thus the rise of Menander was a unique event in the annals of the Indo-Bactrians. The *Milinda-pañha* states that his capital was Śākala or Sialkot in the West Punjab. Whitehead rejects the statement on the ground that it was not a mint city, and thinks that his capital was in the Kabul valley, in Afganistan.

⁴³ Tarn observes: "Menander's regular type on his coins was Athena striding and hurling the thunderbolt, a variant of the widespread Athena Alkis type of Macedonia; she had already been used by Demetrius II, but doubtless one reason for Menander's adoption of Athena was that she had been one of the three regular deities on the Alexander-coinage and that of the other two Zeus had become closely associated with Antiochus IV and Heracles with the Euthydemids; it may also be that, in adopting the one Greek deity who had practically never been equated with anything Oriental but had remained Greek, he intended to emphasise the fact that, in spite of the predominantly Indian character of his empire, he was still a Greek king". (*GBI*, p. 261).

⁴⁴ Marshall, *l.c.*, vol. i. p. 32.

⁴⁵ *SBE*, vols. xxxv-xxxvi. The work is divided into two parts and it is now generally believed that the second part of the work is later in date than the first one, and was evidently composed by a different author. For a critical discussion of the work, see Tarn, *GBI*, pp. 414-436.

⁴⁶ *GBI*, pp. 420-1.

where, according to him, most of the Bactrian kings lived for climatic reasons "since they were natives of a temperate climate and their comparatively small numbers would have been lost in the plains".⁴⁷ It is difficult to determine how far Whitehead's theory is correct, while Marshall thinks that his dominion comprised, besides the Trans-Indus regions in the west as far as Arachosia, "Kaccha and Surāṣṭra and the sea-board beyond them as far as the port of Barygaza (Broach)".⁴⁸ The *Periplus* informs us that in the second half of the first century B.C., the coins of Menander, along with those of Apollodotus, were in circulation in the port of Barygaza, but it appears to be somewhat risky to infer from it that Barygaza formed a part of the kingdom of Menander. We have no definite evidence even to show that his kingdom comprised the Lower Indus valley.

The *Milinda-pañha* has preserved the story that Menander was converted to Buddhism by the Thera Nāgasena. In the Buddhist lore, he occupies a position next to Aśoka, and many of the legends connected with the name of the great Maurya emperor came also to be attributed to him. Thus like Aśoka, he is also described as renouncing the world and becoming an *arhat*, "and certain preliminaries to the meeting of Menander and Nāgasena in the *Milinda-pañha* are supposed to be taken from the story of the meeting of Aśoka with Tissa Mogaliputta".⁴⁹ Some of Menander's legends have again been traced to the story of the Buddha. Plutarch says that he was noted for his justice, and when he died his ashes were divided among the cities of his kingdom, and each city raised a stūpa over its portion. Here we are reminded how when Lord Buddha died stūpas were erected over his relics. The statement that Menander's Council consisted of 500 men (*Yonakas*) may be compared with the fact that in the Buddhist lore the Lord is always accompanied by 500 *arhats*, when he moves from one place to another.

There have been different theories regarding Menander's exact relationship with Buddhism. Tarn observes: "The idea that Menander ever became a Buddhist in the sense of entering the Order may be dismissed at once; it depends on the story in the second part of the *Milinda*, which is not history, for the historical Menander did not retire from the world and hand over his throne to his son, but died leaving a son who was a minor and for whom his widow at first ruled as regent. He had an

⁴⁷ Whitehead, *NC*, 1940, pp. 3-4.

⁴⁸ Marshall, *l.c.*, p. 32.

⁴⁹ Tarn, *l.c.*, p. 267.

enormous number of Buddhist subjects and he probably could not have maintained his power without their support; politically, therefore, he must have done whatever seemed advisable to ensure that support, for no other cause was open to him. No one can prove that Menander was not a Buddhist; but his adoption as his coin-type of the one Greek deity who was practically never equated with anything Oriental, Athena, is against it, and on what is known it seems to be quite unsafe to call him a Buddhist even in the limited sense."⁵⁰

We fully agree with Tarn that the second part of the *Milinda-pañha* contains many unhistorical statements, and where it is in opposition to the first part the latter is to be preferred. The second part makes Milinda born as a prince in a royal dynasty, and this has been rightly rejected by Tarn and others. We, however, cannot at once reject the statement that he was succeeded by his son, though we may reject the story of his arhatship. Tarn comes to the conclusion that he was succeeded by a minor son, Strato I, with his queen, Agathoclea, as the regent, as he had been working on the theory of Rapson that Demetrius and Menander were contemporary. *Secondly*, the figure of Athena on his coins hardly goes against his being a Buddhist, for on the coins of Kaniska also we find the figures of many non-Buddhist gods and goddesses. The type had been in use since the time of Agathoclea and Strato I and Menander had simply been copying their coins. Menander would not have been extolled so much by the Buddhists, it is quite clear, had he not embraced their faith and championed their cause. The case appears to be more so when we find that even in Indo-China his name is connected with the origin of the most famous statue of the Buddha. Such strong traditions cannot be set aside lightly. Milinda was looked upon with honour even in the eleventh century, when Ksemendra states "the Buddha prophesying to Indra that a king Milinda would erect a stūpa at Pāṭaligrāma". This shows how the legends about the king went on multiplying even in the mediaeval age.

The history of the Indo-Greek kings after Menander is obscure. We have no means to ascertain whether the houses of Eucratides and Euthydemus were revived, or whether the

⁵⁰ *ib.*, pp. 268-9. Marshall also maintains a similar view, and thinks that if Menander espoused the cause of Buddhism, it was entirely with a political purpose. (*l.c.*, p. 33). We must consider very critically in this connection the presence of eight-spoked wheel on one of his bronze issues, *BMC*, p. 50, no. 73, pl. xii. 7; cf. *ASIR*, 1929-30, p. 65, no. 4.

descendants of Menander who belonged to neither of the houses continued to rule in the valley of the Indus, till they were supplanted by the Śakas at the close of the first century B.C. It has already been stated that Rapson and others relying on the evidence of the coins hold that the following kings ruled in the Puṣkalāvati region, in the later period of the Greek rule—Diomedes, Epander, Philoxenus, Artemidorus and Peucolaus; while in the Eastern Punjab region, it is supposed, ruled the following kings—Dionysius, Apollodotus II, Zoilus, Hippostratus, Apollophanes, Nicias and others. A branch of the house of Eucratides further continued to rule in the Kabul valley.

We want to make the following observations in this connection:

(a) It is generally believed that the Puṣkalāvati group of kings belonged to the house of Eucratides, while the kings of the Eastern Punjab to the house of Euthydemus. But since Menander ruled over both the regions and did not belong to either of the houses, and further since it is not unlikely that he may have left his successor (cf. *Milinda-pañha* account), we have to think whether some of these kings did not really belong to his house. The coin-types are not very sure guide since they were associated with particular regions, and may have been copied—in fact the Śaka kings copied them⁵¹—by the later kings. Whitehead again thinks that Hippostratus and Nicias ruled in Gandhāra.

(b) Some of the kings of the above two groups may have been sub-kings. Tarn thinks that Hippostratos and Nicias flourished after Maues,⁵² the Śaka king who ruled at the end of the first century B.C. and the beginning of the first century A.D.; but the theory rests on a very slender basis, for as we shall see later on, the stratification at Taxila clearly shows that Maues was succeeded by Azes I. (*infra*).

⁵¹ *infra*, Ch. iii.

⁵² *GBI*, p. 326ff.

APPENDIX I

ON THE TRIBAL STATES

It has already been stated that after the death of Puṣyamitra, the Śuṅgas became a petty local power at Vidiśā, while the rest of the Ganges-Jumna valley, Rajasthan and the Eastern Punjab became divided into a number of petty states, some monarchical and others republican. This state of affairs continued up to the last quarter of the first century A.D. when North India up to Benares in the east again became united under the Imperial banner of the Kuṣāṇas. Coins are our chief source for studying the history of these petty principalities. On the basis of the palaeography of the coins these states may be arranged chronologically as follows:

2ND CENTURY B.C.: Āgreya, Ārjunāyana, Kauśāmbī, Mālava, Mathurā, Pañcāla, Rājanya, Śivi, Trigarta, Udehika, Vaṭāśvaka and Yaudheya.

1ST CENTURY B.C.: Almora, Audumbara, Ayodhyā, Kuninda, Mathurā, Vemaka, Vṛṣṇi-Rājanya, and Kauśāmbī.

From the above lists it is clear that some of these states of the second century B.C. were evidently merged in other principalities in the following century so that their number became reduced from thirteen to eight. In order to have a clear conception about the history of the age under discussion, we must first of all deal briefly with the geographical location of these states.

(1) On the coins of the Āgreya janapada we find the legends *Agodaka Agāca janapada* and *Agācamitrapadabhiṣyāyinēh*. It is thus apparent that the Āgreyas were the inhabitants of Agrodaka which may be identified with the modern Agroha in Hissar district, where these coins have been found.¹ It is difficult to agree with Allan when he thinks that Agodaka or Angodraka may be identified with the Oxydrakai of the Greeks.²

(2) The coins of the Ārjunāyanas bear the legend *Ārjunāyanānām jaya* (—). "The epigraphy of the coins suggests

¹ *JNSI*, iv., p. 50.

² Allan, *Catalogue*, p. clviii.

a date about 100 B.C. and the lands of the Ārjunāyanas probably lay within the triangle Delhi-Jaipur-Agra".³

(3) We have already discussed the history of the Kauśāmbī janapada and have tried to show that it was never under the successors of Puṣyamitra. Kauśāmbī, identical with the modern Kosam, thirty miles south-west of Allahabad, has yielded a large number of coins showing that it was a monarchical state. In the second century B.C. the following kings possibly ruled over the kingdom—Sudeva, Bṛhaspatimitra, Parvata and Aśvaghoṣa.⁴

(4) During the time of Alexander's invasion, the Mālavas or the Malloi lived in the Upper Punjab in the valley of the Ravi. At a later period they evidently migrated to Eastern Rajputana and a large number of their coins have been found at Karkotanagar in the Jaipur district. Rapson thinks that their coins may be as early as c. 150 B.C.. Allan seems to be right when he holds that these are not earlier than the second century A.D.⁵ That they were in the same region in the second century B.C. is proved, however, by a seal belonging to them found at Rairh.⁶ They had a republican constitution, but the absence of their coins in the centuries immediately before the Christian era cannot be satisfactorily explained. It is not unlikely that they were at that time subordinate under the dynasty of Sarvatāta mentioned in the Ghosundi record.⁷

(5) The location of Mathurā is well-known and in the *Geographike* of Ptolemy it is described as 'the city of gods'. The coins of Mathurā "cover the period from the end of the third to the middle of the first century B.C. when we find these Hindu rulers succeeded by a dynasty of Śakas who bear the title Kṣatrapa or Mahākṣatrapa". (*Allan*). As we shall see later on, however, the Śaka kṣatrapas occupied Mathurā not in the middle of the first century B.C., but in the early years of the first century A.D.

(6) Pañcāla corresponds to the present Rohilkhand region. Allan makes the following interesting observations regarding the Pañcāla coins: "The evidence of the uniformity of the coins and of their find-spots show that this 'Mitra' dynasty ruled in Northern Pañcāla, and perhaps also in part of Southern Pañcāla. The capital was Ahichhatra. They cannot be identified with the Śuṅgas. The dynasty was in existence before the Śuṅgas, if we

³ *ib.*, p. lxxxiii.

⁴ *ib.*, pp. 150-2.

⁵ *ib.*, p. cvi.

⁶ Excavations at Rairh, p. 71

⁷ *supra*, p. 29.

date the accession of Puṣyamitra about 184 B.C., and survived not only the Śuṅgas but also the Kāṇvas, probably disappearing with the latter before the Śakas".⁸ It is, however, doubtful whether Pañcāla existed as an independent state in the pre-Puṣyamitra age. It possibly became independent after the death of the Senāpati and hence the Pañcāla series of coins may be supposed to have started about c.150 B.C.

(7) The Rājanya coins bear the legend *Rajaña-janapadasa* and they come mainly from the Hoshiarpur district of the Punjab, where accordingly the janapada can be located. It was evidently a republican state.⁹

(8) The Śibis are evidently identical with the Siboi of the Greek writers who locate the country between the Indus and the Chenub. Their coins belonging to the second century B.C., bear the legend *Madhyamikāya-Śibi-janapadasa* showing that they occupied Madhyamikā near Chitor, where evidently they had migrated sometimes after the invasion of Alexander. There are other coins of the tribe bearing the simpler legend *Śibi-janapadasa*. They had evidently a republican constitution.¹⁰

(9) The Trigarta country corresponds to the modern Jullundur, the land between the Ravi and the Sutlej. The Trigarta coins bear the legend *Trakatajanapadasa* in Brāhmī characters of the second century B.C. It was a republican state.¹¹

(10) There are several coins bearing the inscription *Uddekhi* in Brāhmī characters of the second century B.C. As the provenance of the coins is not exactly known, it is difficult to determine the location of the janapada. Al-biruni states that Uddekika was near 'Bazana', 112 miles south-west of Kanauj.¹²

(11) Coins bearing the legend *Vaṭāsvaka* in characters of the early second century B.C. have been found in Taxila. Nothing is known about the state though we can possibly infer that "if not

⁸ Allan, *Catalogue*, cxx-cxxi; vide, f.n. 1, Ch. ii. *supra*, pp. 19ff.

⁹ *ib.*, cxxii-cxxiii; Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, i. pp. 158-9.

¹⁰ Allan, *Catalogue*, cxxiii f. "Statements in some modern writers that the Śibi was a very primitive race are merely reproductions of a mistake in, or rather perhaps of a false impression given by, the Alexander-historians; they were at least as civilised as their neighbours as is shown by the Greek praise of their capital, by their coinage at Madhyamikā, and by the story in the *Śibi-Jātaka* of the charitable Śibi king who was the hero of the Flesh-gift and was reincarnated as Buddha". (*GBl*, p. 170).

¹¹ Allan, *Catalogue*, cxl. "*Jālandharāstrigartāḥ syuḥ*" (*Abhidhāna-cintāmaṇi*).

¹² Allan, *Catalogue*, cxli.

in the territory of Taxila, it was near enough to be in close commercial relations with it".¹³

(12) At a place in the neighbourhood of the town of Rohtak large number of coin moulds bearing the legend *Yaudheyānām Bahudhānyaka* have been found. In the Mahābhārata the Yaudheyas are described as *Rohitakas* showing that Rohitaka or Rohtak was their home.¹⁴ It has been assumed that *Bahudhānyaka* is identical with the Haryana tract of the Punjab which includes Rohtak. Allan says that "the coins of the Yaudheyas fall into three periods, Classes 1, 2, and 5 of the late second and the first centuries B.C. indicating a period of independence, from the fall of the Mauryas (Puṣyamitra?) to the coming of the Kuṣāṇas. Classes 3-4 belong to the later second century A.D. and the poor state of the currency probably reflects the disastrous effects of Rudradāman's victory and the war with the Śakas. The fine coins of Class 6, which like the seals . . . reveal strong Kushān influence, show the tribe well-established again in the third and fourth centuries A.D. Their currency came to an end with the Gupta conquest".¹⁵ The Yaudheya coins belonging to the pre-Christian age have on them the legend *Mahārājasa* while others have *Yaudheyānām*. The second legend clearly shows that it was a republican state. What may be the significance of the first legend? Either *Mahārāja* may be the personal name of the leader of the Yaudheya republic or, in the alternative we have to assume that for some time the Yaudheya state passed under monarchical form of government.

From the above discussions, it will be seen that while the republican states mainly lay in the Eastern Punjab and the province of Rājasthan, the monarchical states studded the Ganges-Jumna valley. In the next century most of these republics lost their independent status and their independent coinage evidently ceased to exist. Though it is difficult to determine the exact cause of this state of affairs, we may venture to suggest that the rise of Menander may have been one of the contributory causes for the disappearance of the republican states, specially in the Punjab region. In Rajputana the rise of king Gājāyana Sarvatāta may have been another such factor. This also supports our contention that Menander flourished in the first century B.C., and not in the first half of the second century as proposed by Rapson and other

¹³ *ib.*, cxlvii. Rapson thinks that it is not a place name but a division of the Aśvaka, *Indian Coins*, p. 14.

¹⁴ Mbh. II. 32. 4-5.

¹⁵ Allan, *Catalogue*, clii-cliii, see also Ch. vi. *infra*.

scholars. Tarn also thinks that "these peoples probably covered the whole of Menander's domain between the Madras and the frontier south of Mathura".¹⁶ As we have already seen, following Rapson, Tarn also places Menander in the first half of the second century B.C., but in that case, we fail to understand how can he come to the above conclusion regarding the extent of the empire of the Yavana monarch. In fact, all the sources when combined together clearly show that Menander flourished in the first part of the first century B.C., and his rise was responsible for the disappearance of the republican states in the Punjab.

After the death of Menander several new states again rose up in the Punjab, most of them having republican form of constitution. They were as follows:

(a) Audumbara: The coins attributed to the Audumbaras have been mostly found in the Pathankot and the Jwalamukhi regions. Some coins have also been collected in the Hoshiarpur district. This shows that "the Audumbaras should be located in the area formed by the eastern part of the modern Kangra district, the Gurdaspur district and the Hoshiarpur district, that is to say, the valley of the Beas, or perhaps the wider region between the Upper Sutlej and the Ravi".¹⁷ In the first century B.C. it had a monarchical form of government, and the coins supply us with the following four names of their kings: Śivadāsa, Rudradāsa, Mahādeva and Dharaghosa.¹⁸ Allan thinks that at the end of the first century B.C. and the beginning of the first century A.D. a new dynasty came to the throne and to this new dynasty belonged kings like Rudravarman, Āryamitra, Mahāmītra and Bhānumitra.¹⁹ On the coins of Rudravarman, there is the legend *Vijayaka-rajñ(o)* (var. *Vijayaya-raña*) *Vemakisa Rudravarmasa*". According to Allan the legend means 'of the victorious king Rudravarman, the Vimaki'. The Vimaki is evidently the name of the dynasty to which Rudravarman belonged.

(b) Kuninda: We have already stated that the Kunindas occupied a narrow strip of land at the foot of the Siwalik hills between the Jumna and the Sutlej and the territory between the upper courses between the Beas and the Sutlej. Coins disclose the name of Amoghabhuti a king of the country.²⁰

(c) Rājanya: This republican state, as already stated,

¹⁶ *GBI*, p. 240.

¹⁷ Allan, *Catalogue*, lxxxvii; vide, *supra*, Ch. ii & f.n. (8).

¹⁸ *ib.*, p. 122f.

¹⁹ *ib.*, p. 125f.

²⁰ *ib.*, p. 159f, vide, *supra*, Ch. ii & f.n. (10).

existed in the preceding century, and in the first century B.C. we find that they used Brāhmī characters in their coins in the legend *Rājāṇa janapadasa*.²¹

The monarchical states of the Ganges-Jumna valley like Mathurā, Pañcāla, Ayodhyā, Kauśāmbī etc., continued their existence as before till they were conquered by the Kuṣāṇas in the second half of the first century A.D. (*infra*).

²¹ *ib.*, p. 210f.

APPENDIX II

ON THE DATE OF KHĀRAVELA

Some scholars are inclined to think that Khāravēla flourished at the first quarter of the second century B.C., on the following grounds:

(a) that the Hathigumpha inscription is dated in the 165th year of the Maurya era corresponding to the thirteenth year of Khāravēla (*l. 16*) (*Dubrevil*);

(b) that Bahasatimita who was compelled to adore the feet of the Kaliṅga king (*l. 12*) is no other than Puṣyamitra (*Jayaswal*);

(c) that in *l. 6* of the Hathigumpha record, Khāravēla claims that he caused a canal to be dug out again that was originally constructed by king Nanda who must be identified with Nandivar-dhana (*Jayaswal*);

(d) that in *l. 8* of the record, we have a reference to the Yavana rāja Dīmīta who fled away to Mathurā on the approach of Khāravēla, and this Dīmīta can only be identified with Demetrius I who was the contemporary of Puṣyamitra Śuṅga (*Sten Konow*).

None of the above arguments appear to be valid: (a) what has been read in the *l. 16* of the Hathigumpha record as *Muriya-kāla* is really *mukhiya-kalā* or *mukhya-kalā*, and further there is no evidence of any Maurya era starting from the accession of Chandra Gupta Maurya in c. 324 B.C. Had such been the case, Aśoka would have dated his records in that era instead of in his regnal years; (b) the identification of Bahasatimita with Puṣyamitra is far from certain. Jayaswal's argument that as Bṛhaspati is the lord, *nakṣatrādhipa*, of the nakṣatra Puṣya or Tissa in the house of Cancer in which the planet becomes ascendant (*tuṅga*), Bahasatimita should be identified with Puṣyamitra who occupied the ascendant position in North India, has got no historical basis. As Dr. Raychaudhuri points out, the *Divyāvadāna* makes a distinction between a king named Bṛhaspati and Puṣyamitra.¹ R. P. Chanda aptly remarks: "Even if we admit that Bṛhaspati was also identified by the ancient Hindus with Puṣya, that does not justify the identification of Bṛhaspatimitra with Puṣyamitra any more

¹ PHAI, p. 374.

than the denotation of the same god by the terms Skanda and Kumāra justifies the identification of Skanda Gupta with Kumāra Gupta".² It has already been shown that Bahasatimita was been possibly a king of the Kauśāmbī region, and his jurisdiction may have extended over Magadha as well;³ (c) similarly, there is some difficulty in accepting the identification of Nandarāja mentioned in the Hathigumpha record with Nandavardhana or Nandivardhana. Nandivardhana was a king of the dynasty of Śiśunāga, and there is no evidence that the Śiśunāgas had to do anything with Kāliṅga. As Dr. Raychaudhuri points out: "It is not Nandivardhana but Mahāpadma Nanda who is said to have brought 'all under his sole sway' and 'uprooted all Kṣatriyas' or the old ruling families. So we should identify 'Nandarāja' of the Hathigumpha inscription, who held possession of Kāliṅga either with the all-conquering Mahāpadma Nanda or one of his sons".⁴ Barnett thinks that Nandarāja may have been a local king of Kāliṅga, but the view goes against the internal evidence of the Hathigumpha inscription. As Nandarāja is said to have ruled some 300 years before Khāravela, the latter evidently flourished at the second half of the first century B.C., or somewhat later; (d) as regards the identification of the Yavana rāja Dimita with Demetrius I, it may be noted what R.P. Chanda has stated in *IHG*, v. p. 598: "The chronological impossibilities in these identifications becomes still more apparent when attempt is made to reconstruct the history of Magadha from 175 to 170 B.C. on their basis. If Demetrius, son of Euthydemus, retired from India to face Eucratides when Khāravela laid siege to Rājagṛha, the latter event must have happened in the year 175 (*Jayaswal*) or 174 (*Sten Konow*) B.C. As this year corresponds to the eighth year of Khāravela's reign, he must have ascended the throne of Kāliṅga in 183 or 182 B.C. With Khāravela's siege of Rājagṛha, the revolt of Eucratides in Bactria and the retreat of Demetrius, Messrs. Sten Konow and Jayaswal link two other events, the siege of Sāketa and Madhyamikā by Demetrius and a horse sacrifice (the first horse sacrifice according to Mr. Jayaswal) of Puṣyamitra. As we have already seen, Patañjali's statements in the *Mahābhāṣya* clearly indicate that the siege of Sāketa and Madhyamikā by the Yavana (i.e., the Yavana king) and the horse sacrifice of Puṣyamitra were not, strictly speaking, contemporaneous events". In Ch. I, it has already been shown that

² *IHQ*, v. p. 597.

³ *supra*, p. 19.

⁴ *PHAI*, p. 377.

the siege of Demetrius took place before Puṣyamitra ascended the throne of Magadha after murdering Brhadratha, and this goes strongly against the proposed identification.

Thus it appears that in determining the date of Khāravela we have to depend on the palaeographical evidence of the Hathigumpha record, which as already stated,⁵ points to a date in the second half of the first century B.C., and the meaning of the expression "*Pancame ca dāni vase Naṃda—rāja-ti-vasa-sata-o(gh)ātitaṃ Tanasuliya-vāta paṇādīm nagaram pavesayati*", showing that Khāravela flourished some *ti-vasa-sata* years after Naṃda-rāja. Now, the expression *ti-vasa-sata* may either mean 103 or 300. As it is stated that in the fifth year of his reign Khāravela caused the canal opened out by king Nanda *ti-vasa-sata* years back to be brought into the capital, we have to place the accession of Khāravela either 98 or 295 years after the time of the Nanda-rāja. If taken in the former sense, Khāravela becomes king in $324-98 = 226$ B.C. This date can in no case be later, though there is every possibility that it may be somewhat earlier. The Hathigumpha record further states that he was elevated to the position of Yuvarāja nine years before his accession, i.e., in c. 235 B.C. It appears also from the above discussion that in c. 235 B.C. Khāravela's father was on the throne of Kalinga and he also had his predecessor or predecessors who thus becomes a contemporary of Aśoka along with Khāravela's father as well. But from the inscriptions of Aśoka we learn that in his time Kalinga was governed by a Maurya Kumāra under the suzerainty of Aśoka. This shows that the expression *ti-vasa-sata* cannot be taken in the sense of 103.

The above discussions clearly show that we can take the expression only in the sense of 300, which would place Khāravela in the second half of the first century B.C. This interpretation, as we have already seen, is supported by the literary and the archaeological data at our disposal.

⁵ *supra*, pp. 27f.

CHAPTER III

THE ŚAKAS AND THE PARTHIANS

I

THE TRIBAL MOVEMENTS IN CENTRAL ASIA

We have already stated that the Greek rule in Bactria came to an end about 145 B.C. under the pressure of the nomads of Central Asia, who again at the end of the first century B.C. caused the downfall of the Greeks in India. The story of the tribal movement is unfolded to us chiefly by the Chinese authors. The tribes inhabiting Central Asia were first known to the Chinese through the *Report* of Chang-kien which is incorporated in Ch. 123 of Tsi-ma-tsien's *Shi-ki*. Though Chang-kien's *Report* is based on the affairs of Central Asia prevailing in the first century B.C., Chavannes thinks that in all probability the *Shi-ki* was completed about 99 B.C. Chapter 123 of the work contains the famous *Report* and it has been translated into English by Dr. Fr. Hirth in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. xxxvii, 1917, pp. 89ff, to the excellence of which many have testified.

For the period after 100 B.C., two Chinese works are useful: the *Tsien-Han-shu* or the *Annals of the First Han Dynasty* and the *Hou-Han-shu* or the *Annals of the Later Han Dynasty*. The *Tsien-Han-shu* comes down to 24 A.D. It was compiled by Pan-ku and after his death was finished by his sister Pan-tcha. It records the story of the First Han Dynasty, which was founded by Liu-Pang, a soldier of fortune from Central China, in the year 202 B.C. It is thus evident that for the period 202-100 B.C., the *Tsien-Han-shu* overlaps the *Shi-ki*. Important portions of the *Tsien-Han-shu*, specially 94a-b, have been translated by Parker in the *China Review*, xx, pp. 1ff and 109ff, xxi, 100ff and 129ff, while 96a-b has been translated by Wylie in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, 1881, pp. 20ff and 83ff, and also by de Groot in *Die Westlande Chinas in der Vorchristlichen Zeit*.

Chapter 118 of the *Hou-Han-shu* gives us some glimpses of the Yueh-chi. The work was composed by Fan-ye who based his account on the reports of Pan-young (c. 125 A.D.) and others.

The *Hou-Han-shu* covers the period between A.D. 25 and A.D. 220 for the history of China. But for the Yueh-chi it gives the picture of the period A.D. 25 to A.D. 125. This chapter has been translated with valuable notes by E. Chavannes in *Toung Pao*, viii, 1907, pp. 149-234.

We learn from the *Shi-ki* and the *Tsien-Han-shu* that the Hunnish king Chi-yu inflicted a crushing defeat on the Yueh-chi, a people of the Indo-Iranian stock¹ who were at that time occupying the extreme eastern and north-eastern parts of Kashgaria, or, in other words, the region adjoining the Hunnish dominions in Mongolia. The Yueh-chi king was killed and in the terrible panic that followed, the tribe became scattered. One started towards the west and came to be known as the Ta-Yueh-chi and the other moved directly to the south settled among the Tibetans or the Kiang and came to be known as the Tsien or the Little Yueh-chi. The Ta or the Great Yueh-chi defeated the Wu-sun in course of their westward march, in the neighbourhood of the original Yueh-chi territory, and not in the country of the Ili river (now called Kulja) as Rapson thinks,² and the Wu-sun king was killed while the crown prince fled to the Hunnish court where he grew up as a page-boy. When the crown prince grew up to manhood, he defeated the Yueh-chi and recovered his homeland. The Yueh-chi were forced to move again towards the west and we learn from the Chinese sources that they fell upon the Sai or the Śakas. As a result of this attack—(i) the Sai-wang moved south and ruled over Ki-pin; (ii) the Sai were scattered and at times formed several kingdoms.³

(i) Konow interprets the word Sai-wang as equivalent to the Śaka-Murunda, a branch of the vast Śaka horded,⁴ while as pointed out by Chavannes, Levi and others the term Ki-pin denoted Kashmir as a portion of the Punjab plain. Its identification with the Kāpiśa country as proposed by some scholars⁵ is certainly wrong.

¹ For a discussion about the nationality of the Yueh-chi, de la Vallée-Poussin, *L'Inde Aux Temps des Mauryas etc.*, 303ff.

² *CHI*, p. 565.

³ Remusat, *Nouveaux Melanges Asiatiques*, i. p. 205; Wylie, p. 34ff. The *Tsien Han Shu* seems to show further that some of the Śakas who could not move were ultimately absorbed in the Yueh-chi horde; Wylie, ii. p. 84; *SPIH*, p. 30.

⁴ *CII*, II. i. xx. f.

⁵ Chavannes, *Documents sur les Tou-kiue (Turcs) Occidentaux*, p. 336. Konow thinks that it is Kāpiśa, *Ep. Ind.* xiv. p. 291f; see also Tarn, *GBI*, p. 473, f.n. 1 for its identification with Kabul, which seems to be hardly satisfactory one; Chattopadhyaya, *SI*. p. 3f. for further discussions.

(ii) The Śakas who were thus attacked by the Yueh-chi, possibly occupied Bactria, as pointed out by McGovern and others,⁶ and thus the Greek rule there came to an end. Evidently this event forced Heliocles to move to the south of the Hindukush.⁷ The Yueh-chi, however, had been following them and the Śakas were forced to leave Bactria also. This fresh exodus of the Śakas followed the two main branches of the great road from Bactria, one leading to Mesopotamia through Merv, Hecatompylos and Ecbatana, and the other through Merv, Herat and Seistan to India.⁸

The strong Parthian empire in the west naturally acted as a great barrier against the further movement of the Śakas, and sooner or later, a conflict was inevitable. We learn from Justin that the Parthian monarch Phraates II (138-128 B.C.) was killed in battle against them. Artabanus II (128-123 B.C.), the successor of Phraates, inherited the great Śaka problem and brought temporary peace by paying them tribute. But ultimately his patience was exhausted and he was constrained to take up arms and lost life in the battle-field.⁹ When Mithridates II, the Great (123-88 B.C.), came to the throne, Parthia entered into a new chapter of her history. He put great pressure on the Scythians and it is generally believed that they migrated to India either during his reign¹⁰ or just after it,¹¹ by way of Ariana taking the usual route, which Craterus had once followed, by Kandahar, and the Bolan or the Mulla pass over the Brahui mountains leading to the country of the Lower-Indus or Sind, which thus came to be known as Indo-Scythia. The date of the migration, however, is intimately connected with the period of the Śaka king Maues, the first Iranian Śaka to rule in India. We shall discuss later on the reign of this king and shall see that this migration took place at the close of the first century B.C.

In India, we have thus two distinct bands of Śakas, the Sai-wang or the Muruṇḍas, as Konow calls them, and the Śakas of the Eastern Iran who had imbibed a strong Parthian element in their culture before their advent to India. The historical section of the *Purāṇas* also mention the Śakas and the Muruṇḍas

⁶ Cal. Rev. 1949, pp. 192f.

⁷ *supra*, p. 17.

⁸ Tarn, "*Seleucid Parthian Studies*", Proceedings of the British Academy, 1930 p. 117f; for the Śaka conquest of Bactria, Strabo, xi. 5, 11; Trogus, 41-2.

⁹ Debevoise, *A Political History of Parthia*, pp. 31, 35-39, 58.

¹⁰ *SPIH*, p. 325.

¹¹ *CII*. II. i. xxxvi; *CHI*, pp. 567-8.

separately; "When the kingdom of the Andhras has come to an end, there will be kings belonging to the lineage of their servants: 7 Andhras and 10 Ābhīra kings, also 7 Gardabhins, 18 Śakas. There will be 8 Yavanas, 14 Tuṣāras, 13 Muruṇḍas and 11 Hūnas".¹²

II

THE ŚAKAS IN INDIA

(a) *The Muruṇḍas*

Very little is known regarding the history of the Sai-wang or the Muruṇḍas of Ki-pin. The *Han-shu* states that attacked by the Yueh-chi "the Sai-wang went southwards and traversed Hien-tu", or the Hanging Gorge which is located 'on the Indus in a ssw. direction from Kashgar, a little to the west of Skardo, and near the boundary of the modern Dardistan'. The mention of the Hanging Gorge seems to indicate that the Sai-wang took the Kashmir route.¹³ Some scholars think that no tribal migration is possible through such difficult tracts of no man's land, but the discoveries of Stein make it highly probable that the region was inhabited from a very early period, to at least upto the sixth century A.D., and thus the route also may have been used.¹⁴

The *T'sien-Han-shu*, 96a, 10-12, gives the following brief history of Ki-pin:

The relations of China with Ki-pin began at the period of Wu-ti (140-85 B.C.). Inasmuch as it was remote and far distant, the Chinese troops could not reach the country. The prince of the land, Wu-tou-lao, had several times killed Chinese envoys. When Wu-tou-lao died, his son succeeded to the throne. He sent envoys to bring tribute. The official in the frontier district, Wen-chung, accompanied these envoys. The prince, however, proposed once more to do violence to Wen-chung. Wen-chung became aware of it, and opened negotiations with the son of the prince of Jung-ku by name Yin-mo-fu. Both

¹² Pargiter, *DKA*, p. 72.

¹³ *SI*, p. 4.

¹⁴ *ib.* For the view that no tribal migration is possible through the route, see *JRAS*, 1913, p. 635, f.n. 1 & 2; *CHI*, pp. 563-4; *GBI*, pp. 277-8; for Stein's discoveries, *JRAS*, 1944.

attacked Ki-pin on a concerted plan and killed its princes, whereupon Yin-mo-fu was appointed prince of Ki-pin. The incident occurred during the reign of the emperor Hsüan-ti, which lasted from 73 to 48 B.C. In the reign of Yüan-ti (48-33 B.C.), Yin-mo-fu killed the escort of a Chinese envoy and later on sent an envoy to apologise for the act. In the reign of Cheng-ti (32-7 B.C.) other envoys were sent to China from Ki-pin, possibly by Yin-mo-fu.¹⁵

A few scholars think that Yin-mo-fu was the Sai-wang (Śaka king), who being pressed by the Yueh-chi, entered Ki-pin. Yin-mo-fu's occupation of Ki-pin cannot be in any case prior to 73 B.C. (during the reign of the Emperor Hsüan-ti), while the Sai-wang started on migration long before this date, earlier than the embassy of Chang-kien in c. 136 B.C. Yin-mo-fu's achievement probably shows the overthrow of the rule of the Sai-wang in Ki-pin, and the establishment of a new dynasty—a revolution in which the Chinese also took part.¹⁶

(b) *The Sakas of Taxila*

Let us now turn to the history of the Iranian Śakas who first settled in Indo-Scythia,¹⁷ (*supra* p. 50) and later on caused the downfall of the Greek rule in the Upper Indus valley. Sir John Marshall's excavation in Taxila shows that the earliest Śaka king to rule there was Maues who was succeeded by a king named Azes. Smith and other scholars think that there were, in fact, two kings of the name of Azes, and the theory appears to be supported by the following data: (a) the coins which are assigned to Azes II are found generally nearer the surface than those of Azes I; (b) coins of Azes II (with Aspavarman) are found in company with the coins of Gondopharnes, which shows that Gondopharnes ruled after Azes II, but the evidence of coins proves that Azes I was succeeded by one Azilises; (c) Aspavarman appears to have been strategos in the reign of Gondopharnes, as well as in that of Azes, and it is impossible that this Azes can be Azes I.¹⁸

¹⁵ Wylie, p. 36; *SI*, p. 8.

¹⁶ *EECA*, p. 208; for Tarn's interpretation of the account, *GBI*, p. 340f; for the criticism of the same, *SI*, p. 9.

¹⁷ The term Indo-Scythia is possibly used for the first time in the *Periplus* (c. 60-80 A.D.). It is also mentioned in the *Geographike* of Ptolemy.

¹⁸ *JRAS*, 1914, p. 979.

Between Azes I and Azes II, there appears to have been a king named Azilises. This is proved by the evidence of two series of coins. In the first, we have the name of Azes in Greek characters and that of Azilises in Kharoṣṭhī, while in the second the name of Azilises appears in Greek and that of Azes in Kharoṣṭhī. This clearly indicates that Azes I was succeeded by Azilises who in his turn was succeeded by Azes II.

A gold coin reveals the existence of a king named Aṭhama. Whitehead thinks that Aṭhama was a member of the dynasty of Azes and Azilises. But it is difficult to place him in the genealogical table of the dynasty and his date is also uncertain. One peculiar feature of the names of the Śaka kings of Taxila is the final particle 'es' (Mau+es, Az+es, Azilis+es etc.) which, however, is not found in the name of this king.

The date of Maues has been a subject of great controversy with the Indologists and has been determined by (i) *numismatic* evidences, and (ii) by referring the *Taxila Copper Plate of the year 78* mentioning the great king Moga = Maues to particular era.¹⁹

It may be stated at the outset that the numismatic evidences lead us nowhere regarding the date of the king. He copies not only the coins of Demetrius but of Antialkidas as well.²⁰ From his imitation of certain Greek coin-types which seem to be connected with Puṣkalāvati, it has been inferred that he ruled over that region,²¹ while the similarity of the monogram on certain coins of Maues with that of Telephus led Tarn to conclude that Maues must have conquered Kāpiśa.²² But as yet not a single coin of the king has been found either in the Puṣkalāvati or the Kāpiśa regions,²³ a fact which shows that he did not rule in those places. This shows the weakness of the so-called "*mint-theory*", which is of value only when it is supported by the provenance of the coins.

Let us now, therefore, try to ascertain the era to which the Taxila Copper Plate of the year 78 may be referred, and this evidently depends on the fixation of an approximate time when Maues flourished. The Taxila Plate speaks of a subordinate

¹⁹ For the Taxila plate of the year 78, *CII. II. i. p. 28*; Sircar, *Select Ins.*, p. 120.

²⁰ See in this connection, Whitehead, *NC. 1946*. This shows that the theory that Maues ruled after Antialkidas cannot be accepted.

²¹ *CHI*, p. 570.

²² *GBI*, p. 332.

²³ A single coin of Maues was discovered in the Kabul valley and evidently it proves nothing regarding the extent of the kingdom.

satrap Liaka Kusulaka who has been identified with Liaka mentioned in the Manshera inscription²⁴ of the year 68, a fact which shows that the empire of Maues comprised a good portion of Kashmir i.e., Ki-pin. From the Chinese sources, on the other hand, we learn that Ki-pin = Kashmir was under the rule of Yin-mo-fu even after 32 B.C.²⁵ This proves that Maues cannot be placed before that date and the migration of the Iranian Śakas into India took place at the close of the first century B.C. As the Vikrama era, which starts from 58 B.C., had already been in vogue before the date of Maues, and as we have instances of its use in the Kharoṣṭhī records, it may be inferred that the Taxila Plate is also dated in that era. Ghirshman thinks that the Vikrama era has been used in practically all the older records, while, however, there was a separate Maues era and to it should be assigned the Taxila Plate.²⁶ Similarly Rapson ascribes this single Kharoṣṭhī record to an era of 150 B.C. and Tarn to an era of 155 B.C.,²⁷ while both the scholars assign all other older Kharoṣṭhī records to the Vikrama era 58 B.C. A solitary era for a single inscription appears to be highly improbable and unconvincing. In fact, these scholars had to think of a somewhat earlier date for Maues as they laid too much emphasis on the evidence of coins which, however, as we have already stated, leads us nowhere. The theory that the Vikrama era was started by Azes,²⁸ or that it started from the year of his death,²⁹ can hardly be accepted for Azes I uses the square Greek omicron on some of his coins, side by side with the round form. The square "O" makes its appearance in Parthia during the reign of Orodes I (57-38 B.C.). Azes evidently learnt it from the Parthians and he can hardly be the founder of the Vikrama era.

²⁴ *Ep. Ind.* xxi. p. 257; *PHAI*, p. 444, f.n. 3.

²⁵ *supra*, p. 52.

²⁶ *Begram*, pp. 105-8; cf. Fleet, *JRAS*, 1907, pp. 169-72; an era of Maues was also advocated by R. P. Chanda, *JRAS*, 1920, p. 319, and formerly by Marshall (*ASIR*, 1912-3, p. 7; *JRAS*, 1914, p. 896) but he now prefers the theory of Tarn primarily that the Taxila plate should be assigned to an era of c. 155 B.C., and of Rapson secondarily, c. 150 B.C. (*Taxila*, I. 45). A solitary era for a single inscription appears to be highly improbable and unconvincing.

²⁷ Rapson thinks that an era was started c.150 B.C. "to mark the establishment of the new kingdom in Seistan after its incorporation into the Parthian empire by Mithridates I" (*CHI*, p. 570). Tarn refers the record to the Saka era of c. 155 B.C. (*GBI*, pp. 494-502). Lohuizen de Leeuw refers all the earlier Kharoṣṭhī records to an era of 129 B.C., "when the Yueh-chi rule moved across the Oxus into Bactria dispossessing the Greeks" (*SPIH*, II. esp. pp. 28, 34, 48 etc.). For other theories, *GBI*, App. 16.

²⁸ Marshall, *JRAS*, 1914, p. 977; Rapson, *CHI*, p. 571.

²⁹ de la Vallée-Poussin, *l.c.* p. 267.

According to the Vikrama era of 58 B.C., the date of the Taxila C.P. of the year 78 would be 20 A.D. That Maues was ruling at the first quarter of the Christian era can be corroborated from other sources as well. The Taxila Plate mentions the satrap Liaka Kusulaka and his son mahādānapati Patika, who must be identical with the mahākṣatrapa Patika of the Mathura Lion Capital inscription, which mentions the mahākṣatrapa Rājula and his son kṣatrapa Soḍāsa as well.⁸⁰ This kṣatrapa Soḍāsa is again identical with the mahākṣatrapa Soḍāsa mentioned in the Āmohini Votive tablet,⁸¹ which Sir John Marshall assigns to the beginning of the Christian era, on account of the style of its carving,⁸² and which belongs to A.D. 14, if its date, in the year 72, is referred to the Vikrama era. Patika was a contemporary of Soḍāsa, and thus he can be assigned to the first quarter of the Christian era.

It can be said against this view that if both the inscriptions of sam. 72 and sam. 78 be referred to the same era, then Patika first becomes a mahākṣatrapa, and then holds a subordinate rank under his father as mahādānapati. But here we have to bear in mind the fact that all the sections of the Mathura Lion Capital inscription were not executed at the same time.⁸³ Hence it is quite likely that the Section G of the record, which mentions mahākṣatrapa Patika was executed sometimes after 20 A.D., after he had been elevated to the higher office, and thus he may be regarded as a younger contemporary of Soḍāsa.

From the above discussions, we can make the following inferences:

- (a) that Maues came to the throne sometimes after 32 B.C. and ruled upto c. 20 A.D.;
- (b) that if the Taxila Plate of the year 78 may be ascribed to the Vikrama era, then there remains no difficulty in assigning all the older Kharoṣṭhī records to the same era.

Tarn has adduced two grounds against assigning the Taxila Plate of Maues to the Vikrama era; first, the Vikrama era was started after a Śaka defeat and it therefore appears to be impossible that the Śaka kings would use it in their records; and secondly, it is a fixed point that Gondopharnes' reign began in

⁸⁰ For the Mathura Lion Capital inscription, Thomas, *Ep. Ind.* ix. p. 141f; CII. II. i. p. 48.

⁸¹ *Ep. Ind.* ii. p. 199; ix. pp. 243-4; xxi. p. 257n.

⁸² *CHI*, p. 633.

⁸³ *SI*, p. 18.

Taxila in 19 A.D. while the Taxila Plate if assigned to the Vikrama era would make Maues reign there in 20 A.D.⁸⁴

The first of the above objections is evidently based on the account of the Jaina legend *Kālakācāryakathānaka*, a hopelessly late and corrupt account which can hardly be used for historical purposes. The legend runs as follows:

Gardhabhila, the king of Ujjayinī, abducted Sarasvatī, the sister of the Jaina monk Kālaka. In order to punish the king, Kālaka went to the kula of the Śakas, on the other side of the Sindhu and sought their help. He induced some of the chiefs to accompany him. They embarked on a ship, crossed the Indus, proceeded to the Surāṣṭra viṣaya and divided that country among themselves. When the autumn came, one of them went to Ujjayinī, dethroned and imprisoned Gardhabhila and established one of the feudatories as the king of the land. The Śaka king who lived on the other side of the Indus used the title Sāhānuṣāhi, while his feudatories were simply styled Sāhis. The rule of the Śaka feudatory in Ujjayinī, the story runs, lasted only for four years, when the Vikramāditya drove out the foreigners and established an era of his own, which has been identified with the historic Vikrama era, commencing from 58 B.C.⁸⁵

The unhistorical character of the above account is quite apparent. The Śakas never used the title of Sāhānuṣāhi which was mainly a Kuṣāṇa title. Further, from the epigraphic records it appears that even in the ninth century A.D. the name of Vikrama was not universally connected with the era. Indeed, there has been much dispute regarding the origin of the reckoning. Dr. D. C. Sircar thinks that "the Vikrama era is identical with the Drangian reckoning that may have been started to indicate the independent status of East Iran and to oust the Arsacid era starting from 348 B.C., when Parthia itself threw off both the Seleucid yoke and the Seleucid era of 212 B.C."⁸⁶ If this be the case there is no valid ground for Tarn's objection. As we have already stated Azes I cannot be the founder of the era but, as Sir John Marshall thinks, the Vikrama era somehow came to be

⁸⁴ GBI, p. 494.

⁸⁵ *The Story of Kālaka, Texts, history, legend etc.* by W. N. Brown, 1933; also, *Vikrama Volume*.

⁸⁶ AIU, p. 127.

associated with the name of Azes.³⁷ This is of course not unlikely for we find that an era often becomes associated with the name of its user. Thus the name of the Śakas became associated with the era that was originally started by Kaniška I, the Kuṣāṇa king, just as the Gupta era became associated with the name of the Valabhi family.

As regards the second objection of Tarn it may be pointed out that the Takht-i-Bahi inscription³⁸ of Gondopharnes of the year 45 A.D. is dated in his 26th regnal year showing that really he became king in 19 A.D. But there is no proof that in that year his charge included Taxila. As we shall see later on he came to power in Eastern Iran, evidently in 19 A.D. and occupied Taxila at a later date.

Thus we find that there is no valid objection against assigning the Taxila Plate of Maues to the so-called Vikrama era of 58 B.C. Dr. D. C. Sircar also assigns all the earlier Kharoṣṭhi records to this era and gives the following dates for Maues and his successors³⁹:

1. Maues (Moa, Moga), c. 20 B.C.-A.D. 22.
2. Azes (Aya) I, c. 5 B.C.-A.D. 30; son (?) of Spalirises of east Iran and son-in-law (?) of No. 1.
3. Azilises (Ayilisha), c. A.D. 28-40; son (?) of No. 2.
4. Azes (Aya, Aja) II, c. A.D. 35-79; son (?) of No. 3.

Nothing definitely is known about the achievements of Maues. It has been asserted by some numismatists that as the figure of Poseidon appears on some of his coins he may have achieved some naval victory.⁴⁰ Cunningham has read the name Moa in the Maira inscription of the year 58. This shows that Maues ruled for at least 20 years, if not more, from 1 B.C. to 20 A.D.

It is generally believed that Azes I who succeeded Maues at Taxila came from Eastern Iran and belonged to an entirely different family.⁴¹ Thus for sometimes Maues and Azes I had been ruling contemporaneously in two different kingdoms. A series of coins discloses the existence of the family of Azes in Eastern Iran beginning with king Vonones. On the coins the name and title of Vonones are given in Greek language and script according to the regular Parthian formula while those of his relatives, associated with him in administration, are given in

³⁷ *Taxila*, i.

³⁸ *Ep. Ind.* xviii. p. 282; *CH*. II. i. p. 62; *Select Ins.* pp. 121-2.

³⁹ *Select Ins.* pp. 109-32; *AIU*, p. 127.

⁴⁰ *BMC*, p. 70, no. 15; p. 71, no. 17; *ASIR*, 1912-3, p. 47, no. 15; 1928-9, p. 65, no. 18; Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 135.

⁴¹ Rapson thinks that Azes of Arachosia should be identified with Azes II (*CHI*, p. 573); for a criticism of this view, *JRAS*, 1947.

Indian Prākṛt and the Kharoṣṭhī script. There can be no doubt that Vonones was the suzerain and that his relatives were his subordinate colleagues, who were obliged to use an Indian language and script in order to make their coin legends intelligible to their subjects on the Indian borderland, "while Vonones continued the old Bactrian and Parthian practice of using the Greek language and script as being one of the successors of Alexander". Vonones evidently administered some part of his possessions through the agency of his near relatives probably armed with viceregal power. Numismatic evidence gives names of three such relatives, (i) Spalahora, (ii) Spalagadama, and (iii) Spalirises. On the available coins found, Vonones is associated with—(a) Spalahora, described as *mahārajabhrata*, and (b) Spalagadama, as *Spalahora-putra*.

From these facts the inference is inevitable that king Vonones had a brother named Spalahora who may have governed as his viceroy. It also appears that Spalahora must have died during the life-time of Vonones, and was succeeded in the viceregal office by his son Spalagadama.

We also possess similar coins struck by one Spalirises as "*brother of the king*", with the Kharoṣṭhī legend *mahārajabhrata dhramiasa Spalirisasa*. Again, other coins exhibit Spalirisa, as king on his own account, with the Kharoṣṭhī legend, *mahārajasa mahatakasa Spalirisasa*. The king referred to in the first of these types can hardly be any other than Vonones and the legitimate inference seems to be that Spalirisa was a second brother of Vonones, who survived both Spalahora and Vonones, and succeeded the latter on the throne.

Two types of coins, again, exhibit on the reverse the Kharoṣṭhī legend, *Maharajasa mahatakasa Ayasa*, and on the obverse the name of Spalirises in Greek characters. These coins prove that Spalirisa, after his accession to the throne, had been ruling conjointly with one Aya or Azes. This Azes has been identified with king Azes I of Taxila, the successor of Maues, because his coins are closely related to the issues of the rulers of the Vonones group.

Marshall thinks, however, that after the death of Maues there was a Greek revival in Taxila under Hermaues, a member of the House of Eucratides, who had been ruling in the Kabul valley (*supra*, p. 32). Afterwards Vonones extended his suzerainty over India and his authority was acknowledged at Taxila, where Spalahora and Spalagadama acted as his legates.⁴²

⁴² *Taxila*, i. p. 51.

Tarn thinks on the other hand that after Maues, Taxila was occupied by Hippostratus and Nicias.⁴³ The theory of Greek revival in Taxila after Maues is not supported by any cogent evidence, while Vonones' assumption of the Imperial title appears to have nothing to do with the death of Maues and he evidently assumed it independently in imitation of the title of the Parthian rulers, when that opportunity came to him. There is absolutely no evidence to think that Spalahora and Spalagadama ever ruled in Taxila.

Azes overstruck some of Hippostratus' coins and uses the symbol of Athena Alkis. He appears to have ruled in the Puṣkalāvati region and his coins have been found in the Kabul valley. Azilises, the successor of Azes I, issued coins from the Kāpiśa mint of "the Zeus enthroned type", and also the type "Zeus standing with Mt. Pilusara". This shows that the Kāpiśa region had been under his sway, and the Greek ruler of the Kabul valley had possibly to acknowledge his overlordship. According to Justin, however, the Greeks were finally conquered by the Parthians. This may mean that after the temporary conquest of the Kabul valley by Azes—Azilises there was a Greek revival.

We have already seen Azilises was succeeded by Azes II. The name Aja or Aya (Azes) has been recognised by certain scholars in the Kalawan inscription of the year 134 (77 A.D.) and in the Taxila Silver Scroll record of the year 136 (79 A.D.). Dr. Sircar identifies Aya with Azes II and thinks that after the conquest of Gondopharnes Azes II took shelter among the Kuṣāṇas who recognised him as the *de jure*, of course not the *de facto*, king and, during the turmoil following the death of Gondopharnes, conquered the North-Western Frontier Province and the Western Punjab on his behalf.⁴⁴ The interpretation is not unlikely one though other explanation of the name Aja or Aya in the above two records is also possible. It has been stated before that the name of Azes somehow came to be associated with the Vikrama era, and, as Dr. Raychaudhuri points out, the fact that in the record of the year 136 we have reference to the establishment of the relics of the Buddha in Takṣasīlā "*for the bestowal of the health on the maharaja rajatiraja Devaputra Kuṣāṇa*" probably suggests that the years 134 and 136 belong to a period when the reign of Azes was a thing of the past, though the reckoning was associated still with his honoured name.⁴⁵ On some of his coins Azes II is

⁴³ GBI, pp. 329-30.

⁴⁴ AIU, p. 131.

⁴⁵ PHAI (4th ed.), p. 378.

associated with his strategos Aspavarman who later on served under Gondopharnes, the Parthian king. This shows that the rule of Azes II was supplanted, at least in the Western Punjab and portions of the N.W.F.P., by the Parthian monarch.

(c) *The Śaka Satraps*

Before they came to India, the Śaka kings of Taxila had been imbibed with Irano-Parthian culture and ideals, and they introduced into India the system of administration by Satraps after the Achaemenian model. From the inscriptions and coins we are in a position to determine some of these satrapies while in some cases again we have a number of isolated names of Satraps, but the locality of their rule cannot be determined with any amount of certainty. The most clearly ascertained centres of Satrapal government under the Śaka kings of Taxila appear to have been the following:

(i) The extreme north-western portion of the empire was possibly under the rule of the Satrap of Kāpiśa which comprised the present Kafiristan and the valleys of Ghorband and Panjsir. An inscription mentions a Satrap of Kāpiśa, who was the son of Satrap Granavhryaka.⁴⁶

(ii) After the conquest of the Puṣkalāvati region by Azes I a Satrap was possibly appointed to rule the region lying immediately to the west of the river Indus. Thus an inscription preserved in the Kabul Museum mentions the name of a Satrap of Puṣpapura (Puruṣapura ?) as Tiravharna.⁴⁷ The record is dated in the year 83, which if referred to the Vikrama era would give us the date 23 A.D.

(iii) The Swat valley region was evidently under the rule of the house of Vijayamitra or Viyakamitra since the time of Menander as proved by the evidence of the Shinkot inscription.⁴⁸ A member of this house, Aspavarman was a strategos under Azes II as we have already stated.

(iv) A Shahadaur inscription mentions a rājan Namijada or Damijada who was also evidently a Satrap though we do not know exactly over which province he ruled. In the first line of the record there is possibly a mention of Ayasa = of Azes showing that he was a Satrap either under Azes I or Azes II.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Rapson, *Catalogue*, ci; *Ancient India*, p. 141; *JASB*, 1924, p. 14; *CII*, II. i. pp. 150-1.

⁴⁷ *Acta Orientalia*, xvi. Paro, iii. 1937, p. 234ff.

⁴⁸ *Ep. Ind.* xxiv. p. 7.

⁴⁹ *CII*, II. i. pp. 14, 16.

To the east of the river Indus there appears to have been three satrapies—Abhisāraprastha, Cukhsa in Taxila and Mathura. While there is no doubt that the Satraps of Abhisāraprastha and Cukhsa were subordinate rulers under the Taxila kings, the case of Mathura appears to have been somewhat anomalous. We shall see later on that originally the Mathuran Satraps were possibly the subordinate rulers but later on they became practically independent and adopted the title of mahākṣatrapa.

(i) Cukhsa: It is generally believed that the modern Chach, a broad alluvial plain in the north of the Attock District, alongside the Indus, preserves the name of Cukhsa. We have already seen that the Taxila C.P. of the year 78 speaks of the Satrap Liaka Kusulaka and his son mahādānapati Patika, who became later on mahākṣatrapa as shown by the Section, G, of the Mathura Lion Capital inscription. Marshall thinks that "in all probability it (the satrapy of Cukhsa) lay along both banks of the Indus, comprising at least the Peshwar valley on its west and most of the Hazara, Attock and Mianwali districts on the east", and may have "corresponded roughly with the old Greek sub-kingdom ruled by Antimachus II, Polyxenus, Epander etc."⁵⁰ But it seems to be doubtful whether the satrapy was so large since Abhisāraprastha, situated in the mountains above the Taxila country,⁵¹ comprised another satrapy.

(ii) Abhisāraprastha: In the legend of a copper seal ring found in the Punjab mention is made of Śivasena, a Satrap in the town of Abhisāraprastha.⁵² Another Satrap belonging to the same house may have been Śivarakṣita.⁵³ The Indian form of the name is interesting and shows how the Śakas had been attracted towards the Śaiva faith.

(iii) Some scholars think that the satrapy of Mathura was important one and it was formed in order to keep a guard against the advancement of the Śātavāhanas who had already been in occupation of the Malwa country.⁵⁴ Coins show that the earliest of the Satraps to have the charge of Mathura were Hagāna and Hagāmasa. Their coins are related as regards both type and fabric to those of Pañcāla and the princes of Mathura. Thus it appears that Hagāna and Hagāmasa, who ruled conjointly, super-

⁵⁰ *Taxila*, i. p. 48 & f.n. 1.

⁵¹ *PHAI*, p. 248.

⁵² *CII*. II. i. p. 103.

⁵³ *ib.*, p. 102.

⁵⁴ *Taxila*, i. p. 55.

seded princes like Gomitra and Rāmadatta of Mathura and the adjoining regions.⁵⁵

Later on we find that one Rājula became the mahākṣatrapa of the place. His coins are the exact copies of the coins of Strato I and Strato II. This shows that he began his rule originally in the Eastern Punjab and later on became the mahākṣatrapa of the Mathura region. This theory is also supported by the provenance of his coins which have been found in large number in Mathura, while several small copper coins were recovered from the Eastern Punjab, besides a few copper specimens from Mathura of pure Indian type, with the inscription "*mahākṣatrapasa Rajubulasa*". In the Greek legends of the billion coins, he takes the title of 'the king of kings', but on the *reverse*, he is called simply Satrap with the additional title of "*Apraticakra*".⁵⁶ Konow thinks that Yuvarāja Kharaoṣṭa, who is mentioned in the first Section of the Mathura Lion Capital inscription giving us an account of the family of Rājula or Rañjubula, was the father-in-law of Rājula and was the inheritor of the position of "king of kings" after Maues.⁵⁷ If we accept this interpretation we have to admit that the dominion of Maues extended in the east possibly as far as Mathura. Thomas, however, thinks that Kharaoṣṭa was the son of Rājula.⁵⁸ The interpretation of Thomas appears to be better one for the manner in which Yuvarāja Kharaoṣṭa is mentioned in Group ii, e, seems to show that he, in no way, held a superior position than mahākṣatrapa Rājula. Kharaoṣṭa was possibly a son of Rājula, but died during the life-time of his father and was succeeded by his brother or half-brother Soḍāsa as kṣatrapa or crown-prince, and later on this Soḍāsa succeeded Rājula as mahākṣatrapa. There are several coins with the Kharaoṣṭhi legend "*Kṣatrapasa pra Kharaoṣṭasa Artasa putrasa*". This shows that Kharaoṣṭa left a son named Arta who later on became a Satrap, possibly under his uncle Soḍāsa, and issued the above coins.

Both coins and inscriptions of Soḍāsa have been found in

⁵⁵ Allan, *Catalogue*, p. 183f, Plate, xxvi. pp. 1-6. Tarn thinks that the Sakas reached Mathura quite independently of their advance up the Indus, perhaps from Mālava across Rajputana by Ajmir. (*GBI*, p. 325). Konow is of opinion that the Saka rule in Mathura was established by chiefs who left Mālava when that country under the leadership of Vikramāditya (c. 58 B.C.) asserted its independence (*JIH*, xii. p. 23). Both Tarn and Konow base their assumption on the evidence of the *Kālakācāryakathānaka*, which, however, has got little historical value.

⁵⁶ Cunningham, *Coins of the Sakas*, p. 26.

⁵⁷ *Corpus*, II. i. p. 36f.

⁵⁸ *Ep. Ind.* ix. p. 141f.

Mathura only, and from this we can possibly infer that unlike his father his dominion did not include the Eastern Punjab region. This may be due to two facts; either, there was a Greek revival in the Eastern Punjab, or, Maues who was his contemporary took the charge of the whole Punjab region under his own control. As we have already seen he is mentioned as a mahākṣatrapa in the Āmohini Votive tablet of the year 72, which, as Konow has pointed out, if referred to the Vikrama era, gives us the date 15 A.D. So sometimes before 15 A.D., Soḍāsa became a mahākṣatrapa. Taranadāsa or Bharanadāsa who issued coins as kṣatrapa and describes himself as the son of a mahākṣatrapa may have been a son of Soḍāsa.⁵⁹

III

THE PARTHIANS

From the above discussions it is clear that the Śakas, one by one, put an end to the rule of the Greeks in India proper, and only one Greek settlement continued its precarious existence in the Kabul valley under Hermaues. It is difficult to determine exactly how their rule came to an end in Taxila and other parts of North-Western India. During the reign of Azes II the currency "suffered a sudden and surprising eclipse. The design deteriorated and the workmanship came to a very low ebb". It has been surmised that such a state of affairs happened due to "some local catastrophe such as an earthquake or plague, which had wiped out the mint and its skilled engravers".⁶⁰

Evidently taking advantage of this calamitous situation the Parthians made an inroad into India, wiped out the Śaka rule and occupied Taxila. When Apollonius of Tyana visited Taxila in 43-44 A.D., the throne of that country was occupied by one Phraotes, evidently a Parthian as his name indicates.⁶¹ Following Herzfeld, Tarn thinks that Phraotes was Gondopharnes for the term Phraotes was a Graecised corruption of the word *apratihata* which is a title of Gondopharnes on his coins.⁶² Lohuizen de Leeuw has ably controverted the theory and has shown that Phraotes and Gondopharnes were different persons.⁶³ Marshall also points out "the title *apratihatacakra* had been used by

⁵⁹ *SI*, p. 29.

⁶⁰ *Taxila*, i. p. 54.

⁶¹ *The Life of Apollonius*, ed. Coneybeare, i. p. 183f.

⁶² *GBI*, p. 341.

⁶³ *SPIH*, p. 353.

the Satrap Rajubula in the Eastern Punjab. *B. M. Cat.* p. 67. It may be noted that Philostratus represents Phraotes as being only 27 years of age at the time of Apollonius' visit, which would mean that he was about twelve years of age when he came to the throne in A.D. 19. On all his coins, however, Gondopharnes appears as a bearded, middle-aged man".⁶⁴

The famous Takht-i-Bahi inscription⁶⁵ of the year 103 shows that Gondopharnes was the king in 45 A.D. and that his reign began in 19 A.D., because the record is dated in his 26th regnal year as well. Thus we have two Parthian kings—Phraotes (44 A.D.) and Gondopharnes (45 A.D.). From the Takht-i-Bahi record, however, it does not necessarily follow that Gondopharnes occupied Taxila in 45 A.D. and it is more probable that he did so a few years later.

Numismatic evidences show that before he came to India Gondopharnes had been ruling as a subordinate under one Orthanges in Eastern Iran. The coins of Orthanges may be divided into two groups: (a) those which show Orthanges as the supreme ruler and Gondopharnes, with Guda or Gudana, as ruling under him: (b) those which omit the name of Gondopharnes and bear the name of Gudana alone. Rapson thinks that the second group "must no doubt be assigned to the period after Gondopharnes had succeeded Azes II in the sovereignty of N. W. India".⁶⁶

Phraotes may have been a governor of Orthanges, and we are informed that the "Satrap of the Indus" was a subordinate under him. In that case we have to assume that Orthanges was the first Parthian ruler of Arachosia who extended his suzerainty into the interior of India.

Gondopharnes evidently occupied Taxila after the death of Phraotes. Marshall thinks that "at its fullest extent the empire of Gondopharnes comprised Sistan, Sind (probably with Cutch and Kathiawar), the Southern and Western Panjab, the North-West Frontier Province (with much of what is now tribal territory), and Southern Afghanistan. There is evidence also that he conquered and annexed part of the Parthian dominions to the west of Sistan".⁶⁷

Before we proceed further we want to examine critically whether the dominion of Gondopharnes was really such extensive

⁶⁴ *Taxila*, i. p. 64, f.n. 3.

⁶⁵ *Ep. Ind.* xviii. p. 282; *CII.* II. i. p. 62.

⁶⁶ *CHI*, p. 578.

⁶⁷ *Taxila*, i. p. 60.

one. The inclusion of the Peshawar District in the kingdom is proved by the find-spot of the Takht-i-Bahi record and the Aspavarman coins, while his Śaka type of coins with the type of 'king on horse-back with the standing figure of Zeus or Athene on the reverse' proves his conquest of the Śaka kingdom of the Western Punjab. If the figure of Athene can really be detected on such coins we may possibly infer that he conquered the Eastern Punjab as well. At Begram and other sites in the Kabul valley, coins of Gondopharnes have been found in large number which proves indirectly that he also conquered those regions. As we have already stated, the Chinese historian Fan-ye informs us that "Kabul fell under the rule of Parthia". It is quite likely that he put an end to the rule of the last Greek king Hermaues. Now, we have got a series of coins having on the *obverse* the "Bust of Hermaues diademed" and on the *reverse* a *Kharoṣṭhī* legend referring to Kujula Kadphises, Kuṣāṇa Yavuga, and on another class there is on the *obverse* the "Bust of Hermaues diademed", and a Greek legend: 'Kujula Kadphises, Kusana', while the reverse is the same as in the former class. These coins prove beyond any doubt that there was an alliance between the Greek king Hermaues and the Kuṣāṇa chief Kujula Kadphises. The first class shows that evidently at the beginning Kujula Kadphises was a subordinate partner in the alliance while the second class shows that later on he was placed on the same footing with the Greek lord.⁶⁸ The alliance was evidently formed against the attack of the Parthian king Gondopharnes who however became victorious and annexed the Kabul valley to his empire. Konow reads in the Takht-i-Bahi record the name of *erjhuna Kapa* = prince Kapa, whom he identifies with Kujula Kadphises or Kadphises I. The full reading as restored by Konow stands as *erjhuna Kap(sha)sa*. The restoration is quite probable and it is not unlikely that after Gondopharnes' conquest of the Kabul valley, there was friendly relationship between the Parthian king and the Kuṣāṇa leader. If our interpretation be accepted then we have to assume that Gondopharnes' conquest of the Kabul valley preceded the execution of the Takht-i-Bahi record of 45 A.D. and also possibly preceded his occupation of the Taxila country. Gondopharnes, as we have already seen, began his career in Arachosia and it is not unlikely that he conquered the Kabul valley while he was still a subordinate ruler under the Suren

⁶⁸ Tarn thinks that these are pedigree coins, *GBI*, p. 338f; cf. *JIH*, xii. p. 29.

Orthanges. His conquest of the Śaka kingdom also may have thus begun from the west through the Khyber Pass. From Philostratos it appears that Phraotes, the predecessor of Gondopharnes on the throne of Taxila, enlisted the service of certain barbarians to guard his kingdom against other barbarians. It is not unlikely that his ultimate aim was to guard his kingdom against an attack from the Kuṣāṇas as well as from Gondopharnes.

Both Rapson and Marshall think that Gondopharnes conquered Seistan and part of the Parthian dominion to the west of Seistan. For this they depend on the fact that Gondopharnes issued "a silver coinage of the Arsacid type (*B. M. Cat. Pl. xxxii*, no. 10) and that this particular symbol is found counter-marked on coins of the Parthian Orodes I and Artabanus III".⁶⁹

There however remains some doubt whether the suzerainty of Gondopharnes extended over Cutch and Kathiawar. The Lower Indus valley may have passed under his rule and the Satrap of the Indus who acknowledged the authority of Phraotes may have transferred his allegiance to the latter's successor. For his theory (that the empire of Gondopharnes included Cutch and Kathiawar) Marshall has depended on the fact that Sapedanes (a subordinate ruler under Gondopharnes) "may possibly be the prince whom the *Periplus* calls Sandanes and who from the indications given in that work appears to have had his dominions in the region of Barygaza and Surāṣṭra".⁷⁰

Now, the account of the *Periplus* runs as follows:

"The city of Calliena (Kalyāna) in the time of the elder Saraganus became a lawful market town; but since it came into the possession of Sandanes the port is much obstructed and Greek ships landing there may chance to be taken to Barygaza (Broach) under guard".⁷¹

From the above account it does not at all follow that Sandanes, who was evidently a later Sātavāhana prince,⁷² was in possession of the port of Barygaza. On the contrary, the *Periplus* gives definite indications that Barygaza was the port *par excellence* of the kingdom of Nambanus whose identification with the Śaka king Nahapāna appears to be beyond any doubt.⁷³

For the administration of the vast kingdom under his rule Gondopharnes followed the Parthian model of appointing several

⁶⁹ *Taxila*, i. p. 60, f.n. 3.

⁷⁰ *ib.*

⁷¹ *The Periplus* p. 43.

⁷² For various theories about the identification of Sandanes, *infra*, Ch. 5.

⁷³ *JRAS*, 1946, p. 170.

vassal or sub-vassal kings under his control. Rapson thinks that (i) his nephew Abdagases was probably his viceroy in Eastern Iran, (ii) the Strategos Aspavarman was in charge of the Swat valley region.⁷⁴

(i) Marshall points out that the coins of Abdagases may be divided into two groups, the earlier ones of billon similar in types and style to the billon coins of Gondopharnes, issued from the Taxila mint, and the later ones of copper issued from Seistan. On the basis of the above evidence it has been held that Abdagases was at first the viceroy or sub-king, if not of Taxila, somewhere in the eastern parts of the empire and later on he became the governor of Iran.

(ii) The strategos Aspavarman was possibly the military governor and was possibly given the task of keeping away the barbarian Kuṣāṇas who were now growing in power day by day. There are similar coins in the name of Gondopharnes and Sasas showing that at a later time Sasas succeeded to the office of Aspavarman.

Marshall further thinks that another sub-king under Gondopharnes was Zioneses who was in charge of the Cukhsa country, which he thinks comprised Puṣkalāvati as well. A few coins with the inscription '*Manigulasa Catrapasa Jihoniassa*' were discovered and it was once thought that Manigula and Jihonika were Satraps of Puṣkalāvati under Azes II.⁷⁵ In 1927 an inscription of Jihonika of the year 191 was found in Taxila.⁷⁶ Tarn thinks that he was a nephew of and a Satrap under the Parthian king Gondopharnes.⁷⁷ If that be the case then the record should be referred to the Vikrama era and thus the date of Jihonika would be 33 A.D. But it is very doubtful whether Gondopharnes had occupied the Puṣkalāvati or the Taxila region about that time. Further, the coins of Jihonika are of pure silver but we have no silver coins of the Parthian king. He may have been the Satrap under the Kuṣāṇas, and referred to the Śaka era, the date of the above inscription would be 134 A.D.

There are coins bearing the portrait and symbol of Gondopharnes and the names respectively of Sapedana and Satavastra with the title 'Great King, King of Kings'. Marshall, as we have already seen, thinks that they were sub-kings under the Parthian monarch in the region of Cutch and Surāṣṭra,—a theory which

⁷⁴ *CHI*, pp. 577-81.

⁷⁵ Rapson, *Indian Coins*, p. 9.

⁷⁶ *JRAS*, 1928, p. 137f; *CII*. II. i. p. 81f.

⁷⁷ *GBI*, p. 353f.

can hardly be accepted (*supra*, p. 66). As Rapson says the title "is only one degree inferior to the most lofty title assumed by Gondopharnes, viz., 'Great King, Supreme King of Kings'.⁷⁸ Such a style can only mean that even in the reign of Gondopharnes, the allegiance of the governors to the suzerain was becoming merely nominal. We do not know however the district over which Sapedana and Satavastra ruled.

We are fortunate in getting a few details of the reign of Gondopharnes apart from the dry ones supplied by the archaeological sources. The apocryphal *Acts of Judas Thomas the Apostle* in its Syriac version contains the story of the conversion of Gondopharnes into Christianity by the Apostle St. Thomas. Even if we may doubt the historicity of the account it shows at any rate how the name of the Parthian monarch became celebrated in far off lands. Others who scent history in the above legend have come to the following conclusion:

(i) "There is good early evidence that St. Thomas was the apostle of the Parthian empire; and also evidence that he was the apostle of 'India' in some limited sense, —probably of an 'India' which included the Indus valley, but nothing to the east or south of it".

(ii) "According to the Acts, the scene of the martyrdom of St. Thomas was in the territory of a king named, according to the Syriac version, Mazdai, to which he had proceeded after a visit to the city of a king named, according to the same version, Gudnaphar or Gundaphar".

(iii) "There is no evidence at all that the place where St. Thomas was martyred was in Southern India; and all the indications point in another direction. (According to some versions St. Thomas was martyred in Calamina which has been identified wrongly by some scholars with Kalyāna near Bombay)".

(iv) "We have no indication whatever, earlier than that given by Marco Polo, who died 1324, that there ever was even a tradition that St. Thomas was buried in Southern India".⁷⁹

We have already seen that the Sapedana—Satavastra coins demonstrate the fact that the Parthian empire was a loose federation of semi-independent vassal chiefs who nominally owed allegiance to the sovereign. In such a state of affairs as long as a strong personality remains at the centre things go on smoothly, but in case of a weak personality the different units naturally become virtually independent and a chaos follows. Such became

⁷⁸ *CHI*, p. 580.

⁷⁹ *IA*, xxxii. (1903, p. 151).

the condition of the Parthian empire after the death of Gondopharnes. While giving an account of Indo-Scythia, the *Periplus* states: "Before it (Barbaricum) there lies a small island and inland behind it is the metropolis of Scythia, Minnagara; it is subject to Parthian princes who are constantly driving each other out".⁸⁰

The disintegrated political condition of the Parthian empire is reflected by the evidence of coins also. According to Lohuizen de Leeuw, Gondopharnes was succeeded by his nephew Abdagases, who was, however, soon driven out and took shelter in the court of Parthia, and he was followed in India by Pakores.⁸¹ None of the coin legends of Abdagases bear the Imperial title and hence it is difficult to think that he succeeded Gondopharnes. From the numismatic evidences we can possibly make the following brief outline:

(a) Abdagases was the viceroy in Eastern Iran, and after the death of Gondopharnes the region possibly passed under Sanabares.

(b) Pakores, whose coins are of the Seistan pattern possibly became the successor of Gondopharnes in the region to the west of the Indus. The paucity of his coins proves evidently that he had a very short reign. Whether his sway extended also over Taxila is not certain.

(c) The strategos Sasas became independent in the Swat valley region, which was his home district, and possibly later on occupied Taxila.

(d) Some scholars think that before Taxila passed under Sasas it had been for a time under Sapedana—Satavastra who acknowledged Pakores as the overlord. But the evidence of coins on this point is not very clear.

While thus the Parthian empire was passing through a crisis, Taxila and the neighbouring region was visited by a deadly plague.⁸² Thus utter confusion prevailed everywhere and taking advantage of the situation the Kuṣāṇas appeared in India soon after 60 A.D. which ultimately led to the establishment of an empire in North India under their hegemony.

⁸⁰ *The Periplus*, p. 37.

⁸¹ *SPIH*, p. 361.

⁸² *Taxila*, i. p. 65.

CHAPTER IV

THE KUSANAS

I

THE EARLY KUSANA KINGS

Excavations at Begram have unearthed a large number of coins of the Parthian king Gondopharnes, but none of his successor.¹ This evidently shows that the region of the Kabul valley passed under the rule of a different line after the death of Gondopharnes. On the other hand, the Panjtār Stone inscription of 64 A.D. shows that the Kuṣāṇas had established their rule in the Peshawar district.² From the Chinese accounts, we learn that the Kuṣāṇa king Kadphises I "invaded Ngan-si (Parthia) and took possession of the territory of Kao-fu (Kabul). He also overcame Pouta and Ki-pin (Kashmir) and became completely master of these kingdoms".³ Thus we may infer that sometimes after the death of Gondopharnes and before 64 A.D. the region lying to the west of the Indus including the Kabul valley passed under the rule of the Kuṣāṇa king Kadphises I.

The rise of Kadphises thus marks an epoch in the history of the Kuṣāṇas. The Kuṣāṇas were a branch of the Yueh-chi, who, as we have already seen, began a movement towards the west, when about 165 B.C. they were attacked by the Hiung-nu king Chi-yu.⁴ After various vicissitudes of fortune they ultimately came and settled in Ta-hia or Bactria about 145 B.C.⁵ In 128 B.C. the Chinese ambassador Chang-kien visited their country and found them already well-settled in the land. The political condition of this part of Asia is thus described in the *Report* of the ambassador:

"North of this country (Ta-yuan = Ferghana) is Kang-ku (Sogdiana); in the west are the Ta-Yueh-chi; in the south-west is Ta-hia (Bactria); in the north-east are the Wu-sun; and in the east Han-mi and Wu-tien (Khotan)".⁶

¹ For excavations at Begram, see Ghirshman, *JA*, 1943-5, pp. 59-71; *Begram*, 1946.

² *CHI*, I, p. 584; the Panjtār record, like the other pre-Kaniška Kharoṣṭhī records may be ascribed to the Vikrama era. cf. *Select Ins.* p. 126.

³ Chavannes, T'oung-Pao, serie, tome VIII, 1907, p. 187.

⁴ *supra*, p. 49.

⁵ *supra*, p. 32.

⁶ F. Hirth, *JAOS*, 1917, p. 95; *Shi-ki*, 123, 22.

The same Report states elsewhere that when the Yueh-chi were driven by Hiung-nu, "they fled to a distant country and crossed to the west of Yuan, attacked Ta-hia and conquered it. Subsequently they had their capital in the north of the Kui-shui (Oxus) and made it the court of their king".⁷

We next hear of the Yueh-chi in the *Hou Han-shu* or "*The History of the Later Han Dynasty*" composed by Fan-ye who died in 445 A.D. Fan-ye gives the following account:

"In old days the Yueh-chi were vanquished by the Hiung-nu. They then went to Ta-hia and divided the kingdom among five 'Yabgous', viz., those of Hieou-mi, Chouang-mi, Kouei-chowang, Hi-touen and Tou-mi. More than hundred years after that, the Yabgou of Kouei-Chouang (Kushan) named Kieou-tsieou-kio (Kozoulo Kadphises) attacked and vanquished the four other 'Yabgous' and called himself king; the name of his kingdom was Kushan".

From coins we come to learn of various obscure rulers who may have belonged to one or other of the five Yueh-chi principalities referred to above. One of them Miaos (or Heraos) was the first "chieftant among the Yueh-chi to issue a Greek coinage. Other such kings were Hyrcodes, Spabaris, Sapaobizes etc."⁸ The rise of Kujula Kadphises evidently put an end to the rule of these petty kings and the Yueh-chi now became strong enough to aggrandise themselves at the cost of the neighbouring kingdoms.

Naturally the tribe was attracted towards India and we can possibly determine the different stages in the process of this advancement. We have already referred to the coins jointly issued by Hermaues, the last Greek king of the Kabul valley, and Kujula Kadphises who played a subordinate role at that time. Next the Kuṣāṇa chief entered into friendly relationship with the Parthian king Gondopharnes, as proved by the mention of *erjhuna* (prince) Kapa in the Takht-i-Bāhi record.⁹ His Indian campaign evidently began after the death of Gondopharnes. Allan has pointed out that Kujula copied the coins of Claudius, who reigned from A.D. 41 to 54.¹⁰ This would show that Kujula was ruling even after 41 A.D. at least, and thus may well have been a contemporary of Gondopharnes.

Marshall points out that the coins of Kujula Kadphises have

⁷ *Shi-ki*, 123, 29.

⁸ *GBI*, p. 305.

⁹ *CII*, II. i. p. 62.

¹⁰ *CSHI*, p. 74.

been found in so large number in Sirkap that it would be natural to infer that he added Gandhāra and Taxila to his other conquests, referred to by the author of the Hou Han-shu.¹¹ It is further surmised that part of these conquests may have been achieved by his son Vima Kadphises, during his life-time, for the Chinese sources inform us that Kujula died at an advanced age of more than 80 years and further that Yen-kao-chen or Vima Kadphises conquered Tien-chu or India. So if Taxila really passed under the rule of Kadphises I, the conquest of the place must have been effected by his son. Evidently in his old age Kadphises could not physically undertake the arduous task of military campaigns which were left to be undertaken by his grown up son. The Kalawan (near Sirkap, Taxila) Copper plate of the year 134 = 76 A.D.¹² shows, however, that Taxila was subsequently lost to the Kuṣāṇas, and Vima had to conquer the countries to the east of the Indus afresh. The Kalawan record makes no mention of the Kuṣāṇas and it is dated in the era of Azes i.e., the Vikrama era, which, as we have already said, became associated with the name of Azes at a later date, just as the era of Kaniṣka became associated with the name of the Śakas, and the Gupta era with the name of the Maitrakas of Valabhi. The non-mention of the name of the Kuṣāṇas show that in 76 A.D. the country of Taxila was outside their jurisdiction. This has led many scholars to think that Vima Kadphises came to the throne after 76 A.D. and then conquered the country of Tien-chu, as he is credited in the Chinese records.

Konow and Marshall think that Vima Kadphises came to the throne in 78 A.D.¹³ and he was the originator of the Śaka era running from that date. There is, however, no proof that he was the originator of an era, for "no inscription or coin of this monarch contains any date which is referable to an era of his institution".¹⁴ Ghirshman, on the other hand, puts his date at 95 A.D. We shall discuss later on the basis of Ghirshman's theory to show that it is really untenable. Here it may only be pointed out that in case of such late dates for Vima Kadphises, it "would be unexplainable why Wima Kadphises imitated the standard of the Roman aureus of Augustus and his immediate successors which in the mean time had been depreciated by Nero. The standard of Wima Kadphises in that case would not tally any more (sic)

¹¹ Marshall, *Taxila*, i. p. 67.

¹² *Ep. Ind.* xxi. p. 259.

¹³ Marshall, *l.c.*, p. 69; *CII.* II. i. p. lxxvii.

¹⁴ *PHAI*, p. 463.

with that of the western tradesman which would be quite impracticable".¹⁵

It is indeed difficult to determine exactly when the reign of Kujula Kadphises came to an end and when his successor Vima Kadphises came to power, though from the above discussions it is clear that he must have ruled before the starting of the Śaka era. As we have already stated the Panjtar inscription of 64 A.D. shows that the Peshawar district was under the rule of a Kuṣāṇa monarch. If, as Marshall thinks, that this conquest was carried on by Vima Kadphises on behalf of his father then we may assign the record to the older Kadphises. In this connection we may discuss the evidence of two coins having the following legend on them:

(a) *Maharayasa Rayatirayasa Kujula Karakaphasa
sacadhramathitasa*

(b) *Maharajasa rajatirajasa Kusanasa ya(vugasa ?)*

Marshall thinks that the class (a) coins should be attributed to Vima Kadphises. "The reason for associating them with Vima rather than with Kujula Kadphises is that the word *kara* has been interpreted as the equivalent of *kala*, which was used at a somewhat later date in Turkestan with the meaning prince, and if this interpretation is correct, it would seem that the coins were issued by Vima Kadphises as crown-prince during his father's life-time. In that case the coin figured in R.U.C. no. 226, which bears the legend Kujula kara dhramathidasa, may also have been issued by the crown-prince Vima".¹⁶ It has been suggested that the coins of class (b) probably belonged to Kujula Kadphises.¹⁷ The title Yavuga shows, however, that they were issued by some subordinate ruler and hence they should also properly be attributed to Vima Kadphises.

Vima Kadphises may have conquered Gandhāra and Taxila on behalf of his father. The Hou Han-shu informs us that "Kieou-tsieou-kio died at the age of 80. His son Yen-kao-chen ascended the throne. He conquered Tien-chou (India) and there set up *generals*, who governed in the name of the Yueh-chi".¹⁸ Smith gives the following note on the reign of this monarch:

¹⁵ SPIH, p. 366.

¹⁶ Marshall, *l.c.*, pp. 67-8. Rapson thinks that Kujula Kara Kadphises was a third Kuṣāṇa king (CHI, p. 582); *contra*, CII, ii. i. pp. lxiv-lxv.

¹⁷ Konow also maintains a similar view (CII, II. i. p. lxxv); *contra*, Rapson, CHI, p. 581.

¹⁸ JRAS, 1903, p. 24; JDL, i. p. 72; Marshall, *l.c.* p. 67. Marshall thinks that he set up "an army leader" (*sing.*). The original text shows that the *sing.* or *plural* may both be indicated. Ed. Specht uses the *plural* "generals".

"The Indian dominions of Kadphises II certainly extended to the Ganges, and probably at least as far south as Benares. His empire extended westward to the frontiers of Parthia, and included the whole of the countries now known as Afghanistan, Afghan Turkistan, Bukhara, and parts of Russian Turkistan".¹⁹

Though there is no positive evidence to show that the empire of Vima Kadphises was so extensive one, there may be some basis for the above assertion as the subsequent discussions would show. We have to remember the facts that the reign of Vima must have come to an end before 78 A.D. and that he governed his empire through his *viceroys*, as stated by the Chinese chronicles.

II

A DISCUSSION OF KANIŠKA'S DATE

While the Kalawan inscription of the year 76 A.D., referred to above, shows that the Kuṣāṇas had no jurisdictions over Taxila, the Taxila Silver Scroll inscription²⁰ of the year 136 = 78/9 A.D. shows their rule over the place. Now this record presents us with two problems: (a) the inscription refers to '*maharajasa rajatirajasa Devaputrasa Khusanasa*' which is the peculiar form of description of the Kaniška group of kings who ruled after the Kadphises group, but not of the latter; (b) as Vima's rule ended before 78 A.D. when Kaniška I came to power who was the originator of the era which starts from that year, the record, being dated in the Vikrama era, cannot be ascribed to him.

Thus while the use of the Vikrama era shows that the Taxila Silver Scroll record cannot belong to the Kaniška group, the use of the expression *Devaputra* in it shows at the same time that it cannot belong to the Kadphises group. This naturally leads us to assume that it was issued by a king who did not belong to the either group.

Thus we may arrive at the following facts about the early Kuṣāṇa kings of India:

(a) Before 64 A.D. they conquered the region to the west of the Indus, as proved by the Panjtar record.

¹⁹ Smith, *JRAS*, 1903, p. 31. Thomas has shown that the *Han records* mention the conquest of Central India by Vima Kadphises or Kadphises II (*NIA*, vii. 1944). Large number of his coins have been found in Mathura.

²⁰ *Ep. Ind.* xiv. p. 295.

(b) As crown prince Vima Kadphises may have conquered Taxila, and later on when he succeeded his father he conquered the interior of India and appointed viceroys to rule over the different parts of his empire. His reign evidently came to an end before 78 A.D. As Kujula died at an advanced age of more than 80 years, it is but natural that the reign-period of his son Vima was short one.

(c) About 76 A.D. there was some trouble in the Kuṣāṇa empire and Taxila may have become independent of Vima Kadphises, either under its own local ruler or under one of the viceroys of Vima Kadphises.

(d) In 78/9 A.D. Taxila was under the rule of a Kuṣāṇa king who did not belong either to the Kadphises or to the Kaniška group. The king evidently was one of the viceroys of Vima who declared his independence, but who did not venture to put his own name on the record. He may be identified with the nameless king of the Soter Megas coins. We have a gold coin of Vima giving him the title *Basileus Basilion Soter Megas*.²¹ On the analogy of the Taxila Silver Scroll inscription, it may safely be assumed that the viceroy, after he became independent, similarly used the title of Soter Megas but not his own name.²² This, further, shows that Kadphises II was possibly alive in 79 A.D., for otherwise, the ruler of the Taxila Scroll may have given his own name in the record.

At this stage we have to discuss the important question whether Kaniska, who is generally regarded as the successor of Vima Kadphises, came to the throne in 78 A.D., in view of the fact that Vima was alive in 79 A.D., and if so when the rule of Vima came to an end.

The date of Kaniška is one of the greatest puzzles of ancient Indian history. The western scholars generally put his accession sometimes between 120 and 144 A.D.,²³ while the Indian scholars think that the Śaka era of 78 A.D. marks the initial year of his reign. Recently, Ghirshman has proposed the year 144 A.D. as the date of Kaniška's accession. His inference is based on the findings at the ancient city of Begram in Eastern Afghanistan. The coins of Vāsudeva, the last king of the Kaniška group to rule into the interior of India, were the latest of the Kuṣāṇa remnants found at that place, and it has been supposed that as

²¹ NC, 1934, p. 232.

²² cf. CII, II. i. p. lxix; "The Eras in the Indian Kharoṣṭhi Inscriptions" *Acta Orientalia* (1925), 65.

²³ Appendix II.

the city was destroyed by Shahpur I, the Sassanid king of Iran, in the period between A.D. 241 and 250, the last year of Vāsudeva would fall in that period. From the inscriptions it is clear that Vāsudeva I reigned from the year 74 to 98 of the era started by Kaniṣka, and thus the initial year of that era would fall c.144 A.D., which consequently marks the year of Kaniṣka's accession. On this view, Ghirshman gives us the following chronological table:

Kaniṣka	c.144-172 (?)
Huviṣka	c.172-217 (?)
Vāsudeva I	c.217 (?) -241
Vāsudeva II	
Kaniṣka II	
Vāsudeva III	

Ghirshman's theory, however, appears to be unacceptable for the following reasons:

(a) Vāsudeva, whose coins have been found at Begram, cannot be identified with Vāsudeva I for the provenance of his epigraphic records proves beyond doubt that his empire was confined in the U.P. region with Mathura as its centre, and as the coins attributed by Ghirshman to Vāsudeva have not been found in the U.P., it is clear that the two Vāsudevas are different personages. From the Chinese sources we learn that the king of the Ta-Yueh-chi named Po-tiao or Pu-ra-dieu (Vāsudeva) sent an embassy to the Chinese Emperor in 230 A.D.²⁴ This king was evidently the Vāsudeva whose coins have been found at Begram and he evidently solicited the help of the Chinese Emperor against the Sassanids.

(b) There is no convincing proof that Begram was destroyed by Shahpur I and hence any theory built on the synchronism of Shahpur I with Vāsudeva appears to be defective one.

Most of the western scholars, as already stated, are now disposed to think that Kaniṣka began his reign sometimes between 120 and 134 A.D., and not in 78 A.D. The relevant arguments in favour of the view are thus summarised by Marshall:

"My own view, as already indicated, is that Kujula drove the Parthians out of the Kabul valley about A.D. 50, when he was between 50 and 60 years of age; that his son Vima then carried his conquests into Gandhāra, the Punjab and Sind, and eventually succeeded his father in or about A.D. 78. Vima's reign may then have lasted into the opening years of the second century

²⁴ Vide, *infra*, Ch. vi.

A.D., after which I surmise that there was an interval of a couple of decades or so before Kanishka succeeded him. During this interval there seems to have been some disintegration of the Kushan power, but it is possible that *one or more*²⁵ viceroys under the name of Soter Megas continued to rule in India on behalf of a Kushan overlord.

"Apart from what has been said above about the reigns of Kujula and Vima Kadphises, there are other grave objections to making Kanishka founder of the Śaka era of A.D. 78. One of these is that for the thirty years between A.D. 73 and 102, Pan-chao, the famous Chinese general, was pursuing his career of unbroken conquest in the west, which added the kingdoms of Shen-Shen, Khotan, Kucha and Kashgar to the Chinese Empire. Clearly, therefore, it could not have been during this selfsame period and in these same regions that Kanishka was also winning those great victories which enabled him to extend his dominions to the east of the Tsung-ling mountains and caused the tributary Chinese princes west of the Yellow river to send him hostages. Another equally cogent objection is that the *Hou Han-shu Annals*, which cover the period A.D. 25 to 125 and up to the latter date show an intimate knowledge of what was happening in neighbouring countries to the west, give us a precise account of the reigns of Kujula and Vima Kadphises but make no mention of the more famous Kanishka. It was the testimony from Chinese sources that, in the main, led Sylvan Levi, Fleet, and other distinguished scholars to push back the date of Kanishka to 58 B.C., but since my discoveries at Taxila have proved beyond question that Kanishka followed the two Kadphises, and put this theory entirely out of court, the conclusion seems inevitable that he could not have risen to power until after A.D. 125."²⁶

We have purposely given above such a long quotation as it raises some interesting issues. *First*, the theory that the Kanishka group of kings preceded the Kadphises group and that Kanishka was the originator of the Vikrama era of 58 B.C. can no longer be maintained.²⁷ *Secondly*, the evidence of the Chinese Annals regarding the campaigns of Pan-chao should be considered very critically in determining the date of Kanishka. Now, the Chinese account on the campaigns of Pan-chao, as summarised by Levi, runs as follows:

"Pan-tchao's victorious campaigns, pursued for thirty years

²⁵ Vide, f.n. 18 above.

²⁶ Marshall, *l.c.* p. 69f.

²⁷ Appendix II. p. 95.

(73-102 A.D.) without interruption, at this very time restored Si-yu (the West) to the empire, and carried Chinese arms beyond the regions explored by Tchang-kien, as far as the confines of the Graeco-Roman world. By 73, the king of Khoten had made his submission; several kings of that country followed his example, and gave their eldest sons as hostages for their fidelity. Kashgar, immediately after, returned to obedience. The two passes by which the way to the south debouches into India were in the hands of the Chinese The Yue-tchi had not renounced their previous supremacy without a struggle. In the year 90 the king of the Yue-tchi sent an ambassador to demand a Chinese princess in marriage. Pan-tchao, deeming the request insolent, stopped the ambassador and sent him back. The king of the Yue-tchi raised an army of 70,000 horsemen under the orders of the viceroy *Sie*. Pan-tchao's troops were affrighted at the number, and his general had much trouble to reassure them; however, he made them see that the enemy, worn out by a long march, and by the fatigues endured in crossing the Tsoung-ling mountains, was not in a condition to attack them with advantage. *Sie* was vanquished, and the king of the Yue-tchi did not fail to send every year the tribute imposed upon him."²⁸

In the above summary, an item important for our purpose, has been left out. It is stated that in 73 A.D., the Chinese general Pan-chao nominated a king for Kashgar by deposing the old ruler. The deposed prince now solicited the help of the Kang-ku (Sogdians) and through them wanted the assistance of the Yueh-chi.²⁹ This brought the Yueh-chi king in the field of Central Asiatic politics. The Chinese general at first used to send rich presents to the Yueh-chi ruler, but later on, by 90 A.D., the relationship was strained.

In 73 A.D. Kaniska certainly had not come to power, and hence the Yueh-chi ruler from whom the deposed ruler of Kashgar solicited help should be identified with Vima Kadphises. The question now arises, who was the Yueh-chi king who solicited the hand of an Imperial Chinese princess in 90 A.D.? We have already seen that Kujula Kadphises died at an age of more than eighty years, and hence in 90 A.D., Vima was, if he at all had been alive, too aged a man to have a new wife. Further, we have already seen that Vima could not have been a king by the eighties of the first century A.D.,³⁰ and hence the Yueh-chi chief must have

²⁸ *IA*, 1903, p. 421-2.

²⁹ *Toung Pao*, II. vii, pp. 216f; *CII*. II. i. p. lxxi.

³⁰ Vide, f.n. 15 above.

been a successor of Vima Kadphises, and he appears to be no other than Kaniṣka, or one of Vima Kadphises' viceroy who had declared his independence as proved by the Taxila Silver Scroll inscription referred to above.

The Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang gives the following account: "When Kaniṣka reigned in Gandhāra, his power reached the neighbouring states and his influence extended to distant regions. As he kept order by military rule over a wide territory reaching to the east of the Tsung-ling, a tributary state of China to the west of the Yellow river through fear of the king's power sent him (prince as—hostages". Commenting on it, Watters observes: "In the *life* also there is only one hostage and he is a son of a Chinese Emperor The story in the *Records* evidently supposes the reader to understand that the hostages were the sons of a ruler of a feudal dependency of China or of rulers of several such states. Here also I think there is properly only one hostage prince and the use of the plural in the latter part of the passage is perhaps a slip".³¹ Kaniṣka's sway in Central Asia was, however, of short duration, for in the "*Legends of Kaniṣka's Death*", the king is represented as saying: "I have subjugated three regions; all men have taken refuge with me, the region of the north alone has not come to make its submission".³²

The above account thus in no way contradicts the story of Pan-chao's success, as has been supposed by several western scholars. Kaniṣka was evidently defeated by the Chinese general. But what concerns us here is the fact that this defeat took place after 90 A.D., and after he had begun his reign in the region of Gandhāra. The question, therefore, arises—when did Gandhāra come under his sway?

Konow thinks that the Peshawar Casket inscription of Kaniṣka is dated in his first regnal year.³³ The reading of the date appears to be hardly correct. We have from Kosam an inscription of his 2nd regnal year and from Sarnath of the 3rd. On the other hand, the Zeda and the Sui Vihar inscriptions of the year 11 are the first records showing Kaniṣka's connection with the western and north-western part of India. The fact that both the records belong to the same year is significant. It possibly shows that either in that year or just before it, Kaniṣka had conquered Punjab and Sind. Again, his Kurram record of

³¹ Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, Vol. I., pp. 124-5.

³² *JRAS*, 1912, p. 674; *EHI*, p. 285.

³³ *CII*, II. i. p. 137.

the year 21 is the earliest evidence showing his hold over the region to the west of the Indus.

The sequence of the above records can hardly be taken to be accidental, when they are at least five in number. They prove that Kaniṣka came to power in the U.P. and later on conquered the Punjab and the North-Western-Frontier Province. Evidently he was originally a governor of Vima Kadphises, and declared his independence in 78 A.D. when another governor became independent about that time in Taxila and issued the Soter Megas coins. Thus we may agree with Smith that the empire of Vima Kadphises comprised a considerable portion of the Ganges-Jumna valley and possibly extended in the east as far as Benares. It is also clear that there is nothing in the history of Pan-chao's campaign which cannot be reconciled with the theory that Kaniṣka started his reign in 78 A.D. The Chinese account that the struggle between Pan-chao and the Kuṣāṇa chief took place after 90 A.D. seems to corroborate directly the statement of Yuan Chwang that Kaniṣka extended his arms in Central Asia after he began reigning in Gandhāra. This part of his reign could not have begun much before 99 A.D.

While thus we may accept the view that Kaniṣka's reign began in 78 A.D., there are some difficulties in accepting the theory that the same must have started sometimes between 120 and 134 A.D., as maintained by many western scholars. In the first place, the continuous reckoning in the records of the kings of the Kaniṣka group, viz., Kaniṣka 1-23, Vāsiṣka 24-28, Huviṣka 28-60 Vāsudeva 67-98 shows that Kaniṣka was the originator of an era. But there is no proof that any era ever started between 120 and 134 A.D. It may be argued, however, that the era of Kaniṣka really started sometimes between these two dates and that later on it fell into disuse. Thus we must find out some other evidence, besides the founding of an era, to determine the date of Kaniṣka. And that evidence is possibly furnished by the Junagadh inscription of Rudradāman of 150 A.D.

The Andau inscription of 130 A.D. shows that Rudradāman was ruling as mahākṣatrapa in conjunction with his grandfather Caṣṭana,³⁴ while the Junagadh inscription³⁵ shows that he carried extensive conquests in North and South India on or before 150 A.D. There is, however, one significant point in the record. It does not speak of the Kuṣāṇas, though he is said to have conquered the Sindhu-Sauvīra region (Multan and Jharavar) and

³⁴ Vide, *infra*, Ch. v.

³⁵ *Ep. Ind.* viii. p. 42ff.

the "proud and indomitable Yaudheyas" who originally occupied the territory of Johiyabar on the river Sutlej. All these formed parts of the Kuṣāṇa empire, and the non-mention of the Kuṣāṇas can only be explained by the supposition that their power was already eclipsed for the time being and Rudradāman did not conquer any territory from their hands.

If we now turn to the epigraphic records we find that there is no inscription of the dynasty for six years, from the year 61 to 66 both inclusive.³⁶ In other words, there was some eclipse of the Kuṣāṇa power during this period. Thus the period extending from the year 61 to 66 must have fallen between 130 A.D. and 150 A.D., when Rudradāman carried his conquests in North India, and this does not tally if we place the accession of Kaniṣka any time between 120 and 134 A.D. This is a very strong point, why we should place the accession of Kaniṣka in 78 A.D.

As already stated, the Taxila Silver Scroll inscription mentions a Kuṣāṇa ruler of 79 A.D., who did not belong either to the Kadphises or to the Kaniṣka group. Thus it is evident that about 78-9 A.D., there arose rival claimants for the supreme power in the Kuṣāṇa dominion and by crushing such rivals, Kaniṣka became at last supreme.

III

THE REIGN OF KANIṢKA I

Kaniṣka was the greatest king of his dynasty. As already stated, he came to power in the U.P. region, where he acted as a viceroy of Vima Kadphises, and in c.89 A.D. extended his rule over the Punjab and Sind, evidently after suppressing the rival viceroys who laid claim to the Kuṣāṇa throne. Still later on, he conquered the North-Western Frontier Province and established his capital at Puruṣapura or Peshawar. Though his inscription has been found in as far east as Benares, doubts have been expressed whether his dominions extended beyond the Mathura region. It may be pointed out here that from the Tibetan sources we learn that king Kaniṣka led an army into India and overthrew

³⁶ At the Indian History Congress, Agra, 1956, T. N. Ramachandran announced the discovery of a new Kuṣāṇa inscription from Mathura "which narrows down the gulf between the hitherto-known dates of Huviṣka and Vāsudeva to four years only". This, however, does not in any way alter our assertion. It shows all the more that the Kuṣāṇas had been reduced to a precarious condition and were confined in the Mathura region.

the king of Soked, i.e., Sāketa or Ayodhyā.³⁷ The Chinese translation of Kumāralāta's *Kalpanā-maṇḍitīkā*, which was composed shortly after the reign of Kaniṣka states that "in the family of Kiu-sha there was a king called Chen-tan-Kia-ni-tcha (Devaputra Kaniṣka). He conquered Tung-Tien-tchou (Eastern India) and pacified the country".³⁸ Eastern India, in the Buddhist annals, signified the region to the east of Ku-chu-wen-ki-lo or Kajaṅgala near the Rajmahal hills in the Eastern Bihar.³⁹ If then the Chinese account is to be believed, Kaniṣka possibly conquered a portion of West Bengal as well. But unfortunately there is no definite archaeological evidence in support of the theory. Only the following objects of the Kuṣāṇa age have been found from the province: (a) a copper coin of Kaniṣka found at Tamluk in the Midnapore district; (b) a gold coin of Vāsudeva found in Bogra district (E. Pakistan); (c) a base metal coin of the same king found in the Murshidabad district; and (d) another coin of Vāsudeva found at Mahāsthān, and one at Maldah. From these evidences only it will be utterly improper to think that any part of Bengal was included within the empire of Kaniṣka. It is, however, not unlikely that he really led an expedition into the province but did not annex it within his empire proper.

It has already been stated that the empire of Kaniṣka extended in the east up to Benares, as we have from Sarnath one of his inscriptions dated in the year 3. We may now note the large number of Kuṣāṇa coins found in the Eastern U.P. in contrast to the few pieces found in Bengal and Bihar: (a) 105 Kuṣāṇa copper coins found in monastery at Sahet Mahet; (b) 100 copper coins of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka found in a place in the Azamgadh district; (c) a hoard discovered at Azamgadh containing coins of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka with a few Ayodhyā coins of "cock and bull" type; (d) similar coins found in village Nai in the district of Azamgadh. These discoveries when considered in the back ground of the Benares record prove that Eastern U.P. definitely formed a part of the dominion of Kaniṣka.⁴⁰

Thus from the find spots of his epigraphic records we can infer that the present U.P., Punjab, North-Western-Frontier Province, Northern Sind were certainly included within the empire of Kaniṣka. The Sanchi Museum inscription of the year 22 shows that in the south his sway extended as far as the Malwa region

³⁷ *Ep. Ind.* xiv. p. 142; *IA*, 1903, p. 382.

³⁸ *IA*, 1903, p. 385.

³⁹ *CAGI*, p. xliii.

⁴⁰ *IHQ*, xxvii p. 294; *ib.* xxix. p. 212-3.

where his son Vāsiṣka acted as one of his viceroys. From the *Sī-yu-ki*, it is clear that Kashmir was also a part of his kingdom, and, as we shall see later on, the scene of his religious activities.

Levi thinks that the sway of Kaniṣka also extended over the North-Western part of the Deccan. He identifies Sandanes mentioned in the *Periplus* with Candra or Candana, Chinese Chen-tan, a royal title given to Kaniṣka. Further, he thinks that Tong-li of the Chinese historian should be identified with Drāviḍa and thus concludes that between 22 and 170 A.D. the Yueh-chi were the rulers of different principalities in the Deccan.⁴¹ The theory, however, does not tally with the known epigraphic evidences of the dynasty.

Rapson makes Kṣaharāta Nahapāna who ruled over Ujjayini, Western Maharastra etc., a subordinate ruler under the Kuṣāṇas, because one of the Nāsik inscriptions of Nahapāna contains, according to Rapson, "the important information that the rate of exchange between the Kārṣāpaṇa and the gold coin of the period, the *Suvarṇa*, was as 1 to 35. The reference here must surely be (according to Rapson) to the contemporary gold currency of the Kuṣāṇas, the standard of which was apparently that of the Roman Aureus".⁴² The mere mention of *Suvarṇa* or gold coins cannot at once refer to the currency of the Kuṣāṇas, for *Suvarṇa* as a coin was prevalent in India as early as the Vedic times. Prof. Bhandarkar has adduced still another argument to connect the Kṣaharātas with the Kuṣāṇas. The Nasik Cave inscription, no. 12, of Nahapāna's son-in-law Usavadāta contains the line "..... *data cānena akṣaya-nīvi-Kāhāpaṇa-sahasrāṇi trīṇi 3000 saṃghasa cātudīsasa ye imasmim lone vasāmtāna(m) bhabisaṃti civarika Kuṣāṇamūle ca*". Bhandarkar observes that the name Kuṣāṇa "appears to have been given to the silver coinage of Nahapāna, because he issued it for his overlord, who must have been known as kuṣāṇa i.e., Kuṣāṇa". He further connects this Kuṣāṇa with the Kuṣāṇa sovereign referred to in the Taxila Scroll inscription of the year 136, and thinks that he can be no other than Kujula Kadphises or Kadphises I. The sense of the passage does not admit of Bhandarkar's interpretation. Kuṣāṇamūla here evidently refers to *expenses of outside life* as pointed out by Senart. Further, there are objections to the equation Kuṣāṇa to Guṣāṇa or Kuṣāṇa.⁴³

We have made the above discussions particularly because,

⁴¹ *JA*, 1936, pp. 61-121.

⁴² Rapson, *Catalogue*, p. clxxxv.

⁴³ Chattopadhyaya, *SI*, p. 34.

as we shall see later on, Nahapāna was a contemporary of Kanīṣka I, and did not belong to the first quarter of the second century A.D. as it has been supposed by many scholars. There is, however, absolutely no evidence to show that he was in any way subordinate under Kanīṣka I. In other words, there is no evidence to prove that Kanīṣka's sway extended over any part of the Deccan.

It has already been shown that Kanīṣka extended his authority over Central Asia, and "kept order by military rule over a wide territory reaching to the east of the Tsung-ling". A tributary state of China to the west of the Yellow river sent him the royal princes as hostages. "On the arrival of the hostages", we are informed, "Kanīṣka treated them with great courtesy and provided them with different residences according to the seasons. The winter was spent in India, the summer in Kapis, and the spring and autumn in Gandhāra. At each residence, a monastery was erected".⁴⁴ Yuan Chwang further states that the place where these hostages were kept during the winter came to be known as Cina-bhukti. It is further related how peaches and pears were unknown in this district and the parts of India beyond, until they were introduced by the "China Hostage". Hence the peaches were called Chināni and the pears Chinarājaputra.⁴⁵ Kanīṣka's empire of Central Asia came to an end under the pressure of the Chinese general Pan-chao sometimes after 90 A.D.

The vast empire of Kanīṣka appears to have contained several subordinate states ruled by local kings who evidently acknowledged his supremacy. Thus the Sarnath inscription of Kanīṣka of the year 3 mentions the mahākṣatrapa Kṣarapallāna and the kṣatrapa Vanaspara. Vogel points out that the image, on which the inscription is engraved, shows the style of the Mathura school of art and the material is the red sand-stone of the Agra quarries. All these, according to Vogel, point to the conclusion that the donors of the images had their home at Mathura, where as early as the reigns of Rañjuvula and Soḍāsa, a school of sculptors flourished, which was strongly influenced by the Graeco-Buddhist art of Gandhāra.⁴⁶ Kṣarapallāna evidently belonged to the house of Soḍāsa and acknowledged the suzerainty of Kanīṣka, and his son Vanaspara was evidently associated with him in matters of administration.

⁴⁴ Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, i. p. 124.

⁴⁵ Bagchi, *India and China*, p. 64.

⁴⁶ Vogel, *Ep. Ind.* viii. p. 173.

Numismatic evidences again disclose the existence of at least three more subordinate states. Allan points out that the Mitra coins of Kauśāmbī possibly came to an end with the first century B.C., while "the very common coins with the types of Dhanadeva with incomplete and apparently meaningless legends represent the last stage of the coinage of Kauśāmbī, and must belong to the early centuries A.D."⁴⁷ Evidently Dhanadeva and his successors became subordinate rulers under Kaniṣka whose inscription of the year 2 shows his sway over the Kauśāmbī region.

Similarly, the coins of Ayodhyā may be divided into three distinct groups: the first, with punch-mark symbols belong to the third century B.C.; the coins belonging to Mūladeva, Viśākha-deva, Dhanadeva, Śivadatta and Naradatta have been assigned to the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era; the third class of coins mentioning the names of kings like Satyamitra, Āryamitra, Kumudasena, Ajavarman and others "probably covered the first two centuries A.D.",⁴⁸ showing that the rulers of the last group were subordinates under Kaniṣka and his successors.

Many such instances of the existence of local autonomous states under Kaniṣka may be gathered from the evidence of the tribal coins in the *Catalogues* of Cunningham and Allan. But we propose to note here one special type, that of the Yaudheyas. Allan in his *Catalogue*⁴⁹ classifies them as follows: (a) those belonging to the late second and first centuries B.C. and (b) those copper coins which can be assigned to the second century A.D. The absence of any Yaudheya coins of the first century A.D. is very significant. It shows that the Kuṣāṇas did not allow them to enjoy local autonomy like the rulers of Ayodhyā, Kauśāmbī and other places. This accounts for the fury of the tribe against the Kuṣāṇas and in the second half of the second century A.D. we find that they dedicated their kingdom to the war-god Kārtikeya and took an important part in overthrowing the alien rule from the heart of the country. (*vide* Ch. VI).

The above discussions clearly show that Kaniṣka was undoubtedly a great conqueror. From the humble position of a governor in the Gangetic valley, he ultimately became one of the greatest kings of Asia. His achievement in the time of peace

⁴⁷ Allan, *Catalogue*, p. xcvi. This Dhanadeva is evidently different from the king of the same name whose coins have been found at Ayodhyā, and who is mentioned in the Ayodhyā inscription.

⁴⁸ *ib.* p. xc.

⁴⁹ *ib.* p. cxlvii-ci.

also was not negligible. He was a great patron of learning and famous men of letters like Nāgārjuna, Aśvaghoṣa, Māthara and Caraka adorned his court.⁵⁰ Sanskrit language possibly got a new impetus of life in his time. As Konow says, "Sanskrit seems to have spread over the territory where Kharoṣṭhī was used at an early date Sanskrit stanzas are occasionally found in Kharoṣṭhī documents from Chinese Turkistan, and together with Sanskrit the Brāhmī alphabet begins to replace Kharoṣṭhī."⁵¹

Kaṇiṣka's name, however, is specially associated with the religion of Śākyamuni. According to the *Sī-yu-ki*, Kaṇiṣka is said to have convoked a Buddhist Council at Kashmir, which was presided over by the venerable Vasumitra. It is said that after the deliberations were finished, Kaṇiṣka caused them to be "written out on copper plates, and enclosed them in stone boxes, which he deposited in tope made for the purpose."⁵² In later Tibetan books also we find a reference to this council with somewhat different details. In Paramārtha's *Life of Vasubandhu*, the credit for convening the council is given to Kātayānīputra. It may be noted here that in Pali traditions this council has been completely ignored.

Foucher thinks that the earliest Buddha figure appears on certain coins of Kaṇiṣka⁵³ among the numismatic records. Tarn, however, holds that the first Buddha figure appeared on a coin of Maues, and further that "there is a series of coins struck by Kujula Kadphises after the conquest of the Paropamisadae which show on the obverse a seated Buddha with one hand raised in benediction, and on the reverse a standing Zeus, which must be the Zeus of Kapisa".⁵⁴ Tarn's theory, however, has not been universally accepted.

The grand stūpa that Kaṇiṣka built at Peshawar has drawn admiration from all. Cunningham and Foucher have identified Shahji-ki-Dheri, two large mounds outside the Gang gate of the Peshawar city, with this stūpa. The casket that was discovered here informs us that 'the slave Agisala was the architect' of the vihāra. The name Agisala shows that he was possibly a Greek. Tarn, however, makes the following comment: "The slave Agesilas who was the architect of Kanishka's stupa near Taxila and made his relic casket may have been anything from a skilled

⁵⁰ *IA*, 1903, p. 382ff.

⁵¹ *CII*, II. i. p. lxxix.

⁵² Watters, *l.c.* i. p. 271.

⁵³ Foucher, *L'Art gréco-bouddhique de Gandhāra*, Vol. II. pp. 439, 519.

⁵⁴ *GBI*, p. 403.

Greek slave imported from the west to a subject of Kanishka with little Greek about him but his name; as he worked in the Gandhāra style the latter is more probable."⁵⁵ From Al-biruni's account it is clear that he knew of the stūpa and the monastery built by king Kanik.

While giving an account of Kāpiśa the Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang has recorded a curious story about Kaniṣka. Thus it is stated that "above 200 li north-west from the capital was a great Snowy Mountain on the top of which was a lake, and prayers made at it for rain or fine weather were answered. The pilgrim then narrates the legend about this lake and its Dragon-kings. In the time of Kanishka the Dragon-king was a fierce malicious creature who in his previous existence had been the novice attending an arhat of Gandhāra. As such in an access of passion and envy he had prayed to become a Nāga-king in his next birth, and accordingly on his death he came into the world as the Dragon-king of this lake. Keeping up his old bad feelings he killed the old Dragon-king; and sent rain and storm to destroy the trees and the Buddhist monastery at the foot of the mountain. Kanishka enraged at the persistent malice of the creature proceeded to fill up his lake. On this the Dragon-king became alarmed and assuming the form of an old brahmin he remonstrated earnestly with the king. In the end the king and the Dragon made a covenant by which Kanishka was to rebuild the monastery and erect a tope; the latter was to serve as a lookout, and when the watchman on this observed dark clouds rising on the mountain the gong was to be at once sounded, whereupon the bad temper of the Dragon would cease. The tope still continued to be used for the purpose for which it was erected".⁵⁶

In the above story we evidently find one of the many legends that clustered round the name of Kaniṣka in the later days. Can we infer from above that Kaniṣka built in Kāpiśa something like a modern meteorological tower to study the climatic conditions?

Kaḥana in his *Rājatarāṅginī* also mentions the name of Kaniṣka:

"Then there ruled in this very land the founders of cities called after their own appellations the three kings named Huṣka, Juṣka and Kaniṣka".⁵⁷

Thus the Kashmir region was very intimately associated with the Kuṣāṇa monarch. Curiously enough in his *Geographike*

⁵⁵ *ib.*, p. 355.

⁵⁶ Watters, *l.c.*, i. pp. 127-8.

⁵⁷ "*The Stream of Kings*", Trans. R. S. Pandit, p. 23.

Ptolemy also calls the Kuṣāṇa kingdom of his time by the designation of "*the Kingdom of Kaspeiraioi* or the kingdom of Kashmir. We shall discuss more of it later on.

IV

THE SUCCESSORS OF KANIṢKA I

Kaniṣka died in c.101 A.D. after ruling for 23 years. He was succeeded by his son Vāsiṣka, who as crown-prince acted as his viceroy in the Malwa region. Vāsiṣka ruled for a brief period of four years only, i.e., upto c.105 A.D. Possibly after his death there was some trouble in the dynasty, for as we shall see later on,⁵⁸ the epigraphic records show that there was a partition of the empire, and while Kaniṣka II, the son of Vāsiṣka, was ruling in the west in the year 41 = 119 A.D., Huviṣka, the son of Kaniṣka, ruled from c.106 A.D. to c.138 A.D. Marshall, however, thinks that as Huviṣka bore the lesser title of *maharaja* between the years 29 and 39, and the higher title of *rajatiraja* between 40 and 60, it may be inferred that "after Vāsashka's death, Huviṣka, who was probably his brother or uncle, acted for some years as regent on behalf of his son, Kanishka II, and when the latter came of age in the year 39 or 40, was associated with him as co-emperor for a short while, but on his pre-mature death succeeded him as sole emperor".⁵⁹ There are, however, some difficulties in accepting the theory. In the first place, there is absolutely no epigraphic or numismatic evidence to show that Kaniṣka II and Huviṣka ever ruled as co-emperors, as we find in the case of the Śaka kings of Taxila. Secondly, if we critically study the evidence of the *Geographike* of Ptolemy, it would be clear that there was some confusion in the vast empire once ruled by the Kaniṣka I.

It is generally believed that Ptolemy composed *Chap. vii. Pt. i.* of his work containing an account of *India intra Gangem* sometimes between 130 and 140 A.D., though his materials for the description of North India may have come from earlier sources.⁶⁰ In *Fig. 47*, Ptolemy states that the region extending from the country of the Pandoouoi around the Bidaspes or Hydaspes, the Jhelum, "towards the east are possessed by the Kaspeiraioi" as far as Modoura, the city of the gods.⁶¹ Levi has

⁵⁸ Appendix I.

⁵⁹ Marshall, *Taxila*, i. p. 71.

⁶⁰ *AHD*, p. 40.

⁶¹ *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy*: ed. McCrindle, p. 124.

shown that the kingdom of "Kaspeiraioi" undoubtedly refers to the empire of the Devaputras or the Kuṣāṇas.⁶² In this description, we have to note the two following points:

- (a) The empire as described by Ptolemy extends from the Eastern Punjab to Mathura in the east;
- (b) The region lying to the west of this kingdom is divided into several small kingdoms.

After Kaniška, no epigraphic record of the Kuṣāṇas have been found in the region to the east of Mathura, and this tallies with the description of Ptolemy. The Eastern U.P. may have been under the sphere of the influence of the dynasty, but the absence of the epigraphic records clearly shows that it was not directly under its rule. Again, it is only on the supposition that Huviška and Kaniška II had been ruling contemporaneously, the latter in the Western Punjab and the former in the interior of India, that we can explain the implication of Ptolemy's account. Evidently, there was a struggle for the throne in the dynasty, when petty chiefs in the western part of the empire became virtually independent, till they were again brought under obedience by Huviška after the death of Kaniška II.

From the Tibetan account also it is clear that there was some trouble in India about this time. Thus it is stated that an expedition in India was undertaken "shortly after 120 A.D. by the Khotan king Vijayakirti in connection with king Kanika and the king of Guzan".⁶³ The date shows that this king Kanika must be identified with Kaniška II. Possibly there was some rebellion in India—and this is proved by the description of the small kingdoms in the North-Western Frontier Province and the Western Punjab in the *Geographike* of Ptolemy—in the vast empire left by Kaniška I, and it required the skill of the three kings to crush it. In the *Si-yu-ki* also we find that Kashmir revolted after the death of Kaniška:

"After Kaniška's death a native dynasty had arisen in Kashmir, and its sovereign had become a persecutor of Buddhism. Hereupon the king of Himatala, who was a Śākya by descent and a zealous Buddhist, determined to drive the cruel Kṛitiya king from his throne and restore Buddhism. By a stratagem, cunningly devised and skilfully carried out, he succeeded in killing the king of Kashmir. He then banished the

⁶² *J.A.*, 1915, p. 91.

⁶³ *infra*, Appendix III.

chief minister of the court, and reinstated Buddhism as the religion of the country, and then returned to his own kingdom".⁶⁴

Watters points out that the term Himatala is translated in a Chinese note by the expression "*Foot of Snow Mountain*". Yule thinks that "we find a trace of the word Himatala in the name of one of the still existing feudatory provinces of Badakshan, Daraim, or Dara-i-aim". It is not unlikely that it was a part of the kingdom of Khotan under Vijayakīrti. Thus the Khotan king actively helped the Kuṣāṇa monarchs of India in suppressing rebellions in their territories. That Kashmir was brought to subjugation is proved by the statement of Kalḥana that Huviṣka built a town in that country. After the death of Kanīṣka II, the two parts of the Kuṣāṇa dominion were again united under the suzerainty of Huviṣka as proved by the Wardak Vase inscription of the year 51 belonging to the reign of the monarch.

It has already been stated that Huviṣka ruled up to the year 60 = 138 A.D., and for seven years after him there is no record of the dynasty.⁶⁵ Vāsudeva began his reign in c.145 A.D. and his rule continued up to 176 A.D., though it is not impossible that "he may well have been reigning, however, for several years after the date"⁶⁶ given in the inscription of the year 98. As the records of this king are found in the Mathura and the adjoining regions, it has been inferred that he ruled over a small kingdom in Western U.P. It is, however, very curious that a large number of coins, more than eleven times as numerous as the coins of Huviṣka, bearing the name of Vāsudeva, have been found in Taxila.⁶⁷ But it is difficult to determine precisely whether they belonged to the successor of Huviṣka having the name of Vāsudeva or to a later member of the dynasty of the same name called Po-tiao in Chinese records as reigning about the year 229 A.D. The latter alternative seems to be more probable in view of the fact that the successor of Huviṣka was very probably not associated with the western Punjab region as no epigraph of his reign has been found in that country as against his several inscriptions found in the western U.P. region. In the present state of our knowledge it must be held that Vāsudeva I was the last of the dynasty of Kanīṣka to rule into the interior of India. The evidence of coins and the Chinese accounts, however, disclose the fact that the Kuṣāṇas

⁶⁴ Watters, *l.c.*, i. p. 278.

⁶⁵ Vide, f.n. 36 above.

⁶⁶ Marshall, *Taxila*, p. 72.

⁶⁷ *ib.*, p. 71.

continued to rule in the North-Western Frontier Province and the Punjab for several centuries to come. It is difficult to determine exactly what relationship these rulers bore to Vāsudeva I.

APPENDIX I

SOME OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE KANIṢKA GROUP OF KINGS

From the epigraphic records, we get the following dates of the kings of the line of Kaniṣka :

Kaniṣka	yrs.	1-23
Vāskuṣāṇa	,,	22
Vāsiṣka	,,	24-28
Huviṣka	,,	28-60
Kaniṣka II	,,	41
Vāsudeva	,,	67-98

Three things should be noted in the above chart :

- (a) The date of Vāskuṣāṇa overlaps with that of Kaniṣka ;
- (b) The date of Kaniṣka II overlaps with that of Huviṣka ;
- (c) There is no record of any Kuṣāṇa king for 7 years from 60 to 67.

(a) A fragmentary inscription in the Sanchi Museum¹ refers to Vāskuṣāṇa and the year 22. Lohuizen de Leeuw has shown that it is a barbarous telescopic of Vāsiṣka or Vāsudeva and Kuṣāṇa.² The record is then evidently that of Vāsiṣka and was issued when he was a governor under Kaniṣka.

(b) An inscription from Ara (near Attock, W. Punjab) of the year 41 refers to one Vājheṣka-putra Kaniṣka.³ This Vājheṣka may be identified with Vāsiṣka, who succeeded Kaniṣka I. The epithet "*maharajasa rajatirajasa Devaputrasa Kaisarasa*" given to the name of this Kaniṣka II shows that he was an independent sovereign. This shows that after Vāsiṣka there was a partition of the Kuṣāṇa empire, and while Huviṣka succeeded to the eastern part, Kaniṣka II became the king of the western division. The Wardak Vase inscription of Huviṣka of the year 51 shows that his power extended in the west as far as the Kabul valley. This suggests that sometimes after the year 41, Kaniṣka II died and his empire came under Huviṣka.

¹ *Sanchi Catalogue*, p. 30-1.

² *SPIH*, p. 314.

³ *Ep. Ind.* xiv. p. 143; *CII*, II. i. p. 165.

(c) For 7 years extending from 138 to 145 A.D. we have no Kuṣāṇa record in India, and it is very difficult to explain the phenomena. After 146 A.D. when fresh light comes, the Kuṣāṇa empire appears to be confined within the Mathura and the adjoining regions. This proves that the empire suffered diminution during the aforesaid age. As it has been already stated, the Kuṣāṇas are not mentioned in the Junagadh inscription of 150 A.D., though Rudradāman conquered the Sindhu-Sauvīra country which certainly formed a part of the Kuṣāṇa empire in the earlier days. There is no reason to think that the successors of Kaniṣka were reduced by Rudradāman under his vassalage, for in that case the fact would surely have been mentioned in the Junagadh record. In the present state of our knowledge it is difficult to determine exactly the nature of the catastrophe through which the empire passed immediately after the death of Huviṣka.

Divergent views have been expressed regarding the number of kings belonging to Kaniṣka's dynasty. Smith and R. D. Banerjee think that Kaniṣka of the Ara record was Kaniṣka I and that his sons Vāsiṣka and Huviṣka were viceroys under him.⁴ Allan is of opinion that Kaniṣka was succeeded by Huviṣka as king, while Vāsiṣka was Kaniṣka's viceroy and never ruled independently as no coins of him seem to have survived. Similarly, it is maintained, "the absence of coins indicates that a second Kaniṣka, whose name has survived in inscriptions, was not a paramount sovereign but a viceroy of Huviṣka", who was succeeded by Vāsudeva.⁵

Thus there is a very strong view that Vāsiṣka never ruled as an independent king. Ghirshman also thinks that Vāsiṣka predeceased Kaniṣka.⁶ The Sanchi Buddhist Image inscription of the year 28, however, describes Vāsiṣka as *maharaja-rajatiraja-Devaputra-Sāhi*. This title could only have been adopted by a supreme ruler.

Similar also is the case with Kaniṣka II whose title shows that he was not a viceroy, but a supreme ruler. The view of Smith and R. D. Banerjee that he is to be identified with Kaniṣka I is nullified by the fact that in the Ara record he is described as a son of Vājheṣka, i.e., Vāsiṣka, who can be no other than the son of Kaniṣka I of the same name.

Dr. Lohuizen de Leeuw adds two more kings to the Imperial

⁴ Smith, *The Oxford History of India*, p. 130-1.

⁵ CSHI, p. 79.

⁶ Begram, p. 143.

Kuṣāṇa line, Kaniṣka III and Vāsudeva II. Her views are as follows:

- (a) The date of the Mathura inscription of the year 14 mentioning Mahārāja Devaputra Kaniṣka,⁷ should be taken on palaeographical grounds as dated in the year 114 with the sign of the hundred omitted, and thus we get one Kaniṣka III ruling in A.D. 192.
- (b) Similarly, the date of the Sanchi Museum inscription of the year 22 should be read with an added hundred and thus the king Vāskuṣāṇa mentioned in the record would be ruling in A.D. 200. This Vāskuṣāṇa, according to her, was Vāsudeva II.⁸

In spite of her palaeographical arguments, we do not prefer the theory of "*added hundred*", for we have no direct evidence that such a system ever existed in ancient India, specially during the time of the Kuṣāṇas. We prefer to identify Kaniṣka of the above Mathurā record with Kaniṣka I and Vāskuṣāṇa with Vāsiṣka.

⁷ *Ep. Ind.* xix, p. 96.

⁸ *SPIH*, p. 314.

APPENDIX II

THE DATE OF KANIṢKA I

We have already tried to show that Kaniṣka was the founder of the Śaka era of 78 A.D. Here we propose to discuss the different theories regarding the date of this king:

(1) The view that Kaniṣka was the founder of the Vikrama era of 58 B.C. was first advanced by Cunningham (*ASI*, ii. 1871, pp. 68n, 159ff; iii. p. 31), and then accepted by Fleet (*IA*, 1904, *JRAS*, 1906, pp. 979ff; 1913, pp. 95ff, 965ff; 1914, pp. 992ff), and Kennedy (*JRAS*, 1912, pp. 665ff, 981ff; 1913, pp. 369ff, 661ff, 1054ff).

(2) From a study of the Chinese records, Levi concluded that Kaniṣka ruled at the end of the first century B.C. and the beginning of the first century A.D. (*JA*, 1896, pp. 444ff; 1897, pp. 1ff).

It is difficult to accept any of the above theories, for as Allan has pointed out, the gold coinage of Kaniṣka was suggested by the Roman solidus and thus the Kuṣāṇa monarch can hardly be placed long before Titus who ruled from 79 A.D. to 81 A.D. As regards the Chinese sources referred to by Levi, it may be pointed out that Ed. Specht in *JA*, 1897, pp. 152ff, critically discussed the same account and concluded that Kaniṣka must have ruled at the end of the first or the beginning of the second century A.D.

(3) In *JRAS*, 1913, pp. 947ff, Waddell adduces archaeological grounds for believing that Kaniṣka ruled in first century A.D., while Vogel came to the same conclusion also on the grounds of palaeography (*Ep. Ind.*, viii, pp. 173ff).

We also agree with Waddell and Vogel, but as the inscriptions of the Kaniṣka group of kings show a continuous reckoning proving the fact that Kaniṣka was the originator of an era (supra p. 80) we are in favour of associating him with the Śaka era of 78 A.D.

(4) Oldenberg (*JPTS*, 1910-1, pp. 1ff), Ed. Specht (*JA*, 1897, pp. 152ff), A. M. Boyer (*JA*, 1900, pp. 526ff) and Stein (*IA*, 1905, pp. 77ff) favour the view that Kaniṣka flourished at the end of the first and the beginning of the second century A.D.

(This theory practically agrees with the view we have adopted in these pages).

(5) Most of the western scholars believe that Kaniṣka began his reign in the second century A.D. Konow thinks that he came

to power after 125 A.D. and the Kaniṣka era begins with the year 128-9 A.D. Smith thinks that Kaniṣka ruled sometimes between 120 and 160 A.D. (*EHI*, pp. 271ff), while Kimura holds that he ruled between 140 and 180 A.D. (*IHQ*, i. pp. 415ff). According to Ghirshman Kaniṣka's reign began in 144 A.D. (*Begram*). Marshall also thinks that Kaniṣka could not have come to power "until after A.D. 125".

The second century A.D. theory goes against the evidence of the Junagadh inscription of mahākṣatrapa Rudradāman, for if we assume that Kaniṣka began his rule about 125 A.D. Rudradāman's mastery over the Sindhu-Sauvīra region becomes incompatible with the evidence of the Mohenjo-daro and the Sui Vihar records of Kaniṣka proving the latter's jurisdiction over the same territory. Further, as we have already stated Rudradāman's conquest of North India must have been undertaken at a time when the Kuṣāṇa power must have been at a very low ebb and when the Yaudheyas have reasserted their independence. (*supra* p. 81). Again, as we have already stated, Kaniṣka was certainly the originator of an era and we know no era starting in the second century A.D.

(6) Dr. R. C. Majumdar thinks that Kaniṣka came to the throne in 248 A.D. and was the founder of the Traikutaka-Kalacuri-Cedi era starting from that year (*JDL*, i. pp. 65ff).

(7) Sir R. G. Bhandarkar holds that Kaniṣka ascended the throne in 287 A.D. (*JBBRAS*, 1900, pp. 385ff).

As pointed out by J-Dubreuil the third century A.D. theory for Kaniṣka is clearly untenable: "In fact, the reign of Vāsudeva, the last of the Kuṣāṇas, came to an end 100 years after the beginning of the reign of Kanishka. Numerous inscriptions prove that Vāsudeva reigned at Mathurā. It is certain that this country, over which extended the empire of Vāsudeva, was occupied about 350 A.D. by the Yaudheyas and the Nāgas and it is probable that they reigned in this place nearly one century before they were subjugated by Samudra Gupta. The capitals of the Nāgas were Mathurā, Kāntipuri and Padmāvati". (*AHD*, p. 31). Further, as Dr. Raychaudhuri points out, this goes against the Tibetan account which makes one Kaniṣka a contemporary of king Vijayakīrti of Khotan who ruled about 120 A.D. (*PHAI*, p. 468).

(8) Fergusson (*JRAS*, 1880, pp. 259ff), Oldenberg (*IA*, x. 1881, pp. 2123ff, Rapson (*CHI*, pp. 581, 583ff), Sahani (*JRAS*, 1924, pp. 399ff), H. C. Ghosh (*IHQ*, iv. pp. 760ff; v. pp. 49ff) and others maintain the theory that Kaniṣka came to the throne in

78 A.D. This view has been criticised on the following grounds:

(a) that the Śaka era was not a northern one. (*Boyer*) (As pointed out by Lohuizen-de Leeuw: "This is not true. The Śaka era was only temporarily suspended by the Gupta era and pretty soon after the fall of that dynasty the era was used again. The supposition that this was the first time that the Śaka era came into favour in North India is wrong") (*SPIH*, p. 383).

(b) that if we assume that Kaniška came to power in 78 A.D. he would be the anonymous Kuṣāṇa king defeated by the Chinese general about 90 A.D., but this is incompatible with the evidence of the *Si-yu-ki* regarding Kaniška's empire in Central Asia. (We have already discussed this point and have tried to show that there is no difficulty in assuming that Kaniška was really defeated by the Chinese general).

(c) J-Dubreuil thinks that the Kuṣāṇa king referred to in the Taxila Silver Scroll record is probably Kadphises I and this proves that Kaniška was not on the throne in 78 A.D. (It has already been shown that the monarch referred to in the epigraph could neither be Kadphises I nor II nor Kaniška. He was evidently a governor under Vima Kadphises or Kadphises II).

Thus there is, in fact, no valid argument against the 78 A.D. theory regarding the date of Kaniška I. We have already adduced fresh points in support of this theory.

APPENDIX III

A NOTE ON KANIṢKA II

We have already tried to show that Kaniṣka of the Ara inscription of the year 41 should be regarded as an independent king and that he possibly ruled contemporaneously with Huviṣka. In this connection we may note the following lines from one of the Tibetan works dealing with Li-yul, or Khotan, to which we have briefly alluded before:

"The king Kanika (or is it 'the king of Kanika'?) and the king of Guzan and king Vijayakīrti, lord of Li, and others having led an army into India and overthrown the city of Soked (Sāketa), king Vijayakīrti, obtaining many sariras, then bestowed them in that Stupa of Phru-no".

Prof. F. W. Thomas adds the following notes on the above passage:

"The reference here would certainly seem to be, however mistakenly expressed, to Kaniṣka, and in the Guzan we cannot fail to recognise the Kuṣāṇas of the coins and inscriptions, more especially as the form Gusana is actually recorded in two places".¹

If we follow the above interpretation then we can see at once that about 120 A.D., the date of Vijayakīrti of Khotan, there was one Kaniṣka and another king of the Kuṣāṇas. This Kaniṣka, as we have already stated, should be identified with the king of the same name mentioned in the Ara record, and the question now arises who was then the king of the Kuṣāṇas as distinguished from king Kanika of the Tibetan records. He can only be identified with Huviṣka whose records extend from the year 29 to 60 of the Śaka era. The account clearly establishes the fact that about 120 A.D. there was a partition of the Kuṣāṇa empire, and while king Kanika ruled in one part, the king of the Guzan = Huviṣka ruled over another.

We, however, do not like to press upon the Tibetan account too much, for other scholars have given a different interpretation of the term Guzan.² If, however, we study the above Tibetan account in the background of the description given in the *Geographike* of Ptolemy, as already noted, we should prefer the interpretation of Thomas: Guzan = Kuṣāṇa.

It is not unlikely that the venerable ācārya Mātṛceta refers

¹ *IA*, 1903, p. 349.

² Guzan has been taken to be a place name in Central Asia.

to Kaniṣka II in his '*Epistle of King Kanika*' wherein the monarch is described as a scion of the Kuśa family and 'the ruler of the north'. Tārānātha asserts that this Kanika was distinguished from king Kaniṣka, though he gives an absurd and confusing account making Mātṛceta an inhabitant of Kuśumapura in the time of Bindusāra, son of Candragupta. Evidently, Tārānātha knew that the addressee of Mātṛceta was a different person from the Great Kaniṣka and bore the same name, and was also a king of India.³ A second Kaniṣka who ruled in India, and who is associated in Tibetan tradition with king Vijayakīrti of Khotan can only be Kaniṣka II.

Prof. Thomas draws our attention to the following Tibetan account which throws further light on the career of this king:

"Towards the end of his (Mātṛceta's) life, king Kanika sent the messenger to invite the Ācārya, who, however, being unable on account of his great age to come, despatched an Epistle and converted this king to the doctrine".⁴

The account clearly shows that Kaniṣka II was a follower of the religion of Śākyamuni, and Tārānātha has recorded some of his activities in connection with that religion, the historicity of which may appear to be very doubtful. Similarly, we are in favour of dismissing the account of Tārānātha that this Kanika, "young in years, was chosen a sovereign" in the land of Tili and Mālava.

If, however, following Levi, we identify Mātṛceta with Aśvaghōṣa then we have to identify king Kanika also with Kaniṣka I for from the account of the Chinese authors it is clear that Kaniṣka I and Aśvaghōṣa were contemporaries.⁵ We, however, at the same time cannot ignore the fact that Tārānātha distinguishes between two Kaniṣkas while dealing with Aśvaghōṣa. Levi states "The relations between Kaniṣka and Aśvaghōṣa were an embarrassment to Tārānātha; his chronological system obliged him to separate the two persons, and he had to invent a king Kanika, contemporary with Aśvaghōṣa, one 'whom we must consider as a different person from Kanishka'." The confusion of Tārānātha may have been caused by the fact that Aśvaghōṣa (Mātṛceta?) was a contemporary of both the Kaniṣkas. This seems to be clear from the fact that king Kanika (Kaniṣka II) sent for the Ācārya towards the end of the latter's life, as it is evident from the quotation of Tārānātha given above.

³ *IA*, 1903, p. 383.

⁴ *ib.*, p. 348.

⁵ *ib.*, pp. 383ff.

CHAPTER V

THE SAKAS OF WESTERN INDIA

I.

THE KSAHARATAS

The Parthian conquest of the Indus valley, as we have already seen in a previous chapter,¹ put an end to the rule of the Śakas in the Punjab and the North-Western Frontier Province. It also produced an indirect result on the politics of North India. The Śakas now became scattered and a branch of them moved towards the south and ultimately carved out a kingdom in the western part of India.

Available records disclose the existence of two such dynasties—the Kṣaharātas, and the family of Caṣṭana, generally called the kṣatrapas of Surāṣṭra and Malwa. The history of these dynasties should properly form a chapter in the annals of South India since the main sphere of their political activity lay in the region to the south of the Vindhya, excepting that of Rudradāman who also conquered a considerable portion of North India. As, however, the chief centre of their power was in Malwa we may briefly note the history of the dynasties here.

Of these two dynasties, the earlier and the short-lived one was that of the Kṣaharātas, consisting of two members only, Bhūmaka and Nahapāna. Some scholars think that the Kṣaharātas may have been Pahlavas or Parthians.² But if we remember the fact that in the Taxila plate, Patika's father Liaka-Kusulaka is described as Cahara(ta) and as a satrap under the Śaka king Maues-Moga, we have to regard the Kṣaharātas as belonging to the Scythian stock.³ A Mathura inscription of the first century B.C. bears the name of Kṣaharāta Ghaṭāka.⁴ This shows that the Kṣaharātas had their homes in Taxila and Mathura, wherefrom they evidently migrated to the south under the pressure of the Parthians. It may further be noted in this connection that "the coins of the Kṣaharātas of the Western India have on the reverse . . . arrow, thunderbolt and discus . . . which recalls certain coins of Maues and Azes I, the Kings of

¹ *supra*, Ch. iii. pp. 63ff.

² Rapson, *Catalogue*, p. civ. cf. *JIH*, xii. p. 37.

³ *supra*, p. 61.

⁴ *JRAS*, 1912, p. 121.

kings of Taxila, while the 'Lion-Capital' on the reverse of Bhūmaka's coins is a further link with the Śaka family of Mathura".⁵ Dr. Raychaudhuri points out that "Kṣaharāta seems to be identical with Karatai, the designation of a famous Śaka tribe of the north mentioned by the Geographer Ptolemy".⁶

From a consideration of the type and fabric of the coins, there cannot be any doubt about the fact that Bhūmaka preceded Nahapāna. Bhūmaka's coins have been found in Gujrat, Kathiawad and the Malwa region. If we accept the theory that the Kṣaharātas moved south under the pressure of the Parthians, we may tentatively place the beginning of Bhūmaka's reign sometimes between 50 and 60 A.D.

We are absolutely in the dark regarding the relationship of Nahapāna with Bhūmaka. Rapson thinks that the forms of Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī letters on their coins, however, make a long interval between them almost impossible.⁷ Thus if we think that Bhūmaka began his rule sometimes between 50 and 60 A.D., we cannot place the beginning of Nahapāna's reign beyond c.80 A.D. Now, Nahapāna has been mentioned in eight cave inscriptions. Of these six have been cut in cave no. 10 of the Pandu Lena, near Nasik, one in the Caitya cave at Karle and one in a cave at Junnar. The Nasik records give the dates 41, 42 and 45. The Junnar epigraph specifies the year 46.

There has been great controversy regarding the era to which these dates are to be referred. Cunningham, Dubreuil, R. D. Banerjee and some other scholars are in favour of assigning them to the Vikrama era of 58 B.C. This theory has rightly been rejected by the later scholars.

Following A. M. Boyer, Rapson refers these dates to the Śaka era of 78 A.D. and this view has been accepted by Drs. Raychaudhuri, Sircar and others. It has been pointed out that as the Nasik inscription of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇī of the year 18 confirms the gift formerly made by Uṣabhadāta, the son-in-law of Nahapāna, it may be inferred that the last year of Nahapāna is equivalent to the 18th year of Gautamīputra's reign, or in other words 124 A.D. = the 18th year of the reign of the Śātavāhana king.⁸ Thus it is clear that for determining the date of Nahapāna we have to consider first the date of Gautamīputra.

The theory of M/S. Bhandarkar that Gautamīputra and

⁵ *SI*, p. 35.

⁶ *PHAI*, p. 484.

⁷ Rapson, *Catalogue*, p. cviii.

⁸ *ib.*, pp. xxvi-xxvii.

Pulumāyi ruled conjointly must now be given up.⁹ Gautamīputra's empire included Ākara-Avanti (East and West Malwa), while it has been shown before that we have got an inscription of Vāsiska from Sanchi dated in the year 106 A.D. showing that the Kuṣāṇas still controlled the Eastern Malwa region which the Nasik inscription describes as included within the dominion of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi. So Gautamīputra's conquest of Ākara-Avanti seems to have taken place sometimes after A.D. 106, and it thus becomes difficult to agree with Dr. K. Gopalachari that Gautamīputra ruled from c.82 to c.106 A.D.¹⁰

Again, the Ujjayinī symbols on the coins of Caṣṭana as well as the evidence of the *Geographike* of Ptolemy clearly point to the fact that Caṣṭana must have held sway over a portion at least of the Avantī region.¹¹ The Andau inscription of 130 A.D. shows that Caṣṭana had been ruling conjointly with his grandson mahākṣatrapa Rudradāman.¹² Thus sometimes before this date Caṣṭana must have snatched away a portion of the Sātavāhana territory. As Rapson thinks there is no evidence that Gautamīputra lost any part of his dominion during his lifetime.¹³ This leads us to think that Caṣṭana evidently occupied Ujjayinī after the death of Gautamīputra. From the epigraphic evidences it is absolutely clear that Gautamīputra ruled at least for 24 years and if, on the other hand, we think that his 18th year corresponds to 124 A.D. his death would fall in the year 130. A.D. It may of course be argued that Caṣṭana possibly occupied Ujjayinī immediately after the death of Gautamīputra. But here we have to remember the fact that as in the year 130 A.D. he had been ruling conjointly with his grandson Rudradāman, he must have come to power sometimes before this date for we have the coins of his son Jayadāman as kṣatrapa under him.¹⁴ Thus the theory that the year 18 of Gautamīputra's reign is equivalent to 124 A.D. seems to be improbable.

We have to note in this connection another important piece of evidence. In his Junagadh inscription of 150 A.D. Rudradāman claims that he defeated Śātakarṇi, lord of the Dakṣiṇāpatha, twice in fair fight, but did not destroy him on account of the nearness

⁹ For a criticism of the theory, *PHAI*, n. 492f; *JRAS.* 1926, p. 644f; Gopalachari *Early History of the Andhra Country*, p. 63ff.

¹⁰ Gopalachari, *l.c.*

¹¹ *Ptolemy*, p. 152.

¹² *Ep. Ind.*, xvi. p. 23ff.

¹³ Rapson, *Catalogue*, p. xxxviii.

¹⁴ For Jayadāman's coins, *ib.* pp. 76-7.

of their connection.¹⁵ Rapson thinks that this Śātakarnī was Vāsiṣṭhiputra. Pulumāyi who is further identified with Vāsiṣṭhiputra Śrī Śātakarnī mentioned in a Kanheri record as the husband of the daughter of the mahākṣatrapa Ru(dra). But neither in inscriptions nor in the coins Pulumāyi adopts the title Śātakarnī, and, therefore, the identification of the Śātakarnī of the Girnar record, or of Vāsiṣṭhiputra Śrī Śātakarnī of the Kanheri epigraph, with Pulumāyi appears to be untenable. Further, according to Ptolemy, Pulumāyi was a contemporary of Caṣṭana,¹⁶ and it is thus highly improbable that Pulumāyi married the latter's great grand-daughter.¹⁷

From a Karle epigraph it appears that Pulumāyi ruled at least for 24 years. Thus if we think that Gautamīputra died c.130 A.D. Pulumāyi would reign at least up to 154 A.D., which, however, is incompatible with the mention of Śātakarnī, as the lord of Dakṣiṇāpatha, in the Junagadh inscription of 150 A.D. Dr. Raychaudhuri thinks that "Śātakarnī is perhaps to be identified with Vāsiṣṭhiputra Śrī Śātakarnī of a Kanheri Cave Inscription, or with Vāsiṣṭhiputra Chatarapana Śātakarnī of a Nanaghat record. His exact position in the genealogical list cannot be determined with precision".¹⁸ As in the Junagadh record Śātakarnī is described as Dakṣiṇāpatha-pati, it is clear that he must have been a king of importance and may possibly be identified with Śiva Śrī Śātakarnī who ruled for 13 years according to the *Purāṇas* and was a successor of Pulumāyi on the Sātavāhana throne. Thus it is clear that the Sātavāhana chronology as proposed by Rapson needs a thorough revision and the 18th year of Gautamīputra = the last year of Nahapāna's reign must be much earlier than 124 A.D.¹⁹ This proves indirectly further that the dates in the inscriptions of Nahapāna cannot be referred to the Śaka era of 78 A.D. Nahapāna ruled after Bhūmaka, and thus it is not unlikely that the record of Nahapāna are dated in his regnal years. This appears to be supported by the traditions preserved in the Jaina *Paṭṭavalis* and Jinasena's *Harivamśa*, which assign a period of 40 and 42 years respectively to Naravāhana or Nahapāna—a fact showing that Nahapāna ruled for more than 40 years.²⁰

¹⁵ *Ep. Ind.* viii. p. 42ff.

¹⁶ *Ptolemy*, pp. 152, 176.

¹⁷ *JRAS*, 1926.

¹⁸ *PHAI*, p. 495-6.

¹⁹ For the revised scheme of Sātavāhana chronology, see, Ch. VI. f.n. 47 *infra*, p. 125.

²⁰ *SJ*, p. 47.

Allan is inclined to place Nahapāna much earlier. His arguments are as follows:

A Kṣaharāta satrap called Ghaṭāka is mentioned in an inscription from Mathura, while Nahapāna uses the Indian title *rājā* on the reverse of his coins, and *rājā* and *kṣatrpa* in a very corrupt Greek legend on the obverse, which suggests a date contemporary with Rañjubula or Rājula. His coins cannot be assigned to so late a date in the second century A.D., for this would make the interval between Nahapāna and the Mathura dynasty too great.²¹

We cannot, however, agree with this view. The Kṣaharāta satrap Ghaṭāka need not be connected with the line of Nahapāna, and further, as Allan himself states, the coins of Nahapāna and Rañjubula may have been derived from the same prototype. Under the circumstances, there is no harm if the interval between Nahapāna and the Mathura dynasty becomes "too great". The contemporaneity of Nahapāna and Gautamīputra proves beyond doubt that Nahapāna must have lived in the second century A.D. The close resemblance between the characters of Nahapāna's records and those of the Andau inscription of the time of Caṣṭana and Rudradāman of 130 A.D. also supports this view.

The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* speaks of Nambanus who had the port of Barygaza (Broach) under his control. This Nambanus may be identified with Nahapāna, though Dr. Sircar thinks otherwise preferring the variant reading Mambarus or Nambarus.²² It has been pointed out, however, that "the king of *Periplus M.E.* ch. 41, is Nahapāna" and this "no longer admits of doubt. The text, as based on the latest examination of the manuscripts, suggests the view that the name was originally Nambanus and eliminates the Mambarus of earlier texts."²³ Schoff thinks that the date of the *Periplus* is c.60 A.D. Kennedy,²⁴ however, points out that the *Periplus* mentions Malichos (Maliku), the king of the Nabataeans, who died in A.D. 75 and Zoscales (Za Hakale), king of the Auxumites, who reigned from A.D. 76 to 89. The *Periplus*, on the other hand, confines the Kuṣāṇas in Bactria²⁵ and thus it appears to point to a date before 64 A.D. In face of all these contradictory evidences, we can only conclude that the different sections of the monograph was composed at different times between 60 and 80 A.D. Thus Nahapāna must have been ruling sometimes between these two dates.

²¹ CSHI, p. 80

²² AIU, pp. 178-9.

²³ JRAS, 1946, p. 170.

²⁴ JRAS, 1917, pp. 827-30.

²⁵ The *Periplus*, ed. Schoff, p. 185.

As it has been already shown there is absolutely no evidence to prove that Nahapāna was in any way subordinate under the Kuṣāṇas.²⁶ The geographical references in the inscriptions of Uṣavadāta, the son-in-law of Nahapāna, show that the latter's rule extended as far north as Ajmir and Rajputana, and included Kathiawad, South Gujrat, Western Malwa, North Konkan, from Broach to Sopara, and Nasik and Poona districts. If we now turn to the inscriptions of the early Sātavāhanas, we find that a considerable portion of these territories had been under their rule,²⁷ and it was evidently at their cost that Nahapāna made the above conquests. In Nasik Cave inscription no. 10, Uṣavadāta states : "And by the order of the lord, I went to relieve the chief of the Uttamabhadras, who was besieged for the rainy season by the Mālayas; and the Mālayas fled as it were at the sound (of my approach) and were made prisoners by the Uttamabhadras. Thence I went to the Puṣkara lake and was consecrated, and made a donation of three thousand cows and a village".²⁸ Who these Uttamabhadras were we do not know. The Mālayas have been supposed to be either "the inhabitants of the Malaya hills in Southern India" or "the Mālavas". The latter identification is more probable.

The *Periplus* states that the capital of the kingdom of Nahapāna was Minnagara, "from which much cotton cloth is brought down to Barygaza".²⁹ The location of the capital has been a subject of great controversy among the Indologists, but as the *Periplus* states in connection with its description that "in these places, there remain even to the present time signs of the expedition of Alexander, such as ancient shrines, walls of forts and great well"³⁰ it seems that Minnagara should be located somewhere in North India.

The evidence of the *Periplus* shows that in the age of Nahapāna a flourishing trade was going on between India and the western countries. Commodities flowed to Barygaza (Broach) through Ozene, Paethan and Tagara (Ter). We are informed that for the king there were brought from outside very

²⁶ *supra*, p. 83.

²⁷ Gopalachari, *l.c.*

²⁸ *Ep. Ind.* viii. p. 78; *Arch. Surv. West Ind.* iv. p. 99. no. 5.

²⁹ *The Periplus*, ed. Schoff, p. 39.

³⁰ *ib.*, p. 39 and also p. 180. For different locations of the capital, see, Fleet, *JRAS*, 1912, p. 788, where Minnagara is identified with Dohad in Panch-Mahals; *IA*, 1926, p. 143, where it is identified with Junnar; Bhandarkar thinks that it was Mandasor, cf. *Bomb. Gaz.* I. i. p. 15n. For Broach as the capital of Nahapāna, *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*, *JBORS*, 1930, p. 290; also, *IHQ*, 1929, p. 356.

costly vessels of silver, singing boys, beautiful maidens for the harem, fine wines, thin clothing of the finest weaves and the choicest ointments.³¹ This would show at once that king Nahapāna was a man of fashion with tastes of luxury. The singing boys and the beautiful maidens were evidently slaves from Europe and the adjacent countries, but it is difficult to determine their exact status in the Indian society.

The name Nahapāna is distinctly un-Indian. Naha in Iranian and Armenian means *people*, while pana in Iranian means *protégé*; cf. Artaban, Darapanah etc.³² Nahapāna's son-in-law Uṣavadāta or Ṛṣabhadatta, however, bore an Indian name and patronised Indian religion.³³

The Jogalthembi hoard has brought to light numerous coins of Nahapāna, two-thirds of which have been re-struck by Gautamīputra Śrī-Śātakarṇī, a fact which shows that the two kings were contemporaries and that the Kṣaharāta ruler was conquered by the Śātavāhana king. The Nasik *prāśasti* describes Gautamīputra as the "uprooter of the Kṣaharāta race" and "the restorer of the glory of the Śātavāhana family". As among the coins re-struck by the Śātavāhana monarch there is not a single one belonging to any prince other than Nahapāna, it can safely be inferred that Nahapāna was the last prince of the Kṣaharāta dynasty.

³¹ The *Periplus*, ed. Schoff, p. 42.

³² *JRAS*, 1906, p. 211.

³³ *SI*, p. 93ff.

THE DYNASTY OF CAṢṬANA

The second family of the Śakas of Ujjayinī and Kathiawad, the line of Caṣṭana, was destined to rule for centuries and played an important role in the political and cultural history of the land.⁸⁴ In the epigraphic records Caṣṭana is described as the son of Ysamotika. The term 'Ysamo' is Scythian, meaning territory, Sk. bhūmi. Hence Levi and Konow identify Ysamotika with Bhūmaka, and make Caṣṭana a relative of Nahapāna. Though this view has been ably controverted by Rapson and others, it appears that Ysamotika was very near in time to Nahapāna. It is not unlikely that he was a subordinate ruler in the Avanti region under Gautamīputra.

There is no doubt that Caṣṭana was an independent potentate⁸⁵ and his dynasty uses the Śaka era in the inscriptions and coins.⁸⁶ The earliest known date of the dynasty thus becomes 52 = 130 A.D. as given in the Andau inscriptions while the latest date known from the coins is 310 = 388 A.D. which falls within the reign of Candragupta, who extirpated the rule of the Śakas in India.

The coins of Caṣṭana, like those of Nahapāna, bear inscriptions in Brahmi and Kharoṣṭhī characters, showing that he was of Northern origin.⁸⁷ The Caitya symbols on his coins, continued

⁸⁴ The dynasty of Caṣṭana uses the Śaka era in the inscriptions and coins. While the Andau inscription of the year 52 = 130 A.D. is the earliest known record of the dynasty, the dates on the coins of the rulers extend from the year 100 to 310 = 388 A.D. In the Purāṇas, 18 Śaka kings figure as the successors of the Andhra-Sātavāhanas. The 18 Śaka kings are doubtless the kings of the dynasty Caṣṭana which ruled up to c.255 A.D., when according to Pargiter, the earliest *Matsya Purāṇa* account reached its completion.

⁸⁵ Dr. D. C. Sircar thinks that the line of Caṣṭana started as Kuṣāna viceroy of the south-western province of their empire in place of the Kṣaharāta rulers with instructions to recover the lost districts of satrapy from the Sātavāhanas. It has already been shown that Bhūmaka and Nahapāna were never subordinate to the Kuṣānas. In case of Caṣṭana also there is no proof that he owed allegiance to anybody.

⁸⁶ J-Dubreuil thinks that Caṣṭana was the founder of the Śaka era of 78 A.D. Dr. Raychaudhuri points out that this cannot be the case, for the capital of Caṣṭana (Tiasenes) was Ujjayinī (Ozene of Ptolemy), whereas we learn from the *Periplus* that Ozene was not a capital in the seventies of the first century A.D. The *Periplus* speaks of Ozene as a former capital, implying that it was not a capital in its own time.

⁸⁷ The head on the *Obv.* of Caṣṭana's coins closely resembles that on the coins of Nahapāna and comes from the same proto-type. For Caṣṭana's coins, Rapson, *Catalogue*, p. 72-5; for the mention of a coin of Ysamotika

on the coins of his successors also proves that he must have made some conquests at the cost of the Sātavāhanas, while the Ujjayini symbol, and the evidence of the *Geographike* of Ptolemy³⁸ show his connection with the famous city.

The Andau inscriptions of 130 A.D. show that Caṣṭana had been ruling conjointly with his grandson Rudradāman. As we have coins of Jayadāman bearing the humbler designation of kṣatrapa only, it is clear that by 130 A.D. he was dead, and he never thus ruled independently as mahākṣatrapa. This fact has been interpreted in a different manner by Buhler and Bhandarkar, who think that the use of the humbler designation of kṣatrapa only by Jayadāman shows that 'during his reign' the power of the dynasty suffered some diminution, probably through a Sātavāhana conquest.³⁹ The conjecture has further been supported by the statement of the Junagadh record that Rudradāman had 'won for himself the name of mahākṣatrapa' (*svayamadhigata mahākṣatrapa nāmna*). As the Andau inscriptions show Caṣṭana and Rudradāman ruling conjointly,⁴⁰ Jayadāman never ruled independently, and therefore the question of the diminution of the power of the dynasty 'during his reign' cannot arise. The statement of the Junagadh record need not be taken seriously. Such boastful empty statements are often found in Indian epigraphs.

Rudradāman was undoubtedly the greatest king of his

(Ghsamotika), the father of Caṣṭana, Thomas, *JRAS*, 1881, p. 524; cf. Rapson, *JRAS*, 1899, p. 370. It is probably a coin of Caṣṭana with the name of his father, cf. Rapson, *Catalogue*, p. 71.

³⁸ *Ptolemy*, p. 152.

³⁹ *JRAS*, 1890, p. 646; *Bomb. Gaz.* I. i. p. 34, n. 5; *Early Hist. Deccan*, p. 29.

⁴⁰ *IA*, xlvii. p. 154, n. 26. J-Dubreuil and Allan have objected to the view of conjoint rule of Caṣṭana and Rudradāman on the ground that there is no 'ca' in the text, but they would like to supply 'grandson' in the same. This is, however, more objectionable than the omission of 'ca'. Dr. Bhandarkar also originally supposed that the term 'pauṛaśya' had been omitted, but the construction of the text would hardly allow such an insertion. R. D. Banerjee objected to the theory of conjoint rule on the ground that apart from the possibility of such an event in India, there is sufficient evidence in the Andau inscriptions themselves to prove that the authors of the record were quite ignorant as to the exact relationship between Caṣṭana and Rudradāman. It may, however, be noted that among the rulers of the dynasty of Caṣṭana, we find that the father and the son ruled conjointly as mahākṣatrapa and kṣatrapa—a fact which proves definitely that conjoint rule was prevalent in the family. Caṣṭana's son Jayadāman bears the title kṣatrapa only (never mahākṣatrapa), which proves that he ruled as kṣatrapa for some times under his father, but probably died during the latter's lifetime and could not succeed to the higher office of mahākṣatrapa. After his death, Caṣṭana evidently associated with himself his grandson Rudradāman in the administration of the state.

dynasty. His Junagadh record⁴¹ furnishes us with the following facts:

- (a) Election of Rudradāman as the king.
- (b) Conquests made by Rudradāman, in Southern and Northern India.
- (c) History of the Surāṣṭra region.
- (d) Administration and personal qualities of the king.

The Junagadh record states that men of all castes chose Rudradāman as protector and he earned for himself the title of mahākṣatrapa. We have already stated that as the Andau inscriptions show that he had been ruling conjointly with his grandfather Caṣṭana the question of his election by the people cannot arise, though of course it is not unlikely that his selection by his grandfather was hailed by the subjects of his kingdom.

Rudradāman is described as being an object of devotion to the people of the countries of Pūrva and Aparā Ākarāvanti (the East and West Malwa), Anūpa-nivṛt or the Māhiṣmatī region (Māndhātā in Nimad, or Maheśvara) Ānarta (the region round Dwaraka), Surāṣṭra (dist. around Junagadh), Svabhra (the country on the banks of Savarmati), Maru (Marwar), Kaccha (Cutch), Sindhu-Sauvīra (the Indus valley), Kukura (probably between Sind and the Pāriyātra mountain) Aparānta (North Koṅkan), Niṣāda (in the region of the Sarasvatī and the Western Vindhya) and others. In the Nasik inscription of Vāśiṣṭhīputra Pulumāyi, Gautamīputra is described as the king of Asika, Asaka, Mulaka, Surāṭha, Kukura, Aparānta, Anūpa, Vidarbha and Ākarāvanti. Thus it appears that Pūrvāpara-Ākarāvanti, Surāṣṭra, Kukura in North Kathiawad, near Ānarta, Aparānta and Anūpanibhṛt were wrested by Rudradāman from some successor of Gautamīputra.

Of these, Pūrvāpara-Ākarāvanti, Surāṣṭra and Kukura seem to have been conquered earlier during the reign of Pulumāyi, since Caṣṭana held sway over them. It cannot be definitely determined when the rest were conquered. The Junagadh record states that Rudradāman twice defeated Śātakarṇī, the lord of the Dakṣiṇāpatha, but did not destroy him on account of nearness of relationship. As it has been already stated, this Śātakarṇī cannot be Pulumāyi, but probably some successor of the latter. Was it from this Śātakarṇī that Rudradāman conquered Aparānta, Anūpanibhṛt and the Māndhātā regions?

The inclusion of the Sindhu-Sauvīra region, lower and middle

⁴¹ *Ep. Ind.* viii. p. 42ff; *IA*, vii. p. 257f.

Indus valley, within the empire of Rudradāman shows that it must have been conquered by the Śaka monarch from some successor of Kaniska in those regions. The Sui Vihar inscription of the year 11 proves Kaniska's mastery over this area⁴² but the silence of Rudradāman's epigraph regarding the Kuṣāṇas seems to show that the dynasty had no control over the area when the conquest was made. Rudradāman had also to fight the republican tribes like the Yaudheyas,⁴³ "proud and indomitable", who had presumably threatened him from the north. The Junagadh inscription refers to "*other territory*", not specified, as conquered by his own prowess.

The history of the Surāṣṭra region, as preserved in the Junagadh epigraph, goes back to the days of the Mauryas.⁴⁴ The rock which contains this inscription has also engraved on its surface a record of Aśoka, the Maurya. Rudradāman's epigraph records the restoration of the irrigation system of the Sudarśana lake, first planned by the Vaiśya rāṣṭriya Puṣyagupta under Candragupta Maurya, and afterwards improved by Aśoka's governor Yavanarāja Tuṣāspa.⁴⁵ In his own time, the dam of the lake bursted again and was repaired under the supervision of his governor, the Parthian Suviśākha, the son of Kulaipa. The cost of repairing it was borne entirely by the personal expense of the sovereign, and no extra tax was levied on the people for the purpose.

We are practically in the dark regarding the system followed by the Great-kṣatrapa in the administration of his empire. The Junagadh record shows that the region of Ānarta-Surāṣṭra was placed in charge of the Parthian governor (amātya) Suviśākha. From this it may justly be inferred that for administrative purposes he divided his empire into several provinces and placed them under the supervision of faithful governors or amātyas. In his government, the king was helped by a group of able ministers who were divided into two classes, viz., *maṭisaciva* (counsellors) and *karmasaciva* (executive officers).

⁴² CII. II. i. p. 141; also see, *supra*, p. 79.

⁴³ For the Yaudheyas, *infra*, Ch. vi. p. 121.

⁴⁴ For an account of the rock containing the epigraph of Rudradāman, *Arch. Surv. West Ind.* ii. p. 128. The rock, which contains this inscription, is about twelve feet in height and seventy-five feet in circumference at the base; it has engraved on its surface records of three kings belonging to three different dynasties which have ruled over the Western India: (a) Aśoka, the Maurya emperor c.250 B.C.; (b) Rudradāman, the mahā-kṣatrapa: the inscription being dated in the (Śaka) year 72 = 150 A.D.; (c) Skanda Gupta, the Gupta emperor, the inscription being dated in the Gupta years 136, 137, 139 = 455, 456, 458 A.D.

⁴⁵ Barua thinks that Tuṣāspa ruled after (*ante*) Aśoka.

Rudradāman claims that he did not tax the people unjustly, but still he had the treasury filled with kaṇaka (gold), rajata (silver), vajra (diamond) and vaidurya ratna (cat's eye) etc. The subjects were not burdened with kara, viṣṭi and prañaya, but had to pay only just taxes like vali, bhāga and śulka. Here evidently a distinction has been made between the legal and illegal forms of taxation. The legal taxes vali, bhāga and śulka were evidently paid by the people without any protest and were recoverable by the state without question.⁴⁶

Rudradāman was thus a benevolent king with intense love for humanity. In the Junagadh record, he is described as *bhraṣṭa-rāja-pratiṣṭhāpaka* (l. 12), the exact significance of which is not clear. Like Samudra Gupta, he probably re-installed the kings whom he defeated on condition of paying him homage. Rapson thinks that the kings in question were former feudatories of Nahapāna who were dethroned by Gautamīputra.⁴⁷

Rudradāman was well-versed in grammar, politics, music and logic. He also seems to have been equally versed in prose and poetry (*gadya-padya-kāvya-dīnāṃ-pravīṇena*). The Junagadh record itself is one of the earliest epigraphs written throughout in Sanskrit and displays clearly the existence of an elaborate Sanskrit literature. It is written in prose but it shows at the same time in a most interesting manner the development from the simple epic style to that of the kāvya.⁴⁸

There is hardly anything interesting or instructive in the dynastic history of the Śaka-kṣatrapas after the days of the great satrap Rudradāman. Our sources are very meagre and the little amount of knowledge that we have of these petty rulers can enable us only to determine the order of their succession and approximate dates but nothing of their achievements. This history we shall note in the next chapter.

⁴⁶ For the connotation of the terms, *Bali*, *bhāga* etc., Ghosal, *Hindu Revenue System*, p. 58.

⁴⁷ Rapson, *Catalogue* p. cxx.

⁴⁸ *SI*, pp. 60ff: "*Rudradāman and Indian Culture*".

CHAPTER VI

THE DARK AGE

With the fall of the Imperial Kuṣāṇas in c.176 A.D. we enter into what is known as the dark age of ancient Indian history, and this veil of darkness, it is believed, is not lifted till the Guptas came to power in c.319 A.D.¹ Jayaswal has tried to throw fresh light on the period by assuming that the Bhāraṣivas became predominant in this age and extended their rule over almost the whole of North India as well as a large tract of South India including the Andhradeśa.² Jayaswal's account may thus be summarised:

(1) In the Indian National War of Independence against the foreign Kuṣāṇa rule the Bhāraṣivas took the lead and thus they occupied almost the whole of North India.

(2) The Bhāraṣivas were of Nāga-origin and are mentioned in the *Purāṇas* as the Nāgas of Vidiśā and then as the Navanāgas of Mathura, Kāntipurī and Padmāvatī.

(3) The Guptas, the Vākātakas and even the Pallavas were originally feudatories (or generals) under them and later on each of these carved out their kingdoms after the decadence of the Bhāraṣiva power.

(4) The Bhāraṣiva empire contained within itself other autonomous republican and monarchical states and they were allowed to enjoy their own internal autonomy and even the right of issuing coins in their own names.

Jayaswal thinks, in fact, that the Bhāraṣivas should be considered as a great imperial power for the following reasons: (a) they performed no less than ten Aśvamedha sacrifices; (b) as they were identical with the Nāgas, the *Purāṇas* may be utilised to prove the existence of a great Nāga empire in North India; and (c) they could successfully fight against the Kuṣāṇas only because of their enormous wealth and resources.

It is really difficult for us to agree with the theory as stated above for the evidences at our disposal hardly corroborate the same. As Dr. Bhandarkar has pointed out the Aśvamedha sacrifice had lost its true implication about this age, and it could be performed even without any actual conquest.³ Thus the

¹ EHI, pp. 290-92.

² Jayaswal, *History of India*, 150 A.D.—350 A.D., pp. 48ff, 174.

³ Bhandarkar, IC, i. pp. 114f.

Viṣṇukunḍin king Mādhavavarman is said to have performed eleven horse-sacrifices, while Mayūraśarman, the Kadamba king performed eighteen.⁴ None, however, would regard them as Imperial suzerains or even ruling over a very vast kingdom. Again, the identification of the Bhāraśivas with the Nāgas is not beyond doubt. In the Vākāṭaka records, no doubt, Bhavanāga is described as belonging to the lineage of the Bhāraśivas,⁵ but we have many such names ending in—*nāga* having at the same time hardly any connection with the Nāga stock. Even if we admit that the Bhāraśivas were the Nāgas we do not find any evidence to support their connection with the Nāgas of the *Purāṇas* who are represented as ruling after the Andhras and before the Guptas. The evidence of the coins shows clearly that after the fall of the Kuṣāṇas there appeared several petty principalities in the region once ruled by the Devaputras, while the Muruṇḍas of the Scythian stock became predominant in Eastern India. The Sassanids of Iran also extended their sway over the North-Western and the Western parts of India, and the Later Kuṣāṇas who now continued to rule in the NWFP and the Punjab had to acknowledge their supremacy. In any case, there is absolutely no cogent reason for believing that the Bhāraśivas became Imperial power in this so-called dark age. As Dr. Altekar states: "When considering the question of the disintegration of the Kushāna empire, we must therefore disabuse our mind of the notion that it was the Bhāraśivas of Kāntipuri who annihilated the Kushāna empire. The riddle of the disappearance of the Kushāna power from the Gangetic plain can be solved only by carefully studying the coins and inscriptions of the contemporary powers. If we do so, we shall find that the Yaudheyas, the Kunindas, the Mālavas, the Nāgas and the Maghas, who began to strike coins as independent powers in the third century, all played their own part in driving out the Kushānas".⁶

In discussing the history of this so-called dark age we must not lose sight of the fact that the Kuṣāṇa empire in the heart of India shrunk by stages before it finally disappeared altogether. So different forces worked at the root of this disintegration at different ages and this disintegration really began from the eastern side.

⁴ Sircar, *Suc. Sat.* pp. 124f, 238f.

⁵ *Corpus*, iii. p. 236ff. cf. *JNSI*, v. pp. 21-7.

⁶ *VGA*, p. 25; *JNSI*, v. pp. 111-34.

II

The earliest defection from the empire seems to have been Kauśāmbī. Epigraphic records and the coins show that about 130 A.D., or a little earlier, when Huviṣka had still been in power, king Bhīmasena carved out for himself a kingdom in the Kauśāmbī region as proved by his Ginja (40 miles to the south of Allahabad) record⁷ of the year 52 = 130 A.D. There is absolutely no evidence to think that he was in any way subordinate under the Kuṣāṇas inasmuch as he is given the more dignified title of mahārāja. We have got another record of the king from Bandhogarh (Rewa State) of the year 51 showing that Vāsiṣṭhi-putra Bhīmasena really ruled over a pretty large kingdom. A seal of this king found at Bhita does not prove conclusively, however, that it also was included within his kingdom, for it is not unlikely that the same had been carried to that place from outside.

Mahārāja Kautsīputra Poṭhasiri, the son of Bhīmasena, is known from six records from Bandhogarh and his known dates are 86, 87 and 88 corresponding to A.D. 164, 165 and 166. Dr. Altekar thinks that he possibly ruled from c.140 to c.170 A.D. (when Huviṣka and Vasudeva I were the ruling Kuṣāṇa emperors).⁸ There are several coins also belonging to this king having on them the name of Prauṣṭhaśrī.

There are some epigraphic records that fall within the reign of Poṭhasiri but their exact interpretation causes some difficulty. Thus from Kauśāmbī we have got the records of the years 81, 86 and 87 of one Bhadrāmāgha, who is evidently identical with Bhadradeva known from another Bandhogarh inscription dated in the year 90.⁹ The evidences show that Kautsīputra Poṭhasiri had been ruling at the heart of the Baghelkhand, while simultaneously Bhadrāmāgha had been ruling in the Kauśāmbī region and possibly later on occupied the territory of the former monarch. Dr. D. C. Sircar thinks that "it seems that Bhadrāmāgha, who may have been a younger step-brother of Bhīmasena or an elder step-brother of Prauṣṭhaśrī, was the immediate suc-

⁷ *Ep. Ind.*, iii. p. 306. N. G. Majumdar and Krishna Deva think that the records of the dynasty are to be referred to the Chedi era of 248 A.D. (*Ep. Ind.* xxiv, pp. 146 & 253). Sahani thinks that the era used is the Gupta era (*ib.* xviii, p. 159). Konow, Marshall and Moti Chandra prefer the reference to the Śaka era of 78 A.D. (*Ep. Ind.* xxiii. p. 247; *ASR*, 1911-2, p. 417; *JNSI*, ii. p. 95ff). The "Śaka era theory" is now generally accepted.

⁸ *VGA*, p. 39.

⁹ *Ep. Ind.* xxiv. p. 253; xviii. p. 160; xxiii. p. 245.

cessor of mahārāja Bhīmasena. But Praushthāsri appears to have rebelled against Bhadramagha's authority and declared himself king in the southern part of the kingdom about the closing years of the latter's reign. Later he extended his power also over the Kauśāmbī region".¹⁰ If, however, we identify Bhadramagha with Bhadradeva of the Bandhogarh inscription of the year 90, then it becomes difficult for us to agree with Dr. Sircar. On the contrary, the epigraphic evidences would show that Bhadramagha outlived Poṭhasiri and evidently occupied the Bandhogarh region after the death of the latter. Dr. Altekar, on the other hand, thinks that Bhadramagha was the son of Poṭhasiri and observes that "we have got the rather strange phenomenon of finding the father Poṭhasiri ruling at Bandhogarh down to 166 A.D. and the son Bhadramagha administering the affairs at Kauśāmbī from 159 A.D. We can explain this riddle by the assumption that the Crown Prince Bhadra-magha managed to extend the kingdom beyond Kauśāmbī by his own valour of diplomacy and that the father permitted him to rule at the latter place as an independent ruler even in his own life-time".¹¹ The explanation, however, is hardly convincing one. From the coins discovered at Kauśāmbī belonging to the centuries before the rise of the Imperial Guptas, we get the following names of kings: Bhadramagha, Śivamagha, Satamagha, Bhimavarman, Vijayamagha, Puramagha, Yugamagha, Pusvaśri, Navika, Rudra, Dhanadeva etc. The list shows that while there are some names ending in —*magha*, there are others having altogether different forms. From this it will not be unreasonable to infer that the —*magha* kings belonged to one particular dynasty while the others apparently hailed from one or more different stocks. If we remember the fact that Kauśāmbī had an enormous economic importance lying on the route leading to the trade-centres of the Eastern India, then it becomes easily intelligible how different powers tried to have control over the region and thus how different dynasties had been ruling over the place at different periods till it was incorporated within the strong built empire of the Guptas.

This leads us to think that Bhadramagha did not belong to the dynasty of Bhīmasena or Poṭhasiri. He evidently ruled originally in the Kauśāmbī region and later on after the death of Poṭhasiri extended his power in the Baghelkhand area. Śivamagha known from a Kosam inscription may have been the son and the

¹⁰ *AIU*, p. 176.

¹¹ *VGA*, p. 40.

immediate successor of Bhadramagha.¹² Gautamīputra Śivamagha is also mentioned in a Bhita seal and it is not unlikely that he also brought the Bhita region under his control. A Kosam inscription of the year 107 = 185 A.D. speaks of one mahārāja Vaiśravana, whose two records have also been discovered from Bandhogarh.¹³ We do not know whether he belonged to the dynasty of Bhīmasena, although, the form of the name seems to show that he was not a member of the Magha dynasty. Thus it appears that after Gautamīputra Śivamagha the Magha power was eclipsed for the time being. Vaiśravana is described as the son of mahāsenāpati Bhadravala. If, however, this Bhadravala can be identified with Bhadramagha then Vaiśravana may be supposed to have been a younger brother of Gautamīputra Śivamagha. But the form of the name together with the fact that in the Bandhogarh inscription Bhadravala is merely described as a mahāsenāpati, and not a rājā or mahārāja, goes against such identification.

The existence of a king named Bhīmavarman is disclosed to us by two Kosam inscriptions¹⁴ dated respectively in the years 130 and 139 corresponding to A.D. 208 and 217. He may have been the son and successor of Vaiśravana in the Kauśāmbī region.

We are completely in the dark regarding the period when kings Satamagha, Vijayamagha, Puramagha, Yugamagha and others ruled. The last ruler of Kauśāmbī appears to have been Rudra who may be identified with Rudradeva mentioned in the Allahabad inscription of Samudra Gupta.

In this connection we should consider the evidence of a Bhita seal bearing the legend "Śrī Vindhyavedhamahārājasya Māheśvara-Mahāsenāpatisṛṣṭarājyasya Vṛṣadhvajasya Gautamīputrasya". Marshall translates the epigraph as follows: "Of the illustrious Mahārāja Gautamīputra Vṛṣadhvaja, the penetrator of the Vindhyas, who had made over his kingdom to the great Lord Kārtikeya".¹⁵ The seal probably belonged to the third century A.D. It is not clear whether this monarch started an independent dynasty at Bhita or was related to the dynasty of Bandhogarh. If he originally belonged to the region of Bhita, then it must be assumed that he extended his power towards the south as his title Vindhyavedha shows. A Bhita seal of about the fourth

¹² *Ep. Ind.* xviii. p. 159.

¹³ *ib.* xxiv, p. 146.

¹⁴ *IC*, iii. p. 177.

¹⁵ For an interesting discussion on the seal, Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 142.

century A.D. mentions one mahārāja Saṃkarasiṃha, who may have been a successor of Gautamīputra Vṛṣadhva.¹⁶ This Bhita dynasty appears to have been conquered and extirpated by the first Gupta mahārājādhirāja Candragupta I.

III

We have already seen that Sāketa or the Ayodhya region formed a part of the kingdom of the Kuṣāṇas and a local dynasty ruling there, as shown by the evidence of the coins, must have acknowledged the supremacy of the foreign lords. The *Geographike* of Ptolemy shows, however, that in c.140 A.D. the Muruṇḍas had come to power over this region, and there is no evidence that they in any way acknowledged the overlordship of the Kuṣāṇas. In the *Geographike*, we find, the Maruṇḍai are placed on the right bank of the Ganges, to the south of the 'Gangenai' or 'Tanganai', established in the valley of the 'Sarabos', the Sarayu of the Sanskrit texts, the Sarju or Ghogra of modern times.¹⁷ Half a century after Ptolemy, Oppien mentions the 'Maruandien' people, as a Gangetic people living in the Indian plains.

According to the Jaina traditions, Pāṭaliputra was also under the rule of the Muruṇḍa kings. The *Pādalipta-Pravandha* of the *Prabhāvakacarita* relates the story how Pādalipta cured king Muruṇḍa of Pāṭaliputra of his terrible headache.¹⁸ In the *Āvasyka-Bṛihadvṛitti* we find the mention of a Muruṇḍa king of Pāṭaliputra who sent his envoy to the king of Purisapura (Peshawar). This envoy, who put up with the royal minister at the capital, found too many Buddhist monks there. Each time the envoy tried to come out of his abode to go to the palace, he invariably met first a Buddhist monk, which he regarded as inauspicious. He was informed that the capital was full of them and that he would not be able to avoid their sight.¹⁹

Levi has pointed out that the Muruṇḍas ruled in Pāṭaliputra in the centuries just preceding the rise of the Guptas. He draws our attention to a Chinese account²⁰ informing us that during the reign of the Wu dynasty (220-277 A.D.), the king of Fu-nan (Cambodia) named Fan-Chen sent one of his relatives Su-Wu

¹⁶ *AIU*, p. 177.

¹⁷ *Ptolemy*, pp. 210, 212ff.

¹⁸ Mohonlal B. Jhaveri, *Nirvāṇa-Kalika of Pādaliptācārya*, Intro. 10; *Pādalipta-Pravandha*, vv. 44, 59, 61.

¹⁹ cf. *Malaviya Com. Vol.*, p. 184f.

²⁰ Levi, in his *Deux Peuples méconnus in Melanges Charles des Harlez*, pp. 176-85 has given a very interesting account of the Muruṇḍas in India.

as ambassador to India. He started from Fu-nan, passed by the mouths of the river Teou-kieou-li (Takkola) and followed the large bend of the sea-side, straight towards the north-west, entered a large gulf which bordered on a number of kingdoms, and at the end of a little more than a year reached the mouth of the river Tien-chu (India). They went up the river more than 7000 li and reached their destination. The Indian king accorded them a hearty welcome, and gave them facilities to visit the interior of the kingdom. Afterwards he sent two men, Chen-song and another, with four horses of the Yueh-chi country as presents to Fan-chen. About this time, the emperor of the Wu dynasty sent an officer of the second rank, Kang-tai, as ambassador to Fu-nan. He met Chen-song and others and questioned them on the Indian customs.. They replied: "This is a country where the law of Buddha prospers. The people are straight-forward and honest and the land is very fertile. The title of the king is Meouloun. The capital where the king resides has a double wall of ramparts. The rivers and the sources of water are divided into a large number of zig-zag canals which carry waters into the dug-out of the outer-walls, and the water then passes into a large river. The palace and the temples are decorated with ornaments, sculptures, and engravings; in the roads, the markets, the villages, the towns, there are clocks and drums etc....."

Meou-loun has been identified by Levi with Muruṇḍa. The above account is important as showing that in the middle of the third century A.D., the Muruṇḍas had still been ruling prosperously. Cunningham, in his *Mahābodhi*, proposes to identify the capital, the description of which has been given above, with Pāṭaliputra. But the distance of 7000 li covered by the travellers up the river shows that the capital was situated further up to the west of that city.

In the accounts furnished by the *Purāṇas*, we find that one Viśvasphāṇi or Viśvasphūrjhi is stated to have ruled over Magadha just before the rise of the Guptas.²¹ The form of the name, it has been pointed out, shows that he was a foreigner and may have thus belonged to the Muruṇḍa stock. He is said to have established kings, i.e., viceroys in different places and suppressed the old ruling families and brought into existence a new Kṣatriya order. Some of the manuscripts of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* state that he brought the Kaivartas into prominence²² and later on committed suicide by throwing himself into the Ganges.

²¹ *IA*, 1918, p. 298; *Pargiter*, *DKA*, p. 52 (f.n. 28 & 29), p. 73, f.n. 12.

²² *Pargiter*, *DKA*, p. 52, f.n. 48.

The description clearly shows that the empire of Viśvasphāṇi was quite extensive one²³ and may have extended in the west as far as Kānyakubja or Kanauj, for we learn from the Jaina version of the *Siṃhāsanadvātrimśikā* that the city was under the sway of a Muruṇḍa rāja,²⁴ who may have been a viceroy of the Muruṇḍa king of Magadha. Viśvasphāṇi may have set up similar viceroys in other parts of his empire.

IV

While thus the Gangetic valley had been under the sway of the Muruṇḍas, a considerable portion of the Jumna valley passed under the rule of the Nāga kings. The *Purāṇas* state that Vidiśā, Kāntipuri, Mathura and Padmāvati were the strongholds of the Nāga power, and it is stated further that seven Nāga kings had ruled at Mathura and nine at Padmāvati when the Guptas were rising to power. Padmāvati, identified with the small village of Padam-Pawaya in Gwalior state, was possibly the home of the Bhāraśivas whose king Bhavanāga, according to the Vākātaka epigraphs, was evidently a very important monarch, and the dynasty is described as performing ten Aśvamedha sacrifices and as being "besprinkled on the forehead with the pure water of (the river) Bhāgirathi that had been obtained by their valour".²⁵ It thus appears that at least for some times under the Bhāraśivas the region extending from Gwalior to the Ganges was united under one rule. Coins disclose the existence of ten Nāga rulers: Skandanāga, Bṛhaspatināga, Vyāghranāga, Bhimanāga, Bibhunāga, Vasunāga, Prabhākaranāga Devanāga, Bhavanāga and Ganapatināga. Ganapatināga is mentioned in the Allahabad inscription of Samudra Gupta which also speaks of another Nāga king Nāgasena. In the *Harṣacarita* Nāgasena is clearly associated with the Padmāvati region.²⁶

Some scholars think that the Purāṇic statement referring to the seven Nāga kings of Mathura and nine of Padmāvati refers to two distinct Nāga kingdoms. It, however, appears that after

²³ According to the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, he had a capital at Padmāvati, Pargiter, *DKA*, p. 52, f.n. 49; p. 53, f.n. 2. At this period Padmāvati (modern Narwar dist.) seems to have been under the Nāgas.

²⁴ A Muruṇḍa king, according to a legend, was the master of the thirty-six hundred thousand people of Kānyakūbja, see *Vikrama's Adventures*, *HOS*, vol. 26, p. 251; vol. 27, p. 223, also, *Intro.*, vol. 26, p. xxvi.

²⁵ *Corpus*, iii. p. 241; *AHD*, p. 72.

²⁶ "In Padmāvati, Nāgasena, born in the Nāga family, whose confidential deliberations were divulged by a Śārikā bird, met his doom". cf. *HC*. Trans., p. 192.

the rise of the Bhāraśivas who had their original home in Padmāvati, the latter along with Mathura formed really one kingdom.²⁷ If this view be accepted then it can be inferred that Mathura came under the Nāgas during the rule of the third king of the Bhāraśiva-Nāga dynasty.²⁸ Bhavanāga whose daughter was married to the Vākāṭaka crown prince Gautamīputra, may have ruled in the first half of the fourth century A.D. He may have been succeeded by Nāgasena and the latter by Ganapatināga, as we shall see later on, when we shall discuss the conquests of mahārājādhirāja Samudra Gupta who put an end to the rule of the Nāgas in the Jumna valley. (vide, Chap. vii., *infra*).

Besides the Nāga house of Mathura and Padmāvati, there appears to have been other smaller Nāga principalities in different parts of North India immediately before the rise of the Guptas. Thus a copper seal inscription of the fourth century A.D. speaks of a king named Maheśvaranāga, the son of Nāgabhaṭṭa.²⁹ Some coins found at Ahicchatra (Rohilkhand), having close resemblance to that of the Nāgas, refer to a king named Acyuta, who thus may have been a Nāga king, and was ultimately conquered by Samudra Gupta. The Allahabad inscription further refers to kings like Nāgadatta, Nandi, and others who were also rulers of of the Nāga stock. Dr. Raychaudhuri points out that "in the *Purāṇas* Śiśu Nandi and Nandiyāśas are connected with the Nāga family of Central India. We know also the name of a Nāga prince named Śivanandi".³⁰

While thus the dismemberment of the Kuṣāṇa empire in the Jumna-Gangetic valley was chiefly caused by several monarchical houses, the republican states of Rajputana and the Eastern Punjab also took a leading part against the rule of the aliens. We have already seen that in the Junagadh inscription the Yaudheyas are described as a "very proud and indomitable" power, and after

²⁷ This is proved by the statement of the Chammak Copper plate inscription of Pravarasena II— Regnal year 18.

²⁸ This follows from the Purāṇic statement indirectly, if it is supposed that Padmāvati and Mathura were under one and the same house. Thus the first of the seven Mathura kings would naturally be the third king of Padmāvati. Was this third king Candrāmśa, who is described as the second Nakhavant, and who evidently made some conquests including Mathura? Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri identifies him with king Candra of the Meherauli record; also, *infra*, pp. 169-70.

²⁹ *Corpus*, iii. p. 283.

³⁰ *PHAI*, p. 536.

c.175 A.D. we have several coins having the legend 'Yaudheyaganaśya jayah', 'victory of the Yaudheya tribe'.³¹ The evidence clearly shows that the Yaudheyas issued the coins to commemorate their victory evidently against the Kuṣāṇas, who, as already stated, had kept them under the yoke of servitude. There are again certain Yaudheya coins bearing the legend 'of Brahmaṇya (a name of Kārttikeya), the divine lord of the Yaudheyas', or 'Of Kumāra, the divine lord Brahmaṇyadeva'.³² Evidently the Yaudheyas, before they went into war against the Kuṣāṇas, dedicated their state to the war-lord Kārttikeya and fought in his name. A very large seal recovered from Sonait in Ludhiana bears the legend 'Yodheyānām jayamaṇtradharānām'. Allan translates the legend as 'of the Yaudheya councillors of victory'.³³ Dr. Altekar however, thinks that "they possessed a mystic formula (*mantra*) ensuring victory in all circumstances and against all odds".³⁴ A fragmentary inscription from Bijyagadh in the Bharatpur district contains the reference to a mahārāja-mahāsenāpati appointed leader of the Yaudheyagana.³⁵ As the epigraph is in the characters of the second-third century A.D. it may be inferred that in the Yaudheya republic of the time with which we are dealing here, the president was styled as mahārāja and performed the functions of the commander-in-chief.

From the distribution of their coins it may be inferred that the Yaudheyas occupied the Eastern Punjab and the northern part of Rajasthan. Their coins referring to their *jaya* or victory shows strong Kuṣāṇa influence in style and type and have on some of them the words *dvi* and *tr* at the end of the legend. These have been "interpreted as contractions of *Dvitiya* and *Tritiya*, second and third sections of the tribe". If this theory be accepted then we may possibly infer that like the Licchavis of the pre-Maurya days the Yaudheya republic was a confederation of several tribes under the authority of a supreme council of administrators. Dr. Altekar thinks that as according to the traditional belief the Arjunāyanas and Yaudheyas were the descendants of the Pāṇḍava brothers, Dharma and Arjuna, "it is likely that this belief may have facilitated the formation of a kind of loose union between the two neighbouring republics", and the words *dvi* and *tr*, referred to above, point to such a state of affairs.³⁶ As, however,

³¹ Allan, *Catalogue*, p. 276.

³² *ib.* p. 270f; p. cxlix-cl; Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 142.

³³ Allan, *Catalogue*, p. clii.

³⁴ *VGA*, p. 28.

³⁵ Allan, *Catalogue*, p. clii; *Corpus*, iii. p. 252.

³⁶ *VGA*, p. 29.

we have independent coinage of the Yaudheyas and the Arjunāyanas it becomes difficult for us to agree with the above interpretation.

Like the Yaudheyas, the Arjunāyanas were no doubt an important republican tribe and they occupied, as Allan thinks, the lands lying within the triangle Delhi-Jaipur-Agra.³⁷ There are coins of the Arjunāyanas bearing the legend *Arjunāyānām jaya(h)*. But as their epigraphy suggests a date about 100 B.C. we have no reason to think that they were issued after their victory over the Kuṣāṇas. The Arjunāyanas are mentioned in the Allahabad record as a tributary state under Samudra Gupta.

Another important republican tribe, the Mālavas, occupied about this time a considerable portion of the Rajasthan region with their capital at Mālava-nagara, which has been identified with Nagar or Karkota-nagar in Uniyara in the Jaipur district. The Mālavas were thus the immediate neighbours of the Arjunāyanas. Their coins have been divided into two groups:³⁸ the first, bears the legends *Malavānām jaya* or *Malavahṇa jaya* and they possibly belong to the period immediately after the fall of the Kuṣāṇas. Thus it is clear from the legends that, like the Yaudheyas, they also took some part in putting an end to the rule of the Kuṣāṇas in the interior of India. The second class of coins, which on the ground of the characters of the legends on them should be assigned to the "second and third centuries A.D.", are really puzzling. They bear inscriptions like Bha-painyana, Majupa, Mapojaya, Mapaya, Magajaśa, Magojaya, Mapaka, Pacha, Gajava, Maraja, Jamaku etc. The exact meaning of these legends is obscure. Allan thinks that they are not names but in most cases meaningless attempts to reproduce parts of *Mālavānām jaya*.³⁹ This, according to him, accounts for so many of them beginning with *ma* and for the frequency of *ja* as another letter of the inscription. We are sorry that we cannot agree with this theory, and, on the contrary, are inclined to think that they are really names of chiefs. We may, for example, consider the two names in the above list, *Magajaśa* and *Magojaya*. According to the Mahābhārata, the term Maga denoted the priestly class of the Śakas, or in other words, the term denoted a branch of the Śaka people.⁴⁰ Thus the terms may be divided into two parts, e.g., *Maga-jaśa*, *Mago-jaya*, and they can easily

³⁷ Allan, *Catalogue*, p. lxxxiii.

³⁸ *ib.* p. cv.

³⁹ *ib.* p. cvii.

⁴⁰ *Mbh.* vi. 2; *Kūrma Purāṇa*, xlviii, 36.

be considered to be the names of particular persons belonging to the Scythian stock. One fact, however, goes against such an interpretation, the names are not given in the genitive.

The Nandsa Yupa Pillar inscription dated in the Mālava year 282 = 226 A.D. gives us the following account of some chiefs belonging to the Mālava-vaṃśa, existing in the Mālava-gaṇa-*viṣaya*: "Śrī (?) Soma, the leader of the Sogis, son of Jayasoma, grandson of Prabhāgra(?)*vardhaṇa*, dancer at victory, born in Mālava stock, as famous as the *Ikṣvākus*".⁴¹

The chiefs mentioned in the above record are described as *rājaṛṣis*. It is further stated that freedom and prosperity had returned to the country on account of the achievements of Soma. It is not unlikely that he fought against the western *kṣatrapas* and ultimately became successful to make his country free of any danger from that quarter. The Mālavas continued to rule till the time of Samudra Gupta, who, as the Allahabad record informs us, reduced them to vassalage.

An inscription discovered at Badva in Kotah state discloses the existence of one *mahāsenāpati* Bala and his three sons belonging to the Maukhari stock.⁴² The inscription is dated 239 A.D. and records the performance of *Ṭṛirātra* sacrifice by the sons of the *mahāsenāpati*. The Maukharis, as we have already seen, were a very ancient clan known from a clay seal inscription written in Maurya characters discovered in the Gaya region. It is difficult to determine how the Maukhari Bala was related to the Maukharis of Magadha or with the later Maukharis who usurped the imperial position after the fall of the Guptas in c.550 A.D. The title of *mahāsenāpati* shows that Bala was not an independent potentate and may have owed allegiance to the Mālava republic, or to the Śakas of Ujjayinī.

VI

We have given above an account of the kingdoms and republics that came into existence on the ashes of the Kuṣāṇa empire. Let us now turn to the history of the regions lying originally outside the jurisdiction of the Kuṣāṇas during the period under review.

To begin with the history of the dynasty of Caṣṭana that flourished in Western India. As we have already stated there is hardly anything interesting in the history of this dynasty after

⁴¹ *Ep. Ind.* xxvii. pp. 252ff.

⁴² *ib.* xxiii. p. 52.

the fall of Rudradāman.⁴³ Numismatic evidences show that Rudradāman was succeeded by his son Dāmaghsada.⁴⁴ His kṣatrapa coins prove that he had been associated with his father in the work of administration, while the mahākṣatrapa coins bearing the portrait of his old age show evidently that he came to the throne at an advanced age, and hence he may have ruled for a short period only.

Coins show that after the death of Dāmaghsada, his brother Rudrasimha I and his son Jivadāman ruled alternately till 199 A.D. while the office of mahākṣatrapa remained in abeyance for two occasions, from 179 A.D. to 181 A.D. and again for two years from 188 A.D. to 190 A.D. Rapson thinks that this was due to a struggle for succession between Rudrasimha I and Jivadāman.⁴⁵

Available evidences seem to indicate however, that on these two occasions the supreme power in the kṣatrapa dominion passed from the hands of the members of the dynasty of Caṣṭana to some non-Scythian potentates. Thus the Gunda inscription of 181 A.D. shows the Ābhīra general Rudrabhūti referring to Rudrasimha as kṣatrapa, ignoring the existence of any mahākṣatrapa altogether.⁴⁶ It is not unlikely that Rudrabhūti was an over-powerful general who usurped the mahākṣatrapa power and Jivadāman who held the office of mahākṣatrapa in A.D. 178-9, after the death of his father Dāmaghsada, went into exile, while Rudrasimha I agreed to serve in a subordinate role under his *de facto* new master. Like Senāpati Puṣyamitra, Rudrabhūti possibly did not adopt any higher title. Ere long, however, Rudrasimha I became stronger one to assume an independent status and ruled as mahākṣatrapa for nearly seven years from 181 to 188 A.D. But he was again degraded and ruled as kṣatrapa only for the years 188 to 190 A.D., and again during this period there was no mahākṣatrapa in the Śaka dominion. Bhandarkar, Altekar and some other scholars think that an Ābhīra named Iśvaradatta was the mahākṣatrapa during these two years. Rapson, however, has no doubt that Iśvaradatta reigned between 236 and 239 A.D. It is quite probable that between 188 and 190 A.D.,

⁴³ *supra*, p. 111.

⁴⁴ Rapson, *Catalogue*, p. 80-2. On his own coins we find the name as Dāmaghsada, but on the records of his descendants the name appears as Dāmajāda.

⁴⁵ Bhandarkar's view that Jivadāman was not a mahākṣatrapa before 181 A.D. can hardly be maintained in view of the numismatic evidences, *JNSI*, i. pp. 18-20.

⁴⁶ *Ep. Ind.* xvi. p. 233.

the Sātavāhanas held sway over the Śaka dominion of Western India. If we turn to a study of the coins of the Sātavāhana king Yajñaśrī Śātakarṇi, we find that they are found in Gujrat, Kathiawad, Aparānta, the Chanda district in the Madhya Pradesh and the Krishna district of the Madras Presidency. Thus there can be no doubt that he ruled over both the Andhra and the Mahārāṣṭra countries and snatched away a part of the dominion over which ruled the descendants of Caṣṭana. Smith points out in his *Catalogue* that the silver coins of Yajñaśrī Śātakarṇi imitate the coinage of the Śaka rulers of Ujjayinī—a fact which possibly proves his victory over the latter. After this victory, the mahākṣatrapa of the Śaka realm was evidently reduced to a subordinate position and Rudrasimha I became a subordinate kṣatrapa under the Sātavāhana emperor. It was after the death of the Sātavāhana emperor that the Śakas recovered their independence and the office of the mahākṣatrapa revived again. This gives us a fixed point in the Sātavāhana chronology: the year 190 A.D. = the last year of Yajñaśrī Śātakarṇi's reign.⁴⁷

About 200 A.D. Rudrasena I, the son of Rudrasimha I, became the mahākṣatrapa. To his reign belong the Mulwasar tank inscription of 200 A.D., and the Jasdhan Pillar inscription of 205 A.D.⁴⁸ In the Jasdhan inscription the title of *Bhadramukha* is applied to all the ancestors of Rudrasena except Jayadāman, the father of Rudradāman, and the names of the ancestors who are not in direct descent have not been included.

Spooner discovered at Basarh a clay-seal with the inscription: “(the seal) of the great queen Prabhudamā, sister of the king the mahākṣatrpa Svāmī Rudrasena, and the daughter of the king the

⁴⁷ On the assumption that 190 A.D. is equivalent to the last year of Yajñaśrī Śātakarṇi's reign, we may draw up the Sātavāhana chronology thus:

Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi	..	c.99 A.D.—123 A.D.
Vāsiṣṭhīputra Pulumāyi	..	c.123 A.D.—147 A.D.
Śiva Śrī Śātakarṇi	..	c.147 A.D.—154 A.D.
Śiva-Skanda Śātakarṇi		
or		
Śivamaka-Śāda	..	c.154 A.D.—161 A.D.
Yajñaśrī Śātakarṇi	..	c.161 A.D.—190 A.D.

In determining the reign periods of these kings, we have mainly relied upon the evidences of the *inscriptions* and the *Matsya Purāṇa* which is considered by Rapson and others to be the most authoritative for the history of the Sātavāhana kings.

The above scheme shows that the Śātakarṇi mentioned in the Junagadh record can be identified with Śiva Śrī Śātakarṇi, vide, *supra*, pp. 103, 108.

⁴⁸ *Ep. Ind.* xvi. p. 238; Rapson, *Catalogue*, lxii. no. 41.

mahākṣatrapa Svāmī Rudrasimha".⁴⁹ The seal does not appear to have been carried at Basarh from outside and so the great queen Prabhudamā must have lived at the region where it was found. The region at this period evidently formed a part of the Muruṇḍa dominion and Prabhudamā probably was a Muruṇḍa queen. She was evidently given in marriage to a Muruṇḍa chief, and by this matrimonial alliance the Śakas of the Western India probably hoped to strengthen their hands.

From the evidence of the coins we learn that Rudrasena I (200-22 A.D.) was succeeded in the office of mahākṣatrapa by his brothers Saṃghadāman (222-3 A.D.) and Dāmasena (223-36 A.D.) respectively. The next mahākṣatrapa, Dāmasena's second son Yaśodāman, came to power in 238 A.D., and thus for two years there was a gap in the line of the Śaka mahākṣatrapas. Rapson thinks that the Ābhīra Iśvaradatta ruled over the Śaka realm during this interval.

The earliest mention of the Ābhīras in India seems to occur in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali where they are associated with the Sūdras.⁵⁰ They were a foreign tribe and possibly entered into India during the confusions after Alexander's death,⁵¹ and probably settled at the spot where the river Sarasvatī disappears in the sand —the present Hissar in the Punjab.⁵² The country of Ābhīras has been mentioned as Abiria in the *Periplus* and as Aberia in the *Geographike* of Ptolemy, according to which it formed a part of the Indo-Scythia or the Lower Indus valley.

Coins of Mahākṣatrapa Iśvaradatta, the Ābhīra, have been found in Kathiawad, dated in the first and the second years of his own reign, and Bhagawanlal Indraji thought that he was probably connected with the Ābhīra dynasty of Iśvarasena of the Nasik inscription, and founded the Traikutaka era of 248-49 A.D. Rapson, however, is definitely of opinion that Iśvaradatta reigned between 236 and 239 A.D. He may have been an Ābhīra originally in the service of the Śaka kṣatrapas (cf. Gunda inscription) and later on appropriated the supreme position for himself. He evidently failed to establish a dynasty of his own, and in 238 A.D. Dāmasena's second son Yaśodāman again became mahākṣatrapa. He was succeeded by his brothers Vijayasena (239-50 A.D.) and Dāmajadaśrī III (251-55 A.D.). Dāmajadaśrī was succeeded by his nephew Rudrasena II (256 ? — 76 A.D.), who was succeeded by his two sons Viśvasimha and Bhartṛdāman.

⁴⁹ *ASR*, 1913-4, p. 136.

⁵⁰ Tarn, *GBI*, p. 712.

⁵¹ *Mbh.* ix. 37. 1.

⁵² *Mahābhāṣya*, I. 2. 3.

We next enter into an obscure period of the Śaka history, and as Rapson has pointed out, there was no mahākṣatrapa in the Śaka realm from A.D. 295 to c. 340 A.D. The evidences of coins show that the line of Caṣṭana in direct descent came to an end after 305 A.D. and there arose a new line of kṣatrapas and mahākṣatrapas. As we shall see later on precisely during this period the Sassanids of Iran extended their sway into India and the Later Kuṣāṇas, the Śakas of Ujjayinī and the Ābhīras were compelled to acknowledge their supremacy as overlords. From 295 A.D. to c.340 A.D. the coins of the following kṣatrapas are available :

Viśvasena, son of mks	
Bhartṛdāman	(A.D. 293-304)
Rudrasimha I	(A.D. 304)
Yaśodāman II	(A.D. 317-32)

After 332 A.D., the last date so far known on the coins of Yaśodāman II, the next earliest date on the coins of this series is Śaka 270 = 348 A.D., which is found on the coins of king mahākṣatrapa svāmī Rudrasena, son of king mahākṣatrapa svāmī Rudradāman II. We have thus an interval of 16 years in which there are no coins of any of the Śaka kṣatrapas. There are no coins or inscriptions, on the other hand, of the mahākṣatrapa svāmī Rudradāman II, and as it has been assumed, he evidently ruled sometimes in this interval of 16 years. The absence of any remnant of his reign shows that he must have passed through troublesome times. The relationship of Rudradāman II with the dynasty of Caṣṭana is not known, but as his name ends in *-dāman* which is the characteristic of the family of Caṣṭana, he probably belonged to a collateral branch of the same family.

The coins of Rudrasena III, son of Rudradāman II, may be divided into two groups—(1) the dates of which range from 348 A.D. to 351 A.D.; and (2) the dates of which fall between 364 A.D. and 378 A.D. The thirteen years which fall between 351 A.D. and 364 A.D. were probably marked by some political disturbances during which the coinage ceased. There are some lead coins, however, the dates of which range from 358 A.D. to 372 A.D. and they belong, therefore, though not entirely, to the period during which no silver coins are found.⁵³

In any case, it is difficult to determine the order of succession after Rudrasena III. Coins afford us the following four names of the mahākṣatrapas, — Simhasena, (coins dated 304 of 30x), Rudrasena IV, Satyasimha, Rudrasimha III (coins dated 310 or 31x).

⁵³ Rapson, *Catalogue*, pp. cxliv-cxlv; pp. 179-88.

Thus we find that within a brief span of seven years, at least three, if not four, mahākṣatrapas ruled, a fact which probably indicates an unsettled state of affairs. The date 310 = 388 A.D. is the last known one of the western kṣatrapas whose coins extended over a period of some 270 years. This date, in any case, cannot be very far from the Gupta conquests of the western kṣatrapas. It is, however, not certain whether the victim of the Guptas was Rudrasimha III himself, or any of his successor. But the contemporaneity of Candragupta II and the absence of any further kṣatrapa coins and inscriptions strongly indicates that he was possibly the Śaka prince of the west uprooted by the Gupta monarch.⁵⁴

An inscription discovered by Sir John Marshall at Kanakhera, near Sanchi, discloses the existence of an independent Śaka principality ruled by the mahādaṇḍanāyaka Śrīdharavarman, son of Nanda.⁵⁵ The inscription seems to be dated in his own thirteenth regnal year, and not in the Śaka year 241=319 A.D. as N. G. Majumdar thinks. The view of R. D. Banerjee that the regnal year refers to Jivadāman's rule can hardly be accepted, because the latter never ruled as the mahākṣatrapa. We have already seen that there was no mahākṣatrapa in the Śaka dominion from 295 A.D. to 340 A.D. Probably taking advantage of the prevailing adverse situation, Śrīdharavarman, originally an official of the Śaka house of Malwa, declared his independence. Like so many other cases, Śrīdharavarman used original official or subordinate title even after he has assumed independence.

VII

Though Kuṣāṇa coins, as already noted, have been found in different parts of Bengal, there is absolutely no evidence to show that the province was ever included within the empire of the Deva-putras. On the eve of the rise of the Guptas, we have at our disposal only one epigraphic record engraved on the Susunia hill in the Bankura district of West Bengal, about 12 miles north-west of the town of Bankura.⁵⁶ The record consisting of only three lines mentions a mahārāja Candrarvarman. He was the son of mahārāja Simhavarman or Siddhavarman, and the title of *Puṣkaranādhīpati* is given to him. This shows that the dynasty consisting of at least two kings had its headquarters in Puskarana

⁵⁴ *infra*, p. 169.

⁵⁵ *Ep. Ind.* xvi. p. 232; *JPASB*, xix. p. 343; *IHQ*, xxii. (1946), p. 39-40.

⁵⁶ *Ep. Ind.* xii. p. 317f; xiii. p. 133; *ASR*, 1927-8, p. 188f.

identified with Pokharna, the name of the place where the record has been found. He appears to have been a local king of the place and there is no evidence to think that he was "a mighty warrior who extended his dominions eastwards as far as the Faridpur district."⁵⁷ This Candravarman has been identified by some scholars with the king of the same name mentioned in the Allahabad record, by others with king Candra of the Meharauli Iron Pillar inscription, and by some others again it has been held that he was originally a king of Western India and that Puskarana should be identified with "Pokharan in the Jodhpur state in Rajputana".

It is difficult to agree with any of the above theories. Candravarman mentioned in the Allahabad record, as we shall see later on, was a king of the Ganges-Jumna valley most probably, while the region of Western Bengal, or at least a greater portion of it appears to have been conquered by Candra Gupta I, the father of Samudra Gupta. If Candra Gupta I's dominion really extended in the east upon the Ganges (*infra*, pp. 145-6), then there is every reason to believe that the dominion of Candravarman was conquered by the first Gupta mahārājādhirāja.

Mm. H. P. Śāstri identifies Candravarman with king Candra of the Meharauli record and thinks that he belonged to the Varman family of Daśapura. The Mandasor inscription of the Mālava year 461 = 403 A.D. gives the names of three successive kings, Jayavarman, his son Siṃhavarman, and Naravarman.⁵⁸ It is believed that the father of Candravarman, whose name is tentatively read by some as Siṃhavarman, is identical with Siṃhavarman, the son of Jayavarman of the Mandasor record. Further, Candravarman, who is held to be identical with king Candra, came to Bengal and defeated a confederacy of enemies there and then set up the record on the Susunia hill. As Dr. B. C. Sen says: "It is difficult to agree with this view, as none of the inscriptions connected with the Western Mālava family give Candravarman's name, nor do they refer to Pushkarana, the seat of Chandravarman's government. No serious conclusion should be drawn from the fact that the Mandasor inscription and possibly also the Susunia inscription mention the same name Siṃhavarman".⁵⁹ Again, Candravarman's identification with Candra of the Meharauli inscription can hardly be accepted. As we shall see later on,

⁵⁷ *HB*, p. 45.

⁵⁸ *Ep. Ind.* xii. pp. 320f.

⁵⁹ *Sen, SHAIB*, p. 202.

king Candra is probably identical with the Gupta emperor Candra Gupta II.

The *Purāṇas* state that the Devarakṣitas ruled over Paundra (North Bengal?), Kośala, Oḍra and Tāmralipta, while the Guptas had under them Prayāga, Sāketa, Magadha and the territories along the Ganges. Who these Devarakṣitas were we do not know. If they ruled over Kośala then it must be inferred that they had dislodged the rule of the Muruṇḍas in that place. The Purāṇic account, however, is hopelessly corrupt one and it is not unlikely that Kośala here refers to Dakṣiṇa-Kośala. Again, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* states Andhra in place of Oḍra, while R. C. Majumdar has concluded that the Devarakṣitas thus were connected with Devarāṣṭra in the Vizagapatam district.⁶⁰

The political condition of Bengal on the eve of the rise of the Guptas is best summarised by Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri, in the following words:

“It would appear that the general political condition of Bengal at the beginning of the fourth century A.D. was not probably very different from that depicted in the epics. A number of sturdy states, sheltered by the great barriers of rivers and swamps, constituted its most prominent characteristic.”⁶¹

VIII

It has been already stated that while the Kuṣāṇa rule came to an end in the interior of India about 176 A.D., the descendants of the great Kaniṣka continued their supremacy in the Punjab and the North-Western Frontier Provinces.⁶² The existence of one Kaniṣka (III) and Vasu or Vāsudeva (II) is disclosed to us by the evidence of coins. The coins of this Kaniṣka may broadly be divided into two groups, —(i) those found in Bactria and Afganistan have on the reverse the figure of Śiva and his bull; and (ii) those found in the Punjab, Gandhara and Seistan bear on the reverse the figure of the Roman goddess, seated Ardoksho. These numismatic evidences seem to indicate that Kaniska III's sway extended over the region from the Punjab to Bactria in the north and Seistan in the west.

Kaniṣka's coins further bear on the obverse sides names like Vāsu(deva), Viru(pākṣa) and Mahī(śvara or dhara) and ab-

⁶⁰ BDU, no. 3, p. 30.

⁶¹ HB, p. 46.

⁶² *supra*, pp. 90-1; JASB (iv) 1908, pp. 81ff; PMC, pp. 211-2.

breviated letters like *vi*, *si*, *bhṛi*, *pa*, *na*, *ga*, *cu*, *khū*, *tha*, *vai* etc. It is difficult to determine the exact significance either of the names or of the abbreviated letters. As, however, Vāsudeva was the immediate successor of Kaniṣka III, it may be inferred that the term Vasu on the coins refers to the prince who was evidently his governor. On similar grounds therefore we may infer that *Mahi* and *Viru* were other governors of the same king, though nothing can be said definitely on the point. The abbreviated letters like *vi*, *si*, etc., may be the signatures of the mint-masters.

Kaniṣka III was probably succeeded by his son Vāsudeva II who had acted as his governor possibly in the province of Seistan, Afganistan and Bactria. The coins of this prince are rare and have on the reverse the figure of Śiva with his bull, which was the prevalent type of currency in Afganistan and Bactria during his father's time. This seems to indicate that he lost his control over the Punjab and the North-Western Frontier Province, where evidently Kaniṣka III's governors like Virupākṣa and Mahīdhara declared their independence and set up independent principalities of their own. He is identified with Po-tiao, the king of the Kuṣāṇas who sent an embassy to the Chinese emperor to ask for help in c. 230 A.D.⁶³ The help was sought for as Vāsudeva II was pressed from all the directions; *first*, the provincial governors on this side of the Hindukush had declared their independence; *secondly*, the Juan-Juan tribe, later known in history as the Epthalites or the White Huns, had been pressing from the north; and *thirdly*, the Sassanids were threatening from the western side. Of these the Sassanid danger proved to be the most formidable one and brought a tremendous change not only in the fate of the Later Kuṣāṇas, but also in the annals of India as well.

Ardashir, the founder of the Sassanid dynasty, defeated the Parthian king Artabanus V in A.D. 224, conquered the western provinces of the Parthian empire and declared himself king with the title of Shāhanshāh of Iran.⁶⁴ According to Tabari, Ardashir after conquering the country bordering on Khorasan, Merv, Balkh and Khiva received messengers from the kings of Kuṣān, Turān and Makrān. Ferishta states that Ardashir marched against India and reached the neighbourhood of Sirhind, but Junah, the

⁶³ CII, II. i. p. lxxvii.

⁶⁴ For the Sassanids, Rawlinson, "*The Seventh Oriental Monarchy... or the Sassanian Empire*"; McGovern, "*The Early Empires of Central Asia*", pp. 401ff; Sykes, "*History of Persia*", vol. i. pp. 394ff; F.D.G. Paruck, "*Sassanian Coins*".

reigning monarch, gave pearls, gold, jewels and elephants and thus induced Ardashir to return. Smith is inclined to take the statement of Ferishta as historical but other scholars generally put little reliance on it.⁶⁵

Ardashir followed the practice of appointing crown princes as governors in the conquered provinces. Such governors issued their own coins and we have certain such specimens having on the reverse Śiva and the bull, the type that was prevalent in Bactria and Afganistan under Vāsudeva II. If we now consider these coins in the background of the account of Tabari as given above we can possibly infer that Bactria passed under the Sassanids during the time of the Kuṣāṇa king Vāsudeva II, who, however, may have continued his precarious existence in the Kabul valley, possibly as a subordinate ruler under Ardashir.

This discomfiture of the Kuṣāṇa prince naturally offered a welcome opportunity to the former governors on this side of the Hindukush who had already declared their independence after the death of Kaniṣka III. The numismatic evidences seem to indicate that there arose in this part of India three Scythian houses. A large horde of coins discovered at Peshawar bears on the obverse the curious inscription Shāka. It was evidently the name of the dynasty that came into power during this troublesome period. These coins resemble so closely the issues of Kaniṣka III and Vāsudeva II that we may safely assign them after the period of the last-named monarch. They also bear names like Sita, Śayatha and Sena and initials like *Pra*, *Mi*, *Bha*, and *Bhri*. The initials are evidently those of the mint-masters while the names may be of the princes of the house.⁶⁶

Numismatic evidences show that while the Shāka dynasty was thus ruling over the region lying to the west of the Indus, in the Punjab plains two dynasties, the Shīladas and the Gaḍa-haras, founded two independent principalities of their own. It is believed that kings like Bacharna, Bhadra and Pasana belonged to the dynasty of the Shīladas while Peraya and Kirada to the other. As the name Samudra = Samudra Gupta, the Gupta emperor = is found on a coin of a Gaḍahara chief, it is believed that these dynasties survived till at least the time of the Guptas.⁶⁷

This unsettled political condition of the Punjab had indirectly another effect. Some of the Indian republican tribes tried to

⁶⁵ Smith, *JRAS*, 1920, pp. 221-6.

⁶⁶ Cunningham, *Later Indo-Scythians*. Reprinted from the *Numismatic Chronicle*, London, 1888-92.

⁶⁷ *VGA*, pp. 18-9.

reassert their independence which had been carbed by the Kuṣāṇa overlords since their conquest of India. Thus we hear of the existence of the Madra republic in the Allahabad record. The Madras lived between the Chenub and the Ravi and had Śākala or Sialkot as their capital. Przyluski thinks that they entered India shortly before the Achaemenid period and in Indian literature they are sometimes classed among the barbarians as they had some non-Indian customs among them.⁶⁸ Similarly, another republican tribe, the Kunindas, occupying the region between the upper courses of the Sutlej and the Beas, reasserted its independence. A Kuninda coin of c.200 A.D. bears the name of a ruler Chatreśvara having the titles Mahātman and Bhāgavata. On the obverse of the same there is the figure of Kārtikeya, which may be compared with the contemporary coinage of the Yaudheyas. Chatreśvara may have been the leader of the Kuninda tribe and possibly fought against the alien rulers of the Punjab and thus brought about the independence of his country.⁶⁹

The north-western part of India, including the Punjab, was thus highly disunited and this must have prompted the successors of the Sassanid monarch Ardashir to penetrate into the interior of India, as it had done some six hundred years ago in case of the Macedonian hero Alexander the Great. Excavations at Begram show that the city was sacked by Shahpur I, in the period between A.D. 241 and 250. As the coins of Vāsudeva were the latest of the Kuṣāṇa remnants found at that place⁷⁰ it may be inferred that Shahpur possibly conquered the region ruled over by the Later Kuṣāṇas, after the death of Vāsudeva II whose descendants had now to acknowledge the overlordship of the Sassanid lords.

Varhran II (276-93 A.D.) was undoubtedly entangled in Indian affairs. According to Vopiscus, the Roman author of the life of emperor Carus, Varhran II was occupied by a "domestic rebellion", in the year 283 A.D. In 291 A.D. Mamertinus alludes to these events, and states that the rebellion of his brother Ormies i.e., Hormizd was supported against the king by the Śaka, Kuṣāṇ and Gelon. Varhran II conquered the whole of Sakastān and made his son Varhran III, Sakanshāh or the governor of Sakastān (Seistan).⁷¹

It is not known for certain whether Varhran II conquered

⁶⁸ *JA*, 1926, p. 13; 1929, pp. 315-7.

⁶⁹ Allan, *Catalogue*, pp. 159ff.

⁷⁰ *supra*, pp. 75-6.

⁷¹ *MAI*, no. 38.

himself any part of India. The Paikuli inscriptions mention the chiefs of Paradan (Paradas), Makuran (Makran), the Ābhīras and the ksatrapas of Avanti (Avandikan xvat(a)vya) as vassals under Varhran III. Mention is made also of the satrap Bagdat, lord of Zuradian (Bhagadatta, lord of Surāṣṭra) and Mitr-(AL) asen, lord of Boraspicin (Mitrāsena, lord of Bharukaccha).⁷² Curiously enough among the independent kings we find the name of Kuṣāṇ-shāh. The exact significance of the expression Kuṣāṇ-shāh is not clear. But as already the descendants of Vāsudeva had acknowledged the Sassanid supremacy, the independent Kuṣāṇ-shāh of the Paikuli record can only refer to the dynasties in Gandhāra and the Punjab. This also explains why there was no mahākṣatrapa in the Śaka realm after 295 A.D.⁷³

In 293 A.D., after the death of his father, Varhran III succeeded unwillingly, but was dethroned after a short reign of only four months by his grand-uncle Naresh, son of Shahpur I. It thus appears extremely improbable that Varhran III made any fresh conquest. In that case his Indian feudatories as described in the Paikuli record must have been brought under the Sassanid yoke during the reign of his father Varhran II.

As regards the Sassanid hold on India, we may note the following facts as well:

(a) A Pahlavi inscription of Persepolis is written in the year ii (?) i.e., A.D. 310-11 of Shahpur II, by Shahpur Śakānshāh, an elder brother of the infant king, who has the titles "King of Sakastān, minister of ministers of Sind, Sakastān and Tukhāristān", and is accompanied by the Sakastān andarazpet, 'the minister of Public Instruction of Sakastān', by the Zrang satrap, the satrap of Seistan and other dignitaries.⁷⁴

(b) Another Pahlavi inscription of Persepolis "is written by Slok i.e., Seleucus, high-judge of Kabul, in the year 47 (?) of Shahpur II—the numbers are much obliterated—who according to this record is paying homage to Shahpur Śakānshāh as a superior, showing that even Kabul belonged to the lands governed by the Śakānshāh at that time, and that the elder brother of the king ruled the country for an astonishingly long period".⁷⁵

⁷² Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, pp. 35-51.

⁷³ *supra*, p. 127.

⁷⁴ *MAI*, no. 38, pp. 36f.

⁷⁵ *ib.*, pp. 36f.

(c) In c. 358-60 A.D. one Grumbates, who is considered to be a Kuṣāṇa prince, helped Shahpur II against the Romans in the siege of Amida. This prince is described as the king of the Chionitae, "of middle age and wrinkled limbs, but of a grand spirit and already distinguished for many victories".⁷⁶

(d) Jarl Charpentier points out that at the time of Cosmas Indicopleustes (c.500 A.D.) the right side of the Indus delta belonged to Persia.⁷⁷

From the above discussions it is clear that although the hold of the Sassanids extended into the interior of India for some time after 295 A.D., their main supremacy remained confined to the region lying to the west of the Indus, where the descendants of Vāsudeva II and the members of the Shāka dynasty had to acknowledge their supremacy. There is absolutely no reason to think that the Gaḍaḥaras or the Shīladas of the Punjab ever became subordinate under their rule.

⁷⁶ *NC*, (xiii), 1893, pp. 171-2.

⁷⁷ *Aiyangar Com. Vol.*, p. 16.

CHAPTER VII

THE GUPTAS

The foundation of the Gupta dynasty in the beginning of the fourth century A.D. marks a new epoch in the history of North India. The veil of oblivion wrapping up the age immediately succeeding the Kuṣāṇas is now lifted, and with the help of the archaeological and literary sources we can now follow the fortunes of a single Imperial dynasty whose chronology can be determined with a tolerable degree of certainty. Ancient India saw her golden age under the banner of the Guptas and the root of the Hindu civilisation took its strong hold in this period.

The history of the Guptas, extending over nearly two and half centuries, may be divided into the following headings:

- I. Original home and the origin of the Guptas.
- II. The foundation of the Gupta empire.
- III. The expansion of the Gupta empire.
- IV. The Imperial crisis and the foreign invasion.
- V. The disintegration of the Gupta empire.
- VI. The fall of the Gupta empire.

I

ORIGINAL HOME AND THE ORIGIN OF THE GUPTAS

In an article in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, xiv. 532-35, Dr. D. C. Ganguly first drew our attention to the view that "the early home of the Imperial Guptas is to be located in Murshidabad, Bengal, and *not in Magadha*".

The view is based on a statement of I-tsing who states that 500 years before his time a Chinese traveller named Hui-lun came to Nalanda and then he found that "Mahārāja Śrī-Gupta built a temple for the Chinese priests and granted twenty-four villages as an endowment for its maintenance. This temple, known as the 'Temple of China', was situated close to a sanctuary called Mi-li-kia-si-kia-po-no which was about forty yojanas to the east of Nalanda, following the course of the Ganges".

Following Allan, Dr. Ganguly identifies mahārāja Śrī-Gupta with mahārāja Gupta who founded the Gupta dynasty. Further, on the ground that forty yojanas are equivalent to 240 English

miles, he locates the sanctuary mentioned in the Chinese records in Bengal.

Fleet and other scholars have maintained that there is some chronological difficulty in identifying mahārāja Śrī-Gupta with mahārāja Gupta for the latter flourished at the end of the third century A.D., while I-tsing places mahārāja Śrī-Gupta at the end of the second century A.D. Allan, however, finds no difficulty on the point, in view of "the lapse of time and the fact that the Chinese pilgrim gives the statement on the authority of a tradition handed down from ancient times by old men".¹ There is indeed some force in Allan's argument. The Chinese traveller Yuan-Chwang places the Ephthalite ruler Mihirakula "several centuries ago" before his time, but on that account any one would hardly reject his description of the king on the ground that Mihirakula ruled only a century before his date.

Dr. R. C. Majumdar points out that in an illustrated *Cambridge Mss.*, dated 1015 A.D., from Nepal, there is a picture of a stūpa with the label: "*Mṛgasthāpana Stūpa of Varendri*".² Foucher has shown that the Indian original of the term Mi-li-kia-si-kia-po-no should be Mṛgasthāpana and not Mṛgaśikhāvana as restored by Chavannes.³

It is thus clear that a portion of Varendri was included within the dominion of the first Gupta monarch mahārāja Gupta. The identification as proposed by Dr. Ganguly has got two defects:

- (a) Murshidabad is not in Varendri but in the Rādha division. Sandhyākara Nandī locates Varendri between the Ganges and the Karatoyā, and even today "the extensive tract of country on the confines of the districts of Dinajpur, Maldah, Rajsahi, Bogra and Rangpur.... is.... known by the name of Varind".⁴
- (b) 240 miles direct east of Nalanda is no doubt Murshidabad, but from the nature of I-tsing's description it is quite clear that the traveller first went to the Ganges from Nalanda and then voyaged down the river. So, 240 miles should be calculated to include the distance

¹ Allan, *CGD*, p. xv.

² *HB*, p. 69.

³ Foucher, *Icon.*, pp. 62-3. Chavannes published a literal translation of I-tsing's account in his: "*Voyages des Pelerins Bouddhistes*". A wrong and faulty summary of the account was published by Beal in *IA*, 1881, pp. 109ff, and later on somewhat corrected by him in *JRAS*, 1881, pp. 570f, and a resume of the same in his *Introduction* to his translation of the *Life of Hiuen tsang*.

⁴ *SHAIB*, p. 112.

from Nalanda to the Ganges, and then by the course of the Ganges towards the east. I have measured the distance on the Survey of India Maps and have found that the distance, thus calculated, brings us to Maldah.

Let us now see how far the above Chinese account is corroborated by the Indian evidences. The *Vāyu*, *Viṣṇu*, and the *Bhāgavata* Purāṇas have preserved different traditions regarding the empire of the Guptas. Of these, the *Bhāgavata* Purāṇa is a very late work (c. 10th century A.D.) and hence we shall confine our discussion mainly with the other two treatises. Winternitz thinks that the *Viṣṇu* Purāṇa is "not much later than the 5th century A.D.",⁵ and that "on the whole, at least, has been preserved in its original form". The kernel of the *Vāyu* Purāṇa is certainly as old as the *Viṣṇu*, but there appears to have been later additions in the text.⁶

Some manuscripts of the *Viṣṇu* Purāṇa state "*Anu-Gaṅgā Prayāgaṃ Māgadhaṃ Guptāśca bhokṣyanti*", while the three Dacca Mss., referred to by Dr. D. C. Ganguly give the reading "*Anu-Gaṅgam Prayāgaṅca Māgadhaṃ Guptāśca Magadhān bhokṣyanti*".⁷ Here we have to note the different readings: (a) *Anu-Gaṅgā & Anu-Gaṅgam*, and (b) the insertion of the word *Magadhān* in the Dacca Mss. between the words *Guptāśca* and *bhokṣyanti*.

- (i) If we take the reading *Anu-Gaṅgam* then it is to be regarded as qualifying *Prayāgaṃ*, and the expression would mean 'Prayāga on the Ganges'.⁸ The reading *Anu-Gaṅgā Prayāgaṃ* etc., on the other hand, would mean 'Prayāga, and the territory along the Ganges'.
- (ii) The inclusion of the word *Magadhān* in the above (b) seems to be redundant inasmuch as the word *Māgadhaṃ* qualifying *Guptāśca* shows that the Guptas were connected with Magadha; either Magadha was their original home, or, otherwise, it was included within their dominion.

The *Vāyu* Purāṇa gives the following account:

*"Anu-Gaṅgā (Gaṅgam) — Prayāgaṅca Sāketam
Magadhāmstathā,
Etān janapadān sarvān bhokṣyante Guptavamśajāḥ"*⁹

⁵ Winternitz, *HIL*, i. p. 545, f.n. 2.

⁶ *ib.*, pp. 553-4.

⁷ *IHQ*, xxi. pp. 141ff.

⁸ *Mahābhāṣya*, II. pp. 1, 2.

⁹ Pargiter, *DKA*.

Parjiter gives the following translation of the above verse: "Kings born of the Gupta race will enjoy all these territories, namely, along the Ganges, Prayāga, Sāketa, and the Magadhas".

In the above account, also, we have to note the following; first, here also we get the variant readings *Anu-Gaṅgam* & *Anu-Gaṅgā*, and, secondly, it adds the new name of *Sāketa*.

Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri thinks that Prayāga and Kośala (Sāketa) were possibly conquered by Candragupta I, the third king and the first mahārājādhirāja of the Gupta dynasty.¹⁰ If we agree with this view we may possibly infer that originally i.e., before Candragupta I, the Guptas were rulers of Magadha and the territory along the Ganges, if we accept the reading *Anu-Gaṅgā* in the above accounts.

But the question now arises—which reading shall we accept: "*Anu-Gaṅgā*" or "*Anu-Gaṅgam*" as qualifying the term "*Prayāgam*". In the second reading the particle "*ca*" becomes unnecessary, while it carries meaning if we prefer the first reading i.e., *Anu-Gaṅgā*. Further, we should note that both the terms *tathā* and *ca* carry the same sense. This shows that the reading *Anu-Gaṅgā* is the correct one, and it further tallies with the Chinese account discussed above.

Thus we may conclude that the original Gupta territory comprised Magadha and "the regions along the river Ganges" extending upto Northern West-Bengal. The evidences at our disposal hardly proves absolutely that "Magadha was not the original home of the Guptas". It may of course be argued that Magadha may have been conquered at a later date by mahārāja Ghaṭotkaca, the son of mahārāja Gupta. But of this there is absolutely no evidence.

There is some controversy among the scholars regarding the origin of the Guptas. Candragomin, the grammarian, gives the example while illustrating the past tense *laṅ* : '*Ajayad-Jarto* (? or *Jarto*, or *Jato*, or *Japto*) *Hūṇān*'. Jayaswal thinks that "this is pre-eminently referable to Skanda Gupta" and comes to the conclusion that the Guptas were Jats.¹¹ But some scholars think that *Japto* etc. may be a copyist's error for Gupta or that as Yaśovarman also claimed victory over the Hūṇas, the grammarian may have referred to him, if we think that the reading *Japto* is correct.¹² Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri thinks that as

¹⁰ PHAI, pp. 531-2.

¹¹ Jayaswal, *History of India*, 150 A.D.—350 A.D., p. 115.

¹² Hoernle thinks that *Japto* refers to the Jats and regards the example

Prabhāvatī Guptā, daughter of Candragupta II, claims that she belonged to the *Dhārāṇa* gotra it must have been the gotra of the Gupta family, as her husband's gotra was different one.¹³ It has further been suggested that the Guptas may have been related to queen Dhārīṇī, the chief consort of Agnimitra. This is, however, as Dr. R. C. Majumdar points out, highly problematical.¹⁴

There cannot be any doubt that *Gupta* was the surname of the members of the dynasty¹⁵ and hence in order to determine the origin of the family we may take the help of other epigraphic records wherein kings with *Gupta*-surname are mentioned. We may leave out of consideration the so-called Later Guptas inasmuch as though the kings of the dynasty had names ending in Gupta it was certainly not their surname. This is proved by the fact that Ādityasena, the greatest monarch of the dynasty, never took the Gupta title.¹⁶ Now, the Panchobh Copper plate¹⁷ gives us names of six kings whose surname was certainly Gupta, and further it is stated explicitly that they belonged to the reputed *vaṃśa* of the Guptas (*vaṃśo Gupta*). The kings were Śaivas and claimed descent from Arjuna, proving thereby that they were kṣatriyas. This leads us to think that the kings of the Imperial Gupta line were also of kṣatriya origin.

II

THE FOUNDATION OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

The Gupta records give the following conventional account of the early kings of the dynasty:

as referring to the defeat of the Hūṇas by Yaśodharman (*JRAS*, 1909, p. 114). Kielhorn thinks that the word is not *Japto* but *Jarto*; see also Belvalkar, *Systems of Sanskrit Grammar*, p. 58.

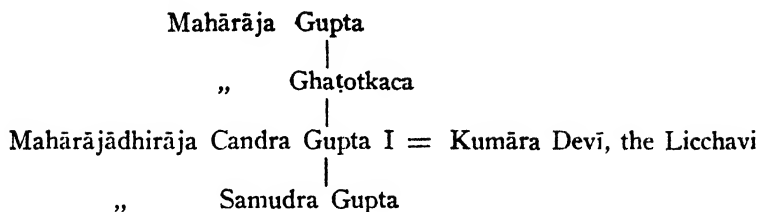
¹³ *PHAI*, p. 528 n.

¹⁴ *VGA*, pp. 120-1.

¹⁵ This is proved by the fact that on some of the copper coins of Candragupta II, we have the legend *Śrī Candragupta* on the *Obv.* and the legend Gupta on the *rev.*, while on another class there is simply the name *Candragupta* on the *Obv.* "We may also note in this connection that some varieties of Lion-Slayer type of coins bear the king's title *Narendragupta* or *Simhagupta* which may be taken to indicate that the king's personal name was *Chandra*, while Gupta was added to it as his surname". (R. K. Mookerjee, *The Gupta Empire*, p. 71).

¹⁶ For a discussion about the family of the Later Guptas, *IC*, viii. p. 33.

¹⁷ *JBORS*, v. pp. 282ff. The village of Panchobh is situated nearly six miles to the west of Laheri Sarai, the chief town of the Darbhanga district in Bihar.



It will be noted that while Candra Gupta I and Samudra Gupta have been given the higher title of mahārājādhirāja, the first two kings of the dynasty, Gupta and Ghaṭotkaca, have been deliberately given the inferior title of mahārāja. The title mahārāja was assumed by many independent kings in this period, like the Licchavis of Nepal, the Maghas, the Bhāraśivas and the Vākātakas, but the Gupta tradition was quite different one. In all the official Gupta epigraphs, independent kings are described as mahārājādhirāja while the title of mahārāja is assumed by only subordinate rulers.¹⁸ Judged in the background of this tradition, we have to assume that the first two sovereigns were not independent potentates. It is, however, difficult to determine precisely whose subordinates they were. We have already seen that the Muruṇḍas were ruling in this region in the third century A.D., while the Purāṇas agree that before the Guptas came in possession of Magadha, the country had been under the rule of one Viśvasphāni, who, as the form of the name indicates, must have been a non-Indian, and possibly a Śaka.¹⁹ From this we can possibly infer that the early Guptas were subordinate rulers under the Muruṇḍas, though, we admit, there is no definite proof about it. Hardly anything definite is known about the kings, Gupta and Ghaṭotkaca. Two seals, one with the legend 'Guptasya' (in mixed Sanskrit and Prākṛit) and the other with the Sanskrit legend 'Śrī-Guptasya' may be ascribed to the first king of the dynasty.²⁰

The Nepal inscription of Jayadeva II of the Licchavi dynasty,

¹⁸ In the Mankuwar Stone Image inscription of the year 129 (A.D. 449), the emperor Kumara Gupta I is styled simply mahārāja śrī. It should be remembered that it is not an official record of the dynasty. In the official records, we find that the independent sovereigns are described as the mahārājādhirājas, while the subordinate rulers eg. governors etc. are designated as the mahārājas. In the coins, however, we often find that the designation of mahārāja has been loosely used. So in order to determine the status of a Gupta sovereign, we have to consider very critically the official epigraphs of the dynasty, or, in other words, the epigraphs issued by the kings themselves or their officers.

¹⁹ *supra*, Ch. vi. p. 118.

²⁰ *JRAS*, 1901, p. 99; 1905, p. 814.

dated in the year 153, states that 23 generations before Jayadeva I, his ancestor Supuṣpa Licchavi was born in the city of Puṣpapura or Pāṭaliputra.²¹ Relying on Fleet's theory about the dating of the Nepal epigraphs,²² some scholars have concluded that Supuṣpa flourished in the beginning of the Christian era, and also that about the time of the rise of the Guptas, Pāṭaliputra was under the rule of the Licchavis.²³ Apart from the fact that Fleet's theory about the era to which the Nepal records are to be referred, is wrong one, we can hardly infer that the Licchavis ruled over Magadha about that period, and that the early Gupta kings were subordinate rulers under the Licchavis, as some scholars think, from the mere statement that Licchavi Supuṣpa was born in Pāṭaliputra. Smith even goes so far as to think that "the Licchavis were masters of Pāṭaliputra and Candragupta by means of his matrimonial alliance, succeeded to the power previously held by his wife's relatives".²⁴ Smith's conjecture is based on two evidences: (a) in the Gupta records, Samudragupta is described as "*Licchavi-dauhitra*", proving indirectly that the marriage of Candragupta with the Licchavi Kumāra Devī

²¹ *IA*, ix, p. 178.

²² *Corpus*, iii. pp. 177f.

²³ Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 112.

²⁴ Jayaswal has made an attempt to show the Licchavi connection of the Guptas, on the basis of the drama *Kaumudimahotsava*. (*ABORI*, xii. p. 50; *JBORS*, xix. p. 113). While his theory has been taken by some scholars (*JBORS*, xxi. p. 77; xxii. p. 275) others have emphatically rejected the same (*IHQ*, xiv. p. 582; *IC*, ix. p. 100; *JAHRS*, vi. p. 139; *Thomas Com. Vol.* p. 115 etc.). The drama relates that king Sundaravarman of Pāṭaliputra had an adopted son named Caṇḍasena, who with the help of the Licchavis killed the king and the latter's natural son Kalyāṇavarman fled to the forest where he continued to live under the care of Mantragupta the minister of the deceased sovereign. Later on, when Caṇḍasena was out to quell a rebellion Mantragupta caused a rising of the people at Pāṭaliputra which resulted in the overthrow of Caṇḍasena's power, and the uprooting of his dynasty. Kalyāṇavarman was restored to his father's kingdom and married Kirtimati, the daughter of Kirtisena, the king of Mathurā, and a moon-lit night celebration was held on the occasion of this happy matrimonial function. This gave the drama its name of *Kaumudimahotsava*. Jayaswal identifies Caṇḍasena of the drama with Candragupta I and believes that thus his Licchavi connection is proved by literary evidences as well. There are some facts, however, which go seriously against the theory: *first*, in the fifth act of the play it is stated that the dynasty of Caṇḍasena had been exterminated, while from the epigraphic evidences it is clear that the dynasty of Candragupta I ruled up to c. 550 A.D.; *secondly*, the Yādava dynasty of Kirtivarman ruling in Mathurā in the beginning of the fourth century A.D. goes against all the known facts of history. The numismatic evidences clearly show that the Nāgas and not the Yādavas had been ruling over Mathurā at this time. Indeed, the drama has got little historical value being a work of fancy. Similarly, we must reject the account of the *Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa* (*JBORS*, xxx. p. 1), which is nothing but a modern forgery. (*IHQ*, xx. p. 345).

was an event of great future importance; and (b) there are several coins or medals having "on the obverse the figures and names of Candra Gupta and Kumāra Devī, and on the reverse a goddess seated on a lion, along with the legend *Licchavayaḥ* (the Licchvis)". Allan suggested that these medals (or coins) were issued by Samudra Gupta to commemorate the marriage of his parents, while other scholars think that Candra Gupta issued them jointly with the Licchavis and their princess Kumāra Devī, his wife, and that "Kumāra Devī was a queen by her own right, and the proud Licchavis, to whose stock she belonged, must have been anxious to retain their individuality in the new Imperial states".²⁵ It is really difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion regarding the authorship "till the discovery of coins whose attribution to Candra Gupta I is beyond doubt".²⁶ But still in this connection we may note some important facts:

1. There is absolutely no evidence that the Licchavis were ruling at this period either in Magadha or in the Vaiśālī region. On the other hand, all the evidences tend to show that the Licchavis were now in Nepal. (Levi).
2. The mention of the term "*Licchavayaḥ*" on the coins shows that either the Licchavi people are meant or that "the Licchavis had a republican constitution". Now, the Licchavis of Nepal had at this period a monarchical constitution and hence the term can only refer to the Licchavi people.
3. Samudra Gupta takes pride in the fact that he was a *Licchavi-dauhitra*, but at the same time claims in his Allahabad record that Nepal, which was at this period ruled over by the Licchavis, was a subordinate state under him. This shows evidently that he had no respect for the Licchavi royal house.

From the above evidences we can only infer that Samudra Gupta was grateful and indebted to the Licchavi people and not to the Licchavi royal house, possibly because the former helped him in some of his conquests. This leads us to think that *Candra Gupta — Kumāra Devī* coins were issued by Samudra Gupta, as suggested by Allan, and Kumāra Devī may or may not have belonged to the Licchavi royal house. She was taken in respect

²⁵ JRASB, 1937, Num. Suppl. xlvii. pp. 105ff.

²⁶ PHAI, p. 530.

more for her being a Licchavi by nationality, than for anything else.

As Candra Gupta I is given the title of mahārājādhirāja it is clear that he was an independent ruler, and possibly the Gupta era of 319-20 A.D. marks the year of his accession to the throne. Some scholars think that the Gupta era originated with Samudra Gupta, and this view possibly gains ground if his Nalanda plate of the year 5 can be regarded as genuine.²⁷ It may be mentioned here that the *Ārya-Mañjuśrī-Mūla-kalpa*²⁸ also begins the line of the Guptas with Samudra Gupta. But in that case his reign becomes a long one of 55 years, for we know definitely that his son Candra Gupta II came to the throne in 375 A.D.²⁹ Such long reigns are not unusual, but as on the coins we do not find the portrait of Samudra Gupta as an old man, it is possibly better to think that the era dates from the accession of Candra Gupta I.

One peculiar feature of the era, however, is that its use is not met with till the time of Candra Gupta II whose Mathura inscription³⁰ is dated in the year 61. It is really curious how an era had been in abeyance for 61 years since its inception. Was it started by Candra Gupta II to commemorate the foundation of the Gupta Empire in 319-20 A.D. ?

Fleet's theory that the Gupta era began in 319-20 A.D. has been rejected by several scholars. Dr. Shāma Śastri thinks that the initial year of the Gupta era is 200-201 A.D.³¹ Sri Govinda Pai wrote an article in the *Journal of Indian History*, Vols. xi & xii, wherein he propounded the theory that the era originated in 272-73 A.D.

There are at least three known data that prove beyond doubt that Fleet's theory is the correct one. They are as follows:

- (i) The Mandasor inscriptions of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman dated Mālava year 493 = 436 A.D.³²
- (ii) The Ganjam Plates of Śaśāṅka of the Gupta year 300 = 619-20 A.D.³³
- (iii) The defeat of the western kṣatrapas and their final

²⁷ For the view that the Nalanda plate is not spurious one as thought by Fleet, *IC*, x. p. 77; xi. p. 225.

²⁸ *AMMK*, ed. Jayaswal, p. 48, Text, p. 52.

²⁹ *Select Ins.*, p. 269.

³⁰ *ib.*, *Ep. Ind.* xxi. pp. 1ff; *IHQ*, xviii, pp. 271ff; *ABORI*, xviii, pp. 166ff.

³¹ *Mysore Arch. Report*, 1923.

³² *Corpus*, iii. pp. 79f; *IC*, iii. p. 379; iv. pp. 110, 262, 361; vi. pp. 110, 339.

³³ *Ep. Ind.*, vi, pp. 143ff.

overthrow by the Gupta king Candra Gupta II⁸⁴ as proved by the evidence of the coins.

The earliest known date of Kumāra Gupta is the year 96 as stated in the Bilsad inscription while his last known date G.E. 136 is found on one of his silver coins. Thus according to Fleet's theory the reign of Kumāra Gupta would extend from c.414-455 A.D. The Mandasor inscription of 436 A.D. thus falls within his reign. The dates of Kumāra Gupta do not tally with the date in the Mandasor record if we think that the Gupta era started in 200-201 A.D. (Shāma Śastri) or in 272-73 A.D. (Pai).

Similarly, we know that Śaśāṅka was a contemporary of Harṣa who ruled from 606 A.D. to 647 A.D. This synchronism tallies only if we ascribe the date of the Ganjam Plate to the era of 319-20 A.D.

As we shall see later on Candra Gupta II ruled from c.375 A.D. to 414 A.D. according to the era the initial year of which has been determined by Fleet. He put an end to the rule of the Śaka Satraps of Western India and issued silver coins imitating the coins of the vanquished. Now the last known date of the Śaka dynasty is 304 as found on the coins and if referred to the Śaka era it gives the date 382 A.D. which consequently falls within the reign of Candra Gupta II.

All these facts when considered together undoubtedly prove the correctness of Fleet's theory, which is based on the statement of Al-biruni that the Gupta era was separated from the Śaka era by an interval of 241 years.

Candra Gupta I married the Licchavi Kumāra Devī and evidently freed the country of the foreign yoke of the Muruṇḍas.⁸⁵ Whether his marriage contributed immediately in any way towards his independent status must remain uncertain in the present state of our knowledge, as we have already seen.

The Allahabad Pillar inscription gives us a very detailed account of the conquests of Samudra Gupta both in the Āryāvarta and the Dakṣiṇāpatha, and it is significant that in the record there is no mention of any conquest by the king in the region extending from Kosam or Allahabad in the west to the Ganges in the east.⁸⁶ This shows that the region possibly extending from Allahabad to the Ganges in the east formed the empire of

⁸⁴ *infra*, p. 169.

⁸⁵ *supra*, p. 143.

⁸⁶ We shall see later on that Candravarman mentioned in the Allahabad record cannot be identified with the king of the same name as mentioned in the Susunia inscription.

mahārājādhirāja Candra Gupta I. Candra Gupta I evidently defeated the Magha kings of Kauśāmbī and Kośala and incorporated their territories within his own kingdom. (*supra*, p. 139) Allan thinks that the verse of the *Vāyu Purāṇa* giving the account of the Gupta empire, quoted on p. 138, *supra*, is, in fact, a description of the empire of Candra Gupta I. It will be seen that the above description does not mention Vaiśālī etc. lying in North Bihar. But if we take the term *Anu-Gaṅgā* as a distinct entity, meaning *the territories along the Ganges*, then there appears to be no difficulty.

III

THE EXPANSION OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

SAMUDRA GUPTA

According to the Gupta epigraphs Candragupta I was succeeded by his son Samudra Gupta. The Allahabad Pillar inscription of his reign states that Samudra Gupta was selected for the throne by his father, because he was considered to be worthy or *ārya*, and the decision was publicly declared in an open assembly before the counsellors by asking the prince: '*Protect ye this earth*'. It is further stated that when this declaration was made his kinsmen of equal birth (*tulyakulaja*) became pale-faced with disappointment, while the members of the council became exalted over the decision.

Recently, Dr. Chhabra has proposed the reading '*chī chī = ty=upaguhya...*' in place of "*(Ā)ryyoh=ity=upaguhya*" and has translated the passage as "Come, Come 'protect thou the whole earth' ".³⁷ If we accept Chhabra's reading then it would appear that Candragupta I abdicated in favour of Samudra Gupta. Such an interpretation seems to be supported also by ll.13-14 of the Eran inscription.³⁸

Some scholars, however, think that the statement that the faces of his kinsmen of equal birth became pale with disappointment is the poetic representation of some trouble over the throne at the accession of Samudra Gupta. They further point out that the fragmentary *verses* 5 & 6 of the Allahabad record, which describe how some were attracted to Samudra Gupta by his extraordinary deeds of valour, and others submitted after being afflicted by his prowess, support such a conjecture. There are several coins bearing the name Kāca and the legend "*Kāco gāṃ avajitya divaṃ karmabhiruttamair jayati*", and it has been held that this Kāca was an elder brother of Samudra Gupta who occupied the throne, and after killing him Samudra Gupta became the king. Now, if we accept the view that Candragupta abdicated in favour of Samudra Gupta such a theory cannot arise. Further, these coins bear such a close resemblance to the coins of Samudra Gupta that Allan thought that "Kācha was the original name of the emperor and that he took the name Samudra Gupta in allusion to his conquests". This supposition is strengthened by

³⁷ *IC*, xiv., p. 141.

³⁸ *Corpus*, iii., p. 18.

the fact that while on the reverse of the Kāca coins there is the legend "*Sarvarājocchettā*", the same epithet is applied to Samudra Gupta only, among the Gupta kings, in the official records of the dynasty. Further, the legend "*Kāco gāṃ avajitya divaṃ karmabhiruttamair jayati*" may be compared with the description of Samudra Gupta in ll.29-30 of the Allahabad record and the legends on the *obv.* of the Aśvamedha type of coins of the same king. These facts evidently lead to the conclusion that Kāca was possibly another name of Samudra Gupta. It is not unlikely that Kāca acquired the name of Samudra Gupta after his conquests extended upto the ocean (*cf.* the description of Samudra Gupta in the Bilsad inscription of Kumāra Gupta I: "*Sarva-rajocchettuh caturudadhi-salilāsvāditayaśaso*").³⁹

It is difficult to determine exactly when Samudra Gupta ascended the throne. If Candragupta became king in 320 A.D. and then married Kumāra Devī then it is difficult to agree with the theories that Samudra Gupta became king in 335 or 325 A.D.⁴⁰ We know that Candragupta II came to the throne in 375 A.D.⁴¹ and thus allowing a margin of 25 years for his father's glorious reign we may tentatively conclude that Samudra Gupta came to the throne about 350 A.D. Further we have to remember the fact that inasmuch as Samudra Gupta was specially selected by his father for the throne, he must have been advanced in age and well-versed in the affairs of the state.

The Allahabad Pillar inscription composed by his sāndhivigrahika and mahādaṇḍanāyaka Hariṣena is the main source for studying the history of Samudra Gupta's reign. Cunningham thinks that the pillar containing the inscription was originally at Kausāmbī and was afterwards moved from there to Allahabad by one of the early Musalman kings of Delhi. The points in favour of such a hypothesis are: (1) that the column contains a short Aśoka edict addressed to the rulers of Kausāmbī; and, (2) that the Chinese pilgrim Yuan-Chwang makes no mention of this column in his account of Po-lo-ye-kia i.e., Prayāga or Allahabad.⁴² Fleet thought that the record was incised after the death of Samudra Gupta inasmuch as ll.29-30 describe the fame of Samudra Gupta as reaching the abode of Indra, i.e., he was dead. This theory has been controverted by Buhler who pointed out that the record contains no reference to the Aśvamedha sacri-

³⁹ *Select Ins.*, p. 278.

⁴⁰ Allan, *CGD*, p. xxxii; *PHAI*, p. 445.

⁴¹ *infra*, p. 167.

⁴² *Corpus*, iii., p. 2.

fice of Samudra Gupta, as proved by the evidence of his coins, and hence the record must have been executed before that event. Further, the *ll.29-30* really mean that the king's fame reached heaven and this cannot be interpreted as meaning that he was dead.⁴³

There is another record of the king at Eran, Saugor District, Madhya Pradesh. Lines 1-6 of the record are entirely broken and lost and an indefinite number at the bottom is damaged.⁴⁴ One of the great peculiarities of this record is that in it Samudra Gupta is not described as Licchavi-dauhitra. This seems to support our conjecture that Samudra Gupta began to boast of his Licchavi connection and also issued the *Candra Gupta-Kumāra Devī* coins after he had received material help from the Licchavi people in the matter of his *digvijaya*. On this ground we are inclined to think that the Eran record is possibly earlier in date than the Allahabad *Praśasti* of Hariṣena.

There are two other records, one from Nalanda of the year 5 and another from Gaya of the year 9, referring to Samudra Gupta. The genuineness of both the records have been doubted though Dr. R. C. Majumdar is inclined to think that the first one may not be spurious.⁴⁵ Nothing however can be said definitely on the point.

The Allahabad record contains a very detailed account of the conquests of Samudra Gupta. As in *ll.19-20* the conquests of the Dakṣiṇāpatha states are described followed by the description of the conquests of kings and states of North India (*ll.21-23*), J-Dubreuil concluded that Samudra Gupta conquered South India first and opines that Hariṣena has described the *digvijaya* of Samudra Gupta in chronological order.⁴⁶ But if really we have to think of any chronological scheme in the description, we have to arrange the history of the *digvijaya* in the following order:

- (a) First campaign in Āryāvarta (*ll.13-14*).
- (b) Campaign in Dakṣiṇāpatha (*ll.19-20*).
- (c) Second campaign in Āryāvarta (*ll.21-23*).

Available evidences seem to indicate that Samudra Gupta led really two campaigns in North India, though most of the scholars do not favour such a theory⁴⁷ on the ground that while

⁴³ *Select Ins.*, p. 259.

⁴⁴ *Corpus*, iii, p. 18; an improved reading of the text, *Select Ins.*, p. 261.

⁴⁵ *supra*, f.n. no. 27.

⁴⁶ *AHD*, p. 61.

⁴⁷ In *ABORI*, ix, p. 88, Heras states that Samudra Gupta undertook

II.13-14 of the Allahabad record state that Samudra Gupta violently uprooted (*unmūlya*) Acyuta, Nāgasena, a king of the Kota family etc., Acyuta and Nāgasena are again referred to in I.21. Had they been *uprooted* in the first campaign how they are mentioned again in course of the supposed second one? In this connection we have to note the following points:

- (a) The king of the Kota family is referred to in I.14 but not again in I.21.
- (b) I.21 speaks of Nāgasena along with Gaṇapati-nāga whose coins have been found at Padam-Pawaya = ancient Padmāvati, a centre of Nāga power according to the *Purāṇas*. Now, *Harṣacarita* refers to the death of Nāgasena, the king of Padmāvati.⁴⁸ As thus both Gaṇapati-nāga and Nāgasena belonged to the Nāga house of Padmāvati, and as Samudra Gupta killed both of them, the latter must have attacked them at two different times, after one has succeeded the other.
- (c) I.14 informs us that the prince of the Kota family was captured while Samudra Gupta had been playing at the city of Puṣpa i.e., Pāṭaliputra. (*Yena... Puṣpāhvaye kṛīḍatā* etc.)⁴⁹ This is evidently the poetic way of stating that Samudra Gupta was a young man at the time of the conquest. It also indirectly refers to his earlier conquests.

From the above discussions it is thus clear that Samudra Gupta undertook two campaigns in North India, and further the description of the North Indian kings in II.21-23 is in the nature of *stock-taking*, containing names of kings who were conquered on different occasions. (cf. Gaṇapati-nāga and Nāgasena).

In his conquests of South India, Samudra Gupta followed the ideal of *dharma-vijaya*. He first defeated the kings and then re-instated them in their own kingdoms, a policy which reminds us of the procedure followed by Raghu in the same region as described by Kālidāsa.⁵⁰ After a critical study of Samudra Gupta's South Indian campaigns, J-Dubreuil came to the con-

two campaigns in the Āryāvarta. In the first, he merely defeated the kings like Acyuta and Nāgasena, and in the second he violently exterminated them. But as the Allahabad epigraph uses the expression '*unmūlya*' in connection with Acyuta and Nāgasena in II.13-4, it shows that they were really exterminated in the first campaign. We cannot take the term '*unmūlya*' in the sense of being '*defeated*'.

⁴⁸ *HC. Trans.*, p. 192.

⁴⁹ *Select Ins.*, p. 256, f.n. 2.

⁵⁰ *Raghuvamśam*, iv. 43.

clusion that Samudra Gupta was opposed by a confederacy of the kings of the Eastern Deccan near the Colair Lake and being repulsed, abandoned his conquests he had made in the coast of Orissa and returned home.⁵¹ The Allahabad record, however, clearly shows that Samudra Gupta advanced in the south as far as Kāñchi, and we do not know on what ground J-Dubreuil drew the above conclusion. We should note, however, that though the *prāśasti* of Hariṣena claims that he defeated all the kings of Dakṣiṇāpatha (*sarva-Dakṣiṇāpatharāja*), the location of the South Indian states, explicitly mentioned as being conquered, shows that Samudra Gupta really subjugated only a portion of the Eastern and the North-Eastern Deccan. Levi has shown that since the second century A.D. there sprang up many good ports on the eastern coast of South India,⁵² and Samudra Gupta evidently wanted to have them under his control. The statement of the Allahabad record that the islanders (*sarvadvīpavāsibhiḥ*) also recognised his supremacy, though it appears to be an exaggeration in itself, may have some amount of truth, and this became possible by Samudra Gupta's control of the Eastern Deccan region. It also may have contributed to a great extent in keeping the Vākātakas under control who were now becoming the dominant power in the Mahārāstra region.⁵³ With the same political purpose he evidently conquered the Forest Countries, extending from Jubbalpur to Chota Nagpur (*paricārikṛta-sarvātavikarājasya*).⁵⁴ The Vākātaka policy also loomed large during the time of Samudra Gupta's son Candra Gupta II who entered into a matrimonial alliance with them by giving in marriage his daughter Prabhāvatī Gupta to Rudrasena II, son of Prthivisena I.

In his first campaign in North India, Samudra Gupta defeated Acyuta, Nāgasena and a prince of the Kota family. In the Allahabad record, after the word Nāgasena, there occurs the letter *ga* and then a lacuna, which Dr. Sircar thinks, can be filled up by *Ganapatyādīn-nṛpān saṅgare*.⁵⁵ If we accept the proposed reading we have to assume that Samudra Gupta had to fight in the Padmāvatī region twice in course of the same campaign inasmuch as both Nāgasena and Gaṇapatināga belonged to the same house. Acyuta probably ruled in the Ahicchatra region (modern Ramnagar and Bareilly District) where copper coins

⁵¹ *AHD*, p. 60-1.

⁵² Levi, *Ptolemy, Niddesa and Brhatkathā*, Trans. P. C. Bagchi, *Sino-Indian Studies*, Vol. II, 1946, pp. 61ff.

⁵³ For the Vākātakas, *Appendix II*.

⁵⁴ *infra*, p. 155.

⁵⁵ *Select Ins.*, p. 256, f.n. 1.

bearing the legend Acyu have been found.⁵⁶ About Nāgasena the *Harṣacarita* states: "At Padmāvati occurred the doom of Nāgasena born of the Nāga family, who was foolish enough to have the secrets of his policy discussed in the presence of the Śārikā bird which declared them aloud".⁵⁷ The *Purāṇas* describe Nāgasena as ruling over Padmāvati and Mathura.⁵⁸ Coins bearing the name of Kota have been found in E. Punjab and Delhi and the dynasty may have held sway in the Upper Gangetic valley region.⁵⁹

Some scholars think that Nāgasena, Acyuta and the prince of the Kota family entered into a league against Samudra Gupta who defeated their combined forces in a battle at Kauśāmbī.⁶⁰ Of this, however, there is no evidence at all.

By the above conquests, Samudra Gupta evidently got some hold over the Ganges-Jumna valley, and thus feeling secured in his position, turned his attention towards the South-India. As already stated, II.19-20 specify the names of the kings of Dakṣiṇāpatha who were defeated but re-instated by Samudra Gupta. They are as follows:

1. Mahendra of Kośala. This is undoubtedly Dakṣiṇa-Kośala and comprised the districts of Bilaspur, Raipur and Sambalpur. From the Rajim c.p. inscription of Tivaradeva of c.800 A.D. it appears that Śrīpura i.e., Sirpur was the capital of the state.⁶¹

2. Vyāghrarāja of Mahākāntāra. Bhandarkar thinks that this Vyāghrarāja is almost certainly identical with Vyāghra, father of Jayanātha, of the Uccakalpa dynasty, that ruled over the Jaso and Ajaigarh states in Bundelkhand.⁶² But this would place the kingdom of Mahākāntāra to the north of the Vindhyas and not in the Dakṣiṇāpatha, as the Allahabad record

⁵⁶ Allan, *CGD*, p. xxii; *Catalogue*, p. lxxix. Altekar observes: "A king named Achyuta had risen to power in Ahichchhatra (Rohilkhand) by middle of the fourth century A.D. His coin-type bears a close resemblance to that of some Nāga coins and it is not improbable that he was himself a Nāga ruler, perhaps a scion of a collateral branch of the Mathurā family". (*VGA*, pp. 36-7).

⁵⁷ cf. *supra*, f.n. 48.

⁵⁸ Padmāvati, as already stated, has been identified with the present Padam Pawayaya, 25 miles north-east of Narwar in the apex of the confluence of the Sindhu and the Para; see also *EH*, p. 300.

⁵⁹ The Kota coins resemble the 'Sruta' coins attributed to a ruler of Srāvasti. There is absolutely no proof that the Kotas ruled over Pāṭali-putra at the time of the rise of the Guptas as Jayaswal thinks. (*History of India*, 150 A.D.—350 A.D., p. 113).

⁶⁰ Jayaswal, *ib.*, pp. 132f.

⁶¹ *Suc. Sat.*, p. 129.

⁶² *IHQ*, i. p. 251; cf. R. K. Mookerjee, *The Gupta Empire*, p. 21.

asserts. G. Ramdas identifies Mahākāntāra with the Jharkhand tracts of Ganjam and Vizagapatam.⁶³ But as it is mentioned immediately after the kingdom of Kośala, it appears to have been a wild tract nearby. We prefer its identification with Mahāvana, mentioned in an old inscription, and which is identified with the present Jeypore forest region in Orissa.⁶⁴

3. Mantarāja of Kurāla. Kurāla has been variously identified with (a) Colair lake, the Kunāla of the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II,⁶⁵ (b) Sonpur district of M.P., "the province round about Yayātinagara where the author of the *Pavanadūta* locates the Keralas",⁶⁶ and (c) Koraḍa in South India.⁶⁷ We prefer the second identification as it is nearer to the Jeypore forest tract, inasmuch as in the Allahabad record Kurāla is mentioned immediately after Mahākāntāra.⁶⁸

4. Mahendragiri of Piṣṭapura. Piṣṭapura is the modern Pithapuram in the Godavari district. It is also mentioned in the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II.⁶⁹

5. Svāmidatta of Koṭṭura. J-Dubreuil thinks that it is to be identified with Kothoor in the Ganjam district.

Note—1. The expression *Paiṣṭapuraka-Mahendragiri-Kauṭṭuraka-Svāmidatta* has been interpreted by G. Ramdas to mean Svāmidatta who had his seat at Piṣṭapura and at Koṭṭura near Mahendragiri (Northern part of the Eastern Ghat Ranges). "This informs us that Svāmidatta was the king of the two territories: (1) the one, of which Piṣṭhapura (Pithapur) was the capital; and, (2) the other, of which Koṭṭura near Mahendra was the capital, i.e., Kaliṅga".⁷⁰

6. Damana of Eraṇḍapalla. Its identification with Erandol,

⁶³ *IHQ*, i. p. 684.

⁶⁴ *JAHRS*, i. p. 228.

⁶⁵ Dr. Raychaudhuri points out that "Kaurāla cannot be Kolleru or Colair which must have been included within the territory of Hastivarman of Veṅḡ mentioned separately". (*PHAI*, p. 539).

⁶⁶ *Ep. Ind.* xi. p. 189.

⁶⁷ *BSOS*, II. iii., p. 569.

⁶⁸ Dr. Raychaudhuri thinks that the reading in the *Pavanadūta* is not beyond doubt.

⁶⁹ *Ep. Ind.* vi. p. 2-3.

⁷⁰ *IHQ*, i. p. 681. Fleet and others maintain that Mahendragiri cannot be the name of any person specially of a king. The view, however, appears to be unacceptable one, for, as Dr. Raychaudhuri points out, we find that the name of Kumāragiri is given to a chief of Kondavidu, whose territories included a portion at least of the Godāvari district. (*PHAI*, p. 538, f.n. 2).

the chief town of a sub-division of the same name in the Khandesh district, as proposed by Fleet, is certainly wrong. as J-Dubreuil points out, who thinks that Eraṇḍapalla should be identified with the town Eraṇḍapali, near Chicacole on the coast of Orissa mentioned in the Siddhantam plates of Devendravarman.⁷¹

7. Viṣṇugopa of Kāñcī. Kāñcī is the modern Conjeeveram in the Chingliput district, Madras. Viṣṇugopa was a king of the Pallava dynasty.⁷²

8. Nīlarāja of Avamukta. Nothing is known either about the king or the country.⁷³

9. Hastivarman of Veṅgī. Veṅgī may be identified with the region round Vegi or Pedda-Vegi, a village in the Ellore taluka of the Godavari district. Hastivarman was certainly the king of the Sālaṅkāyana dynasty whose record has been found at Pedda-Vegi.⁷⁴

10. Ugrasena of Pālakka. J-Dubreuil has identified Pālakka with a capital-place of the same name which was situated to the south of the Kṛṣṇā and which is mentioned in many Pallava copper plates.⁷⁵

11. Kuvera of Devarāṣṭra. Its identification with Mahārāṣṭra as proposed by Smith and others is certainly wrong. "It must be identified with the province of Devarāṣṭra (= Yelamanchili tract) mentioned in a copper-plate grant found in the district of Vizagapatam."⁷⁶

12. Dhanañjaya of Kusthalapura. Barnett identifies Kusthalapura with Kuttalur, near Polur, in North Arcot.⁷⁷

There is also another Kottūra at the foot of the hills in the Vizagapatam district (*Vizag. Dist. Gaz.* i. p. 137).

⁷¹ G. Ramdas thinks that Eraṇḍapalla may be identified with Yendipalli in Vizagapatam or Endapilli in Ellore Taluk. *IHQ*, i. p. 683.

⁷² For Viṣṇugopa, *Suc. Sat.* pp. 151ff, 161ff, 177ff. Some scholars think that the Pallavas were foreigners, but this view is no longer accepted.

⁷³ R. K. Mookerjee thinks that "Avamukta must have been a small kingdom in the neighbourhood of Kanchi and Vengi. Nīlarāja may be connected with Nilapallim in Godavari district. He was also another member of the Pallava confederation fought by Samudra Gupta. The kingdom of Kanchi in those days embraced the whole territory from the mouth of the Krishna to the south of the river Palar and sometimes even Kaveri. To the east of this territory lay the kingdoms of Vengi, Palakka and Avamukta (*The Gupta Empire*, p. 22). Dr. Raychaudhuri points out that the *Brahma Purāṇa* (Ch. 113. 22ff) mentions an *Avimukta-kṣetra* on the bank of the Gautami, i.e., Godāvari. (*PHAI*, p. 540).

⁷⁴ For Hastivarman, *Suc. Sat.*, pp. 68ff.

⁷⁵ cf. *IHQ*, i. p. 686.

⁷⁶ *AIID*, p. 60; *ASIR*, 1908-9, p. 123. Sometimes Piṣṭapura formed a part of Devarāṣṭra, *Ep. Ind.* xxiii. p. 57.

⁷⁷ *Calcutta Review*, 1924, p. 253n. Smith wrongly thinks that Kusthalapura is a mistake for Kuśasthalapura, a name of the holy city of Dwaraka.

Some scholars think that after his first Āryāvarta war Samudra Gupta left the Yamunā valley and marched through the modern Rewa and Jubbulpore regions and attacked the South Kośala country. This would imply that Samudra Gupta must have conquered the *Āṭavīkarājya*, comprising wild tracts near Jubbulpore, before he began his campaign against the Southern kings. In the Allahabad record, however, "*Sarvāṭavika-rājasya*" is mentioned after the enumeration of the kings of Āryāvarta (l.21) supposed to have been conquered in the second *Āryāvarta* war. It is, therefore, better to think with Jayaswal that Samudra Gupta descended swiftly by the Sambhalpur route and then attacking South Kośala etc. proceeded towards the Pallava kingdom of Kāñchī. He has further made some interesting inferences regarding this Southern campaign: (a) that the list of the Southern potentates in the Allahabad record includes the names of kings as well as of District Officers; (b) that Samudra Gupta fought his decisive battle in the Colair Lake region (cf. J-Dubreuil); (c) that the Southern potentates had been grouped under two chief leaders—Mantarāja of Kurāla leading Svāmidatta and Damana of Eraṇḍapalli, while Viṣṇugopa of Kāñchī led Nīlarāja of Avamukta, Hastivarman of Veṅgī, Ugrasena of Pālakka Kuvera of Devarāṣṭra and Dhanañjaya of Kusthalapura.⁷⁸

The statement of the Allahabad record that the Dakṣiṇāpatha conquest of Samudra Gupta was marked by three distinct features, viz., *grahaṇa* (capture of the enemy), *mokṣa* (liberating him), and *anugraha* (favouring him by reinstating him in his kingdom), followed by a description of nine kings of Āryāvarta whose kingdoms were incorporated in his own dominion, proves indirectly that when Samudra Gupta was engaged in his southern conquest there were fresh outbreaks in the north and so the Gupta monarch hurried back to meet the new situation. The kings who became victims of this extermination are thus described in l.21: Rudradeva, Matila, Nāgadatta, Candravarman, Gaṇapatiṇāga, Nāgasena, Acyuta, Nandi, Balavarman etc. As we have already stated this description is of the nature of stock-taking one (*supra*, p. 150) and at least Nāgasena and Acyuta had already been exterminated in the first Āryāvarta war. These kings are described as the rulers of Āryāvarta (*Āryāvartarāja*). Now, in the *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra*, *Vaśiṣṭha Dharmasūtra* and the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, Āryāvarta is described as the region lying to the east of Ādarśa or Adarśaṇa i.e., the place where the

⁷⁸ Jayaswal, *l.c.*, pp. 135-9.

river Sarasvatī disappears in the sand, the present Hissar in the Punjab; to the west of Kālakavana, usually identified with a wild tract near Allahabad; to the south of the Himālayas; and to the north of the Pāriyātra i.e., the western part of the present Vindhya range.⁷⁹ In the *Manusmṛti*, on the other hand, Āryāvarta denotes the land between the Himālayas and the Vindhyas and between the western and the eastern seas.⁸⁰

Before we proceed further we have to determine in which of the above two senses the term has been used in the Allahabad record. As the above kings of Āryāvarta are distinguished from the kings of Samatāṭa (South-East Bengal) and the tribal states like the Mālavas (Mewar, Tonk, and adjoining regions of South-East Rajputana) etc., we can easily infer that Hariṣena must have used it in the sense in which it is described in the earlier *Dharma-sūtras* and the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali. Thus it appears that the territories of the above nine kings lay to the west of the Prayāga which was the western boundary of the empire of Samudra Gupta's father. (*supra*, pp. 145-6). In other words, Samudra Gupta's southern campaigns caused him to lose the conquests in North India that he had achieved after the death of his father.

Of the above nine kings, the dominions of the following five, viz., Rudradeva,⁸¹ Matila,⁸² Nāgadatta, Nandin and Balavarman⁸³ cannot be located at present with any amount of certainty. Acyuta and Nāgasena have already been discussed above in connection with the first Āryāvarta war.⁸⁴ The coins of Gaṇapati-nāga have been found at Nārwar and Besnagar and thus he belonged to the Nāga house of Padmāvatī and was possibly a successor of Nāgasena. He is also described as the Dhārādhiśa, lord of Dhārā. In fact, from the account of the *Bhāvaśataka*, I.v.800, it appears that he was a king of considerable importance and may

⁷⁹ *Baudhāyana Dh. S. I. i. 2. 9; Vasiṣṭha Dh. S. I. 8; Mahābhāṣya* II. 4. 10.

⁸⁰ *Manu-Samhitā* II. 22.

⁸¹ Rudradeva's identification with Rudrasena I Vākātaka, as suggested by Dikshit, seems to be untenable. cf. *The Gupta Empire*, p. 23. His identification with Rudradeva whose coins have been found at Kosam may be accepted, and this would explain also why he is mentioned first among the Āryāvarta monarchs in the Allahabad records.

⁸² "It has been suggested that Matila may be identical with the Mattila of the seal found in Bulandshahr, but the absence of any honorific on the latter suggests that it is a private seal and not one of a royal personage". *IHQ*, i. p. 254.

⁸³ Nāgadatta, Nandin and Balavarman may have been Nāga rulers.

⁸⁴ *supra*, pp. 151-2.

have been the leader of the revolt against Samudra Gupta.⁸⁵ Candravarman has been identified with the king of that name whose record has been found at Susunia in Bankura district, West Bengal.⁸⁶ But as we have already stated, the nine kings including Candravarman possibly ruled to the west of Allahabad and hence this identification can hardly be accepted. King Candravarman of the Susunia record may have been conquered by Candra Gupta I, whose dominion extended in the east upto the Ganges. (*supra*, p. 129).

As a result of this war of extermination the empire of Samudra Gupta now included the U.P. and a portion of Madhyapradesh. The southern boundary of this empire was further extended by the conquest of the Forest Countries (121). Two inscriptions dated in the years 199 & 209 of the Gupta era from the Baghelkhand regions describe king Hastin as ruling over Dabhāla together with the eighteen forest kingdoms.⁸⁷ The *Āṭavikarājya*, therefore, denoted Dabhāla and the wild region around, corresponding to the territory round present Jubbulpore. As a result of this conquest the Narmadā evidently became the southern boundary of the Gupta empire.

These conquests evidently made Samudra Gupta one of the most powerful rulers of North India and we are informed that five kingdoms and nine tribal states lying on the frontier of the dominion were anxious to enter into friendly relations with him by paying taxes, obeying his orders and performing obeisance in person to the great emperor. These five kingdoms were:

(i) Samatāṭa. It is taken as comprising the delta of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, "of which the Jessore district forms the central portion". Dr. B. C. Sen points out that "from the *Records* and the *Biography*, describing the itinerary of Hiuen-tsang, the position of Samatāṭa in relation to the several countries situated in its neighbourhood may be thus indicated. It lay to the south of Kāmarūpa (in Assam) to the south-east of Kārṇasūvarṇa (in the Murshidabad district), and to the east of Tāmralipta (in the Midnapore district)".⁸⁸

⁸⁵ The coins of Gaṇapatināga have been found at Mathura. But as Mathura was an important centre of pilgrimage and trade, we cannot infer from the mere finds of coins in such a place that Gaṇapatināga was a ruler of Mathura only. His empire may have been larger one including Mathura itself. Some scholars have doubted the authenticity of the *Bhāvaśataka*. (IHQ, xii. p. 135).

⁸⁶ For Candravarman of the Susunia record, *supra*, pp. 128-9.

⁸⁷ *Corpus*, iii., p. 112; *Ep. Ind.*, viii., p. 284.

⁸⁸ *SHAI*B, p. 91.

2. *Ḍavāka*. It has not yet been satisfactorily identified. Fleet thinks that it was the ancient name of Dacca, while Smith locates it in North Bengal. Some scholars identify it with the Kopili valley in Assam where there is still a place named Dabok. On the evidence of Ptolemy's *Geographike*, Col. Gerini identifies it with Upper Burma.⁸⁰

3. *Kāmarūpa*. It signifies roughly the modern Assam, the central portion of which is still known as *Kāmṛūp*. It is believed that the contemporary of Samudra Gupta in *Kāmarūpa* was either Puṣyavarman or Samudravarman, remote ancestors of Bhāskaravarman, the contemporary of Harṣa.⁸⁰

4. *Nepāla*. The ancient kingdom of *Nepāla* comprised the region lying between the basins of the Gandak and Kosi, which is still known as "the valley of Nepal." It is mentioned for the first time possibly in the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya, where we have references to "*Naipālakam*" meaning a special kind of blankets made of sheep's wool and manufactured in Nepal.⁸¹ At the time of Samudra Gupta the Licchavis were the ruling dynasty in the country.⁸²

5. *Kartṛpura*. It has been variously identified with (a) Kartarpur in Jalandhar District, (b) the territory of the Katuria Raj of Kumaon, Garhwal and Rohilkhand, and, (c) Kahrur, between Multan and Lohani.⁸³

Among the nine tribal states which submitted to Samudra Gupta, the most important were the *Mālavas*, *Ārjunāyanas*, and the *Yaudheyas*. Dr. R. C. Majumdar thinks that at the time of Samudra Gupta the *Mālavas* probably occupied Mewar, Tonk and the adjoining regions of South-East Rajasthan.⁸⁴ The *Yaudheyas*, as we have already seen, became very powerful in the

⁸⁰ *ib.*, p. 209.

⁸⁰ *infra*, Ch. ix.

⁸¹ *Arthaśāstra*, ed. Ganapati Sastri, Bk. ii. p. 193.

⁸² *infra*, Ch. ix.

⁸³ *Ep. Ind.* xiii. p. 114; *EHI*, p. 302 n; *IHQ*, i. p. 257; *JRAS*, 1898, p. 198.

⁸⁴ *VGA*, p. 131. Dr. Altekar points out: "It is usually held that the careers of the Yaudheya, the Madra, the Ārjunāyana and the Mālava republics mentioned in Samudra-gupta's Allahabad inscription came to an end owing to the imperialistic ambition and expansion of the Guptas. There is, however, no definite evidence to support this view. Samudra-gupta only claims that these republics accepted his overlordship and paid him tribute. This is quite compatible with internal autonomy, and it is quite possible that the republics may have continued their existence during the reigns of Candragupta II and Kumāragupta I. . . . They may well have continued their semi-independent existence down to the middle of the 5th century A.D., when they appeared to have been engulfed in the Hūṇa avalanche". (*ib.*, pp. 32-3).

middle of the second century A.D. and possibly played a part in bringing the Kuṣāṇa rule to an end into the interior of India. During the time of Samudra Gupta they possibly occupied the territory extending from Northern Rajasthan to South-Eastern Punjab.⁹⁵ Allan thinks that the lands of the Ārjunāyanas probably lay within the triangle Delhi—Jaipur—Agra.⁹⁶ From the Allahabad record it appears that in the fourth century they were living outside Āryāvarta. They possibly may be located somewhere near Jaipur, between Bharatpur and Eastern Rajasthan.

Of lesser importance were the tribal states of Madraka, Ābhīra, Prārjuna, Sanakānika, Kāka and Kharapārika. The Madrakas had originally their capital at modern Sialkot in the Punjab and hence they may be located between the Ravi and the Chenub rivers.⁹⁷ The Ābhīras were a foreign tribe that entered India possibly after Alexander's invasion. They are mentioned in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, the *Periplus* and the *Geographike* of Ptolemy. An Ābhīra king Iśvarasena ruled in the Mahārāṣṭra region about 248 A.D. During the time of Samudra Gupta they possibly had a republican constitution and have been located by Smith in the province of Ahirwada between Jhansi and Bhilsa.⁹⁸ The Prārjunas are mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* and have been placed by Bhandarkar near Narsingarh, not far from Bhilsa.⁹⁹ The Sanakānikas are mentioned in the Udayagiri Cave inscription of Candragupta II of the year 82, and thus may be located in the Isagarh District, Gwalior, near Bhilsa.¹⁰⁰ The Kākas also lived nearby evidently in Sanchi, which was known as Kākanādabōṭa.¹⁰¹ Kharaparikas are taken by Bhandarkar to be the Kharparas mentioned in the Batiagadh inscription and may thus be "located in the Damoh District of C.P."¹⁰²

The Allahabad inscription then gives the names of some independent foreign countries as entering into relationship with Samudra Gupta in the following words:

"... whose (Samudra Gupta's) binding together of the

⁹⁵ Dr. Bhandarkar thinks that "at this time, they appeared to have occupied Mewar and Kotah of south-eastern Rajputana and the parts of Central India adjoining them". (*IHQ*, i. p. 257).

⁹⁶ Allan, *Catalogue*, p. lxxxiii.

⁹⁷ For the Madras, *supra*, p. 133.

⁹⁸ *JRAS*, 1897, p. 891.

⁹⁹ *IHQ*, i. p. 258.

¹⁰⁰ *Select Ins.*, pp. 271-2.

¹⁰¹ cf. "*Kākanādabōṭa-Sri-mahāvihāre*", *Select Ins.*, p. 273. "Kākanādabōṭa was apparently the old name of the Sanchi region".

¹⁰² *PHAI*, p. 546; *IHQ*, i. p. 258; *Ep. Ind.* xii. p. 46; Kharapadrapaka, *DHNI*, i. p. 586.

(whole) world, by means of the amplitude of the vigour of (his) arm, was effected by the acts of respectful service, such as offering themselves as sacrifices, bringing presents of maidens, (giving) Garuḍa-tokens, (surrendering) the enjoyment of their own territories, soliciting (his) commands, &c., (rendered) by the Daivaputras, Shāhis, Shāhānushāhis, Śakas, and Muruṇḍas, and by the people of Siṃhala and all (other) dwellers in islands". (Fleet, *Corpus*, iii. p. 14).

We have quoted the above translation of Fleet as it involves some important questions of interpretation. The expression *Daivaputra-śāhi-śāhānuṣāhi* has been split up into three parts as if each denotes a separate entity. Such an interpretation appears to be hardly satisfactory. Bhandarkar points out: "It is, however, forgotten that the initial word is not Devaputra but Daivaputra, a *taddhita* form, which shows that the term cannot stand by itself but must be taken along with what follows. If this is a correct view, Daivaputra had better be taken along not only with Shāhi but also Shāhānushāhi, so as to make the whole correspondent with the full royal insignia Devaputra Mahārāja Rājātirāja, not only of the eastern Imperial Kushāṇa family but also of the Later Great Kushāṇas, or Kushāṇaputras as they called themselves."¹⁰³ Similarly, there is some uncertainty regarding the compound expression Śakamuruṇḍa. Konow has pointed out that the term Muruṇḍa has twofold sense: *first*, it refers to a particular branch of the Śakas, and *secondly*, it is equivalent to the Chinese term *wang*, meaning king or lord.¹⁰⁴ We have already seen that before the rise of the Guptas the Muruṇḍas had been ruling in Eastern India and a Muruṇḍa habitation at Lampāka (modern Laghman) is referred to in the *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi* of Hemacandra. It is not unlikely that these Muruṇḍas of Laghman region entered into some sort of diplomatic relationship with the Gupta monarch, otherwise we have to think only of the Śaka lords (*wang*) of Western India, the descendants of the Great Rudradāman.

It is really curious to think that the Later Kuṣāṇas, Śakas and the king or people of Ceylon should have entered into relationship with Samudra Gupta that involved (i) *ātmanivedanam* (offering their own persons for service to the emperor), (ii) *kanyoṇyādanā* (gifts of maidens) and (iii) *Garutmad-āṅka-sva-viśaya-bhukti-śāsana-yācana* (applications for charters

¹⁰³ *IHQ*, i. p. 259.

¹⁰⁴ *SI*, p. 3; *CII*, II. i. p. xx f.

bearing the Garuḍa seal for the enjoyment of their own territories). Here we have nothing but hyperbolic exaggerations and there is no reason to think that the account implies *Treaties of Alliance and Service*. An example will make the whole thing clear. According to the Chinese author, Wang Hsien-tse, the king of Ceylon, named Chi-mi-kia-po-mo or Sri Meghavarna, once sent two Buddhist monks to Bodh-Gaya, but the pilgrims had to face great inconvenience for want of suitable accommodation. To remove this difficulty for the future pilgrims the king of Ceylon sent an embassy with presents to Samudra Gupta asking for his permission to build at Bodh-Gaya a monastery for the use of Ceylonese pilgrims. The permission was at once granted.¹⁰⁵ Evidently this simple fact has been twisted in the epigraph to mean that the king of Ceylon entered into a subordinate alliance with the Gupta monarch. Similarly, there is no evidence at all to show that the Śaka satraps of the Western India in any way showed respect for the Garuḍa token, though it is not unlikely that during the time of Samudra Gupta the Śaka house had been passing through some crisis and it may have solicited the help of Samudra Gupta. The Śaka contemporary of the Gupta monarch was evidently Rudrasena III whose known dates range from A.D. 348 to 378. His coins may be divided into two groups—(i) the dates of which range from 348 A.D. to 351 A.D., and (ii) the dates of which fall between 364 A.D. and 378 A.D. The thirteen years which fall between 351 A.D. and 364 A.D. were probably marked by some political disturbance during which the coinage ceased. There are some lead coins, however, the dates of which range from 358 A.D. to 372 A.D., and they belong therefore, though not entirely, to the period during which no silver coins are found. There is hardly any evidence, however, to show that the kṣatrapa dominion had to face any foreign invasion during the period. It is not unlikely that it was passing through some economic crisis when Rudrasena III may have sought help from the Gupta emperor.¹⁰⁶

The Kuṣāṇa contemporary of Samudra Gupta was Grumbates, who is described as "the king of the Chionitae, of middle age and wrinkled limbs, but of a grand spirit and already distinguished for many victories". In c.358-60 A.D. he helped Shahpur II, the Sassanid king, against the Romans in the siege of Amida. There is no evidence, however, that Grumbates in any way came into

¹⁰⁵ Levi, *J.A.*, 1900, pp. 316ff, 401ff.

¹⁰⁶ *SI*, p. 69; *supra*, p. 127.

contact with Samudra Gupta.¹⁰⁷ In the middle of the fourth century A.D., however, the Peshawar region passed under the Little Kuṣāṇas whose chief Kidāra for the time being, acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sassanian monarch. It is supposed that with the help of Samudra Gupta he ultimately became independent and even defeated a Sassanid army in 367-8 A.D. Now, he consolidated his power in Gandhāra, Kashmir and the Western and Central Punjab and appointed viceroys to rule over the distant parts of his empire. Kuṣāṇa type of coins with the name of Samudra has also been found but it is difficult to determine the exact significance of the legend.¹⁰⁸

The mention of *sarvadvīpavāsin* in the Allahabad record is indeed very interesting. It evidently shows that the Hindu colonies in South-East Asia maintained close contact with their mother-country in the Gupta age. Dr. R. C. Majumdar points out that the Javanese text *Tantri-kāmandaka* states that mahārāja Aiśvarya-pāla of the Ikṣvāku race traced his genealogy to the family of Samudra Gupta.¹⁰⁹

It was evidently at the conclusion of his campaigns that Samudra Gupta performed the horse-sacrifice as proved by the evidence of his Aśvamedha type of coins. In the Poona plates he is given the epithet *anekāśvamedhajājīn*, showing possibly that he performed more than one horse-sacrifice. On the obverse of these coins we find "horse standing l. before a sacrificial post, from which pennons fly over its back" while the reverse presents "the chief queen standing l., wearing loose robe and jewellery etc.". The queen figured here has been identified with Dattā or Dattādevī, mother of Candragupta II. On the *Rev.* of all these coins there is the legend *Aśvamedhaparākramah*, while on the *Obv.* we can distinguish at least two different types¹¹⁰:

¹⁰⁷ cf. Allan, *CGD*, p. xxvii, *supra*, p. 135.

¹⁰⁸ *supra*, p. 132.

¹⁰⁹ "Some control over the islands in the neighbouring seas is possibly hinted at in the epithet *Dhanada-Varuṇendrāntakasama*, the equal of Dhanada (Kuvera, lord of wealth, guardian of the north), Varuṇa (the Indian Sea-god, the guardian of the west), Indra, king of the celestials and guardian of the east, and Antaka (Yama, god of death, and guardian of the south). The comparison of Samudra Gupta with these deities is apposite and possibly refers not only to his conquests in all directions, but to his possession of immense riches, *suzerainty over the seas*, the spread of his fame to the celestial region and his extirpation of various kings. Inscriptions discovered in the Trans-Gangetic Peninsula and the Malaya Archipelago testify to the activities of Indian navigators (e.g. the Mahānāvika from Raktamṛtikā mentioned in a Malayan epigraph) and military adventurers in the Gupta age". (*PHAI*, p. 547, f.n. 1).

¹¹⁰ Allan, *CGD*, pp. 21f. Altekar, *Bayana Hoard*, pl. xxxiii.

- (a) "*Rājādhirājah pṛthivīm avitvā divaṃ jayatyaprativāryavārya*".
 (b) "*Pṛthivīm vijitya divaṃ jayatyāhṛita-vājimedhah*".

The above two different specimens show evidently that they were issued on two different occasions. Can we infer from it that Samudra Gupta really performed more than one Aśvamedha sacrifice, as hinted indirectly in the Poona plates of his granddaughter Prabhāvatī Gupta.

Dr. R. C. Majumdar describes the extent of Samudra Gupta's empire in the following words:

"It comprised nearly the whole of Northern India, with the exclusion of Kashmir, Western Punjab, Western Rajputana, Sind and Gujrat, together with the highlands of Chattisgarh and Orissa and a long stretch of territory along the eastern coast extending as far south as Chingleput and probably even further".^{110a} This was undoubtedly the sphere of his influence but the area directly under his rule seems to have comprised roughly the present U.P., Bihar, West Bengal and a portion of the Vindhyan tracts. The Allahabad record mentions the following offices or officials who took part in the administration:

1. *Khādyatāpākika*, Officer controlling the superintendence of the Royal Kitchen.
2. *Sāndhivigrahika*, Minister for Peace and War.
3. *Kumārāmātya*, Minister in attendance on the Prince.
4. *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, the Chief of the Police and Criminal Judge.

Hariṣena, the writer of the Allahabad praśasti, combined in himself all the above four offices. His father Dhruvabhūti was also a *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, while another *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* was Tilabhaṭṭaka. The different types of the coins of Samudra Gupta throw interesting light on the career of the king and they may be summarised as follows: (a) The *Garuḍa* types mark his victory over the Nāgas, *Garuḍa* being the devourer of the nāgas or serpents; (b) The *Tiger* and the *River-Goddess* (*Makara-vāhinī Gaṅgā*) types indicate his conquest in the valley of the Ganges, "with its swampy and forest regions which were the abode of the royal Bengal tiger"; (c) the *Candra Gupta—Kumāra Devī* coins having on the Rev. the figure of a Goddess seated on a lion, evidently *Durgā Simhavāhanā*, who is also, known as *Vindhya*

^{110a} V.G.A., p. 140.

vāsini or *Haimavatī* "may point to the extension of the Gupta dominions to the Vindhya and the Himavat".¹¹²

Samudra Gupta's qualities of head and heart as described in details in the Allahabad record can hardly be taken in its face value since it was written by the court-poet whose aim always is to extol his master.¹¹³ Thus he is described as a *kavirāja* and as the composer of a large number of poetry (*vahukavitā*). It is really curious in that case that not a single composition of the king has been handed down to posterity even in the form of quotations by other authors, though it is stated that he gathered at his court the literary masters. There may, however, be some basis of fact in the statement that he "put to shame the preceptor of the lord of Gods and Tumburu and Nārada and others by his sharp and polished intellect and choral skill and musical accomplishments". This reminds us of his "Lyrist type" of coins which represents the king, seated cross-legged on high-backed couch and playing on a lyre or lute which lies on his knees.

In conclusion, we may note a Standard type coin of Samudra Gupta having on the Rev. the legend *Śrī Vikramaḥ*;¹¹⁴ its exact significance is not clear, but it may possibly show that he took the title of *Vikramāditya* like his son.

RAMA GUPTA

According to the epigraphic records, Samudra Gupta was succeeded by his son Candra Gupta II, born of his chief-queen Dattādevī. Recently, some scholars have come to the conclusion that the immediate successor of Samudra Gupta was Rāma Gupta, an elder brother of Candra Gupta II, and the latter came to the throne after murdering him.¹¹⁵ The theory is based on a few passages of a lost drama *Devī-Candraguptam* by one Viśākhadatta, quoted in the *Nāṭyadarpaṇa* by Rāmacandra and Guṇacandra. The story of the drama runs as follows: Rāma Gupta, an impotent and imbecile king, agreed to surrender his queen Dhruvadevī to a Śaka chief who had invaded his kingdom. Rāma

¹¹² cf. *PHAI*, p. 551.

¹¹³ See an article by Dr. R. K. Mookerjee on the many-sided qualities and character of Samudra Gupta as deduced from the evidence of the epigraphs and coins, *IC*, ix. pp. 77ff.

¹¹⁴ *JNSI*, v. p. 136.

¹¹⁵ Viśākhadatta, the writer of the *Devī-Candraguptam* has been placed by Levi sometimes between the Gupta dynasty and Harṣa. Stein Konow, Jayaswal and N. Das Gupta regard him as a contemporary of Candra Gupta II. cf. *B. C. Law Volume*, p. 50.

Gupta's younger brother Candra Gupta protested against such an act of dishonour and himself disguised as queen went to the Śaka king. When the Śaka king was about to embrace the supposed queen, he was killed by Candra Gupta. Candra Gupta then returned to his own country, killed his brother Rāma Gupta, married Dhruvadevī and ascended the throne.

It is really difficult to pronounce the final judgment on the question of the historicity of the account. Viśākhadatta has been identified with Viśākhadeva, the author of *Mudrārākṣasa* and has even been considered by some to be a contemporary of Candra Gupta II,¹¹⁶ though competent authorities think that he cannot be earlier than the ninth century A.D. The earliest definite evidence bearing on the subject is the statement of the *Harṣacarita* that "Candra Gupta, in the guise of the female, killed the Śaka king possessed of lust for another's wife at the very city of the enemy".¹¹⁷ Here we should note that Bāṇa says nothing about Rāma Gupta or Dhruvadevī. In the Sanjan plates of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Amoghavarṣa I of 871 A.D. it is stated: "That donor in the Kaliyuga, who was of Gupta lineage, having killed his brother, we are told, seized his kingdom and wife".¹¹⁸ The point to be noted is that in this cryptic account there is no mention of the Śaka king. The Cambay (A.D. 930) and Sangli (A.D. 933) plates of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Govinda IV mention one Sāhasāṅka who killed his elder brother and married his widow.¹¹⁹

Those who believe in the Rāma Gupta theory point out that these references coming from different parts of India and belonging to different periods can hardly be set aside as mere products of fancy. Those who are against the theory, on the other hand, point out that in the epigraphs Candra Gupta II is described as *tatparigrhita*¹²⁰ implying that he was selected by his father for the throne, and, therefore the question of Rāma Gupta becoming king after Samudra Gupta cannot arise. Even if it be assumed that Rāma Gupta seized the throne by force, then, in that case, there would have been a civil war before Candra Gupta would have meekly submitted to the fact of usurpation, and in case of such

¹¹⁶ Jayaswal, *JBORS*, xviii. pp. 17ff; N. Das Gupta, *IC*, iv. p. 216. Konow, *JBORS*, xxiii. p. 444; Saraswati, *IA*, lii. pp. 181f; Altekar, *JBORS*, xiv. pp. 223ff; xv. pp. 134ff; Mirashi, *IHQ*, x. p. 48; *IA*, lxii. p. 201.

¹¹⁷ cf. *HC. Trans.*, p. 194.

¹¹⁸ *Ep. Ind.*, xviii, pp. 235f.

¹¹⁹ *ib.* vii. pp. 26f; *IA*, xii, pp. 247f.

¹²⁰ Mathura Stone Ins. of Candra Gupta II (Fleet, no. 4); Bihar and Bhitari Stone Pillar inscriptions of Skanda Gupta (Fleet, nos. 12 & 13).

an event, certainly Rāma Gupta, who was so weak and imbecile as to surrender his own wife to an invader, would have been defeated. *Secondly*, there is no inscription or coin referring to a Rāma Gupta of the Gupta dynasty. Dr. Bhandarkar thinks that the name Rāma Gupta is a misreading in the drama for Kāca Gupta, while Jayaswal has concluded that Kāca and Rāma are two different names of the same king.¹²¹ As we have already stated, the Kāca coins bear on them the legend *sarvarajocchettā*, an epithet unthinkable for a weakling Rāma Gupta; even hyperbole has its limits. *Thirdly*, the details of the incident, as given in the *Harṣacarita*, the *Kāvya-mīmāṃsā* of Rājaśekhara, and the Rāṣṭrakūṭa records differ from one another regarding the place of the incident, the identification of the "other's wife" and also the victim of Candragupta's stratagem. In fact, the earliest record on the subject is the *Harṣacarita* which gives us two facts, that the Śaka king was possessed of lust for another's wife, and that Candragupta killed him in the guise of the female. Later on, the following details were added to the story: (a) that this 'other man' was Rāma or Śarma or Sena Gupta; (b) that Dhruvadevī, who is described in the epigraphic records as the wife of Candragupta II, was originally the wife of this Rāma Gupta; and, (c) that Candragupta killed Rāma Gupta and married his widowed queen.

As we shall see later on, it is really a fact that Candragupta II put an end to the rule of the Śaka kings of Ujjayinī. Recently, some copper coins of a king named Rāma Gupta have been collected by Sri Advani and others at Bhilsa. The Udayagiri Cave inscriptions show that Candragupta came to this region with the purpose of conquering this world, or in other words, in order to attack the kingdom of the Śaka kṣatrapas (*infra*, p. 169). It is not unlikely that this Rāma Gupta with his wife had been subjected to some humiliating condition by the Śaka king of Ujjayinī and the latter was later on killed by Candragupta II. This Rāma Gupta may have been a local king of the region, though it is not unlikely that he was a scion of the Gupta family. But there is no proof whatsoever, that he was the elder brother of Candragupta II or that Dhruvadevī was his wife and later on became the wife of the Gupta monarch. Another significant fact to be noted in this connection is that none of the Gupta records explicitly mention that Candragupta put an end to the rule of the Śaka kings of Ujjayinī, which in fact is known from

¹²¹ See f.n. 116 above.

the evidence of coins only. This silence of the epigraphs, which are eloquent over a minor achievement of a ruler, evidently points to the fact that Candra Gupta's victory was not the outcome of a straight fight.

Candra Gupta Vikramāditya has been the subject of a good deal of folklore which went on multiplying in the later periods, and one such episode finds mention in the drama *Devī-Candra Gupta*. The legend in a distorted form found its place in an Arabic work translated into Persian by Abdul Hasan Ali in 1226 A.D. It is stated that when king Rawal was faced with an invasion of his kingdom, he proposed to surrender his own queen to the invader. His brother, Barkamaris then approached the enemy in the dress of the queen and killed him. Later on, Barkamaris killed Rawal and married his widowed queen.¹²² Rawal has been identified by the supporters of the Rāma Gupta theory with Rāma Gupta and Barkamaris with Vikramāditya Candra Gupta II. But such accounts have got little historical value. Thus in the present state of our knowledge we can affirm only this much that Rāma Gupta may have been a scion of the Gupta family and that possibly he was a local ruler of the Bhilsa region.

CANDRA GUPTA II

The Eran inscription of Samudra Gupta shows that he had many sons¹²³ and the epithet *tatpariṅghita* applied to Candra Gupta II evidently implies that the latter was selected from among them as the best fitted to succeed him on the throne. The Mathura Pillar inscription of the year 61 states that the record was executed in the fifth regnal year of Candra Gupta II (*vijaya-rājya-samvatsare pañcame*).¹²⁴ This gives us the definite date that Candra Gupta II became king in 375 A.D. Further, the record has another interest inasmuch as it is the first epigraph dated in the Gupta era. While editing the record, Dr. Bhandarkar observed: "The inscription refers itself to the reign of Candra Gupta, son of Samudra Gupta. The titles coupled with each name are worth noting. They are *bhaṭṭāraka*, *mahārāja* and *rājādhirāja*. The first of these, namely, *bhaṭṭāraka* is associated pretty frequently with the names of the Gupta sovereigns. But the other

¹²² Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, i. pp. 110-1.

¹²³ Eran inscription, ll. 19-20, *Corpus*, iii. p. 20.

¹²⁴ *Select Ins.*, pp. 269-71.

title which they almost invariably assume is *mahārājādhirāja* instead of what we have in the present record, i.e., *mahārāja rājādhirāja*, an exact replica of *maharaja rajatiraja* which the Kushāṇa kings bore. It is quite natural in Mathura which formed one of the most important district of the Kushāṇa kingdom and where numbers of Kushāṇa epigraphs have been unearthed. This is but another indication of Mathura and the surrounding region being wrested from the Kushāṇas *for the first time* by Candra Gupta II".¹²⁵ It is really curious how Dr. Bhandarkar came to the above conclusion when we have definite evidence to show that the empire of Samudra Gupta extended in the west as far as Eran. The title may have been inspired by the Kuṣāṇa example, but the Nāgas and not the Kuṣāṇas had been ruling over the Mathura region on the eve of the rise of the Guptas.

We have already seen that the Nāgas offered the stiffest resistance to Samudra Gupta who had also to be in alert against the rising power of the Vākātakas. Candra Gupta II at once perceived the danger looming from these two quarters and he was clever to win over them to his side by matrimonial alliances. From the Poona C.P. inscription of Prabhāvatī Guptā, it is clear that she was the daughter of Candra Gupta II by his wife Kuveranāgā, born of the Nāga family (*Nāga-kulasambhūtā*) and was herself the wife of Rudrasena II, the Vākātaka king.¹²⁶ Rudrasena II had a very short reign and after his death Prabhāvatī Guptā was appointed the regent of his minor sons Divākara-sena and Pravarasena II.¹²⁷ This led indirectly to the increase of the Gupta influence in the Vākātaka court. The Vākātakas held an important strategic position, and a Vākātaka king "could be of much service or disservice to the northern invader of the dominions of the Śaka Satraps of Gujarat and Surāshtra".¹²⁸ As Prabhāvatī Guptā, the daughter of Candra Gupta II, was the regent and the *defacto* ruler of the Vākātaka kingdom from c. 390 to c. 410 A.D., the Gupta monarch utilised the opportunity to put an end to the rule of his Śaka contemporaries. As we have already stated, Candra Gupta II's victory over the Śaka kings is not explicitly mentioned in the Gupta records, though the same can be clearly inferred from the evidence of the coins. The Gupta monarch's campaigns against the western kṣatrapas is apparently alluded to in the Udayagiri Cave inscription of Vīrasena Śāba,

¹²⁵ *Ep. Ind.* xxi. p. 3.

¹²⁶ *Select Ins.*, pp. 411-5.

¹²⁷ Appendix ii.

¹²⁸ Smith, *JRAS*, 1914, p. 324.

a native of Pāṭaliputra, and a *saciva* of the Great Gupta monarch, placed in charge of the Department of Peace and War, who "came here accompanied by the king in person, who was seeking to conquer the whole world".¹²⁹ In his campaigns against the Śakas, Candra Gupta evidently made Eastern Malwa the base of his operations. Eastern Malwa (Ākara) must have been conquered by Candra Gupta II as early as 401 A.D., for an epigraphic text on the Udayagiri hill bearing the date G.E. 82 = 401 A.D. records a dedication made by a feudatory mahārāja Sanakānika during the reign of Candra Gupta II.¹³⁰

The conquest of the western kṣatrapas by Candra Gupta II is proved by his rare silver coins which are more or less direct imitations of those of the latest western kṣatrapas. As Rapson states, "Like their proto-types, the coins of the latest mahākṣatrapas, which they closely resemble in style and fabric, they have on the *Obv.* the date accompanied by some equivalent of the word *varṣe*, behind the king's head, and retain some traces of the old inscr. in Greek characters, while on the *Rev.* they substitute the Gupta type (a peacock) for the Caitya, with crescent and star".¹³¹ The latest date on the coins of the western kṣatrapas is 310 or 31x (Śaka) = 388 + x A.D., while the earliest date on the silver coins of the Gupta monarch struck in imitation of the former, is G.E. 90 or 90x = A.D. 402 + x. Thus it was during this interval that the Gupta conquest of Surāṣṭra and Gujrat took place. It is possible to limit the period further, for the Udayagiri inscription of the year 401 A.D. shows the occupation of Eastern Malwa by the Guptas and it is improbable that the western kṣatrapas were able to resist for long the victorious progress of Candra Gupta II.¹³²

In this connection, we propose to discuss the evidences contained in the famous Meharauli Iron Pillar inscription of king Candra, about whose identification there is much controversy.¹³³ It is a posthumous record and describes the conquests of Candra "on whose arm fame was inscribed by the sword, when, in battle in the Vaṅga countries, he kneaded (and turned) back with (his) breast the enemies who, uniting together, came against (him); —he, by whom, having crossed in warfare the seven mouths of

¹²⁹ *Corpus*, iii. p. 36.

¹³⁰ *ib.* p. 25.

¹³¹ Rapson, *Catalogue*, p. cli.

¹³² *SI*, p. 78.

¹³³ He has been identified with Candra Gupta Maurya (*Sethi*), Kaniṣka (*Majumdar*), Candrāpaśa, the Nāga king (*Raychaudhuri*), Candra Gupta I (*Basak*) etc.

the (river) Sindhu, the Bāhlikas were conquered". Apart from the facts that palaeographically the record is to be assigned to the Gupta period, that Candra Gupta also takes the name of Candra on his copper coins, that like Candra of the record Candra Gupta II was also a Vaiṣṇava, and, that Delhi, where the record has been found, formed a part of the Gupta empire,¹³⁴ the Meharauli record seems to throw indirect light on the conquest of the Śaka kṣatrapas by Candra Gupta II. As we have already seen, Rudradāman conquered the Lower Indus valley and there is no proof that any of the Later Kuṣāṇa kings was in a position to snatch it away from the hands of the Śakas. There is, therefore, every likelihood that it continued to remain under the rule of the Śaka satraps and as Candra Gupta conquered the Śaka dominion, he naturally crossed the seven mouths of the river Indus. In this period the term Bāhlika, which originally denoted Bactria, came to be used as a synonym for Bāhika or the Land of the Five Rivers.¹³⁵ Candra Gupta evidently went from the Lower Indus valley to the Punjab.¹³⁶

The epigraph further states that Candra fought against a confederacy of powers in the Vaṅga country. The term Vaṅga denoted according to Kālidāsa, who belonged to the Gupta age, the region lying between the two streams of the Ganges i.e., the Bhāgirathī and the Padmā.¹³⁷ The Allahabad record makes Samatāṭa, which comprised a portion of this Vaṅga, a pratyanta state owing allegiance to Samudra Gupta. Evidently, some of these pratyanta rulers refused to acknowledge Candra Gupta II, who, however, brought them under subjugation. The conquest of Vaṅga possibly occurred at the close of the career of the monarch and hence we have no other record, epigraphic or numismatic, of his age to throw light on the subject. It is thus apparent that Candra Gupta II had under him one of the greatest empires of North India in the days after the Mauryas, an empire which was greater than the empires of Harṣa, Bhoja or Mahendrapāla-deva. Through his daughter Prabhāvatī Guptā his influence also reigned supreme in the Mahārāṣṭra region. The commentator of the Prākṛit kāvya *Setubandha* informs us that Pravarasena II, the Vākāṭaka prince and grandson of the Gupta monarch, lived in the latter's court and once composed a poem which was later

¹³⁴ *Select. Ins.*, p. 275, f.n. 2.

¹³⁵ Ptolemy, p. 395.

¹³⁶ Dr. Altekar thinks that Candra Gupta II attacked the Kidāra Kuṣāṇas, *VGA*, p. 21.

¹³⁷ *Raghuvamśam*, iv. 36. The expression "*Gaṅgā-srotāntareṣu ca*" evidently refers to the Padmā and the Gaṅgā.

on corrected by the great poet Kālidāsa.¹³⁸ The historicity of this statement cannot be vouchsafed inasmuch as the date of the poet still remains undetermined. This much, however, appears to be clear that Kālidāsa was later than or a later contemporary of Bhāsa whom he mentions as one of the *pūrvāsūris* in his *Mālavikāgnimitram*.¹³⁹ The *Bharatavākya* at the end of the dramas of Bhāsa refers to one Rājasimha whose kingdom was bounded by the seas and the Himalayan and the Vindhyan Ranges. Keith has shown that Bhāsa must be later than Aśvaghoṣa,¹⁴⁰ and so the king whose dominion tallies with the above description, appears to have been Candragupta II, who also adopts the title of Narendrasimha (= Rājasimha) on his coins. Bhāsa thus may have been an early contemporary of Candragupta II. In that case, Kālidāsa may be regarded as living either in the later years of Candragupta II, or early years of Kumāragupta I. In any case, he cannot be dragged down beyond the time of Kumāragupta, for the Hūṇas are represented in the *Raghuvamśam* as living in the Oxus valley,¹⁴¹ while as we shall see later on, during the time of Skandagupta, the successor of Kumāragupta I, they penetrated into the interior of India. Thus there is no difficulty in assuming that Kālidāsa lived in the later days of Candragupta II. The Vākāṭaka prince Pravarasena also must have composed the poem in the later days of the Gupta monarch, for he was the latter's grandson. In this connection, we may note further that in his *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, Bhoja has quoted a verse written by Kālidāsa who is said to have reported to the Gupta monarch Vikramāditya on the luxurious life at the court of the lord of Kuntala, who has been identified with Pravarasena II.¹⁴² Mirashi points out that the Pattan plates of Pravarasena II of the year 27 refer to a Kālidāsa as the writer of the charter.¹⁴³ While we admit that these are not absolutely conclusive evidences proving the contemporaneity of Candragupta II and Kālidāsa, it cannot at the same time be lightly brushed aside at once. These traditions have the indirect value of proving Candragupta II's influence at the Vākāṭaka court.

The Talagunda inscription¹⁴⁴ of Śāntivarman states that the

¹³⁸ VGA, pp. 104, 373; cf. HC. Trans., p. 3.

¹³⁹ *Mālavikāgnimitram*, I. v: var. Dhāvaka.

¹⁴⁰ Keith, HSL, p. xii.

¹⁴¹ *Raghuvamśam*, iv. 67.

¹⁴² *Proceedings of the Seventh Oriental Conference*, as quoted in *PIIAI*, p. 564, f.n. 2.

¹⁴³ *Ep. Ind.* xxiii. pp. 81ff.

¹⁴⁴ *Ep. Ind.*, viii, p. 31ff.

Kadamba king Kākusthavarman gave his daughters in marriage to the royal families of the Guptas and others. J-Dubreuil thinks that Vākāṭaka Narendrasena, son of Pravarasena II and great grandson of Candragupta II, became the son-in-law of Kākusthavarman and that the Talagunda record refers to this indirect relation of the Kadambas with the Guptas.¹⁴⁵ Dr. D. C. Sircar thinks that it is also possible that while a daughter of Kākustha was married to Vākāṭaka Narendrasena, another daughter "was actually given in marriage to a Gupta prince of Pāṭaliputra, who was possibly a son or grandson of Candragupta II or Kumāragupta I".¹⁴⁶ It may be noted in this connection that some mediaeval chiefs of Kuntala also trace their lineage to Candragupta.¹⁴⁷

It is generally believed that Pāṭaliputra continued to be the capital of the empire, and after the defeat of the Śaka kṣatrapas a second capital was founded at Ujjayinī. The chiefs of the Kuntala country, who claimed descent from Candragupta II Vikramāditya, refer to him as *Ujjayinī-puravarādhiśvara* and also as *Pāṭalipuravarādhiśvara*. In the traditional Vikramāditya stories also the king is described as belonging to both Pāṭaliputra and Ujjayinī. Fa-hsien in his account states that: "Pāṭaliputra is the largest city in the whole Middle Kingdom. The people are rich and prosperous and vie with each other in performing good deeds. Every year in celebration of the eighth day of the second month they hold an image procession. They use a four-wheeled cart on which five tiers are constructed in bamboo, with a halberd-shaped central post about twenty feet high, the whole structure resembling a pagoda. This is covered with white woolen cloth, printed with various devas in colour, adorned with gold, silver and glass, and hung with silk pennants and canopies. There are four shrines on the four sides, each containing a seated Buddha, attended by standing Bodhisattvas. About twenty such carts are prepared, each decked out in a different way.... The elders and laymen of this country have established charitable hospitals in the city, to which all the poor, homeless, deformed and ill can go. Here all their wants are supplied, and the physicians who attend them prescribe the food and medicine they require. When cured, they are free to leave."¹⁴⁸ The description shows that the tradition of the Great Aśoka had been continuing even in the days of the Vikramāditya.

¹⁴⁵ *AHD*, p. 100.

¹⁴⁶ *Suc. Sat.*, p. 256.

¹⁴⁷ *PHAI*, p. 556.

¹⁴⁸ A Record of the Buddhist countries by Fa-hsien, Peking 1957, pp. 60-61.

Unfortunately for us we have no such authentic account of the second capital, Ujjayinī. Kālidāsa, in his *Meghadūta*, incidentally refers to the palaces of the place proving indirectly that it was a very flourishing city.¹⁴⁹ In this connection, we have to consider critically the fact whether another metropolis was Ayodhyā. The biographer of Vasubandhu refers to the city as the capital of the Vikramāditya,¹⁵⁰ though of course it is not certain which Vikramāditya he means. Allan points out that the copper coins issued by Candragupta II are generally found in and around Ayodhyā.¹⁵¹ This may prove that Ayodhyā was also a metropolis and a mint city.

From the evidence of the coins we learn that Candragupta took the title of Vikramāditya. Some scholars think that the story of Śakāri Vikramāditya, as found in the Jaina *Kālakācāryakathānaka*^{151a} is in reality a legend of the Vikrama cycle, the original hero of which is Vikramāditya Candragupta II and as the latter also lived in the Mālava country, the era of the Mālavas starting from 58 B.C. came to be associated with his name. Vikramāditya's driving away the Śakas from Ujjayinī, it is asserted, is nothing but the echo of the defeat of the Śaka ksatrapas by Candragupta II. It is difficult to pronounce any judgment on the problem.

The excavations carried out at Basarh by Bloch has unearthed numerous clay seals with the inscriptions throwing light on the history of the place during the time of Candragupta II.¹⁵² One of the seals bears the epigraph 'Mahādevī Dhruvasvāminī, queen of Mahārājādhirāja Candragupta II, and mother of Mahārāja Govinda Gupta'. Evidently Govinda Gupta was his father's governor in the province of Tira or Tirabhukti during the time of his father Candragupta II. This reminds us of the Maurya practice of appointing princes of the royal blood as the governors of the provinces. The seals mention the designations of a large number of offices and officers, evidently connected with the

¹⁴⁹ *Meghadūta*, I. 28.

¹⁵⁰ Takakusu thinks that Vasubandhu lived from about 420 to 500 A.D. (*JRAS*, 1905, pp. 43ff). This would make Vasubandhu a contemporary of the descendants of Candragupta II. But if we agree with M. Peri that the Buddhist scholar lived in the fourth century A.D. (*BEFEO*, xi. pp. 339f), then his contemporaneity with Candragupta II may not be ruled out. cf. *Indian Studies in Honour of C. R. Lanman*, pp. 79ff. If, however, the Bālāditya of the account be identified with Narasiṃhagupta Bālāditya then it is certainly better to agree with Takakusu.

¹⁵¹ Allan, *Catalogue*, p. cxxxi.

^{151a} *supra*, p. 56.

¹⁵² For Basarh excavation by Bloch, see, *ASIR*, 1903-4, pp. 107f.

provincial administration. Dr. R. K. Mookerjee has prepared the following list from the epigraphs on the seals¹⁵³:

1. *Uparika*, Governor of the Province, as in *Tirabhukti-uparika-adhikaraṇa*.
2. *Kumārāmātyādhikaraṇa*, office of the Princes' Ministers. The officer *Kumārāmātya* is given the curious title of *Yuvarāja* or *Bhaṭṭāraka* signifying the chief of the Princes' Ministers.
3. *Balādhikaraṇa*, office of the Head of the Army, who also bears the title of *Yuvarāja* and *Bhaṭṭāraka*.
4. *Raṇabhāṇḍādhikaraṇa*, the Military Exchequer.
5. *Daṇḍaṭṭāsādhikaraṇa*, office of the Chief of the Police.
6. *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, Chief Justice.
7. *Vinayasthiti-sihāpaka*, Officer or Minister in charge of Law and Order.
8. *Bhaṭṭāśvapati*, Head of the Infantry and Cavalry.
9. *Mahāpratihāra*, Chief Chamberlain.
10. *Vinayaśūra*, Chief Censor.
11. *Talavara*, (?)

If we analyse the above account we can come to the conclusion that in the matter of provincial administration Candra Gupta II followed a model which was a mixture of Mauryan and Scythian ideals. Thus the Prince-vice-royship was undoubtedly a continuation of the Mauryan system. But the fact that a *yuvarāja* was the chief minister or the head of the army while *mahārāja* was the governor shows the influence of the Scythian ideal in which a ruler or *mahākṣatrapa* was associated with a *kṣatrapa* usually the former's eldest son.¹⁵⁴

The seals also throw some light on the district and the local administrations of the province. Thus one of the seals bears the epigraph *Vaiśālī-adhiṣṭhāna-adhikaraṇa*, showing that it belonged to the office of the District Officer of Vaiśālī. Another seal refers to the *Pariṣā* or the Municipal Committee of the city of *Udānakūpa*.

While it may be presumed that similar system of administration prevailed in other provinces of the empire, some regions were under the rule of feudatory princes, who held offices evidently by hereditary rights. Thus the Udayagiri Cave inscriptions of 401 A.D. refer to three generations of feudatory rulers,—*mahārāja*

¹⁵³ Mookerjee, *The Gupta Empire*, p. 50.

¹⁵⁴ PHAI, p. 519.

Chagalaga, his son mahārāja Viṣṇudāsa, his son mahārāja Sanakānika.¹⁵⁵ A Gaya inscription of the year 64 = 383 A.D. refers to another feudatory mahārāja Trikamala.¹⁵⁶ Others of the same rank were Svāmidāsa ruler of Valkha, probably situated somewhere in Central India mentioned in an inscription of the year 67 = 386 A.D.,¹⁵⁷ and mahārāja Śrī Viśvāmitra Svāmī mentioned in a Besnagar seal.¹⁵⁸

The last-known date of Candragupta II is the year 93 = 412—13 A.D. mentioned in a Sanchi record. As the Bilsad inscription of the year 96 = 415 A.D. shows Kumāragupta I as the mahārājādhirāja,¹⁵⁹ it may be presumed that the reign of Candragupta II came to an end some time between 412 and 415 A.D.

KUMARA GUPTA I

After the death of Candragupta II his son Kumāragupta I, born of queen Druvadevī or Dhruvasvāminī, became the mahārājādhirāja of the Gupta empire. We have got a large number of epigraphic records, no less than thirteen, belonging to his reign, but as they do not speak of any political event it may be presumed that his reign was on the whole peaceful one, though from the Bhitari inscription of his son Skandagupta we can infer that there was some crisis in the last days of his life.¹⁶⁰ As already stated, the earliest date of his reign, A.D. 415, is known from his Bilsad inscription, while his silver coins give his last date, A.D. 455.¹⁶¹ Thus he had a long reign of at least 40 years. He evidently maintained intact the vast empire that he inherited from his father. His coins in large numbers have been found at Satara, in Bombay, Ahmadabad and Bhaunagar in Western India. Whether these finds indicate that his sway extended over South-Western Deccan must remain uncertain till the discovery of further record from the region, for coins often are carried from one place to another and so their provenance is no sure index of political hegemony of their issuer.

It is during the reign of Kumāragupta I that we find for

¹⁵⁵ *Corpus*, iii. p. 25.

¹⁵⁶ *ASIR*, 1922-3, p. 169. The date of Trikamala is uncertain. Some scholars refer the year 64 to the Śaka era and conclude that Trikamala ruled in the middle of the second century A.D.

¹⁵⁷ *Ep. Ind.* xv. p. 289; cf. *ABORI*, xxv. p. 159.

¹⁵⁸ *ASIR*, 1914-5, p. 81.

¹⁵⁹ *Corpus*, iii. pp. 43f.

¹⁶⁰ *ib.*, pp. 53f.

¹⁶¹ *EHI*, p. 345-6.

the first time Gupta inscriptions in Bengal. Two of these come from Damodarpur (in the Dinajpur district), one from Dhanaidaha (in the Rajshahi district), while the fourth from Baigram, which is situated near Hili in North Bengal. The Baigram record does not mention the name of any ruler, but its date, the year 128 = 447 A.D., shows that it falls within the reign period of Kumāra Gupta. The Damodarpur records bear the dates G.E. 124 and 128 while the one from Dhanaidaha the year 113. They all bear the name of the mahārājādhirāja Kumāra Gupta. Like other Gupta records from North Bengal they are also connected with the matter of land transaction.¹⁶² It is, however, curious that there is no record of the monarch from other parts of the Vaṅga country, which had been incorporated into the Gupta empire during the last days of Candragupta II. As Dr. B. C. Sen thinks it is not unlikely that the administrative limits of Puṇḍravardhana, which originally signified North Bengal, "in those days may not have necessarily coincided with but in fact exceeded the geographical". Kumāra Gupta's viceroy in charge of the Puṇḍravardhana-*bhūkti* was Cīrātadatta, who held "his office at least for a term of five years (G.E. 124-28), as his name is to be found in both the dated inscriptions from Damodarpur, mentioned above."¹⁶³ The appointment of Cīrātadatta in such a high post was indeed a departure from the practice prevalent during the time of Candragupta II, inasmuch as Cīrātadatta was certainly not a prince of the royal blood. On the western part of the empire, however, Ghaṭotkaca Gupta, possibly a son of the emperor, was appointed a viceroy in Eastern Malwa with jurisdiction over Tumbavana, modern Tumain, about 50 miles to the north-west of Eran.¹⁶⁴ The position of Western Malwa was somewhat peculiar. The Mandasor inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman refers to Kumāra Gupta as ruling the earth (*Kumāra-Gupte pṛthivīm praśāsati*) and Bandhuvarman as ruling at Daśapura evidently as a feudatory under the former.¹⁶⁵ The record, however, bears the date Mālava year 493 = A.D. 435. The absence of any reference to the Gupta era is indeed significant. It shows that though Kumāra Gupta I was recognised as the nominal overlord, Bandhuvarman, the ruler of Daśapura was practically independent so far as the internal affairs of the

¹⁶² *SHAIB*, pp. 210f; *Ep. Ind.* xv. pp. 113f.

¹⁶³ *SHAIB*, p. 212.

¹⁶⁴ *IA*, xlix, (1920), pp. 114-5.

¹⁶⁵ *Select Ins.*, pp. 288ff.

territory was concerned. In this connection, we may note the evidence of another Mandasor record of the Mālava year 524. The record is posthumous one and mentions one Govinda Gupta, and Indra is represented as being suspicious of Govinda's power.¹⁶⁶ Govinda Gupta is evidently identical with mahārāja Govinda Gupta known from the Vaiśālī seal as the son of mahārājādhirāja Candra Gupta II and the queen Dhruvasvāminī. Dr. Bhandarkar thinks that as in this record 'Indra is represented as being suspicious of Govinda Gupta's power the latter seems to have been the supreme ruler'.¹⁶⁷ If we accept the view then we have to infer that Govinda Gupta, brother of Kumāra Gupta I, revolted and became independent in the Mandasor region. Some scholars find in Indra an indirect reference to Kumāra Gupta I, on account of the latter title of *Śrī Mahendra* and *Mahendrakarmā* on the coins.¹⁶⁸ As the Mandasor record of 436 A.D., referred to before, describes Kumāra Gupta I as ruling the earth, it may be presumed that this revolt possibly occurred after this date. This supposition is strengthened by the fact that in the second part of the above Mandasor record, which bears the date M.E. 529 = 473 A.D., there is no reference to any Gupta king. Possibly, after this revolt Mandasor region became an independent unit, though it had already been autonomous in internal matters, as shown by the use of the dates in Mandasor records in the Mālava era, and not in the Gupta era.

The coins prove that Kumāra Gupta I performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice. Whether it was the outcome of any new conquests by the king is, however, uncertain. We may consider in this connection two different kinds of coins issued by him. On one group there is on the *Obv.* the legend *Śrīmān Vyāghrabalaaparākramah* and on the *Rev.* *Kumāragupto'dhirāja*, while on the other group there is the figure of Kārtikeya on the *Rev.* and on the *Obv.* the legend *Jayati Svabhūmau gunarāsi* etc. Kumāra or Kārtikeya is the god of war and he was generally worshipped by the kings when they had to meet any enemy or to make any new conquests.¹⁶⁹ The legend *Vyāghrabalaaparākramah* may have some connection with his conquests in the tiger infested Narmada valley.¹⁷⁰ Such an inference by itself may appear to be rather fanciful one,¹⁷¹ but when we find that he issued coins

¹⁶⁶ *ASIR*, 1922-23, p. 187.

¹⁶⁷ *Ep. Ind.* xix, App. no. 7, p. 2, fn. 5.

¹⁶⁸ *CGD*, pp. 61ff.

¹⁶⁹ *DHI*, p. 362f.

¹⁷⁰ *PHAI*, pp. 569f.

¹⁷¹ This is the view of some scholars.

resembling the Traikutaka coinage we may possibly infer that he really made some conquests in that region.

Kumāra Gupta was thus undoubtedly the worthy successor of his great father. He was also known by other names such as, *Śrī Mahendra*, *Ajita Mahendra*, *Simha Mahendra*, *Aśvamedha Mahendra*, *Mahendrakarmā*, *Mahendrakalpa*, *Śrī Mahendra Simha*, *Mahendra Kumāra* etc.

Kumāra Gupta's adventure in the Narmada valley brought a great crisis in the last years of his reign. The Bhitari inscription of his son Skanda Gupta states that the Puṣyamitras¹⁷² who 'had great resources in men and money' attacked the kingdom, and Skanda Gupta had to fight hard with them 'to restore the fallen fortunes of his family' and had to pass a whole night on bare earth. Ultimately, Skanda Gupta became victorious but Kumāra Gupta died before he could get news of this victory. It is difficult to determine exactly who these Puṣyamitras were. The *Purāṇas* associate the Puṣyamitras with the Mekala country near the source of the Narmada. The Balaghat Plates of the Vākāṭaka king Pṛthivīśena II states that his father Narendrasena's sway extended over Kośala, Mekala and Mālava. The date of Narendrasena is not yet definitely fixed, but as he is assigned to the period c. 440 to c. 460 A.D., it has been assumed that he was the leader of the Puṣyamitra tribe.¹⁷³ But this view seems to be improbable because Narendrasena himself had been in a tottering state about this time (c. 455 A.D.) due to the invasion of the Nala king Bhavadattavarman.¹⁷⁴ Whatever the identification of the Puṣyamitras may be, this much appears to be certain that they came from the Mekala region. In stanzas 2 & 3 of the Junagadh inscription of Skanda Gupta,¹⁷⁵ which may be assigned to c. 455 A.D. we find the following description:

"And next, victorious for ever is the supreme king of kings over kings, whose breast is embraced by the goddess of wealth and splendour; who has developed heroism by (the strength of his) arms; and who plucked (and utilised) the authority of (his local) representatives, who were so many Garuḍas, (and used it as) an antidote against the (hostile) kings, who were so many serpents, lifting up their hoods in pride and arrogance; —Skanda Gupta, of great glory, the abode of kingly

¹⁷² Divekar reads 'yudhy-amitrāṃś = ca' (*ABORI*, I, pp. 99ff).

¹⁷³ *VGA*, p. 106.

¹⁷⁴ *VGA*, p. 107; *Ep. Ind.* xix, p. 102.

¹⁷⁵ *Corpus*, iii, p. 59.

qualities, who, when (his) father by his own power had attained the position of being a friend of the gods (i.e., had died), bowed down his enemies, and made subject to himself the (whole) earth, bounded by the waters of the four oceans, (and) full of thriving countries round the borders of it.".

The above account clearly shows that just before the death of his father Skanda Gupta fought against the hostile kings, "*who were so many serpents*". Here evidently we have a reference to his fight against the Puṣyamitras. Fleet in a note says that "there is possibly a secondary allusion to Skanda Gupta having overthrown some kings of the well-known Nāga or serpent lineage".¹⁷⁶ Indeed, from this description we can clearly make the inference that the Puṣyamitras were a tribe of the Nāga stock. That the Nāgas had been an important political factor in the jungles of the Vindhya as far as Broach is proved by the Kaira grant of Dadda III, which states that Dadda I uprooted the Nāgas who have been identified with the jungle tribes ruled over by Nirihullaka of Broach.¹⁷⁷ From the Rajim grant it appears that in 800 A.D. mahārāja Tivaradeva of Śrīpura in Dakṣiṇa-Kośala most probably defeated a Nāga tribe.¹⁷⁸ From these evidences it appears that the Nāga tribe inhabited the region of the Vindhyas extending from Kośala to Broach, and if we consider this fact in the background of the above description given in the Junagadh record we may possibly conclude that the Puṣyamitras were a branch of the Nāga race.

Skanda Gupta was able to annihilate completely the power of this invading barbarian horde and restore the fallen fortune of the family. Before, however, the news of this victory reached the capital the old king Kumāra Gupta was dead.

SKANDA GUPTA

From the evidences of the inscriptions and coins we learn that Kumāra Gupta was succeeded by Skanda Gupta about 455 A.D. and the latter must have ruled at least for twelve years upto 467 A.D. The Bhitari inscription has given in a condensed form almost all the principal events of his life, evidently in a

¹⁷⁶ *Corpus*, iii, p. 62, fn. 2.

¹⁷⁷ *Ind. Ant.* xiii, pp. 82ff.

¹⁷⁸ *Corpus*, iii, p. 295.

chronological order. For the sake of convenience, we may briefly note them here before proceeding with the detailed discussions:

(a) "... and then, having conquered the Puṣyamitras, who had developed great power and wealth, he placed (his) left foot on a foot-stool which was the king (of that tribe himself);

(b) "Who, when (his) father had attained the skies, conquered his enemies by the strength of (his arm) and then, crying 'the victory has been achieved', betook himself to (his) mother, whose eyes were full of tears from joy, just as Kṛiṣṇa, when he had slain (his) enemies, betook himself to (his mother) Devakī;

(c) "Who with his own armies, established (again) (his) lineage that had been made to totter, (and) with his two arms subjugated the earth, (and) shewed mercy to the conquered peoples in this place

(d) "By whose two arms the earth was shaken, when he, the creator (of a disturbance like that) of a terrible whirlpool, joined in close conflict with the Hūṇas....."

We may now compare the above account of the Bhitari record with that given in the Junagadh inscription:

(a) *Stanza 2*, discussed above, gives an account of his fight against the hostile kings "who were so many serpents", i.e., the struggle with the Puṣyamitras;

(b) *Stanza 3*, discussed above, speaks of Kumāra Gupta's death;

(c) *Stanza 4*, states that his "fame was sung even in the countries of the *Mlecchas* having their pride broken to the very root";

(d) *Stanza 5*, states that "Lakshmī of her own accord selected (him) as her husband having discarded all the other sons of kings".

A comparative study of the above two accounts gives us the following facts: (a) Before his father's death, Skanda Gupta conquered the Puṣyamitras, who were possibly of Nāga origin; (b) immediately after his father's death, Skanda Gupta fought again with some enemies; and so the *Mlecchas* are not the Hūṇas, as Allan thinks,¹⁷⁹ for the Hūṇas are referred to later on in the Bhitari record; (c) Skanda Gupta became king but did not destroy his rivals (*cf.* "*shewed mercy to the conquered peoples*" in the Bhitari record); (d) he fought with the Hūṇas at a later date.

¹⁷⁹ Allan, *CGD*, p. xlvii.

We have already referred to Skanda Gupta's fight with the Puṣyamitras in which he became victorious. It is, however, not certain who were the Mlecchas with whom he had to fight immediately after his father's death. The statement of the Junagadh record that he "deliberated for days and nights before making up his mind who could be trusted with the important task of guarding the lands of the Saurāṣṭras" and then appointed Parna-datta as the governor of the land evidently points to the fact that the fight with the enemies occurred here or somewhere near by. In the *Raghuvamśam* of Kālidāsa we find how the Yavanas fought against Raghu in the *Pārasikadeśa*.¹⁸⁰ As the term Yavana denoted both the Greeks and the Persians in the later period,¹⁸¹ it is not unlikely that some such mixed horde possibly invaded the Gupta dominion immediately after Kumāra Gupta's death and Skanda Gupta was able to drive them outside the boundaries of his dominion.

There has been some controversy whether there was any fratricidal struggle at the time of Skanda Gupta's accession.¹⁸² Though the Junagadh record states that he was selected by the goddess of fortune from among other royal princes,¹⁸³ it has been held that it cannot at once point to a war of succession. But when we find that in the Bhitari record he is credited with having shown mercy to the conquered people and that the Bhitari and the Nalanda seals¹⁸⁴ state that Puru Gupta was the immediate successor of Kumāra Gupta, we may possibly conclude that there was some trouble over the succession of Skanda Gupta. Those who support the fratricidal struggle theory further point out that as the name of Skanda Gupta's mother is not mentioned in the epigraphs, she was evidently not the chief queen of Kumāra Gupta and hence Skanda Gupta was not the rightful claimant to the throne. Though other interpretations are also possible, the argument, it must be admitted, has got some force.

The greatest achievement of Skanda Gupta lies in the fact that he checked the infiltration of the White Huns, or the Ephthalites into India. The history of the Ephthalites in India will be dealt with later on. Here, it may be stated only that they

¹⁸⁰ *Raghuvamśam* iv. 60-62.

¹⁸¹ Dr. Modi Volume, pp. 282ff.

¹⁸² *PHAI*, pp. 572ff; *VGA*, pp. 162; *JASB* NS, xvii. pp. 253ff.

¹⁸³ "*Vyapetya sarve manujendra-putrān Lakṣmīḥ svayam yaṁ varayam cakāra*". (v. 5).

¹⁸⁴ *Select Ins.* p. 313 & 321; *MAI*, no. 66, 64; *Ep. Ind.* xxvi., p. 235; *IHQ*, xix. p. 119.

were not a branch of the Hiung-nus or the Huns proper as it has been supposed by several scholars,¹⁸⁵ but belonged to the vast Scythian horde of Central Asia. A branch of them evidently entered into India during the later years of Skanda Gupta, who completely crushed them in such a way that till c. 500 A.D. they could not cross the natural frontiers of India. As Dr. R. C. Majumdar has stated: "If we remember that the cruel devastations of the Huns had spread from the Danube to the Indus, that their leader Attila, who died in 453 A.D., was 'able to send equal defiance to the courts of Ravenna and Constantinople', and that thirty years later they overwhelmed Persia and killed its king, we can well realise the value of the great victory of Skanda Gupta over them. All over the vast empire the people must have heaved a sigh of relief at the great deliverance. This heroic achievement that saved his kingdom from the scourge of a cruel barbaric invasion justified the assumption of the title of Vikramāditya by Skanda Gupta which we find on his coins along with Kramāditya".¹⁸⁶

There is absolutely no evidence to show that the Gupta empire suffered any diminution during the time of Skanda Gupta. The Bhitari inscription, which must have been incised during the later years of his reign, as shown by the mention of the Hūnas in it, describes Skanda Gupta as having conquered the earth (*avanīm vijitya*) which is on a par with the description of Kumāra Gupta I in the Mandasor inscription, referred to above. His *Bull type* of coins prove his authority over the Cambay coast while his *Altar type* shows his hold over Cutch.

Skanda Gupta was evidently able to withstand so many severe shocks because he had under him a batch of able and trustworthy officers. Parnadatta was the governor of the Surāṣṭra region, while Śarvanāga was in charge of the Antaravedī country,¹⁸⁷ and mahārāja Bhīma-varman mentioned in a Stone Image inscription from Kośam of 458 A.D. may have been a feudatory under him.

From the inscriptions of Skanda Gupta we get some idea about the local administration of the age. The Bihar Stone inscription refers to officers like *Agrahārika*, *Śaulkika* (officers in charge of collections of toll or customs), *Gaulmika* (officer in

¹⁸⁵ *Select Ins.* p. 315, fn. 1; *VGA*, pp. 177ff.

¹⁸⁶ *VGA*, p. 164.

¹⁸⁷ The term *Antaravedī* denotes the region lying between the Ganges and the Jumna.

charge of forest)¹⁸⁸ etc. The Junagadh inscription gives us an insight into the duties and responsibilities of the *Nagararakṣaka* or the mayor of the city. Paṇḍadatta's son was one such *Nagararakṣaka* in the city of Girinagara (Girnar), the capital of the Surāṣṭra-viṣaya. The epigraph gives a description of the qualities of his head and heart and states in detail how, when due to too much rainfall, the dam of the lake Sudarśana bursted and the lives of the people were in danger, Cakrapālita, with his father Paṇḍadatta, saved the country by raising an embankment by an unlimited expenditure of wealth within a short period of two months. The people heaved a sigh of relief and the poet, who composed the record, gives in glowing terms high tributes both to the father and the son.

IV

THE IMPERIAL CRISIS AND THE FOREIGN INVASION

THE SUCCESSORS OF SKANDA GUPTA

It is generally believed that Skanda Gupta whose last known date is 467 A.D. was succeeded by Puru Gupta, the son of Kumāra Gupta I by the chief queen Ananta Devī.¹⁸⁹ The order of succession after Puru Gupta is somewhat confusing. Before the discovery of the Nalanda seals of Budha Gupta and Viṣṇu Gupta, scholars generally depended on the Chinese accounts, as preserved in the *Si-yu-ki* and the *Life*, and the Bhitari seal for determining this order.¹⁹⁰

In the *Si-yu-ki* and the *Life*, we have got an account of the patrons of the Nalanda Vihāra. The patrons are as follows : Śakrāditya, Buddha Gupta rāja, Tathāgata rāja, Bālāditya and Vajra. There is another account of the patrons in the *She-kia-fang-che* written by Tao-si-yan, a disciple of Yuan-Chwang, better known than Hui-li, who wrote the *Life* of the Master. The account of the *She-kia-fang-che* runs as follows :

"In earlier and later times five kings joined together and built it. The first was Śakrāditya he started building this manastery. The second king was Buddha Gupta the third was Tathāgata Gupta the fourth was Bālāditya the fifth was Vajra".

¹⁸⁸ *Select Ins.* p. 316.

¹⁸⁹ This was first suggested by Pannalal, *Hindusthan Review*, 1918, Jan.; *JBORS*, 1918, pp. 412-7.

¹⁹⁰ *PHAI* 4, pp. 494-505.

The author of the *She-kia-fang-che* had taken it down as he had heard it from Yuan Chwang. So also Hui-li. The *Si-yu-ki* was not probably all written by Yuan Chwang, but compiled by some of his assistants from his notes. Under these circumstances, it appears that the Chinese account of the Gupta kings only speaks of the donors of the Nalanda Vihāra, and obviously those member's of the dynasty who made no contributions have been left out. So we can only take the list as showing the relative position of the donors as coming one after another, and cannot draw any inference regarding the relationship among them.

The Bhitari and the Nalanda seals, on the other hand, present us with the following genealogy of the Later Imperial Gupta kings:

Kumāra Gupta I = Ananta Devī
|
Puru Gupta = Candrā Devī

Budha Gupta

Narasimha Gupta = Mīrā Devī
|
Kumāra Gupta
|
Viṣṇu Gupta

In the epigraphic records, we have references to three more Gupta rulers—(a) Kumāra Gupta of the Sarnath inscription¹⁰¹ of the year 154; (b) Vainya Gupta of the Gunaighar inscription¹⁰² of the year 188, and of the Nalanda seal; (c) Bhānu Gupta of the Eran Stone Pillar¹⁰³ inscription of the year 191.

It is really a difficult problem to place the above three rulers in the genealogical table of the Guptas. At the outset we must note the fact that Kumāra Gupta of the Sarnath record does not adopt even the title of mahārāja, and his description '... *bhumim rakṣati Kumāragupte*' evidently shows that he was not a sovereign, but simply a *goptā*, although he may have belonged to the Imperial family. It may, of course, be argued that in the Sarnath inscription of the year 157, Budha Gupta also does not

¹⁰¹ *Select Ins.* pp. 320-1; *ASIR*, 1914-5, p. 124.

¹⁰² *Select Ins.* p. 331; *IHQ*, vi. pp. 53ff; 561ff.

¹⁰³ *Corpus*, iii. pp. 92ff.

take the title of mahārājādhirāja or mahārāja, but his description '.... śate samānām pṛthivīm Budhagupte praśāsati'¹⁰⁴ '....' is conclusive on the status of the ruler. If we accept this view, then it may be inferred that after the death of Skanda Gupta, Puru Gupta became the mahārājādhirāja and was succeeded about 476 A.D. by his son Budha Gupta.

Similarly, in the Eran inscription of the year 191, Bhānu Gupta takes the title of rājā, which shows that he was a mere local governor, belonging to the Imperial dynasty. As regards Vainya Gupta, we may note the fact that in the Gunaighar record he takes the title of mahārāja, while in the Nalanda seal he is represented as the mahārājādhirāja.¹⁰⁵ His single inscription hails from the district of Comilla which has produced no other Gupta record. This seems to show that at first he was a local governor in the Vaṅga-Samataṭa region, and later on succeeded to the Imperial throne. Dr. R. C. Majumdar points out that in the fragmentary seal of Vainya Gupta there is some remnant of mātṛā 'U' at the place of his father's name, a fact which shows that the name of Vainya Gupta's father was 'Ukārānta' and he restores it as Puru Gupta.¹⁰⁶ If we follow this view then Vainya Gupta may be regarded as the brother and immediate successor of Budha Gupta. Narasiṃha Gupta, another and possibly the youngest brother of Budha Gupta, ruled sometimes after 510 A.D., as we shall see later on.

Most scholars think, however, that Kumāra Gupta of the Sarnath inscription was an Imperial ruler. Some again hold that he is identical with Kumāra Gupta, son of Narasiṃha Gupta, and thus Puru Gupta, Narasiṃha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta II are represented as ruling one after another between c.467 A.D., the last-known date of Skanda Gupta, and c.476 A.D., the initial year of Budha Gupta.¹⁰⁷ The main difficulty in accepting this view is that, *first*, we have to accomodate three kings within a comparatively short period of nine years; and *secondly*, Narasiṃha Gupta is the only Imperial Gupta king who takes the title of Bālāditya, while from Yuan Chwang's account it is clear that Bālāditya defeated Mihirakula, the Hūṇa tyrant, who, as we shall see later on, ruled in the first quarter of the sixth century A.D. If we place Narasiṃha Gupta before c.473 A.D., then we have to find out another Bālāditya, different from Narasiṃha Gupta, to

¹⁰⁴ *Select Ins.* p. 323.

¹⁰⁵ *IHQ*, xix, p. 275.

¹⁰⁶ *IHQ*, xxiv, p. 67.

¹⁰⁷ *B. C. Law Volume*, I. p. 620.

be a contemporary of Mihirakula. But the existence of a second Bālāditya among the Imperial Guptas is not known from any other source. Thus the only alternative left to us is to place Narasiṃha Gupta, his son Kumāra Gupta, and the latter's son Viṣṇu Gupta in the first half of the sixth century A.D.

From the above discussions it would appear that Puru Gupta evidently succeeded Skanda Gupta in c.467 A.D. and ruled for nine years up to c.476 A.D., when his son Budha Gupta succeeded him on the Imperial throne. Kumāra Gupta of the Sārnath record was evidently a *goptā* under Puru Gupta.

The dates of Budha Gupta are known to us and he evidently ruled for twenty years, c.476 A.D.—495/6 A.D. According to the Chinese sources, Tathāgatarāja ruled after Budha Gupta but before Bālāditya, i.e., Narasiṃha Gupta. The epigraphic records, on the other hand, show that Vainya Gupta was ruling in c.507 A.D. as mahārāja and later on as mahārājādhirāja. It is, therefore, tempting to identify Tathāgata rāja with Vainya Gupta. According to the *She-kia-fang-che*, Tathāgata rāja was associated with the monastery of Nalanda, while the discovery of Vainya Gupta's seal from the same place proves that the latter was also associated with the same institution. The only fact that goes against the proposed identification is that Vainya Gupta does not adopt the *biruda* of Tathāgata. We may note in this connection that according to the *Ārya-mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa*,¹⁹⁸ after the death of Budha, two kings in the Gupta line were crowned, one in Magadha and another in Gauḍa. If there be any truth in the statement, then we have to hold that after the death of Budha Gupta there was a partition of the Gupta empire, and Vainya Gupta, who was originally a governor, declared his independence in the Vaṅga-Samataṭa region.

Bālāditya rāja (Narasiṃha Gupta), who ruled after Tathāgata rāja, is expressly called 'the king of Magadha' in the Chinese records. Bālāditya's successor Vajra is stated in the Chinese records as ruling immediately before a king of Mid-India. This king of Mid-India can be no other than Yaśodharman,¹⁹⁹ who in his Mandasor inscription of 532 A.D. claims victory over the kings of the east and the north (v. 7), and in another Mandasor record claims to have conquered the lands as far as the Lauhitya.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ *AMMK*, Text, pp. 49-50.

¹⁹⁹ *PHAI*, p. 597

²⁰⁰ *Corpus*, iii, p. 146f, 152ff.

Thus between c.495-6 A.D., the last known date of Budha Gupta, and c.532 A.D. there ruled Tathāgata rāja—(Vainya Gupta), Narasiṃha Gupta Bālāditya, and Vajra. The question now arises—whether we should place Kumāra Gupta II, son of Narasiṃha Gupta Bālāditya, and Kumāra Gupta's son Viṣṇu before Vajra?

Bālāditya is said to have defeated the Hūṇa king Mihirakula the son of Toramāna. We have got an inscription of Toramāna from Eran dated in the first year of his reign,²⁰¹ and another of Mihirakula from Gwalior dated in the fifteenth regnal year.²⁰² Now, from Eran we have got the inscription of Bhānu Gupta, evidently a governor under the Imperial Guptas, as already stated, dated 510 A.D. Thus Toramāna must have conquered Eran in or after 510 A.D. i.e., the first year of Toramāna's rule in the interior of India would be equivalent to 510 A.D. or 510 A.D. + x. It has been argued by some scholars that Bhānu Gupta's inscription proves the end of the Hūṇa rule in the interior of India in 510 A.D. We shall later on discuss fully about the rule of the Hūṇas or the Epthalites in India, and may state here only that such a theory goes against the available Chinese evidences, which if interpreted properly, prove beyond doubt that the Hūṇa rule could not have commenced in India before 510 A.D. The *Records*, on the other hand, inform us that Mihirakula was defeated by Bālāditya, and after this defeat he took refuge in Kashmir.²⁰³ Since the Gwalior record of Toramāna is dated in his fifteenth regnal year, Bālāditya's victory over Mihirakula must have taken place sometimes after 525 A.D. Bālāditya evidently died a little after this victory, and as Vajra appears to have ruled before Yaśodharman (532 A.D.) he must be regarded as the immediate successor of Bālāditya. This shows that we have hardly any room for the rule of Bālāditya's son and grandson, Kumāra Gupta II and Viṣṇu Gupta, before 532 A.D.

If the above view be accepted, then the Damodarpur inscription of 543-4 A.D. referring to "*paramadaivata-paramabhaṭṭārakamahārājādhirāja-Śrī Gupta*"²⁰⁴ should be ascribed to either Kumāra Gupta II or to his son Viṣṇu Gupta, and not to any early king of the so-called Later Gupta dynasty. It may be pointed out

²⁰¹ *ib.*, pp. 159f.

²⁰² *ib.*, pp. 162f.

²⁰³ *infra*, p. 196.

²⁰⁴ *Ep. Ind.* xv. pp. 142f; xvii. pp. 193f. Basak suggests Budha Gupta, while Krishna Sastri restores the name as Kumāra Gupta. Dr. B. C. Sen thinks that he may be Dāmodaragupta of the Later Gupta dynasty.

here that in the Aphsad inscription, which discloses the early history of the dynasty, no king before Ādityasena, who ruled in the later part of the seventh century A.D., is given any Imperial distinction. On the other hand, titles like *śrī*, *deva*, *kṣitīśa-cuḍāmani* etc. given to these monarchs show that they had no Imperial pretensions.²⁰⁵ The Damodarpur record, on the other hand, shows clearly that the ruler referred to therein was certainly an Imperial suzerain.

It is difficult to determine how long the rule of Kumāra Gupta II, to whom should be ascribed the famous Bhitari seal, and of his son Viṣṇu Gupta, identified with *Candrāditya* of the coins,²⁰⁶ continued. The assumption of the title of mahārājādhirāja by the Maukhari king Iśānavarman, who extended his arms as far as the land of Gauḍa, as stated in the Haraha inscription of 554 A.D.,²⁰⁷ and the absence of any Gupta record from North India, appear to prove that the rule of the Imperial Guptas came to an end sometimes before 554 A.D.²⁰⁸

In the western part of the empire, however, there is no definite proof of Gupta rule after 510 A.D., i.e., after the period of the Hūṇa occupation of the territory. The Betul (518 A.D.) and the Khoh (529 A.D.) plates of the Parivrājaka m. Sankhoba refer to "*the enjoyment of the sovereignty of the Gupta kings*",²⁰⁹ but mention no name of the Gupta monarch. This non-mention appears to be somewhat significant, specially when we find that the Khoh inscription of Sarvanātha of 513 A.D. is altogether silent regarding the Guptas.²¹⁰ In case of the Maitrakas of Valabhi, who began to rule as subordinates under the Imperial Guptas, possibly during the time of Budha Gupta, we find that the phrase "*paramabhaṭṭāraka-pādānudhyāta*" occurs in the inscription of Dhruvasena I, who ruled at least up to 545 A.D. Such instances remind us of the history of the Later Mughals. The old emperor Shah Alam was confined in Delhi, the Mughal empire was torn to pieces, and independent lords were ruling in different tracts. But they all owed nominal allegiance to the old emperor, and some even issued coins in his name. In case of the Guptas, it may be said that references to them by the Parivrājaka and the

²⁰⁵ *Corpus*, iii. pp. 200ff.

²⁰⁶ *PHAI*, p. 592.

²⁰⁷ *Ep. Ind.* xiv. p. 111.

²⁰⁸ If a tradition recorded by Jinasena is to be believed the Gupta power came to an end in 551 A.D.

²⁰⁹ *Corpus*, iii, p. 112; *Ep. Ind.*, viii, p. 284.

²¹⁰ *Corpus*, iii, p. 126f.

Maitraka kings show that they were still maintaining a precarious existence in some corner of the Āryāvarta, while the empire had been parcelled out among the *de facto* independent lords.

INVASIONS FROM OUTSIDE

The account of the Bhitari record seems to show that even after the Hūna inroads, the Gupta empire remained intact, and there is no reason to think that the same suffered any diminution during the time of Skanda Gupta. The statements of the Balaghat plates that the sovereignty of the Vākātaka king Narendrasena embraced Kośala, Mekala and Mālava²¹¹ indicate that he contested the sovereignty of the Guptas over the Malwa region, and as this evidently happened in the last part of his reign after he had been freed of the troubles from the Nalas, it appears that he made some conquests at the expense of Puru Gupta, the successor of Skanda Gupta. This seems to be corroborated by the fact that "not a single inscription or coin has yet been discovered which shows that Surāshtra and Western Malwa formed parts of the Gupta empire after the death of Skanda Gupta". Further, the Mandasor inscription which refers to the rule of Kumāra Gupta I in 436 A.D. is conspicuously silent regarding the emperor in 472 A.D., when the later part of the record was completed.

The absence of any epigraphic record seems to suggest that Puru Gupta's reign was really troublesome one. It is extremely doubtful whether we have got any gold coin belonging to his age, for, as S. K. Saraswati has shown, the gold coins attributed by Allan to Puru Gupta belong really to Budha Gupta.²¹² Dr. R. K. Mookerjee and other scholars think that we have got an important literary source regarding Puru Gupta in Paramārtha's *Life of Vasuvandhu* which states that king Vikramāditya of Ayodhya became a patron of Buddhism through the influence of Vasuvandhu, whom he appointed as a tutor of his son Bālāditya. It is further stated that when Bālāditya became king he invited Vasuvandhu to his court at Ayodhya. It has been held that as Puru Gupta's son Narasiṃha Gupta takes the title of Bālāditya on the coins he must be supposed to have been the patron of the Buddhist teacher. The theory, however, cannot be fully accepted in the present state of our knowledge, for, while Takakusu thinks

²¹¹ *Ep. Ind.*, ix. p. 271.

²¹² *IC*, i. p. 692: contra, Jagannath, *AIOC*, 1946, Sec. ix. 11.

that Vasuvandhu flourished in the second part of the fifth century A.D., M. Peri contends that the teacher lived in the fourth century A.D. and died about the middle of that century.²¹³ Further, there is hardly any evidence that Puru Gupta took the title of Vikramāditya, for the coins with the legend Śrī Vikrama can no longer be attributed to him.

Puru Gupta was succeeded by his son Budha Gupta about 476 A.D. Budha Gupta's inscriptions have been found at Damodarpur in North Bengal, Sarnath, Eran and other places.²¹⁴ Dr. R. K. Mookerjee thinks that "it will thus appear that the empire under Budha Gupta recovered its position and prestige after the dark age following the death of Skanda Gupta".²¹⁵ We think, however, that there is hardly any basis for such a theory. There is no evidence that he had control over the Western Malwa region, Surāṣṭra or Cambay, though his suzerainty may have been vaguely acknowledged in these areas.

It was possibly during his reign that the Maitrakas came to power in Valabhī under the leadership of one Senāpati Bhaṭāraka. The third king of the dynasty mahārāja Droṇasiṃha states in a record of 502 A.D. that he was *parama-bhaṭāraka-pādānudhyāta* showing that he was not yet an independent ruler and evidently acknowledged the overlordship of the Guptas. Droṇasiṃha's predecessors, Dharasena, his elder brother, and Bhaṭāraka, his father, had the title of Senāpati. This evidently shows that the dynasty was gradually rising to power and continued to rule in Valabhī for about 225 years, up to c.770 A.D.²¹⁶

Budha Gupta issued the peacock type of the silver coinage which was meant for circulation in the central part of the empire. His last known date is 495/6 A.D. found on one of his coins.²¹⁷

²¹³ *supra*, f.n. 150.

²¹⁴ *vide*, Bibliography.

²¹⁵ Mookerjee, *The Gupta Empire*, p. 121.

²¹⁶ *vide*, ch. ix.

²¹⁷ From the epigraphic records we learn of the governors and the feudatory chiefs who ruled under Budha Gupta. Two of his governors of Northern Bengal, Brahmadata and Jayadata used the title *Upārika-mahārāja* instead of *Upārika* as was the practice in the time of Kumāra Gupta I. Another governor, Surāsmicandra using the title of mahārāja ruled over the territory between the Kālindī and the Narmadā rivers and under him another mahārāja Mātṛviṣṇu governed the district of Airikina or Eran in 484 A.D. Several epigraphic records on the other hand, disclose the existence of a dynasty of Parivrājaka mahārājas, so called because they were descendants from the royal ascetic Suśarman, owing allegiance to the Gupta overlords. Contiguous to this kingdom lay another with Uccakalpa as the capital ruled over by two kings Jayanātha and his son Sarvanātha. From the facts that in the records of Jayanātha and

As we have already stated, Budha Gupta's successor was possibly Tathāgatarāja-Vainya Gupta. Tathāgatarāja-Vainya Gupta was succeeded by his brother Narasimha Gupta, during whose time the Hūṇas again invaded India and established an empire in the sub-continent. These Hūṇas were really the Epthalites, also called the White Huns, who were originally subordinate under the Juan-Juan or the Avars of Chinese Turkistan, and they suddenly grew very powerful and began attacking their neighbours. They eventually attacked the empire of the Guptas and made the Gupta emperor Bālāditya a vassal under them, who, however, was fortunate ultimately in driving them out from the heart of the Āryāvarta, and re-established the glorious tradition of his predecessors. Before we take up the history of the White Huns in India proper, we have to decide who they were, and when actually they entered into the heart of India, as much confusions still prevail on these points.

Some scholars believe that the Epthalites were of Hunnish or Hiung-nu origin. The Chinese writers are, however, always careful to distinguish between the Hiung-nus or the Hūṇas proper, that quarrelled with the Yueh-chi and compelled them to move towards the west in the second century B.C., and the Ye-ti-li-do or Ye-da i.e. the Epthalites. They further inform us that the real name of the people was Hua. As McGovern says: "According to one Chinese chronicle the Epthalites were ultimately of the same origin as the Yueh-chi, according to another they were a branch of the people who inhabited Gushi or Turfan. According to the latter version the Epthalites were descended from a group of Turfanese who in A.D. 126 aided the Chinese general Bang-yung in his attack upon the Northern Huns and who afterwards settled in Zungaria".²¹⁸

Thus if the Chinese account is to be believed the Epthalites were a branch of the Yueh-chis, and it would be wrong to think of them as the Huns. In Zungaria, the Epthalites and the Hiung-nus or the Huns lived in close proximity, and thus in Europe as well as in India, they came to be regarded as a separate branch of the Huns. Thus Procopius says: "The Epthalites are of Hunnish race and bears the Hunnish names, but they are completely different from the Huns whom we know. They alone

Sarvanātha there is no reference to the Guptas it has been inferred that these Uccakalpa monarchs were subordinates under the Parivrajakas (*IHQ*, xxi. p. 137).

²¹⁸ *EECA*, pp. 404-5.

among the Hunnish people have white skin and regular features."²¹⁹

Though the main body of the Ephthalites had thus been settled in Zungaria, a small branch of them possibly carved out another settlement on the Indian borderland. Thus Orosius who composed his account towards the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century A.D. states that "between the sources of the Ganges and those of the river Ottorogorras, situated to the north in the region of the Paropamisades mountains, the Taurus mountain extends. The Caucasus mountain extends between the sources of the Ottorogorras and the town of Ottorogorras through the country of the Chuni, Scythes, and Gandarides." The variants given in the different manuscripts for Chuni are Chunnos, Funos, Hunnas and Hunnus.²²⁰ Thus about 400 A.D. there was no Ephthalite settlement in India proper, though they had been knocking at the door of the country. The condition seems to have been the same a hundred years later, for, from the Chinese sources Chavannes describes the extent of the Ephthalite empire in c.500 A.D. as comprising Tokharistan, Kabulistan and Zabulistan, but no part of India proper.²²¹

The Bhitari Pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta, as we have already stated, refers to his terrible fight with the Hūṇas in which the latter were defeated. The Ephthalites evidently made an unsuccessful bid to found an empire in India. The next landmark in the Ephthalite history is furnished by the account of Sung-yun, who passed through Gandhāra and Udyāna (Swat valley) about 520 A.D. and has left an account of the Ye-tha.

Thus it would appear that between c.500 and 520 A.D., the Ephthalites entered India proper. Such an interpretation is corroborated by a critical study of three inscriptions from Eran. Thus an inscription of Budha Gupta of the year 484 A.D. informs us that the region lying between the Yamuna and the Narmada was governed by one mahārāja Suraśmicandra, while one Mātṛviṣṇu was the *viśayapati* of the division of Airikina or Eran.²²² Another inscription from the same place of the year 510 A.D. shows that king Bhānu Gupta went there with the purpose of conquest and his general Goparāja fell in battle there, while the latter's wife became a *sati*.²²³ The third inscription is dated in

²¹⁹ *ib.*

²²⁰ *JGIS*, 1943.

²²¹ Chavannes, *Documents sur les Toukiue Occidentaux*, pp. 224-5.

²²² *Corpus*, iii. p. 89.

²²³ *ib.*, pp. 92f.

the first year of Toramāna's reign, the Epthalite king, and Dhanyaviṣṇu, the brother of Mātrviṣṇu, had been acknowledging the sway of the Epthalite lord.²²⁴ The above epigraphs clearly show that sometimes after 484 A.D., the viṣaya of Airikina passed from the Guptas to the Epthalites, but as we have already stated, scholars are divided in their opinion regarding the time of the incident. According to some scholars, the Epthalite conquest of Eran and the interior of India began in c.510 A.D., and the inscription of that year shows that Bhānu Gupta came to check the inroad but failed. Others hold that the Epthalite occupation of the interior of India came to an end in 510 A.D. by the conquest of Bhānu Gupta.

As we have an inscription of Toramāna dated in his first regnal year and another of Mihirakula dated in his sixteenth regnal year, it may be assumed that the Epthalite occupation of the interior of India lasted at least for 17 years. Now if we hold that the Epthalite rule came to an end in c.510 A.D., then it must be assumed that the rule of the foreigners in the interior of India began in c.493 A.D., or a little earlier. But the Chinese sources, as pointed out by Chavannes, clearly indicate that as late as 500 A.D., "no part of India proper" was included within the Epthalite empire. Further, the Si-yu-ki states that the Epthalite rule in India proper was put to an end by Bālāditya, and there is absolutely no proof that Bhānu Gupta ever assumed that title. The complete silence of the record of 510 A.D. regarding the achievement of any victory by Bhānu Gupta shows that he evidently could not fare well in the battle referred to. Possibly, Bhānu Gupta went to check the Epthalite advance into the interior of India, but failed. Thus we get the synchronism:

c. 510 A.D. = *the first year of Toramāna's rule in the interior of India.*

Thus we have two distinct phases of Epthalite invasion of India—one during the time of Skanda Gupta (456-67 A.D.) which ended in failure, and the other about 510 A.D., which led to the rule of the Epthalites in the heart of India at least for 16 years.

We propose to date the Kura inscription a little before c. 510 A.D. It records the construction of a Buddhist monastery by one Roṭa-Siddhavṛddhi, the son of Roṭa-Jayavṛddhi, for the teachers of the Mahiśāsaka school, dated "in the prosperous

²²⁴ *Corpus*, iii. pp. 159f.

reign of king of kings, the great king Toramāna-Śāhi-Jauvala, in the . . . the year, on the second (lunar day) of the bright half of the month of Mārgaśīra".²²⁴ Bühler and Kielhorn think that the Toramāna of the Kura inscription cannot be identical with the Epthalite king of the same name since the former uses the epithet *Jauvala* which is supposed to have been a feudatory title. In this connection, we may note the following account of Gandhāra, as given by the Chinese traveller Sung-yun in 520 A.D.:

"This is the country which the Ye-thas destroyed and afterwards set up a tegin (prince or member of the royal family) to be king over the country, since which events two generations have passed".

As we have already indicated, Mihirakula had been ruling in 520 A.D., and thus the above Chinese account would point to a time when Toramāna had been living. Toramāna evidently started his career as a *tegin* under the supreme Epthalite lord living in Bactria and later on declared his independence in c. 510 A.D. Thus there is really no difficulty in identifying the Toramāna of the Kura record with Toramāna, the father of Mihirakula. Other evidences bearing on the reign of this monarch may be summarised as follows :

(a) There are some silver coins of the "*Horseman type*" with the Epthalite symbol behind the horse-man on the *Obv.* and the legend in Greek characters Śāhi Javula or Śāhi Janabula, with the usual fire-altar and supporters on the *rev.* These coins were evidently issued when Toramāna was still a subordinate ruler, i.e., before 510 A.D.

(b) The small copper-coins attributed to Toramāna are found both in the Punjab and in the country between the Sutlej and the Yamunā. Their attribution is based on the type of the "*Sun*" with the abbreviated name Tora in large letters.

(c) Udyotana Suri in his Prākṛit work *Kuvalayamālā* compiled in 699 S.E. = A.D. 777, states that the celebrated town of Pavvaiya, on the banks of the river Candrabhāgā, was the residence of Torarāya or Toramāna.²²⁵

From the Gwalior inscription of the year 15, it appears that Toramāna was succeeded by his son Mihirakula. For the reign

²²⁴ *Ep. Ind.* i. pp. 239f.

²²⁵ *SI*, pp. 76f.

of this prince, we are fortunate in having accounts left by Sung-yun, Cosmas Indicopleustis and Yuan Chwang. We are furnished with the following brief details by the Chinese sources regarding Sung-yun:

"Towards the beginning of the sixth century (518) an Empress of the Wei dynasty sent an official mission to India to offer presents to the Buddhist sanctuaries and bring back Buddhist texts from India. The official envoy was one Song yun. A Buddhist monk named Hui-sheng was asked to accompany him. Song yun and his companions followed the southern route of Central Asia—Shen-shen (near Lobnor), Tso-mo (Chalmadana, modern Cherchen) and Khotan. From Khotan they went to Karghalik, Wakhan and Chitral. They then followed the valleys of Yasin and Gilgit and ultimately reached Bolar to the north-west of Kashmir. The visit of Song yun was restricted to north-west of India, specially to Uḍḍiyāna (the Swat valley) and Gandhāra (the region of Peshawar). Song yun returned to China in 522 and compiled an account of his journey which is now lost".²²⁶

Portions of the account of Sung-yun survives in the quotations of the later writers, and his account of Uḍḍiyāna and Gandhāra has been translated by Chavannes, in *BEFEO*, 1903. An English translation of the same is also given by Beal in his *Records of the Western World*, Vol. I, pp. lxxiv ff. Thus speaking of Gandhāra, Sung-yun states: "During the middle decade of the fourth month of the first year of Ching-Kwong (520 A.D.), we entered the kingdom of Gandhāra. This country closely resembles the territory of U-chang. It was formerly called the country of Ye-po-lo. This is the country which the Ye-thas destroyed, and afterwards set up a tegin to be king over the country, since which events two generations have passed. The disposition of this king was cruel and vindictive and he practised the most barbarous atrocities. He did not believe the law of the Buddha, but loved to worship demons Entirely self-reliant on his own strength, he had entered on a war with the country of Ki-pin (Kashmir), disputing the boundaries of their kingdom, and his troops had been already engaged in it for three years. The king has 700 war elephants The king continually abode with his troops on the frontier and never returned to his kingdom, in consequence of which the old men had to labour and the common people were oppressed".

²²⁶ Bagchi, *India and China*, p. 74.

From the above account of Sung-yun, we can pick up the following facts:

- (a) The Ye-thas or the Epthalites conquered the Gandhāra region and set up a *tegin* there two generations before c. 520 A.D. (We have already pointed out that this event must have occurred after c. 500 A.D., and Toramāna was possibly the *tegin* in question).
- (b) The contemporary king i.e., Mihirakula was non-Buddhist and had entered in war with the kingdom of Kashmir, and it was still going on about the time of the visit of the Chinese traveller i.e., c. 520 A.D.
- (c) The seat of the king Mihirakula was Gandhāra i.e., to the west of the Indus.

Yuan Chwang has preserved a long story about Mihirakula and it differs in details from the one given above by Sung-yun. The account may be summarised as follows:²²⁷

- (a) Mihirakula, who lived some centuries before the time of Yuan Chwang, had his capital at Śākala, the present Sialkot region, and was the lord of a considerable portion of India.
- (b) When Bālāditya-rāja, king of Magadha, "heard of the cruel persecution and atrocities of Mihirakula, he strictly guarded the frontiers of his kingdom and *refused to pay tribute*". (This shows that the Gupta king of Magadha was a vassal under him).
- (c) Leaving the charge of his kingdom to his younger brother, Mihirakula marched against Bālāditya but was defeated and taken prisoner. Later on he was, however, released at the intervention of Bālāditya's mother.
- (d) Mihirakula's brother had in the meantime usurped the throne, and he then sought and obtained an asylum in Kashmir. Later on, he killed the king of Kashmir and "placed himself on the throne."
- (e) He next killed the king of Gandhāra, overthrew the stūpas, destroyed the saṃghārāmas, "altogether one thousand six hundred foundations."
- (f) He died within a year.

While Yuan Chwang is clearly wrong in placing Mihirakula "*some centuries*" before his time, there is some fundamental difference between his account and the one written by Sung-yun. Sung-yun makes Mihirakula pre-eminently the king of Gandhāra.

²²⁷ Beal, *Records*, i. 167ff.

while, according to Yuan Chwang, his capital was Śākala and he was the lord of practically the whole of North India, his overlordship extending over Magadha as well. The account of Cosmas throws reconciling light on this point. Thus he says: "Higher up in India, that is farther to the north, are the White Huns. The one called Gollas when going to war takes with him, it is said, 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..... The river Phison (Indus) separates all the countries of India from the country of the Huns". Thus the Hūṇa kingdom proper lay to the west of the Indus, (cf. Sung-yun), but Mihirakula had extended his sway over a great portion of North India. (cf. Yuan Chwang). This evidently happened after c.520 A.D. and hence Sung-yun knew nothing about this extension of the Epthalite power. The Betul plates of 518 A.D. refer to the Gupta rule and thus Mihirakula's conquest must have taken place after that date. The recent discovery of a seal of Mihirakula from Kauśāmbī tends to support Yuan Chwang's account. What is not clear from the *Si-yu-ki* is the statement that Mihirakula killed the king of Gandhāra. From Sung-yun's account it is clear that Gandhāra was the chief province of the Epthalite empire. Was it subsequently lost in the time of Mihirakula who made Śākala his capital? Or, was it under the occupation of Mihirakula's brother who had usurped the throne in his absence? We cannot be definite about the problem unless fresh evidences come forth.

It is thus apparent that there is some confusion in the account of the *Si-yu-ki*, and it cannot be denied at the same time that the Buddhist writers were biased against him for his unsympathetic attitude towards their religion. Sung-yun represents him as worshipping the demons, but his coins clearly show that he was a devotee of Śiva, while the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman describes him as bowing his head only to that god.

Kalhana has preserved an account of Mihirakula's reign in Kashmir, which, though nothing but legendary, may contain some historical truth. Mihirakula "who was comparable to the god of destruction", is thus credited in the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*:

"For in Śrīnagarī, the foul-minded man founded the temple of Mihireśvara and in Holadā a big city named Mihirapura. (I. 306)

"The Brāhmaṇas of Gandhāra accepted from him gifts of Agrahāras; they, no doubt, too, were of similar

character as his own and were the meanest Brāhmaṇas. (I. 307).

In writing the above account, Kalhana evidently relied on traditions current in his time and they may contain some historical elements. It is not unlikely that Mihireśvara in the above passage refers to god Śiva, the deity worshipped by Mihirakula, though we cannot be very sure on the point. Similarly, uncertain is the meaning of *line* 3 of the Gwalior inscription, which runs as follows:

*"Tasyo (Toramānasyo) dita-kulakīrteḥ putrotulavikramah patih prthvyāḥ, Mihirakuletikhyāto (a *) bhaṅgo yaḥ Paśupatiḥ * * *"*.

Fleet translates the above passage thus: "Of him, the fame of whose family has risen high, the son (is) he, of unequal prowess, the lord of the earth, who is renowned under the name of Mihirakula, (and) who, (himself) unbroken, (broke the power of) Paśupati".²²⁸ Bhandarkar, however, wants to read *bheje* in the lacuna and interprets the term *abhaṅga* as meaning "who was unbroken in the matter of worshipping" the god Paśupati. If we accept Bhandarkar's interpretation, then it may be taken as another evidence of showing Mihirakula's leaning towards Śaivism.

We have already seen that according to the *Si-yu-ki*, Mihirakula was defeated by king Bālāditya (Narasimha Gupta) of Magadha, and then he took refuge in Kashmir. The Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman, on the other hand, gives us the following account:

"He (i.e., Yaśodharman) to whose two feet respect was paid with complimentary presents of the flowers from the lock of hair on the top of his head, by even that famous king Mihirakula, whose head had never previously been brought into the humility of obeisance to any other save the god Sthānu, and embraced by whose arms the Himālaya falsely prides itself on being styled an inaccessible fortress, and whose forehead was pained through being now for the first time bent low down by the strength of his (Yaśodharman's) arm in the act of compelling obeisance."²²⁹

The above account thus gives the impression that Mihirakula was defeated for the first time by Yaśodharman, and further that

²²⁸ *Corpus*, iii. p. 163.

²²⁹ *Select Ins.*, p. 395, f.n. 1.

the former was the king in some Himalayan country. If the *Si-yu-ki*, on the other hand, is to be believed, Mihirakula became king in the Himalayan country of Kashmir after being defeated by Bālāditya. Thus the above two accounts appear at the first sight to be contradictory. In this connection, we may note, however, that in another Mandasor inscription of the year 589 = 532 A.D. it is stated that Yaśodharman acquired the title of Rājādhirāja-Parameśvara after defeating the kings of the north and the east.²³⁰ The kings of the north included evidently Mihirakula of Kashmir whose defeat at the hand of the Mandasor monarch may thus be tentatively dated c. 530 A.D. Now the Khoh Copper plate of 529 A.D. refers to the rule of the Guptas, showing that while Mihirakula's defeat at the hands of Bālāditya must be ascribed before this date, the rise of Yaśodharman should be ascribed after it. We have already seen that the Betul plate of 518 A.D. refers to the Guptas and after it there is no record from this part of the country mentioning the Imperial dynasty till the Khoh plates. This proves conclusively that Mihirakula's rise and fall in the interior of the Āryāvarta must have occurred between 518 and 529 A.D. Yaśodharman must have come to power after 529 A.D., for Yuan Chwang speaks of a king of Central India as the successor of Vajra, the son of Bālāditya, and this king of Central India has rightly been identified with Yaśodharman. Thus it appears that Yaśodharman came to power after the time of Bālāditya, and hence the latter's victory over the Hūṇa king must have preceded the conquests of Yaśodharman. This is also indirectly proved by the statement of the Mandasor inscription that "embraced by whose (Mihirakula's) arms the Himālaya falsely prides itself on being styled an inaccessible fortress", for before his defeat at the hands of Bālāditya, Mihirakula was the lord of a considerable portion of North India. In that case it may be held that Yaśodharman's claim that he defeated Mihirakula for the first time is nothing but a hyperbolic statement. With the defeat of Mihirakula, the Hūṇas or the Epthalites disappear from the field of Indian politics as an important factor. There are of course evidences that they continued as local dynasties, and ultimately formed an important element in the Indian population.

¹ *Corpus*, iii. pp. 152f, verse 7.

THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

The Guptas thus withstood the shock of the Ephthalite invasion, but it shattered the very foundation of their empire. The feudatory dynasties now came to the forefront and though they still acknowledged the nominal sway of the Imperial master, they became practically the *de facto* independent rulers. Further, as already indicated, there soon arose a new danger in the person of Yaśodharman, whose existence is disclosed to us by two inscriptions from Mandasor.²³¹ One of them bears the date 532-33 A.D. and contains the information that he had subjugated "very mighty kings of the east and many (kings) of the north". This brief account is elucidated by the other record which states that his empire extended from the Lauhitya or the Brahmaputra in the east to the Western Ocean; and from the mountain washed by the Ganges i.e., the Himālaya to the Mahendra mountain; that his empire included countries not enjoyed by the lords of the Guptas or the kings of the Hūṇas; and, as we have already seen, that his feet was worshipped by Mihirakula.

Dr. D. C. Sircar has shown that the above account is more or less conventional one, and it is a *praśasti* which may have germs of some truth, but may not be entirely historical. Indeed, in spite of all the bombastic claims it appears that the Guptas continued to rule in Eastern India. Some scholars think that he defeated and killed Vajra, the son of Bālāditya and extinguished the viceregal family of the Dattas of Puṇḍravardhana.²³² Now in the *Si-yu-ki* we get the following account: "To the west of this monastery (Nālandā), Bālāditya's son and successor Vajra built another; and to the north of this the king of Mid-India afterwards erected a large monastery". From this it can hardly be inferred, as it has been done, that Bālāditya's son Vajra was killed by a king of Mid-India, who of course appears to be no other than Yaśodharman. This only shows that Yaśodharman lived after Vajra, who evidently had a very brief reign, and made some contributions to the Buddhist institution. That such Chinese accounts had nothing to do with the "*genealogy*" or the *political events*, but to record simply the names of the donors of the Nalanda monastery one after another, becomes clear from a study of the *Shi-kia-fang-che*, as noted before.

²³¹ *Corpus*, iii. pp. 142ff.

²³² *PHAI*, p. 597.

There is thus no evidence to show that the rule of the Guptas came to an end, even temporarily, due to the conquests of Yaśodharman, whose empire evidently comprised parts of the Ganges-Jumna valley in the east. Hardly anything is known definitely regarding the ancestry of Yaśodharman or how his rule came to an end. While editing the Bihar Kotra inscription of Naravarman's time of the Mālava year 474 = 417 A.D., S. N. Chakravarti came to the conclusion that Naravarman and Yaśodharman belonged to the same family, since both of them are described as *Aulikara*.²³³ This is, however, far from convincing, since it is not known exactly that Aulikara is a family name, and secondly, even if it be so, there is hardly any reason for such a conclusion, when we find that family names like Maukharī etc., are given to different dynasties having no connections.²³⁴

Before Yaśodharman's rise, Mandasor and the adjoining regions evidently passed through some confusions which possibly facilitated his coming to the throne. The Ajanta record claims that Hariṣeṇa, the Vākāṭaka, conquered or extended his sphere of influence over Gujarāt, Mālava, Kośala, Andhra and Kuntala provinces.²³⁵ The date of Hariṣeṇa is far from certain, but he may be assigned with plausibility to the first quarter of the sixth century A.D. Dr. R. C. Majumdar thinks that it was during the trouble and confusion following the invasion of Toramāna that he invaded the distracted province of Mālava and obtained some success.²³⁶ It is not unlikely that he was ultimately defeated by Yaśodharman whose empire extended in the west up to the Arabian Sea. The Mandasor inscription of 532 A.D. shows that Abhaya-datta had been ruling the land, lying between the Vindhya and the Pāriyātra and extending as far as the Arabian Sea, as a viceroy of Yaśodharman.

It is generally believed that Yaśodharman's rule came to an end about 535 A.D. The myth associated with the family of the Vikramāditya had by this time been completely broken and two of the feudatory dynasties, the *Maukharis* and the so-called *Later Guptas* now came to the forefront. After the fall of the Imperial dynasty in the middle of the sixth century, these two families practically dominated the political arena of North India till the rise of Harṣavardhana in 606 A.D.

Both the Maukharis and the Later Guptas evidently started

²³³ *Ep. Ind.* xxvi. pp. 130f.

²³⁴ For the Maukharis, *infra*, Ch. viii.

²³⁵ *Select Ins.*, p. 429.

²³⁶ *VGA*, p. 186.

as subordinates under the Imperial Guptas, possibly at the same time, since Išānavarman, the fourth Maukhari king was a contemporary of Kumāra Gupta, the fourth Later Gupta monarch.²³⁷ As the Haraha inscription shows that Išānavarman²³⁸ had become a mahārājādhirāja by 554 A.D., it may be assumed that the Gupta dynasty had come to an end a little before that date, and that the dynasty of Išānavarman came into existence c.510 A.D., during the confusions caused by the Ephthalite inroads, when the Later Guptas also came to power.

The designation 'Later Gupta' is somewhat misleading one. They had no connection evidently with the Imperial Gupta line, since Kṛṣṇagupta, the first king of the dynasty, is simply said to belong to *Sad-vamśa*, a good family, in the Apsad inscription. In an age when we find a tendency "of the court-writers to exaggerate the importance of the royal families even to the extent of giving them pedigrees reaching not only to epic heroes but also to the sun and the moon, it must be regarded as very surprising that no allusion should have been made in their inscriptions to any connection with the Imperial Guptas if there were even any remote basis for it."²³⁹ The dynasty has been so named because most of the family members bear names ending in *gupta*, though the greatest monarch of the line had the name of Ādityasena. Evidently —*gupta* was a part of their names and not a sur-name, as it had been the case with the Imperial Guptas.

There has been a great controversy regarding the *original home* of the dynasty. While editing the inscriptions of the Later Guptas, Fleet concluded that Magadha was the home of the dynasty, and this theory was later on accepted by R. D. Banerjee and others. There are, however, a group of historians who had challenged the view and they concluded that Mālava, and not Magadha, was the original home in question.²⁴⁰ They give the following arguments in support of their theory:

(a) The Deo-Baranark inscription of Jīvitagupta II²⁴¹ records the continuance of the grant of a village in South Bihar by Bālāditya-deva and after him by the Maukharis Sarvavarman and Avantivarman. There is no mention

²³⁷ *vide*, Appendix iii & iv.

²³⁸ *Ep. Ind.* xiv. pp. 110f.

²³⁹ *VGA*, p. 191.

²⁴⁰ For the Malwa home theory, D. C. Ganguli, *JBORS*, xix. p. 402; R. K. Mookerjee, *JBORS*, xv. p. 251f, *Harṣa*, pp. 60, 67; Vaidya, *HMHI*, i. p. 35; Raychaudhuri, *JBORS*, xv. pp. 651f. For R. D. Banerjee's views *JBORS*, xiv. pp. 254ff. B. P. Sinha has elaborately discussed this question, *DKM*, pp. 130ff.

²⁴¹ *Corpus*, iii. pp. 213ff, no. 46.

of the Later Gupta contemporaries in connection with the previous grants of the village. "The inscription is no doubt damaged, but the sovereignty of Sarvavarman and Avantivarman undoubtedly precludes the possibility of the direct rule of their contemporaries of the Later Gupta line."

(b) The Barābar and Nāgārjuni hill cave inscriptions²⁴² disclose the existence of subordinate Maukhari chiefs of the Gaya district "in the time of the Later Guptas".

(c) When Yuan Chwang visited Magadha he found one Pūrṇavarman on the throne of the country.²⁴³ "He does not say a word about Mādhavagupta or his father in connection with Magadha".

(d) Bāṇa in his *Harṣacarita* speaks of the father of Mādhavagupta, the associate of Harṣa as the king of Mālava. "The existence of two associates of Harṣa, each bearing the name of Mādhavagupta, one of whom was the son of a king of Magadha is not known to the biographer of the great emperor."

The above arguments can hardly be accepted as conclusive, for, they do not take into account all the available facts concerned. The absence of the mention of any early Later Gupta king in the Deo-Baranark record shows simply that they had nothing to do with the grant of the village in question. This reminds us of the Chinese accounts regarding the donors of the Nalanda vihāra. Names of the kings who made no contribution have been deliberately left out, and as we have already said, such accounts have got hardly any political significance. What the Deo-Baranark record shows definitely is that after Bālāditya-deva the village in question passed under the Maukhari kings Sarvavarman and Avantivarman. It cannot prove that the Later Guptas had no jurisdiction over the village before the time of Sarvavarman. Any inference regarding the Later Guptas from the Deo-Baranark record would be a fallacious case of *argumentum ex silentio*.

Secondly, the Barābar and Nāgārjuni hill cave inscriptions no doubt disclose the existence of three feudatory Maukhari chiefs Yajñavarman, his son Śārdūlavarman and the latter's son Anantavarman. Palaeographically these inscriptions are placed by scholars in the last part of the fifth century, and further it is clear that these Maukharis had no connections with the dynasty to

²⁴² *Corpus*, iii. pp. 221-28.

²⁴³ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 115.

which Sarvavarman and Avantivarman belonged. Evidently this line consisting of three rulers came to an end sometimes in the first quarter of the sixth century A.D., and the Later Guptas may have come to power after the fall of the dynasty.²⁴⁴

Drs. B. C. Sen and R. S. Tripathi think that the Later Guptas originally ruled in Magadha and in the last quarter of the sixth century migrated to Mālava.²⁴⁵ This theory has much to commend in itself, and, as we shall see later on, in the last decade of the sixth century there was much confusion in Eastern India owing to the invasions of the Tibetans from the north and this evidently forced the Later Guptas to leave their hearth and home and found a new kingdom somewhere else. This may account for the non-mention of the Later Guptas in connection with Magadha by the Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang. Bāṇa's account of Mādhavagupta as the son of the king of Mālava also does not go strictly against the theory that Magadha was the original home of the Later Guptas.

In this connection, we may note that the Aphas record speaks of Jīvitagupta's exploits on the sea-shore and Mahāsenagupta's victory over Susthitavarman, the Kāmarūpa king. These prove indirectly that the Later Guptas lived in Eastern India, for had they lived in Malwa about this time, they would have been regarded as the Imperial suzerains of North India with a vast empire under them. Again, had Mahāsenagupta extended his conquests from Malwa to Kāmarūpa, he would have done the same evidently at the cost of the Maukharis.²⁴⁶ But the combined testimony of the Nalanda seal of the mahārājādhirāja Su—and the *Harṣacarita* proves beyond doubt that the Maukharis maintained their Imperial status.²⁴⁷ On the other hand, again, had such been the case, the Aphas record would not have given to Mahāsenagupta the humbler designation of Śrī alone.

The Later Guptas evidently started their career as subordinates under the Imperial Guptas, and later on became subordinates under the Maukharis. Some misconception still exists regarding the mutual relationship of the two dynasties—the Maukharis and the Later Guptas—when they got a free hand after the downfall of the Imperial Guptas. Thus Dr. Tripathi says: "The Maukharis who had grown rich and prosperous by their possession of the fertile Doab, were also at this time bidding

²⁴⁴ For the dynasty, Appendix iv.

²⁴⁵ *SHAIB*, pp. 263f; Tripathi, *HK* p. 46.

²⁴⁶ *DKM*, pp. 138ff.

²⁴⁷ *Infra*, p. 217.

for supremacy in the north, and they had now to be reckoned with before the (Later) Guptas could reclaim the allegiance of the greater part of Northern India. This contest for overlordship between the Maukharis and the Later Guptas forms the most arresting feature of the major portion of the sixth century A.D."²⁴⁸ Such a notion of long contest between the two powers is based on a misinterpretation of the Apsad record (*v.II*), and we shall see later on that the struggle was really confined to the reign of Išānavarman himself, who became the mahārājādhirāja, after the fall of the Imperial Guptas, as proved by the Haraha inscription of 554 A.D. It appears therefore that immediately after the fall of the Imperial line, the Later Guptas of Magadha tried to become independent, but failed and acknowledged the supremacy of the Maukhari chiefs, like Sarvavarman and Avantivarman.

Similarly there is difference of opinions among the scholars regarding the original home of the 'Maukharis. As in the *Harṣacarita*, the Maukharis are associated with Kanauj, Tripathi and others think that it was the capital of the line of Išānavarman from the very beginning.²⁴⁹ Dr. D. C. Sircar thinks that "about the middle of the sixth century the dynasty of the Imperial Guptas, in whose cause the Maukharis had been fighting with the Gaudas, totally collapsed and left the Maukharis in practical possession of large parts of Bihar and U.P."²⁵⁰ We have already shown that Magadha was the original home of the Later Guptas and the country subsequently passed under the Maukharis. The earliest Maukhari record of Išānavarman's line has been found at Barabanki in the Jaunpur district of the U.P., while the coins of Išānavarman and his successors have been found in the Faizabad district. This fact seems to show that the original home of the dynasty was in Eastern U.P. and they possibly became confined to the Kanauj region after the foreign invasions of North India in the last part of the sixth century A.D., had brought a tremendous change in the political condition of the country.

The above discussions clearly indicate that after the rise of Yaśodharman, the power of the Imperial Guptas were confined to the region of Magadha and North Bengal, though their suzerainty was theoretically recognised even in the remote western part of North India, as proved by the epigraphic records of the Maitraka king Dhruvasena ranging in date between 525 and 545 A.D.

²⁴⁸ Tripathi, *HK*, p. 24.

²⁴⁹ *ib.*, pp. 32-6.

²⁵⁰ *JRASBL*, xi. pp. 69-70.

VI

THE FALL OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE

It is difficult to determine how exactly the Imperial line of the Guptas came to an end. It has been asserted that the final disappearance of the Gupta rule in Eastern India may be ascribed to two circumstances: (a) "The rise of a ruling dynasty represented by Dharmāditya, Gopacandra and Samācāradeva in Central and South-west Bengal in the first half of the sixth century A.D. possibly points to the extirpation of the Gupta rule from the whole of Bengal excepting the Puṇḍravardhana-bhukti; and (b) "But the decline of the Guptas in North Bengal may have been mainly due to the encroachments of the kings of Kāmarūpa."²⁵¹

While we may thoroughly agree with the above propositions, the question still remains, how the Gupta rule in Magadha came to an end? A copper plate grant found at Amauna in the Gaya district²⁵² appears to have been issued by Kumārāmātya-mahārāja Nandana in the year 232 = 551 A.D., and as it contains no reference to the Imperial line it may be assumed that the dynasty had already come to an end. But at the same time the epigraph raises some interesting problems; *firstly*, whose subordinate Nandana was? and *secondly*, as the Later Guptas had their home in Magadha, what part did they play in the overthrow of the dynasty? Before, however, we deal with these questions we should take up the history of the kings Dharmāditya and others who put an end to the rule of the Guptas in the Gauḍa and Vaṅga-Samataṭa regions.

Four copper-plate inscriptions found in the district of Faridpur and another from the village of Mallasarul on the banks of the river Dāmodar in the district of Burdwan disclose the names of three kings, Gopacandra, Dharmāditya and Samācāradeva, and they possibly formed a dynasty.²⁵³ That they were independent sovereigns is proved by their assumption of the title of *mahārājādhirāja* and the use of the *regnal years*, instead of the Gupta year, in their records. From the internal evidences of the epigraphs we can arrange the order of their succession.

²⁵¹ *IHQ*, xix. p. 276.

²⁵² *Ep. Ind.* x. p. 50.

²⁵³ Pargiter, *IA*, xxxix. pp. 193-216; Bhattasali, *Ep. Ind.*, xviii. pp. 74ff. R. D. Banerjee thinks that the records are spurious (*JASB.* NS. vi. pp. 429f; vii. pp. 289f; x. pp. 425f); *ASIR*, 1907-8, p. 256. The genuineness of the records is no longer doubted. cf. Pargiter, *JASB.* NS. vii. p. 499; *JRAS*, 1912, pp. 710ff.

We have already seen that mahārājādhirāja Vainya Gupta had been ruling about the year 507 A.D. in the Vaṅga-Samatāṭa region, and one Vijayasena is mentioned as a *dūtaka* in his Gunaighar record. In the seal attached to the Mallasarul inscription of Gopacandra of the year 3, we find the name of one mahārāja Vijayasena. If these two Vijayasenas may be regarded as identical,²⁵⁴ then it would appear that Gopacandra was the immediate successor of Vainya Gupta and hence we may place his accession about 510 A.D. He must have ruled for at least 18 years as shown by his Faridpur grant. Thus practically the whole of Gauḍa and Samatāṭa countries had been under his sway. The *Ārya-mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa* mentions a king of the *prācya-janapadas* named *Gopa*, who may be identified with Gopacandra.²⁵⁵

The Faridpur grant of Gopacandra refers to one *Jyeṣṭhākāyastha* of the name of Nayasena, who is again mentioned in the grant of Dharmāditya. This shows that Dharmāditya was the immediate successor of mahārājādhirāja Gopacandra. Of the two Faridpur grants belonging to his reign the first one (A) is dated in his third regnal year.

The next king who ruled after Dharmāditya in the Vaṅga-Samatāṭa country was mahārājādhirāja Samācāradeva and his Faridpur plate (D) is dated in his fourteenth regnal year. Two gold coins of this monarch are available, one of the *Rājātilā* type discovered in the district of Jessore, and another of the *Archer type* of Gupta coins, having on the *Rev.* the legend *Narendravinata*, or *Narendrāditya*.²⁵⁶

There cannot be any doubt that this dynasty put an end to the rule of the Guptas in the Gauḍa and Vaṅga-Samatāṭa regions. Whether Samācāradeva was the last king of the dynasty, or whether he had any successor is not known for certain.²⁵⁷ In the present state of our knowledge it may tentatively be held that the dynasty lasted up to c.570 A.D.

We have given above the account of the dynasty as it is generally accepted by the scholars. Dr. B. C. Sen, who has made a very critical study of the records of the three kings, comes to a slightly different conclusion. He thinks that the dynasty cannot have come to power before the end of Yaśodharman's reign.

²⁵⁴ For the contrary view, *IC*, vi. pp. 106-7; cf. Pargiter, l.c.

²⁵⁵ *AMMK*, v. p. 760, as referred to in *Select Ins.*, p. 357, fn. 1.

²⁵⁶ Smith reads the legend *Narendravinata* (*IMC*, i. p. 120, pl. xvi. p. 11) while Allan reads the same as *Narendrāditya* (*CGD*, p. 149). cf. *ASIR*, 1913-4, p. 260.

²⁵⁷ For further discussions, *HB*, pp. 53-4.

Further it is pointed out that "the Mallasarul copper plate which has a seal of mahārāja Vijayasena attached to itself appears to show that his sphere of activity was not unconnected with or far away from the Vardhamāna-*bhukti*, while there is no evidence to prove that mahārāja Vijayasena whose name occurs in the Gunaighar grant, had been in possession of the same area under a different master."²⁵⁸ If we accept this view, then we can follow Pargiter's account of the kings Dharmāditya, Gopacandra and Samācāradeva as coming one after another, Gopacandra not being the earliest king of the dynasty. Nothing can be said definitely in the present state of our knowledge, though this much is certain that they put an end to the rule of the Guptas over a considerable portion of Bengal.

As already stated, the Gupta rule in North Bengal possibly came to an end under the pressure of the Kāmarūpa kings. The Baḍgaṅgā Rock inscription refers to Śrī Bhūti-varman, an ancestor of Bhāskaravarman, the contemporary of Harṣa, as performing an Aśvamedha sacrifice. The record bears the date 234 or 244 G.E. = 553 or 563 A.D.²⁵⁹ The famous Nidhanpur grant of Bhāskara-varman²⁶⁰ informs us that Bhūti-varman captured the whole of Kāmarūpa and had a circle of feudatory rulers under him. Kāmarūpa was bounded on the west by the river Karatoyā and included roughly the Brahmaputra valley, Rangpur, Cooch Behar and the adjoining regions.²⁶¹ As from North Bengal we find no records of the Imperial Guptas after 543 A.D., we may assume that the conquests of Bhūti-varman may have something to do with the fall of the dynasty in that region, though we must admit that there is no direct proof bearing on the fact.

While thus the Gupta empire was being attacked and dismembered from the east, the Maukharis and the Later Guptas evidently took up arms conjointly on behalf of their masters. The Haraha inscription of 554 A.D. informs us that the Maukhari Isānavarman came to the throne "after conquering the lord of the Āndhras, who had thousands of threefold rutting elephants, after vanquishing in battle the Śūlikas, who had an army of countless galloping horses, and after causing the Gaudas to take shelter into the waters of the sea for the future".²⁶² From the nature of the

²⁵⁸ *SHAIB*, pp. 254f.

²⁵⁹ Bhattasali reads the date as 234, (*JARS*, viii. pp. 138-9); D. C. Sircar reads the same as 244 (*JARS*, x. pp. 64-7; *IHQ*, xx. pp. 143-5).

²⁶⁰ *Ep. Ind.* xii, 65-9; xix, pp. 115f.

²⁶¹ *CAGI*, pp. 572ff.

the waters of the sea for the future".²⁶² From the nature of the description, it is clear that these victories were achieved by Išānavarman before 554 A.D., while yet he was a crown prince, or in other words, during the life-time of his father Išvaravarman the third mahārāja of the dynasty.

Now, while speaking of the third Later Gupta king, Jivitagupta I, the Apsad record states that this king's valour caused "terrible scorching fever (of fear)" to his great enemies, even though they lived in the cool sea-shores or in the Himalayan region. Thus we find that during the time of Išvaravarman, i.e., before 550 A.D., both the Maukharis and the Later Guptas had been fighting with the enemies living in the cool sea-shores, evidently against the dynasty of Gopacandra-Dharmāditya, and it was most likely a conjoint operation. In this connection we should also note the fact that while Jivitagupta I fought against the enemies in the Himalayan regions, possibly against the Kāmarūpa king Bhūti-varman, no such claim is put forward on behalf of the Maukharis. The natural conclusion seems to be that the Maukharis and the Later Guptas first fought conjointly against the Bengal dynasty, but the Later Guptas went alone to fight against the Kāmarūpa enemies. Evidently taking advantage of the absence of his rival in a far off battlefield, the Maukhari Išānavarman overthrew the Gupta master of Magadha and himself assumed the title of mahārājādhirāja, as proved by the Haraha record of 554 A.D. The Later Guptas evidently took exception to such an immoral act of usurpation, and thus there ensued a keen contest between Išānavarman on the one hand and the Later Guptas on the other. The Maukharis, however, proved bigger than their rivals, who had to acknowledge the overlordship of the former now becoming the mahārājādhirājas of the Āryāvarta.

²⁶² The exact significance of the expression *samudrāśraya* in the epigraph is not clear. R. G. Basak thinks that Išānavarman "made the Gauḍa people take shelter towards the sea-shore after causing their land territories to be deprived of their future prospects". (*HNI*, p. 111). Dr. Raychaudhuri however, observes "Samudra may not refer to the sea-shore. The passage in question implies that the Gauḍas were considered to have had a place of refuge in the sea itself, perhaps in an island, and not merely in the *velā*, *anūpa* or *kachcha*" (*HB*, p. 37, n. 3); for other interpretations, B. P. Sinha, *DKM*, pp. 164ff.

APPENDIX I

THE KIDARA KUSANAS

It has already been shown that while the Shākas and the Shiladas ruled in the Punjab and possibly acknowledged the supremacy of Samudra Gupta the descendants of Great Kanishka maintained a precarious existence under the overlordship of the Sassanids of Iran.¹ In the later part of the fourth century A.D. there was again a turmoil over the frontier region of India which at once changed the course of the history of the land. From the *Wei-shu* or the *Annals of the Wei Dynasty* we get some interesting informations about the episode. Thus it is stated: "The kingdom of the Ta-Yueh-chi has for its capital the town of Lou-kien-chi (Balkh) to the west of Fo-ti-cha (Bamian) at a distance of 14,500 li from Tai (the Wei capital). The Ta-Yueh-chi found themselves threatened on the north by the Juan-Juan, and were exposed on several occasions to their raids. They, therefore, migrated to the west and established themselves in the town of Po-lo (Balkan), 2,100 li from Fo-ti-cha. Their king Ki-to-lo (Kidāra), a brave and warlike prince, raised an army, crossed to the south of the Great Mountains (the Hindukush), and invaded Northern India, where the five kingdoms to the north of Kan-tho-lo (Gandhāra) submitted to him".²

From the above account it is clear that Kidāra was a member of the Great Yueh-chi family, and when he invaded India, the North-Western Frontier Province region was divided into five kingdoms. There are reasons to believe that the region was still under the Sassanid supremacy³ and hence the five kingdoms may have been the five satrapies of the Iranian empire. The exact date of this invasion is still uncertain. Cunningham thinks that Kidāra flourished about 425 A.D.,⁴ while Martin brings forth conclusive numismatic evidences to show that this chief possibly ruled about 80 years earlier.⁵ Ma-twan-lin, however, while speaking of the incident states that, "the capital of the Little Yueh-chi is the town of Fou-leou-cha (Peshawar). Their king was a son of Ki-to-lo; he was placed in charge of this town by his father when this prince

¹ *supra*, ch. vi.

² Martin, *JRASB*, 1937, Num. Suppl. 24.

³ *supra*, ch. vi.

⁴ Cunningham, *Later Indo-Scythians*, p. 185.

⁵ Martin, *l.c.*, pp. 23ff.

was forced by the attacks of the Juan-Juan, to march westwards.”⁶ Here we should note the significant fact that Kidāra is described as belonging to the Little Yueh-chi group which stands in contrast to the account of the *Wei-shu*. The *Wei-shu*, however, makes this point clear when it states, “Kidāra, having been pursued by the Hiung-nu (Juan-Juan?) and having retired to the west, ordered his son to establish himself in this town of Fou-leou-cha. These people are consequently called Little Yueh-chi”. Thus it appears that Kidāra really belonged to the Ta-Yueh-chi group and the Chinese historians call him Little Yueh-chi, evidently wrongly, to distinguish him from other Yueh-chi kings.

Kidāra evidently started his career as a subordinate under the Sassanids, for on his earlier coins, his bust is represented as facing right, a convention which was followed by all the feudatories of the Sassanid empire. We have, again, other coins showing his bust facing left. This proves that he became independent. As pointed out by Martin, Ammianus Marcellinus tells us that Shapur II was engaged in wars on his eastern borders from about 350-8 A.D. and that his most important opponents were the Chionitae and Euseni.⁷ Euseni has been recognised as a textual corruption for Cuseni or Kuṣāṇas. It is further stated that in 358 A.D., Shapur made peace with these tribes and picked up a quarrel with Rome. In 359 A.D., he invaded Mesopotamia and besieged the Roman fortress of Amida, and in this operation he was helped by contingents supplied by his former foes. Thus it appears that in 358 A.D. Kidāra became independent and occupied the region extending up to Gandhāra in the south. The Armenian historian Faustos of Byzantium refers on two occasions to the warfare between the Kuṣāṇas and the Sassanids in 367-8 A.D.⁸ Martin thinks that the Kuṣāṇas were the aggressors and inflicted a crushing defeat on the Sassanids in 367-8 A.D. It is not unlikely that the lead in this war was taken by Piro, the son of Kidāra, who by this time had come to the throne.⁹ We have, however, certain coins of this monarch with the bust facing to the right showing that ultimately he lost his independence and had to acknowledge the supremacy of the Sassanid emperor Shapur III (383-8 A.D.). Dr. Altekar thinks that he was the Śaka king, who demanded from Rāma Gupta his wife Dhruvasvāminī, and at a later date may have been pressed from the east by Candragupta II.

⁶ *ib.*, p. 25.

⁷ *ib.*, p. 30.

⁸ *ib.*, p. 32.

⁹ *contra*, *ib.*

While Altekar's theory of Rāma Gupta has got yet to be proved, there is no direct evidence of any contact between Piro and Candragupta II.

Coins disclose the names of several Kuṣāṇa chiefs like Kṛtavīrya, Kuśala, Prakāśa, Sīlāditya etc. As the name Kidāra appears on these coins on the *obverse*, it is not unlikely that they were feudatory rulers under the Kuṣāṇa chief. The later history of the dynasty is obscure. The region under its sway passed under the White Huns and when the Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang visited the country it was under the rule of a "Kṣatriya king" who had his head-quarter at Kāpiśa.¹⁰

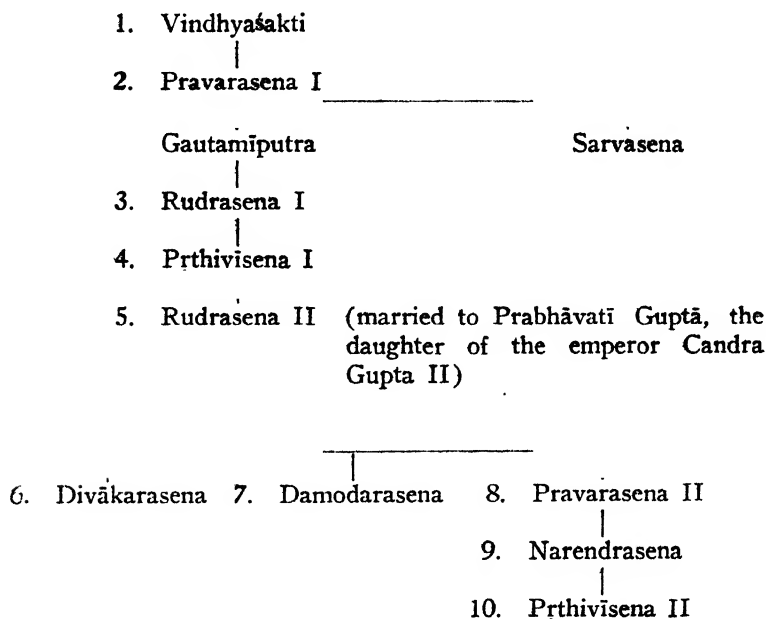
¹⁰ Watters, *On Yuan Chwang*, I. pp. 122ff.

APPENDIX II

A NOTE ON THE VAKATAKAS

The epigraphic texts invariably represent Vindhyaśakti I as the founder of the Vākāṭaka dynasty.¹ The Purāṇas state that Vindhyaśakti's son Pravarasena I had four sons and they became kings after their father's death. This seems to indicate that there was a division of the empire after the death of Pravarasena. Inscriptions, however, testify to the division of Pravarasena's empire into two parts only, one under the descendants of his son Gautamīputra, who possibly predeceased his father, with headquarters in the Nagpur district, and another under Sarvasena and his successors with their capital at Vatsagulma in the Akola district.

The genealogy of the main branch (Nagpur) of the Vākāṭakas may be represented as follows:



¹ In the epigraphic record Vindhyaśakti is described as the 'vaṁśaketu' (*Hyderabad Archaeological series*, no. 14: 'Vākāṭaka inscription in Cave xvi at Ajantā' by V. V. Mirashi).

From the evidence of the epigraphic records the genealogy of the Vākātakas of Vatsagulma appears to be as follows:

1. Sarvasena, son of Pravarasena I, founder of the branch.
- |
2. Vindhyaśakti II
- |
3. Pravarasena II
- |
4. (Name unknown)
- |
5. Devasena
- |
6. Hariṣeṇa

The chronology of both the branches of the Vākātakas is far from settled one.² The date of Rudrasena II, the son-in-law of Candragupta II, must, however, fall within A.D. 375-414. Rudrasena II ruled for a short period, which was followed by the regency of Prabhāvatī Guptā. We do not know when the next monarch Pravarasena II came to the throne. Dr. Sircar thinks that as Prabhāvatī Guptā's death does not appear to have occurred long before the end of the rule of her aged brother Kumāra Gupta (A.D. 414-55), the reign of Pravarasena II may be assigned to about the middle of the fifth century.³ From the epigraphic records it appears that Pravarasena II must have ruled for at least 27 years and thus he may have been a contemporary of Skandagupta. His son Narendrasena was thus possibly a contemporary of Purugupta and thus may have conquered Mālava at the cost of his contemporary Gupta relative.⁴

Another Vākātaka monarch who made some conquests in North India was Hariṣeṇa, the last king of the Vatsagulma branch.⁵ His date is also uncertain and some scholars assign him to c. 500 A.D. on the ground that one of his inscriptions has been found at Ajanta while on architectural grounds, cave no. xvi of Ajanta is assigned to the same date by Fergusson and Burgess. It should be noted, however, that the date 500 A.D. is simply approximate one, and it may be later by one or two decades. We

² For different views; *JRASB* (L), xii. pp. 1-5; 71-3; xiii. pp. 75-8; *IHQ*, xxiv. pp. 148-55; *JIH*, xiv. pp. 1-26.

³ *The Classical Age*, p. 181.

⁴ *supra*, p. 189.

⁵ *supra*, p. 201.

are inclined to think that Hariṣeṇa flourished about 520 A.D. and possibly conquered the Avanti region after the time of Pṛthivī-sena II.

Some scholars believe that there was a struggle between Hariṣeṇa and Pṛthivī-sena II of the main branch. Epigraphic records no doubt claim that Pṛthivī-sena twice retrieved the fallen fortunes of his family.⁶ But this can hardly be taken to mean as referring to his struggle with Hariṣeṇa. Pṛthivī-sena II may have inherited the Mālava region from his father Narendrasena and here he may have to fight with the Guptas. The Nalas also may have given him trouble. Budha Gupta may have recovered the Mālava region and it subsequently passed under the Epthalites. It was evidently after the eclipse of Mihirakula's power that Hariṣeṇa conquered Avanti.

⁶ *Ep. Ind.* ix. p. 267.

APPENDIX III

THE EARLY MAUKHARIS

We have already seen that a Maukhari dynasty, subordinate under the Imperial Guptas, came to power in the sixth century A.D. The Maukharis were a very ancient clan, and a branch of them lived in the Gaya region as early as the second century B.C. as proved by a clay seal inscribed in Mauryan Brāhmī script bearing the legend *Mokhalinam*, secured by General Cunningham at the place.¹ In the works of Bāṇa we find both the terms Mukhara and Maukhari² while the form Maukhara is found in the Jaunpur inscription³ of king Iśavaravarman. In the Haraha inscription, mahārājādhirāja Iśānavarman is described as a Maukhari prince and as descended from the family of king Aśvapati of the house of Vaivasvata Manu.

K. P. Jayaswal points out that "the modern Mauhari caste, almost solely located in the Gaya district, are their representatives. They are Baniyas, i.e., Vaiśyas now".⁴ In fact, the Barābar and the Nagarjuni Hill Cave inscriptions, as we have already seen, disclose the existence of a sāmanta Maukhari family in the Gaya district sometimes before the rise of the dynasty to which Iśānavarman belonged.⁵

Another branch of the Maukhari, evidently lived in the Rajputana region, as known from the Badva Yupa inscriptions. A third branch of the clan, to which Iśānavarman belonged, evidently lived in the Barabanki, Fyzabad and Jaunpur in U.P. and in the epigraphic records mahārāja Harivarman is described as the founder of the dynasty. The Asirgadh and the Nalanda seals⁶ give us the following genealogy:

1. Mahārāja Harivarman = Jayasvāmini
2. Mahārāja Ādityavarman = Harṣaguptā
3. Mahārāja Iśavaravarman = Upaguptā
4. Mahārājādhirāja Iśānavarman = Lakṣmīvati

¹ *Corpus* III, p. 14; supra, p. 28.

² In the *Harṣacarita*, Bāṇa considers *Mukhara* to be the progenitor of Grahavarman's line, *H.C. Trans.*, p. 128; in the *Kādambarī*, we find the expression '*crowned Maukharis*', *Riddling, Kādambarī*, 1.

³ *Corpus*, III, p. 228.

⁴ Aravamuthan, *The Kāverī, Maukharis and the Saṅgam Age*, p. 80, no. 1.

⁵ *supra*, pp. 203-4.

⁶ *Corpus*, III, p. 219; *MAI*, no. 66.

5. Mahārājādhirāja Sarvavarman = "Indrabhaṭṭārikā
6. Mahārājādhirāja Avantivarman =
7. Mahārājādhirāja Su-

In the above account, it will be seen, that while the first three rulers are called mahārāja, the rest are given the loftier designation of mahārājādhirāja, showing thereby that the dynasty started as subordinate one, evidently under the Imperial Guptas. Further, the name of Grahavarman, who was the brother-in-law of Harṣa and also a mahārājādhirāja as proved by the accounts of Bāṇabhaṭṭa,⁷ has been left out as he did not belong to the direct line of mahārājādhirāja Su- known from a Nalanda seal.

There are only two definite dates in the history of the Maukhari dynasty: 554 A.D., the date of the Haraha inscription of Iśānavarman, and 606 A.D., when Grahavarman was murdered by the wicked lord of Malwa. From the *Harṣacarita* it appears that Grahavarman was the eldest son of Avantivarman and thus it may be presumed that he ruled before his brother mahārājādhirāja Su-. As Dr. Tripathi has aptly remarked, the Vikrama year 611 = 554 A.D. mentioned in the Haraha record "is one of the starting points in the Maukhari chronology" while the other is 606 A.D. "when Grahavarman was killed". From this it has been concluded: "Hence assigning an average of twenty years to each of the six rulers, the seventh reign being extremely short, we feel justified in assuming that the Maukharis began their rule over Kanauj sometime about the close of the fifth century A.D."⁸ We are, however, inclined to think that the dynasty began its career in the second decade of the sixth century A.D., say about 510 A.D., when confusion ran high in the field of North Indian politics due to the inroads of the Ephthalites or the White Huns.

About the kings ruling before Iśānavarman we have only vague references to the military campaigns carried on far and wide without any specific details. In the Haraha record Harivarman, the first king of the dynasty is given the epithet of Jvālāmukha, the exact significance of which, however, is not clear. From the names of the queens of the second and third Maukhari rulers it appears that they married princesses of the Later Gupta family, since it is presumed that Harṣaguptā, wife of mahārāja Ādityavarman, "was probably the sister of the Later Gupta king, Harṣa-

⁷ *infra*, Ch. ix.

⁸ Tripathi, *HK*, p. 60..

gupta, as it was a common practice in those days for brothers and sisters to bear such identical names, of course with variations of gender in the ending to indicate the sex".⁹

To the time of mahārāja Iśvaravarman belongs the fragmentary Jaunpur record, which, agrees in some details with the accounts of the Haraha inscription.¹⁰

Thus it appears that up to the time of Iśvaravarman the Maukharis and the Later Guptas had been living in peace and amity. When, however, Iśānavarman became the mahārājādhirāja, the Later Guptas turned to be their enemies and for some times there was a struggle between the two dynasties, but ultimately the Later Guptas had to reconcile themselves to their fate and acknowledge the suzerainty of their relative, the Maukharis. In the *next* chapter it will be shown that a wrong notion prevails among the Indologists regarding the rivalry between the two families and it is assumed even that this rivalry ultimately led to the murder of Grahavarman and paved the way indirectly for the rise of Harṣa. The available facts, however, indicate that this rivalry was confined during the reign of Iśānavarman only.

⁹ *ib.*, p. 37.

¹⁰ Fleet observes that "it is impossible to say whether the historical information given in them refers to Iśānavarman or to one of his descendants". (*Corpus* III. p. 229). After paying a glowing tribute to Iśānavarman the record states that "a spark of fire that had come by the road from (the city of Dhārā) the lord of the Andhras, wholly given over to fear took up his abode in the crevices of the Vindhya mountains went to the Raivataka mountains among the warriors of the Andhra army who were spread out among the troops of elephants". Thus the Andhras with their elephants are mentioned in both the Jaunpur and the Haraha records and so it seems that both the epigraphs refer to one and the same event i.e., the conquests of Iśānavarman made during the lifetime of his father. The "spark of fire that had come by the road from the city of Dhārā" probably refers to the Sulikas who lived in that direction, according to the evidences quoted above.

APPENDIX IV

THE LATER GUPTAS

The Apsad (near Gaya) inscription¹ gives the following genealogy of the early Later Gupta kings:

1. Kṛṣṇagupta
2. Harṣagupta
3. Jīvitagupta
4. Kumāragupta
5. Dāmodaragupta
6. Mahāsenagupta
7. Mādhavagupta
8. Ādityasena

There is much controversy regarding the early history of this dynasty. We have already tried to show² that (a) the original home of the Later Guptas was Magadha and not Mālava; (b) that they started their career about the time when the Maukharis also came to the forefront under mahārāja Harivarman; (c) that they were first subordinate under the Imperial Guptas, and later on, as we shall see in the next chapter, under the Maukharis; and (d) that the missing name of the monarch in the Damodarpur inscription of 543-4 A.D. could not have contained the name of any early member of this dynasty. This is also borne out by the fact that Ādityasena the eighth ruler of the dynasty for the first time assumes the title of mahārājādhirāja, while the earlier members are given the epithets of *nṛpa*, *kṣitīśa-cuḍāmaṇi* etc. signifying subordinate status.

Kṛṣṇagupta is described as rising to power after being victorious over countless enemies. Dr. Raychaudhuri is inclined to think that he fought against Yaśodharman.³ This, however, seems to be highly improbable inasmuch as Yaśodharman rose in the third decade of the sixth century A.D., while Kṛṣṇagupta, possibly came to power about 510 A.D. and it is unlikely that he could have lived till 532 A.D. specially when we find that the fourth king of the dynasty was a contemporary of Iṣānavarman ruling in 554 A.D. We believe that Kṛṣṇagupta ruled from c. 510 to 525 A.D.

¹ *Corpus*, III. no. 42, pp. 200-8.

² *supra*, pp. 202-6.

³ *PHAI*, p. 601.

Harṣagupta, the second king of the dynasty, is described as a valiant warrior who offered a great resistance in terrible battles to his enemies. He may have been the contemporary of Yaśodharman, though there is no evidence that he fought against the Mandasor monarch. His sister Harṣaguptā may have been married to the second Maukhari king Ādityavarman.⁴

Jīvitagupta, the son of Harṣagupta, is described as a terror to his enemies and as causing "terrible scorching fever (of fear)" to his great enemies though they lived on the cool sea-shores or in the Himalayan region. As we have already stated, the enemies on the cool sea-shore probably refer to the Gauḍas, where ruled the dynasty of Gopacandra, and this campaign was evidently undertaken conjointly with the Maukharis under the crown prince Išānavarman.⁵ It is not unlikely that as a result of this campaign the Later Guptas extended their sway over a portion of Bengal. The Imperial Gupta suzerain was possibly still on the throne and the campaign may have been undertaken on his behalf. Up to this time the Maukharis and the Later Guptas lived in friendship, which later on turned into enmity.⁶

⁴ *supra*. pp. 217-8.

⁵ *supra*, p. 209.

⁶ For the later history of the dynasty, after Jīvitagupta, *vide, infra*, Ch. viii.

CHAPTER VIII

THE AGE OF THE MAUKHARIS

I

THE MAUKHARI EMPIRE

The Gupta dynasty came to an end in c. 551 A.D. and the next landmark in the history of North India, as already stated, is furnished by the Haraha inscription of 554 A.D. showing that the Maukhari Iśānavarman had become the mahārājādhirāja. Iśānavarman had to face stubborn opposition from the Later Gupta kings, though there is no reason to think that the struggle between the two dynasties was long-continued one. Some modern scholars refer to the following opinion of Cunningham as showing the antagonism between the two dynasties. The great Indologist observed: "As a curious proof of the antagonism between the Guptas and the Maukharis, I may cite the fact that on the coins of the Maukharis king has his face turned to the left, in the opposite direction to that of the Gupta kings".¹ Cunningham made the remark as he worked under the impression that the Later Guptas were a branch of the Imperial Guptas, and, as the Nalanda seal of Viṣṇu had then not been discovered, he included the Candrāditya and other coins in the issues of the Later Gupta monarchs. That the theory does not hold good at present is apparent from the fact that in the Lucknow Museum we have a coin of the Maukhari Sarvavarman wherein the face of the king is really turned to the right, and further as we have but one coin of Dāmodaragupta, among the Later Gupta kings,² any definite inference can hardly be made from the same. The coin, however, has got a different significance which we shall discuss later on.

As already stated, the Haraha inscription informs us that while yet a crown-prince Iśānavarman conquered the Āndhras, the Śūlikas and the Vaṅgas. From the nature of the description it appears that the epigraph only gives an account of the enemies conquered by the Maukhari lord at the different extremities of the empire. The Āndhra king defeated by Iśānavarman may have been a member of the Viṣṇukundin family,³ while the Vaṅgas

¹ Cunningham, *ASIR*, vol. xvi. p. 81; *JRAS*, 1906, pp. 849-50.

² *ib.*

³ Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri thinks that the Andhra king was probably Mādhavarman I of the Polamuru plates belonging to the Viṣṇukundin family, who "crossed the river Godāvarī with the desire to conquer the

seem to refer to the dynasty founded by mahārājādhirāja Gopacandra. The identification of the Śūlikas is far from certain.⁴ In the *Purāṇas* the Śūlikas are described as living in the northern and the north-western division. Dr. Raychaudhuri thinks that they “were probably the Chālukyas”, and adds the following note: “In the *Bṛihat-Saṃhitā*, ix. 15; xiv. 8, the Śūlikas and Saulikas are associated with Aparāṇṭa (North Konkan), Vanavāsī (Kanara) and Vidarbha (Berar). In *Bṛih. Saṃ.*, ix. 21, xx. 7, xvi. 35, however, they are associated with Gandhāra and Vokkāna (Wakhan). A branch of the people may have dwelt in the north-west. In *JRAS*, 1912, 128 we have a reference to Kulastambha of the Śūlki family. Tārānātha (*Ind. Ant.* iv, 364) places the kingdom of ‘Śulik’ beyond ‘Togara’ (Ter in the Deccan?).”⁵

From the above note it is clear that the Śūlikas extended from the Central Asia to the Maharaṣṭra region. Dr. P. C. Bagchi has shown that *śūlika* is the name of a special branch of the Paiśācī Prākṛit,⁶ and hence it is clear that the tribes using the language occupied a very wide area. It is not unlikely that the Śūlikas mentioned in the Haraha record were such a tribe and occupied the North-Western region inasmuch as in verse 11 of the Apsad record it is clearly hinted, as we shall see presently,

eastern region” and performed eleven horse sacrifices. (*PHAI*, p. 602); Sircar, *Suc. Sat.*, p. 127: “This identification suits well the chronology we have adopted in these pages. It may not be impossible that the eastern expedition of Mādhavarman I was undertaken in retaliation to his previous unsuccessful struggle with the Maukharis. This supposition is supported by the fact that a victory over the Āndhras is alluded to in the Jaunpur inscription of Iśvaravarman, father of Iśānavarman Maukhari”. It is difficult to agree with Dr. Sircar, for, as it has been shown in *Appendix III* supra, the Jaunpur record refers to the same incident as mentioned in the Haraha inscription. Tripathi suggests that “the lord of the Āndhras” may be either Indravarman or Vikramendravarman. (*HK*, p. 40).

⁴ *VGA*, p. 20.

⁵ Raychaudhuri, *PHAI*, p. 602, f.n. 5. Pires, following Father Heras (*JAHRS*, I, pp. 130-1), identifies the Śūlikas with Colas. These scholars rely on the evidence of the Tamil work, *Kalīṅgattupparani* by Jayagondān, which, according to Aravamuthan (*The Kāveri, Maukhari and the Sangam Age*, p. 14f), narrates the circumstances which led to the victory of Kārīkāla over the Mukari, which has been identified with the Maukharis. It is supposed by Pires that Iśānavarman took revenge for this defeat. (*The Maukharis*, p. 80). The equation Mukari = Maukhari is hardly tenable one. As Tripathi points out Mukari was evidently the name of a place on the banks of the river Kāveri. (*HK*, p. 41, f.n. 5). We cannot agree with Dr. Tripathi that Kīrtivarman I was defeated by Iśānavarman, for the evidence of the Mahākūṭa inscription can only be taken with some amount of reservation. (*infra* p. 230).

⁶ *JDL*, xxi. pp. 1-10.

that Išānavarman defeated the Hūṇas as well. The Hūṇas occupied in the second half of the sixth century A.D. the region where the Paisācī Prākṛit had been in vogue, and thus therefore they may be identified with the Śūlikas of the Haraha record. This identification is indirectly supported by other considerations as well. The Haraha record, as already stated, gives evidently the names of the enemies of the Maukharis on the different frontiers of their kingdom. The Vaṅgas lived to the east, the Āndhras to the south and hence the other enemy, the Śūlikas, evidently lived to the west or north of the Maukhari dominion. Their identification with the Hūṇas satisfies the required condition.

It is difficult to determine exactly how far the empire of Išānavarman extended in the east. The Sirpur Stone inscription of Mahāśivagupta describes one Sūryavarman, as "born in the unblemished family of the Varmans great on account of their supremacy over Magadha". This Sūryavarman has been identified with the prince of the same name, the son of Išānavarman as mentioned in the Haraha record.⁷ This shows that Magadha passed under the Maukharis possibly during the time of Išānavarman, and thus evidently the Later Guptas were reduced to a subordinate position. The Later Guptas, however, tried to free themselves of the yoke of servitude, and thus the Apsad inscription states that Kumāragupta, son of Jivitagupta I, defeated Išānavarman, and advanced as far as Prayāga, where he entered into fire, "kindled with dry cow-dung ashes". Evidently Kumāragupta died immediately after his victory against Išānavarman, at the battlefield of Prayāga. Kumāragupta's son Dāmodaragupta came to the throne after this catastrophe and issued coins with his face turned to the right, in the opposite direction to that of the Maukhari kings as represented on the coins of the latter. This independence was, however, very short one, for the Apsad record states that the Later Gupta king "breaking up the proudly stepping array of mighty elephants belonging to the Maukhari, which had thrown aloft in battle the troops of the Hūṇas (in

⁷ *Ep. Ind.*, xi. pp. 185f. In *Ep. Ind.*, xxiv, p. 283, A. Ghose observes: "Attempts have been made to identify this Sūryavarman with the king of that name mentioned in a Sirpur inscription, in which Sūryavarman figures as a Varman king of Magadha and as the father-in-law of Harṣagupta, the nephew of Mahāśiva Tivara of Southern Kośala. But the Maukharis of the line of Harivarman are nowhere mentioned as a characteristically Magadhan dynasty, their capital being Kanauj. Moreover, a detailed palaeographical examination of the inscriptions of the Kośalān Pāṇḍavas leads us to place Tivara at a date much later than A.D. 554 to which year the Haraha inscription belongs". For a criticism of this theory, see Sircar, *JRASBL*, xi. p. 72.

order to trample them to death), he became unconscious (and expired in the fight)" (*verse*, 11).⁸

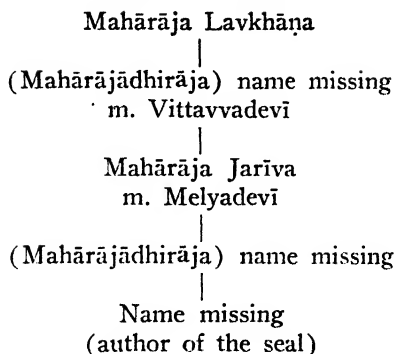
The question now arises,—who was this Maukhari defeated by Dāmodaragupta? It is generally believed that as Dāmodaragupta was the fifth Later Gupta king, he was a contemporary of Sarvavarman, the fifth Maukhari ruler, since both the dynasties started about the same time.⁹ Dr. D. C. Sircar, however, observes: "Apparently Iśānavarman, who is mentioned by name in v. 8 above (Aphsad inscription) has here (v. 11) been naturally referred to by his dynastic appellation. There is no reason to believe that Sarvavarman is here indicated. At least the suggestion does not appear to be quite in keeping with the spirit of the language of the record. The Maukharis possibly fought with the Hūnas as feudatories of Bālāditya of the Imperial Gupta family".¹⁰ Dr Sircar's interpretation of v. 11 is really commendable one, but we cannot accept his view regarding the Hūna-Maukhari struggle. The language of the verse clearly shows that the credit for defeating the Hūnas is ascribed to the Maukhari, i.e., Iśānavarman, who could hardly have fought as a subordinate under Bālāditya who ruled before 532 A.D. The verse thus describes a double achievement for the Maukhari ruler, *first*, the defeat of Dāmodaragupta, and *secondly*, the defeat of the Hūnas or the Epthalites. (cf. the Śūlikas mentioned in the Haraha record as noted above). As a result of this victory, the Maukhari hold over Magadha became firm one, and it continued at least for two more generations as proved by the evidence of the Deo-Baranark record.

The history of the Epthalites after Mihirakula is extremely obscure one, excepting a few mere references here and there about them. Dr. Hirananda Śāstrī's *Nalanda and its Epigraphic Materials* contains the account of two fragmentary seals giving the genealogy of a ruler, whose name is missing, and to which our attention has been drawn by Sri A. Ghose in *IHQ*, vol. xix. pp. 188-89, wherein we find the names of rulers who were known from the coins to have belonged to the Epthalite stock. The genealogy is as follows:

⁸ Dr. Basak rightly thinks that Dāmodaragupta was defeated in the battle (*HNI*, p. 123). K. C. Chattopadhyaya interprets the passage to mean that Dāmodaragupta fell in swoon but later on regained his consciousness (D. R. Bhandarkar Volume, pp. 181ff). Dr. Sircar has controverted this interpretation, and, by quoting parallel passages from other Sanskrit works, has shown that the passage of the Aphsad record really refers to the death of Dāmodaragupta (*JRASBL*, xi. p. 70, f.n.).

⁹ Tripathi, *HK*, pp. 44f; Pires, *The Maukharis*, pp. 90f.

¹⁰ *JRASBL*, xi. p. 70, f.n. 4.



It is really curious that while there are names of the mahārājas preserved in the epigraph, the names of the mahārājādhirājas are missing. The designations show, at any rate, that the dynasty had been passing through very troublesome phase often losing its independent status. In any case, "the probable identity of Lavkhāṇa and Jarīva of the Nalanda seals with the Hūṇa Lakhāṇa and Jarī of the coins cannot be overlooked especially as the paleography of the seals and coins would indicate the same period for them". This seems to indicate that here we have probably the genealogy of the Hūṇa dynasty that ruled after Mihirakula. If, again, we consider the fact that Lakhkhāṇa Narendrāditya of the *Rājatarāṅginī* may be identified with the Lakkhāṇa Udayāditya of the coins, as suggested by Stein, and note the fact at the same time that Kalhana's narrative is often confusing before the history of the Kārkoṭa dynasty, we may possibly hold that the dynasty in question may have been in existence in the period with which we are dealing here. In the second part of the sixth century, again, the Hūṇas had to court defeat at the hands of Iśānavarman and Prabhākaravardhana of Thānesvar (*infra* p. 235) and this tallies with the alternate designations of mahārājādhirāja and mahārāja attributed to the kings. If the above suggestion be correct, then we may assume that Iśānavarman defeated some member of the above dynasty.¹¹

¹¹ Iśānavarman issued some coins bearing dates the reading of which, however, is very uncertain. Rapson says: "There is some doubt as to the reading of these dates; and the era to which they should be referred is altogether doubtful". (*Indian Coins*, p. 27). Rapson reads the dates as 54,55; Burn as 4x; Brown as xx5; Cunningham as 55 or 185 or 257; and Smith as 54. It is thus difficult to come to any definite conclusion from these divergent readings. Again, as some of the dates are in two figures and others in three "they must evidently refer to two distinct eras". (*HK*, p. 59). But as already stated no definite conclusion is possible on the

As we have already seen, a son of Išānavarman named Sūryavarman is mentioned in the Haraha record, but the Asirgadh and the Nalanda seals show that the Maukhari mahārājādhirāja was succeeded on the throne by Sarvavarman. Sūryavarman may have been a younger brother of Sarvavarman, or, if older, died during the life-time of his father. From the evidence of the Deo-Barnark inscription, it is clear that Sarvavarman maintained his hold over the Magadha region, or, in other words, he kept the Later Guptas under subordination. The Barah grant of Bhoja I Pratihāra shows that his sway extended over the Bundelkhand region. His seal found at Asirgadh may not have thus been carried to that place, as some scholars think, but may have been originally issued there. Thus we may agree with Aravamuthan that Asirgadh (Nimar Dist. M.P.) was a "Maukhari outpost in the Deccan".¹² The outpost was possibly created by Sarvavarman to keep a guard against the rising Cālukya power.¹³

The Nalanda seal shows that Sarvavarman was succeeded by his son mahārājādhirāja Avantivarman.¹⁴ As his son Grahavarman, mentioned in the *Harṣacarita*, ruled for a very brief period only being murdered by the wicked lord of Malwa in c. 606 A.D. (*infra*),¹⁵ we may assume that Avantivarman ruled from c. 585 to c. 604 A.D. His reign thus witnessed events of far-reaching importance which led to the dissolution of the Maukhari empire. First of all we should note the fact that he was evidently a contemporary of the Later Gupta king Mahāsenagupta, son of Dāmodaragupta, proved by the fact that Mahāsenagupta's sons were contemporaries of king Harṣavardhana (606-647 A.D.). Now, speaking of Mahāsenagupta, the Apsad matter. For the theory that all these dates should be referred to the Gupta era provided only in case of the dates with two digits, we should "supply the hundred's digit which is missing by the figure 2", see Pires, *loc. cit.* pp. 163ff.

¹² Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age*, p. 97.

¹³ The Nirmand (Kangra dist., Punjab) inscription speaks of a grant of mahārāja Sarvavarman (*Corpus*, iii. pp. 286-91), who has been identified by Aravamuthan (*loc. cit.* p. 93) with the Maukhari king of the same name, on the ground that the latter "had been able to extend his dominions so far west in the course of his wars with the Hunas". As we have already stated, passage 11 of the Apsad record shows that Išānavarman and not Sarvavarman defeated the Hūnas, and hence it is difficult to accept the identification suggested by Aravamuthan. For a discussion of the record, *infra*, Ch. ix; also *HK*, pp. 54f.

¹⁴ *Ep. Ind.*, xxiv. p. 283.

¹⁵ Dr. R. C. Majumdar, however, thinks "it is very doubtful whether Grahavarman ever sat on the Maukhari throne". (*HB*, p. 65). The account of Bāṇa, as we shall see later on, clearly indicates, however, that Grahavarman was a king and at the time of his marriage with Rājyaśrī his father Avantivarman was dead... *infra*, p. 236.

record states that the fame of the mighty king marked with honour of victory in the war over the illustrious Susthitavarman "is constantly sung on the banks of the river Lohitya".

Susthitavarman was evidently the king of Kāmarūpa and the father of Bhaskaravarman,¹⁶ the ally of Harṣa. It has already been shown that the dynasty was rising in importance and Mahābhūtiavarman or Śrī Bhūtiavarman performed a horse-sacrifice and possibly put an end to the rule of the Imperial Guptas in North Bengal. Bhūtiavarman's grandson, Sthitavarman, is described in the Nalanda seals as the performer of two horse-sacrifices, while the latter's son, Susthitavarman takes the title of mahārājādhirāja. He was defeated by the Later Gupta king Mahāsenagupta, as stated above, and there is possibly also a hint of it in the Nidhanpur record which states that Susthitavarman "*gave away the goddess of royal fortune, like the earth to supplicants*". (v. 19).

We have now to discuss two questions—*first*, if Mahāsenagupta extended his power from Magadha to Kāmarūpa, why did he not adopt the title of mahārājādhirāja? and, *secondly*, who was ruling at this time in the Vaṅga-Samataṭa region, for Mahāsenagupta must have passed through this territory while marching against the king of Kāmarūpa?

It has been shown that the Later Guptas became subordinate rulers under the Maukharis, though during the reign of Iśānavarman they made two abortive attempts to make themselves free and independent. In the time of Sarvavarman, we find that the Later Guptas created no trouble, or, in other words, there was now friendship between the two dynasties which characterised their relationship in the earlier period. The fact that Mahāsenagupta's sons lived in the court of Thānesvar at a later period, and the Thānesvar king at the same time entered into a matrimonial relationship with Avantivarman's son Grahavarman (*infra*), also points to the same fact. Thus Mahāsenagupta evidently carried the conquest up to the river Lauhitya, on behalf of his suzerain Avantivarman, and this can only explain why the Later Gupta king has not been adorned with the title of mahārājādhirāja in the epigraphic record.¹⁷

¹⁶ Dr. R. K. Mookerjee thinks that Susthitavarman was a Maukhari king. (Harsa, p. 25, f.n. 1). R. D. Banerjee proved that the view is wrong and that Susthitavarman was a Kāmarūpa monarch. (JBORS, xiv. p. 255). Though, Dr. Mookerjee challenged the view (JBORS, xv. pp. 252ff), scholars now generally think that Susthitavarman is identical with the Kāmarūpa king of the same name, the father of Bhāskaravarman.

¹⁷ The Madhuvan grant (Ep. Ind. i. pp. 72f) and the Sonpat seal

It is difficult to determine who was the reigning monarch of the Vaṅga-Samataṭa region about this time. We have already seen that a new dynasty came into existence in this region about 510 A.D., and as it consisted of three kings at least—Gopacandra, Dharmāditya and Samācāradeva—the dynasty possibly continued up to the c. 570 A.D.¹⁸

The Vappaghosavata inscription, written in characters of the upright Gupta types of the latter half of the sixth century A.D., discloses the existence of a king named Jayanāga bearing the epithets mahārājādhirāja and paramabhāgavata.¹⁹ The seal of the plate bears an effigy of the goddess Lakṣmī with two elephants on her two sides making the pūrṇābhīṣeka. To him may be attributed the coins bearing the abbreviated name of *Jaya* on the *obv.* and a seated Lakṣmī with an elephant sprinkling water on her on the *rev.*²⁰ The inscription was issued during the king's stay at Kārṇasuvarṇa, when Nārāyaṇabhadra, a sāmanta under him, was carrying on the administration of the Audumbārika viṣaya, identified with the greater part of Birbhum and a part of Murshidabad district. In the *Ārya-Manjūsri-mūla-kalpa*, we get possibly a confused reference to this monarch. While he is placed in one place after Śaśāṅka, the Tibetan version of the text speaks of Jaya (the great serpent = Nāga) followed by Keśarī "who in his turn was followed by Śaśāṅka (Somākhyā)".²¹ The palaeographical evidence of the Vappaghosavata record is strongly in favour of placing the king in the latter part of the seventh century A.D.²²

(*Corpus*, iii. 232) of Harṣa speaks of Mahāsenaguptādevī as the mother of Prabhākaravardhan, father of Harṣa. Mahāsenaguptādevī was evidently a sister of the Later Gupta king Mahāsenagupta, and from this it has been inferred that "the Pushyabhuti alliance of Mahāsenagupta was probably due to his fear of the rising power of the Maukharis. The policy was eminently successful, and during his reign we do not hear of any struggle with that family". (*PHAI*, pp. 606-7). This theory is evidently based on the notion that there was a long-continued rivalry between the Maukharis and the Later Guptas. As we have tried to show, the fact was otherwise, the struggle being confined only to the reign of Iśānavarman.

¹⁸ *supra*, pp. 207-8.

¹⁹ *Ep. Ind.*, xviii, pp. 60ff; xix, pp. 286ff.

²⁰ Allan, *loc. cit.*, lxi, civ, pp. 150-1. Allan restores the name on the coin as Jaya-gupta. cf. *DKM*, p. 222.

²¹ *AMMK* ed. Jayaswal, pp. 61, 66. Jayaswal reads Nagarāja in place of Nāgarāja and considers the former to be a member of the Bhāraśiva dynasty. (*loc. cit.*, p. 51).

²² In *HB*, pp. 79f, Jayanāga is placed after Śaśāṅka. As we shall see later on, sometimes after the death of Śaśāṅka, Bihar and Bengal was partitioned by Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman, and thus there appears to be no place for a mahārājādhirāja having sway over Kārṇasuvarṇa. *infra*, *SHAIB*, pp. 256-7.

It is not known exactly whether Jayanāga's authority extended over any portion of the Eastern Bengal, but this much appears to be certain that as a result of Mahāsenagupta's conquest his empire came to an end. Thus under Avantivarman, the Maukhari empire reached at its height. But it was during his reign also that North India was attacked from different directions, which brought a chaos ultimately reducing the Maukharis to a petty local dynasty.

Sometimes between 581 and 600 A.D., the different hill tribes of Tibet were united under Tsong-tsang who led a victorious campaign to Central India, a term used by the Chinese and the Tibetans to denote the U.P. and Bihar.²³ The Tibetan invasion possibly came through the Nepal route,²⁴ for we find that about this time there were some political changes in that country also paving the way for the rise of Aṃśuvarman, whose daughter was married to the son of the Tibetan monarch. Ma-twan-lin says that at the time of Tsong-tsang's death c. 620 A.D., his kingdom extended to the borders of India (*Petech*). This shows that Tsong-tsang simply led predatory raids in Central India leading to no permanent conquests.²⁵

The Kalacuris led another invasion from the south-western direction and in the year 595 A.D. Ujjayinī passed under the possession of the Kalacuri king Saṃkaragaṇa. It has been inferred that the term Kalacuri is derived from the Turkish word Kulucur meaning an office of high rank, and that the Kalacuris were originally a foreign tribe that entered India at the time of the Epthalite invasion.²⁶ Possibly when Toramāna and his son Mihirakula occupied the Gwalior region, the tribe entered into their service and settled in the Anūpa country. Later on, when they were Indianised, they claimed descent from the Haihaya king Arjuna, son of Kṛtavīrya, the traditional hero and ruler of the Māhiṣmatī region, as proved by the preambles of their records. From the epigraphic texts, we learn the existence of three Kalacuri kings, Kṛṣṇarāja, his son Saṃkaragaṇa and the latter's son Buddharāja. The Abhona record of Saṃkaragaṇa was issued from the king's victorious camp at Ujjayinī in 595 A.D., showing that the Western Malwa had been conquered possibly in that year by the Kalacuris.²⁷ This conquest evidently produced a turmoil

²³ *HB*, pp. 91-3; *JGIS*, iii (1941), p. 92.

²⁴ For an account of the Nepal route, Bagchi, *India and China*, p. 21.

²⁵ *Petech*, *The Chronicles of Ladakh*, pp. 30-39.

²⁶ *PIHC*, 1943, p. 44.

²⁷ For the Kalacuris, *AHD*, p. 82; *The Classical Age*, pp. 194ff.

in the Avanti region, where, the Later Guptas, disturbed by the Tibetan invasion, carved out a principality of their own.

Some scholars think that about this time the eastern part of North India was invaded by the Cālukya king Kirtivarman I. According to the Mahākūṭa Pillar inscription, Kirtivarman I defeated the kings of Vaṅga, Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Vattura, Magadha, Madraka, Kerala, Gaṅga, Muṣaka, Pāṇḍya, Dramila, Coliya, Āluka and Vaijayantī.²⁸ As Kirtivarman's reign came to an end in 597-8 A.D., it has been presumed that he possibly made the conquests of Vaṅga, Aṅga, Magadha etc. in the last quarter of the sixth century A.D.²⁹ Dr. Tripathi interprets the account in a different way, stating that "probably in their northward progress they (the Cālukyas) came into conflict with Iśānavarman, and suffered a defeat at his hands".³⁰ It appears to be unnecessary to build any hypothesis on the evidence of the Mahākūṭa inscription, for we find that in the Aihole inscription of his son Kirtivarman is credited with the conquest of the Nalas, Mauryas and Kadambas only, proving that the account of the Mahākūṭa inscription is exaggerated one.

II

ON THE EVE OF HARṢA'S RISE

The invasions of North India from different directions, as already stated, brought a tremendous change in the political condition of the land. In Eastern India, there arose a new power in the person of Śaśāṅka whose existence is disclosed to us by a number of epigraphic records, the *Harṣacarita*, the *Si-yu-ki* and the *She-kia-fang-che*. From the seal-matrix cut in the rock of the hill-fort of Rhotasgarh bearing the legend 'Śrī-mahā-sāmanta Śaśāṅkadēvasya', i.e., 'of the illustrious great vassal Śaśāṅka',³¹ it has generally been inferred that Śaśāṅka began his life as a subordinate ruler possibly under Avantivarman or Mahā-senagupta.³² But as the *She-kia-fang-che* states explicitly that

²⁸ *IA*, xix. p. 7.

²⁹ *HB*, p. 54.

³⁰ Tripathi, *HK*, p. 42.

³¹ *Corpus*, iii. p. 284.

³² *IIIQ*, xii. p. 457; *HB*, p. 59; *DKM*, pp. 222-3. R. D. Banerjee thinks that Śaśāṅka belonged to the Later Gupta dynasty of Magadha (*History of Orissa*, i. p. 129), while it has been pointed out (*Ep. Ind.*, i. p. 70) that one of the manuscripts of *Harṣacarita* names the king of Gauḍa as Narendragupta. The fact that Śaśāṅka has always been described as a Gauḍa or 'vile Gauḍa' in the *Harṣacarita* shows that his original home

Śaśāṅka was defeated by Harṣa, the history of this monarch needs to be entirely rewritten, and it is not unlikely that the Rhotasgarh seal-matrix was executed when Śaśāṅka became a subordinate ruler under the great Vardhana emperor.

Till lately, we knew only one other inscription, the Ganjam C.P. of 619 A.D., in which mahāsāmanta Sainyabhīta Mādhavarman of the Śailodbhava dynasty, associated with the Koṅḍomaṇḍala of the Madras Presidency, acknowledges the supremacy of mahārājādhirāja Śrī-Śaśāṅka.³³ But fortunately we are now in possession of three more plates throwing fresh light on his reign, and they need a critical study. These plates are:

- (a) the Doobi C. P. of Bhāskaravarman, ed. P. D. Chaudhury in *JARS*, vol. xii, pp. 16-33, and D. C. Sircar, *IHQ*, vol. xxvi, pp. 241-6.
- (b) two C.P.s of Śaśāṅka from Midnapur, ed. R. C. Majumdar, *JRASB*, Letters, vol. xi. pp. 1-9.

The Doobi records inform us that Supraṭiṣṭhitavarman and Bhāskaravarman, the sons of the Kāmarūpa king Susthitavarman, who according to the Aphsad inscription was defeated by the Later Gupta king Mahāsenagupta (*supra*), had to face an invasion by a Gauḍa monarch, and "in spite of their brave resistance, alas, the two brothers were completely covered with the striking arms of the enemies, and that, when as a result of that both of them fell into swoon, they were encircled by the fierce elephants of the Gauḍa army and were captured by the enemies".³⁴ From the account we may infer further that "they had been carried away as prisoners by the Gauḍa army and that after some time the Gauḍa king re-instated them in the rule of Kāmarūpa as his subordinate allies".³⁵

The question now arises, who was the Gauḍa king? P. D. Chaudhury thinks that "this invading army belonged to Mahāsenagupta". Dr. D. C. Sircar observes: "The king of Gauḍa who led or sent the expedition against Kāmarūpa after Susthitavarman's death may have been Śaśāṅka himself (who is known to have been on the throne in 605-6 A.D.) or Śaśāṅka's immediate predecessor on the throne of Karnaśuvarṇa".³⁶

was in Bengal, while there is no evidence to prove that the line of Kṛṣṇagupta also belonged originally to that province. For some other theories which, however, appear to be untenable, see, *JARS*, ii. p. 12; *JAHRS*, x. pp. 1ff.

³³ *Ep. Ind.*, vi. p. 141.

³⁴ *IHQ*, xxvi. p. 245.

³⁵ *ib.*

³⁶ *ib.*, p. 246.

Bhāskaravarman, as we shall see later on, outlived Harṣa who died in 647 A.D. and entered into an alliance with the Var dhana monarch in 606 A.D. As he thus ruled for more than 40 years, he may have been a man of quite tender age when Śaśāṅka came to power sometimes before 606 A.D. As we have already said the Tibetan invasion under Tsrong-tsang after 581 A.D., paved the way for the rise of Śaśāṅka, and had Bhāskaravarman been in power about this time, say c. 590 A.D., then we have to assume that he ruled for nearly 60 years, which though not impossible is not always probable. Again, had Mahāsenagupta captured the Kāmarūpa princes, we may expect that this would have been mentioned in the Aphsad inscription which only speaks of his exploits against their father, Susthitavarman. The silence of the record over this affair speaks for itself. Further, the Doobi records state that the invader was a Gauḍa monarch, while Mahāsenagupta has never been described as such in any of the records. This leads to the only conclusion that the invader was Śaśāṅka, and this explains further why Bhāskaravarman entered into an alliance with Harṣa in 606 A.D., when the latter was on his march against the Gauḍa king. (*infra*).

While editing the two Midnapore plates, Dr. Majumdar remarked that the dates of both are uncertain, and in Pl. no. i. "we may provisionally read the year as 309 or 19. In the former case, it has to be referred to the Gupta era and the date would be equivalent to 629 A.D. But the latter is more probable and we may regard the record as dated in the 19th year".³⁷ As regards Pl. no. ii, he says: "In spite of all appearances to the contrary, we may therefore, provisionally read the whole as *samvat 8*",³⁸ and on the strength of this assumption the conquest of the southern region (Midnapore, Orissa etc.) is placed between 580 and 605 A.D. Now in both the plates, Śaśāṅka is described as: "*Śrī-Śaśāṅka mahīm = pati catur-jjaladhi-mekhalām*" i.e., "while the illustrious Śaśāṅka is protecting the earth,—whose girdle is formed by the four oceans". We may note here the fact that while in the Ganjam C. P. of 619 A.D., Śaśāṅka is described as mahārājādhirāja, in the above plates he is given the simple honorific of Śrī, which is usually a subordinate designation. Can we infer from it that the plates were issued after Śaśāṅka became a subordinate ruler under Harṣa (*infra*. ch. ix)? or, is it a case of scribe's negligence? If we accept the first alternative, which

³⁷ JRASBL, xi. p. 3.

³⁸ *ib.*

appears to be more probable, then we would prefer the date 629 A.D., because, as we shall see later on, Harṣa possibly reduced Śaśāṅka under submission sometimes between 618 and 626 A.D. The plates, at any rate, show that Śaśāṅka's suzerainty extended over the Utkala-deśa.

The above two plates combined with the Ganjam record prove that Śaśāṅka's sway extended in the south as far as Ganjam. The Doobi plates, on the other hand, show that at least for some times the kingdom of Kāmarūpa was a tributary under him.

The *Si-yu-ki* has preserved an account of this king which shows that he was a devout Śaiva, an anti-Buddhist and that his authority extended over Bihar as well. The account runs thus:

"In recent times king Śaśāṅka having tried in vain to efface the footprints (of Lord Buddha at the old relic-top at Pāṭaliputra) caused the stone to be thrown into the Ganges, but it returned to its original place".³⁹

"In recent times, Śaśāṅka, the enemy and oppressor of Buddhism, cut down the Bodhi-Tree, destroyed its roots down to the water, and burned what had remained", and further he made an abortive attempt "to have the image (of Lord Buddha at Bodh-Gaya) removed and replaced by one of Śiva. Again, while giving an account of Kuśinagara, it is stated that 'by Śaśāṅka's extermination of Buddhism the groups of brethren were all broken up to the great distress of the brāhmin'".⁴⁰

Thus Śaśāṅka's authority extended practically over the whole of the province of Bihar. Dr. R. C. Majumdar says that "there is hardly any doubt that both Northern and Western Bengal were included in the dominions of Śaśāṅka".⁴¹ Tradition connects his name with a place in the Bogra district.⁴² In the *Harṣacarita*, Śaśāṅka has been described as '*vile-Gauḍa*', while according to the *Trikāṇḍaśeṣa*, "Varendri and Gauḍa were integral portions of Puṇḍravardhana".⁴³ This may be taken as an indirect proof of Śaśāṅka's hold over North Bengal.

But this leads to another question. If Gauḍa may be identified with the present district of Maldah in North Bengal, and, as in the *Harṣacarita*, Śaśāṅka is invariably called the '*vile-Gauḍa*', can we infer that North Bengal was the original home of Śaśāṅka,

³⁹ Watters, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 92.

⁴⁰ *ib.*, pp. 115, 116, 43.

⁴¹ *HB*, p. 60.

⁴² Ettinghausen, *Harṣavardhana*, p. 42, f.n. 2.

⁴³ *SHĀIB*, p. 110.

and from this base he extended his power in different directions, and later on made Karnasuvarṇa, identified with the present Rangamati, in the Murshidabad district of West Bengal, his capital? This goes against the theory of those who assign the Rhotasgarh seal to the early period of Śaśāṅka's career and think that he was originally a subordinate ruler in Bihar.

Dr. R. C. Majumdar is not inclined to think that Śaśāṅka was anti-Buddhist. Thus he says: "But how far the acts of oppression, charged by Hiuen Tsang against Śaśāṅka, can be regarded as historically true, it is difficult to say. At present it rests upon the sole evidence of the Buddhist writers who cannot, by any means, be regarded as unbiased or unprejudiced, at least in any matter which either concerned Śaśāṅka or adversely affected Buddhism".⁴⁴

While thus as a result of the foreign inroads, Śaśāṅka was coming to the forefront in Eastern India, in the west the house of Thānesvar was coming to prominence. This is clearly proved by the fact that while in the inscriptions, Prabhākaravardhana, the father of Harṣa, is given the title of mahārājādhirāja, the latter's ancestors are given the simpler designation of mahārāja.⁴⁵ In the *Harṣacarita* also, Bāṇa after giving an account of Puṣpa-bhūti, the founder of the dynasty, begins his narrative with Prabhākaravardhana, ignoring his predecessors altogether, pointing clearly to the fact that he was the first really important member of the house.⁴⁶ For Prabhākaravardhana's achievements our only source is the work of Bāṇa, and it is really curious that scholars have implicitly followed the account, without ascertaining its real historical value, even taking the court-scenes, coming of messengers etc., as facts of sober history.⁴⁷ In *verse* 18 of his *Introduction*, Bāṇa says: "The mighty deeds of my great king, which fill my heart, though remembered only, restrain my tongue and forbid it to proceed to the poet's task".⁴⁸ Thus Bāṇa wrote his work from his memory and hence it cannot be regarded as solely authentic. Indeed, "historically we may say that the work is of minimal value, though in our paucity of actual records, it is something even to have this".⁴⁹ Further, "the gorgeously des-

⁴⁴ *HB*, p. 67.

⁴⁵ Banskhera Copper plate of the year 22 or 628 A.D. (*Ep. Ind.* iv. pp. 208-11); Madhuvan Copper plate of the year 25 or 631 A.D. (*Ep. Ind.* i. pp. 67-75); Sonpat seal (*Corpus*, iii. pp. 231-2); Nālandā seal (*Ep. Ind.* xxi. pp. 74-6).

⁴⁶ *HC*, Trans., pp. 83ff; 101ff.

⁴⁷ Mookerjee, *Harṣa*, Ch. i.

⁴⁸ *cf.* *MC*, Trans., p. 3.

⁴⁹ Keith, *HSL*, p. 318.

criptive and ornamental style leaves little room for the poor thread of actual history".⁵⁰ So we must proceed cautiously.

Regarding Prabhākaravardhana, the work states that he was "a lion to the Hūṇa deer, a burning fever to the king of the Indus land, a trouble to the sleep of the Gurjaras, a bilious plague to the lord of Gandhāra, a looter to the lawlessness of the Lāṭas, and an axe to the creeper of Mālwa's glory".⁵¹ This can hardly mean that Prabhākaravardhana actually conquered all these states; on the contrary, the very nature of the description clearly indicates that he was on hostile terms with them.⁵² The above passage, however, is interesting as it throws light on the political condition of western and north-western India on the eve of Harṣa's rise.

What, however, creates some confusion in the above narrative is the separate mention of Sindhu-deśa (the Indus land) and Gandhāra. Some scholars take Sindhu-deśa to mean the present Sind, but the case seems to be otherwise. As Dr. Raychaudhuri has pointed out: "Yuan Chwang went east from Sin-tu above 900 li and crossing to the east bank of the Indus came to the Mou-lo-shan-pu-lu country. This proves that Sin-tu lay to the west of Mou-lo-shan-pu-lu (Multan), and was situated on the west side of the Indus. The commentator of the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsāyana makes the clear statement '*Saindhavānāmīti; Sindhuvānāmā nadastasya paścimena Sindhudeśastatra bhavānām*'".⁵³ This clearly shows that to the west of Multan, on the other side of the Indus, there were two states with which Prabhākaravardhana came into hostile contact. Yuan Chwang in his *Si-yu-ki* states, however, that the region extending from Gandhāra to Kāpiśa (mod. Ghorband and Panjshir in E. Afghanistan) in the west was under the rule of a kṣatriya prince whose "power extended over more than ten of the neighbouring lands".⁵⁴ Besides Gandhāra (mod. Peshawar, Charsadda and Und) and Kāpiśa, the other districts of this kingdom were Lan-po (mod. Laghman), Na-ka-lo-ho or Nagar (mod. Jelalabad and the valley of the Kabul river) and Fa-la-na or Barana (mod. Bannu). Thus there was only one kingdom to the north-western side of the Indus when the Chinese traveller visited the land in 629 A.D.

⁵⁰ cf. *ib.*, pp. 326ff.

⁵¹ *HC.* Trans., p. 101.

⁵² C. V. Vaidya thinks that these states were conquered and annexed by Prabhākaravardhana (*HMHI*, i. pp. 1ff); see also, Mookerjee, *Harṣa*, p. 11).

⁵³ *PHAI*, p. 620.

⁵⁴ Watters, *loc. cit.*, i. p. 123.

What then is the significance of the statement of Bāṇabhaṭṭa? We have already seen that the White Hūns or the Epthalites overran the North-Western Frontier Province, and about the beginning of the sixth century A.D., they set up an independent kingdom in Gandhāra. Bāṇa possibly refers to this Epthalite Gandhāra kingdom and to the kingdom of the Kuṣāṇas (*Sindhu-deśa*) in the above passage, and this narrative combined with the statements of the Chinese traveller merely shows that sometimes after the period of Prabhākaravardhana but before 629 A.D., the Epthalite kingdom had passed under the rule of the Kuṣāṇas of Kāpiśa. The *Si-yu-ki* also states that in Kan-to-lo or Gandhāra: "The royal family was extinct and the country was subject to Kāpiśa".⁵⁵

Thus the house of Thānesvar was coming into prominence. But where were now the Later Guptas and the Maukharis who played such important parts in the age just preceding? Bāṇabhaṭṭa informs us that a messenger came from Grahavarman, the eldest son of Avantivarman, seeking the hand of the princess Rājyaśrī, the only daughter of Prabhākaravardhana, born c. 593 A.D.,⁵⁶ and the marriage ultimately took place at Thānesvar.⁵⁷ Whether really any such messenger came or not, "the manner in which Bāṇa has described the settlement and actual celebration of the marriage, performed at Thānesvar between Avantivarman's son Grahavarman, and Prabhākaravardhana's daughter Rājyaśrī, clearly indicates that the bridegroom's father was not alive at the time of his son's wedding, and therefore Grahavarman himself sought the hand of the Vardhana princess, through an ambassador, and the marriage-party arrived at the bride's father's court without any guardian to look after the affairs".⁵⁸ The Maukharis were now a declining power; they had lost the eastern part of their empire under the pressure of the foreign invasions and the rise of Śaśāṅka, and hence they naturally wanted an alliance with the rising power of Thānesvar. About the fate of the Later Guptas, there is some confusion in the available sources. As we have already seen, they were ruling in Magadha and the neighbouring regions, and the rise of Śaśāṅka clearly demonstrates the fact that they were no more there, for the older theory that Śaśāṅka began his career as a subordinate ruler holds no more good as

⁵⁵ *ib.*, p. 199.

⁵⁶ Mookerjee, *Harṣa*, pp. 12, 69.

⁵⁷ *HC*. Trons., p. 122.

⁵⁸ Basak, *HNI*, pp. 117-8; *contra*, Tripathi, *HK*, p. 50.

we have already stated. Now, the *Harṣacarita* gives us the following details:

- (i) that Mādhavagupta and Kumāragupta, the two sons of the king of Mālava, were living in the court of Thānesvar;⁵⁹
- (ii) that Prabhākaravardhana was an axe to the creeper of Mālava's glory;⁶⁰
- (iii) that on the very day king Prabhākaravardhana died, the "*wicked lord of Mālava*" attacked and killed Grahavarman, threw Rājyaśrī into the prison at Kānyakubja, and planned to invade Thānesvar itself.⁶¹

If we identify Mādhavagupta, mentioned above, with the son of Mahāsenagupta of the same name as mentioned in the Apsad inscription, then the history of the Later Guptas at this period may be summed up as follows:

As a result of the inroads from outside, Mahāsenagupta left Magadha and carved a kingdom for himself in the Eastern Malwa region, for as the *Jayamaṅgalā* commentary on the *Kāmasūtra* of Vātsāyana informs us, the simple mention of Mālava, without any distinguishing epithet, denotes Eastern Malwa only, while the term Aparā-Mālava denotes Ujjayinī.⁶² Mahāsenagupta died a little after, leaving two sons, Mādhavagupta and Kumāragupta. Harṣa's inscriptions show that Mahāsenaguptā, evidently a sister of Mahāsenagupta, was the mother of Prabhākaravardhana, and it is in this light that we should interpret the later history of the dynasty. What then can be meant by the account of Bāṇa that the sons of Mahāsenagupta were living in the court of Thānesvar, and at the same time Prabhākaravardhana was in enmity with the kingdom of Malwa? Evidently, after the death of Mahāsenagupta, the Mālava kingdom passed in the hand of an usurper, and the rightful claimants to the throne took shelter in the court of Thānesvar. Prabhākaravardhana took up the cause of his cousins and harassed the usurper, who, as soon as the former died, attacked and killed his son-in-law, Grahavarman, and planned to invade Thānesvar itself.

It is difficult to determine in the present state of our knowledge how Mahāsenagupta's reign came to an end, leaving the two princes in their tragic fate. Dr. R. C. Majumdar thinks

⁵⁹ *HC. Trans.*, p. 119.

⁶⁰ *ib.*, p. 101.

⁶¹ *ib.*, p. 173.

⁶² Tripathi, *HK*, p. 46 & f.n. 2.

that as the Maitraka king Śīlāditya I of Valabhī conquered a considerable portion of Western Malwa, and the Kalacuri king Saṅkaragaṇa was also in possession of Ujjayinī, it may be inferred that thus pressed by two powerful enemies Mahāsenagupta lost his hold over Mālava.⁶³ The whole theory hinges on the fact, how should we interpret the word Mālava. Shall we take it in the sense of Eastern Malwa only or the whole of the Malwa country including Ujjayinī as Dr. D. C. Ganguly does? Dr. Ganguly refers to the evidences of the Aihole inscription, a Valabhī record of 639 A.D., the Nilgund inscription and the Baroda plates of Karkarāja of 812 A.D. where the term Mālava has been used in a wider sense to include Aparā-Mālava as well.⁶⁴ On the Later Guptas, Dr. Ganguly's thesis is as follows:

- (i) Mālava was the original home of the Later Guptas;
- (ii) Sometimes during the early part of his reign, Mahāsenagupta had to suffer a terrible disaster in the hand of Kalacuri Saṅkaragaṇa, son of Kṛṣṇarāja. "Mahāsenagupta appears to have been killed in the battle, after which his two sons, Kumāragupta and Mādhvagupta, fled to Thānesvar and took shelter under their relation Prabhākaravardhana of Thānesvar".
- (iii) Buddharāja, son of Saṅkaragaṇa, is the "*wicked lord of Malwa*", referred to in the *Harṣacarita*, who killed Grahavarman.

It has already been shown that Magadha and not Mālava was the original home of the Later Guptas.⁶⁵ Again, the wicked lord of Malwa appears to have been Devagupta who is mentioned in the Madhuban and the Banskhara inscriptions of Harṣa as receiving punishment at the hands of Rājyavardhana. As Dr. Raychaudhuri says if Buddharāja had been the murderer of Grahavarman, "then it is rather surprising that a shadowy figure like Devagupta, and not Buddharāja, would be specially selected in the epigraphic records of the time of Harsha, for prominent notice among 'the kings who resembled wicked horses'".⁶⁶ It is thus quite probable that while Mahāsenagupta migrated to and carved the kingdom for himself in Eastern Malwa, the western part of the country had been under the Kalacuris. There is absolutely no evidence of a struggle between the Kalacuris and the Later Guptas in this age.

⁶³ Majumdar, *The Classical Age*, p. 74.

⁶⁴ JBORS, xix. pp. 399-400.

⁶⁵ *supra*, pp. 202-4.

⁶⁶ PHAI, p. 607, f.n. 3.

As regards the Maitraka king Śīlāditya I of Valabhī, it may be stated that he could not have occupied the Western Malwa region before 609 A.D., for the Sarsavani plate of that date shows clearly that Saṅkaragaṇa's son Buddharāja held sway over that region.⁶⁷ This also shows that the wicked lord of Malwa could not be Buddharāja for the former was killed by Rājyavardhana evidently before 606 A.D., for Harṣa, the youngest brother of Rājyavardhana came to the throne in that year.

As it has been already stated, immediately after the death of Prabhākara-vardhana, the Maukharī prince Grahavarman, the son-in-law of the deceased sovereign, was murdered by the king of Malwa, who imprisoned Rājyaśrī at Kanauj, and planned to invade Thānesvar itself. Rājyavardhana, the eldest brother of Harṣa, who had just succeeded to the throne, marched at once against and killed the king of Malwa, but was himself murdered by Śaśāṅka, the king, of Gauḍa. We need not take into account the various court-scenes etc. as described in the *Harṣacarita*, for they are evidently the product of the poet's own imagination. Now, the epigraphs of Harṣa give us the following account:

"By whom Rājyavardhana plying his whip in battle, Śrī Devagupta and others (*Śrī-Devaguptādayaḥ*)—who resembled wicked horses (*duṣṭa-vāḥina-iva*) were all subdued with averted faces; who after uprooting his enemies, after conquering the earth, and doing what was agreeable to his subjects, in consequence of his adherence to his promise gave up his life in the mansion of his foe".⁶⁸

If we compare this epigraphic account with the statements of Bāṇabhaṭṭa, we find that the poet has missed a significant point. Bāṇa speaks of the defeat of the king of Malwa alone at the hand of Rājyavardhana, while the epigraphs show that Rājyavardhana defeated Śrī Devagupta and other kings, i.e., a confederacy that was pitted against him. That there was such a confederacy really is indirectly clear from other references in the *Harṣacarita* itself. Thus the Senāpati Siṃhanāda advises Harṣa: "Think not, therefore, of the Gauḍa king alone. So deal that. . . . no other follow his example. . . . these mock conquerors, these would be lovers of the whole earth".⁶⁹ Harṣa is also represented as saying: "I swear that unless in a limited number of days I clear the earth of the Gauḍas and make it resound with fetters on the feet of *all*

⁶⁷ For the Maitrakas, *infra*, Ch. ix.

⁶⁸ *Ep. Ind.*, iv, p. 210; i. p. 67.

⁶⁹ *HC. Trans.*, p. 185.

kings who are excited to insolence, then will I hurl my sinful self, like a moth, into an oil-fed flame.".⁷⁰

It may be that Bāṇa has singled out the name of the king of Malwa possibly because he was the leader of this confederacy. So when Bāṇa says that a Mālava king killed Grahavarman and then threw Rājyaśrī into prison at Kānyakubja, the real thing seems to have been that a confederacy of powers killed Grahavarman and imprisoned the widowed queen. As among the kings of this confederacy the name of Devagupta is mentioned only in the epigraphs of Harṣa, he seems to be the Mālava king referred to in the *Harṣacarita*.

In any case, the army of the Mālava king "was routed with ridiculous ease",⁷¹ but Rājyavardhana, according to the *Harṣacarita*, "had been allured to confidence by false civilities on the part of the king of Gauḍa, and then weaponless, confiding and alone despatched in his own quarters".⁷² The commentator of the *Harṣacarita* informs us that Śaśāṅka, the king of Gauḍa, invited Rājyavardhana with the promise of giving his daughter in marriage to him, and while the unlucky king was engaged in his dinner he was treacherously murdered.⁷³

The account, if it is to be believed, clearly shows that Śaśāṅka acted in a most barbarous manner. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, however, observes: "Further details of this incident may be revealed some day by the discovery of fresh evidence, but until then the modern historians might well suspend their judgment and at least refrain from accusing Śaśāṅka of treachery, a charge not brought against him even by the brother of the murdered".⁷⁴

In support of his theory, Dr. Majumdar has scanned the sources thus:

- (a) Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Yuan Chwang were both partisans of Harṣa, while the commentator of the *Harṣacarita*, Saṃkara, lived in the fourteenth century A.D., and as such their statements need not be taken as entirely historical.
- (b) There is, again, great dissimilarities in the details as furnished by the Indian writer and the Chinese pilgrim, while one version of the *Si-yu-ki* makes no allusion to the treachery at all.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ *ib.*, p. 187.

⁷¹ *ib.*, p. 178.

⁷² *ib.*,

⁷³ *IHQ*, xii, p. 462.

⁷⁴ *HB*, p. 75.

⁷⁵ *ib.*, pp. 71ff.

It is thus really difficult to determine how exactly Rājyavardhana was murdered by Śaśāṅka from the evidence of the literary sources only. As the epigraphs state that Rājyavardhana "in consequence to his adherence to his promise gave up his life in the mansion of his foe", we may suspect that Rājyavardhana was killed by Śaśāṅka in the latter's house. There is no reason to believe that Rājyavardhana was defeated by Śaśāṅka and the former either surrendered to the Gauḍa monarch or was taken prisoner in a straight fight.⁷⁶

We do not know exactly what Śaśāṅka did after Rājyavardhana had been killed. Dr. Tripathi thinks that "Thānesvar was deprived of its young ruler, and Kanauj, having lost its sovereign as well as the timely support of the former kingdom, passed under the occupation of the king of Gauḍa, who, in order to divert the attention of Bhaṇḍi or his adversary's army, released Rājyaśrī, the widowed king of Kanauj, from detention in that city".⁷⁷ A little scrutiny would show that Dr. Tripathi's contention is untenable. In the *Harṣacarita*, we have the two following passages throwing light on the history of Kanauj after Rājyavardhana's death:

- (a) Bhaṇḍi, the general, tells Harṣa: "I learnt from common folk that after His Majesty Rājyavardhana was taken to paradise, and Kānyakubja was sieged by the man named *Gupta*, queen Rājyaśrī burst forth from her confinement and with her train entered the Vindhya forest".⁷⁸
- (b) The attendants of Rājyaśrī told Harṣa that "she (Rājyaśrī) was sent away from Kānyakubja, from her confinement there during the Gauḍa trouble, through the action of a noble man named *Gupta*".⁷⁹

The *Gupta* who is given the epithet 'noble' can hardly be identified with the "vile Gauḍa". In some manuscripts, no doubt, in place of "*Guptanāmnā ca gr̥hite Kuśasthale*", we have the reading "*Gauḍair-gr̥hite Kuśasthale*". But if we take the two passages, quoted above, together, the former reading appears to be more probable. Śaśāṅka evidently could not occupy Kanauj, and it is not improbable that after the death of Rājyavardhana, he followed a strategical retreat realising that he was far away from

⁷⁶ R. P. Chanda thinks that Rājyavardhana was killed by Śaśāṅka in a straight fight or that he was killed after he had been defeated or surrendered to the Gauḍa monarch, *Gauḍa-rāja-māla*, pp. 8ff. See also *Vāṅglār Itihāsa*, p. 107. Contra, *HNI*, pp. 144ff; *IHQ*, xii, pp. 462ff.

⁷⁷ Tripathi, *HK*, p. 67.

⁷⁸ *HC*. Trans., p. 224.

⁷⁹ *ib.*, p. 250.

his base. Bāṇabhaṭṭa informs us that Bhāskaravarman, the king of Kāmarūpa, entered into an alliance with Harṣa immediately after the death of the latter's elder brother,⁸⁰ and this induced the Gauḍa king to fall back to his own kingdom, lest it should be attacked from the eastern side. This inference is forced on us by the fact that Harṣa, as we shall see in the next chapter, could not fight the Gauḍa king immediately after the death of his brother, but had to turn to other problems, and this opportunity was evidently created by the voluntary withdrawal of Śaśāṅka.

⁸⁰ *ib.*, p. 218.

CHAPTER IX

THE AGE OF HARṢA

I

A DISCUSSION ON THE CHINESE EVIDENCES

After the death of Rājyavardhana, Harṣa came to the throne of Thānesvar in 606 A.D. For the early career of the monarch, our only source is the work of Bāṇabhaṭṭa, which, however, as we have already stated, has got little historical value. We are informed that immediately after his elder brother was murdered, Harṣa marched with an army against the 'vile Gauḍa', i.e., Śaśāṅka, and on his way met with an envoy from Bhāskaravarman, the king of Kāmarūpa and a formal alliance, as already stated, was concluded between the two sovereigns. The *Harṣacarita* shows that instead of marching against Śaśāṅka any further Harṣa went to the rescue of his sister Rājyaśrī, who after her escape from the prison at Kānyakubja had entered the forest of the Vindhya. The Vindhya is, however, far away from Kanauj, and it is difficult to believe how far the account is authentic. Again, Rājyaśrī was just on the point of committing suicide in the forest, when Harṣa dramatically appeared and rescued her.

Here ends the *Harṣacarita*, which thus practically tells us nothing about the achievements of the Thānesvar monarch, excepting that he made preparations against Śaśāṅka. For further details, we have to turn to the Chinese accounts. A passage in the *Sī-yu-ki* of Yuan Chwang has been the subject of great controversy among the Indologists, and it has been practically rejected as containing little historical truth. In Watters' translation of the work, it runs as follows:

".....as soon as Śilāditya became ruler he got together a great army, and set out to avenge his brother's murder and to reduce the neighbouring countries to subjection. *Proceeding eastwards he invaded the states which had refused allegiance and waged incessant warfare until in six years he had fought the Five-Indias....*(according to other reading.....had brought the Five-Indias under allegiance). Then having enlarged his territory he increased his army.....and *reigned in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon*".¹

¹ Watters, *l.c.* i. p. 343.

Beal gives, however, the following translation of the corresponding passage:

"Having received these instructions he departed and assumed the royal office. He called himself the king's son (Kumāra), his title was Śilāditya.....*He went from east to west subduing all who were not obedientAfter six years he subdued the Five-Indes.* Having thus enlarged his territory, he increased his forces.....*After thirty years his arms reposed, and he governed everywhere in peace*".²

The above two translations are contradictory; for, while according to the first (Watters' translation), Harṣa reigned for *thirty years in peace*, according to the second (Beal's translation) *he fought for thirty years*. The late Dr. P. C. Bagchi, Vice-Chancellor, Visvabharati University, kindly examined for me the original Chinese text, and he was of definite opinion that Watters' version is the correct one.

Drs. Altekar and Tripathi have seriously challenged Watters' version, for according to it Harṣa would make all his wars between 606 and 612 A.D.,³ and then reign in peace up to 642 A.D.; but it is known from other sources that Harṣa had to fight during this period:

- (1) The Aihole inscription of 634 A.D. refers to the defeat of Harṣa by Pulakeśin II. As the event is not mentioned in the Lonera inscription of 630 A.D., it is clear that Harṣa was defeated sometimes after 630 but before 634 A.D.
- (2) The *Life* shows that in 643 A.D. Harṣa returned from his campaign of Koṅgoda. "If Watters' reading be correct, how are we to reconcile this statement of Yuan Chwang with his other informations that Harṣa made an attack on Koṅgoda (Ganjam) region as late as 643 A.D."?⁴

Dr. K. P. Chattopadhyaya is not prepared to accept these criticisms and holds that Harṣa-Pulakeśin war took place before 612 A.D., and the Koṅgoda campaign of 643 A.D. does not go against Watters' translation, for if the thirty years of peace begins

² Beal, *The Records*, i. p. 213.

³ It is generally believed that Harṣa came to the throne in 606 A.D., the initial year of the Harṣa era. For a discussion about the initial year of the Harṣa era, *IHQ*, xxvii, p. 183, p. 321 & *IHQ*, xxviii. The discussions in this book show that the Chinese accounts do not go against the theory of the Harṣa era starting from 606 A.D.

⁴ Tripathi, *HK*, p. 127.

in 612 A.D., it would end in 642 A.D.⁵ The second part of Dr. Chattopadhyaya's theory may readily be accepted, but as regards the first part, based mainly on Fleet's account, there may be some hesitation.

In my humble opinion, however, there would not be any difficulty in accepting the statement of the *Si-yu-ki*, if we interpret it in the full context of the notes left by Yuan Chwang. The *Si-yu-ki*, we know, was composed by some disciples and friends of the Chinese traveller from his notes. On these was composed also the *Life* of Yuan Chwang by his friend and admirer Hui-li. It is also well-known that the *Life* and the *Si-yu-ki* supplement each other.

Now, the statement of Yuan Chwang that Harṣa *fought for six years* and then *ruled for thirty years in peace* means evidently that the last thirty years of the monarch passed off smoothly. Yuan Chwang left India in 643 A.D. when Harṣa was still alive, but he maintained intimate connection with India till his death in 664 A.D. There are Chinese translations of two letters showing examples of correspondence which passed between him and his Indian friends.⁶ Through these letters he must have been aware of the last days of Harṣa.

The composers of the *Si-yu-ki* and the *Life* also knew the last days of the king, inasmuch as the *Life* refers to his death in 654 A.D.⁷ Thus the thirty years of his peaceful career would begin from $654 - 30 = 624$ A.D. Before it, Harṣa spent six years in warfare i.e., his period of war extended from 618 to 624 A.D.

The Chinese historian Ma-twan-lin also speaks of only one period of Harṣa's conquests. His account runs thus:

"In the Wu-te period (in the reign of Kho-at-su) of the T'ang dynasty (618-27) serious disturbances broke out in India. King Si-lo-y-to (Śilāditya) raised a great army and fought with irresistible valour. The men neither took off their own armour nor the elephants their housings. He punished the kings of four parts of India, so that they all with their faces turned towards the north acknowledged his superiority".⁸

Thus we find that our interpretation of the *Si-yu-ki* is confirmed by the evidence of Ma-twan-lin. Watters has pointed out

⁵ *PIHC*, 1939.

⁶ Bagchi, *India and China*, pp. 80-2.

⁷ Beal, *Life*, p. 156.

⁸ *IA*, ix. p. 19.

that Harṣa must have died in c. 647 A.D.⁹ But the followers of the Chinese traveller are in mistake in putting his death 7 years later. It was evidently due to this mistake that in the *Si-yu-ki*, we have an account of 30 years of peace, which, in fact, lasted for 23 years only.

It may be said against the above view that according to the *Si-yu-ki*, Harṣa started on his *dig-vijaya* as soon as he became the ruler, and as the date of this event is 606 A.D. how can we put the beginning of his conquests as late as 618 A.D.? But here we have got to note several facts. The Harṣa era, no doubt, starts from 606 A.D. showing that Harṣa ascended the throne of Thānesvar in that year, but the *Si-yu-ki* states that Harṣa began his conquests after he became the ruler of Kanauj, and there is no proof that Kanauj also passed under him in that very year. We are informed that the statesmen of Kanauj, on the advice of their leading man Bāni or Vāni invited Harṣavardhana to become their sovereign. But Harṣa hesitated and at last consulted Avalokiteśvara who advised him to rule the kingdom, but not to occupy the actual throne and not to use the title of *mahārāja*. "Thereupon, Harṣavardhana became king of Kanauj with the title Rāja-putra and the style *Śilāditya*".¹⁰

While speaking of Kanauj, the *She-kia-fang-che*, on the other hand, gives the following account: "It is the capital of the king of the Five-Indes. His name is She-lo-tu-to. He is of the Fei-sho (Vaiśya) clan. Wishing to establish himself (as king), he prayed to an image of Avalokiteśvara on the bank of the Ganges. The Bodhisattva replied—'You were a lan-jo (Āryanaka) bhikṣu in your past existence. King Śaśāṅka of Kārṇasuvarṇa has destroyed the law of the Buddha. You will make it prosperous and will be merciful when you are king over all the five directions. Don't sit on the Lion-throne and don't call yourself mahārāja. . . . He carried on the administration of the kingdom with the help of his widowed younger sister".¹¹

The Chinese writers have evidently offered us a concocted story showing that the early position of Harṣa in Kanauj was not easy one. After the death of Grahavarman, the place passed through utter confusion. As we have already seen, it came under the occupation of one noble Gupta who released Rājyaśrī from

⁹ Watters, *L.c.* i. p. 347.

¹⁰ *ib.*, p. 343.

¹¹ The Late Dr. P. C. Bagchi kindly gave me his own translation of the above passage of the *She-kia-fang-che*.

the prison. (*supra*, p. 241). The *Harṣacarita* affirms that all the relatives of Grahavarman fled away from Kanauj,¹² while a Nalanda seal shows that Avantivarman had another son named Śrī Suva. . . . After Grahavarman's death, he was naturally the rightful claimant to the throne of Kanauj, and evidently his claim was set aside by Harṣa. To white-wash this illegal act, the Chinese writers have evidently introduced the story of Avalokiteśvara in order to give it a divine sanction. The *She-kia-fang-che* is rather clear on the point showing that he prayed to Avalokiteśvara "wishing to establish himself (as king)".

Thus evidently setting aside the rightful claim of the younger brother of Grahavarman, Harṣa came to power in Kanauj. It is not unlikely, as often the cases are, that there were parties upholding the claim of the deposed prince and this gave trouble to Harṣa. In any case, Harṣa came to power when the kingdom was in confusion and so it is absurd to presume that Harṣa started on his *digvijaya* immediately after his coming to power. On this point, we have to take the evidence of the *Si-yu-ki* in a rather loose sense.

Let us now determine what the *Si-yu-ki* means by the expression that Harṣa "reigned in peace for 30 (23 ?) years without raising a weapon". The Chinese traveller here evidently meant that after six years of warfare, his reign had been peaceful internally, and "the home provinces enjoyed the blessings of the orderly government".¹³ In the subsequent discussions, I shall try to show that all the conquests of Harṣa were made in the period 618-24 A.D., and later he had to meet only the border skirmishes and there was practically no big war in the period. In fact, Harṣa-Pulakeśin war was not concluded about 630-4 A.D., as it is generally believed, and it was in the nature of trial of patience, possibly with no big engagement, and the conquest of Koṅgoda by Harṣa in 642-3 A.D. was a part of this campaign.

II

HARṢA'S CAMPAIGNS IN NORTH INDIA

If the *Si-yu-ki* is to be believed, Harṣa first marched towards the east, evidently against the Gauḍa king Śaśaṅka, the murderer of his brother. While the *Harṣacarita* stops abruptly after giving

¹² *HC. Trans.*, p. 224; Tripathi, *HK*, p. 74.

¹³ Tripathi, *HK*, p. 127.

an account of his preparations against the 'vile Gauḍa', the *Records* are absolutely silent on the point. The *She-kia-fang-che*, however, states: "So the king with Kumārarāja (Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa) destroyed (subdued ?) the heretical king Śaśāṅka, his army and his followers". In another place, while describing Bodh-Gaya, the same work informs us: "In recent times, when king Śaśāṅka destroyed the Bodhi tree, he ordered his ministers to break the image. He then returned to the east. The minister who was a believer raised a brick wall in front of the image and out of fear in his mind left a lamp inside. Outside it, he painted the image of the god Maheśvara. When it was completed he informed the king. When king Śaśāṅka heard about it he was seized with fear, his body got sores, his flesh rotted off and he died after some time. The officer ran to the place, removed the brick wall and although many days have passed the lamp had not extinguished. At present it is kept in a dark chamber".

From the above account it is clear that Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman conjointly attacked Śaśāṅka, who was defeated for the time being, but managed to maintain his existence somehow. The *AMMK* refers to an actual conflict between king Ha i.e., Harṣa and Soma (Śaśāṅka) and states that Soma was defeated "and was forbidden to move out of his country". We are informed further that king Ha or Harṣa was honoured with welcome in the land of the mlecchas i.e., the eastern country and returned home.¹⁴

The Ganjam inscription of 619 A.D. shows that Śaśāṅka was still in power, and if the *She-kia-fang-che* is to be believed, his defeat must have occurred after this date. The high percentage of silver in some of the gold coins of Śaśāṅka seems to show that the Gauḍa king was actually passing through bad days.

From the statement of Ma-twan-lin that Harṣa adopted the title of "King of Magadha" in the year 641 A.D., it has been inferred that Harṣa conquered the eastern region in that year.¹⁵ Now, the Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang who visited the eastern countries in 637 A.D. states that king Śaśāṅka was already dead. On the other hand, according to the *AMMK*, Śaśāṅka's son Mānava ruled for 8 months and 5 days. What then happened to the eastern region?

¹⁴ Jayaswal, p. 50; *Text*, p. 54: The original text runs thus: "Nivar-tayāmāsa Hakārākhya mleccha-rajye mapūjitaḥ". The term 'mapūjita' carries no meaning. Dr. R. G. Basak's translation of it as "not being honoured" (*HNI*, p. 152) does not commend to us. The Tibetan reading 'prapūjita' is, no doubt, the correct form.

¹⁵ *HB*, p. 79.

Yuan Chwang is silent about the government of the different countries of this region, and from these two different conclusions have been made: (i) Dr. Tripathi thinks that at that time it was incorporated within the empire of Harṣa; (ii) Dr. Majumdar infers that it was then in a state of confusion, only Magadha being under the rule of Pūrṇavarman, "the last of the race of Aśoka rāja".¹⁶

As we shall see later on, such silence of the *Si-yu-ki* really means nothing.¹⁷ The Ganjam inscription of 619 A.D. shows Śaśāṅka as the supreme ruler, while the Midnapore inscription of 629 A.D. shows that he was still alive but not taking the title of mahārājādhirāja.¹⁸ If we study these inscriptions in the background of the accounts furnished by the *She-kia-fang-che* and *Ma-twan-lin*, we may possibly infer that sometimes between 619 and 624 A.D., Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman conjointly defeated Śaśāṅka who was compelled to accept a subordinate status.¹⁹ He evidently lived for some years more and died a little before 637 A.D.²⁰

Dr. Tripathi thinks that after the death of Śaśāṅka the whole of Bengal passed under the rule of Harṣa.²¹ Other scholars who maintain a similar view point out that as we have got inscriptions from the Eastern Bengal dated in the Harṣa era, that region must have formed a part of his territory, for it is well-known "that an era could be employed in those territories only, which were once within the jurisdiction of its originator", or, subsequently brought under the jurisdiction of his descendants, using the same era. We know that Harṣa left no heir and after his death his empire fell to pieces. Thus the discovery of an inscription from the Eastern Bengal dated in the Harṣa era, it is believed, would prove that the region was under the sway of the Kanauj monarch.

The Asrafpur inscription of Devakhaḍga and a Tipperah grant of Lokanātha are the two records that have been utilised for the purpose. The dates of both the records are uncertain. Bhandarkar thinks that the date of the Asrafpur plate is 60 + 3, while, according to Dr. R. C. Majumdar the date is either 70 + 3

¹⁶ Tripathi, *HK*, Chs. iv & v; *HB*, pp. 79ff.

¹⁷ *infra*, p. 257.

¹⁸ For the Midnapore inscription, see, *supra*.

¹⁹ For Ma-twan-lin and the *She-kia-fang-che*, see *supra*.

²⁰ Yuan Chwang in his account of Magdha which he visited in 637 A.D. calls Śaśāṅka a 'recent king'.

²¹ Tripathi, *HK*, p. 119.

or 70 + 9. Similarly, according to some scholars, the date of the Tipperah grant is (1)44, while, according to others, (3)44.²²

Those who advocate the dates 70 + 3 or 70 + 9 and (1)44 favour their assigning to the Harṣa era. Recently Dr. D. C. Ganguly has shown that the date of the Asrafpur plate is simply 7, and it must be the regnal year of the king Devakhaḍga.²³ On the other hand according to Dr. R. G. Basak, the date of the Tipperah grant is definitely 344 and the same is to be referred to the Gupta era.²⁴

Thus there is no certainty that there are inscriptions from the Eastern Bengal assignable to the Harṣa era. The *She-kia-fang-che* states, on the other hand, as we have already seen, that Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman conjointly fought against Śaśāṅka, and though their first attempt might have failed, ultimately the Gauḍa kingdom was destroyed. The Nidhanpur epigraph shows that Karnaśuvarṇa, the capital of Śaśāṅka, passed under the sway of the Kāmarūpa monarch,²⁵ and it is but natural for us to think that Bhāskaravarman occupied the eastern part of Śaśāṅka's kingdom as a part of his joint victory. There is absolutely nothing in support of the theory that Bhāskaravarman occupied Bengal to the east of the river Ganges during the confusion following Harṣa's death.²⁶ It is not unlikely that the Ganges formed the boundary between the kingdoms of Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman.

We have already stated that if the *Si-yu-ki* is to be believed, all the conquests of Harṣa were made during the period 618-24 A.D. But unfortunately we have got actually very little details of his conquests, excepting what we may call the border skirmishes. There are two statements in the *Harṣacarita* of Bāṇabhaṭṭa that now require consideration. Thus it is stated that Harṣa (i) "the greatest of all men having pounded the king of Sind made his wealth his own", (ii) "took tribute from an inaccessible land of snowy mountain". The first has been interpreted to mean that Harṣa defeated the king of Sind, and the second, according to Buhler, refers to Harṣa's conquest of Nepal, while, according to Levi, who rejects, and rightly, Buhler's interpretation, it means that Harṣa exacted taxes from mountains and inaccessible lands where lived the Tukhāras, i.e., the Turks in N.W. India. Bāṇa gives the above descriptions involved in puns while cataloguing the "marvels

²² For a discussion of the dates of these plates, *HB*, pp. 85-90.

²³ *Ep. Ind.*, xxvi. p. 125.

²⁴ Basak, *HNI*, p. 195.

²⁵ *Ep. Ind.*, xii, p. 65; xix. p. 115.

²⁶ Majumdar, *Ancient Indian History & Civilisation*, p. 348.

reported about" Harṣa, and hence anything hardly can be vouchsafed for the authenticity of the account. We have no evidence to corroborate the fact that Harṣa ever defeated a king of Sind or took tribute either from Nepal or from N.W. India. In fact, a critical study of the original passages, quoted below, offer us a different meaning altogether:

- (i) "*Atra Puruṣottāmena Sindhurājaṃ pramathya Lakṣmīḥ ātmikṛtāḥ*"
- (ii) "*Atra Parameśvareṇa tuṣāraśailabhūbo Durgāyā gṛhitāḥ karaḥ*".²⁷

Here Harṣa has been compared with Puruṣottama or Viṣṇu and Parameśvara or Śiva, and the wife of Harṣa is compared with Lakṣmī and Durgā. Indeed, in the whole passage we have vague statements about Harṣa, and it would be improper to force meaning in them.

III

A NOTE ON HARṢA-PULAKESIN WAR

Harṣa's greatest rival was Pulakeśin II, the Cālukya king of the Deccan, and often there were clashes between the two kings. In the Aihole inscription of 634 A.D., Pulakeśin claims victory over Harṣa, and some scholars think that the war took place somewhere near the river Narmada.²⁸ But it appears that the war did not end there, and there were clashes even after this date. Thus while describing Mahārāṣṭra, which the pilgrim visited in 641 A.D., the *Si-yu-ki* states: "At present time Śīlāditya mahārāja has conquered the nations from east to west, and carried his arms to remote districts, but the people of this country alone have not submitted to him. He has gathered troops from Five Indes, and summoned the best leaders from all countries, and himself gone at the head of his army to punish and subdue these people, but he has not yet conquered their troops".²⁹ If this account is to be believed, there is no reason to think that Harṣa-Pulakeśin war came to a final close about 634 A.D., though Harṣa may have once been defeated about that time.

Harṣa's campaigns in Koṅgoda, identical with the modern

²⁷ *Harṣacarita*, Calcutta ed. pp. 210-11.

²⁸ R. K. Mookerjee, *Harsha*, p. 43.

²⁹ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 239.

Ganjam district, in the year 643 A.D.,³⁰ appears to be a part of his strategy against his southern rivals. In the Aihole inscription, Pulakeśin is credited with the conquest of Kaliṅga and Kośala. Koṅgoda was thus a part of the Cālukyan empire, and Harṣa's conquest of it proves that though he was defeated in 630-34 A.D., he was able to avenge that defeat by snatching away from the Cālukyas the eastern part of their empire.

Dr. R. C. Majumdar thinks that Harṣa's war with Dhruvabhāta II of Valabhī ultimately led to the war between Harṣa and Pulakeśin II. It has been said that there was a confederacy consisting of the Lāṭas, the Mālavas and the Gurjaras, headed by Pulakeśin against Harṣa, and when the latter attacked Dhruvabhāta, the lord of Valabhī, he was involved in a war with the Cālukya king.³¹ The assertion is based on the statement of the Aihole inscription that the Lāṭas, the Mālavas and the Gurjaras acknowledged the supremacy of the South-Indian monarch. While editing the inscription, Keilhorn remarked that possibly "impressed by the majesty and power of Pulakeśin (these states) had voluntarily submitted to him or sought his protection".³²

The remark, however, is somewhat misleading. The separate mention of the Lāṭas and the Mālavas in the Aihole record carries no meaning, for on the eve of the Harṣa-Pulakeśin war of c. 634 A.D., Mālava was under the occupation of the Lāṭa king, while the Gurjaras were the latter's subordinates.³³ Secondly, regarding Harṣa's war with the lord of Valabhī, our only source is the Nausari grant of Jayabhāta III of the year 706 A.D., wherein we learn that the Gurjara king Dadda II alias Praśāntarāga of Broach protected Dhruvabhāta or Dhruvasena II, when the latter was "defeated by the great-lord or Paramēśvara, the illustrious, Harṣadeva".³⁴ The earliest known date of Dadda II are furnished by his two Kaira (Kheda) grants of 629 and 634 A.D.; but they are absolutely silent about the protection given to the Valabhī king.³⁵ Thus the war between Harṣa and Dhruvabhāta II must be placed after 634 A.D., and thus the Valabhī affairs has hardly any connection with the war of 630-34 A.D. It is, however, not unlikely that sometimes after this date the Valabhī king entered into a conspiracy with the Cālukyas and was thus threatened by

³⁰ Beal, *Life*.

³¹ *JBORS*, ix. p. 319.

³² *Ep. Ind.*, vi. p. 2.

³³ *sec intra*.

³⁴ *IA*, xiii. pp. 77-9.

³⁵ *IA*, xiii. p. 82ff.

Harṣa. Ultimately, however, there was peace between the two kings and the Valabhī ruler became the son-in-law of Harṣa³⁶

On the northern frontier of his kingdom, Harṣa came into contact with Kashmir. From the *Life* we learn that Harṣa heard that Kashmir had in her possession a tooth of the Buddha. Harṣa came personally to the frontier and asked permission to see and worship it. When the congregation refused to accede to the request, the king of Kashmir personally intervened in the matter and presented the same to the Kanauj monarch. "Śilāditya seeing it was overpowered with reverence, and exercising force, carried it off to pay it religious offerings".³⁷

IV

THE EXTENT OF HARṢA'S EMPIRE

&

SOME CONTEMPORARIES OF HARṢA

Various theories have been maintained regarding the extent of Harṣa's empire. In *JBORS* (V) 1923, pp. 320ff, Dr. R. C. Majumdar pointed out that "we know from the *Harṣacarita* that his (Harṣa's) ancestral kingdom comprised the Thānesvar district and its neighbourhood, including the valley of the Sarasvatī river. The accounts of Hiuen Tsang leave no doubt that he ruled over Kanauj. The Banskhera plate and Madhuban copper plate record grants of land respectively in the Ahichhatra and Śrāvastī *Bhuktis*. The way in which Hiuen Tsang describes the ceremonies at Prayāga seems to show that it was within the dominions of Harṣa. Thus his territory comprised the districts roughly corresponding to the present United Provinces of Agra and Oudh with a small portion of the eastern Punjab. The coins attributed to him and to his father were also found within this area.

"So far, we are on tolerably certain grounds. But it is probable that Harṣa also ruled over Magadha, for the Chinese documents connected with his embassy to that country seem to style him 'king of Magadha'. According to this view Harṣa's dominions were bounded by the Himalayas, the western Punjab, Rajputana, Central India and Bengal".

³⁶ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 246.

³⁷ Beal, *Life*, p. 183; Watters, *l.c.* i. p. 279.

The above observation must fully be accepted in the present state of our knowledge, with the proviso that a portion of Western Bengal, to the west of the Ganges, was also possibly included within the dominion of the Kanauj emperor. We learn from the Chinese pilgrim that Śilāditya held his court at Kajaṅgala and from the *Life* it is also clear that Harṣa exercised his suzerainty over Orissa as well.³⁸ Orissa was conquered in 643 A.D., when Harṣa undertook his Koṅgoda campaign. In this connection, it is worth while to note the account of the *Records* regarding the kingdom lying adjacent to Magadha:

1. *I-lan-na-po-fa-to*: (Monghyr) The *Records* state: "in recent times the king of a neighbouring state had deposed the ruler and given the capital to the Buddhist brethren"³⁹.

2. *Chan-po*: (Campā or modern Bhagalpur) Yuan Chwang is silent about its political condition.

3. *Ka-chu-wen*(?)-*ki-lo*: (Kajaṅgala, identified by Cunningham with the modern Rajmahal) The *Records* state: "The native dynasty had been extinguished some centuries before the time of the pilgrim's visit, and the country had come under a neighbouring state, so the capital was deserted and the people lived in towns and villages. Hence when king Śilāditya in his progress to East India held his court here, he cut grass to make huts, and burned these when leaving."⁴⁰

In Northern Bihar, the *Records* speak of the following Kingdoms:

1. *Kei-pi-lo-fa-su-tu* or Kapilāvastu: The *Records* state: "The country was without a sovereign, each city having its own chief".⁴¹

2. *Lan-mo* or Rāma or Rāmagrāma: The *Records* state nothing about the political condition of the country.⁴²

3. *Kou-shih-na-ka-lo* or Kuśinagara (modern Kasia): "The city walls were in ruins, and the towns and villages were deserted. The brick foundations of the old city (that is, the city which had been the capital) were above ten li in circuit; there were very few inhabitants, the interior of the city being a wild waste."⁴³

In the above description it is to be noted that the *Records* speak indirectly of a neighbouring ruler having sway over the

³⁸ Beal, *Life*, p. 154.

³⁹ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 178; Beal, *Records*, ii. p. 187.

⁴⁰ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 183; Beal, *Records*, ii. p. 193.

⁴¹ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 1; Beal, *l.c.* ii. p. 14.

⁴² Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 20; Beal, *l.c.* ii. p. 26.

⁴³ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 25; Beal, *l.c.* ii. p. 32.

I-lan-na-po-fa-to and *Ka-chu-wen* (?) *-ki-lo* countries while the same is silent regarding the political condition of the other states. Dr. Tripathi thinks that the king of a neighbouring state mentioned in connection with the *I-lan-na-po-fa-to* country should be identified with Harṣa.⁴⁴ But had such been the case the Chinese pilgrim would certainly have explicitly mentioned the fact and would not have simply made an indirect and casual reference. We are inclined to believe that the ruler in question was a subordinate potentate under the Kanauj monarch. It has not been noted by several writers that the kingdom of Harṣa contained several feudatory states within its border. For the sake of clearness we may note some of them here:

(a) The Kudarkot inscription (Bhandarkar no. 1788) records the erection of some building in the memory of Takṣadatta by his father Harivarman (Mamma), son of Haridatta, who had been "raised to eminence by the illustrious Harṣa." Here Harṣa evidently refers to the Kanauj monarch of the same name who evidently made Haridatta a subordinate chief in the region where the inscription has been found, Etawa dist. U.P.

(b) From the Aphsad inscription it appears that Harṣa installed Mādhavagupta, son of Mahāsenagupta, the Later Gupta king, as a subordinate ruler under him on the throne of Magadha. Mādhavagupta possibly administered the eastern region in the name of his suzerain. While giving an account of Magadha, the Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang, however, states: "In recent times Śaśāṅka, the enemy and oppressor of Buddhism, cut down the Bodhi-Tree, destroyed its roots down to the water, and burned what remained. A few months afterwards Pūrṇavarman, the last descendant of Aśoka on the throne of Magadha, by pious efforts brought the tree back to life and in one night it became above 10 feet high". From the description it appears that Pūrṇavarman was a contemporary of Śaśāṅka and it was evidently after his death that the charge of Magadha was bestowed upon Mādhavagupta. From the nature of the description in the *Si-yu-ki* it also appears that when the Chinese pilgrim visited Magadha, Pūrṇavarman was not on the throne of the country. It is not unlikely that the neighbouring king referred to in connection with *I-lan-na-po-fa-to* and *Ka-chu-wen* (?) *-ki-lo* may have been Mādhavagupta, the subordinate chief under Harṣa. The fact that Harṣa pitched his camp in the Kajaṅgala country seems to indicate that the region was under his sway, for as Yuan

Chwang informs us the Kanauj sovereign "made visits of inspection throughout his dominion . . . having temporary buildings erected for his residence at each place of sojourn."⁴⁵

(c) Mathurā or Mo-tu-lo: The *Records* state that "The king and his statesmen devote themselves to good works."⁴⁶ It is very unlikely that Mathura was an independent kingdom, while the statement of Alberuni that in his time the Harṣa era was used in "Mathurā and the country of Kanauj" seems to show that the suzerainty of Harṣa extended over the region.⁴⁷

(d) Ma-ti-pu-lo or Matipura: The *Records* state that "the king who was of the Śudra stock did not believe in Buddhism and worshipped the Devas."⁴⁸

(e) Chih-chi-to, identified with the kingdom of Jajhoti. Its capital was Khajuraho corresponding to the modern Bundelkhand region. The *Records* state that "the king who was a Brāhmaṇa was a firm believer in Buddhism, and encouraged men of merit, and learned scholars of other land collected here in numbers."⁴⁹ It is not clear whether the king was a subordinate under Harṣa, but the discovery of an inscription from Khajuraho itself dated in the Harṣa era⁵⁰ seems to point to such a fact, though of course not conclusively.

For the existence of the above feudatory states within the dominion of Harṣa, Dr. Tripathi gives the following explanations:

"(a) These states in order to save themselves from being swept away by the war-frenzy of Harṣa must have offered their alliance at the very beginning. And Harṣa, who stood in dire need of allies then, astutely tolerated their continued existence."

"(b) The kings of these territories may have been conquered and subsequently reinstated by Harṣa, having accepted his nominal suzerainty. Similarly, we are told in the Allahabad Pillar inscription that Samudragupta 'established (again) many royal families, fallen and deprived of sovereignty'".⁵¹

While we may accept the above explanations, we may at the same time not ignore the fact that in the *Harṣacarita* Siṃhanāda is stated as advising Harṣa to teach other kings, who following the example of the wicked lord of Malwa had become insolent, a good lesson so that they may not again follow a similar course.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Watters, *l.c.* i. p. 303; Beal, *l.c.* i. p. 181.

⁴⁷ Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, ii. p. 5; *JBORS*, ix. p. 323.

⁴⁸ Watters, *l.c.* i. p. 322; Beal, *l.c.* i. p. 190; *Life*, p. 79.

⁴⁹ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 251; Beal, *l.c.* ii. p. 271.

⁵⁰ *Ep. Ind. v. Appendix*. Keilhorn, no. 545; Bhandarkar, no. 1408.

⁵¹ Tripathi, *HK*, pp. 119-20.

in the future.⁵² The description evidently implies that Harṣa uprooted many kings who had refused allegiance. On this light, we are inclined to think that Harṣa placed Mathura, Matipura, Jejakabhukti etc., under his own nominees, after uprooting the royal dynasties that had been ruling over these territories.

The above examples further go against the theory of Dr. Tripathi and others⁵³ that whenever the Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang is silent about the political condition of a country it meant that it was under the political supremacy of Harṣa, and contrarily, whenever we find the mention of a state with a king it was outside such supremacy. The examples of Mathura, Matipura etc. invalidates the second part of the theory at once. As regards the unsoundness of the first part of the same we may note the fact that the *Records* are silent about the political condition of S. Kośala, but the *Life* says that the country was at that time under the rule of a Kṣatriya king.⁵⁴ Such a theory further creates confusion with regard to Eastern India which the pilgrim visited about 637 A.D., while by his campaigns in Orissa in 643 A.D. Harṣa added a considerable portion of the territory within his own dominion.

Thus the *Records* cannot be our guide for determining the extent of Harṣa's kingdom, far less do the same indicate that whenever the account is silent about the government of any state it was included within Harṣa's territory. We should repeat here the warning of Watters: "He (Yuan Chwang) was not a good observer, a careful investigator, or a satisfactory recorder, and consequently he left very much untold which he would have done well to tell."⁵⁵

In determining the extent of Harṣa's empire some scholars have taken as guide the provenance of epigraphic records dated in the Harṣa era. Now, it is generally agreed that the following inscriptions are dated in that era:

(a) Banskhera (Shajahanpur Dist., U.P.) and the Madhuban (Azamgadh Dist., U.P.) plates of Harṣa dated in the years 22 and 25 respectively (Bhandarkar, nos. 1385 and 1386).

(b) Shahpur (Patna Dist., Bihar) image inscription of Ādityasenadeva of the year 66 (ibid. no. 1393).

(c) Punjab inscription of the time of a certain Vyāghra, year 184 (ibid. no. 1406).

⁵² HC, Trans., p. 185.

⁵³ Tripathi, HK, pp. 114-9.

⁵⁴ Beal, *Life*, pp. 134-5.

⁵⁵ Watters, *l.c.* i. p. 15.

(d) Khajuraho (Chhatarpur State, Bundelkhand) image inscription, year 218 (ibid. no. 1408).

(e) Ahar inscriptions (Bulandshahr Dist., U.P.) with years 258-298 (ibid. nos. 1409-11, 1414-15, 1417-20).

(f) Peheva (Pehoa) (Karnal Dist., Punjab) inscription of the time of the M. Bhojadeva, year 267 (Bhandarkar, no. 1412).

(g) Panjam inscription of the year 563 or 562 (ibid. no. 1421).

(h) Dhauuli (Puri Dist., Orissa) cave inscription of the time of Śāntikaradeva, year (2)93 (ibid. no. 2042).

If the provenance of the Harṣa era has got any connection with the extent of the empire of the Kanauj monarch, then it is clear that it included, as already stated, the Eastern Punjab, the whole of U.P. and Bihar and portions of the Madhyapradesh and Orissa. As we have already stated there is further indirect evidence that at least a portion of the Western Bengal was also included within the empire.

Bhagawanlal Indraji and Bühler assume that Harṣa era was in vogue in Nepal and hence his suzerainty was also recognised in that valley.⁵⁶ In his "*Chronology of the Early Rulers of Nepal*", Fleet also accepted this theory.⁵⁷ This leads us to a critical study of the early history of Nepal. As it has already been stated, the ancient kingdom of Nepal comprised the region lying between the basins of the Gandak and the Kosi, which is still known as "*the valley of Nepal*". Our chief sources for studying the history of this mountainous kingdom are the following: (a) the Vamśāvalis or the local chronicles; (b) the epigraphic records, including the coins; and (c) the foreign accounts, specially those left by the Chinese and the Tibetan authors.

Early European scholars like Kirkpatrick and Wright made attempts to reconstruct the history of the land from the Vamśāvalis⁵⁸ but in 1884 Indraji brought out clearly the unhistorical character of these chronicles.⁵⁹ The fictitious character of these documents is demonstrated by the fact that according to the system of chronology adopted in these texts Aṃśuvarman, the Nepalese contemporary of Harṣa, would reign in 101 B.C., i.e., roughly 700 years before his actual date.⁶⁰ They have further

⁵⁶ *IA*, xiii. pp. 411ff.

⁵⁷ *Corpus*, iii. *App.* iv. pp. 177ff.

⁵⁸ Kirkpatrick's work was published as early as 1811, and Wright's work in 1877.

⁵⁹ *IA*, xiii. pp. 411-28.

⁶⁰ Levi, *Le Nepal*, ii. p. 69.

introduced into their lists the mythical kings of the Purāṇas, with abnormal reign-periods, and so from the strict historical point of view these records are absolutely worthless. In his "*Chronology and History of Nepal*", Jayaswal has made a fresh attempt to utilise the evidences furnished by the Vaṃśāvalis, but apparently without any satisfactory result.

The stone inscriptions of Nepal are undoubtedly the most important source for studying the ancient history of the valley. For the period under review in the present volume, we have to concentrate our attention on Indrājī's inscriptions⁶¹ nos. 1-15, Bendall's inscriptions⁶² nos. 1-4 and some in M. Levi's admirable volumes *Le Nepal*.⁶³ Dr. Basak has also made a fresh study of them in his *History of North-Eastern India*, pp. 242ff.

These inscriptions can be classified into two groups, those dated in the smaller figures (30, 32, 34, 39 etc.) and those that are dated in larger figures (386, 387, 413, 435, 510 etc.). On one point, however, we are certain that the inscriptions bearing dates in smaller figures are later in date than the inscriptions dated in larger figures. The inscriptions of the first group begin with the reign of Aṃśuvarman, and hence they must be dated according to an era which started either in the later part of the sixth or the early part of the seventh century A.D. As already stated, Indrājī, Bühler and Fleet thought that they are dated in the Harṣa era of 606 A.D., and this view has been adopted by several subsequent writers including Dr. Basak. Levi has conclusively proved that Harṣa's suzerainty never extended into the Nepal valley, and that during Aṃśuvarman's time Nepal was a vassal of the powerful Tibetan king Srong-tsang-gam-po to whom the Nepal king was compelled to give his daughter in marriage. Levi concluded that the era used in the records of Aṃśuvarman started from 595 A.D., which was possibly of Tibetan origin, starting from the reign of the Tibetan king, Lun-sang-so-lun-tsang.⁶⁴ In fact, the assumption that Aṃśuvarman's records are dated in the Harṣa era cannot be reconciled with the fact that Aṃśuvarman was dead when the Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang visited North

⁶¹ "*Inscriptions from Nepal*", *IA*, ix. pp. 163-94.

⁶² *IA*, xiv. p. 98; *Journey in Nepal*, pp. 72ff.

⁶³ *Le Nepal*, iii. nos. i-xx.

⁶⁴ *Le Nepal*, ii. pp. 153-4; Jayaswal has controverted the view of Levi that Nepal was a vassal state under Tibet at the time of Aṃśuvarman. He thinks that it was the Thākuri era, Aṃśuvarman being a member of the Thākuri dynasty, *Chronology of Nepal*, 16ff. But the evidence of Tao-su-en proves the Tibetan suzerainty over the country, *JA*, 1894, ii. pp. 54ff. For R. C. Majumdar's view, see *B. C. Law Volume*.

India,⁶⁵ for Aṃśuvarman's last record dated in the year 45, if referred to the era of Harṣa would give the date $606+45=651$ A.D., but we know that the Chinese traveller left India before this date.

There is some controversy regarding the era to which the inscriptions bearing dates in larger figures are to be referred. Indrajī thought that the inscriptions of king Mānadeva of the years 386, 387, 413 should be referred to the Vikrama era, while Fleet asserted that all these records are to be referred to the Gupta era of 319 A.D. Dr. R. G. Basak, on the other hand, thinks that—(a) the inscriptions of kings from Mānadeva to Vasantadeva are dated in the Vikrama era; (b) the inscriptions of kings Sivadeva I to Udayadeva are dated in the Gupta era; (c) the inscriptions of Aṃśuvarman, Jīṣṇugupta and Viṣṇugupta are dated in the Harṣa era; and (d) the inscriptions of Narendradeva to Jayadeva II are again dated in the Harṣa era. But unfortunately he does not state the grounds of his assumption.⁶⁶

Levi has shown that these inscriptions are all dated in an era which started from 110 A.D., for the astronomical data furnished by the Kisipidi record of *Samvat* 449 agrees perfectly only with 482 Śaka current. The French savant has ably controverted the view that these inscriptions are dated in the Vikrama era or the Gupta era.

The ancient history of Nepal can be divided into two distinct chapters—one before the Tibetan invasion in the last part of the sixth century, and the other after it. The invasion of the Tibetan king Srong-tsang paved the way for the rise of Aṃśuvarman⁶⁷ who was originally subordinate under king Śivadeva I. This invasion possibly brought Nepal under the suzerainty of Tibet and thus naturally marks an epoch in the history of the valley. We have on the other hand, some coins of Aṃśuvarman with the title of mahārājādhirāja which shows that he was practically an independent ruler and nominally owed allegiance to Tibet. It is not unlikely that the marriage of his daughter with the Tibetan king Srong-tsang-gam-po contributed to a great extent in his assumption of a practically independent status. As his inscriptions have been found at Katmandu, Patan, Deo-Patan and Bagmati, Aṃśuvarman appears to have exercised his suzerainty in the very centre of the Nepal valley. He died possibly a little before 643

⁶⁵ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 84; Beal, *l.c.* ii. p. 81. In the *Sī-yu-ki*, Aṃśuvarman is described as a 'recent king'.

⁶⁶ For a criticism of Dr. Basak's views, *B. C. Law Volume*, i. pp. 626ff.

⁶⁷ vide, *supra*, p. 229.

A.D., for we have an inscription of his successor dated in the year 48=643 A.D. The Chinese traveller Yuan Chwang refers to him as a "*recent king*", and as an author of a treatise on Etymology.

In his inscriptions, Jīṣṇugupta, the successor of Aṃśuvarman, acknowledges the suzerainty of Śrī Dhanadeva who was evidently a Licchavi and a successor of Śivadeva I. Levi has inferred from it that during Jīṣṇugupta's time there was some confusion and the rule of the Licchavis which was suppressed by Aṃśuvarman was restored again. Jīṣṇugupta was in no way related to Aṃśuvarman and may have been a plebeian of the Āhir stock as shown by the ending of his name in—gupta. It was in his time that Nepal along with Tibet helped the Chinese envoy, Wang-hiuentse, against Arjuna or Aruṇāśva, the usurper of Harṣa's throne. This event took place sometimes between 647 and 650 A.D.

We have discussed at length the history of ancient Nepal in order to show that it never formed a part of the empire of Harṣa. Similarly, we cannot agree with Dr. N. Roy that Kāmarūpa was included within the empire and Bhāskaravarman was a subordinate ruler under the Kanauj emperor.⁶⁸ For his theory, Dr. Roy has depended on the following statement of the Si-yu-ki: "The reigning king who was a Brāhmin by caste and a descendant of Nārāyaṇadeva was named Bhāskaravarman, his other name being Kumāra." The term *Kumāra* has been held to signify a dependent status. We, however, can hardly follow this line of argument for in that case, as Dr. R. C. Majumdar points out "the great king Kumāragupta of the Gupta Dynasty has also to be regarded as a dependent king."⁶⁹ The Nidhanpur copper plate, the Nalanda seal of Bhāskaravarman and the *Harṣacarita* present us with the following genealogy of the Varman kings of ancient Assam:

4th century A.D.

1. Puṣyavarman
|
2. Samudravarman
(= Dattadevī)
|
3. Balavarman
(= Ratnavatī)
|

⁶⁸ For the views of Dr. N. Ray, *IHQ*, iii. 1927, pp. 769ff; for a criticism of the same, *IHQ*, v. pp. 229ff.

⁶⁹ *IHQ*, v. p. 232.

5th century A.D.

4. Kalyāṇavarman
(= Gandharvavatī)5. Gaṇapati (-varman)⁷⁰
(= Yajñavatī)6. Mahendravarman
(= Suvratā)7. Nārāyaṇavarman
(= Devavatī)6th century A.D.
(234 or 244 C.E.).8. Mahābhūtiavarman,
alias Bhūtiavarman⁷¹
(= Vijñānavatī)9. Candramukha (-varman)
(= Bhogavatī)10. Sthitavarman⁷²
(= Nayanadevī)11. Susthitavarman,⁷³
alias Mṛgāṅka
(= Śyāmādevī)7th century A.D. 12. Supraṭiṣṭhitavarman 13. Bhāskaravarman
alias Kumāra⁷⁴

Though the dynasty of Bhāskaravarman came into existence in the fourth century A.D., it could not play any decisive role before the sixth century⁷⁵ when Bhūtiavarman came to the throne of

⁷⁰ Mentioned simply as Gaṇapati in the Nidhanpur plates, and as Gaṇendravarman in the Doobi epigraph.

⁷¹ Mentioned simply as Bhūtiavarman in the *Harṣacarita*.

⁷² Sthitavarman in the *Harṣacarita*.

⁷³ Susthitarvarman in the *Harṣacarita*.

⁷⁴ Mentioned by Yuan Chwang simply as Kumārārāja.

⁷⁵ In a Nalanda seal, Puṣyavarman and his two successors are given the title of mahārājādhirāja. As they were certainly contemporaries of the early Gupta monarchs, the account of the Allahabad record that Kāmarūpa became a vassal state under Samudra Gupta can hardly be taken in its face value. This also goes against the theory of scholars who maintain that Puṣyavarman named his son Samudra after the name of his lord Samudra

the country.⁷⁶ As we have already stated he possibly put an end to the rule of the Imperial Guptas in the Puṇḍravardhana region. Bhāṭṭasali thinks that he ruled from 520 to 560 A.D. The Badganga Rock inscription refers to his Aśvamedha sacrifice⁷⁷, while from the Nidhanpur record it appears that he not only captured the whole of Kāmarūpa but had a circle of feudatory rulers under him. Hardly anything is known about the achievements of Candramukhavarman, the son of Bhūtiavarman. In the Nalanda seal Candramukhavarman's son Sthitavarman is described as the performer of two horse-sacrifices. Sthitavarman's son Susthitavarman renowned as Śrī Mrgāṅka, is described in the *Harṣacarita* as the mahārājādhirāja and as one "who took away the conch-shells of the lords of the armies, not their jewels; grasped the stability of the earth, not its tribute; seized the majesty of monarchs, not their hardness."⁷⁸ As it has been already stated, Susthitavarman was defeated by the Later Gupta king Mahāsenagupta, and it is also indirectly hinted in the Nidhanpur record.⁷⁹

Susthitavarman had two sons, Supratīṣṭhitavarman and Bhāskaravarman, the latter being a contemporary and an ally of Harṣa. Formerly it was believed that Supratīṣṭhitavarman never came to the throne, but the newly discovered Doobi Copper plates now show that he did actually reign for a few years.⁸⁰ The two brothers possibly fought against Śaśāṅka, as already stated, and may have been reduced to a subordinate position for the time being by the Gauḍa monarch.⁸¹ It is difficult to determine exactly when Bhāskaravarman came to the throne, though this much is

Gupta. Bhāṭṭasali, however, thinks that Puṣyavarman was a contemporary of Candra Gupta I and named his son and daughter-in-law after the names of the son and daughter-in-law of his Gupta friend, *IHQ*, xi. p. 22; see also, Barua, *Early History of Kāmarūpa*, p. 42; Bhattacharya, *Kāmarūpaśāsanāvalī*, Intro. p. 13; B. K. Barua, *A Cultural History of Assam*, pp. 19-20 for further discussions; also, *The Classical Age*, p. 90.

⁷⁶ A Nalanda seal refers to Mahendravarmān, the grandfather of Bhūtiavarman, as the performer of two horse sacrifices (*MAI*, no. 66). But as the performance of the horse sacrifice carried little significance in this age, we cannot draw any specific conclusion about the thing. Dr. Sircar thinks that the horse sacrifice in question was performed by Nārāyaṇavarman, father of Mahabhūtiavarman (*IHQ*, xxi, pp. 143-5). In that case, Nārāyaṇavarman may be regarded as putting an end to the Gupta rule in the Puṇḍravardhana region. But we prefer to regard Bhūtiavarman as the hero of the act for he, and not his father, is described as capturing the whole of Kāmarūpa, i.e., the region up to Karatoyā in the west. vide, *supra*.

⁷⁷ *JARS*, viii. pp. 138-9; x. pp. 64-7; *IHQ*, xx. pp. 143-5.

⁷⁸ *HC. Trans.*, p. 117.

⁷⁹ *supra*, p. 227.

⁸⁰ *JARS*, xii. pp. 16-33; *IHQ*, xxvi. pp. 241-6.

⁸¹ *supra*, pp. 231ff.

certain that he was already a king when Harṣa marched against the murderer of his brother in 606 A.D. He certainly outlived Harṣa, as we shall see presently, and may have lived up to c.650 A.D.

The following facts of Bhāskaravarman's reign are known to us:

(a) About 606 A.D. the Kāmarūpa king entered into an alliance with Harṣa.

(b) Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman conjointly defeated the Gauḍa king Śaśāṅka (vide, *She-kia-fang-che* account).

(c) He issued his famous Nidhanpur grant from Kārṇa-suvarṇa.

(d) He attended the assembly of Harṣa at Kanauj along with the Master of Law.

(e) After Harṣa's death in c.647 A.D. when there was a combined Sino-Tibetan invasion Bhāskaravarman helped the invaders.

We learn from the *Harṣacarita* that after the death of Rājya-vardhana, Harṣa started to avenge the death of his brother and when he had completed only one day's march from Thānesvar and was on the bank of the river Sarasvatī, Haṁsavega, the messenger of the Kāmarūpa monarch, approached him with the proposal that his master was willing to enter into an "undying association" with him.⁸² Harṣa at once took up the offer because it was evidently meant against Śaśāṅka, the common enemy of both the monarchs. Some scholars think that this alliance really bore no fruit for Harṣa failed to do anything against the Gauḍa kingdom during the life time of Śaśāṅka. The *She-kia-fang-che* account, which has been noted before, clearly shows, however, that Śaśāṅka was really defeated by the combine forces of Śīlāditya and Kumārarāja.

The date of the Nidhanpur plates is uncertain, but if we study it in the background of the events referred to above we have to conclude that it was issued evidently after the defeat of Śaśāṅka as a result of which the region lying to the east of the river Ganges passed to Bhāskaravarman as a share of his victory. Dr. D. C. Ganguly has utilised the evidence of the *Si-yu-ki* to prove that Bhāskaravarman had under him practically the whole of the Gauḍa country.⁸³ It is stated that about 643 A.D. Bhāskaravarman with a large troop of elephants and ships went

⁸² *HC*, Trans., p. 218.

⁸³ *IHQ*, xv. pp. 122ff.

up the Ganges taking the Master of Law with him, to meet Harṣa at Kajaṅgala. This according to Dr. Ganguly, implies control of the Kāmarūpa monarch over the province of Gauḍa. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, however, points out that "the passage of Bhāskara's army and ships can also be explained by the assumption of Harṣa's suzerainty over Bengal."⁸⁴ From the strict political point of view the episode can only be clearly explained on the assumption that the Ganges formed the common boundary between the dominions of the two monarchs. Hence we are inclined to think that Bhāskaravarman occupied the region lying to the east of the Ganges immediately after the death of Śaśāṅka.

We learn from the *Life* that when Harṣa was returning from his campaigns at Koṅgoda he pitched his camps at Kajaṅgala and sent a messenger to bring the Chinese pilgrim who was at that time in the court of Kāmarūpa. Bhāskaravarman refused to part with the pilgrim and informed the messenger that "he can take my head, but he cannot take the Master of the Law yet". This enraged Harṣa, who sent again a messenger with the words "Send the head, that I may have it immediately by my messenger who is to bring it here". Bhāskaravarman got frightened and personally went to Kajaṅgala accompanied by the Chinese pilgrim. The two old allies met each other and there was a joyful reconciliation between the two. From this place the three distinguished persons advanced up the Ganges and arrived at Kānyakubja where they attended the religious assembly held at Harṣa's command in which the Chinese traveller extolled the Mahāyāna doctrine and exposed the inherent poverty of the Hinayāna system.⁸⁵

At the time of the Sino-Tibetan invasion after the death of Harṣa, Bhāskaravarman somehow saved himself by sending the foreigners thirty thousand oxen and horses, and provisions for all the army; to which he added bows, scimitars and collars of great value. He also presented to the Chinese general some rare articles, a map of his state and several statutes of Lao-Shun.⁸⁶ Some scholars think that it was during this turmoil that he occupied Bengal and pitched his camp at Karnasuvarṇa, from where he issued the famous Nidhanpur charter.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ *HB*, p. 78, f.n. 3.

⁸⁵ Beal, *Life*, pp. 172ff.

⁸⁶ *IA*, ix. p. 20.

⁸⁷ Dr. Basak observes: ".....Karnasuvarṇa passed into the hands of Bhāskara, through Harṣa's conquest of it, at some date later than his first campaign against Śaśāṅka, which was led by him immediately after the murder of Rajyavardhana, and that the second campaign of Harṣa might have taken place either during the life-time of Śaśāṅka or after

Levi has given us the following interesting details about king Bhāskaravarman:

"At the time of Hiuan-tsang's visit king Bhāskaravarman was 'a descendant of the god Nārāyaṇa; he was of the caste of the Brāhmanas', and had the title of 'Kumāra'. 'Since the possession of the kingdom by his family up to his time, the succession of princes covers a space of a thousand generations' (*Mcm.* II, 77). The evidence of his contemporary Bāṇa (*Harṣacarita*, chap. vii) confirms almost all these details. Finally, we possess since a few years ago an inscription of king Bhāskaravarman (Nidhanpur plates, *Ep. Ind.*, xii, 65), which takes back the genealogy up to king Bhagadatta, the famous adversary of the Pāṇḍavas, by a long list of ancestors. However, when he had business with others than Indians, the same prince boasted of another origin altogether. When the envoy of the T'ang dynasty, Li Yi-piao, paid him a visit during the course of his mission (643-646) the king in a private conversation, told him: 'the royal family has handed down its power for 4,000 years. The first was a holy spirit which came from China (Han-ti) flying through the air' (*She-kia-fang-che*, ed. Tok. xxxv, 1,94b, col.ult.). As though he would show sympathy for China, he asked the envoy to get him a portrait of Lao-tseu and a Sanskrit translation of the Tao-to-king. The Emperor, on his part, wished to respond to this desire and promulgated an edict asking the master of the Law, Hiuan-tsang, to prepare the translation in collaboration with Taoist teachers."⁸⁸

The above discussion of the history of Kāmarūpa clearly demonstrates the fact that the country was never subject to Harṣa.

his death. Another suggestion offers itself in this connection, that Karṇasuvarṇa might not at any time have formed any part of the Kāmarūpa kingdom at all, but Bhāskara might only have pitched his jayaskandhāvāra (victorious moving camp) there, as an ally of Harṣa during the latter's second campaign referred to above, when the emperor came to Bengal for conquests. On this view both North Bengal and Central Bengal were added to Harṣa's empire, and not to the kingdom of Kāmarūpa even in part". (*HNI*, pp. 228-9). It is really difficult to agree with these theories, for how could Bhāskaravarman issue a charter from another's dominion. Similarly, we cannot agree with B. K. Barua that Bhāskaravarman conquered the whole of Bengal. (*A Cultural History of Assam*, pp. 24ff).

⁸⁸ Bagchi, *Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian in India*, p. 114.

Similarly, we cannot agree with Dr. N. Roy that Valabhī, Jālandhara, Kashmir and Sindhu were parts of the same kingdom. We now propose to take up one by one the history of these states in the first half of the seventh century A.D.

It has already been stated that the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhī was founded by Senāpati Bhaṭāraka and that the third king of the dynasty Droṇasiṃha I was crowned in the presence of his Gupta overlord.⁸⁹ Droṇasiṃha I was succeeded by his brother Dhruvasena I whose records range from the Gupta year 206 to 226 = 525-545 A.D. He is described as *mahāsāmanta mahārāja*, showing that he still acknowledged the overlordship of the Imperial Guptas now confined in a remote corner of the Āryāvarta. Dhruvasena I was again succeeded by his younger brother Dharapaṭṭa who was succeeded by his son Guhasena, for whom we have records extending from the year 240 to 248. Guhasena was succeeded by his son Dharasena II who ruled at least for 18 years as shown by his records dated G.E. 252-270. There is hardly anything of interest in the history of these Maitraka kings.⁹⁰

Dharasena II left two sons, Śilāditya I Dharmāditya and Kharagraha I. There seems to have been some extension of the Maitraka territory about this time, and it appears from the *Records* that Śilāditya I ruled at Mo-la-po or Mālava with its dependencies of Kita, identified with Cutch or Kheda, Ānandapura and Su-la-cha or Surat,⁹¹ while the rest of the kingdom with Valabhī as centre was under Kharagraha I. This account is corroborated to some extent by the Alina plate of Śilāditya VII which associates Derabhāṭa, son of Śilāditya I Dharmāditya, with the region of Sahya and Vindhya mountains, while the descendants of Kharagraha I are connected with Valabhī.⁹²

Mālava or Western Malwa, as we have already seen, was under the Kalacuris in the last part of the sixth century A.D., and thus it appears that after the reign of Dharasena II which ended c.589 A.D., there ensued a Maitraka-Kalacuri rivalry. From the Sarsavani plates it appears that the sway of Buddharāja, the Kalacuri king, extended as far as the Bharukaccha viṣaya.⁹³ Thus for a time the Maitrakas were thrown into the background, but they soon gained power for the Virdhi Copper plate grant of

⁸⁹ *supra*, pp. 190f.

⁹⁰ For an account of the Maitrakas, *IC*, v. pp. 407ff; *IHQ*, iv. pp. 453ff; Sankalia, *Archaeology of Gujrat*, pp. 28ff.

⁹¹ Watters, *l.c.* ii. p. 242; Beal, *l.c.* ii. p. 261; Life, p. 148.

⁹² *Corpus*, iii. pp. 171ff.

the year 616-17 A.D. shows Ujjayinī under their rule.⁹⁴ The lead in this respect was taken by the younger brother Kharagraha I, and thus there seems to have ensued a rivalry for power between the two sons of Dharasena II. The Alina plates state: "Kharagraha I (who meditated on the feet of his elder brother) . . . the goddess of sovereignty, even while she was still an object to be longed for by (his) elder (brother) who, excessively full of respect (for him), behaved as it were (the god Indra) the elder brother of Upendra." In a note, Fleet says: "Upendra, the younger brother of Indra, is Viṣṇu. The allusion seems to be to the contest between Viṣṇu (in his incarnation as Kṛishṇa) and Indra concerning the tree of Indra's paradise, in which Viṣṇu was victorious and had homage done to him by Indra On this analogy it would seem that the two brothers Śilāditya I and Kharagraha I had some dispute about the leadership of their family, and that eventually Śilāditya I conceded the question to his younger brother."⁹⁵

In any case, the Viridi plates of 616 A.D. show that Kharagraha I was the ruler of a kingdom extending from Valabhī to Ujjayinī. He was succeeded by his son Dharasena III, who was succeeded by his brother Dhruvasena II Bālāditya (called Dhruvabhāta by Yuan Chwang), for whom we have records bearing the dates G.E. 310-321, showing that he ruled from c.629 A.D. onwards. Valabhī evidently continued to be the capital of the kingdom, and the *Si-yu-ki* while giving an account of it states: "The reigning sovereign was of Kṣatriya birth, a nephew of Śilāditya the former king of Mālava, and a son-in-law of the Śilāditya reigning at Kānyakubja; his name was Tu-lo-po-po-ta (i.e., Dhruvabhāta); he was of a hasty temper, and of shallow views, but he was a sincere believer in Buddhism."⁹⁶

As we have already pointed out the Nausari grant of 706 A.D. contains the reference how Dadda II of Broach protected the lord of Valabhī when he was attacked by the illustrious Harṣadeva. (*Parameśvara-śrī-Harṣa-devābhībhūtaḥ* etc.)⁹⁷ Dr. N. Roy has inferred from it that Harṣa "overpowered and subdued the lord of Valabhī". We fail to understand how the term '*abhībhūta*' can lead to such an inference. In any case, there was peace and Dhruvabhāta married the daughter of Harṣa and also

⁹⁴ *Ep. Ind.*, vi, p. 295.

⁹⁵ Proceedings of the Seventh Oriental Conference, pp. 659ff.

⁹⁶ *Corpus*, iii, p. 182, f.n. 1.

⁹⁶ Watters, l.c. ii. p. 246; Beal, l.c. ii. p. 267; Life, p. 149.

⁹⁷ *supra*, p. 252.

attended the religious assembly at Kanauj. The *Life* gives him the significant title of 'king of South India'.⁹⁸ There is thus no justification for the theory that Valabhī was a subordinate state under Harṣa.

From the above discussions it also appears incidentally that the ruler of Broach who afforded protection to the Valabhī ruler was also independent of Harṣa. Two Kaira and three Samkheḍa grants reveal the existence of a line of Gurjara kings,⁹⁹ who held subordinate position under the main line of the Gurjaras ruling over Mandor. The records give us the following genealogy:

"In the family of the Gurjara kings, the Sāmanta Dadda I, who uprooted the Nāgas; his son Jayabhāṭa I Vitarāga; his son Dadda II Praśāntarāga."

Dr. R. C. Majumdar thinks that Dadda I, the founder of the line was identical with Dadda, the son of Haricandra, the founder of the Mandor line. From the identification of the villages mentioned in the grants, it may be inferred that this subordinate Gurjara kingdom covered "the country from the north bank of the river Kim to the south bank of the Mahi, and so show the extent of the Gurjara territory in the neighbourhood of the coast; inland, it doubtless extended to the Ghats."¹⁰⁰

The Samkheḍa grant of Śāntilla shows that Nirihullaka, a feudatory of the Kālacuri king Saṃkaragaṇa, ruled over the territory round Dabhoi,¹⁰¹ while the Sarsavani plates of Buddharāja, as already stated, prove that the districts of Kaira and Broach were under his sway. The last known date of the Kalacuris is 609-10 A.D.,¹⁰² while the earliest known date supplied by the above Gurjara records is 629 A.D. when Dadda II had been on the throne, and hence it has been supposed that the Gurjaras "must have come into the possession of these territories after the Kalacuris." The inscription of the Maitraka king Kharagraha I of the year 616 A.D., however, shows that the Kalacuris were eclipsed by the descendants of Senapati Bhaṭāraka and Dadda II may thus have been a Sāmanta ruler under the Maitrakas. There is no evidence that Dadda I or Jayabhāṭa I ruled over the area. Dadda I is credited with uprooting the Nāgas and not the Kalacuris. The kingdom of Po-lu-ka-ca-po or Bhṛgukaccha mention-

⁹⁸ Beal, *Life*, p. 149.

⁹⁹ *IA*, xiii. p. 82f, 88f; *Ep. Ind.*, ii. p. 21; v. p. 39f; xxiii. p. 147f; xxv. pp. 292f.

¹⁰⁰ *Fleet*, *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*, p. 315.

¹⁰¹ *Ep. Ind.*, ii. p. 21.

¹⁰² *AHD*, p. 82.

ed by Yuan Chwang has been supposed to represent the kingdom of Dadda II.¹⁰³

From the Ghatiyala inscription it appears that the main line of the Gurjaras, the descendants of Haricandra, was ruling at this time with Mandor as the citadel of its power.¹⁰⁴ The *Si-yu-ki* informs us that Yuan chwang went north from Valabhī for about three hundred miles and reached the Ku-chi-lo or Gurjara country.¹⁰⁵ The distance points exactly to the Gurjara kingdom of Mandor. We are further informed that the king was a Kṣatriya by birth, was a young man celebrated for his wisdom and valour, and was a profound believer in Buddhism and a patron of exceptional abilities. Tāta, the fifth king of the line, mentioned in the above epigraphs, seems to have been the monarch whom the Chinese traveller saw, for in verses 14-15 of the Jodhpur record it is stated that considering life to be as temporary as lightning, he abdicated in favour of his younger brother and retired to a hermitage and practised the rites of true religion.¹⁰⁶ This confirms the account of the traveller that the Gurjara king was a profound believer in Buddhism.

The above discussions clearly show that there is absolutely no evidence to prove the dependency of either Valabhī or the Gurjaras under the suzerainty of Harṣa. Similar appears to have been the case with Jālandhara, She-lan-ta-lo of Yuan Chwang. The kingdom is described as about 1,000 li or 167 miles in length from east to west, and 800 li or 133 miles in breadth from north to south. Cunningham thinks that if these dimensions are even approximately correct, Jālandhara must have included the state of Chamba on the north, and Mandi and Sukhet on the east, and Śatadru on the south-east.¹⁰⁷ The *Records* state that the king of this place became a believer in Buddhism, whereupon "the king of *Mid-India* appreciating his sincere faith gave him the sole control of matters relating to Buddhism in all India. In this capacity (as protector of the faith) the king of

¹⁰³ Watters, l.c. ii. p. 241.

¹⁰⁴ For the Gurjaras, R. C. Majumdar, *JDI*, x. pp. 1-76; Smith, *JRAS*, 1909, pp. 53f, 247f; for the Ghatiyala inscriptions, *JRAS*, 1895, pp. 513ff; *Ep. Ind.*, ix. pp. 277ff. It is generally believed that the Gurjaras were identical with the Wu-sun of Central Asia. (*supra*, ch. iii). The chief seat of the tribe in India was Mandor, in Rajputana, which thus came to be known as Gurjaratrā or Gurjarabhūmi. As the Jodhpur inscription is dated 837 A.D. and of the five Ghatiyala inscriptions, three belong to 861 A.D. we may assume that the dynasty came to power c.550 A.D. Nothing is known about the achievements of the early kings of the dynasty.

¹⁰⁵ Watters, l.c. ii. p. 249; Beal, l.c. ii. p. 270.

¹⁰⁶ *Ep. Ind.*, xviii. pp. 87f.

¹⁰⁷ *CAGI*, p. 156.

Jālandhara rewarded and punished the monks without distinction of persons and without private feeling".¹⁰⁸ The king of Mid-India has been identified with Harṣa and the whole thing has been construed to mean that the king of Jālandhara was a vassal under the Kanauj emperor. The inference, however, is extremely dubious one. As Dr. R. C. Majumdar says "Apart from the fact that Harṣa is hardly likely to be referred to simply as king of Mid-India by Hiuen Tsang, the passage hardly proves anything about the political relation of the two kings. The king of Jālandhara in his new role of Protector of Faith, is said to have travelled all over India, building new stūpas and Saṃghārāmas and visiting and inspecting old ones. It is difficult to place much historical value upon this story, except on the assumption that the king took to the life of a Bhikṣu and was patronised by kings of Mid-India and other kingdoms which he visited".¹⁰⁹

If the state of Jālandhara included Chanba, then it is curious that the *Records* speak nothing of the dynasty that had been ruling here. Its capital was Brahmor (Brahmapura) and several inscriptions¹¹⁰ discovered here furnish us with the following genealogy of its rulers:

Ādityavarman, of the Solar race

|

Balavarman

|

Divākaravarman

|

Meruvarman c.700 A.D.

As we have no records of the first three rulers, it is not unlikely that they were mere vassal chief under the kings of Jālandhara, and Meruvarman was the first member who brought the dynasty to prominence.

It has already been shown that inscriptions dated in the Harṣa era are not found beyond the Karnal Dist. in the Punjab, and hence it may be inferred that the region lying to the west of the said district was outside Harṣa's jurisdiction. There has been some controversy regarding the date of the Nirmand (Kangra Dist., E. Punjab) plate¹¹¹ of the mahāsāmanta mahārāja Samudrasena of the year 6. Tripathi assigns the record to the Harṣa

¹⁰⁸ Watters, l.c. i. p. 296; Beal, l.c. i. p. 176.

¹⁰⁹ *IHQ*, v. p. 231.

¹¹⁰ *ASIR*, 1902-3, pp. 242-4; Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba*, pt. I, pp. 142ff.

¹¹¹ Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, the Maikhari, and the Sangam Age*, p. 93; Tripathi, *HK*, p. 54; *Corpus*, III, p. 287.

era, while Bhandarkar maintains a different view. It mentions the mahāsāmanta mahārāja Varmasena; his son from Prabālikā, the mahāsāmanta mahārāja Sañjayasena; his son from Śikharasvāminī, the mahāsāmanta mahārāja Ravisena; his son from Mihiralakṣmī, the mahāsāmanta mahārāja Samudrasena. It also mentions a chief of the past, a mahārāja, Sarvavarman. This dynasty appears to have been subordinate under the rulers of Jālandhara and the year 6 possibly refers the regnal year of Samudrasena.

Thus Jālandhara appears to have been a kingdom of considerable importance in the first half of the seventh century A.D. The *Life* calls the king of the country as the sovereign of "North-India"¹¹² and this is conclusive proof of the independent status of the state.

There thus appears to be no reason to think that Harṣa was the lord of whole of North India, as Panikkar does,¹¹³ nor should we take the expression '*Sakalottarāpathanātha*' given to Harṣa in the southern inscriptions in its literal sense. We cannot agree with Dr. R. K. Mookerjee when he states that "with all the possible reservations, it cannot be doubted that Harṣa achieved the proud position of being the paramount sovereign of the whole of Northern India".¹¹⁴ Dr. Tripathi points out that a similar epithet is applied to one of the successors of mahārājādhirāja Ādityasena of the Later Gupta line of Magadha, although "it is known beyond doubt that his dominions did not comprise the whole of Northern India."¹¹⁵ Indeed, such expressions were often used in a vague and loose way and we need not seriously take them into account.¹¹⁶

Harṣa's intimacy with the Chinese pilgrim evidently induced him to establish friendly relationship with the Chinese emperor. We learn from Ma-twan-lin that "(in 641) Śīlāditya assumed the title of king of Magadha and sent an ambassador with a letter to the emperor. The emperor, in his turn, sent Liang-hoai-king as an envoy with a royal patent to Śīlāditya with an invitation to him to submit (to the authority of the Chinese emperor). Śīlāditya was full of astonishment and asked his officers whether any chinese envoy ever came to his country since time immemorial. 'Never', they replied in one voice. Thereupon the king went out,

¹¹² Watters, *l.c.* i. p. 297.

¹¹³ Panikkar, *Sri Harsha of Kanauj*, pp. 22f.

¹¹⁴ R. K. Mookerjee, *Harṣa*, p. 43.

¹¹⁵ Tripathi, *HK*, p. 121.

¹¹⁶ For a criticism of the theory that Harṣa conquered South India, *ib.*, pp. 121-3; *IHQ*, v. p. 235.

received the Imperial decree with bended knees, and placed it on his head."¹¹⁷

Those who are acquainted with the nature of Ma-twan-lin's description will at once perceive the true import of the above account. It is amusing to note that whenever any Indian chief has come into contact with the Chinese emperor, Ma-twan-lin has invariably described the incident as acknowledging the supremacy of the emperor by the Indian king. Thus from the above description it only appears that in 641 A.D. there were mutual exchanges of envoys between Harṣa and the Chinese king.

Again in 643 A.D., soon after Yuan Chwang had returned to China, and evidently under his influence, the Chinese emperor sent another envoy named Li Yi-pao to king Harṣa. Li Yi-pao was accompanied by another Chinese officer named Wang-hiuen-tse. We are informed that "they reached Magadha after a journey of nine months. On the completion of their official mission they visited the Buddhist holy places such as Rajgir, Gṛdhrakūṭa, and Mahābodhi, and set up Votive inscriptions in Chinese at Gṛdhra-kūṭa and Bodhgaya".¹¹⁸ They also visited Kāmarūpa and met king Bhāskaravarman who treated them with great respect. They returned to China in 647 A.D.

The same year (647) Wang-hiuen-tse was entrusted again with a Chinese imperial mission to the Kanauj emperor. But unfortunately before the envoy could touch the soil of India, Harṣa was dead, leaving the country in chaos and disorder.

¹¹⁷ *IA*, ix. p. 19; Ettinghausen, *Harshavardhana*, p. 54.

¹¹⁸ Bagchi, *India and China*, p. 82.

V

THE CHINESE INVASION AFTER HARṢA'S DEATH

From the account left by Wang-hiuen-tse, we learn that after the death of Harṣa his throne was usurped by one A-la-na-shun and when the Chinese envoy, despatched originally into the court of Harṣa, arrived on the Indian soil, he was attacked by the usurper. Wang-hiuen-tse was the head of this embassy and he left a full account of the whole incident. But unfortunately for us his work is lost, portions of the same surviving in the quotations of later writers. Wang-hiuen-tse became fairly acquainted with North India inasmuch as he came to this country twice more in 657 and 664 A.D. ¹¹⁹

Ma-twan-lin gives us the following description¹²⁰: "In the twentieth year of the Ching-Kwan period (646 A.D.) the emperor of China sent Wang-hiuen-tse on an embassy to the kingdom of Magadha. When he arrived he found the usurper on the throne who sent soldiers to oppose the entry of the envoy into the country. The envoy's suite at this time consisted of only a few dozen cavalries who struggled without success and were all taken prisoners.

The envoy resolved upon actions and retired to a town on the northern portion of Tu-fan or Tibet, from which he called the neighbouring kingdoms to arms. The king of Tu-fan came with a thousand soldiers and the king of Nepal with seven thousand cavalries. Wang-hiuen-tse divided them into several bodies and marched against the town of *Cha-pu-ho-lo* or *Ta-pu-ho-lo*, which he took by storm at the end of three days. He beheaded three thousand people, and ten thousand more were drowned. A-la-na-shun abandoned his kingdom and fled away: then he collected his scattered troops and attempted a fresh fight but the general Jin took him alive. Jin also captured and beheaded one thousand men. The remains of the usurper's army obeying the orders of the queen tried to stop the way upon the banks of the river Khien-to-wei but Tsiang-tsi-Jin gave them battle and defeated them. He took the queen and the king's son prisoners, captured twelve thousand men and women and twenty thousand heads of cattle and subdued five hundred eighty towns large and small.

Wang-hiuen-tse took A-la-na-shun to China and presented him at the gate of the palace. The magistrates proclaimed the victory

¹¹⁹ Levi, *Les Missions de Wang-hiuen-tse dans L'Inde*, in *J.A.*, 1900.

¹²⁰ I have summarised the account from Levi's article, *ib.*, pp. 20ff.

in an ancestral temple and the emperor raised him to the rank of Chao-san-ta-fu (a sort of auric councillor)."

The story is no doubt interesting but it is difficult to determine at the same time what were the causes that led the usurper to oppose the Chinese envoy. Evidently, Ma-twan-lin had not before him the full account and some of his details are puzzling. According to him Nepal and Tibet came to the help of the envoy but no such account is furnished from these quarters.

As pointed out by Petech, for the reign of Srong-tsang-gam-po, the Tibetan king, who is supposed to have come to the aid of the Chinese side, the *La-dvago-rgyal-rabs* is the only Tibetan source that speaks of his conquests.¹²¹ Nowhere in it, however, we find any mention of his Indian expeditions or interventions in the Indian affairs. The view that Buddhism was introduced into Tibet during his reign seems to be doubtful and among the chief events of his time three have mainly struck the attention of the Tibetan historians: the creation of the Tibetan alphabet on Indian pattern by Ton-mi-Sambhota and the two marriages of Srong-tsang-gam-po, with the daughter of Aṃśuvarman of Nepal, and with an Imperial Chinese princess.¹²² In the *Bu-ston* we find an account of the Indian Pandits who went to Tibet during the reign of this monarch, but that cannot prove in any way his meddling in Indian politics. In any case, the statement of Ma-twan-lin that "the king of Tu-fan came with a thousand soldiers" remains uncorroborated from any Tibetan source.

Similarly, the Nepalese documents throw no light on the point. Aṃśuvarman's successor was Jīṣṇugupta who had evidently been ruling contemporaneously with Srong-tsang-gam-po at the time of the incident. Levi has shown that Jīṣṇugupta was an Ābhīra and that during his time the Licchavis possibly regained their power.¹²³ But there is no mention in any Nepalese record that he or any of his nominal Licchavi lords came forward to intervene in the Indo-Chinese episode "with seven thousand cavalries" as asserted by Ma-twan-lin.

Bereft of these minor inaccuracies we may take the Chinese account as authentic. Thus it may be held that after the death of Harṣa one of his ministers usurped the power. Levi has shown that in the account of Wang-hiuen-tse, as preserved in the quotations of the later writers, A-la-na-shun has been described as the king of the country of Ti-no-pho-ti, which has been equated with

¹²¹ L. Petech, *A Study on the Chronicles of Ladakh*, p. 51.

¹²² *ib.*, p. 48.

¹²³ Levi, *Le Nepal*, ii. pp. 156-9; iii. pp. 102-9.

Tirabhukti i.e., the modern Tirhoot. The river Khien-to-wei, on the bank of which "the remains of the usurper's army obeying the orders of the queen tried to stop the way", has been considered to be the Gandakī or the confluence of the Gandakī and the Gangā.¹²⁴ These evidences prove beyond doubt that the citadel of the usurper's power was in Eastern India. In this connection, we may consider the statement of Ma-twan-lin that after king Śīlāditya died "his kingdom fell into a state of anarchy i.e., the kingdom was partitioned and the usurper used violence to make other kingdoms pay him tribute."¹²⁵ Eastern India had been conquered by Harṣa by the force of his arms and naturally it tried to maintain its separate and distinct existence as soon as the iron hand of that Kanauj monarch was removed.

Thus there is no evidence to associate the usurper in any way with Kanauj.¹²⁶ It has been thought on the other hand, that as a result of the Wang-hiuen-tse episode, the Tibetan suzerainty was extended over India which lasted till 702 A.D.¹²⁷ In the *History of Bengal*, Vol. i, 92-3, Dr. R. C. Majumdar, on the authority of S. Levi (*Le Nepal*, ii, 148), states that "there is, however, no doubt that the Tibetan king Srong-tsang-gam-po was drawn into Indian politics, either in connection with the strange episode of Wang-hiuen-tse or in pursuance of his father's policy. Whether he actually conquered any part of Indian plains is not definitely known, but he is said to have conquered Assam and Nepal and exercised suzerainty over half of Jambudvīpa. There is hardly any doubt that Nepal was at this time a vassal state of Tibet and remained so for nearly two hundred years". It has already been pointed out, however, that in the Tibetan texts there is no reference to his Indian conquests, and what Levi means to say is simply the fact that the minister of Srong-tsang-gam-po entered into "some diplomatic relationship with Hindusthan". This will be evident from foot note 1, p.148 of his book *Le Nepal*, ii.

Again, there are two statements made by Dr. Majumdar that require careful consideration. Speaking of Ki-li-pa-pu, the successor of Srong-tsang-gam-po, it has been said, on the authority of Levi, again, "In the south, he is said to have extended his conquests as far as Central India . . ." (*l.c.* 92)). In Levi's book *Le Nepal*, ii, 174, we read, however, "Au Sud, ses domaines s'étendaient jusqu'à L'Inde centrale (Po-lo-men)". From this

¹²⁴ Levi, *l.c.*

¹²⁵ *IA*, ix. p. 20.

¹²⁶ cf. Tripathi, *HK*, p. 192.

¹²⁷ Parker, *Journal of the Manchester Oriental Society*, 1911, p. 133.

it is clear that his dominion extended up to the borders of "Central India", and nothing more.

Again, we read "In 702 Nepal and Central India revolted against Tibet. Nepal was subdued and Central India, even if it did not send regular tribute, did not remain free from depredations". (*l.c.* 95) Petech points out that Ki-nu-si-lung, the successor of Ki-li-pa-pu, died a little after 702 A.D., during a campaign against Nepal and the peoples of the Indian frontier that had rebelled against him.¹²⁸

Thus in the present state of our knowledge it is difficult to imagine of any extension of Tibetan authority over India in the post-Harṣa period.

¹²⁸ Petech, *l.c.*

A D D E N D A

I

Mathura Image Inscription of Vasudeva of the year 64 or 67 (*supra*, pp. 81 & 90ff)

The above record has been edited by Dr. D. C. Sircar in *Ep. Ind.* xxx, Part v. pp 181ff. If we accept the reading 64 then it would reduce the difference between Huviṣka and Vāsudeva to practically 3 years and Vāsudeva should be taken as coming to the throne in c. 142 A.D. But as the reading 67 is also probable the inscription practically throws no new light on the Kuṣāṇas.

II

The Kings of Kauśāmbī (*supra*, pp. 114ff)

The following account from *Ancient India*, no. 5, p. 52 may be noted:

"The Bandhogarh cave inscriptions are among the valuable discoveries which add to our knowledge of the history of Central India in the early centuries of the Christian era. Over a score of these inscriptions were copied in rock-cut caverns at Bandhogarh in the Ramgarh tahsil of Rewa State. The main group of inscriptions introduces three generations of kings of whom very little was known before. They are Mahārāja Vāsithiputa siri Bhīmasena (year 51), his son Mahārāja Kochchiputa Poṭhasiri (years 86 and 87) and his son Mahārāja Kosikiputa Bhaṭṭadeva or Bhaḍadeva (year 90). Of these only Mahārāja Bhīmasena was known so far, from the painted inscription on the Ginja hill. It can now be safely assumed that this Bhīmasena is identical with the Bhīmasena of the Bhīṭa seal, as this also gives his metronymic Vāsithiputa. These inscriptions record donations of several cave-dwellings and amenities like wells, gardens and *maṇḍapas*, near these dwellings. One of the records of Poṭhasiri mentions his Minister of Foreign Affairs, named Māgha, son of the minister Chakora. Another inscription of the 87th year of the reign of the same ruler mentions Pavata (Parvata) which is apparently identical with Po-fa-to noticed by the Chinese pil-

grim Yuan Chwang. This is the earliest epigraphical reference to this place. Two more inscriptions found at Bandhogarh are of equally great interest. One of them is of Mahārāja Śivamagha of whose reign we have only one more inscription from Kosam (Kauśāmbī). The other is of the reign of Rājan Vaiśravaṇa who was the son of the Mahāsenāpati Bhadrabala. The only other inscription known of him is that found at Kosam. It may be noted, however, that in the latter Vaiśravaṇa calls himself Mahārāja but no mention is made of his father. *Mahāsenāpati* of the Bandhogarh inscription may have been a title of nobility and need not be taken in the sense of an army-commander. It is just possible that Vaiśravaṇa who gained more eminence than his father, assumed at first the title of *Rājan* which was changed to *Mahārāja* when he became more powerful".

III

"*Anu-Gaṅgā*" & "*Anu-Gaṅgam*" (*supra*, pp. 138-40)

After going through the proof-copy of *ch. vii*, a Sanskrit scholar took objection against my acceptance of the reading of *Anu-Gaṅgā* in the *Purāṇic* texts describing the empire of the Guptas. I have accepted the reading, as already stated, on the ground that it agrees with the available Chinese evidences. As regards the grammatical subtleties involved in the expressions (*Anu-Gaṅgā* and *Anu-Gaṅgam*) we may note the following:

The term *Anu-Gaṅgam* is no doubt justified according to the rules of the *Aavyayībhāva* compound, but at the same time we may accept the expression *Anu-Gaṅgā* by the rules of the *Prādi* compound: "*Anugatā Gaṅgā yasyām (bhūmau) sā*". In this sense we should take the term *bhūmi* as understood one. It may, however, be argued that in such a case the expression should have been in the accusative form. The *Purāṇic* texts on the Guptas, it should be noted, are hopelessly corrupt and we can only accept a reading in such texts that tallies with other known evidences. Further, such loose use of grammar are often found in the literary works and epigraphs dealing with historical facts. Dr. D. C. Sircar has pointed out a large number of such cases in the epigraphic records. (*PIHC*, 1954, pp. 72ff) I consulted Pandit Sukhamay Śāstrī *Saptatīrtha* of the Viśvabharati University on this point and he also opines that there is no harm in accepting

the reading *Anu-Gaṅgā*. Further, the particles *ca* and *tathā*, as already stated (p. 139), seem to suggest the same reading.

IV

The Supia Inscription of Skanda Gupta

The inscription dated in the year 141 is interesting one. It traces the Gupta *dynasty* from Ghaṭotkaca and the family is referred to as Ghaṭotkaca *vaṃśa*. Another interesting feature of the record is that it mentions Candra Gupta II only by his surname *Vikramāditya*.

V

Sung-yun and Toramāna's Kauśāmbī Seal

The Kauśāmbī seal which has "*Toramāna*" impressed on it and the account of Sung-yun create some confusion regarding the extent of Toramāna's empire. It has already been pointed out (*supra*, p. 197) that Mihirakula conquered the Gangetic valley after c.518 A.D., and hence the seal must have been carried to Kauśāmbī after that date, for there is absolutely no evidence that Toramāna conquered the Gangetic valley. The Eran inscription proves the extension of his empire into India proper. Sung-yun evidently knew nothing of it. On the other hand, it is also not unlikely that Toramāna's empire was lost for the time being and Mihirakula again conquered North India from the Epthalite base on the western side of the Indus.

VI

Harṣa-Pulakeśin War

(*supra*, pp. 251ff)

Recently a scholar has urged that Pulakeśin must have defeated Harṣa before 624 A.D. inasmuch as a recently discovered inscription shows that Kubja-Viṣṇuvardhana founded the Eastern Cālukya line about that date (*Ancient India* no. 5, p. 49). As Viṣṇuvardhana accompanied his brother Pulakeśin II in his expedition against the countries of the east coast, the conquest of the Badami ruler must have been completed before 624 A.D., and this conquest was further possible after he had defeated Harṣa. We, however, cannot see eye to eye with this theory. The silence of the Lonerah record of 630 A.D. regarding any such victory on the part of Pulakeśin II seems to be conclusive on the point. As it has been already stated Harṣa-Pulakeśin war appears to have been a *trial of strength* with no significant victory on either side.

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

I. *Suṅga Dynasty*

1. Puṣyamitra
2. Agnimitra
3. Sujyeṣṭha or Vasujyeṣṭha Baimbika Kula (?)
4. Vasumitra (Sumitra))
5. Andhraka (? Bhadraka, Odraka, Ardraka, Antaka)
6. Pulindaka
7. Ghoṣa (or, Ghoṣavasū)
8. Vajramitra
9. Bhāgavata or Bhāga
10. Devabhūmi or Devabhūti

II. *Kāṇva Dynasty*

1. Vāsudeva
2. Bhūmimitra
3. Nārāyaṇa
4. Suśarmaṇ

III. *Sakas of Ki-pin*

1. Wu-tou-lao
2. Yin-mo-fu

IV. *Sakas of Taxila*

1. Maues
2. Azes
3. Azilises
4. Azes II

V. *Sakas of Seistan*

1. Vonnonēs
2. Spalahora
3. Spalagadama
4. Spalirises
5. Azes (= Azes I of Taxila ?)

VI. *Kuṣāṇas*

Group A

Kujula Kadphises I

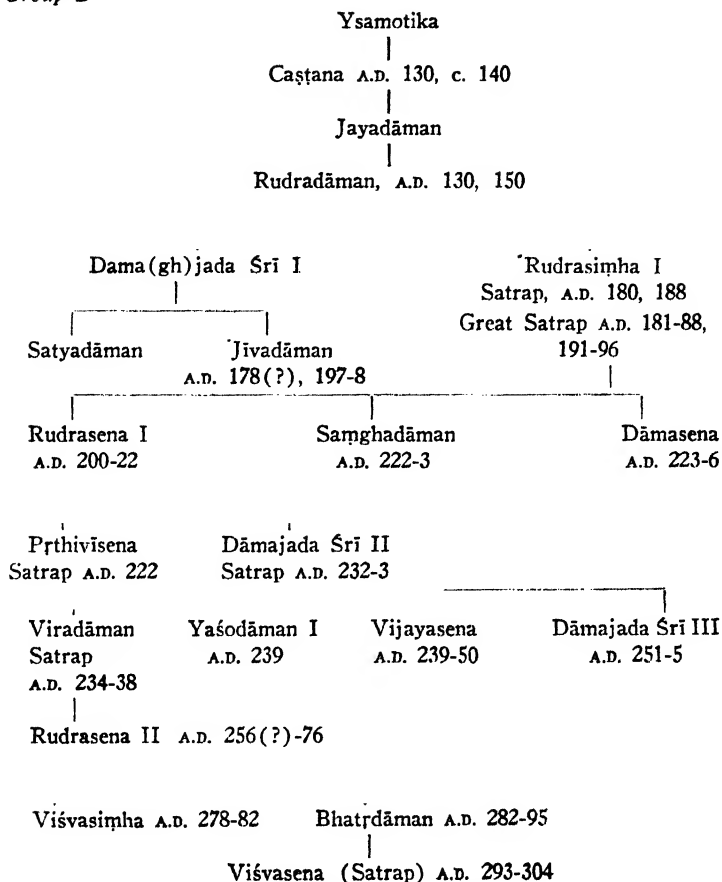
Vima or Wema Kadphises II

Group B

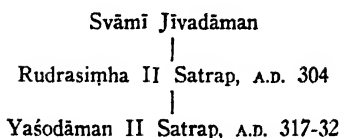
Kaniṣka I
 Vāsiṣka
 Huviṣka
 Kaniṣka II
 Vāsudeva I
 Kaniṣka III
 Vāsudeva II

VII. *Sakas of Western India**Group A*

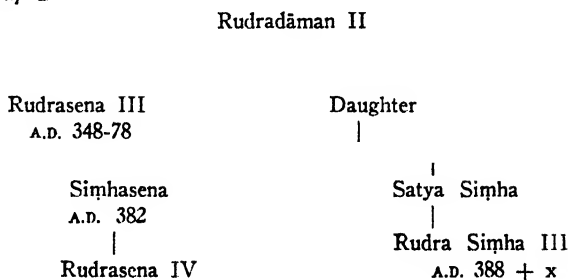
- (i) Bhūmaka
 (ii) Nahapāna

Group B

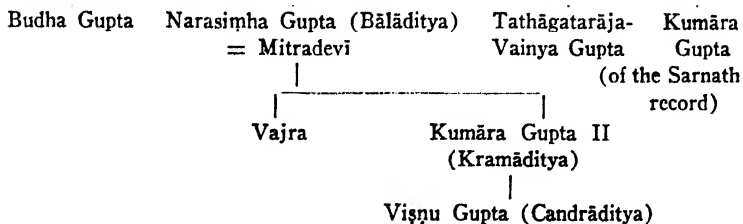
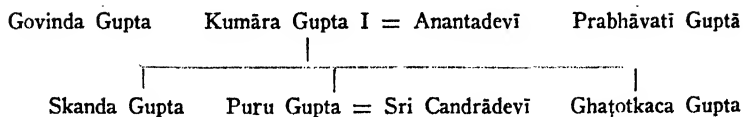
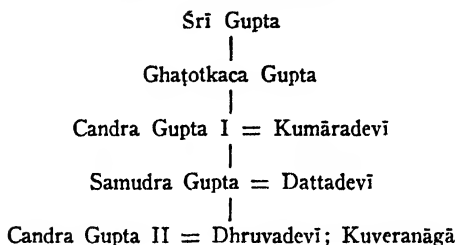
Group C



Group D



VIII. *Gupta Dynasty*



IX. *Maukharis*A. *Maukharis of Magadha*

Yajñavarman
|
Sārdūlavarman
|
Anantavarman

B. *The Main Branch*

Mahārāja Harivarman = Jayasvāminī
|
„ Ādityavarman = Harṣaguptā
|
„ Íśvaravarman = Upaguptā
|
Mahārājādhirāja Íśanavarman = Lakṣmīvati
|
„ Śarvavarman = Indrabhaṭṭārikā
|
„ Avantivarman =

Grahavarman Mahārājādhirāja Suva (?)
= Rājyaśrī

X. *Later Guptas*

(*vide*, Ch. VII. App. IV)

XI. *Puṣpabhūtiś of Thānesvar*

Mahārāja Naravardhana = Vajriṇīdevī
„ Rājyavardhana = Apsarodevī
„ Ādityavardhana = Mahāsenaguptādevī
Mahārājādhirāja Prabhakaravardhana = Yaśomatīdevī

Mhdh. Rājyavardhana

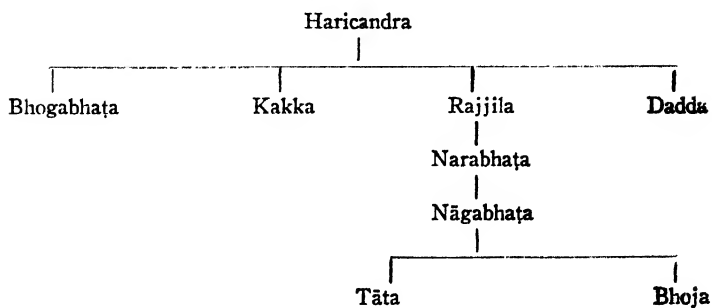
Mhdh. Harṣavardhana

XII. *Licchavis of Nepal*

- A.
- Vṛsadeva
|
Śaṃkaradeva
|
Dharmadeva
|
Mānadeva
|
Mahideva
- B. Śivadeva I
- Vasanta-sena (-deva)
- C. 1. Aṃśuvarman
 2. Jīṣṇugupta

XIII. *Kāmarūpa Kings*
(*vide* pp. 261f)

XIV. *Gurjaras of Rajputana*

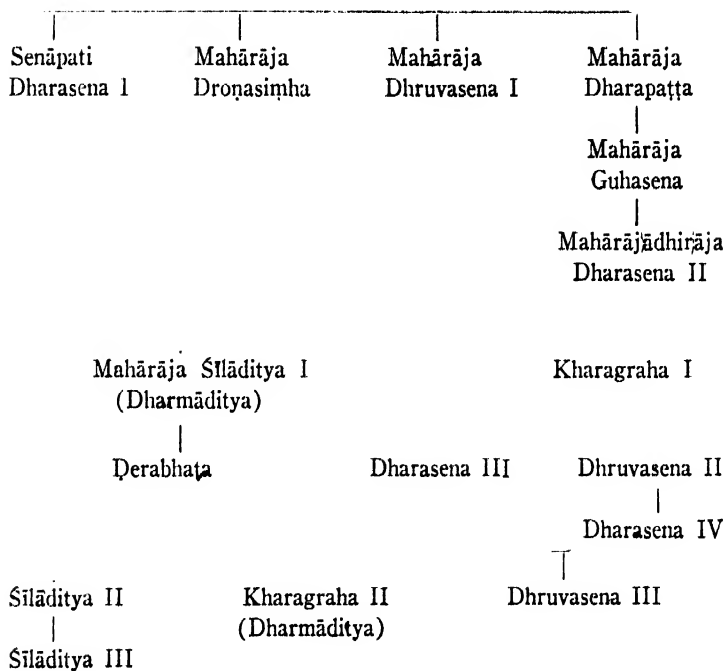


XV. *Gurjaras of Nāndīpuri*

- Dadda I
- |
- Jayabhaṭa I Vitarāga
- |
- Dadda II Praśāntarāga
- |
- Jayabhaṭa II
- |
- Dadda III Bāhusahāya

XVI. *Maitrakas of Valabhi*

Senāpati Bhaṭāraka



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- iii. THE ŚAKAS AND THE PARTHIANS
- iv. THE KUSANAS
- v. THE ŚAKAS OF WESTERN INDIA

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 Taxila Copper-plate inscription of Patika-year 78, (*Ep. Ind.* iv, pp. 55f; *CII*, ii(i), p. 28)

Saka Satraps of Mathurā

- Mathurā Lion Capital inscriptions of the time of Rañjubula and Śoḍāsa, (*Ep. Ind.*, ix, p. 141; *CII*, ii(i), p. 48)
 The Mathurā Votive Tablet of the time of Śoḍāsa—Year 72, (*Ep. Ind.*, ii, p. 199; ix, pp. 243-4)
 Mathurā Stone inscription of the time of Śoḍāsa, (*Ep. Ind.* ix, p. 247)

Gondopharnes

- The Takht-i-Bāhī Stone inscription of the year 103-regnal year 26 (*CII*, ii(i), p. 62; *Ep. Ind.* xviii, p. 282)

The Early Kuṣāṇas

- Panjtār Stone inscription of a Kuṣāṇa King—Year 122 (*Ep. Ind.*, xiv, p. 134; *CII*, ii(i), p. 70)
 Kalawān Copper-plate inscription—Year 134 (*Ep. Ind.*, xxi, p. 259)
 Taxila Silver scroll inscription of a Kuṣāṇa king—year 136 (*CII*, ii(i), p. 77; *Ep. Ind.*, xiv, p. 295)

KANISKA GROUP OF KINGS

Kaṇiṣka I

- Kosam inscription of the year 2, (*Ep. Ind.*, xxiv)
 Sārnāth Buddhist Image inscription—year 3 (*Ep. Ind.*, vii, pp. 173ff)
 British Museum Stone inscription—year 10 (*Ep. Ind.*, ix, p. 240)
 Sui Vihār C. P. inscription Year 11 (*CII*, ii(i), p. 141)
 Zeda inscription—year 11 (*Ep. Ind.*, xix, pp. 1ff; *CII*, ii(i), p. 145)
 Māñikiālā stone inscription—Year 18 (*CII*, ii(i), pp. 149f)
 Two inscriptions from Set-Mahet, (*Ep. Ind.*, viii, pp. 180f; ix, p. 291)
 Kurram Copper casket inscription—Year 21, (*CII*, ii(i), p. 155; *Ep. Ind.*, xviii, pp. 15ff)

Vaśiṣka

Sāñchī Buddhist Image inscription—year 28 (*Ep. Ind.*, ii, pp. 369-70)
 Isāpur inscription, (*Lüders* No. 139a)

Huviṣka

Mathurā Stone inscription—Year 28, (*Ep. Ind.*, xxi, p. 60)
 Mathurā Buddhist Image inscription—Year 33, (*Ep. Ind.*, viii, pp. 181f)
 Mathurā Jain Image inscription—Year 44, (*Ep. Ind.*, i, p. 387, No. 9; ii, p. 212, n. 37; x, p. 114, No. 7)
 Lucknow Museum inscription—Year 48, (*Ep. Ind.*, x, p. 112, No. 5)
 Mathurā Buddhist Image inscription—Year 51, (*Ep. Ind.*, x, p. 113, no. 6)
 Wardak Bronze Vase inscription—Year 51 (*CII*, ii(i), p. 170)

Kaṇiṣka II

Ārā Stone inscription—Year 41 (*CII*, ii(i), p. 165; *Ep. Ind.*, xiv, p. 143)

Vāsudeva

Mathurā inscriptions—Year 80, (*Ep. Ind.*, i, p. 392, no. 24; x, p. 116, no. 10)
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ŚAKAS OF WESTERN INDIA

Six Nāsik Cave inscriptions of the time of Nahapāna, (*Ep. Ind.*, viii)
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—	Eran	<i>Corpus</i> III, p. 18; <i>JIH</i> , xiv, p. 27 xix, p. 27; <i>Select Ins.</i> p. 260
5	Nalanda (CP)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> xxv. p. 52; xxvi, p. 135
9	Gayā (CP)	<i>Corpus</i> III, p. 254; <i>IC</i> , x p. 77; xi. p. 225

Chandra Gupta II

61	Mathurā (P)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> xxi, p. 1; <i>IHQ</i> , p. 271;
	Regnal yr. 5	<i>ABORI</i> , xviii, p. 166; <i>Select Ins.</i> p. 269
82	Udayagiri (Cave)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 21.
88	Gadhwa (Stone)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 36
93	Sāñichi (Stone)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 29
	Mathurā (Stone)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 25
	Udayagiri (Cave)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 34
	Basārḥ Clay Seals	<i>ASIR</i> , 1903-4, p. 107
—	Meharauli (Iron Pillar)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 139

Kumāra Gupta I

96	Bilsaḍ (Pillar)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 42
98	Gadhwa (Stone)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 40
106	Udayagiri (Cave)	<i>Corppus</i> , III, p. 258
113	Dhānāidaha (CP)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> xviii, p. 347
113	Mathurā (Jain Image)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> ii, p. 210
116	Tumain (Stone)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> xxvi, p. 115
117	Karamdāṇḍā	
	(Brahmanical Image)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> x. p. 71
120	Kūlaikuri (CP)	<i>IHQ</i> . xix, p. 12
124	Dāmodarpur (CP)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> xv. p. 129
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128	Baigrām (CP)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> xxi, p. 78
129	Mankuwār (Buddhist Image)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 45
129	Gadhwa (Stone)	<i>Corppus</i> , III, p. 39
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Skanda Gupta

136-8	Junāgadḥ (Rock)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 56
141	Kahāum (Pillar)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 65; <i>IHQ</i> , xxviii p. 298

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141	Rewa (Pillar)	<i>POC</i> , xii, Vol. iii, p. 587
146	Indore (CP)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 68
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(V. S. 524)	Mandasor Fort Wall	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> xxvii, p. 12
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154	Sarnath (of Kumāra Gupta)	<i>ASIR</i> , 1914-5, p. 124; <i>Select Ins.</i> p. 320
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157	Sarnath	<i>ASIR</i> , 1914-15, p. 125, <i>Select Ins.</i> p. 323
159	Paharpur (CP)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> xx, p. 61
159	Benares (Rajghat)	<i>JRASBL</i> , xv, p. 5
163	Damodarpur (CP)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> xv, p. 134; <i>Select Ins.</i> p. 324
165	Eraṇ	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 88
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	<i>Vainya Gupta</i>	
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480	(V. E.) Viśva-varman, Gangdhar (Stone)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 72
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158	Lakṣmaṇa, Singrauli (CP)	<i>ASIR</i> , 1936-7, p. 88
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191	Hastin, Majhgwan (CP)	<i>Corpus</i> , III, p. 106
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191	Sarvanātha, Sohaval (CP)	<i>Ep. Ind.</i> , xix, p. 129
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- viii. THE RISE OF THE MAUKHARIS
 ix. THE AGE OF HARSA

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