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LIFE IN THE GUPTA AGE

BY

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PREFACE

THE object of this work is to present as complete an account as possible of the life of the people in the Gupta Age. By the Guptas I mean not only the Imperial Guptas but also the Later Guptas who ruled consecutively from *circa* A. D. 300 until about A. D. 750. Since this age was essentially an age of political activity, I have tried to depict the political conditions of the period, adding to them the details about their common life, conditions at the court, administration, land and labour questions, corporate organization, fine arts, religion and religious institutions.

My primary sources have been contemporary inscriptions, coins, chronicles, literary works and accounts of travellers. Under the first category I have cited the evidence from the records not only of the Guptas but also of their feudatories and contemporaries like the Parivrājaka *Mahārājas*, the Vākāṭakas, the Maukhāris, the Puṣpabhūtis and others. Numismatic evidence has been taken into account mainly with a view either to confirm or reject the evidence supplied by other sources. Of particular importance among the chronicles are the Muslim account called the *Majmalu-T-Tawarīkh*, the Jaina Prākṛta works and the Buddhist narratives like the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*. The literary sources centre round the works of Kālidāsa, Bāṇa, Daṇḍin, Haribhadra Sūri I, and plays like the *Devīchandraguptam* and the *Kaumudīmahōtsava*. The foreign travellers who visited India during this period were mostly Chinese pilgrims like Fa Hien and Yüan Chwāng—the former having been the contemporary of Chandra Gupta II, and the latter of Harṣavardhana of Kanauj. I-Tsing's visit to the Nālandā monastery a little later has yielded to us much fruit. The accounts of these Chinese travellers are valuable, although they are from the Buddhist view-point, in as much as they corroborate the evidence secured from indigenous literature or from epigraphs. In a way these Chinese sojourners were to the Hindu courts of the Gupta period what the Jesuit padres were to the Mughal court, except with the difference that, being accounts of devout followers of Buddhism which was then prevalent in the country, their narratives have a distinctly greater historical value.

I admit here that in selecting certain literary sources, I am treading a controversial path I am treading. Thus, for instance,

in allotting Kālidāsa to the first quarter of the fifth century A. D., I am afraid I cannot be incorrect, for it is not only the considered opinion of some scholars, but is also the conclusion I have arrived at on the strength of the evidence from his works. Kālidāsa was to the Gupta Age what Shakespeare was to the times of Elizabeth—the *most prominent literary figure of the period. As regards other writers like Bāṇa or Daṇḍin, I presume they do not afford very* great scope for controversy. In order, however, to view the *life* of the period in its proper perspective, I have cited evidence either from the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭalya or from the inscriptions of the Kuṣāṇas and the Scythians.

In this connection I would draw the reader's attention particularly to a hitherto much neglected source, viz., the frescoes which are found in caves nos XVI-XVII at Ajanta. These artistic relics of the Vākāṭaka period may be definitely assigned to the sixth century A. D. They may therefore be considered posterior to Kālidāsa but anterior to Bāṇa. The late Mr. R. D. Banerji's remark that these two caves were "certainly not earlier than 600 A. D." may be borne in mind here. Hence my attempt to study the evidence of the frescoes along with that which is supplied by Kālidāsa and Bāṇa. Here, as in regard to other sources, I have confirmed, corroborated and continued the evidence from one source with that secured from others, laying special stress on the testimony of epigraphs, which, to my mind, are of primary importance in a study like the one I have undertaken.

A word of caution may be mentioned here. I have dared in several cases to disagree with some of the views of many co-workers in the field. This is but inevitable in a work of research like this, but I may honestly maintain with Shakespeare that "—— infects one comma in the course I hold". I confess again that some of my conclusions are only tentative, for there can never be any such thing like finality in research, if it is really to add to knowledge. I am constrained to say this, because unfortunately of late, certain writers, on finding that their views were either criticised or controverted, have taken them as personal affronts and launched tirades against those who had the temerity to disagree with them.

In view of the extraordinary exigencies of the present time owing to certain other considerations, I have much against my will omitted certain aspects of Gupta life and culture; but if my

find that a full and complete account of the activities of the Gupta people has been presented to them in the following pages, I shall feel that the primary object of writing this work has been achieved.

In conclusion I must thank the following who have assisted me in the writing and the publication of this treatise:

1. *Rao Bahadur K. N. Dikshit*, M.A., *F.R.A.S.B., Director-General of Archaeological Survey in India, and Dr N. P. Chakravarti*, M.A., Ph.D. (Cantab), Deputy Director-General of Archaeological Survey in India, New Delhi, for permitting me to publish photographs nos. 1, 7, 8;

2. Gulam Yazdani Esq., M. A., O. B. E., Director, Archaeological Department, His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Dominions, Hyderabad, Deccan, for allowing me to publish photographs nos. 3 and 6;

3. Mr H. L. Srivatsava, M.A., Superintendent, Archaeological Survey, Central Circle, Patna, for permitting me to publish photograph no. 8;

4. The University of Bombay for giving me a grant-in-aid towards the cost of the publication of this work;

5. Rev. Fr Susai Regis, Superintendent, St. Joseph's Industrial School Press, Trichinopoly, for the neat printing and the general get-up of the book;

6. M/s V. D. Wagle and G. S. Borkar of The Wagle Process Studio, Bombay, for the elegant printing of the illustration-blocks and the map;

7. Dr B. A. Saletore, M.A., Ph.D. (London), D. Phil. (Giessen), B.E.S., Lecturer in History and Political Economy, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad; and Mr. G. N. Saletore, M.A., University Research Student, Imperial Records Department, Government of India, New Delhi,—my elder and younger brothers respectively, for going through the manuscript and offering me their criticism;

8. My wife and my brothers-in-law, Mr R. S. Kodical, B.Sc., and Mr G. S. Hattiangadi, B.Sc., for assisting me in the preparation of the index.

Dipāvaḷi,
7—11—1942.
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TO THE MEMORY

OF

MY FATHER

ERRATA

LINE	PAGE	FOR	READ
12	10	house of Padmāvati	Nāga house who perished at Padmāvati
32	71	Deva Gupta II	Deva Gupta III
21	224	*Leghaka*	*Lekhaka*
15	270	B. The *Adhikaraṇa* in Sessions:	B. The *Adhikaraṇa* in Session
Heading	271	*Adhikaraṇa* in Sessions	*Adhikaraṇa* in Session
21	364	cirbira	Cirbira
3	397	3. Coiffeures	3. Coiffures
16	397	coiffeure	coiffure
2	412	1. Coiffeures	1. Coiffures
5	412	coiffeure	coiffure
12, 19	413	coiffeure	coiffure
28	457	*Madhastha*	*Madhyastha*
34	462	*Jyotirvidhabhana*	*Jyotirvidābharaṇa*
32	472	"expensive Vātsyāyana clan":	"expansive Vātsyāyana clan"
foot-note 3:	490	Raychaudhuri	H. C. Ray
Illustration:	To face 504:	Nakti-K-Talāi	Nakti-ki-Talāi
foot-note 2:	538	Macondonell	Macdonell
foot-note 4:	541	Agarwala	Agrawala

ABBREVIATIONS

A. B. O. R. I.	Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
As. Res.	Asiatic Researches.
A. S. I. R.	Archaeological Survey of India Report.
A. S. W. I.	Archaeological Survey of Western India Report.
B. S. O. S.	Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies.
B. V.	Bhāratīya Vidyā.
C. I. I.	Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.
C. R.	Calcutta Review.
D. C.	Devīcaṅdraguptam.
D. H. N. I.	Dynastic History of Northern India.
D. K. D.	Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts.
E. H. I.	Early History of India.
E. C.	Epigraphia Carnāṭica.
E. I.	Epigraphia Indica.
G. J. C. Vol.	Ganga Nāth Jhā Commemoration Volume.
H. C.	Harṣacarita.
H. N. E. I.	History of North-Eastern India.
I. A.	Indian Antiquary.
I. C.	Indian Culture.
I. H. Q.	Indian Historical Quarterly.
J. A.	Jaina Antiquary.
Jr. A.	Journal Asiatique.
J. A. H. R. S.	Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society.
J. As. H. R. S.	Journal of the Assamese Historical Research Society.
J. A. O. S.	Journal of the American Oriental Society.
J. A. S. B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. New Series denoted as (N.S.).
J. B. B. R. A. S.	Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J. B. H. U.	Journal of the Benares Hindu University.
J. B. H. S.	Journal of the Bombay Historical Society.
J. B. I. S. M.	Journal of the Bhārat Itihāsak Samśodhak Maṇḍal.
J. B. O. R. S.	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
J. D. L.	Journal of the Department of Letters, Calcutta.
J. G. R. S.	Journal of the Gujarat Research Society.

J. I. H.	Journal of the Indian History.
J. I. S. O. A.	Journal of the Society of Oriental Arts.
J. M. U.	Journal of the Madras University.
J. N. S. I.	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.
J. O. R.	Journal of the Oriental Research.
J. R. A. S.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London.
J. U. B.	Journal of the Bombay University.
J. P. U. H. S.	Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society.
M. A. R.	Mysore Archaeological Reports.
M. A. S. I.	Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.
M. E. R.	Madras Epigraphical Reports. (Reports of the Southern Circle also stated as E. R. S. C.)
M. M.	Mahāmahōpādhyāya.
M. R.	Modern Review.
N. C.	Numismatic Chronicle.
N. I. A.	New Indian Antiquary.
O. Z.	Ostasiatische Zeitschrift.
P. A. S. B.	Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
P. C. M.	Pachiappa's College Magazine.
P. H. A. I.	Political History of Ancient India.
P. O.	Poona Orientalist.
P. I. H. C.	Proceedings of the Indian Historical Congress.
P. O. C.	Proceedings of the Oriental Conference.
Q. J. M. S.	Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society.
S. B. H.	Sacred Books of the Hindus.
S. B. E.	Sacred Books of the East.
S. I. I.	South Indian Inscriptions.
Z. D. M. G.	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morganländischen Gesellschaft.

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CHAPTER I

The Age of the Guptas

I. Political condition on the collapse of the Śātavāhana Empire.

On the collapse of the Śātavāhana empire in the first half of the third century after Christ[1], there sprang into existence in northern India three important powers, the Vākāṭakas, the Maukhāris and the Guptas, while in the south the Gaṅgas, the Pallavas and the Kadaṁbas slowly assumed political prominence.

Of these powers the Vākāṭakas appear to have established a mighty monarchy under their first prominent king Vindhyaśakti, which was not probably his real name but a cognomen, and his family continued to rule for nearly a century. We know for certain from the Ajanta inscription of cave no. XVI that he was the founder of this family as he is therein called *Vākāṭaka-vaṁśa-kētuḥ*[2]; but he does not seem to have issued any coins, because according to Purāṇic tradition he was a feudatory of the Kila-Kila kings[3]. He is called a Vākāṭaka probably because he founded his dynasty at Vākāṭa[4], and, as his name suggests, he evidently symbolised the might of the Vindhyan regions. But his son on becoming more powerful issued, as Pravarasena I, coins from Pūrikā (Hosangabad); and he seems to have abandoned Canaka (Ganj Nāchanā) his father's capital possibly for political reasons. Like his father, Pravarasena I must have

[1] *Note:* There is no agreement among scholars as yet regarding the precise date of the collapse of the Śātavāhana power. On this point see Bhandarkar, *Early History of the Dekkan*, p. 45, who assigned it to about A.D. 218; Rice, *Mysore and Coorg*, p. 24, placed it "early in the third century"; Pargiter, in *The Purāna Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age*, p. xxvii, stated that it was "not later than A.D. 260"; Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 79, referred it to A. D. 238-39. Also see *J.B.O.R.S.*, XVI, p. 290 for a discussion on this topic.

[2] Burgess and Bhagwanlal Indraji, *Inscriptions from the Cave Temples of Western India*, p. 69 (1881).

[3] *Vāyu*, Pt. II, Ch. 37, vv. 358-60 p. 177; *Bhāgavata*, XII, vv. 31-33, p. 684; *Brahmāṇḍa*, Ch. III, vv. 178-79, p. 186.

[4] *E.I.*, XV, no. 113 (27), p. 267. *Note:* Here the town of Vākāṭa is stated to have been extant in A.D. 150. The name Vākāṭaka can also be traced in the Dekhan to *circa* A.D. 150. Mr. Ramprasad Chanda maintains that the clan-name Pākoṭaka, which occurs in a Prākṛta inscription of Amarāvati (Cf. no. 8, p. 263) is to be identified with Vākāṭaka. See *E.I.*, XV, pp. 260-61, 263. This identification which has been made merely on linguistic grounds does not appear to be very convincing.

been a mighty ruler as he is called *Pravīra* and is recorded to have performed four *Aśvamedha* sacrifices, assumed the title of *sāmrāṭ* or emperor and married a Brāhmaṇa lady[1]. His grandson succeeded him for we know that his son Gautamīputra married a daughter of the Bhāraśiva *Mahārāja* Bhavanāga, but he does not seem to have reigned. What happened to Gautamīputra is not known, but his son ascended the throne as Rudrasena I[2].

About this time, that is on the fall of the Śātavāhana empire, the Guptas were not historically prominent, for the *Vāyu* and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇās* associate them only with Magadha.[3] There they appear to have been at first petty officials under the Śātavāhanas, as can be seen from the Nāsik and Kārle cave inscriptions[4]. But there is reason to conclude that even before the rise of the Imperial Guptas, there were some Gupta rulers who might or might not have been connected with the imperial Gupta family, Probably they were not connected with them, for if they had been their records would have preserved some indications of such a contact. These pre-imperial Guptas issued coins and inscriptions as well. A Brāhmi epigraph refers to a gift of Mahādēvī, the wife of *Śrī* Hariḍāsa "sprung from the Gupta race."[5] A Nasik record of Gotamiputra Śātakarṇi mentions his *Amaca* Śivaguta (Śiva Gupta)[6]. Another inscription, probably of the same king, at Karle refers to two officials: the *Amaca* Pariguta (Pari Gupta?) and an official named Śivakhadaguta (Śiva Skanda Gupta?).[7] There are extant coins of Rudra Gupta and Jaya Gupta[8], both of whom appear to have had no connection with the imperial Gupta dynasty.

Along with the Guptas the Maukhāris also appear to have been entrusted with some posts of responsibility and trust, but by whom remains now to be determined. The three Maukhāri inscriptions on *yūpas*, dated in the *kṛta* year 295 relate how a sacrificial post was erected by Balavardhana (Balasiṁha), son of Bala, the glorious Mokhāri (Maukhāri) commander-in-chief (*śrī mahāsenāpati*)[9]. The

[1] *Note:* This is apparent from the name of his son Gautamiputra. Cf. Jayaswal *op. cit.* p. 62. Moreover in the Ajanta inscription (cave no. XVI) he is called *Dvija*. Cf. Burgess and Bhagwanlal Indraji, *op. cit.* p. 69. Regarding the use of the word *Pravira cf. Raghuvamśa*, XIV, 29, p. 293, where this word is used with reference to Raghu.

[2] *E.I.*, IX, no. 36, p. 270.

[3] *Vāyu, op. cit.* v. 377, p. 177; *Brahmāṇḍa*, Ch. III, v. 195, p. 186.

[4] *E.I.*, VIII, no. 4, p. 72; no. 9, p. 77.

[5] J.A.S.B., LXIV, Pt. 1, p. 161; *E.I.*, X, Lüders' List no. 11, p. 3.

[6] *E.I.*, VIII, no. 8, p. 7; *Ibid*, X, Lüders' List. no. 1125, p. 124.

[7] *Ibid*, VII, no. 7, p. 64; *Ibid*, X, *op. cit.*, no. 1105, p. 119.

[8] Allan, *Coins of Ancient India*, pp. 192, 202.

[9] *E.I.*, XXIII, no. 7, p. 52.

fourth *yūpa* inscription relates how this *yūpa* was the symbol of the Āptōryāma sacrifice performed by the wise Dhanutrāta, son of Hastin of the Maukhāri clan.[1] These inscriptions were found at Baḍvā in the Koṭah State, and it is therefore possible that the Maukhāri official Bala held the post of *Mahāsenāpati* under the predecessors of the Kōṭa-Kulaja mentioned in the Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra Gupta. These *yūpa* records have been ascribed on palaeographic grounds to the beginning of the third century A.D. The antiquity of the Maukhāri dynasty cannot be gainsaid. The Harāha inscription of the Maukhāri ruler Īśānavarman tells us: "The Mukhāra princes, who have vanquished their foes and checked the course of evil, are the descendants of the hundred sons whom king Aśvapati got from Vaivasvata (Manu) and who were conspicuous on account of their excellences."[2] Pandit Hirananda Sastri suggested that, if this Aśvapati were identical with his namesake the father of Sāvitrī, the king of Madra,[3] then the Mukharas (Maukhāris) must have lived, according to Varāhamihira, in the area between the Jhelum and the Ravi, extending at times to the Beas.[4] This region is not far from the Kotah territory, but later on they appear to have shifted eastwards, for Bāṇa tells us that Grahavarman Maukhāri had his capital which was a few days' journey from Sthāṇvīśvara, the metropolis of Harṣa.[5] But it is difficult to think that the forefathers of these Maukhāris, living either in the east or west in northern India, were attacked by the founder of the Kadaṁbakula, Mayūraśarmā, as recorded in his Candravaḷḷi inscription.[6] It is more plausible that like the Vākāṭakas, the Maukhāris too were living in Central India, during the advent of Mayūraśarmā. It may be remembered that the Kadaṁbas succeeded the Śātavāhanas in the west of Mysore early in the third century,[7] while the Pallavas followed them in the eastern Dekhan and penetrated downwards even as far as Trichinopoly.[8]

Chronology of the early Vākāṭakas and the Guptas

We may now turn to settle, of course, tentatively the chronology of the early Vākāṭakas and the Guptas respectively. The *Purāṇas* it

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[1] *E.I.*, XXV, no. 35, p. 253.
[2] *Ibid*, XIV, no. 5, p. 119.
[3] *Ibid*, p. 111.
[4] *Cf.* Varāhamihira, *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, vv XIV, 22, p. 91; also see *J.R.A.S.*, 1897, p. 30.
[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 131.
[6] *M.A.R.*, 1929, Pt. V, no. 1, p. 50.
[7] Rice, *Mysore and Coorg*, pp, 23, 52. Also see *E.C.*, VII, Sk. 176, pp. 113-15.
[8] Rice *Ibid*, p. 52.

may be stated allot ninety-six years to the Vākāṭakas,[1] and a coin of Rudrasena I is claimed to be dated in the year 100.[2] But the Chammak plates of Pravarasena II record that Pṛthvīṣeṇa "belonged to an uninterrupted succession of sons and sons' sons and whose treasures and means of government had been accumulated for one hundred years."[3] To determine, therefore, the commencement of this year of Vākāṭaka sovereignty, we may retrace a little backwards towards the reign of Samudra Gupta whose conquests, it is generally agreed, must have taken place between A.D. 345-50.[4] The Rudradēva, whom he defeated or possibly killed, has been identified with Rudrasena I the son of Gautamīputra and grandson of Pravarasena.[5] This identification can be accepted, provided the Purāṇic epithet of *śiśuka* applied to him is interpreted to mean that he was not after all a child when he came to the throne and was slain in battle by Samudra Gupta. As a prince, according to Hindu *Śāstras*, could not assume kingship unless he was at least twenty-five years old,[6] it may be presumed that Rudrasena I must have been about this age when he met his death at the hands of Samudra Gupta. Therefore, if one hundred years are retraced from this period *viz.*, A. D. 345-50, it may be stated that the Śātavāhanas must have collapsed about the year A. D. 245.

If this suggestion is accepted then we may proceed to a more definite date in Gupta history or rather in Gupta-Vākāṭaka relations. It is known for certain that Prabhāvatī Guptā, the daughter of Candra Gupta II married Rudrasena II, the son of Pravarasena I who is allotted by the *Purāṇas* a period of sixty years.[7] It is also agreed that Candra Gupta II commenced to reign from A. D. 380, according to the IInd Mathurā pillar inscription, which is his

[1] *Vāyu*, II, 37, v. 359, p. 177:
tataḥ Kolikilebhyaśca Vindhyaśaktir bhaviṣyati
samāḥ ṣaṇṇavatiṃ jñātvā pṛthivīṃ ca sameṣyati"
Viṣṇu, IV, 17, p. 21: *tataḥ Purañjayas tato Rāmacandras tasmād Dharmmō Dharmāt vārangaḥ Kṛtanandanaḥ Śiśunandir Nandiyaśāḥ Śiśuka Pravīrauca etc varṣa śatam ṣaḍ varṣāṇica bhaviṣyanti*".
Brahmāṇḍa, *op. cit.*, v. 178:
tēṣu cchinneṣu kālena tataḥ kila-kila nṛpāḥ
tataḥ kilakilebhyaśca Vindhyaśaktir bhaviṣyati."

[2] Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 73.

[3] Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, (55), p. 241.

[4] *Cf.* Jayaswal, *Ibid*, p. 141.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, Intr. pp. 186-91; Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, pp. 32, 35.

[6] Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, II, p. 52.

[7] *Vāyu*, *op. cit.*, v. 365, p. 177; *Brahmāṇḍa*, ch. III, adh. 74, v. 184, p. 186:
Vindhyaśakti sutaścāpi Pravīro nāma vīryavān
Bhōkṣyate ca samāḥ ṣaṣṭiṃ purīṃ kāñcanakāñca vai.

earliest inscription discovered so far.[1] Therefore, to marry a daughter of Candra Gupta II, Rudrasena II must have been a young man of about twenty-five years as in the case of Rudrasena I. If we allot a period of twenty-five years for each ruler, except of course to Pravarasena I, who must have had a rather lengthy reign of about sixty years, then the following dates may be assigned to the Vākāṭakas and the Guptas.[2] According to this chronology, therefore, Śrī Gupta and Vindhyaśakti, the progenitors of two families, being contemporaries must have set up principalities in the regions of Magadha and the present Ajayagaḍh State and Bundelkhand areas.

II. The Early Imperial Guptas

This Śrī Gupta was the founder of the great imperial family of the Guptas, according to the Allahabad *praśasti* of his great grandson Samudra Gupta, which states his relationship precisely thus: *Śrī Gupta prapautrasya Mahārājaśrī Ghaṭōtkaca pautrasya Mahārājādhirāja śrī Candra Gupta putrasya*.[3] This clear indication of kinship should be accepted in concluding that there was only one Śrī Gupta and not two as stated by Alberuni and the Chinese tradition.[4] Moreover from this reference it may be concluded, first, that the founder of the Gupta family adopted the title of *Śrī* the illustrious, secondly, that his son Ghaṭōtkaca added one more title of *Mahārāja* and thirdly, that his son styled himself the king of kings, *Mahārājādhirāja*, all these titles indicating the degrees of power assumed by the early Gupta rulers. This Śrī Gupta was not in all likelihood a feudatory of the Śātavāhanas but was the first Gupta king who assumed independence. In the Poona plates of Prabhāvatī Guptā, he is styled as the *Ādirāja*,[5] a title, which though given to him later, is nevertheless not indicative of any subordination. It may be remembered that the founder of the later Gupta dynasty Kṛṣṇa Gupta is also called likewise a *rāja*,[6] thereby suggesting that he must have been independent.

The first year in which this Śrī Gupta assumed the role of kingship was most probably in A. D. 245 as stated before. We may

[1] *E. I.*, XXI, no. 1, p. 3.

[2] See Appendix A.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1) p. 8.

[4] *Cf.* Beal, SI-YU-KI, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, II, p. 151; Beal, *Indian Travels of Chinese Buddhists, (Hwui Lun), I. A.*, X, p. 110; see Fleet, *op. cit.* f. n. 3. pp. 8-9.

[5] *E. I.*, XV, no. 4, p. 43.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) p. 205.

now consider this from another point of view. If the year A. D. 320 is accepted as the coronation or regnal year of Candra Gupta I, then it is not unreasonable to infer that, at this time, he must have been twenty-five years of age in order to declare himself a ruler and be crowned a king. But it is not known how long he lived subsequent to his coronation. Suppose we go back twenty-five years from the period of Candra Gupta I, *viz.*, A. D. 295-320, then this may be the reign of his father Ghaṭōtkaca who may likewise be allotted a similar number of years. This would bring us to A. D. 270-95 and if the same period is also allotted to the progenitor of the Gupta dynasty, Śrī Gupta, then we arrive at A. D. 245-70, a period which is precisely the same which was determined a little earlier.

But how long Candra Gupta I survived his coronation is not yet a settled point. Although it has been surmised that he must have lived for ten or fifteen years after his coronation, according to the chronology adopted in these pages it may be reasonably assumed that Samudra Gupta must have succeeded his father ten years after the coronation year of A. D. 320. This would mean that he lived for forty-five years as his last date is generally accepted to be A. D. 375. This rather lengthy reign would not be too long a period for such a mighty conqueror like Samudra Gupta who not only conquered his neighbours but even conducted a *digvijaya* into the Dakṣiṇāpatha as well.

The assumption that Candra Gupta I might have survived for ten years after his coronation in A. D. 320 is apparently contradicted by the two Gayā[1] and Nālandā[2] copper plate grants of Samudra Gupta, dated in the 9th and 4th years respectively, which however have been declared to be spurious. According to the Gayā copper plate it would mean that Candra Gupta I had died by A. D. 328, and the Nālandā record would further shorten his life by another four years leaving him only a period of four or five years after his coronation. It is therefore contended that, as he could hardly have created an empire within such a short span of time, "we are forced to use the regnal years of Samudra Gupta himself."[3] Two considerations present themselves here: first, whether Candra Gupta I was responsible for creating and leaving to his son Samudra Gupta an empire or whether he left to his successor merely an independent kingdom namely of

[1] *Cf.* Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (60) pp. 254-56.
[2] *E. I.*, XXV, no. 9, pp. 50-53.
[3] A. Ghose, *Ibid*, p. 52.

Magadha; secondly, whether the years referred to in the Gayā and Nālandā records of Samudra Gupta in reality refer to his regnal years.

It is indeed highly doubtful whether Candra Gupta I ever left in any form an empire to his son for he could not really have created one in the short life which has been unanimously allotted to him. If he had in fact handed over to his son an empire, why then did Samudra Gupta ever take the trouble of uprooting and exterminating such a large number of kings in the north and in the south? The campaign of Samudra Gupta is the strongest argument against the acceptance of the plea that his father could have ever left an empire at all. Moreover during this period, namely that of the days of Candra Gupta I, there is reason to conclude that outside the kingdom of Magadha there were important and independent rulers like Candravarman of the Susunia inscription. In this record, which has been palaeographically ascribed to the 4th century A.D.,[1] we are told that *Mahārāja* Candravarman was the son of *Mahārāja* Simhavarman[2]. If this Candravarman is to be identified with the Candravarman whom Samudra Gupta "violently exterminated"[3] then either he or his father Simhavarman must have been the contemporary of Candra Gupta I, which means that the area round Puṣkaraṇa (now Pokharan in the Jodhpur State), was during his reign independent.[4]

It is also equally doubtful whether Samudra Gupta founded the Gupta era for there is yet no sound evidence to support such a claim. It is now accepted on all hands that Candra Gupta I was the author of this era, and so long as this contention is not disproved by any genuine evidence it cannot be stated that its ascription to Samudra Gupta "is a conjecture which does not conflict with any known fact".[5] No known inscription of this ruler refers to any specified year of his reign as a regnal year, for both the Gayā and Nālandā records allude to only the 9th and the 4th years which need not necessarily be interpreted to mean the years of his reign so long as they are not specified as such. In fact, as in several of the

[1] *E. I.*, XIII, no. 9, p. 133.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (1), p. 13.

[4] *Note*: It is difficult to identify this Candravarman with the Candra of the Meharauli inscription. This Candra has been identified with a brother of Mihirakula (Fleet, *C. I. I.*, Intr. p. 12; Basak, *I.A.*, XLVIII, p. 919); with Candravarman, (Haraprasād Sastri, *I. A.*, XLII, p. 217; R. D. Banerji, *E. I.*, XIV, p. 367) with Candra Gupta Maurya (H. C. Seth, *J. I. H.*, XVI, pp. 117-33; also *N. I. A.*, 1939, pp. 625-33.) But it has been rightly contended that he is unidentifiable in the light of existing evidence. See O. Stein *N. I. A.*, 1938, pp. 188-98.

[5] *E. I.*, XXV, no. 9, p. 52.

known inscriptions of the Gupta rulers, this has been the practice and such a usage has by common consent been interpreted to mean the years dating from the initial year of the Gupta era, *viz.*, A. D. 319-20. Again it cannot be argued that merely because Samudra Gupta was the first Gupta monarch to adopt the title of *Mahārājādhirāja*, he must have necessarily founded the Gupta era for the adoption of a title of paramount supremacy need not be interpreted to mean that he founded the Gupta era so long as there is no proof to support such a contention.

Therefore, from all points of view, so long as there is no fresh testimony to establish the claim that Samudra Gupta founded the Gupta era, it may be maintained that the foundation of this era should unquestionably be still attributed to his father Candra Gupta I, who in all probability did not live longer than 10 to 15 years after A. D. 319-20.[1] This would mean that Samudra Gupta commenced his reign from A. D. 330 or 335.

1. The Early Guptas.

Little is known about the origin of the early Guptas and it is admitted that it is "quite impossible to trace the rise to power of the founder of the Gupta dynasty".[2] There is no unanimity of opinion on the identification of "a great king" *Mahārāja* Śrī Gupta (*Che-li-ki-to*) who built a temple near Mṛgaśikhāvana for some Chinese pilgrims, according to I-Tsing who travelled in India between A. D. 671-695, and who identified him with *Śrī* Gupta, the founder of the imperial Gupta dynasty.[3] About his son and successor, the *Mahārāja* Ghaṭōtkaca, as little is known as about his father.[4] His son, *Mahārājādhirāja* Candra Gupta I, by marrying *Mahādēvī* Kumāradēvī, a Licchāvi princess, effected a momentous union between two prominent royal families. From the coronation year of this Gupta ruler dates the Gupta era, the first year of which ran from February 26, A.D. 320 to March 15, A.D. 321, and this is assumed to be the first year of his reign.[5] From his son Samudra Gupta's epigraphs, however, it may be inferred that Candra Gupta I's kingdom extended from the mouth of the Jumnā

[1] *Cf. E. I.*, XIV, no. 29, p. 368; Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 8.

[2] Allan, *A Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasties and Śaśāṅka, King of Gauḍa*, pp. XV, XVI. (1914).

[3] Beal, *I. A.*, X. p. 110.

[4] *Cf.* Fleet, C. I. I., III, p. 8, note 3; Beal, *I. A.*, IX, p. 110; Vincent Smith, *Revised Chronology, I. A.*, XXXI, p. 252; *Early History of India*, p. 244; Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. xv-xvi.

[5] *Cf. A. S. I. R.*, 1903-04, p. 102; *J. R. A. S.*, 1905, p. 153; Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

(Prayāga) to Pāṭaliputra,[1] and probably an allusion is made to this domain in Purāṇic tradition, which says that the Guptas were "reigning over the country comprised within Prayāga, Sāketa and Magadha".[2] Mr. Pargiter consequently concluded that this "was exactly the territory which was possessed at his death by Candragupta I, who founded the Gupta dynasty in A. D. 319-20 and reigned till 326 or 330 (or even till 335 perhaps) before it was extended by the conquests of his son and successor Samudragupta."[3] It is certain that Bengal was never a part of the dominions of Candra Gupta I, first, because the Dhānaidaha[4] and Dāmodarpur[5] grants of Kumāra Gupta I and the Dāmodarpur grant of Budha Gupta cannot prove such a claim; secondly, both the Allahabad *praśasti*[6] and the Eran inscription[7] maintain a strict silence regarding his campaign in the Punjab, Afghanistan and the Dekhan.

Moreover, it is generally agreed that, though Candra Gupta I might have been the real founder of the kingdom of Magadha and freed it from the Scythian yoke, he had a short reign of ten to fifteen years, that the initial year of his accession or coronation was A. D. 319-20, and that his son and successor Samudra Gupta had a long reign of at least fifty years.[8]

If the Gupta era simply grew out of the practice of dating in regnal years, and if Candra Gupta I assumed the title of *Mahārājādhirāja* after some expansion of his ancestral dominions, then Fleet's date of A. D. 335 for his death may be accepted.[9]

Candra Gupta I was succeeded by his son, the famous Samudra Gupta, whose conquests are enumerated in his unique Allahabad *praśasti*. It has been suggested, though it cannot yet be convincingly proved, that he had another name, Kāca.[10] Selected by his father as the heir apparent, Samudra Gupta commenced his career of conquest

[1] Fleet, *op. cit., Intr.*, p. 127.

[2] Pargiter, *op. cit.*, p. xii, *Cf.* Wilford, *As Ress*, IX, pp. 32-115, *Vāyu*, ii, Ch. 37, v. 377, p. 177; *Brahmāṇḍa*, iii. Ch. 74, v. 125, p. 186; *Bhāgavata*, iii, i, v. 37, p. 684. *Viṣṇu*, IV, v. 18, p. 21:

Anu Gangaṃ Prayāgaṃ ca Sāketaṃ Magadhāṁstathā
etān janapadān sarvān bhakṣyante Gupta vaṁśajāḥ.

[3] Pargiter, *op. cit.*, p. xii.

[4] J. A. S. B., New Series, V, pp. 460-61 pl. xx.

[5] *E. I., XV*, no. 7, pp. 131-44.

[6] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (1) p. 6. [7] *Ibid.*, (2) p. 20.

[8] *Cf.* Smith, *Early History of India*, pp. 297 (4th ed.); Banerji, E. I. XIV, no. 29, p. 368.

[9] Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 38, f. n. no. 5; Allan, *op. cit.*, p. xx.,

[10] Smith, *The Catalogue of the Indian Museum*, I, p. 96. The epithet *Sarva-Rājōcchettā* found on Kāca's coins, says Raychaudhuri, shows that in all probability he is identical with Samudra Gupta. *P. H. A. I.*, (4th ed.) p. 447. More substantial evidence is required before we can accept such an identification.

by subduing several little principalities in northern India. So he violently uprooted Rudradeva, Matila, Nāgadatta, Candravarman, Gaṇapatināga, Nāgasena, Acyuta-nandi, Balavarman and several other rulers of Āryāvarta. Among these rulers Matila is known from a clay seal found in Bulandshahr[1], while Candravarman, identified with his namesake in the Susunia rock inscription of Candravarman,[2] has been determined as the ruler of Puṣkaraṇā, which is the modern Pokharan in the Jodhpur State.[3] Gaṇapatināga who issued coins from Naḷapura, the modern Narwar in the Gwalior State, was evidently a Nāga ruler.[4] The identification of Nāgasena with his namesake mentioned in Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita*, as a representative of the house of Padmāvati,[5] has been rightly questioned for lack of fresh materials to support such a contention.[6] Acyuta-nandi was also most probably a Nāga king, for history knows of a prince called Śiva-nandi who was a Nāga[7], and it is believed that he issued the little copper coin found at Ahicchatra with the word "*Acyu*".[8] The un-named Kōṭa-*kulaja* must have been a ruler of the place now known as Kōṭah, which is very near to the east of Mathurā. Certain coins bearing the word *Kōṭa* have been found.[9] Balavarman has been suggested to have been the king of Assam bearing the same name and ninth in ascent from Bhāskaravarman, the contemporary of Harṣavardhana and Yüan Chwāng and the grandson of Puṣyavarman, the founder of the dynasty.[10] Therefore, Acyuta ruled in the Bareilly district, Matila in the Bulandshahr district, Gaṇapatināga in Narwar in the Gwalior State, the Kōṭa king in north-eastern Rājputānā[11], and Candravarman at Pokharan in the Jodhpur State. These rulers controlled chiefly north-western and central India during the invasion of Samudra Gupta.

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[1] *I. A.*, XVIII, p. 289.

[2] *E. I.*, XIII, no. 9, p. 133.

[3] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 35, p. 317. See remarks on this identification in Section II ante.

[4] V. A. Smith, *Cat. Ind. Mus.*, I, pp. 164, 178-79; also see I. H. Q., I, Pt. 2, p. 255.

[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 192.

[6] Rapson, J. R. A. S., 1898, p. 449.; Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 13.

[7] *Cf.* Dubreuil, *Ancient History of the Deccan*, p. 31.

[8] Allan, *Gupta Coins*, p. XXII. Note: Owing to the discovery of two hoards, i.e., Uparkot and Sarvaniā coins of Svāmi Rudrasena III, whose coinage closed abruptly in 274 S. E., i.e., the 4th year from his first known date and revived after ten years, it has been ingeniously surmised that Samudra Gupta in A. D. 351 invaded the Kṣatrapa kingdom. As a result of this invasion Rudrasena III seems to have collapsed. See Pandit Jayachandra Vidyalankar, *History of the Surāṣṭran Kṣatrapas Re-examined*, J. G. R. S., II, no. 2, pp. 109-11. But when precisely Samudra Gupta made this invasion, if he made it at all, is still an unsettled point.

[9] Rapson, *J.R.A.S.*, 1898, p. 450.

[10] Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[11] Smith, *Cat. Ind. Mus.*, I, pp. 185, 188-89. *J.R.A.S.*, 1897, pp. 420, 862.

Then he subjugated all the kings of the forest countries, an area roughly corresponding to Central India, but which exactly were the Āṭavika kingdoms has been a matter of speculation among scholars. They must have included the kingdom of Ālavaka (Ghazipur) as well as the eighteen forest kingdoms connected with Dabhāla (Jubbulpore),[1] while we come across other Āṭavika states like Kōṭāṭavi[2], Sahalāṭavi,[3] and Vaṭāṭavi.[4] The frontier kings of Samataṭa (south-eastern Bengal) Davāka (Dacca or Tagaung in upper Burma ?)[5], Kāmarūpa (lower Assam), Nepāla (Nepal), Kartripura (the Kangra Valley), paid his taxes, obeyed his orders and performed obeisance to him. As these provinces roughly indicate the extent of Samudra Gupta's dominions, it has been presumed that the northern part of the Gangetic delta might have been included in his empire.[6]

A similar submission was made by several tribes whose names are given but whose homes are not specified. The Mālavas referred to in this inscription of Samudra Gupta, who were definitely the *Malloi* of the Greeks[7], have left their name in Malwa. It is interesting to note that this record connects the Arjunāyanas with the Yaudhēyas, but whether they were in any way related to Arjuna and Yaudhēya, one of the sons of Yudhiṣṭhira, as Dr. B. C. Law has suggested,[8] is a question which cannot be decided with certainty at present. But that there was intimacy between these two tribes appears obvious from the fact that Varāhamihira mentions them together and locates them in the northern division of India.[9] The Prārjunas, probably the Prārjunakas of Kauṭalya, have been located in the Narsimhpur district of the Central Provinces ;[10] but it is possible that they might have inhabited the locality now known as Narasimhgaḍh,[11] in Central India especially

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 114; *E. I.*, VIII, pp. 284-87.

[2] Sandhyākara Nandi, *Rāmācarita* (commentary), p. 36.

[3] *E. I.*, VII, no. 16, p. 126.

[4] *E. I.*, X, Lüders' *List*, no. 1195, p. 138.

[5] K. L. Barua identifies Davāka with the Kopili valley. See his *Early History of Kāmarūpa*, p. 42 f. n.

[6] Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 20.

[7] McCrindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, pp. 139-40, 311. (1893)

[8] *Cf. N.I.A.*, I, 1938, p. 460.

[9] Varāhamihira, *Bṛhat Saṃhitā*, Ch. XIV, v. 25, p. 61.

[10] Smith, *Cat., Ind. Mus.* I, p. 160.

[11] *I. H. Q.*, I, p. 258. *Note*: Fleet attempted to identify the Arjunāyanas with the early Kalacuriyas: "As in their later records, the Kalacuriyas of Central India represent themselves as descendants from Sahasra-Arjuna or Sahasrabāhu-Arjuna (*Cf. E. I.*, II, p. 14, *I. A.*, XII, p. 253) there is possibly an early reference to them, as the Ārjunāyanas in the list of frontier kings who, according to the Allahabad pillar inscription, did obeisance to Samudra Gupta." Fleet, *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*, p. 293. The Arjunāyanas issued coins: see Princep, *Essays*, II, p. 223, pl. XLIV, no. 22. Dr. Kielhorn has proved that the epoch or year O of the Kalacuri or Cēdi era was A. D. 248-49. *I. A.*, XVII, p. 215. These Kalacuris or Katacuris occupied Dāhala or the Cēdi country in Central India. One of their kings Saṅkaragaṇa occupied Vidiśā in A. D. 595. See *Infra*.

because the other tribes like Sanakānikas, Kākas, and Kharaparikas seem to have dwelt more or less in Central India. The Yaudhēyas, as the Bijayagaḍh inscription points out, must have occupied the hill fort of Bijayagaḍh which lies about two miles to the south-west of Byānā in the Bharatpur State of Rājputānā.[1] The Madrakas, probably the Madras of the *Vēdas* and the Epics, seem to have had their capital at Śākala (Sialkot) in the Punjab.[2] The Ābhiras dwelt in the tract in western Rājputānā near the Vināśanā in the region of *Aberia* mentioned in the *Periplus*.[3] Dr. D. R Bhandarkar has identified the Kharaparikas with the tribe of Kharpara mentioned in the Baṭihāgarh Inscription of the Damoh district in the Central Provinces.[4] The Sanakānikas must have lived in Bhilsā, the ancient Vidiśā, now in the Gwalior State.[5] The Kākas must have occupied the town of Kākapur near Bithur and Kākanāda near the modern Sāñci.[6] Their location is hinted at in the *Mahābhārata* as having been in or about this area.[7] From this account of the wild tribes of this period it appears that Samudra Gupta had in all likelihood received the submission of all these tribes who must have dwelt in the Central Provinces and Rājputānā.

Then he turned his attention to the Dakṣiṇāpatha. As he swept along, before him bowed Mahendra of Kośala (in Bilaspur, Raipur and Sambhalpur districts of the Central Provinces)[8] with his capital at Sirpūr (Śrīpura),[9] Vyāghrarāja of Mahākāntāra or the great forest in Eastern Gondwānā[10] and Maṇṭarāja of Kaurāḷa,[11] Mahēndra of Piṣṭhapura (the modern Piṭāpuram in the Gōdāvarī district),[11] Damaṇa of Eraṇḍapalla (Eraṇḍapalli a town probably near

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (58) p. 252; Smith, *Cat. Ind. Mus.* I, pp. 182-83; *J.R.A.S.*, 1897, p. 30.

[2] *Cf. Cambridge History of India*, I, pp. 121, 274.

[3] McCrindle, *Periplus*, p. 113; *Cf. Mahābhārata*, IX, 371, 37: *Śūdrābhīrān prati dveṣād yatra naṣṭā Sarasvati.*

[4] Bhandarkar, *I.H.Q.*, I, p. 258; *E. I.*, XII, p. 46.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (3), p. 25.

[6] J.R.A.S., 1897, pp. 892, 899.

[7] *Mahābhārata*, VI, 9, 64, 10: *Riṣikā Vidarbhāḥ Kākās Tangaṇāḥ paratangaṇāḥ.*

[8] Also a little of Ganjam *Cf. E. I.*, VI, no. 2, p. 14. (Kolala).

[9] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (81), p. 293: Śirpūr is about 40 miles east by north from Raipur.

[10] Dr. Raychaudhuri thinks that Mahākāntāra is apparently a wild tract of Central India, which probably includes the Jaso State (*P. H. A. I.*, p. 452, 4th edn.); G. Ramdas, (*I. H. Q.*, Part IV, p. 684) identifies it with the "Jhād-khand Agency tracts of Ganjam and Vizagapatam."

[11] According to Dr. Barnett, Kaurāḷa is to be identified with Kōraḍa. Of this name, however, there are three places in the Andhra country. Two Koradas are in Gañjam, one being near Vāraṇāśi in the Parlakimedi tāluka, and the other near Surada in the Surada taluka. The third place is near Bimlipatām, in the Bimlipatām taluka of the Vizagapatam District. Barnett, *Kauraḷaka*, *B.S.O.S.*, II, p. 570. On this point also see

Chicakole[1] in the Ganjam district), Svāmidatta of Giri-Koṭṭūra, (Kothoor in the Gañjam district), Viṣṇugōpa of Kāñcī (Conjeevaram in the Chingleput district), Nīlarāja of Avamukta,[2] Hastivarman of Veṅgi (Vegi-Pedda Vegi, seven miles north of Ellore, Krishna district), Ugrasena of Palakka (Palakkaḍa in the Nellore district, a seat of vice-royalty under the Pallavas),[3] Kubēra of Devarāṣṭra (Yellamanchili tract in the Vizagapatam district) Dhanañjaya of Kusthaḷapura (according to Barnett, probably Kuṭṭalūra, near Polur in North Arcot.[4])

Finally Samudra Gupta received the submission of the island dwellers, the Daivaputras, Sāhis, Sāhānusāhis, Śakas, Muruṇḍas and, the people of Simhaḷa. It is not possible to identify these people, but from the influence of the Śakas on his coinage, it may be said that Samudra Gupta possibly penetrated far into their territory in the north. Ptolemy tells us that in the second century A. D. there was a Muruṇḍa chief in the Gangetic valley.[5] About A. D. 319 *Mahāḍaṇḍanāyaka* Śrīdharavarman, a Śaka chief, must have ruled at Sāñci.[6] As Sten Konow has interpreted Muruṇḍa, a Śaka word, to mean *lord*, having its counterpart in Skt. as *svāmin*, and as the Śaka chiefs of Surāṣṭra and Ujjayinī used this epithet, it has been suggested that the Śaka Muruṇḍas apparently included the Scythian chiefs of Surāṣṭra and Central India[7]. This is possible though not conclusive.

Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 136, wherein Kaurāḷa has been identified with the Colair lake. This identification may be accepted. Kaurāla is referred to in the Aihoḷe inscription of Pulikeśin II evidently as Kaunāḷa (Kolanu) See *E. I.*, VI, no. 1. p. 11. This is the Kolleru lake of Pithāpuram (the Piṣṭapura of Samudra Gupta) between the rivers Gōdāvari and Kṛṣṇā. This famous lake is again referred to in the Chellur plates of the Eastern Cālukya Kulōttunga Cōḍa II, dated Śaka Saṁvat 1056, exactly five hundred years after the date of Pulikeśin's Aihoḷe inscription. In this inscription we are informed that in the Veṅgi *maṇḍala* is a great lake in which is a town named Sarasipuri which is governed by Kātana Nāyaka of Kolanu, which means in Telugu a lake. For further details on this lake see Kielhorn's remarks in *I. A.*, XIV, p. 57. Kielhorn was the first scholar who made this identification which appears to be correct, for in the Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra Gupta Maṇṭarāja of Kaurāḷa is the ruler who is placed immediately prior to Mahendra of Piṣṭapuram, a fact which is geographically acceptable. This is because the Kolleru Lake is, as stated above, only to the south of Pithāpuram.

[1] Dubreuil, *Ancient History of the Deccan*, pp. 59-60. Fleet identified it with Eraṇḍol in Khāndesh : *C. I. I.*, (I) p. 13, while G. Ramdas identifies it with Yeṇḍipaḷḷi in Vizagapatam district or Eṇḍipaḷḷi in Ellore Taluk. *Cf. I.H.Q.*, I, Pt. iv, p. 683.

[2] Raychaudhuri suggests Nilapalli "an old seaport near Yanam" in the Godāvari district *P. H. A. I.*, p. 453. (4th ed.)

[3] *I. H. Q.*, I, Pt. 2, p. 686.

[4] Barnett, *Calcutta Review*, 1924, no. (1), p. 253.

[5] *I. A.*, XIII, p. 377.

[6] *E. I.*, XVI, no. 16 p. 232.

[7] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 469 (4th ed.)

It cannot be definitely stated when he died, but as the earliest date of his son Candra Gupta II is A. D. 380-81,[1] it is possible that Samudra Gupta died in A. D. 375, which is his last known date. He nevertheless proved to be probably the greatest representative of his dynasty. He reformed the currency, although it cannot be said that he reformed the administrative system, for, as will be shown presently, he simply carried on in several respects the administrative organisations of the Mauryas and the Scythians. It cannot be maintained therefore, that "the bureaucracy was totally unlike that of the Mauryas".[2] In honour of his *digvijaya*, he performed the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice, as can be seen from his *Aśvamedha* type of coins.[3] Despite the epigraphic boast that such a sacrifice was held long in abeyance, it is known that Puṣyamitra, Vāsiṣṭhiputra Śrī Cāṃtamūla I. Vākāṭaka Pravarasena I. and the Pallava Śivaskandavarman all celebrated it. Nevertheless, his reign is considered to have been very long and he ruled probably from circa A. D. 335 to 375[4].

2. Rāma Gupta

As the latest and the earliest known dates for Samudra Gupta and Candra Gupta the II are A.D. 375 and 380-81 respectively, it is natural to inquire what possibly could have transpired during this period. The suggestion that Samudra Gupta must have ruled between these years is unacceptable because it is generally agreed among scholars that a ruler called Rāma Gupta preceded Candra Gupta II.[5] If the historicity of Rāma Gupta is tenable then it may be assumed that Rāma Gupta must have reigned from A.D. 375 to 380 for it is known from the Mathurā stone inscription that Candra Gupta II ascended the throne in A.D. 380-81.[6]

But the most important point about this ruler is whether he was known as Rāma or Kāca. The suggestion that Kāca was another name or *biruda* of Samudra Gupta has not been accepted.[7] R. D.

[1] *E. I.*, XXI, Pt. i, no. 1, pp. 1-9. p. 3.

[2] Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[3] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 21. Cf. Divekar, *Allahabad Praśasti and Aśvamedha*, A. B. O. R. I., VII, pp. 164-65.

[4] Banerji, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26: The years A. D. 425 to 475 or 480 cited herein are evidently misprints.

[5] *Cf.* J. B. B. R. A. S., X, pp. 38. ff ; I. A. LII, pp. 181-84 *J.B.O.R.S.*, 1928, *Ibid*, 1929, pp. 134. ff.

[6] *E. I.* XXI. no. 1, p. 9. *Note.*—The *first* scholar to point out the existence of this ruler (Kāca-Sarma-Rāma Gupta) was Chandradhar Gulēri, see *Nāgari Pracāriṇi Patrika*, I, pp. 234-35 ; also *cf.* Vidyalankar, *ibid.*, XVIII, p. 19. As the existence of this ruler is not supported by any epigraphic evidence some scholars refuse to accept his existence. See Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, (4th ed.) p. 465 f. n. i ; Basak, *The History of North Eastern India*, pp. III-IV. (1934)

[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp. 18. 27 ; f. n. (Intr.) ; V. A. Smith, I. A., XXXI, p. 259 ; Allan, *op. cit.*, XXXII-III.

Banerji declared that "it is impossible to believe in spite of adjective clauses that Kāca was another name for Samudra Gupta," adding that "in the case of no other king of the Gupta dynasty, do we find another name of the king under the left arm of his figure on the obverse."[1] He has been supported by D. R. Bhandarkar who says that "all evidence thus points to Kāca being regarded as the personal name of a king distinct from Samudra Gupta."[2] The best proof for making such an assertion is that "on Gupta gold coins the name which appears on either side of the standing figure of a king on the obverse especially under his left arm is the personal name of the king, who issues them. This is how the names of Samudra, Candra, Kumāra, and Skanda are found on the obverse and if these are considered the individual names of separate Gupta kings, for the same reason we ought to take Kāca also as separate from those just mentioned."[3] Once this is admitted then it is necessary to ascertain the real name of this ruler for as Dr. Bhandarkar says his name must have been Kāca and not Rāma. "It is not unreasonable" he suggests, "that Rāma Gupta, the elder brother of Candragupta II, is a misreading of Kācagupta. The letters *k* and *c* of the Gupta period are of such a type as are easy to run into *r* and *m*. If the middle bar in the Gupta letter *ka* drops, it can be read as *ra* only. Similarly, if the lower left hook of the Gupta *c* extends itself unwittingly, as it does in cursive writing, it must read as *m*. In fact, if any student of numismatics inspects coin No. 6 on Plate II of Allan's *Catalogue*, he will find on the obverse, the name Kāca but something like *Kāma*. And if the middle bar is inadvertently omitted as very often happens in manuscripts, *Kāca* can easily run into *Rāma*."[4] This is plausible though not definitely decisive. But the strongest arguments against the acceptance of this alternative name of Kāca Gupta as against Rāma Gupta are first, because in the *Devicandraguptam* his name is clearly given as Rāma and not Kāca and secondly because in the *Mujmalu-T Tawārīkh* his name is stated to be Rawwal, which is an obvious corruption of the name Rāma and not Kāca. These two sources of information are, it may be noted, one the earliest and the other the latest, the only authorities which clearly specify from the Hindu and the Muslim points of view the precise name of this Gupta as Rāma Gupta.

[1] Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 220.
[2] D. R. Bhandarkar, *Mālaviya Comm. Volume*, p. 205.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*

This Rāma Gupta must have succeeded his father Samudra Gupta probably in A.D. 375. There are some coins ascribed to Samudra Gupta, which have been characterised as of the Kāca type. On them on the obverse he appears as a king, standing to the left, dressed as in the previous types of his father, holding a standard surmounted by a wheel (*cakra*) in his left hand, and sprinkling something (incense?) on an altar with his right hand. On the reverse there is the usual image of Lakṣmī. The legends are: *Kāco gāṃ avijitya divaṃ karmabhir=uttamair=jayati sarvarājōcchettā.*[1] The title *Sarvarājocchettā* was also adopted by his son Candra Gupta II.[2] Unless we have definite evidence that Kāca and not Rāma was the real name of Rāma Gupta, we cannot ascribe these coins to Rāma Gupta, whose coins bearing his name have not yet been discovered.[3]

What little is known about this ruler's activity is due mainly to some of the extracts of the *Devīcandraguptaṃ* which have come to light and the information from this play, which is supposed to contain historical tradition, is supported by later sources, Hindu and Muslim. According to this play he was an utterly weak and incapable prince[4] and when his dominions were invaded by a powerful Śaka ruler, in order to pacify his minister he agreed to part with his wife Dhruvadēvī.[5] The *Devīcandraguptam* further relates how Candra Gupta, called *Kumāra* as he was not yet a king, being brave and adventurous,[6] offered to come to their rescue by going to their enemy's camp, disguised as Dhruvadēvī to kill the Śaka ruler. Accompanied by a few soldiers dressed as women[7] he entered the Śaka's camp and when the Śaka was about to approach him Candra Gupta fell on him and slew him.[8] This story could have been no mere figment of the imagination for it went down the centuries. Bāṇa in the first half of the seventh century recorded it as a warning thus: "In his enemy's city (Aripura) the king of the Sakas, while courting another's wife, was butchered by Candragupta concealed in his

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[1] Allan, *op.cit*, pp. 15, 16-17.

[2] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (4), p. 26.

[3] *Cf.* Banerji, *op. cit.* p. 28; N. N. Das Gupta, *I. C.* IV, 1938, pp. 221-22.

[4] Rāmacandra and Guṇacandra, *Nāṭyadarpaṇa*, I, (*Baroda*, G. O. S., no. 1929) p. 86: *patyuḥ klibajanōcitena.*; J. B. O. R. S., 1928, XIV, pt II, p. 231.

[5] *Ibid*; p. 141; *prakṛtināmāśvāsanāya śakasya Dhruvadēvisampradāne abhyupagate rājñā*: J. B. O. R. S., op. cit., p. 226.

[6] *I. A.*, LII, *Dēvīcandraguptam*, p. 183: *Eikasyāpi vidhūtakesarajaṭābhārasya bhītāḥ mṛgāḥ gandhādeva harērdravanti bahavo vīrasya kiṁ śankhayā.* ‖

[7] *Cf.* Śankara in Bāṇa's *Harṣacarita*: *striveṣajanaparivṛtena rahasi vyāpāditaḥ.*, text, p. 200.

[8] *I. A.*, LII, p. 183.

mistress's dress."[1] The Sanjan plates of the reign of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Amōghavarṣa I, dated A. D. 871, refer to this event.[2] Rājaśekhara, ascribed to circa A. D. 900, relates that this incident occurred somewhere in the Himālayan region.[3] The Cambay and Sangli records, issued in A. D. 930 and 933-34 respectively during the reign of Gōvinda IV, in addition reveal how *Sāhasāṅka* (viz. Candra Gupta II) resorted to the aid of a vampire (*paiśācaṃ aṅgīkṛtaṃ*) which probably inspired him with the idea of adopting the ingenious disguise.[4] In the 11th century 'Abū-l Hasan 'Ali gives us a complete account of this episode.

His *Mujmalu-T-Tawārīkh*, a Muslim account, the age of which is not known but which is said to have been translated into Persian in A. D. 1026 throws some more light on this period. Confirming this invasion of Rāma's dominion by a "rebel" viz. the Śaka, who may or may not have been defeated by his father Samudra Gupta, this source tells us that he put Rawwal (Rāma Gupta) to flight. Rawwal with his brothers and nobles all went to the top of a mountain where a strong fortress had been built. Then they set guards on the summit and felt secure. But the enemy got possession of the mountain by stratagem and besieged the fort, and was near taking it. Rawwal, then sent to sue for peace and his enemy said "Send me the girl, and let every one of your chiefs send a girl. I will give these girls to my officers—then I will withdraw." At this juncture the king and his officers were about to give way, especially on the advice of his minister, Safar (Śikharasvāmin) but at this critical moment Barkamaris (Candra Gupta *Vikramāditya*) came to the rescue and said: "It seems proper that I should stake my life for the king: let an order be given for me to be dressed like a woman, and let all the officers dress their sons in like manner as damsels, and let each conceal a knife in our hair, and carry a trumpet also concealed; then send us to the king. When we are brought before the king they will tell him that I am the damsel, he will keep for himself and give the others to his officers. When the king retires with me I will rip his belly with the knife and sound the trumpet. When the other youths hear this they will know that I have done my work, and they must do theirs. All the officers of the army will thus be slain. You must be

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 194.

[2] *E. I.*, XVIII, no. 26, p. 248.

[3] Rājaśekhara, *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*, ch. IX, p. 47.

[4] *E. I.*, VII, no. 6, p. 38; *I. A.*, XII, p. 250. The scribes were evidently familiar with the *Dēvīcandraguptaṃ*. See Bhōja, *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*; *Rept of the Peripatetic Pt. of the G. O. M. Library*, p. 19; *I. A.*, LII, p. 182; *I. H. Q.*, X, pp. 49-50; Bhandarkar, *Mal. Com. Vol.* p. 107.

prepared, and when you hear the trumpet, you will sally forth with your soldiers and we will exterminate the foe." Rawwal was delighted and did as was proposed. It succeeded, not one of the enemy's horsemen escaped, all were slain and cast down from the mountain. Rawwal's power increased.[1]

The exact place where these incidents took place remains to be determined and its identification has also been a matter of controversy. The *Dēvīcandraguptaṃ*, fragmentary as it is, does not enable us to locate this place. As Bāṇa suggests more precisely this spot must have been in Aḷipura,[2] which was probably the capital of the Aḷi-Madras, whose home is mentioned among the northern countries (*diśi-paścim-ōttarasyāṃ*). These must have formed a branch of the Madras and they lived between the Jhelum and the Ravi, sometimes up to the Beas.[3] Therefore the scene of action between the Śaka king and Candra Gupta II must have definitely taken place in this region. 'Abū-l Hasan states that Rawwal (Rāma Gupta) with his brothers and nobles "all went to the top of a mountain where a strong fortress had been built."[4] This gives the locality a kind of local colour but Rājaśekhara (circa A. D. 900) in his *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*, places it in the Himālayan region. He relates that "in that very region (*tasminnēva Himālaye*) the demoralised Śarma Gupta had been besieged (*ruddhagatiḥ*) and had to agree to surrender the queen Dhruvasvāminī to the Śaka ruler."[5]

These references have led to various interpretations among scholars regarding the precise location of this place. Mr R. D Banerji thought the place was probably Mathurā,[6] while Mr K. P. Jayaswal considered that it "was in the hills in the Jullunder Doab, somewhere in or about the Sabathu Hill of the Himalayas where in the Moghul times Guru Govind Singh founded his military base."[7] Dr Bhandarkar has observed that, as the verses from which this incident is cited are addressed to Kārtikēya, the whole scene must have taken place in the valley of the Gōmatī and near the present village of Baijnāth located in the Almora district of the United Provinces, which was known in history from the sixth century A. D.[8] Of all these identifications

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[1] Elliot and Dowson, *The History of India as told by its Own Historians*, I, pp. 110-11.
[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 194.
[3] *J. R. A. S.*, 1897, p. 30; Varāhamihira, *Bṛhat Saṁhitā*, ch. XIV, v. 22, p. 61.
[4] Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.*, I, p. 111.
[5] Rājaśekhara, *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*, ch. IX, p. 47; he cites an older authority.
[6] Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 30.
[7] Jayaswal, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XVIII, 1932, p. 28.
[8] Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 194. See also *I. A.*, XXV, p. 178; *E. I.*, XIII, pp. 115, 118.

this one appears the most probable as it is the nearest approach to the interpretations of the earliest writers, Bāṇa and 'Abū-l Hasan, at the close of the Gupta age. This region must have been near the town of Kārtikēyapura which is mentioned in the Pāṇḍukēśvara plates of Lalitāsuradeva, dated A. D. 853.[1]

This identification has been disputed by Mr V. V. Mirashi on the following grounds. According to him Kārtikēya, to whom the verse *dattā ruddhagatiḥ* is addressed, was Mahīpāla I of the Gurjara Pratihāra dynasty of Kanauj, because the Kahjurāho inscription of Yaśovarman states that Mahīpāla secured the image of Vaikuṇṭha from a Śāhi king of Kabul and the Punjab on the strength of his army and elephants and because one of these wars was against the king of Kulūta.[2] Mr Mirashi states that Aḷipura, which Bāṇa refers to as the scene of action, may be identified with Nalināpura also called Padmapura, which is situated somewhere in or near the ancient city of Kulūta.[3] This Kulūta has been identified with the Tuen-Kuang mentioned by Yüan Chwāng as lying "a little to the west" of the modern Jalālābād. Therefore the incident of the surrender of Dhruvasvāminī must have occurred near the Jullunder Doab or near Jalālābād.[4] It may be noticed here that Mr Jayaswal also made a similar suggestion. But before accepting the identification of the locality it may be remembered that there is not much evidence to prove that Mahīpāla was a great conqueror and in fact he has been considered incapable of any conquest.[5]

Nevertheless a certain vagueness prevails about the identity of this celebrated fortress-city. The *Mujmalu-T-Tawarīkh* only refers to a fortress on a mountain-top, Bāṇa calls it Aḷipura without giving us any clue regarding its geographical position, and Rājaśekhara places it somewhere in the Himālayan region. Considering all these points of evidence in all probability this place must have been in the region between the Jhelum and the Ravi near the Kāngrā valley. It may be recalled that in Samudra Gupta's Allahabad *praśasti* Nēpāḷa and Kartripura viz. the Kāngrā valley are referred to as the border States which paid him tribute. This must have been the scene of the destruction of the Śaka who dared to attack Rāma Gupta but was only slaughtered by Candra Gupta II.

[1] *I. A.*, XXV, pp. 180, 182.
[2] *Ibid.*, LXII, p. 203.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 204; also see *J. B. O. R. S.*, XVIII, p. 29.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, p. 215.

The identity of this Śaka has also been a matter of speculation. Fleet suggested that during Samudra Gupta's invasion a scion of Kaniṣka I must have been ruling somewhere in north-western India.[1] Mr R. D. Banerji thought that the Śaka who invaded Rāma Gupta's territories was the scion of Kaniṣka's son.[2] Mr Rangaswami Saraswati was of opinion that this Śaka might have been Svāmi Rudrasiṁha, the son of Svāmi Satyasiṁha, whose last known date is A. D. 310.[3] These identifications must be rejected in view of the fact that the Śaka incident must be placed after A. D. 375 and before A. D. 380, when Candra Gupta II ascended the throne.

Some further identifications of this Śaka ruler have also been offered. Dr A. S. Altekar considered that this Śaka king was a ruler of the Western Kṣatrapa dynasty, namely Rudrasena II whose dates range from A. D. 348 to 378.[4] But there is no evidence to show that the Western Kṣatrapa king had grown so powerful as to compel the surrender of the Gupta queen, especially in a region like that of Aḷipura which was so far away from his own dominion. Mr V. V. Mirashi suggested that the Śaka was a Kuṣāṇa king who ruled over the Punjab and Kabul, although he does not mention his name,[5] for it is known that the Kuṣāṇas were ruling over the Punjab and Kabul regions till the fifth century.[6] As will be shown presently a similar identification was also made by the late Mr K. P. Jayaswal, who offered some further details about this Kuṣāṇa sovereign. The latest writer who has tackled this problem is Mr Jagan Nath who thinks that this Śaka monarch must have been a Khasa king whose name however is not recorded.[7]

But the identification proposed by Mr K. P. Jayaswal in this connection deserves some consideration. In A. D. 360 the Kuṣāṇa king of Kabul, Grumbates, was fighting the Romans on the side of the Sassanian king along with his Indian elephants and the Śakas of Seistān.[8] A generation later the *Rājarāja* Toramāṇa who was ruling in the Western Punjab, according to Mr Jayaswal was "either the king

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (I), p. 14.

[2] Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 3.

[3] *Cf. I. A.*, LII, pp. 181-82; *J. R. A. S.*, 1890, p. 639; *Ibid.*, 1899, p. 375. Vidyalankar has also suggested that Śaka was either Svāmi Satyasiṁha or his son Svāmi-Rudrasiṁha III. See *J. G. R. S.*, II, no. 2, p. 111.

[4] *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, Pt. II, p. 253.

[5] *I. A.*, LXII, p. 203, *op. cit.*

[6] *Cf. E. I.*, I, p. 240.

[7] *J. I. H.*, XIX, Pt. II, p. 169.

[8] *Cf. J. R. A. S.*, 1897, p. 908.

described as 'the Śaka emperor' in the *Devī Candraguptam* or his next successors."[1] This ruler was first noticed by Bühler who, while editing the Kura (now Lahore Museum) inscription stated that this *Rājātirāja Mahārāja* Toramāṇa Śāhi ruling over the north-western India was an independent and foreign king.[2] His Kuṣāṇa affinities can be proved to some extent by comparing his name with that of a definitely Kuṣāṇa name viz. Rukamāṇa which can be noticed in the Girdharpur inscription of king Huviṣka.[3] In view of the proximity of the date, namely, a generation later than A. D. 360, it is highly possible that this Toramāṇa I, for he must be distinguished from his name-sake in the Ērāṇ stone inscription of the days of Bhānu Gupta, was the Śaka who met a deserved fate at the hands of Candra Gupta II.

It is natural to infer that after such a successful victory over the intrepid Śaka, whom Rāma Gupta could not drive away or conquer, Candra Gupta II must have become a national hero and his popularity with the common people must have increased. In such circumstances it is but natural to conclude that he must have been deemed a fit and proper leader in contrast to his weak brother, who must have considered him a menace. In order to divert his importance, the *Devīcandraguptam* tells us that he feigned love-madness,[4] and, according to the Sanjan plates of Amōghavarṣa I dated A. D. 871, ultimately killed his brother and married his wife Dhruvadēvī.[5] But how he managed to do this is revealed only in the *Mujmalu-T-Tawarīkh* which gives the details as follows: "One day in the hot season, Barkamaris (*Vikramāditya*) was wandering bare-foot (as he was feigning madness) about the city, (Pāṭaliputra?) and came to the gate of the king's palace. Meeting no hindrance he entered, and found his brother and the damsel sitting on a throne sucking sugar cane. When Rawwal saw him he observed that there could be no porters at the gate, otherwise the poor mendicant would never have got in. Taking pity on him, he gave him a bit of sugar cane. The mendicant took it, and picked up a piece of the shell of the cane to scrape and clean it with. When the king saw that he wanted to clean the cane, he told the damsel to give him a knife. She rose and gave the knife to Barkamaris, who cleaned the sugar cane with it, and

[1] *J. B. O. R. S.*, XVIII, Pt. II, p. 206.
[2] *E. I.*, V, p. 72. (Appendix), *E. I.*, I, no. XXIX, p. 239.
[3] *J. B. O. R. S.*, XVIII, p. 6.
[4] Rāmacandra and Guṇacandra, *Nāṭyadarpaṇa, DC*, p. 194: *madanavikāragōpamaparasya manāk śatrubhitasya rājakulagamanārtham niṣkramasūciketi.*

craftily watched until the king was off his guard. Then he sprung upon him and plunging the knife into his navel, ripped him up. After that he seized his feet and dragged him from the throne. He next called the wazir and the people and seated himself on the throne amidst the plaudits of the people. He burnt the body of the king, took back the damsel and married her and restored order."[1] That Candra Gupta II slew his brother, married his wife and usurped his kingdom, must have been true for the Sanjan plates of Amōghavarṣa clearly say: *hatvā bhrātāramēva rājyamaharad dēvīṁca dīnastatho*[2] though this was the tradition. But in his own day he was considered a saint among emperors. In his own Udayagiri inscription he is called a *Rājādhirājārṣi*.[3] He was after all perhaps not unworthy of such a title owing to his greatness and possibly un-blemished character, although no doubt he outraged custom and scandalised his relations.

The wazir, continues the *Mujmalu-T-Tawarīkh* who had excited Rawwal's suspicions against Barkamaris, wanted to burn himself along with his master, and although Barkamaris permitted him to continue as his minister (wazir), he refused saying: "All that I did was for the good and advantage of your brother, not out of enmity to you." Barkamaris then told him to write a book on the duties of kings, on government and justice. Safar consented and wrote a book called *Adabu-l-Mulūk* "Instruction of Kings." "When it was finished he took it to Barkamaris and read it and all the nobles admired and praised it. Then he burnt himself. The power of Barkamaris and his kingdom spread until at length all India submitted to him."[4]

It has been maintained that this work called *Adabu-l-Mulūk*, cannot be any other than Kāmandaka's *Nītisāra*, and that Kāmandaka might have been the family name of Śikharasvāmin, the minister of Candra Gupta II, just as Kauṭalya was the surname of Viṣṇugupta.[5] The reasons are that Khazrāji Ibn Abi Usaibei'a, the Arab writer, in his *History of Scientists*, which he completed in A. H. 743 says that the author of the "Hindi" work, which was translated into Arabic possibly under the Abbasid Caliphs, was "Sikkar" and that "Sanjhal" wrote on it. These are evidently the Arab corruptions of the Sanskrit words Śikhara and Śankarārya, the author and com-

[1] Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 111-12. *Cf.* the story of Padmini. Firishta, *The History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India*, I, pp. 362-63. (Briggs, ed. 1829); Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rājasthān*, I, pp. 308-9 (ed. 1920).

[2] *E. I.*, XVIII, no. 26, p. 248.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (6), p. 34.

[4] Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.*, I, p. 112.

[5] Jayaswal, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XVIII, Part I, pp. 38-39.

mentators of the *Nītisāra*. Moreover numerous passages in this work echo the style and language of the classical Gupta poets. Lastly Śikhara seems to have approved of Candra Gupta's scheme to murder the Śaka ruler who has been suggested to be the last Śaka emperor Toramāṇa I[1] when he alludes to such a strategem.[2] Moreover it is certain that, as the Karamadāṇḍa inscription dated A. D. 436 tells us, Pṛthvīṣeṇa, Senior Minister-in-Charge of the Army (*Mahābalādhikṛta*) under Kumāra Gupta I, was the son of *Śikharasvāmin*, the *Mantrin* and *Kumārāmātya* of Candra Gupta II.[3] These questions are however not as yet definitely settled problems.

3. Candra Gupta II

It is no wonder therefore that Candra Gupta II was called later *svayaṃ aprathiratha* (who was without an antagonist of equal power) in the records of his son Kumāra Gupta I and his grandson Skanda Gupta.[4] The expression in the latter's Bihar stone inscription that Candra Gupta II was accepted (*putras=tat parigṛhīto*) by his father Samudra Gupta, may not be a misnomer for, in Candra Gupta II's Mathurā stone inscription dated G. E. 61, he is merely called the "good son (*satputrasya*) of Samudra Gupta."[5] His familiar name seems to have been Dēva as is borne out, not only by his Sāñci stone inscription, but also by Kāmandaka's dedication of the *Nītisāra* to him.[6] As the later epigraphs bear out he certainly must have married Dhruvadēvī, who was his brother's wife. The explanation of the *Mujamalu-T-Tawarīkh* that she selected him in a *svayaṃvara* but that later she was forcibly taken away from him by his brother, is not supported so far by any other evidence. Anyhow, after her husband Rāma Gupta had consented to sacrifice her, this action of weakness made her ashamed, angry and sad and at her suggestion Candra Gupta II made up his mind to undertake his dangerous mission.[7]

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[1] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

[2] Kāmandaka, *Nītisāra*, ch. XVIII, v. 69, pp. 124-25

Niyatamiti nihanyāt kūṭayuddhēṣu śatruṃ
na hi nirayati dharmmacchadmanā śatrunāśaḥ '
acakitamiva suptaṃ Pāṇḍavānāmanīkaṃ,
niśi sunīśtaśastrō Drōṇa sūnurjaghāna ''

[3] *E. I.*, X, no. 15, p. 71.

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (10) p. 44; (12) p. 50; (13) p. 54. The same is said of Samudra Gupta see (14) p. 57.

[5] *E. I.*, XXI, no. 1, p. 8.

[6] Kāmandaka, *op. cit.*, p. 11; Fleet, *op. cit.*, (5) p. 33.

[7] *Nāṭyadarpaṇa, DC*, p. 86: *lajjākōpaviṣādabhītyaratibiḥ kṣetrikṛtā tāmyati ; atra Dhruvadēvyābhiprāyasya Candraguptena niścayaḥ. J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, pt. II, p. 229.

In the early years of his reign Candra Gupta II must have been consolidating his conquests near Mathurā for his Mathurā inscription says that he "was the exterminator of all kings; who had no antagonists of equal power in the world; (whose fame was) tasted by the waters of the four oceans."[1] As his Mathurā and Sāñci epigraphs show, he began to style himself as *Mahārājādhirāja*[2]. With the progress of his conquests he slowly adopted titles of valour and power like *Śrī Vikrama*, *Vikramāditya*, *Vikramāṅka*, *Ajita Vikrama*, *Narēndra Sīṁha*, *Sīṁha Candra* and *Narēndra Candra*, all of which can be seen on his coins.[3] His coins, specially of silver, have been found in the eastern Punjab as far as the Chenab.

Candra Gupta II enlarged his dominions by conquering the dominions of the eastern Kṣatrapas and Mālwā, extending his kingdom "from the Kathiawad peninsula to eastern Bengal, and from the Himālayas to the Narmadā".[4] During this period of territorial expansion and material prosperity, Fa Hien visited this empire of Candra Gupta II between A. D. 399–414. He has left us an account which, though of little historical value, points to the prosperity of the land and the good government of the country, without even mentioning the name of the contemporary ruler. At this time Pāṭaliputra, one of the most flourishing towns in this kingdom, was its capital; Magadha was equally prosperous, while Gayā and other centres of Buddhism, fallen into decay, were covered with jungle.[5] After his western conquests, it is possible that he shifted his capital to Ujjainī which became prominent in later literature.[6] It has also been surmised that, like his father, he too performed a horse-sacrifice.[7]

Candra Gupta II contracted some important political alliances. He married a Nāga princess,[8] Kuberanāgā, and by her had a daughter

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (4) p. 27. [2] *Ibid.*
[3] Allan, *Catalogue*, pp. 27, 37, 61, 45, 43, 44, 51.
[4] Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
[5] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, pp. 87, 94.
[6] Cf. Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbari*, pp. 210. Hiuen Tsiang *op. cit.*, II. B. 270 (Beal). The *Kathāsaritsāgara* tells us that Vikramāditya ruled at Pāṭaliputra as well as at Ujjaini. See *Kathāsaritsāgara* III, p. 206; IX, p. 5. The Guttas of Guttal (Guttavoḷal) traced their ancestry to Candra Gupta *Vikramādtya* who is styled as *Ujjainīpuravarādhīśvara*. Fleet, *D. K. D.*, p. 578.
[7] *Cf. I. H. Q.*, III, p. 725. The Sanjan plates of Amōghavarṣa I accuse Candra Gupta II (*Guptānvayaḥ*) of having induced his queen to write down in a document "one lac, one crore." (*E. I.*, XVIII, pp. 248, 245) This prejudiced allusion is probably a reference to his celebration of the *Aśvamēdha* sacrifice. Prabhāvatī Guptā's Poona and Riddhāpur plates state that he gave away "many thousands of crores cattle and gold." (*E .I.*, XV, no. 4, p. 41; *J. A. S. B.*, XX, p. 58) This statement is an echo of the words in the Mathurā inscription of Candra Gupta II which refer to Samudra Gupta's generosity thus *anēka-gō-hiraṇya-kōṭi-pradasya*. Fleet, *op. cit.*, (4) 26.
[8] *J. A. S. B.*, XX, p. 58: *E. I.*, XV, no. 4, pp. 42-44: *nāgakulōtpannā*.

called Prabhāvatī. The most important political alliance of Candra Guptā II was probably the marriage of his daughter Prabhāvatī Guptā with the Vākāṭaka king Rudrasena II.[1] It has been suggested that this marriage must have taken place during Candra Gupta's campaign in Mālwā and was designed to protect his left flank, neutralizing the power of his only considerable rival.[2]

Candra Gupta II enlarged the territorial acquisitions of Samudra Gupta. The Allahabad inscription of Samudra Gupta relates how the Śakas, who were no other than the Western Kṣatrapas, surrendered to him and solicited his commands.[3] If the *Dēvīcandraguptaṃ* can be relied upon to enshrine the historical incidents of the relations between Rāma Gupta and his wife Dhruvadēvī,[4] the Śaka ruler must have revolted and was conquered by Candra Gupta II.[5]

The conquest of the Western Kṣatrapas, however, must have been effected by Candra Gupta II, for his rare silver coins are more or less direct imitations of those of the latest Western Kṣatrapas. In style and fabric they retain some traces of the old inscriptions in Greek characters on the obverse, while on the reverse they substitute the Gupta type (a peacock) for the *caitya* with the crescent and a star. The latest date seen in the coins of the Western Kṣatrapas is 310 or 31 x (Śaka) equivalent to A. D. 388-97,[6] while the earliest date on the silver coins of Candra Gupta II, struck in imitation of the former is A. D. 409-13 (90 or 90 x = G. E. 49).[7] The conquest of Surāṣṭra and Gujarāt over which these Western Kṣatrapas ruled, must have therefore been effected between the years A. D. 388 and 409. Candra Gupta II, apparently using the Gupta era, continued the practice of employing the word *varṣe* before the date on his silver coins, as can be seen on some coins of Svāmi Rudrasiṁha III.[8] The earliest dated coin of the Guptas seems to have been of A.D. 409, but between this year and the latest dated coin of the Western Kṣatrapa ruler Svāmi Rudrasiṁha III (A. D. 388) there seems to have been a gap of twenty years. But what transpired during this interval is hazardous to state, owing to lack of evidence.

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (56) pp. 247-48.

[2] Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1) p. 14; Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

[4] *Cf.* Basak *op. cit.*, pp. III-IV, for a dissenting view.

[5] On this point read Jayaswal, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XVIII, Pt. I, pp. 29-30.

[6] Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasty, Intr.*, p. xxxviii; also Rapson, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Andhra Dynasty*, pp. cxlix-cli.

[7] *Cf.* Banerji, *Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 228.

[8] Rapson, *op. cit., Intr.*, p. cxlix.

That eastern Mālwā (Ākara) too must have been conquered by this emperor, can be proved by the survival of two inscriptions found in the caves of Udayagiri on the hill, about two miles north-west of Bhilsā in Central India. One of them refers to his subordinate Sanakānika *Mahārāja*,[1] while the other reveals how his Minister for Peace and War, Vīrasena (Śāba), came to this Udayagiri cave, accompanied in person by the king 'who was seeking to conquer the whole world.'[2] This reconquest of Mālwā deserves an explanation in view of the fact that Samudra Gupta had already conquered Gaṇapati Nāga, lord of Dhārādhīśa.[3] It may be that the line of Gaṇapati Nāga was not extinct, and one of his successors probably rose against Gupta rule and was conquered by Candra Gupta II.

These conquests enlarged the dominion of Candra Gupta II into a great empire stretching from the peninsula of Kāṭhiāwāḍ in the east to the boundaries of Eastern Bengal in the west, while it was flanked by the Himālayas in the north and the Narmadā in the south, thus including almost the whole of Central India. The acquisition of Surāṣṭra facilitated the contacts between Pāṭaliputra and the western world through the sea and its commerce.

During this period it is necessary to know whether Pāṭaliputra continued to be the capital of the Gupta Empire. It is certain that Puṣpapura (Pāṭaliputra) was the capital of Samudra Gupta, and in accordance with tradition, also of his father Candra Gupta I.[4] There is no reason to suspect that he changed his capital at any period of reign. The expression, regarding Airikiṇa that it is called "the city of his own enjoyment",[5] does not imply that it was his metropolis. After this ruler, during the short yet chaotic reign of Rāma Gupta, if the *Devīcandraguptam* can be trusted to be a contemporary chronicle in a dramatic garb, Pāṭaliputra appears to have continued to be the capital of the Gupta Empire. When Candra Gupta II ascended the throne, there was a possible cause why this ancestral capital should have been changed in view of the growth of the empire. There is no direct evidence to support such a contention, but if it was not one of the most important cities in the empire, it would not have been mentioned twice in four of the extant

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (3) p. 25.

[2] *Ibid.*, (6) pp. 35-36.

[3] *Cf.* Jayaswal, *Cat. of Mithila Mss.*, II, p. 105; also see *Bhāvaśataka* I, vv. 98-800. (*Kāvyamālā text*).

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 5, 12.

[5] *Ibid.*, 2. p. 21, l. 25.

epigraphs of Candra Gupta II. In his Udayagiri Cave inscription, his Minister for Peace and War, Vīrasena, is clearly recorded to have belonged to the city of Pāṭaliputra,[1] which need not necessarily have been mentioned as though with emphasis. The information that he accompanied the king in person suggests further that both of them probably came direct to Udayagiri from the old metropolis. The Gadhwā stone inscription dated A. D. 407-8 refers again to Pāṭaliputra, although it is true that "there is nothing to indicate, of necessity, that it is mentioned as a capital of Candra Gupta II".[2]

Which, then, was the new capital of Candra Gupta II? Paramārtha, in his *Life of Vasubandhu*, relates how this emperor "King Vikramāditya of Ayōdhyā" and, as will be known presently, his son Bālāditya, in conjunction with his queen-mother, invited Vasubandhu to Ayōdhyā.[3] If the identifications of Vikramāditya and Bālāditya with Candra Gupta II and Gōvinda Gupta, as stated below are accepted, then it may be observed, on the authority of Paramārtha, that in Vasubandhu's time, Candra Gupta Vikramāditya II first shifted his ancestral capital from Pāṭaliputra to Ayōdhyā, and secondly, that his son Gōvinda Gupta Bālāditya I continued to live in this city making it his metropolis.

4. Govinda Gupta Bālāditya I

After the death of Candra Gupta II who succeeded him? One of the Basārh seals reveals how Candra Gupta II had another son besides Govinda Gupta, called Kumāra Gupta I. The seal bears the following inscription: (*a*) *Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Candragupta* (*b*) *Patnī Mahārāja Śrī Gōvindagupta* (*c*) *Mātā Mahādēvī Śrī Dhruvasvāminī.*[4] From this seal it is evident that Dhruvasvāminī was the wife of Candra Gupta II and the mother of Gōvinda Gupta, and as both the rulers are mentioned, it is clear that they were alive at this time. Candra Gupta is styled as *Mahārājādhirāja*, being a paramount sovereign, while Gōvinda Gupta is called only a *Mahārāja*, probably because he was, as his title indicates, only a governor of some province. As the name of Kumāra Gupta I, who is well-known to have been the son of Candra Gupta II, is omitted in this inscription,

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (6) p. 36.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[3] Takakusu, *A Study of Paramārtha's Life and the Date of Vasu-Bandhu*, *J. R. A. S.*, 1905, p. 44.

[4] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 107.

it has been suggested that it may have been because he was a Crown Prince (*Yuvarāja*).[1] Such an inference requires further confirmation.

If any conclusion can be arrived at or hazarded on the basis of historical analogy, as it happened in the case of Pura Gupta and *Skanda Gupta*,[2] *it is possible that the reason for the omission of Kumāra Gupta I's name in this dynastic list was because of a probable lack of concord between these two brothers.* The latest date for Candra Gupta II is G. E. 93 (A. D. 413), while the earliest date for Kumāra Gupta, as we know from the Bilsad stone inscription, is A. D. 415-16.[3] Like his later successor Kumāra Gupta III, it is possible that Govinda Gupta, ascended the throne, after his father's death in A. D. 413 being trained in administration, but within two years either perished or, more probably, was ousted by his brother Kumāra Gupta I.

That Govinda Gupta ruled for some time is certain from the evidence of Vāmana and Paramārtha. The latter says in his *Life of Vasubandhu* that "King Vikramāditya of Ayodhyā, North India, was first a patron of the Sāṁkhya school, but afterwards a patron of Buddhism on account of Vasu-bandhu's success in religious activity. He sent his Crown Prince (*Bālāditya*) to Vasu-bandhu to learn Buddhism, and the Queen too became one of his disciples. When he came to the throne, *King Bālāditya* in conjunction with his Queen-mother, invited Vasubandhu to Ayodhyā and favoured him with a special patronage."[4] Now Vāmana tells us that the patron of Vasubandhu was a son of Candra Gupta,[5] while Paramārtha reveals that the king was called Vikramāditya. As it is known and accepted that Candra Gupta II was also known as *Vikramāditya*, while Vasubandhu had distinguished himself as a literateur in A. D. 414, it has been suggested that the Candra Gupta of Vāmana and the Vikramāditya of Paramārtha cannot be any other than Candra Gupta *Vikramāditya* II and that the Crown Prince *Bālāditya* could only therefore have been the *Mahārāja* Govinda Gupta, who must have assumed the title of *Bālāditya* (I) on becoming king.[6] Possibly this is the first *Bālāditya* referred to as the king of the Madhyadeśa in the Sarnāth inscription of king Prakaṭāditya.[7]

[1] Bhandarkar, *I. A.*, XLI. p. 3.
[2] *Cf. J. A. S. B.*, LVIII, Pt. I, p. 89.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (10) p. 43.
[4] *J. R. A. S.*, 1905, p. 44. Italics mine.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] Bhandarkar, *I. A.*, XLI, p. 2.
[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, III (79) p. 286.

If these identifications are accepted, then it follows that Gōvinda Gupta *Bālāditya* I must have been the first governor, while he was a *Yuvarāja*, over the district of Tīra*bhukti* with Vaiśāli as his head-quarters. This is because none of the seals found at Basārh refers to any place other than Tīra*bhukti* and its capital. Among these may be mentioned two which run as follows: *Śrī Yuvarāja bhaṭṭārakapādīya kumārāmātya ādhikaraṇasya* (of the office of the *Kumārāmātya* of His Highness the Crown Prince) and *Yuvarāja bhaṭṭāraka pādīya balādhikaraṇasya* (of the Military Office of His Highness the Crown Prince).[1] These seals show that, as a governor evidently over the Tīra*bhukti*, the *Yuvarāja* (Gōvinda Gupta) must have had two high officials—the *Kumārāmātya* and the *Balādhikaraṇa*—as the heads of their departments under him.

After the death of his father Candra Gupta II, Gōvinda Gupta *Bālāditya* I must have succeeded to the throne and ruled at least for two years, for the earliest date for Kumāra Gupta I is A. D. 415-16. Paramārtha definitely says that prince *Bālāditya* "*came to the throne*," but he must have reigned only for a short time. Possibly there was a civil war between these two brothers in which Kumāra Gupta was triumphant. How Kumāra Gupta achieved this success, whether by any matrimonial alliance for he seems to have married some one's sister[2] or by some other means, cannot yet be determined.

Subandhu[3] however alludes to such a revolution in the prefatory verses of his *Vāsavadattā*. Therein he launches a tirade against the wicked (*khalās*) saying that they are more mischievous than snakes, while the snakes who are the foes of weasels, are not envious of a family, whereas the wicked are hard even on the family (*Sakuladvēṣī*) of their victims. He adds that the wicked have, like owls, eyes even in the darkness, and though they destroy the merits of others, they become all the more sinful, just as clouds which cover the rays of the moon become darker thereby. As though these allusions were not enough, he clearly refers to a civil war after the death of Candra Gupta *Vikramāditya* when he says in the well-known verse:

sā rasavattā vihatā navakā vilasanti carati nō kaṃ kaḥ!
sarasīva kīrtiśēṣaṃ gatavati bhuvi Vikramādityē!!

[1] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, pp. 107, 108.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12) p. 50.

[3] Subandhu, *Vāsavadattā*, p. 7. For previous references see prefatory verses nos. 6-8. (Bibliotheca Indica, ed. Fitzedward Hall, 1859, pp. 6-7). Also see Haraprasād Sastri's remarks on this topic, *I. A.*, XLI, pp. 15-16.

This allusion implies that, on the death of *Vikramāditya*, the love of Art and Poetry vanished, upstarts flourished and everybody's hand was on his neighbour's throat. Such a statement evidently means that on the death of Candra Gupta II, when Gōvinda Gupta *Bālāditya* I ascended the throne and probably ruled for two years, a civil war must have broken out between him and his better known brother Kumāra Gupta, and on the triumph of the latter, or during this period of internal strife, the acute situation which Subandhu describes must have arisen.

5. Kumāra Gupta I.

Gōvinda Gupta, therefore, was succeeded by his brother Kumāra Gupta I *Mahendrāditya*, probably in A. D. 415-16. The early years of his reign must have been prosperous for the Bilsad stone pillar inscription dated A. D. 415-16 describes his "augmenting victorious reign."[1] He must have been popular, for in the Udayagiri inscription of the year A. D. 425-26, he is styled as "the best of kings".[2] This prosperity must have continued till the year A. D. 437-38, because the Mandasor inscription of this ruler and Bandhuvarman, relates how Kumāra Gupta "was reigning over the (whole) earth".[3] As no inscriptions covering the last seven years of his reign have been forthcoming, it is possible that this was the period of the barbaric invasions. During this juncture, as the undated Bhitarī stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta says: "he was employed as the means of (subduing his) enemies who had put themselves forward in the desire for conquest that was so highly welcome to them".[4]

These invasions must have told heavily on the resources of the Gupta empire, for the emperor Kumāra Gupta I was urged to issue impure gold coins, although in the earlier days of his prosperity, like Samudra Gupta, he too celebrated the horse sacrifice.[5] He must have died in the year A. D. 455-56, for it is well-known that Skanda Gupta I was ruling in this year.[6]

His extant coins and epigraphs reveal how he was, to a large extent, successful in maintaining his father's empire. North Bengal must have been under his control for his viceroy Ciratadatta is said

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (10) p. 44; also see p. 43: "*ābhivarddhamāna-vijaya-rājya-saṁvatsare*".
[2] *Ibid.*, (61) p. 259.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 86: *pṛthvīm praśāsati.*
[4] *Ibid.*, (13), p. 55.
[5] Allan, *op. cit.*, Pl. i, 13, 14, pp. 68-69.
[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14) p. 58; *I. A.*, XXXI, p. 266.

to have governed the Puṇḍravardhanabhukti,[1] while another representative, the councillor (*Mantri*) Pṛthvīṣeṇa, who held the office of *Kumārāmātya*, and was later elevated to the post of *Mahābalādhikṛta*, appears to have been stationed at Ayōdhyā in A. D. 436.[2] The province of Ērāṇ was under the administration of another governor, prince Ghaṭōtkaca, who is mentioned as ruling there in A. D. 435.[3] The Mandasor inscription tells us that in A. D. 437-38, another feudatory named Bandhuvarman was in charge of Daśapura[4] the modern Dasor. From these records it is clear that Kumāra Gupta I, at least between A. D. 435 to 438, was in complete control of all these provinces which he inherited from his father.

Kumāra Gupta I was probably the first Gupta emperor to feel the shock of Hūṇa invasions, towards the last years of his reign when his empire was "made to totter" as the Bhitarī stone pillar inscription of his son Skanda Gupta informs us. These invaders were the Puṣyamitras, an ancient people,[5] who were driven away by Skanda Gupta[6] after his father most probably perished in this battle against them.[7]

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[1] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, p. 134; also *Ibid.*, XVIII, no. 13, p. 193: *Ibid.*, XXI, no. 13 pp. 78-83, where Baigram copper plate grant confirms it.

[2] Karamadaṇḍa Inscription, *E. I.*, X, no. 15, pp. 71-72.

[3] *I. A.*, XLIX, p. 114.

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18) p. 80. —*Note*:—It may be observed that one of the Jaina Prākṛta stories reveal the origin of the town of Daśapura. In the story of Udayana is related the following: "Then in the month of Jeṭṭha Udayana hurriedly took the field together with the ten kings (his vassals). And in crossing the desert the army began to die of thirst. They reported it to the king. Thereupon he thought of Pabhāvāi and she came instantly. She created three lotus lakes, in the front, in the rear and in the middle. Then refreshed and cheered up he marched to Ujjēṇi. And the king said: "Why should the people be killed? Let there be a fight between you and me on horse-back, the chariots on elephants, or on foot, just as *you* please." Pajjōya answered: "Let us fight in chariots." Then he came with Nalagiri caparisoned for the fight, and the king in a chariot. Then the king said: "You are true to (your) agreement. But nevertheless there is no escape for you." Then he drove the chariot about in a circle.... After that King Udayana hastened back to his own town. The image was unwilling. On the way he was stopped by the rain and encamped. Then the ten kings in fear of an attack made ramparts of earth and encamped. And whatever the king ate, of that they also gave to Pajjōya.... When the rainy season was passed the king marched on. The band of merchants that had come there remained on the spot. Then that became the city of Daśapura." Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, pp. 109-11. (London 1909).

[5] *Jaina Kalpasūtra*, *S. B. E.*, XXII, p. 292.

[6] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (no. 13) p. 55. On the Puṣyamitras see *J. A. S. B.*, LVIII, pp. 84-105; *Cf.* Divekar, *A. B. O. R. I.*, 1919-20, p. 99 ff. They ruled over Mekalā in the Narmadā Valley. See *Viṣṇu*, IV, 24, 17; Wilson, *The Vishnu Purāna*, p. 186. (ed. 1840).

[7] *Ibid.*, l. 12, p. 55.

Kumāra Gupta I had some children. His chief queen Anantadēvī gave birth to Pura Gupta. But the name of Skanda Gupta's mother is not known. Yüan Chwāng says that *Fo-to-kio-to* (Buddha Gupta = Budha Gupta?) was the son of Śakrāditya,[1] who has been identified with Kumāra Gupta I, since Mahendra is the equivalent of Śakra,[2] while he was also styled as *Kramāditya* and *Vikramāditya* as well.

But who precisely succeeded to the throne, among these three sons, has been like many a question in Gupta history a matter of controversy. If Yüan Chwāng's traditional account is to be accepted, then it follows that Śakrāditya was followed by Budha Gupta. It has been however suggested that, on Kumāra Gupta I's death, as an interpretation of the implication of verse 5 of the Bhitarī stone pillar inscription,[3] there was possibly a struggle for the throne between the brothers; and that the goddess of fortune of her own accord selected as her husband Skanda Gupta, having discarded all (the other sons) of kings.[4] There is no reason, some scholars hold, to infer that the Bhitarī inscription alludes[5] to a fratricidal war,[6] for the "enemies" of Skanda Gupta were in all likelihood the barbarian Puṣyamitras or the Hūṇas, rather than his own kinsmen, who shook the empire during the last days of his father's reign. Nor is there any direct evidence to prove that he shed the blood of his brothers, for in the Junāgaḍh inscription the line *vyāpēlyasarvān manujēndra putrān* does not at all state or suggest either that any blood was shed or that there was an internal conflict[7]. But fortune favoured Skanda Gupta in as much as he must have been considered, among others, the best person to deal with a crisis like the invasion of the barbarians whom he defeated. But as no record however states that he was selected like Samudra Gupta or his son Candra Gupta II, by his father Kumāra-Gupta I to succeed to the throne, a bloodless struggle must have ensued,

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[1] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 108. (Beal)

[2] *Cf.* Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 477 (4th ed.)

[3] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (13) p. 53: *Skandaguptaḥ sucarita-caritānāṃ yēna vṛttēna vṛttaṃ vihitam = amal-ātmā tāna dīdhiā (?)—vinītaḥ vinayabala sunītair = vvikramēṇa kkrameṇa pratidinaṃ = abhiyōgād = ipsitaṃ yēna labdhvā.*

[4] *Ibid.*, (14) p. 62 text p. 59: *vyāpētya sarvān manujēndraputrāṃ*; *Basak, op. cit.*, p. 62.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (13) p. 54: *pitari divaṃ = upētē vipulatāṃ vaṁśa-lakṣmiṃ bhuja-bala-vijitārir = yaḥ pratiṣṭhāpya bhūyaḥ*

[6] *J. A. S. B.*, LVIII, Pt I, pp. 84-105; Majumdar, *J. A. S. B.*, (*N.S.*) XVII, pp. 253 H.

[7] Raychaudhari, *P. H. A. I.*, pp. 482-89 (4th ed.).

from which Skanda Gupta must have emerged in triumph.[1] That Skanda Gupta was really succeeded by Kumāra Gupta I is supported by a later Buddhist work the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*.[2]

6. The Varmans of Puṣkaraṇa and Kumāra Gupta I

One of the most important feudatories of the reign of Kumāra Gupta I were the Varmans of Puṣkaraṇa, which can be no other than the modern Pokharaṇ in the Jodhpur State. During this reign we first hear from his Mandasor stone inscription, dated A. D. 437-38, how there was a king named Bandhuvarman, who was governing Daśapura and was the son of Viśvavarman.[3] It may therefore be inferred that Bandhuvarman was the feudatory of Kumāra Gupta I.

The father of Bandhuvarman was called Viśvavarman, whose father appears to have been the "illustrious king" Naravarman as is revealed in the Gangdhār stone inscription dated A. D. 423-24.[4] Naravarman was reigning in A. D. 404-5 according to his Mandasor stone inscription bearing that date. This epigraph also tells us that he was the son of king Siṁhavarman and the grandson of king (*narēndra*) Jayavarman.[5]

Naravarman appears to have had an elder brother named Candravarman, who is mentioned in the Susunia rock inscription which records that he too was the son of Siṁhavarman of Puṣkaraṇa.[6] This Candravarman has been rightly identified with his namesake who along with others was "violently exterminated" by Samudra Gupta.[7] The reason why no record mentions that these are brothers may possibly be attributed to internal strife as was the case with Candra Gupta II and Rāma Gupta or Skanda Gupta and Pura Gupta as will be shown presently. It may therefore be considered likely that Siṁhavarman and his father Jayavarman were the contemporaries of Candra Gupta and Ghaṭōtkaca.[8]

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12) p. 50: *tad pādānuddhyātaḥ* shows only his devotion to his father.

[2] *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, Ch. 53, p. 628. (Gaṇapati Sastri's edition.):

Samudrākhyo nṛpaścaiva Vikramaścaiva kirtitaḥ
Mahendra nṛpavaro mukhya Sakārādyo mataḥ paraṃ

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 86.

[4] *Ibid*, (17), p. 76.

[5] *E. I.*, XII, no. 35, p. 321.

[6] *Ibid*, XII, no. 9, p. 133.

[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1) p. 7. This identification was first made by *Mahāmahōpādhyāya* Haraprasad Sastri in *E. I.*, XII, p. 321, and has been accepted by other writers. Cf. Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 11; Basak, I. A., XLVIII, p. 99.

[8] It has been suggested that Ghaṭōtkaca may be a son of Kumāra Gupta I. Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 481; also see *I. A.*, XLIX, pp. 114-15.

7. Skanda Gupta Kramāditya I

Kumāra Gupta I had a wife, Anantadēvī, the mother of Pura Gupta but not of Skanda Gupta, who, probably being the eldest son, succeeded Kumāra Gupta I. The undated Bhitarī stone pillar inscription of this ruler narrates how he made, after undergoing great privations, a successful attempt to stem the tide of the barbarian invasions. This epigraph reveals that he not only conquered the tribe of the powerful Puṣyamitras, but after his father's death, "conquered his enemies (the Hūṇas) by the strength of (his) arm, and established again the ruined fortunes of his lineage; and then, crying "victory has been achieved," betook himself to his mother.[1] He is clearly recorded to have "with his own armies established (again his) lineage that had been made to totter.....(and) with his two arms subjugated the earth (and) showed mercy to the conquered people in distress." It is further specifically added that he "joined in close conflict with the Hūṇas."[2] This Hūṇa invasion could not have taken place later than A. D. 458, if the Mlēcchas of the Junāgaḍh inscription can be identified with the Hūṇas mentioned in the Bhitarī stone pillar record;[3] but such an identification is neither settled nor accepted.[4] During this critical juncture, the Puṣyamitras, probably a tributary tribe of the earlier Gupta emperors, now awaiting to shake themselves free from the Gupta yoke, rose against him. After the conquest of the barbarians, who swept over his empire from the north-western passes, he appointed a number of Wardens of the Marches (*Gōptṛn*) to protect his kingdom from such future invasions. One of them was Parṇadatta, governor of Surāṣṭra, who was appointed to this post after the king had deliberated "for days and nights."[5] This triumph made him, in the eyes of his people, a saviour and a national hero.

The great embankment of the lake Sudarśana burst in A. D. 455-56, but two years later in A. D. 457-58 this dam was repaired, by the orders of Skanda Gupta, under the superintendence of Cakrapālita, son of the governor of Surāṣṭra (Kāṭhiāwāḍ). The embankment was a hundred cubits in length and sixty-eight cubits in breadth.[6]

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (13) p. 55. Also see line 10.

[2] *Ibid.*, I. 15 : *Hūṇair=yyasya samāgatasya samarē.*

[3] *Ibid.*, (13) p. 56; (14) p. 62; Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 389.

[4] Basak, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (13) p. 53: *Svabhimata-vijigiṣā-prōdyatānām*; Allan, *op. cit.*, p. xlv; Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14) p. 59. (Ll. 6-9): *ēvaṃ sa jitvā pṛthvīṃ samagrāṃ bhagn-āgradarpā(n) dviṣataś=ca kṛtvā sarvvēṣu dēśēṣu vidhāya gōptṛn sañciṅtayāmāsa bahu-prakāram.*

[6] *Ibid.*, (14) p. 64.

The emperor Skanda Gupta was alive till A. D. 467-68. According to the Kahāum stone pillar inscription, the year A. D. 460-61 was "in the tranquil reign of Skanda Gupta, whose hall of audience (was) shaken by the wind caused by the falling down (in the act of performing obeisance) of the heads of a hundred kings."[1] This is an obvious allusion to the peaceful condition of his reign. The Indor copper plates, dated A. D. 465-66, refer to his "augmenting victorious reign,"[2] a phrase which was applied to the days of Kumāra Gupta I in A. D. 415-16.[3] This very phrase is again repeated in the Gaḍhwa stone inscription, dated A. D. 467-68, which, although it does not refer to the king's name, probably belonged to the time of Skanda Gupta or to the year following his death.[4] It may therefore be concluded that, unlike his father's reign, these years of Skanda Gupta's rule must have been spent in peace and the barbaric incursions took place in the early years of his sovereignty.

There is however no evidence to ascertain, owing to this Puṣyamitra invasion, the precise nature of the territorial losses. Nor can it be proved whether or not the capital was shifted to another place. The timely rescue of Skanda Gupta by defeating the Hūṇas obviously saved the empire from annihilation and prevented the changing of the metropolis, while Magadha still continued to be the most important province in contemporary politics.

But it is evident from the Bhitarī stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta that he "restored the fallen fortunes of his family..... *established again* the ruined fortunes of his lineage, and *with his own armies, established* (*again*) (his) lineage that had been made to totter."[5] It is therefore certain that Skanda Gupta retarded the first as well as the second barbaric incursions.[6] But what exactly transpired to the Gupta empire, after these two onslaughts is not quite evident. Still according to the Mandasor inscription of Prabhākara, it is apparent that Gōvinda Gupta was the Viceroy of Mālwā in A. D. 467-68,[7] but this epigraph does not mention Skanda Gupta, whose last known date A. D. 467-68. Now neither the exact relationship between the Gōvinda Gupta and Ghaṭōtkaca Gupta has yet been

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (15) p. 67.
[2] *Ibid.*, (16) pp. 70-1 : *abhivarddhamāna.*
[3] *Ibid.*, (10) pp. 43-44.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (66) p. 268.
[5] *Ibid.*, (13) p. 55. Italics mine.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[7] *A. S. I. R.*, 1922-23, p. 187 ; *E. I.*, XIX, App. p. 2. Prabhākara was probably a local chief.

established nor is it clear whether or not Gōvinda Gupta refused to acknowledge his nephew Skanda Gupta, after the death of his brother Candra Gupta II.[1]

Nevertheless, it is certain that during the latter half of Skanda Gupta's reign the Gupta empire lost most of its possessions in the west, upto and probably including Mālwā. From the find-spots of the inscriptions of his step-brother and successor Pura Gupta, his son Narasiṁha Gupta and grandson Kumāra Gupta II, especially in the United Provinces, Bihar and Bengal, it may be definitely concluded that during their reigns the Gupta empire was confined chiefly to Bengal, Bihar and the eastern districts of the United Provinces. The chief cause of this diminution of the once great Gupta empire was the unending invasions of the Hūṇas. The third Hūṇa onrush must have occurred during the reign of Pura Gupta who issued base gold coins, even as his brother or step-brother Skanda Gupta had done before.[2]

Among the enemies whom Skanda Gupta had to face, the Vākāṭakas might have been one, for their power was apparently already crushed in northern India. The Bālāghāṭ plates of Pṛthvīṣēna II, who was Skanda Gupta's cousin, relates that his commands were honoured by the lords of Kōsala, Mēkalā and Mālava and he held in check enemies bowed down by his prowess.[3] Such a Vākāṭaka ruler must have ruled after Skanda Gupta, for during the reign of this emperor, Parṇadatta was the governor over the western provinces which included Surāṣṭra and Mālwā.[4]

Towards the end of his reign Skanda Gupta spent some years in peace. The Kahāum stone pillar inscription, dated A. D. 460-61[5] and the Indor copper plate grant dated A. D. 465-66,[6] respectively refer to his peaceful (*śānti*) and "ever-increasing victorious reign."

But the control over the greater part of his western dominions must have passed from his hands. The scarcity of his silver coins with the Garuḍa reverse type as compared with those of Kumāra

[1] *I. A.*, XLIX, pp. 114-15; *A. S. I. R.*, 1903, pp. 102, 107; Allan, *Catalogue*, p. 149, pl. XXIV, 3, Intr. p. liv; R. D. Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, pp. 50-51.

[2] Allan, *op. cit.*, Intr. pp. XCVIII, CIV. Coins of a standard of 144·6 grains of baser metal were issued by Skanda Gupta, while Pura Gupta lessened the ratio—viz. 142·7 and 141·4. Some types of coins of Narasiṁha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta II, are of very crude workmanship and base metal.

[3] *E. I.*, IX, no. 36, p. 271: *Kōsala-Mēkala-Mālav-ādhipatir = abhyar ccita śāsanasya.*

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14) pp. 59, 63: *pūrvv-ētarasyāṁ diśi Parṇadattaṁ niyujya rājā dhṛtimān = tath = ābhūt.*

[5] *Ibid.*, (15) p. 66.

[6] *Ibid.*, (16) p. 71.

Gupta I, the lack of the silver coins of the successors, Pura Gupta, Narasiṁha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta II and the paucity in the variety in the types of his gold coins, point to the fact that this ruler must have lost his hold on all provinces outside Bengal, Bihar and the eastern districts of the United Provinces.

8. Political Condition on Skanda Gupta's Death

On the death of Skanda Gupta about A. D. 467, the dynasty of the Imperial Guptas may be said to have suffered an eclipse, specially on account of the inroads of the barbarians, the risings of the feudatories and the change of faith of the emperors. According to Sōmadēva, a Jaina contemporary of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Kṛṣṇa III, the Hūṇas advanced into India as far as Citrakūṭa.[1] Whatever the truth of this tradition may be, it is certain that they conquered the district of Erāṇ (Airikiṇa) in the Central Provinces and their capitals during the reigns of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula were Pavvaiyā on the Chenab and Śākala, the modern Sialkoṭ, in the Punjab.[2]

This vast empire of Candra Gupta II slowly began to crumble after the death of Skanda Gupta, if not earlier. It has been surmised that the assumption of the title of *Vyāghra-bala-parākrama* by Kumāra Gupta I "may possibly indicate that he attempted to repeat the southern adventure of his grandfather and penetrate into the tiger-infested territory beyond the Nerbudda."[3] As a possible result of this adventure into that part of the country to imagine that either he or his followers might have left the find of the 1395 coins in the Sātārā district[4] appears rather incredulous for the Sātārā hoard reveals to us nothing.[5] Again, the supposition that Kumāra Gupta I

[1] *Cf.* Sōmadēva Sūri, *Nītivākyāmṛtam*, p. 79, (Bombay, 1922); K. B. Pathak, *New Light on Gupta Era and Mihirakula, R. G. Bhandarkar Commemoration Volume*, p. 216.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (36) p. 161.

[3] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 480.

[4] Allan, *Catalogue*, p. XLIX.

[5] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. CXXX. *Note*:—No definite conclusions can be drawn on the discovery of hoards of coins. We have seen that already in the case of the Uparkōṭ and Sarvaṇia hoards of coins of *Svāmi* Rudrasēna III with regard to the possibility of Samudra Gupta's invasion of the Kṣatrapa kingdom. See *Ante*. In the present case it is quite possible that the coins might have been taken to Sātārā as a result of commercial conditions. We cannot trace any Gupta influence in that region which was at this period completely under the early Western Cāḷukyas. (Fleet, *D. K. D.*, pp. 338-42.) It is therefore incredible to think that even Skanda Gupta would have dared to attack Sātārā during the mighty early Western Cāḷukyas. Moreover, we may take another example to show the movement of coins owing to trade. Many Roman coins have been found in South India, but we cannot, on a similar analogy, infer that the Romans either ever invaded or were defeated in South India.

might have appointed his son Skanda Gupta in the Ghāzipur region,[1] obviously as a guardian against the ravages of the people in the tiger-infested country, is not borne out by the Bhitarī stone pillar inscription.[2] Consequently the inference that the imperial troops met with disaster[3], does not seem to be warranted by existing evidence. The assumption of the title *Vyāghra-bala-parākrama* possibly implies that, towards the end of his reign, Kumāra Gupta I came into conflict with a people whose might was like that of the tiger. Such a people could have been no other than the Puṣyamitras who, as has been seen already, played such a prominent part in the reign of Skanda Gupta I. Probably towards the end of his reign Kumāra Gupta I came into conflict either with these Puṣyamitras or similar wild tribes who infested the upper valley of the Narmadā. If this title has any significance it may be understood to mean his triumph over these tribes viz., the Puṣyamitras who must have invaded his empire in that region, for again we hear of them in the reign of his son Skanda Gupta who had to bear the brunt of the battle as is suggested in the Bhitarī stone pillar inscription. This record specifically reveals that the Puṣyamitras "had developed great power and wealth."[4] The obvious reason for such a sudden rise in their prosperity can only be attributed to their victory over the Gupta emperor Kumāra Gupta I but of course we have no proof that this was really the case.[5] But the Gupta records cannot be expected to perpetuate the defeat of one of their emperors and the fact that Skanda Gupta had such a tremendous task when dealing with these people implies that they must have had, at least for the time being, the upper hand before Skanda Gupta had decisively beaten them.

In the wake of these Puṣyamitras followed the Hūṇas but the latter, although for a time were defeated by Skanda Gupta as is evident from the Bhitarī stone pillar inscription,[6] became a constant source of irritation to the Guptas and their successors later on.[6] The former, namely the Puṣyamitras, although likewise defeated, were only crushed by the Vākāṭakas. The Bālāghāt inscription of the Vākāṭaka Prithvīṣēna II says that Narendrasena's "commands were treated with respect by the lords of Kōsala,

[1] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 480.
[2] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (13), pp. 55-56.
[3] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 480.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (13), p. 55.
[5] *Ibid*, p. 56.
[6] *Ibid*, (42), p. 206; Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 101, 132, 165.

Mēkalā and Mālava."[1] This would imply that Mālwā (eastern), Kosala (the upper Mahānadī valley) and Mēkalā (the upper Narmadā valley) were consequently lost to the Gupta Empire. Moreover, as the inscription further adds that his power was spread over Avantī (district round Ujjainī), Lāṭa (southern Gujarat), Trikūṭa[2] (Sōpara ?) Kalinga (South Orissa and neighbouring lands), these tracts could no more have been under Gupta influence from the days of Narēndrasena.

But the efforts of Skanda Gupta to preserve in tact the heritage of a vast empire which he inherited from his illustrious grand-father probably did not end in failure during his life-time. His Junāgaḍh inscription dated A. D. 456 57, proves that his power in that region was intact. His Bull-type silver coins again support the conclusion that he must have been the master of the Cambay coast as well.[3] But after his death the Gupta empire definitely broke up and his descendants were unable to preserve the empire of Candra Gupta II which had been held intact for two generations.

Shortly after the appointment of Parṇadatta, the Viceroy of Skanda Gupta in his western dominions, a Maitraka chieftain, named

[1] *E. I.*, IX. no. 36, p. 271: *Kōsalā-Mēkalā-Mālav-ādhipatir – abhyarccita-sāsanasya.* According to the topographical list of the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* (I. A., XXII, p. 185) the Narmadā is called Mekala-Kanyā and that river is stated to have sprung from the Amarakaṇṭaka hill in the Cēdi country. *Cf.* Varāhamihira, *op. cit.*, ch. XIV, v. 7, p. 88; *E. I.*, IV, p. 280.

[2] Trikūṭa was possibly the capital of the Ābhiras. It has been identified with Tēgūr. (*J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XII, p. 323) But this identification cannot be accepted. There were more than one Trikūṭas. There was Trikūta in Ceylon. (Bāṇa, *HC*, p. 187.) Hanumān after crossing the southern ocean, saw Laṅkā situated in the Trikūṭa mountain. (*Rām. Sundarakāṇḍa, Sarga* 2, v. 1, p. 1718-Bom. ed.) Pampa tells us that Guṇavatī, daughter of the Trikūṭa ruler of Laṅkā, was given in marriage to Amṛtaprabhā, ruler of Kiṣkindhā. (Abhinava Pampa, *Rāmāyaṇa*, X, p. 117, p. 310 ed. by Rice.) This Trikūṭa cannot be identified with the Trikūṭa of Gupta-Vākāṭaka history, which must be placed only in Aparānta. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* locates it with the mountains Śiśira, Pataṅga, Rucaka and Niṣāda, which project from the base of the Mēru mountain. (*Viṣṇu*, p. 180, ed. Wilson.) The Pardi plates of the Traikūṭaka Dharasena, dated A. D. 456-57, refer to a grant of land to a Brāhmaṇa. (*E. I.*, X, no. 13, p. 54) Jayaswal's suggestion that Dharasena founded the Traikūṭaka dynasty (Jayaswal, J. B. O. R. S., XIX, Pt. I-II, pp. 101-2) must be rejected especially because the Candravaḷḷi inscription of the Kadamba Mayūraśarma, rightly ascribed to *circa* A. D. 258, says that he marched against Kāñci and Trekūṭa (Traikūṭa), the Pallava and Ābhira capitals (*M. A. R.*, 1929, p. 50). Jayaswal's arguments to alter the date of this record (*J. B. O. R. S., Ibid*, p. 211) are not convincing. Again a grant of the Vākāṭaka Hariṣēṇa (*circa* A. D. 500-520) states that he was the lord of Kuntala, Avanti, Kaḷinga, Trikūṭa and Lāṭa. (Burgess-Indraji, *I. C. T. W. I.*, p. 72.) This shows that he inherited these conquests from Narēndrasena. Again a record of about the 5th century of the reign of the *Mahārāja* Mādhavavarman II of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin family states that he was lord of the Trikūṭa-Malaya country. (*E. R. S. C.*, 1920, p. 97). Also see Saletore *J. B. I. S. M.*, XVII, pp. 67-75 for a further discussion on this topic.

[3] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-22.

Bhaṭāraka, established himself at Valabhi. In the latter half of the sixth century, a branch of his family commenced to rule in *Mo-la-po* (Mālavaka), the westernmost part of Mālwā and conquered vast territories in the regions of the Sahya and Vindhya mountains. In the seventh century A. D. (646) Dharasena IV, one of his illustrious descendants, assumed imperial titles.[1] About A. D. 533, Yaśōdharman of Mandasor, carved out for himself a kingdom which extended from the Himālayas to the Mahendra Mountains or the Eastern Ghāts and from the river Lauhityā (Brahmaputrā) to the western ocean.[2] Though some of the Guptas evidently recovered some portions of eastern Mālwā, as can be seen from literary and epigraphic references, after Yaśōdharman's death, western Mālwā was never recovered by the Guptas, for some parts of this area became the possessions of the Maitrakas of Valabhi. In the sixth century A. D., the area round Ujjainī was conquered by Śankaragaṇa,[3] a representative of the Kaṭaccuri (Kalaccuri) family which, during the times of Yüan Chwāng submitted to a representative of the "Brahmin caste."[4] The Kaṭaccuris were themselves conquered by the Western Cāḷukyas in the seventh century as can be seen from the Māhakūṭa pillar inscription of Maṅgaleśa.[5] The Maukhāris, who controlled the regions of the Bara-Banki, Jaunpur and Gayā districts in the United Provinces and Bihar as Gupta subordinates in the fourth and fifth centuries, revolted against their suzerains in the beginning of the sixth century. About A. D. 554 the Maukhāri ruler Īśānavarman fought with the Guptas and adopted the title of *Mahārājādhirāja*.[6] In Bengal too the Gauḍas were rising into prominence in the regions of the lower Ganges and we know, for example, how the *Mahārājādhirāja* Jayanāga, supposed to have been the successor of Śaśāṅka, had his headquarters at Karṇasuvarṇa which was ultimately conquered by the Kāmarūpa king Bhāskaravarman shortly after the death of Harṣavardhana[7]. But that these Gauḍas were slowly rising into power from the beginning of the sixth century can hardly be doubted, for about this time they came into conflict with the Later Gupta Jīvita Gupta I and the Maukhāri Īśānavarman.[8]

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 183; *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, X, p. 77; *I. A.*, I, p. 14.

[2] *Ibid*, (35) p. 156.

[3] *E.I.*, *IX*, no. 45, p. 299. See *Infra*.

[4] Yüan Chwāng *op. cit.*, II, p. 250; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 271.

[5] *I.A.*, XIX, p. 19.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) p. 206.

[7] *E. I.*, XVIII, no. 7, p. 60; *Ibid*, XII, no. 13, p. 76.

[8] *Cf.* Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) p. 205; *E.I.*, XIV, no. 5, p. 120.

9. The Successors of Skanda Gupta

After the death of Skanda Gupta, contemporary inscriptions refer to several rulers regarding whose order of succession there has been considerable controversy. It has been suggested that, as the Bhitarī seal inscription, which contains a genealogy of the early Gupta kings for nine generations carrying an account of this family through Pura Gupta down to his grandson Kumāra Gupta II, does not mention Skanda Gupta,[1] another dynasty of Gupta rulers must have flourished side by side with the dynasty the genealogy of which has been established by the Sarnāth and Dāmodarpur inscriptions. This assertion has been made, although it is not very easy to indicate the precise place where the branch, the separation of which is attributed to Pura Gupta as the founder, may have ruled.[2] This is because Budha Gupta controlled not only north Bengal in the east and Benares in the centre, but also Mālwā in the west. Such a view has met with considerable opposition,[3] and some scholars hold that after Skanda Gupta, the imperial line continued through Pura Gupta, Narasiṁha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta II, after whom came Budha Gupta and the rest. They think that the name Kumāra Gupta, in the Sārnāth and Dāmōdarpur inscriptions and the Bhitarī seal text, represents one person who must be styled Kumāra Gupta II. Against this it is contended that it appears quite abnormal that, between 148 G. E. (the last known date of Skanda Gupta) and 157 G. E. (the date of Budha Gupta in the Sārnāth inscription), i.e., within the brief space of nine years, we should find three reigns crammed in, viz., those of Pura Gupta, Narasiṁha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta.[4] But such short reigns are not unknown to Indian history.[5] The omission of Skanda's name in the Bhitarī seal, does not necessarily imply that relations between him and Pura Gupta were unfriendly.[6] Examples, however, of

[1] *Note*:—An exact parallel will be met with in Later Gupta history in the case of the children of Mahāsena Gupta: Dēva Gupta, Kṛṣṇa Gupta and Mādhava Gupta. The first is not mentioned in any of the Gupta records but Bāṇa's testimony in his *Harṣacarita* leaves no doubt that Dēva Gupta III was the son of Mahāsena Gupta, as will be shown later.

[2] *E.I.*, XV, pp. 118-122; Basak, *History of North-Eastern India*, pp. 76-80.

[3] *Cf. J. & Pr. A. S. B.*, (N. S.) XVII, no. 3 pp. 249-55; *Ibid.*, pp. 296-300; *A.B.O.R.I.*, I, pp. 67-80; *E.I., XVIII*, p. 83 ff; *Dacca Review*, 1920, p. 50 ff; *J.R.A.S.*, 1919, pp. 260-62; *Hindustan Review*, Jan. 1918 (et seq.)

[4] Basak, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

[5] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 500, (4th ed.). See *S.I.I.*, I, p. 46.

[6] Raychaudhuri, *Ibid*, pp. 484-87; for parallel cases see *I. A.*, XIX,p. 227; Kielhorn, *L. N. I.*, no. 464, *E. I.*, V. p. 66.

Harṣa[1] and Bhāskaravarman[2] can be cited to prove that in some of their inscriptions, the names of their eldest brothers with whom they were on the best of terms, are not mentioned. But two gold coins found in the Gayā district, on which the name Pura is very distinct,[3] together with the absence of Skanda Gupta's name in the Bhitarī seal of Kumāra Gupta II, go to prove to a great extent first, that Pura Gupta must have ruled and issued coins, and secondly, that relations between Skanda Gupta and Pura Gupta were not friendly.

Moreover, it is stated that a study of the Dāmōdarpur copper plates reveals how a hitherto unrecorded reign of Kumāra Gupta II, *circa* 150-156 G. E., came in after that of Skanda Gupta.[4] This short reign, it is alleged, was followed in the main line of the heirs of Skanda Gupta, by those of Budha Gupta, Bhānu Gupta and others.[5]

The absence of the silver coins of the Mālwā and Surāṣṭra fabrics implies that no successor of Skanda Gupta ruled over Surāṣṭra and Mālwā. Kumāra Gupta II was in all probability succeeded by Budha Gupta, specially as in the Sārnāth image inscription, the Buddhist monk Abhayamitra acknowledges him as the reigning sovereign.[6] The significant expression *Gupta-nṛpa-rājya bhuktau*, occurring in some of the grants of the Parivrājaka rulers Hastin and his son Saṁkṣōbha, is important in showing clearly that the Gupta dynasty and its sway were still continuing[7] and in pointing out that they were Gupta feudatories, ruling over Dahāla (mod. Bundelkhand) and the area covered by the 'eighteen forest kingdoms.' Consequently it is certain that till at least A. D. 495, the western provinces of the Gupta Empire appear to have been intact.[8]

10. Pura Gupta and Others

Skanda Gupta was succeeded by Pura Gupta, whose exact relation with the former has not yet been determined. As he is known to have been the son of Anantadēvī, who may or may not have been the mother of Skanda Gupta, but was the wife of Kumāra Gupta,[9] he must have been either the brother or half-brother of Skanda Gupta. This is because according to Robert Sewell, Dēvakī

[1] *E.I.*, IV, no. 29, pp. 210-11; Fleet, *C.I.I.*, III, (52) p. 232.
[2] *Ibid.*, XII, p. 73.
[3] Banerji, *A.B.O.R.I.*, I, p. 75.
[4] This is the later view of Dr Vincent Smith, cited by Basak, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
[5] Banerji, *A.B.O.R.I.*, I, p. 75; Basak, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
[6] *A.S.I.R.*, 1914-15, p. 126.
[7] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, III, Intr., pp. 20-21.
[8] *Cf. Ibid.*, (26) p. 118.
[9] *J.A.S.B.*, LVIII, pp. 84-105; *J.R.A.S.*, 1905, p. 128. Also see Allan, *op. cit.*, p. ii.

was possibly the name of Skanda Gupta's mother as she is compared in the Bhitarī pillar inscription to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mother.[1] This supposition has been supported by Dr Raychaudhuri who contends that such a comparison of the widowed Gupta empress would be otherwise inexplicable. He further observes that the name of Skanda Gupta's mother, coupled with her miserable plight, suggested to the court-poet a comparison with Kṛṣṇa and Dēvakī.[2] Such a conclusion appears no doubt tempting but we must, however, remember that in no known Gupta inscription has the name of Skanda Gupta's mother been ever mentioned and consequently to infer that her name was Dēvakī merely on the strength of one simile in the Bhitarī stone pillar inscription seems rather hazardous. The reason why the court-poet cited the name of Dēvakī instead of Pārvati or Aditi may probably be the result of his personal whim or fancy, or what is more probable, it may be because Skanda Gupta was an avowed Vaiṣṇava, for he is well-known to have been a *Paramabhāgavata*, the devotee of Kṛṣṇa-Viṣṇu.[3] It does not appear unnatural for the court-poet to have evoked the name of Kṛṣṇa's mother when he was relating how his emperor, who must have seemed to him a protector like Kṛṣṇa, was hastening home to tell his own anxious mother the glad tidings of his great victory over the barbarians. It is therefore not safe to conclude that the name of Skanda Gupta's mother was probably Dēvakī.

As this queen, whatever her name was, is not mentioned in the Bihar, Kahaum or Bhitarī pillar inscriptions of Skanda Gupta or in the Bhitarī inscribed seal of Kumāra Gupta II, Dr R. C. Majumdar has maintained that she was not the chief queen (*agramahiṣī*) and that Skanda Gupta had consequently "no natural claim to the throne."[4] Of course Dr Raychaudhuri is correct in maintaining that there "was no rule prohibiting the mention of a Gupta queen who was not the principal consort of an emperor."[5] We may here state however that we have to discuss not so much a question of historical principles as of historical probabilities. We have seen above that Gōvinda Gupta *Bālāditya I* must have preceded Skanda Gupta and existing evidence, however allegorical, cannot be interpreted to imply that either Gōvinda Gupta *Bālāditya I* did not rule or that Skanda Gupta I did not succeed without a struggle. Moreover, to cite the authority of the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*[6] which gives the names of some

[1] Sewell, *Historical Ins. of Southern India*, p. 349.

[2] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, pp. 480, 484, f. n.; Fleet, *op. cit.*, (13), p. 54: *jitam iti pariloṣāṃ mātaraṃ sāsra-nēttrāṃ . . . . hata ripur=iva Kṛṣṇa Dēvakiṃ abhyupētaḥ . . .*

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12) p. 50; Allan, *Catalogue*, p. 119.

[4] Majumdar, *J. A. S. B.*, XVII, p. 253.

[5] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, pp. 483, 484; also see *E. I.*, XV, no. 4, pp. 42-43

[6] Raychaudhuri, *Ibid*, p. 487.

prominent Gupta emperors cannot disprove the above conclusions. The *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* is a later work and mentions only the *important* Gupta emperors like the following: *Samudrākhya* (Samudra Gupta), *Vikrama* (Candra Gupta II), *Mahēndra* (Kumāra Gupta I), *Śakārāḍya* (Skanda Gupta).[1] If we are to accept the genealogy of this work then we shall have to reject the historicity of rulers like Rāma Gupta, Kumāra Gupta I and Gōvinda Gupta *Bālāditya I*, which, of course, does not appear desirable.[2] His coins show that he assumed the title of *Śrī Vikrama*,[3] like his grandfather Candra Gupta II. Pura Gupta issued base gold coins evidently owing to his precarious finances, and in fact only two of his coins are extant.[4] These are so few when compared with the gold coins of his son and successor Narasiṁha Gupta. Therefore, it is doubtful whether the horseman issues of Prakāśāditya can be attributed to Pura Gupta, for probably this was the title of Kumāra Gupta I, his father, who used the honorific of *Mahendrāditya* on his coins[5]. Pura Gupta's capital appears to have been at Ayōdhyā, at least till the rise of the Maukhāris and his successors had their metropolis at Kāśi.

According to the inscribed Bhitarī seal of Kumāra Gupta II, Pura Gupta was succeeded by his son Narasiṁha Gupta, whose coins reveal that he assumed the title of *Bālāditya* (II.) There are no extant inscriptions of this ruler. Yüan Chwāng relates how *Mo-hi-ku-lo* (Mihirakula), who had his capital at Śrāvasti, invaded the territory of *Bālāditya*, the king of Magadha, who, as a zealous Buddhist, had rebelled against the Order. *Bālāditya* II finally

[1] *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, I. p. 628 (ed. Ganapati Sastri.) It is worth noting here that the Kahaum inscription of Skanda Gupta calls him as *Śakrōpama*. Fleet, *op. cit.*, (13), p. 67.

[2] Among Gupta emperors there was a usage of adopting the titles and names of their forefathers. Samudra Gupta in his Allahabad *praśasti* is compared to Indra and other gods. (Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), p. 14). Kumāra Gupta I is called a *Mahēndra*. Moreover, we know that Samudra Gupta had the title of *Sarvarājōcchēttā*, which was given, though once, to his son Candra Gupta II by his daughter Prabhāvatī Guptā. (*E. I.*, XV, no. 4, p. 41). Candra Gupta was also known as Dēva Gupta and since we know that Kumāra Gupta also had that name we may call him Dēva Gupta II. (*Cf. A. M. M.*, p. 628). Candra Gupta II had titles like *Śrī Vikrama, Ajita Vikrama, Siṁha Vikrama, Siṁha Candra* and others, as noticed already. His son began to adopt titles in obvious imitation like *Śrī Mahēndra, Ajita Mahēndra, Śrī Mahēndra Siṁha Mahēndra*, all of which can be observed on his coins. (Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-65, 69-71, 76-77, 79-80). Candra Gupta II had the title of *Śrī Vikramāditya* and it is interesting to note that Skanda Gupta also had the same title. (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 122)

[3] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 135; *I. A.*, XXXI, p 263.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 89; J. A. S. B., LVIII, p. 90.

captured Mihirakula and on being eventually released, he sought refuge in Kāśmira where he ultimately became king. This Narasiṁha Gupta has been identified with *Bālāditya*, who is referred to by Yüan Chwāng.[1] This Chinese traveller has recorded that Budha Gupta was succeeded by Tathāgata Gupta, after whom came *Bālāditya*,[2] and it has therefore been maintained that this identification is inadmissible as his immediate predecessor was Tathāgata Gupta.[3] It must here be observed that Yüan Chwāng's account, recorded evidently from hearsay almost two centuries after the expiry of these events, does not clearly specify the relationship between these two persons.[4] While it is known from the Erāṇ stone inscription that Bhānu Gupta was supreme in Mālwā, the *Ārya Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* confirms that both of these were contemporaries.[5] As Yüan Chwāng places these events some centuries before him, it is difficult to corroborate these statements when it is known that *Bālāditya* preceded him only by a century. Moreover, this victory is claimed by Yaśōdharman in his Mandasor inscription,[6] but he was probably not a Gupta ruler, for one of his epigraphs says that he controlled those countries "thickly covered over with deserts and mountains and trees and thickets and strong-armed heroes (and) having (their) kings assaulted by (his) prowess,-which were not enjoyed (even) by the Gupta Masters".[7] An apparently possible solution out of this impasse is made in the suggestion that Narasiṁha Gupta simply succeeded in defending Magadha against the onslaughts of Mihirakula who was afterwards routed and captured by Yaśōdharman.[8] This is plausible because the successful defence of Narasiṁha Gupta must have taken place between the years A.D. 469-70 and A.D. 472-73, for Kumāra Gupta II was recognised as a sovereign in A.D. 473-74 (G. E. 154)[9] while, from the Mandasor inscription, Yaśodharman's date is known to have been A.D. 533-34.[10]

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 164; Beal, *op. cit.*, II, 168; Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life*, p. 111.

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 164-65; Basak, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

[3] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 497.

[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 164.

[5] *Jayaswal, op. cit.*, p. 39.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (33-35) pp. 148, 150 and 155.

[7] *Ibid.*, (33) pp. 147-148. Fleet's interpretation of the phrase *Guptanātha* as "Lords of the Guptas" has rightly been changed into "Gupta Masters" by Jayaswal. *Cf. Imperial History of India*, p. 40.

[8] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. lix.

[9] *A. S. I. R.*, 1914-15, pp. 124-25.

[10] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (35) p. 152.

Therefore Kumāra Gupta II was on the throne in A.D. 473-74, being the son of Narasiṁha Gupta *Bālāditya* II and Mitradēvī.[1] He called himself *Kramāditya* as can be seen from his coins.[2] He also issued some gold coins. He evidently did not rule for a long time since his reign must have ended by A.D. 476-77 (G. E. 157) as is evident from the Sārnāth inscription of the time of Budha Gupta.[3] This Kumāra Gupta II has been identified with his namesake mentioned in the Sārnāth Buddhist image inscription of A.D. 473-74, but it has been observed that "there is not the slightest evidence of a partition of the Gupta empire in the latter half of the fifth century A. D. On the contrary inscriptions and coins prove that both Skanda and Budha ruled over the whole empire from Bengal to the West."[4] As shown above, such an inference cannot possibly be accepted for it is likely that there was a disruption, and in the main line Kumāra Gupta II was succeeded by Budha Gupta, Bhānu Gupta and others.

Budha Gupta, who must have ascended the throne in A. D. 476-7, could not have been an insignificant monarch, although no official inscription of his reign is yet available. He must have reigned from A. D. 476-7 to 494-95, as one of his coins in the British Museum bears the latter date. In A. D. 484-85 his sovereignty was unquestioned in Mālwā for, in this year, his viceroy *Māhārāja* Suraśmicandra was ruling over the country between the rivers Kālindī (Yamunā) and the Narmadā. As the Erāṇ stone inscription dated A. D. 484-85 suggests, Budha Gupta probably reconquered Mālwā which was lost during the times of Kumāra Gupta I with the assistance of Dhanyaviṣṇu and his elder brother the *Mahārāja* Mātṛviṣṇu, possessed of "unimpaired honour and wealth", and who had "been victorious in battle against many enemies".[5] His silver coins of the central Indian type are rare.[6] His Sārnāth epigraph, referred to above, only records dedications of Buddha's images by a Buddhist monk while the Dāmōdarpur plates, whose dates are missing, reveal that he had a governor, the *Uparika Mahārājā* Brahmadatta, over the division of Puṇḍravardhana, while another record shows how the *grāmika* Nābhaka wished to purchase some *apradā* land in Canda *grāma*.[7]

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[1] *E. I.*, XXI, no. 12, p. 77; *A. S. I. R.*, 1934-35, p. 63.
[2] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-41.
[3] *A. S. I. R.*, 1914-15, p. 126.
[4] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 499.
[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (19) p. 90.
[6] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
[7] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, pp. 137-41.

As noticed already, Yüan Chwāng records that Budha Gupta was succeeded by Tathāgata Gupta. The identity of this king has not yet been established, although attempts have been made to identify him with Vainya Gupta.[1] The reasons offered are that there has come to light an inscription, dated A. D. 506-7 from Gunāighar in the Tipperah district, eastern Bengal, revealing the name of a king called Vainya Gupta;[2] there are three coins in the British Museum, bearing his name with the Garuḍa standard,[3] and in some of the clay seals from Nālandā, Vainya Gupta is styled as a *Mahārājādhirāja*.[4] Thus his date falls between the last known dates of Budha Gupta (A. D. 495) and of Bhānu Gupta (A. D. 510). But this identification is unacceptable: first, because though there might have been a king named Vainya Gupta with imperial titles, there is no adequate proof to show that he belonged to the imperial Gupta line; secondly, the precise reason why the Tathāgata Gupta of Yüan Chwāng should be identified with Vainya Gupta, simply because an inscription of his reign bearing the date A. D. 506-7 and some Nālandā seals bearing his name have been found, is not at all clear. Nevertheless, he appears to have been a Gupta monarch who must have ruled over a territory between eastern Bengal and Magadha.

11. The Successors of Budha Gupta.

The successor of Budha Gupta has not yet been established, but as the Erāṇ posthumous stone pillar inscription of Gōparāja says 'the glorious Bhānugupta, the bravest man on earth, a mighty, king", fought with Gōparāja, probably a chieftain, in "a very famous battle" and the latter died in A. D. 510-11.[5] This inscription, although not referring to a defeat, alludes to a retreat in the words that "Bhānu Gupta, the bravest man on the earth . . . and, along with him, Gōparāja . . . followed . . . . (*his*) friends (*and came*) here."[6] This battle must have been fought with Toramāṇa near about Erāṇ, for the posthumous inscription relates that Bhānu Gupta and Gōparāja came there. In this war Toramāṇa must have triumphed and commenced to rule in Eastern Mālwā in the year

[1] Nalini Nath Das Gupta, *I. C.*, V, p. 301.

[2] *I. H. Q.*, VI, 1930, p. 45 ff.

[3] Allan, *Catalogue* p. 144, Nos. 588, 589, 590; V. A. Smith, *J. R. A. S.*, 1889, p. 82; *I. H. Q.*, IX, p. 784.

[4] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-04, pt. I, p. 230.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (20) p. 93.

[6] *Ibid.*, l. 5: Ērān is a village on the left bank of the Bina, eleven miles to the west by north from Khurai (the Kurai of the maps) the chief Town of the Khurai Tahsil or Sub-division of the Sagar District in the Central Provinces.

A. D. 510-11, for although this epigraph bears no date, it says [illegible] "in the first year, while the *Mahārājādhirāja* the glorious Torama [illegible] of great fame and of great lustre, is governing the earth." This record further reveals that by this time viz. A. D. 510-11, the *Mahārāja* Mātṛviṣṇu had "gone to heaven", and his younger brother Dhanyaviṣṇu, who had once fought victoriously "in battle against many enemies" now changed his tactics and became a subordinate of Toramāṇa. He was therefore made the *Viṣayapati* of Airikiṇa.[1] These circumstances imply that eastern Mālwā was again wrested from the Gupta ruler Bhānu Gupta in A. D. 510-11 who, however, continued to live and rule till A. D. 534-35 as one of the Dāmōdarpur copper plates bears witness.[2]

The successors of Bhānu Gupta may now be determined. According to Yüan Chwāng the traditional genealogy of the Imperial Gupta patrons of the Nālandā *vihāra* was as follows:

Founder of the Vihāra

Śakrāditya

| (son)

Bud(d)ha Gupta Rāja

| (son)

Tathagata Rāja

| (son)

Bāladitya abdicated.

| (son)

Vajra.

| (displaced by)

"A king of Mid-India".[3]

Suppose we accept this genealogy as correct then it would mean that Śakrāditya viz., Kumāra Gupta I *Mahendrāditya*, had a son called Buddha Gupta. But we know that his other sons, probably in order of seniority, were Skanda Gupta, Pura Gupta and, if Yüan Chwāng's evidence is to be given any credence, Budha Gupta. It has been shown already that Kumāra Gupta I was succeeded, not by Budha Gupta, but by Skanda Gupta who reigned from A. D. 455-67. Then Pura Gupta, who followed him appears to have reigned from A. D.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (36), pp. 160-61.

[2] *E.I.*, XV, no. 7, pl. 5. p. 144.

[3] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life*, pp. 110-11.

468-70. The son of Pura Gupta was Narasiṁha Gupta (*Bālāditya* II)[1] who reigned from A. D. 470-73 and his son was Kumāra Gupta II who may be said to have ruled from A. D. 473-76. These dates are tentative because the reigns of these monarchs must be crammed in between the years A. D. 467-76, for it is known that Budha Gupta must have commenced to reign from A. D. 476-77. Now since it is accepted that there is no proof of the existence of another Gupta monarch called Buddha Gupta apart from the well-known Budha Gupta of the Gupta inscriptions, the Buddha Gupta of Yüan Chwāng may be identified with the Budha Gupta of Gupta records.[2] If this view is tenable then it would mean that Budha Gupta must have ruled from A. D. 476-95 as already pointed out.

The dates of Budha Gupta's descendants according to Yüan Chwāng may now be fixed tentatively because there is no definite evidence, epigraphic or otherwise, pointing out the limits of the divisions or reigns of each ruler. If Budha Gupta was succeeded by Tathāgata Gupta, as Yüan Chwāng maintains, then it would mean that he must have reigned from A. D. 495 till A. D. 507.

Tathāgata Gupta had a son, who is called by Yüan Chwāng as *Bālāditya*, which is apparently only a title. This ruler may be identified with Bhānu Gupta, who is styled in the Ērāṇ inscription dated A. D. 510-11 as "the glorious Bhānu Gupta, the bravest man on earth, ...a mighty king (*Mahārājan*)."[3] That Bhānu Gupta also bore the title of *Bālāditya* is evident from the Nālandā stone inscription of Yaśōvarmadeva, for herein mention is made of "Bālāditya, the great king of irresistible valour".[4] As the Deo Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II records, this Bhānu Gupta *Bālāditya* had another title of *Paramēśvara*.[5] This would mean that Bhānu Gupta should be styled as *Bālāditya* III because two of his predecessors Gōvinda Gupta and Narasiṁha Gupta were also known by this title.

This Bhānu Gupta *Bālāditya* III therefore must have succeeded Tathāgata Gupta in or about A. D. 507, and fought with the Hūṇa chief Toramāṇa in A.D. 510-11. Presumably suffering a defeat at Ērāṇ

[1] *Note.* The name of Pura Gupta's queen has been interpreted in various ways by scholars, who think that it might have been Śrī Vatsala Dēvī, Vainya Dēvī or Śrī Guptā Dēvī. *E. I.*, XXI, no. 12, p. 77; *A. S. I. R.*, 1934-35, p. 63. Vatsala or Vainya Dēvī refer not Pura Gupta's *mother* as Dr. Sastri says, (*E. I.*, XXI, p. 77), but to his *wife*.

[2] *Cf.* the view of Raychaudhari on this point, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 501 (4th ed.).

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (20), p. 93.

[4] *E.I.*, XX, no. 2, p. 46.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46), p. 218.

in this great battle, in which his feudatory Gōparāja lost his life, he retreated abandoning eastern Mālwā to the Hūṇa conqueror.[1] At this juncture the Hūṇa menace must have assumed a tremendous significance for we soon hear of the conqueror Yaśōdharman, "who plunged into the army of his enemies... having bent down the reputation of heroes,"[2] as recorded in the Mandasor stone inscription of Yaśōdharman, who may, as has been rightly pointed out, be identified with the Yaśōvarmadeva of the Nālandā stone inscription.[3] This Bhānu Gupta seems to have lived till A. D. 534–35 as is revealed in one of the Dāmōdarpur copper plate grants.[4] It may now be seen that about this time there arose that acknowledged leader of men (*janēndrādhipati*) Yaśōdharman Viṣṇuvardhana, who defeated Mihirakula and saved from annihilation the empire of the Guptas.[5] He was, as the Nālandā stone inscription suggests, the overlord of Bhānu Gupta who, though adorned with the title of "great king", must have been subservient to him,[6] for it is related therein that "again, victorious over the earth is this same king of men (*narādhipatiḥ sa ēva*), by whom his own famous lineage, which has the *aulikāra* crest, has been brought to a dignity which is higher and higher."[7] When Yaśōdharman established himself as an emperor he appointed as his own officers some of his relations, who were posted in the various parts of his empire, which extended from "the Himālayas to the Mahēndra mountain and from the mountain of snow the table-lands of which were embraced by the Gaṅgā" in the east to the Western ocean in the west.[8] A member of his family, for example, called Abhayadatta functioning as a *Rājasthānīya* or Viceroy protected the region between the Vindhyas and Pāriyātra viz., Bairāt,[9] the Matsya country, up to the western ocean. During this period Dharmadōṣa, his successor and minister continued the administration of this territory. His younger brother Dakṣa was now entrusted with the administration of Mālwā and the provinces of the west.[10]

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (20) p. 93.

[2] *Ibid*, (35), p. 156.

[3] *Cf.* Fleet, *op. cit.*, (33) f. n. 2 on. p. 145; and Hirananda Śastri's remarks in *E. I.*, XX, no. 2, p. 40.

[4] *E.I.*, XV, no. 7, p. 115.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (35), p. 157.

[6] *E.I.*, XX, no. 2. p. 46.

[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (35), p. 156.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] *Cf.* my paper *Mīnas in Tradition and History* in the *Sir Denison Ross Commemoration, Volume*, (1939) pp. 318-19, for remarks on this point.

[10] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (35), p. 157.

Yaśōdharman had achieved this position "after placing his foot on the head of all kings" and after he had "completely removed the terrific darkness in the form of all his foes by the diffusion of the rays of his sword."[1] As the Mandasor stone inscription states he consequently assumed the titles of a paramount sovereign, having conquered by peaceful overtures and by war "the very mighty kings of the east and many kings of the north". He commenced to style himself as the supreme king of kings (*Rājādhirāja*) and the supreme lord (*Paramēśvara*)[2] as though he were himself a Gupta emperor.

Among the mighty kings of the east Bhānu Gupta *Bālāditya* III was assuredly one, as is clearly borne out by the Nālandā stone inscription of Yaśōvarmadeva, who could have been no other than the Yaśōdharman Viṣṇuvardhana.[3] What happened to Bhānu Gupta can be ascertained from Yüan Chwāng who states that *Bālāditya* (Bhānu Gupta) abdicated under rather peculiar circumstances. "Afterwards", says he "the king.....seeing some priests who came from the country of China to receive his religious offerings, was filled with gladness, and *he gave up his royal estate and became a recluse.*"[4] Whether this was the real reason for the abdication it is not possible to state with any certainty, for it is also probable that his subordination to a military upstart and adventurer like Yaśōdharman might have brought on him a sort of resignation which perhaps forced him to adopt this type of religious life. This event, if it ever happened at all, must have occurred after A. D. 535, which is his last known date.

Bhānu Gupta *Bālāditya* III was succeeded by his son who is clearly called Vajra by Yüan Chwāng, for he records that "*his son* Vajra succeeded and built another *Sanghārāma.*"[5] It has been suggested that an allusion is evidently made to the descendants of Bhānu Gupta in the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa* which refers to Bhakārākhya (Bhānu Gupta) who had by his wife his son and successor Pakārākhya and his brother Vakārākhya,[6] who are taken

[1] *E. I.*, XX, no. 2, p. 45.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (35) p. 153.

[3] *E. I.*, XX, no. 2. pp. 45-46. Basak maintains that Yaśōdharman and Viṣṇuvardhana were two different persons, see *History of North-Eastern India* p. 99. It is difficult to agree with this view.

[4] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *op. cit.*, p. 111. Italics mine.

[5] *Ibid.* Italics mine.

[6] *Āryamañjuśrīmūla kalpa*, p. 637. Italics mine:

Sō' pi pūjita-mūrttistu Māgadhānām nṛpobhavēt |
tasy-āpyanujo **Bhakarākhyaḥ** *pracīm diśi samasṛtaḥ ||*
tasy-āpi sutaḥ **Pakārākhyaḥ** *prāg-dēśēṣv-iva jāyataḥ |*
kṣatriyaḥ agraṇi prōktaḥ bālabandhānu cāriṇaḥ ||.

to refer with some justification to Prakaṭāditya and Vajra.[1] The fact that Yüan Chwāng maintains that after Vajra, who succeeded *Bālāditya* (Bhānu Gupta) a king of Mid-India built another wing to the Nālandā monastery, suggests first, that Vajra (was his full name Vajrāditya?) must have ruled and made endowments; secondly that after him the king of Central India obviously assumed all sovereign powers of supremacy.

In all probability this Vajra had a short reign. In fact, it has been suggested that Yaśōdharman possibly defeated and killed him and extinguished the Datta family of Puṇḍravardhana.[2] There is no evidence in the works of Yüan Chwāng to prove that Yaśōdharman killed Vajra, who, however, appears to have not had a long reign. This is possible because in the Sārnāth inscription of Prakaṭāditya only this ruler is mentioned as *Śrīmān* Prakaṭāditya, the son of *Bālāditya* by his wife Dhavaḷā.[3] Here his title of *Śrīmān* clearly indicates that he occupied a subordinate position evidently under Yaśōdharman but it is also obvious that he could issue inscriptions.

The conqueror Yaśōdharman did not either establish a dynasty or himself survive for a long time after he had issued his famous Mandasor stone inscription in A. D. 533-34, for an inscription, dated A. D. 543-44, relates how a son and viceroy of a Gupta *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Pṛthvīpati*, whose name is unfortunately lost, was administering the Puṇḍravardhana *bhukti*, which lay within the dominion of Yaśōdharman.[4] Who was this emperor? As he is definitely stated to be a Gupta sovereign and as no other Gupta ruler other than Prakaṭāditya appears to have been ruling within Yaśōdharman's domain at this period, it is not unreasonable to believe that, after Yaśōdharman's death, Prakaṭāditya resumed his ancient family titles of supremacy and reappointed his own officers in these divisions. After the death of this Prakaṭāditya what happened to the fortunes of the Gupta family is not known but it may be assumed that the Imperial Gupta family continued to rule almost till the middle of the sixth century A. D.

III. The Later Guptas and Other Powers

1. The Maukhāris and the Later Guptas

After the death of Yaśōdharman Viṣṇuvardhana, the supremacy of northern India passed on to the Maukhāris, whose headquarters

[1] Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 504 (4th ed.).
[2] *Ibid*, p. 505.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (79), p. 285.
[4] *E.I.*, XIV, no. 5, p. 110 ff.

were at Kanauj. The Maukhāris, always at war with the Guptas, were becoming a rising power. The son of the *Mahārāja* Harivarman, Ādityavarman, married the Gupta princess Harṣaguptā, and their son was the *Mahārāja* Īśvaravarman. His son was the glorious *Mahārājādhirāja* Īśānavarman, begotten on the *Bhaṭṭārikā*-Dēvī Upaguptā[1]. The Aphsaḍ stone inscription of Ādityasena tells us that Kumāra Gupta III, the great grandson of Kṛṣṇa Gupta, the ruler of Magadha, routed this Īśānavarman and was afterwards cremated at Prayāga.[2] His son Dāmōdara Gupta probably survived in the fight against the Maukhāris and the Hūṇas. The Maukhāri king against whom Dāmōdara Gupta fought on the banks of the Lauhityā[3] appears to have been Sūryavarman his contemporary rather than Śarvavarman.[4] It is futile to state that the Harāhā inscription does not refer to the martial qualities of Sūryavarman.[5] The Apshaḍ inscription of Ādityavarman tells us that Kumāra Gupta III, the son of Jīvita Gupta I, fought with the Maukhāri emperor Īśānavarman and that Kumāra Gupta's son Dāmōdara Gupta fought with an un-named Maukhāri who is simply called "the Maukhāri."[6] The Harāhā inscription specifically states that Īśānavarman's son was the accomplished Sūryavarman.[7] Dr Raychaudhuri thinks that this "Maukhāri opponent of Dāmōdara Gupta was either Sūryavarman or Śarvavarman (both being sons of Īśānavarman) if not Īśānavarman himself."[8] If the opponent had been Īśānavarman himself, then there is no reason why his famous name should have been omitted in both of the two epigraphs mentioned above or especially in his own Harāhā inscription. Again, if it had been Śarvavarman then too his father's inscription would not have failed to mention that fact instead of expatiating at such length on the accomplishments of Sūryavarman alone. Therefore the possibility of the first two having been opponents is consequently ruled out. But why does the Apshaḍ inscription then call the opponent simply "the Maukhāri" and why does not the Harāhā inscription mention that he fought with any particular enemy like the Guptas? The reasons are possibly first, because Sūryavarman when he fought with

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (47) p. 221.

[2] Dr Radhakumud Mookerji thinks that Īśānavarman was victorious over Kumāra Gupta III. (*Harṣa*, p. 55) This, of course, was not the case but it was really *vice-versa*.

[3] *Ibid.*, (42) p. 206.

[4] For contrary views see Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 512; Pires, *The Maukhāris*, p. 99.

[5] Pires, *The Maukhāris*, p, 88.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42), p. 206.

[7] *E. I.*, XIV, no. 5, pp. 119-20.

[8] Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 512. f. n. 1. (4th ed.)

Dāmōdra Gupta and was defeated, was not a ruler but, like Skanda Gupta when he first fought the Puṣyamitras, only a Crown Prince, whose name might not have been considered important enough to be mentioned in a rival ruler's inscription. The same reason may also be attributed to the omission of his name in his father's record because in his father's life-time it may not have been deemed proper enough to perpetuate a defeat from "hostile lands" and diminish the prince's glories of which already much had been made. Of course, he must have been an able warrior for the Harāhā inscription clearly states that Sūryavarman "dragged forth by means of his arm, which was surrounded by the lustre of his sparkling sword, the riches of hostile lands."[1] These hostile lands, we know from the Apshad inscription, could only have been those of the Guptas or the Hūṇas, with whom the Maukhāris had been at war for the past three generations.

It is difficult to identify this Sūryavarman or one of his descendants with his namesake (Sūryavarma) mentioned in the Śirpūr stone inscription of Mahāśiva Gupta, ascribed to the 8th century, which declares that the former was "born in the unblemished family of the Varmans great on account of (*their*) supremacy (*Ādhipatya*) over *Magadha*."[2] The difficulty in identifying this Sūryavarman of the Śirpūr stone inscription with his Maukhāri namesake is great because he is not stated to have belonged to the Maukhāri family but to have been a "Varman," which would not have been so stated had he been the son of the great Īśānavarman and was really a scion of the illustrious and ancient Maukhāri family, which is specified by name even in the records of their bitterest foes, the Guptas. It is likely, however, that Sūryavarmā of the Śirpūr inscription was a member of the later Maukhāri dynasty which sprang up after the destruction of the main line on the murder of Grahavarman Maukhāri during the reign of Harṣavardhana of Sthāṇvīśvara. Of course the mention of the surname Varman suggests that he must have belonged to a branch of the ancient Maukhāri dynasty, many of whose celebrated representatives had names which ended with the word Varman viz., Īśānavarman, Sūryavarman, Śarvavarman, Avantivarman and Grahavarman. But the statement in the Śirpūr inscription that the Varmans were "great on account of their

[1] *E. I.*, XIV, no. 5, p. 120.

[2] *E. I.*, XI, no. 19, p. 195. Rai Bahadur Hira Lal observed that this Sūryavarmā must have flourished about the 8th century A. D., that he apparently belonged to the *Western Magadha* dynasty and that he must have been a contemporary of Candra Gupta, to whose son Harṣa Gupta he gave his daughter in marriage. *Ibid*, p. 185.

supremacy over Magadha" consequently does not allude, as one would be led to think, to the possibility that, with the triumph and march of Kumāra Gupta III to Prayāga where he died, the Maukhāris occupied some portions of Magadha from which they drove away the Later Guptas, who sought refuge in eastern Mālwā. Much reliance therefore need not be placed on the allusions[1] in the Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II, which alludes to their occupation of some portions of Magadha by Śarvavarman and his successor Avantivarman, although both of them had assumed the title of emperor. If the Maukhāris had occupied Magadha, how can we then explain the activities of Dāmōdara Gupta, if he was not killed in the fight with the Maukhāris? We have no evidence to indicate that Dāmōdara Gupta left Magadha or that he went to eastern Mālwā as was probably the case with his son Mahāsēna Gupta, who, however, by defeating Susthitavarman, who was certainly no Maukhāri,[2] but a ruler of Kāmarūpa, on the banks of the Lauhityā (Brahmaputra), again "restored the fallen fortunes of his family," even as Skanda Gupta did by defeating the Puṣyamitras. It is possible, as will be shown presently, that Harṣavardhana wrested some portions of Magadha from Dēva Gupta III and entrusted them to some representatives of his brother in law Grahavarman Maukhāri who had perished without any issue and that Dēva Gupta III was driven away from Magadha with the aid of Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa, whose predecessor Susthitavarman had fought with Mahāsēna Gupta, the father of Dēva Gupta III. Now the mantle of the Gupta imperialism devolved on the Maukhāris. The successor of Sūryavarman, Śarvavarman, is called in the Deo-Baranārk inscription as *Paramēśvara*, an imperial title, while the same title is applied to his possible successor, Avantivarman[3]. These Maukhāris came into conflict with the Later Guptas of Magadha.

The progenitor of the Later Guptas was Kṛṣṇa Gupta, described as a king (*nṛpa*) who possessed cities, which were crowded with elephants and who was attended upon by men of learning. Nothing is stated about his lineage except that he was of good descent (*sad vaṁśaḥ*) and this points to the possibility that he was probably an adventurer like Yaśōvarman, who, on the confusion following the death of Skanda Gupta in A. D. 467-68, carved out for

[1] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 512, f. n. 1.

[2] Fleet was the first scholar to think that Susthitavarman was probably a Maukhāri (*C. I. I.* III, p. 341). Mr C. E. A. W. Oldham merely follows him (*J. R. A. S.*, 1928, p. 691). That he could have been only the ruler of Kamarūpa has been proved from the Nidhanpur grant which mentions his name. *E. I.*, XII, no. 13, p. 69.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46) p. 218.

himself a small principality. If he had belonged to the line of the Imperial Guptas, he would certainly have styled himself as a relation of this imperial dynasty and traced his descent to that family. If he was not related to the Guptas it is possible that he adopted the surname of Gupta to continue a kind of ancient imperial tradition so that his subjects might conveniently forget that he and his successors were a dynasty of upstarts and adventurers who continued to rule in the dominions of the Guptas[1]. That Kṛṣṇa Gupta was probably a contemporary of Skanda Gupta and not of Yaśōvarman[2], can be made out, first, because it is known that Kumāra Gupta III was the contemporary of the Maukhāri Īśānavarman, who was alive in A. D. 554; secondly, referring to the Mandasor stone inscription of Yaśōvarman, which is dated A. D. 533-34[3], thus allowing a difference of twenty years, it is likely that Jīvita Gupta I was the contemporary of Yaśōvarman; thirdly, if we allow roughly a period of 25 years for the reign of each of Kumāra Gupta III's predecessors, we arrive at A.D. 468, which we know is the last date for Skanda Gupta. If this is admitted, it may be further added that, according to the Aphsad stone inscription, Kṛṣṇa Gupta was a conqueror who became "victorious.....over countless foes."[4] This phrase *asaṅkhya-ripu-pratāpa-jayinā* alludes either to the Hūṇas or his contemporaries whom he vanquished and thereby succeeded in establishing a dynasty.

His son Harṣa Gupta had also to contend with a number of enemies and his reign must have been full of "terrible contests." His successor Jīvita Gupta I was likewise a conqueror, probably greater than his father, for mention is made of his "superhuman deeds" which astounded all mankind. He must have cowed into subjection his haughty foes "even though they stood on the sea-shores that were cool with the flowing and ebbing currents of water."[5] These must have been the Gauḍas who, being defeated by the Maukhāri Īśānavarman, are described in his Harāhā inscription dated A. D. 553, as "living on the sea-shore"[6] of their kingdom which included Karṇasuvarṇa[7] and Rāḍhāpuri[8] in western Bengal.

[1] *Note*: Dr N. K. Bhattasali also holds a similar view. See his *Attribution of the imitation Gupta Coins*, in *J. A. S. B.*, XXII (N. S.) pp. 2-3.

[2] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 508. (4th ed.)

[3] Fleet *op. cit.*, (35) p. 152.

[4] *Ibid.*, (42) p. 205.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) p. 205.

[6] *E. I.*, XIV, no. 5 p. 120: *Gauḍān-samudr-āśrayān-adhyāsiṣṭa* (text p. 117).

[7] *J. A. S.B.*, IV, p. 274.

[8] *Cf.* Kṛṣṇamiśra, *Prabhōdacandrōdaya*, Act II, p. 16 (Trans. J. Taylor, Bombay, 1886), text, p. 48, (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, Trivandrum, 1936).

The most prominent powers at this time were the Āndhras, the Śūlikas,[1] the Gaudas and the Guptas, the first three of whom are said to have been defeated by Īśānavarman in A. D. 554. As his Harāhā inscription, referring to these powers does not mention the Guptas at all, it may be inferred that till A. D. 554 there was no conflict between the Guptas and the Maukhāris, whose representative had now assumed imperial titles or, even if there had been any, the Maukhāris had certainly not the better of it, for had that been the case a reference to it would surely have been made in their inscriptions. In this year, after defeating his foes noticed above, Īśānavarman and Kumāra Gupta III met in a decisive battle in which the "army of the glorious Īśānavarman" was quickly churned and the silence of the Maukhāri inscriptions regarding any Maukhāri victory over the Guptas may be taken to imply a sufficient proof of a complete Gupta triumph. Whether or not as a result of this battle Kumāra Gupta III perished cannot be determined, but anyhow we are told that "he went to Prayāga; (and there) honourably decorated with flowers, plunged into a fire (kindled) with dry cowdung cakes, as if (simply plunging) to bathe in water."[2] As this information is given almost in continuation of his victory over Īśānavarman, it is possible that he met his death in this war and that his body was cremated at Prayāga,[3] which must have then been included within his kingdom. If on the other hand as some writers have maintained Kumāra Gupta III performed a kind of religious suicide, it is difficult to understand why he *should* have killed himself when he "churned that formidable milk-ocean, the cause of the attainment of fortune, which was the army of the glorious Īśānavarman, a very moon among kings." This assertion would evidently mean that Kumāra Gupta III had triumphed over the Maukhāri emperor Īśānavarman and if this was the case, as it appears to have been, there is no

[1] On the Śūlikas see Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 509; Aravamuthan, *The Kāveri, the Maukhāris and the Sangam Age*, p. 88; Heras, *J. A. H. R. S.*, I, pp. 130-31; S. Srikanta Sastri, *Ibid*, I, Pts. 3-4, pp. 178-80; *J. R. A. S.*, 1912, p. 128. The *Bṛhat Saṁhitā* tells us that they were connected with Vidarbha, Banavāsi and Aparānta. *Cf. Ibid*, IX, v. 15, p. 55; XIV, v. 8, pp. 59-60.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) p. 206.

[3] According to Jayaswal, Kumāra Gupta III committed suicide. See *An Imperial History of India*, p. 66 (1934). Dr N. K. Bhattasali calls this form of death an act of "self-immolation." *J. A. S. B.*, XXI (N. S.) p. 6. Mr Kshetreshchandra Chattopadhyaya is the latest writer who thinks that Kumāra Gupta III "performed religious suicide." *Epigraphic Notes, D. R. B. Com. Vol.*, p. 181. In this connection see *J. U. P. H. S.*, X, p. 74. Fleet, perhaps rightly, says that this metaphorical expression "seems to indicate that Kumāragupta's funeral rites took place at Allahabad. *Ibid.*, 206, note 3.

reason why he should have slain himself. But, on the other hand if it is presumed that in this victorious battle he had been mortally wounded, he might have perished or gone to Prayāga where he might have breathed his last and in either case his body was cremated there.

This policy of the Maukhāris enveloped them in a ring of enemies among whom were now included the Guptas and the Hūṇas. The son and successor of Kumāra Gupta III [1], the illustrious Dāmōdara Gupta, like his father, fell in the battle against the Maukhāris. He is said to have broken up the "proudly stepping array of mighty elephants, belonging to the Maukhāris," "became unconscious" and "was revived by the pleasing touch of the water lilies" which were in the hands of "the women of the gods." These words apparently imply first, that the enmity between the Guptas and the Maukhāris continued during the reign of Dāmōdara Gupta; secondly that at first Dāmōdara Gupta scored a victory over the Maukhāris; thirdly in the battle, which was indecisive and yet continued, he became unconscious and Dāmōdara perished in the fight. Till now Fleet's interpretation of the following verse regarding Dāmōdara Gupta has been accepted by scholars to mean that Dāmōdara Gupta in the battle with the Maukhāris became unconscious and "expired in the fight"—[2] (*sammūrcchitaḥ sura-vadhūr=varayan mam=ēti tat-pāṇipaṅkaja-sukha-sparśād=vibuddhaḥ.*) Mr Chaṭṭopādhyāya observes that in this verse it is not stated that Dāmōdara Gupta *died* in the struggle although it is true that he must have been severely wounded but he suggests an emendation *sukhaspṛśayā* for the word *sukhasparśād*, by which he interprets the verse to mean that Dāmōdara Gupta did not die in the fight but, although wounded, he recovered and must have consequently lived for some time after this event.[3] There appears to be some justification for these remarks and we may accept this interpretation for if indeed Dāmōdara Gupta survived this battle, then his conquests must have paved the way for the rise of his son Mahāsena Gupta and silenced the Maukhāris of whom we hear nothing till the alliance of Graha-

[1] *Note.* Mr Kshetreshachandra Chaṭṭopādhyāya has remarked that Gupta III should not be called Kumāra Gupta III because he had no relation with the Imperial Guptas. (*Epigraphic Notes, D. R. Bhandarkar Com. Vol.* pp. 180-81). Of course we know that this was probably the case, although of the real connection of the Later Guptas with the Imperial Guptas we have yet to ascertain and it is only for convenience that rulers have been so called or else it would be difficult to follow the activities of the various Kumāra Guptas or the Dēva Guptas in Gupta history.

[2] *Cf.* R. Mookerji, *Harṣa*, p. 55; R. G. Basak, *H. N. E. I.*, p. 123; R. D. Banerji, *Prehistoric, Ancient and Hindu India*, p. 195; Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 512 (4th ed.)

[3] Chattopadhyaya, *Epigraphic Notes, D. R. B. Comm. Vol.*, pp. 180-81.

varman Maukhāri with Harṣavardhaṇa. This silence of the Maukhāri inscriptions would then account for the possibility with which Dāmōdara Gupta's son Mahāsena Gupta marched forward and defeated Susthitavarman of Kāmarūpa, which he could not have effected had the Maukhāris been in the hey-day of their power. In addition we are told that Dāmōdara Gupta was a great patron of the Brāhmaṇas.

The difficulties of the Guptas continued to the third generation during the reign of Mahāsena Gupta, and Susthitavarman, who was a king of Kāmarūpa,[1] over whom the former won a "victory in war", on the banks of the Lauhityā (Brahmaputrā). This Mahāsena Gupta was probably the father of Mādhava Gupta and Kumāra Gupta IV mentioned by Bāṇa, as having been appointed the princes-in-waiting to Harṣa by his father, Prabhākaravardhana.[2] The reasons why these princes came to reside at Prabhākaravardhana's court cannot as yet be determined, although we know from the Sōnpāṭ copper seal inscription that Dēvī Mahāsena Guptā, his sister, married to Ādityavardhana of Sthāṇvīśvara, was the mother of Prabhākaravardhana.[3] The only plausible explanation is that the Guptas during Mahāsena Gupta's reign made a defensive alliance with the Puṣpabhūtis of Sthāṇvīśvara, against the onslaughts of the Maukhāris on the one hand and the rulers of Kāmarūpa on the other and especially owing to his defeat at Vidiśā by Śankaragaṇa. Possibly, as relatives and as the hostages of good faith, Mahāsena Gupta sent his children to the Puṣpabhūti court. Of these two princes, the Aphsaḍ inscription tells us that Mādhava Gupta was filled "with the desire to associate himself with the glorious Harṣadeva".[4]

The Guptas of this century became embroiled in the politics of northern India, owing to their dynastic alliances. The son of Dāmōdara Gupta, called Mahāsena Gupta, won a victory over Susthitavarman, who has been probably correctly identified as the contemporary ruler of Kāmarūpa.[5] His son Mādhava Gupta associated himself with Harṣavardhana of Kanauj.[6]

2. The Later Guptas and the Early Kalaccuriyas

Towards the end of the sixth century the Later Guptas came into conflict with the early Kalaccuriyas of the Cēdi country.

[1] *Cf.* Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 217; *E. I.*, XII, no. 13, p. 69; *J.B.O.R.S.*, VI, pp. 151-52.
[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 119.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (52) p. 232.
[4] *Ibid.*, (42) p. 207.
[5] *Cf.* Pires, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-102.
[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) pp. 206-7.

The Ābhoṇā plates of Śankaragaṇa, the son of Kṛṣṇarāja, one of the early Kaḷaccuriya kings, dated A. D. 595 (27th July—Kaḷaccuriya Saṁvat 347) relate how he, "reinstated families who had long been dethroned; uprooted those that were too proud."[1] Though this record does not reveal whom he defeated, it is clearly stated therein that the grant was issued from the "victorious camp" of Ujjainī. Ujjainī, Dhārā, and Vidīśa, it may be remembered, were the chief cities of Mālwā during this age.

Mālwā, its eastern part especially, was under the control of the Guptas evidently till the sixth and in the beginning of the seventh centuries. The Ērāṇ stone inscription of Gōparāja, the feudatory of Bhānu Gupta *Bālāditya* III, dated A. D. 510-11, although it alludes to his defeat by the Hūṇa Toramāṇa, records nevertheless, that he was still the "glorious" Bhānu Gupta in Ērāṇ.[2] The alliance of Bhānu Gupta and Yaśōdharman which resulted in driving away Toramāṇa from Mālwā to Kashmir, evidently restored Mālwā after the death of Yaśōdharman, which might be placed about the middle of the sixth century, to the Gupta empire, possibly to Bhānu Gupta who is recorded to have been living in A. D. 534-35 or to his successor and son Vajra. During this period it is possible that the province of Mālwā was administered by the Gupta emperors with the aid of local governors like the *Mahārāja Kumārāmatya* Nandana (A. D. 551-52 ?)[3] even as Magadha was later ruled by Pūrṇavarman[4] and Dēvavarman[5].

Therefore when Śankaragaṇa in A. D. 595 invaded and stormed Ujjainī, Mahāsena Gupta, who may chronologically be placed between A. D. 593-618, being a Later Gupta, must have naturally taken upon himself the role of the protector of the Gupta dominion and was the first to feel the brunt of this attack. But this attempt of the early Kaḷaccuriyas was not apparently successful for the son of Śankaragaṇa, called Buddharāja, is stated in his Vaḍnēr plates, dated A. D. 609, (19th August) to have granted some plot of land in the Vaṭananagara-*bhōga* (Cāndvaḍ taluk, Nasik district), from his "victorious camp" at Vidīśā (Besnagar.)[6] Evidently in this year Buddharāja again attacked Vidīśā which was in the Mālwā dominion, and he would never have done this had his father Śankaragaṇa falling

[1] *E. I.*, IX, no. 45, p. 299.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.* (20), p. 93.
[3] *E. I.*, VII, no. 12, p. 49.
[4] Yüan Chwāng *op. cit.*, II, p. 115.
[5] *I. A.*, X, p. 110. This is the account of Hwui Lun, who visited India during the early period of the T'ang dynasty (A. D. 618-907); *Ibid* p. 109.
[6] *E. I.*, XII, no. 7, p. 35.

on Mahāsena Gupta "totally crushed his power".[1] If this were true such a statement would have been mentioned in the inscriptions of either Śankaragaṇa or his son Buddharāja and the latter would not have been compelled to attack Vidiśā, nearly fourteen years later. Moreover it is also incorrect to say that "in or about A. D. 608 the Guptas seem to have lost Vidiśā (Besnagar) to the Kaṭachchuris,"[2] especially first, because the Vaḍnēr plates were issued on the 19th August A. D. 609 and secondly because in almost the same year, as his Sarsavṇī plates dated A. D. 609-10 reveal, he was "in the royal residence of victory fixed at Ānandapura."[3] If Buddharāja had won a decisive victory at Vidiśā, it was obviously not necessary for him to have fled to Ānandapura further west. Moreover, Ānandapura is called by the significant expression, not as the "camp of victory" which was used to characterise the occupation of Ujjainī and Vidiśā by Buddharāja or his father Śankaragaṇa, but as "the royal residence of victory," which implies that Buddharāja made Ānandapura his permanent residence clearly after conquering it. In this connection it may be remembered what Yüan Chwāng saw at *O-nan-to-pu-lo* (Ānandapura). "There is no chief ruler", he says, "but it is an appanage of Mālava."[4] If this was the case it is not strange that Buddharāja fled from Vidiśā and occupied Ānandapura.

The causes of the sudden departure of Buddharāja from Vidiśā to Ānandapura deserve to be scrutinised. One reason might have been due to his defeat at the hands of the Western Cāḷukya ruler Maṅgaleśa who attacked him first on the banks of the Bhāgīrathī and then probably from a place in his own dominions like Vaḍnēr into which Buddharāja apparently made some incursions. The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription of Maṅgaleśa tells us that he had "set (*his*) heart upon the conquest of the northern region, (*and*) having conquered king Buddha (*and*) having taken possession of all his substance, (*and*), with an eager desire to set up a pillar of victory of (*his*) prowess on the bank of the river Bhāgīrathī."[5] The Vaḍnēr plates tell us that in A. D. 609 Buddharāja was at Vidiśā, but as the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription of Maṅgaleśa informs us, Buddharāja must have been

[1] D. C. Ganguly, *J. B. O. R. S.*, IX, p. 415.

[2] Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 515 (4th ed.)

[3] *E. I.*, VI, no. 29, p. 293. The date of this record is 3rd October 609. A. D. This implies that Vidiśā was probably in Buddharāja's hands between A. D. 19th August and 3rd October 609, after which it must have reverted to Gupta control.

[4] Hiuen Tsiang, *SI-YUKI*, II, p. 268 (ed. 1884)

[5] *I. A.*, XIX, p. 19.

defeated in A. D. 602, in which year the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription was issued, somewhere on the banks of the Bhāgīrathī and from there Buddharāja must have retreated to his own Cēdi country. He did not dare to make any other attack for seven more years and it is only in A. D. 609 that he fell on Vidiśā which he abandoned almost in the same year and fled to Ānandapura. Why was this? It is possible that once again Mahāsena Gupta failed to withstand Buddharāja: otherwise he would not have issued an inscription from his victorious camp at Vidiśā. But it may be remembered that Maṅgalēśa was imbued with the great desire to conquer the northern region as is recorded in his Mahākūṭa inscription and had once defeated Buddharāja, capturing much of his wealth but certainly not crushing him, for we again find him at Vidiśā in A. D. 609. He could not surely have forgotten this foe from whom he acquired so much booty. It is not therefore unnatural to assume that Maṅgalēśa might have come to know of Buddharāja's victory at Vidiśā in A. D. 609 and at once hurried there to meet him. If Maṅgalēśa could have defeated Buddharāja on the banks of the Bhāgīrathī it is not strange to think that he also went to Vidiśā and drove him out of that place. That he was actually driven away is revealed in his undated Nērūr plates which tell us that Maṅgalēśa "*had driven out* king Buddha (*Buddharājaṃ vidrāvya*), who was the son of Śankaragaṇa and who was possessed of the power of elephants and horses and foot-soldiers and treasure."[1] This expression that Buddharāja was driven away is significant and may be interpreted to mean that this was the second time when he was defeated and defeated decisively. Where he was routed cannot be made out although it is possible that the defeat was inflicted at Vidiśā and it may then be seen why in this year viz., A. D. 609, Buddharāja turned his attention to Ānandapura which he occupied. This defeat of Buddarāja was remembered in the days of Pulikeśin II for in his Aihoḷe inscription dated A. D. 634–35, it is recorded that Maṅgalēśa "in that house which was the battle-field, took in marriage the damsel, the fortune of the Kaṭacchuris, having scattered the gathering gloom (viz.) the array of elephants (of the adversary) with hundreds of bright-rayed lamps (viz.) the swords of his followers."[2] The defeat of Buddharāja in Mālwā was decisive and complete for we do not hear of the early Kaḷaccuriyas again in this province later.

[1] *I.A.* VII, p. 162. Italics mine. Fleet placed this inscription "slightly subsequent" to the inscription dated in the twelfth year of the reign of Maṅgaleśa "when śaka 500 had expired" *I. A.* VII, p. 161. In view of contemporary events it may be assigned to *circa* A. D. 609.

[2] *E.I.*, VI, no. 1, p. 8.

3. Later Gupta—Puspabhūti Relations

In all the relations between the Later Guptas and the Puṣpabhūtis only two inscriptions, the Apshad inscription and Sōnpāṭ seal, refer to the Puṣpabhūtis of Sthāṇviśvara and their relations with the Guptas. From them we know that there was close relationship between Mahāsena Gupta and Ādityavardhana, the grand-father of Harṣavardhana. The wife of Ādityavardhana, was probably the sister of Mahāsena Gupta[1], although it has been suggested that 'she might have been the sister of Dāmōdara Gupta, the father of Mahāsena Gupta[2]. Once this relationship is understood it may be seen why Mahāsena Gupta, the brother-in-law of Ādityavardhana, sent his children to the court of Prabhākaravardhana, Ādityavardhana's son, as the companions of Harṣavardhana. This event must have happened in the year A. D. 595 when Harṣa was yet a boy for in this year Mahāsena Gupta was defeated by Śankaragaṇa at Ujjainī. Being defeated at Ujjainī, Mahāsena Gupta must have naturally sent away his two sons Kumāra Gupta IV and Mādhava Gupta to the Puṣpabhūti court for safety. Bāṇa informs us how Prabhākaravardhana presented to Harṣa "Kumāra Gupta and Mādhava Gupta, sons of the Mālwā king."[3] Bāṇa further tells us that Kumāra Gupta was the elder[4] and Mādhava Gupta must have been the younger. What happened to Kumāra Gupta is not known but most probably he died for even till the expedition of Harṣa into the Vindhyas in search of his sister Rājyaśrī, Mādhava Gupta was present while no mention is made of Kumāra Gupta[5]. Moreover in the Aphsad stone inscription of Ādityasena, Mādhava Gupta is referred to as the successor of Mahāsena Gupta and no mention is made of his elder brother[6]. Again in the Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II, Mādhava Gupta is stated to have been as though the founder of his dynasty and nothing is recorded about Kumāra Gupta who was most probably dead and could not have ruled at all. But the association of Mādhava Gupta with Harṣa is confirmed by the Aphsad stone inscription which states that he had the desire to associate himself with the glorious Harṣadeva[7].

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (52) p. 232. See also Intr. p. 15.
[2] *Cf.* P. S. Parakhi, *Life of Harṣa* (Marāṭhi). This view is not convincing.
[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 119.
[4] *Ibid*, p. 121.
[5] *Ibid*, p. 235.
[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) p. 206.
[7] *Ibid*, p. 207.

Mahāsena Gupta had possibly three children and of these Kumāra and Mādhava, who were sent by their father to the court of Prabhākaravardhana, are well-known. There seems to have been another son Dēva Gupta (III), who may be so called because we know that Candra Gupta II was the first who bore the name of Dēva and Skanda Gupta I, according to the *Āryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, also had that name and these may therefore, for the sake of convenience, be styled as Dēva Gupta I and II. That this Dēva Gupta must have also been a son is evident from the fact that he is called by Bāṇa "the wicked lord of Mālava"[1] which means that this Dēva Gupta was the ruler of Mālwā when he attacked Grahavarman. He could not reasonably have succeeded Mahāsena Gupta had he not been his eldest son but it must be remembered that the name of Dēva Gupta is omitted both in the Apshad and the Deo-Baraṇārk inscriptions the details of which may be set forth as below:

Aphsad Inscription:

Dāmōdara Gupta
|
Mahāsena Gupta
|
Mādhava Gupta
|
Ādityasena[2]

Deo-Baraṇārk Inscription:

Mādhava Gupta
|
Ādityasena
|
Dēva Gupta Dēva IV
|
Viṣṇu Gupta
|
Jivita Gupta II.[3]

The reason for this omission of his name is not quite clear. It has been suggested that he "may have represented a collateral line of the Mālava family who continued to pursue a policy hostile to the Puṣpabhūtis and the Maukharis."[4] This is a supposition which is as futile as saying that Dēva Gupta might have been the eldest brother of Kumāra Gupta IV who was the elder brother of Mādhava Gupta both of whom came to the Puṣpabhūti court. If this relationship were correct it would have been noted by Bāṇa who pays attention even to little details. Therefore this kinship can only be understood on the analogy of a similar case in early Gupta history. The name of Skanda Gupta is omitted in

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 173.
[2] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (42), pp. 206-7.
[3] *Ibid*, (46) p. 217.
[4] Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 514, f. n. (4th ed.).

the Bhitarī stone inscription which informs us that Pura Gupta was his step brother.[1] It has only been presumed that Skanda Gupta might have succeeded to the throne on the death of their father Kumāra Gupta I but Bāṇa's testimony that Dēva Gupta was the "wicked lord of Mālava" proves beyond doubt that he was at this time on the throne of Mālwā on the death of Mahāsena Gupta. It is consequently possible that Dēva Gupta III was the son of Mahāsena Gupta by his first wife, while the brothers who were sent to the court of Prabhākaravardhana were his children by his second wife. It may be remembered that Prabhākaravardhana's father Ādityavardhana[2] had married a princess named Mahāsena Guptā, presumably the sister of Mahāsena Gupta and then it will be apparent why Mahāsena Gupta sent these two of his children as though for safe custody. Such a contingency could not have arisen for Mahāsena Gupta had not this Later Gupta been in the throes of a great political catastrophe and a genuine prospect of personal danger to his family. This event must have happened in the year A. D. 595 when, as related already, the Kalacuriya Śankaragaṇa invaded successfully the city of Ujjainī from which Mahāsena Gupta must have fled and probably owing to his difficulites in this retreat he sent his two fond children as a refuge to Sthāṇvīśvara while Dēva Gupta Gupta III, his son, was left behind but precisely for what reason cannot clearly be determined. It may be that Mahāsena Gupta thought that his presence was of use to him from a military point of view, as Dēva Gupta must have been fairly old enough to assist his father in his difficulties or it may be that there was not much love lost between the step-brothers. In either case Dēva Gupta was left to himself and this neglect of his father must have naturally spurned him to make an alliance with the Gauḍas. Two motives must have inspired him to make this move: first is the neglect which his father apparently showed to him by not sending him, evidently as a measure of safety, to Sthāṇvīśvara, and secondly, the fact that Prabhākaravardhana had recently concluded a dynastic alliance with the Maukhāris who were the inveterate foes of the Later Guptas. It is very likely that he considered this alliance a danger to his own dynasty and, as soon as Prabhākaravardhana died, he must have thought that the most opportune moment had arrived to strike his master stroke of diplomacy.

[1] Fleet, *C. I. I.* III, (13), p. 35.

[2] Note: In the *Kathāsaritsāgara* mention is made of "a king named Ādityaprabha in the land of Śrikaṇṭha" and some stories are narrated about him. Sōmadeva, *Kathāsaritsāgara*, II, 97-99; III-14. Is it possible that Ādityavardhana is called here by the name of Ādityaprabha?

We may therefore understand why as Bāṇa tells us "*on the very day* on which Prabhākaravardhana's death was rumoured, His Majesty Grahavarman was, by the wicked lord of Mālava cut off from the living along with his noble deeds. Rājyaśrī, the princess, had also, been confined like a brigand's wife with a pair of iron fetters kissing her feet and cast into prison at Kānyakubja. There was moreover a report that *the villain, deeming the army leaderless*, proposed to invade and seize this country as well."[1] From this account it may be concluded that Dēva Gupta on hearing of the rumoured death of Prabhākaravardhana invaded Kanauj, the capital of the Maukhāris and in the fight which must have ensued Grahavarman lost his life, his queen was imprisoned in her own capital, which indicates that Dēva Gupta must have been at least in temporary occupation of that city and from there made future plans of invading the territory of the Maukhāri allies, the Puṣpabhūtis.

4. The Later Gupta and Gauḍa Alliance.

Although Bāṇa does not mention this, it may be presumed that Dēva Gupta would not have dared to invade the Maukhāri capital if he had not already made the alliance with the Gauḍas. Dēva Gupta could not naturally make any alliance with the rulers of Kāmarūpa especially because his father Mahāsena Gupta was a king, who, as the Aphsaḍ stone inscription reveals, was "marked with honour of victory over the illustrious Susthitavarman" and the glories of this triumph were in the days of Ādityasena "still constantly sung on the banks of the Lohityā."[2] Susthitavarman could never have been a Maukhāri as has been often suggested,[3] for the predecessor of Grahavarman on the Maukhāri throne was Avantivarman and not Susthitavarman, who is clearly referred to in the Nidhanpur grant of Bhāskaravarman, the king of Kāmarūpa, as his father and as one who married Śyāmādēvī and had the title of of *Mṛgāṅka*.[4] Mahāsena Gupta and Susthitavarman must have fought a great naval battle on the Lauhityā (Brahmaputrā) and the glories of this success appear to have passed on to generations. It has been contended that "it was impossible for a king of Mālava to reach the banks of the Lauhityā without strenuous opposition from the kings."[5] We know that the Later Gupta and Maukhāri conflict

[1] Bāṇa *op. cit.*, p. 173. Italics mine.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) p. 206.
[3] F. W. Thomas, *Harṣacarita*, Intr. p. XI; Mookerji, *Harṣa*, p. 55. f. n.
[4] *E. I.*, XII, no. 13, pp. 77-78.
[5] R. D. Banerji, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, pt II, p. 265.

commenced in A. D. 554 and the successive triumphs of Kumāra Gupta, III and Dāmōdara Gupta, in the battles with the Maukhāris show that the Maukhāris were not gaining ground and the Guptas were apparently moving eastwards to Prayāga. Kumāra Gupta III had advanced victoriously as far as Prayāga and his son Dāmōdara also broke "up the proudly stepping array of mighty elephants, belonging to the Maukhāri,"[1] which implies another triumph which after all perhaps did not cost him his life. This contest round about Prayāga shows that the Maukhāris had expanded their territory as far as this place and this conclusion is supported by the Deo-Baraṇārk stone inscription of Jīvita Gupta II which alludes to the possession of much of Magadha by the Maukhāri Śarvavarman and Avantivarman.[2]

Maukhāri inscriptions are silent about any victories which their rulers might have won over the Later Guptas. From this absence of any such reference it may be inferred that the Maukhāri advance westwards, which was started by the Maukhāri Īśānavarman, was checked by the Later Gupta emperors Kumāra Gupta III and his son Dāmōdara Gupta. If these conclusions are tenable, then it is not difficult to understand why Mahāsena Gupta from even eastern Mālwā could march across the vast stretch of territory to the banks of the Lauhityā in order to face Susthitavarman. What we have to infer therefore is that Dāmōdara Gupta, like his father, was in all likelihood more than a match for the Maukhāris who were at that period no doubt very powerful. Even if Sūryavarman did not ascend the throne (this is a debatable point) as has been suggested,[3] his brother and successor, Sarvavarman is not recorded to have fought or attacked Dāmōdara Gupta. After Śarvavarman, the Maukhāri throne was occupied by Avantivarman, who also is not recorded to have fought with any of the Guptas of his day.[4] If Sūryavarman or Śarvavarman were the contemporaries of Dāmōdara Gupta, then Avantivarman must have been contemporaneous with Mahāsena Gupta, who was the son and successor of Dāmōdara Gupta. This contemporaneity is confirmed by Bāṇa who states thus about Avantivarman: "Now at the head of all royal houses stand the Mukharas, worshipped like Śiva's foot-print, by all the world. Of that race's pride, Avantivarman..."[5] Mahāsena Gupta we know was the contemporary of Harṣa and if Avantivarman was the

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42), p. 206.
[2] *Ibid*, (46) pp. 217-18.
[3] Pires, *The Maukhāris*, p. 87; Fleet, *op. cit.*, (47), p. 221.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46), p. 218.
[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 122.

contemporary of both of these, the evidence of Bāṇa need not be discounted. Consequently, as neither the inscriptions nor the chroniclers refer to any of the exploits of Avantivarman over the Guptas, much need not be made of the allusions of the powers of patronage of the Maukhāris in the Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II, which only states that Śarvavarman and Avantivarman, who adopted the title of *Paramēśvara*, confirmed the grants in the villages of Vāruṇikā (Deo-Baraṇārk) and Kiśōravāṭaka which were once made by one "Bālāditya"[1] (viz., Bhānu Gupta?). We may therefore now understand why Mahāsena Gupta could not find it difficult to display the strength of his arms with the Kaḷaccuriyas on the one hand in the west at Vidiśā[2] and with Susthitavarman on the other in the east on the banks of the Lauhityā.

This triumph of Mahāsena Gupta can therefore explain why Dēva Gupta, his son, could move from eastern Mālwā eastwards, ally himself with the Gauḍa king Śaśāṅka capture Kānyakubja, and destroy the Maukhāri emperor Grahavarman. If, as Bāṇa states, Dēva Gupta was only a "Mālavā king"[3] and if, we are with some writers to presume that "a considerable part of Magadha was in Maukhāri hands,"[4] how then could Mahāsena Gupta have moved to the Lauhityā and his son from Mālwā swept on Kānyakubja in the east or allied himself with the Gauḍa king Śaśāṅka without marching through some portions of Magadha? These considerations would therefore imply first, that the claims of Maukhāri possessions made in the Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II, could not have been considerable; secondly, Bāṇa's claim that Dēva Gupta or his father Mahāsena Gupta were only Lords of Mālwā also cannot be given much credence. Of course, Dēva Gupta must have been entrusted with the administration of eastern Mālwā but it cannot be reasonably denied that the Later Guptas, Dāmōdara Gupta, Mahāsena Gupta and his son Dēva Gupta, too, must have exercised some power over some portions of Magadha as well.

On events following this attack of Dēva Gupta on Kānyakubja Bāṇa throws much light. He relates how, on hearing about this attack "of the

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[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 122.; Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46), p. 218.

[2] Note. Kaḷaccuriya contacts with the Guptas may be traced to the days of Śaṅkaragaṇa's father Kṛṣṇarāja (ascribed to *circa* A. D. 550-75) for his coins, found some time ago at Besnāgar, resemble some of the western issues of Skanda Gupta I, which are described by Allan, *Catalogue*, pl. XX nos. 9-12. In this connection see *A. S. I. R.*, 1913-14, p. 214; *J. N. S. I.*, III, pt I, p. 23.

[3] Bāna, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

[4] Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 512. (4th ed.).

wicked lord of Mālava", Rājyavardhana incensed that the "Mālavas" should "maltreat the race of Puṣpabhūti" sent Bhaṇḍi with 10,000 horse "to lay the royal house of Mālava low in ruin."[1] Harṣa stayed behind but learnt from Kuṇtaḷa, a chief officer of cavalry, that his brother "had routed the Mālava army with ridiculous ease, 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."[2] These statements are well borne out by contemporary inscriptions and traveller's accounts. The Madhūban plates of Harṣa state that Rājyavardhana "in battle curbed Dēva Gupta and all other kings together" and then "having uprooted his adversaries, having conquered the earth, having acted kindly towards the people, he through his trust in promises, lost his life in the enemy's quarters"[3] Yüan Chwāng further enlightens us on this matter: "At this time, the king of Karṇasuvarṇa (*Kie-lo-na-su-fa-la-na*) a kingdom of eastern India whose name was Śaśāṅka (*She-Shang-kia*), frequently addressed his minister in these words: 'If a frontier country has a virtuous ruler, this is the unhappiness of the (*mother*) kingdom.' On this they asked the king to a conference and murdered him."[4] Harṣa naturally laid the blame of this dastardly murder on Śaśāṅka himself. "Except the Gauḍa king" he cried "what man would by such a murder, abhorred of all the world, lay such a great soul low..."[5] This cowardly murder was considered the disgrace of the Gauḍa royal house: "By lighting this evil path," says Harṣa, "this vilest of Gauḍas has collected only foul shame, like lamp-black, to the soiling of his own house."[6] It is not strange therefore to learn that he desired to wreak revenge on this Gauḍa and was advised to do so by his commander-in-chief (*Senāpati*) Siṁhanāda thus: "Therefore do you this very day register a resolve, and for the wreck of this meanest of Gauḍa's life take up the bow, that pennon of the sudden expedition of fate busy in gathering lives."[7] To this advice Harṣa agreed with the following reply: "But small store of tears have these tremulous eyes till they have seen the smoke cloud from the vilest of Gauḍa's pyre."[8] This resolution was made in an open assembly.[9]

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[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 175.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 178.
[3] *E. I.*, VII, no. 22, p. 159. Also see *E. I.*, IV, no. 29. pp, 208-11.
[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 343; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 210.
[5] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 179.
[6] *Ibid*, p. 180.
[7] *Ibid*, p. 186.
[8] *Ibid*, p. 187.
[9] *Ibid*, p. 188.

But before Harṣa set forth to conquer the vile Gauḍa, Bhaṇḍi, who, as already noticed, had accompanied Rājyavardhana with ten thousand horse, returned with the spoils of victory. Now since Bāṇa tells us that Dēva Gupta was in Kānyakubja, where Rājyaśrī was imprisoned, it may be concluded that Rājyavardhana with Bhaṇḍi must have hurried to that city where Dēva Gupta was defeated with great loss, but the diplomacy of Dēva Gupta and Śaśāṅka destroyed Rājyavardhana. Bhaṇḍi therefore returned with the booty of war which was exhibited before Harṣa. "Let your majesty," he said, "inspect the Mālava king's army and royal equipage, won by the power of his majesty Rājyavardhana's arm.....All the Mālava king's adherents with their feet restrained by iron fetters: the whole of his treasure chests, heavy laden with the wreaths of ornaments and provided with written records of their contents."[1] Dēva Gupta therefore not only suffered heavily but he must have escaped with his life to the Gauḍa camp where both of them achieved by treachery what they had failed to gain by force of arms. In this confusion at Kānyakubja, Rājyaśrī must have escaped into the Vindhyan wilds[2].

Therefore Harṣa, instead of marching first against the Gauḍa, on learning that his sister had fled into the Vindhyan forests, resolved to find her and said thus to Bhaṇḍi: "Where she has gone, I myself will go. Your honour must take the army and advance against the Gauḍa."[3] What was the result of this expedition we are not informed but Bāṇa's reticence about it may be taken to mean that Harṣa did not succeed in uprooting or even in defeating the Gauḍa. If this expedition against Śaśāṅka may be placed in the year A. D. 606, the year of Harṣa's accession to the throne[4], then the former must have continued to rule in peace till A. D. 619-20, for he issued an inscription in this year,[5] which means that he never submitted to Harṣa.

5. The Kāmarupa-Puṣpabhuti Alliance.

The Gauḍas however were not to be left in peace. Before Harṣa left Śrīkaṇṭha to march against the Gauḍa Śaśāṅka[6] in the year *circa*

[1] Bāṇa *op. cit.*, p. 225.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 224. "I learnt" says the letter-carrier "from common talk after his majesty Rājyavardhana was taken to paradise and Kānyakubja was seized by the man named Gupta, *queen Rājyaśrī burst from her confinement*, and with her train entered the Vindhya forest." Italics mine.

[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

[4] *Ibid*, p. 185, Siṁhanāda says to Harṣa: "..You are, in the cataclysm which has come to pass, the only Seṣa left to support the earth. Comfort your unprotected people." This declaration was made before the assembled feudatories and nobles. *Ibid*. p. 188.

[5] *E.I.*, VI., no. 14, p. 143.

[6] Bāṇa, *op. cit*, pp. 191, 194, 223.

A. D. 606, Bhāskaravarman the king of Kāmarūpa (Assam), presumably on learning about the Gupta-Gauḍa alliance, decided to make a counter alliance with the Puṣpabhūtis of Sthāṇvīśvara. So he sent his ambassador Haṁsavēga to Harṣa with a number of presents and the following message: "The sovereign of Assam desires with your majesty an imperishable alliance... Commission me to say that the sovereign of Assam may enjoy your majesty's, as Mandāra Viṣṇu's, hearty embrace.. If your majesty accepts not his love command me what to report to this proposal."[1] Harṣa pondered for a while over this offer and at once decided to accept it. "The prince's design too" he observed "is excellent... This resolve increases my affection."[2] After entertaining him for some time, Harṣa sent Haṁsavēga "with a load of answering gifts in charge of eminent envoys."[3] This new alliance proved fatal to the Gauḍas but its results were evidently not obtained during the days of Śaśāṅka for there is no record of any ruler to show that either Bhāskaravarman or Harṣa succeeded in conquering the Gauḍa kingdom during Śaśāṅka's days.

The fight obviously continued after Śaśāṅka's death but during the life-time of Bhāskaravarman. A ruler called Jayanāga appears to have ruled in Karṇasuvarṇa in the first half of the seventh century, as can be seen from the Vappaghōṣavāṭa grant, ascribed on palaeographic grounds to the latter half of the sixth century, which relates how "the fortunate king" Jayanāga was living at Karṇasuvarṇa[4]. If this Jayanāga succeeded Śaśāṅka, who must have died between A. D. 619-637, then this might have been the Nāga king (*Nāgarājasamāhvayo Gauḍarāja bhaviṣyati*) whom Bhāskaravarman conquered, for we know that his Nidhanpur grant was issued from the *vāsaka* of Karṇasuvarṇa.[5]

This fall of Karṇasuvarṇa was evidently rendered possible by the break-up of the Later Gupta and Gauḍa alliance. So long as Dēva Gupta and Śaśāṅka were alive the Puṣpabhūti-Kāmarūpa alliance failed to destroy either the Guptas or the Gauḍas but on the death of Dēva Gupta II, as Mādhava Gupta must have succeeded to the throne as the Aphsaḍ and the Deo-Baraṇārk inscriptions assert, and as he was an ally of Harṣa[6], he must only

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacrita*, p, 218.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 219.
[3] *Ibid*, p. 223.
[4] *E. I.* XVIII, no. 7., p. 63.
[5] *Ibid*, XII, no. 13, p. 73; also see *Āryamañjuśri mūlakalpa*, p. 636. Allan suggested that this may be the king who issued coins bearing the abbreviated name of Jaya. See Allan, *Catalogue*, pp. LXI, CIV, CVI. CXXIII, 150-51,pl. XXIV.
[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42, 46) pp. 206, 217-18.

have made what became a triple alliance, namely, the Later Gupta, Puṣpabhūti and Kāmarūpa alliance. Once this is understood it can be seen why Bhāskaravarman succeeded in conquering the city of Karṇasuvarṇa, after the death of Śaśāṅka, between A. D. 619-37.[1] The Gauḍas neither forgot nor forgave the Guptas for this betrayal of their alliance. The Gupta empire was virtually destroyed by the Gauḍas for according to the *Gauḍavāho*, ascribed to Vākpatirāja, one of the Gauḍa kings actually occupied later the throne of Magadha.[2] The Gauḍas passed on their spirit of hostility to generations for they continued to be hostile towards the rulers of Kanauj and Kāmarūpa even during the times of the Pālas and the Senas.

6. The Puṣpabhūtis and the Western Cāḷukyas.

It must be recalled that the ambition of the Western Cāḷukyas to extend their empire in the northern region arose with Maṅgaléśa and it is not strange that his nephew, the famous Pulikeśin II, set forth to fullfil this ambition. Bāṇa states that Harṣa was out for "a world-wide conquest" when he got ready to attack Śaśāṅka and then "in the abodes of the doomed neighbouring kings manifold evil portents spread abroad."[3] This allusion only means that Harṣa intended to conquer the world and this ambition neither Maṅgaléśa nor his successor Pulikeśin II would ever tolerate. So in this struggle for supremacy Harṣa came into conflict with Pulikeśin II, who defeated him perhaps so soundly that never did Harṣa for the rest of his life make any such attempts at conquest. Yüan Chwāng relates how "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 Indies*...Then having enlarged his territory he increased his army, bringing the elephant corps up to 60,000 and the cavalry to 100,000, and reigned in peace for thirty years, without raising a weapon."[4] But there was one monarch who resisted Harṣa successfully and that was Pulikeśin II. This too has been noted by Yüan Chwāng. "The great king Śilāditya at this time was invading east and west, and countries far and near were giving in allegiance to him but *Mo-ha-la-ch'a* (Mahārāṣṭra) refused to become subject to him".[5]

[1] *E. I.* XII, no. 13, p. 73.
[2] Vākpatirāja, *Gauḍavāho*, vs 1207-9, pp. 342-43. (ed. S. P. Pandit, Bombay, 1927).
[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 194.
[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 343. Italics mine.
[5] *Ibid*, II, p. 239.

On defeating this supreme ruler of northern India, Pulikeśin II acquired the title of paramount supremacy, *Paramēśvara*, which he proclaimed in his inscriptions. The first inscription which calls him *Paramēśvara* is his Hyderabad grant dated *śaka* 535 (A. D. 612) which states the reason for his adopting such a title: "The great king Satyāśraya has acquired the second name of "supreme lord" (*Paramēśvara*) by victory over hostile kings (or over a hostile king)"[1]. This allusion to a victory is obviously to the triumph which he won over Harṣa in A. D. 612. It may be seen that Yüan Chwāng says that Harṣa waged war for six years and if his year of accession is to be taken as A. D. 606 then the date of the Hyderabad grant definitely proves that Yüan Chwāng was partly correct in saying that Harṣa after his defeat with Pulikeśin ceased to entertain any plans of aggrandisement. This victory of Pulikeśin II is alluded to in the Aihole inscription dated A. D. 634-35 thus: "Harṣa, whose lotus-feet were arrayed with the jewels of the diadems of hosts of feudatories prosperous with unmeasured might, through Him had his mirth (*harṣa*) melted away by fear, having become loathsome with his rows of lordly elephants fallen in battle."[2] This victory was remembered later.

7. Harṣa and the Maitrakas of Valabhi

Another important event in the political life of Harṣavardhana was his contact with one of the rulers of Valabhi. The Nausāri grant of Jayabhaṭa II of the Gurjara family, dated A. D. 706, relates how over Daḍḍa II, his great grand-father, "with the grace of a white cloud, there hung ceaselessly a canopy of glory gained by protecting the lord of Valabhi who had been defeated by the great lord, the illustrious Harṣadeva."[3] Who was this ruler of Valabhi whom Harṣa defeated? Yüan Chwāng who visited Valabhi about A. D. 638 states that "the reigning sovereign was of the Kshattriya birth, a nephew of Śilāditya the former king of Mālava, and a son-in-law (*nü-sai*) of the Śilāditya reigning at Kānyakubja; his name was *Tu-lo-p'o-po-t'a* (Dhruvabhaṭa?); he was of a hasty temper and of shallow views, but he was a sincere believer in Buddhism."[4] When he went to Mālwā, Yüan Chwāng heard that about sixty years

[1] *I. A.*, VI, p. 74. The significance of this date was first pointed out by Dr B. A. Saletore. See *Q. J. M. S.*, XXII. p. 311. For a similar view see Kshetreschandra Chaṭṭopādhyāya, *The Dates of Harṣa-Pulikeśin War*, *P. I. H. C.*, (3rd Session) 1938, pp. 598-604.

[2] *E. I.*, VI, no. 1, p. 10.

[3] *I. A.*, XIII, p. 79.

[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, 246; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 267; also see Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life*, p. 149.

prior to his visit to that country there reigned in that region a ruler called Śilāditya.[1] But if Yüan Chwāng meant Dhruvabhaṭa Śilāditya VII, whose Alīṇā copper-plate grant is dated A. D. 766-67, as Bühler pointed out "Dhruvabhaṭa cannot be the *T"u-lo-ho-po-t'u*" whom he visited in A. D. 643,[2] because as Fleet rightly stated this Chinese name "certainly cannot denote the seventh Śilāditya."[3] There is no cogent reason to disagree with these views. Dr R. C. Majumdar has suggested that "It seems therefore very probable that in his attempt to chastise the king of Mālava, Harṣavardhana found himself confronted by a hostile confederacy in and around the Gujarat peninsula."[4] Such a suggestion may be accepted if we realise the position in which Harṣa must have found himself after the death of his brother and brother-in-law as explained earlier. Harṣa apparently commenced his career of conquest in A. D. 606 and must have completed it by A. D. 612 when he was defeated decisively by Pulikeśin II. The only Maitraka ruler who can be placed within this period is not necessarily Dhruvasena II *Bālāditya* whose known date is G. E. 310 (A. D. 630)[5], but rather his son and successor Dharasena IV whose known dates are S.(G) 326, 328 and 330.[6] Dharasena IV, obviously a name misheard by Yüan Chwāng as Dhruvabhaṭa, must have been the king whom Daḍḍa II sheltered after his defeat by Harṣa.

We may now attempt to identify the Śilāditya who is referred to by Yüan Chwāng as having been the king of Mālwā sixty years prior to his visit to India. Yüan Chwāng visited India in A. D. 630 (October)[7] and he states thus: "The local records told of a king, by name of *Śilāditya* who had reigned over the country *Mo-la-p'o* (Mālwā) *sixty years before the pilgrim's arrival*, a monarch of great administrative ability, and of rare kindness and compassion."[8] By Mālwā Yüan Chwāng evidently meant the western portion of Mālwā for he says that *K'i-t'a* (Kutch?) was "subject to Mālava"[9] and that *A-nan-t'o-pu-lo* (Ānandapura) was "a dependency of Mālava".[10] What he implied was that Śilāditya ruled over these provinces which were

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 246; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 261.
[2] Bühler *I. A.*, XV, p. 338.
[3] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, Intr. p. 40.
[4] Majumdar, *J. B. O. R. S.*, IX pts. III-IV, p. 319.
[5] *I. A.*, XV, p. 339.
[6] *Cf. I. A.*, I, p. 339, *Ibid*, VII, p. 73, *Ibid*, X. p. 278, *Ibid*, XV, p. 330.
[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 335.
[8] *Ibid*, p. 242.
[9] *Ibid*, p. 245.
[10] *Ibid*, p. 247. Italics mine.

then included in western Mālwā. But sixty years prior to his visit would mean that in A. D. 570 there must have ruled over these areas a king named Śilāditya. No Gupta king ever bore this title and the only earliest monarch who was graced with this title was the Maitraka ruler Śilāditya I whose known dates are G. E. years 286 and 290[1] which are equivalent to A.D. 606 and 610. The latter date would imply a difference in forty years which may provisionally be allotted to Śilāditya I for it is not an extraordinary length of a reign for a king; secondly none of his predecessors had this title of Śilāditya; and thirdly, Yüan Chwāng's details about him may be compared with the following words which are recorded about him in the Alīṇā copper-plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67. Śilāditya I "acquired the second name of Dharmāditya by pursuit of wealth happiness and riches, illumined by conformity with religion...who supported the great burden of weighty desires on a cushion that was his shoulder... who though his intellect was pure through his mastering the endmost divisions of the limits of all sciences,...who, though his heart possessed a profundity that could be fathomed by no people, yet had a most agreeable disposition that was displayed by the excess of (his) good actions."[2]

These words of the Alīṇā plates may in turn be compared with another passage wherein Yüan Chwāng says thus in his *Life* about the Śilāditya to whom he refers: "Tradition says: Sixty years before this there was a king called Śilāditya, of high talent and singular learning. He was humane, affectionate, generous, and sweetly attached to his people. He was from the first supremely reverent to the doctrine of the three precious ones; and from the time he became king to his death no improper word had proceeded from his mouth, nor had his face ever flushed with passion.... *Thus for fifty years he continued on the throne carrying out these most excellent works without cessation*; and he thus endeared himself to his people, and his memory is still revered."[3] From these words of Yüan Chwāng two important conclusions can be drawn: first is that this Śilāditya was an ideal king and was in every way worthy of his *birudu of Dharmāditya* which is given to him in the inscriptions of his dynasty. Secondly, this Śilāditya seems to have ruled for fifty years on the throne. As stated earlier according to the chronology suggested in these pages it has been presumed that Śilāditya might have ruled for forty years from A. D. 570, (that is

[1] *Cf. I. A.*, XIV, p. 328; Fleet, *C.I.I.* III, Intr. p. 41.

[2] Fleet, *Ibid*, (39), p. 181.

[3] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life*, pp. 148-149. Italics mine.

sixty years prior to Yüan Chwāng's arrival in India viz., A. D. 630) till 610 which is the last known date of Śilāditya I. Now, according to Yüan Chwāng's own clear statement, the Śilāditya to whom he refers appears to have reigned for *fifty years*, which proves that the chronology which I have suggested is not improbable. Therefore it may be concluded that the Śilāditya of Yüan Chwāng could have been no other than the Śilāditya I of the Maitraka dynasty.[1]

If this is admitted then it would imply that he must be granted a further period of ten more years viz., from A. D. 560 till 610. This would leave only thirty-six years, viz., A.D. 610 till 646, the latter being one of the known dates of Dharasena IV, which must be divided between six kings who appear to have ruled between Śilāditya I and Dharasena IV, implying that each of these rulers might have had a short reign of about six years. We may therefore reject the theory that the Valabhi ruler who was defeated by Harṣavardhana was Dhruvasena II, and that this event should be placed after A. D. 638 and before A. D. 640-41.[2] The Kaira grant of Dharasena IV dated S. (G) 330 (A. D. 648) states that it was issued from "the camp of victory at Bharukaccha" and in this grant he is styled as *Paramamaheśvara Śrī Bhaṭṭāraka*, titles which imply paramount supremacy. The reason why this grant was issued from a camp of victory cannot be precisely determined, but from the analogy of a similar expression in the grants of Samudra Gupta and of Jīvita Gupta II, it is probable that he was on a military expedition the exact nature of which however cannot be specified. The Nausāri grant of Jayabhaṭa II, dated A. D. 706, tells us that his great grand father Daḍḍa II protected the lord of Valabhi.[3] If we assign twenty-five years to each of Jayabhaṭa's predecessors including himself, then we may set forth the tentative chronology of these rulers as below:

Daḍḍa II	—A. D.	606-631.
Jayabhaṭa I	—	631-56.
Daḍḍa III	—	656-681.
Jayabhaṭa II	—	681-706.

[1] S. Levi has arrived at the same conclusion from other points of view: see *Jrl. Asiatique*, July-Dec., 1897, pp. 526; *I.A.*, XXXIII, pp. 110-11. Mookerji, however, is not prepared to accept this inference. *Cf.* his *Harṣa*, p. 31, foot-note 1, pp. 62-63. He makes Yaśōdharman, of the Mandasor inscription, "the founder" of the Mālava empire, identifies him with the conqueror mentioned by Kalhaṇa (*Rājataraṅgiṇi*, II, 7, III, 125) and states that he was succeeded by his son Śilāditya, who is mentioned by Yüan Chwāng, as having reigned 60 years prior to his visit and states that Yaśōvatī, the mother of Harṣa, was the daughter of Yaśōdharman Vikramāditya. (Mookerji, *Ibid*, pp. 59-60, 67.) These suggestions though ingenious are not supported by other evidence.

[2] Vincent Smith, *E. H. I.*, p. 354, (4th ed.); also see Ettinghausen, *Harṣa Vardhana*, pp. 47-49; Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 354, f. no. 1.

[3] *I. A.*, XIII, p. 79.

But we have extant records of Daḍḍa II showing that he was living during A. D 629, 634 and 641.[1] This chronology would consequently make Daḍḍa II a contemporary not only of Harṣavardhana (A. D. 606-648) but also of Dharasena IV, whose Bhavnagar grant is dated S.(G) 326 (A. D. 646). In support of this statement we may cite some inscriptions of Dharasena IV which prove that he must have been a contemporary of Harṣavardhana... His Valabhi plate is dated in S. (G) 326, viz., A. D. 648, and in this record he is styled as *a Paramamahēśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Paramēśvara Cakravartin*.[2] In his Kaira grant he is given the same titles and its date is stated to be *Saṃ. 300-30-dvi-Mārg-śu-2* which, owing to "rules of mean inter-calculation", has been considered to be equivalent to A. D. 648.[3] In his Alīṇā copper plates, dated *Saṃ. 300-30* viz., A. D. 650, he is again graced with the full royal titles[4] which have been noticed in his previous grants. From these records it may therefore be concluded that Dharasena IV was not only a contemporary of Daḍḍa II but also of Harṣavardhana, whom he evidently survived by two years. Yüan Chwāng's statement that Harṣa reigned in peace for thirty years, evidently after his defeat in A. D. 612 by Pulikeśin II, cannot be literally accepted as true, because we know from Yüan Chwāng himself that Harṣa went on a conquering expedition to Koṇgoḍa (Ganjam)[5] and this event may be placed in the year A. D. 636. This would mean that Harṣa resumed his military activities after an interval of nearly twenty four years. Probably his next war after this incursion into Ganjam was in the year in A. D. 640 or shortly after. As Dharasena IV, miscalled by Yüan Chwāng as Dhruvabhaṭa, was present at the sixth quinquennial assembly in A. D. 636, till that year there could not have been any war between Harṣa and Dharasena IV. In A.D. 646 this ruler of Valabhi thought himself powerful enough to assume imperial titles, a right which must have been challenged by Harṣa and in this fight Dharasena IV, being defeated, must have fled to Daḍḍa II who claims to have protected him.[6] This inference can be proved by the Valabhi grant of Dharasena IV which is dated *Saṃ. 300-20-6-Āṣāḍha su 10* viz., A. D. 646 and in this grant he is styled as *Paramamahēśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka*

[1] *I. A.*, XIII, pp. 81, 88, 118, *E. I.*, II, p. 20; Fleet, *D. K. D.*, pp. 313-314.

[2] *I. A.*, p. 145; *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, X, pp. 77, 79.

[3] *Ibid*, XV, p. 339; Also see Fleet, *C. I. I.* III. Intr. 93; Sewell and Dikshit, *Ind. Calendar*, p. XXIII.

[4] *I. A.*, VII, p. 73.

[5] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life*, pp. 159, 172; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 206.

[6] On this point see Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 314; K. Chaṭṭopādhyāya, *P. I. H. C.*, (3rd Sess.) p. 598.

Mahārājadhirāja Paramēśvara. Therefore as Dharasena IV is not styled in any of his earlier grants with these royal titles it may be inferred that in A. D. 646 his claims to these honours must have been challenged by Harṣavardhana who was then the paramount sovereign of northern India. If this was then the case then Dharasena IV, on being defeated by Harṣa, must have fled for refuge to Daḍḍa II who must consequently have been the contemporary of Dharasena IV and of Harṣa as well.[1]

Dharasena IV seems to have been an important king of Valabhi in the days of Harṣa. Yüan Chwāng calls him in one place *T'u-l'o-po-t'a*[2] and in another as *Tu-lu-po-pa cha*[3], which only suggests that he was evidently not quite sure of what he had heard about this king. He further calls him "the king of the South"[4], which at first appears rather strange, for it is well-known that he was after all a ruler of Valabhi. But Valabhi was not conquered by Prabhākaravardhana for Bāṇa says that the former was only "a troubler of the sleep of Gujarāt, a looter to the lawlessness of the Lāṭas, an axe to the creeper of Mālava's glory,"[5] which implies that neither Gujarāt nor Lāṭa was conquered by Prabhākaravardhana. But as the Nausāri grant of Jayabhaṭa II informs us, Harṣa evidently defeated the king of Valabhi for a time although an alliance had been effected with him through matrimony as is borne out by Yüan Chwāng. But Yüan Chwāng does not tell us that Dharasena IV, or rather Dhruvabhaṭa as he calls him, was a subordinate of Harṣa. Probably this was not the case at first, because we know that, as the Nausāri grant informs us, Daḍḍa II gave shelter to this king after his defeat at the hands of Harṣa and there is every reason to conclude that the rulers of Valabhi during this period, especially after the defeat of Harṣa most probably in A. D. 612, considered themselves to be the subordinates of Pulikeśin II, who appears to have frightened all these rulers. His Aihoḷe inscription says that "subdued by his splendour the Lāṭas, Mālavas and Gūrjarās became as it were teachers of how feudatories subdued by force ought to behave,"[6] This expression has been, I think, rightly interpreted by Kielhorn to mean that "these were not conquered by force but submitted to or sought the protection of

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[1] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, X, p. 77; also see *I. A.*, I, p. 14.

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 246; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 267.

[3] Shamans Hwui Lui and Yen Tsung, *Life*, p. 185.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 101.

[6] *E. I.*, VI, no. 1, p. 10.

Pulikeśin, of their own accord."[1] This interpretation would explain why Yüan Chwāng calls Dharasena IV a king of the south.[2]

8. Political Condition on the death of Harṣavardhana.

When Harṣa died chaos set in the kingdom of the Puṣpabhūtis, where Arjuna his minister wrought havoc for a time until he was conquered by Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa as is recorded in his Nidhanpūr plates,[3] Mādhava Gupta must have been left supreme in his kingdom of Magadha while Bhāskaravarman was master of Kāmarūpa and Karṇasuvarṇa as well. But Tibet appears to have exercised considerable influence over Bengal and Bihar[4] till probably king Ādityasena issued his Shāhpur Stone Image inscription in A. D. 672-73 in which there is a reference to the *Balādhikṛta* Śalāpākṣa.[5]

This grant implies that Ādityasena asserted successfully his power in south Bihar in this year. His Mandār and Deoghar inscriptions show that he succeeded in establishing his power also in the Bhāgalpur and the Santal Parganas districts of Bengal. The Khaḍgas of Samataṭa, whose records have been found in the Dacca and Comilla districts in Bengal, bearing dates between A. D. 650–700, reveal that during this period they too were successful in this part of Bengal.[6] With the decay of the Maukhāris arose the Gauḍas as a sea-power in Bengal.[7]

It is likely that the Gauḍas were a sea-power already in the days of Jīvita Gupta I (*circa* A. D. 518-43,) for in the Aphsaḍ stone inscription of Ādityasena it is revealed how "the very terrible scorching fever (of fear) left not (his) haughty foes, even though they stood on the sea-shores that were cool with the flowing and ebbing currents of water."[8] This allusion to a sea-power is obviously to the Gauḍas who seem to have been a sea-faring people. About this time they also appear to have come into conflict with the Maukhāris for the emperor Īśānavarman in his Harāhā inscription,

[1] *E. I.*, VI, no. 1, p. 2.

[2] Fleet conjectured that this ruler of the South was probably Satyāśraya Dhruvarāya Indravarman, the uncle of Pulikeśin II, who was governor of four *viṣayas* and was stationed at Rēvatidvīpa. (Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, Intr. p. 40; *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, X, p. 365.) But this governor was never a lord of Valabhi.

[3] *E. I.*, XII, no. 13, p. 76.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (43) p. 210.

[6] *J. A. S. B.*, XIX, pp. 376-78; Chavannes, *Life*, pp. XXXVI-VII; Ray, *Dynastic History of Northern India*, I, p. 275.

[7] *E. I.*, XIV, no. 5, p. 117.

[8] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) p 205.

dated A. D. 554, is stated to have kept the sea-faring (*Samudrāśraya*) Gauḍas within their own bounds.[1] The Farīdpur plates refer to three rulers known as Dharmāditya, Gōpacandra and Samācāradēva, who appear to have carried on their administration in one of their provinces called Vārakamaṇḍala.[2] The ruler Samācāradēva is styled as a *Mahārājādhirāja* in one of the Farīdpur records and two of his coins with the legends *Samācāra Narēndraraṇita* have been found with the *naṅdi* symbol which appears on the coins of Śaśāṅka.[3] But these rulers are not however called Gauḍas. These proofs appear insufficient to accept the statement that "there can be hardly any doubt that Samāchāra was the predecessor of Śāśāṅka as a Gauda king."[4] But it is also difficult to accept the view that the alliance of this Śaśāṅka with Dēva Gupta was owing to "blood-relationship, Śaśāṅka being himself perhaps a Gupta, the son or nephew of king Mahāsena Gupta."[5] Perhaps the only reason for making such an assertion is that a certain *Ms.* of the *Harṣacarita* calls him Narēndra Gupta and if this is accepted then it would mean that the Gupta who is stated by Bāna to have seized Kanauj was Śaśāṅka himself and the escape of Rājyaśrī from her prison might have been under his orders.[6] These conclusions appear untenable.

9. The Disappearance of the Maukharis.

With the premature death of the Maukhāri ruler Grahavarman, son of Avantivarman, the House of the Maukhāris which had allied itself by a dynastic marriage with that of the Puṣpabhūtis, became almost extinct in as much as Grahavarman had no children. But on the testimony of Yüan Chwāng it may be said that there was probably one more, though not possibly the last, member of this dynasty known as Pūrṇavarman who, according to Yüan Chwāng, was "the last of the race of Aśoka."[7] It has been surmised that this Pūrṇavarman might have been a brother of Grahavarman and must have been alive about the year A. D. 637, when Yüan Chwāng visited the city of Kanauj.[8] This Pūrṇavarman, it is important to remember, is called by Yüan Chwāng "the king of Magadha" which

[1] *E. I.*, XIV, no. 5, p. 120.
[2] *I. A.* XXXIX, pp. 193-98.
[3] Allan, *Catalogue*, p. 417.
[4] Mookerji, *Harṣa*, p. 70 f. n. 1.
[5] *Ibid*, p. 71, f. n. 1. Also see Allan, *op. cit.*, p. DXIV.
[6] R. D. Banerji, *History of Bengal* (In Bengali) p. 106; Mookerji, *Ibid*, p. 71.
[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 115, Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 118.
[8] Aravamuthan, *The Kaveri, Maukhāris and the Saṅgam Age*, p. 111.

implies that he must have exercised authority over Magadha as well. It is possible, though of course it cannot be stated with certainty, that Harṣavardhana, on the death of his brother-in-law Grahavarman Maukhāri of Kānyakubja, condescended to permit Pūrṇavarman, who was in all probability a kinsman of Grahavarman, to continue to rule over Magadha from which Dēva Gupta must have by A. D. 612 been driven out in case he had occupied it after the death of his father Mahāsena Gupta, his alliance with the Gauḍa Śaśāṅka and their incursions on Kānyakubja which resulted in the extinction of the line of Grahavarman Maukhāri. Consequently Dēva Gupta must have shifted his quarters towards eastern Mālwā where he is not recorded to have been beaten or destroyed by Harṣa. Such a probability can be understood if we realise what a bitter opponent Dēva Gupta was of Harṣa and, if these were the conditions which materialised, then we can understand why Yüan Chwāng calls Pūrṇavarman a ruler of Magadha. If this was really the case then it would mean that in A. D. 637, viz, the year in which Yüan Chwāng visited Magadha, neither Dēva Gupta nor Mādhava Gupta occupied the throne of Magadha and it is not unnatural to believe that Mādhava Gupta was living at the court of Harṣa. That this Mādhava Gupta must have reigned is borne out by the Aphsaḍ and the Dēō-Baraṇārk stone inscriptions, but it must not also be forgotten that, as Dēva Gupta lived to create considerable consternation after the death of Grahavarman, most likely the former, namely, Dēva Gupta, also must have ruled almost side by side with Mādhava Gupta. If Dēva Gupta was the lord of Mālwa, over which country could Mādhava Gupta have ruled is a question which now remains to be solved. It is just possible, for it cannot be proved, that Mādhava Gupta for his loyalty and his services to Harṣa was placed by him on the throne of Magadha shortly after the death of Pūrṇavarman. The Chinese work *Fang-Chih* states that Harṣa administered the Maukhāri kingdom "in conjunction with his own widowed sister,"[1] but it must also be remembered that in his own Nālandā seals he is given imperial titles.[2] This would only mean that Harṣa might have administered for a time the Maukhāri kingdom in the way suggested in the Chinese work and then, when he had waged "incessant warfare until in six years he had fought the Five Indies"[3], bestowed the kingdom of Magadha on Mādhava Gupta and devolved upon himself the administration of the kingdom of the

[1] *Cf.* Watters, *op. cit.*, I, p. 345.

[2] *A. S. I. R.*, 1917-18, p. 44.

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 343; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 213.

Maukhāris. Of course there must have survived petty Maukhāri administrators like the noble Bhōgavarman who married the daughter of the Later Gupta emperor Ādityasena[1].

IV. The Last Phase

The Chronology of the Later Guptas

Taking the year A. D. 467-68 as Kṛṣṇa Gupta's first regnal year, as suggested earlier, we may say that Mahāsena Gupta might have reigned from *circa* A. D. 593 till A. D. 618 and that Dēva Gupta III succeeded him from *circa* A. D. 618 and ruled till A. D. 643. But Mādhava Gupta, almost a contemporary of Harṣa, was not a king from A. D. 606 till 612, if during these years, according to Yüan Chwāng, Harṣa was constantly engaged in warfare. Still whether he was given the kingdom of Magadha in A. D. 612 or in 618 cannot be ascertained but it does not appear unreasonable to conclude that Mādhava Gupta might have ruled over Magadha from *circa* A. D. 643. This is because, as stated before, according to Yüan Chwāng in A. D. 637 Pūrṇavarman, the ruler of Magadha, was ruling there and this would naturally exclude the possibility of Dēva Gupta's having then occupied the throne of Magadha at this period. If it is admitted that Pūrṇavarman died a few years later after A. D. 637, we may state that Mādhava Gupta must have ruled from A. D. 643 till A. D. 668. There is another reason to conclude that Mādhava Gupta might have commenced to rule from A. D. 643. If Mahāsena Gupta reigned from A. D. 593 till A. D. 618, then his son Dēva Gupta III may be said to have followed him and ruled from A. D. 618 till A. D. 643, as Harṣa is not recorded to have either killed or driven him away from his own dominions in Mālwā (eastern) or from the country itself.[2] Moreover it is difficult to think that during the life-time of his brother, Mādhava Gupta would have dared to occupy the throne of Magadha even with the support of Harṣa. But Yüan Chwāng records definitely that Pūrṇavarman was on the throne of Magadha in A. D. 637. Mādhava Gupta must have ruled for a considerable time in Magadha for his son and heir Ādityasena did not create an empire but only enlarged the one which he inherited from his father. Even if this period is given to Mādhava Gupta, then the period reckoned from the year A. D. 595, when his father Mahāsena Gupta sent his children to Prabhākaravardhana, till A. D. 643 would only

[1] *I. A.*, IX, p. 180.

[2] *Cf.* Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 223, 224, 251.

give Mādhava Gupta a reign of forty-eight years. If in A.D. 595 Mādhava Gupta was only about ten or twelve years as he appears to have been for he was meant only as a companion to Harṣa, then he must have been in A. D. 668 quite an old man of nearly eighty-two years. His brother Kṛṣṇa Gupta IV does not appear to have reigned at all as no inscription mentions that he ever ruled and his name may consequently be excluded in suggesting a tentative chronology of the different rulers.

If these suggestions are admissible then Ādityasena may be said to have reigned from *circa* A. D. 668 till A.D. 693 in the usual course giving him, as for each of his predecessors, twenty-five years. His Shāhpur stone image inscription clearly tells us that he was alive in A.D. 672-73 in the region of south-east of Bihar.[1] In this as well as in his Deoghar and Aphsad stone inscriptions he is not given any titles of paramount supremacy but in his Mandār Rock Hill inscription, which is undated, he is called *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Paramēśvara*.[2] Fleet therefore concluded that the Mandār Rock Hill inscription must have been issued some time later in the reign of Ādityasena.[3] This conclusion would naturally imply that Ādityasena must have lived for a longer period after A. D. 672-73 and we may in the circumstances grant him a further extension and thus limit his reign to the year A. D. 693.

If this chronology again is admissible then we may observe that his son Dēva Gupta IV, who married Kamaladēvī, might have lived from *circa* A.D. 693 till A.D. 706. This is because we know that his son Viṣṇu Gupta commenced to reign from A. D. 706. Dr A. S. Altekar states that he has recently discovered at Mangraon in the Shahbad district of Bihar an inscription of the Later Gupta ruler Viṣṇu Gupta, which is dated in his 17th regnal year and in the 117th year probably of the Harṣa era. If this is the case then it would mean the Viṣṇu Gupta commenced to reign from A. D. 706 and ruled for 17 years viz., till A. D. 723.[4] He is not recorded to have died in this year and we may therefore state, of course tentatively, that he might have reigned from A.D. 706 till A.D. 731, allotting to him the usual twenty-five years.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (43) p. 210.

[2] *Ibid.*, (44-45) pp. 211-13.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 211. In the *Kathāsaritsāgara* mention is made of a king of Ujjainī called Ādityasena: "In the city of Ujjainī, which is celebrated throughout the earth, there was in former days a king named Ādityasena". II, p. 54. Then it is related how "thus he obtained the mighty rank of a king, and gradually conquered the whole earth, so that his foot was worshipped by all kings..." Sōmadeva, *Kathāsaritsāgara*, II, p. 80,

[4] Altekar, *J. N. S. I.*, III, pt. I, p. 57.

If this is tenable then Ādityasena, Dēva Gupta IV and Viṣṇu Gupta might have been the contemporaries of the Western Cāḷukya rulers Vikramāditya I (A. D. 655-680), Vinayāditya (A. D. 680-96) and Vijayāditya (A. D. 696-733) respectively.

Then only one more Later Gupta ruler would now remain for further consideration and that is Jīvita Gupta II. Continuing the dates given to his predecessors he too may be allotted provisionally the period of *circa* A. D. 731-56. Jīvita Gupta II was the great-grandson of Ādityasena who was alive in A. D. 672-73 in the male line. His contemporary in the female line was Jayadeva II whose known date is (*Harṣa*) *saṁvat 153 Kārttika śukla-navamyāṁ* approximately equivalent to A. D. 16th October 758.[1] Thus, according to the dates which we have assigned to Jīvita Gupta II, he would only be the contemporary of Jayadeva II, who was certainly alive in A. D. 758. It is possible as will be shown presently, that Jīvita Gupta II lived only for a short time, at the most for about ten years. He was in all likelihood unmarried at least when this grant was made, for in his Dēō-Baraṇārk inscription mention is made of four of his ancestors and the names of all their queens are mentioned while nothing is stated about the queen of Jīvita Gupta II who issued the inscription.

2. The Decline of the Later Guptas

After the demise of Mādhava Gupta, who no doubt succeeded Dēva Gupta III, the decline of the Later Guptas may be said to have commenced with the rise of the last great ruler of this dynasty, namely Ādityasena. If Dēva Gupta III can be assigned to a period between A. D. 618-43, being a contemporary of Harṣavardhana, and his successor Mādhava Gupta, to a period between A. D. 643-68, allotting each on an average a quarter of a century, for we have no evidence that Mādhava Gupta lived or reigned for a short time, then the successor of Mādhava Gupta, Ādityasena, may on the same basis be said to have reigned from A. D. 668-93. This ruler revived the glories of the Later Guptas but had to bear the brunt of the might of the Western Cāḷukyas. The Later Guptas, in the first half of the seventh century, had to face the onslaught of the Southern powers. One of these might have been the Rāṣṭrakūṭas but this is only doubtful. The Pāṇḍuraṅgapaḷḷi plates of Avidhēya, dated *circa* A. D. 516, record that his grandfather Māṇāṅka conquered the countries of Aṅga, Vidarbha, Aśmaka and Sātkuṇṭa.[2] This

[1] *I A.*, IX, p. 180.
[2] *M. A. R.*, 1929, pp. 197, 198.

assertion would mean that, if a reign of twenty-five years is to be assigned to the two predecessors of Avidhēya, then we may place Māṇaṅka in *circa* A. D. 466-91. This period falls within the reign of Budha Gupta but we have not only his inscriptions but also those of his successors down even to Bhānu Gupta *Bālāditya* III, which prove that Aṅga till the first quarter of the sixth century was in Gupta hands. It is also possible that Māṇāṅka had a successful campaign like the one by the early Kaḷaccuriya Śaṅkaragaṇa or it may be just an empty boast but nothing can be said definitely about this claim beyond these conjectures. The Guptas were, however, not dispossessed of the Aṅga country during Budha Gupta and most probably till the days of Bhānu Gupta too.

Ādityasena may be said to have been the last great ruler of his dynasty. That he was master of southern and east Bihar is proved by the Aphsaḍ, Shāhpur and Mandār inscriptions. The undated Mandār inscription clearly depicts him as the ruler of the whole earth extending to the shores of the seas and as the performer of four of the great *Aśvamedha* and similar sacrifices.[1] He evidently gave up the old policy of his forefathers of animosity against the Gauḍas and the Maukhāris for we find that one of his engravers was the Gauḍa Sūkṣmaśiva,[2] who is referred to in the above mentioned inscription. He even contracted a dynastic alliance with a minor Maukhāri chief named Bhōgavarman, who might have been the successor of Pūrṇavarman who probably succeeded Grahavarman Maukhāri, the brother-in-law of Harṣa. Bhōgavarman is said to have married a daughter of the great emperor Ādityasena but her name is not given.[3] The supremacy of Ādityasena in the Madhyadēśa is indirectly proved by the Dēō-Baraṇārk inscription of his grandson, Jīvīta Gupta II, which was issued from his *jayaskandhāvāra* at Gōmatikoṭṭaka.[4] It is therefore not strange to learn that he assumed imperial titles as can be seen from his Mandār stone inscription wherein he is styled as the *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*.[5] The Deoghar inscription refers to his patronage of temples and the Shāhpur stone epigraph points to his charity to Buddhist *saṅghārāmas* like the Nālandā *vihāra*.[6] Such benefactions show that he must have been, like many of the Imperial and Later Gupta emperors, a tolerant monarch.

[1] *J. A. S. B.*, LII, pt I, p. 190; Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (45), p. 213.
[2] Fleet, *Ibid*, (42) p. 208.
[3] *I. A.*, IX, p. 178; *E. I.*, V, no. 541, p. 74.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46), p. 217.
[5] *Ibid.*, (44), p. 212.
[6] *Ibid.*, (43, 45) pp. 210, 213.

During this ruler's reign the Later Gupta power received the last great blow to its supremacy, influence and prestige from the Western Cāḷukyas of Bādāmi. The policy of the Western Cāḷukyas to conquer north Indian countries may be said to have commenced from the days of Kīrtivarman I who ascended the throne in A. D. 566-67. The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription tells us that he was victorious over the kings of Vaṅga, Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Vaṭṭūra, Magadha and Madraka.[1] This revelation may be taken to imply that he must have enjoyed some victories over Bhānu Gupta *Bālāditya* III, who may be said to have lived between A. D. 507-35. Maṅgalēśa, his successor in his turn fostered this idea of conquering the regions of the north and by his two victories over Buddharāja, "acquired the whole of the northern territory up to the river Kīm or perhaps to the Māhi",[2] before A. D. 609. Pulikēśin II, as stated already, defeated the famous Harṣavardhana somewhere in the region of the Narmadā on the southern bank of which Pulikēśi s forces were encamped in A. D. 612. The reign of this ruler ended in chaos especially owing to the Pallavas who attacked his kingdom and even laid waste Bādāmi, his capital.[3] He must have ruled from A. D. 634 till A.D. 655.[4] He was followed by Ādityavarman about whom little is known, Candrāditya who reigned from A. D. 655-59, and then came Vikramāditya I who ruled from A. D. 655 till A.D. 688.[5] None of these rulers is said to have attacked any monarch of northern India and the reason was probably because all of these were busy with the destruction of the Pallavas and the other three Southern powers. But with the accession of Vinayāditya (A. D. 680-96) the ambition of the Western Cāḷukyas to conquer the northern regions was again revived. He is stated to have conquered the Haihayas (Kaḷaccuriyas), Viḷas, Mālavas and acquired the *Pāḷidhvaja* and other insignia of sovereignty by defeating some paramount sovereign of northern India as is recorded in his Harihar plates dated A. D. 694-95. But this statement need not necessarily be taken to mean that this conquest was effected in this year because it is stated therein that he carried out these conquests "at the command of his father" whose last known date is A. D. 668.[6] It is not unreasonable to assume that this command must have been issued

[1] *I. A.*, XIX, p. 19. Vaṭṭūra is probably to be identified with Oḍḍra—the modern Orissa. R. N. S.

[2] Fleet, *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts*, p. 347.

[3] *E. I.*, III, no. 38, p. 277.

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

[5] *Ibid*, p. 337.

[6] *I. A.*, VII, p. 303. The Mālavas should not be confused with the people of the Malaya country as Fleet suggests. *Cf. D. K. D.*, p. 368.

while he was alive and that it was carried out either during his father's life-time or more probably soon after his death, namely within A. D. 680-90. But we know for certain that Ādityasena was alive in A. D. 672-73 as is recorded in his Shāpur stone image inscription.[1] This inscription along with the Aphsad stone epigraph, because they do not contain any of his paramount titles, were rightly considered by Fleet to have been issued slightly earlier than his undated Mandār Rock Hill inscription in which he and his wife Kōṇadēvī are graced with full royal titles.[2] The allotment of an average of twenty-five years to each of his predecessors would place him between A. D. 668-93. This chronological arrangement would consequently exclude the possibility that Ādityasena was most probably the north Indian king who was defeated by Vinayāditya whose contemporary appears to have been Dēva Gupta IV, the son and successor of Ādityasena. It must be remembered that he too adopted imperial titles of paramount supremacy as an emperor. The *Sakalōttarāpathanātha* defeated by Vinayāditya was therefore in all probability this Dēva Gupta IV, rather than his father, even considering that this defeat was effected within the years A. D. 680-90.

The Deoghar inscription, which is also undated, relates that Ādityasena was "returning from the Cōḷa city."[3] It is not known whether or not Ādityasena made any expedition into the Cōḷa country and "we have only to suppose", it has been surmised, "that Ādityasena of Magadha was invited to join that (what?) he was none too loth to risk the adventure, and that he accompanied Vikramāditya to Uṟaiyūr in 674 A. D., and it becomes clear how in an inscription in his own dominions he can be said to have 'arrived from the Chōḷa city' sometime later."[4] This view is untenable for Vikramāditya I is not known to have made any expedition into Gupta territory, nor is he recorded to have defeated any Later Gupta kings, and he therefore could not have compelled or made it obligatory for a sovereign of the north to accompany him in a campaign into the Cōḷa country. But Vikramāditya I avenged his father's defeat when he "seized Kāñci after defeating the leader of the Pallavas and humbling the pride of the Cōḷa, Pāṇḍya and Kēraḷa" rulers in *Saka* 612, viz., A. D. 690.[5] Unless more tangible proof is forthcoming

[1] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (43), p. 210.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*, (45) p. 213.

[4] Aravamuthan, *The Kāveri, the Maukhāris and the Sangam Age*, pp. 32-33. For contrary views see S. K. Aiyangar, *J. I. H.*, V, pp. 324-25.

[5] *I. A.*, VI, p. 87.

we may consider this statement in the Deoghar inscription of Āditya-sena to be merely a poetical fiction.[1]

But the acquisition of the Gaṅgā-Yamunā symbol is significant and it can only mean the defeat of a ruler of that region viz., the Madhya-dēśa, which was then only in the hands of the Later Guptas. But the sovereign whom Vinayāditya defeated is also styled as Vajraṭa in Western Cāḷukya as well as some Rāṣṭrakūṭa records.[2] Whether or not Dēva Gupta IV had such a title is not known. Never-theless it is interesting to note that the successor of Vinayāditya called Vijayāditya (A. D. 696-733-34) pushed further into northern India and acquired like his father once again the *Pāḷidhvaja* and the symbol of the Gaṅga and the Yamunā.[3] This would imply that within the period of his reign (A. D. 696-733-34), Vijayāditya must have attacked successfully some ruler of northern India who was powerful in the Madhyadēśa.

During this period the Later Gupta rulers Dēva Gupta IV and his son Viṣṇu Gupta must have reigned on the throne of Magadha and these were probably attacked by Vijayāditya, as his records suggest. The *Āryamañjūśrīmulakalpa* relates that there was in Magadha a king named Dēva who had a son called Candra.[1] Contemporary Later Gupta inscriptions reveal that the name of Viṣṇu Gupta's father was Dēva Gupta,[4] while the reverse of the coins of the former show that he had the *birudа* of *Candrāditya*.[5] It has therefore been concluded that the Dēva of the *Āryamañjūśrīmūlakalpa* should be identified with the Dēva Gupta of the inscriptions and that Candra mentioned therein could not have been any other than the Viṣṇu Gupta *Candrāditya* of the inscriptions and the coins.[6] It is doubtful whether these identifications can be accepted without any reservation, especially because the *Manjūśrīmūlakalpa* is not only "cryptic, enigmatic and confused",

[1] A similar tradition is recorded in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*. It is stated therein that a "king of Vatsa" conquered the Cōḷas: "The Kāverī being crossed by him in his victorious onset, and the glory of the Chōḷa race being surpassed, were befouled at the same time. He no longer allowed the Muralas to exalt their heads, for they were completely beaten by tributes imposed on them. Though his elephants drank the waters of the Gōdāvarī divided into seven streams, they seemed to discharge them seven-fold in the form of ichor. The king crossed the Rēvā and reached Ujjainī and entered the city, being made by Caṇḍamahāsena to precede him". Sōmadeva, *Kathā-saritsāgara*, II, pp. 92-93.

[2] *I. A.*, XI, pp. 114, 119; *I. A.*, IX, p. 129.

[3] *Āryamañjūśrīmūlakalpa*, vv. 676-678, p. 50, (Jayaswal's ed. 1934).

[4] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (46), p. 217.

[5] Allan, *Catalogue*, pp. LXI, CIV, 145-46.

[6] Altekar, *J. N. S. I.*, III, pt. I, p. 59.

but it is also a later Buddhist work which enshrines only Buddhist tradition. If these identifications are consequently rejected then it would imply that during this period, namely between A. D. 706-774, there were two Viṣṇu Guptas. This inference is not improbable in view of the two Viṣṇu Guptas who can be traced in the Mangraon and the Nālandā Seal inscriptions.[1]

3. The Collapse of the Later Gupta Dynasty

Little is known about the descendant of Ādityasena who appears to have been the last great ruler of the Later Gupta dynasty. Neither Harṣa nor Bhāskaravarman succeeded in establishing a powerful dynasty either in Bihar or in Bengal. The successors of Ādityasena were monarchs who continued to adopt the titles of paramount supermacy like Ādityasena himself, but as shown above they must have been weak sovereigns who often felt the brunt of the Western Cāḷukya invasions. The Rāgholi (Bālāghāt district, C. P.) plates of the Śaila king Jayavardhana II inform us that his grandfather took Kāśī after killing its "self-conceited and cruel king," while the elder brother of this grandfather is recorded to have taken the whole of the Pauṇḍra country (Bihar and Bengal) after destroying its ruler.[2] As this script of this record very much resembles that of the Paithan plates of Govinda III dated in the year 794 A. D., Dr. H. C. Ray has suggested that it is "not unreasonable to refer the events recorded above to c. 725 A. D." He further thinks it not improbable that the Pauṇḍra king referred to in this inscription was either Jīvita Gupta II or one of the successors of Ādityasena.[3] This ruler could not have been Ādityasena because he could not have possibly lived after A. D. 693 and we may therefore say that his grandson Viṣṇu Gupta *Candrāditya*, who may be placed between A. D. 706–25, was most likely the ruler who fell a prey to the un-named Śaila conqueror in the first quarter of the eighth century.

This invasion of the Śailas was shortly followed by that of Yaśōvarman who can hardly be called a Maukhāri,[4] though he has

[1] Cf. Ch. V *infra*, Sect. III, 5, pp. 389 for further details on this question. Also see Altekar, *J. N. S. I.*, III, Pt I, pp. 57-59; *Ibid.*, Pt II, p. 104.

[2] *E. I.*, IX, no. 5, pp. 41-47.

[3] Ray, *D. H. N. I.*, I, p. 271. Dr. S. K. Aiyangar has suggested that, as Jayadēva the grandson of Ādityasena in the female line was alive in *Harṣa saṁvat* 153 (A. D. 759-60), the date of Jivita Gupta II, who was his grandson in the male line, "would be roughly about the middle of the eighth century when according to Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇi the Kashmir ruler Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa defeated and overthrew completely the ruler of Kanouj." *J. I. H.*, V, p. 325. The reign of Jivita Gupta II must be placed a little after the first quarter of the eighth century as will be shown presently and Jīvita Gupta II must have been defeated by Yaśōvarman, who about A. D. 731 was himself destroyed by the Karkōṭaka king Lalitāditya.

[4] *Cf.* Pires, *The Maukhāris*, p. 136. A contrary view was expressed long ago by Aravamuthan. *Cf. The Kaveri, the Maukhāris and the Sangam Age*, p. 113.

been characterised by Kalhaṇa as the lord of "the land of Kānyakubja from the bank of the Yamunā to the Kālikā".[1] Stein identified this ruler with the king of Central India, *I-cha-mo-on-mo*, who in A. D. 731 sent an embassy to the Chinese court. This king is described in the *Gauḍavāho* as having been on the throne in *circa* A. D. 731–36 when he probably undertook his *digvijaya*. He is recorded to have attacked, defeated and slain a Magadha king (*Magadhādhipa*). This Magadha monarch appears at first to have fled from the field of battle, but he was captured and slaughtered, his queens taken prisoners and reduced to slavery.[2] The only Magadha monarch, who was his possible contemporary was Jīvita Gupta II whose reign can consequently be restricted from A. D. 725 to A. D. 731. If the Dēō-Caraṇārk inscription is any indication of this ruler's martial spirit, for he seems to have issued this inscription from his camp of victory at Gōmatikoṭṭa, then it may be hazarded that this Yaśōvarman probably met with some resistance on the field of battle, and perhaps Jīvita Gupta II only yielded ultimately to the superior forces of Yaśōvarman. Therefore, with the destruction of Jīvita Gupta II between the years A. D. 725–731, the last representative of the Gupta empire vanished for ever from the scene of history and the age of the Guptas may be said to have closed.

But the success of this usurper was deservedly short-lived for only nemesis appears to have overtaken him. This conqueror of the Magadha kingdom was not long left in peace to enjoy the fruits of his conquest, although he turned eastwards and compelled the king of Vaṅga, "though proud in the possession of a large number of war-like elephants", to acknowledge his overlordship.[3] This Vaṅga ruler was possibly one of the Khaḍga rulers of Samataṭa styled as the Vindhyeśvara.[4] But the collapse of the Gupta power only opened the way for a number of invasions. Shortly after this brief triumph of Yaśōvarman in or about A. D. 736 he was defeated by the Kārkōṭaka king Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa, probably known to the

[1] Kalhaṇa, *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, I, Bk. IV, vv. 132-46, pp: 131-34 (ed. by Stein, Westminster, MDCCCC).

[2] Vākpatirāja, *Gauḍavāho*, vv. 354, 414-20, pp. 104, 113-14. Dr H. C. Ray thinks that this Magadha king was probably "one of the Śaila rulers, who is referred to in the Rāghoḷi plates of Jayavardhana II (*E. I.*, IX, no. 5 pp. 41-47) but I would suggest that it was Jīvita Gupta II as explained above.

[3] *Ibid.*, v. 423, p. 122.

[4] Ray, *op. cit.*, I. p. 277. It has been suggested that Dēvavarman, the Khaḍga contemporary of Ādityasena, was the Khaḍga ruler who was defeated by Yaśōvarman. See *J. A. S. B.*, XIX, p. 376, Chavannes, *Les Religieux Eminents*, pp. 81, 83, also see *Life*, pp. XXXVI-VII.; Ray, *D. H. N. I.*, I, p. 275.

Chinese as *Mu-to-pi*.[1] The region of Bihar and Bengal was again invaded by the Kāmarūpa monarch Śrī Harṣa (Hariṣa?) who is referred to in the Paśupati inscription as the father-in-law of Jayadeva II,[2] and the ruler of Gauḍa, Oḍra, Kaliṅga, Kosala and other lands, in the year *Harṣa Saṁvat* 153 viz. A. D. 759-60.[3] This invasion was again followed by that of the Kashmir king Jayapīḍa, who according to Kalhaṇa visited lands east of Prayāga in the course of his conquests early in his reign, namely *circa* A. D. 762-63.[4] He is recorded to have reached Puṇḍravardhana which was then subject to the Gauḍa prince Jayanta, whose daughter he married and, after conquering the chiefs of the five Gauḍas, he made his father-in-law their overlord.[5]

As a consequence of such invasions utter disaster prevailed and confusion reigned supreme in the lower Gangetic valley from about the first quarter of the eighth century till the election of Gōpāla to the Pāla throne in *circa* A. D. 765.[6] The consternation of this period has been well described by Tārānātha thus: "There was no longer any member of it (the royal family of the Candras) a king; in Oḍivīsa, in Bengal and in other five provinces of the east; each Kṣatriya, Brāhmaṇa and merchant (*Vaiśya*?) constituted himself king of his surroundings, but there was no king ruling the country."[6] He tells us further how the wife of one of the late kings assassinated by night every one of those who had been chosen to be kings, but after a certain number of years, Gōpāla who had been elected for a time fortunately escaped from her and was eventually made king for life.[7] The reason why this Gōpāla was elected is clearly stated in the Khalimpur grant of Dharmapāladeva, dated the 12th day of *Mārga*, of the year 32 of his "increasing" reign. It tells us how "the glorious Gōpāla, whom the people made to take the hand of Fortune, put an end to the practice of fishes (*Matsyanyāya*)."[8] Thus after a period of anarchy lasting for nearly forty years, peace was restored and plenty returned to the land where for so many centuries the glorious Guptas reigned, prospered and perished.

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[1] Stein, *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, I, pp. 88-89.

[2] *I. A.*, IX, p. 180.

[3] Ray, *op. cit.*, I, p. 278; also see Kalhaṇa, *Rājataraṅgiṇi*, IV, 421-68, pp. 78-70.

[4] Kalhaṇa, *op. cit.*, IV, vv. 401-61.

[5] Ray, *op. cit.*, I, p. 279; also see p. 278 wherein he is placed in "the second half of the eighth century".

[6] *I. A.*, IV, pp. 365-66.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 366.

[8] *E. I.*, IV, no. 34, p. 251. Kauṭalya refers to this *nyāya*: *mātsyanyāy-ābhibhūtāḥ prajā Manuṃ Vaivasvataṃ rājānaṃ cakrire. Arthaśāstra*, Bk. I, text, ch. 9, p. 22; trans. ch. XIII, p. 22.

CHAPTER II

Common Life

I. Introduction

The Dharma Śāstra literature prescribed a procedure of life which was to be followed by the four castes. Yājñavalkya states that "the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and the Śūdras are the (four) *Varṇas* (castes); of them the first three are the twice-born. All their rites from the very conception (*Garbhādhānaṃ*) to death (*Śrāddha*), are performed with the recitation of *Maṅtras* (mystic syllables)."[1] The details of these ceremonies which had to be performed were also given. "*Garbhādhānaṃ*" says Yājñavalkya "(takes place when the conception is formed) during the menses; *Puṃsavanaṃ* (formation of a male child), before the moving of the foetus (*Sīmaṅtonnayanaṃ*) in the sixth or eighth (month); and *Jātakarma* after delivery. *Nāmakaraṇaṃ* (takes place) on the eleventh (day after birth); *Niṣkramaṇaṃ*, in the fourth month; *Annaprāśanaṃ*, in the sixth month; and *Cūḍākaraṇaṃ* should be performed according to the practices of the family." The later ceremonies were also to be executed in accordance with specified usage. "The *Upanayanaṃ* (ceremony) of a Brāhmaṇa (is performed) in the eighth year (counting from the time of conception); (that of) a Kṣatriya in the eleventh or according to the practices of the family. After the celebration of the *Upanayanaṃ*, the preceptor, after reciting the *Mahā-Vyāhṛti*, should teach the disciple the Vēdas, good and pure conduct."[2]

The programme of the day was also laid down by the Dharma Śāstras. "One should daily bathe" continues Yājñavalkya "after one gets up, answer the calls of Nature and then sprinkle (on his person) with an *Āpohiṣṭa-Maṅtraṃ*, practise *Prāṇāyāma* (suppression of vital airs), *Sāryyōpasthānaṃ* (worshipping the sun) and recite the *Gāyatrī*."[3]

The life of a student was also enjoined. The student, according to Yājñavalkya, "should study when called (upon by his preceptor to do so) and dedicate unto him (whatever had been) acquired (by him by begging). He should secure (the preceptor's) well-being by

[1] *Yajñavalkya Saṁhitā*, I, 10-21, p. 3. (ed. by M. N. Dutt, Calcutta, 1908).
[2] *Ibid.*, 14, p. 4.
[3] *Ibid*, I, 22. p. 5.

his mind, words, body and deeds."[1] A time-limit was set forth for the periods of his studies. "In studying each *Vēda*, one should lead the life of a religious student for twelve years, or for five years (at the lowest). Some say (one should observe) *Brahmacaryaṃ* while studying the *Vēdas*, (one should have) his hairs shaven in the sixteenth year (beginning with the conception)."[2]

Then came the time for greater worldly responsibilities like marriage. Yājñavalkya decrees that "the period up to the sixteenth, twenty-second, and the twenty-fourth year, is laid down as the time for *Upanayanaṃ* (respectively) for the Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya."[4] In marriage as in other matters the higher castes were granted some special privileges. "The Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas and the Vaiśyas must take wives three, two and one in number according to the order of their caste."[3] The types of marriages sanctioned were the *Daiva, Kāyaḥ, Asura*,[4] the *Pratilōma-Anulōma*, inter-caste marriage being also permitted.[5]

The householder had to live and the nature of food which he could consume and which he had to avoid is also depicted. Yājñavalkya observes that "*Sallas* (porcupine), crocodiles, tortoises, porcupines and rhinoceroses—these five-nailed animals and of fish, *Śiṃhāsya, Rōhita, Pāthina, Rājīva* and lobsters are not allowed to be eaten by the twice-born."[6] But exceptions were made. "Taking meat when life is in danger," he reveals "at a *Śrāddha*, (as well as) *prōkṣita* (meat of an animal offered in fire for a sacrifice) and taking (the residue of) meat after having offered it to the twice-born, the celestials and the departed manes, does not lead to the commitment of any sin."[7]

Spirituous liquors were not taboo even among the privileged Brāhmaṇas. "The twice-born one" remarks Yājñavalkya "who has in store food for three years to last, can drink Sōma-juice; (and) one, who has food in store for a year, before the drinking of Sōma, should perform the rites which ought to be performed (*i.e.*, the Agnihōtra)."[8]

The vegetable foods were not of course forgotten. "An edible, which has been prepared" affirms the same authority, "a night

[1] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, I, 27, pp. 5-6.
[2] *Ibid*, 36, p. 7.
[3] *Ibid*, 57, p. 10.
[4] *Ibid*, 59-61, p. 11.
[5] *Ibid*, 62, p 11 ; 94-95, p. 17.
[6] *Ibid*, I, 177-78,p. 30.
[7] *Ibid*, I, 79, p. 30.
[8] *Ibid*, 124, pp. 21-22.

before and prepared with clarified butter or oil, and kept for some time, may be taken. Cakes of wheat and barley and those made of milk (dried up) (even) if not made with clarified butter or oil (may be taken) if they are not sour to the taste."[1]

In eating, not to say in general life, cleanliness was advocated. "After bathing," adds Yājñavalkya "drinking water, yawning, sleeping, eating, walking, putting on cloth, (as also after) reading, (one should) rinse his mouth again, even if he has done it once (before)."[2]

When life itself ended the departed manes of those who perished were to be gratified by the performance of the *Śrāddha* ceremony. The nature of food, the period, the persons qualified to perform this ceremony are given in detail and the beneficial results are also enumerated.[3] Yājñavalkya clearly specifies that "one should daily follow the rules of conduct laid down in the *Śrutis* and *Smṛtis*."[4]

In the light of these remarks it may now be seen how far the people in the Gupta age followed these injunctions of the Law-Givers.

II. The Divisions of Society

Society at the advent of the Guptas was divided into the four traditional divisions of Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras. This division of society can be traced from the Kauṭilīyan polity down into the *Smṛti* literature.[5] The Chinese traveller, Fa Hien, noticed some of these castes. He refers to the Brāhmaṇas who "with their contrary doctrines became angry and jealous".[6] He found that the "heads of Vaiśya families" established in the cities houses for dispensing charity and medicines.[7] He saw that the Cāṇḍālas were fishermen and hunters, living apart from the other castes.[8] Although he does not mention in particular the Kṣatriyas, he nevertheless probably alludes to them when he refers to the king's body-guards and attendants.[9] But, unlike his predecessor, Yüan Chwāng was more precise in his observations regarding the four castes. He clearly says: "There are four orders of hereditary

[1] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 169, p. 29.
[2] *Ibid*, 196, p. 33.
[3] *Ibid*, 250-64, pp. 42-45.
[4] *Ibid*, 154, p. 26.
[5] *Cf.* Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. I, Ch. III, pp. 6-7; The *Laws of Manu*, Ch. I, 88-90, 4-24 (Bühler).
[6] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 79.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[9] *Ibid.*

clan distinctions. The first is that of the Brāhmins of "purely living"; these keep their principles and live continently, strictly observing ceremonial purity. The second order is that of the Kshatriyas, the race of kings: this order has held sovereignty for many generations, and its aims are benevolence and mercy. The third order is that of the Vaiśyas or class of traders, who barter commodities and pursue gain far and near. The fourth class is that of the Śūdras or agriculturists; these toil at cultivating the soil and are industrious at sowing and reaping. These four castes form classes of various degrees of ceremonial purity."[1] Such an acute observation by no means implied that Yüan Chwāng failed to observe the unfortunate Cāṇḍālas who came within the purview of Fa Hien, for these too were noticed by the former, as having been 'butchers, fishermen, public performers, executioners and scavengers'.[2]

The "ceremonial purity" which was observed by Yüan Chwāng appears to have been the Hindu ideal of maintaining the *Varṇāśrama Dharma*. It was at least preached by poets for instance like Kālidāsa and probably adopted by contemporary rulers. This can be seen from contemporary epigraphs which refer in clear terms to the four castes and the duties of rulers towards them. The Mandasor stone inscription of Yaśōdharman and Viṣṇuvardhana, dated A. D. 533-34, mentions the 'advantages of those who belonged to the (four) (recognised) castes' (*varṇinām*).[3] In the undated Asirgaḍh copper seal inscription of Śarvavarman it is recorded how *Mahārāja* Harivarman was "employing (*his*) sovereignty for regulating the different castes and stages of religious life".[4] Prabhākaravardhana, the father of the illustrious Harsavardhana, was similarly credited with "regulating all the castes and stages of religious life."[5] In the Alīṇā plates of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, it is related how Kharagraha II "properly regulated the practices of the different castes and stages of life."[6] From these examples it may be concluded that during the age of Gupta sovereignty it was considered a royal duty to protect the four castes and their regulations.

That Kālidāsa, among poets, was an advocate of such an ideal can be observed from his works. He considered that the sovereign was the

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 168; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 82.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 147., Hiuen Tsiang, *Ibid.*, p. 74.
[3] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III (35), p. 157, text, p. 154.
[4] *Ibid.*, (47) p. 221, text p. 220: *varṇāśrama vyavasthāpana pravṛtta.*
[5] *Ibid.*, (53) p. 232.
[6] *Ibid.*, (39) p. 185, text p. 177: *sākṣād=dharma iva samyag-vyavasthāpita-varṇāśramācārāḥ.*

protector of the *Varṇāśrama Dharma* and that it was his duty to see that they did not in the least abandon the righteous path. Each caste (*varṇa*) had to perform its own duties (*sahaja-karma*)[1] out of necessity[2] and any infringement of such a *Varṇāśrama Dharma*, specified as an *apacāraḥ*, was to be duly suppressed by the king.[3] Such an ideal was considered to maintain the purity of the castes.[4] Therefore, it is not strange to hear that Śūdras, for example, were forbidden to perform austerities,[5] which were evidently the privileges of the twice-born, the Brāhmaṇas.

But even Kālidāsa discovered that in actual practice such an ideal was not universally followed. Inter-caste marriages then, as even now, took place despite the threats of orthodoxy and the fear of ostracism. Generals born of such mixed marriages were branded as *varṇāvarāḥ* in the days of Kālidāsa.[6] That such an ideal was in practice unworkable owing to its inelasticity is borne out by Yüan Chwāng who refers to the great intermixture of castes. Writing about them he says: "There are also mixed castes; numerous clans formed by groups of people according to their kinds, and these cannot be described."[7] That Yüan Chwāng was himself correct regarding this observation can be proved by an instance from Bāṇa's life. Bāṇa's father, Citrabhānu, was a pure Vātsyāyana Brāhmaṇa, but his wife Rājadēvī was a Brāhmaṇi woman, and the issue of this marriage was the celebrated Bāṇa, the chronicler of Harṣavardhana. Moreover, he had a half-brother, Candrasena, by a Śūdra mother, who lived with him under the same roof.[8]

If society was divided into the four traditional castes, then by a strange coincidence, the span of man's life itself was classified into four stages (*āśramas*). The first was that of a pupil-bachelor *brahmacārin*); then he became the house-holder (*gṛhastha*); then he assumed the role of a hermit (*vānaprastha*); and finally, abandoning all worldly concerns, he turned a religious mendicant (*sanyāsi*).[9]

[1] *Raghu.*, XVIII, 12. p. 366.; *Śak*, Act V, 10, p. 67; see also *The Laws of Manu*, I, 87, p. 24 (Bühler).

[2] *Ibid.*, I, 17, p. 7: *rekhāmātram-api kṣuṇṇādā manōrvartamanaḥ paraṃ |*
na vyatīyuḥ prajāstasya niyantur nemivṛttayaḥ ||

[3] *Śak.*, Act V, 8, p. 67.

[4] *Raghu.*, I, 69, p. 23: *santatiḥ śuddhavaṁśyāhi.*

[5] *Ibid.*, XV, 53, p. 316: *kṛta daṇḍaḥ svayaṃ rājñā lēbhē śūdraḥ satāṃ gatiṃ |*
tapasā duścareṇāpi na svamārgavilaṅghinā ||

[6] *Māl.*, Act I, p. 13.

[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 168; Huien Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 82.

[8] Bāna, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 32-34, text, pp. 40-43.

[9] *Raghu.*, I, 8, p. 4. v. 19. p. 101; VIII, 14, p. 162; XIV, 67, p. 301.

III. Brāhmanās and Domestic Life

1. Student Life: Brahmacarya

Ceremony played a vital role in the common life of the people in the Gupta period. Human life from the start had to be purified by a number of practices which were called *Saṁskāras*. On the recognition of the earliest signs of pregnancy, the *Puṁsavana* was performed for the birth of a son. This ceremony consisted in the pregnant woman holding a grain of barley and two *māṣas* in her right hand over which, while incantations were chanted, a little curd was poured and she had to sip it.[1] Before the navel string was cut, the *Jātakarma*[2] was performed and it comprised of a rather lengthy ceremonial in which the father blest his child with long life and prosperity, and afterwards gave presents to Brāhmaṇās.[3] The christening, called the *Nāmadēya*,[4] was made after the bath of natal purification. Then, between the first and the third years of a child,[5] the *Vṛttacūla*[6] or *Cūḍākarma* rite of letting its hair grow, was performed. The wearing of the sacred thread was called the *Upanayana*,[7] which initiated the boy into the studies of the *Vēdas*, between the age of eight to sixteen years. The first shaving of the chins was styled as *Gōdāna*,[8] between the twenty-second and twenty-fourth years.

Yüan Chwāng enlightens us on what the Brāhmaṇas had to study. He found that they studied the four *Vēdas*, although he does not mention the other *Śāstras* to which Bāṇa refers. "The Brāhmins" he states, "learn the four Vēda treatises. The first called "*Shou*", 'Longevity' (the Āyur-Veda) tells of nourishing life and keeping the constitution in order; the second called *Tzù*, "Worship" (the Yajur Vēda) tells of the making of offerings and supplications; the third called *P'ing*, 'Making Even' (the Sāma Vēda) describes ceremonial etiquette, divination and military tactics; the fourth called *Shu* or "Arts" (the Atharva Vēda) tells us of the various skilled arts, exorcisms, medicine."[9] Although Yüan Chwāng gives an erroneous and confused account of the *Vēdas* and the topics they deal with,[10] still he substantiates the words of Bāṇa, according to whom a student in his time had to master the *Vēdas* and the *Vēdāṅgas*.

[1] *Raghu.*, III, 18, p. 157.
[2] *Ibid.*, 18.
[3] *Ibid.*, see note on *Jātakarma* by S. P. Pandit.
[4] *Ibid.*, x, 67. p. 221.
[5] *Cf. The Laws af Manu*, II, 30-33, p. 35, V, 70, p. 180 (Bühler).
[6] *Raghu.*, iii, 28. p. 60.
[7] *Ibid.*, 29, p. 61.
[8] *Ibid.*, 33, p. 62.
[9] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 159; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 79.
[10] *Cf.* Watters' remarks, *ibid.*, pp. 157-61.

But when writing about Buddhist studies, Yüan Chwāng was on firmer ground. The knowledge that was imparted to a Hindu boy can well be compared with the curriculum which a Buddhist student had to undergo after he was seven years old. "When the children are seven years of age" says Yüan Chwāng, "the great treatises of the Five Sciences are gradually communicated to them". The first was the science of grammar, the second that of the skilled professions concerned with the principles of the mechanical arts, the "dual process" and astrology. The third was the science of medicine, the fourth, the science of reasoning, and the fifth the "science of the Eternal" which dealt with the 'five vehicles' and the doctrine of *Karma*.[1]

According to Bāṇa, however, the students had to study not only the *Vēdas* but in addition had to attend to the daily mastery of the *Vēdas*, and to the display of old earnestness in practising the art of sacrifice; they had to follow classes in the exposition of grammar, without idly spending their time in a series of emulous discussions. They had to participate in an old "Logic Society," where they evidently discussed the problems pertaining to the science of logic (*Tarka-śāstra*). They exhibited excessive delight in the *Mīmāṁsā*, "dulling all pleasure in other authoritative books".[2]

That Kālidāsa must have invariably recorded contemporary usage concerning the details of student life can be proved by internal evidence pertaining to the days of Bāṇa and others although there was a gap of a century between these two writers. A boy, probably as soon as he was of school-going age, namely, five or six years, was sent to a teacher's house and there lived under his preceptor's roof as a student till he was fourteen years old. Bāṇa tells us that "when being now about fourteen years of age, he had passed through initiation and the associated rites and had returned from his teacher's house as a *snātaka*".[3] When a boy was such a student, he wore "long tawny braids of hair" and his forehead was streaked with "white sectarian marks made of ashes".[4] Bāṇa too underwent the ceremony of the investiture of the sacred thread and, as he grew up, he too had to study the *Vēda* with its six divisions (*aṅgas*) and hear as far as possible lectures on the *Śāstras*.[5] These details show how far the customs recorded by Kālidāsa were almost faithfully continued in the age of Harṣavardhana without any material changes.

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 154-55.; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 78-79.
[2] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 35.
[5] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

The age when these studies had to be completed may now be decided. Kālidāsa, for instance, says that the long hair of the boy student, after his mastery of the *Vēdas*, was cut at the age of sixteen years.[1] Bāṇa too tells us that when he had passed through initiation and its connected rites, he was about fourteen years.[2] But Yüan Chwāng states that when the disciples were thirty years old, they went "into office".[3] I-Tsing, who toured in India between the years A. D. 671-95, referring to the Buddhist students remarks that "boys begin to learn the book on the three *Khīlas* (or three pieces of waste land) when they are ten years old, and understand them thoroughly after three years' diligent study".[4] From these statements it may be inferred that the education of a boy as a *Brahmacārin* started probably at the age of five or six and that the student continued to study in the home (*āśrama*) of his preceptor (*guru*) till he was fifteen or sixteen years old.

Further studies were evidently continued in special cases until the young man was thirty years old. This can be substantiated by the personal experience of Bāṇa and I-Tsing. The latter states: "Those who (coming to a priest) want to learn secular literature only, without having any intention of quitting the world, are called 'students' (*Brahmacārin*)".[5] At this age the period of studentship ended, for Bāṇa clearly says that he returned from his teacher's house where he had been under training[6]. That Bāṇa's education was not complete at this age is also evident from his own words. He adds: "But gradually *thereafter* by observation of great courts charming the mind with their noble routine, by paying his respects to the schools of the wise brilliant with blameless knowledge, by attendance at the assemblies of able men deep in priceless discussions, by plunging into the circles of clever men dowered with profound natural wisdom, he regained the sage attitude of mind customary among his race. *After long years he returned* once more to his own native soil, resort of Brāhmaṇas, shelter of the Vātsyāyana line".[7] Here Bāṇa explicitly observes that *after* he returned from his teacher's house completing his *Brahmacarya* or studentship period, he went out again to acquire knowledge by means of service, travel, intellectual intercourse with savants and discussion with scholars, on completing which, he *returned* to his home.

[1] *Raghu.*, III, 33, p. 62.
[2] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 32, text, p. 41.
[3] Yüan Chwang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 160; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 79.
[4] I-Tsing, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, p. 175, (1896).
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 106.
[6] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 32, text, p. 41. Italics mine.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34, text pp. 42-43. Italics mine.

All these studies implied the existence of teachers and an organized system of instruction. The Brāhmaṇas too must have had their own teachers who undertook to train young boys in the study of the *Vēdas* and the rituals of sacrifice. Bāṇa, in fact, refers to his own preceptor and the 'Brāhmaṇa groups' who had to be gratified by the faultless performance of sacrifices.[1] His reference to the classes of the exposition of grammar suggests that such subjects must have been explained by acknowledged authorities to groups of students. Such a teacher, according to Yüan Chwāng, was expected to have "a wide, thorough, and minute knowledge of these (subjects) with an exhaustive comprehension of all that is abstruse in them".[2] These teachers, being Brāhmaṇas, appear to have paid particular attention to the observance of ritual. When Bāṇa inquired of his elders regarding the studies of boys, they replied that their "intellectual pastimes" were always at their command, and that "all the ceremonies proper to Brāhmaṇas are fully carried out".[3]

In the actual art of tuition, if Yüan Chwāng can be trusted, the Brāhmaṇa teachers appear to have exercised great perseverance, kindness and skill. "These teachers" he observes, "explain the general meaning (to their disciples) and teach them the minutiæ; they rouse them to activity and skilfully win them to progress; they instruct the inert and sharpen the dull. When disciples, intelligent and acute, are addicted to idle shirking, the teachers doggedly persevere repeating instruction until their training is finished. *When the disciples are thirty years old*, their minds being settled and their education finished, *they go into office*; and the first thing they do then is to reward the kindness of their teachers."[4] I-Tsing also noticed the Brāhmaṇa practice of imparting knowledge. He found that in India there were "two traditional ways by which one can attain to great intellectual power. Firstly, by repeatedly committing to memory the intellect is developed; secondly the alphabet fixes one's ideas."[5] The first system clearly refers to the practice of memorising and the second to the system of study by means of the written matter.

From these accounts of the Brāhmaṇa tutorial system, as set down by Yüan Chwāng and I-Tsing, it is evident that the "repetition" of instruction, thereby suggesting an oral system of imparting knowledge, was predominant; a youth's education was considered

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 71.
[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I. p. 159; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 79.
[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 160; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. Italics mine.
[5] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-83.

complete when he was thirty years old; on completing his education he sought, then as now, some occupation or other; and finally, if he was fortunately established in some lucrative position, he tried to requite his gratitude towards his teacher by offering him some adequate reward. In the light of these inferences, as Bāṇa seems to have only been fourteen years when he returned from his teacher's house, he cannot be considered to have completed his education. Moreover, he too being faced with the problem of unemployment, attempted to gain a footing in Harṣa's court.

But Bāṇa was fortunate in having three cousins, who were brothers and had risen to the eminence of preceptors. It is interesting to note how he casually describes their qualifications after achieving this distinction. Referring to them he reveals that they were "men of mild manners, and culture, holding the status of preceptors, expounders of *Nyāya*, deep in the study of able works, receiving only good words, both in the world and in grammar, versed in the acts of all monarchs and sages of old, inspired in mind by the *Mahābhārata*, acquainted with all legends, great in wisdom and poetry, full of eagerness to know stories of heroes, thirsting for no elixir, but that of listening to well-turned phrases, foremost in years, speech, distinction, asceticism, the conference, the festival, in person and in sacrifice."[1] Despite the apparent hyperbole which all these qualifications are said to have graced his three preceptors, it need not be considered an exaggeration to conclude that such teachers were expected to attain a high standard of knowledge, especially in the fields of the *Veda*, *Nyāya*, *Purāṇa*, *Nītiśāstra*, *Vyākaraṇa* and general knowledge. A person possessing these qualifications was highly honoured and his requests were treated with due respect. Such scholars were probably addressed to as Sir (*Ārya*) and it may be remembered that the *Harṣacarita* was narrated as a story in response to the request of such a preceptor named Śyāmala.[2]

2. Leaving the Home

Once a student returned home from his teacher's house, after completing his education, he had to make his own way in the world. Therefore, the day on which such a venture was to be made had to be very auspicious. What exactly was done on such a day can be observed from an incident in Bāṇa's life. Before venturing on a journey several ceremonies were performed in order to make it propitious. Having risen and bathed, Bāṇa "put on a dress of white

[1] Bāṇa *op. cit.*, pp. 73-74; text, p. 85.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 76; text, p. 92.

silk, seized his rosary and repeatedly recited the hymns and sacred texts fit for starting on a journey, after washing Śiva's image with milk." Bāṇa then offered worship with lighted lamps, ointments, oblations, banners, perfumes, incense and sweet flowers. Subsequently having "proffered a libation with profound reverence to the holy fire, whose right flame was kindled by a profuse pouring of ghi, and whose fiery crest was noisily crackling with splitting husks of the restless mustard seeds, which had been previously offered, he distributed wealth according to his means to the Brāhmaṇas, and walked solemnly round the sacred cow which faced the east, himself decked with white unguents, and wearing white garlands, and white garments and having his ears adorned with *giri-karṇikā* flowers, fastened with the ends of *dūrvā* grass, and covered with yellow paint, and having white mustard put on his top-knot".[1]

Then, "all the rites necessary at starting on a journey" were performed for him by his sister Mālatī, clad in white garments. Finally he was greeted with blessings by the aged women of the family, applauded by the old female attendants, dismissed with good wishes by the *gurus* whose feet he worshipped, kissed on the head by the elders whom he himself saluted", while the astrologers wished him their utmost to secure favourable constellations. Then he looked upon a full water-jar set in the court-yard which was daubed with brown cow-dung, with a mango spray placed in its mouth, whitened with five finger breadths of flour and with its neck encircled by a garland of white flowers. At last, paying his homage to the family deities and followed by his own Brāhmaṇas who held in their hands flowers and fruits and muttered the *Aprativatha* hymn,[2] he went out from his village of Prītikūṭa, setting his right foot first.[3]

There are no means of ascertaining whether or not such a procedure, prior to the undertaking of an auspicious journey, was followed during the earlier Gupta times. But, as with several other matters of social life, the ceremonial adopted by Bāṇa must have been only traditional in the sense that it was an adaptation of an ancient practice, which, though sanctioned by Manu,[4] was possibly followed in the Gupta period. The characteristics of such a farewell appear to have been made after the morning bath, and were followed by the worship of family deities, granting of gifts to the Brāhmaṇas,

[1] Bāṇa *op. cit.*, p. 44, text, pp. 56-57.

[2] *Cf. Ṛgvēda*, 10, 103; *Ait Brāhmaṇa*, VIII, 10, 351 (S. B. H.)

[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 45, text, p. 57.

[4] *Cf. The Laws of Manu*, II and III, 249, 1-5, pp. 74-75.

a formal leave-taking with elders in the house and the observation of certain superstitions.

3. Superstitions and Beliefs

Superstition played an important part in the life of the people in the Gupta age. If the right eye throbbed it was considered to augur ill,[1] while the throbbing of the left one spelt good,[2] especially to women. In the case of men, however, the trepidation of the right arm was reckoned auspicious.[3] The granting of gifts to Brāhmaṇas was believed to bring about good.[4] Deer passing from right to left foreshadowed evil. A crow crying out from a burnt-out tree and meeting with a Digambara Jaina were thought inauspicious.[5] The heaving of the earth, the upheavals of the seas, the appearance of the comets, the sight of a human offering in the guise of a headless trunk in the sun's circle, the extreme redness of the quarters, the dimness of the sun's brilliance by dust-showers and the discordant howls of jackals with uplifted muzzles, were all considered portents of evil omen.[6]

Amulets, used as means either for defence[7] or for the achievement of triumph, were worn by men and children in lockets generally on their wrists.[8] Some of these talismans were prepared from herbs like *Aparājita* (*clitoris ternata*), which were supposed to be metamorphosed into a serpent on meeting an undesirable person and kill him.[9] Counter antidotes also appear to have been in use. It was considered possible to stupefy venomous cobras in a charmed circle,[10] and cure the snake-bite by means of the *Udakumbhavidhāna* rite with which the snake-doctors seem to have been familiar. Excision and cauterisation were thought to be useful in such exigencies, while a cooling treatment was also recommended. A serpent's image, charmed, was supposed to serve as an antidote as well; but the bite, if feigned, was considered to turn out genuine.[11]

[1] *Śak.*, Act V, p. 68.
[2] *Māl.*, Act V, p. 139.
[3] *Śak.*, Act I, 15, p. 8.
[4] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 134.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 134-35.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 146-47.
[7] *Śak.*, Act VII, p. 115.
[8] *Raghu.*, XVI, 74, 83, pp. 342, 344.
[9] *Śak.*, Act VII, p. 118: *sarpo bhūtvā daśati.*
[10] *Raghu.*, ii, 32, p. 38.
[11] *Māl.*, Act IV, p. 122-123,

In fact, it was a common belief that a miser, after his death became a snake to protect his wealth.[1] The faith in talismans continued to the days of Bāṇa. These were considered to ward off evils[2] and sometimes "a few ashes mixed with mustard seed," with a drop of ghee on it was placed on a child's palate.[3] The necks of children were adorned with 'rows of tiger-claws,'[4] evidently for an auspicious purpose.

Certain other beliefs were also current. The knowledge of *tiraskariṇī* was considered to make a man invisible.[5] People had great faith in Palmistry,[6] Astrology and consequently in fortune tellers (*Daivacintakas*).[7] It may be recalled that Bāṇa, on setting out from his home, was blest by the astrologers as well as his elders. Daṇḍin tells us that when a person became a fortune-teller he "tucked a measure of rice in his garment's hem and roamed the earth."[8]

The interpretation of dreams may also be considered to have been a kind of superstition. The birth of a son seems to have been foreshadowed in dreams. Bāṇa relates that king Caṅdrapīḍa saw in a dream the full moon entering the mouth of his queen Vilāsavatī, while another courtier saw likewise in a dream a white-robed Brāhmaṇa placing in his wife's lap a "lotus that rained drops of honey, with a hundred outspread white petals." These omens were thought to foreshadow the birth of a son to king Caṅdrāpīḍa. Bāṇa, in citing these experiences of visions, probably recorded two examples of contemporary interpretaions of dreams. Dreams, for instance, seen at the close of the night, were thought to bear fruit in truth.[9] This dream may be compared with the vision of queen Yaśōvatī, the wife of king Prabhākaravardhana, which appeared to foreshadow the births of their children. In response to her husband's request to explain the cause of her fright in her sleep she replied: "I saw in a dream two shining youths issue from the sun's disk, filling the heavens as with radiance of morning, and turning the whole world as it were into lightning. They wore crowns, earrings, armlets, and cuirasses: swords were in their hands: they were bathed in blood

[1] *Śak.*, Act VI, 28, p. 103.
[2] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 166.
[3] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 54.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[5] *Śak.*, Act VI, p. 83.
[6] *Kum.*, V, 58, p. 93.
[7] *Māl.*, Act IV, p. 107; *Cf. Arthaśāstra*, Bk V, Ch. III, p. 308.
[8] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 168.
[9] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 57.

cochineal red. All the world bowed before them with upturned faces and hands joined reverently at their foreheads. Accompanied by one maid like a moon incarnate, who issued from the ray Suṣumṇa they lighted upon the earth and while I screamed, cut open my womb with a sword and essayed to enter. My heart quaked, and I awoke with a cry to my lord". Just then a Marshal (*Bāhyakaṣyāvasthā*) chanted the following *Vaktrā* and *Aparavaktrā* verse while the morning horn rang out at the porch:

'By misshapen trees a treasure, by flashing light a fine jewel,
'By an omen the approach of luck is clearly in the world revealed;
'As the dawn, his harbinger, announces the sun, as the speeding blast the rains approach,
'Even so the appearance of a previous vision foretells good, yea and evil hap to men!'

At these words of the Marshal, the king's heart was filled with delight and he cried out: "Our wishes are fulfilled. Our family goddesses have accepted you. In his graciousness the holy god of the radiant crown (Sūrya) will grant you joy and that soon, by the gift of three noble children."[1]

4. Calculation of Time

The student as well as the ordinary man in the Gupta age had a system of calculating time. Sometimes it was done by merely looking out into the open by night or day, and the results could only have been vague. Kālidāsa, for example, makes a pupil in a hermitage, when he was asked to inform how much of the night remained, cry out: "O! it is dawn!"[2] Such an observation could only have been made by looking about oneself in the open, but invariably a more reliable practice was in use. The night was divided into four watches (*yāma*) after sunset. If the usual sunset may be said to take place at six or six-thirty in the evening, then after the first watch, people generally went to bed. If a *yāma* is taken to be one-eighth part of a day or three hours, then people must have usually retired to bed at nine or nine-thirty at night. Bāṇa informs us that the first watch having been spent with his kinsmen, he went to bed in the house of the preceptor Gaṇapati.[3] The passing of every watch was notified to the public by a watchman, who, on the passing of each watch, loudly recited some hymn. Even kings or little princes

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 105-6, text, pp. 139-41.
[2] *Cf. Raghu.*, XVII, 1, p. 346: *paścimād yāminī yāmāt prasādaṁ ivacetanā.*
[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 78, text, p. 83.

in the palaces were awakened by either such bards or by their sons trained in the art of fluent speech.[1] People usually must have slept probably from nine o'clock at night till three watches had elapsed after sunset and the three o'clock hour was struck at dawn. It must have been the common practice to rise up early at about four in the morning. Bāṇa again tells us that he woke up at the fourth watch of the night. On waking up he worshipped the holy twilight, took his betel and went about the daily round of his duties.[2] On getting up after the performance of his morning worship (*Saṁdhyāvandana*), the absence of partaking any drink deserves to be noticed.[3]

5. The Water-Clock

The watches of the day and night were evidently calculated by the device of the well-known water-clock, the antiquity of which can be traced to Mauryan times. The earliest references to this device of the water-clock are found in the *Jyōtiṣa Vedāṅga* and the Kauṭilīyan *Arthaśāstra*.[4] The latter relates how "forty *kalas* are a *nāḍika* or a *nāḷika* is determined by four *suvarṇa māṣakas* four *aṅgulas* in length, a hole in a water-jar and an *āḍhaka* of water; a *muhūrta* consists of two *nāḷikās*; a day consists of fifteen *muhūrtas*; also a night."[5] The *Divyāvadāna* reveals that one *nāḷikā* is equal to one *drōṇa* of water. The *Arthaśāstra* states that one *nāḍikā* is equal to one *āḍhaka* which is equal to one-fourths *drōṇa* of water. According to the *Purāṇas* one *nāḍikā* is equal to one *āḍhaka* which is equivalent to one-fourths of a *drōṇa*.[6]

This water-clock has fortunately been referred to in inscriptions of the Gupta age, which reveal that it must have been still in active use during this period. In the Harāhā inscription of Īśānavarman, dated A. D. 554, we are told how "the victorious one (Īśānavarman) whose watches can only be determined by means of the water-clock (*nāḍikā*) as if it were at night, the world being encompassed in darkness and bewildered as to the beginning, the middle or the end of the day ..."[7]. In the Wālā inscription of the Maitraka ruler Guhasena, dated A. D. 566-67, mention is made of the expression *Ghaṭa*,[8] which

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[1] *Raghu.*, V, 65-66, p. 113.

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 78-79; text, pp. 93-94.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 79, 87.

[4] *Cf.* Fleet, *The Water-Clock, J. R. A. S.*, 1915, pp. 213-30.

[5] *Arthaśāstra*, Bk III, p. 119. (3rd ed.).

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-21; I. A., XIV, p. 75.

[7] *E. I.*, XIV, no. 5, p. 120; text, p. 117.
Prōdbhūta-sthagit-ārkkamaṇḍala-ruci dig-vyāpinā reṇūna |
Yasyāmūḍadin-ādimadhya-viratau lōk-ēndhakārīkṛte |
Vyaktiṁ nāḍikayaiva yānti jayino yāmāstriyāmāsviva||

[8] *I. A.*, XIV, p. 75. Fleet thought that this vessel was most probably used by Guhasena in his palace to calculate time. *Cf J. R. A. S.*, 1915, p. 230.

was probably the vessel employed to keep the water by the trickling of which the passing of time was recorded. If this vessel was really called the *Ghaṭa*, then the place where the *Ghaṭikas* were measured and made known might have been styled as the *Ghaṭikāsthāna* and an allusion is made to such a place in the famous Tālguṇḍa inscription of the Kadaṁba ruler Śāntivarman, dated *circa* A. D. 450. We are informed that Mayūraśarma "desiring to be proficient in *Pravacana*, entered into all religious centres (*ghaṭikā*) and so became a quick (or ready) debator (or disputant)."[1] It is possible that in the temples, *maṭhas* and *saṅgharāmas*, as will be shown presently, the water-clock was usually kept for the benefit of the public, because in such places people must have congregated and the place where the *ghaṭikā* was placed might have been called the *Ghaṭikasthāna*. This is only a tentative suggestion which deserves confirmation. Nevertheless from these inscriptions it may be concluded that the device of the water-clock must have been a familiar instrument for calculating time among the Kadaṁbas, the Maukhāris and the Maitrakas from the fifth till the seventh centuries.

That it must have been well-known to the people in the Gupta empire also can be confirmed from the accounts of the Chinese travellers, while contemporary Gupta inscriptions, as noticed already, also refer to this important yet familiar instrument. But neither Fa-Hien nor Yüan Chwāng offers us any information about this water-clock and it is only from the later sojourner I-Tsing, who lived for quite a long time in the Nālandā monastery, that we obtain a detailed account of it. He tells us that the water-clock or *clepsydra* was used in monasteries and that boys, who watched them in action, announced the hours to the monastics. Water was filled in a copper vessel, in which a copper bowl was floated and this bowl, being thin and delicate, held two *Shāngs* or *prasthās* of water (about two pints). In its bottom a hole was pierced, small as a pin-hole, through which the water sprang up. This hole had to be made larger or smaller according to the time of the year and had to be well set in order to calculate the length of the hours.

Commencing from the morning, at the first immersion of the bowl, one stroke of a drum was announced, and at the second immersion, two strokes and at the third, three strokes. But at the fourth immersion, besides four strokes of a drum, two blasts of a couch-shell, and one more beat of a drum were added to the announcement. This

[1] *E. C.*, VII, Sk. 176, p. 113, text, p. 269.: *Pravacanaṃ nikhila ghaṭikāṃ viveś-āśu arkkakaḥ.*

period was called the first hour, when the sun was at the east between the zenith and the horizon. When the second turn of four immersions of the bowl was over, four strokes of a drum were struck, a conch-shell was blown and two more strokes were sounded. This moment was styled the second hour, which was the exact beginning of the noon called the "horse-hour". As there were two hours announced in the fore as well as in the after-noon, and as there were four hours in the night too, the division of one day and one night in the Nālandā monastery comprised of eight "hours".[1]

In order to set this water-clock in action, adds I-Tsing, it was necessary to be a good mechanic. One had to calculate first the length of the day and night and then to divide them into hours. There could be eight immersions of the bowl from noon to mid-day. If it happened that the immersions were less than eight (when it was mid-day), the hole of the bowl had to be opened a little wider. When the day or night became gradually shorter, half a ladle of water had to be added, and when the day or night grew gradually longer, half a ladle had to be let off. When such care was taken, even on cloudy or rainy days, there was no fear of either missing the noon-hour or the night watches.[2]

Since it has been noticed that Bāṇa woke up at the commencement of the fourth watch, it may be inferred that the night according to Hindu calculation must have consisted of four watches, or twelve hours from six o'clock in the evening to six o'clock in the morning, while according to the Buddhist practice, the night was made up of four "hours", each of which was comprised of three hours. The former system was observed by Yüan Chwāng, who says that "the non-Buddhist people of India divided the day and night into four times",[3] while the latter is borne out by I-Tsing.

The public announcement of time was possibly an administrative matter. Bāṇa, for instance, refers to the bard who announced with some verses the commencement of the fourth watch.[4] Considering his poverty, neither he nor the preceptor Gaṇapati from whose house he heard the verses, could have afforded to maintain a public or even a private watchman. I-Tsing, moreover, tells us that the *clepsydræ*

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-45.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 146.

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 143. He further adds that one *Kṣaṇa* was the shortest space of time. 120 *kṣaṇas* = 1 *Tatkṣaṇa*. 60 *tatkṣaṇas* = 1 *lava*. 30½ *lavas* = 1 *muhūrta*. 5 *muhūrtas* = 1 "time". 6 "times" = 1 Day-Night.

[4] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 78.

were only gifts from kings.[1] In Nālandā, however, as though to determine what may now be termed the standard time, the water-clock was kept by "imperial order to determine the night time".[2]

6. The Hindu Calendar

In calculating months, the lunar calendar was followed. The passing of every fortnight was therefore watched and so mention is made how "the fourteenth night when the rising of the full moon" was at hand.[3] The general practice must have been to reckon each day from the rising of the full-moon; hence it was recorded, for example, in one case that a particular day was "the fourteenth day of the month".[4]

In fact, contemporary epigraphs furnish us details about the Hindu calendar as it was in use in the Gupta empire. The year was divided into twelve months, the first of which was *Caitra* (March-April). The Khoh copper plates of the *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 528-29, was issued in this month.[5] The next month was *Vaiśākha*, corresponding to April-May. The Gayā copper plate grant of Samudra Gupta, dated A. D. 328-29, was given in *Vaiśākha*.[6] The Kahāum stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta dated A. D. 460-61, refers to the month *Jyēṣṭha*[7] (May-June), which followed *Vaiśākha*. After this month came *Āṣāḍha* (June-July) in a bright fortnight of which in the year A. D. 401-2 the Udayagiri cave inscription of Candra Gupta II was engraved.[8] The month of *Āṣāḍha* was followed by *Śrāvaṇa* (July-August) The Eran posthumous stone inscription of Gōparāja was issued in this month.[9] *Āṣāḍha* was succeeded by *Bhādrapada* (August-September) This month was also known as *Prauṣṭhapada* as can be seen from the Junagadh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta.[10] The Sāñci stone inscription of Candra Gupta II, dated A. D. 412-13, bears this month as the date of issue.[11] The next month was *Āśvīja* = *Āśvajuja* (September-October). In this month of the year A. D. 516-17 was granted the Khoh

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 144, 146. In Surat and Kāthiawād this custom of publicly announcing time by a *Dāṇḍya* still prevails.

[2] *Cf. Two Chinese Bhuddhist Ins.*; *J. R. A. S.*, XIII (New Series), p. 571.

[3] Bāṇa, *Kādambarī*, p. 54.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

[5] Fleet *op. cit.*, (25) p. 116; (28) p. 129; (71) p. 278.

[6] *Ibid.*, (60) p. 257; (38) p. 171.

[7] *Ibid.*, (15) p. 67; (55) p. 243.

[8] *Ibid.*, (3) p. 25.

[9] *Ibid.*, (21) p. 92.

[10] *Ibid.*, (14) pp. 60, 64.

[11] *Ibid.*, (5) p. 34.

copper plate grant of the *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha.[1] The succeeding month was *Kārttika* (October-November); and the Khōh copper plate grant of the *Mahārāja* Hastin dated A. D. 475-76 says that it was given away "in the year hundred and fifty-six" (A. D. 475-76) in the *Mahā-Vaiśākha saṁvatsara*, on the third lunar day of the bright fortnight of the month *Kārttika*".[2] Then came *Mārgaśīrṣa* corresponding to November-December. In this month, referring only to the fifth regnal year, was issued the Ārang copper plates of the *Rājā* Mahā-Jayarāja.[3] *Pauṣa* was the name of the next month. *Māgha* (December-January) which is mentioned, for example, in the Khoh copper plate grant of the *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 533-34.[4] *Pauṣa* was followed by *Māgha*, referred to in the Majhgawām copper plate grant of the *Mahārāja* Hastin issued in A. D. 510-11.[5] After *Māgha* came the last month *Phālguṇa* (February-March) mentioned for instance, in the Indor copper plate grant of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 465-66.[6]

IV. The House-Holder (*Grahastha*)

1. Marriage

After completing his studies, as noticed above, either after the age of sixteen or on finishing his travels and further studies after thirty, the *Brahmacārin* thought of marriage.[7]

Kālidāsa, refers to four kinds of marriage viz., *Svayaṁvara*, *Prājāpatya*, *Gāṅdharva* and *Asura*. The first two will be discussed later on in the course of this treatise, for they were pre-eminently connected with the court, while the rest must have prevailed among the common people. In the *Prājāpatya* form of marriage, the father gave away his daughter, fully ornamented to his prospective son-in-law.[8] The *Gāṅdharva* type of marriage was contracted by lovers without consulting their parents or performing any ritual[9]; while, according to the *Asura* system, the father of the boy accepted as a condition of the marriage the bride-money (*duhitṛ-śulka*).[10] Of all these types of marriage the *Prājāpatya* type

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (30) p. 134; (62) p. 262.
[2] *Ibid.*, (21) p. 96-97.
[3] *Ibid.*, (40) p. 195.
[4] *Ibid.*, (31) p. 139.
[5] *Ibid.*, (23) p. 108; (66) p. 268.
[6] *Ibid.*, (16) p. 71; (59) p. 254.
[7] *Cf. The Laws of Manu*, Ch. III, vv-1-4, pp. 74-75 (Bühler).
[8] *Raghu.*, VII, 13, p. 15-28.
[9] *Śak.*, Act III, 20, p. 41.
[10] *Raghu.*, XI, 38, p. 234.

was probably the most popular as it seems to have conformed to the warning of Kālidāsa regarding unions. He observed that a match especially when it was contracted privately between individuals should be made after careful scrutiny.[1] The *Gāndharva* rite of marriage probably appealed to the romantically-minded, but there is no evidence to prove that it was current. Nevertheless, it is not mentioned as one of the types of union ; on the contrary, because till now no evidence is forth coming to prove its prevalence, it cannot be said that it did not prevail at all. Greater plausibility can be claimed for the *Asura* system, the main stipulation of which, *viz.*, *duhitṛ-śulka* is a practice which has survived to the present day. Kālidāsa, for instance, refers to a marital payment called *Haraṇaṃ*,[2] which Mallinātha explains to be what is now known as a dowry.

2. Rites

Kālidāsa sometimes refers to the rites of a Hindu marriage. This ceremony was performed by the family priest, *Purōhita*, before a fire (*Agni*) which was considered a witness to it, and in celebration of which clarified butter and other things were offered to it.[3] After the union was proclaimed at the stipulated hour, the witnessing householders threw over the couple the wet rice (*akṣatāḥ*).[4] The invited guests presented gifts to the husband and wife.[5]

3. Marriage Practices

Marriage within the caste (*varṇa*) was favoured and this was usually the prevailing custom. Yüan Chwāng remarks: "The members of a caste marry within the caste, the great and the obscure keeping apart. Relations whether by the father's or the mother's side do not intermarry, and a woman never contracts a second marriage"[6]. From these statements it is evident that usually inter-caste marriage was not in vogue, unions between the rich and the poor were not common, no marriages were contracted between the relatives of the father and those of the mother, and lastly widow-marriages were never celebrated. These conditions might have usually prevailed, but there were certainly exceptions to prove the rule. Bāṇa, for example, had two step-brothers of low birth, Candrasena and Mātṛsena.[7] The marriage of Rāma Gupta's wife Dhruvadēvī

[1] *Raghu.*, VI, 84, p. 140.
[2] *Ibid.*, VII, 32, p. 148.
[3] *Ibid.*, VII, 20, p. 145.
[4] *Ibid.*, VII, 28, p. 147.
[5] *Ibid.*, VII, 30, p. 148.
[6] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, p. 168. Beal gives another interpretation. Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 82.
[7] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 32 and 40,

with her brother-in-law Candra Gupta II,[1] although condemned in later times,[2] only shows that widow-remarriages, though sanctioned by law-givers,[3] occasionally took place even among the most important personalities in the country. When they were sponsored by the king and queen, despite the rigours of orthodoxy, some at least among the middle and poor classes, might have followed the example set by the aristocracy. Of course, such unions must have been occasional, for Yüan Chwāng says that marriage in the early seventh century decided a person's prestige. "When they marry" he remarks, "they rise or fall in position according to their new relationship."[4]

4. The Home

Once a marriage was contracted, the couple must have settled down in a home. It was furnished with cane chairs (*vētrāsana*),[5] which were offered to guests. People slept on cots (*mañca*)[6] which had beds (*śaiyyā*)[7] and bed-spreads (*uttaracchada*)[8] or (*astaraṇa*).[9] These seats and couches were also used in the seventh century. Yüan Chwāng observed them and states: "For seats all use corded benches. The royal family, the grandees, officials and gentry adorn their benches in different ways, but all have the same style (or form) of seat..... The ordinary officials according to their fancy carved the frames to their seats in different ways, and adorned them with precious substances."[10] It is worth noting that Bāṇa too mentions the bamboo couch.[11] These seats were also used by the Buddhist priests, especially during the time of taking food. "In India the priests" observes I-Tsing, "wash their hands and feet before meals, and sit on separate small chairs. The chair is about seven inches high and a foot square, and the seat of it is wicker-work made of rattan cane. The legs are rounded, and, on the whole, the chair is not heavy. But for junior members of the Order, blocks of wood may be used instead."[12] Such blocks of wood, it may be remarked, are still in use in Southern India when taking food.

[1] *Cf. Dēvicandraguptam, I. A.* LII, p. 183; Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, I, pp. 111-12.

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 194; *E. I.*, XVIII, no. 26, p. 248.

[3] *Cf. The Laws of Manu*, Bk. III, 173, p. 108 (Bühler.)

[4] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 82. (Beal). This interpretation is not given by Watters. See Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 168.

[5] *Kum.*, VI, 53, p. 115.

[6] *Raghu.*, VI, 1, 3, p. 118.

[7] *Ibid.*, III, 15, p. 56; V, 65, 72, pp. 113, 115.

[8] *Ibid.*, V, 65, p. 113; XVII, 21, p. 350.

[9] *Ibid.*, VI, 4, p. 118. *Astaraṇa* has also been interpreted as a rug.

[10] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 147-48; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 75.

[11] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 133.

[12] I-Tsing., *op. cit.*, p. 22.

The home was furnished with several necessary utensils. The wealthy had vessels of gold [1], while they were also wrought of other metals[2] as well as of clay[3]. Water for domestic use was stored in vessels large (*kuṁbha*)[4] and small (*ghaṭaḥ*).[5] Jewels and valuables were kept either in boxes or caskets (*mañjūṣa*).[6] Toilet requisites were probably carried in a toilet-box (*tālavṛnta*).[7] The homes were lit up at night by means of lamps (*dīpa*) which were generally made either of clay or metal.[8] In warm weather fans, wrought of palm or lotus leaves, were used.[9] For dumping all the utensils in the house there appears to have been, what may be called in modern phraseology, a store-room (*Sāra-bhāṇḍa-bhūgṛha*) [10].

Pets were kept in the house and birds especially were taught to imitate human speech or sounds. Bāṇa, for instance, speaks of "all kinds of birds, beginning with the parrot and the *maina*" repeating a sound once heard.[11] He gives a rather exaggerated description of certain animals like monkeys and tigers which, in the cave of the Buddhist monk Divākaramitra, are said to have behaved like human beings.[12]

These homes must have had terraces. The Mandasor stone inscription of Kūmara Gupta and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, describes the dwellings of people in the town of Daśapura (Daśor): "Here the houses have waving flags (and) are full of tender women (and) are very white (and) extremely lofty, resembling the peaks of white clouds lit up with forked lightning. And other long buildings on the roofs of the houses, with arbours in them, are beautiful." [13] From this record it may be inferred that houses in the Gupta period, especially in the fifth century, were evidently white-washed and that some of them were very huge edifices having terraced roofs. Most of these inferences can be confirmed by the

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[1] *Raghu.*, II, 36, p. 46.
[2] *Ibid.*, X, 51, p. 217.
[3] *Ibid.*, II, 36, p. 40, V, 63, p. 112.
[4] *Māl.*, Act, IV, p. 104.
[5] *Śak.*, Act, I, p. 6.
[6] *Māl.*, Act, V, p. 156.
[7] *Kum.*, II, 35, p. 34; *Cf.* Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18) p. 83: *tālavṛnta-hāra...*
[8] *Raghu.*, V, 74, p. 116.
[9] *Kum.*, II, 35, p. 14. (T. S. S.)
[10] *Māl.*, Act, IV, p. 95.
[11] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbari*, p. 11.
[12] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 236.
[13] Fleet *op. cit.*, (18), p. 85, text p. 81:
Prāsāda mālābhir=alaṁkṛtāni dharāṁ .....vidāryy=aiva samutthitāni vimāna-mālā-sadṛśāni yatra gṛhāṇi pūrṇṇ-ēndukar=āmalāni

evidence of Kālidāsa. He refers to the practice of white-washing houses[1] and states that houses had terraces,[2] which were given specified names.[3] All these statements are fully borne out by Bāṇa and the Chinese traveller Yüan Chwāng. The former observes that in the district of Sthāṇvīśvara were "rows of white houses plastered with stucco."[4] Yüan Chwāng, however, gives more detailed information regarding the construction of houses. "As to the construction of houses and enclosing walls" he says, "the country being low and moist, most of the city walls are built of bricks, while the walls of houses and enclosures are wattled bamboo or wood. Their halls and terraced belvederes have wooden flat-roofed rooms, and are coated with chunam, and covered with tiles burnt or unburnt. They are of extraordinary height, and in style like those of China. The [houses] thatched with coarse or common grass are of bricks or boards; their walls are ornamented with chunam, the floor is purified with cow-dung and strewn with flowers of the season."[5] These terraces were used for sleeping purposes in the warm weather, especially at night, with awnings spread over for protection. Bāṇa relates how "on the occasion of one hot season the king (Prabhākaravardhana) slept on his palace roof white with stucco, spotless as the moonlight; and the queen (Yaśōvatī) lay on a second couch at his side."[6]

V. Products of the Country

The people of this age subsisted on the products of the country. In the earlier half of the seventh century the shrewd traveller Yüan Chwāng throws considerable light on the general products of northern India during this period. "As the districts vary" he states, "in their natural qualities, they differ also in their natural products. There are flowers and herbs, fruits and trees of different kinds and with various names. There are, for example, of fruits, the *āmra* or mango, the *āmla* or tamarind, the *madhūka* (Bassia latifolia), the *badara* or Jujube, the *kapittha* or wood-apple, the *āmala* or myrobalan, the *tinduka* or Diospyros, the *audumbara* or Ficus glomerata, the *moca* or plantain, the *nārikēla* or Cocoa-nut, and the *panasa* or jack-fruit. It is impossible to enumerate all the kinds of fruit and one can only mention in a summary way all

[1] *Raghu.*, XIV, 10, p. 289
[2] *Ibid.*, 29, p. 293; *Rtu.*, I, 3, p. 1
[3] *Vik.*, Act III, p. 76.
Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 82.
[4] Yüan Chwāng *op. cit.*, I, p. 147; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 73-74.
[5] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-108; also see Kādambari, p. 166.

those which are held in esteem among the inhabitants. (Chinese) jujubes, chestnuts, green and red persimmons are not known in India. From Kashmir on, pears, plums, peaches, apricots, grapes are planted here and there; pomegranates and sweet oranges are grown in all the countries ... There is much rice and wheat, and ginger, mustard, melons, pumpkins, kunda (properly the olibanum tree) are also cultivated. Onions and garlic are little used and people who eat them are ostracised. Milk, ghee, granulated sugar, sugar-candy, cakes and parched grain with mustard-seed oil are the common food...."[1]

As this pilgrim moved from place to place in northern India, he noticed the products of particular places. Going from *Chĕh-ka* (Takka ?) to Mathurā, he found the crops of the country to be "upland rice and spring wheat".[2] On his way eastwards at *Chinā-p'uh-ti* (Cina-bhukti) he saw that it produced "good crops of grain".[3] At *Shĕ-lan-ta-lo* (Jālandhara) there was "upland rice and other grain".[4] *Pāriyātra* (Bairāṭ) yielded "good crops of spring wheat and other grain, including a peculiar kind of rice which in 60 days was ready for cutting."[5] Mathurā was known for mangoes, which were of two kinds, one small and "becoming yellow when ripe, and the other large and remaining green".[6] Travelling thence to Sthāṇvīśvara, *Ngo (O)-hi-ch'i-ta-lo* (Ahicchatra ?), *P'i-lo-shan-na* (?) and *Kah-pi-t'a* (Kapitha) (Sānkāśya), he did not notice anything particular regarding the natural products.[7]

1. Food

From the fourth century onwards it is possible to have an idea of the foodstuffs used by the people in the 'Middle Kingdom' as Central India was then called by Chinese travellers. Fa Hien, for instance, who visited this portion of India between A. D. 399-414, says that most of the people of the Madhyadēśa were vegetarians. "Throughout the whole country" he observes, "the people do not kill any living creature, nor drink intoxicating liquor, nor eat onions or garlic. The only exception is that of the Cāṇḍālas ... In that country they do not keep pigs and fowls, and do not sell live cattle; in the markets

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 177-78; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 88.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 286; *Ibid.*, p. 165.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 291; *Ibid.*, p. 176.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 296; *Ibid.*, p. 179.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 300; *Ibid.*
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 301.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 314-15, 331-4; *Ibid.*, pp. 183-205.

there are no butchers' shops and no dealers in intoxicating drink."[1] These statements of Fa Hien deserve a critical examination.

The absence of the slaughter of animals implies that, towards the end of the fourth and in the beginning of the fifth century, the consumption of liquors and meat was unknown in the empire of the Guptas. There is no evidence, except that of Kālidāsa, to prove the contrary especially during these years of Fa Hien's travels, although a century later internal evidence proves that meat diet was familiar to the people of their country. Consequently it cannot be maintained that meat-eating was suddenly introduced into northern India in the sixth century as customs especially pertaining to food are of slow growth and development. It is not unreasonable to suppose that vegetarian and non-vegetarian diets prevailed side by side in Gupta times from the fourth till the fifth centuries despite Fa Hien's observations to the contrary. This traveller, being an ardent Buddhist, probably moved only in Buddhist circles and Buddhists being invariably vegetarians, although there were exceptions even among them, his remarks are evidently confined to their own activities. From the works of Kālidāsa it is, however, clear that there prevailed in his day the practice of consuming meat in northern India.

2. Vegetable Food

Vegetable food appears to have been common among the majority of the people, as has been noticed for example by the Chinese traveller Fa Hien. The nature of such food-stuffs can be ascertained to some extent from epigraphic evidence found in the Nālandā stone inscription pertaining to the reign of Yaśōvarmadeva. Referring to the community of the Buddhist monks it relates how, "under the order of the community of friars of bright intellect, great piety and learning, he (Mālada) distributed daily in a fitting manner rice, other (*various*) preparations, curds and copulous *ghee*, to the four monks."[2] Besides these different other kinds of food were consumed. The common people ate grain in a military camp, as can be made out from the testimony of Bāṇa.[3] He tells us that in Harṣa's camp there were "bearers of kitchen appurtenances" with "pot herbs and bamboo shoots, butter-milk pots protected by wet seals on one part of their mouths which were covered with white clothes."[4] Besides these other

[1] Fa Hien, *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*, p. 43 (ed. Legge, 1806).
[2] *E. I.*, XX, no. 2, p. 45.
[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 207.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 208.

vegetable foods were also consumed, and among them barley (*yava*) and wheat appear to have been their staple foods. Two kinds of rice viz., *śāli*,[1] *kalama*[2] and grain (*dhānya*) are mentioned. Rice mixed with honey made a preparation called *argha*.[3] Other preparations of sweets were also known. Some of these went by the names of *Guḍavikāra*[4] and *Matsyaṇḍikā*,[5] but the precise nature of these sweets it is hazardous to specify, because they have not been clearly explained in the context. Besides these, other articles of diet among, milk products were butter, ordinary (*navanīta*)[6] or clarified (*haiyaṅgavīnaṃ*).[7] Mention is also made of sweets like *Payaścaru*,[8] *Mōdaka*,[9] *Śikhariṇī*,[10] and honey,[11] and it may be presumed that they were served only during feasts and were probably current only among the wealthy. Salt was in common use[12] and the mango fruit (*rasālaṃ*) appears to have been a favourite among the common people.[13] Spices were also in general use and among these mention may be made of pepper (*marīca*)[14], cloves (*lavaṅga*)[15] and cardamums (*ailālata*).[16]

3. Meat Diet

There is no doubt that meat formed one of the most important articles of food despite the statement of Fa Hien to the contrary. It is related by Kālidāsa how at irregular times a meal, mostly consisting of meat roasted on spits was eaten.[17] In the cities meat must have been sold in the slaughter-houses (*śāṇā*) over which birds, greedy of flesh yet timid, are said to have hovered.[18] The wealthy hunted the wild boars, antelopes, birds, yaks,[19] and deer which served

[1] *Raghu.*, XVII, 53, p. 357 : *garbhaśālisadharmāṇaḥ.*
[2] *Ibid.*, IV, 37, p. 81 : *kalamā iva te Raghuṃ.*
[3] *Ibid.*, XI, 69, p. 241.
[4] *Ritu.*, V, 16, p. 65.
[5] *Māl.*, Act III, p. 66.
[6] *Ibid.*, Act III, p. 87.
[7] *Raghu.*, I, 45, p. 16.
[8] *Ibid.*, X, 51, 54, p. 218.
[9] *Vik.*, Act III, p. 78.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 86.
[11] *Kum.*, VII, 72, p. 171.
[12] *Raghu.*, V, 73, p. 116: *lōhyāni saindhava-śilā-sakalāni vāhāḥ . .*
[13] *Vik.*, Act III, p. 86.
[14] *Raghu.*, IV, 46, p. 84.
[15] *Kum.*, VIII, 25, p. 129.
[16] *Raghu.*, IV, 47, p. 84.
[17] *Śāk.*, Act II, p. 19: *aniyata vēlāṃ śulyamāṁsabhūyiṣṭha āhāro bhujyate (aśyate).*
[18] *Māl.*, Act II, p. 54 *bhavaṁvi sūṇoparicarō vihaṅgamō via āmisa-lōluvō bhīruō accādurō.*
[19] *Raghu.*, IX, 53, p. 196.

for meat. Fish was also eaten, especially the Rōhita or carp found in the vicinity of the Ganges.[1]

In later times too meat was consumed by several people, as is borne out by Yüan Chwāng and Bāṇa. According to the former "fish, mutton, venison, are occasional dainties (lit. are occasionally served in joints or slices). The flesh of oxen, asses, elephants, horses, pigs, dogs, foxes, wolves, lions, monkeys, apes is forbidden, and those who eat such food become pariahs."[2] He again tells us that "constantly in his travelling palace he (Harṣa) would provide choice meats for men of all sorts of religion."[3] As though to confirm these remarks of a foreign observer, Bāṇa tells us that in the camp before Harṣa set out against the Gauḍa Śaśāṅka, there were bearers "with goats attached to thongs of pigskin, a collection of young rabbits" and "baskets containing a chaos of fire-trays, ovens, simmering pans, spits, copper saucepans, and frying pans."[4]

But it is only Daṇḍin who gives a graphic description of how a deer was shot, skinned, and roasted before a full venison meal was made.[5]

4. Alcoholic Drinks—Pre-Gupta

In order to understand and appreciate the nature of alcoholic drinks and practices in the Gupta age, it is useful to know some details about such usages in pre-Gupta times. Kauṭalya informs us that there was a Superintendent of Liquor, who administered liquor traffic not only in the forts and country parts but also in the camps. He appears to have exercised considerable power over the people in conducting his duties. Kauṭalya lays down that a fine of 600 *paṇa* was to be paid "on all offenders other than those who were manufacturers, purchasers or sellers in liquor-traffic. Liquor was not to be taken out of villages nor were liquor shops to be close to each other. Liquor was to be sold to persons of well-known character in such small quantities such as one-fourths or half a *kuḍuṁba*, one *kuḍuṁba*, half a *prastha* or one *prastha*. Those who were well-known and of pure character were allowed to take liquor out of the liquor shop. Or all may be compelled to drink liquor within the shops and not

[1] *Raghu.*, IV. 46-47, p. 84.

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 178. Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 88.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 344; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 214.

[4] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 208, text, p. 211: *śiśuśaśaka-śākapatra-vetr-āgrasaṅgrasaṅ-grahāhibhiḥ śuklakarpaṭaprāvṛtamukh-aikadēśadattārdra mudr-āguptā-gorasa bhāṇḍaistalaka-tāpikatāpikāhastaka tāmra carukaṭāha sankaṭa piṭaka bhārikaiḥ.....*

[5] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, pp. 216-17.

allowed to stir out at once in view of detecting articles...Likewise those who are too extravagant or spend beyond their means shall be arrested." No fresh liquor other than bad liquor was to be sold below its price. Bad liquor could be sold elsewhere or given to slaves or workmen in lieu of wages or it could form the drink of beasts of draught or the subsistence of hogs. Liquor shops were to contain many rooms provided with beds and seats kept apart. The drinking room was to contain scents, garlands of flowers, water, and other comfortable things suitable to the varying seasons. Spies stationed in the shops were to ascertain whether the expenditure incurred by the customers in the shop was ordinary or extraordinary and also whether there were any strangers. They were also to ascertain the value of the dress, ornaments and gold of the customers lying there under intoxication. When customers under intoxication lost any of their things, the merchants of the shop were not only to make good the loss but had also to pay an equivalent fine. Merchants seated in half-closed rooms were to observe the appearance of local and foreign customers, who in real or false guise lay down in intoxication along with their beautiful mistresses.[1] From these duties of the Liquor Superintendent it can be learnt how much interest the State displayed in the personal welfare of each and every member of society even in the case of indulging in such a vice as drink.

It is equally interesting to know something further about the actual types of liquors known to Kauṭalya. He mentions in some detail the ingredients and proportions which made up such liquors like *mēdaka*, *prasannā* and *āsava*. The first was made from rice and some fermented liquor (*kiṇva*), the second from flour (*piṣṭha*), spices (*jātisaṁbhāra*) and bark and fruits of *putraka*; and the third extracted from *kapittha* (*Feronia Elephantum*), *phāṇita* (sugar) and honey. Besides these the fermented juice of grapes made the drink known as *madhu*, the liquor from mango fruits was styled as *Sahakārasūra* and white liquor went by the name of *śvetasūra*. Besides these again Kauṭalya mentions other types of drinks such as *sūrā mēdaka*, *ariṣṭha*, *phalāmla* (acid drinks prepared from fruits) and *āmlaśīdhu*.[2] These details display what a great variety of drinks must have been current in the days of the Mauryas according to Kauṭalya, but whether all these types continued to survive till the days of the Guptas is a matter which cannot be proved. Nor can we ascertain

[1] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. XXV, pp. 147-48.
[2] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. XXV, pp. 132-34.

whether the Kauṭalyan administrative system of liquor control continued to the days of the Guptas. Nevertheless the information of Kauṭalya serves as a good back-ground for the Gupta period.

5. The Use of Liquor in Gupta Times

The consumption of liquor seems to have been quite common in Gupta times. Soldiers celebrated a military triumph with a drink. They constructed their own drinking-booths (*pānabhūmayaḥ*) and drank in cups of betel leaves (*tāmbūlānāṃ dalaiḥ*) the ale produced from cocoanut trees (*nārikēlāsavaṃ*).[1] They spread choice deer-skins in the vineyards where they eased their fatigue by drinking wine (*madhu*).[2] It may be recollected how, according to Kauṭalya, women too drank wine in the wine shops and in Gupta times also this custom seems to have prevailed. It is related that intoxicated women sometimes fell asleep on half the way to such pleasure grounds[3], while young maidens appear to have found great delight in such drinks.[4]

That several types of alcoholic drinks must have prevailed can be known by some of the names of such wines. Mention is made by Kālidāsa of *madhya*,[5] *madirā*,[6] *āsava*,[7] *vāruṇī*,[8] *kādambarī*,[9] and *śīdhu*.[10] *āsava*, *madhya* and *śīdhu* are mentioned by Kauṭalya as well.

Liquor was patronised by the rich as well as the poor. Queens were accustomed to this beverage.[11] Officers and also policemen sometimes succumbed to it,[12] while it formed a favourite drink of soldiers.[13] It was a popular saying that intoxication lends a special charm to women.[14] Alcohol was a popular beverage with the poor people, and sometimes friendship between two persons was sealed

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[1] *Raghu.*, IV, 42, p. 82: *tāmbūlānām dalaistatra racitā pānabhūmayaḥ | nārikēlāsavaṃ yōdhāḥ śātravam caprapūryaśaḥ...* Probably Yüan Chwāng refers to such booths when he says: "The shops are on the high ways and booths (or inns) line the roads". *Travels*, I, p. 147.

[2] *Raghu.*, IV, 65, p. 114.

[3] *Ibid*, VI, 75, p. 186.

[4] *Ibid*, VII, 11, p. 195.

[5] *Ritu.*, V, 10, p. 62.

[6] *Ibid.*, VI, 10, p. 70.

[7] *Ibid.*, IV, 11, p. 52.

[8] *Kum.*, IV, 12, p. 66.

[9] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 188.

[10] *Raghu.*, XVI, 52, p. 337.

[11] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 77, 82-3, 104.

[12] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 82.

[13] *Raghu.*, IV, 42, p. 82.

[14] *Māl.* Act III, p. 73.

with a drink in a liquor shop.[1] Among royal voluptuaries there was probably in existence the insanitary and barbaric practice of transferring rinsed wine (*mukhāsava*) from the mouths of infatuated kings to their intoxicated queens or other women.[2]

Sometimes the nature of liquors is specified. The extract of the cocoanuts was called *nārikēlāsava*[3] which was perhaps the counterpart of toddy. Another kind of drink styled *śīdhu* was evidently the fermented juice of sugar-canes[4]. The essence of flowers like *madhuka* yielded an intoxicant called *puṣpāsava*.[5] Probably these formed the drinks of the poor and middle classes, while the rich must have resorted to wines, flavoured with mango and red *pāṭala* flowers[6]. Such liquors were taken in cups called *caṣaka*,[7] either in roadside shops (*Śauṇḍikāpaṇa*)[8] by the common people or in the *pānabhūmi*,[9] the resort near the apartments of women in a palace by the wealthy. These booths are also mentioned by Bāṇa who refers to rum-booths "like shower-baths."[10] Yüan Chwāng adds that they were distinguished by sign-boards[11].

Not only were wine and liquor taken in cups but, as has been suggested, they were brought to kings and queens in large jugs as can be seen from one of the paintings at Ajanta. With a queen seated on his lap a king holds in his right hand a wine cup, while a servant on their left is ready waiting with a wine-jug of excellent shape.[12] In the days of Harṣa too wine was apparently drunk by women from a wine-glass or a goblet. Bāṇa, for instance, describes how "with braided locks and eyes not from collyrium lustrous, appeared in the wine of their goblets (*caṣaka-madhūni*) the reflections of the lotus faces of warriors' wives".[13] It is interesting to note that Bāṇa too uses the word *caṣaka*, which was utilised by Kālidāsa, as noticed earlier.

Some devices were employed to remove the foul smell of the liquors which were drunk. The skin of the *bījapūraka* (*citrus*

[1] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 182.
[2] *Raghu.*, XIX, 12, p. 379.
[3] *Ibid.*, IV, 42.
[4] *Ibid.*, XVI, 52. p. 337.
[5] *Kum.*, III, 38, p. 52. This liquor was drunk by the Kiṁpuruṣas.
[6] *Raghu*, XIX, 46. p. 388.
[7] *Ibid.*, VII, 49, p. 152
[8] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 82.
[9] *Raghu.*, VII, 49, p. 152. The *pānabhūmi* is also mentioned by *Bāṇā*, see *Kādaṁbarī*. p. 28 (ed. Bombay, 1920, B. S. S.)
[10] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 112.
[11] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 147; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 74.
[12] Griffiths, *Ajanta*, 58, see Intr., p. 35.
[13] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 195, text p. 201.

medica) was chewed to sweeten the breath and prevent belching after meals.[1] With the same object in view betel leaves and nuts were chewed.[2] To a person disgusted with liquor, granulated sugar (*matsyaṇḍikā*) was offered as an antidote.[3]

That liquor must have been popular in those days is also borne out by Daṇḍin. Singing its praises he says: "This fortifies the charm of youth through the steady use of spirituous antidotes to numerous diseases. It neutralises all misfortunes by increasing self-esteem. It kindles sexual desire and improves the capacity for pleasure. It drowns the consciousness of sin, so counteracting morbidity. By removing the fetters of reticence, it conduces to mutual confidence. By repressing envy, it makes for pure joy. It encourages continual enjoyment of music and other sense-impressions; the acquisition of countless and varied friendships; unrivalled beauty of person; unparalleled graces; martial spirit, resulting from the loss of fear and depression."[4] This praise was no mere theory for Daṇḍin actually refers to the consumption of wine in his day in his suggestive phrases. In one place he states how one of his characters "had often sipped the wine of her (his lover's) lips."[5] He again refers to the "fault of drink," which led persons to imprisonment.[6]

That women too in the Gupta age indulged in intoxicants can be proved by contemporary inscriptional evidence. The Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 475–76, records how the sun was "of a dark-red colour, like the cheeks of intoxicated women."[7] In all likelihood this comparison was one from real life.

The evidence found in Kālidāsa's works, proving that wine or liquor was a favourite drink in the fifth century, receives additional support from Yüan Chwāng, who saw various types of spirits in the seventh century. "There are distinctions in the use of their wines" he says, "and other beverages. The wines from the vine and the sugar-cane are the drink of the Kṣatriyas; the Vaiśyas drink a

[1] *Māl.*, Act III p. 57; also see *I. H. Q.*, XI pp. 40-41.

[2] *Raghu.*, IV, 42, 44. pp. 82-83 *Ritu.*, v, 5, p. 59.

[3] *Māl.*, Act III, p. 66: Kāṭayavēma explains it thus: *matsyaṇḍikā nāma Śarkara-viśeṣaḥ.*

[4] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p, 210, text, p. 126.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 94.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

[7] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (18), p. 81.

strong distilled spirit; the Buddhist monks and the Brahmins drink syrup of grapes and of sugar-cane; the low mixed castes are without any distinguishing drink".[1]

Wine was taken by men as well as women. It is again mentioned by Bāṇa who observes: "'Tis like bidding a divine drink wine".[2] Ullaka was evidently a kind of drink drunk from cups, for Haṁsavēga brought from the king of Assam "cups of Ullaka, diffusing a fragrance of sweetest wine".[3] Bāṇa refers to the wine-flushed cheeks of Malabāri women in the Vindhyan forest.[4] In the *Kādaṁbarī* he again states how "the sharpness of wine has mellowed to its full virtue."[5] The Brāhmaṇas of those days had evidently no compunction to taste wine for Bāṇa himself was "a Brāhmaṇa born in the family of Sōma-drinking Vātsyāyanas."[6] Bāṇa's allusion to 'the clanking ornaments of wine-flushed beauties,'[7] suggests that wine drinking was not unknown to the women of Harṣa's times. Wine was considered to perfume the breath and it is no wonder that Bāṇa relates how the beauties of his master "fanned him with wine-perfumed breath."[8]

6. Cleanliness

Certain habits of cleanliness were observed. There was for instance a custom of rinsing the mouth in the days of Bāṇa. Harṣa, before granting gifts to Brāhmaṇas, rinsed his mouth.[9] After taking food this usage was resorted to and Harṣa, partaking of a few mouthfuls "while rinsing the mouth," ordered his chowrie-bearer to bring him tidings of his father's condition. After food was taken, betel was chewed and this is a practice prevalent even today. Harṣa having heard that his father's condition was the same as before, rejected the betel.[10] Queens had water poured out to them "from a silver flamingo-mouthed vessel tilted by a hunch-backed girl" and wiped their hands on a white cloth held by mutes.[11] The face was wiped with a towel which, in the case of kings, was brought by servants like a betel-bearer.[12]

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 178; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 89.
[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 171.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 214.
[4] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 16.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 179.
[6] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacrita* p. 66.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 82.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 104.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 134.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 143; *Cf. Kādaṁbarī*, p. 14.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 153.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 167.

All these habits of personal cleanliness are fully borne out by Yüan Chwāng who writes in detail about such habits of the people in northern India during the period of his travels. Writing about them he remarks: "They are pure of themselves and not from compulsion. Before every meal they must have a wash; the fragments and remains are not served up again; the food utensils are not passed on; those utensils which are of pottery or wood must be thrown away after use; and those which are of gold, silver, copper or iron, get often polishing. As soon as a meal is over they chew the tooth-stick and make themselves clean; before they have finished ablutions, they do not come into contact with each other; they always wash after urinating; they smear their bodies with scented unguents such as sandal and saffron".[1]

Yüan Chwāng's successor I-Tsing confirms these observations of his predecessor about personal cleanliness. The latter warns his country men: "Those who have partaken of a meal must remain together on one side of the hall and should wash their hands and rinse their mouths and also wash the things used during the meal and the soiled pots".[2] Then again he does not forget about tooth-woods regarding the use of which he says: "Every morning one must chew tooth-woods, and clean the teeth with them, and rub off the dirt of the tongue as carefully as possible".[3]

7. Cooking Utensils

The frescoes at Ajanta reveal a number of what are obviously cooking utensils, especially kept near and on an oven which is heated with sticks and fire. Some of them are broad and large, resembling modern *gāṛūhas*,[4] which are probably used for storing water and for boiling purposes. In fact a painting shows how water was poured out from such a vessel to a beggar in the street[5]. Many of the vessels seem to have been of this shape with rather narrow mouths. On trays we see vessels of toilet requisites, in which sandal-paste and lac-dye must have been kept. One looks like an open cup, while the other having a pedestal, a broad bottom and a lid, was considerably larger.[6] Broad low cups

[1] Yuan Chwang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 152; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 77.
[2] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 25; see also pp. 26-27.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[4] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 85.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 81.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

were used for drinking wine, while it was possibly brought in and poured out from goblets or jugs with large stomachs, narrow necks and handles. There were low broad mouthed spittoons to spit.[1]

Bāṇa refers to a number of vessels which were used in his times. He writes about them in connection with Harṣa's royal camp pitched before he set out to wreak his vengeance on the Gauḍa king. It has been suggested that Bāṇa's words referring to these vessels may be taken to mean water-pots, cups, spittoons, fire-trays, ovens, simmering pans, spits, copper saucepans, and frying pans, though, of course, the exact sense of many of the Saṁskṛta words is rather doubtful.[2]

Yüan Chwāng too refers to such cooking utensils. "As to household necessaries" he says, "there is generally a good supply of these of various qualities. But although they have different kinds of cooking implements, they do not know the steaming boiler (i.e. they have not large boilers such as are used in large households in China). Their household utensils are mostly earthen ware, few being of brass. They eat from one vessel in which the ingredients are mixed up; they take their food with their fingers. Generally speaking spoons and chop-sticks are not used, except in cases of sickness when copper spoons are used."[3]

8. Etiquette

To people who lived in these lands, begot children and made friends, the problem of etiquette was one of their most important duties. On meeting one another the practice of salutation was observed. A disciple fell at the feet of his preceptor,[4] a son did likewise to his parents,[5] while they in return blest him.[6] These blessings, depending on circumstance, assumed various expressions. Elders prayed that the path of the young might be free from dangers,[7] a sage blest a king that he might have a son who would be invincible;[8] elderly ladies wished young maidens that they

[1] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 208, text p. 211:
bhūpati bhṛtakabhārikair=mahānasōpakaraṇavāhibhiśca baddhavarāhavadhravādhriṇa sair=lambamānaharina cataka cataka jūṭajaṭilaiḥ.

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 178; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I. p. 89.

[4] *Raghu.*, I, 57, p. 19.

[5] *Ibid.*, XI, 4-5, p. 226.

[6] *Ibid.*, 6, p. 227; 31, p. 233.

[7] *Śak.*, Act IV. p. 63: *Śivāste panthānaḥ santu.*

[8] *Ibid.*, Act IV, 19, p. 62: "*apratiratham tanayam niveśya.*" The title *apratiratha* can be seen on Samudra Gupta's arch type coins, see Allan, *op. cit.*, p. CIX.

might either win a husband entirely devoted to them[1] or one who could command their undivided affection[2]; and a sister-in-law wished her brother-in-law long life.[3]

There were also other forms of salutation, formal and informal. When talking to a person of higher social status, the inferior man bent down a little, using chaste language,[4] and folded his hands.[5] When a guest arrived at a house, water was offered to him for washing his feet[6] and, as noticed earlier, a cane-seat was offered to him to sit down.[7] Then he was given a little of the oblations proffered to the gods (*arghyam*).[8] When a king, however, entered his capital either the young girls or old women from the balconies of their homes showered on him the customary rice grain (*lājas*).[9]

In less formal cases the ceremonial of obeisance became more homely and simple. On meeting for the first time, brothers embraced each other[10] and friends who were equals shook each other's hands.[11] If distance or time intervened between the meeting of either relations or friends, there was an exchange of inquiry regarding mutual welfare.[12]

Most of these methods of salutation can now be compared with the details which Yüan Chwāng noticed in the seventh century. According to him there were nine "degrees" in the etiquette of showing respect. These were (*a*) greeting with a kind inquiry, (*b*) reverently bowing the head, (*c*) raising the hands to the head with an inclination of the body, (*d*) bowing with the hands folded on the breast, (*e*) bending a knee, (*f*) kneeling with both knees, (*g*) going down on the ground on hands and knees, (*h*) bowing down with knees, elbows and forehead to the ground, and (*i*) prostrating oneself on the earth. Excepting two ways (*e* and *f*) all the other practices noticed by Yüan Chwāng, were apparently current prior to the visit of this Chinese traveller. He further explains the

[1] *Kum.*, VII, 28, p. 132: *akhaṇḍitam prēma labhasva patyuḥ.*
[2] *Ibid.*, III, 63, p. 59: *ananyabhājam patim āpnuhi.*
[3] *Raghu.*, XIV, 59, p. 299. *saumya cirāyajīva.*
[4] *Ibid.*, V, 32, p. 104.
[5] *Ibid.*, II, 64, p. 48.
[6] *Ibid.*, V, 32, p. 104.
[7] *Kum.*, VI, 53, p. 56.
[8] *Raghu.*, XI, 69, p. 241.
[9] *Ibid.*, II, 10, p. 32. IV, 27 p. 79.
[10] *Ibid.*, XIII, 73, p. 285.
[11] *Vik.*, Act I, p. 27: *parasparam hastau spṛśataḥ.*
[12] *Māl.*, Act IV, p. 103: *yōga kṣēmam.*

significance of all these various ways of obeisance. "The performance" he explains, "of all these nine from the lowest to the highest is only one act of reverence. To kneel and praise the excellence (of the object) is said to be the perfection of reverence. If (the person doing homage) is at a distance he bows to the ground with folded hands, if near he kisses (lit. licks) the foot and rubs the ankle (say, of the king). All who are delivering messages or who are receiving orders tuck up their clothes and kneel down. The exalted person of distinction who receives the reverence is sure to have a kind answer, and he strokes the head or pats the back (of the person paying respect), giving him good words of advice to show the sincerity of his affection."[1]

These remarks of Yüan Chwāng deserve to be examined. Before a king prostration was necessary, though not at all times and in all cases.[2] For example, Mādhava Gupta and Kumāra Gupta, on seeing Prabhākaravardhana on his throne in his palace, "bowed from afar till their four limbs and heads touched the ground, then assumed a suitable position indicated by a kindly glance from the king".[3] Haṁsavēga, the confidential messenger sent by the ruler of Assam, to Harṣa, on being admitted "embraced the courtyard with his five limbs in homage. At the king's gracious summons to draw near, he approached at a run and buried his forehead in the footstool; the king having laid a hand on his back, he approached again and once more bowed".[4] Both these examples of princes as well as of messengers, show that prostration before a king was from a distance and that his feet were seldom touched for the sovereign was an object of reverence.

Similarly with messengers a certain formality was observed, though not exactly as Yüan Chwāng related. Mēkhalaka, the renowned courier sent by Kṛṣṇa, Harṣa's brother, to summon Bāṇa to the court, had no doubt his tunic girt up tightly by a mud-stained strip of cloth, but as soon as Bāṇa saw him, he inquired about Kṛṣṇa's welfare. The courier answered "All is well" and then making his obeisance sat down at some distance, and after some time presented the royal letter.[5] Again this Chief Door-Keeper, wearing the sacred thread before approaching his king, Harṣa, "uttered his good wishes"[6] and had to wait there until he was seen

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 173; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 85.
[2] *Cf.* Ch. III for further details on this topic.
[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 121.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 211.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 41, text pp. 52-53
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 65, text, p. 78: *svasti śabdaṃ*

and commanded by the ruler. These two examples, again of a contemporary chronicler, do not show that as a rule a messenger had, as Yüan Chwāng would have it, to tuck up his clothes and kneel down either before a commoner or a monarch.

But in the case of ordinary men salutation was a far less formal affair. How a member of the family was received back into his own home can best be seen in the case of Bāṇa's return. He greeted, kissed, embraced and blest some people who responded to these gestures of good-will likewise. When the elders were seated, he took a seat which was brought in by his excited attendants.[1]

9. A Citizen at Home

We may now conclude this picture of the domestic life of a householder with a description of a Nāgarika's home-life as given by Vātsyāyana. "A dwelling" he says, "should be preferred in a large town where the inhabitants are of consequence, or a pleasure resort may be chosen. There should be water nearby, an orchard, a roomy courtyard for one's labours, and two chambers. In the outer chamber there should be a very soft becushioned bed with white coverings, and another bed alongside. Distributed about and within easy reach should be salve, garlands, cooked rice, scents, lemon-peel and betel. On the floor there will be a spittoon and dicing-board and on the wall a lute. In the orchard there will be a swing and a flower-decked bench . . ."

After giving this description of a Nāgarika's home, Vātsyāyana depicts the particulars of his daily programme. "On rising in the morning" he states, "a citizen will clean his teeth, rub himself with salve, taking a fumigating stick and a garland, and a mouthful of rice and a betel quid. Then he will paint his lips and examine himself in the glass.

"He will bathe every day, anoint himself every other day, shave every fourth day, and every tenth day go over the whole body with a razor.

"Three meals a day are taken—morning, noon, and night. The morning is spent in games and amusements, the afternoon with friends, cock-fighting or teaching parrots to talk, and at eventide there is singing.

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 71.

"Public promenades occupy part of every one's time and the citizen will be seen elegantly dressed in company with courtesans, and followed by a retinue of servants."[1]

From this account of Vātsyāyana it may be seen that this normal programme in the daily life of a Nāgarika had considerable resemblance to the every day life of an ordinary citizen as recorded by Bāṇa, but of course without any of the amenities of town or city life as appears to have been the case in the life of the Nāgarika.

VI. The Hermit (*Vānaprastha—Sanyāsin*)

The third stage of life in the existence of a common man in the Gupta age was that of the hermit after which he became a wandering beggar. The hermit or *Vānaprastha* lived in the hermitage where the *nīvāra* corn was collected in heaps and antelopes lay down in the court yards and ruminated.[2] Sometimes the breeze carried to and fro the smoke of the sacrificial offerings and at this time the vesperrites were conducted[3]. Portions of the *nīvāra* corn were set apart for guests arriving in time.[4] The hermits greased their heads with the oil of the *iṅgudi* fruit and lit their lamps with its oil.[5] They slept on hides of sacred animals, wore bark-clothes and kept themselves clean by baths.[6] Sometimes it is related how a pair of shoes made of cocoanut matting were hung on a peg and on one side dangled a veil worn during the sacred meditation.[7]

The final stage of life was that of becoming a religious mendicant (*Sanyāsin*), moving from place to place and subsisting on alms. Few details of these two phases of life have been preserved in contemporary annals.

VII. The Ksatriyas and Military Life

The Kṣatriyas were the warrior class and came next in importance to the Brāhmaṇas. They invariably made up the army and defended the country but a complete picture of the life which soldiers lived in the times of the Guptas cannot, at present, be obtained for lack of sufficient evidence.

[1] Vātsyāyana, *Kāmasūtra*, pp. 22-23, text, pp. 42-57 (with commentary of Jayamaṅgala, edited by D. L. Goswami, Benares, 1912).
[2] *Raghu.*, I, 52-53, pp. 17-18.
[3] *Ibid.*, XIV, 81, p. 304.
[4] *Ibid.*, V, 9, p. 97.
[5] *Ibid.*, XIV, 81, p. 305.
[6] *Sak.*, Act IV, pp. 59-60.
[7] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 99.

Of the military life of this period not much can be written, for although the epigraphs, the foreign travellers and the contemporary chroniclers refer to some aspect or other of such activity, we have no extant account of a real battle of this age from the point of view of the people themselves. But so far as the Gupta forces are concerned they may be broadly divided into two main classes—the sea and land forces, for, as will be shown later, it cannot be denied that there was a Gupta navy from the fourth to the seventh century.

1. Maritime Activity

But it is regrettable that little indeed can be gathered about their sea-life. In the days of Fa Hien he saw large merchant vessels carrying more than two hundred passengers from Ceylon to China, but he does not appear to have noticed any similar battle-ships.[1] But the inscriptions of the Gupta rulers or their subordinates allude to naval activities. Viśvavarman, probably not a Gupta feudatory, must have had a powerful navy in A. D. 424-25. His Gangdhar stone inscription, issued in this year, relates how he was one "whose forces, moreover, have reverence done to them by (the oceans), the palmyra-trees on the shores of which are beautified by the lustre of the production of jewels (*from the waters*); the rows of the foam on which are broken through by the terrified sharks and marine monsters; (*and*) and all of whose hands, which are their waves, are shaken about by a fierce wind."[2] Such a description though highly metaphorical can only be interpreted to mean that Viśvavarman had a powerful fleet, which controlled the waters adjacent to his dominions. But it is nevertheless strange to learn that a ruler of western Mālwā, in the first half of the fifth century A. D., could have had a strong naval force, unless an exaggeration is made of his river craft or unless he was a master of Surāṣṭra as well. Most probably the governorship of western Mālwā included "all the countries of the Surāṣṭras" as was the case with Cakrapālita in A. D. 455-56.[3] Even so late as the early seventh century Yüan Chwāng tells us that *A-nan-t'o-pu-lo* (the capital of Valabhi) was "a dependency of Mālava",[4] that *Su-la-ch'a* (Surāṣṭra)[5] was and *K'i—t'a* or *Ch'a* (Cutch) were "subject to Mālava,"[6] and that Mālava in the south-west and Magadha in the north-east were

[1] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (17), p. 77, text, pp. 74-75.
[3] *Ibid.*, (14) p. 62.
[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 247; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 268.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 248; Hiuen Tsiang, *Ibid.*, pp. 268-69.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 245; Hiuen Tsiang, *Ibid.*, p. 266.

"the two countries of India."[1] This must have been probably the case during the days of Viśvavarman as well and then it may be understood why he is alluded to have been a master of the seas round the Kāṭhiāwār peninsula.

Though Viśvavarman's epigraph alludes to his sea-power, it does not suggest that there was any battle in those waters. The Aphsaḍ stone inscription of Ādityasena, on the other hand, refers to a battle which must have taken place between Mahāsena Gupta and Susthitavarman, when it relates that the mighty fame of the former was "still constantly sung on the banks of (the river) Lōhityā, the surfaces of which are so cool," after his victory over the latter.[2] No victory would have been praised on a seashore or river bank if it was achieved entirely on land. Although this epigraph was issued most probably in the seventh century, yet the reference to this naval battle is evidently to the days of Mahāsena Gupta and Susthitavarman.

In the early fifth century too the navy continued to be an arm of Gupta power. Kālidāsa tells us how Raghu smote the Vaṅga hosts, who proudly thought their ships to be invincible[3] and conquering them, on a living bridge made of elephants he crossed the Kapiśā river and passed into Kaliṅga.[4] Such a statement may be compared with a painting at Ajanta in cave no. XVII, wherein five or six soldiers, mounted on horseback in their typical military costume and holding in the right hand long lances, are crossing a stretch of water, evidently representing the river, in one boat.[5] The oars of this boat are visible but how it was rowed cannot be made out unless it is understood to mean that it was dragged along by a bigger craft.

In the times of Harṣa, as his inscriptions bear out, some large sailing ships must have continued to be in use not only in his dominions but also in the kingdom of the Later Gupta king Jīvita Gupta II and the realm of Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa as well.[6] That this was no empty boast can be verified by the experience of Yüan Chwāng who saw large ships plying through the Ganges

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 242; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 260.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42), p. 206.

[3] *Raghu.*, IV, 36, p. 81: *Vaṅgānutkhāya tarasā nīlā-nausādhanōdyatān.*

[4] *Ibid.*, 38, p. 81: *Sa tīrtvā Kapiśām sainyair=baddhadviradasētubhiḥ.....*

[5] Griffiths, *Paintings in the Buddhist Cave temples of Ajanta*, I, Cave no. XVII, no. 72. (London 1896-97).

[6] *Cf. E.I.*, IV, no. 29, p. 208; *Mahā-nau-hasty-aśva-Jaya-skandhāvārāc=cri Vardhamāna kotyā*; also see *E.I.*, I, no. 11, p. 72; *Ibid.*, XII, no. 13, p. 73: *mahā-nau-hasty-aśva-patti-saṁpatti-upātta-jayaśabd-ānvarttha-skandhāvārāt*: Fleet, *C. I. I.* III, no. 46, p. 215.

"with about eighty other fellow passengers" besides himself, on the way to '*O-ye-mu-khi* (Hayamukha).[1] Such boats, of course, did not belong to the royal navy of this day, which perhaps this pious Chinese traveller must have seen, but he only points in this case obviously to the large country craft. In the light of these remarks it does not seem incredible to believe that mighty military naval ships as well must have been in use in the Gupta age.

Yüan Chwāng throws some light on the naval activities of his day. Kumāra Rāja (Bhāskaravarman) of Kāmarūpa had, according to Yüan Chwāng, a fleet of 30,000 ships. When Kumāra Rāja was alarmed at having enraged Harṣa by refusing to part with Yüan Chwāng, "embarking with the Master of the Law they passed up the Ganges together in order to reach the place where Śilāditya Rāja (Harṣa) was residing." This must have been, as will be seen presently, on the northern bank of the Ganges. When Kumāra Rāja, therefore, arrived at the country of *Kie-shu-ho-ki-lo* (Kajūrgira-Kānkjol, Rājmahāl) from Kāmarūpa, he held a conference there and "first ordered some men to construct on the *north bank* of the Ganges a pavilion-of-travel, and then on a certain day he passed over the river and coming to the pavilion, he there placed the Master of the Law, after which he himself with his ministers went to meet Śilāditya-rāja on the north bank of the river."[2] Soon however Harṣa arrived in state over the Ganges in his own fleet. "About the first watch of the night" says Yüan Chwāng "the king (Harṣa) did in effect arrive. There were some men who reported that on the river there were several thousand lighted torches, and that they heard the sound of beating drums." On learning that Harṣa was approaching him Kumāra Rāja ordered his men to "take torches in hand, whilst he himself with his ministers went forth a long way to meet him."[3] From these incidents it may be inferred that travelling in the Ganges by means of sailing ships by day as well as by night, at least in the first half of the seventh century if not earlier and later, must have been common. This conclusion can be further supported by some more evidence from Yüan Chwāng himself. When this Chinese traveller was invited to participate in "a grand assembly" at Kānyakubja, he "in company with the king (Harṣa) advanced up the river (Ganges) and in the beginning of the last month of the year arrived at the rendezvous."[4] Again when Harṣa convened the great assembly to receive gifts at Prayāga, "on the morrow the military followers of Śilāditya-rāja, and of Kumāra-rāja, embarked in ships, and the attendants of

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *Life*, p. 86.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 172. Italics mine.
[3] *Ibid*, p. 173.
[4] *Ibid*, p. 176.

Dhruvabhaṭṭa-rāja mounted their elephants, and so, arranged in an imposing order, they proceeded to the place of the appointed assembly."[1] Not only was navigation in the Ganges so familiar but even the Sindhu river (Indus) appears to have been equally popular with the sea-men of this age. When returning to China Yüan Chwāng reached this river "five or six *li* wide. The books, images and fellow-travellers were embarked on board a boat for the passage across, but the Master of the Law crossed the stream mounted on an elephant". But their boat in mid-stream capsized and they lost fifty manuscripts.[2]

Towards the end of the eighth century this navy continued to be a reality at least in the Suhma country, especially in and around the maritime city of Dāmalipta (Tāmralipti) on the one side and at Valabhi in Surāṣṭra on the other. In the city of Valabhi relates Daṇḍin there lived a ship-captain (*Nāvikapati*) rich as the god of wealth.[3] Despite such ship-captains and their ships, Daṇḍin confesses that sea-travel was extremely dangerous in the sense that men who lived in the most sacred places, for love's sake endured "terrible battles, sea-voyages, and other fearful dangers."[4] Such voyages they dared to undertake because sea-travel in those days depended entirely on the strength of trade-winds. He relates how a man and woman "cast off the moorings; and the ship flying before the returning wind, sailed back to Dāmalipta (Tāmralipti)", where they disembarked in a hurry.[5]

In this region of Dāmalipta, Daṇḍin describes what was evidently a sea-fight between Hindu and Yavana country craft. He makes Mitra Gupta relate the following story: "At day break I espied a kind of boat manned by Yavanas.[6] They pulled me in and reported

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 191-92.

[3] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 173, text, p, 113.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 75, text, p. 43.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 182, text, p. 119.

[6] The translator of the *Daśakumāracarita*, Mr. Arthur W. Ryder, interprets Yavana to mean a Greek, which is unacceptable for the word Yavana in the 7th century A.D., must be taken to mean either a Persian or an Arab. On the Yavanas of the Purāṇas, see K. P. Jayaswal, *J. B. O. R. S., XVIII.* p. 201. The term Yavana appears to have been applied at first to the Indo-Greeks. *Cf.* Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, pp. 417-418. It was probably used to denote the Kuṣāṇas as well as all foreigners. *Cf. E.I.*, VIII, no. 8, p. 91 where the word Yōṇaka is used in the case of Dhammadēva, as "a northerner from Dattāmitri". The expression foreigner "*auttarāha*", according to Pāṇini (IV, 7. 104), has been interpreted to mean a northerner. The allusion of the word Yavana, in the first half of the 6th century A.D., is possibly to the Arab adventurers, for the earliest literary work in Arabic that has come down to us is *Kalilah-wa-Dimnah* (*Fables of Bidpai*), a translation from Pahlavi which was itself a rendering from Saṁskṛta. The original work was brought to Persia from India, together with the game of chess, in the reign of Anūsharwān (A. D. 531-78.) *Cf.* Hitti, *The History of the Arabs*, p. 308 (London, 1923).

to their captain Ramēṣu. 'Here is a man wearing fetters of iron. We found him in the water. We could use him to sprinkle a thousand bunches of grapes at a time . . Just then a gulley (*madgura*), attended by numerous smaller craft, bore down on us, terrifying the Yavanas. The swift boats were about us in a moment, like dogs around a boar. A fight followed, in which the Yavanas were worsted. But when they were demoralised and disheartened, I encouraged them saying: 'Strike off my fetters, and I will destroy your enemies single handed.' They did so; and I, with a horn-bow that shot showers of shafts with a terrible twang, made mincemeat of all those hostile hirelings.

"I leapt on a boat alongside, and on its death-strewn deck engaged in single combat with the captain; whom I captured alive. He proved to be Bhīmavarman. . . But the crew of the merchantman bound him fast with my discarded fetters, trolled out their joyous chanties and paid me something like worship."[1] This account, although a little imaginary, gives us some idea of a small-scale naval fight towards the end of the seventh century.

2. Land Activity

But a better idea of the land forces and their activities can be obtained from contemporary documents. Kālidāsa tells us how a king with his armies left his capital in order to fight his foes. Before he started on a career of conquest, he saw that his capital (*mūla*) frontier-posts (*pratyaṅtaḥ*) and rear flanks (*pārṣṇi*) were safe-guarded; then on an auspicious occasion he got ready, with his six types of armed forces.[2] But before he left solemn rites were prepared for a sacrifice to bless his conquering arms and there was a lustration of the weapons of war (*vājinīrājanāvidhi*) which was generally undertaken at the close of the rains.[3] As he issued forth with all his forces elderly matrons showered rice (*lāja*) on all of them.[4]

Then the army marched forth. The soldiers wore armour and helmets (*śirastrāṇi*) while even on horseback.[5] While they moved

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-65, text. pp. 106-7.

[2] *Raghu.*, IV, 26, p. 79:
sa gupta-mūla-pratyaṅtaḥ śuddha-pārṣṇirayānvitaḥ |
ṣaḍvidhaṃ balam-ādāya prataṣthē dig-jigiṣayā ||

[3] *Ibid*, IV, 25, p. 78; *Cf.*, also XVII, 12, p. 349:
tasmai samyag-hutō vaḥnir=vāji-nīrājanāvidhau....

[4] *Ibid.*, 27, p. 79.

[5] *Ibid.*, VII, 49, p. 152.

from place to place their banners, which had various emblems like the fish,[1] were soiled with dust.[2] When they decided to march, the war-trumpets (*tūrya*) were sounded.[3]

How actually the army was led is not quite clear. Probably the king was the supreme commander of all forces and led his forces to battle. Kālidāsa tells us that the cavalry formed the van-guard of the army and has recorded how it raised terrific dust.[4] This arm was probably the National Guard of which Yüan Chwāng has given some account. "It consisted" he states "of heroes of choice valour, and, as the profession is hereditary they became adepts in military tactics. In peace they guard the sovereign's residence, and in war they become the intrepid van-guard."[5] Behind the king the commanders must have followed. "The war-elephant" observes Yüan Chwāng "is covered with coat of mail, and his tusks are provided with sharp barbs. On him rides the Commander-in-chief, who has a soldier on each side to manage the elephant. The chariot in which an officer sits is drawn by four horses, while the infantry guard it on both sides."[6]

3. The breaking up of a camp

It may now be seen how, almost a century later, in the days of Bāṇa, an army broke camp and started for the battle-field. Several of the characteristics which Kālidāsa mentions with regard to an army appear to have been continued to the days of Harṣavardhana as well in the first half of the seventh century.

As soon as a war was declared, the rallying drum was sounded for mustering the forces. Rājyavardhana, on hearing of his sister's fate in Kānyakubja, ordered the marching drum (*prayāṇapaṭahaṃ ādideśa*) to be struck. The army appears to have had the rear-flank and the rear-guard.[7] There were probably no chariots (*rathās*) in use[8]. The army appears to have consisted of the elephant, camel, horse corps and foot soldiers.

Great importance was paid to elephants. The elephant-corps had a supreme officer (*Aśēṣagajasādhanādhikṛta*), who obtained the

[1] *Raghu.*, VII 40, p. 150.
[2] *Ibid.*, IV. 42, p. 150.
[3] *Ibid.*, VII, 38, p. 149.
[4] *Ibid.*, VI, 33, p. 127: *asya-prayāṇēṣu sam-agraśaktēr=agrēsarair=vājibhir=utthitāni.*
[5] Yüan Chwāng, *Travels*, I, p. 171; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 82-83.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 171; Hiuen Tsiang, *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.
[7] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 175, text, p. 184.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 187, text, p. 194.

latest news about the favourite elephants from the elephant-doctors.[1] For careless offences riders were deprived of the charge of their elephants. The information about elephants newly captured or those in rut was reported by the riders. Drums were mounted on the elephants. Troops of Superintendents of Decoys uplifted their hands enumerating the serviceable females. Rows of foresters with tossing badges of twigs strove, by upraising tall goads, to announce the number of the newly captured elephants which they had secured. Crowds of *māhouts* displayed leathern figures for practising manoeuvres. Emissaries from the rangers of elephant-forests (*Nāgavanavīthīpāla*), sent to convey tidings of the movements of fresh herds and momentarily expecting supplies of fodder, informed the commissariat stores at villages, towns and marts.[2] These elephants were adorned with shells in their ears while red chalk unguents were used to paint their heads.[3] As soon as the army was about to set forth, the Commander of the Elephant Corps (*Gajasādhanādhikṛta*) was ordered by the king to call in the elephant herds out at pasture.[4]

Then an hour was fixed by the court astrologers for commencing the march (*daṇḍayātrā lagna*). An emperor like Harṣa then bathed in golden and silver vessels, with deep devotion offered worship to the adorable Nīlalōhita (Rudra-Śiva), fed the up-flaming fire, bestowed on Brāhmaṇas sesamum vessels of precious stones, silver and gold in thousands, myriads of cows having horn-tips adorned with creepers of gold-work, sat on a throne with a coverlet of tiger-skin and duly anointed first his bow and then his body down to the feet, with sandal. Then he put on two seemly robes of bark silk embroidered with the flamingo-design, formed about his head a chaplet of white flowers as a sign of supremacy, drew to his ear a fresh *gōrōcanā*-spotted *dūrvā* spray and wound upon his fore-arm, together with the seal-bracelet, an amulet to ensure a successful campaign. The highly honoured and delighted *Purōhita* then sprinkled on his head, with a spray, lustral water. Then he sent away valuable equipages, divided the spoils among the king's adherents, released the state prisoners, and bestowed suitable gifts of favour on distressed pilgrims and nobles. Finally amidst a clamorous cry of 'victory' from the delighted people, he issued forth from his palace.

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 189, text p, 196: *pratidiśaṃ ibhabhiṣagvarān.*
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 189-90, text pp. 196-97.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 190.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 191, text, p. 195.

The starting place was fixed at a large temple built of reeds, not far from the city and close to the river Sarasvatī. It displayed a lofty pillared gateway, an altar supporting a golden camp adorned with sprays, chaplets of wild flowers and wreathes of white banners, while therein strolled white-robed people and muttering Brāhmāṇas. The king stayed there for a time.

At the close of the third watch of the night, the marching drum was sounded. Then, after a moment's pause, eight sharp strokes were distinctly struck again on the drum, indicating the number of the leagues in the day's march.

Bāṇa gives a glowing and detailed account of the breaking up of Harṣa's camp. "Straight away the drums rattled, the *nāndis* rang out joyously, the trumpets brayed, the *kāhalas* hummed, the horns blared: and the noise of the camp gradually increased. Officers occupied themselves in arousing the courtiers. The heavens were confounded by a confused noise of drumsticks added to a rapid tapping of mallets.[1] Commanders mustered crowds of barrack superintendents.[2] Thousands of torches lighted by the people made inroads upon the darkness of the night with their glare. Loving pairs were roused from sleep by the tramp of women of the watch (*Yāmacēṭī*).[3] Shrill words of command from the marshals (*Kaṭuka*) dispelled the slumbers of blinking riders. Awakened elephant-herds vacated their sleeping stalls. There was a shaking of manes from troops of horses risen from sleep. The noisy camp resounded with mattocks uprooting ground fastenings. Elephant hobbles rattled as their pins were extracted. Rearing horses curved their hoofs at the clear low noise of chain-keys brought towards them. A clanking sound of halter fetters filled the ten regions to overflowing, as the foragers loosed the rutting elephants. Leathern bags, bursting with fullness, were extended upon the dusty back of elephants, which had been rubbed down by strokes from wisps of hay. Servants of house-builders (*Gṛhaciñtaka*) rolled up awnings and cloth screens belonging to tents and marquees. Leathern bags were filled to roundness with bundles of pegs. Store-room stewards (*Bhāṇḍāgārika*) collected stores of platters. Many elephant attendants (*Nālīvāhikaḥ*)[4] were pressed to convey the stores. The houses of the neighbourhood were

[1] *Cf.* Twining, *Travels in India*, pp. 92, 484, for a characteristic breaking of camp in India.

[2] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 204, text: *Balādhikṛtabadhyamānapāṭipatipāṭake*

[3] *Cf. yāmakinyāḥ*, in Ch. iv, p. 137 l. 5 (text).

[4] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, text, p. 204. The commentator Śankara observes: *kariṇaṃ vāsagrahaṇaniyukto hastipako meṭhākhyaḥ.*

blocked with clusters of cups and vessels, which were lifted upon numerous elephants, while the riders kept the animals steady. Wicked elephants were loaded with a cargo of utensils hurriedly tossed upon them by travel-practised domestics. Amid the laughter of the crowd helpless corpulent bawds lagged as they were with difficulty dragged along with hands and legs sprawling sideways. Many huge and savage elephants trumpeted as the free play of their limbs was checked by the tightening of the girth-bands of their gaudy housings. A jangling of bells taking place in the elephant troop inflamed all ears with fever. Camels, as sacks were set on their backs, bellowed at the outrage. The carriages of the high-born nobles' (*Sthānapāla*) wives were thronged with roguish emissaries sent by princes of rank. Elephant riders, deceived as to the time of starting, searched for new servants. Highly honoured footmen led the fine horses of the king's favourites. An array of gay gallants employed thick unguents to draw circular lines of camphor on their persons. To the saddles of marshals were fastened martingales with wooden figures of deer, bells, and reeds attached. Apes were placed among troops of horses whose grooms were entangled in a net-work of coiled reins. Stablemen dragged along half-eaten shoots to be eaten at the morning manoeuvres. Loud grew the uproar of foragers shouting to one another. Much crashing of stables resounded as the young rearing horses swerved in the confusion of starting. Women, hastening at the call of riders whose elephants were in readiness, presented unguents for the animals' heads. The low people of the neighbourhood, running up as the elephants and horses started, looted heaps of abandoned grain. Donkeys ridden by throngs of boys accompanied the march. Crowds of carts with creaking wheels occupied the trampled roads. Oxen were laden with utensils momentarily put upon them. Stout steers, driven on in advance, lagged out of greed for fodder lying near them. In front were carried the kitchen appliances of the great feudatories. First ran banner-bearers. Hundreds of friends were spectators of the men's exits from the interior of their somewhat contracted huts. Elephant keepers, assaulted with clods by people starting from hovels which had been crushed by the animals' feet, called the bystanders to witness the assaults. Wretched families fled from grass cabins ruined by collisions. Despairing merchants saw the oxen bearing their wealth flee before the onset of the tumult. A troop of seraglio elephants advanced where the press of people gave way before the glare of their runners' torches. Horsemen shouted to dogs tied behind them. Old people sang the praises of tall Tangaṇa horses which by the

steady motion of their quick foot-falls provided a comfortable seat. Deckhan riders disconsolately contended with fallen mules. The whole world was swallowed up in dust."[1]

Bāṇa has no doubt given us a most vivid description of the breaking up a military camp but, if it was in such a disorganised condition, then a better picture of confusion worse confounded can hardly be found in the annals of Indian military history. With this disorganisation may be compared the order in the Mauryan camp as noted by foreigners.[2] It is no wonder that Harṣa was routed by his great contemporary Pulikeśin II whose forces must have been far more orderly and efficient. As can be seen from the above description the camp was not only filled with women, but there was in it apparently little or no order at all. The advance must have resulted in disastrous confusion.

At the hour of marching, from every side the chieftains gathered on horseback in front of the king's residence. Their names were proclaimed aloud, while 'craning footmen' awaited their commands. Then the signal-conch rang out repeatedly announcing the moment of the king's arraying the army. After a brief interval, he came forth on a female elephant, wrapt in a tunic of silk, with the auspicious umbrella, distinguished by a torquoise rod and inlaid with rubies at the top, held over him. The company of feudatories bowed before him.[3] Such a review of the forces probably also took place when a victorious army returned from a battle. On Bhaṇḍi's requesting Harṣa to inspect the Mālwā king's army and royal equipage, which were conquered by his brother Rājyavardhana, he consented to do so. When such an inspection was over, the king appointed overseers to take charge of the booty according to their several functions.[4]

The camp, therefore, consisted not only of soldiers, their commanders, nobles and the king in person, but also of the commissariat comprising of the beasts of burden like horses, camels, elephants, bullocks and their keepers, elephant-men, donkey-boys, camp-followers, grooms, serving-men, besides rogues, bachelors, knaves and thieves. They were satisfied with easily acquired meals of plentiful readily-pounded remnants of grain. The poor unattended

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-201, text. pp. 204-6. This description of an army breaking camp may aptly be compared with a similar picture in Bāṇā's *Kādaṁbarī*, pp. 85-87.

[2] *Cf.* M'Crindle, *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*. pp. 54-55; *Ibid.*, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes & Arrian*, p. 69. (London, 1877).

[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 202-4.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 225.

nobles were overwhelmed with the toil and worry of conveying their provisions on fainting oxen provided by the wretched village householders. They themselves grasped their domestic appurtenances and grumbled.[1] The *Agrahārikas* led by the *Mahattaras* came to lay their grievances before the king. Hares were hunted. Bands of foragers ran about: "with loins a mass of fodder bundles and grey with chaff, sickles swinging from one part of their ancient saddles, loose dirty blankets made of bits of old wool, and, dangling in tatters, torn jerkins presented by their masters."[2] It is possible that the king received audiences in camp in a separate tent.[3]

Camp life was not popular, probably because it entailed so much hardship to the poor as well as to the rich people, and the general opinion of the populace was perhaps expressed in the words: "Good-bye to this camp, the pinnacle of all unpleasantness."[4]

When the camp broke up not only was the whole world "swallowed up in dust."[5] but in a little while "the earth seemed as it were made of horses; the horizon, of elephants; the atmosphere of umbrellas; the sky, of forests of pennons; the wind, of the scent of ichor; the human race, of kings; the eye, of the rays of jewels; the day, of crests; the universe, of cries of 'All hail!'."[6]

The army must have naturally halted in the evening on its onward march. Bāṇa records what was actually done during such a halt: "When the sun set, the princes (Caṅdrāpīḍa and others) encamped under the trees that chanced to be near; the golden saddles of the steeds were hung on the boughs; the steeds showed the exertions they had gone through, from the tossing of their manes dusty with rolling on the earth, and after they had taken some handfuls of grass and been watered, and were refreshed, they were tethered, with the spears dug into the ground before them; the soldiery, wearied with the day's march, appointed a watch, gladly went to sleep on heaps of leaves near the horses."[7]

Kālidāsa observed some characteristics of camp life which were probably current in his day. While the soldiers were in camp they

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[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 207, text p. 211.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 209.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 211. text, p. 214: *vāhyāsthānaṃ maṇḍapasthāpitaṃ āsanaṃ ācakrāma.*

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 207.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 201.

[6] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 87.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 172-73.

made merry with drinking bouts (*racitāpānabhūmayaḥ*)[1], and after a great victory drank wine (*madhu*).[2] During a march the soldiers pitched tents (*upakāryā*) by the roadside and horses of the cavalry were sheltered in pandals (*paṭamaṇḍapa*), in which the horses were tied and given large pieces of rock-salt to lick.[3]

When the battle actually began trumpets (*tūrya*) were blown before the bowmen and their family history was proclaimed[4] possibly by *Bhaṭas*. If the cavalry formed the van-guard it must necessarily have made the first charge and then the infantry followed. "The infantry" adds Yüan Chwāng "go lightly into action and are choice men of valour; they bear a large shield and carry a long spear; some are armed with a sword or sabre and dash to the front of the advancing line of battle."[5] Then conches (*jalaja*) were sounded[6] and in the thick of battle the fighters shouted out the names of their masters,[7] but in the slaughter which followed women were spared.[8] When a victory was won again a conch was blown,[9] and the victor set his left foot on the crown of his defeated antagonist[10] and the routed kings were housed in separate quarters.[11]

There was in those days the practice of employing bards or *Bhaṭas* in peace and war. Their duty was to sing praises of princes on auspicious occasions. Bāṇa referring to Dadhīca, the son of the ascetic Cyavana, states: "In front chanted a bard, whose eloquence caused the hairs on the young man's cheeks to bristle with delight."[12] As the context shows such bards must have accompanied armies to incite warriors onwards to victory. Such a practice continued in the Dakṣiṇāpatha and contemporary epigraphs reveal how the *Bhaṭas* survived to be an important institution in the court life of South Indian rulers from the tenth century down to the collapse of the great Vijayanagara empire in the first half of the

[1] *Raghu.*, IV, 42, p. 82.

[2] *Ibid.*, 65, p. 88: *madhubhir=vijayaśramam.*

[3] *Ibid.*, V, 63, p. 113; *Ibid.*, 73, p. 116: *dirghēṣv=ami niyamitāḥ paṭamaṇḍapēṣu nidrām vihāya vanajākṣa Vanāyudeśyāḥ. Cf. Ibid.*, 41, p. 106; *Ibid*, XVI, 73, p. 113.

[4] *Ibid.*, VII, 35, p. 149: *nadatsu tūryēṣv=avibhāvya vāco ʻdīrayanti sma kul-ōp.adēśān bāṇ-ākṣarair=iva parasparasya nām=ārjitam cāpa-bhṛtaḥ śaśaṁsuḥ*.

[5] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I., p. 171; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I., p. 83.

[6] *Raghu.*, VII, 63, p. 155.

[7] *Ibid.*, 38, p. 150: *Svabharty nāmagrahaṇāt babhūva sāndrēṣv ajasy-ātmaparā vabōdhaḥ.*

[8] *Ibid.*, XI, 17, p. 229: *patriṇā saha mumōca.*

[9] *Ibid.*, VII, 64, p. 156.

[10] *Ibid.*, VII, 70, p. 157.

[11] *Ibid.*, VII, 47, p. 152.

[12] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita* p. 18.

seventeenth century.[1] It may also be recalled here how Kālidāsa also refers to another community of such singers of eulogistic songs. They are the *Cāraṇas* who are mentioned in the *Vikramōrvasīyaṃ*, and are said to have been a caste akin to the Bhārotyas or Bhāṭs in Gujarāt. Kālidāsa tells us that they were experts in singing panegyrics styled the *Jayōdāharaṇaṃ*.[2]

4. Weapons of War

These forces used a variety of weapons in prosecuting warfare. Contemporary inscriptions sometimes throw some light on the nature of these instruments of destruction and defence. The Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra Gupta speaks of battle-axes, arrows, spears, pikes, barbed darts, swords, lances, javelins for throwing, iron arrows, *vaitastikas*, and many other weapons.[3] The Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473–74, relates how some members of the Silk Weavers' Guild became "excessively well acquainted with the science of archery (*dhanurvidyā*) in which the twanging of the bow was pleasing to the ear."[4] Ādityasena, the Later Gupta king, is recorded to have "landed in the presence of all wielders of the bow."[5] The Alīṇā copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766–67, refers to a mace (*gadā*) that could be hurled and a nice-looking discus (*sudarśana-cakra*) that could be thrown.[6]

In the seventh century too similar weapons continued to be in use. Yüan Chwāng speaks of the large shield and the long spear carried by the choice men of valour of the infantry, who formed the van-guard in times of battle. "They are" he says "experts with all implements of war such as spear, shield, bow and arrow, sword etc. having been drilled in them for generations."[7] Bāṇa refers to bows (*dhanūṁṣī*) and bow-strings (*maurvyo*), arrows (*iṣavaḥ*), helmets (*śirastrāṇi*), mace-staves (*vētrayaṣṭayaḥ*), lance-staves (*kuntayaṣṭayaḥ*),

[1] *Cf. E. I.*, XI. p. 39. *Ibid.*, XIV, p. 85, *Ibid.*, XIX, p. 148; *E. C.*, III, p. Ml. 12, p. 56 Ml. 22. p. 58. Ml. 47, p. 61; Nj. 192, p. 115; *Ibid.*, X, Ct. 22. p. 248; also see Saletore, *Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagara Empire*, I, pp. 272-73.

[2] *Vik.*, Act I, p. 17: *tato vayam antarā cāraṇēbhyastvadīyaṃ jayōdāharaṇaṃ śrutvā tvāṃ ihastaṃ upāgatāḥ.* Also see in this connection *Raghu.*, II, 12, p. 33.

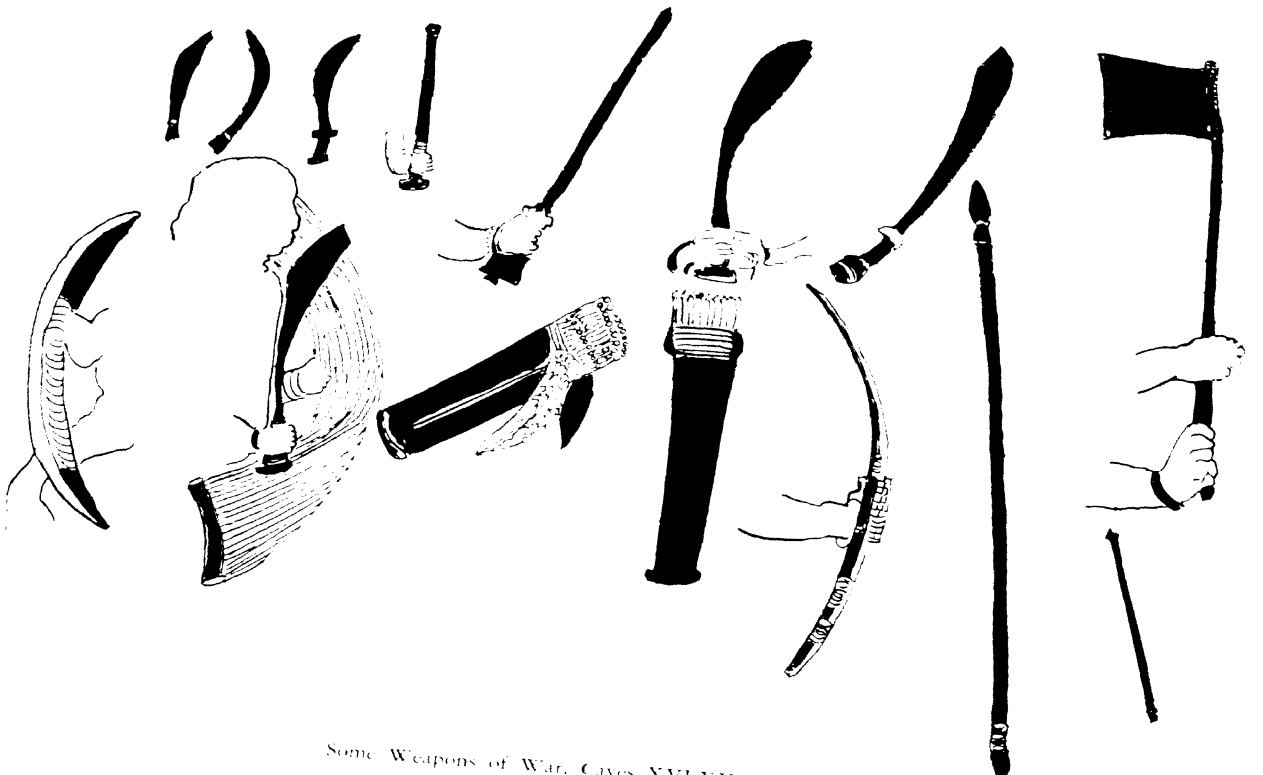
[3] Fleet *op. cit.*, (1) p. 12, text, pp. 6-7: *paraśu-śara-śaṅku-śakti-prās-āsi-tōmara bhiṇḍi-pāla-n (ā) rāca-vaitastik-ādy-anēka ...*

[4] *Ibid.*, (18) p. 85, text, p. 82.

[5] *Ibid.*, (42) p. 204.

[6] *Ibid.*, (39) p. 184.

[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I. p. 171; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 83.



Some Weapons of War, Caves XVI-XVII, Ajanta.

swords (*khaḍgāḥ*) and sharp pointed spears (*Kṛpāṇadarpaṇa*).[1] The handles of these spears were probably made of *Dēvadāru* wood.[2] The mace (*gadā*) is also mentioned as another current weapon of war.[3] That such weapons existed later on towards the end of the seventh century has been confirmed by Daṇḍin who mentions the bow, discus, lance, barb, dart, spear, club, and the mace.[4]

VIII. The Vaiśyas and Commercial Life

The merchant class, consisting of the Vaiśyas, was an important community, which fostered trade and industry and thereby increased the prosperity of the country. They not only carried on commerce by means of barter but they were also bold traders who "pursued gain far and near" as Yüan Chwāng puts it and as can also be made out from contemporary chronicles. It has been already noticed that it was an established fact that the Guptas had a fleet, although the strength of it cannot be determined. Early in the fifth century, when Fa Hien wanted to leave Pāṭaliputra after completing his "three years stay there, he went to Tāmralipti (Tamluk)[5] where he embarked in a large merchant vessel and went floating over the sea to the south-west". It was the beginning of winter and wind was favourable; and after fourteen days sailing day and night, they came to the country of Singhala (Ceylon).[6] From this information it may be inferred that in the fifth century merchants sailed from Tāmralipti (Tamluk) to Simhaḷa (Ceylon) by ship in fourteen days for trading in pearls. It is no wonder, therefore, that mention is made in contemporary literature of several pearl ornaments. Yüan Chwāng refers to Tāmralipti as "a bay where land and water communication met."[7] I-Tsing too later left the shores of India from this spot on his further eastern travels.[8]

From Tāmralipti traders sailed on evidently to far-off China whence came the adventurous travellers like Fa Hien, Yüan Chwāng

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 188, text, p. 194. Bāṇa mentions Kārdaraṅga shields of various colours. *Ibid.*, p. 209, text, p. 207.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 171.

[3] *Ibid.*, *Caṇḍīśataka*, (21), p. 286; *Ibid*, (25), *Śūlaṃ iva devadāru ghaṭitān*. The *Devadāru* is the *Pinus Devadāru* or *Deodar* also *Avaria Longifolia* and *Erythrosylon Sideroxyloides*.

[4] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 66.

[5] *Cf.* Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India*, p. 577. (S. M. Sastri, ed. 1924). Tamluk is situated on a broad bay of the Rūpnārayaṇ river, 12 miles above its junction with the Hugli.

[6] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*. II, p. 190; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 201.

[8] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 185, 211.

and I-Tsing who have left us such valuable information about the Gupta period. The trade with China was chiefly in silk materials of which mention is made for example by Kālidāsa as *Cīnāṁśuka*.[1]

If Tāmralipti was the eastern port for commercial activity at this period in the west too, in distant Surāṣṭra, there was another port through which India came into contact with the western world. That port must have been Barygāza (Broach) in Gujarāt, referred to by the Greek geographers,[2] through which the Gupta empire came into contact with Roman influence owing to which the Guptas struck coins equal in weight to the Roman coin *dinarius*[3] and in the fifth century A. D. introduced the coin *dīnāra*, probably the counterpart of the Roman *dinarius*.[4]

The wealth accumulated by the Vaiśyas was sometimes generously spent by them in endowing rest-houses (*sattras*). At Pāṭaliputra: records Fa Hien, "the heads of the Vaiśya families in them (kingdoms) established in the cities houses for dispensing charity and medicines. All the poor and destitute in the country, orphans, widowers, and childless men, maimed people and cripples, and all those who are diseased, go to those houses, and are provided with every kind of help, and examined by doctors. They get the food and medicines which their cases require, and are made to feel at ease; and when they are better, they go away of themselves."[5]

The existence of such alms-houses (*sattras*) can be proved by contemporary epigraphs. The Gadhwā stone inscription of the reign of Candra Gupta II, dated A. D. 407-8, relates how headed by "Māṭṛdāsa...for the purpose of increasing the religious merit through the 'Brāhmaṇas of the community' established a perpetual alms-house, which was to be maintained on the interest of ten *dināras*."[6] From this grant it is evident that such alms-houses were established and maintained for increasing spiritual benefit, that Brāhmaṇas by such establishments were patronised and that they were maintained on the interest-proceeds of specified endowments. Fa Hien gives more details about these rest-houses, commenting how Hindus patronised them. "They (Hindus)" he observes, "also, moreover, seek (to

[1] *Śak.*, Act I, 19, p. 29.

[2] McCrindle, *The Commerce and Navigation of the Erythrean Sea*, pp. 113, 117. (1879).

[3] *Cf.* Allan, *Catalogue*, Intr. p. LXX; also *J. R. A. S.*, 1889, pp. 23, 24.

[4] *Cf.* Warmington, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*, p. 320; also see Fleet, *op. cit.*, (5). p. 33.

[5] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (7). pp. 38-39.

acquire) the blessing of good deeds on unfrequented ways, setting up on the road-side houses of charity, where rooms, couches, beds, and food and drink are supplied to travellers, and also to monks coming and going as guests, the only difference being in the time (for which those parties remain)".[1] He noticed such houses of charity when travelling from Kōsala and Śrāvasti. The same practice continued in A. D. 417-18 under Kumāra Gupta I, the sums granted varying from ten to twelve *dīnāras*.[2] In fact a *sattra*-rite was performed for granting charity, as can be seen from the Khoh plates of the *Mahārāja* Saṁkṣōbha, in A. D. 528-29.[3]

That such rest-houses were built also in the seventh century can be observed from the words of Yüan Chwāng. He travelled from *Chēh-ka* (Rājāpur) south-eastwards into the *Chēh-ka* (Ṭakka?) country and on going forwards he found what he calls *puṇyaśālas*.[4] "On from this country" he says "there were numerous *puṇyaśālas* or free rest-houses for the relief of the needy, and distressed; at these houses medicine and food were distributed and so travellers having their bodily wants supplied, did not experience inconvenience".[5] It must be noticed here that this practice of establishing free rest-houses from the fourth to the seventh century continued not chiefly owing to the patronage of the State, but it was largely sponsored by private philanthropy, which was inspired by a desire to increase religious merit and to alleviate the miseries of the poor and needy.

IX. Śūdras and Agricultural Life

1. Cāṇḍālas

The fourth caste of the Śūdras consisted of either agriculturists or labourers and among them the Cāṇḍālas were the most unfortunate. "That is the name" says Fa Hien "for those who are (held to be) wicked men, and live apart from others. When they enter the gate of a city or a market place, they strike a piece of wood to make themselves known, so that men know and avoid them, and do not come into contact with them... Only the Cāṇḍālas are fishermen

[1] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (8-9), pp. 40-41.

[3] *Ibid.*, (25), p. 116.

[4] The present day survivals of these *puṇyaśālas* are possibly the *Dharmaśālas*, which are so often found scattered all over the country.

[5] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 286; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 165.

and hunters, and sell flesh meat".[1] Since it has been proved that meat formed one of the items of food in Gupta times, it follows that the Cāṇḍālas, if they were butchers, hunters and fishermen, formed an important though contemptible community. The contempt for them, which was tantamount to untouchability, being traceable to Manu,[2] was probably due to the nature of their work and uncleanliness.

As Yüan Chwāng states these unfortunate people were forced to live outside the city. Referring to them he remarks: "Butchers, fishermen, public performers, executioners, and scavengers have their habitations marked by a distinguishing sign. They are forced to live outside the city and they sneak along on the left when going about in the hamlets."[3] Probably some of these ill-treated people were permitted to live in the city and some were certainly employed by the State. Bāṇa relates how the pupils of the eyes of the horses "trembled with fear" at the yells of the Cāṇḍālas who guarded them in the royal stables of Harṣa.[4]

2. A Cāndāla Colony.

A picture of the surroundings in which the Cāṇḍālas lived has luckily been preserved by Bāṇa, who brands them as barbarians and styles their dwellings as "a very market place" of evil deeds. He describes their habitation in a rather gruesome way: "It was surrounded on all sides by boys engaged in the chase, unleasing their hounds, teaching their falcons, mending snares, carrying weapons, and fishing, horrible in their attire, like demoniacs. Here and there the entrance to their dwellings, hidden by thick bamboo forests, was to be inferred from the rising of smoke of orpiment. On all sides the enclosures were made with skulls; the dust heaps in the roads were filled with bones; the yards of the huts were miry with blood; fat, and meat chopped up. The life there consisted of hunting; the food, of flesh, the ointment, of fat; the garments, of coarse silk; the couches, of dried skins; the household attendants, of dogs; the animals for riding, of cows; the men's employment, of wine and women; the oblation to the gods, of blood; the sacrifice, of cattle. The place was the image of all hells."[5]

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[1] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[2] *The Laws of Manu*, V, v. 85, p. 183 (Bühler).

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, p. 147; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 74.

[4] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 51.

[5] *Ibid.*, *Kādambari*, pp. 204-5.

X. Aspects of Urban Life

1. Features of Town-Life

All these people lived either in the town or village. Contemporary accounts throw some light on some features of town life from the fourth to the seventh century A. D. When going through Mathurā, towards the end of the fourth century, Fa Hien noticed "the fields, houses, gardens and orchards along with the resident populations and their cattle."[1] He refers to the "southern gate" of *Shā-che* (Sāñci) and in Kōsala to "the well and walls" of the house of the Vaiśya head-man Sudatta.[2] In Vaiśāli he noticed a garden to the south of the city on 'the west of the road' and the west gate of the city.[3] In the centre of Pāṭaliputra he records that he saw Aśōka's palace and halls, walls and gates, with elegant carving and inlaid sculpture.[4] So absorbed was Fa Hien with his Buddhist studies that he did not care to record any further details of towns or cities except a few hints referring to the existence of gates, walls, houses and gardens in them.

But the inscriptions of the Gupta rulers themselves, at times, throw some light on some features of town-life during this period of Indian history. The Gaṅgdhār stone inscription of Viśvavarman, dated A. D. 423-24, relates how Viśvavarman, the father of Bandhuvarman, the feudatory of Kumāra Gupta I, adorned a city (Gaṅgdhār?) on the banks of the Gargarā "with irrigation wells, tanks, and temples and halls of the gods, drinking wells and pleasure gardens of various kinds, and causeways, and long pools."[5] The Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, describes how in Daśapura (Dāsor) "the houses have waving flags.....(*and*) are very white (*and*) extremely lofty..... And other long buildings on the roofs of the houses, with arbours in them, are beautiful.....being vocal with songs (*like those*) of the Gaṅdharvas; having pictured representations arranged (*in them*); (*and*) being adorned with groves of waving plantain trees. Here, cleaving asunder the earth, there rise up houses which are decorated with successions of storeys..... It shines with Brāhmaṇas endowed

[1] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 54; pp. 55-56.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 77.

[5] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (17) pp. 77-78. text p. 75. *prabuddha-kumud-ākara-śuddha tārī-vāpi-taḍāga-sura-sadma-sabh-ōdupāna-nānāvidh-ōpavana-saṅkrama-dirghikābhiḥ.*

with truth, patience, self-control, tranquillity, religious vows, purity, fortitude, private study, good conduct, refinement, and steadfastness (*and*) abounding in learning and penances, and free from the excitement of surprise."[1] Again in the Mandasor stone inscription of Yaśōdharman and Viṣṇuvardhana, ascribed to the year A. D. 533-34 it is stated how in many countries the sun was obscured by the smoke of the oblations of sacrifices, where flourished thick and thriving crops of grain "through the god Maghavan pouring cloudfuls of rain upon (*their*) boundaries; and in which the ends of the fresh sprouts of the mango-trees in the parks (*udyāna*) are eagerly plucked in joy by the hands of wanton women."[2]

Kālidāsa may be said to supplement this information revealed by Gupta inscriptions. Gardens (*pramadavana*)[3] were considered by him to be ornaments to every household. He refers to private gardens (*grah-ōpavana*),[4] town (public) gardens (*nagar-ōpavana*)[5] and palace gardens in a city (*pramadavana*)[6], in which were cultivated fruit trees and flowers.[7]

The orchards planted on the banks of rivers, one after another, were irrigated by narrow drains (*kulya*),[1] through which, as well as from fountains (*vāriyaṅtra*),[8] water flowed. These drains carried the flowing water into little channels (*ālavāla* or *ādhāraba*ṅ*dha*),[9] which were constructed about trees which slowly absorbed it.

The flower-gardens were more elaborately laid out. They were graced with tanks,[10] arbours of creepers having seats,[11] mock hillocks (*krīḍāśaila*) with crystalline posts for tame peacocks to play on,[12] swings either in bowers or in the open,[13] and raised seats (*vēdikā*) under large shady trees.[14] In such places the marriage of a tree to a creeper (*sahakāraḥ*) provided a gay time to visitors.[15]

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18) p. 85, text p. 81.
[2] *Ibid.*, (35) p. 156, text p. 153.
[3] *Māl.*, Act. III, p. 55.
[4] *Raghu.*, VIII, 32, p. 166.
[5] *Śak.*, Act I, 10, p. 6.
[6] *Vik.*, Act II, p. 33.
[7] *Raghu.*, XII, 3, p. 247; *Śak.*, Act I, 10.
[8] *Māl.*, Act. II, 12, p. 51.
[9] *Raghu.*, XII, 3, p. 206.
[10] *Ibid.*, XIX, 9, p. 378.
[11] *Raghu.*, XIX, 23, p. 382.
[12] Megh., I, 60, p. 47.
[13] *Raghu.*, IX, 46, p. 194.
[14] *Kum.*, III, 44, p. 55.
[15] *Raghu.*, VIII, 60, p. 173.

These flower-gardens were looked after by women who, with pitchers (*sēcanaghaṭa*)[1] and small jars (*payōghaṭāḥ*),[2] watered the plants. Servants entrusted with the care of these gardens were called their guardians (*pramadavanapālikā*).[3]

The towns and cities must have had huge gates and long bolts,[4] which are sometimes compared to the strong arms of a hefty person.[5] Ramparts (*nitaṁbaḥ-prākāra*) existed,[6] and royal streets (*rājapatha*) were flanked with rich shops (*vipaṇi*).[7] Ayōdhyā, for instance, is recorded to have had four gates and an open space outside the city.[8] When prominent persons, especially those connected with the royalty, either arrived at or departed from a city, the streets were gaily decorated.[9]

There were some transport facilities. The means of conveyance were horses, bulls, elephants, camels, mules and oxen, for land purposes,[10] while boats and ships were used for crossing the rivers and the seas.[11] Women were carried about either in palanquins borne by four men (*caturāśrayāna*)[12] or in carriages of various kinds (*ratha*).[13]

2. Country Life

Life in the country-side was, however, more peaceful and undisturbed. Let us take for example the description of the Śrīkaṇṭha *janapada*, the capital of which was Sthāṇvīśvara.[14] It was according to Bāṇa peopled by the good and there the laws of caste were for ever unconfused and the order of the *kṛta* age prevailed.

Śrikaṇṭha was a fertile place. It had unbroken lines of *Puṇḍra* sugar-cane enclosures. On every side its marches were packed with

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[1] *Śak.*, Act, I, p. 6.

[2] *Raghu.*, XIV, 78, p. 304.

[3] *Māl.*, Act III, p. 55.

[4] *Śak.*, Act II, 15, p. 28: *nagaraparighaprāṁśu.*

[5] Māl., Act V, p. 9.

[6] *Raghu.*, VI, 43, p. 129: *asy-āṅka-lakṣmirbhava dīrghabāhōr Māhiṣmat=iva prani-taṁbakāñcim.*

[7] *Ibid.*, XIV, 30, p. 293; *Māl.*, Act V, p. 120.

[8] *Ibid.*, XV, 60, p. 318. *Cf.*, with the observations of Yüan Chwāng: "As to their inhabited towns and cities the quadrangular walls of the cities (or according to one text, of the various regions) are broad and high, while the thoroughfares are narrow tortuous passages. The shops are on the high ways and booths (or, inns) line the roads. *Travels*, I, p. 147; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 73-74.

[9] *Raghu.*, XI, 3, p. 226.

[10] *Ibid.*, IV, 21, 22-26, pp. 77-88: *Ṣaḍvidhaṃ balam-ādāsa prathasthē dig-jigīṣayā*... ....

[11] *Ibid.*, IV, 36, p. 81.

[12] *Ibid.*, VI, 10, p. 120.

[13] *Māl.*, Act, V p. 132.

[14] *Cf.* Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 701.

corn-heaps, distributed among the threshing floors.[1] Throughout it was adorned with rice-crops extending beyond their fields, where the ground bristled with cumin beds watered by the pots of the Persian wheel. On its lordly uplands were wheat crops variegated with *Rājamāṣa* patches ripe to bursting and yellow with the split bean pods. Attended by singing herdsmen mounted on buffalos, pursued by sparrows greedy for swarms of flies, gay with the tinkle of bells bound to their necks, roaming herds of cows wandered through its forests, revelling on *Vāṣpachedya* grass. There were thousands of spotted antelopes. Pot-herbs and plantains blackened the soil around the villages. At every step were groups of young camels. The exits were made attractive by vine arbours and pomegranate orchards. Arbours, ablaze with *Pīlu* sprays, were besmeared with the juice of hand-pressed citron leaves. Travellers slept there blissfully after drinking the juice of fresh fruit and plundering the date-trees. Wood-rangers in those groves tasted the cocoanut juice. Troops of camels and flocks of sheep formed hordes under the guardianship of camelboys.[2]

Yüan Chwāng visited Sthāṇvīśvara, the capital of Harṣavardhana. He noticed there that the "soil was rich and fertile and the crops were abundant: the climate was warm; the manners and customs of people were illiberal: the rich families vied with each other in extravagance . . . . . few were given to farming".[3]

Sometimes the portions of forest land inhabited by villagers, were converted into settlements. Harṣavardhana, in search of his sister, approached the skirts of the Vindhya forest. Entering he saw, while still at some distance, a forest settlement which was distinguished by woodland districts and turned grey by the smoke from granaries of wild grain in which heaps of burning *Saṣṭika*[4] chaff sent up a blaze. Therein were huge banyans, encircled with cowpens formed of a quantity of dry branches; and tiger-traps were constructed in fury at the slaughter of young calves.[5] Zealous foresters violently seized the axes of trespassing wood-cutters; and *Durgā* arbours were built of tree clumps in the thickets. The outskirts being for the most part forest, many parcels of rice-land, threshing ground and tilth were being apportioned by small farmers and that

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 79, text, p. 94. But the commentator Śaṅkara says-*khaladhānadhāmabhiḥ khalapālaiḥ*: "by the owners of the threshing floors."

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 79-80, text, pp. 94-95.

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 314; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 183.

[4] *Saṣṭika* is a kind of rice ripening in sixty days, commonly called sāṭhi.

[5] *Vatsarūpaka=cf. Vatsarūpa*, p. 227, (text).

with no little vigour of language, since it was mainly spade culture and they were anxious for the support of their families. No great amount of coming and going trampled the earth owing to the difficulty of ploughing, the sparsely scattered fields covered with *Kaśa* grass, with their few clear spaces, their black soil stiff as black iron, the branches bursting from the tree trunks set up here and there, their growths of impenetrable *Śyāmāka* their wealth of *Alaṁbuśa*, and their *Kōkilākṣa* bushes not yet cleared away. Near the village scaffolds constructed above ground suggested incursions of wild beasts.

In every direction at the entrance to the forests were drinking arbours made of way-side trees, which by their coolness seemed to dispel the summer heat. There were arbours, where wooden stands surmounted by an array of bristling water jars to steal away thirst, cool porous vessels with dripping bases for allaying weariness, pictures black with moist acquative plants, for the purpose of keeping the water cold, bits of pink gravel taken from rivers to cool the air.

In other places again blacksmiths were almost intensifying the heat by burning heaps of wood for charcoal. On every side the prospect was filled with the inhabitants of the district, who dwelt in the surrounding country, and entered the woods to collect timber and were enveloped in the provisions guarded for them by old men stationed in the hamlet houses of the vicinity. Their bodies they had anointed to prepare themselves for their hard sylvan toils. On their shoulders were set strong axes, and about their necks hung their breakfast bundles. They wore ragged clothes for fear of thieves. They bore water in jars having mouths covered with corks of leaves, and attached to their necks which were encircled by triple collars of black cane. Strong yoked oxen marched before them in couples.[1]

3. Forest Life

Ranging on the outskirts of the country-side were hunters, who grasped snares with intricate loops formed of animals' sinews, and bore coiled traps and netted nooses fastened to a quantity of screens used in shooting wild beasts. Fowlers roamed hither and thither, loaded with cages of falcons, partridges, *kapiñjalas* and the like, while their boys loitered about with aviaries hanging from their shoulders. Troops of female sparrows were caught with twigs whereon

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacaritra* pp. 226-27. *Kaṇṭakita* = containing grass stalks? *Cf. Ibid.*, p. 139. "Fresh water-plants were coiled round a dripping globe".

a little cast away pulse broth was smeared. Young hunters, practising bird-catching, coaxed a number of dogs which were frightened at partridges hidden in clumps of grass.

There were people moving along with bundles of *Śūdhu* bark, hued like an old ruddy-goose's neck, countless sacks of recently uprooted *Dhātakī* flowers of the colour of red ore and of cotton plants, plentiful loads of flax and hemp bundles, quantities of honey, peacocks' tail feathers, wreathes of compressed wax, barkless *Khadira* logs frilled with hanging *Lāmajjaka* grass, large bundles of *Kuṣṭha* and the *Rōdhra* yellow as a full grown lion's mane. Village wives hastened en route for neighbouring villages, all intent on thoughts of sale and bearing on their heads baskets laden with various gathered forest fruits.[1]

4. Trees

In these towns, villages and forests were grown different kinds of trees the names of some of which are mentioned in Gupta inscriptions. The undated Bihar stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta mentions "groups of fig-trees and castor-oil plants, the tops of which are bent down by the weight of their flowers."[2] In the Gañgdhār stone inscription of Viṣvavarman, dated A. D. 423-24, reference is made to the palmyra (*Kūla-tāla*) trees, the flowers of the *Bandhūka* trees (*Pentapetes Phoenicea., Terminalia Tomentosa*) bearing red flowers and the blue-flowering *Bāṇa* trees (*Barleria*)[3]. The Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, speaks of the full-blown flowers of the *Rōdhra* (*Symplocos Racemosa*) and *Priyaṅgu* plants (*Panicum Italicum*: *Sinapis Ramosa-saffron*) and the Jasmine creepers; the *Lavalī* trees (*Averrhoa Acida*) and the solitary branches of the *Nagaṇā* bushes (*Cardiospermum Halicacabum*)[4], the *Aśōka* (*Jonesia Aśōka*) *Sinduvāra* (*Vitex Negundo*), *Kētaka* (*Pandanus Odoratissimus*) and the pendulous *Atimuktaka* creeper.[5] The Khōh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 482–83, refers to the *Vṛika* (*Sesbana Grandiflora*) and *Amrāta* (Hog-plum-*Spondias Mangifera*) trees.[6] The *Priyaṅgu* (*Panicum Italicum*) and *Vakula* (*Mimusops Elengi*) are again mentioned in the undated Nagarjuni Hill Cave inscription of Anantavarman.[7]

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[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 227-28.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12), p. 51, text p. 49: *vṛkṣāṇām kusuma-bhar-ānat āgra-śuṁ* (?) *ga* (?) *vyālaṁbastavak.* ...

[3] *Ibid.*, (17), p. 77.

[4] *Ibid.*, (18), p. 87, text, p. 83: *priyaṅgu taru-kuṇḍa latā vikōśa puṣp=āsava.*

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[6] *Ibid.*, (22), p. 105.

[7] *Ibid.*, (50), p. 228.

It may now be seen how many of these trees mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions can be noticed first in the works of Kālidāsa and later in the writings of Bāṇa. Kālidāsa too mentions several kinds of trees. Among these are *Kōvidāra*[1], *Punnāga*[2], *Saptaparṇa*[3], *Tāmbūli*[4], (*Nāgavalli*) *Pūga* (betel-nut tree)[5], *Akṣōṭa*[6], *Sahakāra*[7], (*Āmra*-mango) *Tāli*[8], *Plakṣa*[9], *Saudha*[10], *Saptacchada*[11], *Pārijāta*[12], *Sāmī*[13], *Aśoka*[14], *Syāma*[15] (Fig tree), *Tamāla*[16], *Sarala*[17], *Kaṭaka*[18], *Lōdhra*[19], *Dēvadāru*[20], *Śallakī*[21], *Nīpa*[22], *Sāla*[23], *Kṛṣṇ-āguru*[24], *Kharjūra*[25], *Haricandana*[26], *Ātimukta*[27]. Among creepers he mentions *Priyaṅgu*[28], *Lavali*[29], *Mādhavi*[30], *Nicula*[31] and others. He refers to various kinds of flowers as well. Among these are *Lōdhra*[32], *Santānaka*[33], *Kētakī*[34], *Mālatī*, *Bakula*, *Yūthikā*[35], *Śirīṣa*[36], *Namēru*[37], *Kadaṁba*[38], *Kandala*[39], *Aśōka*[40], *Lavaṅga*[41], *Madhūka*[42], *Paṅkaja*[43] and *Bandhujīva*[44].

[1] *Rit.* III, 6, p. 35.
[2] *Raghu.*, IV, 57, p. 86.
[3] *Ibid.*, IV, 23, p. 78.
[4] *Ibid.*, IV, 42, p. 82.
[5] *Ibid.*, 44, p. 83.
[6] *Ibid.*, IV, 69, p. 89.
[7] *Ibid.*, 9, p. 74.
[8] *Ibid.*, 56, p. 86.
[9] *Ibid.*, XVII, 12, p. 349.
[10] *Ibid*, VIII, 93, p. 181.
[11] *Ibid.*, V, 48, p. 108.
[12] *Ibid.*, VI, 6, p. 119.
[13] *Ibid.*, XIII, 32, p. 275
[14] *Ibid.*, XIII, 32, p. 275,
[15] *Ibid.*, XIII, 53, p. 280.
[16] *Ibid.*, XIII, 15, p. 272.
[17] *Kum.*, I, 9, p. 5.
[18] *Ibid.*, VII, 52, p. 138.
[19] *Raghu.*, II, 29, p. 37.
[20] *Ibid.*, II, 36, p. 40.
[21] *Vik.* Act IV, p. 122.
[22] *Raghu.*, XIX, 37, p. 386.
[23] *Ibid.*, I, 13, p.6.
[24] *Ibid.*, IV, 81, p. 92.
[25] *Ibid.*, IV, 57, p. 89.
[26] *Śak.* Act VII, 2, p. 105.
[27] *Ibid.*, Act III, p. 37.
[28] *Megh.*, II, 44, p. 82.
[29] *Vik.*, Act, V, 8 p. 146.
[30] *Ibid.*, Act. II, p. 33; *Śak*, III, 10, p. 36.
[31] *Ibid.*, Act IV, p. 114.
[32] *Raghu.*, III, 2, p. 52.
[33] *Kum.*, VII, 3, p. 125.
[34] *Rit.* II, 26, p. 30.
[35] *Ibid.*, II, 24, p. 28.
[36] *Kum.*, V, 4, p. 76.
[37] *Ibid.*, I, 55, p. 21.
[38] *Raghu.*, XV, 99, p. 325.
[39] *Ibid.*, XIII, 29, p. 275.
[40] *Ibid.*, XIII, 32, p. 275.
[41] *Ibid.*, VI, 57, p. 133.
[42] *Ibid.*, VI, 25, p. 125.
[43] *Ibid.*, IV, 14, p. 75.
[44] *Ibid.*, XI, 25, p. 231.

It is interesting to note that trees in this period were, like human beings, adopted and married[1].

Bāṇa tells us how amidst such trees, in the Vindhyan forests the people lived. "Here and there," he observes "the preparation of unsightly fields of barren soil was being effected by numerous lines of wagons, bearing heaps of manure from old dust heaps and yoked to strong young steers, while to the creaking of their loose and noisy wheels were added the angry cries of the dust-grey plough-boys, who sitting on the poles urged them on. The surrounding country was black with numerous sugar-cane enclosures, showing wide carefully tended branches, buffalo skeletons fixed on stakes, to scare away with their sharp points the rabbits which devastated the rising buds, and high bamboo fences which the antelopes lightly leapt when startled by ox-drivers' sticks which the watchers hurled at them.

"At very wide intervals were the dwellings of the forest house holders, girt with orchards of emerald bright *Snuhā*, entangled with thickets of bamboo suitable for bows and difficult of access owing to rows of thorny *Karañja*. They had garden enclosures with clumps of *Gavēdhukā*, *Garmaī*, *Śigru*, *Granthiparṇa*, *Saraṇa*, *Surasa*, *Vaṅgaka*, *Vacā*, and the castor plant, and a net work of *Kāsthāluka* creepers, reared on tall planted uprights, provided a shade. Young calves were tied to *Khadira* stakes fixed in the ground in circular jujube arbours, and crowing cocks more or less indicated the positions of the houses. At the foot of *Agasti* trees in the yards tanks and drinking vessels for birds had been constructed, and pink masses of jujube were scattered around. The walls were formed of partitions made of slips of bamboo, leaves, stalks, and reeds, while for ornament *gōrōcana* pigment and *Kiṁśuka* flowers were used. There were piles of charcoal tied with *Valvaja* grass, numerous heaps of cotton from the *Seemul* (*Śālmali*) tree fruit, stores of *Nala* rice, water-lily roots, candied sugar, white lotus seed, bamboos, and threshed rice ready at hand, also collections of *Jamāla* seeds, mats worn from being used to pound ashes and disposed upon heaps of *Kāśmarya*, a wealth of withered *Rājādana* and *Madana* fruit, abundance of *Madhūka* fruit decoctions, pots of safflower in excellent cupboards, no lack of *Rājamāṣa*, cucumber, *Karkaṭikā*, and (*Kūṣmāṇḍa*) gourd seeds, and collections of living pets, such as wild-cats, *māludhāna* snakes, ichneumons, *Sālijātakas*, and the like".[2]

[1] *Raghu.*, II, 36, p. 40; and *Ibid.*, VIII, 61, p. 173; Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 194.

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 228-29.

XI. Some Customs and Manners

1. Pastimes–Indoor Games

The people of this age had their own indoor as well as outdoor pastimes. Sometimes kings and nobles fuddled themselves with wine and women;[1] the latter enjoyed themselves in public baths, where they played pranks in the water.[2] Dice (*akṣa*)[3] was as a great favourite as story telling, with interested audiences. The *Harṣacarita*, by the way, was a story narrated by Bāṇa to an enraptured domestic circle of his relations[4]. Women loved to sit on the swing (*dōlā*) sometimes with their lovers,[5] within[6] and without[7] their homes. Inside their houses wealthy persons used swinging cots which were set in motion by servants by means of ropes.[8]

The pastime of playing with dice must have been a game current in Bāṇa's days. He refers to a grateful dicer[9] and observes how "dicemen and chessmen lone left empty squares."[10] He again clearly states that during Harṣa's reign "only chess boards teach the position of the four members (*caturaṅga*)."[11] The game of draughts must also have been familiar. It is said that Candrāpīḍa "sent for his amusement by the porters at Kādaṁbari's bidding, players on lute and pipes, singers, skilful dice and draught players, practiced painters and reciters of graceful verses."[12] Dice was indulged in the mixed company of men and women[13] and there is a suggestion that a couple played with two dice.[14] The gaming dice discovered on the main Stūpa site no. 3 of the ancient Buddhist *Saṅghārāma* of Nālandā suggests that "the Buddhist brethren in residence here were not altogether above the amusements of less austere humanity." Similar gaming dice had previously been recovered from monasteries nos. I and 1 A, as well as on many other Buddhist sites.[15]

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[1] *Raghu.*, XIX, 5, p. 378.
[2] *Ibid.*, XVI, 64, p. 349.
[3] *Ibid.*, VI, 18, p. 122.
[4] *Cf.* Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 76-77.
[5] *Raghu.*, XIX, 44, p. 387.
[6] *Māl.*, III, p. 74.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 73.
[8] *Raghu.*, XIX, 44, p. 387.
[9] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 171.
[10] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbari*, p. 5.
[11] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 65, text p. 78: *aṣṭapadānāṁ caturaṅga kalpanā.*
[12] *Ibid.*, *Kādambarī*, p. 152.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 155.
[14] Bāṇa, *Caṇḍī-Śataka*, (27), p. 292: *krīḍā dvabhyāṁ vimuñc āparaṁ alaṁ amun=aikēna me pāśakena.* The word dice here can also be interpreted to mean a noose.
[15] *A. S. I. R.*, 1923-24, p. 74.

Just as Kālidāsa describes the virtues of hunting, Daṇḍin too dilates on the advantages of gambling (*dyūta*). Gambling he remarks "develops an unexampled magnanimity, since you drop a pile of money like a straw. With its alternations of winning and losing, it liberates you from servile joy or despondency. It nourishes impetuosity, the basis of all manliness. It compels a continuous exercise of quick intelligence in detecting tricks (very difficult to perceive) with dice, sleight of hand, the board, and other equipment. Demanding exclusive attention, it gives superb training in mental concentration. It makes for delight in audacity, the companion of brisk resolution; for ability to hold one's own while rubbing up with the toughest customers; for the cultivation of self-reliance; for getting a living without stinginess."[1]

Once again it is Daṇḍin who gives us a vivid picture of a dice-play in action. One of his characters, Apahāravarman went to the city of Campā. Resolved to tread the path of "scientific thievery," he did not rest until he had entered a gambling dive and mingled with the professionals. There he "found no end of enjoyment observing their skill in all the twenty-five branches of the art of gambling: their sleight of hand, extremely difficult to detect, over the dice-board; the accompanying sneers and jeers; their death-defying truculence; their systems (chiefly argument, force and bluff) devised to gain a gambler's confidence and calculated to win the stakes; their flattery of the strong; their threats towards the weak; their cleverness in picking partners; their fantastic means of allurement; the varied wagers proposed; their magnanimous way of dividing the cash; the intermittent buzz of talk, largely obscene; and much besides.

"Now when a player made a careless throw, I laughed a little. But his opponent seemed to flare up, looking at me with an eye red with wrath, and shouting: "Man, you tell him how to play when you laugh. Let this uneducated duffer go. I'll just play with you-you seem a smart one." The proprietor offered no objection: he clinched with me, and I won sixteen thousand *dināṛs*. Half I gave to the proprietor and his staff; half I pocketed. Then I rose, and with me, rose delighted congratulations from the company."[2] This incident reveals that gambling dens must have been common, and that they were controlled by their proprietors, whose permission was necessary for a stranger to

[1] Daṇḍin *op. cit.*, pp. 209-10, text, p. 135; also see Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 81.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81, text, pp. 47-48.

participate in a game in which the members of the dive were already taking a part. This game of dice was essentially a sport of stakes, in which large sums sometimes were either lost or won. When these games were in action brawls must necessarily have taken place.

2. Outdoor Pastimes

Outdoor pastimes were also popular in this age. The public was entertained by ram fights,[1] while girls and boys played with balls (*Kaṅduka*) in their hands.[2] Hunting, probably an aristocratic amusement, was a favourite with kings and nobles. In singing its praises Kālidāsa appears to echo the enthusiasm of Kauṭalya, when he says that it causes the disappearance of phlegm, bile, perspiration and that it yields the acquisition of skill in aiming at still and moving objects, the ascertainment of the appearance of beasts when provoked, their sense of fear and ferocity.[3] Hunting according to him makes one intimate with the art of throwing down the moving mark; gives understanding of their signs of fear and ferocity and endows the body with excellent qualities owing to a conquest over fatigue.[4] Perhaps Daṇḍin was the only other writer, after Kālidāsa, who was equally enthusiastic about hunting. "There is nothing so beneficial as hunting (*mṛgayā*)". He adds: "It gives the legs magnificent exercise; and long-winded speed might prove very handy after a defeat. It dries up the phlegmatic humour; thus promoting digestion, the sole foundation of health. By reducing fat, it makes the body vigorous, sinewy, agile. It gives power to endure cold, heat, wind, rain, hunger, thirst. It interprets the mental activities of living beings from their physical expression. It supplements scanty crops with the flesh of deer, buffaloes, wild oxen, and other game. It makes land routes secure by killing such creatures as wolves and tigers. It wins the confidence of jungle tribes. It fosters energy, thus impressing hostile armies."[5] Therefore hunting was considered to benefit the well-being of the human body as well as that of the State.

But a full picture of a royal hunt can also be obtained from contemporary evidence. On his hunting expeditions, as though in consonance with Kauṭalya's injunctions, the king was accompanied by *Yavanīs*, armed with bow and arrow, who wore garlands of wild

[1] *Māl.*, Act, I, p. 26: *urabhrasaṁpātaṃ.*
[2] *Raghu.*, XVI, 83, p. 344.
[3] *Śak.*, Act II, 5, p. 23.
[4] *Raghu.*, IX, 48, p. 95.
[5] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p. 209, text, p. 135.

flowers.[1] The royal hunt appears to have been a rather ceremonious affair. The king with the ministers' assent,[2] crowned with a rustic garland, wearing a leaf-coloured armour[3] for the sake of the adaptation to environment, rode on horseback to the forest. Here the huntsmen assembled with nets and dogs on the leash, evidently to see that the woods were free from thieves and fires. There the ground was made solid for horses, spots with many pools of water were found, while antelopes, birds and yaks (*gayāla*)[4] offered him the necessary targets. There the king first saw a herd of deer and then followed the track of the herd of wild boars which, running away from the wet mud of the ponds, had strewn pieces of *muṣṭā* grass in their paths.[5] There he slew bisons, rhinoceroses, tigers, lions.[6] These beasts of the forest were at first hemmed in, before they were attacked. Sometimes the animals were expected to rest for a while: the buffaloes were made to plunge into the water of the tanks, herds of deer were permitted to ruminate and boars were allowed to dig up the *muṣṭā* grass at ease in the pools.[7] Forest surrounders (*vanagrāhiṇaḥ*) were sent ahead.[8]

Another open-air sport was swimming either in tanks or rivers (*tōya-krīḍā*). It was probably the custom for a king to sit in a boat and watch the women of his seraglio sporting in the water and splashing water at each other, to the tune of music.[9] After his bath he repaired to a tent pitched on the shore.[10] In the hot season people often resorted to reservoirs of water for a bath.[11]

Hunting must have been in great vogue during the days of Baṇa. Partridges, for instance, must have been caught by poisoned baits. This can be made out from Rājyavardhana's words: "At sovereignty my eye grows disordered like the partridge at poison."[12] It is possible that kings hunted in the woods "with a great retinue of runners, horses, and elephants." The huntsmen are recorded on such occasions,

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[1] *Raghu.*, IX, 46-47, p. 197; *Śak.* Act II. p. 20.

[2] *Ibid.*, IX, 49, p. 195. *anumataḥ sacivair=yayau.*

[3] *Ibid.* 51, p. 196.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*, 59, p. 198.

[6] *Ibid.*, 61-64, pp. 199-200. *Cf.* The prevalence of hunting is proved by the Lion and Tiger types of Gupta coins. See Allan, *Catalogue*, pp. 17-18, 38-45, 76-83.

[7] *Śak.*, Act II, 6, p. 24.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 24; also see Bāṇa, *Kādambari*, p. 73.

[9] *Raghu.*, XVI, 57-67, pp. 338-39; *Mēgh.*, 33, p. 19. (Hultszch).

[10] *Ibid.*, 73, p. 342.

[11] *Rit.*, I, p. 1. *sad-āvagāha-kṣatavāri-sañcayaḥ.* For further details regarding the seasons see chapter VIII.

[12] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 170.

to have led in a golden leash large hounds. The beasts hunted appear to have been wild boars, lions, *Śarabhas*, yāks and various kinds of deer. It is possible that during such hunting expeditions princes wore particular kind of hunting dress. Kālidāsa refers to such a costume (*mṛgayāveśam*)[1]. Bāṇa tells us how Candrapīḍa took off his corselet and removed the rest of his riding apparel.[2] Like his predecessors Kālidāsa and Bāṇa, Daṇḍin describes in a few words a hunter's experience. "At this moment" relates Viśruta, one of his characters, "two dear flashed past, and a hunter who had missed them with three arrows. Snatching from his hand his remaining two arrows and the bow, I shot. One arrow pierced beyond the feather, the other not so far; both deer fell dead."[3] This pen-picture gives us an idea of the method by which hunting must have been carried out in the days of Daṇḍin towards the end of the seventh century.

Another of the open-air amusements of this age was cock-fighting which must have been a popular pastime. Cocks were most familiar domestic birds even in the days of Bāṇa. On the morning following Prabhākaravardhanā's death, Bāṇa remarks that "anon the cocks began to clamour wildly, as if in grief."[4] But it is only Daṇḍin who gives us an impressive picture of this pastime. "I came" says Pramāti, one of his characters, "to a large market town, where business men were raising a tremendous bombilation over a cock-fight (*tāmracūḍayuddha*), so that I could not repress a snicker as I joined them. And a certain Brāhmaṇa who sat near me, a gay old gentleman, quietly asked an explanation of my merriment. "How in the world," said I, "can men be such fat-heads so as to match Crane, that cock in the western pen, against Cocoanut, the rooster in the eastern pen?" "Be still", said the wise old boy. "Dont give these ninnies a tip," and he handed me some betel-gum (camphor flavour) from his little box, filling in the intermission with spicy anecdote. Then the two birds, went at each other full tilt, stab and counter-stab, with wing-flapping and cock-a-doodling. And the poor cock from the western pen was beaten. The old gentleman, delighted at backing a winner, made a friend of me in spite of the disparity in age; gave me a bath, food, and other comforts in his own house that day; and when I started next morning for Shravasti, he set me on my road, turning back with the friendly farewell: 'Don't forget me when

[1] *Śak.*, Act II, p. 24.
[2] Bāṇa *Kādaṁbari*, p. 73.
[3] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
[4] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 159; also see p. 228.

your business is done!"[1] A cock-fight therefore implied a large and enthusiastic gathering of people. Cocks, which had particular names and were armed with knives or blades, were placed in their specified pens. When the fight began, the people must have crowded, as they do even now, all round to watch one armed cock being set against another by their respective owners. Prior to this procedure, betting must have gone on and the ballyhoo must have been considerable. An exactly similar cock-fight goes on even today in Tuḷuva (mod. South Kanara)[2] It is no wonder therefore in those days that cock-fights were associated with brawls, especially in the market-place.[3]

This picture of a cock-fight as portrayed by Daṇḍin may well be compared with another remarkable notice of this game as revealed in one of the Prākṛta Jaina stories, the age of which cannot be determined. "There in the park outside of the city (Kosambi) they saw a cock-fight gotten up by two merchants' sons Sāgaradatta and Buddhila by name, who had made the stake a hundred thousand pieces. Buddhila's cock was struck by Sāragadatta's cock and then Sāgaradatta's cock was struck by the cock of Buddhila. Thereupon Sāgardatta's cock was cowed and didn't want to fight, although he was moved towards the cock of Buddhila; and therefore Sāgaradatta lost his lakh. At this point Varadhaṇu said to Sāgaradatta and Buddhila: "Why has this cock, although of good breed, been cowed by the second cock? So I'll look into the matter, if you do not take it amiss." Sāgaradatta said: "Most excellent sir, look, look! For I am not at all greedy for the money in this affair, but I care that my honour should prosper." Thereupon Varadhaṇu examined Buddhila's cock. And he saw bright fine needles made of iron fastened to his feet. And Buddhila observed that he noticed them. Then he went up to him and secretly told Varadhaṇu: "If you do not speak of the affair of the needles I shall give you half of the lakh." But although he prated "Hear, I have investigated, but seen nothing", in such a manner that Buddhila didn't notice it, he made the matter known to Sāgaradatta somehow or other by employing (certain) movements of the eyes and the fingers. And Sāgaradatta freed his own cock from the needles by taking them off (the feet of Buddhila's cock) all unnoticed. And thus the second cock was defeated. So Buddhila lost the lakh."[4] From this account some interesting conclusions

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-50; text. pp. 96-97.

[2] *Cf.* Saletore, *Cock-Fighting in Tuḷuva, Q. J. M. S.*, XVII, pp. 316-327.

[3] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, 212.

[4] Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, pp. 34-36, (1909).

may be drawn. It appears as though this open-air sport of cock-fighting was popular in northern India and was not confined only to the Dakṣiṇāpatha. Bets were evidently made on these birds and differences arising therefrom, as Daṇḍin suggests, must have led to occasional brawls and local disturbances. Another important feature of this pastime seems to have been the practice of tying sharp knives to the legs of the cocks which must have made the game not only thrilling and risky to the owners but extremely dangerous to the poor birds as well.

Some further evidence may be adduced to prove that the game cock-fighting was also familiar in northern India in the Gupta age. It may be remembered how Nārada and Bṛhaspati refer to gambling contests of birds, rams, deer and other animals, in the course of which small pieces of leather were used.[1] It is worth noting how Bṛhaspati states in one case that these birds were made to fight against one another, after a wager had been laid.[2] Moreover Vātsyāyana in his *Kāmasūtra* explicitly states that cock-fighting was one of the sixty-four fine arts which he enumerates were the accomplishments of every cultured man aud woman.[3] Again he further clearly lays down that in the daily programme of a citizen "the morning is spent in amusements, the afternoon with friends, cock-fighting or teaching parrots to talk, and at even-tide there is singing."[4] Bāṇa too alludes to the cock-rules of fasting[5] and this allusion possibly again reveals that cock-fighting might have been well-known in northern India in the seventh century.

3. Feasts and Fasts

Another feature of the common life of the people in the Gupta Age was manifest in the various feasts celebrated on several occasions in the year. One of the most prominent of such festivals was the *Kaumudīmahōtsava*, which, as its name suggests, was celebrated in honour of the full-moon. It is referred to in the *Mudrārākṣasa*, where it is stated to have been celebrated in the name of the king.[6] Another play attributed to the same playwright, Viśākhadatta, is called after this festival, *Kaumudīmahōtsava*.[7]

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[1] *Nārada*, XVII, I, p. 212.; also see *Brhaspati*, XXVI, 3, p. 385.

[2] *Bṛhaspati*, XXVI, 3, p. 385.

[3] Vātsyāyana, *Kāmasūtra*, pp. 19-20, text, pp. 32-33.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 23, text, p. 57.

[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 30.

[6] Viśākhadatta, *Mudrārākṣasa*, Act, III, p. 37. text p. 38. *Āryavaihinare athāsmadvacanād-āghoṣitaḥ Kusumapure kaumudimahōtsva.*

[7] *Cf. Kaumudimahōtsava*, Act, V, pp. 40-43.

The appearance of Spring was hailed with the celebration of the *Vasantōtsava*, which was also called the *Rtūtsava*.[1] This feast, held probably in honour of Kāmadeva, was celebrated in the full-moon day of *Caitra*, when mango blossoms were offered in worship to him [2] and sweets were distributed.[3] This festival has now become synonymous with *Hōḷi* and whenever it was celebrated, coloured [4] water (*varṇōdaka*) was sprinkled on passers-by with syringes (*śrṅgaiḥ*.). The appearance of the full-moon was always an occasion for great jubilation and people gathered in the open to hail the moon rise.[5]

In the rainy season when the rain-bow was first seen, the *Purūhutadhvaja* was celebrated, from the eighth to the twelfth of *Bhādrapada* in honour of the God of Rain (*Indra*) when a post, with a flag attached to it, was erected.[6]

Vows and fasts were also observed for the achievement of particular objects. Mention is made of vows (*vrata*),[7] fasts (*upavāsa*) and penances [8] which were commenced and broken in accordance with a system (*Pāraṇa*).[9] It is worth noting here how Harṣa, on his father's death, grew a beard and, as he refrained from taking food, became lean.[10] His father Prabhākaravardhana, before undertaking the *Mahākālahṛdaya vṛta* is reported by Bāṇa to have fasted on the fourteenth day of the *Amavāsya*.[11]

4. Illness and Cure.

It may be remembered that Fa Hien did not fail to observe that there were rest-houses at regular distances on the road-side in the Gupta dominion[12], which may be compared roughly to the rural dispensaries of to-day. It is equally interesting to note that Yüan Chwāng nearly two centuries later also noticed the same institutions[13] which were undoubtedly maintained by the State as well as by

[1] *Raghu.*, IX, 46, p. 194.
[2] *Māl.*, Act III, p. 48.
[3] *Śak.*, Act VI, p. 83.
[4] *Raghu.*, XVI, 70, p. 342.
[5] *Ibid.*, XI, 82, p. 244. *paśyati sma janatā dinātyaye pārvaṇau śaśidivākarāviva.*
[6] *Ibid.*, IV, 3, p. 73.
[7] *Ibid.*, II, 70, p. 49; *Vik.* Act III, p. 91.
[8] *Cf. Śak.* Act VI, p. 86.
[9] *Raghu.*, II, 39, p. 40.
[10] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 165-66.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[12] Fa Hien, *Travels*, p. 79.
[13] Yüan Chwāng, *Travels*, I, p. 286; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 166, 198.

public munificence for the welfare of the common and poor people. But how cases of illness were treated in those houses of rest it is not possible to say for lack of any definite evidence.

Nevertheless some methods were apparently known for curing the effects of poisons, the ravages of disease and the consequences of illness. Snake-bite, for example, in the days of Kālidāsa, was treated by snake-doctors who prescribed excision of the bite or cauterisation or the letting of the blood from the wound, in order to save the victim from inevitable death.[1] In cases of ordinary fevers the services of doctors (*cikitsitarṣo*) were requisitioned.[2] Special attention was paid to the health of the royalty. It was considered undesirable to miss the appointed hours of the bath and dinner. This can be observed from the words addressed to the king in the play *Mālavikāgnimitra*: "Oh! Ho! the time for bathing and eating has arrived for your majesty. The physicians (*cikitsaka*) say that it is bad for your highness to be kept waiting past the appointed hour."[3]

Some other means of fighting disease have also been noted by Yüan Chwāng as they evidently prevailed in his own day in the domain of Harṣa. One of the commonest devices to cure sickness was starvation, failing which doctors were called in. Yüan Chwāng tells us how "every one who is attacked by sickness has his food cut off for seven days. In this interval the patient often recovers, but if he cannot regain his health he takes medicine. Their medicines are of various kinds, each kind having a specific name. Their doctors differ in medical skill and in prognostication."[4] Bāṇa too, who gives an elaborate account of the treatment administered by the court physicians to king Prabhākaravardhana during a serious illness which cost him his life, relates how Harṣa in the third court of the palace where his father lay ill, "detected an odour of boiling oil, butter and decoctions emitting a steam scented with various draughts."[5] I-Tsing also refers to various types of medicines.[6]

5. Funeral Rites.

When a sick person died, the disposal of the dead formed another important duty of the house-holder in the sphere of his domestic affairs in this age. Yüan Chwāng refers to the three

[1] *Māl.*, Act IV, p. 98—*raktacandanadhāriṇa.*
Śak., Act VI, p. 87.
Māl., Act II. p. 52: *ucitavetātikramēṇa cikitsakā ḍōṣaṃ udāharanti.*
Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 174; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 86.
Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 138.
I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-40.

recognised customs of funeral: water-burial, cremation and interment in the wilds. He explains that, according to the first system, the corpse was "put into a stream to float and dissolve".[1] The second practice was evidently that of cremation and it can be noticed in the Ērāṇ posthumous stone pillar inscription of Gōpa Rāja, dated A. D. 510-11, which informs us that he was cremated.[2] This usage must have continued into later times for Bāṇa reveals to us that Harṣa's father Prabhākaravardhana was cremated on the banks of the river Sarasvatī, where a "pyre befitting an emperor solemnly consumed all but his glory in the flames."[3] There is reason to think that the first type of disposal was probably also adopted by the Hindus. Kālidāsa, for instance, commended death at a holy place like Prayāga, the confluence of two rivers like the Jahnu (Yamunā) and the Sarayu (Gaṅgā).[4] After cremation, the ashes were thrown into the river[5] and it is even now a rather hideous custom to hurl half-burnt corpses into the Ganges, to the disgust of those unaccustomed to such gruesome sights. It is not possible that the Chinese pilgrim Yüan Chwāng refers to such a custom but rather to a practice exactly as he depicts it. The third rite, prevalent at Taxila, when Indo-Greeks passed through it on their way to India,[6] was probably current among the Hūṇas, who are referred to not only during the times of the earlier Guptas, but later on as well.[7]

There was yet another method of dealing with the dead according to Yüan Chwāng, and it was allied to water-burial. Persons who become very old, whose time of death was approaching, who were afflicted by incurable disease and feared that their goal of life was reached, desired "to cast off humanity. So their relatives" adds Yüan Chwāng, "and friends give them a farewell entertainment with music, put them in a boat and row them to the middle of the Ganges that they may drown themselves in it, saying that they will be born in heaven; one out of ten will not carry out his

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 174; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I. p. 86.

[2] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (20), p. 93.

[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 158; also see I-Tsing *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82 wherein he describes the Buddhist way of cremation.

[4] *Raghu.*, VIII, 95, p. 182.

[5] *Cf.* Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 164. Prabhākaravardhana's bones were carried to the sacred fords.

[6] Strabo, XV, p. 714; *J. A.*, 1915, p. 75; *Cf.* Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, p. 137.

[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (13) p. 56; (33), p. 148; (42), p. 206.

contemptuous views."[1] The last warning of this Chinese traveller shows that few indeed were found acting inconsistently at the critical moment, when they were in such an unhappy predicament.

A suicide similar to this is recorded by Kālidāsa, who mentions the Jaina practice of starving oneself to death (*prāyōpavēśana*).[2] Daṇḍin also refers to this type of self destruction. He relates how "Tuṅgadhanvan, king of Suhma, childless through the loss of son and daughter, and stricken in years, set forth with his consort-queen to seek slow peace by starvation on the stainless Ganges' shore."[3]

Thereafter commenced the rites of the obsequies. They were observed, according to Kālidāsa, ten days after the death of a person.[4] The offering of rice-balls (*piṇḍa*) by the sons to the manes of their departed parents was considered meritorious.[5] That such a practice was actually followed by Harṣa after his father Prabhākaravardhana's death is borne out by Bāṇa, who refers to the funeral *piṇḍa*-balls of pure white rice and the water which were offered.[6] Yüan Chwāng gives some more details about these funeral rites. "At the obsequies for a departed one" he observes, "the relatives wail and weep, rending their clothes and tearing out their hair, striking their brows and beating their breasts. There is no distinction in the styles of mourning costume, and no fixed period of mourning."[7] Probably the first statement of Yüan Chwāng is correct, although that too was not the universal rule.[8] But after a person's death, as Kālidāsa suggests, until the tenth day, a period of mourning must have been observed. This is again clear from an incident in Bāṇa's life when a certain period was observed for mourning. When he was fourteen years old his father Citrabhānu died, owing to which with a heart "all aflame by day and night *passed some days*, he knew not how, in his own house."[9] This

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 175. In this connection it may be observed, how in A. D. 1068, the Western Cāḷukya king Āhavamalla, smitten with a deadly fever, drowned himself in the Tungabhadra, at Kuruvaṭṭi, see *E. C.* VII, Sk. 136, text, p. 181., tr. p. 102. Such a rite was called *parama-yāga*.

[2] *Raghu.*, VIII, 94, p. 181.

[3] Daṇḍin *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 182.

[4] *Ibid.*, viii, 73, p. 176: *atha tena daśāhataḥ.*

[5] *Ibid.*, 26, p. 164.

[6] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 160; see also p. 158, text p. 172.

[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 174. Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 86.

[8] *Cf.* Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 161, where various types of sorrows consequent to Prabhākaravardhana's death are described.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 32. Italics mine.

period of 'impurity' as Bāṇa calls it, must have ended when the *piṇḍa* was offered to the Brāhmaṇa as it is obvious from what happened after Prabhākaravardhana's death. "The Brāhmaṇa who consumes" relates Bāṇa, "the departed spirit's first oblation had now partaken of his meal. The horror of the days of impurity had passed."[1] This usage was observed by the royalty as well. When unfortunately his brother Rājyavardhana too died, Harṣa spent a day alone in Bhaṇḍi's company.[2] From these examples it is evident that a period of mourning, the duration of which probably depended on proximity of relationship and circumstance, was invariably observed in Gupta times. As can be seen from Harṣa's example, during the performance of the obsequies, a white costume was worn although Yüan Chwāng states that there was no distinction in the style of mourning costume.[3] Moreover, as Yüan Chwāng himself admits, during the period of mourning the members of the household where the death took place were considered unclean. "No one" he says, "goes to take food in a family afflicted by death, but after the funeral matters are again as usual and one avoids (the family). Those who attend a funeral are regarded as unclean, they all wash outside the city walls before entering (the city)."[4] Harṣa, it may be remembered, after cremating his father's remains, bathed in the river Saraswati, offered libations to his father, and proceeded home.[5]

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[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 164, text, p. 175 : *śaucadivaseṣu.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 224.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 160.

[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 175 ; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 86.

[5] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

CHAPTER III

Court Life

I. Introduction

The Smṛtis laid down the details of the daily programme for a king as they did for a common man. Yājñavalkya, for example, advocates that having "risen up early in the morning, he (the king) should look after the work of collection or disbursement; then, looking after the work of litigation, he should bathe and take his meal at ease."[1] Then he was to look to the particulars of administration. "(He should, then,) deposit in the treasury all the gold brought in by persons engaged in the work, and, then see the secret emissaries and the envoys (sent by other kings) along with his ministers and dismiss them....." Thereafter he should either enjoy himself (his) leisure, or (be) surrounded by (his) ministers. Then inspecting the army, he should, with the commanders, concert (measures for their improvement.)... Then, having finished his evening adoration, he should listen to the secret report of the confidential spies. (He should), then enjoy singing and dancing, take his meal and study the *Vedas*. He should go to sleep with the sound of bugles and arise similarly; and should deliberate mentally about the *Śāstras* (scriptural injunctions) and all his duties."[2]

Kingship was also associated with sports and amusements. Yājñavalkya states that the State was to be paid certain specified dues recovered from the gains in licensed games like gambling and betting on living animals. "In a gambling match, where increase is made by a hundredfold betting, the keeper of the gambling-house should take five per cent (of the earnings made by) a fraudulent gamester and ten per cent (of the bet) from others (i.e. those defeated)."[3] Fraud in gambling was not to be tolerated, for gamesters, appointed by the king as judges of gambling suits and as witnesses, investigated into such cases and imposed punishments.[4] As Nārada records government license was necessary to indulge in dice-play and the

[1] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, I, 331, p. 54.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, 202, p. 98.
[4] *Ibid.*, 205, p. 98.

dues to the State were to be paid by the gamblers. "If a man" observes Nārada "is gambling with dice, without authorisation from the king, he shall not get his stake, and shall have to pay a fine. Or let the gamblers pay to the king the share due to him, and play in public, thus no wrong will be committed."[1]

These gambling houses were according to Nārada and Bṛhaspati to be controlled by the Master of the Gaming House, who arranged the game, collected the stakes and paid the dues to the victors and to the State. His profit, meaning probably the wages due to him, according to Nārada, was ten percent of the stakes which were won,[2] and Bṛhaspati observes that "he shall also act as witness in a dispute assisted by three other gamblers."[3]

The actual games which were evidently then in vogue are also referred to by the Law-givers. Nārada refers to gambling "with dice, small slices of leather, little staves of ivory, or other (games), and betting on birds."[4] Bṛhaspati throws some light on this betting on animals. He calls it '*samāhvaya*' and states that it means "when birds, rams, deer or other (animals) are caused to fight against one another, after a wager has been laid."[5]

II. Early Life of a King.

1. The birth of a Son.

The life of the royalty and the nobility in their palaces and courts was a great contrast to the humble ways of the common people in their homes.

Kālidāsa has recorded some customs which marked the birth of a son in the house of the *Magadhādhipati*. As soon as a child was born to the king and queen, the family priest (*Purōdhasa*) performed all the *jātakarma* ceremonies. Such an occasion was marked by the celebration of festive rejoicing, the liberation of the prisoners, and the delightful dancing of the courtesans.[6]

It is interesting to note how most of these customs were faithfully observed in the times of Harṣavardhana of Kanauj. During the days of the Puṣpabhūtis too the birth of a child to the king and

[1] Nārada, XVII, 7-8, pp. 213-14. (*S. B. E.*, XXXIII Ed. Jolly).
[2] *Ibid.*, 2, p. 213.
[3] Bṛhaspati, XXVI, 8, p. 386.
[4] Nārada, XVII, 1, p. 512.
[5] Bṛhaspati, XXVI, 3, p. 385.
[6] *Raghu.*, III, 18-20, pp. 57-58.

queen was an occasion of great jubilation. When Rājyavardhana, Harṣa's eldest brother was born for one month which seemed a day the king (Prabhākaravardhana) held a great festival, when innumerable blow-horns (*śaṅkha*) were noisily sounded, hundreds of tom-toms (*mukhara*) were beaten and the world was filled to overflowing with "the burden of deep-rumbling drums (*bhēri*)".[1] Similar festivity took place on the birth of Harṣa when the whole population of his capital commenced to dance in ecstasy.[2]

As soon as a child was born, certain formalities were observed. On Harṣa's birth, his father was first informed about the good news. Suyātrā, the daughter of Yaśōvati's nurse, fell at king Prabhākaravardhana's feet, crying: "Good news! your Majesty. You are blessed with the birth of a second son". Presently she carried off all the clothes and other articles (*pūrṇapātraṃ*).[3] Soon after the astrologer (*jyōtiṣaḥ*), highly esteemed by the king came and proclaimed the horoscope of the newly-born child. On Harṣa's birth, the astrologer Tāraka, cried out to his royal master: "The son now born to your majesty shall be coryphaeus of the Seven Emperors, bearer of the Seven Imperial Signs and the Great Jewels, lord of the Seven Oceans, performer of all sacrifices of Seven Forms, the peer of them of the Seven Steeds (*Sūrya*)."[4] Then white-clad Brāhmaṇas with the *Vēda* on their lips came to bless the new-born child. The elders of the family arrived, crowds of prisoners were liberated, and rows of shops given to general pillage.[5] The tutelary deity of Yaśōvatī, the new mother, having a cat's face and being surrounded by a crowd of children, was installed in the lying-in-chamber (*sūtikāgṛha*).[6] For once all distinctions were broken down on the proclamation of the great birth-festival (*putra janmōtsava*). The order of the royal household vanished the pretence of the chamberlains (*Pratīhāra*) was laid down, the mace-bearers (*Vētrivētro*) were robbed of their maces, entrance to the inner apartments of women (*avarōdha*) was in no way criminal, master and servant, learned and ignorant, drunk and sober, were all reduced to a level, while the noble women (*yuvati*) and harlots (*vēśyā*) were all equally merry.[7]

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 107, text, p. 126.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 110-11, text, p. 129.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 109, text, p. 128: Śankara quotes:

"*Ānandadōhi sauhārdādētya vastrādikaṃ balāt |*
ajānatō haraty-ēva pūrṇapātraṃ tu tatsmṛtaṃ. ||

[4] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 110, text, p. 128.

[5] *Raghu.*, III, 16, p. 57; *Cf.* Carlyle, *Frederic*, II, p. 195.

[6] Bāna, *op. cit.*, text, p. 129, Śankara:
jātamātṛ dēvatā mārjārānanā bahuputraparivārā sūtikāgṛhē sthāpyatē.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 111, p. 129.

On the birth of a son, the royal palace became a centre of visitation from all quarters. On Harṣa's birth, first came the wives of the neighbouring kings, followed by servants bearing garlands in wide baskets, with bath-powder sprinkled on the flowers, dishes laden with bits of camphor, jewelled caskets of saffron scents, ivory boxes studded with rows of sandal-hued areca-nuts and tufted with slim *Khadira* fibres dripping mango-oils, vermilion and powder boxes red and pink, and betel trees with bundles of nuts hanging from the young strips.[1]

2. Childhood

Great care was bestowed on the royal child during the early stages of its childhood. Among royal families and probably among the affluent too, children were entrusted to wet-nurses (*dhātrī*) who breast-fed them and enabled them to walk, holding them by the fingers.[2] After the performance of the tonsure (*cūla*), the young prince, attended by the sons of his father's courtiers (*amātyaputrāḥ*), of the same age, wearing flowery locks, learnt his alphabet. Then after some time, the thread ceremony (*upanītaṃ*) was performed in accordance with precept.[3] Later, clad in the sacred skin of the *Ruru* deer, he learnt the art of using missiles. Later on, after the completion of the ceremony of cropping the hair (*gōdāna*), he was married.[4]

Whether such customs had become traditional during the days of the Puṣpabhūtis of Kanauj, can be ascertained from the evidence of Bāṇa. When Rājyavardhana was attaining his sixth year, Harṣa could just manage to walk five or six paces with the support of his nurse's finger. He wore on his head a mustard amulet, his limbs were stained with yellow *gōrōcana*, and his neck was ornamented with a row of a large tiger's claws linked with gold. The women folk (*purastrī*) in the women's quarters (*antaḥpuraḥ*) safeguarded him, the ministers of State (*Saciva maṇḍala*) preserved him, his kindred (*Kulaputraka*) cherished him and the swords of guards (*Rakṣipuruṣāḥ*) protected him. His companion was his maternal uncle's son, Bhaṇḍi, who at the age of eight years was 'tufted with tossing side-locks of curly hair'.[5] Such a statement shows that at this age the hair of children was not cut in the seventh century.

3. Education

Soon the young prince was taught many of the fine arts, including of course, the art of handling weapons. Mention is made,

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 111-12, text, pp. 183-84.
[2] *Raghu.*, III, 25, p. 59.
[3] *Ibid.*, 28, p. 60.
[4] *Ibid.*, 33, p. 62.
[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 116, text, p. 134.

for example, of how the hands of Rājyavardhana and Harṣa were begrimed with the marks of sword-play (*śastrābhyāsa*) and their recreation time resounded with the deep twang of their bows.[1] Bāṇa throws more light on the education of princes. Candrāpiḍa, he says, 'gained the highest skill in word, sentence, proof, law and royal policy; in gymnastics, in all kinds of weapons such as the bow, quoit, shield, scimitar, dart, mace, battle-axe, and club; in driving and elephant-riding; in musical instruments such as the lute, pipe, drum, cymbal and fife, in the laws of dancing laid down by Bharata and others; and the science of music, such as that of Nārada, in the management of elephants, the knowledge of a horse's age, and the marks of men; in painting, leaf-cutting, the use of books, and writing, in all the arts of gambling, knowledge of the cries of birds, and astronomy; in testing of jewels, carpentry, the working of ivory; in architecture, physics, mechanics, antidotes, mining, crossing of rivers, leaping and jumping and sleight of hand; in stories, dramas, romances, poems; in the *Mahābhārata*, the *Purāṇas*, the *Itihāsas* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, in all kinds of writing, all foreign languages, all technicalities, all mechanical arts; in metre, and in every other art".[2] It can hardly be maintained that, either during the Guptas or for that matter under the Puṣpabhūtis, a prince was either taught or mastered all these arts. It is, however, possible that some of these subjects formed the topics of study for a prince. Bāṇa, in fact, relates that a prince's education commenced at the age of six and by his sixteenth year, as though in accordance with Kālidāsa's statement, he was expected to complete his studies.[3]

At this age companions were selected to keep company with the prince. Prabhākaravardhana selected Kumāra Gupta and Mādhava Gupta to be the comrades of his sons, Rājyavardhana and Harṣa. They were 'men found by frequent trials untouched by any taint of vice, blameless, discreet, strong, and comely'. The father told his sons: "To them your highnesses also will show a consideration not enjoyed by the rest of your dependents".[4] After they were introduced to each other, these became like 'a pair of arms', ever constant at their side.[5]

4. Coronation (Rājyābhiṣēka)

The heir-apparent must have been brought up in these surroundings and in a regal atmosphere until he was considered fit

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 118, text, p. 136.
[2] *Ibid.*, *Kādambarī*, p. 60.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[4] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 119.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 121, text, p. 140.

for the anointing ceremony (*rājyābhiṣēka*). That Samudra Gupta was aware of such a ceremony can be made out from a reference to it in his Ērāṇ stone inscription, wherein he is said to have achieved 'glories consisting of the consecration by besprinkling etc., that belong to the title of king'.[1] Further details are not furnished by the epigraphs, although, for instance, reference is again made to the same ceremony in the Maḷiya copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, which refers to *Mahārāja* Drōṇasiṁha, 'whose installation in the royalty by besprinkling was performed by the paramount master in person'.[2] This allusion shows clearly that such a ceremony implied the assumption of legal sovereignty. The Chammak copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II, the Vākāṭaka king, reveals the nature of the purifying water that was poured during a *rājyābhiṣēka* on a king's head. This record states that the Bhāraśivas were besprinkled on the forehead with the pure water of the river Bhāgīrathī which "had been obtained by their valour".[3] Such a claim is reiterated in the Siwaṇī copper-plate grant of the same monarch.[4] Consequently, it may be concluded that the *rājyābhiṣēka* ceremony was performed in Gupta times, that it implied the assumption of sovereignty and that in such a ceremony pure Bhāgīrathī water was poured on the ruler's head as a symbol of purification and sanctity.

The coronation of the king was an elaborate ceremony. The elderly ministers (*Mantri vṛddhāḥ*) placed the son of the king on the throne and for this purpose the architects (*Śilpinaḥ*) erected a new pavilion supported on four pillars with a raised *tapis* for this ceremony. In this pavilion the ministers attended on the prince, who had taken his seat on a splendid throne, with holy water filled in golden jarst Trumpets were blown. Old kinsmen offered to him in the course of the rite of lustration (*nīrājanāvidhi*), young sprouts of *yava* grass and *durva* shoots. The Brāhmaṇas, led by the family pries, (*Purōhita*), sprinkled the holy water and chanted Atharva *maṅtras*, while panegyrists (*Bandinaḥ*) praised him.

The conclusion of this coronation ceremony was marked by a display of great exultation. The king granted liberal gifts to *Snātakas* (house-holders), liberated prisoners and set aside death penalties. Beasts of burden were released, cows were not milked, and even pets such as parrots and others confined in cages were set at liberty.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (2), p. 21, text, p. 20 *rāja-śabda-vibhavair=abhiṣēcan=ādyaiḥ nitaḥ...*
[2] *Ibid.*, (38), p, 168, text, p. 165 : *paramasvāminā-svayam=upahita=rājy-ābhiṣēkaḥ.*
[3] *Ibid.*, (55), p. 241, text, p. 237 : *Bhāgīratthy-ā-(a) mala-jala mūrddān (rddh)-ābhiṣiktānān.*
[4] *Ibid.*, (56), p. 248.

Then the king adorned himself for this momentous occasion. He took his seat on a clean ivory stool arranged in the courtyard of his palace, with a cover (table-cloth) set on it, so that he might wear his royal suit with the aid of his valets (*Prasādhakāḥ*). These, washing their hands with water, adorned his hair, and fastened his head with pearl necklaces, interwoven with garlands and rubies. They applied to his limbs sandal paste perfumed with musk and painted on his body figures of leaves streaked with a yellow pigment. They decked him with a silken garment on which were woven figures of flamingoes and ornamented his person with jewels. Then in a mirror made of gold, he examined all these decorations. Finally to the tune of panegyrics raised by his attendants, who walked at a distance round him, bearing the symbols of royalty like the royal umbrella and the chowries, he went to his court, where he sat on the imperial throne of his ancestors, furnished with a canopy and a foot-stool in a great and auspicious hall.[1]

In the paintings of Ajanta there is a representation of what appears to be a *rājyābhiṣēka* ceremony. A king is seated, draped in all his court-robes, on a couch covered with a cloth, resting his legs on a foot-stool. On his left and right stand two women chowrie-bearers with fly-whisks in their right hands. Between these chowrie-bearers, almost behind the seated king, two persons, probably priests, are shown as pouring some liquid from two large vessels, which are akin to the modern *ghārās*, which are uplifted by them with both their hands. In front of the king, to his right, are standing a group of five women musicians with cymbals in their hands, and a male drummer behind them. In the front again, to the king's left, are four men: the first of these carries some clothes, probably of rich gold-figured silk and cotton fabrics. The second, following him carries in a tray some food-stuffs in one hand and in another some cone-shaped article crowned with three beads. After these are two male drummers, with long and short drums.[2] This scene is undoubtedly a picturesque representation of the coronation ceremony. As this cave was excavated during the reign of Hariṣeṇa (*circa* A. D. 500-20) it is possible that it represents the *rājyābhiṣēka* either of Hariṣeṇa or of some Vākāṭaka king.[3]

[1] *Raghu.*, XVII, 8-30, pp. 348-52.

[2] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, p. 75. (1896).

[3] Burgess, *Report on the Buddhist Cave Temples and Their Inscriptions*, p. 53, p. 127 *ll*: 17, 19, 22. (1883). Also see Burgess and Bhagwanlal Indraji, *A. S. W, I.*, IV, *Inscriptions from the Cave Temples of Western India*, p. 76. (1881).

It is natural to inquire whether Harṣa, after accepting the proposals made by his Assembly, had this *rājyābhiṣēka* performed. Bāṇa reveals to us that some constitutional preliminaries were to be performed in the case of an heir to the throne before he actually ascended the throne as was done in the case of Harṣa. A proposal was made in the open assembly by one of the members, usually the eldest and perhaps the most influential like the *Sēnāpati* Siṁhanāda in the case of Harṣa and if this proposal was carried out in that assembly, it was left to the discretion of the heir whether or not to accept it. Once the heir accepted the proposal then the coronation must have taken place shortly.[1] It is very interesting to note, as will be shown presently,[2] that the Chinese traveller Yüan Chwāng and the court chronicler Bāṇa corroborate each other's statements regarding this procedure with remarkable fidelity. But it is only and perhaps naturally Bāṇa who specifically states that, shortly after Harṣa accepted the proposal made by his feudatories and his people, he "*complied with all the forms of royalty*," (*sakala rājyathitīścakāra*) implying that a formal coronation of Harṣa must have taken place.[3] It was only after this event took place that Harṣa, when the auspicious hour (*daṇḍayātra lagna*) had been determined by his court astrologers, and the lustration ceremony of his weapons of war had also been performed, started for the conquest of the four quarters and especially of the Gauḍa king Śaśāṅka.

The heir-apparent possibly had to undergo the anointing ceremony. How it was done can be ascertained from a rather idealistic description of the anointing of Caṅdrāpīḍa: "On an auspicious day, the king, surrounded by a thousand chiefs," says Bāṇa, "raised aloft, with Śukanāsa's help, the vessel of consecration, and himself anointed his son, while the rest of the rites were performed by the family priest. The water of consecration was brought from every sacred pool, river and ocean, encircled by every plant, fruit, earth and gem, mingled with tears of joy, and purified by *maṅtras* . . . . Straightway he was anointed from head to foot by Vilāsavatī, attended by all the *zenāna*, and full of tender love, with sweet sandal white as moon beams. He was garlanded with fresh white flowers; decked with lines of *gōrōcana*; adorned with an ear-ring of *dūrva* grass; clad in two new silken robes with long fringes, white as the moon; bound with an amulet round his hand; tied by the family priest; and had his breast encircled by a pearl necklace. . . .

[1] *Cf.* Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 210-12; also see Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 192-94.
[2] For further details on this topic see Chapter IV *infra*.
[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 194, text, p. 200. Italics mine.

"Then his father himself for that time took the chamberlain's wand to make way for him, and he went to the hall of assembly and mounted the royal throne. . . . Then, when he had received the due homage from the kings, after a short pause, the great drum that heralded his setting out on his triumphant course resounded deeply, under the stroke of golden drum-sticks. . . Then at the roar of the drum, followed by an outcry of "All hail!" from all sides, Candrāpīḍa came down from the throne, and with him went the glory of his foes. He left the hall of assembly, followed by a thousand chiefs."[1]

This coronation ceremony was evidently performed in a large hall where the king and his counsellors assembled. This is clear when Bāṇa reveals how, after kingship was offered to Harṣa, and was accepted by him, "he dismissed the assembly (*sabhā*) and having sent away the feudatories (*rājalōkaḥ*), left the hall once more desirous of the bath"[2]. It must have been gorgeously ornamented, as can be seen from a rather florid description of such a hall in the *Kādaṁbarī*. It is possible, however, that its corners were draped with white silk, that it was perfumed with musk, had pillars decked with images and was crowned with an alcove.[3]

5. Consecration Advice

During this consecration the priest who performed the ceremony appears to have given some advice to the prince whom he consecrated so that he might share well the burden of the royalty which was thenceforth to become his most important duty. Candrāpīḍa, for example, when consecrating his son offered the following advice to him: "Therefore, my Prince, in this post of empire which is terrible in the hundreds of evil and perverse impulses which attend it, and in this season of youth which leads to utter infatuation, thou must strive earnestly not to be scorned by thy people, nor blamed by the good, nor cursed by thy *gurus*, nor reproached by thy friends, nor grieved over by the wise. Strive, too, that thou be not exposed by knaves, deceived by sharpers, preyed upon by villains, torn to pieces by wolfish courtiers, misled by rascals, deluded by women, cheated by fortune, led a wild dance by pride, maddened by desire, assailed by the things of sense, dragged headlong by passion, carried away by pleasure. . . . .

[1] *Bāṇa, Kādaṁbarī*, pp. 84-86.
[2] *Ibid., Harṣacarita*, p. 188, text, p. 194.
[3] *Ibid., Kādaṁbarī*, p. 14.

"Let this saying be for ever ringing in thine ears: There is none so wise, so prudent, so magnanimous, so gracious, so steadfast, and so earnest, that the shameless wretch Fortune cannot grind him to powder. Yet now mayest thou enjoy the consecration of thy youth to kinghood by thy father under happy auspices. Bear the yoke handed down to thee that thy forefathers have borne. Bow the heads of thy foes; raise the host of thy friends; after thy coronation wander round the world for conquest; and bring under thy sway the earth with its seven continents subdued of yore by thy father.

"This is the time to crown thyself with glory. A glorious king has commands fulfilled as swiftly as a great ascetic."[1]

The object of this advice therefore appears to have been threefold, first, the prince was advised regarding the question of friendship, secondly the prince was warned about the temptations of the senses and lastly he was exhorted to think of conquest and aggrandisement. This piece of advice need not necessarily be understood to mean that it was given as a rule to each and every prince during consecration or that it was current only in the days of Bāṇa, but it evidently reveals the political ideals of his day.

III. Public Life

1. Audience: Symbols of Sovereignty

The king sitting on his throne must have made an impressive sight. Harṣa, for instance, sat in an open space in front of a pavilion where he used to give audience after his repast, surrounded at a distance by his attendants in a line, all six feet in height, armed, of ancient lineage, with his special favourites seated near him. He sat on a throne made of a stone as clear as a pearl, washed with sandalwood water, with its feet of ivory and its surface cool to the touch, resting the weight of his body on his arm, which was placed on the edge of the seat.[2] His left foot was playfully placed on a large costly foot-stool, girt with a band of rubies.[3] As he sat thus the chowrie-bearers waved before him their fly-whisks.[4] Bāṇa evidently depicts this contemporary practice of monarchs sitting in state when he describes how a king called Śūdraka occupied the throne. "He was sitting," he relates "in a couch studded with moon-stones, beneath a small silken canopy, white as the foam of the rivers of heaven, with its

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādambarī*, pp. 83-84.
[2] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 56-57.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

four jewel-encrusted pillars joined by a golden chain, and enwreathed with a rope of large pearls. Many chowries with golden handles waved before him; his left foot rested on a footstool of crystal."[1] A comparison of these two descriptions, especially if the verbosity of the latter is eschewed, shows that the king in the earlier half of the seventh century, when granting an audience usually sat on a gorgeous throne, under a canopy, placing his left foot on a foot-stool. On either side of him stood his fly-whisk bearers, while he was surrounded by his armed attendants and nobles.

These statements of Bāṇa can be confirmed by the evidence of Yüan Chwāng, who does not fail to refer to the royal throne. "The sovereign's dais", he observes, "is exceedingly wide and high, and it is dotted with small pearls. What is called the "Lion's Seat" (that is, the actual throne) is covered with fine cloth, and is mounted by a jewelled foot-stool."[2] This is undoubtedly a reference to the *siṁhāsana* on which the king sat and rested his legs.

That many details of such a usage remained current from Gupta times can be proved to some extent by the aid of contemporary inscriptions. Let us take, for example, the question of a foot-stool. The undated Bhitarī stone-pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta, describes how "he placed (his) left foot on a foot-stool which was a king (of that tribe himself)".[3] Again, in the Alīnā copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, Kharagraha I's "footstool was covered over with the lustre of the jewels of a hundred kings".[4]

Another feature of royal life in this age was the institution of umbrella-bearers, especially during the rule of the Vākāṭakas. There is reason to believe that the umbrella-bearers (*Chatra dhāriṇaḥ*) became as privileged as the police officials and soldiers (*Cāṭa-bhaṭa*) from the days of Samudra Gupta. The Chammak copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II, states that the village of Carmāṅka was not to be entered into either by the *Cāṭa-bhaṭa* or the *Cchātra*.[5] A similar exception was made in the Siwaṇī plates of the same ruler regarding their entry into the village of Kollapūraka.[6]

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 6.

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 147; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, 75.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (13), p. 55, text, p. 53:
stambhanāy-ōdyatēna kṣititala-śayaniyō yēna nītā tṛiyāmā. Also see Allan, *Catalogue*, p. 18 wherein the lyrist type of Samudra Gupta's coins shows him resting on a foot-stool.

[4] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 182.

[5] *Ibid.*, (55), p. 242.

[6] *Ibid.*, (56), p. 248.

That these umbrella-bearers formed an appendage of royalty can be proved again by the Ajanta paintings of caves no. XVI-XVII which, according to epigraphic evidence, were executed in this period under the Vākāṭakas. An inscription in cave XVII reveals how Hariśāṁba, son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra 'of the white umbrella,' had 'the royal umbrella over his head.'[1] That such a practice must have prevailed can be confirmed by noticing how often and prominently at Ajanta the royal umbrella can be seen. Generally it was round,[2] or sometimes rectangular,[3] with long handles, but from its structure it could not usually be folded. It was always carried by separate persons who sheltered the king and queen under its shade. At least, as the paintings show, the rectangular umbrellas being smaller, must have been carried only by the common people, while the round ones were always associated with kings.

At Ajanta, along with this royal umbrella can also be seen the other attributes of royalty—the fly-whisk and the foot-stool. Now just because some of the extant Vākāṭaka inscriptions do not refer to these royal symbols, it cannot be maintained that they did not exist in Gupta court life. The Ajanta paintings would disprove such a conclusion. The chowrie-bearers may be seen in the company, either of religious personalities like the Buddha[4] or of high-born ladies[5] and kings.[6] The chowries, fixed in four knobs with long handles having a knob at the end, must have been made of fine hair of some animals, perhaps the yak. The king is seen sitting on a foot-stool, resting not only his left leg, but both his feet on it.[7]

During Harṣa's regime the same practice continued, as has been already noted. A royal umbrella or parasol, the symbol of supremacy, was sent to Harṣa as a present by the king of Assam. This gift known as *Ābhōga* appears to have been a family heir-loom. The fact that it was wrapped in a wrapper of white bark-silk reveals that it could be closed.[8] Such an umbrella was carried by a special official who was known as the Umbrella-Bearer, and such an office generally seems to have been held by men while that of the chowrie-bearer (*Cāmara-grāhiṇī*)

[1] Burgess and Bhagwanlal Indraji, *op. cit.*, no. 4, 74.
[2] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 58, 69, 70, 71, 73, 76, 80, 83, 85.
[3] *Ibid.*, 59
[4] *Ibid.*, 54.
[5] *Ibid.*, 73, 55.
[6] *Ibid.*, 75, 76.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 55.
[8] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 212, text, pp. 214-15.

appears to have been held by women. When Haṁsavēga the Assamese ambassador came to interview Harṣa, he dismissed the chowrie-bearer who was waiting on both of them.[1]

It is worth noting here that this parasol, which was the emblem of royalty, can be seen on several Gupta coins which are styled as coins of the *Chatra* type. On such coins of Candra Gupta II, the emperor is seen standing with his left hand resting on his sword-hilt, while behind him is a dwarf attendant holding the royal parasol over him.[2] It is not unreasonable to assume that the king appeared and departed in public, especially in an Assembly Hall in this manner.

In such a hall all the business of the State must have been transacted. The selection of an heir to the throne either by the father or by the nobles was probably made in such a hall in the presence of courtiers. The allusion to the selection of Samudra Gupta in his Allahabad inscription, suggests such an inference. It relates how he, "looked at by the faces melancholy (through the rejection of themselves) of others of equal birth (*tulyakulaja*), while the attendants of the courts (*sabhyēṣu*) breathed forth deep sighs (of happiness), was bidden by his father, who, exclaiming 'verily (he is) worthy', embraced him"[3]. In such a hall, the king's feudatories came and bowed down to him, as can be proved by the Kahāum stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 460-61. This record states that in his reign his hall of audience (*upasthāna*) was 'shaken by the wind caused by the falling down (in the act of performing obeisance) of the heads of a hundred kings'.[4]

2. Reception at Court: Common People.

The king granted to various types of people the favour of an audience. Common people, feudatories, ambassadors from other kings and princes, were permitted to see him. Before interviewing the sovereign, the visitor had to be announced by a door-keeper (*Dauvārika*) who, on being permitted to do so, conducted such a person before the king. Bāṇa, was called forth by such a door-keeper, Pāriyātra, who happened to be Harṣa's chief door-keeper, his special favourite. Such an official was called the *Mahāpratihāra*. He was tall, his breast was adorned with a string of pearls and he had two jewelled ear-rings in his ears. He greeted Bāṇa from afar and with his top-knot bent down to the

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 211, text, p. 214.
[2] Allan, *Catalogue*, pp. 34-37.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), p. 11, text, p. 6.
[4] *Ibid.*, (15), p. 67.

ground, lifted his white turban in token of respect, grasped his pearl-studded sword in his left hand and in his right hand his burnished golden staff of office, and became suddenly motionless. Bāṇa's friend introduced this officer as king Harṣa's *Mahāpratihāra*, thus: 'Let him who pursues success treat him with suitable ceremony'. The door-keeper, having come forward and saluted him, addressed him respectfully in a gentle voice: "Approach and enter, his highness is willing to see you". Then Bāṇa entered as he was directed, saying: "I am indeed happy that he thinks me worthy of this honour."[1]

The king could not be seen immediately for he was quite at a distance. Bāṇa, following the path of the door-keeper, passed through three courts crowded with subject kings and in the fourth, he saw king Harṣa in an open space, where he used to give audience.[2]

3. Ambassadors.

The ambassadors from kings were received in a very formal manner, probably in consonance with ancient custom. After the Chamberlain had announced the Assamese ambassador, Haṁsavēga, king Harṣa commanded the former to admit the latter at once. While at some distance Haṁsavēga, who was escorted in person by the Chamberlain, "embraced the courtyard with his five limbs in homage". At the king's gracious summons to draw near, he approached him at a run and buried his forehead in the foot-stool; and when the king laid a hand on his back, he approached the monarch again and once more bowed. Finally he assumed a position not far away, indicated by a kindly glance from the king, who, turning his body a little aside, sent away his chowrie-bearer standing between them, and on being face to face inquired familiarly, 'Haṁsavēga, is the noble prince (heir-apparent of Assam, Prāgjyōtiṣa) well?' 'At this moment', was the reply, 'he is well'.

This introduction was followed by an exchange of gifts between the two courts. Haṁsavēga, laid down before Harṣa the presents he had brought from his master Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa (Assam). Foremost among them was the wonderful umbrella called *Ābhōga*, wrapped in white bark-silk. There were besides, fine gems like crest jewels, pearl-necklaces, silken towels rolled up in baskets of variously coloured reeds, quantities of pearls, shell, sapphire, and other drinking vessels, embossed by skilful artists. There were loads of *Kārdaraṅga* leather buckles with charming borders, bright gold-leaf work winding

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 49-50.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

about them, and cases to preserve their colour. There were soft loin-cloths smooth as birch bark, pillows of *Samūraka* leather and other kinds of smooth figured textures. There were cane-stools with the bark yellow as the ear of millet, volumes of fine writing with leaves made from aloe-bark, luscious betel-nut, thick bamboo tubes containing mango sap and black aloes' oil, bundles of black aloe, *gōśīrṣa* sandal, cool camphor, scent bags of musk-oxen, *kakkola* sprays, clover-flower bunches, nutmeg clusters, cups of *ullaka*, heaps of black and white cowries, carved boxes of panels for painting with brushes and gourds attached, and various birds and animals like musk-deer, female *Cāmara* deer, parrots, *Śārikās*, and others enclosed in cages and chattering "copious wit."[1] These presents were accepted in friendly terms and the ambassador was dismissed to the Chamberlain's house.

At the hour of dinner, king Harṣa despatched to Haṁsavēga, the remains of his toilet sandal enclosed in a polished cocoanut covered with a white cloth, a pair of robes touched by his person, a waist-band wrought of pearls, a ruby and a plentiful repast.[2]

If such ambassadors had any special message to deliver, the king heard them in private, dismissing his servants.[3] When the work was done, the ambassador was permitted to return to his kingdom with all honour due to an official of his rank. Haṁsavēga was sent away by Harṣa, "with a load of answering gifts in charge of eminent envoys."[4]

The ambassador in Gupta times was probably known as the *Dūta*, although the records of the Gupta emperors show that this term was also used in the sense of an ordinary messenger as well. Such a messenger is also included among the several officials mentioned for example in the Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II.[5] The term *Dūta* is also capable of another interpretation. As the Nirmand copper-plate grant of the *Mahāsāmanta* and *Mahārāja* Samudrasēna, ascribed to A. D. 612-13 reveals, the leader of an assembly was also called by this designation.[6] The technical term *Dūta* has also been considered to be an occasional substitute for the term *Dūtaka*, who was generally connected with the granting

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 213-14.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 215
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 216.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 223.
[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46), p. 216.
[6] *Ibid.*, (80), p. 289.

of charters.[1] This office of the *Dūtaka*, it is interesting to note, survived to the days of king Harṣa as can be seen from his Banskhera and Madhuban grants, which refer to the official *Dūtaka*.[2]

Such a royal official called the *Dūta* or ambassador proper, according to Kālidāsa, was despatched by kings to one another with presents of costly jewels, vehicles and a troupe of servants consisting mostly of accomplished maidens.[3]

IV Private Life

1. The King and Women in Pre-Gupta times

Another prominent characteristic of court-life in the Gupta period is the association of women around the king. Such an association is of great antiquity. From the times of the Mauryas, if the *Arthaśāstra* can be relied upon as a source of information regarding social life, women appear to have played an important part in the life of a monarch in early Indian history.[4] The early Greek writers refer to these women. Megasthenes relates how the king's person was entrusted to women who were brought from their parents.[5] Curtius records how the food of the monarch was prepared by women, who also served him with wine; and when he sank into a drunken slumber, they carried him away to his chamber, invoking the gods of the night in their hymns. When the sovereign went out hunting, crowds of women surrounded him, while outside stood the spearmen. The road was marked off with ropes and it was death for a man or woman to pass within them. "At the king's side stood two or three armed women." He further observes how some of them drove in chariots or on horseback or on elephants, equipped with all kinds of weapons as if they were going on a military expedition.[6]

These statements of the Greek writers are well supported by Kauṭalya. He says: "On getting up from the bed, the king shall be received by troops of women armed with bows."[7] These were evidently prostitutes, for once again Kauṭalya adds that: "Prostitutes shall do the

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 311; also see Chapter V *infra* for further details on this topic.
[2] *E. I.*, IV, no. 29 p. 211; also see *Ibid.*, I, no. XI, p. 73.
[3] *Māl.*, Act. V, p. 132.
[4] *Cf.* my paper entitled *The Amazons of the East*, *J. U. B. I*, Pt IV, 1933, pp. 272-73, for a fuller discussion on this subject.
[5] McCrindle, *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, p. 58.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 58, n. 1.
[7] Kauṭalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. I, Ch. XX, p. 41.



(By courtesy of the Archaeological Department, Hyderabad).

Palace Scene in the Verandah of Cave XVII, Ajanta.

duty of bath-room servants, shampooers, bedding-room servants, washermen, and flower garland-makers, while presenting to the king water, scents, fragrant powders, dress and garlands, servants along with the above prostitutes shall first touch these things by their eyes, arms and breast."[1] Their teachers, who taught these women were to be maintained by the State.[2] They had, moreover, to hold the royal umbrella, golden pitchers and fan, attend on the king when he was seated in his royal litter, throne or chariot. According to their beauty and jewellery they were to be classified as of the first, middle and highest rank and their salary was to be fixed in terms of thousands of *paṇas*. Over all these women there was the Superintendent called the *Gaṇikādhyakṣa*, who was entrusted with well-defined duties.[3]

It is very likely that the women employed as servants round the king were in the majority of cases courtesans, who are often referred to in dramatic literature. In the *Mudrārākṣasa*, Candragupta Maurya records how the "courtesans attended by companions of pleasure, well-versed in gallant talk did not adorn the thorough-fares, moving with a gentle pace owing to the imposition of the weight of their heavy (lit. bulky) hind parts."[4] Such a pen-picture can well be compared with another from the works of Kālidāsa. He reveals how in Alakā, gallants, rich with untold wealth, concealed in their houses, daily enjoyed the conversation and company of the leading courtesans while wandering in the garden called Vaibhrāja (the bright garden) which was situated on the outskirts of the city.[5] These women were sometimes learned. In the *Kaumudimahōtsava* it is related how at Pāṭaliputra the book of Dattaka was studied by learned courtesans.[6]

2. The King and Women in the Gupta Age

This practice of maintaining women as servants round the king seems to have continued to the Gupta period as well. In the Allahabad stone-pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta, it is related how he brought "presents of maidens".[7] The Gaṅgdhār stone inscription of

[1] *Kauṭalya, op. cit.*, pp. 42-43

[2] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. XXVII, p. 138, text, p. 124.

[3] *Ibid.*, Bk II, Ch. XXVII, pp. 136–39.

[4] Viśākhadatta, *Mudrārākṣasa*, III, pp. 37–38., text, p. 38:
dhūrttair=anviyamānā Rati-catura-kathā-kōvidair=vēśa-nāryō |
n=ālaṅkūrvanti rathyāḥ pṛthu-jaghana-bhar=ākrānti-mandaiḥ prayātaiḥ. ||
(Dhruva, Poona, 1923)

[5] *Cf. Megh.*, II, 8, p. 55.

[6] *Kaumudimahōtsava*, V, p. 37.
gōtrēṣu skhalitaḥ Kaṭāhanagare ya kuṇḍinē ma (u?) ṇḍito |
vēśastrīnikaṣ-ōpalaściratarāṃ bhūtvā niṣṭāṃ gataḥ. ||

[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (I), p. 14, text, p. 8: *kanyōpāyanadāna.*

Viśvavarman, ascribed to A. D. 423–24, shows how to him obeisance was "performed by the water lillies which are the faces of the lovely women of (his) enemies".[1] Such a suggestion is again made in the Āraṅg copper plate grant of *Rāja* Mahā-Jayarāja who is said to have been the cause "of the tearing out of the parted hair of the women of (his) enemies".[2] A similar claim is made for *Rāja* Mahā-Sudēvarāja in the Rāypur plates.[3] The Rājim copper plate states that *Rāja* Tīvaradeva broke the saffron-leaf designs 'on the cheeks of the violated wives of his enemies'.[4] Such women must have swelled the ranks of the ladies' apartments and some of them might have been employed to serve the king. Kālidāsa refers to a female door-keeper, Vētravatī, in his play *Śākuntalaṃ*. It is possible that women about the king were employed as chowrie-bearers, portresses and similar servants.

In the paintings at Ajanta the king, whenever he is represented, is usually depicted in the company of women. Women servants bring wine in jugs to the king, bear the royal umbrella,[5] wave the chowrie or the fly-flap[6] and sing before him to the accompaninent of the cymbal and drum.[7]

When Harṣavardhana came to the throne there was no departure from this ancient practice. His courtier Bāṇa actually bemoans how his master's "imperial splendour was eclipsed by the women, who repeatedly prostrated themselves at his feet, attracted him and smiled at him."[8] They carried him until their hands perspired.[9] They served as portresses (*Pratihārī*), who guarded the inner apartments of the royal ladies. Whenever a visitor desired to see the king or the queen, his arrival was announced by name to the king or queen, who made their wishes known to this servant.[10] They served as chowrie-bearers to the queens as well as to the kings.[11]

As in Mauryan times, in the social life of the Gupta age too the courtesans played an important role. They (*vārayoṣitāḥ*)[12] were engaged to sing and dance during the celebrations made in honour of the birth of a child in the homes of the wealthy citizens as well as at

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (17), p. 77, text p. 75.
[2] *Ibid.*, (40), p. 195.
[3] *Ibid.*, (41), p. 199.
[4] *Ibid.*, (81), p. 298.
[5] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 58, 75, 76.
[6] *Ibid.*, 65.
[7] *Ibid.*, 75.
[8] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 61-62.
[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.
[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86, text, p. 101.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 211.
[12] *Raghu.*, III, 19, p. 58.

worship-time in the temples like that of Mahākāla at Ujjainī, where they danced with fly-whisks in their hands.[1] This latter custom is apparently the fore-runner of the employment of the dancing girls which, for a considerable time, prevailed in South Indian temples. They not only lived in the cities, but they attracted young men into the neighbouring caves like those of Nīcagiri.[2] As a class they appear to have been comparatively wealthy and their prosperity can be seen in their material possessions. Kālidāsa refers in one case to some dancing girls whose jewelled girdles chimed, beating time to their tinkling feet. He observes that their hands, weary with the waving of the quivering *cāmaras* having handles thickset with gems, felt love's lacerations mollified.[3]

It is hazardous to point out particular figures of women at Ajanta as those of dancing girls unless, perhaps with some hesitation, a reference can be made to the group of musicians singing before a king on his throne. These can probably be said to be dancing girls for they are seen with cymbals in their hands in action, while behind them is their drummer, striking on the drum with both his hands. In this group there are five dancers, excluding the drummer, who is clearly a man. Four of them, who are nearest to the onlooker are apparently still, though they are clashing their cymbals; the fifth, nearest to the king in the foreground, is evidently in a dancing posture while the drummer, both by his pose and the position of his fingers, is playing on a drum. This group probably represents either the commencement of a dance of all the five women or of one woman dancing, accompanied by the cymbal and music of the rest to the rhythm of the drum.[4]

When Harṣa ascended the throne, the traditional freedom and patronage of the dancing girls continued. Bāṇa describes them in glowing terms. They had flashing necklaces, sweet-scented sighs, creeper-like eye brows, jar-like bosoms encircled with bands of *Vakula* flowers and pollen of flowers and lotuses in their ears. They had curved nails, involuntary smiles and their twined hands came into close contact as they gesticulated when they danced before king Harṣa

[1] *Megh.*, I, 334, p. 29.

[2] *Ibid.*, 25, p. 20.

[3] *Ibid.*, I, 35, p. 29: *pādanyāsaiḥ kvaṇita raśanāstatra līlāvadhūtaiḥ*
ratnacchāyā khacita balibhis=cāmaraiḥ klānta hastāḥ
vēśyāstvatto nakhapada sukhānprāpya varṣ=āgrabiṅdūn
āmōkṣyante....(Ed. Pansikar, 1929)

[4] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

seated on the throne.[1] On the birth of this king they danced every where to the accompaniment of instrumental music, scattered camphor and perfume in handfuls and lashed young folk with flowers, They had wreaths about their brows, chaplets round their ears, sandal-marks on their foreheads, garlands of amaranth on their round hips and rows of vermilion-spots on their faces.[2]

These dancing women, as their descriptions suggest, probably set certain standards of feminine beauty. In order to ascertain such standards, it is necessary to see what were considered the characteristics of feminine beauty in Bāṇa's day. If most of the women went about in *purdah* as one may suppose, they could not possibly have been entrusted with the watching of the crops of *śāli* corn when they sheltered themselves under the deep shadows of sugar canes.[3] The epigraphs of the period too do not suggest that the women went about veiled or lived in seclusion. The Ajanta frescoes of this period do not reveal in any single painting that the women lived in isolation. Instead of costumes covering all the limbs suggesting the idea of seclusion, the paintings reveal a daring attempt in the freedom of dress[4]. Women went about unveiled in the open along with men without the least embarrassment[5]. They are seen standing beside kings[6], moving about in the streets amidst common soldiers[7], singing to the accompaniment of drum and cymbal before a king when he is anointed[8], giving food to beggars in the streets along with men[9], carrying small vessels[10] and performing a variety of similar duties in the open without suggesting in the least either their seclusion or their utter dependence on man.

In the days of Harṣa, likewise, they were appointed as watch-women in the night, and they heralded the approach of dawn by blowing a horn[11]. The royal ladies' apartments were looked after chiefly by the women officials themselves[12]. These were the king's women, who, at least according to Bāṇa, on Harṣa's birth day violently forced

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 62, text, pp. 64-65.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 113, text p. 133.
Raghu., IV, 20, p. 77.
Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 55.
Ibid., 58.
Ibid., 65.
Ibid., 66.
Ibid., 75.
Ibid., 81.
[10] *Ibid.*, 85.
[11] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 105.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 128.

even the sedate chamberlains of the palace to dance[1]. The queens, being much addicted to the betel-leaf, employed some of these women as betel-bearers. Queen Rājyaśrī had one such servant named Patralatā, who acted as an intermediary between her and her brother Harṣa[2]. These women rode not only horses but even elephants[3]. That they knew horse-riding can be seen from the *Harṣacarita*. Mālatī, a lady of note, 'like Gaurī on a tiger,' was mounted on a great-maned steed resembling in colour a bunch of *Atimukta* flowers[4]. As Bāṇa adds, behind her on a tall camel followed her betel-basket bearer who was also a woman.[5]

The women of Śrīkaṇṭa, according to Bāṇa, were extremely charming. "There are women like elephants in gait", he says, "yet noble minded; virgins yet attached to worldly pomp; dark, yet possessed of rubies; their faces are brilliant with white teeth, yet is their breath perfumed with the fragrance of wine; their bodies are like crystal, yet their limbs are soft as acacia flowers; they are unattainable by paramours, yet robed in bodices; wide are their beautiful hips, yet are they possessed of thin waists; lovely are they, yet honied in speech; they trip not, yet have a bright and captivating beauty; they are without curiosity, yet wedded".[6] Yaśōvatī, the queen of Prabhākaravardhana was "endowed with the gait of a *haṁsa*, the voice of a cuckoo, the answering love of a ruddy-goose, the full-bosoms (clouds) of the rainy season, the laugh of wine".[7] The eye-brows to be attractive had to be 'creeper-like'.[8] Large, swelling and rounded breasts,[9] broad hips, soft hands, thighs 'like an elephant's trunk', thin waists, a languid gait, white teeth and 'swimming eyes of love',[10] were considered the attributes of feminine beauty.

These public women appear to have been given some kind of training from their childhood in order to become professional dancing girls and ladies of the court. Daṇḍin tells us that the following were the obvious duties of the mother of a *fille de*

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*., p. 112.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 254.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 201.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 261.

[5] *Ibid*.

[6] *Ibid*., pp. 82-83; also see *Caṇḍīśataka*, (58) p. 321.

[7] *Ibid*., *Caṇḍīśataka*, p. 103: "since this Mahiṣa was made white by the dazzling splendour of Umā's (Caṇḍi's) teeth".

[8] *Ibid*., (13), p. 279.

[9] *Ibid*., (71-72), pp. 333-34.

[10] *Ibid*., *Harṣacarita*, p. 22.

joie: "Care of her daughter's person from the hour of birth; nourishment by a diet so regulated as to develop stateliness, vigor, complexion, intelligence, while harmonising the humours; gastric calefaction and secretions; not permitting her to see too much even of her father after the fifth year; festive ritual on birthdays and holy days; instruction in the arts of flirtation, both major and minor; thorough training in dance, song, instrumental music, acting, painting, also judgement of foods, perfumes, flowers, not forgetting writing and graceful speech; a conversational acquaintance with grammar, with logical inference and conclusion; profound skill in money-making, sport, and betting on cock-fights or chess; assiduous use of go-betweens in the passage of coquetry; display of numerous well-dressed attendants at religious or secular celebrations; careful selection of teachers to ensure success at unpremeditated vocal or other exhibitions; advertising on a national scale by a staff of trained specialists; publicity for beauty marks through astrologers and such; eulogistic mention in gatherings of men about town of her beauty, character, accomplishments, charm, and sweetness of hangers-on, gay dogs, buffoons, female religionists, and others; raising her price considerably when she has become an object of desire to young gentlemen; surrender to a lover of independent fortune, a philogynist or one intoxicated by seeing her charms, a gentleman eminent for rank, figure, youth, money, vigour, purity, generosity, cleverness, gallantry, art, character and sweetness of disposition; delivery, with gracious exaggeration of value received, to one less affluent, but highly virtuous and cultivated, (the alternative is levying on his natural guardians, after informal union, with such a gentleman); collection of bad debts by vamping judge and jury; mothering a lover's daughter, abstraction by ingenious tricks of money left in an admirer's possession after payment of periodical pleasures; steady quarreling with a defaulter or miser; stimulation of the spirit of generosity in an over thrifty adorer, by the incentive of jealousy; repulse of the impecunious by biting speeches, by habits, as well as by simple contempt; continued clinging to the open-handed, the chivalrous, the blameless, the wealthy, with full consideration of the inter related chances of money and misery."[1]

Women consequently enjoyed considerable freedom in this period. It is difficult, however, to agree with the view that the evidence of Kālidāsa conclusively shows that the *purdah* as a custom was not

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, pp. 70–72; text, pp. 68–70.

unknown.[1] There were no restrictions to their appearing in public, so they enjoyed river-baths,[2] attended weddings,[3] kept watch in their fields,[4] and some, if proficient in the arts, even sat in judgement over teachers.[5] As such freedom was apparently permitted to women, they could not have suffered the discomforts which the *purdah* entails, although the veil was in vogue at this period. This veil was evidently a symbol of modesty or bashfulness[6] and cannot be interpreted to mean the emblem of seclusion for which the *purdah* stands. In domestic life the power of the husband over his wife was considered powerful.[7]

3. The Seraglio

During the times of Harṣa, the apartments of the women were called either *vāsara*[8] or *antaḥpura*.[9] It is possible that in these quarters eunuchs were employed, along with other misshapen guards like hunchbacks, dwarfs, deaf and mutes and barbarians.[10] Besides the portresses bearing golden staves, chamberlains with unguents, cosmetics, flowers and betel, holding waving chowries also looked to their conveniences.[11] It has been recorded that among these the unfortunate eunuchs adopted the speech and dress of women, wore strange decorations and attended on the royal ladies.[12] Into these dwellings of the royalty few were admitted and from what Bāṇa records it was considered a criminal offence to do so. Such a stringent rule was relaxed on memorable occasions like the birth of a son to the king, when "entrance to the harem (was) in no wise criminal".[13]

The apartments of women in Kālidāsa's time were styled either *avarōdha*,[14] *antaḥpura*[15] or *śuddh-ānta*.[16] Old ladies, diligent in their duties, placed brilliant lights to mark the auspiciousness of the

[1] Upādhyāya, *Social India as depicted by Kālidāsa, J. B. H. U.*, II, No. I, 1937, p. 163.
[2] *Megh.*, I, 13, p. 28.
[3] *Raghu.*, VII, 6, 16. pp. 142, 144.
[4] *Ibid.*, IV, 20. p. 77.
[5] *Cf. Māl.*, Act I, p. 22.
[6] *Śāk.*, Act V, 33, p. 68.
[7] *Ibid.*, 26, p. 75 : *upapannāhi dārēṣu prabhutāsarvatō mukhī.*
[8] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, text, p. 101.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 102.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 242.
[11] *Cf. Ibid.*, pp. 138, 167. 211.
[12] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 217.
[13] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 111.
[14] *Raghu.*, I, 32, p. 12 ; IV, 68, pp. 89 ; XVI, 25, 58, 71. pp, 332, 339, 342 ; *Śāk.*, VI, 12, p. 92.
[15] *Ibid.*, XVI, 59 p. 339 ; *Kum.*, VII, 2 ; p 99 (Pt III) ; *Śak.* Act II, p. 30.
[16] *Ibid.*, III, 16 ; p. 57. VI, 45 ; p. 130 ; *Śak.*, Act I, 15, p. 8.

evening at the various spots in the palace strewn with the offerings of flowers.[1] There were women attendants in these ladies' quarters[2] (*Śuddh-āntācara*) and there was a keeper of the door of the harem called either *Pratihārarakṣī*[3] or *Avarōdharakṣa*.[4]

In the Ajanta paintings there is an example of the sleeping quarters of the royal women. Although the scene is Buddhist, it possibly represents contemporary usage. Princess Yaśōdharā is portrayed as sleeping in her bed-room with her two children lying on her bed, while her maidens are nodding on the floor about her cot. Small oil lamps are seen lit up beside her couch, against the wall is hung a guitar, and on a shelf are toilet articles.[5] This scene can be aptly compared with the pen-picture of a sleeping princess as portrayed by Daṇḍin. Apahāravarman, one of his characters, relates the following experience: "There (the maidens quarters) in the blaze of jewelled lamps, I beheld the princess securely sleeping among the attendants, who slumbered soundly after their giddy games. She lay on a couch whose ivory feet were shaped to the likeness of recumbent lions and set with splendid precious gems; its pillows were stuffed with swans' down; and scattered flowers were strewn about its border. The instep of her left foot nestled beneath the right heel; the ankle showed a light, sweet outward sweep; the calves lay close; the dainty knees were bent; the thighs had a graceful curve. One soft and shapely arm hung limp over the hip; the other comely arm was bent so that its open flower-like hand rested beside her cheek. Over the swell of the hips clung close the shift of Chinese silk. The lower body had a trim elegance; the generous breasts, like two budding blossoms, trembled in answer to each deep breath. On the charming flexture of the neck shone a necklace of rubies strung on a string of burnished gold; one earring snug, peeping from beneath a lovely ear half hidden, while the jewelled ornament of the lovely ear which was wholly visible, darted pencils of light, gilding the ribbons in the loose hanging hair that they informally fastened. The slight parting of two red lips, hardly noted by eyes, intent on the innate beauty of each; one blossom-hand caressed and decked her cheek; shadow in the mirror of her upper cheek, the bed's gay canopy rendered cosmetic service; the lotus eyes were closed, becalmed the banner of the brows. Upon her forehead the beauty-spot of sandal-paste

[1] *Vik.*, III, p. 67 (ed. 1923).
[2] *Raghu.*, III, 16, p. 57.
[3] *Ibid.*, VI, 20, p. 123; 31, p. 126.
[4] *Ibid.*, VII, 19, p. 145.
[5] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 48.

was loosened by little invading pearls of weariness; like vines that stretch towards the moon, the locks of hair curled towards her face."[1] Despite the imagination and the apparent exuberance of this description, it may be concluded that Daṇḍin had in his mind's eye a real scene from life, which he must have seen or heard in the courts of Valabhi or Kāñci.

That this description of Daṇḍin must have been realistic can be proved to some extent by comparing it with a similar account given by Bāṇa of the conditions prevailing in the court of Harṣa. It has been recorded how in Bāṇa's day the king and the queen slept in one room on two separate cots. But the queen nevertheless had a seraglio of her own and at night Bāṇa tells us how "smitten by the breath of intoxicated sleeping beauties, the seraglio lamps staggered as if drunk."[2] The king wore while in bed "a fine robe of muslin", a golden bracelet and a necklace, but he kept a sword beside his head. While this royal couple slept, they were guarded by the women of the watch (*Yāmakinyāḥ*) and the other servants who slept near them.[3]

In the seraglio the women of the palace were naturally entrusted with various duties and in their midst was the chief queen (*agramahīṣi*). We sometimes come to know some particulars about the duties which these royal women had to undertake in the palace, which according to Bāṇa, seemed "walled with women"[4]. The maidens around the queen wandered here and there. They were ordered to deck the *Lavalī* trenches with the *Kētaki* pollen, sprinkle jewelled dust in the tanks of scented water, inlay with saffron dust the pairs of toy (lit. "going by machinery") *cakravākas* in the artificial lotus beds, scent the pot-pourri with camphor-juice, place jewelled lamps in the dark *Tamāla* avenues, cover the pomegranates with pearly nets to keep off the birds, draw saffron lines on the breasts of the jewelled dolls, sweep with golden brooms the emerald arbour in the plantain house, sprinkle with wine the houses of *Bakula* flowers, redden lead the ivory roof of Kāma's shrine, give the tame *kalakaṁsas* lotus honey to drink, take the tame peacocks to the showerbath, give some sap from the fibres to the young *cakravākas*, give the caged pigeons their meal of mango-buds, distribute to the tame *haritāla* pigeons some top-most leaves of the pepper tree, throw some pieces of *Pippaḷi*

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-2.
[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 104.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 105, text, p. 124.
[4] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 67.

leaves into the partridges' cages, make some flowery ornaments, dismiss the pairs of Kinnaras in the singing room, bring up the pairs of partridges to the top of the playing hill, and give the caged parrots and *mainas* their lesson.[1] They must have been entrusted with other similar duties.

Surrounded by women who performed all these duties the chief-queen and her co-wives lived in really regal surroundings. Kādaṃbarī for instance was seen by Caṅdrāpīḍa "in the midst of her pavilion encircled by a bevy of maidens sitting by her, whose glittering gems made them like a cluster of *Kalpa* trees. She was resting on her bent arms, which lay on a white pillow placed on a small couch covered with blue silk; she was fanned by cowrie-bearers that in the motion of their waving arms were like swimmers in the wide-flowing stream of her beauty."[2] If this was the regal splendour of a princess the glory which surrounded the chief queen like Vilāsavati is worth knowing. Bāṇa again informs us that "she was surrounded by countless zenana attendants in white jackets like Śrī in the waves of milk, and was having her time whiled away by elderly ascetic women, very calm in aspect, wearing tawny robes, like twilight in its clouds, worthy of honour from all the world, with the lobes of their ears long, knowing many stories, relating holy tales of old, reciting legends, holding books, and giving instructions about righteousness. She was attended by eunuchs using the speech and dress of women, and wearing strange decorations; she had a mass of cowries constantly waved around her, and was waited upon by a bevy of women seated around her, bearing clothes, jewels, flowers, perfumes, betel, fans, unguents, and golden jars; she had strings of pearls resting on her bosom, as the earth has the stream of Ganges flowing in the midst of mountains, and the reflection of her face fell on a mirror close by."[3] These descriptions of royal feminine life were no doubt tinged with not a little of the courtier's extravagance and hyperbole, but still it may not be too much to infer that these experiences must have been drawn from real life as it survived in the days of Bāṇa and Harṣavardhana.

4. A Day in the king's Life

It is however, difficult to ascertain how a king spent a day in the Gupta age. It may be remembered how Kauṭalya has left us full details about the daily programme which had to be followed by the king but

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, pp. 144-45.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 145.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 217.

whether or not he recorded it from contemporary usage, it is difficult to decide. He divides the day into eight *nāḷikas* each of which was divided into one and a half hours, allotting to each *nāḷika* a specified duty. During the first *nāḷika* the king had to post watchmen and to attend to the accounting of receipts and expenditure. During the second he had to look to the affairs of both citizens and country people. The third *nāḷika* was to be set apart for his bath and his studies. The fourth was reserved for receiving the revenue in gold (*hiraṇya*) and for the appointment of superintendents. In the course of the fifth he had to correspond in writs (*patrasaṁprēṣaṇēna*) with the Assembly of his Ministers and receive the secret information gathered by his spies. In the sixth he could engage himself with his favourite amusements or indulge in self-deliberation. In the course of the seventh he had to attend to the superintendence of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry. At the close of the day he had to observe the evening prayer.

The programme of the night was also elaborately laid down. During the first one-eighths part of the night the king had to confer with secret emissaries, while the second was to be spent in having his bath, supper and study. In the third part he had to enter his bedchamber amid the sound of trumpets and enjoy sleep in the course of the fourth and fifth *nāḷikas*. From this sleep he was woken up in the beginning of the sixth part of the night by the sound of trumpets when he had to recall to his mind the injunctions of sciences as well as the day's duties. In the seventh part of the night he sat considering administrative measures and sent out spies. During the eighth he had to obtain the benedictions from sacrificial priests, teachers and the high priest. Then, having saluted both a cow and its calf and a bull by going round them, he went to his court.[1]

That there was some such arrangement during the Gupta age becomes apparent from the works of Kālidāsa and Bāṇa. Kālidāsa refers in the *Vikramōrvaśīyaṃ* to the sixth part of the day in these words: *ṣaṣṭē-bhāgē-tvam-api divasasyātmanaschaṅdavartī*.[2] In the *Mālavikāgnimitraṃ* a bard announces the approach of noon in the words that the sun had climbed up to the zenith, on hearing which the *Vidūṣaka* exclaims: "Oh! Ho! the time of bathing and eating has arrived for your majesty."[3] In this play the king is depicted as holding a secret conference with his minister regarding some state

[1] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Book II, Ch. XIX, pp. 37-38.
[2] *Vik.*, Act II, p. 28.
[3] *Māl.*, Act II, p. 53.

matter pertaining to the Vidarbha country[1]. In the *Śākuntalaṃ* it is suggested that the king attended the court of justice early in the morning [2].

The time-table as revealed in the Dharma Śāstra literature, as recorded already, has much in common with the injunctions of Kauṭalya. It may be remembered here that Bāṇa relates how, when the dawn appeared, the morning conch (*prabhāta śaṅkha*) was blown at the porch; briskly sounded the tom-toms (*daṅdabhayaḥ*); the day-break drum (*nāndī*) boomed "Victory!", and the loud voices of those who recited the well-omened calls from sleep rang out in the morning stillness. In the stable yard of the favourite horses the slowly rising marshal chanted some verses[3]. Yüan Chwāng refers to the hour of the king's bath, the announcement of which was notified by the music of drums, stringed instruments and the recitation of hymns[4]. In view of these observations of Bāṇa, it is difficult to believe the statement of Yüan Chwāng that king Harṣa divided his day into three periods: one of which was devoted to the management of government and the other two were set apart for religious works.[5]

Bāṇa gives us some details of the daily programme in the life of a prince, namely Candrāpīḍa. When the night turned to dawn, he observes, Candrāpīḍa rose before sunrise and mounting a horse went to the wood with a great retinue of runners, horses and elephants for a hunt. When the sun reached the zenith he returned home from the woods with a few of the princes, who, being well mounted, recounted the details of the chase: "Thus I killed a lion, thus a bear, thus a buffalo, thus a *śarabha* and thus a stag." On dismounting he sat down on a seat brought hastily by his attendants, took off his corselet and removed the rest of his riding apparel. Then resting for a while till his weariness was removed by the wind of waving fans, he went to the bath-room. When his bath was over, he went to a chamber where he was rubbed and donning his clothes, he performed his homage to the gods and then entered the perfuming room. On completing his functions there, by taking unguents in due order from the women, he went to the banquet-hall, to partake of his morning meal. Then he stayed there for a short time and later visited the court, and afterwards saw the king and returning home spent the night there.[6]

[1] *Māl.*, Act I, p. 51.
[2] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 87.
[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 105-6, text, p. 125.
[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I. p. 152; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 77.
[5] *Ibid.*, II, p. 344; Hiuen Tsiang, *Ibid.*, I, p. 215.
[6] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, pp. 73-74.

Of all the items in the daily life of a king in the Gupta age, perhaps the only items regarding which we have some fuller details, as in the case of hunting for instance, were the royal bath and dinner. Bāṇa describes in detail a royal bath the particulars of which he might have gathered from his contemporaries although he embodied them in his romances. King Śūdraka, he says, "having taken (in the hall of exercise-*vyāyāmabhūmi*) pleasant exercise therein with the princes of his own age, he entered the bathing place (*snānabhūmi*), which was covered with a white canopy, surrounded by the verses of many a bard (*anēka cāraṇa gaṇanibadhya mānamaṇḍalāṃ*). It had a gold-bath (*jaladrōṇi*) filled with scented water in its midst with a crystal bathing seat (*sphaṭika-snānapīṭha*) and was adorned with pitchers placed on one side (*rūpaśōbhitaṃ snānakalaśaiḥ*) full of most fragrant waters, having their mouths darkened by bees attracted by the odour, as if they were covered by blue cloths, from fear of the heat. Then the hand maidens (*vārayōṣitaḥ*), some darkened by the reflection of their emerald jars (*gṛhītajalakalaśāḥ*) like embodied lotuses with their leafy cups, some holding silver pitchers (*kañcuka-kuṃbhamaṇḍalā*), like night with a stream of light shed by the full moon, duly besprinkled the king. Straightway there arose a blare of the trumpets sounded for bathing, penetrating all the hollows of the universe, accompanied by the din of song, lute, flute, drum, cymbal and tabor, resounding shrilly in diverse tones, mingled with the uproar of a multitude of bards, and cleaving the path of hearing."[1]

When the bath was over some further functions remained to be performed. Bāṇa again reveals to us how, when the bath was finished, Candrāpīḍa was "rubbed in a separate room with cloths, his head covered with a strip of pure linen, his raiment was put on, and he performed his homage to the gods."[2] But before he started to perform worship he had to wear fresh clothes. "Then in due order", continues Bāṇa, the king (Śūdraka) put upon him two white garments, light as a shed snake-skin and wearing a turban, with an edge of fine silk, he made his libation to the *Pitris*, with a handful of water, consecrated by a hymn and then, prostrating himself before the sun (*Agnikārya*), proceeded to the temple (*dēvagṛhaṃ*) where after he had worshipped Śiva and made an offering to Agni, his limbs were anointed in the perfuming room (*vilēpanabhūmi*).[3]

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 13, text, pp. 32-34: *śrutipathamanēkaprahata paṭupaṭahajhallarī-mṛdaṅgavēṇuviṇāgītaninādānugamyamānō baṁdivṛṁdakōlāhalākulo bhuvanavivara-vyāpīsnānaśaṁkhānāṁāpūryamāṇāmatimukharo dhvaniḥ .....*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 74, text, p. 201.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14; text, p. 34.

In this room the king's limbs were anointed with sandal-wood paste (*candanenanulipta sarvangō*), sweetened with the fragrance of saffron, camphor and musk, (*mrgamada-karpurakunkumavasa surabhinā*). Then he put on a chaplet of scented flowers (*mālatīkusumaśekharaḥ*), changed his garb and with no adornment save his jewelled ear-rings, he broke his fast.[1] In this room of fragrance there were court women attendants appointed by the Grand-Chamberlain,[2] slaves and zenana women, sent by the king, bearing in baskets various ornaments, wreaths, unguents and robes, which they presented to the king. Having taken them all in due order from these women, he first anointed some companion near him; and when his own anointing was over, he gave to those around him, flowers, perfumes, robes and jewels, and finally went to the banquet-hall.[3]

We may now compare these details with an evidently pre-Gupta painting at Ajanta, wherein a king is depicted at his bath. Clad only in a loin-cloth he is seated on a high-backed stool. On his right stands a maid with a tray of pastes and unguents; while on his left are two chowri-bearers; behind him are two attendants whose hair is covered with a cloth, pouring water over his head from the vessels. To the left of the king we also see a water-carrier, an old man, wearing a tunic and reclining on a staff (*Mahā Pratīhāra*?), an attendant carrying unguents, and another who is naked and is reclining to take a bowl from a hunch-backed woman.[4] Although there is some variation between the pictures which we find in Bāṇa and at Ajanta, the traditional system of a royal bath deserves to be noticed.

We may now turn to the details of a royal dinner as it was actually conducted in the days of Harṣavardhana, and Bāṇa gives us some interesting details about this function of social life of his times. The king Candrāpīḍa, he relates, "then (after his bath) went to the banquet hall (*āhāra-maṇḍapa*) which was rich in a thousand jewelled vessels". He sat there on a doubled rug (*dviguṇita-kuthāsanōpaviṣṭaḥ*) with his guests next to him eagerly employed, as was fitting, in praising his virtues, and the host of princes, placed each in order of seniority, on the ground, felt the pleasure of their service increased by seeing the great courtesy with which the prince

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādambarī*, p. 14, text, pp. 33-34.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 73, text, p. 201: *Mahāpratīhārādhiṣṭhitā rājakulaparicārikāḥ* ....

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 73-74, text, p. 201.

[4] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, I, pl. XII.

said: "Let this be given to him, and that to him! And so he duly partook of his morning meal."[1]

After dinner the particulars about the dessert which was offered are also interesting from the point of view of social life. King Śūdraka in the *Kādaṁbarī*, asked his guest Vaiśyaṁpāyana thus: "Hast thou in the interval eaten food sufficient and to thy taste?" "Sire", replied he, "what have I not eaten? I have drunk my fill of the juice of the *jaṁbū* fruit (*jaṁbūphalarasaḥ*), pink and blue as a cuckoo's eye in the gladness of spring; I have cracked the pomegranate seeds (*dāḍiṁba-bījāni*), bright as pearls wet with blood. . . . I have torn at my will old myrobalans, green as lotus leaves, and as sweet as grapes (*prācīnāmalakīphalāni*)."[2]

Probably after all these functions ended then the final touches to the dinner were given. The king Candrāpīḍa, we are informed, on finishing his dinner "drank a fragrant drug" or rather smoked the *dhūparatti*, rinsed his mouth and took betel. Then he arose from the dais, while a portress (*Pratīhāri*) hastened to him and, leaning on her arm, he went to the hall of attendance (*bhuktvāsthānamaṇḍapaṁ*).[3]

From these details we may infer that, in the seventh century and possibly in earlier times as well, the royalty sat for a dinner on double-covered or similar seats on the ground and when the king was seated in the midst of his flattering courtiers, he saw that his guests were properly served. Then they had a dessert of fruits, fruit-drinks, after which they had a smoke. When the smoking was over, they rinsed the mouth and took the *pān-supāri* or the betel leaf and its components. On finishing all these the party left for the Attendance Hall.

It is worth noting in this connection how Daṇḍin also refers to this programme of the king, for he has clearly adopted that passage from Kauṭalya's famous *Arthaśāstra* when he indicates how to make an unaided mortal, emperor. He states that the path for this attainment lay through the mastery of four royal studies—theology, agriculture, metaphysics, which are deep and show slow results. The study of political science alone was advocated while the above four were to

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbari*, p. 74, text, pp. 201-2.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 15, text, pp. 37-38.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 74. text, p. 35.

be discarded, and for this purpose the *Arthaśāstra* was recommended as a text. Then Daṇḍin lays down the full programme which was to be followed by the king throughout the day and night. But he evidently thought that this type of programme was not practical for he finally makes the following comment on the results of the benefits which a monarch could derive from a mastery of Political Science. "So when a man learns his political science and governs accordingly without a particle of repose day and night, with no end of botheration, with unremitting irritations he finds it difficult to control his own household, not to mention an empire. Whatever gifts, whatever homage, whatever compliments he gets from his fellow scholars, he thinks a cheat and does not trust them."[1]

The King's Palace

The king lived thus in a palace which must have been a huge edifice. Mention is made of the inner quadrangle of a palace (*catuṣkamaṅtaḥ*)[2] and of balconies[3]. There is reason to believe that a royal palace in the times of Kālidāsa had probably several stories, which were crowned with a large terrace (*harmyastalaḥ*) on which ladies enjoyed their evening walks[4]. Images were emblazoned over the portals of the door.[5] There are several references to terraces in Bāṇa's time[6]. In the days of Bāṇa reference is also made to the statues in the halls[7]. The palace of Prabhākaravardhana had several vestibules, closing and opening doors, windows, quadrangles and courts. The apartment where he lay when ill was situated in the third court[8]. The courtyards had terraces protected with awnings[9]. Various parts of the palace were called by different names. That portion of the palace in which Prabhākaravardhana lay ill was styled the White House, while his silent ministers of state were in that portion of the palace which was called the "Moon Chamber."[10]

[1] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, pp. 202-5, text, pp. 194-95.
[2] *Raghu.*, VII, 17, p. 145.
[3] *Megh.*, I, 27, p. 22 : *saudh-ōt saṅga-praṇayavimukho māsma bhūr=ujjainyāḥ.*
[4] *Ibid.*, II, 3, p. 52 : *yasyāṃ yakṣāḥ sitamaṇimayān-ītya harmya sthalāni.*
Ibid., 6, p. 54 : *nētrā nitāḥ satatagatinā yadvimānāgrabhūmī.*
[5] *Ibid.*, II, 17, p. 61 : *dvār-ōpānte likhitavapuṣau śaṅkha padmaucadṛṣṭvā...*
[6] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 104, 108, 137.
[7] *Ibid.*, text, p. 195.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 137-38.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 168.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 138.

V. Camp Life

1. The King in Camp

The king, whenever he went to wage war, lived in a royal camp (*Skandhāvāram*). The gates leading to the palace of king Harṣa while in camp were evidently thronged with the elephant and camel corps. The elephants bore several gifts from the camps of renowned subject kings. Some of them bore turbans of honour, others were brought to bear drums, some were newly bound, others were acquired as tribute or as presents, or were dispatched by the rangers of the elephants' districts. Some were possibly brought there in the excitement of a first visit to the court, or sent at the time of an embassy or presented by the lord of a wild settlement or demanded for the spectacle of a mimic battle, or given or taken by force, or let loose, or set ready for a watch or collected to conquer all continents. These elephants were graced with banners, cloths, kettle-drums, conches, chowries and unguents. In another part of this royal camp there were troops of camels either sent as presents or brought back in return for others. They were all tawny in colour. Their faces were ornamented with lines of chowries, and they were decked with strings of ever jingling golden ornaments. They had long tufts of hair and variegated threads of wool of five colours hanging near their ears. Another part of the camp was all white with masses of white umbrellas. In another place thousands of stirring chowries were waved. The camp was filled on every side with conquered and hostile vassal chiefs. Some of them, who could not find admission, hung down their heads and others had flashing sapphires hanging on their breasts. Some were continually asking the servants of the different domestic porters, who at intervals made their exits and entrances: "Good sir, will it be today? Will the great Lord give an audience in the hall after he has dined? Or will he come into the outer court?" Thus they spent the day in the hope of getting an audience.

The royal camp was, in fact, an extraordinarily cosmopolitan gathering. There assembled not only kings of various countries, but could be found seated by themselves, Jainas, Ārhatas, Pāśupatas, mendicants of the school of Parāśarya, Brāhmaṇa students, foreigners, savages from forests and ambassadors from alien lands.[1]

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-49, text, pp. 54-61; also see Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp. 217-257.

VI. Life of the Queen

1. Early Life

Like the king, the queen too was cherished with care. Rājyaśrī, for example, "gradually grew up in daily increasing familiarity with friends expert in song, dance, etc., and with all accomplishments."[1] The girls were evidently married early, at least, as soon as they attained puberty. Bāṇa relates how "in a comparatively limited period she (Rājyaśrī) came to maturity. On her alone fell the glances of all kings . . . and sending envoys, monarchs sought her hand." Then Prabhākaravardhana informed his wife how their daughter had "now grown a young woman".[2] Soon she was married and could hardly have been twelve years of age and it is not strange that she is described as the "bashful young bride".[3] The period of menstruation was observed with scrupulousness. Kālidāsa states how even in the cases of queens, after the completion of this period, a bath was considered necessary.[4]

2. Types of Marriage

Some aspects of the problem of marriage as it affected the common people in Gupta times have already been discussed.[5] As stated earlier three forms of marriage, the *Svayaṁvara*, *Āsura* and *Prājāpatya*, specially may now be studied in greater detail when dealing with the activities of Gupta court life.

Some of the Gupta inscriptions specifically refer to the *Svayaṁvara* type of marriage. In the Junāgadh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 457-58, it is recorded how "the goddess of fortune and splendour of her own accord selected (him) as her husband."[6] Again in the Ērāṇ stone pillar inscription of Budha Gupta, dated A. D. 484-85, it is recorded how *Māhārāja* Mātṛviṣṇu was approached (in marriage choice) by the goddess of sovereignty, as if a maiden choosing (him) of her own accord (to be her husband)."[7] The Alīnā plates of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, reveal how Dhruvasena III "accepted in marriage the goddess of royalty, just as if she were longing to choose (him) of her own accord, from the assemblage

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 121.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 121-22.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 131.
[4] *Raghu.*, I, 76, p. 24.
[5] See chapter II, section IV, 1-3, pp. 110-12.
[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14), p. 62, text, p. 59.
[7] *Ibid.*, (19), p. 90. text, p. 89: *svayaṁvaray=ēva rājalakṣmy=ādhigatēna* . . .

of kings," adding that Kharagraha II also had his "slender body embraced in a very public fashion by the goddess of fortune herself."[1] All these references indicate that the idea of choosing a husband was associated, so far as the Gupta epigraphs are concerned, only with supernatural beings like the goddess of victory. No concrete example of a Gupta ruler is forthcoming till now to prove that it was actually adopted in practice by Gupta kings between the fourth and seventh centuries.[2] This idea of a *Svayaṁvara* was, however, well-known during this period. Bāṇa, however, relates how Candrāpīḍa offered himself in marriage to Kādaṁbarī.[3] In this case, the allusion is entirely to a fictitious person, who probably existed only in Bāṇa's imagination and no inference from such references is either possible or desirable.

But there are reasons to conclude that the *Āsura* system of marriage was practised among kings during the Gupta period. Kālidāsa, for example, says that in such a practice, the father accepted as a condition of the marriage, bride-money (*duhitṛśulka*).[4] That such a system was known and observed in Gupta times can be proved by contemporary inscriptions. The Ērāṇ stone pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta states how he "married a virtuous and faithful wife (Dattadēvī) whose dower (*datta-śulkā*) was provided by his manliness and prowess."[5] The Udayagiri cave inscription of Candra Gupta II again refers to it, saying that he bought the earth by the 'purchase money' (*āvakraya-krītā*) of his prowess.[6] It is more explicitly expressed in the undated Aphsaḍ stone inscription of Ādityasena, wherein it is said that while Dāmōdara Gupta was king, he 'gave away in marriage a hundred daughters of virtuous Brāhmaṇas, endowed with many ornaments and with youth (and) dowered with *agrahāra* grants'.[7] From these examples it may, therefore, be concluded that the *Āsura* system of marriage, according to which the bride-money or dowry was a condition of the marriage, was not only known to the Gupta rulers but was also patronised by them and practised by the people. Daṇḍin apparently refers to this type of

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 184, text, p. 76.

[2] The Muslim chronicle *Mujamalu-T-Tawarikh* records how Bārkhamāris (Candra Gupta II) had been accepted by Dhruvadēvī in a *Svayaṁvara*. *Cf.* Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.*, I, p. 110.

[3] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 169.

[4] *Raghu.*, XI, 38, p. 234.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (2), p. 21, text, p. 20.

[6] *Ibid.*, (6), p. 35.

[7] *Ibid.*, (42), p. 206, text, p. 203: *guṇavad=dvija kanyānāṁ nān-ālaṁkāra-yauvanavatīnāṁ pariṇāyitavan=sa nṛpaḥ śataṁ nisṛṣṭ-āgrahārāṇāṁ.*

marriage when he relates the following experience of a young woman. "But now that I am a woman, my father refuses me to a beggar and plans to bestow me on a certain wholesaler named Arthapati, a rich man as his name indicates. This calamity, you must know, impends at dawn of day."[1]

3. The Prājāpatya Type of Marriage

There was another type of marriage known as *Prājāpatya*. This system appears to have been in conformity to the warnings of Kālidāsa, who observes that a union especially among private persons should be made after careful scrutiny.[2] According to this form of marriage, the prospective husband approached the girl's father through an agent in order to settle the match.[3] If the father or rather the parents agreed to the proposal, preparations were made for the celebration of the marriage, an auspicious day was fixed and the thoroughfare leading to the bride's house gaily decorated with silks, flags and arches.[4] Meanwhile unwidowed ladies[5] prepared the bride for the occasion, adorned her with the *durva* grass and a silken robe below her waist, applied sandal-oil, *kālēyaka* and *lōdhra* dust over her body, and led her away to the bath.[6] There, over her the women poured water from urns and arraying her in the choicest white robes took her away to a canopied pandal, where she had to sit on a *vēdi* facing the east.[7]

Here she was fully adorned. They ornamented her hair with a chaplet of fragrant grass[8], painted her limbs with *aguru* and *gōrōcana* paste[9], dyed her cheeks with saffron, jewelled her ears with bunches of *yava* or barley,[10] reddened her lips with vermilion hues, painted her feet with the lac-dye and her eyes with unguents and burdened her with a variety of rich ornaments.[11] When the bride's mother fastened her daughter's wrist with the *kauṭuka*, the auspicious

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[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

[2] *Raghu.*, VI, 84, p. 140.

[3] *Cf. Kum.*, VI, 84, p. 122.

[4] *Ibid.*, vii, 3; p. 125; *Raghu.*, vii., 4. p. 141.

[5] *Ibid.*, 5 p. 102.

[6] *Ibid.*, 7: p. 127.

[7] *Ibid.*, 12 p. 128: *tasmāt pradēśācca vitānavantam yuktam manistambhacatuṣṭayēna | pativratābih parigṛhya ninyē klṛptāsanam kautukavēdi madhyam ||*

[8] *Ibid.*, 14, p. 128: *dhūpōṣmaṇā tyājitamārdrabhāvam kēśānta mantah kusumam tadīyam ||*

[9] *Ibid.*, 15, p. 129: *vinyastaśuklāguru cakruraṅgam gōrōcanāpatra-vibhaktamasyāh.*

[10] *Ibid.*, 17, 18. p. 129.

[11] *Ibid.*, vii, 19, 20, 21. p. 130.

woollen band,[1] the attending women, one after another, worshipped the family deity and then received the blessings of the elderly ladies.[2]

The bridegroom was, likewise, fully and gorgeously decorated with jewels, shawls ornamented with the flamingo-design[3] and a *tilaka* on his forehead.[4] Accompanied by his party, they proceeded to the bride's house in a procession, the bridegroom followed by attendants with the umbrella (*ātapatra*), fly-whisks (*cāmara*) and music (*maṅgala tūryaghōṣaḥ*).[5]

This party was received by the bride's people, who proceeded to meet them.[6] They passed through the city-gates which were thrown open, and the main street was fully decorated with arches, while the people, peeping from their terraces and house-tops, flung the sacred-rice (*akṣata*) over them.[7]

The bridegroom was received by the bride's parents, seated with proper ceremony and given a number of presents while the priests chanted the *maṅtras*.[8] Finally he was led to the veiled (*avaguṇṭya*) bride[9] by proper attendants[10], and the priests joined the hands of the couple in token of the union.[11] The marital deities were worshipped there[12], and the pair circumambiated thrice round the holy fire and threw the parched grain at the request of the priests.[13] Then the officiating priest thus blest them: "This sacred flame is the witness of your marriage. Be faithful husband and wife."[14] The husband then asked his wife: "Look up, O gentle lady, can you see the bright pole star? Your faith must be as constant as that star." To this the bride answered:

[1] *Kum.*, 25. p. 131: *dhātryaṅgulibhiḥ pratisāryamāṇamūrṇāmayaṃ kautuka hastasūtraṃ.*

[2] *Ibid.*, 27 p. 132; see also 28, p. 132:
tāmarcitābhyaḥ kuladēvatābhyaḥ kulapratiṣṭhāṃ praṇamayya mātā |
akārayatkārayitavyadakṣā kramēṇa pādagrahaṇaṃ satīnāṃ.

[3] *Ibid.*, 32, p. 133.

[4] *Ibid.*, 33, p. 134: *tilakriyāyāḥ.*

[5] *Ibid.*, 40-42, pp. 135-36.

[6] *Ibid.*, 5-12, pp. 126-28.

[7] *Ibid.*, 55, 56, 63. pp. 139, 141:
prāsādamālāsu babhūvuritthaṃ tyaktānyakāryāṇi vicēṣṭitāni.

[8] *Kum.*, VII, 72, p. 144.

[9] *Māl.*, Act V, p. 159.

[10] *Kum.*, vii, 73. p. 144:
dukūlavāsāḥ savadhūsamīpaṃ ninyē vinitair=avarōdha-dakṣaiḥ.

[11] *Ibid.*, 76, p. 144: *tasyāḥ karaṃ śaila gurūpanītaṃ jagrāha tāmrāṅgulimaṣṭamūrtiḥ.*

[12] *Ibid.*, 78, p. 145.

[13] *Ibid.*, 79. p. 146: *pradakṣiṇaprakramaṇātkṛśānōrudarciṣastānmithunaṃ cakāse.*

[14] *Ibid.*, 83, p. 147.

"Yes, I see". Then the couple was seated on a seat and the sanctified grain sprinkled over it[1]. A spell of merriment followed,[2] and finally the couple retired to their bed-chamber[3].

After staying at the house of his father-in-law for a short time, the couple left for their own home. At this moment the bride was sanctified with the application of *gōrōcana* and clay from sacred spots[4], sprouts of *dūrva* grass[5], the wearing of white silken garments and ornaments[6] and her feet were dyed with lac-dye. Then she was asked to go round the sacrificial fire[7]. When she was about to depart finally from her father's home, he blest her thus: "Serve your elders, be a friend to your co-wives; though ill-treated by your husband do not in wrath revolt against him, be courteous to your servants, do not be proud of good fortune; these are the ways by which young women achieve the state of wife-hood: those who do not follow these ways ruin their families."[8]

There is little doubt that such a type of marriage must have prevailed in the times of Kālidāsa among the rich and the poor, the principles remaining the same while the splendour with which it was carried on naturally must have varied according to the circumstances. It is, however, most interesting to notice that the wedding of Grahavarman Maukhāri with Rājyaśrī, the daughter of Prabhākaravardhana, was carried precisely on the lines laid down by Kālidāsa. As Bāṇa is more or less a faithful historical chronicler, it may be concluded that during the Gupta period the *Prājāpatya* form of marriage must have been current and that it continued to be so down to the days of Harṣavardhana, when so many of the Gupta customs and ceremonies were also observed.

This type of marriage was also popular with the royalty. How actually even a king and queen pitched upon a match and settled it has been recorded by Bāṇa. On seeing their daughter Rājyaśrī growing into a woman, Prabhākaravardhana decided to find out a suitable young man for her and remarked thus to his wife: "In spite of all,

[1] *Kum.*, 85, p. 147.
[2] *Ibid.*, 88, p. 148.
[3] *Ibid.*, 91, p. 149.
[4] *Ibid.*, 94, p. 150.
[5] *Śāk.*, Act IV, p. 52.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 55.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 56: *vatse, itaḥ, sadyō hutāgnin pradakṣiṇikuruṣva.*
[8] *Ibid.*, Act IV, 19, p. 62:
bhūtvā cirāya caturāntamahisapatnī Dauṣyantiṃ apratiratham tanayaṃ nivēśya |
bhartrā tadarpitakuṭumba bharēṇa sārdhaṃ śānte kariṣyasi padaṃ punarāśram=ēsmin

householders must follow the ways of the world. though a bride-groom may have other merits, *the cline towards good family.* Now at the head of all royal houses stand the Mukharas, worshipped, like Śiva's foot-print, by all the world. Of that race's pride, Avantivarman, *the eldest son*, Grahavarman by name, who lacks not his father's virtues, a prince like the lord of planets descended upon earth, *seeks our daughter. Upon him, if your majesty's thoughts are likewise favourable, I propose to bestow her.*" To these words she replied: "*Mothers*, your majesty, *are to their daughters no more indeed than nurses*, useful only in rearing them. *In their bestowal the father is the judge.*" These statements show that in selecting a son-in-law, good family and virtue or character were considered the deciding factors. The relations of the young man sought the girl's hand and, if the young man was approved of by the girl's father, he placed the proposal before his wife. If these jointly agreed, then the parents like Prabhākaravardhana and Yaśōvatī, sent for their sons and acquainted them also with this design. Then, on a day of good omen, in the presence of the whole royal household, the father poured the betrothal water (*duhitṛdānajalaṃ*) upon the hand of an envoy extraordinary, who had arrived previously with instructions from Grahavarman to sue for the princess.[1]

4. A Royal Wedding

Consequently preparations were made for a royal wedding on a lavish scale. Bāṇa again gives us a detailed and glowing description of the arrangements which were in progress prior to Rājyaśri's marriage. "All the world", he relates, "bedecked itself with betel, perfumes, and flowers, distributed with a lavish hand. From every country were summoned companies of skilled artists. Under the charge of royal officers came whole villages, bringing loads of serviceable gifts. Emissaries conveyed presents from many a king. The favourites busied themselves in attending to the troops of relatives, come in answer to invitations. Leather workers, wild with intoxication–having been treated with wine–flourished in their hands drum-sticks, with which they sharply struck the festal drums, till they boomed again. Mortars, pestles, stone blocks, and other utensils were bedecked with pounded perfumes. Successive trains of troubadours, appearing on every side, crowded the courts, where images of Indrāṇi were being set up. Carpenters presented with white flowers, unguents and clothes, planned out the marriage altar. Workmen mounted on ladders, with brushes upheld in their hands and plaster pails on their

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 123, text, p. 142. Italics mine.

shoulders whitened the top of the street wall of the palace. Torrents of water from pounded saffron now being washed stained the feet of the nation. The courtyards were seas of elephants and horses, suitable for bridal gifts, which were undergoing inspection. Throngs of astrologers, set calculating, investigated the characteristics of different moments. Crocodile-mouthed conduits, conveying scented water, filled a variety of ponds. The outer terraces resounded with the din of gold-workers engaged in hammering gold. Plasterers were beplastered with showers of sand which fell over them from freshly erected walls. A group of skilled painters painted auspicious scenes. Multitudes of modellers moulded clay figures of fishes, tortoises, crocodiles-cocoanuts, plantains and betel trees. Even kings girt up their loins, and busied themselves in carrying out decorative work set as tasks by their sovereign, being variously engaged in polishing mosaic floors of red lead, or erecting the posts for marriage platforms, which they stewed with handfuls of liquid *ālarpaṇa* pigment, reddened with cochineal disposed about them, and adorned at the top with mango and *Aśōka* twigs."[1]

The women of the nobility played a prominent part in this royal wedding. "From the furthest orient had come the queens of the feudatories, noble, high-bred, shapely, well-clad, *unwidowed* dames, with lines of vermilion powder glittering on their foreheads. Thronging the household, they sang sweet well-omened songs containing allusions to the bride and bride-groom's families; or with fingers steeped in diverse colours, dyed neck-strings, or employed their skill in leaf and plant painting to adorn polished cups and collections of unbaked clay-ware; or stained skeins of cotton-thread for bamboo baskets, and fabrics of wool for marriage amulets; or manufactured cosmetics, compounded of saffron paste, clotted by *balāśanā* essence, and face unguents adding distinction to beauty; or made strings of cloves mingled with *Kakkōla* fruit, containing also nutmegs and large bright lamps of crystalline camphor, threaded in the intervals."[2] It is interesting to note here that only married women, adorned with the *tilaka*, are said to have been present in the marriage pandal, a practice current even today.

The palace was arrayed in textures, flashing on every side, of linen, cotton, bark-silk, spider's thread, muslin and shot silk. Some of these were made by ancient city matrons, experts in cutting and measuring, some made already were dyed by washermen, some after

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 124.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 124. Italics mine.

dyeing, were being dried in the shade; and some, after dyeing were twisted into shapes of sprays. Some of these workers spotted these textures with saffron paste and some tore the fragile stuffs grasped by the servitors. Couches were overlaid with gay coverlets and bodices with star-like pearls. Thousands of canvas and cloth pieces were divided for various uses. There were awnings bright and soft, freshly dyed bark-silk, marquees had roofs covered all over with garments, and posts were swathed in strips of variegated silk[1].

The most important place in the marriage pandal was the marriage altar. It was whitened with new plaster and surrounded by invited kings. Gleaming around it were earthen dolls whose hands bore auspicious fruits, which had five-mouthed cups bristling with dew-besprent blades of barley,[2] and enemies' faces painted with soft colours. Brāhmaṇa witnesses busied themselves in kindling the flame which smoked under logs heaped by the teachers. Close to the fire unsoiled green *Kuśa* grass was set and hard by were bundles of pounding stones, antelope skins, ghee, garlands, and fuel, while a sparkle of parched grain was mixed with dark *Śamī* leaves placed in new baskets.[3] The dolls bearing auspicious fruits perhaps symbolise the idea of fertility.

During the marriage, even the king and queen took a personal interest in the ordinary matters pertaining to the ceremony. Queen Yaśōvatī, for instance, personally attended to the invited ladies, commanded her servants and looked after things done and omitted. Meanwhile the king, Prabhākaravardhana, in the '*distraction of fatherly affection*,' did everything in person along with his two sons.[4]

The actual ceremonial of a royal marriage can also be ascertained from the works of Bāṇa. In the case of Rājyaśrī's wedding, on the marriage day, at dawn all strangers were expelled from the palace by the chamberlains and the royal family was drawn apart. Anon the groom-in-waiting introduced to the king a betel-bearer from the bridegroom's presence. The king inquired of his son-in-law's health, greetings were exchanged and he was sent away with this mission: "At the first watch of the night see that no mishap arises owing to the

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

[2] In the *Śilappadikāram* it is related that during Kōvalan's marriage some ladies carried lamps, vessels and *pālikai* pots of tender shoots. See, *The Śilappadikāram*, p. 90 (trans. by V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, 1939). The *Bodhyana Gṛhyasūtra* mentions five *pālikais* for marriage purposes, p. 328, (My. ed.).

[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-30.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 125. Italics mine.

passing of the marriage hour".[1] This was the most momentous hour as settled by the royal astrologers. When it arrived they approached king Prabhākaravardhana and said: "Your Majesty, the moment approaches, let the bride-groom proceed to the bridal house."[2]

The royal bridegroom came in a ceremonial procession. Before the bride-groom ran footmen, relates Bāṇa, "with red gold-studded chowries incessantly flashing... The horizon was filled with troops of horses, which were welcomed as it seemed by answering neighs from the prick-eared steeds of the capital. Throngs of mighty elephants with chowries waving at their ears, arrayed in trappings all of gold, with gay housings and twanging bells, seemed to reform the darkness dissolved by the rising moon. He (Grahavarman) *came mounted on an elephant whose muzzle was bedecked with a zodiac of pearls* . . . All about him was a hubbub of dancing troubadours shrilling forth notes of divers birds . . . An array of lamps, incensed with dripping perfumed oil, made yellow all the world as with a cloud of saffron toilet powder. His head with its flowery top-knot set amid a blooming jasmine wreath . . . He had formed for himself a mock *vaikakṣaka* wrap with a wreath of flowers . . . . His heart drawn on as in eagerness to behold his new bride's countenance, he appeared almost to fall forward on his face."[3] From these details it is clear that the bridegroom came in a procession to the bride's home, rode on an elephant, (a custom observed even at present in Indian royal houses) and did not see the princess whom he was going to marry.

On his arrival at the gate of the capital, the king and his sons (Prabhākaravardhana and his sons) accompanied by their retinue *went forth on foot* to meet his prospective son-in-law. Dismounting he bowed, and the king with outstretched arms gave him a hearty embrace. Next he embraced Rājyavardhana and Harṣa and the king taking him by the hand, led him within doors, where he honoured him with a seat equal to his own and with other attentions.[4] Presently he was congratulated on his uniting the two royal houses of Maukhāris and the Puṣpabhūtis by this marriage, by a wise Brāhmaṇa, Gaṁbhīra. While he spoke, the royal astrologers announced the approach of the marriage-hour, on hearing which, the king bade his son-in-law to rise and proceed to the marriage altar. He entered the women's apartments, and disregarding the thousands

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 128.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 127-28. Italics mine.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129.

of glances eager to see him, passed on to the door of the bridal house, where, commanding his attendants to halt, he entered.

There amid a company of relatives, friends and servants, mostly women, the bridegroom espied his bride. Her body was smeared white with sandal and she wore jewelled ear-rings. Most deftly he performed all that in a marriage the bride-groom is made to do by women with faces lit by a mocking smile. Then, his bride having been arrayed in a dress proper for the ceremony, he took her by the hand and went forth to an altar whitened with new plaster.[1]

The bride-groom ascended the marriage altar and approached the fire with its tremendous sprays of red flame. The fire being fed, he marched round towards the right and, as the rice oblation was let fall, the blazing fire whitened by the gleam of nails, seemed to smile. "Anon a tempest of tears showed itself on the bride's face, which yet displayed no discomposure, and she burst into weeping. With eyes brimming with tears, the women of the family raised a lugubrious cry."

All the bridal rites being fully completed, the husband bowed with his wife to their parents and then entered their chamber. There a fairly well upholstered bed with pillows was guarded on the one side by a golden rinsing vessel and on the other by a golden figure holding an ivory box. At the bed's head stood a night bowl of silver bedecked with lotuses. After staying with his father-in-law for ten days, the bride-groom, prince Grahavarman set out with his bride to his native country.[2]

The physiological consequences of a marriage in a pregnant woman have often been observed by Kālidāsa.[3] Such signs of pregnancy have also been recorded by Bāṇa, especially in the case of Yaśōvatī, the queen of Prabhākaravardhana. Languid with the slowly growing burden of her child, he remarks, she still insisted on "being conveyed with the support of friendly hands to salute her parents, who would have stayed her. Slow, slow was her gait . . . Her household duties she had scarce strength to command, not to speak of performing them . . . . She could not even support her limbs, much less her ornaments . . . . Resigning her form to her friends' bosoms, she set her feet on the laps of her handmaids, and on the heads of

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-31.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Cf. Raghu.*, III, 8-10, p. 54.

her co-wives."[1] Prior to the birth of Harṣa, as pregnancy came on, her cup-like bosoms grew dark in their tender nipples and all day long she lay on a couch.[2]

When a queen desired to have a child, probably if she did not have one for a considerable time, she appears to have resorted to certain customs. It is said that queen Vilāsavatī, "slept within the temples of Durgā, dark with smoke of bdellium ceaselessly burnt, on a bed of clubs covered with green grass, fasting, her pure form clothed in white raiment; she bathed under cows endowed with auspicious marks, adorned for the occasion by the wives of the old cowherds in the herd-stations, with golden pitchers laden with all sorts of jewels decorated with branches of the *pīpal*, decked with divers fruits and flowers and filled with holy water; every day she would rise and give to Brāhmaṇas golden mustard leaves adorned with every gem; she stood in the midst of a circle drawn by the king himself, in a place where four roads meet, on the fourteenth night of the dark fortnight, and performed auspicious rites of bathing, in which the gods of the four quarters were gladdened by the various oblations offered; she honoured the shrines of the *siddhas* and sought the houses of the neighbouring (*Sapta*) Mātṛkās, in which faith was displayed by the people; she bathed in all the celebrated snake-ponds; with a sun-wise turn, she worshipped the *pīpal* and other trees to which honour was wont to be shown; after bathing, with hands circled by swaying bracelets, she herself gave to the birds an offering of curds and boiled rice placed in a silver cup; she offered daily to the goddess Durgā a sacrifice consisting of parched grain of oblation, boiled rice, sesamum, sweetmeats, cakes, unguents, incense, and flowers in abundance; she besought, with a mind prostrate in adoration, the naked wandering ascetics, bearing the name of *siddhas*, and carrying their begging bowls filled by her; she greatly honoured the directions of fortune-tellers; she frequented all the sooth-sayers learned in signs; she showed all respect to those who understood the omens of birds, she accepted all the secrets handed down in the tradition of a succession of venerable sages.....she made the Brāhmaṇas who came into her presence chant the Vēda; she heard sacred stories incessantly repeated; she carried about little caskets of *mantras* filled with birch leaves, written over in yellow letters; she tied strings of medicinal plants as amulets; even her attendants went out to hear passing sounds and grasped the omens arising from them; she daily threw out lumps of

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-7.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 108.

flesh in the evenings for the jackals; she told the pandits the wonders of her dreams, and at the cross-roads she offered oblation to Śiva."[1]

VII. Other Aspects of Court Life

1. Illness and Treatment

The people of Bāṇa's day knew certain methods of treating a royal person during illness. This can be best exemplified by the measures adopted during the sickness of Prabhākaravardhana. "Attendants were drinking streams of water from uplifted (or empty) cups in order to distract the pain of the king's dry mouth. Gourmands were being fed to relieve his craving. All the dealers were busy in providing a pharmacopoeia of drugs.....Butter-milk was freezing in pails packed in ice; a collyrium stick had been cooled with camphor powder placed on a moist white cloth; in a new vessel besmeared with wet clay was whey for a gargle. Water trickled from the soft bundles of fibres covered with delicate (red) lotus leaves; on the ground where were cups of drinking water lay bunches of lotuses with their stalks. Boiled water was being cooled by passing in a stream from cup to cup; red sugar diffused a pungent odour. On a stand stood a sand-jar for the sickman's eyes to rest upon; fresh water-plants were coiled round a dripping globe; a crystal platter gleamed with parched groats and barley-meal; a paste of flour and curds was held in a yellow emerald cup; a collection of crystal, pearl and shell vessels was sprinkled with powders and infusion of cooling herbs. Piles of myrobalans, citrons, grapes and pomegranates were at hand. Lustral water was being scattered by Fee'd Brāhmaṇs. A flat stone was stained with forehead unguents which a maid-servant was pounding.....As they touched him, the hands of the attendants engaged in ceaselessly smearing him with sandal were as white in the palm as if turned to ashes by contact with his burning limbs.....Incessantly applied petals of red, white and blue lotuses seemed to blot his body.....On his head a thick silken cloth bound round his hair..."[2]

Moreover from the exclamations of king Prabhākaravardhana it can be seen that, in order to assuage the fever of this royal patient, pearl necklaces and jewelled mirrors were placed on his body, his brow was anointed with bits of ice, camphor powder was administered to him, moon-stones were applied to his eyes, blue lotuses were

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, pp. 55-56.

[2] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 138-40. For other details regarding medicines and treatment to be administered during illness in the case of people in general, see I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-38; also see *ante* Ch. II, Sect. XI, 4, pp. 162-63.

placed on his cheeks, sandal-paste was used to massage his limbs, palm-leaves were waved to keep the breeze cool and his arms were shampooed and his feet squeezed to revive his lost energy.[1]

2. Death—Funeral Rites of Men

When a king died, he was cremated with due ceremony in Gupta times. This can be substantiated by means of contemporary evidence. The Ērāṇ posthumous stone pillar inscription of Goparāja, dated A. D. 510-11, clearly states that he, on being killed in battle, was cremated on a funeral pyre (*āgnirāśīṃ*)[2]. Such a practice evidently points to the system of cremation, which can be confirmed by another reference to this form of disposal in the Aphsad stone pillar inscription of Ādityasena, which has been ascribed to the seventh century. In this epigraph it is recorded how Kumāra Gupta III, cherishing heroism and adherence to truth, went to Prayāga (Allahabad) and there "honourably decorated with flowers, plunged into a fire, with dry cow-dung cakes, as if (*simply plunging to bathe*) in water."[3] From this allusion to Kumāra Gupta's death, it is clear that after a king's death during Gupta times, his body was adorned with flowers, and that cow-dung cakes were utilized in lighting the funeral pyre. Kālidāsa further relates that after a king's demise, the royal family priest (*Purōdhas*) performed the last rites and he, together with the ministers, consigned the king's body to the flames.[4]

That the system of offering oblations was practised in the Gupta age can be proved by means of contemporary inscriptions. The undated Bhitarī stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta refers to both the deceased ancestors, the gods and the oblations (*karya-karyaiḥ*) proper for each of them[5]. The oblations to the gods were offered prior to the undertaking of any important measure. The Junāgadh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 455-56, relates how Parṇadatta, the governor of Surāṣṭra, performed them before he proceeded to rebuild the dam of the Sudarśana lake and records how, "having sacrificed to the gods with oblations of clarified butter and with obeisances; and having gratified the twice-born (with presents) of riches; and having paid respect to the citizens with honours as

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 144-45.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (20), p. 93.

[3] *Ibid.*, (42), p. 206; text, p 203. I agree with Fleet, in interpreting that this is not a type of *sati* performed by Kumāra Gupta, but only a picturesque representation of his death ceremony at Allahabad. K. P. Jayaswal thought that it was a case of suicide without giving any specific reasons; see *ante*, Ch. I. Sect. III, I, pp. 57-58.

[4] *Raghu.*, XIX, 54, p. 389.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12), p. 51.

they deserved, as to such of his servants as were worthy of notice and to his friends with presents,"[1] he proceeded to undertake this great work. Temples were built, as the Ērāṇ stone pillar inscription of Toramāṇa states, to increase the religious merit of the donor's forefathers. This record reveals how Dhanyaviṣṇu built a stone temple of Nārāyaṇa, for increasing the religious merit of his parents.[2]

In order to see in detail how a royal funeral was performed, one has to turn to Bāṇa who offers the best information on this topic. It has been noticed that, when Prabhākaravardhana died, Bāṇa relates how the former's son Rājyavardhana was installed as king. Yüan Chwāng confirms this statement and gives the religious reason for such an immediate installation. "When the sovereign dies", he states "the first thing is to place his successor on the throne in order that he may preside at the religious services of the funeral and determine precedence".[3] It is not possible that immediately on the death of a king, this ceremony of installation took place, for a contemporary chronicler like Bāṇa does not mention it. On the death of Prabhākaravardhana, for instance, his body was first disposed of in a way befitting his kingly position. Then the feudatories and townsmen headed by the family priest, taking on profferred shoulders the bier of this Śibi-like king, bore him to the river Sarasvatī and there placed him on a pyre befitting an emperor, which "solemnly consumed all but his glory in the flames."[4] After the cremation, his son, Rājyavardhana, bathed in the river, "offered water to his father", and returned home on foot. Later he offered to the spirit of the departed the funeral *piṇḍa* ball of pure white rice.[5]

On a king's death there was a certain period, probably of ten days, which was known as a spell of impurity. When this period ended a Brāhmaṇa, who had consumed the first oblation to the departed spirit, partook his meal. The various appurtenances of the royal bier, beds, chairs, cowries, umbrellas, vessels, carriages, swords, and similar possessions of the king were distributed to Brāhmaṇas. The bones of the dead king were carried to sacred fords, a monument of brick was set upon the sepulchral pile, and the royal elephant was abandoned to the woods.[6]

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14), p. 64.
[2] *Ibid.*, (14), p. 64.
[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 175; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 86.
[4] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 158.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 160.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 164.

When a king perished there was a period of universal mourning in his kingdom. On Prabhākaravardhana's death Bāṇa reveals how throughout the city "none cooked, none bathed, none took their pleasure; in every quarter there was no man but wept".[1] Despite some obvious exaggeration it may be concluded that there must have been a great expression of sorrow on a king's death. His son seems to have seen soothed by a number of courtiers and sages, for Harṣa, was similarly consoled. He was closely attended, says Bāṇa, by "young nobles of ancient houses, which had enjoyed the favour of the court for generations, venerable trusted advisers . . . . . old Brāhmaṇas versed in *Śruti*, *Smṛti* and *Itihāsa*, anointed counsellors of royal rank endowed with learning, birth and character, approved ascetics well-trained in the doctrine of the self, sages indifferent to pain and pleasure, Vedāntists skilled in expounding the nothingness of the fleeting world, mythologists expert in allaying sorrow."[2] The deceased sovereign's close relations were obliged to grow a beard in token of sorrow. On Rājyavardhana's death, Bhaṇḍi grew a beard, which "resting, like reverence for his master in his bosom all betokened his grief." After a time, when it was shaved off, he bathed, and received clothes, flowers, unguents and ornaments[3].

3. The Institution of Sati

The practice of committing *sati* can be traced to the time of the *Mahābhārata* but the scanty references in it to this usage show that it was not common.[4] This custom apparently came into vogue with the rise of the Guptas, and it appears to have been known to Vatsyāyana[5], Kālidāsa[6], and Śūdraka[7]. Probably one of the main causes for the revival of this usage was its common prevalence among the Scythians, who ruled over a considerable portion of northern India from about 150 B. C. to A. D. 250.

Though the custom was advocated by some Kṣatriyas, it evoked considerable opposition. One of the most vehement of such opponents was the courageous Bāṇa, who carried on a crusade against this inhuman practice. "To die after one's beloved", he cries, "is the most fruitless. It is a custom followed by the foolish. It does not do any good whatever to the dead person...On the other hand, by surviving

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 168.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 162.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 164.
[4] *Mahābhārata*, I, 138, 77-72.
[5] Vātsyāyana, *Kāmasūtra*, VI, 2, 53.
[6] *Kum.*, IV, 1, p. 63.
[7] *Cf. Mṛcchakaṭikā*, Act X.

the deceased, one can do much good to both oneself and to the departed by offering prescribed oblations for his happiness in the other world."[1] Such tirades had evidently no effect, for this gruesome custom slowly gained popularity until, in the sixteenth century in southern India, the practice of *sati* almost became the rage of the day.

The survival of widows on the death of the husband having been pointed out, it may be seen whether or not widow-marriage was prevalent in Gupta times. Sanction was accorded by legists in the Vedic age[2], and later by the Dharmaśāstras as well. Vasiṣṭha, Nārada, and Kauṭalya[3] accord full approval to such a course. From 300 B. C.[4] this usage became unpopular, and such an unpopularity was probably stimulated by law-givers like Gautama[5], Manu[6] and Nārada,[7] who vehemently opposed this practice and therefore few contemporary records point out such marriages especially among the Brāhmaṇas. But as though to prove the rule, the celebrated emperor Candra Gupta II (c. A. D. 380-414) married, as the play *Dēvīcandraguptaṃ* tells us, his elder brother Rāma Gupta's wife Dhruvadēvī. That such a marriage was a historical fact can be proved by the reference to it in later times. Bāṇa mentions it as a word of warning, and a record of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Amōghavarsa condemns it. These are a few examples which show that from the times of Harṣa a prejudice against widow-re-marriage had gained in strength and in intensity.

The wife of the deceased sovereign sometimes committed *sati* by burning herself on her husband's funeral pyre. The Erān posthumous stone pillar inscription of Gōparāja, dated A. D. 510-11, records how Gōparāja's wife committed *sati*. This inscription states that his "devoted, attached, beloved and beautiful wife, in close companionship, accompanied (him) on the funeral pyre."[8] The funeral pyre of a king, observes Bāṇa, was made of black beams of aloe wood,[9] strewn with heaps of flowers and then covered over with *Kuruvaka* buds.[10]

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[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, text, p. 308.

[2] *Cf. Ṛigvēda*, X, 40, 2; *Atharva Vēda*, IX, 5, 28-29. (Ajmere, 1917).

[3] Vasiṣṭha, XVII, 14, 18-20, pp. 85-86; Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. III, Ch. 4, pp 180-81; Nārada, XII, 80, 85, pp. 181-2; Gautama, XVIII, p. 267.

[4] *Cf. Mahābhārata*, IX, 31, 45.

[5] Gautama, XVIII, p. 267.

[6] Manu, V, 157, p. 196.

[7] Nārada, XII, 80, p. 181.

[8] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (20), p. 93.

[9] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 157. Aloe wood is the fragrant resin of wood the *Agalloch* derived from the species of two East India genera—*Alœxylon* and *Aquilaria*.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

Bāṇa, again, has left us a vivid picture of the actual performance of a *satī*. He has recorded that not only the principal queen, but some of the co-wives too resolved to die on their husband's funeral pyre. On Prabhākaravardhana's death, Harṣa went in haste to the women's apartments where, while still at a distance, he heard cries from queens resolved to die.[1] In these quarters those who had so resolved took leave of each other and of the rest who were there.[2] That such was the usual practice can be made out from another example. When Harṣa's sister Rājyaśrī, on her husband's death, being abandoned in the Vindhyan jungles, with all her women determined to die, they bade farewell to each other in a similar way.[3] Such a death was considered meritorious. Among Rājyaśrī's maids, one cried out: "O Virājikā, you are made famous by your resolution to die in your mistress's calamity."[4] But such a death was evidently not compulsory in Gupta times, for only a few extant inscriptions record the death of women, common or royal, by *satī*. But, as Bāṇa records, while queen Yaśōvatī perished, her daughter Rājyaśrī, though bent on committing *satī*, was obliged to refrain from executing such a resolution.[5]

There is little doubt that women remained widows after the death of a husband. The Māndasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473–74, referring to the exploits of the latter states: "Even today, when the long-eyed lovely women of (his) enemies, pained with the fierce pangs of widowhood think of him, they stagger about through fear."[6] The undated Nāgārjuni hill cave inscription of Anantavarman, also records how his glories taught the wives of his enemies the conditions of the arrows of widowhood.[7] These references are evidently traditional and allude to the destruction of their husbands who were the foes of the Gupta rulers: but there is no evidence to show that *satī* was either compulsory or was followed universally throughout the Gupta age. Nevertheless it cannot be denied that the rite of *satī* continued to be in vogue down to the seventh century as Daṇḍin clearly refers to this practice. Arthapāla (one of his characters) suggested to his mother that she should say the following words to the king: "It is a woman's duty

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 149, text, p. 164: *rājāmahiṣīṇāmaśṇōdūrādēva.*

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 149–50.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 247–48.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 155, 249–50.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 86, text, p. 83: *vaidhavya-tīvra-vyasana-kṣatānām.*

[7] *Ibid.*, (49), p. 226.

to follow the fate of her husband, whether scoundrel or not. Therefore I shall mount the pyre with him (her husband)."[1]

Kālidāsa also refers to widows,[2] who could not participate in marriage functions. There were further exemptions from committing *sati*: a pregnant woman was not expected to perish on her husband's pyre.[3] Bāṇa too relates how for princess Rājyaśrī's marriage came, noble, high-bred, shapely, well-clad *unwidowed* dames with lines of vermilion powder glittering on their foreheads.[4]

The lady about to perform *sati* was picturesquely arrayed. Queen Yaśōvatī, resolving to become a *sati*, issued forth from her apartments, after giving away all her wealth and assuming the vestments of death, with the purpose of entering the fire. Still wet from her recent bath, she wore two saffron-brown clothes. Her lips were stained with the deep dye of betel. Hanging between her breasts was a red neck-cord and her limbs were aglow with moist saffron paste. At every step she scattered, in dropping bracelets, a kind of farewell-present to the family goddess. From her neck down to her instep hung wreaths of strung flowers. She carried in her hand a picture representing her husband, which she held steadfastly to her heart. Lovingly she clasped her lord's spear-shaft which was reverently tied with waving strings of white flowers. Before the king's umbrella she shed tears as though it were a kinsman.[5]

The funeral pyre-fire was worshipped with flowers.[6] The fire was fanned by the women about to plunge into it, who bowed before it, circumambulated the pile, strewed a heap of flowers,[7] issued instructions to those around them[8] and then gallantly plunged into it. Not all could stand the sight of the flames, which must have been terrible and some of these resolute women fainted. Harṣa's sister, Rājyāśrī, succumbed to such a fainting fit.[9] But unlike her, his mother queen Yaśōvatī perished in the flames before her husband expired.[10]

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
[2] *Kum.*, IV, 1, p. 63: *navavaidhavyamasahyavēdanaṃ.*
[3] *Raghu.*, XIX, 56, p. 390.
[4] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 124.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 150-51.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 155, 247.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 247.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 151.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 249.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 155.

CHAPTER IV

Administration

I. The Origins of Gupta Administration

Now that we have seen in some detail the ways of life which the common people, the nobility and the royalty led in the Gupta age, we may examine at length their system of administration as it was current at the capital where the emperor ruled, at the provincial metropolis where the noble held sway as the governor and in the village where the common people looked after their own affairs. It has been remarked that "in the inscriptions of the Gupta emperors there is no trace of the retention of the old Maurya official terms."[1] Such a remark cannot be said to be correct regarding the whole of Gupta administration, although it is true that the Gupta emperors introduced some *new* designations into their administrative machinery. The Gupta emperors must have clearly realised that they could not blindly dispense with the traditions of their predecessors in northern India like the great Mauryas, the details of whose administration are evidently recorded in Kauṭalya's *Arthaśāstra*[2], and their later successors the Scythians and the Kuṣāṇas who have left some vestiges of their systems of government in contemporary records.

1. Pre-Gupta Administration: Mauryan

During the Mauryan period there was an elaborate system of government as is borne out by Megasthenes and confirmed by Kauṭalya. The king (*Rāja*) was the head of the State, and had military, judicial, legislative and executive duties. Among his duties he had to attend to the posting of watchmen, the accounting of receipts and expenditure, and the appointment of superintendents. He had to correspond in writs (*patrasaṁpreṣaṇena*) with the assembly of his ministers (*mantriparisad*), receive secret information gathered by spies, supervise his forces, and consider various plans of military operations with his commander-in-chief[3].

All kinds of administrative measures were to follow, according to Kauṭalya, the deliberations in a well-formed council. "The subject matter of a council shall be entirely secret, and deliberations in it

[1] Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 70; also see Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, II, pp. 149-50.

[2] *Cf.* Dikshitar, *Mauryan Polity*, pp. 301-28.

[3] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. I, Ch. XIX, pp. 37. (3rd ed. 1929).

shall be so carried that even birds cannot see them; for it is said that the secrecy of counsels was divulged by parrots, *mainas*, dogs and other low creatures of mean birth. Whoever discloses counsels shall be torn to pieces."[1] The Council had certain duties: the five constituents of every council deliberation were the "means to carry out works, command of plenty of men and wealth, allotment of time and place, remedies against dangers, and final success".[2] It was not evidently only a guiding body and the king was not bound to follow its decisions. "The king", observes Kauṭalya, "may ask his ministers for their opinion, either individually or collectively, and ascertain their ability by judging over the reasons they assign for their opinions." Kauṭalya, in contradiction to Manu, Bṛhaspati and Uśanas, holds that a king's council "shall consist of as many members as the needs of his dominions require (*yathāsāmarthyam*)[3]. In works of emergency, the king had to call his ministers and the assembly of ministers (*maṁtriṇo maṁtriparisadaṁca*) and tell them about the project. "He shall do whatever the majority (*bhūyiṣṭhāḥ*) of the members suggest, or whatever course of action leading to success (*kāryasiddhikaraṃ*) they point out."[4]

Apart from this council, the king had several important officers, for sovereignty, as Kauṭalya asserts, was only possible with the assistance of other officials. The most prominent among them were the *Maṁtriṇaḥ*, who were selected from the ministerial officers (*Amātyas*), for he states that "those whose character has been tested under all kinds of allurements shall be employed as prime-ministers (*Maṁtriṇaḥ*)".[5] They were paid the highest annual salary of 48,000 *paṇas*;[6] and had to assist the king in examining the character of ministers (*Amātya*) appointed in government departments of an ordinary nature.[7] Three or four of them were consulted before administrative measures were decided upon, summoned along with the Council during emergencies,[8] accompanied the king to battle, and encouraged the soldiers,[9] and probably exerted some influence over the imperial princes.[10]

[1] Kauṭalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. I, Ch. XV, p. 26; *Cf.*, *Ibid.*, Ch. XV, p. 28.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 29.
[5] *Ibid.*, Ch. X, Bk I, p. 16, text, p. 17: *dharmasthīya* . . .
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *Ibid.*, Ch. X, p. 16.
[8] *Ibid.*, Ch. XV, p. 29.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[10] *Cf. Ibid.*, Ch. IX, p. 15.

Next to the *Mantrins* were the ministerial officers (*Amātyāḥ*). "Having divided", says Kauṭalya, "the spheres of their powers and having definitely taken into consideration the place and time where and when they have to work, such persons shall be employed not as councillors (*Mantriṇaḥ*), but as ministerial officers (*Amātyāḥ*)."[1] Of these tried ministers, those whose character was tested under religious allurements were to be employed in criminal and religious courts (*dharmasthānāya kaṇṭaka śōdhanēṣu*); those whose purity was tested under monetary allurements were to be employed in the work of a revenue collector and chamberlain; those who have been tried under love allurements were appointed to superintend the pleasure ground (*vihāra*), external and internal. "Those who have been tested by allurements under fear shall be appointed to immediate service . . . . and those who are proved impure under one or all of these allurements shall be appointed in mines, timber and elephant forests, and manufactories."[2] Those having ministerial qualifications,[3] were appointed either as Ministers Plenipotentiary (*Niṣṛiṣṭārthāḥ*)[4], Ministers of Correspondence (*Lēkhakāḥ*)[5] and Superintendents (*Adhyakṣāḥ*).[6]

Strabo and other Greek authors evidently refer to the *Amātyas* as the chief executive and judicial officers of the kingdom, when they mention the "seventh caste",[7] while they allude to the *Adhyakṣas* when they refer to the Magistrates.[8] The classical writers speak of the overseers (*Episkopi*),[9] who probably correspond to the Kauṭalīyan *Pradēṣṭṛ*[10] or Commissioner.

Coming to the administration of a village, Kauṭalya tells us that it was carried on by the *Gōpa* who maintained the accounts of ten to forty house-holders, while the *Sthānika* attended to the accounts of the one quarter of the kingdom,[11] and their work was supervised by the *Samāhartṛ* with the assistance of the *Pradeṣṭṛ*.[12] The village had a village officer (*Grāmika*) and he had to be assisted by the elders

[1] Kauṭalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. I, p. 14.
[2] *Ibid.*, Ch. X, pp. 16–18.
[3] *Ibid.*, Ch. IX, p. 14.
[4] *Ibid.*, Ch. XVI, p. 29.
[5] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. X, p. 71.
[6] *Ibid.*, Ch. IX, p. 68.
[7] M'crindle, *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, p. 53.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Ibid.*, also see *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes & Arrian*, p. 85.
[10] *Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch. XII, p. 20.
[11] *Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch. XXXV, p. 159. On the Sthānikas, see B. A. Saletore, *The Sthānikas & their Historical Importance*, (Bombay, 1938).
[12] *Ibid.*, Bk. IV, p. 227.

(*Grāma vṛddhāḥ*)[1]. It is possible that this *Grāmika* was an elected official of the village[2], as he does not appear among the paid servants of the State; while *Grāma bhṛtaka*, the village-servant of the king, seems to have received an annual salary of 500 *paṇas*[3].

During the reign of Aśōka, the administration of the empire was carried on by a number of officials. In every city and district there was a body of *Mahāmātras*[4], among whom some were styled as in the Dhauli Rock edict as the *Nagala Viyōhālaka* and they acted as judges as well[5]. On the first pillar edict are mentioned the *Antamahāmātras*[6]. The most important official must have been the *Pradēśika* who has been interpreted to mean a local governor. The *Rajuka*[7] must have been a revenue official with judicial duties such as the granting of records while the infliction of punishment was left to his discretion[8]. Lastly came the *Yukta*[9], who could be ordered by the council of *Mahāmātras* to register the prescribed rules according to the letter.[10]

Attempts have been made to trace the relations between the officials mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* and those recorded in the edicts of Aśōka. It has been suggested that the Aśōkan *Antamahāmātras* corresponded to the *Aṅtapālas* of Kauṭalya.[11] Thomas identified the *Pradēśika* with the *Pradēṣṭr* of the *Arthaśāstra*[12], which also mentions only the *Cōra-rajjukas*[13], but not the *Rajjukas* as such, while Kauṭalya refers to the *Yuktas* or *Upayuktas* as misappropriating State funds.[14]

2. Scythian and Kuṣāṇa Administration

With the advent of the Śakas there was again a change in the designation of officers in the administration of the country under the Scythian hegemony. The king or his representative, the viceroy, living in the *adhiṣṭhāna*, probably meaning a capital, had round him

[1] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. III, Ch. X, p. 194.

[2] *Cf. Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch. X, p. 195.

[3] *Ibid.*, Bk. V, Ch. III, p. 277.

[4] Hultzsch, *The Inscriptions of Aśōka*, pp. 12-13. (1925) *Cf. Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. V, p. 56.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 94, 96.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

[7] *Cf.* Bühler, *Z. D. M. G.* XLVII, pp. 466 ff; Jolly, *Ibid.*, 71, 228; Fick, *The Social Organisation in North-East India in Buddha's Time*, p. 148. (1920).

[8] Hultzsch, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-25.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 30, 103.

[11] F. W. Thomas, *J. R. A. S.*, 1914, pp. 386-87; Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 215; Bhandarkar, *Aśōka*, pp. 56-59.

[12] *J. R. A. S.*, 1914, pp. 383-85; *Cf. Arthaśāstra*, Bk. IV, Ch. I. p. 227; also see Bhandarkar, *Aśōka*, pp. 54-55.

[13] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. I, Ch. VI, p. 58.

[14] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. V, p. 57.

high civil and military officials (*Mahāmagata*)[1]. Among the former were his privy councillors the *Mati Sacivas* and the *Amātyas*[2], from whom were appointed governors (*Raṭhika-Bhōjaka*)[3] superintendents of works (*Kāmaṁtika*) and secretaries (*Mahāsāmiyas*)[4] and treasurers (*Bhaṇḍākārikaya*)[5]. Among the treasury officers is mentioned another as the *Gaṁjavara*[6], while another epigraph speaks of the store-house-keeper (*Koṭhāgala*).[7] Among the military officers were the *Mahāsenāpati*,[8] the *Daṇḍanāyaka*, and *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*[9]. The affairs of the village were managed by the *Gramēyika Āyutta*[10], with the aid of the headman, *Grāmāṇi*,[11] or *Grāmika*,[12] and the *Grāmabhōjaka*.[13]

In the Dakṣiṇāpatha too inscriptions of this period throw some light on some aspects of contemporary administration. The king had the titles of *Rājan*,[14] *Mahārāja*,[15] and *Mahārājādhirāja*.[16] A royal prince was hailed as *Rājakumāra* and the crown prince was possibly called *Kumāra*.[17]

The king had round him some high officials, military and civil. There was the great general (*Mahāsenāpati*),[18] general (*Senāpati*), captains (*Gulmika*), guards (*Ārakhā likata*), *Vāthikas* (?), *Nēyikas* (?) spies (*Sañcārāṁtaka*) and soldiers (*Bhaḍamanuṣa*).[19] They were entrusted with judicial duties as well. In another place mention is also made of a *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*.[20]

The king had his civil officers too. Among them were the royal minister (*Rājāmāca*),[21] royal councillor (*Rahasādhikata*),[22] the

[1] E. I. X, Lüders, *List of Brāhmi Inscriptions*, no. 965, p. 95.
[2] *Ibid.*, no. 965, p. 99.
[3] *Ibid.*, no. 1345, p. 161.
[4] *Ibid.*, nos. 1186, p. 136, 1125, p. 124.
[5] *Ibid.*, no. 1141, p. 128.
[6] *Ibid.*, no. 82 p. 16.
[7] *Ibid.*, no. 937, p. 95.
[8] *Ibid.*, no. 1124, p. 123.
[9] *Ibid.*, no. 1328, p. 157.
[10] *Ibid.*, no. 1327, p. 157.
[11] *Ibid.*, no. 1333, p. 159.
[12] *Ibid.*, no. 48, p. 10.
[13] *Ibid.*, no. 1200, p. 139.
[14] *Ibid.*, no. 1001, p. 104.
[15] *Ibid.*, no. 1021, p. 107.
[16] *Ibid.*, no. 1200, p. 139.
[17] *Ibid.*, no. 1072, p. 114.
[18] *Ibid.*, no. 1200, p. 139.
[19] *Ibid.*, no. 1146, p. 129.
[20] *Ibid.*, no. 1328, p. 158.
[21] *Ibid.*, no. 1053, p. 111.
[22] *Ibid.*, no. 1200, p. 139.

treasurer, (*Hēraṇika*)[1] or *Hiraṇakāra*,[2] the royal physician (*Rājavēja*),[3] the provincial chiefs (*Rathika*) and local chiefs (*Bhōjaka*).[4] Among the lesser officials (*Vāpata*)[5] were the superintendent of works (*Kāmaṁtika*),[6] the chief over the Maḍambas (*Maḍaṁbika*), the local prefects (*Deśādhikata*) and the freeholders of villages (*Gāma-gāma-bhōjaka*).[7] Mention is also made of the town-judge (*Nagara-akaha-daṁsa*).[8]

The village was also controlled by some persons. Records speak of the committee of inhabitants (*Goṭhi*),[9] the great elders (*Mahathera*)[10] and the village authorities (*Gāmeyaka-āyutta*).[11]

Before the rise of the Guptas, the Scythians and the Kuṣāṇas carried on the administration of their respective territories. Their epigraphs reveal some technical designations of their offices. The king was known as the *Mahārāja*; members of the royal family and sometimes kings too styled themselves as *Rājan*,[12] while a prince was called *Kumāra*.[13] A supreme king was given the title of *Ādi-rāja*.[14] Great officials round the king were styled as *Mahāmagata*,[15] while the royal scribe went by the name of *Rājalipikāra*.[16]

The designations of some lesser officials are also known. A local committee, especially Buddhist, was called *Goṭhi*.[17] There were the surveyor (*Rajuka*),[18] writer of documents (*Lēkhaka*),[19] copyist (*Lupadakha*) and temple servant (*Dēvadaśikyī*).[20]

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[1] *E. I.*, X, Lüders, *op. cit.*, no. 1239, p. 146.
[2] *Ibid.*, no. 1333, p. 159.
[3] *Ibid.*, no. 1193, p. 137.
[4] *Ibid.*, no. 1345, p. 161.
[5] *Ibid.*, no. 1328, p. 157.
[6] *Ibid.*, no. 1186, p. 136.
[7] *Ibid.*, no. 1200, p. 139.
[8] *Ibid.*, no. 1351, p. 162.
[9] *Ibid.*, no. 273. p. 35.
[10] *Ibid.*, no. 1272, p. 151.
[11] *Ibid.*, no. 1327, p. 157.
[12] Fleet, *J. R. A. S.*, 1909, p. 1089 ff.; *I. A.*, XXI, p. 225.
[13] *I. A.*, XXI, p. 225.
[14] Cunningham, *The Stūpa of Barhut*, p. 143. (London, 1879).
[15] *I. A.*, XXV, p. 263.
[16] *E. I.*, II, no. 49, p. 102.
[17] Cunningham, *Bhilsa Topes*, no. 112, p. 251. (London, 1854).
[18] *E. I.*, II, no. 230, p. 381.
[19] *E. I.*, VIII, no. 8 p. 89.
[20] *E. I.*, X, no. 921, p. 93.

Some of their territorial units are also recorded. The smallest unit was the village (*grāma*).[1] Then came the town (*nagara*)[2] and then the district (*āhāra*).[3]

At least some of the technical terms and official designations noticeable in the *Arthaśāstra*, appear to have been actually adopted in practice long before the advent of the Guptas, by the Śātavāhanas in the second century A. D. as can be seen from their inscriptions in the caves at Nāsik and at Kārle.

The village was styled as the *gāma*, and this technical term is used when referring to places like Pisājipadakam and Sāmalipadasa.[4] A town was called *nagara*, while a royal field went by the name of a *rājakaṁkhēta*,[5] while a district was christened as *āhāra*.[6]

The epigraphs also clearly refer to the officials connected with the grants made. During the reign of Śrī Pulumāyi Vāsiṣṭhiputra, there was the *Mahāsenāpati* Medhuna, while the *Cāṭa-bhaṭa* are also mentioned.[7] It has been suggested that the office *Mahāsvāmika* is strongly reminiscent of the Gupta official *Mahāvihārasvāmin*.[8] There is no agreement regarding the interpretation of the term *Gaṇapa*, but it is clear that a guild was known as *Srēṇi*.[9] The officer in charge of the treasury went by the name of *Bhāṇḍāgārika*,[10] while the writer of a grant was given the designation of *Lēghaka*,[11] an official so familiar in the Gupta records.

3. Smṛti Literature and Gupta Administration

The polity of the Gupta emperors may now be studied in the light of *Smṛti* literature, the influences of which can be seen to some extent in the records of this period. Yājñavalkya records how "a (qualified) king, minister, subjects, fort, treasury, sceptre (*daṇḍaṃ*) and friends are mentioned as the seven limbs (component parts) of a kingdom."[12]

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[1] *E. I.*, X, no. 93, p. 99.
[2] Cunningham, *A. S. R.*, X, no. 8, p. 58.
[3] *Ibid.*, *Bhilsa Topes*, no. 106, p. 251.
[4] *E. I.*, VIII, no. 8, pp. 60, 65.
[5] *Ibid.*, no. 5, p. 73: *nagarasime*.
[6] *Ibid.*, no. 13, p. 82.
[7] *Ibid.*, no. 3, p. 65.
[8] *Ibid.*, no. 5, p.74.
[9] *Ibid.*, no 15, p. 88. Bühler maintained that *Gaṇaka* means protector or leader of a *Gaṇa*, which consists of three *gulmas* or battalions and may be taken as an equivalent of *Gaṇaka* meaning accountant or astrologer. The *Gaṇakas* are mentioned as important functionaries in the *Mahāvastu*, III, 42, 9; 44, 5; *E. I.*, VIII, no. 8, p. 89.
[10] *Ibid.*, no. 19, p. 91.
[11] *Ibid.*, no. 27, p. 96.
[12] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 353, p. 57.

Of all these limbs, the king was evidently the most important, and it may be observed that the *Smṛtis* transformed kingship almost into a godhead. Nārada declares that "intelligence is the glory of rulers; it becomes manifest in their speeches, whatever sentence they may pass, whether unjust or just, settles the law between the litigant parties. (Law) personified as a king, roams on earth with a thousand eyes. Mortals cannot live at all if they transgress his commandments. *Whatever a king does is right, that is a settled rule, because the protection of the world is entrusted to him.* A ruler though worthless must be (constantly) worshipped by his subjects.[1]

His powers therefore must have been supreme, but he nevertheless was advised to select his own officers. "He should make," remarks Yājñavalkya, "his ministers (of persons who are) wise, born in good families, (i.e. of those who are hereditary ministers), grave and pure. With them, or with the Brāhmaṇas, and, afterwards, with himself (he should) deliberate the affairs of the State."[2] The accounts department was to be conducted by efficient persons for Yājñavalkya clearly advises that the king should "appoint devoted, clever and honest men in posts suited to them and energetic men in the works of collection and disbursement."[3] The king, however, was requested to be honest in his duties of acquisition and munificence. "He should try to acquire," observes Yājñavalkya, "by fair means, objects not acquired; and keep carefully the acquired ones; multiply the protected ones, according to the laws of political economy; and distribute the surplus wealth among worthy persons."[4] Of all this acquisition a large portion was to be given away to Brāhmaṇas while the rest of course were to be protected. "Whatever is acquired, should be given to the *Vipras*; and protection (should be given) to the subjects; there is no higher religion than this for kings."[5] But even in acquiring wealth, unjust taxation was condemned as detrimental to the welfare of the State. "A king," according to Yājñavalkya, "who multiplies his treasury by unfair (taxation) from the kingdom, is, in no time shorn of prosperity and meets with destruction along with his own people."[6] Although the king was declared almost absolute, nevertheless some constitutional restraint by means of advice was imposed on his powers. As shown

[1] Nārada, XVIII, 20-23, p. 217. Italics mine.
[2] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 312, p. 52.
[3] *Ibid.*, 322, p. 53.
[4] *Ibid.*, 317, p. 52.
[5] *Ibid.*, 323, p. 53.
[6] *Ibid.*, 340, p. 55.

above efficient administration, legitimate taxation and works of public utility were always recommended to him. Along with these he was given further hints on administrative matters. The maxim that "secret counsel is the root of kingdom"[1] implies the maintenance of a king's council. It is further stated that the king "should duly apply the (sixfold) *guṇas* or words of policy, viz., treaty, hostilities, attack, maintaining a post against an enemy, forming or seeking an alliance and doubledealing."[2] It is no wonder, therefore, that Yājñavalkya admonishes that "proper administration of punishment secures the acquisition of the celestial region, fame and victory."[3] This sense of justice implied the importance of public welfare which was considered the root of the prosperity of a State. "When his people," declares Nārada, "are flourishing, the religious merit and the treasure of a king are sure to be in a flourishing state as well. When (the people) cease to prosper, (his merit and his treasure) are sure to abate as well. Therefore he must never lose sight of (that) cause of prosperity."[4]

This material prosperity of a State according to these law-givers depended upon the measure of protection which the king could give to all his people in his kingdom. Gautama, like Nārada, advocates more or less a similar policy although it betrays great preference to Brāhmaṇas. A king for instance is declared to be "the sovereign lord of all except the Brāhmaṇas."[5] Nevertheless a high sense of duty was always associated with kingship which was considered infallible. "Punishing the wrong-doers, and rewarding the virtuous have been laid down by the wise, hence kings and wise men are never condemnable."[6] Nārada, like Gautama, although a champion of Brāhmaṇa patronage recommended to the king protection of all castes and creeds. "The king," he lays down, "shall be careful to protect all orders and the constituent elements of his state with the four means indicated by science."[7] He further states that a king's duties are "the protection of his subjects, honouring the aged and wise, the trial of law suits, and to make (each caste) abide by the duties assigned to it."[8] In brief the duty of a ruler

[1] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 344, p. 56.
[2] *Ibid.*, 347, p. 56.
[3] *Ibid.*, 357, pp. 57-58.
[4] Nārada, XI, 43, p. 164 (Part I)
[5] *Gautamā Saṁhita*, Ch. XI. p. 681.
[6] *Ibid.*, XI, p. 683.
[7] Nārada, XVIII, II, 5, p. 215.
[8] *Ibid.*, 33, p. 218.

was considered to lie in showing "favour to the virtuous at all times and to oppress the wicked."[1]

Of all these duties great importance was attached to justice. Yājñavalkya maintains that, "having duly punished (men of his own) family, caste, division and class, and the subjects, the king should place them on the right path."[2] According to Gautama "in cases of litigation a king shall ascertain what is true and what is false from the witnesses..... Truth spoken before the president of a royal tribunal (*Prāḍvivāka*) forms the highest virtue."[3] Nārada imposed certain conditions for appointing men to this tribunal. "Let the king appoint," he observes, "as members of a court of justice, honourable men of tried integrity, who are able to bear, like good bulls, the burden of the administration of justice. The members of a royal court of justice must be acquainted with the sacred law and with rules of prudence, noble, veracious and impartial towards friend and foe."[4] But Bṛhaspati, however, is more precise, and according to him it should consist of ten members. According to him "The king, his chosen representative (the chief judge)," "the judges, the law (*Smṛti*), the accountant and scribe, gold, fire, water, and the king's own officer are ten members of legal procedure."[5]

The legists have set forth an elaborate account of exemplary judicial procedure. Bṛhaspati holds that this arrangement consisted of four parts of which the plaint was the first, the answer the second, the trial the third, and the judgement the fourth part.[6] In such a procedure "when litigants are quarrelling," he tells us, "in a court of justice, the judges, after examining the answer, shall adjudge the burden of proof to either of the two parties. The judges having heard both the plaint and the answer, and determined to which party the burden of proof shall be adjudged, that person shall substantiate the whole of his declaration by documents or other proofs. The plaintiff shall prove his declaration, and the defendant his special plea; victory in a previous trial shall be proved by a document recording that victory."[7] In addition Nārada gives us the full details about the defects and merits of a plaint to which,

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[1] Nārada 17, p. 216.
[2] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 361, p. 58.
[3] *Gautama Saṁhitā*, XIII, pp. 687-88.
[4] Nārada, III, 4-5, pp. 36-37.
[5] Bṛhaspati, I, 4, p. 277.
[6] *Ibid.*, III. 2, p. 289.
[7] *Ibid.*, V, 1-3, pp. 294-95.

when it was properly tendered by the plaintiff, the defendant had to deliver an appropriate answer. The nature of such a reply is given in great detail. Whatever document was presented in a court had to be signed by witnesses, who were examined in various ways. The defendant was tested by means of the ordeals of the sacred libation, poison, fire, water and the balance.[1]

In order to maintain justice punishments were advocated. Theft, refusal to give out one's name or caste, addiction to gambling, women, drink, enquiries without any apparent cause about another's property and house, secret movements, lavish expenditure, and sale of broken articles, were among other offences liable to arrest on suspicion.[2] If the accused could not establish his innocence, he was punished and in inflicting punishment the factors of time, place, age and power were taken into account.[3] Nārada, however, recommends fines, which should depend on the nature and gravity of the offence.[4] Various types of amercements were also recommended for specified offences.[5] But a Brāhmaṇa, though not entirely free from all penalties, was exempt from capital punishment.[6]

4. The Beginnings of Gupta Administration

This survey of pre-Gupta and officials mentioned in the Dharma Sāstras is helpful in deciding how far Gupta administration can be claimed to be original as has been maintained by some writers. That the Gupta emperors carried on to a great extent a good many of the official designations of their illustrious predecessors cannot be denied. Such an inference can be proved by comparing some typical examples of pre-Gupta and Gupta designations of officials. The *Arthaśāstra* reveals that several of the Gupta official titles must have been known to the Mauryas. Let us take, for example, the officials mentioned in Samudra Gupta's Allahabad pillar inscription, which is claimed to contain the titles of three 'new classes' of officials,[7] the *Kumārāmātya*, the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, and the *Saṁdhivigrahika*. All these officials were apparently known to Kauṭalya. The official title *Kumārāmātya* is clearly a combination of two words *Kumāra* and

[1] Nārada, I-VII, pp. 233-67.
[2] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 270-71, pp. 108-09.
[3] *Ibid.*, 278, p. 110.
[4] Nārada, Appendix, 25-27, pp. 226-27.
[5] *Ibid.*, 32-37, p. 228.
[6] *Ibid.*, 37-44, pp. 228-29.
[7] Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

Amātya both of which occur in the *Arthaśāstra*.[1] *Daṇḍanīti*[2] is mentioned while *Nāyakas*[3] are referred to several times by Kauṭalya and it is certainly possible that the Guptas introduced a type of gradation in this cadre of *Daṇḍanāyākas*, who cannot be claimed to be a Gupta innovation. The office of the *Saṁdhivigrahika* is evidently an adaptation of the Kauṭalīyan *Saṁdhivigraha*[4] or rather *Saṁdhivikrama*.[5] This can be further substantiated by other examples. The technical Gupta terms *adhikaraṇa*,[6] *sīmā*,[7] *dūta*,[8] *akṣapaṭala*,[9] *gulma*,[10] *śulka*,[11] *bhōga*,[12] *pustapa*,[13] *gōpa*,[14] *nagara*,[15] *viṣaya*,[16] *grāma*,[17] *grāmika*,[18] were all well-known to Kauṭalya. One more example may be cited to establish the derivative nature of Gupta administration. Kauṭalya, for instance, refers to officers like the *Yuktaka* and *Upayuktakas*.[19] The Guptas evidently did not forget this official, for in the Allahabad inscription of the emperor Samudra Gupta, mention is made of *Ayukta puruṣas*,[20] who were probably the proto-types of the Kauṭalyan *Yuktakas*.[21] The Guptas only seem to have adapted the official titles of Kauṭalya to suit their purposes and administrative convenience. Consequently they had officials styled as the *Sīmakāraka*, *Dūta*, *Dūtaka*, *Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta*, *Gaulmika*, *Bhōgika*, *Gōpa*, *Pustapāla*, *Grāmika*, besides others as in the *Arthaśāstra*.

[1] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. I, Ch, XVI, text, pp. 32-33:
kumārā hi vikramabhayānmāṃ pitā ruṇaddhīti jñātvā
tamevāṅke kuryāttasmādantapāladurgē vāsaśrēyāniti.
Ibid., Ch. XV, text, p. 26,:
maṅtrabhēdō hi dūtāmātyasvāmināmiṅgitākārābhyāṃ.

[2] *Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch. II, text, p. 6:
vārtādaṇḍanītiścēti Bārhaspatyāḥ.

[3] *Ibid.*, Ch. XII, text, p. 20: *pradēṣṭṛnāyaka.*

[4] *Ibid.*, Bk. VII, Ch. I, p. 261.

[5] *Ibid.*, Ch. VII, p. 278.

[6] *Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch. I, p. 1, text, p. 2: *ityadhyakṣapracārō dvitiyamadhikaraṇaṃ.*

[7] *Ibid.*, Bk. V, Ch. X, p. 238: *simākṣētraphalavēśmaryādāsu.*

[8] *Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch. V, p. 26: *dūtāmātya svāmināṃ.*

[9] *Ibid.*, Ch. I, p. 2: *ākṣapaṭalē gāṇanikyādhikāraḥ.*

[10] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. XV, p. 99: *śulkavartanyātivāhaka gulma taradēya,...*

[11] *Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch. IV, p. 171.

[12] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. VII, p. 62: *pragraha pradēśabhōga parihāra.*

[13] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. VII, p. 64: *āgatānāṃ samudrapustabhāṇḍanivikānāṃ*

[14] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 46: *gōpasthānika.*

[15] *Ibid.*, Bk. I, Ch. XII, p. 19: *sa nagarābhyāśē.*

[16] *Ibid.*, Bk. VII, Ch. IX, p. 298: *prabhūtaviṣayō vā phalgupaṇyaḥ*

[17] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. VII, p. 62: *dēśagrāmajātikula.*

[18] *Ibid.*, Bk. III, Ch. IV, p. 171: *gramārthēna grāmikaṃ.*

[19] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. V, p. 57.

[20] Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, (1), p. 8.

[21] This was first pointed out by Dr. F. W. Thomas, in *J. R. A. S.*, 1909, pp. 466-67. I agree with this view. On this point see Bhandarkar, *Aśōka*, pp. 53-54, wherein he points out the relation between the *Yuktakas* and the *Ayuktakas*.

Likewise among the Śātavāhanas, there were high and low officers. Among the former the *Mahāsēnāpati*, *Sēnāpati*, *Bhaṇḍakārika*, *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, *Lēkhaka*, and among the latter the *Gulmika Gaṇapaka*, *Nēyika*, *Bhōjaka*, *Mahattara* and the *Cāṭa-bhaṭa*. These designations can all, in some recognisable form or other, be traced in Gupta records, as will be seen presently.

The Scythian and Kuṣāṇa officials like the *Rājuka*, *Lēkhaka*, *Matisaciva*, *Amātya*, *Mahāsēnāpati*, *Daṇḍanāyaka* in the higher cadres while minor government servants like the *Grāmika*, can similarly be noticed in the inscriptions of the Gupta period.

II. The Pivot of the Administration—The King.

1. The King and his Titles

The king, being the sovereign head of the State and the princes being of royal blood, were graced with certain titles of supremacy, power, and grandiloquence. The Kauṭalīyan and the Scythian title of *Mahārāja*, given to the king, while royal princes christened by the designations of *Rājan* and *Kumāra*, can fortunately be found in the epigraphs of the Gupta age.

It may, however, be noticed here that in Gupta times some more high sounding and bombastic titles were given to the sovereign as can be noticed from their documents. The emperor in the Gupta inscriptions was called by various titles. Among them are *Mahārājādhirāja* (supreme king of kings) and *Paramabhaṭṭāraka* (one who is supremely entitled to reverence or homage),[1] which signified the assumption of supreme power. Princes like Ghaṭōtkaca, or Śrī Gupta, the founder of the imperial Guptas, called themselves simply *Mahārājas*.[2] An emperor like Kumāra Gupta I sometimes called himself *Mahārāja* only,[3] while a feudatory like Mātṛviṣṇu also adopted the same title.[4] The Parivrājaka rulers of Ucchakalpa, the kings of Valabhi, and the Vākāṭakas invariably styled themselves *Mahārājas*.[5] More grandiose titles were also adopted. Dharasena IV of Valabhi in addition to the two titles of *Mahārājādhirāja* and *Paramabhaṭṭāraka*, assumed by the Gupta emperors, is called *Paramēśvara* (supreme lord) and

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), pp. 10, 17; (3), p. 25.
[2] *Ibid.*, (13), p. 54.
[3] *Ibid.*, (11), p. 47.
[4] *Ibid.*, (19), p. 89.
[5] *Ibid.*, (21), p. 97; (22), p. 104; (24), pp. 111-12; (38), p. 168; (56), p. 248.

Cakravartin (emperor).[1] The Mandasor stone inscription of Yaśōdharman and Viṣṇuvardhana ascribed to A. D. 533-34, reveals how the latter was called by the title of *Paramēśvara*.[2] These three titles mentioned above were evidently symbols of paramount sovereignty. Śilādityadeva VII of Valabhi is given these titles.[3] Sometimes even independent rulers like Śaśāṅkadeva called themselves *Mahāsāmanta*.[4] This title was used together with the epithet *Mahārāja* in the case of the illustrious Varuṇasena, in about the seventh century.[5]

It may here be noticed that Kālidāsa too refers to certain titles of royalty. In his works the king is called *Rājan*,[6] *Sāmrāṭ*,[7] *Narapati*, *Dēva*,[8] *Cakravartin*,[9] *Apratiratha*,[10] *Bhaṭṭāraka*,[11] and *Asahya Vikrama*.[12] A ruler, according to him, was considered a universal monarch, when he became the lord of twelve kings.[13] Almost all of these titles adorned the names of Gupta monarchs.

2. The Queen and her Titles

The queen of the emperor was also crowned with certain titles of honour. The wife of Candra Gupta II was styled as *Mahādēvī* Dhruvadēvī.[14] This title was imitated by the queens of the Parivrājaka *Mahārājas* of Ucchakalpa.[15] Sometimes the reigning queen was granted one or two more titles. The glorious Kōṇadēvī, wife of the king Ādityasenadeva, is called *Paramabhaṭṭārikarājñī mahādēvī*.[16] This title of *Paramabhaṭṭārikā* (lit. she who is supremely entitled to respect or veneration), the feminine of the imperial title, was one of the customary titles of empresses, especially of the Later Guptas of Magadha.[17] Among the Maukhāris lesser titles of

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 183.
[2] *Ibid.*, (35), p. 156.
[3] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 189.
[4] *Ibid.*, (78), p. 284.
[5] *Ibid.*, (80), p. 289.
[6] *Śāk.*, Act V, p. 65.
[7] *Raghu.*, II, 5, p. 31.
[8] *Śāk.*, Act V, pp. 66, 67.
[9] *Ibid.*,
[10] *Ibid.*, Act VII, p. 118.
[11] *Cf. Māl.*, Act III, p. 73; Act IV, p. 118.
[12] *Raghu.*, IV, 52, p. 85.
[13] *Ibid.*, IX, 15, p. 186: *upagat-ōpi ca maṇḍalanābhi tāṃ anuditānya-sitātapavāraṇaḥ* (Parab. ed. 1882).
[14] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (10), p. 44.
[15] *Ibid.*, (26), p. 119; (28) p. 128.
[16] *Ibid.*, (45), p. 212.
[17] *Ibid*, (46), p. 217.

this nature were used. The mother of the *Mahārāja* Ādityavarman was the *Bhaṭṭārakadēvī* Jayasvāminī.[1] From these titles it should not be inferred that queens in Gupta times could rule in their own right as queens.

During the age of the Guptas usually the emperor reigned independently in his own right, owing to a school of political thinkers, who thought that the natural limitations of women debarred them from becoming good administrators.[2] But there were certain exceptions to this usage. Candra Gupta I, the first emperor of the Gupta dynasty ruled his kingdom jointly with his Licchavi queen Kumāradēvī, as their names and effigies appear on their coins,[3] probably as the result of a political compromise. Only in the Aśvamedha type of coins issued by Samudra Gupta is found the image of his chief queen (Dattadēvī), while in almost all the coins of rulers after Candra Gupta I, instead of the effigy of the queen, appears the figure of the goddess Lakṣmī. In the fourth century, however, the Vākāṭaka queen Prabhāvatī Gupta, ruled for nearly twenty years as regent during the minority of her sons Divākarasena and Pravarasena II.[4]

Except in exceptional cases, the queen in the Gupta age does not appear to have been entrusted with responsible duties of administration. One of these exceptional circumstances seems to have been during the minority of the heir-apparent, although the Queen-Mother was a widow, when, as in the case of Prabhāvatī Guptā, the queen undertook all the responsibility of the administration as though she were the king herself. In support of this presumption it may be seen that Bāṇa has fortunately left an account of the prerogatives of the Chief Queen, probably of his day, although the allusion is, as usual in his romance *Kādaṁbarī*, to fictitious persons. "Charmed by her (Madirā, the wife of Citraratha, a Gandharva ruler) countless virtues, he (Citraratha) showed his favour by giving her the title of Chief-Queen (*Mahā-dēvī*) bearing with it cowrie, sceptre and umbrella, marked by a golden throne, and placing all the zenana below her—a woman's rarest glory!"[5] As Bāṇa, in the course of enumerating the rights of the Chief-Queen, evidently does not mention any of the privileges allotted to her in the machinery of State administration, it may be presumed that usually the Chief Queen did not participate in matters of administration during the regime of the Guptas.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (47), p. 221
[2] *Cf. Majjhima Nikāya*, III, pp. 65-66. (P. T. S.); *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. IV, Ch. III, pp. 175-76.
[3] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-11.
[4] *E. I.*, XV, no. 4, pp. 42-44.
[5] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 140.

3. Powers of the king.

The powers of the king in the Gupta age were absolute. As all the land was virtually State property, the king could make gifts of it to any one whom he liked. Such an inference is borne out by epigraphic evidence.[1] A monarch could issue orders to build temples, install images therein, construct dams,[2] command officers and cultivators regarding grants,[3] appoint and promote officers although such offices were hereditary.[4] An officer like *Viṣayapati* Śarvanāga so appointed, for instance by Skanda Gupta, is said to have "been accepted (with favour) by his feet."[5] The king could give shelter to foreigners who came to settle down in his country,[6] impose, recover and remit taxes,[7] lead armies,[8] and exercise power of life and death over his subjects, whom he could either expel from his State or on whom he could inflict even corporal punishment,[9] as he was evidently the final authority in judicial affairs. That is possibly the reason why Kālidāsa has laid down that the king's decision in matters of justice was considered final.[10] But he could be approached only at his leisure.[11] He was interviewed by his officers like the Chamberlain with auspicious exclamations like "May Your Majesty be victorious!"[12]

Sometimes his powers were also defined. A minister investigated into the incomes of people and if there was a case for consideration he reported it to the king. It was probably the tradition that, if a leading sea-merchant perished at sea, the ownership of his store of wealth lapsed to the king, who, however, appears to have instituted enquiries regarding possible claimants, before finally appropriating it for himself.[13] Probably there was the tradition, rather than the actual practice, of recovering from hermits and such persons dwelling in the forests, one-sixths of the produce of wild grains.[14] He was expected to collect taxes from his people for their welfare alone,[15] and had the right of granting

[1] *Cf.* Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12), p. 52; also see *infra*, Ch. V, Sect. I.
[2] *Ibid.*, (10), p. 45; (13), p. 56; (14), p 64.
[3] *Ibid.*, (12), p. 52; (38). p. 169; (41), p. 199.
[4] *Ibid.*, (6), p. 35; (14), p. 63.
[5] *Ibid.*, (16), p. 71.
[6] *Ibid.*, (18), pp. 84, 85.
[7] *Ibid.*, (29), p. 132; (31), p. 138.
[8] *Ibid.*, (33), p. 148; (1), pp. 12-16.
[9] *Cf.* Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 344; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 215.
[10] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 80.
[11] *Ibid.*, Act VI, p. 81. *Cf.* Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 48-49, 56.
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 97.
[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.
[14] *Ibid.*, Act II, p. 27.
[15] *Raghu.*, I, 18, p. 8: *prajānām-eva bhūtyārtham sa tābhyo balim-agrahit.*

them villages, the owners of which, during a royal progress, came forward to bless their benefactor, presented him with offerings (*arghya*) and represented their grievances to him;[1] while cowherds visited him with gifts of newly made ghee[2]. He always appears to have moved about under the aegis of an umbrella[3] and invariably rested in royal tents during his periodical visitations in his dominions. The king apparently considered as sources of revenue "jewels from mines, corn from corn-fields and elephants from forests."[4]

4. Ideals of Good Government.

The inscriptions of the Gupta rulers reveal how certain ideals were expected of good administrators, although it is difficult to state whether or not they were actually observed in practice. As the Allahabad stone pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta suggests, a king like him protected the people, 'built the pale of religion,' supported the miserable, the poor, the helpless and the afflicted, restored the wealth of the various kings whom he conquered, patronised the arts and celebrated the rites of the observances of mankind.[5] The Mathurā stone inscription of Candra Gupta II tells us that he was the giver of (many) millions of lawfully acquired cows and gold, and was the restorer of the *Aśvamēdha* sacrifice.[6] In the Junāgadh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 457-58, it is related that in this king's reign, "no man among his subjects falls away from religion, (and) there is no one who is distressed, (or) in poverty, (or) in misery, (or) avaricious, or who, worthy of punishment, is over-much put to torture."[7] The Alīṇā copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, relates how Dharasena IV, 'intensified the happiness of the earth by the lenient levying of taxes',[8] while Dhruvasena III levied 'according to proper custom taxes from his enemies' lands'.[9] Another of the king's duties was to look to the regulation of all castes and stages of religious life as is claimed to have been the case with Harṣa's father, Prabhākaravardhana.[10] In the inscriptions of the

[1] *Raghu.*, I, 44, p. 15: *grāmīṣv-ātma visṛṣṭīṣu yūpacihnīṣu yajvanām.* See also, *Ibid.*, V, 41, p. 138.
[2] *Ibid.*, 45, p. 16.
[3] *Ibid.*, IV, 85, p. 93.
[4] *Ibid.*, XVII, 66, p. 360.
[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), pp. 12, 14, 15.
[6] *Ibid.*, (4), p. 28; (10), p. 44; (12), p. 51; (61), p. 259.
[7] *Ibid.*, (14), p. 62.
[8] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 183.
[9] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 184.
[10] *Ibid.*, (52), p. 232.

Parivrājaka *Mahārājas* there appears a more or less stereo-typed ideal. In the Khōh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin dated A. D. 475-76, it is recorded how he was "the giver of thousands of cows, and elephants, and horses, and gold, and many lands; who was earnest in paying respect to (his) spiritual preceptor, and (his) father and mother; was extremely devoted to the gods and Brahmins."[1] In the Chammak plate of Pravarasena II, the Vākāṭaka king, certain Brāhmaṇas were advised to observe the seven cardinal principles of political good conduct towards the State. They were ensured the enjoyment of the grant provided they committed no treason against the kingdom consisting of the seven constituent parts,[2] slew no Brāhmaṇas, became no thieves, adulterers and prisoners of kings, did not wage war, and committed no wrong to other villages.[3]

5. The Problem of administration

The problem of administration was not considered a simple matter in this age of great conquests and large empires. Kālidāsa, for instance, thought that kingship is like the sun-shade handle held with one's own hand[4]. He tells us that the duty of the ruler was to protect all grades and orders[5]. This responsibility of kingship has also been ably expressed by Daṇḍin in a rather picturesque manner. "The tree of government," he says, "—whose five-fold root is wise-planning, whose double stem is prestige, whose four branches are energy, whose seventy-two leaves are the counsellors, whose six twigs are the six expedients, whose flower is power, and the fruit, success—should benefit its governor. But so wide are its ramifications that one needs a companion for full explanation"[6]. This complexity of administration was not unknown to Kālidāsa for he refers to the *Tīrthas*,[7] a technical term familiar to Kauṭalya who enumerates them in the following way: *Mantri-purōhita-senāpati-rāja-dauvārik-āntarvaśika-praśāstṛ-samāhartṛ-sannidhātṛ-pradēṣṭṛ-nāyaka-pauravyāvahārika-kārmāntika-mantriparişad-adhyakṣa-daṇḍa-durg-āntapāl-āṭavikēṣu.*[8] But even in those days the finance department was considered the most essential and the importance

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (21), p. 97; see also (22), p. 104; (23), p. 109; (25), p. 115.

[2] The *Saptāṅga* consists of the king, his ministers, allies, territory, fortress, army, treasury.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (55), p. 242.

[4] *Śāk.* Act V, 6, p. 66: *rājyaṃ svahastadhṛta daṇḍam-iv-āta patraṃ.*

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 68: *varṇāśramāṇāṃ rakṣitā.*

[6] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 223.

[7] *Raghu.*, XVII, 68, p. 360. Mallināth comments thus on the word *ātirthān-mantr-ādy-aṣṭādaś-ātmaka tīrthaparyantaṃ Ibid.*, p. 361.

[8] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk I, ch. IV, text, p. 20; also see *Mahābhārata*, I, 142 p. 421.

of finance is stressed by Daṇḍin when he observes that "the best measures of regulation are dependent on money and there is nothing more fatal than weakness in that department."[1]

III. Details of Administration

The king, without doubt, was the central and chief authority assisted, as will be seen presently, by a body of subordinate officials. He must have received ambassadors, and conducted business in a hall of audience (*upasthānabhūmi*) as can be observed from the Kahaum stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta dated A. D. 460-1.[2] There must have existed various grades of special officials whose duties can sometimes be made out from their designations. For example the Deo Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II refers to a *Mahāpratīhāra*[3] indicating that there were similar officials of a lower grade. Not only were there gradations among officers, distinguishing one from the other, but there were several types of officials the nature of whose duties is sometimes ambiguous and sometimes clear. We may now proceed to examine in greater detail the cadres and the duties of most of these officials.

1. Gupta Officials: A Survey

During Samudra Gupta's reign, "whose officers were always employed in restoring the wealth of the various kings who had been conquered by the strength of his arms,"[4] it is possible to gather some information about these officials. Mention is made during this monarch's reign, in his Allahabad *praśasti* of Dhruvabhūti, who is called *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, and Hariṣeṇa Tilabhaṭṭāraka, entitled 'the *Saṅdhivigrahika*, the Minister for Peace and War, and a *Kumārāmātya*, evidently a counsellor of the heir-apparent prince[5]. That this prince was probably selected by the king from among his sons may be inferred from the words of Candra Gupta I, for referring to Samudra Gupta his Allahabad *praśasti* states: "Verily (he is) worthy to govern the whole world."[6] The *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, clearly indicating a gradation among such officers, who must have been his subordinates, does not suggest that there was any real separation between civil and military duties. The *Daṇḍanāyaka*, who is also called in different inscriptions

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p. 224, text, p. 145.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (15), p. 67.
[3] *Ibid.*, (46), p. 218.
[4] *Ibid.*, (1), p. 14.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

as *Dāṇḍika or Dāṇḍapāśika*,[1] evidently performed military and civil duties as similar officials did much later in Vijayanagara times. Sometimes, inscriptions equate *Daṇḍābhinātha* with *Camūpa*, obviously making him a military commander, but Dr Beni Prasad remarks that by them "on the whole judicial officers are meant."[2] It would be interesting to know the grounds for such an assertion. The *Saṁdhivigrahika* does not, from its obvious meaning, appear to evoke such complications, but it is known that such an officer called Virasena, appointed to this office, by hereditary descent, for arranging problems connected with peace and war (*anvaya-prāpta-sacivyō vyāpṛta saṁdhivigrahaḥ*), accompanied a king in person.[3] That such an office also had gradations is known from the title of Sūryadatta, the great grandson of the *Amātya* Vakra, who is called *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika* during the times of *Mahārāja* Hastin.[4] This office of *Amātya* was known to Śukra, who reckoned him to be one among the ten departmental heads of a State.[5] One of such *Amātyas* was to assist the prince, probably a Viceroy or Crown-Prince as in Samudra Gupta's case. But there is no doubt that there was, even in far later times, an official whom Śukra calls *Pradhāna*,[6] for, during the reign of Mahābhava Gupta I who is called Yayāti, there was a chief minister named Sādhāraṇa (*sādhāraṇa nāmni maṁtri tilaka*).[7]

Other officers are also mentioned in the records of this period. The Bihar stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta's reign speaks of an *Uparika* who must have been a revenue officer, an *Agrahārika*, an official in charge of the *agrahāra* which was often granted as a gift by kings, a *Śaulkika*, the superintendent of *śulka*, tolls or customs, and a *Gaulmika*, the superintendent of *gulma* or woods.[8] According to Śukra, however, the *Gaulmika* was the chief of thirty foot-soldiers.[9] Over all these superintendents there must have been the chief superintendents called *Sarvādhyakṣas*,[10] but it cannot be made out whether they were central or provincial officials.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46), p. 218; (38), p. 170.

[2] Beni Prasad, *The State in Ancient India*, p. 295.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (6), p. 35: *rājñaiv=ēha sah-āgataḥ.*

[4] *Ibid.*, (22), p. 105.

[5] *Śukranīti*, Ch. II, ll. 141-43, p. 68, (Sarkar).

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 70, III. 168-73.

[7] Fleet, *Records of the Śimavaṁśī Kings of Kaṭak, E. I.*, III. p. 349.

[8] *Ibid., C. I. I.*, III, (12), p. 52.

[9] *Śukranīti*, Ch. II, p. 78, *ll.* 281-5.

[10] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (55), p. 241: "Wherefore our obedient and high-born officers, employed in the office of General Superintendents.": *yat-ōsmāt saṁtakāḥ sarvādhyakṣ-ādhiyō-ga-niyuktā.* Fleet offered no explanation. Pires simply follows Dr. Bhagvanlal Indraji, *Cf. The Maukhāris*, p. 170. (1934).

Whenever the king went about in his kingdom, it is possible that many of his officials accompanied him, because in contemporary inscriptions the officers already referred to are mentioned, while officials of the *grāma* are also addressed. The Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II mentions the *Taḷārāṭakas*, whom Dr Bhagavanlal Indraji supposed to be the forerunners of the modern *Talātis*,[1] *Dūtas* or messengers, *Sīmakāras* or boundary markers, *Rājaputras* (whom Fleet takes to be, strangely enough, the king's messengers), *Rājāmātyas*, *Mahādaṇḍanāyakas*, *Mahāpratīhāras*, *Kumārāmātyas*, *Rājasthānīyas*, *Uparikas* (whose designations have already been explained) *Caurōddharaṇikas*, entrusted with the extermination of thieves, *Dāṇḍikas* and *Dāṇḍapāśikas*, who may be called chastisers. These officers were possibly recorded in the grades which they occupied in the Gupta administration, for there is evidence, as will be shown presently, to support such a conclusion.

Even later, in the ninth century under Dharmapāladeva, for instance, most of these officials survived. The Khalimpur plate of this king mentions officials like the *Rājan*, *Rājanaka*, *Rājaputra*, *Rājāmātya*, *Sēnāpati*, *Viṣayapati*, *Bhōgapati*, *Ṣaṣṭādhikṛta* (apparently denoting superintendents or controllers of the *ṣaṣṭāṁśa* or the *ṣaḍbhāga* being one-sixths of the produce due to the king), *Daṇḍapāśika*, *Daṇḍaśakti*, *Caurōddharaṇika*, *Daussādhasādhanika*, *Duta*, *Khola*, *Gamāgamika*, *Abhitvaramāṇa*, besides inspectors of elephants, horses, cows, buffaloes, boats, goats, sheep, and *Tārika* (probably the overseers of ferries, tolls and forests), *Śaulkika*, *Gaulmika*, *Tadāyuktaka*, *Viniyuktaka*, all dependent on the king's feet.[2] The officer *Viniyuktaka*, who is placed below the *Āyuktapuruṣa* in Gupta inscriptions, was no doubt a different type of subordinate whose duties cannot be definitely stated, while the *Divira* and *Lēkhaka*[3],—who also figure in the *Śukranīti*,[4] in which, however, they are stated to be officers entrusted with the duty of looking to the number of soldiers and their pay,—evidently signify the several clerical grades.[5]

2. The Cadres of Gupta Officials

Now that several officials of the Gupta administration have been noticed, it may be ascertained whether or not there was any system in the gradation of such officers. No extant record precisely reveals

[1] Bhagwanlal Indraji, *A. S. I. R.*, XVI, pp. 68, 73. *Cf.* Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (46), p. 217. f.n. would suggest that *Taḷāvāṭaka* is possibly the north Indian counter-part of the Karnāṭaka *taḷa=vārika*, the village watchman, on the analogy of other terms: viz., *śulka=suṅka*, *viṭṭi=biṭṭi*, etc.

[2] *E. I.*, IV, no. 34, p. 253.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (27), p. 123.

[4] *Śukranīti*, Ch. II, *ll.* 293-4, p. 79.

[5] *Cf. I. A.*, VI, p. 10, for some comments on these terms.

this information and consequently it may be obtained only by a comparative study of contemporary and some post-Gupta inscriptions. In these epigraphs, as will be seen presently, several officers are many a time mentioned one after another. This order is repeated in some Gupta inscriptions themselves, and moreover, as several of these officials are recorded in more or less the same order, in the epigraphs of the Pālas of Bengal, the political successors of the Later Guptas of Magadha, it is possible that these officials were addressed by the king in their original order of importance in the Gupta or Pāla administrative systems.

Sometimes, however, as in the Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II, the immediate officers, though petty, were first addressed, but this practice was, after all, an exception and not the general rule.

Gupta and Feudatory Rulers	Non-Gupta Rulers	Age of Non-Gupta-Records
Samudra Gupta: *Saṁdhivigrahika-kumārāmātya-mahādaṇḍanāyaka.*[1]	**Śaṅkaragaṇa**: *Rāja-sāmanta-bhōgika-viṣayapati-rāṣṭra-grāma-mahattar-ādhikārik-ādīn.*[1]	A. D. 595.
Skanda Gupta: *Āgrahārika Saulkika-gaulmika.*[2]	**Buddharāja**: *Rāja-sāmanta-bhōgika-viṣayapati-rāṣṭra-grāma-mahattar-ādhikārik-ādīn.*[2]	A. D. 609.
Jivita Gupta II: *Talavāṭaka-dūta-sīmakarmakara-rājaputra-rājāmātya-mahādaṇḍanāyaka-mahāpratīhāra.....pramāṭa-kumārāmātya-rājasthānīy-ōparika-caurōddharaṇika-dāṇḍika dāṇḍapāśika.*[3]	**Harṣavardhana**: *Mahāsāmanta-mahārāja-daussādhasādhanika-pramātāra-rājasthānīya-kumārāmāty-ōparika-viṣayapati-bhaṭa-cāṭa-sēvak-ādīn.*[3]	A. D. 606-48.
Dhruvasena I: *Āyuktaka-viniyuktaka-drāṅgika-mahattara-cāṭa-bhaṭa-dhruvādhikaraṇika-dāṇḍapāśik-ādīn.*[4]	**Bhāskaravarman**: *Ājñaśaptaprāpayitā-sīmapradātā-nyāyakaraṇika-vyavahārikāyastha-śāsayitā-lēkhayitā-bhāṇḍāgārādhikṛta-mahasāmanta-utkhēṭayitā-sēkyakāra.*[4]	,, ,,
Dharasena II: *Sarvān=ēva-Āyuktaka-viniyuktaka-drāṅ-*	**Dantivarman**-*Rāṣṭrapati-viṣayapati-grāmakūṭa-*	A. D. 867.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), p. 10.
[2] *Ibid.*, (12), p. 216.
[3] *Ibid.*, (46), p. 216.
[1] *E. I.*, IX, no. 45, (text), p. 297.
[2] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 7, p. 34.
[3] *Ibid.*, VII, no. 22, p. 158.
[4] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 13, p. 75.

[4] *E. I.*, XI, no. 9, p. 107; also see pp. 110, 113, 115. Sometimes when enumerating a list of contemporary officials, as in no. IV, pertaining to the reign of Dhruvasena I, the *Viniyuktaka* is left out. See p. 115.

Gupta and Feudatory Rulers	Non-Gupta Rulers	Age of Non-Gupta-Records
gika-mahattara-cāṭa-bhaṭa-dhruvādhikaraṇika-daṇḍa-pāśika-rajasthānīya-kumārāmāty-ādīn.[1]	*niyuktak-ādhikārika-vāsapaka-mahattar-ādīn.*[1]	
Dēvapāladeva: *Rājaraṇaka-rājāputraka-rājāmātya-mahākārttākṛtika-mahādaṇḍanāyaka-mahāpratīhāra-mahāsāmanta-mahādauḥsādhasādhanika-mahākumārāmātya-pramāṭṛ-śarabhaṅga-rājasthānīy-ōparika-viṣayapati-daśāparādhikacaurōddharaṇika-dāṇḍikadāṇḍapāśika-śaulkika-gaulmika-kṣētrapāla-kōṭapāla-khaṇḍarakṣa-tadāyuktakaviniyuktaka-hasty-aśv-ōṣṭranau-bala-vyāpṛtaka-kiśōravaḍavā-gō-mahiṣy-ādhikṛtadūta-praiṣaṇika-gamāgamika-abhitavaramāṇaka-tarika-tarapatika-cāṭa-bhaṭa.*[2]		A. D. 985-1013
Saṅgrāma Gupta: *Aśēṣarājñī-rājaputra-pātra-mahāsandhivigrahika-mahāvyūhapati-mahādhikārika-mahāmudrādhikārika-mahāmahattara-mahāpīlupati-mahasādhanika-mahākṣapaṭalika-mahāpratīhāra-mahādhar-mādhikaraṇika-mahākaraṇādhyakṣa-vārttinaibandhika-mahākaṭuka-mahautthitāsanika-mahādaṇḍanāyaka-mahādānika-mahāpāñcakulika-mahāsāmanta-rāṇaka-mahāśrēṣṭhidānika-dhūlidānika-ghaṭṭapala-khaṇḍapālanarapati-gulmapati-nau-balavyāpṛta-gō-mahīṣ (y)-āb (d)i-vaḍav-ādhyakṣ-ādīn.*[3]		not later than 12th century.

[1] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, I., (N. S). p. 23; Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 166.

[1] *E. I.*, VI, no. 28, p. 292.

[2] *E. I.*, XVII, no, 17, p. 325.

[3] *J. B., O. R. S.*, V, Pt. IV, p. 593, text, pp. 588-89.

3. Remarks

These lists of officials may now be classified for detailed examination. As the inscriptions of Samudra Gupta, Skanda Gupta and Jivita Gupta II, when compared with the epigraphs of non-Gupta rulers as indicated above, reveal, most probably these officials must have been named in the order of importance in the official cadres. Among these officers those of the greatest importance were the *Rājapuruṣa* (either the prince or man in the king's service), *Rājarājanyaka* (the petty prince), *Rājaputra* (prince), *Rājāmātya* (counsellor of the king), *Mahāsaiudhivigrahika* (the Great Minister for, War and Peace), *Mahākṣapaṭalika* (the Great Keeper of records), *Mahāsāmanta* (the Great Feudatory), *Mahāsenāpati*, (the Great Commander), *Mahāpratīhāra* (the Great Chamberlain or door-keeper) *Mahādaṇsādhasādhanika* (Great Door-keeper or superintendent of villages),[1] *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* (the Great Judge, police officer, magistrate or general), *Mahākumārāmātya* (the Great Counsellor to the princes or heir-apparent).

The king's immediate subordinates were the princes royal and their advisers. Mention is first made of the *Rājapuruṣa* (prince), *Rājarājānyaka* (the petty prince), *Rājaputra* (the prince) and the *Rājāmātya* (the counsellor of kings).

Next to these came those officials prefixed with the honorific *mahā* "great". The title of *Mahārāja* was used, for instance, by the father and grand-father of Samudra Gupta,[2] and the Śaka kings, who must have been certainly paramount rulers.[3] Later it was applied to feudatories. The Udayagiri cave inscription of Candra Gupta II, pertaining to the year 82 (A. D. 401-2) refers to Sanakānika *Mahārāja* and *Māhārāja* Viṣṇudāsa.[4]

The prefix *mahā* appears to have been applied to quite a number of officers. The Allahabad stone pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta refers to the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* Hariṣeṇa,[5] the Bijayagadh stone inscription of the Yaudhēyas mentions officers like the *Mahārāja* and *Mahāsēnāpati*,[6] while the Nirmand copper plate grant of *Mahāsāmanta*

[1] *Cf.* Böhtlingk und Roth, *Sanskrit-Wörter buch*, III, p. 787; Apte, *The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary* p. 582, (1890).

[2] Fleet *op. cit.*, (1), p. 15.

[3] *A. S. I. R.*, III, pp. 31-32.

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (3), p. 25.

[5] *Ibid.*, (1), p. 16.

[6] *Ibid.*, (58), p. 252.

and *Mahārāja* Samudrasena calls the illustrious Varuṇasena *Mahāsāmanta* and *Mahārāja*.[1] It is possible that there was a *Mahākumārāmātya* in the administration of the Guptas, though none of their inscriptions refers to such an official. The Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 482-83, refers to the *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika*.[2] In the Alīṇā copper plate grant of Śīlāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, reference is made to the *Mahāsarvadaṇḍanāyaka Mahāpratīhāra* and the *Mahākṣapaṭalika*.[3] A *Dutaka* is called by the additional official designation of *Mahābalādhikṛta* in the Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 516-17. In the Kāsiā stone inscription, assigned to the end of the fifth century, Haribala is styled as the *Mahāvihārasvāmin*.[4]

The title of *Mahākārtākṛtika* was applied to Dhruvasena I of Valabhi, as can be seen from his Vāla grant of Gupta *Saṁvat* 216, A. D. 536 37.[5]

It may therefore be concluded that the title *mahā* or "great" was evidently conferred on feudatories like a *Mahārāja* or a *Mahāsāmanta* and heads of the departments. The head of the department of justice was called *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, that of the army, *Mahāsenāpati* or *Mahābalādhikṛta*; that of peace and war, *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika*; that of state records, *Mahākṣapaṭalika*; that of the counsellors of princes, *Mahākumārāmātya*; that of the door-keepers or chamberlains, *Mahāpratīhāra*; and possibly that of the keepers of the *vihāras* of Buddhist monasteries, *Mahāvihārasvāmin*.

IV. Central Administration.

1. The King's Council.

These feudatories, princes and high officials probably comprised the "King's Council." Though who precisely constituted such an assembly cannot be made out, owing to the lacunæ in the epigraphs themselves, one of the duties of such a Council seems to have been the authority to exercise the approval or disapproval of a successor to the throne. This supposition is suggested by the manner in which Samudra-Gupta was selected as his heir by Candra Gupta I. The Allahabad

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (80), p. 289.
[2] *Ibid.*, (22), p. 105.
[3] *Ibid.*, (39), pp. 178, 190.
[4] *Ibid.*, (30), p. 134, also see (28), p. 129; (23) p. 109.
[5] *I. A.*, IV, p. 105, l. 14. f.

pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta relates how, "being looked at (with envy) by the faces, melancholy (*through the rejection of themselves*) of others of equal birth, *while the attendants of the court breathed* forth the deep sighs (*of happiness*) was bidden by his father who exclaiming 'Verily (*he is*) worthy,' embraced him."[1] As the *praśasti* clearly states, such a selection was made in an assembly (*sabhyēṣuccāvacāsitēṣu*)[2], and it is obvious that such an assembly was called the *Sabhā*. Again, as the Bihar stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta reveals, Samudra Gupta in his turn preferred Candra Gupta II, evidently to some of his other sons (Rāma Gupta?), for this record tells us that he was "accepted" by Samudra Gupta. It may be noticed that this phrase of "approval" was also applied to persons appointed to the posts of *Viṣayapati*,[3] and to the granting of patronage to feudatories with the title of *Mahārāja* as can be proved from the Ērāṇ stone inscription of Budha Gupta. This epigraph reveals that, while Budha Gupta was king, *Mahārāja* Mātṛviṣṇu's younger brother Dhanyaviṣṇu was "accepted with favour" by him,[4] evidently as his successor. This can also be confirmed by the Ērāṇ stone inscription of Tōramāṇa.[5] It may here be observed that in the Bilsad stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 415–16, mention is made of one Dhruvaśarman who was honoured by the Council (*Pariṣadā mānitēna*).[6] Evidently the *Pariṣad* constituted the Council of Ministers, while the *Sabhā* was the great assembly of the ministers and feudatories in the administration of the Gupta empire.

2. The Council of Ministers

This Council of Ministers, which is alluded to in the Bilsad stone pillar inscription of Kumāra Gupta I, is clearly referred to in the works of Kālidāsa as the *Maitri Pariṣad*. Such a political assembly was invested with certain powers. According to Kālidāsa, the officer called the Chamberlain (*Kañcuka*) acted as a medium between the king and the Council, probably when the latter was not present during its proceedings. This can be inferred from a passage in the *Mālavikāgnimitram*, in which a Chamberlain, for instance, says thus to the king: "Victory to the King. The minister (*Amātya*) sends this message to his sovereign. The King's plan is auspicious. This is what the ministers (*Maitri Pariṣad*) also thought."[7] From this

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (10), p. 45. Italics not in brackets mine.
[2] *Ibid.*, (1), p. 6.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[4] *Ibid.*, (19), p. 90.
[5] *Ibid.*, (36), p. 160.
[6] *Ibid.*, (10), p. 44.
[7] *Māl.*, Act. V, p. 152, Tawney, trans., p. 77.

allusion it appears that the Council apparently conveyed its decisions through the *Amātya* concerned to the King who, of course, was approached by the Chamberlain. Probably a proposal was placed before the Council of Ministers, who considered over this matter and conveyed its final decision to the king through the Chamberlain. Therefore it appears that the ministers deliberated over what the king stated or set forth and finally conveyed their considered opinion which was submitted to the king for his orders. In fact, whatever the king himself desired was set forth before the Council and when the king's orders were received, they were at once conveyed back to the Council. The king in this play on hearing that two kings would remain firm in their allegiance to him, says thus to his Chamberlain: "Tell the Council then to send the general Vīrasena written instructions to this effect."[1] From this passage it is clear that civil and military affairs were considered and decided by the Council and approved of by the king. But it may be remembered that the Minister did not act alone in arriving at decisions, for he appears to have only communicated the king's decision to the Council of Ministers, although the final approval only lay in all likelihood with the ruler himself, who seems to have been the repository of all authority. In the same play the Chamberlain remarks: "King! The minister sends the following message, which I was prevented from delivering before by another matter arising: "We have considered what ought to be done with reference to Vidarbha, I should like now to hear the King's opinion."[2]

It is interesting to watch the reaction to such a request. To this request the king said: "Maudgalya, I wish to establish the two cousins Yajñasena and Mādhavasena as joint-rulers: let them rule separate divisions, the north and south banks of the Varadā..." To this decision the Chamberlain replied: "King! I will announce this decision to the council of ministers."[3] From this delibration it appears as though the Council was asked to think over important problems of administration like the appointment of two princes in particular divisions of a State. Not only was this the case but, if we can rely on the evidence of Kālidāsa, the Council seems to have acted as a Council of Regency and it was held responsible for making preparation for the coronation of a Crown Prince (*Yuvarāja*).[4]

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[1] *Māl.*, Act. V, p. 152, Tawney, trans., p. 78.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 150, Tawney, *Ibid.*, p. 77.

[3] *Māl.* Act. V, p. 151: *evamēva Amātya-pariṣadē vijñāpayāmi.*

[4] *Vik.* Act V, p. 167.

As a consequence of such delibrations there seems to have been great personal contact between the Ministers and their sovereign. Kālidāsa obviously depicts contemporary usage when he describes how a minister submitted a dispatch to his sovereign. The king is described by Kālidāsa as seated with his retinue standing apart and attended upon by the minister seated behind him with a letter in his hand. The king, looking at his minister who has to read the letter, says: Vāhatava, what does the king of Vidarbha mean?" The Minister replies: "To destroy himself." At this answer the king remarks: "I want to hear his dispatch, at once." Then the Minister begins to read the dispatch, saying: "He has on the present occasion sent the following answer: "My royal brother has informed me that my cousin, Prince Mādhavasena, who had promised to enter into a matrimonial alliance with my royal brother, while proceeding to his court, was on the way attacked by one of my wardens of the marches and taken prisoner (*Antapālena avaskandya gṛhītaḥ*). This man, with his wife and sister, I am required to set free out of regard for my royal brother. Now my royal brother knows well enough what is the custom of kings with the respect to sovereigns of equal birth; therefore he should be impartial in this matter: as for the prince's sister she disappeared in the confusion of the capture: I will do my utmost to find her. Anyhow my royal brother can certainly ensure Mādhavasena's being set at liberty. Mark the condition (*Śrūyatām abhisaṁdhiḥ*). If my royal brother will set my brother-in-law free, the Maurya (noble) minister, whom he has imprisoned, then I will immediately free Mādhavasena from confinement." These are the contents of the letter." To this the king observes: "What? does the foolish fellow presume to bargain with me about an exchange of services? Vāhatava! the king of Vidarbha is my natural enemy and sets himself in opposition to me: therefore give orders, as before determined, to the avenging army under Vīrasena to root him up, in as much as he is numbered among my foes." The Minister listens to these words, saying: "As the king commands." But the king, on reconsideration perhaps wanted to know the personal opinion of his minister, so he asks him: "Or what do you think about it yourself?" The Minister replies: "Your Highness speaks in accordance with the treatises on policy. For an enemy that has but lately entered upon his kingdom, because he has not taken root in the hearts of his subjects, is easy to extirpate, like a tree that is unsteady, because it has only lately been planted." On hearing this the king observes: "So may the saying of the wise compilers of the treatises (*tantra*

kāra vacanaṃ) prove true. For this purpose let the general (*Sēnāpati*) be ordered to put his troops in motion." The Minister obeys with the words: "It shall be done."[1]

Therefore it need not necessarily be maintained that the Chamberlain was perhaps the only official who acted as a medium between the king and the Council of Ministers for, as this passage shows, if the matter under discussion was of great importance or secrecy or if any document had to be seen by the king himself, then the Minister concerned came to him with the relevant document and after a personal discussion with him obtained his orders on the point at issue. It is interesting also to note how the Śāstras were always consulted in arriving at conclusions.

This Minister apparently, at least from the context, dealt with questions of foreign policy and there were other ministers who were entrusted with other portfolios like finance and justice. In the *Śākuntalaṃ* mention is made of the Minister (*Amātya*) in charge of the Royal Treasury. He informed the king that, as there was a good deal of calculation work in the treasury, only one plea was looked into and the king was requested to notice it as recorded (*paṭṭārūḍaṃ*). One of such cases appears to have been his decision regarding a certain case of succession and proprietory rights as can be seen from the following words: "To the king should go all his (a sea-trader's) hoard of money so the minister writes."[2] But the final decision, of course, lay with the king to whom the minister's opinion was submitted for orders. On considering this view of his *Amātya*, the king decided thus: "O! the unborn child is entitled to its parental assets. Go, say so to the minister."[3] Therefore it is evident that the king did not in all cases agree with his minister's view, for he thought over the questions submitted to him and arrived at his own conclusions.

Similarly in the sphere of justice too there was apparently a Minister entrusted with the portfolio of justice. If reliance can be placed upon the evidence of Kālidāsa, during the absence of the king in the Court of Law (*Dharmāsana*), a minister took his place and reported to him an account of the proceedings. In the *Śākuntalaṃ*, for example, the king says to Vētravatī: "Vētravatī, in my name, tell the minister (*Amātya*) Piśuna, that for long wakefulness we did not think today of taking the seat of justice, and that any common plea

[1] *Māl.* Act I, pp. 15-16, Tawney, trans., pp. 7-9.

[2] Śāk., Act VI, pp. 98-99: *rājagāmi tasyārtha sañcaya ityētadamātyēna likhitaṃ.*

[3] *Ibid*; p. 99: *nanugarbhah pitryaṃ riktham arhati-gaccha-ēvaṃ amātyam brūhi.*

which has been looked into by his lordship should be put on paper and submitted."[1] This passage gives us the additional information that a written report had to be submitted by the Minister concerned regarding the court proceedings especially in the king's absence. But whether a written account of such proceedings was recorded while the king himself was present cannot be verified for lack of evidence.

Kālidāsa consequently alludes to three types of ministers viz., those who dealt with foreign policy, finance and justice. On this point however some misconception appears to exist about the actual designations of these officials. It has been observed that "Besides several heads of departments, Kālidāsa alludes to the offices at least of three ministers, viz., the Chief Minister, the Minister for Finance, Law and Justice. These along with the Yuvarāja possibly constituted the Council of Ministers."[2] It is difficult to agree with this view because Kālidāsa, who offers so many different designations for various officials, calls all of these ministers by the one common name of *Amātya*. Although Kālidāsa refers to the *Mantri* (who according to Kauṭalya was the chief minister), he does not specifically state that the *Mantri*, the *Amātyas* and the *Yuvarāja* constituted the Council of Ministers.

Kālidāsa has some further remarks to make regarding ministers in general. Such officials were expected to be experts in politics and statesmanship[3], their office was hereditary[4] and their intelligence alone was expected to protect the subjects for a time.[5] It is very interesting to observe how far these characteristics were actually realised in practice during this period. He also tells us that this Council of Ministers met in the Council Room (*Sadōgṛham*),[6] where they evidently held their deliberations on matters of State. In one place he adds that these consultations were held in the greatest secrecy.[7]

Kāmandaka, likewise, emphasises the greatest secrecy in such matters and warns the king against divulgence of state secrets by his ministers either through carelessness, talk during sleep, and sensuality. He insists that the council meetings were to be held in a secluded mansion and into it dwarfs, idiots, eunuchs, women,

[1] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 87: *yat-pratyavēkṣitaṃ paura kāryaṃ āryēṇa tat patraṃ ārōpya diyatāṃ iti.*

[2] Upādhyāya, *K. V. R. Aiyangar Commemoration Volume*, p. 172. (1940) The *Mantri Mukhya* is mentioned in *Mudrā.*, Act II, p. 21.

[3] *Raghu.*, VIII, 17, p. 162.

[4] *Ibid.*, XII, 12, p. 249.

[5] *Śak.*, Act, VI, 31, p. 104.

[6] *Raghu.*, III, 67, p. 71.

[7] *Ibid.*, XVII, 50, p. 356.

the crooked, lame, timid and emaciated, were not to be admitted. Animals were not permitted to enter its precincts. The Council discussed all State affairs, legislated and carried on the administration; in fact he adds that repeated discussion of a case was necessary before this body came to a final decision. The king of course could veto any case when he thought it fit to do so for some cause or other, which is, however, not mentioned. Kāmaṅdaka in fact advises that these decisions were to be in accordance with the Śāstras, reasonable and loyal[1].

3. The Great Assembly

In the times of Harṣa, these traditions of the Guptas continued. According to Bāṇa the words of Prabhākaravardhana on his deathbed to Harṣa, suggest that the former had almost selected the latter to succeed to the throne despite the existence of the eldest son, Rājyavardhana.[2] But probably such a suggestion was not openly made in the assembly because it is evident that Rājyavardhana preceded Harṣa and ruled for a short time.[3]

But in the crisis which resulted on the foul murder of Rājyavardhana, the question of Harṣa's succession again became a constitutional issue of the first magnitude. As Bāṇa would have it, the *Senāpati* Siṁhanāda addressed Harṣa thus: "Now that the king (Prabhākaravardhana) has assumed godhead and Rājyavardhana has lost his life by the sting of the vile Gauḍa serpent, you are in the cataclysm which has come to pass, the only Śēṣa left to support the earth. Comfort your unprotected people". To this appeal Harṣa agreed, resolving to clear the earth of Gauḍas. Thus resolved, "he *dismissed the assembly* (*sabhā*) and *having sent away the feudatories*, left the hall once more, desirous of the bath."[4] As the context shows, this assembly consisted of princes (*rājalōkaḥ*) and others.[5]

The traveller Yüan Chwāng, however, has a similar story to narrate. "The people", he says, "having lost their ruler, the country became desolate. Then the great minister *Po-ni* (Bhaṇḍi) whose power and reputation were high and of much weight, addressing the assembled ministers, said: "The destiny of the nation is to be fixed today. The old king's son is dead: the brother of the prince,

[1] Kāmaṅdaka, *Nītisāra*, Ch. IV, pp. 17-25.

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 158: "'Succeed to this world' is a command too mean for an intending conqueror of both worlds,..". *Ibid.*, p. 156.

[3] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 210; Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 343; *I. E.*, VII, no. 22, p. 159.

[4] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-88. Italics mine.

[5] *Ibid.*, text, p. 194: *iti kṛta niscayaśca muktāsthānō visarjita rājalōkaḥ sñān-ārambhākāṅkṣī sabhāmatyakṣit.*

however, is humane and affectionate, and his disposition heaven-conferred, is dutiful and obedient. Because he is strongly attached to his family, the people will trust in him. I propose that he assume the royal authority: let each one give his opinion on this matter, whatever he thinks." They were all agreed on this point, and acknowledged his conspicuous qualities.

"On this the chief ministers and the magistrates all exhorted him to take authority saying: "Let the royal prince attend . . . The opinion of the people, as shown in their songs, proves their real submission to your eminent qualities. Reign, then, with glory over the land; conquer the enemies of your family . . . We pray you reject not our prayer."

The prince Harṣa, according to the Chinese chronicler, resorted to the statue of the Budha on the banks of the Ganges, where the Buddha appearing in a bodily form, urged him not to ascend the lion-throne and call himself *mahārāja*, but to patronise Buddhism. Having received this instruction, Harṣa departed and "assumed the royal office".[1]

A comparison of these two versions of an evidently vital event of great constitutional importance is inevitable. Whoever might have raised the question of proposing the name of Harṣa to the throne, it is clear that first, the name of Harṣa on his brother's death, was proposed in an open assembly of ministers and feudatories, secondly, a decision must have taken place in this assembly regarding his claims to the throne; thirdly, on a unanimous agreement being reached in his favour, the assembly appears to have requested Harṣa to accept the throne; fourthly, in response to this proposal, after some consideration ultimately he accepted it and ascended the throne.

The latter half of Yüan Chwāng's information, regarding Harṣa's resort to the Buddha, must have been based on hearsay and religious bias. In his Madhuban plates, for example, Harṣa, instead of being styled a *Mahārāja* or Śilāditya, is called by his full royal title of *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*.[2] As this record was issued after the accession of Harṣa to the throne, it is doubtful whether much credence can be placed in this account of Yüan Chwāng.

[1] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 210-11; Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 343.

[2] *E. I.*, VII, no. 22, p. 158.

4. Official Communication

The high officials in the government machinery probably granted interviews to the people who wanted to see them. In the *Mudrārākṣasaṃ*, for instance, an attendant of Rākṣasa tells the snake charmer: "So if the Minister does not favour him with an interview, His Excellency will be pleased to read this leaflet."[1] Sometimes these high officers of the central government, who held the position of chiefs or feudatories and attended State processions, are described in literature. The Chamberlain in this play informs Malayakētu thus about such chiefs: "Look here, my lord! Some chiefs rein in their horses (lit. restrain) that with their long (lit. high) necks greatly arched on account of the tightly held sharp-pointed bridles, are, as it were, scraping the void in front of them with their hoofs; while some stop short with their noble elephants standing motionless with silent bells."[2]

Such important officials probably, at critical moments, held some kind of communication with kings of other lands. In the *Kaumudīmahōtsava* Mantra Gupta, the prime-minister of Sundaravarman, is said to have made an alliance.[3] In the *Mudrārākṣasaṃ* it has been stated that "never do kings send for officers without a (weighty) reason (demanding their immediate attendance)."[4] It may here be remembered that Bāṇa records the well-known interview of Haṁsavēga, the confidential messenger of the heir-apparent of Assam, with Harṣavardhana of Kanauj. This important interview has been described by Bāṇa in great detail.[5]

V. The Departments of Administration

Assisted by the Council of Ministers, the king in the Gupta age carried on the administration of the empire and in this onerous task he was ably assisted by a number of other officials who constituted the several departments of his state. According to Kālidāsa and incidentally the Chammak copper plates of the Vākāṭaka ruler Pravasena II as well, there appear to have been seven specified departments of administration.[6] These, after all, appear to have been only tradi-

[1] Viśākhadatta, *op. cit.*, Act II. p. 23, text, p. 25.
[2] *Ibid.*, Act IV, p. 52, text, pp. 52-53.
[3] *Kaumudimahōtsava*, Act IV, p. 33.
[4] *Ibid.*, Act III, p. 41, text, p. 41.
[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 211-23.
[6] *Raghu.*, I, 60, p. 20: *saptāṅgēṣu*. *Cf.* Chammak plates of Pravarasena II, Fleet, *op. cit.*, (55), p. 239.: *tad yathā rājñāṃ saptāṅge rājye,a-ddrōha-pravṛttānāṃ*. Also see Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, p. 55.

tional. In the age of the Guptas, however, from their epigraphic records it may be seen how their administration was broadly divided into four main divisions or departments: civil, revenue and police, military and judicial pertaining to the spheres of the central, provinical and local spheres of administration.

1. Civil Officers

Among the civil officers, after the *Rājapuruṣa*, the *Rājanyaka* and the *Rājaputra*, those next in importance were probably the *Rājāmātya* (the Counsellor of the king), the *Mahāpratīhāra* (the Great Chamberlain or the Door-Keeper) the *Mahāsāmanta* (the Great Feudatory) and the *Mahākumārāmātya* (the Great Counsellor to the prince or the heir-apparent). But unfortunately little is known about the duties of any of these high officials except about the *Mahāpratīhāra*. If the officer *Kañcuki*, interpreted to mean the Chamberlain, mentioned in the works of Kālidāsa, can be equated with the *Mahāpratīhāra* of the Gupta records, or at least, an officer corresponding to his status, then it may be inferred that he had to look after the inner apartments of the king's women, that he had a staff of office and that he had to report to the king the arrival of persons who sought his audience.[1] His duties in the ladies' apartments must have been rather exacting.[2]

In the times of Harṣa some more light can be thrown on the nature of the duties of the Chamberlain. He had to maintain the order of the women's apartments, guard against stumbling at every step by the guidance of a staff, maintain the order of towns within and guard them against steps by the administration of justice.[3]

The duties of the others will remain speculative until further research can throw more light on them. As their official titles suggest, the *Rājāmātya* must have acted as an adviser to the king, the *Mahāsāmanta*, a feudatory title, in some cases denoting equal rank with *Mahārāja* and *Mahākumārāmātya*, must have served in a similar capacity either to the princes or the heir-apparent. Along with these is mentioned the official *Rajāsthānīya*, who, as his designation implies, was either an officer who belonged to the king's abode,

[1] *Śāk.*, Act V, 3, p. 65: *ācāra ityavahitena mayā gṛhītā yo vētrayaṣṭiravarōdhagṛhēṣu rājñaḥ.*

[2] *Cf. Vik.*, Act III, pp. 73-74; *Mudrā.*, Act III, p. 44.

[3] Harṣa, *Priyadarśikā*, Act III, p. 49, text, p. 48:
antaḥpurāṇaṃ vihitavyavasthaḥ pade pade 'haṃ skalitāni rakṣan |
jarāturaḥ samprati daṇḍanityā sarvaṃ nṛpasyā 'nukarami vṛttam. ||

or a governor.[1] As the honorific *mahā* is not prefixed to his name, it is possible that his status was officially of a lower rank than that of the officers with such an honorific mentioned above. The Mandasor stone inscription of Yaśodharman and Viṣṇuvardhana of the Mālava year 589, refers to a person called Abhayadatta, who "with the functions of a *Rājasthāniya* protected the region...between the Vindhya (mountains)...and the mountain Pāriyātra...up to the (western) ocean",[2] which implies a vast stretch of territory.

Such a high post required certain qualifications. Probably they are hinted at in the Junāgaḍh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta dated A. D. 455-56, when the emperor is stated to have been thinking about a person who had to be "endowed with intellect, modest, possessed of a disposition that is not destitute of wisdom and memory; endowed with truth, straightforwardness, nobility and prudent behaviour; and possessed of sweetness, civility and fame; loyal; affectionate; endowed with manly characteristics; and possessed of a mind that (*has been tried and*) is (*found to be*) pure by all the tests of honesty; possessed of an inner soul pervaded by (*the inclination for*) the acquittance of debts and obligations; occupied with the welfare of all mankind; capable both in the lawful acquisition of wealth, and also in the preservation of it, when acquired, and further in causing the increase of it, when protected (*and able*) to dispense it on worthy objects, when it has been increased."[3] Skanda Gupta found all these qualities in Parṇadatta, while his son Cakrapālita, is said to have made a good governor. The ideal governor is depicted in the character of Cakrapālita, for he is recorded to have been endowed with "patience, lordship, modesty, and good behaviour, and heroism without too great an estimation of prowess, eloquence (?) self-control, liberality, and high-spiritedness, civility, the acquittance of debts and obligations, and freedom from empty headedness, beauty and reprobration of things that are not right, absence of astonishment, firmness and generosity."[4] Such a governor of a *Bhukti* bore various designations like *Bhōgika*, *Bhōgapati*, *Gōptā*, *Uparika*, *Mahārāja* and *Rājasthānīya*.[5]

There was, moreover, the *Dūtaka* or *Ājñāpādaka* who communicated royal commands to officers as well as to the people. In Gupta

[1] *I. A.*, V, p. 207 : *prajā-pālan-ārtham=ūdvahati rakṣayati ca sa rājasthānīyaḥ* : "he who carries out the object of protecting subjects and shelters them, is called a *Rājasthāniya.*" Kṣēmendra, *Lōkaprakāśa* IV ; cited by Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

[2] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (35), p. 157.

[3] *Ibid.*, (14), p. 62.

[4] *Ibid.*, (14), p. 63.

[5] *Ibid.*, (35), p. 155.

inscriptions the *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika* generally acts as the *Dūtaka*, though sometimes he was dispensed with and the king himself bestowed the gift. The *Dūtaka* was also sometimes substituted for the *Ājñāpālaka* or the *Ājñāptiḥ*.[1] Such an arrangement obviously resulted in the production of correspondence in the shape of records, to supervise and protect which was appointed an officer called the *Mahākṣapaṭalika*. His designation appears in the Alīṇā copper-plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67.[2] Along with these officers is mentioned another official called *Pratīnartaka*, a term which is interpreted to mean a herald,[3] who in some connection or other in the routine of court life appears to have been connected with the Great Door-Keeper or the *Mahāpratīhāra*.

We may now mention some of the officials who are referred to in the works of Kālidāsa. He often mentions the Ministers of the king calling them only as *Amātya*.[4] He records the designations of other higher officials like the *Purōhita* or *Purōdhas*,[5] the High Priest of the king, the *Dūta* or messenger,[6] the *Rāṣṭrīya* or the Governor placed over the *Rāṣṭra* or province,[7] *Dharmādhyakṣa*,[8] entrusted with the adminsitration of Justice, *Pratīhāri*[9] or Chamberlain, *Kumāra*[10] or Prince.

Kālidāsa refers to the institution of bards (*Baṁdinaḥ*),[11] also called *Baṁdiputrāḥ*,[12] *Sūtāmajāḥ*,[13] and *Vaitālikāḥ*,[14] who have been interpreted to be heralds. They sang the glories of the royal line and acted as a part of the regal parapharnalia. The *Vaitālikas* appear to have played an important role in the court life of this period. They announced the time for the bath and dinner of the king by loudly singing couplets which the king could hear from his premises. One of these *Vaitālikas* sings thus in the play *Mālavikāgnimitram*: "Victory to the king! The sun has climbed up to the zenith, for the geese

[1] *I. A.*, XIV, pp. 160-61. *Ibid.*, XIII, p. 122; Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
[2] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (39), p. 190.
[3] *Ibid.*, II, 75-76.
[4] *Cf. Māl.* Act. I, pp. 15-16, *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 87.
[5] *Raghu.*, XVII, 13, p. 340.
[6] *Māl.*, Act. V, p. 132.
[7] *Śāk.*, Act. VI, p. 85.
[8] *Ibid.*, Act. I, p. 13.
[9] *Raghu.*, V, pp. 76-77.
[10] *Māl.*, Act. I, p. 15.
[11] *Raghu.*, IV, 6. p. 74.
[12] *Ibid.*, V. 75, p. 117.
[13] *Ibid.*, 65, p. 113.
[14] *Māl.*, Act, V, p. 133.

rest with closed eyes in the shade of the leaves of the lotuses of the ornamental water, the pigeons shun on account of the extreme heat the sloping roofs of the palace which they ordinarily frequent, the peacocks desirous of drinking the particles of water continually flung out, flies to the revolving water-wheel, the sun blazes with all his rays at once, as thou with all thy princely qualities."[1] Such an announcement implied that the king was informed by the herald about the description of nature at the moment when the verses were chanted.

These bards also proclaimed the arrival of the king with his praises (*Jayaśabda*) evidently in the open court. This practice can be illustrated by one or two examples from the same play. Two bards sing in the following way behind the scenes: "We hail the King who by means of his avenging force tramples upon the heads of his enemies" (*diṣṭyā daṇḍen-āri śiraḥsu vartate deraḥ*). The first Bard sings: "While thou, Oh! bestower of boons dost delightsomely spend the spring in gardens on the banks of the Vidiśa, in which the cuckoos utter pleasing notes, like the comely-limbed god of love, in the meanwhile the enemy of thee, whose army is so mighty, has been caused to bow together with the trees on the banks of the Varadā, which served as the hooks for fastening the victorious elephants." Then the second Bard cries: "The victories of both of you over the Krathakaiśikas are celebrated in song by godlike sages from pure love of heroism, of thee who by means of thy avenging armies didst take away the glory of the king of Vidarbha, and of Kṛṣṇa, who by main force carried off Rukmiṇī with his four arms strong as clubs."

Finally the female Door-Keeper exclaimed: "Here is the King coming in this direction, his setting forth being announced by shouts of victory; I for my part will step a little out of his direct course, and put myself under this arch of the main entrance."[2] Such paeans therefore implied that the conquests of the king were enologised by these bards whenever a king was about to enter some specified place in the court where the courtiers and nobles must have gathered to receive him.

These *Vaitālikas* of Kālidāsa's time may probably be equated with the *Pratīnartakās* mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions[3] and the *Bhaṭās* whose duties are described by Bāṇa in his works. It may be

[1] *Māl.*, Act II, p. 51, Tawney, trans., p. 27.
[2] *Ibid.*, Act V, pp. 133-34., Tawney, *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.
[3] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (39), p. 190.

remembered that Bāṇa often refers to these bards in his *Harṣacarita* wherein he depicts them as singing couplets to wake the king and announce the passing of the hours by night and day[1].

Some other officers are also mentioned in the writings of Kālidāsa and these may be classed with those whom we have termed as Civil Officers. The office of the female Door-Keeper (*Dauvārikī*) has already been noticed, but we are informed that there was the institution of the male Door-Keeper as well. He was known as the *Dvārastha*.[2] But there were some other offices the duties of which cannot be clearly made out. We cannot ascertain what precisely were the functions performed by the *Pratyavekṣitāḥ*[3] or, for the matter of that, by the *Adhikārapuruṣa*,[4] who might have been an official endowed with police powers, although of this we cannot be sure. Mention is also made of the *Lipikāra*[5] or the Scribe, *Daivacintaka*[6] or the Fortune-Teller, *Praṇidhi* or the Spy,[7] *Kuśalaciracitānukulava*[8] or Superintendent to the Ministers, *Kirāti*[9] and *Yavani*[10] evidently women servants selected from the Kirāta and the Yavana tribes.[11]

These servants of the Gupta State may now be compared side by side with some of the officers recorded in the inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas. The Chammak, Siwaṇi and Paṭṭan copper plates of the Vākāṭakā king Pravarsēna II reveal the offices of the *Saṁtaka-Sarvādhyakṣa-Niyōga-Niyukta-Ājñāsaṁcāri-Kulaputrādhikṛta-Bhaṭōbh-chhatrā*.[12] Of these officials the *Saṁtika* appears to have been an official connected with the *Saṁtika*, which seems to have been a unit of administration larger than a village. In the Karitalai copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, dated A. D. 493-94, mention is made of how the village of Chandā-pallikā was in the Nāgadēya *Saṁtaka*[13], while in the Khoh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 516-17, half

[1] *Cf.* Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 136.

[2] *Raghu.*, VI, 48, p. 131; the *Dauvārikī* is also mentioned; *ibid.*, VI, 59, p. 133.

[3] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 198.

[4] *Raghu.*, V, 68, p. 114.

[5] *Māl.*, Act V, p. 132.

[6] *Ibid.*, IV, p. 107.

[7] *Raghu.*, XVII, 48, p. 356. *cf.*, *Cara in Mudrā.*, Act VI, p. 83.

[8] *Ibid.*, V, 76, p. 117.

[9] *Ibid.*, XVI, 57, p. 339.

[10] *Śāk.*, Act II, p. 20.

[11] On the *Kirāta* and *Yavana* tribes see Saletore, *The Wild Tribes in Indian History*, pp. 12–37.

[12] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (55), p. 237 and (56), p. 246; *E. I.*, XXIII, no. 14, p. 86.

[13] *Ibid.*, (26), p. 120.

of the village of Dhavaṣaṇḍikā was in the Vōṭa *Saṁtika*.[1] The next official *Sarvādhyakṣa* seems to have been a kind of General Superintendent, whose specific duties cannot be defined with any certainty. The *Niyōga-Niyukta* appears to have been the counter-parts of the Gupta officials known as the *Āyuktaka-Viniyuktaka*, who were primarily connected with the treasury and the accounts departments. The *Kulaputrādhikṛta* was apparently a member of the royal family who was entrusted with administrative authority, the precise nature of which it is difficult to specify. Along with these officers are mentioned the *Bhaṭa-Chhatra*, who, as will be shown presently were only soldiers and umbrella-bearers.

Of all these officials there was one of whom little has till now been said and that is the *Ājñasaṁcārika*. This officer was apparently one who was entrusted with the execution of all royal messages and he must have performed the duties of one who may be termed a courier. We can ascertain some details about this officer during the days of Harṣavardhana. In these times there appears to have been a system of communication by means of couriers (*Dīrghadvagāhā*). Kṛṣṇa, the brother of Harṣa, sent such a messenger who wore the simplest of dresses. "His legs tired and heavy with the long journey," says Bāṇa, "with his tunic girt up (*sūtra baṁdhina*) tightly by a mud-stained strip of cloth, the knot hanging loose and fastened up by a ragged clout swinging behind him, and having his head wrapped with a deep division pressed into it by a very thick thread that bound it."[2] Such a mesenger was well received in a common household. On taking this letter from Kṛṣṇavardhana, the messenger Mekhalaka, after resting for a while in Bāṇa's home, said to Bāṇa: "This letter has been sent by our honoured lord" and unloosening it, he delivered it to Bāṇa. Such messengers were also entrusted with verbal messages and Bāṇa heard such a message in secret.[3] That such messengers were well-treated there cannot be any doubt. Mekhalaka was asked to rest, served with food and given some clothing. Before he departed he was again requested to rest for a while.[4]

These couriers not only carried letters and messages but also served as guides and guardians. Bāṇa informs us how footmen

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (29), p. 132. Mr. V. Mirashi has stated that the word *Saṁtika* is connected with the Pāli word *Saṁtiki*, meaning "proximity, presence" and that the word *Saṁtika* used in Vākāṭaka grants in the sense of 'a subordinate officer or servant.' See *E. I.*, XXXIII, no. 14, p. 83.

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 41, text, p. 52.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 41, 43.

were "sent ahead to secure a relay of villagers to show the best way" to Harṣa, as he hastened from the Punjab on hearing of his father's illness.[1] Yüan Chwāng, who also noticed these couriers, observes that they were sent as escorts on the way.[2] In his own case he was granted such an escort by Kumāra Rāja of Kāmarūpa. It is very interesting to note that Harṣa, when finally taking leave of Yüan Chwāng, "commissioned four *Ta-Kwan* (official guides) to accompany the escort: they call such officers *Mo-ho ta-lo* (*Mahattara?*). The king also wrote some letters on fine cotton stuff and sealed them with red wax (or, composition) which he ordered the *Ta-Kwan* officers to present in all the countries through which they conducted the Master, to the end that the princes of these countries might provide carriages or modes of conveyance to escort the Master even to the borders of China."[3] Such a precaution was necessary owing to the danger from brigands who infested lonely parts and attacked unwary travellers.[4]

There were evidently two types of these couriers, who may be styled as mounted and foot, the former travelling on swift animals like the horse or camel, while the latter moved fast from place to place on foot. On arriving at his palace and seeing his father ill, Harṣa "in hot haste dispatched express couriers and swift camel riders one after another to procure his brother's coming."[5] This practice of employing, especially the swift couriers, was noticed by Yüan Chwāng. A courier dispatched by Kumāra Rāja from Kāmarūpa presented a letter at Nālandā after two days.[6] That verbal messages along with written letters were also entrusted to such messengers is also borne out by Yüan Chwāng.[7] The dispatch of such postmen, if such a term may be permitted, appears to have been fairly common. When Śīlabhadra refused to go to Assam after the arrival of the first messenger sent by Kumāra Rāja, this king again sent another one to renew his invitation. When this request was again turned down, in anger another courier was dispatched to Nālandā with a personal letter to the Master of the Law. This royal request could not naturally once more be refused lest it should lead to avoidable estrangement and royal displeasure, and the invitation was

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 170.
[2] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *op. cit.*, p. 182.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 189-90.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 191.
[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 145.
[6] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life*, p. 169.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 170.

finally accepted.[1] This arrangement shows how often couriers must have passed from Kāmarūpa to Nālandā and vice-versa. But their movements were not confined only to this route, for this system of postal communication appears to have been spread throughout the length and breadth of Harṣa's empire and must have prevailed in the dominion of Bhāskarvarman of Kāmarūpa as well. It has been noticed that, when returning from the Punjab, Harṣa deputed some advance couriers in order to find out the way, which implies that this system must have been known in those parts as well. Again Harṣa, on coming to know that the Master of the Law was with the Kumāra Rāja, on his return after his attack on Kongyōḍha (Ganjam ?) soon sent a messenger to Kumāra Rāja, requesting him to send this priest of China at once. As this request was refused, the courier returned but Harṣa was not to be spurned with such a refusal, for he again dispatched yet another messenger.[2] From these incidents it may be seen how swift couriers travelled pretty fast not only from Kāmarūpa to Nālandā and from the Punjab probably to Kanauj but also from Orissa to Assam.

2. Revenue and Police Officers

Next in importance to the civil department, was the Revenue and Police department, the duties of which were evidently combined. The most important of these officials of this department were the *Uparika*, an officer primarily entrusted with the recovery of the *Uparikara*, *Daśāparādhika*, whose duties were to recover fines from those responsible for the ten offences,[3] *Caurōddharaṇika*, responsible for the extermination of thieves, i.e. police officers, *Dāṇḍika*, police officers (holding rods of punishment ?),[4] *Daṇḍapāśika* (policemen, lit. one who holds the fetters or the noose of punishment),[5] *Śaulkika*, officers entrusted with the recovery of *śulka* or customs duties, *Gaulmika*, officers in charge of *gulma* or forest, *Kṣētraprāntapāla*,[6] protectors of the borders of the field or protectors of fields and borders, *Koṭṭapāla*,[7] protectors of forts, *Aṅgarakṣa*, body-guards or personal

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-71.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 172; also see p. 159.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), pp. 189-90; f. n. 4.

[4] Böhtlingk and Roth, *op. cit.*, III, p. 499; Apte, *Dictionary*, p. 555.

[5] Monier Williams, *Dictionary*, p. 477; *Cf.*, *Mudrā.*, Act I, p. 13.

[6] Mallinātha equates the term *Kośagṛhēniyuktāḥ* with *Bhāṇḍāgārikas* thus: *Kośagṛhē niyuktā adhikṛtā Bhāṇḍārikāḥ*..... These officials may be compared with the *Aṅtapāla* mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Pratyaṅtapāla* referred to in the *Kaumudīmahōtsava*. *Cf.*, *Gulmādhikāra* in *Mudrā.*, Act V, p 64.

[7] Apte, *Dictionary*, p. 425.

attendants,[1] and *Āyuktaka-Viniyuktaka*, accountants and assistant accountants. An important revenue official mentioned in Gupta inscriptions is the *Rājuka* who appears to have been a decendant of Aśōkan times.

Of these officers an important yet perplexing official of the Gupta period was the *Uparika*, a term which has been like *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa* variously interpreted. The expression *Tīrabhuktāuparik-ādhikaraṇasya* on one of the Basarh seals was interpreted by T. Bloch was interpreted to mean "(The seal of) Chief of *Uparika* of Tīrabhukti."[2] This interpretation was modified by Dr J. Ph. Vogel into the "(seal) of the court of (or office) of the *Uparika* of Tirabhukti (i. e. Tirhut).[3] But Block admitted that "*Uparika* means a class of officials, whose exact functions are not known."[4] Fleet followed him saying that the "exact purpose" of this technical term was unknown.[5]

The place given in contemporary inscriptions to this official has enabled certain scholars to offer other interpretations of this office. In the undated Bihar stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta, the *Uparika* precedes the *Kumārāmātya*[6], while in the Deo Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II the *Uparika* is again preceded by the *Kumārāmātya* and the *Rājāsthānīya*.[7] As in some of the Ucchakalpa inscriptions the *Uparika* seems to have acted as the *Dūtaka*,[8] Dr Vogel suggested that "perhaps we may assume some connection between the two offices."[9] But this inference, as will be explained presently, can hardly be accepted. Again in some of the Dāmodarpur grants, pertaining to the reign of Kumāra Gupta I, the *Kumārāmātya* appears to have been a district officer appointed by the *Uparika Mahārāja*, who acted as a governor and is mentioned in the records as next in order of authority to the emperor himself.[10] In the Gunaighar grant of Vainya Gupta, dated the year 188 current of the Gupta era (A. D. 506 Dec. 13th), mention is made of the *Purapālōparika Mahārājā śrī Mahāsāmanta* Vijayasēna, and the term *Uparika* has been interpreted to mean "the President of the City Governors" by Mr D. C. Bhaṭṭāchārya.[11] But from the above grant it may be seen that the

[1] Apte, *op. cit.*, p. 19. *Cf. Rājakulasēvaka* in *Mudrā.*, Act II, p. 21.
[2] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, no. 20, p. 109.
[3] Vogel, *Antiquities of the Chamba State*, p. 123.
[4] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 109.
[5] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, p. 52, n, 1.
[6] *Ibid.*, (12), p. 52.
[7] *Ibid.*, (46), p. 218.
[8] *Ibid.*, (26, 27, 30), pp. 120, 124, 134.
[9] Vogel, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
[10] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, p. 114.
[11] *I. H. Q.*, VI, no. I, p. 57. *Cf. Durgapāla* in *Mudrā.*, Act VII, p. 102.

office of the *Uparika* was combined with other offices, a practice common in the machinery of Gupta administration, as noticed already. *Mahāsāmaṁta* Vijayasēna was not only a *Mahārāja* but was also entrusted with the duties of the Protector of the City (*Purapāla*). That such an officer was invariably entrusted with other duties can be seen from other grants as well. Some Bengal grants refer to the *Bṛhad-Uparika*,[1] in which this officer is generally preceded by the *Aṁtaraṁga*, which in conjunction has been interpreted by Dr Basak to mean the "Chief Privy Councillor."[2] Again in the two grants from Tāḷēśvara, Almora district, U. P., we come across an official known as the *Daṇḍōparika*,[3] a term which has been understood to mean the "Prefect of Police."[4]

But Dr Ch. Chhabra has recently offered another interpretation. He has pointed how Viśvarūpācārya in his commentary *Bālakrīḍā* on the *Yājñavalkya Smṛti*, while commenting on a verse on the *Rājadharmaprakaraṇa* of this work observes thus: *avikāryo='vikal-eṁdriyaḥ pratāparāṁ subhagaḥ sumukho='kṛpaṇo'=pramādī dakṣo dākṣiṇya cāritra-rakṣaṇ-ārtham= adhikaraṇa-saṁdigdha vivēka-kṛd-Uparikaḥ syād.* This has been translated to mean: "a man who is resolute, sane, energetic, blissful, personable, generous, vigilant, dexterous and capable of administering justice in legal disputes should be (*appointed* as) *Uparika* in order to maintain impartiality and morality."[5] From this information Dr Chhabra infers that "it is obvious that an *Uparika* was invested with two-fold authority judicial and administrative. His office, may, therefore correspond to that of a magistrate."[6]

This interpretation may be accepted with some reservations. First it may be seen that the term *Uparika* obviously originated from the tax *Uparikara* and it is therefore very likely that the *Uparika* was the official who was held responsible for the recovery and administration of that tax. That he must have been a high official can be seen from the fact that he has often been mentioned next only to the emperor and like many of the high Gupta officials must have been

[1] *Cf.* N. G. Majumdar, *Inscriptions of Bengal*, III, nos. VI-XI, p. 185; *E. I.*, XII, pp. 9, 40; XIV, p. 160; XXI, p. 217.

[2] *E. I.*, XII, p. 43.

[3] *Ibid.*, XIII, pp. 115, 119.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 117, 120.

[5] *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* with the Commentary of *Bālakrīḍā*, v. 307, pp. I v. 184. (ed. by T. Gaṇapati Sastri, Tr. Sanskrit Series, no. LXXIV).

[6] B. Ch. Chhabra, *D. R. Bhandarkar Comm. Volume* (*Acārya Puṣpāñjali Volume*), p. 233. also see pp. 231-33.

entrusted with other responsible duties like those of the *Purapāla*, the *Bṛhad-Uparika* and the *Daṇḍōparika*. His high status is further established by the fact that he is styled in many inscriptions as a *Mahārāja* and *Mahāsāmanta*.

In the Indor plates of Pravarasena II, issued in the 23rd year of his reign, one Koṭṭadēva is styled as a *Rājuka*.[1] This *Rājuka* is undoubtedly an adaptation of the Aśōkan *Rajjuka* as can be seen from his edicts of the 3rd century B. C. As in several other units of administration such a practice travelled into the Dakṣiṇāpatha, where, so late as the second century A. D., a Cuṭukulānanda Śātakarṇi gave certain commands to his *Mahāvalabhaṃ Rajjuka*.[2] As has been noticed already, the Guptas adopted many features of Kuṣāṇa administration, and the Vākāṭakas, being further south, appear to have retained some of the old official titles. In this inscription the *Rajuka* appears to have been an official chiefly concerned with land and revenue, and he must have acted also, at times, as the engraver of grants. Dr Bühler pointed out that the name *Rajjuka* literally means "holder of rope,"[3] thereby indicating that their duty was concerned with the survey of land. Their modern counterpart is the *Seristadāra*, which is a corruption of the Persian *Sar-i-rishta dār*, viz., he who holds the end of the rope.[4]

Moreover, Kālidāsa mentions two more officers who must have belonged to this department. According to him the *Kośagṛhē niyuktāḥ*[5] must have been employed to administer the affairs of the treasury. Though this official is not exactly mentioned in Gupta records the Maḷiya copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571–72, refers to the *Āyuktakas* and *Viniyuktakas*.[6] From the use of the word *niyuj* in the Junāgaḍh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 455–56, if *niyuj*[7] is accepted to mean "to appoint." or "to commission", then probably it may be interpreted to mean that these officers mentioned by Kālidāsa were in charge of the treasury of the king.

[1] *E. I.*, XXIV, pt. II 1937, no. II, p. 56.

[2] *E. C.*, VII, Sk. 263, p. 142, text p. 251.

[3] *Z. D. M. G.*, xlvii, p. 466.

[4] Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, pp. 14-15, f. n. 2. On *Rājuka* in the *Jātakas*, see Fick, *Social Organization* (trans) pp. 148-49. Also see Bühler, *Z. D. M. G.* xlvii, pp. 466 ff; Bhandarkar, *Aśōka*, pp. 55-56 (2nd Ed.).

[5] *Raghu.*, V, 29, p. 103. He also refers to the *Sārabhāṇḍāgṛha Vyāpṛtā*—an officer in charge of the Royal Store-House, *Māl.*, Act IV, p. 97.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 169.

[7] *Ibid.*, (14), p. 59, line 9: *niyujya dēva Varuṇaṃ praticyāṃ svasthā yathā na-ōnmanasō babhūvuḥ*. Also see line 76, (39). Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 180: *tanniyukta pratinarttaka kulaputra*.

Another police officer mentioned by Kālidāsa is the *Nāgarika*, one of whose duties appears to have been to look out for offenders against the law.[1] Although Gupta inscriptions specify *nagara* as a territorial division and *Grāmika* as probably a village official, they do not refer to a *Nāgarika*[2], evidently because he was not a territorial officer. It is worth remembering here that Vātsyāyana refers to the *Nāgarika*, not as an official but as a gentleman at large, whose home life he describes at length.[3]

3. Military Officers

The spurious Gaya copper plate grant of Samudra Gupta and the Deo Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II, refer to the foot-soldiers (*paṭṭiḥ*), cavalry (*aśva*), elephant (*hasti*), camel (*āṣṭra*) corps and the navy (*nau*) as the arms of war. Nevertheless from these two records it may reasonably be assumed that these "arms" of the Gupta army must have continued from the days of Samudra Gupta down to those of Jīvita Gupta II, although, however, in the Gaya copper plate of Samudra Gupta, only the "great ships and elephants and horses" of his victorious camp (*Jayaskandhāvāra*) at Ayōdhyā are mentioned. It may be observed here that in the inscription of Jīvita Gupta II first comes the navy, then the elephant corps, then the cavalry and finally the foot-soldiers. In those days probably the Guptas did not have the camel corps, which was in use during the times of Harṣavardhana,[4] but which must have survived as an arm during the reign of the Pālas of Bengal. During these Pālas, the order of the forces must have been changed. First came the elephant corps, and subsequently the cavalry, the camel corps and the navy, and finally, the foot-soldiers, at least in the Khalimpur grant of Dharmapāladeva.[5] Kālidāsa also refers to these components of the army and relates how the six-limbed army of this period marched in four divisions.[6] Of these six limbs, the chariots were by his time only traditional, but the elephant corps,[7] cavalry,[8] foot[9] and the fleet[10] were current. He sometimes distinguishes between foot-soldiers (*paṭṭiḥ*) and the infantry (*padātīṃ*).

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[1] *Vik.*, Act V, p. 142: *madvacanāt ucyatāṃ nāgarikaḥ sāyaṃ nivāsavṛkṣāśrayī vicīyatāṃ vihagadasyur=iti.*

[2] *Cf.* The Aśōkan *Nagala-Viyohālaka* (*nagara vyavahāraka*) in the Separate Dhauli Edict I, identified with the *Paura-vyahahārika* referred to in the *Arthaśāstra* (pp. 20, 245) is interpreted to have been a judge for district towns only. *Cf.* Bhandarkar, *Aśōka* p. 70.

[3] Vātsyāyana, *Kāmasūtra*, text, pp. 42-57, also see ch. II, *ante*, pp. 128-29.

[4] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 200. Describing the camp of Harṣa, Bāṇa remarks: "Camels, as sacks were set on their backs, bellowed at the outrage."

[5] *E. I.*, IV, no. 34, pp. 252-3.

[6] *Raghu.*, IV, 30, p. 79: *catuḥskandhēva sā camūḥ.*

[7] *Ibid.*, 29.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] *Ibid.*, 47, p. 84.

[10] *Ibid.*, 36, p. 104. 81: *nausādhanōdyatān.*

The fleet continued to be in existence even till the days of Harṣa and his great contemporary Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa. The Madhuban plates of the former refers to his great navy, elephant corps and cavalry.[1] The Nidhanpur copper-plates of the latter, ascribed to about A. D. 600, likewise mention how his splendid camp at Karṇasuvarṇa had mighty ships, elephants, horses and foot-soldiers.[2]

Over these divisions of the armed forces were appointed certain officers who had their specific designations. The Maḷīya copper-plate grant of Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, tells us how the founder of this family Bhaṭārka was a *Sēnāpati*.[3] The Chammak copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II (c. A. D. 420) states that that charter was written while Citravarma was the *Sēnāpati*.[4] He had another *Sēnāpati* called Bappadeva.[5] From these two records it is evident that definitely from the early fifth century down to the sixth century the *Sēnāpati* or the Commandar of the Forces was an official in charge of the army. Over this official, his official superior appears to have been the *Mahāsēnāpati*, who is mentioned in the Bijaygaḥḍ stone inscription of the Yaudhēyas, which is undated.[6] Besides there were several other officials known as the *Balādhikṛta* and the *Mahābalādhikṛta*. The Shahpur stone image inscription of the Later Gupta Ādityasena, dated A. D. 672-73, mentions the *Balādhikṛta* Sālapakṣa, who was apparently a commander of the forces.[7] The Majhgawam copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 510-11 refers to the *Mahābalādhikṛta* Nāgasiṁha, who must have been evidently of a higher rank.[8] The third important type of military official was the *Daṇḍanāyaka*, who might have combined military as well as judicial duties. The Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra Gupta mentions the *Mahādaṇḍanāyakas* Hariṣeṇa, Dhruvabhūti and Tilabhaṭṭaka. That such an official continued till the end of the Gupta age can be made out from the Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II ascribed to the eighth century, which also alludes to the official *Mahādaṇḍanāyka*.[9] It may therefore be concluded that all these officials were current throughout the Gupta period and that during the reign of each king there was not necessarily one of each type of these officials.

[1] *E. I.*, VII no. 22, p. 158.
[2] *Ibid*, XII, no. 13 p. 76, line 2. text. p. 73.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 165.
[4] *Ibid* (55), p. 243.
[5] *Ibid.*, (57), p. 249.
[6] *Ibid.*, (58), p. 252.
[7] *Ibid.*, (43), p. 210.
[8] *Ibid.*, (23), p. 109.
[9] *Ibid.*, (1), pp. 16-17, also see (46) p. 218.

The commander-in-chief of all these forces was probably the *Mahāsēnāpati*.[1] Another officer of his status was obviously the *Mahāsaṅdhivigrahika* entrusted with the administration of the affairs of war and peace. Another official of a similar status was the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, probably the Great General and Magistrate. Another official pointed out in the Basārh seals is *Mahābalādhikṛta*,[2] probably the Great Commander of the Forces. But what precisely were the relations between him and the *Mahāsēnāpati* cannot be made out at present.

Later, during the reign of Harṣavardhana of Kanauj, the Great Minister for Peace and War was known as *Mahāsaṅdhivigrahādhikṛta*. One of his duties appears to have been the execution of the king's proclamations when they were issued by the king. Harṣa commanded Avanti, who held this post, when he was standing beside the latter, thus: "Let a proclamation be engraved".[3] Bāṇa states that another officer named Skanda Gupta, whom he calls the 'commandant of the whole elephant group', was styled as the *Āśēṣagajasādhanādhikṛta*.[4] Probably there were similar commanders over the infantry, cavalry and the navy as well. The Udayagiri cave inscription of Kumāra Gupta refers to the *Aśvapati*, the soldier Saṅghila.[5] Such a commander of the cavalry was also evidently entrusted with the command of the infantry for in a Basārh seal mention is made of the *Bhaṭāśvapati*,[6] who must have been in charge of both of these forces.

Other officers are also sometimes mentioned, but little is known about them. For example, an official named *Camūpa* is occasionally mentioned after the *Saṅdhivigrahika*, but nothing can be found out about his activities. Bāṇa also refers to *Vanapāla*,[7] the Protector of Forests, but whether he had any military duties it is difficult to state. Another official pointed out by the Basārh seals as the *Mahābalādhikṛta*, under whom it is obvious, must have served the *Balādhikṛtas*, appears to have survived down to the times of Harṣavardhana.

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[1] Kālidāsa also refers to this official named *Mahāsēnāpati Cf. Vik.*, Act V, p. 170. and to his subordinate, the *Sēnādhipati. Māl.*, Act I, p. 17.

[2] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-04, pp. 103, 108.

[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 189, text, p. 195; see also *Kādaṁbari*, text, p. 37. *Cf. A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, pp. 101-2, wherein *Kaṭūka* is interpreted to mean a Commander of Elephants.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (61) p. 260. *Cf. Gaja-adhyakṣa* in *Mudrā.*, Act III, p. 44.

[6] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 101-2, *Cf. Hasty-āśva-adhyakṣa* in *Mudrā.*, *Ibid.*

[7] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, text, p. 227.

The *Harṣacarita* sometimes throws some light on the military administration of this period. Bāṇa states how "commanders mustered crowds of barrack superintendents" (*balādhikṛtabadhyamānapāṭīpati pēṭake*).[1] From this statement it is evident that even during the sovereignty of Harṣavardhana, the Gupta designation of *Balādhikṛta* was maintained, while there was another grade of officials known as *Pāṭhīpati*. There was yet another class of the official styled as the *Kaṭuka*, interpreted as a marshal, for in this connection Bāṇa continues that "shrill words of command from the marshals dispelled the slumbers of blinking riders".[2] The elephants of war had each an attendant called the *Nālīvāhika* while the store-rooms had stewards, for we are told that "store-room stewards collected stores of platters. Many elephant attendants were pressed to convey the stores."[3]

Another important military official who must have also acted as a governor was the *Gōptā*. The Junāgadh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 455-56,[4] relates how he "appointed protectors (*gōptṛīn*) in all countries".[5] Such an officer is obviously referred to by Kālidāsa in his *Mālavikāgnimitraṃ*, wherein he remarks: *Vasumitraṃ gōptāraṃ ādiśya*.[6] The official designation of either Parṇadatta or his son Cakrapālita, who were entrusted with the administration of all the Surāṣṭrās, is not given in the Junāgaḍh rock inscription, but as in the earlier context the "*Gōptṛīn*" are referred to, it is possible that the *Gōptā* was a military official, possibly a governor or viceroy, especially in the times of Skanda Gupta. This officer was probably a new incarnation of the Kauṭilīyan *Gōpa* noticed already, but of course with a change in his duties.[7] This *Gōptā* may be compared with some similar officials mentioned in other contexts. Kālidāsa, it is interesting to note, refers to this *Gōptā* in the clearest of terms thus in the *Raghuvaṁśa*: *Tasmai sabhyāḥ sabhāryāya Gōptrē gupta tamēndriyāḥ*. Mallinātha commenting on it states that the *Gōptā* was a protector: *Gōptṛe rakṣakāya*.[8]

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 199, text, p. 204.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 199, text, p. 204: *kaṭuka kaṭuka nirdēśanaśyann: droṇmiśannniśādini.*

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 200, text, p. 204: *bhāṇḍāgāravahanavāhyamānabahuṇālīvāhikē.* The Basārh seals refer to the *Śri Raṇa bhāṇḍāgār-ādhikaraṇasya. A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 108.

[4] The 2nd part of the record refers also to A. D. 457-58.

[5] Fleet *op. cit.*, (14), p. 62, text, p. 59: *sarvēṣu dēśēṣu vidhāya gōptṛīn.*

[6] *Māl.*, Act V, p. 153: *yōsau rājasūyayajñē dīkṣitēna mayā rājaputra śataparivṛtaṃ vasumitraṃ gōptāraṃ ādiśya saṁvatsarōpāvartaniyō nirargalasturagō visraṣṭaḥ sa sindhōrdakṣiṇarōdhasi carannaśvānikēna yavanānāṃ prārthitaḥ . . .*

[7] Saletore, *The Historical Importance of the Sthānikas, J. B. U.*, VII, pp. 39-36.

[8] *Raghu.*, I, 55, p. 18.

An officer similar to the *Goptā* appears also to have been adopted by later rulers in South India. A copperplate grant from Tāgarti *agrahāra* in the same *hobaḷi* in the Śikarpur district, dated A. D. 1162 says how, "in the fifth year of the emperor Bijjana, when his force marched to destroy Tāgarti, the eastern guard (*Mūḍa-Daḷāra*), the son of Jakka of Masaṇa, attacking and slaying turned him back and went to the world of gods."[1] From this reference it is evident that the *Mūḍa Daḷāra* was to the Kaḷacūryas what the *Goptā* was to the Guptas, in the sense that such a military official was a 'Warden of the Marches' posted in a particular area to safeguard it.

It is interesting to note that a variant of the Kauṭilīyan officer *Gōpa* also appears to have been current in Kālidāśa's days for he refers to the *Gōptā* whom Mallinātha interprets to mean a protector in general (*Rakṣaka*).[2] This office must have survived to the times of Dharmapāladeva, in whose Khalimpur grant, ascribed to the 9th century A.D., mention is made of an official called *Gōpa*.[3]

Another important official of the Gupta period appears to have been a kind of a Warden of the Marches or one who may be styled as a governor of a frontier province. In the Nālandā stone inscription of the reign of Yaśōvarman, ascribed to the early sixth century A. D., mention is made of Tikina (Tegin) who was Yaśōvarmadeva's Minister (*Maṅtrin*), the Guardian of the Roads (*Mārgapati*) and Ruler of the North.[4] A similar official is referred to in the play *Kaumudimahōtsava* by the name of *Pratyaṅtapāla*.[5] It is interesting to note in this connection how more or less similar officials are mentioned by Kauṭalya, who remarks that "there shall be constructed in the extremities of the kingdom forts manned by boundary-guards (*Aṅtapālāḥ*), whose duty shall be to guard the entrance into the kingdom."[6] In fact, Kauṭalya prescribes rules for the appointment of such officials and repairers of fortifications. Kālidāsa also refers to the *Aṅtapāla* official.[7]

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[1] *E. C.*, VII, Sh. 56, p. 52, text, p. 102: *maga Mūḍa-daḷāra taḷat irida maraḷuci.*

[2] *Raghu.*, IV, 20, p. 77. *Cf. Ibid., Śāli-Gōpayaḥ.*

[3] *E. I.*, IV, no. 34, p. 252.

[4] *Ibid.*, XX, no. 2, p. 45, text, p. 43:
Śrīmānudurāsayaḥ putrō mārgapatīḥ pratīta tikinodocipatīrmaṅtriṇaḥ. Cf. with the official *Mārgēśa* mentioned by Kalhaṇa, *Rājataraṅgiṇi*, I, p. 214, II, pp. 291-92. (Stein).

[5] *Kaumudimahōtsava*, Act, IV, p. 29.

[6] Kauṭalya, *Arthasāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 45, text, p. 46: *aṅtēṣvaṅtapāladurgāṇi janapadadvārāṇyataṅpālādhiṣṭhitāni sthāpayēt.*

[7] *Māl.*, Act, I, p. 15.

The interior of the kingdom, according to Kauṭalya, "shall be watched by trap-keepers (*Vāgurikas*), archers (*Śabaras*), hunters (*Puliṅdas*) Caṇḍālas and wild tribes (*Araṇyacarāḥ*)."[1] Sometimes it is possible that these tribes came into conflict with the protectors of the frontiers and the king had to intervene in order to effect a settlement. Such a situation is pointed out in the *Kaumudimahōtsava* wherein it is related how once Caṇḍasēna had to go out with his army on an expedition to the frontiers to quell a revolt of his *Pratyaṅtapāla* officials among the Śabaras and Puliṅdas on the frontier of Magadha.[2]

It may be remembered here that in Pillar Edict I of Aśōka mention is made of an official called the *Aṅtamahāmātra*, a designation interpreted to mean "high officers of the frontiers" or "Wardens of the Marches" and *Mahāmātras* who were "those sent to the neighbouring states and charged with the carrying out of Aśoka's programme of Dhamma."[3] If this was the case, then especially the former official may be considered to have been the predecessor of the *Pratyaṅtapāla* or the *Aṅtapāla* officials of the Gupta age.

4. Judicial Officers

As noticed earlier the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* probably performed the combined duties of the Great Judge and General. Another official closely associated with him must have been the *Mahākṣapaṭalika* or the Great Keeper of Records. Whether these two officials worked hand in hand is not known, but probably they did so as records were referred to and precedents cited, especially in connection with cases concerning the purchase and sale of land. The latter officer, during the reign of Harṣa appears to have been styled as the *Mahākṣapaṭalādhikaraṇādhikṛta*. As the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* does not appear in either the records or the chronicles of Harṣa's reign, his place was probably taken by another officer named the *Mahāpramātāra*.[4]

It is possible to know something about this official who must have been entrusted with the administration of justice in the times of Harṣa. The officer styled *Pramātṛ* was evidently an official of the judicial department in the times of Harṣa. The etymological meaning

[1] Kauṭalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 45, text, p. 46. The Śabaras and Puliṅdas were really separate wild tribes, see Saletore, *The Wild Tribes*, pp. 38-59, 97-100.

[2] *Kaumudimahōtsava*, Act IV, pp. 10 and 29: *Magadhapratyaṅtavāsināṃ Śabara (?) Puliṅdānāṃ kuñjarakēṇa puruṣaḥ prēṣitaḥ. Bardhamānaka, api jānīṣē kuñjarakānuvartiṣu kupitēṣu pratyāṅtapālēṣu tatpratikārsayā sasainyē nagarānnigarthē. . . . .*

[3] Bhandarkar, *Aśōka*, p. 58; also see Hultzsch, *C. I. I.*, I. *The Ins. of Aśōka*, p. 97.

[4] *E. I.*, IV, no. 29, p. 211.

of this designation points to a person who must have been either a judge or an assessor of revenue.[1] Moreover the Valabhi grant of Dhruvasena III, dated A. D. 653-54, states that the messenger for this grant was the *Pramāṭṛ* Śrī Nāga.[2] In the Madhuban plates of Harṣa, the *Dūtaka* was the *Mahāpramātāra Mahāsāmanta* Skanda Gupta.[3] From these two examples it may be inferred first, that there must have been a gradation in this office, as in several others as noticed earlier; secondly, that this official must have belonged to that group of officers graced with the title of *mahā* or great, thirdly, that such an officer could also hold other offices as well and he was usually connected with the grants of land.

This office was adopted later on by other rulers and dynasties. The two *praśastis* of Baijnāth, dated A. D. 803,[4] Paṇḍukeśvara plates of Lalitāsuradeva, dated A. D. 853,[5] and the Benares copperplate grant of Karṇadeva, dated A. D. 1042,[6] refer to this office.

A. The Adhikaraṇa

Officials of the Gupta administration from the highest down to the lowest appear to have conducted their administrative duties in an *adhikaraṇa*, which may be interpreted to be an office or a court. Seals mention, for example, the *Śrī Parama bhaṭṭāraka pādīya kumārāmātya adhikaraṇa*,[7] the *Śrī Raṇabhāṇḍagāra adhikaraṇa*, the *daṇḍapāśādhikaraṇa*,[8] the Tirabhukti *parika-Ādhikaraṇa* and similar types of courts (*Ādhikaraṇa*).[9] From these references it may be

[1] Apte, *Sanskrit—English Dictionary*, p. 755, says that *Pramāṭṛ* means "having a right notion, competent to judge or ascertain, an authority, proof, demonstrating."

[2] *E. I.*, I, no. XIII, pp. 88, 92.

[3] *Ibid.*, VII, no. 22, p. 160. This Skanda Gupta, who was the commander of the whole elephant troop (*Aśeṣagajasādhanādhikṛta*), when Harṣa started on his expedition against the Gauḍa Śaśāṅka (Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 189, text, p. 195). Skanda Gupta appears to have been promoted to be a *Dūtaka Mahāpramātāra Mahāsāmanta* when the Madhuban plates were issued.

[4] *Ibid.*, I, no. 16, p. 118.

[5] *I. A.*, XXV, p. 182.

[6] *E. I.*, II, no. 23, p. 309.

[7] *Ibid.*, XXIII (II), p. 56, text, p. 55.

[8] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 108, The late R. D. Banerji observed: "The term *pādīya* was not translated by Dr. Vogel; it means 'equal to'. *Pada* is often used in the same sense as *kalpa*. *Guru-pāda* is the same sense *guru-kalpa* and means 'One equal in rank to the preceptor'". Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, pp. 72-73. This interpretation is not acceptable, because the word *pāda* means foot and the objectival form of it is *pādīya*, meaning 'at the foot', *viz.*, a servant, while it appears far-fetched to maintain that the word *pāda* is often used in the sense of *kalpa*, the source of which is not mentioned. Moreover, it is not necessary to stretch the meaning of the word

safely inferred that the *Kumārāmātya*, the *Bhaṇḍāgāra*, the *Daṇḍapāśika* and the *Uparika* had each his separate *adhikaraṇa*.[1]

Such centres of administration must have been established at particular places, especially at the district capitals. One of the Basarh seals speaks of the "chief of the Government of Vaiśāli" (*vaiśālyādhiṣṭān-ādhikaraṇasya*).[2] One of the Faridpur copper-plates of Gōpacandra, dated A. D. 586, relates how in the time of *Uparika* Nāgadeva, Chief Warden of the Gate and the minister entrusted with the principal business of regulating trade in New *Avakāśika*, who gained his dignity through the favour of Gōpacandra, "while he is administering affairs Vastupāla-svāmin, who is appointed over trade in this district in the province of Vāruka, becomingly apprised both the district government wherein the oldest Kāyastha Nayasena is the chief and also leading man . . . foremost among whom . . . and also the principal trader".[3] From this inscription it can be seen that the heads of the district were sometimes called *Amātya Uparikas* or *vice-versa*, that they were entrusted with the regulation of trade, that they were evidently appointed by the king; that they were to be apprised along with the representatives of the mercantile and the Kāyastha classes when any one applied for a plot of land. It has

pāda, especially while it appears so self-evident when compared with the word *kalpa*. *Pādīya*, therefore ought to be interpreted to mean-a servant-belonging to *Cf. Pāda-pādiya-Rāṣṭra-Rāṣṭrīya*. Therefore, another interpretation may be given to some of the legends on the Gupta seals discovered at Basārh. For instance, *Śri paramabhaṭṭāraka pādīya kumārāmātya adhikaraṇa* may be taken to mean "one who belonged to or was attached to His Highness, the illustrious *paramabhaṭṭāraka* of the Court of the *Kumārāmātyas* (counsellors to princes); *Yuvarāja-bhaṭṭāraka pādīya ... ka ādhikaraṇasya* (seal of His Highness, the Heir-Apparent (*Yuvarāja*) and Worshipful (*Bhaṭṭāraka*-worshipful, venerable, etc. *Cf.* Apte, *op. cit.*, p. 807) . . . of the court of"; *Yuvarāja bhaṭṭāraka-pādīya balādhikaraṇasya*: "The heir apparent (or prince royal or crown-prince) and Worshipful of the Military department (*Cf. A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 108. Dr. Block takes *Balādhikaraṇa* to mean military forces). The *Adhikaraṇa* cannot be interpreted as such, for it may mean only a court, tribunal, court of justice Cf. Apte, *op. cit.*, p. 47. This interpretation appears to be more reasonable instead of assuming that the Gupta officers were created with a status equal to that of the emperor himself. Even their feudatories like the Maitrakas of Valabhi, not to mention the Parivrājaka (Ucchakalpa) *Mahārājas*, did not assume royal titles until the great Gupta emperors had passed away

[9] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 109.

[1] *Cf.* Monier Williams, *Dictionary*, p. 20. He says that *Adhikaraṇa* means an act of placing at the head or subordinating government, supremacy, magistrate, court of justice, etc. Cf. *E. I.*, VIII, p. 46, note 7.

[2] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4. p. 109.

[3] *I. A.*, XXXIX, p. 204. *Amātya Upārika Nāgadēvasy-āddhyāsana kālē Vāruka maṇḍala viṣaya vyāpārāya viniyukta Vatsapāla svāminā...stha (sya?)...vyavaharato jyēṣṭha kāyastha Nayasena pramukham adhikaraṇa...ttaraviṣaya-kuṇḍa-pa...ha mahattarā (ḥ) pradhāna vyāp (ārinaḥ).* For the interpretation of *Navya-Avakāśika*, see p. 210.

also been suggested that the *Mahāsāmanta* was literally the "great chief of a district" for such a title is given to Saśāṅkadēva in his Rohtasgadh stone sealmatrix, ascribed to the 7th century.[1] Such an officer also probably styled as the *Viṣayapati* as can be seen in the Indor plates of Skanda Gupta dated A. D. 465-66.[2] That such officials were employed along with *Kumārāmātyas* during the Gupta regime can be seen from the extant seals, which refer to these officials, for they have the following expressions: *Kumārāmātya-adhikaraṇaś-ca Sarvvaṅga-viṣay-ārā (brā) hmaṇ-ādya-purassarān-carttamānān-bhavinaś-ca śrī-sāmaṅ'a...(ri)ṣayapatīn-sādhikaraṇān..... ryyahāri-janapadān-vo-(bo) dhayaty-astu vo viditaṃ.*[3] Some of these officials are also referred to in the *Mudrārākṣasa*, wherein it is related that its author, the poet Viśākhadatta, was the son of *Mahārāja* Bhāskaradatta and the grandson of *Sāmanta* Vaṭeśvaradatta.[4]

B. The Adhikaraṇa in Sessions

If it is accepted that the term *adhikaraṇa* may be interpreted to mean a court or an office wherein, according to epigraphic evidence, transactions pertaining to land were decided, it is possible that judicial matters were also settled in such a place. In *Mṛcchakaṭika* a trial scene (*ryavahāra*) is described in detail. The Beadle (*Sādhanika*)[5] goes to the court room (*ryavahāra maṇḍala*), tidies it up and makes ready the seats. Public complaints were lodged there before the magistrates (*Adhikaraṇakāḥ*). The judges entered accompanied by a guild warden (*Śrēṣṭhin*), a clerk (*Kāyastha*) and others. The judge was then conducted into the court-room by the beadle. The judge had evidently other colleagues who bore the same name *Adhikaraṇaka*. Once these were seated, the beadle had to go out of the court-room to inquire who wanted to present a case and the judges were probably empowered to postpone cases through the beadle if they were so determined, while an influential person especially of the royalty, could have his case heard despite such a determination.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (78), p. 284. This designation was used during the reign of Samudrasēna, *circa* 7th century. *Cf. Ibid.*, (80), p. 289.

[2] *Ibid.*, (16), p. 70.

[3] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 121.

[4] Viśākhadatta, *Mudrārākṣasa*, Prologue, pp. 157.

[5] *Cf.* Such an official is actually mentioned by Kālidāsa as shown below; see section on Provincial Administration. The office of the *Sādhanika* appears to have entailed the carrying out of difficult state work which probably involved some personal risk. *Cf. Daṇḍakara-sādhanādhikārēṇa-ya janapada-vidvēṣaṃ grāhayēt.* Kauṭalya *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. I, Ch. XIII, p. 23. Also see the Sone East-Bank copper-plate of Indradeva and Udayarāja. E. I., XXIII, p. 222: *Kari-turag-ōṣṭra-nau-sādhanika.* Could he have been a pilot?.

Once the plaintiff entered the court-room, first his welfare was inquired into by the judges and then he was offered a seat. Then the judge asked the plaintiff to state his case, and during this time any irrelevant talk was interrupted by the judge who reminded the plaintiff only to state the case. During this statement, any commitment, pertaining to the case in hand, if made by the plaintiff was at once pointed out by the judge to the clerk (*Kāyastha*) to be written down. The judge first considered the allegations, then the facts, the investigation of the former depending on the plaintiff and the defendant, while the investigation of the facts had to be carried out by the judge. The defendant was then summoned and likewise examined. During such an examination the conduct of the case required the judge to make even intimate and awkward questions. Sometimes during this investigation such questions were asked by the beadle as well as the clerk. The Protector of the Town (*Nagararakṣādhikṛ'a*)[1] was, if required, requested to investigate into a point at issue. While the trial was going on, the court-room was in the charge of royal guards (*Rājapuruṣāḥ*). If a capital punishment was imposed, the drum was beaten and the culprit conducted to a burial-ground and there impaled.[2]

It may be now seen how far these designations pertain to the Kauṭalīyan and Gupta periods. According to Kauṭalya the judge is called *Dharmastha*, the clerk, *Lēkhaka*,[3] the court, *Dharmasthāyi*.[4] But in the Gupta grants it has been seen how the word *adhikaraṇa* invariably refers to the seat of local administration, while the official designation of *Nagaraśrēṣṭhin* implies the most important personality in the town or the guild-president as it has been also interpreted. Likewise mention is made of the *Prathama Kāyastha*,

[1] *Cf.* The *Nāgarika* official mentioned by Kālidāsa see *ante* p. 262. It is worth observing here that Kauṭalya refers to an official called *Nāgaraka* who has been interpreted to mean a town-clerk *Cf. Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II. Ch. VI. p. 57. (3rd ed.)

[2] Viśākhadatta, *Mṛcchakaṭika*, Act IX, pp. 372-423, (Godbole); trans., Ryder, pp. 132-52. Regarding the date of this play Dr A. B. Keith says: "We are left, therefore, with no more than impressions, and these are qualities insufficient to assign any date to the clever hand which recast the Cārudatta and made one of the great plays of the Indian drama." Keith, *The Sanskrit Drama* p. 131. Owing to his imitation of Bhāsa, Sūdraka is placed after Bhāsa who is supposed to have lived in "a period of not later than A. D. 350, while we may fairly safely date Kālidāsa about A. D. 400". Ibid., p. 93. Referring to this scene Dr Keith thinks that it "conforms duly to the requirements of the legal Smṛtis of the sixth and seventh centuries A. D., but the conservatism of the law renders this no sign of date." *Ibid.*, p. 134.

[3] Kauṭalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. IV, Ch. IX, text, p. 222.

[4] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. V, p. 56, text, p. 58.

apparently alluding to the foremost among the clerks.[1] Another important Gupta official dealing with transactions pertaining to land was the *Sādhanika*,[2] while their epigraphs often refer to the military officer like the *Mahābalādhikṛta*[3]; while the *Balādhikṛta* is mentioned in the *Harṣacarita*.[4] Consequently, it can be seen how obvious is the similarity in the official designations between those referred to in the Gupta epigraphs and those recorded in the *Mṛcchakaṭika*, although it is likely that the duties of identical Gupta officials may not necessarily have had any similarity with the functions with their prototypes as in the times of Śūdraka.

The term *adhikaraṇa* is referred to in the *Harṣacarita* evidently as a court of justice, for Bāṇa observes that "the followers of the *Mīmāṁsā* alone have to ponder problems in administering justice (*adhikaraṇa*), while they examine the several *adhikaraṇas* or 'cases for discussion.'"[5] Such a designation (*adhikaraṇa*) in the reign of Harṣavardhana implies that the *Adhikaraṇa* or the court, which prevailed in Eastern Bengal in the sixth century during the days of the Later Guptas, continued to survive in the kingdom of the Puṣpabhūtis[6] about the same period and even later in the beginning of the seventh century. But how far it differed from its Vākāṭaka proto-type, the *Dharmasthāna*, cannot be ascertained.

C. Dharmasthāna

There was in Gupta times a place where an attempt was made to mete out justice in administrative matters. Kauṭalya refers to it

[1] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, p. 131.

[2] *I. A.*, XXXIX, pp. 210-11.

[3] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, pp. 101-2.

[4] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 199, text, p. 204.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 65, text, p. 78: *vākyavidām adhikaraṇavicārāḥ.*

[6] In this treatise I have adopted the name of Puṣpabhūti instead of the variation of Puṣyabhūti which was suggested by Dr Bühler long ago. He pointed out that the word Puṣpabhūti "gives no good sense" while Puṣyabhūti is a *nakṣatra* and means "he to whom Puṣya may give welfare." The modern Devanāgari Mss. constantly interchange *pa* and *ya* in compound letters." *E. I.*, I, p. 68, f. n. 5. Throughout this work the word Puṣpabhūti has been adopted especially because Bāṇa in his *Harṣacarita* clearly mentions that word as Puṣpabhūti and not as Puṣyabhūti: "*iva rāja Puṣpabhūtiriti nāmnā babhūva.*" Text, p. 100, trans, p. 83. Fleet was not quite sure of the alternative reading which was proposed and therefore read it in both the forms: *Cf. op. cit.*, Intr. p. 15. Max Muller, (*India, What can it teach us?* p. 288) and Dr. F. E. Hall (*Vāsavadattā*, Pref. p. 51), and Cowell and Thomas in their translation of the *Harṣacarita*, (p. 83) have accepted the word to mean Puṣpabhūti, while Pandit Bhagwanlāl Indraji styled it as Puṣyabhūti. (*I. A.*, XIII, p. 74). It is worth noting, however, that in no known inscription of Harṣavardhana is the word under reference referred to, while only Bāṇa mentions it.

as *Dharmasthāyī* and calls the judge a *Dharmastha*.[1] An apparent elucidation of this technical term can be found in the Chammak copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasēna II which refers to the *Dharmasthāna* in the following words: "Be it known to you that, in order to increase our religion and life and strength and victory and dominion and for the sake of (our) welfare in this world and the next, (and generally) for our benefit, this (village) is granted in our victorious office of justice (*Dharmasthāna*) as a grant not previously made, with libations of water."[2] It is therefore evident that, among the Vākāṭakas, as among the Guptas, grants of land were made in the presence of obedient and high-born officers, soldiers and others in a court of justice. Such an inference is fully borne out by the Siwaṇi Indor and Paṭṭan copper plate grants of the Vākāṭaka king Pravarasēna II.[3] Probably in such a court lands were given away, grievances redressed and justice meted out.

We may now compare this institution with another which Kālidāsa also styles as the *Dharmāsana* (*Dharmmāsana*). It is possible that in Kālidāsa's day the king, especially in his capital, attended such a court,[4] but mention is also made of another officer who was apparently entrusted with judicial duties, for he is called the *Dharmādhikāra*. The king, for example, in the *Śākuntalam* remarks: "My lady, I am (versed in the Holy Writ) he whom the Puru king employed in the office of keeping the law in the town. I am he, who has come to this pious forest (*Dharmāraṇya*) by way of seeing the holy hermitage, to know if the rites of sages are free from obstacles."[5] From those words it may be inferred that the *Dharmādhikāra* was an officer who had to be well-versed in the scriptures (*Dharma*), that he had to maintain order in the town and that he had to see that the hermits in the woods were not disturbed in the prosecution of their penances.

It is very interesting to note that Kālidāsa again refers to this office called the *Dharmāsana* in his play *Mālavikāgnimitram*. The *Pratihāri* observes: *tasmād yāvad Dharmāsanasthitam dēvam pratipālayāmi*.[6] There is no doubt that Kālidāsa had clearly in his mind a definite office known as the *Dharmāsana* to which he specifically

[1] Kauṭalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. IV, Ch. IX, text, p. 223; also see, Bk. II, Ch. V, p. 56.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-42, text, p. 238: *vaijayikē dharmasthānē apūrvva dattyā udaka-pūrvvam* . . . .

[3] *Ibid.*, (56), pp. 248-49; *E. I.*, XXIII, no. 10, p. 55; *Ibid.*, no. 14, p. 83.

[4] *Cf. Māl.*, Act V, p. 133: *jāva dhammāsaṇa-gadaṃ dēvaṃ paḍivālēmi.*

[5] *Śāk.*, Act I, p. 13: *yaḥ Pauravēṇa rājñā dharmādhikārē niyuktaḥ.*

[6] *Māl.*, Act V, p. 133.

refers twice in his plays. In the *Śākuntalam* too, he refers to this office in the following words: *ciraprabhṛidhāna sambhāvitam asmābhir—adya Dharmāsanadhyāsitam*,[1] and in these words the reference to *Dharmāsana* is clear. From this reference it may be concluded that the king must have acted as the Chief Justice in such a court, but it is not possible that in actual practice it was feasible for the king to undertake this duty either in all countries or throughout the Gupta empire. It is quite possible, however, that the *Dharmādhikāra*, who is referred to in the *Śākuntalam* as occupying the seat of Justice in maintaining law and order in the town, usually occupied this post which went by the name of the 'Seat of Justice'. It is extremely interesting to compare this technical term with a similar one found, for example, in one of the Vaisāli seals of the Gupta age. Seal no. 69-A reads thus: *Dharmāsanādhikaraṇasya*, which has been interpreted to mean "the seal of the office of the Chief Justice."[2] From this comparison three important conclusions can be drawn: first, that the *Dharmāsana* mentioned by Kālidāsa and the Vaisāli seals must have been one and the same; secondly, that the *Dharmādhikāra*, mentioned by Kālidāsa as having been the officer entrusted with the maintenance of the law in the town, must have been according to the Gupta seal the same officer although he is styled as the *Dharmāsanādhikaraṇa*; thirdly, he appears to have had an office or, as has been interpreted in this work, a court (*adhikaraṇa*) wherein he administered justice and stamped his documents. It would not be far fetched to identify the *Dharmāsana* of the Gupta seals and the plays of Kālidāsa with the *Dharmasthāna* of the Vākāṭaka inscriptions, which must have been the seat of justice in Gupta times. Probably there existed this rather vital difference between the Gupta *Dharmāsana* and the Vākāṭaka *Dharmasthāna*: the former was possibly in the Gupta empire the court of the *Dharmādhikāra*, while the latter in the Vākāṭaka empire was what the *Adhikaraṇa* was in the Gupta empire —merely a civil and criminal court wherein land disputes were also settled.

D. Ecclesiastical Officers.

It has been seen till now that in the administration of the Gupta empire there were civil, revenue and police, military and judicial departments. But whether or not there existed during the Gupta Age a department to look after the religious institutions of the Hindus,

[1] *Śāk.*, Act. VI, p. 87.

[2] *A. S. I. R.*, 1913-14, pp. 127-28.

Jainas and Buddhists remains now to be decided. Mention has already been made of the *Purōhita* but whether he was the chief of all the religious officers in this period cannot be decided for lack of evidence. His close association with the king and his importance in vital matters like the coronation and the religious functions in the palace must have naturally given him a place of enviable prominence. But if he were in reality the head of all such officers, he would have been referred to in connection with the *maṭhas* of either the Hindus or the Jainas and the *Saṅghārāmas* of the Buddhists. The Gupta seals refer to the existence of an official in the following words: *Tīrabhuktau Vinayasthiti-sthāpanādhikaraṇasya*,[1] which imply that he must have been an official who looked after the morals of the people. If this were really the case then he could only have been the prototype of the Aśōkan *Dhamma Mahāmātas*[2] and the *Samaṇa Mahamātas*[3] of the Śātavāhana inscriptions.[3]

The religious institutions of this period had evidently some administrative officers. The *Agrahārās* granted to Brāhmaṇas were under the jurisdiction of the *Agrahārika*, who must have been entrusted with the recovery of certain dues, privileges and the introduction of new settlers in a given *agrahāra*. This can be inferred from the Gaya copper-plate grant of Samudra Gupta which reveals that "the tax paying cultivators, artisans etc. of other villagers *should not be introduced by the Agrahārika of this* (*village*) (for the purpose of settling in it and carrying on their occupations) (for) otherwise there would certainly be a violation of the privileges of an *agrahāra*."[4] This officer, it may be observed, is again mentioned in the Bhitarī stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta although his duties are not specified in any way.[5] But as he is clearly referred to in this record along with other officers like the *Śaulkika* and the *Gaulmika*, there cannot be any doubt about his official status.

The Jaina *vihāras* too must have been under the supervision of the *Ācārya*. The Paharpur copper-plate inscription of the Gupta year 159 mentions the *Śramaṇāchārya* Guṇanaṇdin of Vaṭa Gōhalī which has been identified with the modern Goālbhiṭa.[6] This *Ācārya* was

[1] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-04, p. 109.

[2] Hultzsch, *C. I. I.*, I, *The Inscriptions of Aśōka*, p. 9; also see Mookerji, *Aśōka*, 29-31 173-79, Bhandarkar, *Asōka*, pp. 65-67, 144-48.

[3] *E. I.*, VIII no. p. 91.

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (60), p. 257; italics mine, text, p. 257: *agrahārikēṇ = (ā)nyad-grām-ādi-karada-kuṭuṁbi-kāruk-ādayaḥ pravēśayitavyā ma(a)nyathā niyataṃ ā(a)grahār-akṣēpaḥ.*

[5] *Ibid*, (12), p. 52.

[6] *E. I.*, XX, no. 5, p. 62, see also p. 61.

undoubtedly the head of the *vihāra* as this record suggests. In the reign of Kumāra Gupta I there was another famous Jaina teacher who went by the name of the *Ācārya* Gōśarman "who was the ornament of the lineage of the *Ācārya* Bhadra (and) sprang from a noble family,"[1] which suggests succession by heredity in office and nobility in descent. Obviously under this official there must have been lesser officers as there were in the convents of the Buddhists.

The Buddhist monasteries must have been under the jurisdiction of their officers styled as the *Vihārasvāmin* and the *Mahāvihārasvāmin*. The Kasiā stone image inscription, ascribed to the end of the fifth century, relates how the *Mahāvihārasvāmin* Haribala made an appropriate religious gift.[2] This statement shows that such officials were empowered to make gifts in the cause of religion.

Next in importance and subordinate to the *Mahāvihārāsvāmin* must have been the *Vihārasvāmin*, who was, as his designation indicates, the Superintendent of Convents. The Sāñci stone inscription, roughly allotted to the fifth century A. D., refers to the *Vihārasvāmin* Rudra, his full name being omitted.[3] This office was probably not hereditary, unlike several other offices in Gupta times, for the father of this Rudra is not called by any official designation. The appointment of Rudra might have been an exception and not necessarily the rule as far as the office of the *Vihārasvāmin* is concerned. It is not possible at this stage of research to define the duties of these Convent Superintendents unless it may be assumed that they were concerned mainly with the administration of the *vihāras* as can be seen in the case of Nālandā and Duḍḍā *Saṅghārāma* organisation.[4] But it is interesting to note that the wives of such officials were called by a feminine designation of their office, more as an honour than a suggestion implying that such a term implied their holding of any similar office. The Mathurā stone inscription, pertaining to the time of Skanda Gupta, dated A.D. 454-55, states that an appropriate religious gift was made by the *Vihārasvāmini* Dēvatā.[5] It may be observed in this connection that such a practice became current in South India as well. The Kargudari inscription, dated A. D. 1103, refers for example to a *Daṇḍanāyakiti*[6],

[1] Fleet, *op. cit* (61), p. 259.

[2] *Ibid.*, (69), p. 272.

[3] *Ibid.*, (73), p. 280.

[4] *Cf. Infra* Chapter VIII on the Religious Institutions.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit*, (63), p. 263.

[6] *I. A.*, X., p. 252, note 20. Similar appellatives can be cited in support of this view: *Rayagini*—(from *Rāyaga-Rajaka*). *E. I.*, I, no. 5, p. 384; *Mahāsenāpatini*, *A. S. W. I.*, IV, no. 16, p. 114; *Sārthavahini*, *E. I.*, I, no. 29, p. 395.

but there is nothing in this grant to show that the lady held any post of a *Daṇḍanāyaka* in this year or that she performed any duties of this office. Such a usage can therefore only be interpreted to mean the bestowal of an honorific on the wives of the holders of such offices.

VI. Powers of Officials

1. Types of Punishment

The officers of these departments were endowed with certain powers of punishment. If the Kauṭiliyan code of punishment was so severe, then according to the pious-minded Fa Hien, in the reign of Candra Gupta II, there must have been great leniency in punishing culprits. "The king", he observes, "governs without decapitation or (other) corporal punishments. Criminals are simply fined lightly or heavily, according to the circumstances (of each case). Even in cases of repeated attempts at wicked rebellion, they only have their right hand cut off".[1] The Chinese traveller does not seem to be correct in making such assertions, although it is possible that he might not have personally seen the punishments inflicted or even heard about them. He admits that fines were levied and this tax was probably the charge alluded to, for instance, in the Khōh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 475-76, as '*cōraraṇjjaṃ*',[2] which has been interpreted to mean as "fines imposed on thieves".[3] The extant epigraphs of Candra Gupta II do not, however, mention this charge. But, as it is referred to among the taxes specified by Kauṭalya,[4] and as it is mentioned as a current levy in the last quarter of the fifth century, it is possible that it was recovered as a tax in the times of Candra Gupta II as well.

In the Junāgaḍh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 455-56, there is a suggestion that another method of punishment in Gupta times was torture. When this king was ruling, the records states that any one worthy of punishment was not "over much put to torture",[5] which reveals that during his reign torture as a means of punishment certainly existed, but it was not obviously carried to excess. This allusion to the infliction of torture probably implies

[1] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (21), p. 96.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

[4] Kauṭalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. II, Ch. VI, p. 58.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14), p. 62, text, p. 59; *ārttō daridrō vyasanī kadaryō daṇḍ(yō) na vā yō bhṛśa-piḍitaḥ syāt.*

that, in the reigns of his predecessors Kumāra Gupta or Candra Gupta II, it was often stringently enforced, though of course we have no means of verifying such a statement.

Kālidāsa tells us how thieves were caught and dealt with by government officers. Theft, which was a matter of common occurrence in his days, was punished. A thief when caught was given over to guards called *Rakṣiṇaḥ*, who made inquiries into the theft and cross-examined him. He was kept in custody near the city-gate, and the matter reported to the authorities in the palace, and if the crime affected royalty, the king himself was informed about it.[1]

A man condemned to death had "the flowers of death" fastened on him. This implies that capital punishment was in use during the days of Kālidāsa. But how exactly an execution was performed is given by Viśākhadatta in his play *Mudrārakṣasa*. In it Cāṇakya relates how the Buddhist monk Jīvasiddhi, who murdered king Parvata, was to be, after a public proclamation of his offence, banished from the capital with disgrace. The other offender Śakaṭadāsa, always hatching treason against Candragupta Maurya, after a similar proclamation, was to be impaled and his family imprisoned. Later Cāṇakya observes: "Go directly to the place of execution, and with an angry scowl frighten the executioners (out of their wits) and when they run away terrified in any and every direction, carry off Siddhārtaka from the place of execution and take him safely to Rākṣasa."[2] Therefore not only were banishment and impalement after a public proclamation in vogue, but there was a specific place for such an execution, named the *vadhyasthāna*.

But probably the most brutal form of capital punishment in the Gupta age was the infliction of death by elephants. When Malayakētu heard that two of the confederate kings of Candragupta Maurya coveted his corps of elephants, he cried out to his attendant: "Put them to death by means of an elephant."[3] It is interesting to note how this horrible practice continued to the days of Daṇḍin,[4] and was once again revived in Southern India in the Vijayanagara empire in the sixteenth century.[5]

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[1] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 80: *phulaṇṭi mē hatthā imaṁsa hajjhaṁsa ṁumaṇō piṇaddhuṁ.*

[2] Viśākhadatta, *op. cit.*, Act I, p. 12. text, p. 12, also see Act II, p. 30.

[3] *Ibid.*, Act V, p. 76, text, p. 78: *itarau tu va hastibalakāmau hastinaiva ghātyētāmiti.*

[4] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, pp. 128-29. *Cf. Mudrā.*, Act V, p. 78.

[5] Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire-Vijayanagara*, p. 384. Nuniz says: "When the King so desires, he commands a man to be thrown to the elephants, and they tear him in pieces".

Banishment was also a method of punishment. It appears that a verdict of capital punishment pronounced on a criminal was at times commuted to banishment. The Chinese traveller Yüan Chwāng relates how once a person dared to make an attempt on the life of Harṣa and how "the kings all demanded that that culprit should instantly be killed". But the king inquired into the matter, "punished the chief of them (Brāhmaṇas) and pardoned the rest. He banished the 500 Brāhmaṇas to the frontiers of India, and then returned to his capital."[1] This benevolent practice of a regal amnesty appears to have been a fact because Kālidāsa also refers to this gesture of royal munificence.[2] Bāṇa too confirms it when he reveals that on the birth of the prince Harṣavardhana, all prisoners were released in the reign of king Prabhākaravardhana.[3] Yüan Chwāng further states that after Harṣa became deeply interested in Buddhism, he convened every Five Years an assembly of the brethren, and those who neglected the ceremonial observances of the Order, and whose immoral conduct was notorious, were banished from his presence and from the country.[4]

Yüan Chwāng throws some light on some other types of punishment meted out to offenders against the law. "The statute law is sometimes violated and plots made against the sovereign when crime is brought to light the offender is imprisoned for life; he does not suffer any corporal punishment, but alive and dead he is treated as a member of the community (lit. as a man). For offences against social morality and disloyal and unfilial conduct, the punishment is to cut off the nose, or an ear, or a hand, or a foot, or to banish the offender to another country or into the wilderness. Other offences can be atoned for by a money payment".[5]

Bāṇa unconsciously gives some information about the nature of some of these punishments. He relates how under Harṣa "the only *feet* ever cut off are those in metre . . . there is no cutting off the four principal limbs of condemned criminals".[6] From these allusions

[1] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 221; *Cf.* Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 172.

[2] Raghu., III, 20, p. 58: *ṛṇābhidhānātsvayamēva kēvalaṃ tadā pitṛṇāṃ mumucē sa bandhanāt.*

[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 344.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 171-72.

[6] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 65, text, p. 78: *pustakarmaṇāṃ pārthiva vigrahāḥ . . . . vṛttānāṃ pādacchedāḥ.* Manu refers to the practice of cutting off of a thief's hands for stealing more than 50 *pālas*: see *Laws of Manu*, VIII, 322, p. 310 (Bühler).

it may be seen that Bāṇa in these cases obviously refers to the extant practices of cutting off the feet for some unspecified offence and of the mutilation of the principal limbs in the case of condemned criminals. Though Bāṇa here denies the existence of these two types of punishment as Yüan Chwāng relates, the former must have existed in practice, while regarding the latter, Bāṇa himself refers to "doomed" criminals. He speaks of "clots of red sandal juice wherewith doomed criminals are decked".[1] This can again be proved by examining the condition of the corpse over which Bhairavācārya was performing the *Mahākālahṛdaya* rite. It lay supine anointed with red sandal, arrayed in garlands, clothes and ornaments, all of red.[2] Such a practice must have been common, for Cārudatta, in the *Mṛcchakaṭikā*, describes himself when led to execution, as being dragged like a beast to sacrifice, decked with the marks of red sandal on his limbs and besprinkled with meal and pounded incense.[3] From this information it is clear that in the Gupta age three methods of capital punishment were employed.

2. A Public Execution

A typical example of a public execution for committing murder can be well illustrated from the *Mṛcchakaṭikā* in the treatment meted out to the unfortunate Cārudatta. The Cāṇḍālas led the way crying "Out of the way, gentlemen, out of the way! This is the noble Cārudatta." The oleander was placed on his brow (*pāṁśurakṣīkṛtāṅgam*), red marks of sandal were placed on all his body (*sarvagātreṣu vinyastai raktacandanahastakaḥ*)[4], and he bore the stake (*sthula*) on his shoulder,[5] and his whole body was strewn with meal and powder (*piṣṭa curṇa*). Thus he was led through the crowd and as they marched they came across the stipulated places of halt, where the royal proclamation of the crime had to be read out to the assembled people. Then the Cāṇḍālas cried out: "Here is the place of proclamation (*ghōṣaṇasthānam*). Beat the drum (*āhata ḍiṇḍimam*) and proclaim the sentence." Then the proclamation was read out thus: "Listen, good people, listen. This is the noble Cārudatta, son of Sāgaradatta, and grandson of the merchant (*Sārthavāha*) Vinayadatta. This malefactor enticed the courtesan (*gaṇikā*)

[1] Bāṇa *op. cit.*, p. 196, text, p. 201: *śarīrēṣu vikasitabandhūka kusumaśōṇita śōciṣaḥ śōṇita vṛṣṭayaḥ.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

[3] *Mṛcchakaṭikā*, Act X, text, p. 257.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 153, text, p. 257; *Cf. Mudrā.*, Act II, p. 32.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 158, text, p. 263.

Vasaṅtaseṅā into the deserted old garden Puṣpakaraṅḍa and for a mere trifle murdered her by strangling. He was taken with the booty, and confessed his guilt. Therefore we are under the order of king Pālaka to execute. And if any other commit such a crime, accursed in this world and in the next, him too king Pālaka condemns to like punishment."[1] The object of this proclamation was first, to inform the people about the culprit and his offence, secondly, to convince them that the crime deserved the punishment, and thirdly, to warn them against a repetition of such a crime. In this connection one of the characters observes: "But the citizens do not believe it."[2] This remark reveals that the common people had to be convinced about the authenticity of the offence, the nature of which was publicly proclaimed. Thus proclaiming, the Cāṇḍālās led the victim to the southern cemetery (*dakṣiṇasmśānaṃ*) where he was to be executed.[3] He was led through the king's highway (*rājamārga*)[4] and on the way there were stages where the proclamation had to be read out, for references are made to the third and the last places where it was so read out.[5] When it was read out finally on reaching their destination, the chief of the executioners asked the victim to lie flat and said that with one stroke of his sword, which he had already drawn out, he would send him to heaven.[6] His last wishes were granted.[7] Daṇḍin corroborates these facts as will be shown presently.

Of course there were some chances of escape. Some good man might offer some money to free the captive, a son might be born to the king or an elephant might break loose[8] and the victim could be free.

3. Offences and Punishments in Later Times

For lesser offences, four ordeals were employed for determining the guilt or innocence of a person.[9] "These are", says Yüan Chwāng, "by water, by fire, by weighing, and by poison. In the water ordeal the accused is put in one sack and a stone in another, then the two sacks are connected and thrown into a deep stream; if the sack

[1] Viśākhadatta, *Mrcchakaṭika*, p. 155, text, p. 259.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 164, text, p. 272.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 165, text, p. 275.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 166, text, p. 276.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 163, text, p. 272.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 167, text, p. 278 *Cf.* Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, p. 5.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 156, text, p. 261.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 164-65, text, p. 274.
[9] Of these punishments Manu refers to the carrying of fire, diving under, and touching the heads of wife & children. See *Laws of Manu*, VIII, 114, p. 310 (Bühler).

containing the stone floats, and the other sinks, the man's guilt is proven. The fire ordeal requires the accused to kneel and tread on hot iron, to take it in his hand and lick it; if he is innocent, he is not hurt, but he is burnt if he is guilty. In the weighing ordeal the accused is weighted against a stone; and if the latter is the lighter the charge is false, if otherwise it is true. The poison ordeal requires that the right hind leg of a ram be cut off, and according to the portion assigned to the accused to eat, poisons are put into the leg, and if the man is innocent he survives, and if not the poison takes effect."[1]

The object of such punishments was to discourage crime to a great extent, although it was not unknown especially in the wild forests, not to mention the roads and river routes. Yüan Chwāng was attacked twice, once while sailing in the Ganges not far from Kanauj, and again while journeying through the forest of the *Polo-che* trees (*Palāśas*) near the town of *Che-kia-lo* (Sakala) where he and his companions, robbed of all their belongings and pursued by an armed gang, were saved by the intervention of an armed peasant and eighty of his armed friends.[2]

Daṇḍin throws considerable light on the activities of the police department of his day regarding crime and punishment. Police men (*Rakṣikāḥ*) wandered about in the city, either on their rounds or in search of thieves. Apahāravarman, one of Daṇḍin's characters, tells us how, after an expedition to conceal some booty, he fell in with policemen.[3] These policemen walked about with truncheons (*daṇḍa*) with which they thrashed offenders,[4] but whenever they caught a thief they bound his arms behind his back.[5] They kept watch on the highway (*rājavīthi*) at night and resorted to torture. A certain Bhil woman, conveyed a still-born child, belonging to someone to a grave-yard "but as she returned by the highway at night, she was seized by policemen (*Rakṣikapuruṣāḥ*), menaced with torture, and in her fright she half revealed the secret."[6] These tortures were not only mere threats but when they were carried into operation they must have proved fatal, for a suggestion to this effect is made by Dhanamitra to Apahāravarman: "You must torture him to death

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 172; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 83-84.

[2] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *The Life of Hiuen-Tsiang* p. 73.

[3] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 85. (trans., A. W. Rider, 1927), text, p. 41. (edited by G. J. Agashe, 1919, Bombay.)

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 196, text, p. 127.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 129, text, p. 82.

like a thief."[1] The policemen were posted not only in graveyards but also in the crematoria to guard against desecration. Mitragupta "received from the aldermen (*Pauramukhajāḥ*) the position of policemen (*Smaśānarakṣāḥ*) in the cemetery."[2]

The police department, like the others, was an organised unit of administration, although this suggestion cannot be confirmed by epigraphic evidence. Daṇḍin refers to the police captain (*Nāgarika puruṣaḥ*) by whose order arrested culprits were led away to jail.[3] This police captain did not act alone, especially in matters of arriving at a decision regarding confiscation. Mitragupta relates how, on receiving some secret information about an elopement, "the avaricious police-captain convoked the town-council (*Pauravṛddha-samidhi*) and took him (Balabhadra) (to them), saying: "This scoundrel Balabhadra is living in our city with Kanakavatī whom he stole from her father Nidhipatidatta. *You gentlemen will not object to the entire confiscation of his property.*" This proposal alarmed Balabhadra, but Ratnavatī (whom he was about to marry) said to him: "Do not be alarmed. Tell them that this is not Nidhipatidatta's daughter Kanakavatī, but Gṛhagupta's daughter Ratnavatī, given you by her parents in Valabhi and decently married. If they do not believe, let them send a messenger to his relatives." Balabhadra consented and remained on bail from his guild until Gṛhagupta, informed by letter, visited the hamlet and returned most joyfully with daughter and son-in-law.[4] This incident reveals that in Daṇḍin's day elopement or the courting of others' wives implied arrest, that the police captain convoked the town-council before whom the arrested man was placed so that they might come to a unanimous decision regarding any confiscation of goods which the captain suggested. The culprit, however, was given a chance to defend himself and was even granted a bail. Such a rough and ready procedure was considered a system of trial, the absence of which was generally noticed.[5]

This penalty of confiscation of property was only one of the several punishments meted out to offenders against the law. The confiscation of property was probably next in severity to death. A king in his fury condemned the wretched Arthapati to death

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[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 178, text, p. 116.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 96, text, p. 57.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 176-77, text, p. 118: *vimarśē ca tasyāḥ śākinītvamaikamatyēna paurāṇāṃ abhimatamāsīt.* Italics mine.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

as he was accused of theft but on his behalf Dhanamitra respectfully pleaded thus: "Oh, Sir, *royal tradition graciously grants exemption from the death penalty to merchants guilty of such felonies.* If you feel furious confiscate the criminal's property and exile him."[1] A penalty less severe than this double-edged punishment of confiscation and exile was probably torture, of which eighteen kinds are referred to and torture must have commenced with "daily inquisition, half wheedling, half bullying."[2] Then mention is made of slitting of the ears and noses.[3]

But the most savage of them all was the trampling to death by elephants, which is referred to by Viśākhadatta in his play called *Mudrārākṣasa*. In the city of Kāśī, while stealing in the house of an eminent business man, Arthapāla was caught according to Daṇḍin "with the coin and fettered" and condemned to death. When the signal was given by the chief counsellor (*Uttam-āmātya*) Kāmapāla, who looked on from the height of the palace entrance gate; (*gopur-āparital-ādhirūḍhasya*) whereupon a *mast* elephant called death-winner, to whom murder was sport lumbered towards him "with monstrous trunk curled back, while the jangling of his bells was reinforced from the throaty yells from the crowd... The infuriated driver headed him back with blistering words and kicks of unrestrained ferocity."[4] Such an execution, conducted in the presence of a crowd, by means of a *mast* elephant and under the supervision of a state official, must have been a most terrifying and agonising spectacle. But whether such a penalty was meted out simply for committing a theft alone is rather doubtful and it might have been resorted to only in cases of extreme danger and provocation.

An equally brutal punishment was the scooping out of the eyes for committing treason, especially in the case of Brāhmaṇas. Even highly placed officers were not spared from this punishment particularly if they secretly planned to murder a king. How a culprit accused of such a crime was treated is related by Arthapāla. "At the place of proclamation (*ghoṣaṇāsthāna*)", he says, "I climbed a tamarind tree with thick, spreading branches, and lay hidden, while the crowd sought the highest spots they could find; and high and low their chattering buzz began. Then my father was brought forth, his arms were bound like a thief's behind his back, the centre

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p. 93. Italics mine.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 96.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 93.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 128, text, p. 80.

of a gabbling throng. Just below me they halted him while the headman thrice made this proclamation: "This is Kāmapāla, the counsellor (*Mantri*). Coveting the kingdom, he clandestinely poisoned his sovereign Caṇḍasiṁha, and the heir-apparent (*Yuvarāja*), Caṇḍaghōṣa. Further, he plotted evil against our present monarch Siṁhaghosa, who now comes to years of discretion. He confidentially summoned to a secret interview the counsellor (*Amātya*) Śivanāga, likewise Sthūna and Aṅgaravarṣa and babbled of royal murder. These loyal men (*Svāmibhaktāḥ*) reported the plot, and the judge (*Nyāyya*) decreed deprivation of vision as the legal penalty for this kingdom-coveting Brāhman. He is now on his way to have his eyes torn out. And if any second criminal be detected, His Majesty will in a like manner visit him the appropriate penalty."[1] Consequently treason in the days of Daṇḍin meant the administration of poison to the ruling sovereign; plotting evil against the king and meeting in secret with State officials with a view to murdering the ruler. When loyal men betrayed such plots, the case must have been reported to the judge (*Nyāyya*) who, after due deliberation, meted out the appropriate penalty to the delinquent. Once the criminal was so condemned he was taken away like an ordinary thief through the common streets, where proclamations were issued in his presence so that any of his abettors might be discovered and so that they too might not escape from the same penalty.

The mutilation of a person's limbs sometimes led to the offender's execution. Dhanyaka, who was accused of such a crime, while being led to his execution with his arms bound behind his back, cheerfully said to his functionary: "If the beggar whom I am supposed to have mutilated is prepared to speak ill of me, my punishment is deserved." "No harm in trying", said the officer, who summoned the cripple and presented him before the culprit."[2] But unfortunately there is no scope for verifying whether such officers were given such latitude, especially after a criminal was condemned to be executed.

The causes of arrest and imprisonment may now be recounted. As noticed already, treason against the king, mutilation of another's limbs and even theft led to various punishments like the scooping out of the eyes, execution and trampling to death by elephants, while loitering about either in the king's highway or in the cemetery

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-36, text, p. 86: *tāvan=mē pitaram taskaram=iva paścād-baddhabhujamuddhara dhavanimahājanānuyātamānīya.....*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 168, p. text, 109.

implied imminent arrest, the clapping on of irons and imprisonment[1]. That convicts were sent to prison there cannot be any doubt, for references to the prison and a jailor are specific and clear especially in the works of Daṇḍin.[2] Minor thefts discovered by the police who arrested thieves, and disorderly behaviour in the public streets as a result of alcoholic excesses, also led to legal interference on behalf of the State. Apahāravarman one day was clapped in jail "through the fault of drink."[3]

Burglary was also a crime and how it was committed is worth noting. The prospective housebreaker first studied every house in the city regarding its wealth, occupation and character. Then by night, clad in a black cloak and girt with a sword, he provided himself with a varied kit of trowel, scissors, tweezers, dummy, cord, a dark lantern, a bee-basket and other tools. Then pitching on the house of a "capitalist," he breached the wall, penetrated through a narrow opening, unconcerned, appropriated considerable wealth and bolted[4]. The Jaina Prākṛta stories also throw some light on this aspect of burglary. We are told that burglars adopted various disguises in the shapes, dresses and signs of other professions.[5] A thief who dressed himself as a religious mendicant went about a city, where there were various houses some of which were "worth looking at, with wide open eyes and indicative of complete excellence. And there the religious mendicant made a breach in the form of *sirivaccha* and went in. And having stationed him (Agaladatta) there he left it. He brought out baskets filled with many wares."[6] We are told that this system of breaking open house walls was made, "with a very sharp tool" which aided the thieves to make "an extremely well conceived hole" in the walls of any home.[7]

When such a thief or even a suspicious character, though armed, was once caught by the police, he was not spared especially if he resisted. Apahāravarman recounts an escapade in which he met the police whom he tried to withstand. "Even when I met the policemen," he begins, "I attacked them without thinking, and was particularly angry when *they took me for a thief and struck me.* It seemed a game. But the sword dropped from my groggy hand, so that I only

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 62, 99, 96.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 97.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 81.
[5] Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, p. 231.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 232.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 253 also see pp. 249, 253.

killed two or three before falling, my eyes rolling and bloodshot. The nurse ran to me at once, with bleats of misery; but *my enemies fettered me.*"[1] The abettors of such offenders were tracked down and certainly apprehended as early as possible.[2] So thieves once caught, when they showed the least resistance, were not only thrashed but were fettered with manacles of iron.[3]

These burglars and thieves in general frequented houses of prostitutes, tap-rooms, gambling-places, stalls of bakers, sheds of parks, huts of ascetics, empty temples, squares, market-quadrangles and bazars of the markets.[4] The police were always set after them in such places, where they could be easily traced and arrested. Over these policemen in the city there was an official called the Chief of the City Guards, who, if he failed to trace any particular thief, was replaced by another official.[5] Sometimes the king laid down a time-limit for the arrest of a thief,[6] but this might not have been always the case.

VII. Provincial Administration

1. Types of Officers and their Duties

We have seen till now the nature and the duties of the civil, revenue, military, police and judicial officials of the Central Government of the Gupta empire, and we may now turn to ascertain similar functions of the Provincial and Local Administrative officers of this age.

As observed earlier, large tracts were entrusted to the care of the governors in the times of Gupta rule. Under these governors there were the district officers, who were responsible for the government of districts. The district officers were in reality appointed to special posts. How they were appointed can be found out from one of the Dāmōdarpur copper plate grants of Dharmāditya which states thus. "In the times of the reigning of the *Uparika* Nāgadēva, Chief Warden of the Gate, in New Avakāsika, who gained his dignity through gratifying that Dharmāditya, Gopālasvāmi is the customs officer

[1] Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 94. Italics mine.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 141.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 249-50.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 224.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 231.

appointed as such in chief in this district within the province of Vāsaka by this very Nāgadēva."[1] This record reveals how the king appointed an *Uparika*, who must have probably been the officer of a district authorised to recover the *uparikara*, and this officer must have been granted power to appoint his substitutes or subordinates in order to conduct the local administration and enforce regulations in the villages whenever the necessity arose. The Nandāpur copper plate grant, dated A. D. 488, shows how such orders were issued: "Hail! from the (royal) grant (*agrahāra*) of Aṁbikā village, our Head of the District (*Viṣayapati*) Chatramaha, with confidence intimates, addresses in writing and informs the court (*adhikaraṇa*) as well as the Brāhmaṇas, the chief officers and others and also the householders at the village of Jaṅgoyikā, after having inquired of their well-being..... From Aṁbila (the *Ayuktakas*).....intimate and write to the court that *Viṣayapati* Chatramāha informs us....."[2] From this record it may be concluded that the *Viṣayapati* addresed in writing any information or order he had to make to the local administrative unit, the *adhikaraṇa*, the Brāhmaṇas, the chief officers and others as well as the householders. This information was evidently communicated to the *adhikaraṇa* through the *Ayuktakas*, who must necessarily have been subservient to the *Viṣayapati*.

Just as those in charge of the *viṣayas* were called *Viṣayapatis*, it may be inferred that those who administered over *bhōgas* were styled as *Bhōgikas*. Fleet has suggested that, from a passage in the Kavi grant of Jayabhaṭa II, the *Bhōgikas* were ranked below the *Sāmaṅtas* and above the *Viṣayapatis*;[3] but whether this was an invariable practice cannot be ascertained.

There must have been several other officials under these administrative heads of districts. The seals reveal the name of the *Prayuktakas*,[4] but there are no means of finding out either their official status or even their dates. These may be compared with the *Ayuktaka*, the *Ayuktapuruṣa* and the *Viniyuktas* who are referred

[1] *I. A.*, XXXIX, p. 200, text, p. 200: *Śri Dharmāditya bhaṭṭāraka rājyai tad anumōdanā labdhāspado Navy-Āvakāsikāyāṃ mahā-pratīhār-ōparika Nāgadēvasy-āddhyāsanakāle [ ] nen āpi Vāraka-maṇḍala viṣay=ādhiniyuktaka vyāpāra kāraṇḍaya Gopāla svāmi yat—ōsya saṁvyavaharato Vāsudēva svāminā sādaraṃ abhigamya jyeṣṭha kāyastha.....*

[2] *E. I.*, XXIII, (pt II), p. 55, text, p. 54: *Aṁv(b)ila grāma agrahārāt saviśvāsaṃ adhikaraṇāṃ (nāṃ) Jaṅgoyikā grāme brāhmaṇottarāṃ saṁvyavahāryādi kuṭumv(b)inaḥ kuśalaṃ anuvarṇya bodhayaṅti likhaṅti (ti) ca reijñāpayaṅtinaḥ viṣayapati Chatramahaḥ.*

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (21), p. 100, *note* 2; *I. A.*, V, p. 144.

[4] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 109.

to in the Maliya copper-plate grant of Dharasena II, dated A.D. 571-72.[1] Besides them, as the Chammak plates of Pravarasena II record, there appear to have been officials known as *Sarvādhyakṣāḥ*, General Superintendents, mentioned along with the regular soldiers and the umbrella bearers.[2] Another important official, no doubt, appointed by the lord of the district to transact business on his behalf, especially in connection with land transactions, was the *Sādhanika*. This inference is strengthened by a comparison between this official and the *vyāpāra* officers. In a record of the emperor Dharmāditya, issued on the fifth day of *Vaiśākha* of the third year of his reign (A. D. 531 ?),[3] mention is made of the *Sādhanika* Vaṭabhōga.[4] As this term is a noun of agency formed from *sādhana*, it probably implies "a person who transacts any kind of business or who carried any matter through." In this record Vatabhōga was probably an "agent, attorney or factotum" appointed by the lord of the district to transact business generally on his behalf.[5] Kālidāsa uses this word *Sādhana* with reference to the region of East Bengal, where he speaks of the people as (*Vaṅgān*) *nau-sādhanōdyatān*, which Mallinātha explains as *naubhiḥ sādhanair – udyatān-sannaddhān*[6]. He further observes: *sādhanair – udhyatānsannaddhānvaṅgānrājñastarasā balēna*— meaning that they used boats for all purposes including war, being experts in all nautical resources.

2. The System at Work

A fairly clear idea of Provincial Government under Kumāra Gupta and Budha Gupta can be obtained from contemporary records.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 169. In this connection also see p. 8, l. 25 (1); (14); p. 59 l. 56 (39), p. 178 (35), p. 180. *Yukta* has been interpreted to mean "minor official" by Vincent Smith and F. W. Thomas. See *I. A.*, XXXVII, p. 19 and *J. R. A. S.*, 1909, p. 467, on the basis of the Kauṭilīyan expression: *yuktās tathā kārya vidhau niyukta jñātuṃ na śakyā dhanaṃ ādadhānāḥ*. *Ayuktakas* and *Viniyuktakas* have been taken to mean accountants and deputy accountants. D. R. Bhandarkar, *Aśōka*, pp. 53-54 (1925). *E. I.*, XVIII, no. 26, p. 256. There is no doubt that the *Yuktas* and *Upayuktas* according to Kauṭalya had something to do with cash and accounts, for he says: "In all departments, whoever, as whether an officer (*Yukta*), a clerk (*Upayukta*), or a servant (*Tatpuruṣa*) misappropriated sums from one to four *paṇas* or any other valuable things, shall be fined with the first, middlemost and highest amercements and death respectively." *Arthaśāstra*, Book II, Ch. V, p. 57.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (35), p. 241, text, pp. 237-38: *Yat-ōsmāt saṁtakāḥ sarvādhyakṣ ādhiyōga niyuktā ājñā saṁcāri kulaputr-ādhikṛtā bhaṭāś (c)chātrāś ca viśruta purvvay ajñā-ājñāpayitavyā viditaṃ astu.*

[3] Pargiter, *I. A.*, XXXIX, p. 208.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 195.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 211.

[6] *Raghu.*, IV, 36. p. 81, also see, *I. A.*, XXXIX, p. 210.

Vētravarman, the governor of Kōṭivarṣa *viṣaya*, mentioned above, ruled with the help of an advisory board, consisting of the *Nagara-śrēṣṭhin*, the "guild-president," the *Sārthavāha*, the chief caravan leader, the chief merchant (*Prathama Kulika*), the chief artisan, and the *Jyēṣṭha Kāyastha*, the chief scribe.[1] This statement reveals how the captains of industry in those days were virtually the rulers of the locality, for they formed a majority in the Advisory Board and their word must have carried considerable weight. These representatives were also assisted by the *Pustapālas* or the Record-Keepers who were conversant with the previous grants, which had to be verified before a plot of land could be sold.

The Dāmodarpur copper plates state that the king appointed provincial governors who selected *Viṣayapatis*, or heads of districts. In the days of the Gupta ruler Budha Gupta, Jayadatta, a governor, appointed Guaḍaka as an *Ayuktaka*,[2] who later on is mentioned as a *Viṣayapati*.[3] Such a district officer had his *adhiṣṭhāna* or headquarters in the town proper where he had his *adhikaraṇa*, probably his office and court and a large establishment of clerks.[4] This governor was empowered to sell *aprada* (unsold) as well as *vāstu* (building) lands within his jurisdiction, the details of which were well-documented by his scribes.[5]

The actual working of this system of provincial administration can be well illustrated by some contemporary inscriptions, which deal with the transactions of land. The Dhanaidaha copper-plate grant of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 432-33, tells us that the intending purchasers of any land had to approach the householders (*Kuṭumbinaḥ*), the officers in charge of the eight families (*Grama-aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa*) and the elders of the village (*Mahāmahattara*) before any transaction could be completed.[6] In this record it is stated how one officer (*Ayuktaka*) on behalf of a person named Varāhasvāmin placed the following facts before the City Council (*Adhiṣṭhāna - Adhikaraṇa*). "In this *viṣaya* of Khādā(ṭa)pāra the established custom regarding the sale of cultivated land (*kṣētra*) prevalent.....to be had (at such a rate) by the nullification of the custom of permanent endowment (*Nivīdharma*). So deign to make a gift (of land) this day according to this method...by the neighbouring

[1] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7. p. 131.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 140.
[3] *Ibid.*, V, no. 16 p. 138.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 138.
[5] *Ibid.*, XV, no. 7. pp. 140-1.
[6] *Cf. Ibid.*, XV, p. 137; *ibid.*, XVII, no. 23, p. 348.

householders who are obedient and are (thus) addressed." The Council then considered the case or the proposal, placed before it and then the plot specified was given away in the following manner: "Whereas it was so determined and whereas this determination was accepted by the statement "be it so" (*Yathā-tath=āti*), one *kulyavāpa* of cultivated land (*kṣētra*) was given to him with the area severed by the measurement of 8 9 reeds." Then the land was given away to the applicant[1]. From this grant it may be inferred that the applicant for a plot of land approached an officer (*Ayuktaka*) who must have been informed of all the details of the area required. Then this officer placed the whole case before the Council which considered over the matter and then came to a decision.

Some further light on the administration of this Council can be obtained from the Pahārpur copper plate grant dated A.D. 479. It relates how Natha Śarman, a Brāhmaṇa and his wife Rāmī, approached the official *Ayuktaka* and the City Council (*Adhiṣṭhāna-Adhikaraṇa*) headed by the Town Mayor (*Nagara Śrēṣṭhin*) at Puṇḍravardhana with the request that, in accordance with the procedure prevalent in the locality, they may be allowed to deposit three *dināras* in return for 1½ *kulyavāpas* of land distributed among four different villages, which they desired to endow in perpetuity for the maintenance of the requisites for the worship of *Arhats* and for the construction of a resting place at the *vihāra* of the Jaina preceptor Guhanandi at Vaṭa Gōhali. The details of the plot were given in the necessary units of measurements (*drōṇavāpas*). The Council then, in the first instance, consulted the Board of Record Keepers (*Pustapālas*) which was presided over by the *Mūla Nāgiraṭṭa* named Divākaranandin, who pointed out that there was no objection to the granting of this required land as it would, besides yielding some revenue to the State treasury, entitle the reigning king to a sixth of the religious merit accruing from the endowment. The Council thereupon decided to accept the offer of the couple and recorded the transfer of land. The village elders (*Mahattara*) of the respective villages, in which the land was situated, were then requested by this Council to mark out the boundaries of the plot thus granted and to maintain it in perpetuity.[2] From this record it appears that the Council first referred the question

[1] *E. I.*, XVII, no. 23, p. 348. It is worth noting here that Bāṇa too refers to the official called *Ayuktaka* in the *Harṣacarita* thus: *pūrvabhōgapati dōṣānudhāvayadbhiratikrāntāyuktaka-śatāni*, text, line 6, p. 212. Śaṅkara explains the word thus: *ayuktaka vyāpratkā.*

[2] *E. I.*, XX, no. 5, pp. 63-64.

of measurements to the Record Keepers and their verification finally decided the question. Then the Council called upon the village elders of the locality to measure the land and to maintain it as a legal transaction.

This provincial administration had a political continuity for definitely two centuries of Gupta sovereignty. Of course there are many extant inscriptions of rulers prior to the advent of Kumāra Gupta I, but little can be made of this continuity of provincial administration from the days of Samudra Gupta. But from the reign of Kumāra Gupta I onwards the full details of this provincial system of administration can be ascertained with some certainty. The emperor was of course at the head of the administration and immediately below him was the governor of the province who was usually the *Uparika*. The official responsible to this *Uparika* was the *Viṣayapati*, who, as his designation suggests, was in charge of the *viṣaya* and may be compared to the present day District Collector. This *Viṣayapati* administered the *viṣaya* with the assistance of the *Adhikaraṇa* which consisted of four representatives, namely, the *Nagarasreṣṭhin*, the *Sārthavāha*, the *Prathamakulika*, and the *Prathama Kāyastha*. The *Nagaraśrēṣṭhin* obviously must have been the representative of the merchants' guild of the town, being the north Indian prototype of the *Paṭṭanaswāmi* of South Indian history.[1] The *Sārthavāha* was apparently the representative of the trading class as a whole, the *Prathama Kulika* must have represented the artisan community while the *Prathama Kāyastha* was evidently the nominee of clerical interests of the provincial administration. It is interesting to observe that this system of government, which can be noticed in working order from the days of Kumāra Gupta I in A. D. 443-44, continued to survive not only in the reign of Budha Gupta in A. D. 448-49 but also in A. D. 534-35 during the sovereignty of Bhānu Gupta. Such a continuity reveals that this system of provincial administration was in vogue for more than two centuries of Gupta administration.

We may, therefore, set down below the personnel of this Advisory Board as it was actually constituted during the reigns of three Gupta sovereigns. Not only was the emperor mentioned in every case when the Board was referred to, but the *Uparika* and the *Viṣayapati* were not forgotten, while the names of the Board members are clearly laid down.

[1] *Cf. E. C.*, IX, Kn. 6, p. 121, *ibid.*, An. 44. p. 114; *ibid.*, X, Ct. 95, p. 263.

The Adhikaraṇa at Kōṭivarṣa[1]

Mahārājādhirāja:	Uparika:	Viṣayapati:	Adhikaraṇa:	Date
1. Kumāra Gupta I:	Ciratadatta:	Vētravarman:	*Nagaraśrēṣṭhin* Dhritīpāla, *Sārthavāha* Baṅdhumitra, *Prathama Kulika* Dhritimitra, *Prathama Kāyastha* Sāṁbhapāla.	: A.D. 443-44
2. Budha Gupta:	Jayadatta :	Śaṇḍaka (Gaṇḍaka) :	*Nagaraśrēṣṭhin* Ribhupāla, *Sārthavāha* Vasumitra, *Prathama Kulika* Varadatta, *Prathama Kāyastha* Viprapāla.	448-49
3. Bhānu Gupta:	Devabhaṭṭā-raka :	Svayaṁ-bhūdeva :	*Nagaraśrēṣṭhin* Āryya Ribhupāla, *Sārthavāha* Sthānudatta, *Prathama Kulika* Matidatta, *Prathama Kāyastha* Skandapāla.	534-35

3. Some Remarks on Offices

These provincial offices were sometimes combined, evidently after the higher officers of the central government. In the Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra Gupta we find, for example, how Hariṣeṇa is called the *Saṅdhivigrahika*, *Kumārāmātya* and the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*.[2] Likewise there was no reason why the lesser offices of the provincial

[1] *E. I.*, XV, no 7, pp. 131, 140, 144.

[2] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (1), p. 16.

administration could not be combined. A *Bhōgika* and an *Amātya* could be one and the same person.[1] But this was not always the rule, and it is possible that such a practice might have been made for administrative convenience, for we hear of more than one *Dūtaka* at one time.[2]

The bestowal of office was usually though not invariably, hereditary. Pṛthvīṣēṇa, once a *Kumārāmātya* and the son of Śikharasvāmin, who was the *Kumārāmātya* of Candra Gupta II, later on became a *Mahābalādhikṛta*.[3] Such a practice shows that there must have existed some prospects of promotion in the administrative system of the Guptas, although the usage of hereditary employment could not have always been conducive to administrative efficiency. It may be noticed here that Śikharasvāmin was not the son of an official or, for the matter of that, was Bāṇa's father an officer at the court of Harṣavardhana.

These officers, no doubt, held important administrative posts. The Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Saṁkṣōbha states that *Mahārāja* Hastin was entrusted with the administration of the eighteen forest kingdoms,[4] which had been previously conquered by Samudra Gupta[5] and had thus been incorporated into the Gupta Empire. The emperor, no wonder in such circumstances, contracted matrimonial relations with his nobles and feudatories who were endowed with considerable power, sovereignty and wealth.

VIII. Local Administration

1. Early Village Officers

Like the province and the town, the village too was an administrative unit in the Gupta empire. The village appears to have had an administrative system of its own. Kālidāsa, for example, refers to the *Mahattaras* thus: *mahattaro tumaṃ piavasako dāṇīṃ me saṁvutto Mahattarastvaṃ priyavayasya idānīmme saṁvrattaḥ*.[6] From this allusion the importance of the *Mahattaras* can be gauged. A record of

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (27), p. 124.
[2] *Ibid.*, (30), p. 134.
[3] *E. I.*, X, no. 15, p. 72.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.* (25), p. 116.
[5] *Ibid*, (1), p. 13.
[6] *Śāk.* Act V, p. 82.

Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, refers to them along with the policemen and the soldiers or the *Cāṭa-Bhaṭa* corps.[1]

The term *Mahattara* has been interpreted to mean the "head or the oldest man in the village."[2] Whether such a person was one of the members of the *pañca-maṇḍali*, the assembly of five persons, mentioned in the Sāñci stone inscription of Candra Gupta II, dated A. D. 412-13, before whom a person is recorded to have prostrated,[3] it is not possible to infer, especially owing to the lack of evidence to corroborate this supposition. The Jaina stories, also ascribed to the 6th century, A. D., sometimes throw some light on the local administration of their day. We are informed that the village headman was called the *Thakkura* (*Gramapaha*) who stood in the middle of the village.[4] He may probably be equated with the *Mahattara* of Gupta inscriptions. But there is evidence to prove that organised assemblies especially during the Gupta age, dealing with corporate village administration, evidently had a president, to adopt a modern term, who was styled as *Gaṇa-śreṣṭha*. The Nirmaṇḍ copper plate grant of *Mahāsāmanta* and *Mahārāja* Samudrasena, attributed to *circa* the 7th century A. D., refers to Udyōtārka, a *Gaṇa-śreṣṭha*, who is said to have been the writer of the grant, while the person who proclaimed this written information is named the *Dūta* called Nihilapati Kuśalaprakāśa.[5] This *Dūta* evidently ordered the record-keeper, *Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta*, of the village, to place on record the proceedings of the assembly. The Gaya copper-plate grant of Samudra Gupta dated

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.* (38), pp. 169-70.

The *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* v. 335, p. 330 (*ed. Sam.* 1980) offers some information regarding this technical term:

Cāṭa-taskara durvṛatta mahāsāhasikādibhiḥ
Puḍyamānā prajā rakṣēt kāyasthais ca viśeṣataḥ .

The *Cāṭa-Bhaṭa* are again referred to by Śaṅkarācārya thus:

Tasmāt tārkika-Cāṭa-bhaṭa-rāj-apravēśyaṃ-abhayam-durgaṃ idaṃ alpabuddhy-agamyaṃ-śāstra-guru-prasāda. See Śaṅkarācārya, *Bṛhadāraṇyakōpaniṣadbhāṣyāṭīkā*, (Ānandāśram Ed.) pp. 311 ff. Ānandajñāna gives the following explanation of this office in these words (cited by K. B. Pathak in *E. I.*, IX, no. 45, pp. 296-97): *Advaitē virōdh-āntar-ābhavē-pi - tārkika - samaya-virōdh-ōsti-ity-āśaṅky-āha-tasmāditi- pramāṇa-virōdh-ābhāvas-tach-chhabd ārthmḥ-āryamaryādām-bhiṇḍā nās-cāṭ-vivakṣyamē-***bhaṭās-tu sēvakā mithyā-bhāśiṇas-tēṣāṃ** *sarvēṣāṃ rājānas tārkikās tair apravēśyaṃ-anākramaṇiyaṃ idaṃ brahmaikātvaṃ iti yāvat.* **Italics** mine.

[2] Monier Williams, *Dictionary*, p. 794.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (5), p. 32. See Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 255, where mention is made of the *pañcamaṇḍali*. For another interpretation of this term, see *infra* chapter VIII on Religious Institutions.

[4] Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, pp. 43, 178.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (80), p. 291. The *gaṇas* are mentioned in *Yājñavalkya*, I, v. 360. *Cf.* also Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, II, p. 65 and p. 107, in this connection.

the year 9, states: "This deed has been written by the order of *Dūta* Gōpasvāmin, the *Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta* of another village."[1] This official is not evidently synonymous with the *Akṣapaṭalaka*, but was probably one of the higher officers of the *Akṣapaṭala* or the Records Department. Anyhow it is interesting to observe that during the reign of Śilāditya VII, according to his Aliṇa copper-plate grant, dated A. D. 766-67, a *Mahāpratīhāra* could be a *Dūta*, while mention is made of a *Mahākṣapaṭalika*, a member of the king's household, the illustrious Siddhasena. This officer, probably the chief of the *Akṣapaṭala*, issued a charter, which was written by his deputy, the *Pratinartaka*, the high-born *Amātya* Guha, the son of Hemḥhaṭa, who was deputed to transcribe it.[2] From this inscription it may be inferred that, during the rule of the Guptas, either the officers were transferred, for it may be seen how a *Mahāpratīhāra* could officiate as a *Dūta* or a messenger, or one official was entrusted with more than one post. Moreover, the fact that there were officers styled *Mahākṣapaṭalika*, *Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta* and *Akṣapaṭalika* shows that Gupta administration was a highly organised and centralised system.

Along with these officials are mentioned some others. The Deo Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II refers to the *Taḷavāṭaka* the *Dūta* and the *Sīmakarmakāra*. The *Taḷavāṭaka* was more probably the northern counterpart of the southern *Talavārika*, the *Taḷāra* or the village watchman rather than the village accountant.[3] The *Sīmakarmakāra* must have been an official responsible for the measurement of boundaries. It is possible that he worked in collaboration with the *Sādhanika* mentioned above. Another such officer mentioned is the *Valatkauṣaṇ*, referred to in the Gayā grant of Samudra Gupta.[4] There is reason to conclude that the *Valatkauṣaṇ* was a land-revenue official, primarily, connected with the recovery of income like the *Uparikara* from an *agrahāra* and was the custodian of its privileges. These inferences are evident from the directions addressed to such officials in the Gaya copper-plate grant of Samudra Gupta, by a higher official. Thus: "*Be it known to you*" (these officials viz., *Valatkauṣaṇa* and the local Brahmaṇas). For the sake of increasing the religious merit of (my) parents and *of myself this village is granted by me, as an agrahāra, with the assignment of the uparikara* to the religious student, the Brāhmaṇa Gōpasvāmin, of the Bhāradvāja

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (60), p. 257.

[2] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 190.

[3] *Ibid.*, (46) p. 217; see note 8, and also *E. C.*, V, Hn. 2, p. 2; Wilson, *Glossary of Indian Terms*, p. 506.

[4] *Ibid.*, (60), p. 257. R. D. Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 70 refers to this term but offers us no explanation.

gōtra (and) the Bahvṛcha (*Śākhā*). "*Therefore attention should be paid to him by you; and (his) commands should be obeyed; and all the customary tributes of the village*, consisting of that which is to be measured, gold, etc. should have given. *And from this time forth, the tax-paying cultivators, artisans etc. of other villages* should not be introduced by the *Agrahārika* of this (village) (for the purpose of settling in it and carrying on their occupations); (for) otherwise there would certainly be a violation of the principle of (the privileges of) an *agrahāra*. The year 9; the month *Vaiśākha*; the day 10." [1]

From these official directions of a *Dyūta* it may be inferred that, as soon as a plot of land was granted to any one as an *agrahāra*, its particulars, together with the name of the donor, his *gōtra* and *śākhā* were notified to him. Consequently he was specially requested to treat the donee as a privileged person, whose commands, possibly for forced labour, and other demands as the occasion arose, were to be obeyed by the *Valatkauṣan* and the local Brāhmaṇas. Nevertheless it was his duty to see that all the customary dues of the village (*samucita-grāma pratyaya-mēya*) (that which is to be measured), *hiraṇya* (gold viz., cash payment), *ādāya* (profits-from sale?) and *dēya* (*Balidēya*?) gifts like *Bali* and flowers and other gifts were to be granted to the king. From the time the grant of the *agrahāra* was made this *Valatkauṣan* had to observe that the *Agrahārika* was not to introduce the tax-paying cultivators and other artisans from other villages for the purpose of colonising this *agrahāra*, as such a procedure was considered a violation of one of its privileges.

This order to the *Valatkauṣan* was issued by the *Dyūta* Gopasvāmin, who in this case happened to be the *Akṣapaṭalika* of another village. It therefore follows that in the hierarchy of Gupta village administration, the *Dyūta* of the king, who could also hold another office of the *Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta*, viz., the Custodian of Legal Documents, was empowered to issue orders to the *Valatkauṣaṇ*. This *Valatkauṣaṇ* was therefore an official with a status higher than that of the *Agrahārika*, whose actions, as already noticed, were to be watched and guided by the former, but lower than that of the *Dyūta*.

Another important village official besides these two was the *Grāmika*, whose name, it may be observed, ends like those of many other Gupta officials namely *Śaulkika*, *Gaulmika*, *Daṇḍika*, *Uparika* and others. It has been suggested that the headman of a village

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (60), p. 257. Italics mine.

was possibly known as the *Grāmika*. The Bhumarā stone inscription of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 508-09, refers to one Indana, who was the son of the *Grāmika* Vasu.[1] As the word *Grāmika* is evidently derived from the word *grāma* it is possible that the *Grāmika* was only a village official of some eminence in the village locality especially on the analogy of other officials like the *Uparika*, *Sādhanika*, *Akṣapaṭalika* and the rest. What precisely were his duties it is not possible to say with any certainty, but one of his duties was clearly to set up the boundary pillars as can be ascertained from the Bhumarā stone inscription of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha and Hastin, ascribed to the early sixth century A. D.[2]

The actual administration of the *grāma* or the village was conducted by its own officials. The Rg Vēdic village headman, styled as the *Grāmāṇi*, which only indicates that the village was an organised unit from very early times[3], was evidently the forerunner of the Gupta *Grāmika*[4], who controlled the village. One of the Dāmōdarpur copper-plates, the date of which is lost, shows how, during the reign of Budha Gupta, land was given away by the *Grāmika*. One Nābhaka, a *Grāmika*, applied for permission to grant land to some Brahmaṇas to the *Mahattaras* (viz. men of position in the locality whose status was determined probably by wealth and age), the *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇas* (the officers supervising over the eight families (*kulas*), and the *Grāmikas* or the village-heads. They had several privileges and some examples may be cited to prove this point. A *Grāmika* for example could utilise for his own use the king's dues recovered from the village or refer cases of criminal offence to the *Grāmikas* of ten villages and the house-holders "being in confidence", implying their trust[5].

2. Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa

Perhaps the most perplexing technical term among the offices of the local administration of this age is the *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa*, which appears in some Gupta inscriptions of the fifth century A. D. The Dhanaidaha grant of the reign of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 432-33 (issued in the year 113), relates how the ryots, Brāhmaṇas, the *Mahattaras* and the others including the *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa* in the village were informed by an officer named Viṣṇu about some details of a

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (24), p. 112, note 2.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 111-12.
[3] Macdonel and Keith, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 96, 204, 247.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (24), p. 112.
[5] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, p. 137 also see note 3.

plot of land.[1] Again one of the Dāmōdarpur plates of Budha Gupta, dated A. D. 482–83, reveals the following that, while *Bhukti-Uparika Mahārāja* Brahmadatta "was the administering agent, the *Mahattaras*, the *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇas*, the village-heads (*Grāmikas*) and the house-holders, being in confidence" informed the chief Brahmaṇas about certain particulars of a plot of land.[2] From these two references it may be concluded that the *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa* was definitely a village official who was consulted along with the *Mahattaras*, the *Grāmikas* and the *Kuṭumbins* in matters pertaining to land administration, particularly regarding the purchase and sale of land in the village.

It may be noticed here that scholars have offered various interpretations of this term. R. D. Bandyopādhyāya, explained it to mean "a local officer who exercised authority over eight villages."[3] Dr R. G. Basak offered another interpretation stating that it means "an officer in the village having supervising authority over eight *kulas*."[4] Mr N. N. Das Gupta states that the expression *Aṣṭha-kulādhikaraṇa*" would mean the *Adhikaraṇa* or judicial court in the village composed of (more or less) eight judges,"[5] observing that it is analogous to the phrase "*jyēṣṭhādhikaraṇaka-Dāmuka-pramukhaṃ adhikaraṇaṃ*" which occurs in the Gugrahati grant of Samācaradēva,[6] and equating it with the *Aṭṭhakulaka* (interpreted to mean a judicial institution composed of judges from all the eight castes by George Turnour in 1838[7]) which occurs in the *Aṭṭhakathā* of Buddhaghoṣa.[8]

Mr Das Gupta's interpretation is unacceptable for, as stated earlier, while the term *adhikaraṇa* should obviously be understood to mean only a court, there is little evidence to show that the *Aṣṭa-kulādhikaraṇa* was an officer who was entrusted with any judicial duties. As noticed already the term *adhikaraṇa* may be interpreted to mean a court in which problems of land revenue administration and possibly judicial problems were discussed but, as three of the Dāmōdarpur grants of the fifth and sixth centuries clearly reveal, the *adhikaraṇa* evidently constituted of the *Uparika*, the *Viṣayapati*,

[1] *E. I.*, XVII. no. 23, p. 348.

[2] *Ibid.*, XV, no. 7, p. 137.

[3] Bandyopādhyāya, *J. A. S. B.*, (N. S.), V, no. 11, p. 460.

[4] Basak, *E. I.*, XV, p. 137.

[5] Das Gupta, *I. C.*, V, no. 1, p. 111.

[6] *E. I.*, XVIII, no. 11, p. 78: *ayavahārataḥ supratikasvāminā jyēṣṭhādhikaraṇa Dāmukapramukādhikaraṇa.*

[7] Turnour, *J. A. S. B.*, VII, pp. 993-94.

[8] *Cf. I. C.*, V. p. 110-11.

and the four members of the *adhikaraṇa* namely the *Nagaraśreṣṭhin*, the *Sārthavāha*, the *Prathama Kulika*, and the *Prathama Kāyastha*.[1] No mention is made in these inscriptions of the *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa* as having been a member of the *Adhikaraṇa*, while, the Dhanaidaha grant of Kumāra Gupta I and the Dāmōdarpur grant of Budha Gupta already cited also reveal that the *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa* was an official who was on a par with the *Mahattaras*, the *Grāmikas* and the *Kuṭumbins*. As his name indicates he might have been a type of supervisor over or a representative of eight families which probably constituted the village. But there is as yet no extant evidence to reveal that the *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa* was a member of the *adhikaraṇa* as it existed in the Gupta age. The *Jyēṣṭhādhikaraṇa* of the Gugrahati inscription of Samācāradēva does not appear in any way to be connected with the expression *Aṣṭhakulādhikaraṇa*, while the official *Aṭṭhakulaka* of the *Aṭṭhakathā* is from the context a purely judicial officer.

3. Later Village Officers.

Besides the *Grāmika* there were the other officials in the village. The Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II, refers to several officials in the names of herdsmen, messengers (*Dūtas*), and boundary-makers (*Sīmakarmakaras*)[2], who were apparently in charge of the village administration. Slightly higher officials are also sometimes mentioned in other inscriptions. In the Maliya plates of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A.D. 571-72, for instance, an officer called *Dramḍika* is mentioned after the *Ayuktaka* and the *Viniyuktaka*[3] and he appears to have been in charge of a town, but what precisely his duties were in town administration it is difficult to state for want of sufficient evidence. There were also two other village officials, at least in the reign of the Vākāṭaka king Pravarasena II, known as the *Adhvaryu* and the *Ācārya*[4], who appear to have been connected with the religious functions of the village. The former was evidently connected with matters of worship, while the latter might have been connected with the exposition of religious texts. The grants of land and the records connected with them were obviously under the *Akṣpaṭalādhikṛta*.[5] The Gaya copper-plate of Samudra Gupta, dated the year 9, refers to an *Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta*, who was the depositor of the legal documents

[1] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7. pp. 131-132, 136-37.

[2] Fleet., *op. cit.*, (46), p. 217.

[3] *Ibid.*, (14), p. 63. In this connection also see *I. A.*, IV, pp. 105, 175; *Ibid.*, V, p. 205. for variations of this designation.

[4] *Ibid.*, (56), p. 248.

[5] *Ibid.*, (60), p. 257.

of the *grāma*. In times of king Dharmapāladēva, the *Taḷapāṭāka* and *Haṭṭika*[1] seem to have been similar officials, but it cannot be definitely stated whether the former had anything to do with the *Taḷāvāṭaka*. It is also recorded that, while the same king ruled, in every market "there were guardians of the weights."[2] Several inscriptions, contemporary though not pertaining solely to the Gupta dynasty, have preserved the names of different officials with various designations. There was the *Pramāṭṛ*,[3] the surveyor and measurer (?), *Sīmapradātā*, fixer of boundaries, *Nyāyakaraṇika*,[4] an official who settled disputes and cases especially arising out of the fixation of land boundaries, *Uparika*, an officer entrusted with the recovery of the *Uparikara*, *Dhruvādhikaraṇa*,[5] a revenue superintendent, *Utkhēṭayitā*,[6] another official having similar duties, *Karaṇika*,[7] a registrar in charge of *karaṇas* or documents, *Kartṛi* and *Lēkhaka*,[8] a composer or writer of inscriptions.

Besides these officers there must have been other officials with their specified duties. The *Daṇḍapāśika* was the policeman, the *Dāṇḍika*, the chastiser, *Caurroddharaṇika*, the officer apprehending thieves,[9] while the *Cāṭa-Bhaṭas* possibly also made investigations into crimes.[10] The expression *Cāṭa-bhaṭa-pravēśya* is referred to in the Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin,[11] implying that in certain endowed lands the *Cāṭa* and *Bhaṭa* were not to enter, except to arrest robbers or persons guilty of high treason.[12]

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[1] *E. I.*, IV, no. 34, p. 254. *Haṭṭika* was possibly a collector of market-dues or an inspector of markets (*Haṭṭa*).

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 252.

[3] *Ibid.*, XVII, no. 17, p. 325.

[4] *Ibid.*, XII, no. 13, p. 79.

[5] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (38), p. 169.

[6] *E. I.*, XII, no. 13, p. pp. 75. 79.

[7] Fleet, *op. cit*, (55), p. 242.

[8] *Ibid.*, (18), pp. 88, 99.

[9] *Ibid.*, (46), p. 218. The *Daṇḍapāśika* apparently means a police official carrying a *daṇḍa* or a baton and a noose or *pāśa*, while *Dāṇḍika* must have been a policeman, carrying only a *daṇḍa*.

[10] *Cf.*, *E. I.*, IX, no. 39, pp. 284-85, *Ibid.*, XI, p. 176.

[11] Fleet, *op. cit.* (21), p. 98.

[12] *Ibid.*, *Cf.* Pran Nath, *A Study in the Economic Conditions of Ancient India*, pp. 60-66. *Cāṭa* has been understood to mean a "district officer" being a possible corruption of *cār* used in the ancient hill State of Chamba (the Panjab) to mean the head of a *pargaṇa*, who collects the villagers to do work (forced labour) on behalf of the State. *Cf.* Vogel, *A. S. I. R.*, 1902-3; *E. I.*, IX, no. 39, p. 284, note 10. A plausible explanation is the one based on a passage from the *Harṣacarita*, wherein it is stated: *śaṁśadbhichiraṃ tana-cāṭaparādhām cchābhidhānaiḥ*, (text. p. 212, line 7) on which Śaṅkara comments thus: *cāṭāḥ dhūrtāḥ . . .*

In the days of Harṣa too some light can be thrown on the local administration. Bāṇa mentions the *Agrahārikas* who were in charge of the *Agrahāras* and the *Mahattaras*, who were the elders of the village. When Harṣa started on a campaign and went to a village, they came with their presents. "Fools of grant-holders (*Agrahārikas*)", says Bāṇa, "issuing from the villages on the route and headed by the aged elders (*Mahattaras*) with uplifted water-pots, pressed furiously near in crowds with presents of curds, molasses, candied sugar and flowers in baskets, demanding the protection of crops: flying before their terror of irate and savage chamberlains...kept their eyes on the king, bringing to light imaginary wrongs of former governors, (*Bhōgapati*), lauding hundreds of past officials, reporting ancient misdeeds of knaves".[1] News was carried from place to place by letter-carriers (*Lekhakārakas*).[2] Then there was the village Record-keeper (*Grāmākṣapaṭalika*) and a retinue of clerks (*Karaṇikas*). This official and his staff were expected to meet the king or his representatives whenever they visited the locality, with a seal (*mudrā*) to legalise any orders issued by the king.[3] This inference can be made from a passage in the *Harṣacarita* which states: "During the king's stay there the village notary (*Grāmākṣapaṭalika*) appeared with his whole retinue of clerks, and saying, 'let his majesty, whose edicts are never void, even now bestow upon us his commands for the day', so presented a new-made golden seal with a bull for its emblem."[4] There is no doubt that such an official existed in the times of Gupta rule, for in the Gaya copper plate grant of Samudra Gupta mention is made of the *Grāma Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta Dyūta Gōpasvāmin*.[5]

This officer, according to Fleet, is "evidently synonymous with *Akṣapaṭalika*."[6] The word *Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta* literally means "one who is appointed to (the duties of) a depository of legal documents." As can be seen from this grant of Samudra Gupta, the *Dyūta* Gōpasvāmin, who bore the official designation of *Grāmākṣapaṭalādhikṛta ordered* the writing of a royal grant, (*ādeśa likhitaḥ*). It may therefore be concluded that such an official had also the power to order the recording of grants made by the king.

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 208, text, p. 212.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 223, text, p. 225.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 198, text, p. 203.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 198, text, p. 203: *tatrasthasya cāsya=grāmākṣapaṭalikaḥ sakalakaraṇi-parikaraḥ 'karōtu dēvō divasa=grahaṇa madyaivāvaṅdhyśāsanaḥ śāsanānāṃ' ityābhidāya vṛṣāṅkāṃ=abhinava ghaṭitām hāṭakamayīṃ mudrāmupaninyē.*

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (60), p. 257.

[6] *Ibid.*, note 8.

4. The Village Assembly

These officials of the village must have directed its administration on a co-operative basis with the help of a representative assembly (*pariṣada*) which was evidently an imitation of the *Maitri-pariṣad* of the capital and the District Council (*Adhikaraṇa*) comprising of the *Nagaraśreṣṭhin* and his colleagues who met to deal with land administrative matters. One of the Basārh seals refers to the Udānakūpe *pariṣadah* which means that it represents the seal of the Committee or, what may now be termed the *Pañcāyat*, of the village of Udānakūpa.[1] Possibly its Buddhist counterpart, especially in the administration of the *vihāra*, which will be explained at length later,[2] was the *Pañcamaṇḍali* as is revealed in the Sāñci stone inscription of Candra Gupta II.[3] This tradition of administering the organisation of a village with the help of a small yet representative committee, appears to have survived down to the seventh century, for Bāṇa alludes to the *Pañcakula*,[4] which may mean either the representatives of five particular families of the locality or it may be a variation of the technical term *Pañcamaṇḍali*. But what precisely were its duties it is not possible to define, owing to lack of evidence. But towards the end of the seventh century, Daṇḍin refers to the existence of a Town-Council which he calls by the name of *Paurarājñasabhā*, before which the police of the locality produced offenders against the law, made out a case and if the accused was found guilty, elicited the permission of this Council for the confiscation of his property.[5]

IX. The Influences of Gupta Administration

The designations of Gupta officers continued to remain current long after the shadow of that which was the great Gupta empire had passed away. Probably the earliest dynasty, other than the feudatories of the Guptas, in whose records can be traced the influences of Gupta administration, is that of the early Kalacūriyas. The Ābhōṇa plates of Śaṅkaragaṇa, dated A. D. 595, begin in a style which is reminiscent of the Gaya copper-plate of Samudra Gupta and the Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II. The glories of Śaṅkaragaṇa are praised in a manner which recalls an obvious imitation of the splendours of Samudra Gupta. Kielhorn was the first

[1] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, (24), p. 109.

[2] See *infra* Chapter VIII on Religious Institutions for further details on this point.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (5), p. 31. For kindred terms like *pañcāli* etc. see *I. A.*, IX, pp. 173, 177.

[4] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 255.

[5] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, pp. 176, 77, also see p. 182; text, p. 118.

scholar who pointed out some of these affinities when editing the Sarsavṇī plates of Buddharāja. Śaṅkaragaṇa, for example, is described in these plates as one "who on the earth had no antagonist equal to him . . . whose might was like that of Dhanada, Varuṇa, Indra and Aṅtaka, who by the strength of his arm, . . . acquired the fortune of powerful kings . . whose profound and elevated mind was well-pleased only by submission . . . who reinstated families of princes long subverted . . "[1] These epithets are strongly reminiscent of Gupta inscriptions.[2] It is worth noting that in the Madhuban copper plate of Harṣavardhana, dated *Saṁvat* 25, it is related that Rājyavardhana "completely appropriated the lustre of the guardians of the world, Dhanada, Varuṇa, Indra, and so forth."[3]

The officials and other details mentioned in these Kaḷacūriya records are also strongly reminiscent of Gupta designations. In the Sarsavṇī plates of Buddharāja mention is made of the *Rājas*, *Sāmaṅtas*, *Bhōgikas*, *Viṣayapatis*, *Grāmamahattaras*, *Adhikārikas* and others.[4] These officials administered over areas or units which can certainly be traced to the Gupta period. Reference is made to the village of Kumaravāḍao in the Gorajja *bhōga* which lay within the Bharukaccha *viṣaya*, and was granted with the *Udraṅga* and the *Uparikara*, with all imposts and taxes (*sarv-ādāna saṅgrāhyaḥ sarvva ditya viṣṭi prātibādikā*)[5] according to the *Bhūmicchidra Nyāya* and was not to be entered into by the *Cāṭa-Bhaṭa*. It was granted to the Brāhmaṇa Bappasvāmin, of the Parāśara *gōtra*, a student of the Kaṇva *śākhā*, and of the Vājasaneya Vēda, for the maintenance of the *bali*, *caru*, *vaiśvadēva*, *agnihōtra* and other rites. This record was written by the *Mahāsaṅdhivigrahādikaraṇādhikṛta* Śivarāja and the *Dūtaka Mahābalādhikṛta*, the illustrious Prasahyavigṛha.[6] When these early Kaḷacurīyas were conquered in the beginning of the seventh century by the Western Cāḷukyas, it is not strange that many of these Gupta designations, which were adopted by this dynasty were imitated by the Western Cāḷukyas as well.[7]

[1] *E. I.*, VI, no. 29. p. 300, also see *E. I.*, IX, no. 45, p. 299.
[2] Fleet, *C. I. I.* III, (1), *ll.* 26, 25, 23, p. 8.
[3] *E. I.*, I, no. XI, p. 74.
[4] *Ibid.*, VI, no. 29, p. 300.
[5] *Ibid.*, text, p. 298.
[6] *E. I.*, VI, no. 29, p. 300.
[7] *I. A.*, VII p. 365. A grant of the Western Cāḷukya governor Vijayarāja, dated A. D. 610 (Śaka 532), states: *Durgapati Vijayarājaḥ . . . rājānujñātēna viṣayamaṇḍala catuṣṭayādhipatina . . . khetāhāre kārellikāgrāmaḥ.* The administrative units referred to herein are evidently Gupta. Also see in this connection the Kheda or Kaira grant of *Śaka* era 394. A. D. 472–73 which is one of the earliest Western Cālukya inscriptions. *Cf. J. B. B. R. A. S.*, X, p. 348.

These official designations were imitated by the Cāḷukyas of Bādami, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas of Malkhed, and the Western Cāḷukyas of Kalyāṇi. In the Bāgumra grant of the reign of Vikramāditya III, the Cāḷukya king of Bādāmi, dated A. D. 654-55, we find the following statement: "*sarvānēva-yathā-sambadhyamānakān-rāja-rājasthānīya-cōroddharaṇika- dāṇḍapāśika - dūta-ganagamika - bhaṭa-cāṭa - sēvakādīn-Brahmaṇ-ottarān-vaṇig - janapadān-anyāṁśca-viṣayapati-rāṣṭra-grāmakūṭa-yūktaka-mahattar-ādhikārik-ādīn.*"[1] The Bāgumra grant of the time of Amōghavarṣa I, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa ruler, dated A. D. 867, reveals the following details: "*sarvān-ēva-yathā-sambadyamānakān-rāṣṭrapati-viṣayapati - grāmakūṭa - āyukta - niyuktak- ādhikārika - vāsapaka - mahattar-ādīn.*"[2] Again in the Yevūr inscription of Vikramāditya VI, the Western Cāḷukya ruler of Kalyāṇi, dated A. D. 1077-78, we are informed that in his reign there existed the " *rāṣṭrapati-viṣayapati-grāmakūṭa-āyuktakaniyuktak-ādhikārika-mahattar-ādīn.*"[3]

It can thus be seen that the influences of Gupta administration, which passed on through four centuries, were chiefly the results of political contacts. The early Kaḷacūriyas adopted the Gupta designations evidently owing to their close relations with the Gupta rulers of the sixth century. The same may be said of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas who ventured to enter the arena of north Indian politics in the eighth century. I have elsewhere pointed out how the Rāṣṭrakūṭas embroiled themselves in the politics of the Matsyas and the Pālas in the eighth century.[4] The Rādhanpūr plates of Govinda III record how in A. D. 808 his camp was "pitched on the ridges of the Vindhya."[5] Such associations with the Pālas, who only arose out of the ruins of the Gupta empire, must have naturally inspired the Rāṣṭrakūṭas to adopt some of the Gupta designations. For example in the Sañjan plates of Amōghavarṣa, dated A. D. 871, he is called by the typically Gupta royal title of *Parambhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Paramēśvara*.[6] Then are mentioned the lords of the ten provinces and districts (*Rāṣṭrapati-Viṣayapati*) the heads of villages (*Grāmakūṭa*), the accountants (*Yuktakas*) and deputy

[1] *I. A.*, XVIII, p. 268.

[2] *Ibid.*, XII, pp. 184, 189.

[3] *Ibid.*, XVIII, pp. 20-21.

[4] *Cf.* Saletore, *The Mīnas in Tradition and History, A Volume of Indian and Iranian Studies* (*Sir Denison Ross Commemoration Volume*), pp. 320-23, (1939).

[5] *E. I.*, VI, no. 23, p. 250.

[6] These Gupta titles were first adopted by the Western Caḷukyas of Bādāmi. Pulikēsin II acquired the title of *Paramēśvara* by defeating Harṣavardhana (*I. A.*, XIX p. 305). In the Nerūr grant of Candrāditya the title of *Bhaṭṭāraka* is attached to his name. *Cf.* Fleet, *D. K. D.*, pp. 351-52.

accountants (*Niyuktakas*) and other officers (*Adhikārakaṇ*). Mention is also made of *bali*, *caru*, *vaiśvadeva*, *agnihōtra*, and other sacrifices. Besides these there is again the unfailing reference to the Cāṭas and Bhaṭas.[1] A Cāḷukyan record dated A. D. 1123 relates how a ruler called Tribuvanamalla Narendra Deva commanded several of his servants, among whom are mentioned the *Rāṣṭrapati*, *Viṣayapati*, *Grāmakūṭaka*, *Ayuktaka Niyuktaka*, *Adhikārika* and *Mahattara*.[2]

The Somavamśī kings of Kaṭaka, who have been placed by Fleet between *circa* A. D. 1000 and 1100,[3] adopted Gupta titles of royalty and designations of office. The titles of *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Paramēśvara* were assumed by rulers like Śiva Gupta,[4] Mahā Bhavaguptarāja I,[5] and Mahā Bhavaguptarāja II.[6] Their records show that designations of Gupta officers too were adopted by them. A record of king Śiva Gupta, for instance, refers to the *Samāhartṛ-Sannidhātṛ - Niyuktak - Ādhikārika - Daṇḍapāśika - Cāṭa - Bhaṭa*,[7] among whom, although the first two are evidently Kauṭalīyan officers, the rest are all pertaining to Gupta administration. Along with these officials new designations, probably for their own administrative convenience, were also introduced as can be noticed from the Kaṭak copper plate grant of Mahābhavaguptarāja Deva.[8] The Kudopaḷḷi plates of Mahābhavagupta II, which could not have been inscribed earlier than in *circa* the first half of the twelfth century A. D., allude to Gupta officers like *Cāṭa-Bhaṭa Sarva-ōparika*, *Rājaputra* and *Taḷavargi-Sāmavāji*.[9]

X. Units of Administration

Under the Guptas most of these important officials of the State were placed in charge of the various units of administration into which their empire was divided. Even in the matter of these units of administration, it cannot be said that the Guptas were in any way 'original' because they evidently did not entirely cut themselves away from the historic traditions of their illustrious predecessors. In the Kauṭalīyan polity reference is made to the *nagara*, *viṣaya* and

[1] *E. I.*, XVIII, no. 26, pp. 256-57.
[2] *E. C.*, XI, Dg. 1, p. 23.
[3] *E. I.*, III, no. 47, p. 333.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 334, 350, etc.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 354, also see, *Ibid.*, XI, no. 8, p. 94.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 358.
[7] *Ibid.*, text, p. 347.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 354, see *Ibid.*, VIII, no. 11, p. 141.
[9] *Ibid.*, IV, no. 35, text, p. 258.

grāma.[1] What terms were employed to denote a territorial division and its sub-divisions during the reign of Aśōka it is not known,[2] while during the days of the Scythians and the Kuṣāṇas the village, town and district went by the names of *grāma*, *nagara* and *āhāra* as noticed earlier. It is interesting to observe that all of these territorial divisions continued to be current in the days of the Gupta emperors.

A. In the Eastern and Central Provinces

1. Grāma

The *grāma* as an administrative unit was known in the Vedic age, when it was united by ties of kindred.[3] This *grāma* was familiar to Kauṭalya who mentions the village labourers as *grāmabhṛtaka* and refers to the village as *grāma*.[4] It was also known to Sukrācārya.[5]

The smallest territorial unit in Gupta administration was evidently the *grāma*. Mention is made of the Rēvati *grāma* in the Gaya grant of Samudra Gupta.[6] The Bihar stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta, which is not dated, calls a village field as the *grāmakṣētraṇi*. The undated Bhitarī stone pillar inscription of this ruler clearly refers to the *grāma* in the words: "*grāmaṇ-ēnaṇ sa vidadhē pituḥ puṇyābhivṛddhaṇē*."[8] The Kahauṇ stone pillar inscription of this king, dated A. D. 460-1, points to the Kakubha *grāma*.[9] This practice was in vogue among the Parivrājaka *Mahārājas* as well. In the Khoḷ copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 475-76, mention is made of the Vasuntaraṣaṇḍikā *grāma*.[10] The diminutive of *grāma* was sometimes called the *grāmaka*. The Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 482-83, refers to the Vaṅgara *grāmaka*.[11] Even later on in the seventh century, to which the Nirmaṇḍ copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* and *Mahāsāmanta* Samudrasena is ascribed, the term *grāma* is applied to the village of Sūlisa.[12]

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[1] *Kauṭalya, op. cit.*, Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 46, text, p. 46.
[2] *Cf.*, Bhandarkar, *Aśōka*, p. 51, (2nd ed.).
[3] Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects*, I, v. 5, p. 96.
[4] *Kauṭalya op. cit.*, Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 46.
[5] *Śukranītisāra*, Ch. I, ll. 385-86, p. 25.
[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (60), p. 256.
[7] *Ibid.*, (12), p. 50.
[8] *Ibid.*, (13), p. 54.
[9] *Ibid.*, (15), p. 67 : *khyātesmin grāma ratne Kakubha* . . .
[10] *Ibid.*, (21), p. 96.
[11] *Ibid.*, (22), p. 103.
[12] *Ibid.*, (80), p. 289.

2. Pura

Towns and even large cities went by the name of *pura*. In the Mandasor inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, mention is made of Daśapura,[1] now known as Dāsōr. Again in the Ārang plates of *Rāja* Mahājayarāja it is related how this monarch ruled in Śarabhapura.[2] But it is known from epigraphs that in Surāṣṭra a town must have been called as *draṅga*. The Vāla copper plate grant of Guhasena of Valabhi, dated A. D. 556, refers to the *Maṇḍali draṅga*.[3] During the reign of his son Dharasena II, this unit must have been in use and an officer, either in charge of such territorial divisions or having some administrative control over them, must have been known as a *Draṅgika*.[4]

In the Deo Baranārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II the term *viṣaya* is in a sense a little more clarified. The village of Vāruṇika, for example, is stated to have been in the Nagara *bhukti* and belonged to the Vāḷavi *viṣaya*.[5] Consequently one is led to conclude that in the reign of this ruler while the *grāma* was the first, the *bhukti* and finally the *viṣaya* were the other graded units of administration. It is hardly possible to assume here that the term *bhukti* was then considered to be synonymous with the *pura*. This traditional order of Gupta administrative units was no innovation in the days of Jīvita Gupta II for in the Gaya copper plate grant of Samudra Gupta, dated A. D. 328-29, the Rēvati *grāma* is recorded to have belonged to the Gaya *viṣaya*.[6]

3. Patta

Some *agrahārās* or Brāhmaṇa villages, at least according to the Khoḷ copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 482-83, must have constituted a *paṭṭa*. This record refers to the "*Agrahāra* of Kōrparika in the northern *paṭṭa*."[7] The Khoḷ plates of *Mahārāja Saṁkṣōbha*, dated A. D. 528-29, point to "half of the village of Ōpāṇi in the Maṇināga *pēṭha*".[8] Again the Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 533-34, which was issued from Ucchakalpa, refers to the villages of Vyāghra *pallikā* and Kāćara

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 81.
[2] *Ibid.*, (40), p. 193.
[3] *E. I.*, XIII, no. 30, p. 339.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 169.
[5] *Ibid.*, (46), p. 218.
[6] *Ibid.*, (60), p. 256: *Gayāvaiṣayika Revāṭike grāmē*...
[7] *Ibid.*, (22), p. 104.
[8] *Ibid.*, (25), p. 116.

pallikā in the Maṇināga *pēṭha*.[1] From the last two references it may be inferred that at least three villages viz., Ōpāṇi *pallika*, Vyāghra *pallika* and Kācara *pallika* constituted one *pēṭha*, but whether more villages were included in one *pēṭha* cannot now be determined. Moreover it is hazardous to suggest any connection between the terms *paṭṭa* and *pēṭha*, apart from an apparent phonetic similarity. But still it may be noticed that the terms *paṭṭa* and *pēṭha* occur in records which were found somewhere in the valley near the village of Khoḥ in the Nāgauḍh State in the Bāghelkhand division of Central India. The Khoḥ copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Saṁkṣōbha, which mentions how he governed Ḍabhālā, "undoubtedly the older form of Ḍahālā, which seems to represent the modern Bundelkhand," refers to the *pēṭha*.[2] This term is also repeated in the epigraph of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha issued from Ucchakalpa, wherein is mentioned the town of Mānapura, which Fleet identified with the modern Mānpur near the river Sōn, about forty-seven miles in a south-easterly direction from Uchaharā and thirty-two miles south-east of Kārītalāi.[3] It is therefore evident that, in the area corresponding to the modern Central India, the terms *paṭṭa* and *pēṭha* were current.

The word *paṭṭa*, according to Kittel, among other things means either a city, a town or a village.[4] Its diminutive form is probably *paṭi* or *paṭṭi* which in Kannaḍa means a pen or fold, an abode, a hamlet.[5] The Halsi grant of the Kadaṁba king Bhānuvarman, refers to the Kardama *paṭi* or *paṭṭi*,[6] which in Kannaḍa stands in general for 'a strip of land'. Again in one of the earliest grants of the Cāḷukyan monarch Vijayarāja, dated A. D. 472-73, the word *paṭṭikā* occurs evidently in a similar sense. This record relates how in the village of Pariyāya several *paṭṭikas* were granted to a number of people.[7]

It is interesting to observe that in Surāṣṭra too the term *paṭṭa* was known. The Valabhi grant of Dhruvasena III, dated A. D. 653-54, mentions the village of Paṭṭapadraka in the southern division (*dakṣiṇapaṭṭa*) of the district (*viṣaya*) of Śivabhāgapura.[8]

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (31), p. 138.
[2] *Ibid.*, (25), pp. 114-116.
[3] *Ibid.*, (31), p. 136.
[4] Kittel, *Kannaḍa-English Dictionary*, p. 926.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 927.
[6] *I. A.*, VI, p. 28.
[7] *Ibid.*, VII, p. 250.
[8] *E. I.*, I, no. XIII, p. 92, text, p. 88: *Śivabhāgapura viṣayē dakṣiṇapaṭṭe, paṭṭapadraka-grāmaḥ.*

From this expression it appears that in Surāṣṭra, at least, a district (*viṣaya*) was divided into two parts northern and southern, each evidently comprising of several villages. This must have also been the practice among the Parivrājaka Mahārājas in the Central Provinces. In the Khōh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 482-83, it is said that the *agrahāra* of Kōrparika was "in the northern *paṭṭa*",[1] evidently of a *viṣaya* which is not mentioned. Whether this was the practice elsewhere in the Gupta empire cannot now be determined. The term *paṭṭa* should not be confused with the expression *paṭha*, and this administrative unit *paṭha*, meaning a part or sub-division has been current from the second century A. D. This technical term should not again be confounded with the phrase *patha* referred to for instance in the Junāgaḍh rock inscription of Rudradāman, dated A. D. 151-52, in the expression Dakṣiṇāpatha.[2]

4. Viṣaya

Next to the *grāma* or the village, the most important administrative unit was the *viṣaya*. This word *viṣaya*, which has been generally accepted to mean a district, often occurs in Gupta inscriptions. In the Indor copper plate grant of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 465-66, the unit styled as the *viṣaya* must have been in use, for the officer in charge of it, known as the *viṣayapati* Śarvanāga, was governing Antarvedi or the country lying between the Ganges and the Jamnā[3].

In the undated Bihar stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta, the town of Ajāpura is said to have been situated in an unnamed *viṣaya* or district.[4] The exact expanse of territory covered by the term *viṣaya* within its area cannot be ascertained from this epigraph. But in the Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, the whole of Lāṭa is called a *viṣaya*, and therein was the city of Daśapura.[5] This term *viṣaya* was in vogue not only in the western provinces of the Gupta empire but also in the modern Central Provinces. The Ērāṇ Boar inscription of Toramāṇa, who achieved political prominence shortly after Budha Gupta, reveals how

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (22), p. 104. *Cf.* the Tamil expression *paṛṛu*, which is interpreted to mean a village (422 of 1912) and the Karnāṭaka administrative unit *paṭṭaṇa* (*E. C.* VII, Sk. 118, p. 118) which has been suggested to mean a territorial division larger than the *Maḍamba* and lower than the *Drōṇamukha*. *Cf.*, Saletore, *Social and Political Life*, I, p. 291.

[2] *E. I.*, VIII, no. 6, p. 44.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (16), p. 71.

[4] *Ibid.*, (12), p. 52.

[5] *Ibid.*, (18), p. 81: *Lāṭaviṣayān...Daśapuraṃ.*

Dhanyaviṣṇu, the younger brother of *Mahārāja* Mātṛviṣṇu, built a stone temple "in his own *viṣaya* of Airikiṇa".[1]

5. Dēśa

Next to the district or *viṣaya* in area and in importance was the *dēśa* or the province in some portions of the Gupta empire. In the Sāñci stone inscription of Candra Gupta II, dated A. D. 412-13, reference is made to the town of Naṣṭi in the Sukuli *dēśa*.[2] Thus it is clear that in Central India the term *dēśa* signified a unit of administration larger certainly than the town and probably the *viṣaya* as well. The *viṣaya* evidently formed a sub-division of the *dēśa*. This administrative practice can be seen from the Kapālēśvar grant of Mahābhavagupta, recording the gift of a village of Dāraṇḍagrāma belonging to the Yodha *viṣaya* in the Kōsala *dēśa*.[3]

In later times the *dēśa*, *viṣaya* and *maṇḍala* were apparently considered to be synonymous. The grants of Amma II, ascribed to *Śaka-Saṁvat* 867 or A. D. 945-46, state that the kingdom of the Eastern Cāḷukyas was called the Veṅgi *dēśa*.[4] In the Terdāl inscription of Vikramāditya VI, dated A. D. 1123-24, the terms *dēśa* and *viṣaya* are applied to the Bharatakhaṇḍa and the Three Thousand District of Kuṇḍi in Karnāṭaka.[5]

6. Bhukti

The term *bhukti*, used in some portions of the Gupta empire as a unit of administration, included a number of *viṣayas*. In the Dāmōdarpur copper plate grants of Kumāra Gupta, ascribed to the fifth century, mention is made of the *Uparika* in the province (*bhukti*) of Puṇḍravardhana and of the *Kumārāmātya* Vētravarman appointed by him in the district (*viṣaya*) of Kōṭivarṣa.[6] Another epigraph of the same ruler, dated A. D. 448-49, refers to the same terms in the same order, in the Puṇḍravardhana *bhukti* and Koṭivarṣa *viṣaya*.[7] Another inscription of the reign of king Budha Gupta refers again to the same terms in the same sequence.[8]

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (36), p. 160: *svaviṣay-ēsmin Airikiṇē kāritaḥ*.

[2] *Ibid.*, (5), p. 32.

[3] *I. A.*, V, p. 55.

[4] *Ibid.*, VII, p. 16, also see *Ibid.*, VIII, p. 79.

[5] *Ibid.*, XIV, p. 16.

[6] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, p. 130.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 133.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 138-39.

The expression *bhukti* is also mentioned in the Deo Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II. Therein the village or *grāma* of Vāruṇikā is said to have been included, after a hiatus, in the Nagara *bhukti*.[1] The hiatus probably stands for a *viṣaya*, the name of which is obliterated. This term again appears in the Rajim copper plate inscription of *Rāja* Tīvaradeva, which cannot be allotted according to Fleet to a date earlier than *circa* A. D. 800. Here the village of Pimpari *padraka* is recorded to have belonged to the Peṇṭhāṇa *bhukti*.[2] From these two examples it follows that it was not the rule to mention first the *grāma*, then the *viṣaya* and then the *bhukti*, although in Harṣa's times this practice can be seen in at least one inscription. The Madhuban plates of Harṣa refer, for instance, to the Somaṇḍaka *grāma* which belonged to the Kuṇḍadhāni *viṣaya* in the Śrāvasti *bhukti*.[3]

7. Khaṇḍa

The *khaṇḍa* was also probably a sub-division of the *dēśa*. In an unpublished grant of the Somavaṁśī king Mahābhavagupta, mention is made of the gift of the village of Arkigrāma belonging to the Tulumbakhaṇḍa, in the Kosala *dēśa*.[4]

In the region controlled by the Vākāṭakas, however, there appears to have been some variations in the nomenclatures of the different units of administration. The Siwaṇi copper plate grant of the Vākāṭaka *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II, relates how in the Beṇṇākarpara *bhāga*, the village named Brahma *pūraka*, in the north of the village of Kiṇihi *khēṭaka*, in the south of the village of Pararajja *vāṭaka* and in the east of the village of Kollā *pūraka*, was given away as a gift[5]. The terms *pūraka*, *khēṭaka*, and *vāṭaka*, most probably implied certain gradations or types of villages, the nature of which cannot at present be ascertained. As will be seen presently the term *khēṭaka*, which probably connoted a unit larger than a village (*grāma*), was also current in Surāṣṭra at this period. These villages made up a *bhāga*, meaning a portion or a division, and possibly its counterpart was the *bhukti*.

It has been noticed already that the unit smaller than the *grāma* was probably the *grāmaka*. The Khōh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 533-34, gives a parallel diminutive

[1] Fleet, *op. cit*, (46), p. 218.
[2] *Ibid.*, (81), p. 298.
[3] *E. I.*, VII, no. 22, p. 159.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit*,, (5), f. n. 7, p. 33; *I. A.*, XV, p. 112.
[5] *Ibid.*, (56), p. 248.

in the world *pallika* and so mention is made of Vyāghra *pallika* and Kācara *pallika* in the Maṇināga *pēṭha*.[1] On this analogy the term *pūraka*, a portion of which was possibly called *bhāga*, probably denotes the smallest type of the *grāma* in the spheres of Vākāṭaka administration.

Some Parivrājaka inscriptions of the Gupta period mention an officer named *Bhōgika*, a term which has been interpreted to mean "the chief of a village"[2] and also a tax styled as *bhāgabhōga*, which, as the Karitalai copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, dated A. D. 493-94 shows, was apparently a village tax.[3] The officer *Bhōgika* like the *Uparika* was evidently a revenue official. If it is admitted that the *Uparika* was an officer entrusted chiefly with the recovery of the *Uparikara*, then it may be suggested that the *Bhōgika* might have been in charge of the territorial units known as the *bhāga* and the *bhukti*.

B. In the Western Provinces

1. Grāma-Āhāra

In the province of Surāṣṭra, however, there appears to have been a difference in the nomenclature of the units of administration. This inference can be seen from the Palitāna plates of Dhruvasena I, dated A. D. 529. The smallest unit was, of course, the almost universal *grāma*. For instance, in the Gaṇeśghaḍ plates of Dhruvasena I, dated A. D. 526-27 mention is made of the village of Hariyāṇaka "which belongs to Akṣasahaprāpa of the Hastavaprā-*haraṇi*.[4] The Palitāna grant of the same ruler already referred to mentions the "Jyēṣṭhānaka *grāma* belonging to the Akṣasāraka-*pravēśya* in the Hastavaprā-*haraṇi*".[5]

Hultzsch interpreted *prāpa* to mean a sub-division,[6] while Dr Sten Konow thought that *prāpīya* is synonymous with *prāvēśya*, which also occurs in the Khariar plates of Mahāsūdeva.[7] *Prāvēśya* may, of course, be a fiscal term but it is, nevertheless, not likely that it means anything else than what it implies in the common phrase *a-chāṭa-bhaṭa-pravēśya*, *viz.*, "which is entered from Akṣasaraka", namely, borders on Akṣasaraka."[8] Dr V. S. Sukthankar, however, agrees with

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (31), p. 138.
[2] Monier Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 767.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (26), p. 118:
te yūyaṃ asya samucita bhāga-bhōga-kara pratyāya-ōpanayaṃ.
[4] *E. I.*, III, no. 46, p. 323, text, p. 320.
[5] *Ibid.*, XVII, no. 7, pp. 107-8.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *I. A.*, V, p. 20.
[8] *E. I.*, XI, p. 110.

Hultzsch who was of opinion that *prāpīya* was derived from *prāpa*, which he interpreted to mean a territorial division smaller than *āhāra*. "Similarly the analogous term *prāvēśya* should also be looked upon", observes Dr V. S. Sukthankar, "as a *taddhita* of *prāvēśa*. That this derivation is correct may be seen from the Khariar plates of Mahāsūdeva in which a village is described (l. 4) as *Kṣitimadāhārīya* and *Navannaka-ēlat-prāvēśya*. No one will dispute that *āhārīya* is derived from *āhāra* (district, province) by the addition of the suffix-*iya*. That supplies us with the clue to the explanation of the other words under consideration here. All these words are derived by the addition of the secondary (i)*ya* to the strengthened forms of the roots *āhṛi*, *pra(ā)viś* and *pra(ā)p* (bring to, carry to) words with only minute differences of meaning. I feel, therefore, constrained to reject the interpretation of Prof. Konow in favour of the other. *Prāpīya* I take to be "that which belongs to *prāpa*," and the *prāvēśya*, "that which belonged to the *prāvēśa* (or *prāvēsa*)"; both *prāpa* and *prāvēśa* I regard as territorial divisions."[1] This explanation appears plausible although it is by no means conclusive. It may here be noted that in eighty-five inscriptions of the Valabhi rulers,[2] these two expressions occur only twice as noted above, in which, however, the correct interpretation seems to be the natural meaning of *prapīya* and *pravēśya* - to be arrived at - to be entered from.

In this connection it may be observed that in the sixth century the territorial division larger than the *grāma* was the *āhāra*. There is an apparent connection between the *āhāra*, a territorial unit, and the *agrahāra* a village granted to a Brāhmaṇa. Whereas the former retained its territorial significance, the latter became associated with a religious practice especially in the endowments of land.

2. Pēṭha

Another term akin to the *paṭṭa*, *paṭi*, *paṭṭika*, is *pēṭha* which occurs in the epigraphs of the Vākāṭakas and the Parivrājakas as noted above. That this unit was occasionally current in Surāṣṭra as well can be ascertained from the Jhar copper plate grant of Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, hailing from the village of Jhar in the Amreli *pargaṇa* in Kāthiawāḍ. It refers to the *Vaṭagrāma* in the Dīpaṇaka *pēṭha* and the Bilvakhāta *sthaḷi*.[3] Here probably is to be traced the root of Karnāṭaka influence for even now in Kannaḍa, the word

[1] *E. I.*, XVII, no. 7, pp. 106-7.

[2] *Cf.*, *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, I. (N. S.) pp. 12-75; *Ibid.*, pp. 184-91.

[3] *I. A.*, XV, p. 187.

pēṭhe means a market town, a place of sale, or long street of shops in a town.[1]

3. Pathaka

Akin to the *paṭṭa*, *paṭi* and the *paṭṭika* was the term *pathaka* found in the epigraphs of the Maitrakas of Valabhi, as one of the names of the territorial subdivisions. In a grant of Dharasena IV, dated *saṁvat* 326, the term *pathaka* occurs evidently as a division including some villages when a reference is made to the grant of the village of Kikkaṭaputra in the Kālāpaka *pathaka* in Surāṣṭra.[2] The Jhar grant of Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, clarifies the position of the *pathaka* further; for it states that there was the Aśilāpallika *grāma* in the Baṇḍārijidra *pathaka* in the Kheṭakāhāra *viṣaya*.[3] It may be noticed here that four territorial units are mentioned in order of importance: *grāma*, *pathaka*, *āhāra* and *viṣaya*.

4. Sthaḷi

There was another territorial division in Surāṣṭra called *sthaḷi*. In the Palitāna plates of Dharasena II of Valabi, dated A. D. 571, we meet with this expression.[4] Another grant of the same king, dated A. D. 571-72, mentions the name of the village of Vaṭa*grāma* in the Dīpaṇaka *pēṭha* and the Bilvakhāṭa *sthaḷi*.[5] The term *sthaḷi* apparently means a place (*sthaḷa*) but its precise significance cannot be determined except that it was a territorial unit larger than the *grāma*, and the *pēṭha*, so that a village is sometimes mentioned as being in a *sthaḷi* as in the Valabhi grant of Dharasena I, viz.: *mahēśvara dāsēnaka grāma dhārakēṭasthaḷyāṃ*.[6]

5. Viṣaya

The *viṣaya* unit was also current in Surāṣṭra. In a Valabhi grant of Dharasena IV, dated *saṁvat* 330 (A. D. 650), there occurs the expression: *Śirabhāgapura viṣayē gṛdālaya bhūmau phaṅgulapallika grāmaḥ*[7], according to which the *grāma*, *bhūmi*, and the *viṣaya* formed three consecutive units of administration. Sometimes, however, there was evidently an equivalent of this *viṣaya*, generally accepted to mean a district, in the term *bhukti*. In the Nogawa plates of

[1] Kittel, *op. cit.*, p. 1015.
[2] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, X, p. 79; *I. A.*, I, p. 16.
[3] *I. A.*, XV, p. 187.
[4] *Ibid.*, VI, p. 12.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[7] *Ibid.*, VII, p. 79. *Cf. nāḍu* in Karnāṭaka; Butterworth and Chetty, *Nellore Ins.*, III, p. 1500.

Dhruvasena II, dated *saṁvat* 320, (A. D. 639-40.) we come across the Mālavaka *bhukti*.[1]

6. Maṇḍala

Several of these districts, styled as *viṣayas* or *bhuktis*, must have constituted a *maṇḍala* or a province. The Dhiṅki grant of king Jaikadēva, dated A. D. 738, relates how a gift was made of the village named Dhēnika situated in the province or *maṇḍala* of Bhūmilika.[2] The territorial unit *maṇḍala* was also current in the Gupta empire in certain parts of which we find that the administrative unit larger than the *viṣaya* was the *maṇḍala*. For instance in the Faridpur grant of king Dharmāditya, dated A. D. 531, it is mentioned how in the province (*maṇḍala*) of *Vāraka* which was granted to Sthāṇudatta, through his lord Dharmāditya's favour, Jāyava as lord of the district was entrusted with its administration and direction.[3] Another grant of the same king, stated to have been issued in the closing years of his reign and dated A. D. 567, also refers to the territory of Vāraka as a *maṇḍala*.[4] Another record of the reign of Gōpacandra, the successor of Dharmāditya, dated A. D. 569, found in the same place, relates how Vatsapālasvāmin, who was appointed to supervise over the trade in this district (New Avakāśika) in the province of Vāraka, becomingly apprised the district government about certain administrative matters.[5]

The *maṇḍala*, therefore, from these records appears to have been divided into districts or *viṣayas*. How many such *viṣayas* constituted a *maṇḍala* or province cannot now be determined, but it is possible that the unit of administration called *maṇḍala* was confined to Eastern Bengal in the sixth century.

7. Rāṣṭra

Probably larger than the *maṇḍala* or equivalent to it was the *rāṣṭra*, a nomenclature best preserved in the name of the famous Surāṣṭra or the modern Kāthiawāḍ. In the Junāgaḍh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta, we know that he appointed Parṇadatta to protect the land of the Surāṣṭras.[6] If the western country was styled in this manner,

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[1] *E. I.*, VIII, no. 20, p. 188: *Mālavaka ucyamāna bhuktau.*

[2] *I. A.*, XII, p. 155.

[3] *Ibid.*, XXXIX, p. 197. text, p. 195: *Vāraka maṇḍale Viṣayapati Jayāvasyāyogo (a) dhikaraṇam.*

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 200.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 204: *āddhyāsana-kāpe Vāraka maṇḍala viṣaya vyāpārāya Viniyukta Vatsapālasvāminā.*

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14), p. 63: *samyak Surāṣṭr-āvani-pālanāya.*

it is interesting to note that the eastern country too was named likewise. The Āraṅg copper plate grant of Rāja Mahājayarāja, which is undated, refers to the Pamvā *grāma* in the Pūrvarāṣṭra, so called according to Fleet from its position on the east of the range of mountains, which were identified by Cunningham with those of Mekhala.[1] From these two examples it may be inferred that the term *rāṣṭra* was used in Gupta times in a rather loose way in order to represent a large stretch of land. Probably it was at first used as a technical term in Kuṣāṇa times when *rāṣṭra* was a unit larger than the *viṣaya*, as it occurs for instance in the Junāgaḍh inscription of Rudradāman, dated A. D. 151-2.

The ruler of the *rāṣṭra* was obviously styled as the *Rāṣṭrīya*.[2] The inscriptions of the successors of the Guptas do not, however, mention the unit *rāṣṭra* although they refer to the *Rāṣṭrapati*. For instance, in the Kaira grant of Vijayarāja, the Eastern Cāḷukyan king, dated the year 394, viz., A. D. 642, and the Kavi grant of the Jayabhaṭa of the year 486, namely A. D. 734[3] reference is first made to the *Viṣayapati* and then to the *Rāṣṭra-Grāma Mahattaras*.[4]

The units of administration of the reign of Harṣa too can be ascertained to some extent. In the *Harṣacarita* Harṣa remarks to Skanda Gupta: "Thus do national types vary, like the dress, features, food, and pursuits of countries, village by village, town by the town, district by district, continent by continent, and clime by clime." Therefore we learn that the village was called the *grāma*, the town, *nagara*, district, *deśa*, and the continent, *dvīpa*.[5] These details can in some cases be confirmed by contemporary epigraphic evidence. In the Banskhera grant of Harṣa, it is stated that the village called Markaṭasāgara lay in the *bhukti* of Ahicchatra (*Rāmnagar*) and in the western *pathaka* of the Aṅgaḍīya *viṣaya*.[6]

C. Conclusion

In conclusion the following provisional statement may be set down as revealing the units of administration in the eastern, central and western provinces of the Gupta empire from the rise of Samudra Gupta to the death of Harṣavardhana of Kanauj.

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (40), p. 193.
[2] *E. I.*, VIII, no. 6, p. 43: *Mauryasya rājñaḥ Caṅdraguptasya rāṣṭrīyēṇa vaiśyēṇa.*
[3] *I. A.*, VII, p. 248.
[4] *Ibid.*, V, p. 114.
[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 192, text, p. 198.
[6] *E. I.*, IV, no. 29, p. 211.

Eastern	Central	Western		
Grāma	*Grāma*	*Grāma*	*Grāma*	*Grāma*
Viṣaya	*Paṭṭa*	*Bhūmi*	*Pēṭha*	*Pathaka*
Bhukti	*Viṣaya*	*Viṣaya*	*Āhāra*	*Āhāra*
Khaṇḍa	*Bhukti*	*Bhukti*	*Sthaḷi*	*Viṣaya*
Dēśa	*Dēśa*	?	?	*Maṇḍala*
?	?	?	?	*Rāṣṭra*

From these details it may be seen that the *grāma* was invariably the smallest unit in all the provinces of the Gupta empire. Like the *grāma*, the *viṣaya* and the *bhukti* were commonly used throughout the domain, while the territorial units known as the *pathaka, āhāra, sthaḷi* and *maṇḍala* were current only in Surāṣtra.

XI. General Remarks

The administration of the Guptas, as can be ascertained from the account given in these pages, cannot be justly claimed to have been genuinely original, but it may be said to have been imposing and benevolent. It was not original because it was founded on the historical traditions of the past and improved and adopted to suit contemporary conditions. It was imposing because of the vastness of its structure the nature of which, however, can best be realised by recollecting that it was composed of the king, the Council of Ministers, the Great Assembly, the feudatories, the departments of State, the officers at the capital, in the provinces and in the villages, with their multifarious duties, the great extent of their authority and the numerical strength their own subordinates. It was benevolent because it was not a crude autocracy wherein the king was the only and absolute dictator; it had constitutional checks in the form of the Council of Ministers and the high officials of State, whose power and influence have been already depicted, but more than these, the whole administration was often guided by a judiciously interpreted system of constitutional usage surviving in the form of precedents, which had almost received the sanction of unwritten law. Its efficiency was such that it reduced its sources of revenue to a regular form, maintained an admirable system of accounts, the evidence of which can be noticed even in the sale of a plot of land in a village, and organised its vast fiscal resources in such a manner as to enable its rulers to control an empire extending from the principality

of Magadha to the borders of Samataṭa in the east and to the boundaries of Surāṣṭra in the west and from almost the footsteps of the Himalayas in the north to the confines of Central India in the south. It did not merely foster aggrandisement but, as will be shown presently, it patronised the fine arts the range of which was considerable and protected the various religions of the country with a commendable display of toleration. The external splendour of this administrative system did not imply that its interior was rotten, for it developed a robust constitution which survived for more than three centuries of remarkable sovereignty. It not only survived during this period but it largely influenced the administrative organisations of most of the north as well as south Indian dynasties till the close of the twelfth century, and such a power reveals the strength it wielded and the influence it exerted even long after the Gupta empire had disappeared as a political power from the sphere of contemporary history.

CHAPTER V

Land, Labour And Corporate Organisation

I. Introduction

1. The Concept of Land in Pre-Gupta Times

The Greek writers, dealing with pre-Gupta times, invariably state that all land belonged to the king.[1] According to Kauṭalya the country (*rāṣṭra*) is one of the elements of sovereignty.[2] He suggests that all land essentially belonged to the king when he says that "Lands prepared for cultivation shall be given to tax-payers (*karada*) only for life (*ēkapuruṣikāṇi*). Unprepared lands shall not be taken away from those who are preparing them for cultivation. Lands may be confiscated from those who do not cultivate them and given to others; or they may be cultivated by village labourers (*grāmabhṛtaka*) and traders (*vaidēhaka*), lest those owners who do not properly cultivate them might pay less (to the government). If cultivators pay their taxes easily, they may be favourably supplied with grains, cattle, and money."[3] Then again he adds: "The king shall exercise his right of ownership (*svāmyaṃ*) with regard to fishing, ferrying, and trading in vegetables (*haritapaṇya*), in reservoirs or lakes (*sētuṣu*)."[4] The king, moreover, was expected to make provision for pasture-grounds on uncultivable tracts.[5] From these words of Kauṭalya it may be inferred that according to him all land belonged to the king; lands cultivated could be granted to cultivators only for life so that they might not be lost to the king; and uncultivated lands could also be given provided that the cultivators bound themselves to pay the requisite revenue to the State. If these dues were not paid, the king was empowered to confiscate the lands once granted, while dutiful and satisfactory tenants of the State were to be assisted with grants in cash and in kind. Not only did the king exercise this right over lands cultivated or otherwise, but he imposed his prerogative of ownership as a monopoly over the rights of fisheries, ferries, lakes and commercial transactions.

[1] Mc'Crindle, *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, p. 48 (ed. 1901).
[2] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. VI, Ch. I, p. 287.
[3] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. 1, p. 46, text, p. 47.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 47, text, p. 47.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 48; see also, Bk. VIII, Ch. iv, p. 360.

Kauṭalya also laid down certain rules regarding labourers and co-operative undertakings. He prescribes fines for faults committed in the execution of labour of various kinds and refers to several types of guilds of workmen (viz., *Saṅghabhṛtaḥ*) employed by companies as well as those who carried on co-operative work, namely, *Sambhūya-samutthāthāraḥ*. Referring to these he states that "they shall divide their earnings (wages-*vētanaṃ*) either equally or as agreed upon among themselves."[1] He also states how wages should be paid and how priests should share their earnings,[2] not forgetting to set forth rules regarding slaves and labourers.[3]

Kauṭalya devotes much attention to the conduct of corporations, their causes of dissension and methods of secret punishment. He evidently paid great importance to the alliance of kings with corporations, for according to him "the acquisition of the help of corporations *is better than the acquisition of an army, a friend*, or *profits*."[4] He refers to various types of corporations of warriors (*Kṣatriyaśrēṇi*) of Kambhōja and Surāṣṭra and other countries who lived "by agriculture, trade and wielding weapons." He mentions the corporate organisations of the Lichivika, Vṛjika, Mallaka, Madra, Kukura, Kuru, Pāñcāla and others who bore the title of "*Rāja*".[5] He further explains the methods of sowing the seeds of dissension in the camps of kings and among wild tribes. He suggests how a king should help an inferior party with men and money and set them up against the wicked or cause them to migrate to other parts of the country. He advises how "corporations, also, under protection of such a single monarch, should guard themselves against all kinds of treachery."[6]

2. Corporate activity under the Kuṣāṇas.

Several Kuṣāṇa inscriptions refer to trade guilds, which point to a highly developed state of economic progress. It is interesting to note that the majority of them appear to have been corporations of craftsmen. The Sōnāri Stūpa I rail inscription refers to a gift of Dhamaguta (Dharma Gupta?) who was a *Navakarmika*, an architect.[7]

[1] Kautalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. III, Ch. XIV, p. 210.

[2] *Ibid.*, Ch. XIV, pp. 209-11.

[3] *Ibid.*, Ch. XIII, pp. 205-08.

[4] *Ibid.*, Bk. XI, Ch. I, p. 407, Italics mine.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 407-410.

[7] Cunningham, *Bhilsa Topes*, p. 313, and plate XXIII, 8; Lüders' *List, E. I.*, X, p. 25. This term has been interpreted to mean also as the Overseer of Water-Works, *Ibid.*, p. 76; *I. A.*, XXI, no. 76, p. 233; *Ibid.*, XI, no. 24, p. 29; Cunningham, *Stupa of Bharhūt*, no. 62, p. 136, and plates XVI and LIV. Also see Burgess, *Notes on the Amaravati Stupa*, no. 143, p. 30; pl. IV, no. 14.

The *Navakarmikas* are also mentioned in the Dharma Śāstra literature as pertaining to the Śūdra class[1] and it is not strange that the representative of such a guild is called in this record as a *Dāsa*. Another type of architects appears to have been the *Vihārakāracharyiṇa* (*Vihārakārāpakiṇa*) who seems to have been entrusted with the repairs of monasteries, which were, as will be shown presently, one of the conditions of the grant. Several inscriptions allude to these guilds[2]. According to the Mankiāla epigraph one Burita was a *Vihārakaracharyiṇa*,[3] but what relation such craftsmen had with the *Navakarmikas* it is indeed hard to make out. Several inscriptions refer to the guild of *Lōhakākāra*[4] who must have dealt with metals which must remain unspecified, and whom we would now style as smiths. The antiquity of such a guild can be traced to the *Jātakas*[5] but an attempt to locate them in any particular place appears to be futile. Another Kuṣāṇa inscription mentions the name of the goldsmith Dēva who is called a *Hiraṇyakāra*.[6] This term may be said to indicate the highly specialised state of arts and crafts in Kuṣāṇa times for the term *Lōhakākāra* is apparently a broader one because, for example, the traders of those days went by the general synonym of *Vaṇika*.[7] Mention is made also of other types of traders like the *Sabittakara*,[8] who probably traded in wheat flour[9] and the *Rājanapita*,[10] the name of the Chief of Barbers, which presupposes that barbers also must have formed a professional class, and the *Rāyagaṇiya*, viz., *Rāyaga*,[11] a term which has been interpreted to mean a washerman.[12] Then there was the guild of the perfumers styled as the *Gaindhika*, who must have dealt in perfumes,[13] and this corporation is mentioned in at least three inscriptions.[14] Like the guild of the *Lohakākāras*, this corporation too

[1] Manu, III, 50-60, pp. 84-86; Gautama, XVII, 17, p.; Vasiṣṭha, III, 3, p. 17, Nārada I, 178, pp. 86-87.

[2] *I. A.*, XXI, no. 76, p. 233, *Ibid.* XIV, p. 334; Vinaya Texts, Pt. III, pp. 189 ff.

[3] *J. A. S.*, IX, Vol. VII, p. 8.

[4] *E. I.*, II, no. XVIII, p. 203.

[5] Fausboll, The *Jātaka*, VI, p. 427.

[6] *E. I.*, II, no. XXIII, p. 199.

[7] *Ibid.*, I, no. XLIII, p. 383.

[8] *Ibid.*, XXI, no. 10, p. 58, also p. 61.

[9] *Cf.* Monier Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 1164.

[10] *J. U. P. H. S.*, July, 1937, no. III.

[11] *E. I.*, I, no. XLIII (v), p. 384.

[12] *Cf.* Lüders, I. A., XXXIII, p. 37.

[13] *E. I.*, I, no. 7, p. 385.

[14] *Ibid.*, II, no. XVI, p. 203; Vogel, *Cata. of the Arch. Muscum at Mathura*, no. B2. p. 62. Also see Cunningham, *A. S. R.*, III, no. 16, p. 34, Lüders, *I. A.*, XXXIII, no. 21, p. 107; *E. I.*, X, List, no. 68, p. 14; Cunningham, *A. S. R.*, III, p. 35; Lüders, *op. cit.*, no. 23, p. 108; *E. I.*, X, *List*, no. 76, p. 15.

appears to have been an ancient guild for it is mentioned also in the *Jātakas*.[1] There appears to have been yet another corporation of the caravan leaders, for mention is made of an anonymous *Sārthavāha*, whose wife Dharmasōmā made a gift.[2]

But little indeed can be made out about the administration of these guilds in Kuṣāṇa times owing to the paucity of evidence. The guild itself was known as the *Śrēṇi*,[3] while the chief was styled as the *Śrēṣṭhin*.[4] What rights he exercised and what his powers were cannot be ascertained, but it is known that some of these guilds acted as trusts of sums granted to them by some public benefactor for specified works of common welfare. An inscription from Mathurā, for instance, tells us that a foreigner called Kanasarukmāṇa deposited with the *Sabhittakara* and *Rāka* corporations 500 *purāṇas*, on condition that every month (*māsānumāsaṃ*) the interest which accrued from this permanent endowment (*akṣayanīvī*) was to be utilised for feeding one hundred Brāhmaṇas in a *Puṇyaśālā* and for keeping some provisions for the sake of the indigent at the doors of this house of charity.[5] It is interesting to note that such a practice must have prevailed in the days of the Sātavāhanas too as can be noticed from their inscriptions.[6] What is more remarkable is that this spirit of public charity was not forgotten in the times of the Gupta emperors too as can be proved from their epigraphs.

3. Land Problems and Dharma Śāstra Literature.

Smṛti literature is explicit regarding the grants of land and their connected problems. Yājñavalkya maintains that a "written document, lawful possession and witnesses are described as evidences (of a case)."[7] The details to be set forth in such a document are also laid down. "The writer of the deed should then write "this (document) is written by me, and such and such a person, the son of such and such person, being requested by both parties (i. e. the debtor and the creditor)."[8] This injunction was applicable not only to monetary transactions but also to dealings in land. "In disputes

[1] Fausboll, *The Jātaka*, I, p. 320.

[2] *E. I.*, I, no. XXIX, p. 395; *I. A.*, VII, p. 257; Indraji-Burgess, *Ins. in the Cave Temples of West. India*, no. 27, p. 19.

[3] *Ibid.*, XXI, no. 10, p. 61.

[4] *Ibid.*, I, no. II, p. 382.

[5] *Ibid.*, XXI, no. 10, p. 61.

[6] *Ibid.*, VIII, no. 8, pp. 67, 72, 75, 78-79, 82-83, 86, 89.

[7] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 22, p. 65.

[8] *Ibid.*, 90, p. 79.

relating to boundaries," observes Yājñavalkya, "of land under cultivation, persons residing in surrounding villages, aged men and other (competent persons), cow-herds, persons cultivating boundary lands and all persons living on forest-produce, should determine those boundaries. It (i. e. the boundary) should be determined by elevated lands, charcoal, chaff, huge trees, bridges, ant-hills, ditches, bones, and piles of stones."[1] Nārada is in almost complete agreement with Yājñavalkya on this point for he says that "In all quarrels regarding landed property or boundaries, the decision rests with the neighbours, the inhabitants of the same town or village, the (other) members of the same community and the senior, and the senior (inhabitants of the district). (As also) with those living on the outskirts of the village and who live by the tillage of fields situated in those parts, and with herdsmen, bird-catchers, hunters, and other inhabitants of the woods. These men shall determine the boundary in accordance with the (old) landmarks, (such as) chaff of grain, coal, pot-sherds, wells, sanctuaries, trees."[2]

In this connection it is interesting to note how provision was made by the law-givers for the remission of revenue recoverable from land, several types of which were also distinguished. "A deduction of an eighth part", states Nārada, "(shall be made), till seven years have elapsed. But when the eighth year arrives, (the owner) shall recover the field (by the other) as his independent property."[3] Therefore one eighths of the total produce was to be recovered for eight years on virgin land as soon as it began to be cultivated. It is also worth noting how Nārada also distinguishes between different types of land. "A tract of land", he says, "(which has not been under cultivation) for a year is called *ardhakhila* (half waste). That which has not been (under cultivation) for three years is called *khila* (waste). That which has not been under cultivation for five years is no better than a forest"[4] But Nārada, nevertheless, is explicit in defining the king's right over all the land. "A field which has been held in succession," he adds, "and a house which has been inherited from an ancestor, cannot be estranged (from its owner) by force of possession, except when the king wills it so."[5] Bṛhaspati, however, points to the permanent grants of land. "Having given a tract of land or the like", he states, "the king should cause a formal grant to be executed on

[1] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā* 153-54, p. 90.
[2] Nārada, XI,2-4, pp. 155-56.
[3] *Ibid.*, 25, p. 160.
[4] *Ibid.*, 26, p. 160.
[5] *Ibid.*, 27, p. 160.

a copper-plate or piece of cloth, stating the place, the ancestors (of the king), and other particulars, and the names of the (king's) mother and father, and of the king himself, (and containing the statement that) "This grant has been made by me today to N. N., who belongs to the Vedic school N. N., as being endurable while the moon and the sun last, and as descending by right of inheritance to the son, grandson, and more remote descendants, and as a gift which must never be cut down or taken away, and is entirely exempt from diminution (by the allotment of shares to the king's attendants, and so forth), conveying paradise to the giver and hell on the taker, for a period of sixty thousand years, as the recompense for giving and taking (the land)." (Thus the king should declare in the grant), the secretaries for peace and war signing the grant with the remark "I know this (the grant) should be provided with (the king's) own seal, and with a precise statement of the year, month and so forth, of the value (of the donation) and of the magistrate." Such a document issued by the king is called a royal edict."[1]

Not only were grants made but instructions were also issued for the regulation of labour and wages. "(If a servant)", remarks Yājñavalkya, "receiving wages, refuses to do the work (stipulated for) he must pay double the amount (to his master), and in case of not receiving any payment an amount equal (to the wages); all household articles should be protected by the servants."[2] This condition only shows that wages and labour were, in a manner, interdependent. The payment of wages was made not only obligatory but bounden, for Nārada explicitly states that "a master shall regularly pay wages to the servant hired by him, whether it be at the commencement, at the middle, or at the end of his work, just as he had agreed to do."[3] But despite this observation Nārada does not forget to emphasise the interdependence of labour and wages and he even advocates coercion if a labourer fails to fulfil his contract.[4]

Not only was labour legislation promulgated by the Smṛtis but they also set forth regulations for the maintenance of trade. Yājñavalkya, for example, observes that prices of market commodities were to be fixed by the king: "Sale and purchase shall be conducted daily according to the value fixed by the king. The surplus on the fixed value is to be recognised as the first value of

[1] Bṛhaspati, VIII, 12-17, pp. 305-06.
[2] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā* 254, p. 106.
[3] Nārada, VI, 2, p. 139.
[4] *Ibid.*, 5-8, pp. 140-41.

the trade."[1] The effects of the rise and fall in prices of commodities, were carefully observed. "If there has been", says Nārada, "a fall in the market value of the article (in the interval, the purchaser shall receive both the article itself, and together with it the difference (in point of value). This law applies to those who are inhabitants of the same place; but to those who travel abroad, profit arising from (dealing in) foreign countries shall be made over (as well.)"[2] In brief, Nārada exhorts merchants "to fix a just price for their merchandise, according to the locality and season" and to refrain from dishonest dealings.[3]

The concept of corporate activity was also not unknown to Smṛti literature. Persons of education and trust were to be placed at the heads of public bodies. Yājñavalkya holds that "Persons conversant with Vedas, pure-minded and shorn of avarice should be placed at the head (of a public body)".[4] The same principle was also to be applied to guilds and corporations. Again he adds: "This, also, is the law for a guild (*Śrēṇī*) or company of traders and artisans (*Naigama*), persons of various castes coming from different countries for trading purposes and (*Pāṣaṇḍa*) heretics. The king should prevent dissensions (from taking place amongst them) and make them follow their previous callings."[6]

The king, therefore, appears to have exercised considerable power over these corporations. Manu, for instance, lays down that "if a man belonging to a corporation inhabiting a village or a district (*grāma-dēśa-saṅgha*) after swearing to an agreement breaks it through avarice, (the king) shall banish him from the realm."[6] Such a punishment for the same offence seems to have been recommended by Yājñavalkya[7] as well as by Bṛhaspati. The latter tells us that "(such an agreement) must be kept by all. He who fails (in his agreement), though able (to perform it), shall be punished by confiscation of his entire property and by banishment from the town."[8]

Such a procedure implies that the corporations of the Dharma Śāstra literature were highly organised. Yājñavalkya states that

[1] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 254, p. 106.
Nārada, VIII, 5, pp. 147-48.
Ibid., 12, p. 149.
Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā, 194, p. 97.
Ibid., 195, p. 97.
Manu, VIII, 219, p. 293.
[7] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 190, p. 96.
[8] Bṛhaspati, XVII, 13, p. 348.

they made arrangements to share the profit and loss in their transactions. "A number of traders", he observes, "carrying on a trade for making profit, shall share profit and loss according to their respective shares, or according to the compact made (between themselves)."[1] But no loss was to be tolerated in the sense that if any loss was incurred through indifference or carelessness on the member's part he was made personally responsible for it. Yājñavalkya remarks that "(If any member company) does an act, forbidden (by the general body), or without their permission, or carelessly, and thereby causes a loss, he shall have to make good the same. If one protects (its interests) at a time of imminent danger, he shall be entitled to (an additional share of) one tenth of the profit as his reward."[2] But any member who made a false statement regarding the quantity of the articles in order to evade payment of duty, or went away from a place where duty was collected, he was fined. If any of the partners died his share was to revert to his sons, kinsmen or to his partners and in their absence to the king.[3]

II. The Land System of the Guptas

As soon as the Guptas came into power, they too appeared to have followed in the footsteps of Kauṭalya because they too claimed that all the land belonged to the king. During this age the problem of land was of vital importance. There is reason to believe that during this period all the land, especially in Eastern Bengal, belonged to the State. By all the land is meant land including cultivable tracts and to purchase them the permission and sanction of the government were necessary. For example the Nandāpur copper plate grant, dated A. D. 488, reveals how fallow land had thus to be purchased. An official in this inscription is stated to have made the following petition to the assembled members of the local administration: "Now in your district (*viṣaya*) there is established the system of sale (at the rate of two *dināras* per *kulyavāpa*) of fallow land originally devoid of vegetation, which does not yield any revenue (to the State) and being under perpetual endowment (*akṣayanidhi*) can be enjoyed eternally, as long as the moon, the sun and the stars endure."[4] This epigraph also reveals how this type of fallow land

[1] *Yājñavalkya Saṁhitā*, 262, p. 107.

[2] *Ibid.*, 263, p. 107.

[3] *Ibid.*, 265, 267, p. 108.

[4] *E. I.*, XXIII (II) p. 55, text, p. 54: *yuṣmad viṣayē ca samudayava-vā(bā)hy=ādyas tamva (mba) khila kṣēttrāṇāṃ śāśvad=ā-caṅdrārkka tāraka-bhōjyānāṃ akṣaya nīvyāḥ dvi dināṛikya kulyavāpa vikkrayōnuṛttas=tad arhatha mattōṣṭau dināṛān upasaṅgṛhya jaṅgōyikā grāmc khila kṣēttra kulyavāpa catuṣṭayaṃ akṣaya nivyās tāmrapaṭṭēna dātuṃ.*

was sold at the rate of two *dināras* per *kulyavāpa*, its complete rights of ownership being transferred to the purchaser. What these rights of eternal enjoyment exactly meant cannot be precisely determined. But it is still worth noting that in selling a plot the convenience of the householders was respected. The above mentioned grant dated A.D. 488 says: "Therefore having known this, you should give away (the plot) in a land that *may not cause hindrance to (the) the cultivation by householders* after measuring it by (the standard unit of) 8 × 9 reads, according to the cubit length of *darvikarma* and also after demarcating the area in four directions by permanent marks of chaff, coal, etc."[1] Therefore, in order to safeguard the interests of neighbouring agriculturists and householders, their presence was necessary during a sale of land. A record of Dharmāditya shows how, along with the lord of the district, the leading men of the district were also present to see that no injustice was done in effecting such a transaction. Moreover, what is more interesting is that such an assembly had to be unanimous in their verdict regarding the sale to be effected. In this Faridpur grant of Dharmāditya it is stated that "the province of Vāraka which was entrusted to (Sthāṇudatta), Jayāva as lord of the district has the direction and administration. The leading men of the district, who were headed by.....(15 persons are named) and the common folk were apprised by the agent Vātabhōga, thus: "I wish to buy a parcel of cultivated land from your honour and to bestow it on a brāhmaṇ; therefore *do ye* deign to take the price from me to divide *the land* in the district and to give *it to me*; *wherefore we giving heed to this request and being unanimous, determined the matter* by the keeper of the records Vi(na) yasena.[2]" The area of such a saleable plot, before it was actually declared as sold, had to be determined by the government record-keeper (*pustapāla*) in three places and it had to be stated as fit for sale by some government officials who acted as referees together with the government administrator of the district and had served it off to

[1] *E. I.*, XXIII, p. 56, text, p. 55: *kṣettra-kulyavāpa catuṣṭayaṃ dattaṃ ku ⸗ lcūyaṃ ēvaṃ viditvā kuṭuṁbināṃ karṣaṇ āvirōdhi-sthānc Darvvīkarmma hasten = āṣṭaka navaka nalābhyaṃ apaviñchhya cira kāla sthāyi tus-āṅgar-ādi chinhasiś = caturddin-niyamita sammāṇaṃ kṛtvā dāsyatha-datvā (ttvā) c = ākṣaya nīvi dharmeṇa śāsvat kūlaṃ anupālayiṣyatha* Italics mine.

[2] *I. A.*, XXXIX, p. 195: *Icchāmy-ahaṃ bhavatān-sakāśa kṣētta-khaṇḍaṃ-upa krīya brāhmaṇasya partipādayituṃ tad-arhatha matto mūlyam grhītvā viṣayē vibhajya dātuṃ iti-yataḥ ētad.* Italics mine. For similar requests *Cf. Ibid.*, pp. 202, 205, in the grants of Dharmāditya and Gopacandra.

the "standard measure."[1] Another unit of demarcating land was styled as the royal measure. In the Chammak grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II, it is related how the village named Cārmāṅka on the bank of the river Madhunadi in the Bhōjakaṭa kingdom "(was) measured by eight thousand *bhūmis*, (or in figures 8000), according to the royal measure."[2]

The land so specified was given away on certain conditions. During the rule of king Gōpacandra, as a grant dated in the year 19 probably of his reign reveals, a piece of land was given away with the right of succession for three generations: "He (Vastupāla-svāmin) has bought it (the village) and bestowed it on Bhaṭṭa Gōmidatta-svāmin with the right of succession to son and grandson".[3] Then naturally arises the next question whether a plot of land was so sold or granted in perpetuity. There is epigraphic evidence to support an affirmative answer to this query in the Rāypur copper-plate grant of the ruler Mahā Sudeva Rāja. It states that a plot was "to be enjoyed as long as the world endures . . . together with (its) hidden treasures and deposits (was) not to be entered by the irregular or the regular troops; and exempted from all taxes."[4] A similar procedure appears to have been in vogue during the reign of *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II, the Vākāṭaka monarch, for a village was granted "free from (all obligation of) forced labour"; it carried with it "the hidden treasures and deposits and the *kḷṛpta* and *upakḷṛpta*."[5]

Even such a perpetual grant did not imply that in Gupta times the State could not resume the grants so bestowed, especially because the idea of State confiscation must have been well-known in those days. Kauṭalya, for example, clearly refers to it[6] and from his injunction it is evident that even he was not for the complete State resumption of lands once granted for that would have meant not only a loss of revenue, but an increase in avoidable government expenditure. It cannot be said whether the policy of Kauṭalya was followed during the Gupta regime, but it may be stated that the State probably resumed lands once given. Therefore many an inscription

[1] *I. A.*, XXXIX, p. 205, text, p. 204: *pustapāla nayayabhūtēs tristhaḷāvdhāraṇayāvadhṛtya viṣayā-dhikaraṇēn-ādhikaraṇaka jana kuḷavārān prakalpya pratita dharmaśīla Śivacaṅdra hast āṣṭaka navaka naḷena.*

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (55), p. 241, text, p. 237: *rājamānika bhūmi sahasrair aṣṭabhiḥ 8000.*

[3] *I. A.*, XXXIX, p. 205, text, p. 204: *putra pautra kramēṇa vidhinā pratipāditam.*

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (41), p. 199.

[5] *Ibid*, (55), p. 242.

[6] *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. I, p. 46; text, p. 47: *Karadēbhyaḥ kṛtakṣētrāṇyaikapuruṣikāṇi prayacchēt | akṛtāni kartṛbhyō nā dēyāt | akṛṣatamācchidyānyēbhyaḥ prayacchēt; grāmabhṛtakavaidēhakā vā kṛṣēyuḥ | akṛṣatō apahīnaṃ dadyuḥ | dhānyapaśuhiraṇyais = cainānanugṛhṇīyāttānyanu sukhēna dadyuḥ.*

repeats the terrible curse, as can be seen from the Khoh plates of *Mahārāja* Hastin dated A. D. 475-76 wherein appears the warning that "he who assents to an act of confiscation shall dwell for the same number of years in hell."[1]

1. Sale-Deeds

The sale of land was legalised during Gupta times through the medium of sale-deeds. The legislation of a sale through such a deed was no invention of the Guptas, for it was known to early Hindu law-givers. According to Bṛhaspati, when a person having purchased a house, field or other (property) caused a document, containing an exact statement of the proper price paid for it, to be executed it was called a deed of purchase.[2] That such transactions were well-known to Kauṭalya cannot be denied for he gives us the exact procedure of conducting such a sale and he observes that "kinsmen, neighbours, rich persons, shall in succession go for the purchase of land and other holdings. Neighbours of good family, forty in number and different from the purchasers above mentioned, shall congregate in front of the building for sale and announce it as such. Accurate description of the exact boundaries of fields, gardens, buildings of any kind, lakes or tanks shall be declared before the elders of the village or of the neighbourhood. If, on crying aloud thrice, "who will purchase this at such and such a price?", no opposition is offered, the purchaser may proceed to purchase the holding in question. If at this time the value of the property is increased by bidding, even among persons of the same community, the increased amount together with the toll on the value shall be handed over into the king's treasury. The bidder (*vikrayapratikrōṣṭā*) shall pay the toll."[3] Writs of gift (*paridāna*)[4] and agreements for the acquisition of land even by kings are mentioned by Kauṭalya[5] who also refers to "natural or artificial boundary marks."[6]

Though it is now not possible to prove the existence of the practice of selling land by bidding, it is clear that during the Gupta age there was an elaborate procedure for legalising the sale of land. As has been shown above, any prospective purchaser, regardless of rank, had to make a formal application specifying the full

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (21), p. 99.
[2] Bṛhaspati, VIII, 7. *S. B. E.*, XXXIII, p. 305.
[3] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*. Bk. III, Ch. IX, pp. 190-91.
[4] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. X, p. 74.
[5] *Ibid.*, Bk. VII, Chs. X-XI. pp. 321-327.
[6] *Ibid.* Bk. III, Ch. IX, p. 191.

details, object and price of the plot he desired to purchase and had to forward it to the local government established in the *Adhikaraṇa*. This body, paying heed to this request, unanimously referred the application to the Record-Keepers (*Pustapāla*). These, in their turn, had to state whether the application was in "proper form"[1], whether there was established in that particular district the system of sale at the specified price per each *kulyavāpa* of fallow land, whether it was originally devoid of vegetation which did not yield any revenue to the State, whether it could not yield any income to the Crown, and whether, if that plot of land was sold, "a sixth part of religious merit could accrue to the king" and consequently whether the plot could be granted.[2] Then in the presence of the *Adhikaraṇa* the applicant, who had to tender the deposit as a guarantee of good faith, had to pay in cash the stipulated price of the plot. Then this plot had to be "inspected by the *Mahattaras* and others, the officers and householders, and its area severed by them . . ."[3] This body, having demarcated the land according to the standard measure of eight reeds in breadth and nine in length by the hand of an officer like Śivacandra, sold it to the applicant "by the custom of copper-plate."[4] It must be remembered how, even in the sale-price, one sixth was deducted as a charge due to the State, for in a grant of king Dharmāditya runs the expression that the feet of the emperor would "receive the sixth part of the price according to the land here."[5] These deeds were written "by order" of particular officials. The Gaya copper plate grant of Samudra Gupta ends thus:—"This deed has been written by the order of the *Dyūta* Gōpasvāmin, the *Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta* of another village."[6]

In demarcating the plot natural and artificial marks were made. A set of Dāmodarpur plates of Budha Gupta reveals how in the village of Candragrāma a plot to be granted was "situated in the south, west and east in touch with the right boundary of the north side

[1] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7. p. 137, text, p. 136: *yuktamanūna*; also see p. 140.

[2] *Ibid.*, XXIII, (II), p. 55, text, p. 54.

[3] *Ibid.*, no. 7. XV, p. 137.

[4] *I. A.*, XXXIX, pp. 197-98, see also *E. I.*, XXIII (II), p. 54.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (60), p. 257. The *Akṣapaṭala* (Accountant) is an official mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* (see Bk. II, Ch. VII) wherein is given in detail the business of keeping up accounts in the office of accountants: *Akṣapaṭale gāṇanikyādhikāraḥ. Cf.*, text, pp. 62-65. A *Mahākṣapaṭalika* is mentioned in the Alina grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67. Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 190. Also see *I. A.*, VI, p. 200, 1, 34 wherein an abbreviation of this office is mentioned in the Kavi grant of Bhīmadeva II, while *Akṣaśālika* appears in the Cicacole grant of Indravarman, dated the year 146. *I. A.*, XIII, p. 123.

of Vāyi grāma."[1] The Dāmōdarpur copper plate grant of Bhānu Gupta, dated A. D. 533-34, refers even to the nature of such boundaries pointing out "one *kulyavāpa* with *rastu* to the north of Pañcakulyavāpakā."[2]

These sale-deeds and similar documents were evidently placed in a separate and secure place. Yüan Chwāng refers to such a place in the 7th century. He remarks that "As to their archives and records there are separate custodians of these. The official annals and State papers are called collectively *ni-lo-pi-t'u* (or *chā*); (*nīlapīṭa*?) in these good and bad are recorded and instances of public calamity and good fortune are set forth in detail."[3] In the Nirmaṇḍ plate grant of *Mahāsāmanta* and *Mahārāja* Samudrasena, ascribed to the seventh century A. D., an officer Kuśalaprakāśa is called *Nihilapati*.[4] Whether Yüan Chwāng refers to a record-department under such an officer in charge of the State papers and official annals or whether this is only a phonetic similarity cannot be decided.

There was evidently a practice of stamping official documents with the seal of the State. There is evidence to prove that contracts made by commercial corporations or guilds in Gupta times were registered by affixing such seals. The great corporation of bankers seems to have made such an agreement with a *Kumāramātya*, owing to the survival of such a seal. Such official seals, apparently made of clay, were either oval or circular in shape. Seals wrought of copper and silver were also known. Not only had monarchs like Ghaṭōtkaca and queens like Dhruvasvāminī the privilege of employing seals, but they were utilised by guilds, temples, monasteries, and even private individuals.[5] The seals of State officials had generally the image of Gaja-Lakṣmī, who figures in some of the oldest Indian sculptures,[6] and whose temples had either the *liṅga* or the *yōni* or the *Dharma-cakra*,[7] while the seals of private individuals had either the trident (*triśūla*), the human feet (*pādukās*), the urn (*kalaśa*) and the two conches (*śaṅkhās*) as their typical emblems.[8]

The seal must have played an important part in the office routine of Gupta administration. Some light on this practice is thrown by

[1] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, p. 137, text, p. 136.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 144.
[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 154; Hiuen Tsiang, *Buddhist Records*, I, p. 78.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (80), p. 291.
[5] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, no. 29, pp. 107-18.
[6] *Ibid.*, see pl. XL, nos. 7, 8, 11, 13. opp. p. 102.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 110-11, see pl. XL, nos. 2, 3; pl. XLII, nos. 39, 40 etc.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 112, 118.

Kālidāsa who suggests that all articles which were kept in the royal store-house were stamped with the royal seal. Mādhukarika in the *Mālavikāgnimitraṃ* observes thus: "Here is Sārasaka, the hunch-back that belongs to the Queen's household, coming out of the court with a kind of leather trunk in his hand, sealed with a lac-seal (*jatumudrālāñcitāṃ mañjūṣikāṃ gṛhītvā catuśālāt kubjaḥ Sārasako niṣkrāmati*)"[1]. This royal office-seal seems to have symbolised the stamp of royal sanction for permitting any goods which were to be sent out of the regal store-house. Again in the same play the Vidhūṣaka exclaims: "How can there be (an opening for any stratagem)?" For Mādhavika, who presides over this store-house, received this order from the queen, "you are not to let out that baggage of Mālavika, until you see the seal of my ring."[2] The royal ring was consequently utilised for stamping goods which entered and left the royal store-house.

These seals were also attached to letters and similar literary documents, enabling them to hold the papers together by means of a string which was tied round the wooden boards with the intention of using them as a kind of envelope. In the majority of cases the seals were made of unbaked clay, but it is clear that the lac must have been allowed to dry before the seal reached its destination, especially during its transit.[3]

The seals must have been used especially for stamping royal documents, while they were also often utilised in the case of commercial correspondence and private communications as well. An allusion to the practice of sealing royal documents is apparently made in Samudra Gupta's Allahabad *praśasti* wherein it is stated that the foreign kings of the north-western frontier, Mālwa and Surāṣṭra (Kathiawar), made peace with him by offering him personal service, gifts of maidens, solicitation of charters bearing the Garuda seal (*Garutmatāṅka*) confirming them in the enjoyment of their districts and provinces (*svaviṣaya bhukti*).[4] As noticed already, Bāṇa also refers to this usage even in the remote Vindhyan villages which were within Harṣavardhana's jurisdiction.[5] But the most numerous extant seals are those pertaining to the corporation of bankers (*srēṣṭin nigama*), traders (*sārthavāḥa*) and elderly house-holders (*kulikāḥ*). The seals being invariably combined with other seals reveal the names of other private individuals and in only one instance

[1] *Māl.*, Act V, p. 130.
[2] *Ibid.*, Act IV, p. 97: *mamāṅgulīmudrāṃ adṛṣṭvā na mōktavyā.*
[3] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 101.
[4] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (1), p. 14. Fleet, however, interprets them to be coins. f. n. 3.
[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 198.

has there been found a seal of the Chief Princes' Ministers, while the names of private parties are fairly conspicuous. But a great number of these apparently belonged to elderly householders (*Kulika*) and chief householders (*Prathama-kulika*). One of them styles himself both as a *Kulika* and a *Prathama-kulika*, while two persons are called representatives of the merchants' guild of the town (*Śrēṣṭinaḥ*), and one was merely a trader (*Sārthavāha*). Generally two or even more of these seals of private individuals are found in combination with each other or with the seals of the *Śrēṣṭinaḥ*, of which probably they were partners or shareholders. It is interesting to note, however, that most of these merchants had business connections with the royal family of Vaisāli.[1]

3. Systems of Land Tenure

These grants of land, having been sanctioned and registered by the impressions of State seals, were made in accordance with some limitations or conditions and on the basis of certain systems of land tenure. The most important of these, which prevailed in the Gupta empire, were the *Bhūmicchidra* or (*Cchidra*) *Nyāya*, *Nīvī-Dharma*, *Apradā Dharma* and *Tribhāga* tenure systems.

The *Bhūmicchidra Dharma* system was well-known to Kauṭalya for he deals with it in elaborate detail. According to him, in conformity with this practice land was given by the State for making pasture grounds and cultivable tracts, forest-plots for Brāhmaṇas for raising Sōma-plantations, game-preserves or "forests," "manufactories" for preparing commodities from forest-produce and forests productive of commodities, and in the extreme limits of the country separated from wild tribes tracts for the preservation of "elephant forests".[2] Such a system implies that according to this usage land was granted for private as well as for public purposes.

This system of granting land continued to Gupta times. According to the Khōh copper-plate grant of the Parivrājaka *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, the Vyāgrapaḷḷika and the Kācarapaḷḷika villages were given away "according to the rule of the Bhūmichchidra (*nyāya*)..... "to be enjoyed by the sons and son's sons" of the donee.[3] The Maḷiya copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, states that the village of Antarātra was bestowed on the Brāhmaṇa Rudrabhūti "to endure for the same time with the moon,

[1] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 104. nos. 42-120, 77-79, 109-10.
[2] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. II, pp. 48-49; text, pp. 49-50.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (31), p. 138.

the sun, the ocean, the rivers, and the earth; (and) to be enjoyed by the succession of (his) son's and son's sons." It was given together with the *udraṅga* and the *uparikara*, with the *vāta*, *bhūta*, grain, gold, and the *ādeya*; with the right to forced labour as the occasion arose and with the privilege that it was not even to be "pointed at with the hand (of undue appropriation) by any of the king's people (*samasta-rājakīyānāṃ-a-hasta-prakṣēpaṇīyaṃ*)."[1]

This system continued to be current in the seventh and eighth centuries. There is reason to conclude that this type of tenure prevailed in the dominion of Harṣavardhana because in his Banskhera copper plate grant, dated A. D. 628-29, mention is made of this *Nyāya*.[2] This practice was not forgotten in Surāṣṭra. The Alīna copper-plate grant of Silāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, reveals how the village of Mahībali in the Upahilapathaka in the famous Kheṭaka āhāra was granted in accordance with the *Bhūmichchidra Nyāya*.[3]

The meaning of this term, which occurs constantly in the *Yādavaprakāśa Vaijayantī* in the *Vaiśyādhyāya*, verse 18, is explained by the expression "*kṛiśya-yogya-bhūḥ*," implying a "fissure (furrow) of the soil."[4] Dr Ghosal has observed that it implied "the gift of the full right of ownership such as is acquired by a person making barren land cultivable for the first time."[5] Dr Barnett, however, interprets this expression to mean that the grantees holding lands became merely tenants at will.[6] The latter interpretation cannot be accepted while the former appears more plausible although it deserves to be amplified. As the records referred to above reveal, lands granted by means of such a tenure were granted in perpetuity not only to one person but to all his family for posterity as is apparent from the reference to: "succession of son's son and son's sons."[7] There is no evidence to show that this type of grant

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 170. *Cchidra* means "uncultivated lands", states Mr Padmanātha Bhattacarya, "probably because such land was deemed as useless to a cultivator as a "whole" where no corn could grow amid fertile soil. In the Kamauli plates of Vaidyadēva (*E. I.*, II, p. 349) we find the expression-*bhūcchudrañcāyakiñcitkaragrāhyam*" which means "*bhū-cchidra*" (uncultivable) land is that from which no revenue is to be realised. Hence the "*bhūmi*" (or *bhū*) *cchidranyāya* "indicates that no assessment is to be made on the land covered by the grant" just like unarable land "which is not assessable." *J. R. A. S.*, 1926, p. 489.

[2] *E. I.*, IV, no. 29, p. 211.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 189; also see *E. I.*, IV, no. 8, p. 75.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 138 f-n. 2, also see *I. A.*, I, p. 46; *Ibid.*, p. 106. note. *E.I.*, I, p. 74.

[5] Ghosal, *Hindu Revenue System*, p. 195; *I.H.Q.*, V, p. 385.

[6] Barnett, *J. R. A. S.*, 1931, pp. 165—66.

[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 170.

implied tenancy at will. The grantee was offered not only the assignments of the specified taxes but was also informed that even the king's own people were not authorised or empowered to confiscate the land thus granted. This expression evidently implied that the State clearly renounced its own right of resumption in such cases and it cannot therefore be claimed as has been suggested that the king reserved for himself the right to the ownership over the mineral resources of the plot which was so granted.[1]

The other system of land tenure was *Nīvīdharma*. In the Dāmōdarpur copper plate grant of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 433-34, we are informed how in the Kōṭivarṣa *viṣaya* some *khila* land, which had not been either ploughed nor even yet granted to any one, was bestowed on the Brāhmaṇa Karpaṭika "to be enjoyed" by him "forever, as long as the moon, the sun and the stars exist."[2] The technical term *Nīvī Dharma* is also found in the undated Bihār stone pillar inscription, of Skanda Gupta I,[3] and the Sāñcī stone inscription, dated A. D. 450-51[4] wherein it is characterised as "*akṣaya-nīvī*", although this term is usually found in contemporary inscriptions as *nīvīdharma*. In a set of Dāmōdarpur copper plate grants, dated A. D. 448-49, the following application is stated to have been made by an applicant for a plot of land in the Kōṭivarṣa *viṣaya*, to the Local Board: "Deign to make a gift (of land) according to the established rule . . . . (for disposing of lands) by destroying the condition of *apradākṣayanīvī* (non-transferability) for conducting five daily sacrifices (*pañcamahāyajña*)."[5]

The word *nīvī* appearing in this technical expression has been explained. It has been claimed to be a synonym for *paripaṇa* and *mūladhana* i.e., the capital and the principal in the matter of sale and purchase. "These words mean", states Dr R. G. Basak, "the fixed capital out of the interest on which an expense is to be met. Hence to make a gift of land or money according to *nīvīdharma* is to give it on condition that the endowment is to be maintained as perpetual."[6] As the records cited above show, the land granted according to this system was to one person alone and that for the duration of his life-time only. There is no indication to show that it was to be transmitted to his progeny or that it was a grant for

[1] Bhadkamkar, *E. I.*, XI, no. 17, p. 177.
[2] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, (1), pp. 131-32.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12), p. 50.
[4] *Ibid.*, (62), p. 261.
[5] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, (2), p. 134.
[6] *Ibid*, p. 131; *Cf. Amarakōśa*, III, 3, 212; Hēmacaṅdra, II, 534-*mūla-dravya*.

posterity. This conclusion can be substantiated by the Dhanaidaha copper-plate grant of the Gupta era 113 (A. D. 432-33) of the reign of Kumāra Gupta I. This record tells us that a place called Kṣūdraka was in the possession of two Brahmaṇas known as Śivaśarman and Nāgaśarman and that it was granted to Varāhasvāmin, a Sōmavēdi Brahmaṇa, after reversing the process styled as the *Nīvīdharma*, i.e., "destroying the permanency of the grant".[1] From this transfer of a grant it may be definitely concluded that the *Nīvīdharma* tenure did not mean a permanent transfer; the State clearly reserved for itself the right to resume the lands once given according to this usage and then to regrant it to another person and when making such a grant the names of the previous donees were specially mentioned obviously to indicate that it was a second bestowal. When a plot of land was therefore granted, the donee had apparently all the rights and enjoyments of such land *except* the right of destroying the perpetuity of the grant by bestowing it on another person, for such a right was vested only in the State and not in the donee.

The third type of tenure was styled as the *Apradā-nivī Dharma*. According to this system of tenure also the plot of land, which had once been given over to one person, could not evidently be re-transferred to another but it had to be enjoyed by the grantee alone perpetually. In a Dāmodarpur grant of Budha Gupta, the date of which is lost, we are told that four *kulyavāpas* of *apradā* (untilled) land was formerly given by the *Nagaraśrēṣṭhin* Ribhupāla to Kōkāmukhasvāmin and seven *kulyavāpas* to Śvētavarāha Svāmin and to another person, and in the neighbourhood of these lands he desired to purchase some more *kulyavāpas* of land (*vāstu*-building ground) in accordance with the prevailing custom of sale.[2] Here is a case of *apradā* land which was once granted by one person to another, but such a grant could not and was not meant to pass from generation to generation and could not be transferred by one donee to another. This inference can be substantiated by a copper-plate grant probably of Bhānu Gupta, dated A. D. 433-34, which records that in the Koṭivarṣa *viṣaya*, on receiving fifteen *dināras* from one Amṛtadeva "out of consideration for his mother", the local government authorities permitted him to dedicate five *kulyavāpas* of *khila* land together with *vāstu* land to Bhagavān Śvētavarāhasvāmin according to the *apradādharma* "for use for ever".[3] Such a condition implies that the land so granted could not be alienated or transferred to

[1] *J. A. S. B.*, V, no. 11, p. 461.

[2] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, (4), p. 140.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 144.

another person by the donee without the special permission and sanction of the State, whether it was dedicated either to a deity or bestowed on a Brahmaṇa.

Less common than the above mentioned types of tenure was the *Tribhōga* system which is apparently alluded to in the words "with the exception of previously given grants to gods and Brahmaṇas" in the Alīna copper-plate grant of Śīlāditya VII, dated A. D. 766 67.[1] From its name it was evidently a grant dividing the land donated into three parts, for the Brahmaṇa, the deity and the king.

4. Types of Land

Now that we have seen some of the chief systems of land tenure prevalent in the Gupta age, we may notice how many types of land existed in those days. It has been pointed out that in some Gupta inscriptions three kinds of land can be distinguished: revenue-free (*samudayabāhya*), untilled (*aprahatā*) and fallow (*khila kṣētra*) land.[2] But a closer examination of contemporary inscriptions shows that a further classification is possible and desirable. In the Dāmōdarpur grant of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 443-44, mention is made of a type of land called "*apradāprahata*,"[3] and it has been already pointed out that *khila* and *apradā* are synonyms[4] meaning untilled land. In a Dāmōdarpur record of Budha Gupta, the date of which is unfortunately lost, reference is made to *khila* land,[5] which has been interpreted to mean "waste" land. This *khila* land is again referred to in another set of Dāmōdarpur plates of Bhānu Gupta, dated A. D. 533-34, and obviously implies the same sense.[6] The third type of land called the *vāstu* land, which was set apart for building purposes only, has been classified as building ground land. This type of land is also mentioned in the same record.[7] Gifts were made of all these types of land and there was no land which was exempt from the payment of revenue unless it was declared as such by the State when it was donated to a particular person.

But when villages were granted, some times suggestions made in the inscriptions reveal that further distinctions were implied in the specified areas. In the Malīya copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, mention is made how "in the common land called Bhambhusa*padraka*, one hundred *pādāvartas*" and an irrigation

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 190: *dēvādāya brahmādāya varrjaṃ*. Also see *I.A.*, XV III, p. 271.
[2] Ghosal, *I. H. Q.*, V. p. 104.
[3] *E. I.*, XV, no 7. p. 131.
[4] *Cf. Amarakōśa*, II, 10, 5; *Halāyudha*, 2, 3.
[5] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7, (3), p. 137.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 144.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 144.

well were given away as a gift.[1] Fleet suggested that the word *padraka* appears to be a fuller form of the word *padra*, which has been interpreted to mean a village, the entrance to a village, the earth and a particular district.[2] Bühler explained it to mean the equivalent of the modern expression *pāḍṛ* which means a grazing place, without of course citing any authority for his interpretation.[3] H. H. Wilson thought that it stood for "commonland, land adjacent to a village left uncultivated."[4] The large length of land specified in the inscription which has been already cited, namely one hundred *padrakas*, implies that such an area was probably extensive and was used for public purposes. Of course such an inference is only apparent and cannot be proved.

Another interpretation of the expression "*padraka*" has been offered though it does not appear radically different from that which was offered by Fleet. Mr Kishori Mohan Gupta has stated that the phrase *aṁtaratrāyāṁ Śirapadrakē* which occurs in the Malīya copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasēna, dated A. D. 571-72, implies that *padraka* means a village; because according to the lexicons, *padraka* means a village; and its meaning is explicitly clear from the following line in an inscription of Karkarāja: *arikoṭṭaka-caturāśity-aṁtargata-Vaḍapadrak-ābhidāna-grāma*,[5] and the expression *samī-padraka-grāma* in a grant of Jayabhaṭa.[6] This inference can be further supported by the evidence of another inscription of Daḍḍa wherein we find the statement: *akrurēśvara-viṣayāṁtargata-śiriṣa-padrakaṁ ēṣa-grāmaḥ*.[7] But, as Fleet remarked earlier, it takes us nowhere if we merely identify the term *padraka* with a village, for in that case it would be only too broad a term, especially because the village itself included different types of land and it would be difficult to specify those types of land, and what is more important, the village appears to have been clearly defined by the term *grāma*, as can be seen from the two inscriptions already cited above. As the *grāma* obviously appears from the context to have been the smallest unit of administration in this age, and as the *padraka* is mentioned immediately next above it, it may be suggested that the *padraka* was in all probability the next larger unit in area and in importance.

[1] Fleet *op. cit.*, (38), p. 170.
[2] *Ibid.*, f. n. 3.
[3] *Cf. I. A.*, XV, p. 337.
[4] Wilson, *Glossary of Indian Terms*, p. 286.
[5] *I. A.*, XIII, pp. 158-62; *Prācina Lēkh.*, I, p. 21.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 77-79; *Ibid.*, p. 40, also see Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14), p. 63.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 82-84; *Ibid.*, p. 43.

If the expression *padraka* signified the common land in a village, then the Nirmand copper-plate inscription of *Mahasāmanta* and *Mahārāja* Samudrasena, ascribed to about the seventh century, raises another difficulty in the expression of *drēśa* land. In this record it is stated how the whole of the village of Śūliśagrāma, including the *drēśa* land, which had been given by the *Vakkhadika* (cultivator),[1] whose holding was on the edge of the *vaidila* of this village and the *drēśa* land with the *udraṅga* and including the edges of the boundaries, was given away as a gift.[2] That portion of the village was called *drēsa* land, probably out of dislike or repugnance owing to its lack of fertility or for some other reason which rendered it for all practical purposes useless. Likewise that portion of the land was called *vaidila*[3] probably because leguminous vegetables or grains were cultivated in that area. These interpretations are at present only tentative and subject to modification in the light of future research.

5. Granting of Charters and Bestowal of Land

Lands were given away by the king means of charters and how they were issued formed an interesting yet complicated problem in the administration of the Gupta empire. The Śātavāhanas, during the second century A. D., probably anticipated the Gupta practice of giving grants. The officer *Mahāsenāpati* Medhuna, for instance, evidently transcribed a grant of Śrī Pulumāyi Vāsiṣṭhaputra, while that record was entrusted to the custody of another official, who was probably in charge of the records. The deed was delivered on a specified day, while it was executed by another person whose name cannot be deciphered.[4]

[1] The word *Vakkadika* may be compared with the Kannaḍa word *Vokkaliga* found in Karnāṭaka inscriptions. *Cf.* Saletore, *Ancient Karnāṭaka*, I, pp. 191-92.

[2] Fleet *op. cit.*, (80), p. 290.

[3] *Cf.* Böhtlingk und Röth, *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*, p. 1398—(*vaidala*) The Bassein grant of the Yādava king Sēuṇacaṅdra III, dated *śaka* 991, refers to the "destruction of *vidula* and other things made by his own or foreign armies, *akaravātottarah*, and with all its enjoyments." *I. A.*, XII, p. 123. In this connection Bhagwanlal Indraji observed that "the meaning of *vidula* is not clear. *Vikula* means *Śarakāṇḍ*. Probably *Vidula* was one of the articles levied from every village in times of war, and the grant allows the donee an exemption from this taking away of arrows and other ammunitions in times of war." *Ibid.*, f. n. 28. It may perhaps be suggested that *vidula* is probably a variation of the Gupta term *Vaidila*, which has already been referred to above. If this supposition is granted the *vaidula* was in all probability a village tax recovered from that part of the village where leguminous vegetables were grown. It is, however, difficult to understand the interpretation offered by Bhagwanlal Indraji as it is not quite apparent from the context.

[4] *E. I.*, VIII, no. 8 (3), pp. 65-66: *Mahāsenāpatinā Medhunēna.....nā chato baṭikā..... v.....kehi hatha.....te datā paṭikā.....sava 22 pakhe diva 7 takaṇinā kaṭa Govadhanavā-thavāna phāsa.....*

As will be seen presently in the times of the Guptas too, the drawing up of a charter was many a time the duty of a military officer like the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, who also set forth the information which was to be transcribed in the royal grant. Such grants must have been made from the court named either the *Dharmasthāna* or the *Adhikaraṇa*.[1] The Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra Gupta was drawn up by the *Saindhivigrahika*, *Kumārāmātya* and the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* Hariṣeṇa, while "the accomplishment of the matter" or, in modern phraseology, the signing and sealing of this document was effected by the *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* Tilabhaṭṭaka.[2] From this epigraph it may be seen that a great general, in charge of the transactions of war and peace, must have transmitted the details of his master's expedition to another *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* who composed this inscription. The expression *anuṣṭhitaṃ* suggests that the imparting of such information and its transcription were the duties of a *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*.

6. Village Grants

In the villages too the grants were written by the village notaries. The spurious Gaya copper-plate grant of Samudra Gupta, dated A. D. 328-29, tells us that the deed was written by the order of *Dyūta* Gōpasvāmin, the *Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta* of another village.[3] This designation literally means that he was entrusted with the duties of a depository of legal documents. As the record reveals the *Dyūta-Akṣapaṭalādhikṛta* only ordered some of his subordinates that such a record should be engraved, but who they were is not mentioned. Bāṇa, however, relates that this official had a staff of clerks,[4] but it is only the Alīna copper-plate grant of Śīlāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, which throws further light on this point. It records that the officer *Mahākṣapaṭalika* Siddhasena acted as the *Dūtaka* while the charter was written by his deputy, the *Pratinaṛtaka Amātya* Guha, "who was deputed by him to write it."[5]

From these notices it may be concluded first, that an officer acted as the *Dyūta* or *Dūtaka* in order to impart the information

[1] *Karaṇa* means both a written document and a government officer. The latter meaning may be gathered from Hemacandra's commentary on his *Yogaśāstra*, III, 127: *yathocitaṃ sthānaṃ yathocitaṃiti yadā rājā tadā dhavalgṛhaṃ yadāmālyastadā karaṇaṃ yadā vaṇigā dirāpaṇamiti. E. I.*, I, p. 85. *Adhi-* (as a prefix, *over, above*) + *karaṇa* evidently implied a chief court where cases pertaining to land, etc., were decided.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), p. 17, text p. 10: *anuṣṭitaṃ.*

[3] *Ibid.*, (60), p. 257.

[4] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 198, text, p. 203.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 190.

which was to be engraved; and secondly that the actual writing of it was done by another officer. The *Dūtaka* as well as his deputy were high officials. Two of the Khōh copper plate grants of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 475-76 and 482-83 respectively, state that in both cases the *Dūtaka* was Bhāgraha while the writer was Sūryadatta who, in A. D. 475-76 though not given any official title, must have been either a *Bhōgika* or an *Amātya*, while in A. D. 482-83 he became a *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika*.[1] This change of status in the case of Sūryadatta points to an evident promotion in service and reveals how like Hariṣeṇa, in the Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra Gupta noticed above, the Minister of War and Peace was often entrusted with the duty of issuing royal epigraphs.

In most cases the duty of the *Dūtaka* was to convey the king's sanction and order to the local officials who drew up and delivered the charter. The Majhgawaṃ copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 510-11, seems to have been written by *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika* Vibhudatta, while the *Dūtaka* was the *Mahābalādhikṛta* Nāgasiṁha.[2] The Khōh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha dated A. D. 516-17, reveals two *Dūtakas*, the first of whom was *Mahābalādhikṛta* Śivagupta and the other, *Uparika* Mātṛśiva for the remission of fines on ploughs and water-pots.[3] These examples show that the *Dūtaka* as well as the *Lekhaka*, who were also military officers of the king, must have been well acquainted with the details to be inscribed. But it was not considered always necessary to employ the *Dūtaka* to convey the order of the king. In such a case, as the Khōh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Saṁkṣobha, dated A. D. 528-29 shows, the *Lēkhaka* himself gave an oral order to the local officials.[4] This practice became current among the Parivrājaka rulers too. According to the Arang copper plate grant of *Rāja* Mahā Jayarāja, at the command of the king's "own mouth" (*sva mukha ājñayā*) the charter was engraved by Acala Siṅgha.[5] A similar system was followed in the reign of *Rāja* Mahā Sudevarāja.[6] But the *Dūtaka* sometimes held a triple office as can be observed from the Kāritalāī plates of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, dated A. D. 493-94, wherein it is recorded that the *Dūtaka* Sarvadatta was

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (21-22), pp. 100, 105.

[2] *Ibid.*, (23), p. 109.

[3] *Ibid.*, (30), p. 134.. The term *halir-ākara* may be interpreted to mean a tax on ploughs.

[4] *Ibid.*, (25) p. 116: *sva mukha ājñā*, p. 115.

[5] *Ibid.*, (40), p. 195.

[6] *Ibid.*, (41), p. 200.

an *Uparika*, *Gṛhapati* and *Sthapati-Sāmrāja*.[1] This *Dūtaka* continued to hold this post for two more years.[2]

Even in the sixth century the custom of entrusting the writing of inscriptions to Ministers of War and Peace continued. The Khōh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 533-34, informs us that it was written by *Saṁdhivigrapika* Nātha,[3] son of *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika* Manōratha mentioned earlier.

In cases of corporate inscriptions, the corporation or guild acted as a body in engraving the epigraph. In the Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, the expression "by command of the guild" refers evidently not only to the authority of the corporation which enabled the Sun-temple to be erected, but also to the *praśasti* which was composed with particular care by Vatsabhaṭṭi.[4] As the Nirmaṇḍ copper plate grant of *Mahāsāmaṁta* and *Mahārāja* Samudrasena, dated A. D. 612-13 show, such corporations had their own messengers and leaders in order to complete their epigraphs. This record states that the *Dūta* was the *Nihilapati* Kuśalaprakāśa and the writer (*Lēkhaka*) was Udyōtārka, the *Gaṇa Śrēṣṭha*, the leader of the assembly. The following words of the grant namely, that "This grant, which is one of the whole assembly of (the people of) the country",[5] suggest the unanimous character of the corporation.

Nevertheless among the Vākāṭakas, the Gupta custom of entrusting military officials with the engraving of inscriptions appears to have continued. From the Chammak copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II, it is evident that the charter was written while Citravarman was the *Senāpati*.[6] Sometimes this commander was assisted in such a task by another officer. It is related in the Siwaṇi copper plate grants of the same ruler that the record was "written by the *Ācārya*, while Bappadeva was the *Senāpati*".[7]

In Surāṣṭra too, during the later Maitrakas of Valabhi, such a practice of registering State edicts seems to have survived. In a grant of Dharasena II, dated "later than *Saṁ* 252, but earlier than *Saṁ* 269," the *Dūtaka* is Śrī Śilāditya while it was written by

[1] Fleet *op. cit.*, (26), p. 120.
[2] *Ibid.*, (27), p. 124.
[3] *Ibid.*, (31) p. 139.
[4] *Ibid.*, (18), pp. 87-88.
[5] *Ibid.*, (80), p. 291.
[6] *Ibid.*, (55), p. 243.
[7] *Ibid.*, (56), p. 249.

the *Saṁdhivigrahādhikṛta Divirapati* Skandabhaṭa.[1] The son of this Skandabhaṭa became the *Lēkhaka* and *Saṁdhivigrahādhikṛta Divirapati* of king Dhruvasena III, as can be noticed from this ruler's Valabhi grant, dated A. D. 653-54.[2] A similar procedure can be seen from a grant of Śilāditya I *Dharmāditya*, dated A. D. 606 in which the *Lēkhaka* Vattrabhaṭṭi was a *Saṁdhivigrahādhikṛta-Divirapati*. The office of the *Divirapati* has been interpreted to mean Chief Secretary.[3] If the writer of the grant was during the Maitrakas of Valabhi often a Minister of War and Peace and Chief Secretary, the *Dūtaka* sometimes belonged to the royal family. In the Goras plates of Dhruvasena II, dated A. D. 633, the *Dūta* was *Sāmaṁta* Silāditya.[4] Again, a grant of Silāditya III, dated A. D. 676, styles the *Dūtaka* of the grant as *Rājaputra* Kharagraha.[5]

About the middle of the seventh century, especially during the reign of Harṣavardhana of Kanauj, there was some similarity in the recording of grants. The Madhuban grant of Harṣa, attributed to the commencement of the seventh century A. D., records how the *Dūtaka* was *Mahāpramatāra Mahāsāmaṁta* Skandagupta. The former designation was evidently similar to the Maitraka office of *Pramāṭṛ* which was held by the *Dūtaka* Śrī Nāga in A. D. 653-54.[6] Harṣa's Madhuban grant refers to the "order of the Great Officer in Charge of the Office of Records (*Mahākṣapaṭalādhikaraṇādhikṛta*) the *Sāmaṁta* Iśvaragupta."[7]

It is therefore evident that the most important officers concerned in bestowing grants were the *Dūtaka* or messenger who brought the information to be engraved and the *Lekhaka* or the writer or engraver, who actually engraved the inscription. The *Dūtakas* sometimes had deputies who did this work for them, but often as the *Dūtakas* were themselves *Pramātāras*, they must have been well acquainted with the assessment of the revenue from the grants of lands made, as they conveyed the information to the writer of the inscription.

This tradition of transcription was adopted by the Maitrakas of Valabhi. The Maḷiya copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, reveals how that charter was written by the

[1] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, I, (N. S.), no. V, p. 24.
[2] *E. I.*, I, no. XIII, p. 88.
[3] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, I, (N. S.), no. VI, pp. 27, 29.
[4] *Ibid.*, I, (N. S.), no. XVII, p. 57.
[5] *Ibid.*, no. XVIII, p. 63.
[6] *E. I.*, I, no. XIII, p. 92.
[7] *Ibid.*, VII, no. XXII, p. 160.

Saṁdhivigrahika Skandabhaṭa. The Maitrakas introduced a new feature in the registration of grants by adding the sign-manual of the ruler, styled as the *svahasta*.[1] Sometimes, however, as the Alīna copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67 reveals, an actual representation of the sign manual was also indicated.[2]

The Maitrakas of Valabhi introduced some changes of their own in the system of selecting officers to act as *Dūtakas*. According to the Alīna copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, the *Dūtaka* was the illustrious Siddhasēna who was not only a member of the king's household (*rājakula*) but also a *Mahāpratīhāra* and a *Mahākṣapaṭalika*.[3] From this grant it may consequently be inferred that it was obviously not considered necessary to employ only military officers in transcribing grants.

7. Sources of Land Revenue

The issuing of grants, it may be recollected, was essentially connected with the bestowal of plots of land, the revenue from which formed the most important source of income to the State in the Gupta age. As the Ēraṇ stone inscription of Samudra Gupta shows, the wealth of a monarch in this period appears to have consisted of "an abundance of elephants and horses and money and grain."[4] This allusion to grain obviously points to the importance of income from land from which in this age the State recovered the most vital government taxes. The Gaya copper plate grant of the same emperor throws some light on this aspect of Gupta land revenue system. This record tells us how the emperor gave away the village of Revaṭika, pertaining, to the Gaya *viṣaya*, as an *agrahāra* to the Brāhmaṇa Gopasvāmin with the assignment of the *uparikara*. "Therefore", runs the royal edict, "attention should be paid to him by you; (the two village *Valatkauṣans* and the attendant Brāhmaṇas) and (his) commands should be obeyed; and all the customary tributes of the village, consisting of that which is to be measured, gold, etc.; should be given. And from this time forth, the tax-paying cultivators, artisans, etc., should not be introduced by the *Agrahārikas* of this (village) (for the purpose of settling in it and carrying on their occupations); (for) otherwise there would certainly be a violation of (the privileges of) an *agrahāra*."[5] From this grant it may be

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 171.
[2] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 191.
[3] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 190.
[4] *Ibid.*, (2), p. 21.
[5] *Ibid.*, (60), p. 257: *sarve-ca-samucitā grāma pratyayā mēya-hiraṇy-ādāyo-dēyāḥ.*

concluded that during the reign of Samudra Gupta villages were given away as gifts; but such rewards were made with certain specifications. The *uparikara* was assigned to the donee, his commands, possibly for occasional demands for forced labour, were to be obeyed by the inhabitants. All the customary tributes of the village (*grāma pratyayā*), consisting of that which could be measured (*mēya*) and gold (*hiraṇya*), were to be given (to him); and from that time new tax-paying settlers from other villages like cultivators, artisans, were not to be introduced by the *Agrahārika*.

These dues of the State have been explained in various ways. The term *uparikara* has been interpreted to mean "rent paid by the temporary tenants",[1] but it may perhaps be better understood to mean the north Indian counterpart of the Tamil expression *mēl-vāṛam* (*mēl-upari*) being the Crown's share of the produce.[2] The other land due *mēya* (what is to be measured) apparently one similar to the *bhāga* of Kauṭalya and the Aśōkan edicts,[3] denotes a payment in kind, while *hiraṇya* was the equivalent of cash payments of revenue. That payment in kind was also in vogue during this period can be proved by the evidence of Fa Hien, who says that during the reign of Candra Gupta II, "only those who cultivate the royal land have to pay (a portion of) grain from it."[4] The term *royal land* alludes, no doubt, to the fact that in Gupta times all waste land was State property. The general term *ādāya* alludes to other taxes which, being well-known, are not specified. Moreover, it is interesting to note that cultivators and especially artisans (*karaḍa*), and others not pointed out, also paid certain dues to the State. This statement shows that in the early fourth century A. D. the Gupta administration derived its revenue not only from land but also from other kinds of taxation.

The nature of some of these kinds of imposts can be ascertained from the undated Bhitari stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta, which refers to the *Uparika*, the *Agrahārika*, the *Śaulkika* and the *Gaulmika*.[5] These were officers in charge of the *uparikara* tax, *Śulka* (customs), *agrahāras* (villages granted to deserving Brahmaṇas), and *gulma* (woods). Among these dues, the revenue from customs and

[1] Ghosal, *Agrarian System in Ancient India*, pp. 39-40.

[2] Barnett, *J. R. A. S.*, 1931, p. 164.

[3] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. V, p. 58; Hultzsch, *Inscriptions of Aśōka, C. I. I.*, I, Girnar 13, p. 25.

[4] Fa Hien, *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*, pp. 42-43.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12), p. 52.

from forests can be traced to the *Śukranīti*.[1] It is also certain that the revenue from customs (*śulka*), continued to be a definite source of State income from the reign of Skanda Gupta, if not earlier, down to the end of the seventh century. Such tolls were recovered on roads in the days of Daṇḍin, who refers to "trade on roads where they pay no tolls."[2]

The reason why guilds of craftsmen, artisans and others were taxed during the Gupta regime appears to have been on account of their wealth. The Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, states that the guild of the silk-cloth weavers had "stores of wealth acquired by the exercise of their craft."[3]

Of these terms the tax *uparikara* has been the subject of much discussion. Fleet was the first writer who suggested that it must have originated from its Prākṛta word *uvari* or *upri* which denotes that it was a "tax levied on cultivators who have no proprietory rights in the soil."[4] This interpretation was not accepted by Dr Ghosal who stated that it was a "tax on permanent and temporary tenants respectively."[5] Dr L. D. Barnett, however, as remarked earlier considered that it was the counterpart of the Tamil expression *mēl-vāyam*, that is the Crown's share of the produce.[6] Dr. Ghosal disagreed with this view on the following grounds. He holds that the ancient Indian land grants have other and distinct terms to signify "the Crown's share of the produce", the most common of these being the *bhāga-bhōga-kara* and *hiraṇya* which are included with the *udraṅga* and the *uparikara* among the privileges assigned to the donees by the authors of the grants. Secondly, he adds that some grants of Assamese rulers, of the tenth and eleventh centuries, called Balavarman and Ratnapāla couple the officers, charged with the collection of revenue with the recovery of *uparikara* and those charged with the recovery of the *utkhetana* impost, in a list of oppressors who were forbidden to enter the donated land. Therefore he contends that "the *uparikara* was not a regular item of revenue like the "Crown's share of the produce." "but was an irregular tax which bore harshly on the cultivators."[7] It is difficult to agree

[1] *Śukranīti*, Ch. II, 11. 209-14. pp. 73-74; text, pp. 42-48.
[2] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 204.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 86.
[4] *Ibid.*, (21), p. 98.
[5] Ghosal, *Hindu Revenue System*, pp. 210-11.
[6] Barnett, *J. R. A. S.*, 1931, pp. 165-66.
[7] Ghosal, *I. H. Q.*, V, pp. 384-85.

with these views. First, it may be observed that a technical term of the Gupta age like the *uparikara* should not be interpreted by means of words or usages of later times, while a *vice-versa* method of interpretation appears desirable. The word *uparikara* cannot be said to have been derived from the Marāṭhī word *upri* as Dr Ghosal observes[1] simply because the Marāṭhī language as it is known at present *cannot* be traced to earlier than the tenth or eleventh centuries A. D. Moreover, the origin of this Marāṭhī word is still not quite free from doubt. It is therefore more reasonable to trace the word to the Prākṛta word *upari* or *upri* as Fleet rightly suggested. It is unlikely that a revenue practice which prevailed in the tenth or eleventh centuries during the Assamese rulers was one which necessarily either prevailed in Gupta times or was one which had descended from those days. There is no evidence to prove such a contention.

Fleet's suggestion that *uparikara* means a "tax levied on cultivators who have no proprietory rights in the soil"[2] appears to be correct. The word *uparikara* is evidently a combination of the two words *upari* and *kara*. The word *upari* used as a separable preposition means above, over, upon, on, or towards[3] and it obviously implies that it was a charge imposed on those agriculturists who had no proprietory rights in the soil, viz., those who were literally above this right of proprietorship. As shown earlier, only in those cases wherein plots of land were granted by the king according to the *Bhūmicchidra Nyāya* and even there in specified cases did the State part with its right of propriety in the soil by granting such plots in perpetuity. It therefore follows that those who had to pay the *uparikara* must have been comparatively greater than those who had to pay the *udraṅga*. The revenue arising from this source of taxation must have been so great that a high official called the *uparikara Mahārāja*, who had the status of a governor, was, as his designation implies, apparently entrusted with the recovery of the *uparikara*. The office of *Uparikara Mahārāja* is often referred to in the Dāmōdarpur copper-plate grants of the Gupta period.[4] If such a tax was really an oppressive charge it is not likely that such a high official would have been appointed by the State to recover such an impost.

[1] Ghosal, *Hindu Revenue System*, p. 210.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 97. n. 6.

[3] *Cf.* Böhtlingk und Röth, *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*, I, pp. 906-7. Also see *Śat. Br.* 3, 6. I, 18; *Śak.* Act VII: *gaṭaṃupari dhanānāṃ*; *Raghu.*, II, 60, p. 47: *avaṅgmukhasyōpari vṛṣṭiḥ papāta.*

[4] *Cf. E. I.*, XV, no. 7, pp. 131, 134, 136, 140.

If this *uparikara* was therefore a tax recovered from agriculturists or those who had no proprietory rights in the soil, then the significance of the other tax which is invariably mentioned together with it, namely *udraṅga*, deserves to be examined. This due was also an assignment which was given away when plots of land were granted as gifts. Bühler was the first scholar who pointed out that it can be explained by the word *uddhara* and *udgraṅtha* (? *udgraha*) and that it means "the share of the produce collected usually for the king."[1] Dr Ghosal has suggested that this word *udraṅga* can be explained by its Marāṭhī prototype thus: "Now Marāṭhi *udhār* means "in the gross" and *udharjamābaṅdhi* means "assessing the total revenue of a village upon the chief proprietor, leaving it to him to distribute the proportion." Therefore he concludes that *udraṅga* means the "revenue imposed upon the permanent tenants."[2] If, according to the *Śāśvatakōśa*, the words *udraṅga* and *uddhara* are equivalents, it would then imply that the former was a tax imposed on those who had a proprietory right in the soil *viz.*, on those who were granted plots of land by the *Bhūmicchidra Nyāya* and from whom the land granted was not to be confiscated. This tax was therefore evidently in contrast to the *uparikara* which must have been recovered from those who had no such proprietory right of ownership. The word *uddhara* means drawing-out, extraction[3] and apparently implies the imposition of a tax on the produce of land which was in the possession of those who had a proprietory right in the soil. This imposition too could not have been an oppressive charge, for no Gupta inscription mentions it as a remission; but there are some inscriptions of this age which invariably refer to it as an assignment. The *udraṅga* tax is mentioned in the Khōh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 475-76, where it is assigned along with the *uparikara* and other dues to some Brāhmaṇas with the grant of the village of Vasaṅtaraṣaṇḍika.[4] Three centuries later it was again current. The Alīna copper-plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, reveals how he acquired an excellent reputation by his settlement on a Brāhmaṇa of the *udraṅga* and the *uparikara* dues.[5] If they were oppressive dues they would not naturally have been granted as assignments to grantees and would not have brought a great

[1] *I. A.*, XII, p. 189; also see, *Śāśvatakōśa*, xxiv, 260, (ed. Zacharia).
[2] Ghosal, *op. cit.*, p. 210.
[3] *Cf.* Böhtlingk und Röth, *op. cit.*, p. 923.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (21), p. 97.
[5] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 189.

reputation for the king who made such assignments. On the contrary, as several south Indian inscriptions show, oppressive charges when remitted have been recorded to have enhanced the popularity of the monarch and made him famous. The *udraṅga* was consequently, like the *uparikara*, an essentially State charge imposed on the produce of land and recovered evidently from those who had a proprietory right in the soil and there is no evidence to prove that it was in any form or at any time an oppressive impost.

The revenue from fines also has been a source of State income from early times. This fact has been mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra*[1] and must have been current during the reigns of Samudra Gupta and his son Candra Gupta II, although their epigraphs do not mention it. This inference can be asserted with confidence because Fa Hien avers that in the Middle Kingdom (*Madhya-dēśa*) "criminals are simply fined, lightly or heavily, according to the circumstances (of each case)"[2]. Though Fa Hien's evidence is not always reliable as will be shown later, this observation of his appears to be correct, for it can be confirmed by epigraphic evidence. This source of revenue, as stated in the Khōh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, is simply called *cōravarjaṃ*, meaning literally "with the exception of thieves" while it is more explicitly explained in line 14 of the Khōh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, dated A. D. 496-97. Here occurs the expression *cōradaṇḍa-varjaṃ*,[3] implying clearly that it meant a fine imposed on thieves. Fines also seem to have been imposed on ploughs and water-pots, as can be seen from the Khōh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 516-17[4]. The reason for such a charge cannot be made out, but its remission shows that it was evidently not acceptable to the common tax-payer. Fines were also recovered for the ten offences, which were christened as the three sins of the body, four of speech and three of the mind.[5]

The *Cāṭa-Bhaṭa* officers were forbidden to enter a gifted *agrāhāra* owing to the fear that they would harass the inhabitants therein by exacting probably unauthorized dues. These were considered mischief makers (*drōhaka*) and were also fined, as can be noticed from the Khōh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Saṁkṣōbha, dated A. D. 528-29.[6]

[1] Kauṭalya *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. IV, Ch. X, pp. 254-56; also see. *Ibid.*, Ch. I, pp. 226-31.
[2] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (27), p. 124, text, p. 122.
[4] *Ibid.*, (30), p. 134.
[5] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 189; (46), p. 218.
[6] *Ibid.*, (25), p. 115.

At times a rather comprehensive term, employed to cover two land taxes due to the State, was the fiscal expression *bhāga-bhōga* the interpretation of which has also been a matter of controversy. In the Karitalāi copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, dated A. D. 493-94, occurs the expression—*bhāga-bhōga-kara pratyāyōpanayaṃ*[1] and the combined word *bhāga-bhōga* was suggested by Fleet to mean the enjoyment of shares.[2] It is worth while trying to find out what is meant by the enjoyment of shares. The Khōh grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, the date of which is lost, is addressed as usual to the cultivators, beginning with the privileged Brahmaṇas down to the artisans. It further says: "You yourselves shall render to these persons (the donees) the offering of the tribute of the customary royalties (*bhāgabhōga*), taxes, gold, etc., and shall be obedient to their commands."[3] This statement reveals that the expression *bhāga-bhōga* stood for some charge which was quite distinct from other imposts like *hiraṇya* and similar dues. Moreover, it is clear that the fiscal term *bhāga-bhōga* was a charge connected with land-produce, as the cultivators and others residing in the village from which it is due are addressed concerning it.

If *bhāga-bhōga* is therefore accepted to mean the enjoyment of shares, it refers obviously to the benefits enjoyed from land produce. But the Bijayagaḍh stone pillar inscription of Viṣṇuvardhana, dated A. D. 371-72,[4] tells us how a sacrificial post was caused to be set up by a Vārika, for the purpose of increasing the "splendour, sacrifices, religion, welfare (in the other world), prosperity, fame, family, lineage, good fortune and enjoyment (*bhāga-bhōga*)."[5] Such a general reference to the dues of the king being quite apparent, Fleet subsequently changed his interpretation as meaning the "enjoyment of taxes."[6]

The fiscal term *bhāga*, meaning a rent or tax on land, was familiar to Kauṭalya,[7] for he refers to the portion of produce payable

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (26), p. 118.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

[3] *Ibid.*, (29), p. 132.

[4] The era is not stated but Fleet, considering the type of the characters, 'with the locality of the inscription,' referred it to the Mālava or Vikrama era, with the result that it was ascribed to A. D. 371-72 expired and A. D. 372-73 current. See Fleet *op. cit.*, p. 253.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (59), p. 254. *śrī yajña dharma-ssṛcyō-bbhyudaya yaśaḥ kula vaṁśa bhāga-bhōg-ābhivṛddhaye.*

[6] *Ibid.*, f. n. 1.

[7] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. VI, p. 58, text, p. 60: *sītā bhāgō baliḥ karō vaṇik-nadipālastarō* . . . .

to the government as *bhāga*, while the customs duties and fines are styled as *śulka* and *daṇḍa*, respectively.[1] To Śukra also *bhāga* was one of the nine sources of revenue payable to the State.[2] In the *Smṛtis*, the term *bhāga* or its equivalent *aṁśa* stands for land-tax.[3] From these references it may definitely be inferred that *bhāga* was a tax on land, which was generally referred to as one-sixth of the produce in contemporary inscriptions of the Gupta period.

The term *bhāga* can be traced to Manu and the commentator Sarvajña Nārāyaṇa explained it to mean "daily presents in the form of fruits, flowers, vegetables, grass, etc."[4] It is interesting to note that such a custom was in vogue even in Harṣa's reign, and it continued to the days of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas.[5] Bāṇa mentions how "fools of grant-holders, issuing from the villages on the route (of Harṣa's army) and headed by aged elders with uplifted water pots, pressed furiously near in crowds with presents of curds, molasses, candied sugar, and flowers in baskets, demanding the protection of the crops".[6]

In the Maḷiya copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, of Valabhi, dated A. D. 571–572, some more sources of revenue are mentioned as *vāta-bhūta*, *dhānya*, *hiraṇya ādēyaṃ*.[7] Dr Altekar has suggested that *vāta* may refer to articles imported (*vā*, iii conjugation, "to wish", to gain, to invite, invoke) and that *bhūta* means what is produced in the village, and they therefore appear to be the equivalents of *śulka*.[8] If the word *bhūta* were to denote all that was produced in the village, it would be interesting to know why the dues on grain (*dhānya*), gold (*hiraṇayaṁ*) and what could be taken or received[9] (*ādēya*) are mentioned separately. Could these not have been covered by that one term? It is possible that *vāta* may have been the counterpart of an octroi duty but it is doubtful whether *bhūta* denoted a tax *on all* that was produced in the village.

[1] Kauṭalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. II, Ch. VI, pp. 57-58.

[2] *Sukranīti*, Ch. II, 11. 209-14, pp. 73-74, text, p. 48.

[3] Gautama, X, 24-27; p. Manu, VIII, 130, p. 276. Kauṭalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. V, Ch. 2 p. 271.

[4] *Manu*, VIII, v. p. 307 (Buhler), *Cf.* Sarvajña Nārāyaṇa's commentary. *Cf.* Altekar, *Rāṣṭrakūṭas and their Times*, pp. 215-16 and for an interpretation of the term *bhōgakara* which he understands to mean "petty taxes in kind." The use of the word *bhāgadēya* may be observed in the *Raghuvamśa: Nivarabhāgadēya-ucitair-mṛgaiḥ*, I, 50, p. 17 on which Mallinātha comments thus: *Bhāgadēyo amśaḥ. Ibid.*

[5] *I. A.*, XI, p. 111; *E. I.*, I, p. 52.

[6] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 208, text, p. 212.

[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 166.

[8] Altekar, *Rāṣṭrakūṭas and their Times*, p. 229.

[9] Apte, *Dictionary*, p. 236; see Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 189.

Probably the fiscal term *bhōga* was the equivalent of the due *grāma-maryāda* (the constitutional dues payable by a village) noticed for example in the Chammak copper plate grant of the Vākāṭaka *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II, issued in the 13th year of his reign. This grant reveals how the village named Cārmāṅka did not carry with it "the right to cows and bulls in succession of production, or to the abundance of flowers and milk, or to the pasturage, hides and charcoal, or to the mines, for the purchase of salt in a moist state."[1] As the record explicitly states that this village did not carry with it the right to these perquisites, these dues were therefore payable to the king, while the exemptions from taxation are made so clear. It is possible that flowers, milk and similar products only formed some items of the comprehensive fiscal charge named *bhōga*.

The Chammak copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II also refers to two more sources of revenue in the Gupta period by the names of *klṛpta* and *upaklṛpta*.[2] The due called *klṛpta* is recorded by Kauṭalya among the sources of revenue,[3] and it has been interpreted to mean a "fixed tax."[4] The word *klṛb*, p. f. (v. l. *klṛb*; *klṛp*?) means accomplishment,[5] and from this interpretation, it may be said tentatively that *klṛpta* was a tax on finished products. Since *upa* as a preposition or prefix to verbs and nouns means towards, near to (as opposed to *apa*, away), by the side of, together with, under, down,[6] the charge *upaklṛpta* must have been a tax either on goods akin to finished goods or on goods which were not finished.

Another source of income in the Gupta State as revealed in the Rajim copper-plate grant of *Rāja* Tīvaradeva, the date of which is uncertain, is *dāradraṇaka*. As the dictionaries give only the meaning of *dāra* to be a cleft, gap, hole; ploughed field; a wife, and do not mention either the word *draṇaka* or the root by which it can be explained, Fleet suggested that it may refer either to some agricultural cess or to a marriage tax.[7] As it is mentioned in connection

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (55), p. 242, text, p. 238: *Grāmamaryādāḥ* (m) = *vitarāmas* = *tad-yathā-a-karadāyi-a-bhaṭa-chhccha* (*chchā*) *trapravēśyaḥ* | *a-pārāmpara-gō-balivarddaḥ-apuṣpa-kṣirasaṭdo* (*ndō*) *haḥ a-cārāsana-carmāṅgāraḥ a-lavaṇa-klinna-kkrēṇi-khanakaḥ-sarvvavēṣṭi-parihār-parirhṛtaḥ sa-nidhis* = *s-ōpanidhiḥ.*

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Kauṭalya, Arthaśāstra*, text, p. 60.

[4] *Ibid.*, Bk. II, Ch. VI, p. 58.

[5] Monier Williams, *Dictionary*, p. 323.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (81), p. 299.

with the granting of a village, it is likely that this fiscal term denotes an agricultural instead of a marriage cess.

An equally mysterious charge appears in the Siwaṇī plates of the Vākāṭaka *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II, issued in the eighteenth year of his reign. Herein it is recorded how a village named Brahmapūraka was given away with the *kōraṭa* and some fifty hamlets to the *Adhvaryu Ācārya* Devaśarman.[1] If it is a Prākṛta form of the Kannaḍa word *kōraṭu*, which means the state of being checked in growth or stunted,[2] then *kōraṭa* possibly stood for a due recoverable from lands which were not fully developed or cultivated.

All these taxes noticed above were evidently legitimate forms of taxation in the Gupta period. As there were probably other ways by which the State exchequer was filled or by which the government officials enriched themselves, a distinction was made between legal and illegal forms of taxation. In the Kāritalāi and Khōh grants of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, dated A. D. 493-94 and 496-97 respectively, it is laid down that "the tribute of the taxes which by custom should not belong to the king, should not be levied."[3] From this allusion it is evident that constitutional usage, known in the Karnāṭaka country as the *pārvada maryāde* was respected in the Gupta administration in the various recognised forms of taxation. Such taxes may therefore be considered to have been payable by the people and recoverable by the State without question.

Nevertheless, even among these acknowledged forms of taxation, if some of the taxes pressed sorely on the tax-payers, or for some other reason they were unacceptable to the common people, exemptions were granted. Such an exemption was either specified or general. For instance the king reserved for himself the right to recover the fines imposed on thieves or the privilege for the imposition of forced labour even in a village bestowed as a grant.[4] On the other hand sometimes as the Khōh grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha indicates, a village was given away with "the remission of all the taxes; (and) with such tribute as may accrue."[5] This statement implies that, in some cases of land grants, a kind of universal exemption was given regarding the recovery of all taxes payable to the State, and this privilege was even extended to taxes which would or could be

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (56), p. 248.
[2] Kittel, *Kannaḍa-English Dictionary*, p. 489.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (26), p. 120; (27), p. 124; (31), p. 138.
[4] *Ibid.*, (27), p. 124; (38), p. 170.
[5] *Ibid.*, (29), p. 132; (40), p. 195; (41), p. 179.

recovered by the State in future, a step which does not appear very commendable from the point of view of financial propriety.

8. Survey of Land

The granting of land, in a way, implies that in the Gupta age, as all such lands which were given away as gifts were demarcated, the measurement and survey of land must have been an elaborate and a well-organised practice. Of course in the fourth century this system of measuring land must have been in vogue, but unfortunately few records revealing the details of this practice have come down to us. In the fifth century we find some records which illustrate the details of this usage in an interesting way. The Khōh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 475-76, relates how the village of Vasantarasaṇḍika was demarcated thus: "On all sides (*there are*) trenches (*of demarcation*) (*and*) on the north by the west, *the boundaries are those that have been previously enjoyed.*"[1] This remark, that the boundaries were those which were previously enjoyed, alludes to a usage which must have been in existence from earlier times. The details of such boundaries can be noticed in the same king's Khōh copper-plate grant, dated A. D. 482-83, wherein the *agrahāra* of Kōrpārika had "on the east (the boundary-trench or village called) Kōrparagartā on the north Animuktakakoṇaka (and) a *Vṛka* tree; in the centre of Valaka on the south side of the village of Vaṅgara (and) a clump of *amrāta*-trees; on the west, (the tank or village called Nāgaśri; (and) on the south, the *parichchhēda* (division or plot) of Balavarman."[2] That this system continued into the sixth century can also be exemplified by the Gunaigarh grant of *Mahārāja* Vainya Gupta, dated A. D. 508, which records how five plots of land were granted. Of them the first plot "measuring seven *pāṭakas* and nine *drōṇavāpas* the boundary marks are, to the east, the border of the Gunikara-grahāra village and the field of engineer Viṣṇu; to the south, the field of Miduvilala (?) and the field belonging to the royal *vihāra*; to the west, the Surinasirampuraneka (?) field; to the north, the tank of Dosobhoga,.....and the boundaries of the fields of (?) Vampiyaka and Adityabaṇḍhu."[3] These details reveal how in Eastern Bengal the system of measuring land was known and practised from early times and it is not strange that this practice was prevalent in

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (21), p. 97: "*sammaṇṭād-gartā-uttare-paścimō* (*mā*) *na pūrvva-bhūktā mā* (*ma*) *ryyādāḥ*", text, p. 96. Italics mine.

[2] *Ibid.*, (22), p. 105.

[3] *I. H. Q.*, VI, p. 58.

later times as can be observed from similar demarcations recorded in the Dāmōdarpur and the Faridpur grants.[1]

9. Land Measures

Now that we have ascertained that the system of measuring land was prevalent in Gupta times, we may attempt to find out the actual measures by which such measurements must have been executed. In the Gunaigarh grant above mentioned in A. D. 508 five plots of land, whose measurements are given thus, were given away as gifts:

1st	plot	measuring	7 *pāṭakas* and 9 *drōṇavāpakas*	
2nd	,,	,,	—— —— 28	,,
3rd	,,	,,	—— —— 23	,,
4th	,,	,,	—— —— 30	,,
5th	,,	,,	1 and $^3/_4$ths—	
	Total:		8 and $^3/_4$ths— 90	,,

As 11 *pāṭakas* of land were to be given away and as the measurements of only 8 and $^3/_4$ths of them are stated to be equivalent to 90 *drōṇavāpas*, Mr Dineshchandra Bhattacharya has correctly stated that "this works out the important equation 1 *pāṭaka*: 40 *drōṇavapākas*"[2] and not 50 *drōṇavāpakas* as was concluded from the Asrafpur plates of Devakhadga.[3] Thus were holdings divided and measured in the Gupta period.[4]

In the Vākāṭaka dominions there was, as in the empire of the Guptas, a standard royal measure for demarcating land. The Chammak copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasena II, issued in the eighteenth year of his reign, refers to such a measure called the *bhūmi*. It states: "The village named Cāramāṅka, on the bank of the river Madhu, in the Bhōjakaṭa kingdom (measured) by eight thousand *bhūmis* (or in figures) 8,000, according to the royal measure, is at the request of Koṇḍarāja, the son of Śatrughnarāja, given to one thousand Brāhmaṇas of various *gōtras* and *cāraṇas*."[5] It is not possible at present to ascertain the precise meaning of this land measure, but most probably it was the standard Vākāṭaka unit equivalent to the *kulyavāpa* reed in Eastern Bengal, the plough (*hala*) measure in Central India and the *pāḍāvartā* length in Surāṣṭra.

E. I., XIV, no. 7, pp. 113-45; *I. A.*, XXXIX, pp. 193-216.
[1] *I. H. Q.*, VI, p. 52.
[2] *Cf. M. A. S. B.*, I, p. 87.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 38.
Ibid., (55), p. 241.

In Eastern Bengal, however, the land measure employed was different. If one turns to the three copper-plate grants from East Bengal pertaining to the reigns of the emperors Dharmāditya and Gōpacandra, which have been ascribed to the sixth century, one finds that they illustrate some features of Gupta land measurement. Intending purchasers of land, as noted before, were obliged to make a formal application for purchasing certain *kulyavāpas* of land, according to the prevailing rates of sale for each *kulyavāpa*. The *kulyavāpa* must have probably consisted of as much land as could be sown by one *kulya* of seed. Meanwhile the authorities, empowered to sell the waste land, when handing over the plots sold, caused such plots to be measured according to the measure of 8 × 9 reeds or *pāla*. This measure has been considered to be "evidently an oblong measure comprising an area of nine reeds in length and eight reeds in breadth."[1] Pargiter suggested that "the *kulyavāpa* consisted of 8 × 9 reeds, the reed being about 11 cubits long and the cubit about 19 inches; that its area was a little larger than an acre. A *kulya* of seed could certainly provide for this area (and probably more), if it contained 8 *drōṇas* or bucketfuls."[2] Such a land measure was made the *standard* measure in the eastern (Bengal) provinces of the Gupta empire. This measure is recorded in the inscriptions of Dharmāditya, dated A. D. 531[3], 567[4] and of Gōpacandra, dated A. D. 586[5].

As the second Faridpur grant of Dharmāditya, dated A. D. 567 shows, there must have been a measure of land smaller than the *kulyavāpa*, named *pravarta*, for this record clearly refers to some "*kulya*-sowing areas of waste land plus a *pravarta*-sowing area."[6] This measure was obviously smaller than half a *kulya* as the price for all the land, waste and cultivated, was only two *dināras*.

Some of the contemporaries of Harṣa had an elaborate staff for the survey and settlement of land. This statement can be proved by the Nidhanpur plates of Bhāskaravarman, king of Kāmarūpa, dated A. D. 643. During this period, the officer, who issued a "hundred commands" pertaining to these transactions, was styled as the *Ājñāśatā prāpayītā*. The officer who marked the boundaries was the *Sīmā-pradātā*. Probably the adjudicator, who inspected and decided

[1] *I. A.*, XXXIX, p. 216. *Cf.* Monier Williams, *San. Eng. Dictionary*, p. 295.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 197-98.
[3] *Ibid.*, *XXXIX.*, p. 202.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 205.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 202.
[6] *E. I.*, XII, no. 13, 75, 79, *Cf.* the terms *pravarta* and *pādavarta*.

whether or not the boundaries were properly marked and settled all disputes, was named the *Nyāya-Karaṇika*. When making a grant before these, evidently as witnesses, were present some traders, a *Kāyastha* and some others possibly the neighbours. The officer styled *Sāsayita-Lekhayitā*, perhaps drafted the form in which the royal command issued by a higher official, was finally to be adopted. The officer in charge of the treasury or the stores (*Bhāṇḍāgarādhikṛta*) as well as a *Mahāsāmanta* were also present. Besides these officers there was a tax collector (*Utkheṭayitā*) and an engraver (*Sekyakāra*).[1]

In the western provinces of the Gupta empire, especially in Surāṣṭra, the *pādāvarta* measure was in vogue. The areas of irrigation wells and agricultural land was calculated by this measure. The Pālitāna plates of Dhruvasena I, dated A. D. 525-26, state how in the village Madkaṇa there were "hundred and forty *pādāvartas* (in area) and an irrigation well with an area of sixteen *pādāvartas*."[2] From a grant of Śilāditya III, dated A. D. 666, it is clear that fields were measured by means of the *pādāvarta* measure. This ruler granted a field, measuring fifty *pādāvartas*, consisting of three divisions in the village Daccāṇaka in the Hastavaprahāra in Surāṣṭra and a division of a field measuring fifty *pādāvartas* in the village (Vātanumaka) to three Brāhmaṇas.[3]

These measures were not current in the other provinces of the Gupta empire. Fleet suggested that the word *pādāvarta* literally means the turning of a foot, while Monier Williams interpreted it to be a square foot. The former added that it seems more likely that such an expression like a hundred *pādāvartas* as seen in the Maḷiya plates of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, "means a plot of ground measuring a hundred feet square each way, i.e. ten thousand square feet", rather than only "one hundred square feet", which would mean only ten feet each way and would be rather a small area for a grant."[4] This interpretation appears plausible, specially as in this record grants were made of lands measuring one hundred, ninety, twenty, fifteen and ten *pādāvartas*. If it is understood that a *pādāvarta* means only a square foot, as is generally acknowledged, the area of the grants of

[1] *E. I.*, XII, no. 3, pp. 79, 75.

[2] *Ibid.*, XI, no. 9, p. 108; also see pp. 111, 113. Also see Böhtlingk und Röth, *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*, p. 655. *Pādāvarta* is explained by the comentator on Kātyāyana's *Śrautasūtra*, as a "square foot." *Cf.*, *E. I.*, XII, p. 323, also see *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, I (N. S.), p. 18.

[3] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, I (N. S.), p. 74, ll. 54-55.

[4] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (38), p. 170, f. n. 4.

about ten *pādāvartas*, would be an extremely small plot of land to be considered the holding of any tenant.

It is interesting to note how minutely land was measured during the Gupta period. The Gaṇeśgaḍ plates of Dhruvasena I, dated in the Gupta *saṁvat* 207, mention that *khaṇḍas* were measured by the *pādāvarta* or the turning of a foot.[1] Land was likewise measured by the *pādāvarta* during the regime of Dhruvasena II, as a record of his time indicates.[2] Evidently, 'the turning of a foot' refers to the royal foot. Such a system of measuring land was a special feature of the Tamil country, where the rod was equal to "the royal foot which measures the (whole) world."[3] The land survey called *aḷavu*,[4] conducted in the sixteenth year of Kulottunga Cola I, was according to the *śrīpāda*[5] or royal foot of that monarch which was evidently taken as the unit of measurement.

In Central India, especially in the beginning of the sixth century A. D., the plough (*halī*) was possibly used as a land-measure. This suggestion is made, because in the Khōh plates of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 516-17, we are told that the *Dūtaka-Uparika* Mātṛśiva was appointed as an additional writer for the remission of the fines on *Halir-ākara-kumbha-daṇḍaḥ*.[6] Though the meaning of this technical expression is not apparent, it possibly meant a tax on ploughs, which we know definitely were later on used in and around Kanyakubja and Sthāṇvīśvara as a land-measure.

The length of a plough must have been considered a standard measure in the domain of Harṣavardhana. Bāṇa has recorded how Harṣa, in the region on one of the banks of the Sarasvatī, "bestowed upon the Brāhmaṇas a hundred villages delimited by a thousand ploughs."[7] This reference clearly reveals that the plough, the length of which is unfortunately not recorded, was employed to measure land, the stipulated number of plough-lengths of course making up the length and breadth of the village.

[1] *E. I.*, III, no. 46, p. 323.

[2] Fleet. *op. cit.*, p. 170.

[3] *M. E. R.*, 87 of 1900.

[4] *Ibid.*, 440 of 1912.

[5] *Ibid.*, for 1900, p. 10; Saletore, *Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagara Empire*, I, p. 166.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (30), p. 134. This technical expression may be compared with similar technical terms: *Bhikku-hala* (*E. I.*, VII, no. 3, p. 66), and *Dēva-bhōga hala*, (*I. A.*, V, p. 157 and *J. A. H. R. S.*, I, p. 92).

[7] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 199, text, p. 203: *ityabhinandya manasā mahānimittaṃ tatsīrasahasrasaṁmita simnāṃ grāmāṇāṃ śatamadād-dvijēbhyaḥ.*

This custom of measuring land by means of plough-lengths appears to have become not only popular but seems to have survived for a considerable period after the reign of Harṣavardhana. In the Harṣa stone inscription of the Cāhamaṇa Vigraharāja, dated A. D. 970, it is mentioned how various types of land were measured by what is said to be "a big plough of land."[1] Such a reference suggests that there must have been various types of ploughs, here the obvious distinction being between the larger and smaller ploughs of land. Whether or not such distinctions existed during the reign of Harṣavardhana, cannot be definitely decided for lack of evidence. In the record of Vigraharāja this land measure appears to have been current in the region near Ajmere.[2]

III. Land and Labour Relations

1. Forced Labour

The idea of forced labour has its roots in the hoary past. It was known to Manu,[3] Viṣṇu,[4] Nārada[5], and Vasiṣṭha.[6] The Greek writers did not forget its survival for Strabo alludes to it when dealing with the activities of the second caste of husband-men and he says that "They are exempted from military service and cultivate their lands undisturbed by fear".[7] Again he observes that the fourth caste who worked at trades and vended wares, not only paid taxes but rendered to the State "prescribed services".[8] Though Strabo has not specified what exactly were these prescribed services due to the State, they evidently allude, among other contributions, to the demands of forced labour. Such a system was also known to Kauṭalya who refers to it as one of the branches of *Vārtā*.[9]

During the times of the Guptas this forced labour or *viṣṭi* became a source of State income in the shape of a tax. In the Khōh plates of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha appears this order to the Brāhmanas, cultivators and artisans of Dhavaṣaṇḍikā thus: "You yourselves shall render to these persons the offering of the tribute

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[1] *E. I.*, II, no. VIII, p. 130, text, p. 125: *Kalāvaṇa padrē sēkyakakṣētraṃ tathā atraiva dvihali kānaṁ(di) sōmakē vṛhad dalaṃ iti.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 119.

[3] Manu, VIII, I. 415, p. 326.

[4] Viṣṇu, XVIII, I. 44, p. 74.

[5] *Nārada*, V, II. 25-43, pp. 135-39.

[6] Vasiṣṭha, II, I. 39, p. 14.

[7] Mc'Crindle, *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*, p. 48, (1901 ed.)

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

[9] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. IV, p. 8.

of the customary duties, royalties, taxes, gold, etc., and shall be obedient to (their) commands ".[1] This right to extort dues and labour must have depended on circumstances and must have been resorted to as occasion arose. In fact in the Māḷiyā grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, appears an expression to support such a contention for it refers to the "right to forced labour as the occasion for it occurs ".[2] On what occasions there was a recourse to such an enforcement of forced labour the inscriptions do not enlighten us, and it is only in the literature of this period that there is scope for ascertaining the nature of this type of work. One of such occasions was during the time of war. For instance in the *Harṣacarita*, there is the description of such a critical period: "Here, with cries of 'the labour is ours, but when paytime comes some other rascals will appear', village servants, set to scare on the feeble oxen tripping at every step, were indiscriminately badgering the whole body of nobles. There the whole country side had come in eager haste from both directions out of curiosity, to see the king, and fools of grant-holders (*Agrahārika*), issuing from the villages on the route and headed by aged elders with uplifted waterpots, pressed furiously near in crowds with presents of curds, molasses, candied sugar, and flowers in baskets, demanding the protection of the crops."[3] Bāṇa in fact tells us what work was extorted from the people when he remarks: "Here all the people, busy with orders to fill up muddy places, were cutting bundles of grass."[4]

In times of peace also forced labour was employed, especially in connection with the presence of the royalty. In the *Mudrārākṣasa*, for example, Virādhagupta relates how Cāṇakya on the day of the entry of the Candragupta Maurya into the palace of Nanda "summoned all the carpenters residing in Kusumapura" and said "there is to be the entry of Candragupta in the palace of Nanda today as appointed by astrologers. You will, therefore, decorate the royal mansion commencing with the main entrance." Then the carpenter Dāruvarman had already furnished the main entrance with magnificent (lit. special) decorations such as the golden arch and the like; so that the interior only remained to be decorated for them. Then the fellow Cāṇakya bestowed a long eulogium on Dāruvarman's wisdom, expressing gratification at his having decorated the royal

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (27), p. 124: *āj̃ña śravaṇa. Cf. Ibid.*, (60), p. 257.
[2] *Ibid.*, (38), p. 170, text, p. 166: *sōtpadyamāna viṣṭikaṃ.*
[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 208, text, p. 211.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 209, text, pp. 212-213.

mansion without being told, and added that he would have his reward for it before long."[1] From this passage it may be inferred that forced labour being current was occasionally enforced and sometimes probably paid for. Such an inference is not without some reason if reliance can be placed in contemporary inscriptions. The Udayagiri cave inscription of Candra Gupta II suggests that these labourers were purchased with money, for it refers to 'purchase money' (*vikram-āvakraya-krītā dāsya-nyayabhūta*).[2] Such being the money value of forced labour, it was considered a source of public revenue. In the Gaṇeśgad plates of Dhruvasena I, dated A. D. 526-27, we are told how the village Hariyāṇaka was granted "free of taxes (in the shape of) gifts and taxes (in the shape of) forced labour" (*viṭṭolaka*).[3]

This custom of utilising forced labour travelled into southern India. The *kesavaga* of the Kannaḍa inscriptions was the bond-servant in Karṇāṭaka.[4] The epigraphs of the Coḷa, Pāṇḍya and Karṇāṭaka rulers bear ample testimony that forced labour was a well-known source of government revenue from early times down to the eighteenth century.[5]

From these facts it may be deduced that forced labour in reality existed in Gupta times. This is further supported by a remark of Yüan Chwāng who toured northern India between A. D. 629 and 645 for he observes that in the Gupta empire "taxation being light and forced labour being sparingly used, every one keeps to his hereditary occupation."[6] He further adds that "individuals are not subject to forced labour contributions."[7]

2. Slavery

Apart from the institution of forced labour, the existence of slavery in the Gupta age from early times cannot be denied. The slaves were called *dāsas*. In the Allahabad stone pillar inscription

[1] Viśākhadatta, *Mudrārākṣasa*. Act II, text, p. 27, (ed. by Dhruva, 1923.)

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (6), p. 35.

[3] *E. I.*, III, no. 46, p. 323.

[4] *E. C.* VIII, Sb. 255, p. 39; Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, p. 112.

[5] *M. E. R.*, 1905, p. 46.

[6] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 176. (Watters). There is an apparent contradiction in translations of the statements of Yüan Chwāng. According to Beal: "The families are not entered on registers and the people are not subject to forced labour (*conscription*)... When the public works require it, labour is exacted but paid for."; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 87.

[7] *Ibid.*

of Samudra Gupta it is recorded how Harisena, although a *Sandhi-vigrahika, Kumārāmātya* and *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, was the *dāsa* at the feet of the emperor.[1] The application of such an epithet to this distinguished officer shows that it was evidently considered not derogatory to style such a noble as a slave of the emperor, and moreover this allusion possibly hints at the suggestion that slavery in India at this period was not of the type as was known in general in the West.

But if credence is to be given to Fa Hien, then slavery was apparently non-existent during the reign of Candra Gupta II. "If they want to go," he observes, "they go; if they want to stay on, they stay."[2] Such a statement implies great freedom of movement and suggests no restriction of any kind whatever. But the Udayagiri cave inscription of Candra Gupta II clearly refers to the existence of slavery when it states that "all other princes are humiliated by the slavery (*dāsya-niyogbhūta-pārthivāḥ*) (imposed on them by him)."[3]

The later inscriptions of the Guptas do not refer to slavery, but nevertheless it cannot be inferred that slavery did not survive in the country after Candra Gupta II. It may even be said that it existed side by side with forced labour (*viṣṭi*), the survival of which is amply corroborated by epigraphs and travellers' accounts.

Later in the times of Harṣa, Yüan Chwāng like Fa Hien praised the generosity of the government, maintaining that individuals were not subjected to forced labour contributions and that "forced labour was sparingly used."[4] The distinction between these two kinds of service should be noticed and in his reference to forced labour he obviously alluded to the institution of slavery which he, unlike Fa Hien, did not fail to notice.

That slavery certainly existed during this period is borne out by the evidence of Bāṇa. He has recorded his impressions of such forced labour during a campaign of Harṣa. This conclusion can be inferred from the bits of conversation heard in the camp of Harṣa: "How long, slave, are you to gather jujube fruit?" "Quick, slave, with a knife cut a mouthful of fodder from this bean field." "Who can tell the fate of his crop when we are gone?"[5] These slaves called

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), p. 16. *Ityacca kāryam-eṣām-iva bhaṭṭāraka pādānāṃ dāsasya samipa parisarppan anugraḥa.....*

[2] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (6), p. 35.

[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I. p. 176; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p, 87. Hiuen Tsiang remarks that "the personal service required of them (the people) is moderate."

[5] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-207, text, p. 210.

dāsakas were consequently employed for performing sundry tasks such as gathering fruits or cutting grass, their duties being chiefly of a menial nature. Moreover, it is also known that not only men but even women were sold into slavery. Even these were permitted a spell of freedom on the birth of a prince like Harṣa. Bāṇa specifically refers to them, when he describes their movements on this momentous occasion in these words: "There drunken slave women allured the favourites, while the monarch himself looked on with a secret smile."[1] Such an attitude of the king and his court suggests that slaves in the days of Harṣa could not have possibly had a very miserable existence, as they were patronised by the people, the nobility and the royalty.

3. Skilled Labour-Engravers

Quite a different type of workmen were the engravers, who inscribed the royal charters either on stone or on copper plates. Among them there were composers and actual engravers. During Yaśōdharman's reign Vāsula was a composer, while Govinda actually engraved the charter.[2]

These engravers occupied high positions of trust. One such was Skandabhaṭa, a *Saṅdhivigrahika*, who had a *Dūtaka* or a messenger named cirbira. The Māliyā copper-plate grant of Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, informs us that this *Dūtaka*, read out to the donee and the assembled people the contents of the charter.[3] The *Dūtaka* also held high posts. The Alīnā grant of Śilāditya VII states how the illustrious *Dūtaka* Siddhasēna was *Mahāpratīhāra*, *Mahākṣapaṭalika* and also a member of the king's household. This statement reveals how one officer performed the duties of three or almost four posts! He was too high an officer to write the record himself, and so he had a deputy, Guha by name, who was both an *Amātya* as well as a *Pratināṭaka*, obviously the herald or it might even have been merely a family title.[4] Siddhasēna actually deputed this *Amātya* Guha to write out the inscription. The *Dūtakas* must have been employed in connection with the issuing of formal grants, of course not to carry the actual charter itself into the grantee's hands, but to convey the king's sanction and order to the local officials, whose duty was to have the charter drawn up and delivered to the persons addressed.[5] It is

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 112, text, p. 130: *Kṣudradāsīsamākṛṣyamāṇarājavallabhaḥ....*
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (33), p. 148.
[3] *Ibid.*, (38), p. 171.
[4] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 190.
[5] *I. A.*, IX, p. 167.

incredible to believe that *Dūtakas* of such a status as noted above would have actually written or transcribed the grants which were also given to the common people.

4. Ancestry of Engravers

These engravers were learned persons of noble ancestry. The engraver Devaśarman, for example, was an *Ācārya*.[1] During the regime of king Jayanātha, *Sāndhivigrahika* Gallu, a charter-writer, is recorded to have been the son of *Bhōgika* Varāhadinna and the grandson of the *Bhōgika Amātya* Phalgudatta.[2] The *Bhōgika* as an officer, it may be stated here if a grant of Jayabhaṭṭa II can be trusted, was in rank below the *Sāmanta* and above the *Viṣayapati*.[3] The *Amātya* Phalgudatta was a famous person according to the Khōh copper plate grant of Śarvanātha. Phalgudatta had a son called Varāhadinna whose son was Manōratha, a *Dūtaka* and this person's son was *Sāndhivigrahika* Nātha, a royal charter-writer.[4] Now this Varāhadinna, who was also a *Bhōgika*, had another son, named *Sāndhivigrahika* Gallu, who served as an engraver to king Jayanātha.[5] This ruler had another calligraphist named *Bhōgika* Guñjakīrti, who also could boast of a high pedigree.[6]

To prove the responsibility and the ancestry of these writers of *śāsanas*, some genealogical lists, which have been drawn up chiefly from inscriptions pertaining especially to *Uchchakalpa* rulers, reveal how Gupta kings employed responsible people to carry out their commands.[7] These dynastic tables of *Lekhakas* and *Dūtakas* indicate that employment of these craftsmen was usually hereditary, that one officer held several offices, at times, in addition to his own either as a *Lekhaka* or a *Dūtaka*, that they were patronised by kings and their feudatories, that brothers of one family served either one or two masters and that nobles, as later in Vijayanagara times, had their private as well as royal engravers.

IV. Corporate Organisation

1. Types of Corporations

Whether these engravers formed themselves into guilds it cannot be settled, but there is ample evidence to prove the existence of

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (56), p. 249.
[2] *Ibid.*, (27), p. 124.
[3] *I. A.*, p. 114, L. 8 of the Kavi grant.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (31), p. 138.
[5] *Ibid.*, (27), p. 124.
[6] *Ibid.*, (26), p. 120.
[7] *Cf.* Appendix D.

other guilds. The records of Kumāra Gupta I and Budha Gupta noticed before, specially those dealings with Vētravarman, the governor of Kōṭivarṣa *viṣaya*, refer to the *Nagaraśrēṣṭhin*, *Sārthavāha*, and the *Prathama Kulika* who were on the Advisory Board of the guild.[1] This grant reveals that there were separate kinds of guilds, especially of merchants inland and foreign who must have undertaken huge industrial enterprises like the "great masonry work of lake Sudarśana" mentioned in the Junāgadh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A.D. 456-57.[2] Moreover these inscriptions show that the craftsmen were so well organised that every corporation had a leader from its own guild, and as such he had indirectly some influence in the administration of the country. Now referring to such a person like the *Nagaraśrēṣṭhin* it is possible that it means guild president and it is worth noting that even to-day in Gujarat one hears about the *Nagar-śeth*, a term evidently reminiscent of the *Nagaraśrēṣṭhin*. Its equivalent in southern India in later times was obviously the *Paṭṭaṇa-svāmi*[3] who has been interpreted to mean the Lord Mayor of the town.[4] The title of *Jyēṣṭha* or *Prathama Kāyastha* does not suggest that even the clerks themselves formed into a guild, but it only stood apparently as an official designation for the head of the clerical establishments or associations.

There is also evidence to show that, during the reign of Kumāra Gupta I and Budha Gupta, there was a powerful guild of silk merchants. They were not only well-organised and wealthy but seem to have been sun-worshippers. The Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman narrates how "by command of the guild, and from devotion, this temple of the sun was caused to be built."[5] This statement reveals how they carried out their corporate assent even in religious matters such as the erection of a temple. These silk weavers came from Lāṭa, and being a "guild", with their own wealth caused a "noble *and* unequalled temple of the bright rayed sun."[6] To build such a shrine considerable expenditure could only have been met by an extremely wealthy association of merchants. These traders who were patronised by the governor Bandhuvarman, came as emigrants from Lāṭa and settled in Daśapura, the modern Daśor.

[1] *E. I.*, XV, no. 7 p. 131.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14), p. 64.
[3] *M. A. R.*, 1918, para 116, p. 54.
[4] Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, p. 104 ; see *ante passim*, Ch. IV, pp. 271, 292.
[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 87.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 86.

In the highly organised state of Gupta society it is not surprising to find some further evidence of this corporate activity. That there were oil guilds during this period cannot be doubted. The Indor plates of Skanda Gupta observe thus: "This gift of a Brāhmaṇa's endowment of the temple of the Sun is the *perpetual property of the guild of oil men* of which *Jīvanta is the head*, residing at the town of Indrapura, *as long as it continues in complete unity even in moving away from this settlement*. But *there should be given by this guild*, for the same time as the moon and sun endure, two *pālas* of oil by weight".[1] From this grant it may be concluded that in Gupta times there were guilds of oilmen (*taila śrēṇyaḥ*); that they evidently being wealthy gave grants to religious bodies and in this case to a sun temple; and that even in owning possessions, making gifts or in moving from place to place they acted as a corporate body, and that they had a leader (*pravara*). The activities of this guild may well be compared with the guild of silk weavers, referred to above, who came from Lāṭa and prospered under the patronage of Bandhuvarman,[2] the governor of Daśapura.

There is reason to believe that traders, artisans and bankers during the Gupta period must have organised themselves into huge organisations (more or less like modern trusts) for commercial purposes. The bankers in this age appear to have constituted themselves into guilds. This inference can be proved by a Gupta seal which bears the following inscription: *śrēṣṭhi sārthavāha kulika nigama* (or sometimes) *nigamā*—representing the corporation of bankers, traders and merchants.[3] These seals allude, in fact, to a guild of bankers. One of the seals bears the epigraph of *Śreṣṭhinigamasya*, representing the (seal) of the Guild of Bankers.[4] Commenting on this aspect of commercial life in the Gupta age, D. B. Spooner remarked that "In all the sixteen specimens of this field (at Basārh) were recovered in the year's work, very unusual number for any one type in this collection. Banking was evidently as prominent in Vaiśāli as we should have expected it to be, judging from the notice in Manu to the effect that the people in Magadha were bards and traders."[5]

Such corporate activity was also displayed in making endowments. The Gadhwa stone inscription of Candra Gupta II reveals how "headed by Mātṛdāsa . . . for the purpose of increasing the religious

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (16), p. 71. Italics mine.
[2] *Ibid.*, (18), p. 84.
[3] *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-4, p. 107.
[4] *Ibid.*, 1913-14, p. 122.
[5] *Ibid.*

merit . . . fashioned . . . the Brāhmaṇas of the community of a perpetual almshouse . . . by ten *dināras*."[1] Such grants of money were made for the maintenance of alms-houses as permanent funds and these endowments implied that only the interest arising from the capital endowed was to be utilized for the specified object. The Sāñci stone inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 450-51, states that "By the *Upāsikā* Harisvāmini, the wife of the *Upāsaka* Sanasiddha, for the sake of (*her*) parents, twelve *dināras* are given (*as*) a permanent endowment to the community of the faithful,...at the holy great *vihāra* of Kākanādabōṭa. With the interest that accrues, of these *dināras*, day by day one *Bhikṣu*, who has been introduced into the community should be fed. Also three *dināras* are given in the jewel-house. With the interest of three *dināras*, day by day, three lamps of the divine Buddha should be lit in the jewel-house. Also, one *dināra* is given in the place where (*the images of*) the four Buddhas are seated. With the interest of this, day by day, a lamp of the divine Buddha should be lit in the place where (*the images of*) the four Buddhas are seated."[2] So not only men but women too made endowments in the name of charity, granting sums ranging from one *dināra* upwards to twelve and more for particular objects like feeding *Bhikṣus* of the Buddhist Order, or for lighting lamps within the *caityālayas*.

Sometimes in dramatic literature, which is attributed to the sixth century, reference is made to corporate activity. In the *Mudrārākṣasa*, for example, we learn that there existed at Pāṭaliputra a guild of the *Śreṣṭhins*[3] and that these were evidently controlled by a chief who was known as the *Nagara-Śrēṣṭhin*[4]. The position of the *Nagaraśrēṣṭhin* was apparently one of considerable importance and responsibility and it is interesting to know that it was conferred as a reward on any deserving *Śrēṣṭhin* by the king.[5] It may be recalled that this official, known as the *Nagaraśrēṣṭhin*, was one of the representatives who occupied a place in the *Adhikaraṇa* as can be noticed from the Dāmōdarpur copper-plate grants which have been referred to already.

It is also interesting to note that, according to some Jaina Prākṛta stories, which have also been attributed to the sixth century,

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (7), p. 38.

[2] *Ibid.*, (62), p. 262.

[3] Viśākhadatta, *Mudrārākṣasa*, Act VII, 10, p. 98.

[4] *Ibid.*, *Ibid.*, p. 101. The expression: *ēṣa śrīṣṭhī Caṇḍanadāsaḥ pṛthivyām sarvanagaraśrēṣṭhipadamārōpyatām*, suggests that there was a post like that of the Chief of the guilds of all the towns in the empire. But no such post has been referred to either in the inscriptions, seals or other records of the Gupta age and it is doubtful whether such a post in reality existed.

[5] *Ibid.*

there was a guild of painters. In one of these stories known as Domuha's tale we are told that a certain ruler desired to have in his palace a hall decorated with new paintings. Therefore he ordered architects to come to his palace and undertake the work. We are informed that at times this work was entrusted to the guild of painters in equal portions, implying that the members of this guild must have been assigned separate duties so that the work in hand might be executed quickly and efficiently. Consequently we learn that several painters were engaged in such an undertaking.[1] When, however, the task was completed the craftsmen, who painted this hall of paintings, which must have elicited the satisfaction of the royalty, were rewarded with gifts of raiments and other presents. Then on an auspicious day, which was determined by the royal astrologers, this hall of paintings was formally declared open, to use a modern expression, when the royalty made a State entry into it through one of its doors.[2]

Daṇḍin gives us some information regarding the corporate activity of his day. He refers, for example, to the merchants' guild (*Vaṇiggaṇasamāja*) which may be compared to some extent with the town-council (*Paurajanasannidhi*) to which he also points in his work.[3] The jurisdiction of the former was confined to the transactions of the market, while that of the latter pertained to the local administration. This inference can best be illustrated by an incident. A rogue, approaching a merchant called Anantakīrti, offered an anklet for sale. "This is my wife's anklet" he cried. "How did you come by it?" he was asked. But pressed in vain for an answer the fellow insisted that he would explain only in the presence of the merchant guild. Upon this information the merchant took the fellow before the merchants' guild. There the rogue, when questioned, modestly reported: "It is known to you of course that by your appointment I guard the grave-yard, making my living thereby. I even spend my nights in the cemetery, (*pitṛvanaṃ*) thinking that grave-robbers who would seek to avoid me, might occasionally burn the bodies. The other night I saw a woman, a brunette, clawing a half-burnt corpse from its pyre. Her greed was greater than her timidity, so that I caught her; and I chanced to scratch her thigh slightly with my knife. I also chanced to snatch this anklet from her foot. At this point she made off in a hurry. I have told you how I came by it;

[1] Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, p. 174.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 139.

[3] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 176, text, p. 117.

further action rests with you."[1] The merchants' guild must have therefore possessed certain privileges. The local cemetery was probably under its control and to guard it they appointed a watchman. If any of the members of this guild was involved in a case, the matter was brought before the guild when the whole question was thrashed out in an open and full session. The culprit was given a full hearing and if he was required to be released on bail when he was accused by the Judge (*Nyāyya*), the guild came to his rescue and offered bail to him[2]. Any decision which they arrived at was consequently a unanimous agreement after a thorough discussion. In another case we are told that "the citizens, after deliberation, unanimously voted that she was a witch."[3] Once again this statement proves that the decision arrived at in any corporate discussion was the result of only an unqualified agreement.

2. Corporations and Trade-Routes in pre-Gupta times

These merchants carried on a vast commercial intercourse between India, the Far East and the West. There appear to have existed four important centres of commercial enterprise, which may be said to have been confined to Bengal and Kalinga in the east and to Surāṣṭra and Karnāṭaka on the west coasts. Traders evidently left either from Valabhi or Broach on the west coast and from Tāmralipti on the east coast, for voyages, as the *Mahājanaka Jātaka* tells us, between Campa and Suvarṇabhūmi.[4] The important sea-ports on the Kalinga coast are mentioned by Ptolemy and the *Periplus*. The former relates how ships left for the eastern seas from the port of Gopālpūr, which was situated a little below the mouth of the Rasikulya river and sailed across the bay of Bengal.[5] The *Periplus* refers to another trade route from three harbours on the east coast near Masulipatam, whence the sea-farers left for the distant Far East across the Bay of Bengal.[6] The third important sphere of commercial activity was the province of Surāṣṭra on the west coast wherein the most navigable port was that of Broach. The *Sussondi Jātaka* informs us that from this town of Broach there was another trade route along the western coast to the east.[7] In Karnāṭaka of course there were the important ports of Semulla (Chaul) and Mangarur (Mangalore).[8]

[1] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 180, text, pp. 117-18.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 177, text, p. 115.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 110, text, p. 118: *paurāṇāṃ abhimatamāsīt. . . .*
[4] *Mahājanaka Jātaka*, VI, no. 5319, p. 30 ff.
[5] Gerini, *Researches in Ptolemy's Geography*, p. 743.
[6] *Periplus of the Erythræan Sea*, p. 46. (Schoff); Cunningham, *Ancient Geography*, p. 598.
[7] Fausboll, *The Jātaka*, III, p. 187 ff.
[8] Mc'Crindle, *The Commerce and Navigation of the Erythræan Sea*, pp. 125, 129 (1879).

According to the *Periplus* in the first century A. D. Tāmralipti was apparently the only port from which Indian ships left for the eastern shores. Referring to the Tamil country Periplus states that "Among the market-towns of these countries, and the harbors where the ships put in from Damirica (Tamiḻagaṃ) and from the north, the most important, are, in order as they lie, first Camara, then Poduca, then Sopatama; in which *there are ships of the country coasting along the shore as far as Damirica.*"[1] Again *Periplus* remarks how "After these, the course turns towards the east again, and sailing with the ocean towards the right and the shore remaining beyond the left, Ganges comes into view, and near it very last land towards the east, Chryse."[2] From this observation it is evident that coastal voyages were the practice of the day in the first century. A. D.

From these ports sailors left for the great maritime cities of the east and the west, especially of Egypt and Rome. With the accession of the Lagids to the throne of Egypt at the end of the fourth century B. C., especially Ptolemy II paid great attention to the development of the African coast, founding colonies along it as far as Socotora. The old canal which led from the eastermost branch of the Nile delta into the Red Sea and the road from Coptos to Berenice, a port on the Red Sea coast, were repaired and restored. But with the decline of the early Ptolemies and the rise of Rome, these canals slowly silted up and the roads of commerce were closed until, with the rise of Augustus, their complete reconstruction was undertaken.[3] The consequence was that Strabo at Myos was assured that one hundred and twenty vessels then sailed to India in a year and that many then essayed the formerly dangerous passage. The merchandise from Myos was removed by camel over the land to Coptos and thence evidently to Berenice and so down to Alexandria, from where carefully along the coast they reached, after touching at Aden, the famous port of Bharukhaccha (Broach).[4]

Some years later, about the middle of the first century A. D., a navigator called Hippalus, after observing the periodicity of the winds, with their aid eventually reached the shores of India. This discovery resulted in a vast increase in trade, which prevailed till the days of Hadrian, the total destruction of the old-Arab monopoly and

[1] *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, p. 46. (Schoff.) (Italics mine).
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[3] Mc'Crindle, *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, pp. 9-10, 111-112.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 98-100, also see *I. A.*, LVI, p. 60.

the possibility of making a return voyage within one year from Rome to India and back. Both Ptolemy and the anonymous author of the *Periplus* refer to this increase in commerce.[1] Consequently the road from Coptos to Myos Hormos was improved, divided into stages, on it storage depots were constructed and water reservoirs and armed guards provided, while a fleet was stationed in the Red Sea. As, however, at Arsinoe and at Berenice, winds, shoals and winds gave trouble, Hormos gradually developed into the principal harbour while on the other side Aila and Leuce Come became the haunts of smaller vessels. Strabo describes how merchandise landed here was carried by immense caravans to Petra and the Mediterranean.[2]

Not only was there a sea route for trading with the East but there also appears to have been a land route as well. In the early days of the Roman empire, Commagene and Cappadocia were client states but under Vespasian these were incorporated in the Empire and control was thus established over the three crossings of the Euphrates at Commagene, Cappadocia and Zeugma, the last of which was the starting point for journeys into Mesopotamia through which several land caravans passed. The Euphrates valley was infested with fighting tribes and therefore the caravans made a northerly circuit through the desert through Carrhae and Resaina to Nisbis and Singara until they reached the Tigris valley near Nineveh and followed its course down to Ctesiphon. There were several variations to this trade route too from this point but they all met finally at Seleucia on the Tigris. Mr Charlesworth has well observed that "Here used to arrive at regular intervals large vessels from India laden with timber, sandalwood and teakwood and ebony, blackwood and ebony, which returned bearing in exchange the pearls of the Persian fisheries, the purples of the Mediterranean, wine and dates and slaves." From this port merchants, who had arrived from Bactria, invariably shipped for Petra and the ports of the West.[3]

Such was the course of the route which was followed till the days of Isidore, but after him a new route was discovered. Till Merv the old route was followed but after leaving it the merchants struck out for Bactra (Balkh), traversed through the mountainous

[1] *Periplus of the Erithryaean Sea*, pp. 135.

[2] Mc'Crindle, *op. cit.*, pp. 101. In this connection see Charlesworth, *Trade Routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire*, pp. 58-64. (Cambridge, 1924), Warmington, *The Commerce Between The Roman Empire and India*, pp. 101-2.

[3] *Ibid.*, *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy*, pp. 12-21; Charlesworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-2.

country of the Comedi, the lands of the Sacae, until they arrived at the "Stone Tower", identified with Tashkurgan in Sarikol overhanging the Upper Yarkhand river. From here to the east ran the road to China and Singfanu, and to the south-east lay the way to the Indus valley through Srinagar and Taxila and through the west the path was open to reach Europe through Samarkand down the Oxus valley. At Tashkurgan the merchants of China came with their silks, raw silk and silk-yarn which they exchanged for precious stones, amber and coral from the merchants of Rome. A considerable quantity of these silks was also transported down the Ganges to Pāṭaliputra while some of it went down the Indus river to Barygāza (Broach) from where it was transferred to Rome by sea.[1]

3. Trade Routes in Gupta Times

(*a*) Land Routes.

The contact between China and India was not only spiritual owing to the Buddhist faith, but also commercial on account of the trade, especially in silks from the times of Fa Hien to the days of Daṇḍin. It is interesting to know the trade routes through which this trade flowed for three centuries.

The Chinese travellers, who visited India from the days of Candra Gupta II, appear to have followed in the tracks of the traders. Fa Hien, the first Chinese pilgrim to visit the Gupta empire, was living at *Ch'ank-gan* and started from that place westwards until he came to *Yu-teen* (Khotan), whence he went to *Tsze-hoh* (?) across and through the Onion mountains until he reached, with his friends, the region near *Darelas* (Darada). Then he crossed the Indus, going south-west and came to *Woo-Chang* (Udayana-country now called Swat), which constitutes a portion of Central India, which was styled by the Chinese as the "Middle Kingdom." Thence he moved on to Gāndhāra (the region about Dheri and Banjour) and seven days from this place to the east brought him to Takṣaśila (Taxila). From Gāndhāra, going southwards for four days he arrived at Puruṣapura (Peshawar), from where he left westwards, travelling sixteen *yojanas*, until he reached the city of *He-lo* (Hidda, west of Peshawar 5 miles south of Jalalabad), where he stayed for some time. Then crossing the Little Snowy Mountains (probably the Safeid Koh on the way to

[1] Mc'Crindle, *The Commerce and Navigation of the Erithryæan Sea*, pp. 102-4; also see pp. 96-97, 107-8.

the Kohat pass) to the south of the range, arrived at the kingdom of *Lo-e* (Rohi-Afghanistan—only a portion here being intended). After staying here for some time, he again crossed the Indus, moved into the *Pe-t'oo* country (Bhīda—a portion of the Punjab) and from here travelling south-east came to *Ma-t'aou-lo* (Mathurā) where he heard that "all south from this is named the Middle kingdom."[1] From here he proceeded south-east to Sankāsya (Samkassam, a village 45 miles north west of Kanauj) whence he went to Kanauj, Śrāvasti, *Too-kei* (Taḍwa—a village 9 miles to the west of Sāhara-mahat), Kapilavastu, Vaiśāli and then to "the confluence of the five rivers" probably near Pāṭnā. Thence he travelled to Pāṭnā, Magadha, Rājagṛha, Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa, Gaya and Mount Gurupada (7 miles south-east of Gaya). From here he returned to Pāṭaliputra (Patna) "keeping along the course of the Ganges and descending in the direction of the west, and going further west," went to Vāraṇāsī (Benares), until, turning north-west from there he came to the kingdom of Kōsambi (Kosam on the Jumna) about 30 miles from Allahabad.[2]

Now let us see how another prominent Chinese pilgrim, Yüan Chwāng, followed in the footsteps of Fa Hien, two centuries later. Like Fa Hien travelling westwards, Yüan Chwāng, after visiting several places, came to Samarkand, "a great commercial entrepot," whose inhabitants were "skilful craftsmen, smart and energetic." Thence along the banks of the Oxus, he reached the countries of *Tu-huo-lo* (Tokhara), *Ta-mi* (Termed or Termez) until, coming to the "south across the Oxus", he arrived at the countries of *Fo-ho* (Balkh). Then going southwards from thence he came to *Kie Ka-chih* (Gachi and Gaz) and moving south-east from here 'entered the lofty Great Snowy Mountains,' in the midst of which was *Fan-yen-na* (Bamian). Trudging east from here he went to *Ka-pi-shih* (Kafiristan) and finally arrived at the frontiers of *Yin-tu* (India). From Kapis he passed on to *Lan-'Po* (Lampa), *Nagar*, (Hiḍḍa) *Kanto-lo* (Gāndhāra) the capital of which was Puruṣapura. Then he travelled to Puṣkarāvatī (Hastanagar), Udyāna (districts of Pangkara, Bijāwar, Swāt and Bunir) and Takṣaśilā (Taxila) across the Indus. From here he moved to Kashmir, Rājapur, Takka, Mathurā and Sthāṇvīśvara. The other important cities which he visited were Śrāvasti, Kapilavastu, Rāmagrāma, Kuśinagara, Vāraṇāsi. From the neighbourhood of this city, following the course of the Ganges eastward,

[1] Fa-Hien, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-65.

[2] *Ibid.*, Some identify it with Kusia near Kurrah.

he passed on to *Chan-chu* (Ghāripur) and crossing the Ganges, came to *Fei-shē-li* (Vaiśāli). Thence across the Ganges he journeyed to Magadha and Nālandā.[1]

We may now attempt to ascertain the details of the route of the return journey of Yüan Chwāng, after his sojourn in India. It may be recollected that this Chinese pilgrim was present at the great assembly at Prayāga. On the conclusion of the sixth quinquennial assembly there he informed Kumāra Rāja (Bhāskaravarman) that he intended to go by the "Northern Road" and was then supplied with the necessary provisions.[2] From Prayāgā he went south-west through a great desert waste for seven days and arrived at the kingdom of Kausāmbi. From here he travelled north-west three *yōjanas* until he came to the capital of the country of *Pi-lo-na-na* (Virāśana) where he halted for two months, and then continued north-west for one month and some days until he reached the kingdom of *Che-lan-tʻa* (Jālandhara), the royal city of northern India. From here he went in a westerly direction for about twenty days until he came to Simhapura and thence through mountain defiles after twenty days reached the country of *Takṣaśilā* (Taxila) where he halted for seven days. After travelling from here for three days he reached the great river Sindhu.[3] From here he passed through Kapiśa, crossed all the precipices of the *Tsung-Ling*, traversed the valley of the Pamir and finally arrived at Khotan.[4] From there through the country of Tukhāra and the Nime country "after various detours" he reached the borders of China, and at last went to Shachow.[5] He had arrived in India in A. D. 630 and ultimately went to Khotan after a most adventurous journey of seventeen years.[6]

From these accounts of two travellers, who visited India during the fourth and seventh centuries, it may be concluded that in this period people came from China to India westwards along what must have been the caravan routes and along the rivers: first, along the Oxus until they came to the Balk region and then they took again to the land route until in the east they reached Peshawar; secondly travelling further eastwards once more they followed the course of the Indus and then that of the Ganges in order to visit the whole of the Middle Kingdom.[7]

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 102-401; II pp. 1-63; Hiuen Tsiang. *op. cit.*, I, pp. 19-229. Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *Life*, p. 190.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 190-91.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 209.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 211-12.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 209.
[6] Aurel Stein, *Sand Buried Ruins of Khotan*, pp. 2, 64, 68, (1904).

(*b*) The Water-Ways.

After having stayed for some time in India, the Chinese travellers, merchants and pilgrims, returned generally by the sea-route, which can be noticed in the writings of these sojourners. Fa Hien, for instance, after resting at Pāṭaliputra for a certain period "following the course of the Ganges and descending eastwards for eighteen *yojanas*," reached Campā. Thence embarking in a "large merchant vessel", he sailed away to the south west and after "fourteen days, sailing day and night, he came to the country of *Sinhgala* (Ceylon)." This was the beginning of winter and the winds at the time of sailing were favourable. Remaining there for two years, Fa Hien "took passage in a large merchantman, on board of which there were more than two hundred men, and to which was attached by a rope a smaller vessel, as a provision against damage or injury to the large one from the perils of the navigation," and proceeded eastwards. Sailing for ninety days, they came to the island of Java, whence again, embarking in another large merchantman, which had also on board "more than 200 men," carrying provision for fifty days, and after sailing night and day for twelve days, they at last reached the shores on the south of mount *Lāo*, which is the Shantung promontory.[1] Yüan Chwāng also followed the same route. Following the track on the south bank of the Ganges, this traveller and his merchant friends came to *Chan-po* (Champā),[2] and he too followed in Fa Hien's foot steps.

That there were clearly-marked and well-known water-ways in the days of these Chinese travellers cannot be denied, for it can be proved from their own accounts. When Yüan Chwāng, for example, proposed to Kumārarāja (Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa) that he would like to return to China, the king replied: "But I know not, if you prefer to go, by what route you propose to return; if you select the Southern Sea route, then I will send some officials to accompany you."[3] From this reply it is evident that there existed what was known as the Southern Sea route by which sea-farers returned to China from India in the seventh century.

We may now see whether I-Tsing followed this route when leaving for his own country. I-Tsing observes that "This is the place (Tāmralipti) where we embark when returning to China.

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[1] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 181; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 191.
[3] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life*, p. 188.

Sailing from here two months in the south-east direction we come to *Ka-Cha*. By this time a ship from Bhōga will have arrived there. This is generally in the first or second month of the year. But those who go to the Siṁhala Island (Ceylon) must sail in the south-west direction. They say that that island is 700 *yōjanas* off. We stay in *Ka-Cha* till winter, then start on board a ship for the south, and we come after a month to the country of Malayu, which has now become Bhōga; there are many states (under it). The time of arrival is generally in the first or second month. We stay there till the middle of summer and we sail to the north; in about a month we reach *Kwang-fu* (*Kwangtung*.) The first half of the year will be passed by this time."[1] From this account it may be seen that I-Tsing evidently returned to China by the South-Sea route which Bhāskaravarman had pointed out to Yüan Chwāng. There were specified halting stations during this long and perilous voyage and the period taken to stay at many of these stations was obviously circumscribed by the conditions of the trade winds, the nature of which must have been well-known to the mariners of those days. Nevertheless, the time taken to reach one of these places could not always be decided, for I-Tsing tells us that "starting from *P'an-yü* we set sail in the direction of Champa with the view of reaching Bhoga after a long voyage."[2] This observation reveals the uncertainty with which sea-voyages were undertaken in the seventh century, especially from India to far-off countries like China.

The Jaina Prākṛta tales, which have been ascribed to the sixth century,[3] at times throw some light on the maritime activities of the people of those days. Frequent mention is made of sea-men travelling in ships, which, owing to their association with merchants and their cargoes, must have been probably of considerable size. It is interesting to learn that voyages were made in these ships from India to Greater India, viz., the isles of Daṇṭapura and Campā. But the most interesting reference to these travels is to a voyage of a certain merchant from Persia to a place called Bennayada, in a large ship with wares of conches, betel-nuts, sandal-wood, aloe, Bengal madder and similar products. We are informed that, when such a ship reached an island or some place, the goods were examined in order to see whether or not they were in order. We

[1] I-Tsing, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, p. XXX-IV.

[2] *Ibid*, p. XXXVI.

[3] Jacobi, Intr. to Hemacandra's *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, p. VII. (Bib. Ind.; 2nd ed.) Also see 4. L. Alsdorf, *A Specimen of Archaic Jaina Mahārāṣṭri*, *B. S. O. S.*, VIII, pts. 2-3, p. 320.

are told, of course, with reference to the locality, Bennayada, that when a ship from Persia reached that place, an Appraiser (*Seṭṭhi*) was called by the ruler of the region and instructed to give the merchant concerned half of the goods. But, probably suspecting some foul play, the king ordered the goods to be weighed in his presence. The Appraiser weighed the goods in the bale and by means of weighing, kicking and piercing with an instrument for the purpose discovered inside the madder some precious wares which were thus smuggled. Thereupon the king, whose suspicions were confirmed, ordered the bales to be opened, and when they were thoroughly examined they found in several places gold, silver, gems, pearls, corals, and other valuables which were being smuggled. The merchant concerned was arrested and handed over to the city-guards with a view to standing his trial.[1]

4. Trade Routes in Later Times

In the seventh century A.D., the trade routes already referred to, apparently continued to survive because both I-Tsing and Daṇḍin mention them. I-Tsing chose to arrive and depart by the sea-route alone. "On the eighth day in the second month in the fourth year of the Hsien Heng Period (A. D. 673) I arrived", he says, "at Tāmralipti, which is a port on the coast of Eastern India. In the fifth month I resumed my journey westwards (while) finding companions here and there."[2] When he completed his stay in India he again sailed from the same port for he states that he "sailed from Tāmralipti and arrived at Śribhoga."[3] Daṇḍin too refers to two notable towns of maritime activity, Tamralipti on the east and Vaḷabhi on the west coasts,[4] from where the sea-farers left for the islands of Campā, and Suvarṇabhūmi and for China itself.

In the middle of the eighth century Haribhadra Suri throws considerable light on some of the trade-routes of his day.[5] In his work *Samarāiccha Kahā* he records how a caravan which left the town of Suśarman in Bharatavarṣa "started and left for Tāmralipti in two months."[6] With this caravan was a merchant named Dhana, who at Tāmralipti sold the goods he had for sale, purchased goods

[1] Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, pp. 216-17.

[2] I-Tsing, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, p. 211.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 185.

[4] Daṇḍin, *Dasakumāracarita*, pp. 173, 183.

[5] For the date of Haribhadra Sūri see P. O. C. I, p. CXXV, p. 197.

[6] Haribhadra Sūri, *Samaraiccha Kahā*, p. LV, text, p. ch. IV. (Ed. Jacobi, Calcutta 1926).

for overseas trade and as his profit was less than he expected, he resolved to go beyond the seas. Then he took ship at Tāmralipti and it sailed with a favourable wind and they "soon landed in Kaṭāhadvīpa,"[1] and later reached Giristhaḷa.[2] The port of Tāmralipti was a port from where voyages were made to many foreign lands. Sanatkumāra proposed to run away from Tāmralipti, so he and Vasubhūti embarked in a ship bound for Suvarṇabhūmi.[3] After two months they landed at Suvarṇabhūmi and then proceeded to Śrīpura.[4] But while proceeding from Suvarṇabhūmi to Varavakūla, his ship foundered and he hoisted a flag as a signal of ship-wreck. This was sighted by a ship sailing from Mahākaṭāha to Malaya. He was taken on board the ship and after a time pushed over-board, but with the aid of a plank he drifted at last after five days to the coast of Malaya.[5]

The story of Dhāraṇa also provides some more information regarding some other ports of mercantile activity. Dhāraṇa, who had started from the port of Daṇṭapura, fell into the hands of the wild Śabaras who captured him and took him to the temple of Caṇḍikā.[6] From this place, however, Dhāraṇa returned to Mākandī which appears to have been a city situated on the banks of the Ganges.[7] But from here Dhāraṇa, intent on acquiring still greater wealth, started again on an expedition with his wife and they soon arrived at Vaijayantī on the eastern coast (*puvvasamuddatoḍaniviṭṭaṃ Vējayaṇṭīṃ*). But as they made little profit there, Dhāraṇa at this port sailed in a ship bound for China. After sailing for a few days a storm broke out and shattered the ship, but Dhāraṇa clung to a plank and drifted after a day to Suvarṇadvīpa.[8] Then he raised a flag again as a signal of ship-wreck, and this too was noticed by a merchant called Sudēvana, who was sailing from China to Dēvapura. Dhāraṇa was rescued by this trader but they had hardly sailed five *yōjanas* when a female demon, the ruler of Suvarṇadvīpa, is said to

[1] Haribhadra Sūri, *op. cit.*, p. LV, text, ch. IV pp. 204-5.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. LVIII, text, ch. IV, p. 221.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. LXVIII, text, Ch. V, p. 327.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*, p. LXXI, text, Ch. V, p. 352.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. LXXXI, text, Ch. VI, p. 437.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. LXXXII, text, Ch. VI, p. 443. The province of Mākañdi, according to the *Mahābhārata* was situated on the banks of the Ganges. We are told that "the city of Kāmpilya was situated within the province of Mākañdi on the banks of the Ganges filled with many towns and cities." *Mahābhārata*, I, 140, p. 413. (ed. Roy) I am indebted to my younger brother, Mr G. N. Saletore, M.A., for this reference.

[8] *Ibid.*

have appeared in the air and claimed all the gold on board.[1] Thence Dhāraṇā again came to Tāmralipti.[2]

The travels of Sēna also furnish some more details regarding the trade-routes of this period. Sēna is said to have sailed to Rājapura and soon after returned to Campā.[3] From this place without giving notice to any one, Sēna and Śāntimatī departed in the night and went to Campavāsa. At this place one Sānudēva, a merchant of Rājapura who was on his way to Tāmralipti, discovered and recognised prince Sēna.[4]

There was yet another town of nautical importance in the days of Haribhadra Sūri. He tells us how Sarga was reborn in Tāmralipti as Aruṇadeva, the son of a merchant, and Candra in Pāṭalāpatha as Deyiṇī, the daughter of the trader Jasāditya. They became engaged to one another but before they were wedded, Aruṇadeva sailed for Mahākaṭāha. The ship foundered but Aruṇadeva together with another person called Mahēśvara, with the help of a plank saved themselves and after some adventures reached Pāṭalāpatha.

We may now attempt to identify some of the important ports referred to by Haribhadra Sūri. Tāmralipti has been identified with the modern Tāmluk "situated on a broad reach or bay of the Rūpnārāyan river, 12 miles above its junction with the Hugli."[6] Kaṭāhadvīpa is the famous Kaḍāram[7], while Kaṭāh, Kaḍāra or Kiḍāra are all considered equivalents of Keddāh situated in the western part of the Malaya Peninsula.[8] Suvarṇadvīpa has been identified with Malaya Peninsula and Malaya Archipelago,[9] Daṇṭapura, the Dantagūda or Dantagūla of the Buddhist chronicles,

[1] Haribhadra Sūri, *op. cit.*, p. LXXXII, text, Ch. VI, p. 440.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. LXXXVII, text, Ch. VI, p. 490.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. XCI, text, Ch. VII, p. 520.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. XCII, text, Ch. VII, p. 534.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. XCVIII, text, Ch. VII, p. 585. It is worth noting here that in the *Kaumudimahōtsava* a reference is made to Kaṭāhanagara, *Cf. Kaumudimahōtsava*, p. 37. Owing to this allusion it has been suggested that this work was composed after Kaṭāh (Kedah) in the Malaya Peninsula became celebrated under the Śailendra emperors in the 8th century. *Cf. J. A. H. R. S.*, XI, p. 67.

[6] Cunningham, *Geography of Ancient India*, p. 504 (1924).

[7] *Travancore Arch. Series*, III, (1922), v. 72, pp. 120; *Madras Review*, August, 1902; *J. I. H.*, II p. 347. The Tiruvālangāḍa plates of Rājendra Cōḷa (A. D. 1017-8) relate how "having conquered Kaṭāha with (the help of) his valiant forces that had crossed the ocean (and) having made all kings this king (Rājēndra Cōḷa) protected the whole earth for a long time." *S. I. I.*, III, Pt. III, v. 123, p. 383.

[8] Majumdar, *Suvarṇadvīpa* p. 172.

[9] *Ibid.*, II. p. 48.

was the capital of Kalinga on the Godāvarī.[1] Mākandī must have been a city on the banks of the Ganges. In the *Kathāsaritasāgara* we are told how "on the banks of the Ganges there is a city named Mākandikā,"[2] which may be identified with the Mākandī of the *Samaraiccha Kahā*. Rājapura has been identified with the capital of southern Campā,[3] while Śrīpura is probably to be identified with Śrī Vijaya. "The identification of Śrī Vijaya", remarks Dr R. C. Majumdar "must remain for the present an open question, but we can safely regard the kingdom as comprising the south-eastern part of Sumatra and some of the neighbouring islands."[4] But Campā itself has been identified with the eastern portion of the Indo-China peninsula and "roughly corresponded to the present province of Annan (excluding Tonkin and French Cochin China) with the exception of three districts, Than hoa, Nghe An and Ha Tinh. It was situated between 18° and 10° of N. Latitude."[5] Pāṭālapatha could have been no other than the famous Pāṭaliputra. But it is not easy to identify the town of Vaijayanti which is clearly stated to have been on the eastern coast. Perhaps the Jainas alluded to Jayantipura when they referred to Vaijayanti. According to *Kṣētramāhātmātya*, as has been already pointed out, Jayantipura was one of the names of Kalinganagara and Jayantipura, according to Mr Ramamurti, may be the same as Jantāvūra, the capital of Kāmārṇava I, the Cōḍa-Ganga king.[6] While Jayantipura and Vaijayantipura (Banavāsi, the capital of the Kadambas)[7] were interchangeable names, it is not impossible that the same might have been done by the Jainas as regards Jayantipura or Kalinganagara or Jayantāvūra of the eastern coast.[8]

5. Commerce and Coinage

The most important concern of these guilds was money. But according to Fa Hien, during the reign of Candra Gupta II, currency appears to have been non existent in the Gupta empire for he states that "In buying and selling commodities they use

[1] Cunningham, *op. cit.*, p. 517 (ed. 1871) p. 612 (1924 ed.)

[2] Somadeva, *Kathāsaritsāgāra*, II, Bk. III, Ch. XXV, p. 4. (Tawney)

[3] Majumdar, *Campā*, p. 107, (1927).

[4] *Ibid.*, *Suvarṇadvīpa*, I, p. 121, also see pp. 209-27. (1938).

[5] Majumdar, *Champa*, p. 7.

[6] Ramamurti, *E. I.*, IV, p. 188; H. C. Ray, *D. H. N. I.*, I, p. 453, note 1.

[7] On the antiquity of Vaijayanti see *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XII, p. 315, Ibid, XI, p. 250, *I. A.*, IV, p. 250; Bühler's remarks on this town in his introduction to *Vikramāṅkadevacarita*, p. 34; Burgess and Indraji, *The Cave Temples of Western India*, p. 28, note.

[8] I am thankful to my elder brother Dr B. A. Saletore for this suggestion.

cowries."[1] The enthusiastic Chinese pilgrim was evidently unaware that the Gupta emperors from the reign of Samudra Gupta onwards if not earlier had a system of currency. Coins of his father Candra Gupta I are known, but it has been doubted whether they were ever issued by him, for instead of being of the Later Kuṣāṇa type, they are of the Samudra Gupta type[2], which itself is an imitation of the Later Kuṣāna type.[3] Commenting on them Mr John Allan observes that "The variations of four to six grains in well-preserved specimens of the same type of Samudra Gupta's coins may be due to variations of the standard in different districts, but it probably shows that little effort was made to strike the coins accurately on a particular standard, and that they were considered rather as medals than coins. This standard may be defined as of about 121 grains."[4] If this was really the case, then common transactions must have been carried on by means of barter and exchange of cowries as the Chinese traveller Fa Hien records, but there is epigraphic evidence to prove that coins were the medium of exchange for transactions like the sale and purchase of land or the granting of a fund during Samudra Gupta's reign.

It must, however, be remembered that the predecessors of the Guptas, the later great Kuṣāṇas, had a currency which was constituted chiefly of impure gold. Its characteristics, nevertheless, were imitated by Samudra Gupta,[5] who issued coins of various designs like the standard, archer, battle-axe, *Kāca*, tiger, lyrist and *aśvamedha* types.[6]

The standard type of gold coin of Samudra Gupta bears impressions on both sides. On the obverse is the image of the king standing, nimbate, wearing a close-fitting cap, coat and trousers, ear-rings and necklace holding in his left hand a standard bound with a fillet, while with his right he drops incense. On the left behind the altar is a standard bound with a fillet and surmounted by a Garuḍa looking in front. Beneath the king's arms are the words

[1] Fa Hien, *Record of the Buddhist Kingdoms*, p. 43 (Legge).

[2] Allan, *Catalogue*, pl. lxv.

[3] Cunningham, *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1893, pl. viii, 2-12, and pl. ix.

[4] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. cxxxii. Dr. Bhandarkar states that "We have two types of Gupta gold coins one of which conforms to the weight of the Roman dinarius standard and the other to that of Manu's *suvarṇa*." Bhandarkar, *Lectures on Indian Numismatics*, p. 183 (1921).

[5] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. lxv-vi. On the absence of gold coins of genuine India type prior to the Gupta period, see D. R. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, pp. 19, 94-95.

[6] *Cf. J. A. S. B.*, X, pp. 174-77; also see *Ibid.*, 63, no. 4, pp. 167-68 (1894).

Samudra or *Samudra Gupta*, while surrounding the king's figure is the legend: "*Samara-śata-vitata-vijayō-jitaripur=ajitō-divaṃ jayati*—the unconquered one, whose victories extend over a century of battles, having conquered his enemies, wins heaven." On the reverse is seated on the throne the goddess Lakṣmī facing, nimbate, wearing a loose robe, a necklace and armlets. She holds a fillet in her outstretched right hand, and the cornucopia in her left arm, her feet resting on a lotus while there are traces of the back of a throne on the right in most specimens. The legend on the right is —*Parākramaḥ*.[1] The variations in the other varieties of the standard type of coin are not great.

The other types of Samudra Gupta's coins have more or less similar characteristics. In the archer type, on the obverse, is the legend: "Having conquered the earth, the invincible one wins heaven by good deeds (*apratiratho vijitya kṣitiṃ sucaritair=divaṃ jayati*), while on the reverse appears the epithet *apratirathaḥ*.[2] The battle-axe type coins have on the obverse the legend: "Wielding the axe of *Kṛtānta*, the unconquered conqueror of unconquered kings is victorious (*Kṛtāntaparaśur-jayaty-ajitarājajetājitaḥ*); while the reverse shows *Kṛtāntaparaśuḥ*.[3] In the Mathurā stone inscription of Candra Gupta II, Samudra Gupta is called *Apratiratha*, as well as *Kṛtānta paraśuḥ*.[4] In this type of coin the king is portrayed in the same dress, holding a battle-axe (*paraśu*) in his left hand, while his right hand rests on his lap. On the left is a boy or a dwarf behind whom can be noticed a crescent-crowned standard.[5] In the Kāca-type, the king dressed as before, holds a standard surmounted by a wheel (*cakra*) in his left hand and with his right hand sprinkles incense on an altar. The legends on the obverse and reverse are: "Kaca having conquered the earth, wins heaven by the highest works (*Kāco-gāṃ-avijitya-divaṃ-karmabhir=uttamair=jayati*) and *Sarvarājocchettā*.[6] In the tiger type, the king tramples on a tiger, which falls backward as he shoots it with a bow in his right hand, while with his left hand he draws his bow back behind his ear. The reverse shows the goddess Gaṅga standing on a *makara*, nude to the waist, holding a lotus in her left hand while her right hand is outstretched and empty. The legends are *Vyāghraparākramaḥ* and *Rājā Samudraguptaḥ*.[7]

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (4) p. 20.
[5] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

The lyrist type displays the king seated, as in previous cases, on a high-backed couch, playing on the *vīṇā* lying on his knees, while beneath the couch is a foot-stool, inscribed *si*. The inscriptions are *Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Samudraguptaḥ* and only *Samudraguptaḥ*.[1]

Samudra Gupta appears to have struck medallions to commemorate his father's marriage with Kumāradevī, the Licchavi princess, and the performance of the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice. In the former, Candra Gupta I, wearing the typical Gupta royal dress seen on Samudra Gupta's coins, appears to offer what is evidently a ring to his wife Kumāra devī, who wears a loose robe, the usual ornaments and the tight-fitting head dress. On the reverse can be seen the seated Lakṣmī.[2] On the *aśvamādha* type is a horse standing to the proper left, before a sacrificial post (*yūpa*) from which pennons fly over its back. On some specimens there is also a low pedestal. On the reverse is the image of the chief queen *Mahiṣī* (*Mahādevī* Dattadevī?)[3] wearing a loose robe and jewellery, holding a chowrie in her right hand, while she has let down her left hand. On her left is a sacrificial spear bound with a fillet. Around her feet is a chain (?) extending round the spear, and some specimens of a gourd at her feet. The legends are: "The king of kings, of irresistible prowess, having protected the earth wins heaven.—(*Rājādhirājaḥ pṛthvīṃ avitvā divaṃ jayaty-aprativāryavīryaḥ*)" and *Aśvamedhaparākramaḥ*.[4] The Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra Gupta alludes to his giving away gold coins in the expression *suvarṇa dāne*, in which he is recorded to have outshone *Pṛthu*, Raghava and other kings.[5] Such an occasion could only have been the performance of the *Aśvamedha* which is referred to in the Udayagiri cave inscription of his son Candra Gupta II. It records that Samudra Gupta was "the giver of many millions of lawfully acquired cows and gold; who was the restorer of the *aśvamedha* sacrifice that had long been held in abeyance."[6] This title of *Aśvamedhā-kartuḥ* may be compared with that of *Aśvamedha parākramaḥ* appearing on his coins.

His son Candra Gupta II carried on the policy of his father of issuing coins like the archer, couch, parasol (*cchattra*) and lion-

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[3] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (4), p. 27.

[4] Allan *op. cit.*, p. 21. Mr. Allan suggests another reading for the word *avitvā-vijitya*, see p. cxi. The restored legend of this coin is read thus = *navamjamadhaḥ rājādhirājaḥ prthvim Jayatya ; J. A. S. B.*: X, *N. S.* XXIII, pp. 255-56.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (2), p. 20.

[6] *Ibid.*, (4), p. 28: *hiraṇya-kōṭi pradāsya.. ...aśvamēdh aāhṛttur.....*

slayer types, which, however, show some variations. In the archer type coins, which picture the king standing on the obverse and Lakṣmī seated on the reverse, the legends are *Dēva Śrī Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Candragaptaḥ* and *Śrī Vikramaḥ*.[1] In the Sāñci stone inscription dated A. D. 412-13 he is styled as *Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Candra Guptasya Devarāja iti priyanāmn*[2]. In the couch type, the king, wearing a waist-cloth and jewels, is seated, his head turned leftwards, on a high-backed couch, holding a flower in his uplifted right hand and resting his left hand on the edge of the couch. This type of coin too has some typical legends.[3] On the *chattra* design coins the king stands to the left, nimbate, casting incense on an altar to the left with his right hand, while resting his left hand on his sword-hilt. Behind him is a dwarf-attendant holding a parasol (*chattra*) over him. The epithet of *Vikramaḥ* is here enlarged into *Vikramāditya*ḥ.[4] Another kind of this *chattra* coin has the legend of *kṣitim avajiyta sucaritair-divaṃ jayati Vikramādityaḥ*[5], which is an imitation of his father's legend on his archer type of coins[6]. In the lion-slayer type, which may be compared with his father's tiger-type coins[7], the king, wearing a waist-cloth with a sash floating behind him, an ornamented head-dress and ornaments, shoots with a bow a lion (?) which falls backwards and he tramples it with one foot. It bears the legends: "The moon among kings, brave as a lion, whose fame is far-spread, invincible on earth, conquers heaven"—(*narēndra candraḥ*) *prathita divaṃ jayaty-ajeyo bhuvi siṃhavikramaḥ* and *Siṃhavikramaḥ*[8]. On some of these coins the lion retreats with its head turned back, while the king is shooting, and these bear the legend: *Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Candra Guptaḥ*[9]. This very expression can be seen in his Mathurā stone inscription.[10] On his horseman type coins, the king rides on a fully caparisoned horse, with a similar dress, having in some specimens a bow or a sword, in his left hand or side. The legends appearing are *Paramabhāgavata Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Candra Guptaḥ*, and *Ajitavikramaḥ*.[11] The former legend can also be seen in his Udayagiri cave inscription.[12]

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 24; *J. A. S. B., N. S.*, XXIX, (1933) pp. 13-14; *Ibid.*, 63. Pt. 1, no. 4, p. 168.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (5), p. 32.
[3] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 34; *J. A. S. B.*, 63, Part I, (1894), pp. 168-69.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 35. *Cf.*, legend on Samudra Gupta's archer type coins. *J. N. S. I.*, III, Pt. II. p. 83.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[7] Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[10] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (4), p. 27, *ll.* 11-12.
[11] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
[12] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (4), p. 25.

He issued some coins of silver and copper, the former evidently for circulation in the western provinces, while the latter might have been issued for general use throughout the empire. The silver coins bear the stamp of his bust, as on the *Kṣatrapa* coins, with traces of Greek letters on the obverse, while the reverse shows the Garuḍa standing, face in front, with out-spread wings. They bear the legend: *Paramabhāgavata Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Caṅdragupta Vikramādityaḥ Śrī Guptakulasya Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Caṅdragupta Vikramasya.*[1] Likewise the copper coins bear the impressions of his bust in various poses. He is shown wearing a necklace, ear-rings, holding a flower in his uplifted right hand or standing with his left hand behind on his waist, his right hand outstretched possibly casting incense on an altar or, as in the preceding cases, with his left arm folded on his breast. In all these cases may be observed the image of Garuḍa on the obverse with the legend—*Śrī Caṅdragupta*ḥ or *Caṅdragupta*ḥ. Sometimes instead of the Garuḍa there appears the flower-vase (*kalaśa*) with flowers which hang down on the sides of the *kalaśa*[2] which in exactly the same style can be seen for example in the Śiva temple at Bhumāra.[3]

His son and successor Kumara Gupta I continued to issue coins of the archer, swordsman, *aśvamedha*, horseman, lion-slayer, tiger slayer, peacock, *prakāśa* and elephant-rider types. Of these the last three may be said to be innovations, while in the other cases there was no substantial change in the impressions. On the archer types the legends on the obverse were: *cirōdhārtr-ucchettuḥ Kumāragupto divaṃ jayati Jayatimahīpatēḥ, Kumāraguptaḥ Paramaṛṛjōdhārṇja Śrī Kumāraguptaḥ, Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Kumāraguptaḥ* and on the reverse, *Śrī Mahēndraḥ*.[4] On the swordsman type appears the: *Gāṃ avajitya sucaritaiḥ Kumāragupto divaṃ jayati* and *Śrī Kumāraguptaḥ*; on the *Aśvamedha* type: *Aśvamedhamahēndraḥ*, on the horseman type *pṛthivitalaṃ . . . divaṃ jayaty-ajitaḥ* and *Ajitamahēndraḥ* in some and *kṣitipatir ajito vijayī mahēndrasiṅho divaṃ jayati, Gupta kulavyōmaśaśī jayatyajēyo ajitamahēndraḥ* in others. On the lion-slayer type the legends vary, while the obverse reveals: *Sākṣād-iva Narasiṅho sauha Mahēndro jayaty-amśaṃ, Kṣitipatir ajitamahēndraḥ Kumāragupto divaṃ*

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-51. For details regarding the *Garuḍa* type of coins of Candra Gupta II, see *J. A. S. B., N. S., XIX*, p. 57.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 52-60. The copper kārṣāpaṇa was the standard mony from slightly before the rise of the Mauryas to at least the beginning of the Gupta supremacy, i.e., for upward of 600 years. *Cf.* Bhandarkar, *Lectures on Ancient Indian Numismatics*, p. 88.

[3] *M. A. S. I.*, no. 16., pl. V (*a*).

[4] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-63; also see *J. A. S. B.*, 63, Pt. I, p. 16), (1894).

jayati, Kumāragupto vijayī simhamaheṅdro divaṃ jayati, Kumāragupto yudhi simhavikramaḥ, while the reverse shows either *Maheṅdrasiṃhaḥ* or *Siṃhamaheṅdraḥ*. On the tiger-slayer type appears *Śrīmān Vyāghra balaparākkramaḥ* and *Kumāraguptādhirājā*.[1]

The peculiar types are the peacock, *pratāpa* and the elephant-rider coins. The first has on the obverse the king, nimbate, standing to the left, with waist-cloth of long sashes, wearing jewellery, feeding a peacock from a bunch of fruits held in his right hand, with his left drawn behind him. The reverse shows Kārtikēya nimbate, riding on his peacock Paravaṇi, holding a spear in his left hand over his shoulder (*śaktidhara*) with his right hand sprinkling incense on an altar to the right. The peacock stands on a kind of platform with the legends: *Jayati siṃhamana gaganāśi . . . Maheṅdrakumāraḥ* and *Maheṅdrakumāraḥ*.[2] In the *pratāpa* type are three figures: in the centre is a male wearing long loose robe, with arms on breast, while on his left and right are two female figures, wearing loose robes, the one to his left has a helmet with a shield on her left arm, while the one to the right holds out her right hand and rests her left hand on her hip. Both appear to address him. The goddess Lakṣmī appears on the reverse. The legends are *Kumāraguptaḥ* and *Śrī pratāpaḥ*. In the elephant-rider type, the king, holding a goad in his right hand, is riding an elephant and behind him is an attendant holding a parasol (*chhattra*) over him. The reverse shows the usual Lakṣmi. None of these titles is visible on any of his extant epigraphs. Most of these gold coins have a standard weight of about 126 grains current in the reign of Candra Gupta II.[3]

Like his father again Kumāra Gupta I issued silver coins not only for his western but also for his central provinces. His bust and the facing Garuḍa, with the legend *Paramabhāgavata Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Kumāragupta Maheṅdrāditya*ḥ, can be seen on his silver coins current in his western provinces.[4] His coins of the Central Provinces have, instead of the Garuḍa, a peacock facing with the head turned to the left, wings and tail outspread, bearing the words: *Vijitāvanir-avanipati(ḥ) Kumāragupto divaṃjayati*. His silver-plated coins, of the Valabhi fabric, have on the reverse: *Paramabhāgavata Rājādhirāja Śrī Kumāragupta Maheṅdrādityaḥ*.[5] It is interesting to note that in his Gaḍhwā stone inscription dated A. D. 417-18, Bilsaḍ stone pillar

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-83; also see *J. A. S. B.*, Pt. I, no. 4, p. 169.
[2] *J. A. S. B.*, 63, Pt. I. no. 4, p. 175.
[3] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. cxxxiii.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 89-106. also see *J. A. S. B. N. S.* XXIX, (1933), pp. 11-12.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 107-11, *Cf.*, *J. N. S. I.*, III, Pt. II, pp. 85-86.

inscription of A. D. 415-16,[1] and the Mankuwar stone image inscription issued in A.D. 448-49, occur his titles of *Paramabhāgavata Mahārājadhirāja Śrī Kumāraguptaḥ*,[2] *Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Kumāraguptaḥ* and *Mahārāja Śrī Kumāraguptaḥ*.[3] As in the reign of Candra Gupta II, Kumāra Gupta's Gaḍhwā stone inscription refers to an endowment of twelve *dināras*,[4] which were evidently gold coins, being the equivalents of the Indian *suvarṇa*.[5]

His copper coins are after those of his father, with the impressions of his bust and of Garuḍa, having his name *Kumāraguptaḥ*.

With the demise of Skanda Gupta the continuity of Gupta coinage may be said to have ended. He issued gold coins of the archer, Lakṣmī and king types. The former were of a standard of 132 grains having his figures with the bow and the goddess on either side with the legends: *jayati mahītalaṃ.....sudhanvī* and *Śrī Skandaguptaḥ*, while his later heavy standard 146·4 grain coins, have the expressions *jayati divaṃ Śrī Kramāḍityaḥ* and only *Kramāḍityaḥ*.[6] In his king and Lakṣmī types on the obverse the king stands with the bow while to his right is Lakṣmī, (his queen?) whose image also can be seen on the reverse as well.[7] His Sāñcī stone inscription dated A. D. 450-51, refers to the granting of certain *dināras*, the interest on which was to be utilised for feeding a *bhikṣu* and for lighting three lamps before the Buddha.[8]

His silver coins, current in his western provinces, were of the Garuḍa, bull, altar and *Kramāḍityaḥ* types, while those current in his central provinces were generally of the peacock stamp.[9] The former bore the legend *Paramabhāgavata Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Skandagupta Kramāḍityaḥ* on the Garuḍa,[10] and *Kramāḍitya* and *Paramabhāgavata, Śrī Vikramāḍitya, Śrī Vikramāḍityaḥ Skandaguptaḥ* on the altar types.[11] The silver coins of his central provinces have the

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-12.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (8), p. 40, (9) p. 41.
[3] *Ibid.*, (10), p. 43; (11) p. 47.
[4] *Ibid.*, (9), p. 41.
[5] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. cxxiv-v.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 114-15, 117-19; also see *J. A. S. B.*; (*N. S.*) XIX, p. 58.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 116-17. Vincent Smith called this type "King and Queen Type" whereon the name "Skanda is placed vertically between the king's head and the Garuḍa, the first letter *sa* S being deficient." He thought that the letters *priyā* may be doubtfully read as the concluding element of the queen's name. *Cf.*, *J. A. S. B.*, 63, Pt. I, no. 4, p. 170.
[8] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (62), p. 262.
[9] *J. A. S. B.*, Pt. I, p. 175.
[10] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-22; also see *J. A. S. B.*, *N. S.* XIX, p. 57.
[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 122-24.

legend *Vijitāvanir=avanipatir=jayati divaṃ Skandaguptōyaṃ*[1], after his father Kumāra Gupta I's coins of this region[2].

The history of Gupta coinage after Skanda Gupta becomes spasmodic, although the imperial tradition of design and symbolism appear to have continued. His son and successor Pura Gupta issued a few gold coins and in fact only one coin with his name is extant.[3] Some scholars therefore presume that he possibly reigned only for a short time, at the most for one or two years. There is no evidence to prove that Pura Gupta is identical with Prakāśāditya. Of his son Narasiṁha Gupta, who followed him, twelve gold coins have been found, but they are all of the archer type: some of the standard type, and others of a very crude fabric without the obverse marginal legends issued probably in times of danger and difficulty[4]. His coins have an average standard of 146·5 and 146 grains[5]. The larger number of his coins also suggests that he probably ruled for a larger period than his father, namely five or six years. If Pura Gupta died in A. D. 467-68, then Narasiṁha Gupta (*Bālāditya*) must have ruled from A. D. 468-69 to A. D. 472-73, for we know that his son Kumāra Gupta II was on the throne in this year. This king too, like his forefathers issued only archer type coins, adopted the title of *Kramāditya* of his great grand father and like his father had two types of coins, some of the standard type and others of a cruder fabric[6].

To the chronological difficulties following the death of Kumāra Gupta II are added the paucity of Gupta coins of Budha Gupta, who ruled in northern Bengal and Malwa between A. D. 483-95. Of the G. E. 163-75 only one silver coin is extant,[7] while none has yet been discovered of his successor Bhānu Gupta, who succeeded him in Eastern India. Until the late discovery of the Nālandā seal, it was presumed that Kumāra Gupta II was succeeded by Budha Gupta and that the former had evidently no children. But the Nālandā seal has made it necessary to make some alterations in early Gupta history. As stated earlier, I was inclined to doubt the identification that the Viṣṇu Gupta of the Kālighāt hoard of coins was apparently

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-33.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 107-10.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 134-35.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 137-39.
[5] *Ibid.*, cxxxiv.
[6] *Ibid.*, 140-43. Probably the crudely made Garuḍa (new) type—with the letters *Śrī Ku* above which is a Garuḍa standing, on the obverse, while the reverse shows a Lakṣhmī - are to be attributed to Kumāra Gupta II rather than to Kumāra Gupta I as Smith supposed. *Cf. J. A. S. B.*, 63, pt. I, p. 174.
[7] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

the Viṣṇu Gupta of the Later Gupta dynasty,[1] who, as we are aware, ascended the throne in A. D. 706 and reigned at least according to the Mangraon inscription, for seventeen years.[2] But the recently discovered Nālandā seal compels one to reject this identification, because it reveals to us that Narasiṁha Gupta's son Kumāra Gupta II had a son known as Viṣṇu Gupta.[3] Narasiṁha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta mentioned in this seal can only be identified with their namesakes referred to in the Sārnāth inscriptions, one of which, pertaining to the reign of Budha Gupta, furnishes us with a date of A. D. 473-74 for Kumara Gupta II.[4] It may therefore be concluded that the Viṣṇu Gupta of the Nālandā Seal inscription was in all likelihood no other than the son of Kumāra Gupta II alluded to in the Sārnāth inscription. I had stated earlier that Kumāra Gupta II was probably succeeded by Budha Gupta,[5] in view of the then existing existence, but the discovery of this seal necessitates us to modify some of the statements made already. I had observed that Pura Gupta, Narasiṁha Gupta, and Kumāra Gupta II were to be assigned to a period within G. E. 148, (Skanda Gupta's last known date, and G. E. 157, the first known year of Budha Gupta's reign.[6] The Nālandā seal now obliges us to include the reign of Viṣṇu Gupta within this period of nearly nine years, during which we know for certain that Kumārā Gupta II was reigning in A. D. 473-74. Of course the Nālandā seal now raises several important issues[7] but it suggests that Kumāra Gupta II was obviously succeeded by Viṣṇu Gupta I, who was known as *Mahārājādhirāja* and had obviously issued the coins stamped with his name in the Kāḷighāṭ hoard.

Several coins have been found bearing the names of some of the rulers of Eastern India who must have followed Bhānu Gupta. Among these were Candra Gupta III, Dvādaśāditya, Viṣṇu Gupta Candrāditya, Ghaṭōtkaca Gupta, Samācara Narēndrāditya,[8] Jaya Gupta, Vīrasena Kramāditya, who might have been real Gupta kings with

[1] *Cf.*, Ch. I. *ante*, pp. 88-89.
[2] Altekar, *J. N. S. I.*, III, Pt. I, pp. 57-59.
[3] *Ibid.*, Pt. II, p. 104.
[4] *A. S. I. R.*, 1914-15, p. 126.
[5] *Cf.*, Ante Ch. I., p. 41.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 46.
[7] I intend discussing these issues in a separate paper.
[8] On the identification of Narendrāditya with Samācaradeva, see N. K. Bhattasali, *E.I.*, XVIII, no. 11 pp. 74-86, also his paper—*Attribution of Imitation Gupta Coins, J. A. S. B., N. S.*, XXI pp. 1-6; also see *Ibid.*, XIX pp. 54-57 for details on Samācaradeva's *Rājalīla* type of coin.

the typical *Āditya* title. There were others also who went by the names of Samācara, Jaya Prakāṇḍayaśa and Hari Gupta,[1] who might or might not have belonged to the family of the Later Guptas,[2] but their identification is still an unsettled problem.

It is interesting to know what was the medium of exchange in the days of Yüan Chwāng. He relates that "rare precious substances of various kinds from the sea-ports (lit. sea bays) are bartered for merchandise. But in the commerce of the country gold and silver coins, cowries and small pearls are the media of exchange."[3] It is worth recollecting here that a Gupta emperor named Vainya Gupta issued some gold coins one of which is now extant,[4] but his identification with the Tathagata Gupta mentioned by Yüan Chwāng is still an open question and has been discussed already.[5]

6. Symbolism of the Coins

Several of the coins, which have been described till now in some detail, represent the various activities of the reigning king in impressive symbolism. The first two rulers of the Gupta dynasty evidently did not issue any coins, but on those attributed to the third monarch the emperor Candra Gupta I, and his son and successor Samudra Gupta, the sovereign and his consort, the empress are seen. On the lyrist coins of Samudra Gupta he is represented as playing on the lyre (*vīṇa*) which lies on his knees while he is seated on a couch and rests his legs on a foot-stool.[6] With such types can be compared the couch-coins of Candra Gupta II whereon he is depicted as sitting likewise, but he is only holding a flower in his uplifted right hand, while resting his left hand on the edge of a couch.[7] The emperor Samudra Gupta is shown, on his tiger type coins, as slaying a tiger, a symbol which reminds us of Sāla killing s similar animal in early Hoysāḷa history.[8] His performance of the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice is symbolised by the engraving of a horse which is led to the altar before a sacrificial post (*yūpa*). On the coins of his son, Candra

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-52.
[2] Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 248.
[3] Yüan Chwāng, *Travels in India*, I, p. 178; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I. pp. 89-90.
[4] Allan, *Catalogue*, nos. 588-90; p. 144; V. A. Smith, *J. R. A. S.*, 1889, p. 82; *I. H. Q.*, IX, p. 784; I. C., V, p. 301.
[5] *Cf.*, ante Ch. I. p. 47.
[6] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[8] *E. C.*, V, Bl. 171, p. 100.

Gupta II, in those of the archer, couch, parasol (*chhatra*), lion-slayer, and horseman types, he is portrayed as wielding the bow, resting on a couch, enjoying the glory of sovereignty under a parasol, the symbol of supremacy, slaughtering a lion, and riding on a horse. On the horseman coins of Kumāra Gupta I, he appears as riding on a horse, holding a bow either in his right or left hand with its string outwards and without a sash.[1] This ruler also issued some other types of currency like those of the peacock, *pratāpa* and elephant-rider coins. In the first type the monarch feeds a peacock, the *vāhana* of Kārtikēya, in the second, a male figure appears in the centre with two female figures on either side,[2] while in the third, he rides in the centre on an elephant with a goad in his right hand while an attendant holds the State umbrella over him.

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

[2] Does this type of coin represent the king with his queens? In that case it is known that Kumāra Gupta I had a wife named Ananta Devi but had he another queen? This problem cannot be solved at present.

CHAPTER VI

The Fine Arts

I. Introduction

The common people, the nobility and the royalty, whose ways of life have been noticed already, cultivated, patronised and fostered several of the fine arts which have distinguished the age of the Guptas as an era of culture in Indian history. The people of this period, especially the nobles and the rulers, paid particular attention to costume, while the young ladies seem to have taken particular care about their make-up and toilet. The manufacture of ornaments, which appear to have been a necessity in those days, developed into a speciality. Personal decoration may be said to have been only a preliminary stage in the development of the fine arts in the Gupta age. Architecture being encouraged and sculpture fostered, elaborate temples came into existence to serve as models which continued to survive as a style till the eleventh century as far as Orissa. As the art of letters flourished, composers and playwrights made this period almost the golden era of Sanskrit literature. As a consequence of the cultivation of the drama, there sprang into existence the theatre wherein plays were enacted although the names of actors, among whom some notable exponents must have existed, are unfortunately forgotten. Music, as an accompaniment of the drama, was practised by the common as well as the rich people, and dancing, which was always an accompaniment of song in those times, became a fashionable art with the courtesans as well as the courtiers. We may therefore fully agree with the statement that "the Gupta period is in the annals of classical India almost what the Periclean age is in the history of Greece",[1] and it may be added what the Elizabethan and Stuart periods were in the pages of English history.[2] What the era of Augustus was to the Roman Empire, what the period of Taitsung was to the history of China, what the days of Louis XIV were to the annals of France, the Age of the Guptas may be said to have been to the heritage of India. This age may be compared in Indian history itself to the Saṅgam Age of Tamil literature, to the period of the great Moghuls in

[1] Barnett, *J. R. A. S.*, 1917. p. 417.

[2] Smith, *The Early History of India*, p. 322. (4th ed.)

medieval India, and to the splendours of Vijayanagara in the chronicles of the Daksinapatha. It may therefore be stated without exaggeration that the Age of the Guptas was in several respects the golden age of Indian history.

1. Fine Arts in Pre-Gupta times

Kautalya, in an interesting passage, reveals what he meant by fine arts and their patronage in his day. He observes that "Those who teach prostitutes, female slaves and actresses, arts such as singing, playing on musical instruments, reading, dancing, acting, writing, painting, playing on the instruments such as the *vīṇā*, pipe and drum, reading the thoughts of others, manufacture of scents and garlands, shampooing, and the art of attracting and captivating the minds of others, shall be endowed with maintenance from the State."[1] From this passage it may be inferred first, that there must have been specialists in all these branches of human knowledge; secondly, that these must have been considered the most important of all the fine arts which were thought worth learning and imparting to others, thirdly, that dancing girls, women slaves and actresses only were considered to specialise in such arts and lastly, the most important factor is that such specialists were patronised by the State which maintained them at State expense.

That each of these arts must have reached a considerable stage of specialisation may be concluded from one or two examples. Let us take for instance the question of scents or scented pastes. Kautalya mentions quite a number of them. Among some of these which he refers to may be mentioned the names of *Sātana*, *Gosirṣaka*, *Haricandana*, *Tārṇasa*, *Grāmeruka*, *Dāruśabheya*, *Aupaka* (*Jāpaka*), *Joṅgaka Taurupa*, *Agaru*, *Mālevyika*, *Kucandana*, *Kālaparvataka*, *Kośākāraparvataka*, *Śītalakīya*, *Nāgaparvataka* and *Sākala*.[2] These varieties show not only the range but also the specimens of scented pastes which were manufactured in the days of Kautalya and which were evidently known to his people. If this was the case with ordinary pastes it is not too much of a presumption to suppose that in many other arts as well specialisation must have reached an equally high standard of efficiency.

Kautalya refers again to the types of clothes which appear to have been current in those days. Among these mention is made of woollen and cotton fabrics. Among the woollens he specifies ten

[1] Kautalya, *op. cit.*, Bk. II, Ch. XXVII, p. 139.
[2] *Ibid.*, Ch. XI, p. 79.

kinds. He records that "Woollen blankets are (of ten kinds): *Kambala* (a coarse blanket) *Kauchapaka* (usually worn by cowherds), *Kulamitika* (head-dress), *Suamitika* (hustings spread over the back of a bullock), *Turagāstaraṇa* (hustings spread over the back of a horse), *Varṇaka* (a coloured blanket), *Talichchhaka* (a blanket or bed-sheet), *Vāravāṇa* (a coat), *Pariṣṭōma* (a large blanket or hustings) and *Samāntabhadraka* (hustings spread over the back of an elephant)." Of these "that which is slippery (*picchchhila*) as a wet surface, possessed of fine hair and soft is the best." Then he describes types of other fabrics. "That which is manufactured in the country of Vaṅga (*Vāṅgaka*) is a white and soft fabric (*dukula*); that of Pāṇḍya manufacture (*Pauṇḍraka*) is black and as soft as the surface of a gem; and that which is the product of the country, *Suvarṇakuḍya* is as red as the sun, as soft as the surface of the gem, woven while the threads are very wet, and of uniform (*caturaśra*) or mixed texture (*yāmiśravāna*)". Moreover there were various types of such cloth: single, half, double, treble, and quadruple garments are varieties of the same. "The above", says Kauṭalya, "will explain other kinds of fabrics such as *Kāśika*, Benares products, and *Kṣauma* (coarse) which is manufactured in Pāṇḍya (*Pauṇḍraka*)". He refers to fibrous garments such as "*Māgadhika* (product of the Magadha country), *Pauṇḍraka* and *Suvarṇakuḍyaka*."[1] It may be noticed that these references to several countries reveals the centres where all these types of woollen and fibrous cloth were manufactured.

Besides these mention is also made of *Kauśēya* or silk cloth and *Cina-paṭṭaka* or fabrics of Chinese manufacture. Dealing with cotton cloth he states that those of Madhurā (southern), Aparānta (western parts), of Kaliṅga, Kāśi, Vaṅga, Vatsa (*Kauśāmbī*) and of Mahiṣa (Māhiṣmatī) were the best.[2]

2. Costume

Sculptures especially from Gāndhāra and the neighbourhood of Mathura throw some light on the costume worn in pre-Gupta times. From the Gāndhāra sculptures of the north west we learn that the people wore the typical Indian *dhōti*, *dupaṭṭa* and turban, while the alien dress like the tunic, trousers, armours, high-boots and cap, were all generally worn by the inhabitants of the Punjab, the North-Western Provinces and Afghanistan. The origin of this costume has been traced to Central Asia and Iran. The wealthy people appear to

[1] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. XI, p. 81-82.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

have worn the lithe and graceful *dhōti* reaching to the feet, a shawl usually covering the shoulders and rolled round on the left arm and flung back in firm folds which were firmly held fast by a heavy tassel.[1] The *dhōti* was held firmly by a fastened waist-band which was either plain or laced. Sandals were also worn.[2] Over the head with the hair either uncovered or tied into a top-knot was worn the turban which was either spiral shaped, light or heavy.[3] The turban itself was placed in shape by a head-clasp or brooch which had various designs.[4] The tunic in vogue had flaps to the right or the left,[5] while over it long over-coats were also worn.[6] The cap in use was of various types: skull-shaped, conical, and domed, while the helmet also seems to have been popular.[7]

Women wore a three-piece costume, made up of the shawl, sleeved tunic and skirt. The shawl, covering the shoulders, descended to the waist, the sleeved tunic enveloped the body above the waist, while below was worn the skirt.[8] Of course the petticoat was also in use and we can occasionally notice the breast-band.[9] The *sāri* worn in different styles was common and over this costume was flung the flowing shawl.[10] The head was ornamented with either the chaplet or at times with the tiara.[11]

In Kuṣāṇa times most of these practices noticeable in the Gāndhāra sculptures appear to have continued.[12] The Saka kings usually wore a cap, tunic, trousers and high boots as can be observed from the headless image of Kaniṣka and other similar figures from Mathura.[13] The women invariably donned the *sāri*, which was fastened by means of the girdle, many elaborate types of which can be found while foreign women also seem to have worn the tunic as well.[14]

[1] Foucher, *L'Art Gréco-Bouddhique du Gandhāra*, II, figs. 393, 401, 417, pp. 179, 192 223, (ed. MDCCCXVIII).

[2] *Ibid.*, figs. 392, 415-417 pp. 179, 221; also see *A. S. I. R.*, 1911-12, pl. XL, II.

[3] *A. S. I. R.* 1912, pl. VI (*a*); XLII, fig. 17, XL, fig. 12.

[4] Foucher, *op. cit.*, II, fig. 415, p. 221; fig. 417, p. 223; fig. 423, p. 231.

[5] *Ibid.*, figs. 351, 353, pp. 93.

[6] *Ibid.*, II, fig. 373, p. 121.

[7] *Ibid.*, fig., 353, p. 95, fig. 354, p. 97.

[8] *Ibid.*, I, figs. 139, 140, pp. 275, 277, figs. 189, p. 375; II, figs. 326, p. 49.

[9] *Ibid.*, I, fig. 153, p. 303.

[10] *Ibid.*, II, fig. 377, p. 129.

[11] *A. S. I. R.*, 1911-12, pl. XLI, fig. 16.

[12] *Cf.* Vogel, *La Sculpture de Mathura*, Pl. VII, XXXV, XXI, VIII.

[13] *A. S. I. R.*, 1911-12, p. 1222; pl. LIII, figs. 3, 7, 8.

[14] Kramrisch, *Grundzüge de Indischen Künst*, pl. 19; Smith, *Jain Stūpa and other antiquities of Mathura*, pl. XXXIV-V; Vogel, *op. cit.*, pl. XVIII (*a*).

They usually unbared their heads though occasionally they adopted the use of the veil and the turban.[1]

3. Coiffeures

The Gāndhāra and Mathura sculptures reveal to us the current practices of dressing the hair. In the former we find that the men usually wore long hair and tied it up in a knot on the top of the head,[2] while at times the curls fell on either side as well on the back.[3] The hair of the children was either cropped or left in two or three tufts which were tied into a chignon; while the women too adopted a similar system with the tying of the top-knot which, at times, was twisted into a spiral. Their hair was plaited, either into a single braid which was let down on the back, or bound into a loose knot which rested on the nape of the neck. These plaits or knots were adorned with nets of pearl, rosettes or chaplets.[4]

But the Mathura sculptures display a surprising variety in the contemporary styles of coiffeure. But usually the men in Kuṣāṇa times appear to have tied up their hair into a top-knot, while the women parted their hair at the sides of the head and tied it into a knot in the centre and on the top of the crown.[5] The ladies of course had recourse to other fashions like parting of the hair in the centre[6], but the system of looping and knotting the hair in a plait on the back does not appear to have been popular.

4. Cosmetics

Suśrūta, assigned to the Kuṣāṇa period, in his work *Cikitsasthāna*, lays down twenty-four regulations regarding toilet and cosmetics. He observes that at home on rising up, a man had to clean his teeth with the tooth-brush, wash his mouth and eyes, apply a little collyrium to his eyes, and chew some betel leaves. Before taking his bath he had to massage his head with oil (*śirōbhyaṅga*), anoint and rub his limbs (*udavartana*, *utsādana*, and *udgharṣaṇa*), take some exercise, shampoo his body and then go to his bath. After this operation his body had to be suffused with fragrant paste (*anulēpana*), his hair combed, his nails paired, ornaments worn and some scent

[1] Foucher, *op. cit.*, II, figs. 385, 392-93, 397, pp. 157, 179, 185.
[2] *Ibid.*, fig. 357, p. 97.
[3] Marshall, *The Stūpa of Barhūt at Jaulian*, p. 29.
[4] Foucher, *op. cit.*, I, figs. 162-64; *Ibid.*, II, figs. 318-19; Vogel, *op. cit.*, pl. XLV.
[5] Vogel, *op. cit.*, pl. LXVI (*h*).
[6] *Cf.* Smith, *op. cit.*, pl. LXI.

sprinkled on his limbs. The common man on going out wore leather shoes and took with him either a stick or an umbrella; if he were a soldier, he donned his armour (*varṇavāra*).[1]

Suśrūta sometimes throws some light on some of the preparations which were probably in vogue during his days. He states that the tooth-paste for example was obtained from honey, *tri-kaṭu* (*Terminalia Chebula*, *T. Bellerica* and *Phyllanthus Emblica*), *trivarga*, (cinnamon, cardamom, and leaves of *Laurus Cassia*), *tejōvati* (*Scindapsus officinalis*) salt and oil.[2] He mentions again a type of mouth-wash prepared from the bark of a certain tree called *Kṣīra*, which was mixed with milk, *bhillaḍaka* (*Symploses Racemosa*) or emblic myrobalan (*āmlaka*), which, after being soaked in water, and also being strained were ready for use.[3] Again the betel-leaf, which was such a common and familiar article of toilet during Gupta times, was meant to be chewed along with spices like cloves, camphor, nut-meg, *kakkōla lata-kastūri*, and similar objects of flavour.[4]

5. The Scope of Fine Arts in the Gupta Age

In Gupta times too the concept of fine arts was well-defined although the idea of the traditional arts was usually current in the minds of the writers of this age. Vātsyāyana, for instance, gives a concrete illustration of this statement when he mentions the sixty-four arts which, according to him, were to be the accomplishments of very cultured man and woman. He records their names as follows: singing, playing on the instruments, dancing, drawing, engraving, tattoing, decoration of idols, flower-strewing, dyeing of teeth and clothing, inlaying of floors with jewels, bed-making, making of musical-fountains, water-sprinkling, casting of spells, garland-making, arrangements of diamonds and crowns, beauty-culture, decoration of the ears, scent-making, display of jewellery, witch-craft, expressive management of the hands, cooking, preparation of drinks, darning, Legerdemain, playing on the lute and drum, solving puzzles, the expression of tongue-twisters, reading aloud, acting and story-telling, capping rhymes and half-finished verses, reed plaiting, carpentry, turnery, architecture, testing silver and precious stones, forestry, metal-working, identification and discovery of precious stones, organisation of cock, quail and pigeon fights, training parrots and

[1] Suśrūta, *op. cit.*, II. Ch. XXIV, vv. 29-32, pp. 487-88. (ed. by K. K. Bhishagratna, Calcutta, 1907.)

[2] *Ibid.*, v. 4. p. 481.

[3] *Ibid.*, v. 8, p. 482.

[4] *Ibid.*, v. 12, p. 483.

jack-daws to speak, hair-dressing, talking with the fingers, cryptography, study of dialects, decoration of vehicles with flowers, interpretation of omens, the drawing of talismans, mnemonics, group reciting, guessing riddles and word-puzzles, writing poems, use of reference books, prosody, literary knowledge, art of disguise, patching and restoration of clothes, games of chance, dicing, children's games, etiquette, making artificial flowers.[1]

It has already been noted that Bāṇa too has recorded all these arts which were considered essential for the attainment of a liberal education especially of princes and nobles.[2] Bāṇa tells us how there was a Brāhmaṇa minister named Śukhanāsa "whose mind had plunged deeply into all the arts and *śāstras*."[3] King Candrāpīḍa, while a prince, was sent by his father to a "palace of learning outside the city, stretching half a league along the Siprā river surrounded by a wall of white bricks like the circle of peaks of a snow-mountain, girt with a great moat running along the walls, guarded by very strong gates, having one door kept open for ingress, with stables for horses and palanquins close by, and a gymnasium constructed beneath."[4] In such a palace of learning the prince had to study for ten years in order to master all the arts, having entered it in his sixth and leaving it in his sixteenth year.[5] Here the prince was to study under "teachers of every science" surrounded with "a suite composed mainly of the sons of his teachers."[6]

In later times according to Daṇḍin the concept of the traditional sixty-four arts appears to have been well-known. In Pramati's

[1] Vātsyāyana, *Kamasutra*, text, pp. 29-30: *gītam, vādyam, nṛtyam, ālekhyam, viśeṣakacchedyam taṇḍulakusumavalivikārāḥ, puṣpāstaraṇam, daśanavasanāṅgarāgāḥ, maṇibhūmikākarma, śayanaracanam, udakavādyam, udakāghātāḥ, citrāśca yogāḥ, mālyagrathananvikalpāḥ, śekharakāpīḍayojanam, nepathyaprayogāḥ, karṇapatrabhaṅgāḥ, gandhayuktiḥ bhūṣaṇayojanam, aindrajālāḥ, kaucumārāśca yogāḥ, hastalāghavam, viciitraśākhayūṣabhakṣyavikārakriyā, pānakarasarāgāsavayojanam, sūcīvānakarmāṇi, sūtrakrīḍā, vīṇādamarukavādyani, prahelikā, prātimālā, durvācayogāḥ, pustakavācanam, nāṭakākhyāyikādarśanam, kāvyasamasyāpūraṇam, paṭṭikāvetravānavikalpāḥ, takṣakarmāṇi, takṣaṇam, vāstuvidyā, rūparatnaparikṣā, dhātuvādaḥ, maṇirāgākarajñānam, vṛkṣāyurvedayogāḥ, meṣakukkuṭalāvakayuddhavidhiḥ, śukasārikāpralāpanam, uccāṭanam, kesamarddhane ca kauśalam, akṣaramuṣṭikākathanam, mlecchitavikalpāḥ, deśabhāṣāvijñānam, puṣpaśakaṭikā, nimittajñānam vastramātṛkā, dhāraṇamātṛkā, saṃpāṭyam, mānasī kāvyakriyā, abhidānakośaḥ, chandojñānam, kriyākalpaḥ, chalitakayogāḥ, vastragopanāni, dyūtaviśeṣaḥ, ākarṣakrīḍāḥ, bālakriḍanakāni, vainayikānām, vaijayikānām, vyāyamikānāṃ ca vidyānāṃ Jñānam...(Kāśi Sans. Series, 1929).

[2] See Ch. III *ante*, Sec. 3, pp. 170-71.

[3] Bāṇa, *Kādaṃbari*, p. 49. *Cf.* The attainments of the parrot Vaiśampāyana. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 59.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 62.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 60.

adventure a son-in-law is thus introduced to the king: "He is erudite in the four bodies of Scripture; *au courant* both as to theory and practice in the sixty-four accomplishments; a specialist in literature relating to elephants, chariots, and horses; a champion archer and clubfighter; versed in mythology and traditional lore; a creative artist in poetry, drama, and sophisticated fiction; a scholarly economist and mystical theologian; never envious of another's talent; a candid friend; capable; generous; blest with a retentive memory; unassuming."[1]

It is certainly possible that all the sixty-four arts, already enumerated, might not actually have been learnt and practised in the Gupta age, but that most of them were really known cannot be gainsaid. Probably they were the monopoly of only the royalty and the nobility while the less wealthy must have attempted to imitate these classes and acquired the mastery at least over some of these arts.

Later most of these practices survived and achieved a remarkable stage of efficiency and excellence. Kālidasa describes the fashions current during the various seasons of his day. In the summer (*Grīṣma*) the people took their bath under shower-baths (*jalayaṁtra-maṁdiraṃ*), smeared their bodies with sandal-paste,[2] put on light clothes, adorned themselves with flower-garlands which were perfumed with sandal-paste, scented their hair with the fragrance of bath-room powder (*snāna-kaṣāya*)[3] and ornamented their fore-heads with lines of sandal-paste.[4] In the rainy season (*Varṣā*) they daubed their limbs with sandal-wood and black agallochum (*kālāguru*) pastes, and decorated their hair and ears with flowers, and their foreheads with flower-chaplets (*kēśapāśāḥ*) of the season.[5] In the winter (*Hēmaṁta*), besides all these embellishments of the body, they painted their faces with various leaf-designs (*patralēkhāni*).[6] In the *Śiśira* (January to March) season, they disinfected their rooms with frankincense like black agallochum and tinged their bosoms with saffron, scented

[1] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, 154, text, p. 100: *caturbhyaśca kalāgamaprayōgacaturō viśēṣēṇa gajarathuragataṁtravidiṣvanāstrakarmaṇi gadāyuddhē ca nirupamaḥ purāṇētihāsakuśalaḥ kartā kāvyanāṭakākhyāyikānām vettā sōpaniṣadō arthaśāstrasya nirmatsarō guṇēṣu viśraṁbhī suhṛtsu śakhyaḥ saṁvibhāgaśīlaḥ śrutadharō gatasmayaśca.*

[2] *Ṛtu.*, I, 2, p. 2.

[3] *Ibid.*, 4, p. 3.

[4] *Ibid.*, 4-5, pp. 3-4: *caṁdanalikhita-lalāṭika-pauṁḍri-kaiḥ.*

[5] *Ibid.*, II, 21, p. 27.

[6] *Ibid.*, IV, 5, p. 49-50.



Costumes of Men and Women, Caves XVI XVII, Ajanta

their hair with the incense and black agallochum smoke, stained their breasts with pastes of *priyaṅgu* or saffron and painted their limbs with lac-dye.[1]

Bāṇa tells us that "the fierce heat of the sun made people long not only to drink water perfumed with the strong scent of the trumpet-flower, but even to drink up the very wind."[2]

But it was especially during a wedding that a more elaborate system of toilet was observed. The bride after her bath was smeared with the *lōdhra* (*Symplocos Racemosa*) to remove the oiliness of the skin (*lōdhra-kalkēna-hṛtāṅgataila*ṃ), and anointed with the *kāleyaka* unguent. Then her hair was perfumed with incense-smoke,[3] and a garland of yellow *madhuka* flowers placed round her neck.[4] Her mother then marked on her forehead the vermeil-spot prepared from yellow orpiment (*haritāla*) and realgar (*manaḥśilā*).[5] Her eyes were painted with collyrium (*kajjala*ṃ),[6] and various designs (*patravibhāktaṃ*) were painted on her limbs by means of the *śukalāguru* and *gōrōcana* pastes.[7]

II. Costume in Gupta Times.

The costume, toilet and ornaments of the various people noticed earlier, now deserve to be ascertained. But in this connection, it will be convenient to note the dresses not of so many castes, but rather of Gupta society as a whole, from the king downwards even to the forest people.

The king was the most important person in the State and what he wore naturally attracted attention. But unfortunately as no chroniclers have left any account of the earliest Gupta rulers, their coins are the only sources which can give us any reliable information about their dress. One of the coins of Candra Gupta I shows him wearing a close-fitting coat, trousers and head-dress, ear-rings and armlets, holding in his left hand a crescent-topped standard bound with a fillet and with his right hand offering a ring to his wife,

[1] *Ṛtu.*, VI, 13, p. 72.
[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 37, text, p. 52.
[3] *Kum.*, VII, 9, p. 127.
[4] *Ibid.*, 14, p. 128.
[5] *Ibid.*, 23, p. 131.
[6] *Ibid.*, 20, p. 130.
[7] *Ibid.*, 15, p. 129.

Kumāradevi, who stands, left to right, wearing a loose robe, ear-rings, necklace and armlets and a tight fitting head-dress.[1] The standard type coins of Samudra Gupta, for instance, reveal a kind of armour covering the chest and sides and opening below the waist in front.[2] A similar protection can also be noticed on the archer and couch type of coins of Candra Gupta II, but in some of his archer coins, he obviously wears a *dhōtī* as the loose folds indicate.[3] His lion-slayer and horseman type coins display the girdle, armlets and ear-rings, which must have been familiar ornaments in this period of Gupta history.[4] Sometimes on his coins he appears wearing only his waist-cloth and ornaments, with a bow in hand,[5] while he has a turban or some ornamental head-dress.[6] The sash can also be discovered not only on the coins of this ruler but also on those of Skanda Gupta as well.[7] Some of the coins of the lion-slayer and peacock types, pertaining to the reign of Kumāra Gupta I, show how short loose clothes were worn above the knee.[8] It is possible that such a dress was donned particularly during hunting, although it cannot be substantiated. The larger soutane-like costume, probably a *dhōtī*, can be seen on the coins of Skanda Gupta.[9] Thus arrayed, the king appears to have had what are apparently curls with a fillet drooping on the forehead,[10] as can be observed on the coins of Skanda Gupta and Pura Gupta.[11]

Kālidāsa is more enlightening than Fa-Hien in depicting some features of contemporary Hindu costume. He refers to the headgear, probably a turban (*vēṣṭana*) which was worn by boys and men.[12] The upper portion of the body above the waist was wrapped with the *uttariya*,[13] the counterpart of the modern shawl. The lower as well as the upper garment are both sometimes referred to in one term *dukulam*.[14] Bāṇa, as will be seen presently, clearly alludes to a lower

[1] Brown, *Catalogue of the coins of the Guptas, Maukharis, etc., in the Provincial Museum, Lucknow*, no. 28, p. 6, (1920).
[2] Allan, *Catalogue*, pl. I-II.
[3] *Ibid.*, pls. VI and VII; also ... no. 10.
[4] *Ibid.*, pl. IX.
[5] Brown, *op. cit.*, no. 73, p. 17.
[6] *Ibid.*, no. 77, p. 19.
[7] *Ibid.*, nos. 87-88, pp. 21-22. no. 128, p. 33.
[8] Allan, *op. cit.*, pl. XV.
[9] *Ibid.*, pls. XIX, XXIV.
[10] *Ibid.*, pls. XVI, XVII, XVIII.
[11] *Ibid.*, pl. XXI.
[12] *Raghu.*, I. 42, p. 15; VIII, 13, p. 161.
[13] *Ibid.*, XVI, 43, p. 336.
[14] *Ibid.*, VII, 18-19, p. 145.

garment in his expression *dvitīyāmbara*. Yüan Chwāng, in fact, refers to this lower garment as prevailing among Buddhists and calls it the *Niv-'o-so-na* or the *Nivāsana*.[1] Likewise I-Tsing referring to the clothes required by a Buddhist priest in the seventh century, mentions this *uttarāsaṅga* or the upper cloth and the *nivāsana* or the lower garment.[2]

The evidence from Kālidāsa receives support from the specific information given by Yüan Chwāng about the nature of cloth materials used in northern India in the seventh century. He observes that "the names of their clothing materials, are *Kiao-shē-ye* (*Kauśeya*) and muslin (*tieh*) and calico (*pu*), *Kauśeya* being silk from a wild silk-worm; *Ch'ü* (or *Chu*)-*mo* (*Kṣauma*), a kind of linen; *Han* (or *Kan*)-*po-lo* (*Kambala*), a texture of fine wool (sheep's wool or goat's hair) and *Ho-la-li* (Ral?) a texture made from the wool of a wild animal—this wool being fine and soft and easily spun and woven is prized as a material for clothing. In north India where the climate is very cold, closely fitting jackets are worn somewhat like those of the Tartars (Hu)."[3] The *Kauśeya* type is the one referred to by Kālidāsa, while Watters had suggested that, as the Saṁskṛta word *rallaka* denotes a wild animal, the fabric made from its hair, the *rallaka-kambala* must have been a fine woollen cloth.[4] Therefore it is evident that there were three principal varieties of cloth; first being *kauśeya*, covering types of silk, muslin and calico, secondly *kṣauma*,[5] linen manufactured from either flax, (*kṣauma*), jute (*śaṇa*) and hemp (*bhaṅga*) and lastly *kambala*, implying woollens in the shape of blankets or other kinds of cloth made from the wool of goats and similar animals.

Bāṇa too refers to some kinds of fine as well as coarse cloth manufactured in his day. Haṁsavēga, the confidential messenger from the heir-apparent of Assam, for instance, had wrapped an umbrella named Abhōga in a wrapper of white bark-silk.[6] He brought among other presents silken towels, rolled up in baskets of many-coloured reeds and soft loin-cloths smooth as birch bark.[7] In Bāṇa's days a variety of silks and cotton cloth appears to have been

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 150.

[2] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 148; Hiuen Tsiang, *Si-yu-ki*, I. p. 75.

[4] Watters, *op. cit.*, I, p. 149.

[5] *Kṣauma* is interpreted also as woven silk.

[6] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 212, text, p. 215. *dukūlakalpitaccha nicolakādakosit.*

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 214, text, p. 217. *śaucakṣmāṇi kṣaumāṇi kuśalaśilpilōkōllikhitānāṁ .... bhūrjatvakkōmalāḥ śparśavatiḥ jātipaṭṭikāḥ.*

manufactured, because he refers to linen (*kṣauma*) cotton (*bādara*) bark-silk (*dukūla*), spider's thread (*lālāta*), muslin (*aṅtajah*) and silk (*aṁśuka*).[1]

At Ajanta, especially in caves XVI and XVII, the different styles of contemporary costume can still be seen. Men generally wore a loose short cloth below the waist and above the knees,[2] while a shawl was thrown over the shoulder.[3] The men-servants invariably had only a short loose cloth with nothing above the waist.[4] Some of the soldiers adopted this type of costume, but they were generally also found with short-sleeved jackets covering the breast.[5] In some cases the full-armed jacket, the loose cloth worn below the waist and a shawl covering the waist could be seen among men.[6] This short cloth was worn even by rich persons in whose case its texture, of course, was of a superior kind, but the shawl thrown over the shoulder sometimes descended down to the ground.[7] The children went about either with a small cloth below the waist or quite naked. The recluses, especially Buddhist, wore their full armed long robes or the lower and upper clothes.[8]

From these descriptions of contemporary coins, frescoes and the accounts of contemporary writers it may be concluded that people, in the times of the Guptas up to the seventh century, were familiar with turbans, coats, shawls and loose garments comparable to the present day *dhōtī*. They wore ornaments in the ears, round the neck, arms and legs. This information may now be compared with the evidence offered by foreign travellers, who visited portions of the Gupta empire from the fourth century onwards. Among them Fa Hien is one who is either reticent or even vague when dealing with the dress of the people amidst whom he moved. Dealing with the Middle Kingdom in general he says that "The food and clothes of the common people are the same as in that of Central Kingdom"[9] about which, however, he gives little information. It is only his later successor Yüan Chwāng who throws considerable light on this aspect of Hindu life in the first half of the seventh century. "The inner clothing and outward attire of the people," he states, "have no

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 125, text, p. 143: *kṣaumaṁśca bādaraiśca dukūlaiśca lālātaṅtujaiścāṁśukaiśca.*

[2] Griffiths, *Paintings in the Buddhist Cave Temples of Ajanta*, 47, 48 (1896-97).

[3] *Ibid.*, 49.

[4] *Ibid.*, 50, 54.

[5] *Ibid.*, 66, 68, 69, 70, 72, 73.

[6] *Ibid.*, 76.

[7] *Ibid.*, 88.

[8] *Ibid.*, 89 (5).

[9] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

tailoring; as to the colour other than a fresh white is esteemed and motley is of no account. The men wind a strip of cloth round the waist and up to the armpits and leave the right shoulder bare."[1] This is most probably an allusion to the *dukūla* referred to in the works of Kālidāsa, but, as will be shown presently, it was perhaps not quite correct to state that colours other than white were of no consideration.

1. Costume of the Royalty

The dress of the wealthy must naturally have been of a finer cast. Yūan Chwāng, in fact, struck with their costume, observes that "The dress and ornaments of the kings and grandees are very extraordinary."[2] A comparison of this statement with a description of Harṣa's robes as given by Bāṇa, may be made in order to test Yūan Chwāng's accuracy as a contemporary chronicler. Bāṇa reveals how Harṣa had a lower garment, (*dvitīyāṁbaraṃ*) which, "shot with silk threads, washed in pure water, clung closely to his loins, ornamented with the rays of the jewels of his girdle and white like a mass of ambrosial foam, while he appeared girt with his thin upper garment (*aṁśuka*) spangled with worked stars."[3] In another place, describing Harṣa's dress, Bāṇa states that he wore two seemly robes (*dukūla*) of bark-silk marked with a pair of flamingoes.[4] It may be observed here that the two robes (*dukūla*) known during Kālidāsa's days were current in Harṣa's days as well and even the flamingo design which the former mentions appears to have survived to the seventh century.

The fineness and embroidery, worked on this delicately textured fabrics worn by Harṣa, naturally raise the question regarding the qualities of the kinds of cloth known during the rule of the Gupta monarchs. Fa Hien has not recorded any details about the quality or nature of the clothing material used in the fourth century. Sometimes, however, he alludes to the types of cloth used in Kōsala and Śrāvāsti, where, in the Jētavana *vihāra*, according to him "the kings and people of the countries around hanged about on it silken streamers and canopies."[5] That such kinds of silk and canopy-cloth,

[1] Yūan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 148; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 75.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 151; *Ibid.*, p. 76.

[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 59, text, p. 73: *aghaṭṭena satārāgaṇēn-ōparikṛtēna dvitīyāṁbarēṇa bhuvanābhōgamiva bhāsamānaṃ, ibhapatidaśanahimusala-sahasrōllēkhakaṭinamasṛēṇ-āparyāptāṁbara prathimnā.*

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 197, text, p. 202: *rājahaṁsa mithunalakṣmaṇī sadṛśē dukūlē. . .*

[5] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

the nature of which is not specified, were also used in Pāṭaliputra is borne out by Fa Hien himself. Referring to the procession of images in this city, he describes how round the erection of a structure of five storeys on a car, "white and silk-like cloth of hair is wrapped all round it, which is then painted in various colours." Over the figures of gods were flourished 'silken streamers and canopies'[1] as in Kosala. Fa Hien, therefore, gives us the information that he observed three kinds of cloth, probably muslin, silk and cotton, the last being of a coarser texture, all of which were also painted.

Kālidāsa, however, tells us that various kinds of costume were familiar to the people of his time. Cotton,[2] silk,[3] and wool[4] were utilised in preparing fabrics. The cloths made of cotton and wool was probably manufactured in the country, but some types of silks like the *cīnāṁśuka*[5] might have been imported from China, although the *kauśeyaka* variety might have been of indigenous origin. There was also a mixture of the silk and wool,[6] meant for winter wear.

As dyeing must have been known, mention is made of black,[7] saffron,[8] blue,[9] and red[10] coloured costumes, but the white colour appears to have been a favourite.[11]

Separate dresses were designed for particular occasions; so mention is made of costumes for a bride,[12] a hunter,[13] a love-sick person,[14] an adulteress[15] and several others to suit the time and place.

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[1] Fa-Hien *op. cit.*, p. 70. The 'canopy' was probably the umbrella held over deities and rulers.

[2] *Raghu.*, XVI, 43, p. 336: *aṁśūṁśuka.*
Ṛtu., V, 8, p. 61: *kṣaumeṇa.*

[3] *Māl.*, Act V, 12, p. 149: *snāmi vāsastra kriyā.*

[4] *Śāk.*, Act I, p. 19.

[5] *Vik.*, Act IV, 17, p. 129.

[6] *Raghu.*, XV, 77, p. 321: *Uṣṇāya.*

[7] *Vik.*, Act III, p. 90.

[8] *Raghu.*, IX, 43, p. 193.

[9] *Ibid.*, I, 46, p. 16; VI, 6, p. 119.

[10] *Ṛtu.*, II, 25, p. 29.

[11] *Māl.*, Act V, p. 135.

[12] *Śāk.*, Act II, p. 24; *mṛkṣāveśam.*

[13] *Ibid.* VII, 21, p. 115.

[14] *Vik.*, Act III, p. 81: *abhisārikāvēśā.* See Notes, p. 89 (S. P. Pandit's edn. 1889).
Ranganātha explains the *Abhisārikālakṣaṇam* thus:
hitvā lajjāṁ samākṛṣṭā madanēna madēna vā |
abhisārayate kāntam svayam vā sābhisārikā

2. Costume of the Nobility

Now that some idea of the dresses of the royalty has been obtained, we may turn to the costume worn by the nobility. Bāṇa gives us a glowing description of the details of such a costume which he saw probably with his own eyes at a review of the chiefs of Harṣa. He states how the chiefs, who had arrived at Harṣa's camp to pay homage to their overlord, were clad in impressive attire. He remarks that "They wore tunics (*kañcuka*) darkened by black diamonds glistening on bright forms, Chinese cuirasses (*kūrpāsaḥ*) thrown over them, coats and doublets (*ācchādanakāḥ*) showing clusters of bright pearls, bodices (*coḷākāḥ*) speckled with a mixture of various colours, and shawls (*uttarīyāḥ*) of the shades of parrots' tails".[1] Fine waist-bands (*śaṣṭam*) were wound about their flanks made thin by exercise, and their heads were wrapt in shawls of a soft saffron hue. They had fine turbans (*kṣaumacoḷāḥ*) inlaid with bits of crest-gems. Therefore the wealthy like the militant nobles of Harṣa's day, wore not only turbans or shawls as headgear, but they put on tunics, waist-coats, coats and fastened their costumes with waist-bands.

3. Costume of the Common People—Men

Less ornate than the dress of the nobility was the costume of the soldiers, among whom may be distinguished the infantry and the cavalry. The former precede the latter, in a description given by Bāṇa who observes that "Before it ran an army of foot about a thousand strong, mostly young men, with clusters of crisp hanging hair upon their foreheads, and cheeks laughing with the bright gleam of their ear-ornaments; girt with scented jerkins (*kañcukā*) spotted with a powder of black aloe-wood paste: their upper garments (*uttarīya*) formed into turbans (*veṣṭana*); sparkling golden bracelets on their left fore-arms, daggers fastened in strong knots in their sashes of doubled cloth (*paṭṭa-paṭṭikā*); clubs (*koṇa*) at their sides; swords (*krapāṇa pāṇi*) in their hand,.....making a ceaseless hubbub with cries of 'on, on, make speed, away, make way in front".[2] Though this description of foot-soldiers is associated by Bāṇa with divine beings like Sarasvatī, he evidently had his contemporary soldiers in mind when he set forth these details of dress and ornaments. Their costume seems in all probability to

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 202, text, pp. 200-7: see Śaṅkara's commentary: *sastaṃ paṭṭikāḍōraḥ kaṭisūtramityarthaḥ.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 16, text, p. 21.

have consisted of a turban, an upper garment, a jerkin, a double-clothed sash, and over all these were superimposed the weapons of defence and the ornaments of grace. Especially the costume of these soldiers can well be compared with that of the chiefs who came to visit Harṣa, and the details are almost the same, except of course in the quality of material utilised.

The cavalry riders had evidently more or less the same type of dress. Depicting a young horseman's costume, Bāṇa remarks that he wore a white jerkin and a silken turban round his head.[1] But the war-horse of the richer person or the higher officer was appropriately decorated. It has been recorded how on the forehead of such a war-horse dangled rings of fine gold and the end of the bit rested against its long nose. It was adorned with tinkling trappings of gold. Close on either side with their hands grasping the saddle-cloth, attendants shook white chowries.[2]

Far less elaborate was the costume of the common people in the Gupta age. As Yüan Chwāng noticed the ordinary person must have wound a strip of cloth round the waist, and he wore either a tunic or merely covered his chest with another loose piece of cloth. The courier, Mekhalaka, who came to see Bāṇa from Harṣa's court, wore an extremely simple dress. This messenger had his tunic girt up tightly by a mud-stained strip of cloth, the knot hanging loose and fastened up by a ragged cloth swinging behind him.[3] The Brāhmaṇa, on the other hand, had an equally simple, if not simpler apparel. Bāṇa's friend Sudṛṣṭi, a typical Brāhmaṇa, wore a pair of pale silken *Paṇḍra* clothes, which the scholar-courtier Bāṇa considered decorous and respectable.[4]

The dress of the Hindu ascetic was probably reduced to the utmost simplicity. His worldly possessions consisted of a staff, black antelope skin, bark-dress, rosary and girdle.[5] More details of an ascetic's costume can be obtained from a description of Bhairavācārya's deputy who visited Harṣa. An ascetic's red scarf hanging from his shoulder formed his *vaikakṣaka* wrap. His upper robe consisted of a tattered rag knotted above his heart and stained

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 19, text, p. 24: *dhavalavārabāṇadhāriṇaṃ, dhautadukūla paṭṭikā-parivēṣṭitamauliṃ puruṣaṃ.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 18, text, p. 23.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 41, text, p. 52: *pṛṣṭaprerikhatpaṭaccara karpataghaṭita galita granthiṃ.*

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 72, text, p. 85.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 30, text, p. 38: *kṛṣṇājini, valkali, akṣavalayi, mēkhali, jaṭi.*

with red chalk. In his right hand he grasped a bamboo-stool, while in the other was a yoke-pole resting on his shoulder, where its motionless point of support was tied with a complicated fastening of hair rope. To this were attached his dirt-scrapper and sieve of bamboo bark, his loin cloth at the end, his alms-bowl contained in its receptacle, namely a cavity of *kharjura* wood, his waterpot fixed in a triangular support made of three sticks, his slippers disposed outside and a bundle of manuscript bound by a string of stout cord.[1] With this scanty dress, these people who had renounced the world, moved on from place to place.

The forest people (*āṭavikāḥ*) wore a peculiar dress and this too can be ascertained from contemporary works. There is reason to believe that since the days of Samudra Gupta, when the wild tribes came into close contact with the Gupta empire, their costume and habits must have been observed. But it is only Kālidāsa who gives a brief description of their dress, when referring to a band which attacked a caravan going to Vidiśā. They appeared as a host of way-layers, bow in hand, their chests covered with the quiver-straps, and they wore plumes of peacock-feathers which drooped down to their ears.[2] Bāṇa, who is certainly far more enlightening on some features of wild life in Harṣa's time, depicts in detail forest chiefs like the Śabara youth Śarabhaketu, who met Harṣa in the Vindhyan jungles when he was out to seek his sister after the Kānyakubja crisis. Describing him Bāṇa makes almost no reference to the clothing which he wore, except stating that he girt round his broad loins a short black antelope-skin as if it were a woven covering and that his dark body was sheltered by a leather-quiver on his back, which was made of a bear's skin and wrapped with a leopard's skin.[3]

The apparel of this Śabara youth may well be compared with that of the Śabara leader, Mātaṅgaka, who is depicted with equal accuracy. Bāṇa states that from the great hardness of his limbs he seemed as though he was made of iron. He had thick locks curled at the ends hanging on his shoulders, his brow was broad; his nose stern and aquiline; his leftside shone reddened by the faint pink rays of a jewelled snake's hood which was the ornament of one of his ears; he was perfumed with fragrant ichor and clad in a silk dress red with

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 86, text, p. 101.

[2] *Māl.*, Act., V, 10, p. 147:
Tūṇirabaṅdhapariṇaddhbhujāṅtarālaṃ ākarṇalambiṣikhi-picchakalāpadhāri |
Kōdaṅḍapāṇi ninadat pratirōdhakānāṃ āpātaduṣprasahaṃ avirabhūd anīkam ||

[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

cochineal. Some of the companions of this Śabara chieftain, who were following him had garments 'dark as clouds.'[1] From these details of the dresses worn by the foresters and their chiefs, the same distinction between the wealthy and the poor stands out that their chiefs wore a comparatively costlier costume like a silken dress while their subjects wore skins and occasional pieces of cotton cloth.

3. Costume of the Common People—Women.

It has been noticed that men in the Gupta period usually wore two garments, one styled the upper and another the lower one. Women too appear to have adopted a similar costume. The former, known as either the *sthanāṁśuka*[2] or the *kurpāsaka*,[3] was tightened with the assistance of bands (*bandhanāni*).[4] The modern counterpart of this garment is obviously the bodice worn by women. The other dress affected by them was known as *aṁśuka*,[5] which, to use a current day expression, was the skirt of the Gupta age. It is recorded to have descended from the stomach to the ankles and was fastened by means of the *nīvībandha*.[6] Over the skirt was worn the waistband, sometimes called the *kṣaumānitaritamēkhala*.[7] Once these dresses were worn and adjusted, what we now know as the sāri must have been worn and if required adapted also as a kind of veil.[8] This sāri-like garment was probably not universally worn on all occasions, for in the Vidharbha country Kālidāsa states that the dress of a woman was a silk garment which was not exceedingly long.[9]

The women are at times shown at Ajanta (caves XVI-XVII) only with a loose cloth which is a little longer than that worn by men,[10] and many a time either with half-armed or full-armed jackets.[11] Such a short loose cloth, worn below the waist, was not necessarily plain, for it had stripes and in some cases colours too. The loose ends were let down gracefully in folds on the back.[12] Over this dress was worn the girdle. Among the wealthy ladies the

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 28.
[2] *Ṛtu.*, VI, 8, p. 61.; *Vik.*, Act V, 12, p. 155.
[3] *Ibid.*, IV, 16, p. 55; V, 8, p. 61.
[4] *Ibid.*, VI, 8, p. 69: *ucchvāsayantyaḥ slathabaṁdhanāni gāḍhāni kaṁdarpasamākulāni. . . .*
[5] *Raghu.*, VI, 75, p. 138: Mallināṭha comments thus—*aṁśukāni vastrāṇi vāṭō-api nāsr-aṁsayan=nākampayat.*
[6] *Kum.*, VIII, 60, p. 168.
[7] *Raghu.*, X, 8, p. 208.
[8] *Cf.*, *Śāk.*, Act IV, 4, pp. 54-55.
[9] *Māl.*, Act V, 7, p. 139.
[10] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 47, 48
[11] *Ibid.*, 49.
[12] *Ibid.*, 55, 60, 61, 75.

practice was to wear larger lower as well as upper loose clothes, the texture of which was so fine as to reveal the figure of the wearer.[1] Among the poorer people, the breasts were covered with a costume which is not very much unlike the modern bodice,[2] although such was not the universal practice, at least, so far as the paintings of this period are concerned.[3]

Yüan Chwāng confirms to some extent the evidence of Kālidāsa and of these Ajanta paintings. He states that "The women wear a long robe and leave the right shoulder bare." But this statement by no means implies that all the women did not cover their breasts, for Bāṇa clearly refers to corslets. That in his time women wore corslets opening in front, being fastened in front, is clear when he observes that the joints of the goddess Caṇḍi's corslet (*kañcuka*) gaped open at the part where it bulged out from the bulk of her swelling breasts.[4] Bāṇa often makes references to the silk skirts and jackets worn by women.[5] This upper garment was held in position or supported by a girdle (*bandha*) worn above the navel.[6] When on horseback women wore petticoats (*pulaka*) and over them silken gowns, which were fastened by girdles. Describing Mālati, Bāṇa states how hanging down to her toes a gown (*pulakabandha citraṃ*) of bleached white silk, lighter than a snake's slough, concealed her form. Underneath gleamed a petticoat of saffron tint, with variegated spots of different colours.[7] This is apparently an allusion to the embroidery made on clothes. It has been noticed that Harṣavardhana's robes were ornamented with large stars and designs of flamingoes. Bāṇa again relates how the silk robes, worn by ladies of Harṣa's court, were adorned sometimes with hundreds of divers flowers and birds,[8] while even the awnings spread over the terraces to shut out the sunshine or the dew were likewise designed with figures. He also informs us how queen Yaśōvatī, during her pregnancy, as she lay all day long on her couch, saw the reflections of figures embroidered on the awning.[9]

[1] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 55, 47.

[2] *Ibid.*, 61, lower panel, third figure from right.

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I. p. 148; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 75.

[4] Bāṇa, *Caṇḍiśataka*, 71, p. 333: *truṭyaṅtaḥ pinabhāge stanavalanabharāt saṁdhyaḥ kañcukasya.*

[5] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 241.

[6] *Ibid.*, *Caṇḍiśataka*, 72, p. 334: *Pārvatyā mahiṣāsuravyatikare vyāyāmaramyaṃ vapuḥ | paryastāvadhibaṅdha baṅdhura lasatkeśoccayaṃ pātu vaḥ*

[7] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 262, text, p. 32.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 95.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 108.

III. Toilet

1. Coiffeures

The hair of men and women during this period was adorned in various ways. Kālidāsa gives us some information about the systems of coiffeure in his day. Among men it was the practice to have a tuft of hair called *śikha*,[1] which, if long, was tied with a tape.[2] The beard (*śmaśru*) affected by the Persians, though usually shaved off, was unshaven during periods of mourning.[3] Children and boys too had long hair until it was cut off.[4]

That the above noticed practices must have continued to survive in the seventh century can be confirmed by the evidence offered by Bāṇa. Bhaṇḍi, the son of queen Yaśovati's brother, had side-locks of curly hair at the age of eight.[5] The chiefs who came to visit Harṣa had peacock feathers stuck in their top-knots (*cūḍāmaṇi-khaṇḍakhacita*).[6] At Ujjainī there could be seen chiefs with top-knots.[7] The custom of having long hair appears to have been common.[8] Bāṇa's friend Sudṛṣṭi wore a thick bunch of flowers in his short top-knot (*maulih*).[9] Hindu ascetics had matted locks (*jaṭi*).[10] Even the forest people had their hair tied into knots over their heads. Vyāghrakētu, a tributary forest-chief, had his hair tied into a crest above his forehead.[11] Mātangaka, the Śabara chief, had thick locks curled at the ends and hanging on his shoulders.[12] These two examples show that among wild tribes at this period two practices of wearing the hair must have prevailed, the first was to let the hair down so that it dangled naturally on the shoulders in curls; the second was to tie it up, not behind the head as was done by the Brāhmaṇas, but over it in front as is the custom in Malabar today.

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[1] *Raghu.*, XVI, 43, p. 341.
[2] *Ibid.*, II, 8, p. 32.
[3] *Ibid.*, XVIII, 51, p. 375.
[4] *Ibid.*, III, 28, p. 60; XI, p. 225, 42, p. 235.
[5] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 116.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 203, text, p. 207.
[7] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbari*, p. 174.
[8] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 243, text p. 242.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 72, text, p. 85.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 30, text, p. 38.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 230; text, p. 231: *maulibaṁdhaṃ*
[12] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbari*, p. 28.



Some Types of Coiffeure, Caves XVI-XVII, Ajanta

Yüan Chwāng was keen enough to observe all these usages. In one place according to him the people wore their hair cut even.[1] Referring to the customs of non-believers, he relates how some "pull out their hair and cut off their moustaches; some mat their side hair and make a top-knot coil".[2] The former practice evidently refers to the system of the Jaina *sādhus*, while the latter must have been the custom of Hindu anchorites. This observation does not mean that he failed to notice how the common people adorned their hair. "The hair on the crown of the head", he says, "is made into a coil, all the rest of the hair hanging down. Some clip their moustaches or have other fantastic fashions."[3]

The women of the Gupta age had various styles of coiffeure. Some let their hair grow long and after it was oiled,[4] perfumed,[5] and combed,[6] it was either parted into plaits (*cēṇī*) or tied into a knot on the head.[7] If braided into a long plait, it was styled as the single braid (*ēkavēṇī*).[8] In times of mourning, even as the men let grow their beards, the women abstained from their daily routine as a mark of their anguish.[9]

It has already been noticed to what all types of coiffeure Kālidāsa refers and it is worth comparing some of these styles with those which were commemorated in colour at Ajanta, where in the cave-paintings of our period most of these styles of dressing the hair have been preserved. The hair of the ladies was parted either in the middle or on the right as can be seen in the case of the female dwarf and the attendant to the lady at her toilet. The hair on the forehead was either plainly brushed on both the sides or let down in curves in front. Over the hair, a little above the forehead, was worn an ornamental band either broad or narrow.[10] The long hair of the women was either let down in plaits behind on the back or tied into a knot on the nape of the neck and round it was wound a band[11] obviously of flowers as is the practice in the Deccan even at present.

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 151; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 76.
[2] *Ibid.*, I, p. 148; Hiuen Tsiang, *Ibid.*, I, p. 75.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 148; Hiuen Tsiang, *Ibid.*, p. 75.
[4] *Ṛtu.*, IV, 15, p. 55.
[5] *Ibid.*, I, 4, p. 3; II, 21, p. 27.
[6] *Ibid.*, IV, 15, p. 55.
[7] *Raghu.*, XIV, 12, p. 290.
[8] *Śāk.*, Act VII, 21, p. 115.
[9] *Māl.*, Act V, text, pp. 188-41; also see Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 243, text, pp. 242-43.
[10] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 55.
[11] *Ibid.*, 61, 62, 65.

The men too let their hair grow till it was let down on the back like that of women.[1] This custom was prevalent among the soldiers[2] and probably among the common people as well. In the case of ascetics the hair was tied into a knot on the head itself[3] exactly as it has been portrayed in contemporary literature. Two *Kirātas* portrayed in another place reveal also how they too wore a top-knot on the head.[4]

2. Flowers

Once the hair was combed and adjusted, women wore in it flowers,[5] which were used as designs for girdles as well as ornaments[6] and as ear-pendants (*karṇikāra*).[7] Women, especially those who were dwelling in hermitages, considered flowers as ornaments.[8] These needs show that there must have been a great demand for flowers, which were apparently supplied from gardens attached to private houses and public places inside as well as outside the towns and cities. The official designation of the garden keeper (*Pramadavanapālikā*)[9] suggests that women too were entrusted with the responsibility of looking after gardens and parks which yielded flowers and served as pleasure resorts.

Flowers during the days of Harṣa were in great favour specially among women. *Tamāla* sprays were fixed in the braids of their hair, while brilliant ear-chaplets of *Śirīṣa* flowers were also dorned by them.[10] Dancing girls wore wreaths about their brows, chaplets round their ears, great garlands of amaranth hung down upon their round hips,[11] and their "great jar-like bosoms" were encircled with bands of large *Bakula* flowers. They also pinned lotuses in their ears.[12] *Pārijāta* flowers were considered along with wine and ambrosia as objects of scent.[13]

[1] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 72, 73, 74.
[2] *Ibid.*, 79.
[3] *Ibid.*, 50, 54.
[4] *Ibid*, 60.
[5] *Raghu.*, VI, 23, p. 124.
[6] *Kum.*, III, 55, p. 57.
[7] *Ṛtu.*, VI, 5, p. 68.
[8] *Śāk.*, Act IV, p. 54.
[9] *Māl.*, Act III. p. 55.
[10] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 115, text, p. 133.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 83, text, p. 132.
[12] *Ibid.* p. 62, text, p. 74.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 61, text, p. 73.

As men too had long hair, they also were naturally fond of flowers. It has been noticed how Brāhmaṇas like Sudṛṣṭi placed flowers in their top-knots as emblems of decoration. Bāṇa himself, prior to his departure for the palace of Harṣa, adorned his ears with *Giri-Karṇika* flowers, fastened with the ends of *dūrva* grass.[1] The *Karṇikāra* flower was probably considered an object of beauty, for a tall man is compared to it.[2] Mention is also made of the *Kadaṁba*, *Caṁpaka*, *Lavali*,[3] *Nīpa*, *Kuṭaja*, *Kalhāra*, *Sephālikā*, *Priyaṁgu* flowers.[4] Even kings thrust flowers in their knots. The locks of Harṣa are said to have been encircled by a wreath of jasmine flowers.[5]

3. Cosmetics

After dressing the hair, the next most important item in the daily routine of a person in the Gupta age appears to have been his attention to toilet. This statement by no means implies that all persons paid special attention to toilet, for the use of cosmetics, scents and perfumed oils has invariably been the privilege of only the wealthy from early times. But in imitating the affluent person, the man of average means also, as will be shown presently, followed a certain system of toilet. To the grandee, the toilet consisted of the major operation in decorating the face and it was styled as the *mukha-prasādhana*[6] which appears to have been an elaborate and tedious function of facial ornamentation.

The face had to be an object of attraction in woman and man. In order to improve on the gifts of Nature several artifices were utilised in the Gupta age. Pastes and oils were used as preliminaries to the bath; the former were generally prepared out of plants and trees, while the latter were extracted from fruits. Out of sandal-wood were prepared the *anulēpana*[7] and the *aṅgarāga*[8] pastes, while plants yielded unguents like the *kālīyaka*,[9] *kālāguru*,[10]

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[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 49; also see p. 56.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71, text, p. 83.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 61, text, p. 76. *Cf.* Yüan Chwāng *op. cit.*, I pp. 151, 148; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 76.
[6] *Māl.*, Act III, 5, p. 64.
[7] *Ṛtu.*, V, 5, p. 59.
[8] *Kum.*, VII, 9, p. 127.
Raghu., VI, 60, p. 134.
[9] *Ṛtu.*, IV, 5, pp. 49-50.
Kum., VII, 9, p. 127.
[10] *Ibid.*, II, 21, p. 27.

and *haricaṁdana*.[1] Fruits like *iṅguḍi*,[2] *manaḥśila*,[3] and *haritāla* yielded beneficial oils.

On finishing the bath, the hair was perfumed and warmed with the frankincense of the *kālāguru*,[4] *lōdhra*-dust,[5] and *dhūpa*,[6] and the limbs were scented with musk.[7]

The *tilaka* or the vermeil spot was impressed on the forehead by women, men and children. This caste-mark was made up either of the pastes of the *haritāla*, *manaḥśila*, and *caṁdana*[8] pastes or with collyrium[9] and saffron called *kuṁkuma*[10] which was smeared on the breasts by women to get a cooling effect.

Much attention was paid to the beautification of the face. After all the pastes were applied and the oils rubbed in, pencils (*śalākā*)[11] were used to apply unguents to the eyes, while ladies painted their cheeks with multi-coloured dots called *viśeṣaka*.[12] These spots, designed into the form of a leaf and styled as the *patra-viśeṣaka*,[13] were usually made with saffron and the white pastes *śuklāguru*[14] and *gōrōcana*.[15] The lips were painted with the lac-dye (*ālaktaka*),[16] and then given a finishing touch with the *lōdhra* dust to lend them a tint of yellow.[17]

Sometimes the effects of an elaborate toilet was sought for specially as an irresistible source of allurement. Not only was the lac-dye applied to the lips,[18] but it was used to paint the feet as well. In the case of applying the dye to the feet it had to be arranged in specific lines. When the feet were thus painted, the dye was allowed to dry by breathing over it.[19]

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[1] *Raghu.*, VI, 60, p. 134.
[2] *Śāk.*, Act I, 9, p. 5.
[3] *Kum.*, VII, 23, p. 131.
[4] *Ṛtu.*, II, 21, p. 27.
[5] *Raghu.*, II, 29, p. 37; *Kum.*, VII, 9, p. 127.
[6] *Ṛtu.*, IV, 5, pp. 49-50.
[7] *Raghu.*, XVII, 24, p. 351.
[8] *Ṛtu.*, I, 2, 4, 6, pp. 2, 3, 4.
[9] *Māl.*, Act III, 5, p. 64.
[10] *Ṛtu.*, IV, 2, p. 48; V, 9, p. 61.
[11] *Ibid.*, I, 4, 6, pp. 17-18.
[12] *Māl.*, III, 5, p. 64.
[13] *Ṛtu.*, IV, 5, pp. 49-50: *patralēkhā*.
[14] *Raghu.*, VI, 65, p. 135.
[15] *Kum.*, VII, 15, p. 129.
[16] *Ibid.*, V, 34, p. 85.
[17] *Ibid.*, VII, 9, p. 127.
[18] *Māl.*, Act III, 5, p. 64: *raktāśōkarucā viśoṣitaguṇo bimbādharālaktaḥ*.
[19] *Ibid.*, 13, p. 78: *ārdrālaktakaṁ asyāścaraṇaṁ mukhamārutēna vijayituṁ*.

Toilet, according to Kālidāsa, was also resorted to as a preliminary to sexual intercourse. "For the festival of the pleasure of union," he remarks, "women besmear their bodies with *kālīyaka* pigment, decorate their lotus-like faces with figures of painting and perfume (fumigate) their hair with the incense of black *aguru*".[1] Such young women drank heavily and then smeared their limbs with various pigments to increase their attraction. He observes that young women, "languid through intoxication, apply sandal pigment mixed with musk and smeared with *priyaṅgu*, *kālīyaka* and saffron to their white breasts."[2]

Such practices must have continued to the times of Bāṇa, who refers to some of them in his description of the marriage rites and preparations relating to Harṣa's sister Rājyaśrī. The feudal queens who attended that marriage prepared cosmetics made of saffron paste, clotted by "*balāśana*" essence (*balāśanā-ghṛta-ghanī-kṛta*), unguents (*mukhalēpanānī*) as well as strings of cloves (*lavaṅga-māla*) interspersed with *Kakkōla*-fruits (*kakkōla-miśrāḥ*), nut-megs (*sajātiphalāḥ*) and large bright pieces of camphor (*sphurat-sphaṭika-karpūraśakala-khacitāntarāla*).[3] Not only weddings but also birth-ceremonies offered a great scope for the display of the variety and the requirements of toilet requisites. Ladies proceeding to Prabhākaravardhana's palace in order to celebrate Harṣa's birth were followed by servants who carried "garlands in wide baskets with bath powder (*snānīya-cūrṇa*) sprinkled upon the flowers, dishes laden with bits of camphor clear as crystal granules; jewelled caskets of saffron scents; ivory boxes (*daṅta-spharukāṇi*) studded with rows of sandal-hued Areca-nuts and tufted with slim *Khadira* fibres dripping mango-oil; vermilion and powder boxes (*kuṅkumādhivāsabhāṇji bhājanānī*) red and pink, with murmuring bees sipping *Pārijāta* perfumes; betel trees with bundles of nuts hanging from the young slips." The palace itself was an exhibition of the ways and means by which the cosmetics of the day were prepared and utilised. In Prabhākaravardhana's palace "mortars, pestles, stone blocks and other utensils were bedecked with perfumes"[4] and "crocodile-mouthed conduits, conveying scented water, filled a variety of pleasure ponds."[5]

[1] *Ṛtu.*, IV., 5, p. 50: *śirāṁsi-kālā-guru-dhūpitāni.*

[2] *Ibid.*, V, 9, p. 61: *payōdharaiḥ-kuṅkuma-rāgapiñjaraiḥ suk-ōpasēvyair-navayauvanōṣmabhiḥ* | ...also see 12. p. 63.

[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 124.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 111-12.; text, p. 130.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 124, text, p. 142.

It is fortunate that the painter of this age has preserved a picture of a lady of rank at her toilet. At Ajanta, in cave XVII, a painting represents a lady of status with her maidens performing her toilet; with her right hand she applies unguents to beautify her face, while in her left hand is held a mirror into which she gazes. Her lips, palms and the soles of her feet are all painted with a dye the colour of which has disappeared, but which must have been the lac-dye referred to by Kālidāsa and subsequently by Bāṇa. This lac-dye appears to have been carried in one of the small, lidded vessels which is placed on a tray seen in the hand of the woman attendant on her left. Not only both the attendants, but even the dwarf accompanying this lady, have adorned the soles of their feet with the lac-dye. The sharpened eye-brows and the eye-lids of the lady as well as her women attendants suggest that they too must have been painted probably with the pencil or *śalākā* as Kālidāsa has recorded. Probably she is about to put on the *tilaka*-mark on her forehead, but it is strange to notice that none of her attendants has the vermilion spot.[1]

Several types of cosmetics were used by Bāṇa's contemporaries. The cave dwellings of Gandhamādana were perfumed with fragrant sulphur which was considered a scent by the *Yakṣa* matrons.[2] Sandal-paste was a favourite with men. At the hour of dining Harṣa sent to Haṁsavēga, the Assamese ambassador, the remains of his toilet-sandal enclosed in a polished cocoanut wrapped in a white cloth.[3] The ladies used saffron unguents on their lips to make them shine and camphor powder as a perfume.[4] Viscous sandal was used by women to perfume the body. Betal leaves were eaten to redden or darken the lips just as lip-stick is used to day. Clotted lac was used to decorate the soles, while the upper portion of the feet was stained with saffron. The round sectarial-mark on the forehead was made dark with civet[5] or tawny with *gōrōcana*.[6]

That most of these cosmetics were also used by men is again emphasized by Bāṇa who relates that king Śūdraka's limbs were anointed in the perfuming room with sandal-wood, sweetened with

[1] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 55

[2] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 260-61; *Kādaṁbari*, p. 55. See also *Kādaṁbari*, p. 5, wherein it is stated that "her bosom glistened with rich sandal ointment."

[6] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbari*, p. 8.

the fragrance of saffron, camphor and musk.[1] Harṣa was adorned with the vermilion spot or the *tilaka*, which was made either of black *agallochum*[2] or bright aloes.[3] The dressing of the hair was not forgotten. Sudṛṣti, for example, put on the sectarial lines on his forehead, painted his arms with *gōrōcana* and clay from a sacred pool blest at the end of his bath and made his hair sleek with oil and myrobalan.[4] The typical Hindu ascetic daubed his limbs with the purifying ashes.[5] Even the forest people had their articles of toilet, among which may be mentioned the pigment of a peacock's gall,[6] and an elephant's ichor,[7] which were used by them as perfumes.

The lac-dye must have been a popular cosmetic as it evidently proved a source of attraction. Bāṇa's reference to the absence of the sheen of the lac-dye glistening on a victorious foot only reveals the object of using the pigment.[8] The lac-dye was prepared from the fresh lac-juice extracted from fresh lac-branches, for it is recorded that a fresh lac-branch became worthless through the taking of its sap.[9] The allusion to the lac-dye on Lakṣmi's feet shows that in Bāṇa's day women applied the lac-dye to their feet as was the practice in the times of Kālidāsa.[10] The comparison of forest-fires to women's lower lips red with melted lac[11] is just another allusion to a current contemporary usage. Bāṇa clearly states that the feet of Harṣa's sister, Rājyaśrī, were red with the application of the customary lac.[12]

The epigraphs of the Gupta period at times throw some light on the cosmetics and the toilet practices of the people in Gupta times. The Māṇḍasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, describes how a woman, though endowed with youth and beauty and adorned with the arrangement of golden necklaces and betel-leaves and flowers, did not go to meet her lover in a secret place, until she had put on a pair of coloured silken clothes.[13] In addition to the wearing of jewels, flowers and

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 8.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 61.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 17.
[4] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 72.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 86, 92.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 232.
[7] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 31.
[8] *Ibid. Caṇḍīśataka* (12) p. 278: *raktākte alaktakaśrīr vijayini vijaye no virājaty-amuṣmin.*
[9] *Ibid.*, (3), p. 269: *tāṃ śobhāṃ ādadhānā jayati navam ivā 'laktakaṃ pīḍayitvā.*
[10] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 61.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 39
[12] *Ibid.*, p. 242.
[13] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 85, text, p. 82: *tāruṇya kāṅty-upacitōpi suvarṇṇahāra tāṁbūla puṣpa vidhinā samālaṅkṛtōpi nārī janaḥ priyaṁ upaiti na. . . .*

dyeing the lips by eating betel-leaves, reference is also made to plants like the *rōdhra* (*lōdhra-Symplocese Racemosa*) and *priyaṅgu* (*Panicum Italicum*) and *bakula* (*Mimusops Elengi*) which are known to have been used in the preparation of toilet-pastes in those days. The perfume of red and blue water-lillies was considered enjoyable.[1] As the Alīnā copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67, suggests, dark-blue coloured cakes of ointment made of pounded aloe-bark (*khaṇḍitāguru*)[2] were in common use. Moreover, the Rājim copper plate grant of *Rāja* Tīvaradeva, ascribed to A. D. 800, reveals how women painted saffron-leaves (*kuṅkumapatra*) and collyrium (*añjana*) on their eye-lids.[3]

There is no doubt that betel-leaves were chewed in Gupta times for fashion as well as for pleasure. The chewing of the betel-leaf (*tāṁbūla*) was considered an attribute of beauty as well as a toilet requisite during the reigns of Kumāra Gupta I in A. D. 473-74.[4] The Aphsad stone inscription of Ādityasena, attributed to the seventh century, A. D., reveals how *Siddhas* in pairs, woke up after sleeping in the shade of the betel-plants which were in full bloom on the banks of the river Lōhityā[5], mentioned in the Mānḍasor stone inscription of Yaśodharman and identified with the river Brahmaputrā.[6]

That the betel-leaf was well-known to Kālidāsa is certain, for he refers to cups made from betel-leaves (*tāṁbūlānāṁ dalaiḥ*).[7] This being the case it need not be considered unreasonable to believe that the betel-leaf must have been a great favourite with women as well as men. Though at Ajanta ladies are painted with reddened lips,[8] it cannot be inferred whether or not the redness was the result of using the lac-dye or chewing the betel-leaf. But Bāṇa definitely remarks that the betel-leaf was consumed in order to redden the lips. He relates how Mālati's joined lips, darkened by a deep, black stain of betel seemed to pour forth, mingled with the after-glow, a dusk[9].

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (37), p. 163, text, p. 162: *kumudōtpala-gaṅdha-śital-āmōdī Kārttika-māse.* Also see (50), p. 228.

[2] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 185, text, p. 177: *khaṇḍitāguru-vilepanavida-śyāmala.*

[3] *Ibid.*, (81), p. 298, text, p. 294.

[4] *Ibid.*, (18), p. 82.

[5] *Ibid.*, (42), p. 206, text, p. 203: *Lōhityasya-taṭēṣu sītala talēṣu-utphulla nāgadruma chchāyā supta.*

[6] *Ibid.*, (33), p. 145, also see Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India*, p. 729 (S. M. Sastri, 1924).

[7] *Raghu.*, IV, 42, p. 82.

[8] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

[9] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 265, text, p. 32: *bahalatāṁbūla kṛṣṇikāṅdha kāritēnādhara saṁpuṭena.*

Men too loved the betel-leaf and we hear how Harṣa's lip was smeared with betel and vermilion.[1] In the case of the affluent, the betel leaves and other ingredients, necessary to be eaten along with the leaf, were carried in caskets by a special servant called the bearer of the betel-casket (*Paṭaladhāraḥ*),[2] who followed his mistress with this casket. Owing to this practice of betel-leaf chewing, the teeth must have been discoloured and no wonder Yüan Chwāng remarks how the people stained their teeth red or black.[3]

After all this elaborate completion of the toilet, in order to see what was the result the lady or the dilettante must have gazed into a mirror, which was one of the most important of the toilet requisites. Kālidāsa sometimes describes how a lady with a mirror (*darpaṇa*) in her hand decorated her face, her rich plaits of hair and red lips.[4] These mirrors were restored to their natural clearness by blowing over them with the mouth after which moisture was removed.[5] It is possible that the mirror in the Gupta age was made of metal especially of brass, copper or gold.[6] The recently discovered archaeological finds at Mohenjo Daro, Egypt and Mesopotamia and elsewhere reveal how mirrors in ancient times were made either of copper or brass.[7] It is therefore not strange to find that such a practice should have survived to the Gupta age like so many other customs.

We may now visualize how a man made up, even as ladies did, his own toilet, the details of which have fortunately been left for us by Vātsyāyana in his picture of a Nāgarikā's toilet in his day. The Nāgarika at first seems to have perfumed his limbs with the sandal-wood paste made up of sweet-smelling substances called *anulēpana* (*accīkṛtaṃ candanamanyadvānulepanaṃ*). Then he scented his clothes in a sweet-smelling smoke of *aguru* and wore a garland of flowers either on his head or around his neck. Then he used other perfumes (*saugandhikaḥ*) and a box of scents (*saugandhaputikaḥ*) was kept ready for his use. Then he applied collyrium, made of several substances, to his eyes and to his lips. After applying the *alaktaka*

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 204.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 263, text, p. 33, *Cf. Haḍapa*, Wilson, *Glossary*, p. 193.

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 151; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 76.

[4] *Ṛtu.*, IV, 13, pp. 53-54: *kācitdvibhūṣayati darpaṇasaktahastā:*

[5] *Raghu.*, VII, 69, p. 157.

[6] *Ibid.*, XIV, 26, p. 292.

[7] *Cf.* Marshall, *Mohenjo Daro and the Indus Civilisation*, II, p. 459, also see in this connection Gopinath Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, I, Pt. I, p. 12, wherein he refers to metal-mirrors made at Aramila in Travancore State.

dye over which he rubbed some wax to make it fast, he gazed at himself in a mirror (*dṛṣṭvā darśe mukhaṃ*). After this he chewed some betel-leaves in order to sweeten his mouth (*gṛhītva mukhavāsa tāṁbūlaḥ*) and then proceeded to perform his duties. Finally he had a shave and then went to his bath during which he used a soap-like substance producing foam (*phēṇaka*).[1] This picture of a dilettante at his toilet may well be compared with the painting of a fashionable lady at her toilet which has already been described. It is interesting to note how fashions in toilet appealed to both men and women with equal enthusiasm.

At Ajanta some details regarding the mirror used by the women of this age can be ascertained. It was probably oval in shape with a flat surface and a handle to serve as a clasp behind it. The mirror must have had a shining surface and must have been comparatively light in weight, for we see a lady holding a looking-glass in her left hand with only her thumb and the first finger.[2] In another painting below the two vessels of toilet requisites, which exactly resemble those carried in the tray referred to already, is hung what is most probably a mirror. All these appear in the sleeping-room of a queen with her attendants.[3]

When this elaborate operation of the toilet was going on especially among the wealthy, it is natural that they must have had some attendants to assist them. In Gupta times when the toilet was in progress, valets employed for the purpose of assistance were called *prasādhakāḥ*,[4] who, as their designation suggests, helped the gentlemen while the ladies were attended to by their assistants styled as the *prasādhikāḥ*.[5] This does not necessarily mean that men were not employed in helping women at their toilet. Hunchbacks (*vāmanāḥ*) served amongst queens in their private apartments, carrying boxes marked with seals of red lac.[6] These deformed people must also have acted as guardians of the women's apartments, for we are told that they were furnished with conches (*jalaja*), swords (*asi*), maces (*gadāḥ*), bows (*śārṅga*) and quoits (*cakrāḥ*).[7]

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[1] Vātsyāyana, *Kāmasūtra*, IV, 7-8, p. 40: *Vedikā ca | taira rūpriśeṣamanulēpanaṃ mālyaṃ śikhtakaraṇḍakaṃ saugaṇdhikaputikā mātuluṅgatvacastāṁbūlāni ca syuḥ.* Also see D. L. Goswami's Benares ed. 1912, vs. 5-6, pp. 120-21.

[2] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 55; Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 162.

[3] *Ibid.*, 48.

[4] *Raghu.*, XVII, 22, p. 350.

[5] *Ibid.*, VII. 7, p. 142; *Kum.*, VII, 20. p. 130.

[6] *Māl.*, Act V, p. 89.

[7] *Raghu.*, X, 60, p. 220: *jalaj āsigadā-śārṅga-cakra-lāñchitamūrtibhiḥ.*

The painter at Ajanta did not forget to portray the attendants of the lady at her toilet. To her left stands a woman holding a tray containing the sandle-paste and lac-dye vessels and probably some flowers, while to her right is another girl fly-flap (chowrie) bearer, with a chowrie in her right hand. To complete the picture and unconsciously as though in support of earlier and later writers like Kālidāsa and Bāṇa, the dwarf has not also been forgotten. In fact, in front of the lady waits the strange female dwarf, carrying what is probably a bag or a casket, the contents of which cannot be made out.[1] In another painting, besides other servants around a prince and the princess, a dwarf is carrying to his master a spittoon.[2] In another picture a woman dwarf, clearly portrayed, is carrying a bottle and a child stares at her.[3]

Such an attendance was the rule of the day during the reign of Harṣavardhana of Kanauj. The various types of servants who made up the entourage of royal ladies can sometimes be discovered from the works of Bāṇa. He relates how round Harṣa's sister Rājyaśri in the Vindhyan jungles were 'bewildered eunuchs, hunchbacks, dwarfs, deafs, barbarians and all the other mis-shapen guards of the gynaeceum.'[4] In the palace, however, besides portresses (*prattihārī*) bearing golden staves, chamberlains carrying unguents, cosmetics, flowers, betel leaves and waving chowries, there were hunchbacks, barbarians, deafmen, eunuchs, dwarfs and mutes.[5] The real duties of these unfortunate people can sometimes be known. Queen Yaśōvati, for example, "washed her face with water poured from a silver flamingo-mouthed vessel tilted by a hunchbacked girl; wiped her hands on a white cloth held by mutes."[6]

4. Headgears

After doing the hair and finishing the toilet, some headgear appears to have been worn in the Gupta age. Fa Hien, referring to caps worn by kings in Mathurā, states that whenever they made offerings to a community of monks, they doffed off their royal caps.[7] What exactly Fa Hien meant by caps it is difficult to define,

[1] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 55.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 85.

[4] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 242, text, p. 242: *vikalamūkakubjavāmanabadhirabarbarā viralīnā-balānāṃ cakravālena parivṛtāṃ.*

[5] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbari*, p. 122.

[6] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 156, text, p. 166.

[7] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

for it is possible that he might have alluded either to helmets or turbans, both of which were worn during this period. Kālidāsa relates how turbans (*veṣṭana*) adorned the head[1] and the same word is used also for a royal tiara.[2] At Ajanta royal personalities like kings and queens are adorned with crowns of several shapes and designs, inlaid with an almost infinite variety of gems and precious stones.[3] That such a practice was observed by Yüan Chwāng is clear from his words when he observes that garlands and tiaras with precious stones were the head-adornments of kings.[4] Bāṇa confirms the existence of this system of adorning the hair. In Harṣa's case Bāṇa remarks that "He was consecrated by the light of the pearls in his top-knot and the dark rays of the emeralds, as they crossed in their intermingling."[5] While the lesser people, as noticed already, wore turbans and helmets, which covered their ears, the kings put on crowns (*kirīṭa*), which are referred to, for instance, in the Alinā copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67.[6]

The women, as stated before, used the long cloth which they utilised also as a veil. But in some cases and probably at times, as the paintings at Ajanta disclose, they donned ornamented caps with broad borders and leaf designs.[7] Yüan Chwāng makes no such specific observation, differentiating between the caps worn by men and women. He obviously refers to the custom of wearing flower-chaplets when he says that "garlands were worn on the head."[8] But Bāṇa mentions the hair-nets (*jālikā*) which were obviously meant to keep the hair unruffled by the breeze. Describing the beauties of Sthāṇvīśvara, he states that "tribes of bees attracted by their breath are their beauteous veils, the duty of noble women, their hair-nets".[9] Although he does not explicitly mention that the women of Sthāṇvīśvara wore hair-nets (*jālikā*), he nevertheless apparently refers to a practice which must have prevailed in his day.

[1] *Raghu.*, VIII, 12, p. 161: *śirasā veṣṭanaśobhinā.*

[2] *Ibid.*, I, 42. p. 15: *rajōbhisturagōtkīrṇairaspṛṣṭālakavēṣṭanau.*

[3] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 54, 55, 60, 64, 65, 69, 71, 73, 75.

[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 151; Hiuen Tsiang. *op. cit.*, I. p. 76.

[5] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 178, l. 56.

[7] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 62.

[8] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 148; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 75.

[9] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 83, text p. 98. *niḥśvāsākṛṣṭa madhukarakulānyeva ramaṇiyaṃ mukhāvaraṇaṃ kulastri janācāro jālikā.*



(By courtesy of the Archæological Department, Hyderabad).

A Lady at her Toilet. Ajanta, Cave XVII.

IV. Ornaments—Types and Details

Ornaments were worn on the head, in the ears, round the neck, the forearms, wrists, fingers, the waist and ankles. Those worn on the head were styled as *cūḍāmaṇi*,[1] *muktajaṭa*,[2] and the *kirīṭa*.[3] The ear-rings went by the names of *karṇabhūṣaṇa*,[4] *karṇapūra*,[5] *kuṇḍala*,[6] and *maṇikuṇḍala*,[7] signifying different varieties. Necklaces worn on the neck were called *niṣkā*,[8] *muktāvali*,[9] *tārāhāra*,[10] *hāra*,[11] *hāraśekharā*[12] and *hārayaṣṭi*.[13] The armlets were christened as *aṅgada*,[14] and *keyūra*,[15] while the ornaments of the forearm were known as *valaya*.[16] The girdles had the names of *mēkhalā*,[17] *hemamekhalā*,[18] *kāñci*,[19] *kanakakiṅkiṇī*,[20] and *raśanā*,[21] denoting some types.

Sometimes in contemporary epigraphs some jewels are called by particular names. In the Bilsad stone pillar inscription of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A.D. 415-16, a staircase is compared to a pearl necklace of the kind called *kanberacchaṇḍa*.[22] Necklaces are styled as *hāra* in the Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, while a breast-jewel of the god Śārṅgin is named the *kaustubha*.[23] The Māliyā copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, refers to the 'jewels in the locks of hair on the tops of the heads of his enemies' and such a jewel is given the name of *cūḍāmaṇi* or *cūḍāratna*,[24] which is again referred

[1] *Vik.*, Act. IV, p. 122.
[2] *Megh.*, I, 46, p. 38; *Ragha.*, XVI. 18, p. 339.
[3] *Ragha.*, VI, 19. p. 123.
[4] *Ibid.*, 65. p. 135.
[5] *Ibid.*, VII, 27. p. 147.
[6] *Ibid.*, X. 51; p. 217. *Ṛtu.*, III, 19, p. 42.
[7] *Ṛtu.*, II, 19, p. 26.
[8] *Kum.*, II, 49, p. 37.
[9] *Ragha.*, XIII, 48, p. 279.
[10] *Ibid.*, V, 52, p. 109.
[11] *Ibid.*, 70, p. 115.
[12] *Ṛtu.*, I, 6, p. 4.
[13] *Ibid.*, I, 8; II, 25. pp. 5, 13.
[14] *Ragha.*, VI, 73, p. 107.
[15] *Ibid.*, VI, 68, p. 136.
[16] *Megh.*, I, 60, p. 47.
[17] *Ṛtu.*, VI, 3, p. 67.
[18] *Ibid.*, I, 6, p. 4.
[19] *Ragha.*, VI, 43, p. 129.
[20] *Ibid.*, XIII, 33, p. 276.
[21] *Ibid.*, VII, 10, p. 143.
[22] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III (10), p. 45.
[23] *Ibid.*, (18), p. 83; for *hāra*, see (42), p. 203.
[24] *Ibid.*, (38), p. 168. text, p. 165, ll. 3, p. 166; l. 11.

to in the Alinā copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67.[1] Mention also is made of the pearl ornaments (*mauktik-ālaṅkāra*) in the ears of Dhruvasena IV, while[2] the bracelets on the forearm of Dhruvasena III are called *kaṭaka*.[3]

In the paintings of the Ajanta caves various types of ornaments can be observed. At the parting of the hair, in front, an ornamented jewel can be noticed in the case of most women, its size and shape not being necessarily the same.[4] In fact, several designs and shapes of this jewel can be discovered at Ajanta, especially in caves XVI and XVII.[5] Often the knot of hair, particularly among women, tied behind was also ornamented, not only with wreaths of flowers, but also with jewels.[6]

Next to this frontal ornament came the necklaces of which there appear to have been several kinds. Generally one was worn but at times the first one was of large gold-beads, while the next one was of strings which varied from one to four. Between these two was worn another necklace with complicated designs.[7] Such necklaces were used by women as well as men.[8] Among women, the third necklace with several strings was at times so long that it descended down to the breasts.[9]

On the forearms broad and ornamented *valayas* were worn, while on the wrists we find single as well as double wristlets.[10] Though generally the wristlets were not as broad as those worn on the forearm, sometimes they were as broad if not broader.[11] At times the wrist was adorned with as many as six bangles with two extra larger ones in the beginning and in the end.[12]

The waist was adorned with a girdle.[13] It was usually broad with four strands or one solid belt[14] and was worn both by men and women.[15]

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), p. 173, also see p. 176.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 175, p. 183, *l.* 29.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 184, p. 176, *l.* 38.
[4] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 47.
[5] *Ibid.*, 55, 58, 60, 62.
[6] *Ibid.*, 48.
[7] *Ibid.*, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52.
[8] *Ibid.*, 54.
[9] *Ibid.*, 55, 58.
[10] *Ibid.*, 47, 48, 50, 51.
[11] *Ibid.*, 55.
[12] *Ibid.*, 47, 48, 55.
[13] *Ibid.*, 52.
[14] *Ibid.*, 65.
[15] *Ibid.*, 45, 55.

On the ankles people generally put on anklets, which were not extremely narrow, but they had various shapes and designs.[1]

The practice of wearing ornaments continued to the seventh century. Yüan Chwāng states that "The dress and ornaments of the kings and grandees are very extraordinary. Garlands and tiaras with precious stones are their head adornments; and their bodies are adorned with rings, bracelets, and necklaces. Wealthy mercantile people have only bracelets. They bore their ears... such are they in outward appearance."[2]

That most of these ornaments were current during the reign of Harṣavardhana can be proved by the evidence of Bāṇa. He refers in general to several ornaments worn by women like Mālatī. The parting of her hair was crowned with a frontal jewel (*jūṭikābaṅdha*); above her breast was worn a necklace with jewelled pendants (*mālika*) set on each of her forearms was a golden bracelet having an emerald crocodile-shaped signet (*kaṭaka makaravēdika*);[3] on her ears were pendant ear-ornaments (*bālikā*) of which on the right ear the pendant resembled a string of leaves containing a string of *kētakī* flowers;[4] about her neck was a collar of pearls (*hāra*); around her waist clung a girdle (*raśanā mekhalā*)[5]; and round her ankles were tinkling anklets (*nūpura*).[6]

Most of these jewels appear to have been used also by men. Bhaṇḍi, when he was eight years of age, had ear rings (*kuṇḍala*) of sapphire and pearl, and diamond bracelets (*valaya*) round his forearms,[7] while Harṣa's top-knot was adorned with a jewel inlaid with pearls.[8] The chieftains who came to visit Harṣa wore anklets (*pādabaṅdhāḥ*) inset with precious stones, ear-ornaments (*karṇapūraka*) and ear-rings (*karṇōtpala*), budding with gold-filigree work.[9] Some chiefs at Ujjainī had bracelets.[10] Even foresters like Vyāghrakētu had ear-rings of glass (*maṇikarṇika*)[11] fastened in his ear, and a tin armlet (*valaya*), decorated with white *gōdaṅta* beads, on his forearm.[12]

[1] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, 47.
[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I p. 151; Hiuen Tsiang. *op. cit.*, I p. 76.
[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 260-61.
[4] *Ibid.*, text, p. 32. *dakṣiṇa karṇavataṅsitayā ketakigarbhapalāśalekhayā.*
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 261-62, text, pp. 21-24.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 116-17, text, p. 135.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 61, text, p. 96.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 202, text, pp. 206-7.
[9] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 174.
[10] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 231.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 231, text, p. 232.

Bāṇa, generalising about the wild tribes, records that the snake's hood was the ornament of the Śabaras.[1]

Most of the names of the jewels in Bāṇa's days do not, as a rule, have the same names as of those worn in the times of Kālidāsa, for several reasons. But the practice of decorating the human frame literally from head to foot continued as before.

Bāṇa also gives specific names of some ornaments of his day. The girdle which queen Yaśōvatī wore was called *tribali* as it evidently had three strings.[2] Harṣa presented the ambassador from the king of Assam with a waist-band named *parivēṣa*, whereof one part showed clusters of clear pearls and an ear-ornament called *taraṅgaka*, inset with a precious ruby.[3]

It cannot be said that footwear was unknown during the Gupta age. Since early times except probably the rich, most people went about their ways with bare feet.[4] Fa Hien rarely refers to any shoes or sandals, but Kālīdāsa does mention them as *pāduka* or wooden sandals.[5] At Ajanta too there are few paintings which show anything worn on the feet either by men or women among the rich or the poor. But this does not mean that nothing was worn by the people of this period to protect their feet. Yüan Chwāng, for instance, observes how "Most of the people go barefoot and shoes are rare."[6] Bāṇa too alludes to wooden sandals called *pāḍukas* worn by ascetics like Bhairavācārya.[7]

V. Architecture

1. Introduction

There came into existence, during the sovereignty of the Guptas, a school of architecture which may be definitely styled as Gupta. Its early (A. D. 319-550) and representative examples can be seen at Bhūmarā, about six miles from Unchhera railway station on the Itarsi-Allahabad section of the G. I. P. Railway and at Nachnā Kūthara in the Ajaygadh State, about ten miles from Bhūmarā. Its later examples (A. D. 551-605) can be seen at Deoghad in Jhansi district, while types of post-Gupta A.D. 606-700) architecture can be

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 31.
[2] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 215.
[4] *Cf.* Mc'Crindle, *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, p. 57.
[5] *Raghu.*, xii, 17, p. 250: *yayāce pāduke paścāt kartuṃ rājyādhi devate.*
[6] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 151; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 76.
[7] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 86, text, p. 102.

observed at Śankargadh in Nagod State, at Nachnā Kūthara, and at Muṇḍēśvarī, near Bhabua in the Arrah or Shāhabad district of Bihar and Orissa.[1]

The early Gupta temples have certain definite characteristics, which can be observed from their extant examples. The entire Śiva temple at Bhūmarā is 35′ square and in front of it is a porch (*maṇḍapa*) measuring 29′ 10″ by 13′; and before this on either side were two smaller shrines measuring 8′ 2″ by 5′ 8″. Externally the *garbhagṛha* is 15′ 22″ square[2] and between this and the larger masonry chamber ran the path of circumambulation (*pradakṣiṇā*). The *maṇḍapa* in front was smaller than this chamber and there was only one entrance to the *garbhagṛha*.

The door of the shrine was elaborately carved while the walls were quite plain. The door consists of two carved jambs, a carved lintel and a plain sill. The carving on the jambs shows the Gaṅgā and Yamunā motif: they stand on their *vāhana* the *makara* while near them are attendants holding trays. "The upper portion of the jamb on the right over the head of the Ganges", described R. D. Banerji, "is divided into three separate vertical bands of carving; that on the extreme right consists of conventional lotus buds in a superimposed row, each issuing out of the one below it. This band is continued overhead on the lintel. The second or central band consists of four superimposed niches each containing a human figure. The lowermost figure is that of a male, the second that of a female, while the third and fourth also contain male figures. The jamb on the third and fourth is exactly similar to that on the right though here we find Yamunā on her *vāhana* the tortoise, with a female attendant in front of her and two other circular objects behind."[3] The lintel crowning these two jambs is equally ornate and is a little longer than the breadth of the door. At the extreme ends of this lintel, next to the jambs, are two figures of a man and woman standing. In the centre of this lintel is a *caitya*-window ornamentation in which something is missing, but immediately below it is a fine bust of Śiva. The third eye is visible on his matted head and he is adorned with elaborately designed necklaces.

Over the shrine, wrought in and out of plain ashlar, came the roof which is sloping and flat like the roofs of the Jaina *basadis* of

[1] *Cf.* Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, pp. 135-36.

[2] *M. A. S. I.*, no. 16, 1924, p. 3.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 4. also *cf.* Banerji, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-44; also see pl. III.

the sixteenth century at Mūḍabidri and Barakūr in Tuḷuva (mod. South Kanara district). But Banerji observed that it was not possible to ascertain how this type of roof came to be copied in the 6th century A. D. at Bādāmi.[1] It is possible that ideas of architectural design and ornamentation passed on from the Guptas into the country of the early Cāḷukyas, owing to historical contacts between the two dynasties. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that the early Kosalas were the feudatories of the Guptas as the names of Gōparāja and Tīvaradeva bear out.[2] But there was no such political contact between the Guptas early or late with either the Āḷupas or the emperors of Vijayanagara. The ruins of early Āḷūpa temples or those of the Jaina *basadis* in Tuḷuva reveal the flat roof of the Gupta temples purely as a result of a natural cause like excessive rain-fall, which is common both to the Gangetic valley as well as to the west coast. To withstand such a downpour the plain slab-sloping roof was probably the only natural and best shelter.

That this typical Gupta roof had a particular name can be made out from contemporary inscriptions. The Gaḍhwa stone inscription of the reign of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 467-68, refers to a part of a temple in the expression "*vaḍabhīṃ-kārayayitvā*" which has been interpreted to mean as "having caused (a temple having) a flat-roof to be made."[3] The term *vaḍabhī* is considered the equivalent of *valabhī* which was interpreted by Fleet to stand for a roof as it appears in the Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74.[4] It is interesting to know that Kālidāsa also refers to this technical term when he says:

"*tām-kasyāṇcid-bhavanavalabhau-suptapārāvatāyāṃ*

nītvā-rātriṃ-ciravilasanāt-khinnavidyut kalatraḥ"[5]

Mallinātha, the commentator, in explaining this term remarks that it means a covering of the upper portion of the house: "*gṛhācchādan = āparibhāgaityarthaḥ*" for *ācchādana* according to Halāyudha is the equivalent of a roof when he explains it thus: "*acchādanaṃ-syadavalbhī - gṛhāṇāṃ.*"[6] Therefore it may be concluded that the technical term *vaḍabhī* or *valabhī* means the sloping roof of the upper

[1] Banerji, *op. cit.*, pl. III (*b*).
[2] *Cf.* Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (20) p. 93; (81), p. 296.
[3] *Ibid.*, (66), p. 268.
[4] *Ibid.*, (18), p. 81, ll. 6-7: *ānyany ābhāṅti dīrggha-valabhi ni sa-vēdikāni.*
[5] *Megh.*, I, 38, p. 32.
[6] *Ibid.*

storey in a Gupta temple. But here it must be remembered that this term in the Mandasor inscription, already referred to, is used not in connection with temples but with reference to houses, the roofs of some of which were evidently covered with terraces. This epigraph clearly relates that in Daśapura the houses were "very white and extremely lofty..... And other long buildings on the roofs of the houses with arbours (in them) are beautiful,"[1] which also suggests that some of the houses must have had terraces.

2. The Śikhara: its origin and development

Over this roof the extant early shrines of the Guptas at Bhumara and at Nachnā Kūthara show no *śikhara* over the sanctum and it has therefore been remarked that "the original of the *śikhara* or spire in Indian temple architecture is much later than the period of domination of the early Gupta Emperors in Northern India."[2] Few can hardly agree with this view for, though the Gupta temple perhaps in the fourth century did not have a *śikhara*, it is certain that in the fifth century the Gupta temple was crowned with one. This can be asserted with some confidence because the Mandasor inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, relates how in Daśapura "in the course of a long time, under other kings, part of this temple (of the Sun) fell into disrepair; so now... the whole of this most noble house of the Sun has been repaired by the munificent corporation;...(this temple) which is very lofty (and) pure; *which touches the sky, as it were, with (its) charming spires (śikharaiḥ).*"[3] This Sun-temple was, however, completed in A. D. 437-38[4] and was repaired nearly thirty-six years later. Therefore it may be stated that the year A. D. 473-74 marks, as far as extant epigraphic evidence goes, the first year of the appearance of the *śikhara* in Gupta architecture.

This is because most probably the *śikhara* was not a part of the Gupta temple earlier, at least according to epigraphic evidence. The Bilsad stone pillar inscription of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 615-16, records how in the temple of Svāmi Mahāsena one Dhruvaśarman made a gateway (*pratōlī*) "resembling in form the top part of a temple (*prāsāda*)."[5] Again the Gangdhār stone inscription of

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 85, text, p. 81.

[2] Banerji, *op. cit.*, p. 137; also see Codrington, *Ancient India*, p. 61.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 87, text, p. 83. (Italics mine): *aty-unnataṃ=avadātaṃ nabhaḥ spṛśanniva manōharaiḥ śikharaiḥ, Cf. Ibid. Vistirṇṇa-tuṅga śikharaṃ śikhariprakāśaṃ*

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 87.

Ibid., (10), p. 45, text, p. 44: *prāsāda agra.*

Viśvavarman, dated A. D. 423-24 expired or 424-25 current, tells us that the illustrious Mayūrakṣaka, built a shrine of Viṣṇu "resembling the lofty peak (*śikhara*) of the mountain Kailāsa."[1] One more allusion to the top part of a temple is in the Junāgaḍh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 457-58, which records how the governor, Cakrapālita, caused to be built two temples for god Cakrabhṛt and another on a hillock "obstructing the path of birds."[2] None of these references to the top part of a temple style it by the name of a *śikhara* but they evidently point to the upper chamber (*prāsāda*), which only could have all the attributes given to it in the inscriptions. The word *śikhara* is used in the Gangdhār inscription not with reference to a temple but with reference to the mountain Kailāsa.

The development of the *śikhara* may now be determined from the extant ruins. The upper chamber (*prāsāda*) can be seen in the Pārvati temple but not in the Śiva temple at Nachnā Kūthara, with two *caitya*-like windows, while the windows of the *garbhagṛha* are square and covered with *jāḷis* or window-screens.[3] Therefore the Śiva temple here may be declared to have been earlier than the shrine of Pārvati and should probably be assigned to the fourth century A. D. as it has only the front (*mukha*) *maṇḍapa*, the sanctum (*garbhagṛha*) the *pradakṣiṇā* and a slab-sloping roof over it. Over this roof of the shrine was superimposed the upper chamber (*prāsāda*) evidently in A. D. 415-16 at least according to the Bilsad stone pillar inscription of Kumāra Gupta I, and this development may be said to mark the second stage in the development of the Gupta *śikhara*. The third stage was a further development of this upper chamber into the beginnings of the *śikhara*, which can be seen in the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogadh, Jhansi district. This temple, which Cunningham describes in great detail,[4] shows what are obviously the remnants of a *śikhara* having a slight curvature, resembling the earliest medieval temples of Orissa.[5] Although this temple does not show it in its present state, its *śikhara* was probably erected, in the early stages, on the upper chamber (*prāsāda*),[6] while later on it must have been

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (14), p. 78, text, p. 70: *Kailāsa-tuṅga-śikhara-ppratimasya.*

[2] *Ibid.*, (14), p. 65, text, p. 61: *vihaṅga-mārgaṃ vibhrājate.*

[3] *A. S. R. W. I.*, 1920, pl. XVII, also p. 61

[4] Cunningham, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-08.

[5] *Cf.* Ganguli, *Orissa and Her Remains*, pl. XV-A; also see the Bhāskareśvara temple at Bhuvaneśvara, R. D. Banerji, *History of Orissa*, II, p. 360; *A. S. R. W. I.*, 1920, pl. XVII-left.

[6] *Ibid.*

raised directly over the *garbhagṛha* itself. Such a practice can be seen, for example, in the Later Gupta temple of Siva at Nachnā-Kūthara, which shows a tall *śikhara* with its sides slightly bulging outside.

This convex type of *śikhara* deserves further study. It was not only convex but all its sides were split into three divisions. Each side in the centre had a space corresponding to what appears the area of the *garbhagṛha*, while the next division must have conformed to the space of the *pradakṣiṇā* and the third elongation seems to have covered the outer wall of the shrine itself. These apparent divisions, which are suggested as corresponding to the respective spaces on the ground-plan of the temple, are purely tentative and in actual practice might have been smaller or larger as it suited the convenience or fancy of the craftsmen. The walls of the temple, however, were plain.

It would be interesting to know how such a *śikhara* was raised. The Gupta type of temple architecture, which was adopted later on in Orissa, appears to have been generally characterised as Nāgara[1] and especially the similarity between the Later Gupta *śikhara* and that seen in the Orissan temple of Paraśurāmēśvara at Bhuvanēśvara, which cannot be earlier than the 8th century,[2] is worth attention, although it must be admitted that the *śikhara* of the latter is certainly more elaborate than that of the former. The *śikhara* of another Orissan temple called the Liṅgarāja or Kṛttivāsa, claimed to be the most stupendous structure in Orissa, reveals that such a frame-work was built along a series of upper chambers, one upon the other, over the central shrine. It has, however, been definitely concluded that the *śikhara* of the Lingaraja temple is "a hollow pyramid and its interior consists of a number of super-imposed chambers, gradually decreasing in size like those of the great temples at Bodha Gaya and Konch, near Tikari in the Gaya district of Bihar."[3] A steep stair-case was built through the sides of the *śikhara* leading into the upper chamber, which has a window, and possibly into other chambers as well. These chambers were built one over the other evidently to reduce the weight of the *śikhara* which was further supported "by the construction of great trabeate arches in the sides just over the top wall of the *vimāna*," the masonry being strongly bounded and having no core of rubble.[4]

[1] *Cf. M. E. R.*, 1915, pp. 49, 90.

[2] Banerji, *op. cit.*, II, p. 340, pl. opp. p. 344.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 360.

[4] *Ibid.*, For a 10th century imitation of this type of *śikhara* see *A. S. I. R.*, 1913-14, part II, pl. XXII, opp. p. 36.

We may now ascertain some features of Gupta *śikhara* structure. It has been seen that the Pārvati temple at Nachnā Kūthara has this upper chamber but it is not known whether or not the Later Gupta temple of Śiva there, which has a full fledged *śikhara*, contained such a chamber.[1] Moreover it has not been ascertained whether or not the *śikhara* over this temple had been erected round a rung of such upper chambers diminishing in size towards the top, but most probably the Orissan craftsmen imitated the methods of the Later Gupta temple architects in this direction.

If a similar analogy may be applied, the shape of the top of the *śikhara* of the Gupta temple may also be hazarded, for the crest of *śikhara* of the Śiva temple at Nachnā Kūthara has unfortunately fallen away.[2] The top of the *śikhara* of the Parasurāmeśvara temple at Bhuvaneśvara in Orissa[3] shows first, a flat surface through which, in the centre, rises a short, cylindrical projection (*kalaśa*) on which is placed a wheel of blue chlorite marked with wedges. It is possible that the Gupta temple bore a similar *āmlaka*, though we have no means of proving it.

3. Features of Temple Architecture

Among the extant Gupta temples may be mentioned the rock caves at Udayagiri, Bhopal State, and at Sāñci, the pillared porticos in the Mukundwāra Pass, Kotah State, the shrine at Tigowa, Jubbulpore district, the Narasiṁha and similar temples at Erān, North-east of Bhilsa, the temple no. 17 at Sāñci, the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā, Nagod State, the Muṇḍeśvari temple at Bhabua, Shahbad district, the Pārvati and Śiva temples at Nachnā Kūthara, Ajaigadh State, and the finest of all, the Śiva shrine at Deogaḍh, Jhansi district. The attractive monoliths at Erān and at Delhi must also not be forgotten.

The whole structure of the *śikhara* and the *prāsāda* was supported by the walls and the pillars of the shrine. The pillars in the Gupta temple are either square or round in shape. The temples no. 17 at Sāñci[4] or at Tigowa[5] display pillars which are one-fourths square, while above this they become ornate in a variety of ways. They are crowned with elaborate corbels, having the *caitya*-window

[1] *A. S. W. I.*, 1920, pl. XVII, p. 61.
[2] *Ibid.*, pl. XVII, p. 61, left.
[3] Banerji, *op. cit.*, II, opp. p. 344.
[4] Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.* pl. XXXVI, (151).
[5] Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, pl. VI.

motif over which are two lions sitting back to back. This corbel flowered into the charming bowl-shaped "vase and flower" capital (*pūrṇa kalaśa*) adorned with its circular garland of flowers looped half way from its top. This type of capital may be said to be the contribution of Gupta temple architecture to Indian art and it may be styled as one of the most charming designs throughout the range of Indian temple architecture. Such a temple could not certainly have been an early example of Gupta architecture, owing to the development of the pillars and the corbels. The square pillar seen in the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā reveals a further elaboration of style and design. Some of these pillars are plainly square, with carvings at the top and at the bottom. At the top is a design of looped garlands hanging from a variety of rosettes, while at the bottom is a vase (*kuṁbha*), either plain or ornamented, with flowers descending from it on both sides.[1] The square pillar was also profusely ornamented and divided into three portions. The top was a plain square which was probably a rest for the flowery corbel: below it came the *kuṁbha* with a display of lotus petals and foliage overflowing on the right and left. And below this *kuṁbha* three-fourths of the space is made dodecagonal while the rest is octagonal, with lotus designs on each of the four faces. Below this each portion of the square pillar, transformed into a rectangle, is filled with an elaborate *kīrtimukha*. The space below this is made a plain hexagonal, while the bottom is once more divided into two parts: the upper half is ornamented with a semi-circular medallion and the lower half with a cluster of arabesque foliage.[2] The excavations of the Daśāvatāra temple reveal large pillars with the typical Gupta emblems and designs of the half and three-quarters medallions on the shaft and foliated vases at the top or at the bottom.[3] As in the pillars of the temple at Tigowa, the pillars in the Later Gupta temple of Muṇḍeśvari, Bhabua Sub-division, Shāhbād district, the corbels reveal the *caitya*-window on them, while the *kuṁbha* can be seen at the top and the *kīrtimukha* at the bottom, as in the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogaḍh.[4]

The ground-work of the Gupta temple appears to have had three mouldings. In the earliest Gupta temples at Sāñcī, in the Bhopal State, the lowest of these mouldings, on which the whole temple was raised, is the base (*pāda*), plain and square. Above this rose a

[1] *M. A. S. I.*, no. 16, pl. V. (*a*)
[2] *Ibid.*, pl. V, (*b*)
[3] Banerji, The Age of *The Imperial Guptas*, p. 147.
[4] *Ibid.*, pl. VII.

semicircular astragal, projecting from a vertical design, probably intended to represent the lotus, over which the whole temple was to stand. Over this lotus (*padma*) is another moulding more or less similar to the base but a little smaller in proportion.[1] A little linear elaboration of these mouldings, which can be observed in the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā,[2] is only a distinct development of the plain and early style at Sāñci. A further development of these mouldings can be seen in the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogaḍh Hill in the Jhānsi district.[3] Later on in the temple of Muṇḍēśvarī in the Shāhbad district, which was built in A. D. 635-36, decoration became manifest just above the top-most of these three mouldings in the shape of semi-circualr garlands, each of which has in the centre three flowers, while between two of such garlands descends a series of flowers.[4]

The Śiva temple at Deogadh is a little artistic masterpiece. Its base is eighteen feet in width, it is built on a square terrace five feet in height, and its chief peculiarity is that it has four porticos "one projecting from each side of the central structure, each with a flat roof supported on a row of four pillars, with the customary interculmination." Its most attractive feature is the ornamentation of its door on which the art of sculpture seems to have been dowered with a lavish yet most skilful hand. The door has four jambs, on each side of which sculpture is portrayed with remarkable exuberance. The outermost jambs are crowned at the top with the figures of two *yakṣiṇis*, while all the lower portions of these jambs reveal feminine musicians with musical instruments in their hands.[5] It may be said that this Śiva temple at Deogaḍh is to the Gupta age what the Viṭṭalaswāmi shrine was to the empire of Vijayanagara—the finest flower of the age's artistic excellence. It is therefore not strange that Mr Percy Brown has remarked that "few monuments can show such a high level of workmanship, combined with a ripeness and rich refinement in its sculptural effect as the Gupta temple at Deogarh."[6]

Around the main shrine, as in the case of the Daśāvatāra temple which has been assigned to A. D. 575,[7] were built smaller shrines

Coomaraswamy, *A History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, pl. XXXVI (151)
M. A. S. I., no. 16. pls. I (*b*), II, (*a* and *b*).
Cunningham, *op. cit.*, X, pl. XXXV ; Banerji, *op. cit.*, pl. VII.
Banerji, *op. cit.*, pl. IX.
Brown, *Indian Architecture*, (*Buddhist and Hindu*), pl. XXXV, fig. 2. (1942)
Ibid., p. 58.
Ibid., p. 147.

the plinth levels of which are much lower than the larger or the main temple. These temples, on the strength of the style of their sculptures, have been considered to be of later date.[1] It may here be remarked that this practice of building smaller shrines round the central temple must have commenced about the fifth century for the Mandasor stone inscription, of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, dated A. D. 473-74, refer to such a group of temples.[2] Such a tradition, it may be added, came into existence during the sovereignty of the Yādavas (Seuṇās) of Devagiri, from whom in all likelihood it was adopted by the Hoysalas in southern India.[3]

4. The Influences of Gupta Architecture

The Gupta temples of the 5th and 6th centuries may now be compared with the early Cāḷukyan shrines of the 7th century. Such a comparison reveals many common characteristics. Let us take for example, the temple of Mēguti at Aihoḷe built in A. D. 634 during the reign of the famous Pulikesin II. It has a *mukhamaṇḍapa*, the *garbhagṛha*, the *pradakṣiṇa*, enclosing which are walls perforated with stone-screen windows. The Lāḍ Khān temple, supposed to be the oldest shrine at Aihoḷe and strongly "derived from wooden forms," has an upper shrine over the *garbhagṛha* and its roof is covered with flat slabs and it has no *śikhara*. This upper chamber can also be seen in the Jaina temple at Paṭṭaḍakal.[4] The Gaṅgā and Yamunā motif, so typically a Gupta emblem, is also present in the Lāḍ Khan temple.[5] But it is only in the Durgā temple (A. D. 696-733) that the *śikhara*, so reminiscent of the Pārvati temple at Nachnā Kūthara, appears as though to complete all the characteristics of Gupta architecture. This *śikhara* has also three divisions in each side as in the Gupta shrines, the only difference being that the *śikhara* of the Durga temple at Aihoḷe is divided into horizontal tiers, on every side of which was impressed the *caitya*-window design enclosing an image. Such a *śikhara* resembles its Kadaṁba prototype which can be seen at Banavāsi. On every side of this Cāḷukyan *śikhara*, between two tiers along all the four corners upwards, appear carved circular panels. This *śikhara* is of exactly the same shape as that of the Gupta temple at Nachnā Kūthara and the Paraśurāmeśvara temple at Bhuvaneśvara. Even the top of such temples was

[1] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 147; also see Codrington, *Ancient India*, pp. 58-62.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.* (17), p. 78.
[3] Narasimachar, *The Somnāthpura Temple at Haḷebiḍ*, frontispiece.
[4] Cousens, *Cāḷukyan Architecture*, pl. LI.
Ibid., pl. VII.

almost the same. What lay on the top of the Durga (fort) temple as its "frontispiece" (*Kalaśa*) cannot be determined as it is missing, but such a crown is present in the Huchchimalli Guḍi temple to the south of Aihoḷe, as a circular carved panel,[1] on the top of which was probably the image of Śiva as Naṭeśvara.[2] It is interesting to note that this circular panel is exactly similar to the round structure seen on the top of the Paraśurāmeśvara temple at Bhuvaneśvara in Orissa.[3]

5. Monoliths

We may now turn to the monoliths which are outstanding examples of Gupta craftsmanship and architectural skill. The first of these is the Viṣṇu pillar at Eran, which is dated A. D. 484-85, and must have been constructed during the reign of Budha Gupta. It is forty-four feet in height, being a faceted shaft crowned with a typical Gupta lion abacus. It appears to have been a votive pillar which was meant to support at its top a small image of Viṣṇu.[4] It irresistibly reminds us of its Aśōkan prototypes, whose massive grandeur it, of course, lacks and its architectural effect on the whole "is marred by the mean fluting and attenuated proportions of its bell capital."[5]

The other monolith, an iron pillar, now at Delhi, seems to have been originally at Mathura. It is smaller than the former Viṣṇu stone pillar, being only twenty-three feet and eight inches in height and weighs more than six tons. It was evidently constructed in the reign of Kumāra Gupta I as it bears the date of A. D. 415, and seems to have borne at its top an image of Garuḍa, Viṣṇu's *vāhana*, which, however, is now not traceable.[6] This structure has been architecturally divided into three parts: the first being the square abacus, the second below it being "a melon shaped member" which was the forerunner of the Later Gupta motif of the *pūrṇa-kalaśa*, and lastly the "campaniform captial, marking one of the last appearances of the Persipolitan attribution here, however, retaining the vigorous outline and rounded fluting of the original model."[7]

This iron pillar is unique from some points of view. The considerable technical skill which is essential to construct such a huge monolith presumes not only extraordinarily skilled technicians

[1] Cousens, *op. cit.*, pl. XXII, no. 24.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[3] Banerji, *History of Orissa*, pl. opp. 344.
[4] Cunningham, *A. S. R.*, X, p. 81.
[5] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
[6] *J. R. A. S.*, 1907, pp. 1-18.
[7] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

in very large iron foundries in the Gupta age but and as Mr Percy Brown has stated it is "a remarkable tribute to the genius and manipulative dexterity of the Indian iron-worker."[1] Though not in any particular way an extraordinary structure of architectural beauty it has been well characterised as "a landmark denoting the dividing line between the age of primitivism and the beginning of the early medieval era."[2]

It is worth noting here that just as the Gupta type of flat roof became current in the Jaina school of architecture in the 16th century in Tuḷuva, among the Jainas, the monoliths too became a feature of Jaina art during this period. This characteristic shows how particular motifs and designs in Indian architecture ran persistently through the fabric of Indian art through the centuries from one end of India to the other regardless of distance, time and political vicissitudes.

VI. Sculpture.

1. Iconography

These fine temples, which were erected in the Gupta dominions, enshrined some of the most beautiful examples of Gupta sculpture, which may, for the sake of convenience, be divided into Buddhist, Jaina and Hindu. These sculptures may be further subdivided into bronzes, stone images and bas-reliefs. The chief centres of Gupta sculpture have been claimed to be Mathura, Benares, and Pāṭna which were the sources of Scythian, Buddhist and Hindu influences.[3]

The early temple of Śiva at Bhūmarā reveals several Śaiva images. There is a huge Eka-Mukha linga 6′ 1′ high, the upper part of which is a plain cylinder with an image of Śiva on either side.[4] A fine image of Gaṇeśa, seated on a thick cushion, wearing the usual ornaments and a crown, having only one tusk and two long elephant ears, is unfortunately broken.[5] Torsos with halos have been discovered and though broken they reveal a fine sense of outline, delicacy of perception and mastery of figure.[6] These figures were probably placed in the porch in front of the *pradakṣiṇa* while the medallions filled up the *caitya*-windows panels along the cornices of the *maṇḍapa* of temples. These medallions are usually representations

[1] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 100.
[4] *M. A. S. I.*, no. 16, pl. XV, (c).
[5] *Ibid.*, (*a* and *b*).
[6] *Ibid.*, pl. XVI. (*a* and *b*)

of deities like Gaṇeśa, Brahma, Yama,[1] Kubera, Śiva, as Naṭeśvara and Kāritikēya, as simply riding on his bull[2] Sūrya, Mahiśāsuramardhini and Indra (?)[3].

Large carvings like these can be seen in the Śanakānika Cave no. II at Udayagiri near Bhilsā, which was excavated in A. D. 401. On either side of this cave are the door-keepers (*dvārapālas*) with axes on long shafts on which they rest, bending a little. Their workmanship displays an admirable knowledge of anatomical technique. On either side of these figures are images of Viṣṇu, standing, (*Vāsudeva Sthānakamūrti*) armed with a heavy ringed club and holding the sacred conch. Next to Viṣṇu on our right is a twelve-armed Mahiṣāsuramardhini.[4] These figures of Viṣṇu do not reveal the slightly elevated eye-brows which are present in the Ēka-mukha *lingas* found at Khōh and Bhūmarā.[5] All of these sculptures not being of the same age display different types of expression and development. The stiffness of the images in the Śanakānika cave, for instance, is also present in the carvings of Vīrasena's cave as both of them pertain to the reign of Candra Gupta II, while the Varāha image in the Varāha cave, built in the reign of Kumāra Gupta I, shows a charming grace, elasticity and poise, which are noticeable in the figures of the slender Pārvati and Nāga standing behind her.[6] It has been therefore suggested that in "plastic art" the zenith of excellence was reached" in the reign of Kumāra Gupta I[7] having already achieved a remarkable standard of workmanship in the celebrated reign of Candra Gupta II.

These images sometimes reveal a most admirable expression of the face. The naturalness, symmetry and serenity of the face found in the Ēka-mukha linga[8] from the ruined temple on the road from Khōh to Parasmania, Nagod State, Central India, have no possible rival among such icons of Gupta sculpture. The facial expression of the *gaṇa* in the Atariya Khera at Khoh is likewise extremely natural and human[9] and shows an admirable mastery of emotion,

[1] *M. A. S. I.*, no. 16, pl. XIII, (*a, b, c.*), see pp. 12-13.
[2] *Ibid.*, pl. XIII, (*a-d*).
[3] *Ibid.*, pl. XIV, (*a-c*).
[4] Codrington, *Ancient India*, pl. 29 A.
[5] Banerji, *op. cit.*, pl. XXVI (a), pl. XXIV.
[6] William Cöhn, *Indische Plastic*, Tafels, 22-23.
[7] Banerji, *The Age of the Imperial Guptas*, p. 175.
[8] *Ibid.*, pl. XXIV; *A. S. I. W. C.*, 19-20, pl. XXIX.
[9] *A. S. I. W. C.*, 1920, pl. XXX.

anatomy and grace. The faces of the various deities on the medallions of the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā are also natural.[1]

The rock-cut figures for instance in the cave no. 9, namely the "Amṛta Cave" at Udayagiri, display a vitality in construction which is no doubt reminiscent of the Besnagar craftmen's skill during the Sungas. The Pārvati temple at Nachnā Kūthara again shows at its sides some friezes the figures of which reveal an astonishing vigour of expression, a refreshing vitality of figure and a pulsating exuberance of youth.

A serenity of expression can be noticed in the plastic representation of Buddha as well. The image of Buddha discovered at Mankuwar in the Karchana *tāhsil*, Allahabad district, and dedicated in A. D. 448-49 (G. E. 129) in the reign of Kumāra Gupta I, discloses Buddha with a shaven head, the *abhayamudrā*, elongated ears, in the *padmāsana* and as seated on a pedestal. In front below it runs a frieze with two maned lions at either end of the pedestal and between these two beasts are two *dhyāni* Buddhas with the *Dharma Cakra* (Wheel of the Law) in the centre on the *yōni*.[2] As this figure strongly resembles the Kuṣāṇa Buddhist images of the first and second centuries A. D., it has been suggested that this Mankuwar image "is a typical example of a great conservative force in the Mathura school of sculpture even in the middle of the fifth century A. D."[3] This Mathura school of sculpture is claimed to have succumbed later on to the influences of the Benares school, with the result that the images of the Gupta period at the beginning of the fifth century, had especially the long tangential eye-brows, the conventional arrangement of the drapery without the lines indicating folds and the enlargement of the halo with the typical Gupta examples of arabesque foliage about it.[4] The chief cause of the rise of the Benares school is because, as Fa-Hien bears out, that city remained at this period a centre of Buddhist activity.[5] The material decline of Mathura and a change probably in the tastes of the people regarding style and workmanship, led to the rise of a new style of sculpture at Benares in the 5th century.

The influences of this new school spread as far as Nālandā and further in the east while they affected even Mathura in the west,

[1] *M. A. S. I.*, no. 16, pls.-XII-XIV.

[2] Banerji, *op. cit.*, pl. XXV (b).

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

[4] *Ibid., op. cit.*, pp. 164, 166,; also see Anderson, *Catalogue and Hand-Book of the Archaeological Collections of the Indian Museum*, part I, p. 181, (1883).

[5] Fa-Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

which was the centre of Kuṣāṇa art. In the image of Buddha discovered at Nālandā we find the schematic curly hair, the tangential eye-brows, the foldless robe and the Gupta arabesque foliage on the large halo behind his head. The Kuṣāṇa type of long ears can also be observed.[1] These features also reappear again in the colossal image of Buddha found at Sultan-ganj in the Bhagalpur district, wherein the full robe with faint fold-like lines and the *uṣṇiṣa* can be noticed.[2] Both these images have been assigned to the early fifth century A. D.[3] These icons are characterised by a vivid fidelity to nature, poise and balance, which are present for example in the image of Lokēśvara Padmapāṇi from Sārnath.[4] Of all Buddhist images, Mr Codrington has observed perhaps with justice that the sand-stone Buddha image from Mankuwar, the standing Buddha in the Mathura Museum and the Sārnāth Buddha are the "most perfect examples of Gupta sculpture."[5]

Compared with the Buddhist icons few of the Jaina images of the Gupta period have survived. The main reason for this paucity of Jaina imagery was obviously the consequence of the decay of Jainism in the Gupta empire. On the column of the Kahāum stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta I, dated A. D. 460-61, the most important sculptures are five standing nude figures, which are, as Fleet once suggested, the five *Ādikartṛs* or *Tīrthaṅkaras* mentioned in the epigraph.[6] Another image of the twenty-fourth *Tīrthaṅkara* Varddhamāna Mahāvīra, dedicated at Mathura, during the reign of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 432 (G. E. 113), has survived.[7] Its head is missing, it has disproportionate legs and its palms are placed one over the other in front.[8] When compared with the early Kuṣāṇa type Mankuwar Buddha image, dated A. D. 448, this image no doubt indicates some Kuṣāṇa characteristics especially in the shape of the torso, the hands and the legs. But when compared with the Buddha image in the *Dharma-cakra mudrā* pose from Sārnāth, this image is certainly crude, disproportionate, lacking in balance and a delicacy of outline.

2. Bas-Reliefs

The bas-relief to the Gupta craftsman was not only a place to display his skill in depicting arabesque foliage and geometrical

[1] Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, pl., XLII, 161; *Ibid.*, XXVI, 92.
[2] *Ibid.*, pl., XLI, 160.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 74.
[4] Sahni and Vogel, *Catalogue of the Museum of Archaeology at Sarnath*, pl. XIII, (b).
[5] Codrington, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
[6] Fleet, *C.I.I.*, III, (15), pp. 67—68.
[7] *Cf. E.I.*, II, no. XXXIX, p. 210.
[8] Banerji, *op. cit.*, pl. XVIII.

patterns, but in portraying contemporary life as well. The variety, naturalness, proportion and beauty of the floral designs of the Gupta sculptor have elicited unanimous and universal admiration.[1]

But more important than this infinite variety of design was the portrayal of contemporary life. First and foremost to the sculptor was the appeal of the past which he probably tried to interpret in terms of the living present. So he carved various incidents from Buddha's life like his conception and nativity, his great miracles of Śrāvastī[2] or the apotheosis of the Bōdhisattva Kṣāntivādin.[3] Sometimes scenes from the *Kṣāntavādin Jātaka* or portraits of Jaṁbhala, the god of wealth, became the objects of sculpture.[4] Likewise Hindu mythology was not forgotten. A pillar from Rajaona, Munger district, Bihar, represents the penance of Arjuna and his departure from heaven in Indra's chariot.[5] Another bas-relief showing him in the act of receiving a boon from Śiva and later on seeing Śiva and Durgā on Kailāsa, was also found at Rajaona, Munger district, Bihar.[6] In the Daśāvatāra temple at Deogadh, Jhansi district, are scenes from Rāma's life carved as detached bas-reliefs.[7] In the temple of Muṇḍeśvarī, Shāhbād district, Bihar, are fragments of two bas-reliefs depicting couples, which cannot be identified.[8] Most of these figures are well-carved, proportionate and instinct with life. The carvings depicting Buddha's life have a weird stateliness and a serenity as though in consonance with Buddha's great renunciation. The Hindu mythological sculptures from Deogaḍh as well as from Rajaona, being less natural, lively and balanced, are decidedly inferior to the Buddhistic representations.

More interesting than these mythological topics are the scenes from real life, which can be observed, for instance, on the panels of the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā. There are dwarfs, whose long hair is either combed away from the forehead or curled high on the top of the head; while a well-proportioned man is seen running to the right. *Gaṇas* stand in elegant postures, musicians play on the drum which is slung from the shoulder, wearing long coats and high

[1] *Cf.* Banerji., *Imperial Guptas*, pp. 200—03; Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 72; Codrington, *op. cit.*, p. 62; Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[2] Sahni, and Vogel *op. cit.*, pl. XXI.

[3] *Ibid.*, pl. XXV; also see Banerji, *op cit.*, pl., XXX, XXXI, XXXII.

[4] *Ibid.*, *Cf.* pl. XXIII. pp. 233—34.

[5] Banerji, *op. cit.*, pl. XXXIII.

[6] *Ibid.*, pl. XXXIV.

[7] *Ibid.*, pl. XXXV.

[8] *Ibid.*, pl. XL.

boots. Some of these also dance. Some *Gaṇas* wear skull-caps, some blow the horn (*kāhaḷa*) and others don the typical long coats and high boots. Some stand with long poles or tridents in their right hands or even dance in various poses. Animals like the monkey, pig and the tiger, are common.[1] The figures appear to be good attempts at representing action, every day activity and common life.

3. Remarks

Now that we have noticed some characteristics of Gupta temple structure and sculpture it may be observed that like its administration, Gupta Art was not original in as much as it was inevitably derivative. Commenting on the typical Gupta square pillar, Mr Percy Brown has remarked rightly that "a glance will show that in spite of the greatly diminished height this form of pillar is a distinct descendant of the Viṣṇu column at Besnagar of five centuries earlier, and the lion motif itself is a link with the still older monoliths of Aśōka."[2] The Yakṣiṇi of the Buddhist *toraṇas* became, in the hands of Gupta craftsmen, metamorphosed into the symbol of the Ganga-Yamuna motif which assumed an almost political significance because ultimately it came to represent the Ganga and Yamuna rivers and the region they fertilised. The substructure of the Śiva shrine at Deogadh, Jhansi district, again recalls a similar railing in a Buddhist stūpa. The rock-cut corbels of the cave no. 9 (Amṛta Cave), enriched with its fawn-like scroll-work are apparently an adaptation of the friezes on the Gautamiputra Vihāra at Nasik.[3] These remarks do not imply that the Gupta school of architecture and sculpture was consequently not remarkable. On the other hand as Mr Codrington states, it would be better to treat Gupta art "as the natural outcome of ancient Indian art, with its vivid appreciation of form and pattern, and its love of quick beat and rhythm of living things and of their poise and balance in repose."[4]

VII. Painting

1. The Scope of Painting

Another fine art which was patronised and flourished in the Gupta age was painting. That the art of painting must have reached a high standard of excellence in Gupta times cannot be denied.

[1] *M. A. S. I.*, no. 16, pl. IX-XI.
[2] Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 57.
[4] Codrington, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

Kālidāsa, Bāṇa, Daṇḍin and others refer to *citraśālās* or picture-houses, *citrācāryas* or painters and paintings in general.

There were private as well as royal picture-houses (*citraśālās*). In the latter incidents from royal life were given importance,[1] while life in general must have also been depicted.[2] Bāṇa refers to a city full of picture galleries (*citraśālās*) filled with pictures of *Dēvas*, *Dānavas*, *Siddhas*, *Gaṅdharvas*, and genu snakes[3] which were well adorned with paintings of foliage decorations and of many coloured birds.[4]

Citrācāryas in royal employ were instructed to paint pictures to suit royal tastes.[5] During Rājyaśrī's marriage, Bāṇa tells us that on the walls of the palace "a group of skilled painters painted auspicious scenes."[6] Some of these "auspicious" scenes are described. When Rājyaśri and her husband entered their *vāsagṛha*, they saw that its door way was adorned with the human representations of love and joy (Prīti-Rati)[7]. While Yaśōvatī was asleep during her pregnancy, the chowrie bearers (*cāmaragṛhiṇī*) on the painted walls seemed to fan her.[8] Her children, Rājyavardhana and Harṣa, were so powerful that they expected homage from even the painted vassal kings on the palace wall, for Bāṇa remarks that "even painted kings that would not bow appeared to burn their feet".[9] The borders of the fine fabrics which these kings wore were painted with figures of swans.[10] Mention is made of the portraits of Agnimitra alone in the *Samudragṛha* hall,[11] and at times with his queen Irāvatī.[12] The realism of such paintings is best expressed in the appreciation of a picture of Śākuntalā when it was seen and admired by king Duṣyanta.[13]

[1] *Māl.*, Act I, p. 7. *Cf. Raghu.*, XIV, 25, p. 292:
tayoryathā prārthitamiṅdriyārthānāsēduṣōḥ sadmasu citravatsu |
prāptāni dukhānyapi daṇḍakeṣu saciṅtyamānāni sukhānyabhūvan.

[2] *Megh.*, II, I, p. 50: *vidyutvaṅtaṃ lalitavanitāḥ sōṅdracāpaṃ sacitrāḥ.*
.....prāsādāstvāṃ tulayitumalaṃ yatra taistairviśēṣaiḥ.....

[3] Bāṇa., *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 210, text, pp. 102-3: *surāsurasiddhagaṅdharvavidyādharoragādhyāsitābhiscitraśālābhiravirataṭsarva pramadāvalōkanakutūhalādaṁbara talā davatirṇābhīrdivyavimāna paṅktibhirivālaṅkarta.*

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 241: *ālekhyagṛhairiva-bahuvarṇa-citrā-patra-śakunisatasāśōbhitaiḥ.*

[5] *Māl.*, Act I, p. 7: *citraśālaṃ gatā dēvī pratyagravarṇarāgānvitalekhāṃ-ācāryasya-ālōkayaṅtī tiṣṭati.*

[6] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 124, text, p. 142.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 130, text, p. 148: *dvārapakṣalikhita ratiprītidaivataṃ.*

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 108, text, p. 127: *cāmarāṇi cālayāṅcakruḥ.*

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 118, text, p. 136.

[10] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, text, p. 17.

[11] *Māl.*, Act IV, p. 109: *paṇama bhaṭṭāraṃ manye pratikṛtiṃ mē darśayati.*

[12] *Ibid.*, Act IV, p. 111: *kaiṣā pārśva parivṛttavadanā bhartā snighdayā dṛṣṭvā nidhyāyate.*

[13] *Śāk.*, Act VI, pp. 94-95.

Painting was not confined only to human forms and emotions, but it is known that natural scenery as well as animals offered material for the painters of this day. The portrait of Śakuntalā as Duṣyanta relates, had for its background a remarkable scene from nature in which were painted the Himālayan mountains, yaks, trees bearing bark hermit dresses on their high branches and a doe which rubbed its eye on a buck's horn.[1] Figures of common animals like monkeys and of ordinary human beings were usually painted on the walls of the palaces.[2]

Later on too, the painters continued to depict a variety of subjects. During the course of her second pregnancy queen Yaśovati, "all day long as she lay on her couch, the reflection of figures embroidered in the awning rested on her cheek's clear round."[3] What precisely were the figures is not clear but it may be assumed that there must have been some variety in these representations of embroidered skill so that queen Yaśovati could admire them long from her couch.

2. The Technique of Painting

Such a range of subjects in painting was possible on account of the high technique achieved by painters in the times of Kālidāsa. They were aware of surfaces, processes, materials and colours for executing a picture. Kālidāsa in his expression, *tvam-ālikhya praṇayakupitāṃ dhāturāgaiḥ-śilāyāṃ ātmānaṃ te caraṇapatitaṃ yāvad-icchāmi, kartuṃ*,[4] shows that an artist could, with the necessary painting materials, depict on a piece of stone the emotions of anger in a person, and simultaneously, the painter could also portray himself in this painting as well. Painting was also executed on walls, boards, canvas and the human skin. The variety of frescoes is realisable from a verse from the *Raghuvaṃśa*.[5] The paintings of Indumatī, Daśaratha or the dancing girls by Agnimitra, for instance, were made either on canvas or boards.[6] Designs of the flags, conch, discus *svastika*, and similar objects were drawn with *sindūra* on the limbs of elephants,[7] while motifs of the *patralekhā* on the cheeks[8] and

[1] *Śāk.*, Act VI, 17, p. 95.

[2] *Vik.*, Act II, text, p. 24.

[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 108, text, p. 127: *śayanīyamālpāśrayapatrabhaṅgaputrikāpratimā...*

[4] *Megh.*, II, 42, p. 79.

[5] *Raghu.*, XVI, 16, p. 330.

[6] *Ibid.*, XIX, 19, p. 381: *laulyamītya gṛhiṇi parigrhān-nartakiṣvasulabhāsu tadvapuḥ | vartate sma sa kathañcidālikhann-aṅgulikṣaraṇa sannavartikaḥ.*

[7] *Megh.*, I, 19, p. 15: *revāṃ drkṣyasy-upalaviṣame Vindhyapāde viśīrṇāṃ bhakticchedairiva viracitāṃ bhūtimaṅge gajasya.*

[8] *Raghu.*, VI, 72, p. 137.

the *makara* on the breasts of women were also invariably current. Pictures were painted not only of the living but also of the dead. Bāṇa records how Prabhākaravardhana, after his death, was only existing in a picture. Yaśōvatī, when going to commit *sati*, carried a picture representing her husband[1] and after his death only a painting retained his outline.[2]

3. Execution

These designs were executed in particular ways. The *patralēkhana* was painted usually on a background of lightly smeared sandal paste though the *śuklāguru* was also used.[3] Over such a surface either *gōrōcana* or *dhāturāga* was employed.[4] The outline was drawn either with a pencil called *vārtikā*[5], or with the delicate brush known as the *tūlikā*, a process technically styled as the *citra-unmīlana*.[6]

That many of these practices continued to survive to the days of Bāṇa there can be little doubt. Before drawing an outline he suggested that the artist should fix the general proportions of the figure he was going to paint and christens it *ārambha sūtrapātra rēkhā*. Over this outline the picture was to be drawn with the *vārtikā* and his comparison in this connection to the *romarāji* (a streak of hair) of Puṇḍarīka, suggests that he alludes to the usage of charcoal powder.[7]

4. Colour Schemes

With such a variety of paintings and their own technique, the painters of this period must have used different colours. These paints were kept in special boxes called *vārtikakaraṇḍa*.[8] Śrī Harṣadeva alludes to it in the expression: *gṛhītāsamudgakacitraphalakavartikā*,[9] meaning a colour-box, picture-board, and a brush. Bāṇa refers to the *alābu* for preserving colours.[10] Among these water-colour must have been known, for Kālidāsa evidently refers to it remarking that colour is easily spoilt by water.[11] Bāṇa observes that colours are

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[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 151.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 165, text, p. 175, *Cf. Raghu.*, VIII, 92, p. 180; XIV, 15, p. 290.
[3] *Raghu.*, III, 55, 59, pp. 68, 69.
[4] *Ibid.*, XVII, 25, p. 351.
[5] Bāṇa, *Kādambari*, text, p. 467.
[6] *Kum.*, I, 32, p. 13: *unmīlitaṃ tūlikayēva citraṃ sūryāṃśubhirbhinnamivāravindaṃ.*
[7] Bāṇa, *Kādambari*, pp. 466, 264.
[8] *Śāk.*, Act VI, p. 95.
[9] Harṣa, *Ratnāvali*, Act II, p. 51.
[10] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 217:
avalaṃbamānatūlik-ālābukāṃśca likhitānālēkhya phalakasaṃpuṭān.
[11] *Śāk.* Act VI, 15, p. 94.

fresh and beautiful when new and to maintain this freshness for a long time has been the desire of every celebrated artist.

If the frescoes were to be painted, then the background, viz., the wall was first white-washed and then a mixture of sand and plaster was applied over it. For Rājyaśrī's wedding, "workmen mounted on ladders, with brushes upheld in their hands, and plaster pails on their shoulders, whitened the top of the street wall of the palace... Plasterers were beplastered with showers of sand which fell over them freshly erected walls."[1] Then the actual work of painting was commenced, but before starting on their work, the painter was expected to have a mental picture of the painting he was going to execute. Bāṇa styles this practice *saṅkalpalēkha*.[2] It is actually such a picture of Kādaṁbarī really painted which consoled Caṅdrāpīḍā during her absence. Painters carried "carved boxes of panels for painting with brushes (*tūlikas*) (which were evidently the *lekhinī* of the *Śilpaśāstras*) and gourds attached to them," and some Assamese samples of these boards were presented to Harṣavardhana by Haṁsavega on behalf of his master Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa.[3] Separate brushes were required for separate colours: the *varṇasudhākūrcaka* was for the use of white paint,[4] while *kālāñjanavartikā* was exclusively for black paint.[5] The mixing of colours was called *varṇasaṅkara*,[6] while the expression *rūpalēkhyanomūlana*, so reminiscent of a similar expression of Kālidāsa, suggests a system of revivification. The painter of this age was also familiar with 'stiffling' (*ācchūraṇa*) by dots or colour details (*varṇasūdhāccharaṭa*).[7]

With these colours, the artist of Bāṇa's age painted not only frescoes on walls of palaces, but he utilised lesser backgrounds like canvas and ordinary boards. Alluding to the former he observes that "they paint the loved form: the earth is a canvas all too small".[8] *Citraphalakās* were usually employed in drawing portraits[9] and *citrapaṭas* were used for painting common pictures of Yama and Kāma.[10] During Rājyaśrī's marriage "the palace was arrayed in

[1] Bāṇa., *Harṣacarita*, p. 124.
[2] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, text, p. 521, *Cf. Bhāvagaṁyam. Megh.*, II, 22, p. 65.
[3] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 214.
[4] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbari*, p. 527.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 527.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 246.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 154 (trans); *Cf.* also *Harṣacarita*, p. 125.
[9] *Ibid.*, text, p. 172.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 536.

textures flashing like thousands of rainbows, textures of linen, cotton, bark-silk, spider's thread, muslin, and shot-silk, resembling sloughs of snakes, soft as the unripe plantain's fruit, swaying at a breath, imperceptible except to the touch.....Some, made already, were being dyed by washermen.....some, after dyeing, had been shaken by servants clinging to either end, and were drying in the shade; some, now dry, were having all the charm of sprays reproduced in their twisted shapes: in some cases the spotting with saffron paste had been begun.....".[1] This system of hand-printing, in vogue in India even today, reveals a particular type of specialisation: one kind of task being assigned to one set of people, thus increasing the efficiency and output of the product. The printing of the cloths appears to have been done with the help of *gōrōcana* pigment, which was used for painting the swan-borders on the shawls often worn by kings.[2] The painting on clay must have reached a high stage of efficiency. The wives of Harṣa's feudatories, during Rājyaśrī's marriage, "employed their skill in leaf and plant painting to adorn polished cups and collections of unbaked clay-ware."[3] It may be taken for granted that these women painters used not only their fingers, but to achieve the final and more delicate effects also utilised the brush.[4] Among the presents brought from Kāmarūpa by Haṁsavēga were "quantities of pearl shell, sapphire, and other drinking vessels, embossed by skilful artists: loads of Kārdaraṅga leather bucklers with charming borders, bright gold-leaf work winding about them, and cases to preserve their colour."[5]

The pictures of Yama (*Yamapaṭa*)[6] were sold by pedlars in the streets and this custom prevails to this day.[7] Harṣa on returning to his capital saw in the street bazaar, amidst a great crowd of inquisitive children, "an inferno showman (*yamapaṭṭika*) in whose left hand was a painted canvas (*citracaṭipaṭa*) stretched out on a support of upright rods and showing the lord of the dead mounted on his dreadful buffalo. Wielding a reed-wand in his other hand, he

[1] Bāṇa *Harṣacarita*, p. 125: text, p. 143: The expression *kuṭilakramarūpa kṛyamāṇapallavaparabhāgaiḥ* has also been interpreted to mean: "beautiful creepers done in the wrong way on one side so that they might be seen aright in a subdued colour on the other side of the thin fragile fabric." *Cf.*, *J. O. R.*, VI, 1932, p. 412.

[2] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, text, p. 17.

[3] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 124.

[4] *Cf. Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 154.

[5] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, p. 214.

[6] *Cf.* Viśākhadatta, *Mudrārākṣasa*, Act I, p. 7.

[7] *Cf.* Lockwood-Kipling, *Beast and Man in India*, p. 123.

was expounding the features of the next world, and could be heard to chant the following verse:—

> Mothers and fathers in thousands, in hundreds children and wives,
> Age after age have passed away: whose are they, and whose art thou?[1]

Likewise another popular picture was that of Cupid (*Kāma*) which adorned generally the bed-room. Kādaṁbarī's final injunction to her friend Madelakhā was to destroy the painting of Kāma in her home.[2]

Even the human skin was used as a back-ground for painting. Women ornamented their faces and breasts with lovely drawings of wavy creepers and quaint dragons. In his sports king Tārāpīḍa's white upper garments were soiled by his harem ladies with *kṛṣṇāguru* paste.[3] Even youths did likewise: Dadīca, for example, was smelling sweet with creepers painted with *kastūri* on his limbs.[4]

5. The Picture House (*Citraśāla*)

These paintings were housed in a specially built house called the *Citraśālā*, which may perhaps be interpreted to mean in modern phraseology a picture-gallery. The king, for instance, in the play called *Priyadarśikā*, directs the jester to go to such a place quietly with Manōramā and stay there watching their acting.[5] Such a *Citraśālā* or a picture-house must have been a separate chamber with an entrance and most probably rehearsals took place there. Such an inference can again be substantiated by some further observations from this play. Indivārika informs the king that Vasantaka was lying asleep at the door of the picture-gallery, while the jester wants to know whether his friend the king had returned after acting or whether he was still acting. Consequently, according to the context, this picture house was supposed to adjoin the concert room. Such picture houses were no innovations in Harṣa's day for Kālidāsa mentions how halls or pavilions were adorned with frescoes,[6] and this practice must have continued to the age of Bāṇa and Harṣa and even later.[7]

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 136, text, p. 153.

[2] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, text, p. 536: *vāsabhavane me śirobhāgnihitaḥ kāmadevapaṭaḥ pātaniyaḥ.*

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 124.

[4] *Ibid.*, *Harṣacarita*, text, p. 22: *āmodita mṛgamadapaṅkhalikhitapatrabhaṅgabhāsvaraṃ.*

[5] Harṣa, *Priyadarśikā*, II, p. 55, text, p. 54: *nibhṛtena citraśālāṃ praviśya Manoramayā sahā śmannṛttaṃ paśyatā sthiyatāṃ.*

[6] *Māl.*, Act I, p. 8.

[7] *Cf.* Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, p. 174; see Ch. V, *ante*, Sec. I, pp. 368-69; Rājaśekhara, *Viddhasālabhañjikā*, Act I, 27, pp. 21-24, *trans.* Gray, (*J. A. O. S.*)

VIII. The Drama.

1. The Theatre (*Prēkṣagṛha*)

If the rehearsals of a play took place in the *Citraśāla* then the actual enactment of it must also have occurred in the *Prēkṣagṛha*, which may be styled as the auditorium. In the *Mālavikāgnimitra* the jester (*Vidūṣaka*) remarks: "Well, then, let both the parties go to the representation-hall (*Prēkṣagṛha*) and having made the necessary arrangements for the musical concert, send a messenger here; or rather the sound of the tabor itself will make us rise."[1] What precisely this *Prēkṣagṛha* was like it is difficult to say but in the play *Priyadarśikā* we are offered a rather conventional description when it is related that it was "lovely with golden columns adorned with hundreds of jewels, festooned with great strings of pearls, thronged with damsels that surpass the nymphs."[2] But whether or not plays were staged in cave-theatres like those in Rāmgarh Hill,[3] in conformity with *Nāṭyaśāstra* regulations, during the days of the Guptas cannot be determined. Kālidāsa, however, refers to some caves where revelry appears to have been common. He speaks of "the mountain which, by means of its stone-caves emitting the (smell of) perfumes used in their sports by harlots, proclaims the unrestrained youth of the townsmen."[4] Once again he points to such places as the homes of the Kinnara women.[5]

But it need not be doubted that plays were really staged generally in honour of some kind of festival. Kālidāsa's play *Mālavikāgnimitra* was performed at a Spring festival probably in Ujjayini. Again how actually such plays were staged it is difficult to state, but the stage manager appears to have at first called an actor on to the stage, informed him how a new drama by a particular playwright would be staged and requested him that the actors should be ready to act their respective parts and to such requests the actor formally consented. Then turning to the audience the stage-manager requested them to listen to the new production either out of sympathy for the producers, their friends, or in admiration for their subject, the play. Then from behind the scenes

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[1] *Māl.*, Act I, p. 32.

[2] Harṣa, *Priyadarśikā*, Act III, p. 49, text, p. 49.

[3] *Cf.*, Bloch, *A. S. I. R.*, 1903-04, pp. 123, ff.

[4] *Megh.*, I, 25, p. 20: *yaḥ paṇya strī rati parimaḷōdgāribhir-nāgarāṇā-muddāmāni prathayati śilāvēśmabhir-yauvanāni,...*

[5] *Kum.*, I, 10, 14, pp. 5, 7.

came the cry of one of the characters of the ensuing play. After introducing them one by one with some surprise, the stage-manager made his exit and the real drama began.[1] Women too must have taken part in these plays especially as directors. Bāṇa tells us that Muktikā was the manager (*Sūtradhārī*) of queen Rājyaśrī's plays.[2]

The nature of the audience during this period also is difficult to define. Kālidāsa sometimes suggests that it was composed mostly of learned men[3] but a generalisation of such a remark has called forth a deserving comment.[4] In such an audience it is not possible to ascertain what was the seating arrangement observed, especially when the king and his court attended the enactment of a play. Whether or not they sat as is indicated in the *Saṅgīta Ratnākara*,[5] it is not possible to decide.

2. Some Features of Acting

The subject of the drama, as exploited by contemporary playwrights, was not necessarily of one type. Kālidāsa's plays were drawn from the epics as well as probably from contemporary social life. Amateur theatricals were also not unknown. In the days of Daṇḍin there were professional entertainers who frequented the homes of the wealthy. Viśruta, who was such a professional, went to Pracaṇḍavarman's home with a similar object and at "the hour when the sun's rays redden", he presented to the inmates of the house a vaudeville programme (*viśeṣalīlā*) adapted to suit the mentality of the audience. It consisted of "dance, song, assorted pathos, and the like; hand-waving, foot-flourishing, and high-kicking; the scorpion wiggle, the crocodile waddle and the fish-twitch. Next, he snatched knives from the nearest and disposed them about his person and exhibited certain spectacular and scientific specialities such as the hawk-swoop and the osprey-dive."[6] Bāṇa also at times refers to actors and the nature of plays. He records the example of Sumitra, the son of Agnimitra, who, "being overfond of the drama, was attacked by Mitradeva in the midst of actors (*śaileṣumadhye*)."[7] But what type of play this was he does not tell us, yet he refers to the "actors in the wild miracle-play (*ārabhaṭī*) with its passionate circular dances."[8]

[1] *Cf.*, *Vikramōrvaśīyaṃ*, Prelude, p. 2.

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 248, text, p. 247: *nikaṭe nāṭakasūtradhāri.*

[3] *Śāk.*, *Prelude*, p. 1: *abhirūpabhūyiṣṭā pariṣadiyaṃ* . . . also see Prel. *Vik.*, pp. 1-2.

[4] Keith, *A History of the Sanskrit Drama*, pp. 369-70.

[5] Nihśaṅka Śārṅgadeva, *Saṅgita Ratnākara*, II, Ch. VII, 1351-61, p. 812.

[6] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, p. 220, text, p. 142: *nrtyagitanāna ruditādihastacakra-maṇamūrdhvapādālāta pādapīḍa vṛscikamakaralaṅghanādīni* . . .

[7] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 192, text, p. 198.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 38, text, p. 51.

3. Musical Instruments

These plays and dances could not have been performed without musical instruments and the nature of some of them can to some extent be ascertained. The lyrist type of Samudra Gupta's coins reveals him as sitting on a high-backed couch playing on a *vīṇa* which lies on his knees. It appears to have been a rather lengthy bow-like instrument, and almost half of it downwards from the top (being probably of wood) was broad, while the lower half, being narrow had strings, three of which are clearly visible. This instrument, placed on the lap, was played with the fingers of the left hand, while the right hand was placed on the broad portion resting on the lap.[1] In corroboration of Samudra Gupta's skill as a musician his Allahabad *praśasti* adds that he "put to shame (Kāśyapa) the preceptor of (Indra), the lord of the gods, and Tumbūra and Nārada, and others, by his sharp and polished intellect and choral skill and musical accomplishments—who established (his) title of "king of poets" by various poetical compositions".[2] The expression *gaṅdharva-lalitair* alludes to his proficiency as a musician and player on instruments, chiefly the *vīṇā*, as Nārada is regarded as its inventor. Probably there were few other Gupta emperors like Samudra Gupta, who were among the musicians or poets of note, although obviously Skanda Gupta had perhaps some skill as a musician. His Bhitarī stone pillar inscription tells us that he was "well disciplined in the understanding of musical keys (?)" and it adds that his resplendent behaviour, spotless fame, patience and heroism were "sung in every region by happy men, even down to the children."[3]

Some of these musical instruments can be seen in the sculptures of the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā, ascribed to the early fifth century A. D. On some of the fragments of the dado are preserved three kinds of drums: one short, and the other longer, both of which, tied to the ends, were slung on the shoulders by means of strings or straps.[4] These were cylindrical, while the third type was long, narrow in the centre, but broad towards the ends.[5] Cymbals were also in use for there is a sculpture of a dwarf who plays with them.[6] Conches can also be seen,[7] while the *kahaḷa* or timbrel also appears

[1] Allan, *Catalogue*, pl. v.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), pp. 14-15, text, p. 8.
[3] *Ibid.*, (13), p. 55.
[4] *M. A. S. I.*, no. 16, pl. IX, (*a* and *b*).
[5] *Ibid.*, (*a*) first row.
[6] *Ibid.*, (*b*) second row.
[7] *Ibid.*, (*c*) third row.

to have been popular. Some sculptures of dwarfs show them blowing such horns, which being long and slightly bent were held with both hands, probably to produce the maximum effect.[1]

Kālidāsa refers to several musical instruments. Among these may be mentioned the *tūryavādya*[2], a clarionet(?), *vallakī*[3] and the *āḍōdya*[4] which was another type of stringed instrument, which commentators like Mallinātha group together with the *vīṇā*. The other instruments which he mentions are *mṛdaṅga* (tabor)[5] *vīṇa*[6] (a stringed instrument), *vēṇu* (flute)[7], and *vaṁśakṛtya* (flute)[8]. There were various types of the tabor (*mṛdaṅga*) called *puṣkara*[9], and *muraja*[10], while *duṅdubhi*[11] was a type of a kettle-drum, *Jalaja*[12] was a conch sounded in peace and war, and the *ghaṇṭā* was a type of bell.[13]

In cave no. XVII at Ajanta the paintings reveal a number of musical instruments, among which some are long-stringed with a gourd at the bottom, cymbals and lengthy straight flutes.[14] Here too are three kinds of drums, the first among them was long, having straps at either end, and designed to be slung over the shoulder. The second type, nearly three-fourths of this with its middle portion a little inflated, was carried likewise. The third kind of drum was almost one-fourths of the first type, but in the centre its surface was flat. On these the players played with both hands on either side,[15] and these drums may very well be compared with their prototypes which can be seen in the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā.

In the early seventh century foreign travellers and contemporary chroniclers throw some light on the nature of these instruments. Yüan Chwāng refers to "sounding drums and blowing horns, playing on flutes

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[1] *M. A. S. I.*, no. 16, pl. X (*a*)
[2] *Raghu.*, III, 19, p. 58.
[3] *Ibid.*, VIII, 41, p. 168.
[4] *Ibid.*, 34, p. 167. Regarding Mallinātha's date, *cf. J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XIX, p. 37.
[5] *Ibid.*, XIII, 40, p. 277.
[6] *Ibid.*, VIII, 33, p. 166.
[7] *Ibid.*, XIX, 35, p. 385.
[8] *Ibid.*, II, 12, p. 33.
[9] *Ibid.*, XIX, 14, p. 380.
[10] *Kum.*, VI, 40, p. 112.
[11] *Raghu.*, X, 76, p. 223.
[12] *Ibid.*, VII, 63, p. 155.
[13] *Ibid.*, VII, 41, p. 168.
[14] Griffiths, *op. cit.*, I, 60.
[15] *Ibid.*, 75.

and harps."[1] Bāṇa too mentions many such musical contrivances like the horn or conch (*śaṅkha*) drum (*duṅdubhi*), tabor (*turyā*), timbrel (*rēṇu*),[2] lute (*vīṇā*),[3] tamborine (*jhallarikā*), reed (*vādya*) cymbal (*tāla*) string-drum, lowgourd lute (*ālōdyavādya*) and the horn with its brazen sound-boxes (*kāhaḷa*)[4] The diversity of these musical devices can be realised when we see how the king of this age, probably Harṣa, went to his bath-chamber known as the *Snāna-Bhuvana*.[5] When the time for the king's bath came "straight away there arose a blare of trumpets sounded for bathing.....accompanied by the din of song, lute, flute, drum, cymbal and tabor, resounding shrilly in diverse tones, mingled with the uproar of a multitudes of bards, and clearing the path of hearing."[6] This statement of Bāṇa finds wonderful confirmation in the words of Yüan Chwāng when he remarks: "When the king goes to his bath there is the music of drums and stringed instruments and song; worship is performed there and there are bathing and washing."[7] Bāṇa styled this art of instrumental music *Gaṅdharvaśāstra* and he further informs us that the *vīṇā* had a gourd. The head of the Aśmaka king, Śarabha, who was extremely fond of stringed music, was cut off by his enemy's emissaries "with sharp knives hidden in the space between the *vīṇā* and its gourd."[8]

All this music was generally practised in court circles in the *Saṅgīta Śālā*[9] and in such a place dancing must also have been taught. In the *Mālavikāgnimitra*, Bakula observes: "Here is the noble Gaṇadāsa, the dancing-master, issuing out of the music-hall (*Saṅgita-Śālā*); let me show myself before him."[10]

IX. Dancing

1. General Characteristics

Another of the fine arts of the Gupta age was dancing which must have been popular in this period. On some of the fragments of the dado of the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā, the panels of which depict dwarfs blowing the slightly bent horns (*kāhaḷas*) there are

[1] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 218, also *Cf.*, Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 152.
[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 110, text, p. 128.
[3] Harṣa, *Priyadarśika*, Act III, p. 57.
[4] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 113, text, p. 131.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 224, text, p. 226.
[6] *Ibid.*, *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 13.
[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 152; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 77.
[8] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 193.
[9] *Śāk.*, Act V, p. 64: *saṅgītasālāṅtarc avadhāṇaṃ dēhi.*
[10] *Māl.*, Act I, p. 9: *eṣa nāṭyācārya ārya Gaṇadāsaḥ saṅgitaśālāyā nirgacchati.*

some dancing figures of dwarfs. In one the right hand is raised to the right ear, while the left leg is lifted likewise and the left hand is loosely flung in front, while the right leg is bent a little. In another panel an exactly opposite posture is revealed.[1] There are other variations of such postures: the right hand is raised in front while the left one is placed on the breast, and the left leg is slightly bent while the right leg is kept straight. At other times this posture is slightly modified: the right arm being raised a little over the head and the right leg, a trifle bent.[2] As these sculptures disclose, dancing was set to the tune and rhythm of drums, cymbals, conches and horns. These dancing dwarfs are lively figures, which show a strange vivacity and vigour in their postures, poise and movements.

In the times of Kālidāsa dancing was conducted by a dancing master (*nāṭyācārya*) sometimes in a music—salon (*saṅgīta-śālā*).[3] Kālidāsa refers to various kinds of dancing, which were probably current in his day. Among them are *cchalita*[4] and *khuraka*, while *abhinaya* was a superior kind of dance which required the use of the five limbs.[5] Of these dances the *cchalita*, based on a song of four parts (*catuṣpada*), was considered by experts the most difficult to be performed.[6] Likewise there was another dance called the *śarmiṣṭa* which, like the *cchalita*, consisted of four parts, in which a middle tone was maintained.[7]

The art of dancing must have attained a high stage of proficiency in the days of Kālidāsa who devotes to it much attention and importance. He considered dancing to be one of the chief amusements of human beings although their tastes are different.[8] In the execution of this art can be noticed the behaviour of men arising from three qualities of goodness, passion, and darkness.[9] The achievment of proficiency in this art was considered chiefly due to practice.[10]

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[1] *M. A. S. I.*, 1924, no. 16, pl. X, (*a*) 5th square from the left and bottom row and 1st square from right, top row. The latter is repeated in the 1st square from right at bottom pl. IX (*c*).

[2] *Ibid.*, pl. I, (*c*) 1st and 3rd squares from the left.

[3] *Māl.*, Act I, p. 5.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

[5] *Ibid.*, I, p. 26.

[6] *Raghu.*, XIX, 36, p. 375; *Māl.*, Act I, p. 31.

[7] *Māl.*, Act II, pp. 37-38.

[8] *Ibid.*, Act I, p. 10: *atra lokacaritaṃ nānārasaṃ dṛśyate nāṭyaṃ bhinnarucēr-janasya bahudāpyekaṃ samārādhanaṃ.*

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 10: *traiguṇyodbhavaṃ.*

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 2 : *prayōgapradhānaṃ hi nāṭyaśāstraṃ.*

The art of dancing had to be acquired from teachers who were the acknowledged experts in it. In fact it was believed that the skill of a teacher when communicated to a worthy pupil attained greater excellence.[1] Such masters were patronised by the court and the nobility. Gaṇadāsa, a character in the *Mālavikāgnimitra*, states that he was favoured by the king, implying that the post of the professorship of such theatrical representations was conferred on him by his sovereign.[2] These professors of dancing were paid salaries called *vētana*.[3] The chief qualification for this post was a combination of the knowledge of the theory and practice of dancing. Parivrājakā in the same play observes: "One man can perform excellently in person, another possesses to a remarkable degree the power of communicating his skill; *he who possesses both these excellences should be placed at the head of teachers.*"[4]

2. Dancing Contests

The protegees of the court must have naturally had their own little differences which led to rivalry and sometimes even to an open contest. The *Mālavikāgnimitra* illustrates a typical example. Haradatta, in the presence of the principal men of the court, taunted Gaṇadāsa, both being professors of dancing, in the following words: "This man is not as good as the dust of my feet...There is in truth the same difference between your reverence and myself as is between the ocean and a puddle." Therefore the former pleaded with the king to test them in their knowledge of the theory and practice of dancing. The king, fearing that if he decided alone he would be accused of partiality, declared that this contest should take place in the presence of himself, his wife and another learned man called Kauśiki. These three were called referees (*Madhastha*).[5] Finally, it was settled that the question should be decided by an examination of their skill in teaching this art for which certain criteria were to be observed. First, when an unskilful pupil disgraced the instruction of a teacher the latter was sure to be blamed. Secondly, the reception of an unpromising pupil implied a lack of discernment in the teacher and the transformation of an unpromising pupil into a skilful performer revealed only the acuteness of the teacher's intellect.[6]

[1] *Māl.*, Act I, p. 13.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 21: *datta prayōgōsmi dēvena.*
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 26.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 27. Italics mine.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 24.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Such contests took place either in the play-house or the school of music (*Saṅgīta Śālā*). There, when the orchestral arrangements were made, the pupils came arrayed in their theatrical dresses so that they might display the elegance of the movements of their limbs and the orchestra commenced when the drum (*mṛdaṅga*) was sounded.

The dancer herself was required to possess certain physical qualifications. When Mālavikā presented herself before the king to give a performance, he said: "Oh! the perfection of her beauty in every posture! For her face has long eyes and the splendour of an autumn moon, and her two arms are gracefully curved at the shoulders, her chest is compact, having firm and swelling breasts, her sides are as it were palmed off, her waist may be spanned by the hand, her hips slope elegantly, her feet have crooked toes, her body is like the ideal conceived by the teacher of dancing."[1] Despite some exaggeration in this description these characteristics no doubt give us an idea of the bodily requirements of an ideal dancer of those days.

The dancer came on the stage, went through her prelude and sang a song consisting of four parts (*caturthavastukaprayōgaṃ*) like the following: "My beloved is hard to obtain, be thou without hope, with respect to him, oh! my heart! Ha! the outer corner of my left eye throbs somewhat; how is this man, seen after a long time, to be obtained? My lord, consider that I am devoted to thee with ardent longing. (As she sings she goes through a pantomime expressive of the sentiment.)"[2]

When this performance was over, opinions about its merits or demerits were expressed by some of the persons in the audience. One of the spectators on noticing this performance said: "All was blameless, and in accordance with the rules of art; for the meaning was completely expressed by her limbs which were full of language, the movement of her feet was in perfect time, she exactly represents the sentiments; the acting was gentle, based upon the different forms of feeling in the successive exhibition of their various shades of emotion trod on emotion; it was a vivid picture of a series of passions."[3] The opinions of the judges were then called for and if the majority of them decided in a competitor's favour he was thus congratulated: "I must congratulate you, Sir, on being so fortunate as to give

[1] *Māl.*, Act II, p. 40.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

satisfaction to your judge."[1] The winner was then rewarded with a present, and in this case Gaṇadāsa was given a bracelet (*kaṭaka*).[2]

3. Types of Dancing

A dance in action, however, has been well depicted by a painting in the Ajanta cave no. xvii which represents the *abhiṣeka* of a king with some dancing girls and a dancer in action to the right of the ruler. In this painting there are four women with cymbals in their hands and accompanying them is a male drummer, who plays on a drum. In addition, nearest to the king, is another dancing girl who appears in the execution of a dance. The poise, the vitality and remarkable proportions of this group attract attention.[3]

Probably a more eloquent picture of a dance in action has been given by Bāṇa when he describes the festivities of the dancing girls on the birth of prince Harṣa: "Tambourines were slowly thumped, reeds sweetly piped, cymbals tinkled, string-drums were belaboured, the low-gourd lute sang, gently boomed the *kāhalās* with their brazen-sounding boxes, while all the time a subdued clapping proceeded. Even the clank of jingling anklets kept time pace by pace, as if intelligent with the clapping. Whispering softly like cuckoos, in low passionate tones, they (dancing girls) sang the words of vulgar mimes, ambrosia to their lovers' ears...with tossing forehead marks and ear-rings they swayed like creepers of Love's sandal tree. Like waves of passion's flood, they gleamed all resonant with the cries of anklets adding music to their steps. As to what was proper to be said or not, they were as void of discrimination as the childish play of happiness."[4] From these observations of Bāṇa we may infer that dancing, especially by the low class dancing girls, was performed to the accompaniment of instrumental and vocal music, that they sang lewd songs, that clapping proceeded in the course of a dance as though to keep time with the rhythm and the sounds of the drums, musical instruments and the movements of the swaying girls, while the onlookers threw camphor and perfume at them.

But dancing, it must be remembered, was not confined to women of this type alone. It was a fine art studied and cultivated by the rich as well as by the middle classes of this age. The initiative

[1] *Māl.*, Act II, p. 48: *diṣṭayā parikṣakārādhanēna ārya vardhatē.*
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[3] Griffiths, *Paintings in the Buddhist Cave Temples at Ajanta*, I, 75.
[4] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 113-14.

was given by the ladies of the court. It has been noticed already that music, dancing and many of the fine arts were the subjects taught to young princesses from a very early age. It is therefore not strange that they became familiar with these arts when they grew older, as Bāṇa tells us. While the lewd dancing girls were carrying on the dance which has been just described, the ladies of Harṣa's court too appear to have caught the infection. "In other places," relates Bāṇa, "where under the terror of the chamberlains' wands the people had made room, the king's wives essayed the dance, a brilliant throng with a forest of white parasols held above them...Some, wrapt in loose shawls hanging from both shoulders, swayed as if mounted on play swings. Some, with wavy robes torn by the edge of the golden armlets, were like rivers lined by crossing ruddy-geese...Others, from whose tripping feet, trickled a dew of lac-reddened sweat that besprinkled the palace *haṁsas*...Others, with brows curved in derision at the contortions of chamberlains bending beneath golden girdles placed about their necks, seemed love-nets with outstretched arms for toils."[1] Despite the rather poetic exaggeration it cannot be denied that royal women must have been familiar with the art of dancing in order to give public exhibitions of their skill in the capital itself.

Even girls became adepts in the art of dancing towards the end of the seventh century. They often observed a dance called the festival of the ball (*Kaṇḍuka Utsava*) which appears to have been common in the days of Kālidāsa.[2] But it is only Daṇḍin who gives a detailed account of this dance as it was actually performed by a girl on the third day of every month from her seventh year until her marriage when she had to honour "the moon-browed goddess" with this dance, so that she might acquire a virtuous husband. "At this festival of the ball," remarks Daṇḍin, "the exhibition is public."[3] Daṇḍin informs us how the princess Kandukāvatī performed this dance. He describes how "With wholly faultless grace she crossed her hands and touched the earth with blossom finger tips; her black curls rippled as she paid a fluttering courtesy to the blessed goddess; she held the ball as if she held the love-god in her hand, her eyes flaring with impatient passion. With playful grace she dropped it on the ground. As it rose sluggishly, she struck it with her flower hand—the thumb a little bent, the tender fingers

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-15.
[2] *Cf. Māl.*, Act IV, p. 127.
[3] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, p. 159, text, p. 103.

extended—bounced it from the back of her hand, and caught it falling in mid-air, while her flashing glances flickered round it.....Then she let it fall. Patting or pounding, *andante* or *allegro*, she kept its motion timed with her forward or backward steps. Inert, she made it hop with heartless blows; frisky, she soothed it. Sidewise and straight she struck, with the left hand and the right in turn, making it fly like a bird. If it soared too high, she caught it, taught it moderation; she tossed it wide from side to side, then brought it home. Such was her sweet, surprising sport, bringing each moment the cry or the sigh of applause from the fascinated spectators round the platform."[1] This was evidently a solo dance popular with maidens.

The dancing girl even later was expected to have a certain type of figure. Kālidāsa's description of an ideal dancer,[2] though perhaps idealistic, may be compared with another little poetic picture of the dancing girls who were observed by Bāṇa. "Wreaths were", he states, "about their brows, and chaplets round their ears, upon their foreheads sandal marks. With upraised creeper-like arms, vocal with rows of bracelets, they seemed to embrace the very sun. Like Kāśmīr colts, they leapt all aglow with saffron stains. Great garlands of amaranth hung down upon their round hips, as if they were ablaze with passion's flame. Their faces, marked with rows of vermilion spots, seemed to wear the rubric of the edict plates of Love.....Dusty were they with camphor and perfumes scattered in handfuls.....Like women chamberlains of a children's festival they lashed the young folk with great wreaths of flowers.....".[3]

The company of such women (*attmāṅganā*) has been greatly praised by Daṇḍin with as great an enthusiasm as either hunting, gambling or drinking. He remarks that the society of good-looking girls "makes money and virtue worth having. That means genuine manly pride; skill in thought reading; conduct untainted by sordid greed; training in all the social arts; quickness of wit and speech because you must be forever devising means to get what you lack, to keep what you get, to enjoy what you keep, to dream what you enjoy, to pacify the peevish and so on; public deference for your well-groomed person and stunning clothes; social acceptability; great respect from servants; smiling address; dignity; gallantry; the winning, through children, of salvation on earth and salvation in

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-60, text, pp. 103-04.
[2] *Māl.*, Act II, 3, p. 40, also see *ante* p. 458.
[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 113-14, text, pp. 131-32.

heaven."[1] Nevertheless he does not forget to record a proverb, evidently current in his day, that gay girls are heartless.[2]

X. Literature.

1. General Remarks

Another of the fine arts which was fostered in these times was Literature which may be said to have made the Gupta Age the golden age of Literature in the literary history of India. There were not only Hindu writers but we also find Jaina and Buddhist literary figures as well. This was an age in which we notice great poets and playwrights, composers and chroniclers, grammarians and philosophers, who would have been considered ornaments of any court in any age. Literature flourished because it was patronised by the king and his courtiers. Many of the Gupta emperors were distinguished patrons of men of letters and some of them were probably literary men themselves. For example in the Allahabad *praśasti* it has been stated that Samudra Gupta was a poet himself although no work of his appears to have survived him. One of his titles was one "who established (*his*) title of king of poets by various poetical compositions that were fit to be the means of subsistence of learned people".[3] Candra Gupta *Vikramāditya* is said to have had nine gems who graced his court.

A. 2. Poets and Playwrights-Hindu

It is not known whether any poets and playwrights adorned the courts of the Gupta emperors prior to the rise of Samudra Gupta but even if they did their works have not survived to this day. Nevertheless from the reign of Samudra Gupta literature commenced to flourish in the Gupta court. The earliest Gupta poet of distinction, of course excluding Samudra Gupta himself, was probably Harisena who not only composed the celebrated Allahabad *praśasti* but was *Saṅdhivigrahika Kumārāmātya* and *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* at the court of Samudra Gupta.[4]

The next ruler who gave a kind of impetus to the literature of this age was the Famous Candra Gupta II *Vikramāditya*. It is related in the *Jyotirvidhābhaṇa* that the following nine gems adorned his court :

Dhanvaṅtariḥ Kṣapaṇako Amarasimaḥ Saṅkur
Vetālabhaṭṭa Ghaṭakarpara Kālidāsāḥ |
Khyāto Varāhamihiro nrpateḥ sabhāyāṃ
ratnāni vai Vararucir nava Vikramasya.[5]

[1] Daṇḍin, *op. cit.*, 210, text, pp. 135-36.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 158.

[3] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (1), p. 15 text, p. 8: *vividvaj-janōpajīvyānēka-kāvya-kkriyābhiḥ pratiṣṭhitakavirāja-śabdasya. Cf.* pp. 11, lines 5-6, 12. ll 15-16.

[4] *Ibid.*, (1), p. 16.

[5] Cited by Vidyabhusana, History of Mediaeval School of Indian Logic, p. 15.

Of these gems perhaps Kālidāsa was the most celebrated. To him are attributed the plays known as *Abhijñāna-Śākuntala*, *Vikramorvaśī*, *Mālavikāgnimitra* and the poems called the *Raghuvaṁśa*, *Kumārasaṁbhava*, *Meghadūta* and the *Kuntaśvaradautya* and the *Ṛtusaṁhāra*. His date is one of the most disputed points in Indian literary history. It has been maintained that he "must have lived before A. D. 472 and probably at a considerable distance, so that to place him about A. D. 400 seems completely justified."[1] This view of Dr Keith appears acceptable from many points of view. In Kālidāsa's works references are made to one Vikramāditya, Dinnāga, Pravarasena and Kumāradāsa, who may be assigned to the fifth century.[2] It has been proved that Vikramāditya was a title of Candra Gupta II, that Pravarasena was most probably the Vākāṭaka king Pravarasena I who may be allotted to A. D. 280-340,[3] and that Dinnāga could have been no other than the Buddhist logician of that name who must have been a contemporary of Kālidāsa and has been ascribed to the period prior to A. D. 400.[4] Kumāradāsa might have been the Ceylon king whose name is associated with Kalidāsa's death for it is related that, while this poet was that ruler's guest, he was murdered by a greedy hetaira.[5] Dr Keith has suggested that Kālidāsa must have served as a model to the composer Vatsabhaṭṭi who, as we definitely know, was a servant of Kumāra Gupta I, who certainly lived during A. D. 437-47. Some of his verses in the Mandasor stone inscription are obvious imitations of couplets in the *Meghadūta* and *Ṛtusaṁhāra*.[6] According to two literary sources Kālidāsa appears to have been sent as an ambassador of king Vikramāditya to a Kuntala ruler,[7] who was most probably the Kadaṁba ruler, Kākusthavarma.[8] The Saṁskṛta work *Śṛṅgāraprakāśika* ascribed to Bhoja, who has been assigned to the eleventh century, relates that this great poet was sent as an ambassador to a Kuntala court, while in the *Aucityavicāracarcā* Kṣēmēndra, who has been ascribed to the ninth century, tells us that this poet-ambassador, not being offered a proper place

[1] Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 82. (1928)

[2] *Cf.* Ramakrishna Kavi, *P. O. C.*, 1922, p. 198.

[3] See Appendix B.

[4] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 484; Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81; Rhys Davids, *J. R. A. S.*, 1888, p. 148, Vidyabhusana, *P. O. C.*, 1919, I, p. CLXXII, Nandargikar, *Kumāradāsa*, p. V.

[6] Keith, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82, *Cf.* v. 65 of *Meghadūta* and canto V of *Ṛtusaṁhāra* with v. 31 of this inscription.

[7] Balasubrahmanya Aiyar, *P. O. C.*, 1924, p. 6.

[8] *Cf.* On this point see Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, pp. 22. 26.

in the Kuntala court, was made to sit on the ground.[1] Both these sources of information are not contemporary, but they might have preserved what was probably a historical tradition. Nevertheless there is no doubt that Kālidāsa was well known prior to the days of Bāṇa, for in his *Harṣacarita* Kālidāsa is mentioned with great enthusiasm and praise,[2] and Bāṇa we know for certain lived in the court of Harṣavardhana in the first quarter of the seventh century. Even from the point of view as a recorder of social life, as has been attempted to show in this work, Kālidāsa may well be placed in the first quarter of the fifth century A. D.

This assumption is supported by epigraphic evidence which proves that the works of Kālidāsa were imitated not only in the first half of the fifth century but also in the sixth and seventh centuries. The earliest imitator of Kalidāsa, as has been pointed out already, was Vatsabhaṭṭi in the Mandasor stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 473-74.

In the sixth century Kālidāsa continued to serve as a literary model. Kielhorn had stated long ago that the *Raghuvaṁśa* was quite familiar in the distant parts of India and even beyond its confines about the year A. D. 600. One of its verses was present in the mind of the author of the Bodh Gayā inscription of Mahānāman, dated A. D. 588.[3] Another verse of this poem has been imitated in one of the Nāgārjuni Hill cave inscriptions of the Maukhāri Anantavarman,[4] which, according to Kielhorn, "for palaeographic reasons cannot be placed later than the first half of the sixth century."[5]

In the seventh century too this spirit of imitation continued. The line *yathāvidhi-hutāgnīnāṃ yathākāmārcitārthinām* from *Raghuvaṁśa*[6] was virtually almost lifted by the composer into the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription of Mangaleśa which "may specifically be dated in A. D. 602 and was certainly composed before A. D. 610."[7] About this time when the *Harṣacarita* was composed, Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa refers to the literary excellences of Kālidāsa remarking: "By whom is not delight felt at the beautiful expressions uttered by Kālidāsa

[1] Kṣēmēndra, *Aucityavicāracarcā*, p. 139. (Kāvyamāla Series, 1929.)

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 3.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (72), p. 279.

[4] *Ibid.*, (50), pp. 227-28.

[5] *E. I.*, VI, no. 1, p. 3. *Cf.* line 2 of this inscription with verse 23 in canto VI of the *Raghuvaṁśa*.

[6] *Cf. Raghu.*, I, 6., p. 4,

[7] *I. A.*, XIX, p. 16.

as at sprays of flowers wet with honey-sweetness."[1] The Aihole inscription of Pulikeśin II, dated A. D. 634-35, was composed by Ravikīrti who is clearly indebted to the *Raghuvaṁśa* and the *Kirātārjunīya*. His description of his patron in verses 17-32 recalls his model of Raghu's *Digvijaya* in canto IV.[2] A part at least of the text of the *Raghuvaṁśa* must have been familiar to the composer of the first Cambodian inscription, which has been authoritatively assigned to the beginning of the seventh century.[3] From these imitators it may be concluded that, as the earliest imitator of Kālidāsa can be traced to the second half of the fifth century, he can confidently be placed in the first half of the fifth century.

Sometimes internal evidence from Kālidāsa is cited in order to determine his date, but, as will be seen presently, it cannot be said to help us much. Kālidāsa's reference to the Hūṇas[4] has been interpreted to imply that "he lived at a period when the Hūṇa kings actually held sway over the Punjab and Kashmir", namely during the invasions of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula, viz., A. D. 532-33.[5] But it has also been shown that the Hūṇas became very powerful and moved to the west of Khotan as far as the Oxus and the Murghāb rivers during the reign of Firuz, viz., A. D. 459-84.[6] It is not unreasonable to suppose that Kālidāsa in his *Raghuvaṁśa*, which was after all purely a work of imagination, might have alluded to the Hūṇas of the reign of Firuz or of his predecessors, whose wild incursions must have been well known in India in the first quarter of the fifth century A. D. Again it was also suggested by Pathak that, as Kālidāsa refers to Greek astronomical data like *jāmitra*, which is obviously a corruption of the Greek term *diametron*, "it is highly probable that Kālidāsa derived his knowledge of astronomy from Ārya Bhaṭṭa," the first Hindu astronomer who reveals any familiarity with Greek astronomical terminology, and who has been assigned to A. D. 476.[7] There is no evidence, however, to show that Kālidāsa was either a student or a

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 3.

[2] *E. I.*, VI. no. 1. p. 12. On Kālidāsa's historicity see *I. H. Q.*, XVIII, no. 2, pp. 128-136.

[3] G. Coedès, *Insc. Sanscrites du Cambodge*, p. 13. Kumārila (8th century) quotes from the *Śākuntalā* and speaks of its author as a great poet. *Cf.* Pathak, *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, XVIII, p. 213.

[4] *Raghu.*, IV, 68, p. 89.

[5] Pathak, *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XIX, p. 38. Pathak had already indicated the correct translation of the phrase "*Guptanātha*" in the undated Mandasor stone pillar inscription of Yaśodharman, as referring only to the Guptas themselves, long before Jayaswal pointed it out. See *Ibid.*, p. 38.; Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 40.

[6] K. Chattopadhyaya, *J. I. H.*, XV, pp. 93-102; also see his *The Date of Kālidāsa, All. Uny Studies*, II, p. 127.

[7] *Raghu.*, XIV, 40, p. 295, *Kum.*, VII, 1, p. 125; Pathak, *op. cit.*, 41. f. n. 13.

contemporary of Ārya Bhaṭṭa.[1] Moreover it is worth remembering that under the Greeks Kathiawar (Surastrene) is considered to have been a Greek satrapy with a governor responsible only to the king.[2] From them it ultimately passed into Kṣatrapa hands from whom it was wrested by Candra Gupta II, and it is not too much of a presumption to think that Kālidāsa might have come across Greek astronomical data which must have emanated from Kathiawar and spread throughout the Gupta empire during this period. Again attempts have been made to find out a historical basis and a model for Kālidāsa's description of Raghu's conquests as revealed in the *Raghuvaṁśa*. We may take one example which suggests that most probably Kālidāsa had, after all, in this poetical work some background of a previous historical military campaign. Kālidāsa says in this poem:

Gṛhītāpratimuktasya sa dharmavijayiṇaḥ|
śriyaṃ Mahendranāthasya jahāra na tu medinīm.[3]

These works no doubt recall the line in Samudra Gupta's Allahabad *praśasti* that he had "glory produced by the favour shown in capturing and then liberating Mahendra of Kosala."[4] This similarity, perhaps accidental, would only help us in placing Kālidasa after Samudra Gupta, during whose son's reign it could only have been natural that the great conqueror's glories should have been recounted.

Another important writer of the reign of Candra Gupta II seems to have been Kāmandaka, the author of the *Nītisāra*. It may be recalled that Abu Salih, who summarised the work of one whom he calls Sifar or Siqar, styles his book *Adabul Muluk* or Instruction of the Kings.[5] K. P. Jayaswal attempted to identify this Siqar with the Śikharasvāmin of the Karamdanḍa inscription, the minister of Candra Gupta II, and that work with the *Nītisāra* of Kāmandaka. His suggestion that Kāmandaka "was probably a family title of Sikhara just as Kautilya was of Viṣṇugupta"[6] remains yet to be proved for lack of more definite and substantial evidence.

[1] Keith, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 75, 521. Dr Keith states that Ārya Bhaṭṭa wrote his work in A. D. 499.

[2] *Cf.* Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, pp. 240; also see Johnstone, *J. R. A. S.*, 1939, pp. 217-40.

[3] *Raghu.*, IV, 43, p. 83. See R. G. Basak, *Historical Basis and Model for Kālidāsa's Description of Raghu's Conquest*, *P. O. C.*, Calcutta, 1922, pp. 325-333.

[4] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (1), pp. 12-13; Raychaudhari, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 465. (4th ed.)

[5] Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, I, p. 100.

[6] *J. B. O. R. S.*, XVIII, Pt. I, p. 39.

But that Kāmandaka was a writer prior to Bhavabhūti and Daṇḍin has been proved by Mr T. Ganapati Sāstri.[1] Some arguments have been advanced to show that the *Nītisāra* is a Gupta work.[2] It has been stated that just as Viṣṇugupta wrote his *Arthaśāstra* for his Narendra (Candra Gupta Maurya), Śikhara (Kāmandaka) must have written his *Nītisāra* for his Deva,[3] which is well-known to have been the familiar name of Candra Gupta II.[4] Kāmandaka, it is true, refers to Candra Gupta II, and observes that he is giving instruction to the king in the matters of government,[5] and even alludes to a defence of his master's slaying the Śaka by strategem.[6] Several passages in this work no doubt echo the language and style of the classical Gupta poets. But still there is no clear proof to show that Śikhara and Kāmandaka are one and the same person.

The Karamdaṇḍa inscription, dated A. D. 437, tells us that Śikharasvāmin was the Minister and *Kumāramātya* of the celebrated *Mahārājādhirāja Śrī* Candra Gupta II. He was the son of Viṣṇupālita Bhaṭṭa and the grandson of Kuramāravyabhaṭṭa, who belonged to the Aśva-Vājin *gotras* and taught the Chhandoga Veda, but neither of these two held any office. This record, which gives us so much information about Sikharasvāmin, makes no mention of him as an author. But it reveals that his son Pṛthvīṣeṇa was the Minister and *Kumārāmātya* and later *Mahābalādhikṛta* of Kumāra Gupta I.[7]

The next prominent poet of this reign was Vīrasena, who being also known as Śāba, became like Hariṣeṇa not only a composer but also a high military official and minister of the king, like another Śikharasvāmin. He was a *Sacira* and a *Saṁdhivigrahika* in one. His family name was Vīrasena and he is said to have "known the meaning of words and logic, and (the ways of) mankind." He was a native of Pāṭaliputra, belonged to the Kautsa *gōtra*, being a devotee of god Śaṁbhu and a poet.[8]

Now between Kālidāsa and the author of the *Kaumudimahōtsava* there are some apparent affinities. The writer a lady (presumably)

[1] Kāmaṇḍaka, *Nītisāra*, pp. V-VI, (ed. by Ganapati Sastri, T. S. S., No. 214. 1912.)
[2] Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, I, p. 215.
[3] *Ibid.*, *J. B. O. R. S.*, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
[4] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (5), p. 33.
[5] Kāmaṇḍaka, *Nītisāra*, Ch. I., pp. 5, 7, 8.
[6] *Ibid.*, Ch. 18, 71, p. 293.
[7] *E. I.*, X, no. 15, p. 72; also *J. A. S. B.*, N. S., V, p. 458.
[8] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (6), pp. 35-36.

was probably named Kiśorikā,[1] whom K. P. Jayaswal called a "contemporary of Kalyāṇavarman of Pāṭaliputra," and consequently ascribed to "the time of Samudra Gupta" her work the *Kaumudimahōtsava*.[2] Nevertheless he admitted that this work is "nearer to Kālidāsa's time than that of Bhāsa's."[3] Yet elsewhere he stated that this drama must have been written about A. D. 340.[4] What appears strange is whether during Samudra Gupta, perhaps the greatest Gupta emperor who had temporarily crushed the famous Vākāṭaka dynasty through the death of Rudrasena (Rudradeva), this play, which relates that the Guptas were of a low caste (*Kāraskaras*), calls the Licchavis, *Mlēcchas*, styles Caṇḍasena (Candra Gupta I?) a *Kāraskara*, who put the leading citizens of Pāṭaliputra in prison, and was consequently ousted from his capital by Sundaravarman in A. D. 340, could ever have been written at all and what is more, enacted. This play might possibly contain historical tradition of this period but to assign it definitely to A. D. 340 does not appear plausible. Moreover it has been well proved that the writer of this play has borrowed not merely ideas "but also the language and the metre of the verse" of Kālidāsa.[5] It is incredible that such a great poet like Kālidāsa would ever have stooped to borrow from an anonymous and unknown poetess ideas, phrases and metres while the contrary is certainly possible, as was the case with Vatsabhaṭṭi. Consequently if Kālidāsa lived prior to Vatsabhaṭṭi, as he seems to have done, then it follows that the *Kaumudimahōtsava* must have been composed after Kālidāsa, and possibly, as has been suggested, in the sixth century. Lastly, there is no definite proof to assign this work to A. D. 340 while there are reasons to think it is a post Kālidāsa work.[6]

3. The contemporaries of Kālidāsa

According to tradition there were nine contemporaries of Kālidāsa, of whom some are identifiable. Bhartṛ Mentha, the author of the *Hayagrīva*, which is unfortunately lost, has been ascribed to

[1] Mr. Ramakrishna Kavi calls her Vijjika; K. P. Jayaswal, named her Kiśorikā. See *Kaumudimahōtsava*, p. 1. (Daksiṇabhārat Sanskrit Series No. 4.)

[2] Jayaswal, *A. B. O. R. I.*, XII, p. 54.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

[4] *Ibid.*, *History of India*, p. 95.

[5] *Cf.* D. R. Mankad, *A. B. O. R. I.*, XVI. pp. 155-57; also see Dasaratha Sarma, *I. H. Q.*, 1934. pp. 765-66 but he is unable to "decide offhand the priority or posterity of these two writers" Kālidāsa and the author of the *Kaumudimahotsava*.

[6] *Cf.* D. C. Sircar, *J. A. H. R.*, XI, pp. 63-67. According to this writer this work is not "earlier than the 7th or 8th century A. D." Many of the dogmatic assertions of this author fail to carry conviction. Mr. M. R. Kavi assigned it to A. D. 500-700: *Cf.*, *Kaumudimahōtsava*, *J. A. H. R. S.*, III, Pt. II, Intr. p. IV.

circa A. D. 430,[1] but he does not seem to have been one of them. Varāhamihira, the astronomer, is also believed to have been one of these jewels. But as he selected *śaka* 427 or A. D. 505 as the initial year of his astronomical calculations, it is very likely that he lived about this time.[2] Vararuci seems to have hailed from south India, for it is related that Candra Gomin on returning from Ceylon went to Vararuci's house in the Dakṣiṇāpatha, and found in Pāṇiṇi's grammar "many words but few thoughts."[3] As will be shown presently Kṣapaṇaka (Siddhasena) and Dinnāga were probably his contemporaries. The other contemporary Amara has been rightly characterised as a mysterious figure for little is known about him.[4] Nothing is known about the others who cannot be identified.

4. Some writers posterior to Kālidāsa

Like Yüan Chwāng, Bāṇa too refers to some writers who were evidently his predecessors. In the *Harṣacarita* he refers to compositions like the *Vāsavadattā*, the prose compositions of the revered Haricandra, the plays of Bhāsa and to writers like Śātavāhana and Pravarasēna.[5]

The play *Vāsavadattā* has been attributed to Subandhu. Some scholars contend that this Subandhu must have flourished between the periods of Bāṇa and Vāmana, that is between the 7th and the 9th centuries. It has also been nevertheless suggested that Bāṇa's reference to *Vāsavadattā* is possibly to the *Vāsavadattā Nṛttapāra* of Subandhu or some other romance mentioned in Pāṇini's *Mahābhāṣya*, for the extant *Vāsavadattā* of Subandhu does not relate the story of Udayagiri and makes no reference to later authors like Bāṇa, Bhavabhūti and others.[6] But Subandhu has also been ascribed to the "second half of the seventh century" and it has also been maintained that "he was only a contemporary of Bāṇa, whose work came to fruition before Bāṇa's."[7] That he was possibly Bāṇa's contemporary, owing to an allusion to him in the *Harṣacarita*, may tentatively be accepted, unless some other evidence is forthcoming to disprove this theory.

[1] Krishnamacariar, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

[2] *Cf. Pañcasiddhāntika*, Ch. I. Intr. p. XXX. (ed. by Dr. Thibaut and Sudhākara Dvivedi).

[3] *Cf. J. A. S. B.*, (N. S.), III, no. 2, (20), pp. 121-22; Vidyabhūsana, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

[4] Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 183.

[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 2-3.

[6] Krishnamachariar, *op. cit.*, p. 469.

[7] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

The next writer Pravarasena, whom Bāṇa mentions, is evidently either the author or the patron of the work *Sētubandha*. Owing to his affinity with Mentha he has been placed in the latter part of the sixth century.[1]

Haricandra, whom Bāṇa also refers to, has been identified with Bhaṭṭāra Haricandra, but he is another author whose precise date cannot be determined with certainty. Although he might have survived in or about the sixth century, it is difficult to state whether he was the predecessor of Daṇḍin.[2] It is worth noting, however, that according to Bāṇa, Haricandra's "compositions (*Dharmaśarmabhyudayaṃ*) stand out pre-eminent as a sovereign luminous with its employment of words, delightful, and preserving rigidly the traditional rules of letters."[3]

Besides these, there are still some other writers whose dates are not yet free from speculation. Bhāravi, whom Bāṇa ignores but who is remembered in the Aihole inscription along with Kālidāsa[4], being strongly affected by Māgha, has been placed about c. A. D. 500 rather than as early as A. D. 500. He was a playwright of power and is known chiefly for his *Kirātarjunīya*. Probably about this time lived Viśakhadatta, to whom are attributed the plays of *Mudrārākṣasa*, *Abisārikavañcita* and the *Devīcandraguptaṃ*. The last play apparently consisted of five acts as can be seen from its various quotations in Bhoja's *Śṛngāraprakāsa* and Rāmacandra's *Nāṭyadarpaṇa*. Then there is Vijjikā or Vijjakā who is most probably the author of the *Kaumudīmahotsava*. Owing to the references to Sauṇaka and Avimāraka in this play it has been suggested that the playwright (a lady) must have seen Daṇḍin's *Avantisuṇdarīkathā*. But such a reference might have been made independently and not necessarily from Daṇḍin's work. Moreover it is claimed that, if Vijjikā were the queen of king Candrāditya of the 7th century, this period is the likely date for this work,[5] but this identification is not yet an accepted fact. Another important writer of this period was Vātsyāyana but his date is still an unsettled problem although generally he is considered to have survived before the sixth century A. D. Remarking about him Dr Keith states that his

[1] Keith, *op. cit.*, pp. 97, 133.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 300, 339.

[3] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 2.

[4] *E. I.*, VI, no. 1. p. 7.

[5] *Cf.* Act III, 15. Also see Krishnamacariar, *op. cit.*, pp. 391, 600; K. P. Jayaswal, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIX, p. 113 ff; *A. B. O. R. I.*, XII, p. 399; *J. A. H. R. S.*, I—II, p. 139.

work, *Kāmasūtra* "is of uncertain date but it is not improbably older than Kālidāsa and in any case represents the concentrated essence of earlier treatises on the Ars Amoris."[1]

5. Poet-Composers

In later times of the Gupta age too there appear to have flourished some writers of distinction, especially poets and composers. In the days of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman, the *praśasti* of the Māndasor stone inscription, dated A. D. 473-74, is stated to have been composed "with particular care" by Vatsabhaṭṭi,[2] who it has been already pointed out, should not be confused with the poet Bhaṭṭi.[3] Again the charter known as the Khoh copper-plate grant of the Parivrājaka *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 475-76, was written by Sūryadatta, who is recorded to have been a descendant of officers.[4] This is not strange because the office of composer, either to the king or to the nobles or to the corporations, was usually in the Gupta age, hereditary. It is worth noting that this composer-poet composed another inscription seven years later, and from this fact it may be inferred that this officer must have continued in the service of this ruler for eight years during which he appears to have been promoted, for in this record he is styled as *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika*.[5] This poet must have died by A. D. 510-11, for the Majghawam copper-plate grant of the same monarch, *Mahāraja* Hastin, is stated to have been composed by the son of Sūryadatta, called Vibhudatta who is styled as a *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika*.[6] From this adoption of this official designation it may be concluded that not only was the office hereditary but even the official designation descended from father to son in this age. It therefore follows that this Sūryadatta must have served under king Hastin from A. D. 475-76 to 509-10, for a period of thirtyfive years, which is quite a long tenure of service unless there comes to light an earlier record pointing to his death. Another poet, who served *Mahārāja* Samkṣōbha in A. D. 528-29 was Iśvaradāsa, the son of Bhujaṅgadāsa and the grandson of Jīvita. He was responsible for the Khoh copper-plate grants issued by this monarch.[7] In the reign of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, the composer of his Karitalai copper-plate

[1] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[2] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (18), pp. 87-88. In this connection see Ch. V ante, Sect. III, 3, p. 365.

[3] *Cf.* Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (21), pp. 99-100. Also see Appendix D.

[5] *Ibid.*, (22), p. 105.

[6] *Ibid.*, (23), p. 109.

[7] *Ibid.*, (25), p. 116.

grant was the *Bhogika* Guñjakīrti, son of the *Bhogika* Dhruvadatta and grandson of the *Bhogika Amātya* Rajyika. He was living in the year A. D. 493-94.[1] This ruler appeared to have employed some other poet as well. Two years later this king issued his Khoh copper-plate grant, which was drawn up by *Saṁdhivigrahika* Gallu, the son of *Bhōgika* Varadinna, and the grandson of *Bhōgika Amātya* Phalgudatta.[2] His son Manōratha, serving under *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha in A. D. 512-13, was responsible for the Khoh copper-plate grants which were issued by this sovereign.[3] Most probably his father Gallu served the two rulers Jayanātha and Śarvanātha from A. D. 496-97 till A. D. 511-12, a period of fifteen years. But this Manōratha was certainly alive in A. D. 516-17 for the Khoh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha was written by him.[4] This poet-officer possibly lived for a considerable time, for another Khoh copper-plate grant in A. D. 533-34 appears to have been composed by his son *Saṁdhivigrāhika* Nātha.[5]

From these notices of contemporary poets some inferences may be made. First and foremost it may be said that most of these poets held high ministerial posts like *Saciva*, *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka*, *Saṁdhivigrahika*, or *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika*, and as such they must have been *ipso facto* members of the King's Council (*Mantri-pariṣad or the Sabhā*) having first-hand information of State activities which were about to be published in the form of edicts for all the world to see. As stated earlier the post of the poet-officer was hereditary and continued in one family for three to four generations. Some of these composers held office like Sūryadatta for a considerable period, and during this tenure promotions in rank were common. Sūryadatta, for example, in the reign of *Mahārāja* Hastin, had no official status except that of the *Lēkhaka* in A. D. 475-76, but in A. D. 484-85 he was styled as *Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika*.[6] Moreover it was not the custom to have only one royal composer: in the reign of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha in the late fifth century there were two composers *Bhōgika* Guñjakīrti and *Saṁdhivigrahika* Gallu. Nevertheless it was not the rule that every royal poet was honoured with only a ministerial status, for this Guñjakīrti was only a *Bhōgika*, which was obviously a post lower in status than that of even a *Saṁdhivigrahika*.

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[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (26), p. 120.

[2] *Ibid.*, (27), p. 124. *Cf.* Rāmavarman differentiates thus between *Mantriṇ* and *Amātya* on *Rām.*, I, 7. 4: *amātyāḥ deśādhikāryanirvāhakāḥ, mantriṇo vyavahāradraṣṭāra iti bhedaḥ.*

[3] *Ibid.*, (28), p. 129.

[4] *Ibid.*, (30), p. 134.

[5] *Ibid.*, (31), p. 139.

[6] *Ibid.*, (33), p. 148. *Cf.* Ch. IV *ante*, Sect. IV, 3, pp. 248-49.

6. Later Poet-Composers

On the break up of the Gupta empire these imperial traditions of employing composers of repute continued in the various new kingdoms which sprang up on its ruins. In the reign of Yaśodharman, his Māṇḍasor stone inscription, dated A. D. 532-33, was composed by Vāsula, the son of Kakka, to both of whom no titles are given.[1] This circumstance possibly points to the fact that the Gupta practice of granting high administrative posts to composers was discontinued by Yaśodharman, who may not have approved of such a system which he must have known quite well. This was however not the case in the western provinces of Surāṣṭra where, late in the sixth century, the Maitrakas of Valabhi gallantly carried on the imperial practices of the Guptas. The Māliyā plates of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, were written by the *Saṁdhivigrahika* Skandabhaṭa.[2] Such a usage was carried on even into the 8th century as can be seen from the Alīnā copper-plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67. This was composed by the *Pratinartaka Amātya* Guha, the son of Hembaṭa. He was the deputy of the *Mahāpratīhāra Mahākṣapaṭalika Rājakula Śrī* Siddhasena, who deputed him to write it.[3] The Later Guptas unlike the Maitrakas appear to have followed the innovation introduced by Yaśodharman and employed local people of recognition to perpetuate their edicts. The Aphsaḍ stone inscription of Ādityasena, ascribed to the seventh century, was composed by Sūkṣmaśiva, who was a native of the Gauḍa country, "thoroughly religious and very intelligent."[4]

7. Poets and Chroniclers

Another important and, it may be added, an indispensable authority for this period is Bāṇa Bhaṭṭa, the well-known author of the early seventh century. He is in a sense his own biographer to a little extent for he gives us a good yet all too brief account of his own life and of the early days of Harṣavardhana. He narrates to us his family history. In the "expensive Vatsyāyana clan" was born Kubēra who had four sons among whom Pāśupata had a son named Arthapati who had eleven sons of whom Citrabhānu by a Brāhmaṇi woman called Rājadēvī had a son styled Bāṇa. He lost his mother

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (33), p. 148.
[2] *Ibid.*, (38), p. 171.
[3] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 190.
[4] *Ibid.*, (42), p. 208. Also see Ch. V, Sec. III, 4, p. 365, Ch. VI, ante, Sec. X, pp. 471-72.

while still a child and his father who acted "his mother's part," when little Bāṇa was only fourteen years, died a premature death.[1]

Then Bāṇa "through indulgence in sundry youthful follies... came into reproach." Later he went forth from his home and "brought himself into the derision of the great." Then "gradually thereafter by the observation of great courts" he "regained the sage attitude of mind customary to his race."[2] Afterwards seeking Harṣa's patronage, being invited by Harṣa's brother Kṛṣṇa who was a great friend of Bāṇa's,[3] he went to the court but he was "misunderstood by the king."[4] He was received at first coldly by Harṣa who said, on being informed about his arrival: "I will not see him yet as he has not yet offered his tribute of respect."[5] It is no wonder that he was sent for by Harṣa, because Bāṇa was himself a great scholar, having "thoroughly studied the *Vēda* with its six *aṅgas*" and heard as far as possible "lectures on the *Śāstras*."[6] It is not strange that Harṣa gave a cold reception to Bāṇa as he must have heard certain rumours of his "youthful follies"[7] but only "a very few days after" he was received by Harṣa "into the highest degree of honour."[8]

The result of this patronage was that Bāṇa became a kind of court-chronicler of Harṣa's court and an extremely reliable historian of the social life of this period. He is chiefly remembered for his famous *Harṣacarita* and *Kādaṁbarī* which was completed by his son, Pulinda Bhaṭṭa. The *Harṣacarita* gives considerable historical information, the veracity of which can be checked by means of contemporary inscriptions and the accounts of Yüan Chwāng, as has been shown to some extent already.[9] But the date of the composition of this work is not yet free from controversy,[10] although it can hardly be denied that it must have been composed in the first half of the seventh century. But as he closes this work almost with the commencement of the expedition of Harṣa to punish the Gauḍa Śaśāṅka shortly after the murder of Rājyavardhana and the death of Grahavarman Maukhāri at the hands of Dēva Gupta which may be

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 32; also see *Kādaṁbarī*, pp. 2-3.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 32-34.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 66.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 66.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 68.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[9] *Cf.* Chapter *I*, *ante*. Sect. III, 3-9, pp. 63-82.
[10] *Cf.*. Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 315.

placed in *circa* A. D. 606, the year in which Harṣa ascended the throne, it may be stated that the *Harṣacarita* might have been composed sometimes between A. D. 606 and 608. If Bāṇa, who has given such a detailed account of Harṣa's birth and early life, had only heard of his campaigns from A. D. 606-612 before he wrote this work, then he would have obviously given us full particulars of these exploits in this book. This view, however, would appear to run counter to the opinion of Dr Keith who holds that "Bāṇa wrote late in his (Harṣa's) reign which ended in 647, and this is borne out by his mention of *Vāsavadattā* which he clearly imitated."[1] With due deference to such a view it is not clear why in case he wrote late in Harṣa's reign, being well-informed about all the exploits of Harṣa, Bāṇa could not have made light of Harṣa's defeat at the hands of Pulikēśin II and given us a description of his other victories in glowing terms, which, however, he never does. Nor does he give us any details of the patronage of the Buddhists or of Yüan Chwāng, which perhaps may be attributed to his anti-Buddhist views, but he could be expected to give us at least some information about such matters.

Bāṇa is also credited with some other works. It is possible that he might have written the *Caṇḍīśataka* but to credit him with the plays *Pārvatīpariṇaya*, the production of Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa in the 15th century, and the *Ratnāvalī* is, as Dr Keith rightly observes, "merely an idle surmise."[2] It is worth remarking here that *Caṇḍīśataka* is an interesting work which throws light on some features of Śaivism of this period. The *Harṣacarita* and the *Kādambarī* on the other hand are invaluable sources for the social life of this age.[3]

Along with these writers must be considered the question of the Daṇḍin, who according to Dr. Keith may be placed about the beginning of *circa* A. D. 600.[4] Among Indian scholars also there seems to be no unanimity of opinion regarding his date, for Dr S. K. De thinks that he flourished in the beginning or in the first half of the 8th century,[5] while according to Dr Krishnamachariar he must have lived much earlier.[6] But it has been suggested that he probably

[1] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

[2] *Ibid.* Some annotators hold these untenable and unconvincing views: *Cf.* P. V. Kane, *The Harṣacarita*, Chs. IV-VIII, pp. XVII-XVIII, (Bombay, 1917).

[3] See passim Ch. VII for further details.

[4] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

[5] S. K. De, *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, I, p. 70.

[6] Krishnamacariar, *A History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 314. Also see Harichand, *Kālidāsa*, pp. 77 ff.; K. P. Trivedi, *I. A.*, XLI, p. 235, XLIV, p. 278; *J. B. R. A. S.*, XXIII, p. 29.

flourished for some time in the court of Narasimha I (Mahāmalla) during A. D. 630-60, because in his *Kāvyadarśa* Daṇḍin refers to a Śaiva king called Rājavarma[1], who has been identified with Rajasimha Pallava (Narasimha Varma II) who was known as a devout Śaiva.[2] In chapter V of that work it is said that it was only composed for giving lessons in rhetoric to a royal prince.[3] Whether this identification is accepted or not, some internal evidence may be cited in order to determine his date. In his *Avantisundarīkathā* Daṇḍin refers to the great Kālidāsa and his reference to *cakṣu-kṣati* (affliction in the eye) has been interpreted to be an allusion to Kumāradāsa who was blind. Daṇḍin in this work again mentions Nārāyana Bhaṭṭa, probably the author of the *Veṇīsaṁhāra*. Again in an incomplete verse he refers to the "emperor of poets" (*Kavīnāṁ-cakravartināṃ*) who might be Bhāravi, his great grand-father. Finally he points clearly to Bāṇa and to Mayūra in the following words:

Bhinnas tīkṣṇamukhenāpi citraṃ Bāṇena nirvyathaḥ
Vyahariṣu yau līnāṃ na Mayūraḥ[4]

From these references especially to Bāṇa it may definitely be concluded that Daṇḍin must have lived after Bāṇa, that is, after A. D. 610 (C. 600-25) and he may with some confidence be placed in the first half of the seventh century. It may be remembered that he wrote the well-known romances *Daśakumāracarita*, *Kāvyadarśa*, and *Avantisundarīkathā*.

Daṇḍin's reference to Bāṇa and Mayūra also suggests that they were possibly contemporaries. It is interesting to note that Bāṇa in the *Harṣacarita* refers among his friends to one snake-doctor called Mayūraka,[5] who has already been identified with the Mayūra who wrote the *Sūrya-śataka*. It has been recorded that his poetic abilities during a recital once attracted the attention of the emperor Harṣavardhana, who summoned him to his court, where he became a serious rival to the better known Bāṇa, who might have been his father-in-law.[6] It has also been suggested that *Mayūra Stava* might also have been one of his works.[7] Mayūra was therefore in all likelihood the contemporary of Bāṇa and must have lived in the first quarter of the seventh century.

[1] Daṇḍin, *Kāvyadarśa*, Ch. II, p. 279.
[2] Gopalan, *History of the Pallavas of Kāñchi of South India*, p. 110.
[3] *Cf. S. I. I.*, I, no. 24, vs. 5, 6, pp. 13-14.
[4] Ramakrishna Kavi, *Avantisuṇdarīkathā of Daṇḍin*, *P. O. C.*, 1922, pp. 198-99.
[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 32.
[6] Quackenbos, *The Sanskrit Poems of Mayūra*, Intr. p. 60 (New York, 1917.)
[7] N. Venkatarao, *Rangaswami Aiyangar Commemoration Volume*, p. 475.

8. Later Poets

It is worth noticing here that Bāṇa, being a celebrated writer, had a number of literary men as his friends. He mentions, for example among them Iśāna, the *Bhāṣa-kavi* or the song-writer, the preceptors Vāravāṇa and Vāsavāṇa, the descriptive poet, Veṇībhārata, a Prākṛta poet the young noble Vāyavikāra, two panegyrists, Anangavāṇa and Sūcīvāṇa, the reader Sudṛṣṭi, the painter Vīravarman, and the music-teacher Darduraka.[1] Of course, none of them is known and but for Bāṇa's account they would never have been known at all although they deserve to be remembered as minor poets, whose works unfortunately have not, with the exception of that of Mayūraka, survived.

Later than these poets and writers must have lived the famous Bhartṛhari and Jayāditya. According to I-Tsing about forty years before he wrote the account of his travels, viz. A.D. 651 there died in India a grammarian named Bhartṛhari, who, according to Dr Keith, was "certainly the author of the *Vākyapādīya*, the last Indian contribution to Indian grammatical science."[2] He also wrote the well-known *Śṛṅgāraśataka*, and the *Bhartṛhari Śāstra*, a commentary on Pāṇini.[3] Another poet of the seventh century was Jayāditya of great ability and striking power who wrote the *Kāśika-vṛtti* in 18000 *ślokas*, being a commentary of Pāṇini.[4] He was possibly a contemporary of Candra Gomin about whom however he makes no mention.[5]

Another intriguing literary figure of this century is Bhaṭṭi, who is known for his *Bhaṭṭi-kāvya* or the *Rāvaṇavadhā*. He is of course not to be confused with the Vatsabhaṭṭi of the Maṇḍasor inscription, because as Dr Keith maintains this identification "lacks all plausibility."[6] It is interesting to note that he was known to Bhāmaha, who "may approximately be placed in the period between the last quarter of the 7th and in the last quarter of the 8th century."[7] This Bhaṭṭi has also been identified with Bhartṛhari and it has been contended that he was patronised by Śrī Dharasena of Valabhi and that he flourished in "the fourth or fifth century."[8] This view can hardly find any support because more evidence is necessary before such an early date can be accepted for Bhaṭṭi.

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32.
[2] Keith, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 176.
[3] I. Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. LVII.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. LVII.
[5] *Cf.* Kielhorn, *I. A.*, XV, pp. 181, 184.
[6] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 116.
[7] S. K. De, *A History of Sanskrit Poetics*, I, p. 49.
[8] Krishnamachariar, *A History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 142.

If Jayāditya is to be placed in the seventh century, then the date of Māgha may also be determined to some extent. In Māgha's *Śiśupālavadha*, which depicts Kṛṣṇa's slaughter of *Śiśupāla*, a reference is made to Jayāditya's *Kāśika-vṛtti* and its commentary known as the *Nyāsa* which is attributed to Vāmana. Māgha's grand-father Suprabhadra is said to have served as a minister under a king named Varmalāṭa, who is mentioned in a record dated A. D. 625.[1] He may therefore rightly be placed in the latter half of the seventh century.[2]

Kumāradāsā, who wrote the *Jānakīharaṇa* which is referred to by Rājaśekhara (A. D. 900), displays a knowledge of Jayāditya's *Kāśika-vṛtti*, and must have been familiar to Vāmana but seems to have been anterior to Māgha who echoes him. Kumāradāsa has consequently been placed between A. D. 650-700.[3]

Two important writers who graced the courts of the Later Guptas were Skandasvāmin and his disciple Harisvāmin the famous commentator of the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*. The former has been assigned to the end of the 5th or the beginning of the 6th century and the latter to A. D. 558.[4] Harisvāmin in his commentary states:

Śrīmato (a)vantināthasya Vikramasya kṣtiśituḥ|
Dharmādhyakṣo Harisvāmī vyākhyāṃ kurve yathāmati||
Yaḥ samrāṭ kṛtavān sapta sōma saṃsthāsthakkśrutīṃ|
Vyākhyāṃ kṛtvādhyāpayanmāṃ śrī Skaivlasvāmyasti me guruḥ||
Yadādi (bdā) nāṃ kalērjagmuḥ saptatriṃśa=ccatāni vai|
Catvāriṃśat samāścānyastadā bhāsyamidaṃ kṛtaṃ||[5]

From these three verses it may be observed how Harisvāmin according to his own statement was the Superintendent of *Dharma* (Law) in the court of the brave lord of Avanti (*Avantināthasya Vikramasya*). He appears to have been the disciple of Skandasvāmin, a sovereign among scholars, who established the Seven Sōma Institutions and wrote a commentary and taught Harisvāmin the *Rg Veda*. This commentary was written in the year when 3700 and after another 40 years of the Kali Age had passed away. This date appears equivalent to A. D. 638-39.[6]

Who then is the ruler of Avanti, viz. Malwa, during this period who was virtually acknowledged as ruler of the country and as a

[1] *J. R. A. S.*, 1906, p. 499; *E. I.*, IX, p. 187.
[2] Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 124; Krishnamachariar, *op. cit.*, p. 155.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 119. Also see *J. R. A. S.*, 1901, p. 253.
[4] Lakshman Sarup, *Date of Skandaswāmin, G. J. C.* Volume, p. 410.
[5] *Cf. Ibid., Indices to the Nirūkta*, Intr. pp. 29, 30.
[6] Swamikannu Pillai, *Indian Ephemeris*, I, p. 2.

brave person (Vikrama)? The only ruler who has been styled as the Lord of Malwa by Bāṇa as well as by contemporary inscriptions is the inveterate enemy of Harṣavardhana, Deva Gupta.[1] About his bravery, which must have earned him the title of *Vikrama*, there can be little doubt especially if we remember how he attacked and destroyed Grahavarman Maukhāri, allied himself with the Gauḍa Śaśāṅka and possibly with the Maitraka Dhruvasena II of Valabhi as well and defied Harṣa until his death ; for we have no evidence that he was ever defeated by Harṣa until he died and his throne then passed on to his step-brother Mādhava Gupta, the ally of Harṣa. According to the chronology followed in this treatise he might have lived between *circa* A. D. 618-43, and in this period Harisvāmin must have flourished. If this is accepted, then his *guru* Skandasvāmin must have lived and enjoyed the patronage of the father of Deva Gupta, Mahāsena Gupta, who must have reigned from *circa* A. D. 593-618.[2]

B. Philosophers and Grammarians—Buddhist

1. Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna

Just as Jainism produced some remarkable philosophers and grammarians, among the Buddhists too we find a school of such writers. The philosophical views of the various Buddhist sects slowly crystallised into two important schools of thought known as the *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna* (the Lesser and Greater Vehicles) the former being subdivided into the Vaibhāṣika and the Sautrāntika and the latter into the Mādhyamika and the Yogācāra.[3] Few of the ancient works pertaining to the first two subdivisions have survived to this day but many of those relating to the latter are known to us.[4]

The founder of the Mādhyamika school was Nāgārjuna, who is said to have lived four hundred years after Buddha's *nirvāṇa* (B. C. 543) but as he is stated to have been one of the founders or patrons of the Nālandā *vihāra* which was evidently unknown during the visit of Fa Hien,[5] and according to Tārānātha he was a contemporary of a king called Nemi Candra who ruled about A.D. 300 in Aparāntaka and as his biography was translated into Chinese in A. D. 401, he is supposed to have lived between these two dates. His work styled

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 173, 225 ff. See *ante* Chapter I Sec. III, 3, pp. 64-72. *E. I.*, VII, no. 22, p. 159, and *E. I.*, IV, no. 29, pp. 208-09.

[2] *Cf.* On this point see Lakshman Sarup, *Date of Skandasvāmin*, *Ganga Nath Jha Commemoration Volume*, p. 399 (1937).

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I pp. 210, 371, 374 ; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 105, 139.

[4] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, 66.

[5] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 81. Mr D. Mukerjea denies this statement. *P. I. H. C.*, 1939, pp. 427, 431.

Mādhyamika-kārika was the first work of the Mādhyamika school,[1] which must have entitled him to be called the founder of that school.

The next important writer of this school of thought was Ārya Deva also known as Karṇanṛpa, Kāṇa Deva, Nīla Nētra and Piṅgala Nētra. Yüan Chwāng records that he was born in southern India, travelled through Mahākosala, Srughna, Prayāga, *Chu-Li-Ya* (Coḷa?) and Vaisāli, in all of which he became famous by defeating the *Tīrtha* antagonists.[2] He is stated to have been a contemporary of Candra Gupta II, and was the author of several works on Mādhyamika philosophy.[3]

After Ārya Deva or Deva P'usa, as Yüan Chwāng calls him, Maitreya was the most notable representative of this school. As he, according to Yüan Chwāng, communicated the materials of three treatises to Ārya Asaṅga, who lived about A. D. 450, he may be said to have been alive about twenty-five or thirty years prior to this date. His most notable work is the *Saptadaśa-bhūmi-śāstra-yogācārya*, which is a dissertation on Logic.

It is very interesting to note that Yüan Chwāng refers to several writers some of whom evidently preceded him. It is only a tradition that Maitreya communicated the materials of three Buddhist treatises to Ārya Asaṅga at Ayodhya.[4] Asaṅga is said to have lived nine hundred years after Buddha's *nirvāṇa* which, according to the *Mahāvaṁsa*, took place in 543 B. C., but which, according to European scholars, occurred between 470-480 B. C.[5] Then Asaṅga must have lived according to the first version somewhere about A. D. 450,[6] while according to the second computation he must have lived somewhere about A. D. 520. He has been assigned to A. D. 450 as he was the eldest brother of Vasubandhu who is considered to have lived about the year A. D. 480. He is stated to have been a professor (*paṇḍita*) at the Nālandā monastery and was at first the follower of the Mahīśāka sect before he became Maitreya's disciple.[7]

[1] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 100, 200, 224.

[3] Vidyabhusana, *J. A. S. B.*, (N. S.), III, no. 7, p. 548; also see *A History of Indian Logic*, pp. 248, 261-62.

[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 355-56.

[5] Fleet, *J. R. A. S.*, 1904, pp. 1-26.

[6] Vidyabhusana, *Med. Logic.*, p. 74.

[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op cit.*, I, p. 357.

Vasubandhu is stated to have been born at Gāndhāra (Peshawar) where Yüan Chwāng saw a tablet commemorating his death. He was at first a Vaibhāṣika philosopher of the Sarvastivāda sect but appears to have been later on converted to the Yogācāra school of the *Mahāyāna* sect by his elder brother Asaṅga. Owing to his Vaibhāṣika associations he was a friend of Manōratha, an authority on that *Śāstra*, who lived about A. D. 500 and was a contemporary of another Vaibhāṣika scholar named Sanghabhadra who flourished about A. D. 489. His date has been therefore approximately fixed at *circa* A. D. 480. He was the reputed author of several works including the *Tarkaśāstra* which has been christened to be "perhaps the first regular Buddhist work on Logic."[1] Yüan Chwāng during his stay in India noticed three other works attributed to him which were called in Chinese *Ronki*, *Ronshiki* and *Ronshin*.[2]

About this time there flourished the famous Dinnāga (*Ācārya*) who became later on a disciple of Vasubandhu. On being invited to the celebrated Nālandā monastery, he defeated and converted many *Tīrtha* controversialists like Sudurjaya and others. He has been assigned to A. D. 500,[3] but he seems to have lived earlier for he must have been a contemporary of Kālidāsa who advises his verse in his *Meghaduta* to avoid Dinnāga's rugged hand (*sthūlahasta*).[4] Consequently if Kālidāsa, as has been assumed in this treatise, lived about A. D. 400, then it must be concluded that Vasubandhu and his disciple Dinnāga must have been Kālidāsa's contemporaries, viz., about the first quarter of the fifth century. It is worth noting that Mallinātha compares Dinnāga to a rock (*adrikalpa*).[5] Subsequently even I-Tsing refers to him and to Dharmakīrti.[6] He was a great traveller, dialectician and scholar. He was born at Kāñci, travelled to Nālandā, moved into Orissa and toured through Mahārāṣṭra.[7] He had a pupil named Śankara Svāmin, who was the author of the *Nyāya Praveśa Tarka Śāstra*.[8]

There were some famous logicians who followed Dinnāga and whom Yüan Chwāng also refers to in his account. Another south

[1] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.
[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 210., Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 98, 105, 172, 193, 225, 236.
[3] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
[4] *Megh.*, I, 14, p. 12.
[5] *Cf.*, Mallinātha's commentary on the above verse.
[6] I-Tsing, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, p. LVIII.
[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 210; Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
[8] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-2.

Indian Buddhist scholar who was born at Kāñci but came to Nālandā was Dharmapāla. There he became very proficient and most probably preceded Śilabhadra as the head of the monastery, a little prior to the visit of Yüan Chwāng. Before he entered the Nālandā *saṅgharāma* he was evidently connected with a monastery at Kausāmbi where Yüan Chwāng observed the ruins of such an institution in which Dharmapāla is stated to have defeated the heretics.[1] This Dharmapāla initiated into the priesthood (*Saṅgha*) the *Tīrtha* scholar Dharmakīrti. As Yüan Chwāng mentions Dharmapāla and, as Dharmakīrti was his pupil, they may both be considered to have been his contemporaries. In fact I-Tsing records how after Dinnāga "Dharmakīrti made further improvement in Logic."[2] Dharmapāla was the author of several important works on Logic, the most prominent of which were the *Ālambana-pratyaya-dhyāna-śāstra-vyākhyā*, *Vijñāptimātra siddhi-śāstra-vyākhyā* and the *Śata-śāstra-vaipulya-vyākhya*.[3]

Dharmapāla was evidently followed by Śilabhadra at Nālandā where he became the chief of the whole establishment. He was a Brāhmaṇa and was related to the royal family of Samataṭa (Bengal).[4] He was a disciple of Dharmapāla whom he succeeded as chief at Nālandā where he taught Yüan Chwāng.[5] This Chinese pilgrim has recorded how Śilabhadra alone had mastered fifty collections of the *Sūtras* and *Śāstras*, which was considered an intellectual feat at Nālandā.[6] As he was consequently the contemporary of Yüan Chwāng he may be said to have lived about A. D. 635.[7]

The next important writer on Logic after Śilabhadra was Dharmakīrti who is not mentioned by Yüan Chwāng but is referred to by I-Tsing who styles him as the next most notable logician after Dinnāga, as related already. According to Tibetan tradition he was a south Indian having been born in the kingdom of the *Cūḍāmaṇi*, and was the son of a *Tīrtha* Brāhmaṇa, but his occasional attendance at Buddhist lectures went a long way in converting him. He finally went to the Madhyadeśa (Magadha) where he was received into the priesthood by Dharmapāla. He is said to have learnt the secret doctrines of the *Tīrtha* system from Kumārila, whom he ultimately converted to Buddhism. He is recorded to have at last returned to the

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 372; Hiuen Tsiang., *op. cit.*, I, p. 235.
[2] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. LVIII.
[3] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 110; I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
[4] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life*, p. 122; I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. XLV.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 112.
[6] Vidyabhusana, *A History of Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 102.

Daksiṇāpatha where he defeated many of the *Tīrtha* scholars and retired into a monastery at Kalinga.[1] As he was the pupil of Dharmapāla and evidently not a notable logician during the visit of Yüan Chwāng, but was remembered by I-Tsing during A. D. 671-95, he may be assigned to c. A. D. 650. Author of numerous works on Logic, he is chiefly noted for his *Pramāṇa-vārtika-kārikā*, *Pramāṇa-vārtikavṛtti*, *Pramāṇa-viniścaya*, *Nyāya-biṅdu*, *Heṭu-biṅdu-vivaraṇa* and other works.[2] One of his contemporaries Devendrabodhi wrote a commentary on one of his works styled as the *Pramāṇa-vārṭika-pañjikā*, explaining some of the difficulties in Dharmakīrti's work of that name.[3]

These famous writer-teachers left some illustrious pupils after them and they set themselves to write elaborate commentaries on their preceptors' works. Śākyabodhi, stated to have been a pupil of Devendrabodhi and ascribed to A. D. 675, wrote a commentary on the latter's book referred to above, called the *Pramāṇa-vārtika (pañjikā) ṭīkā*, the Saṁskṛta original of which appears to have been lost but the Tibetan version of which survives.[4] There was another commentator known as Vinīta Deva, who lived about the end of the seventh century and composed the celebrated *Samayabhedoparacana-cakra* and five annotations on the works of Dharmakīrti and one on the *Ālaṁbana-parīkṣā* of Dinnāga.[5]

The next prominent logician and grammarian of this period was Candra Gomin about whose date there is no unanimity of opinion. Originally from Varendra (Rājashāhi), he later on went to Nālandā where possibly he wrote his *Cāndra-Vyākaraṇa* which is a commentary on Pāṇini's grammar,[6] and the *Nyāyaloka Siddhi*, the original Saṁskṛta of which is lost but the Tibetan version of which is extant.[7] In the former occurs the cryptic line that "the Jārta king defeated the Hūṇas",[8] which has been interpreted to mean a possible allusion to Skanda Gupta, who, as we know, defeated the Hūṇas.[9] It is interesting to note that Candra Gomin is not mentioned by Jayāditya who lived in A. D. 661-62,[10] but by Hema Candra Sūri

[1] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-4.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 105-18.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 118.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 119.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 119-121.
[6] *Ibid.*, *J. A. S. B.*, III. no. 2, (20) 1907, (N. S.) p. 115. Also see his *A History of Indian Logic, Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern Schools*, pp. 333-36.
[7] *Ibid.*, *Med. Logic*, p. 123.
[8] Candra Gomin, *Cañdra-Vyākaraṇa*, cited by Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 115.
[9] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (13), p. 55.
[10] *Cf.* Kielhorn, *Indra Gomin and Other Grammarians*, *I. A.*, XV, pp. 181, 184.

who lived during A. D. 1088-1172. This would imply that Candra Gomin lived after Jayāditya but prior to Hema Candra Sūri. He is stated to have lived during the reign of Śīla, the son of Harṣa. But whether this Harṣa can confidently be identified with the Harṣavardhana of the Puṣpabhūti family of Kanauj cannot be decided.[1] But if this identification is accepted tentatively then perhaps Gomin's reference to the defeat of the Hūṇas is probably to be attributed to Rājyavardhāna, who according to Bāṇa, also defeated the Hūṇas.[2] This would imply that Candra Gomin might have been a contemporary of Rājyavardhana, but this inference cannot be laid down with any certainty.

Caṅdra Gomin evidently belonged to a famous family of Gomins. Indra Gomin is mentioned in company with grammarians like Candra Gomin or in connection with a work on grammar like the *Kalāpaka* about whose relation to Pāṇini, according to Kielhorn, there cannot be any doubt.[3] Besides Indra Gomin there is another Gomin referred to in the Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Saṁkṣōbha, dated A. D. 528-29, wherein it is stated how "at the request of Chhoḍugomin" half of the village of Maṇināga-*peṭhe* was given away as a gift.[4] Again in the Khoh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, the date of which is lost, half of the village of Dhavaṣaṇḍika in the Vōṭa *saṁtika* was granted to Chhoḍugomika.[5] What relation existed between these two persons it is not possible to determine with any decision, nor is it possible to infer whether these were connected with the Indra or Candra Gomins mentioned already. But it is apparent that these persons obviously belonged to the Gomin family.

In the eighth century there were some notable grammarians. Ravi Gupta had a disciple, the famous Tāṅtric scholar, Sarvajña Mitra, who lived in the middle of the eighth century.[6] It has therefore been suggested that Ravi Gupta might have flourished in the first quarter of the eighth century. He was the author of a commentary on Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇa-vārtika*, the original Saṃskṛta-version of which is lost.[7] Then there was Śānta Rakṣita, who is said

[1] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 123. This identification was proposed by Dr Vidyabhusana but it is doubtful whether it will find acceptance.

[2] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 132, 165.

[3] *I. A.*, XV, p. 181.

[4] Fleet, *C. I. I.* III, (25), p. 116.

[5] *Ibid.*, (29), p. 132.

[6] Vidyabhusana, *Intr., Sragdhāra Stōtra*, p. XXX, (Bib. Ind. Series)

[7] *Ibid., Med. Logic*, pp. 123-24.

to have died when king Dharmapāla became king, that is in *circa* A. D. 769-801.[1] He is considered to have left Nālandā for Tibet at the invitation of king *Khri-sroṅ-deu-tsan*, who with the aid of Śānta Rakṣita built the monastery of Sam-ye in Tibet in imitation of the Odantapura *vihāra* at Magadha in A. D. 749.[2] He may therefore be allotted to about the middle of the eighth century A. D. He was the author of a commentary on the *Vāda Nyāya* of Dharmakīrti and a summary of the *Tattvās* known as *Tattva-saṅgraha-kārika*.[3] One of his followers was Kamala Śrīla (Śīla) who like his master also went to Tibet and wrote commentaries on the works of his preceptor Dharmakīrti in *circa* A. D. 750.[4]

C. Logicians and Grammarians: Jaina

1. Svetambara and Digambara

We have noticed till now some of the most important Hindu and Buddhist writers of the Gupta age till the fifth century A. D. and we may now turn to some of the prominent Jaina men of letters. Though in the Gupta period Jainism did not flourish, it must be confessed that Jainism produced some remarkable literary men.

We find some distinguished logicians and grammarians in this period. Devardhi Gaṇi, also known as Kṣamāśramaṇa, codified the teachings of Mahāvīra in a Council at Valabhi in A. D. 453.[5] Siddhasena Divākara, who laid for the first time the foundation of Logic or *Nyāya* among the Jainas by compiling the *Nyāyāvatāra* in 32 short stanzas. He also wrote the *Sammatitarka Sūtra*, a work in Prākṛta on general philosophy containing elaborate discussions in Logic. He was a Svetāmbara Jaina and according to Jaina tradition converted Vikramāditya to Jainism 470 years after the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra which is ascribed to 57 B. C.[6], implying that Siddhasena Divākara must have been alive in the first half of the sixth century, viz. A. D. 527. It has, however, been presumed that he might have lived at Ujjaini, about A. D. 533.[7] This would mean that Yaśovarma Deva was converted by Siddhasena Divākara, but his date is still an open question which can be determined only when epigraphic evidence is found to corroborate the statements of Jaina and Buddhist tradition and literature.[8] The next important Jaina

[1] Ray *D. H. N. I.*, I, p. 279.

[2] Das, *J. A. S. B.*, V, 1881, Pt, I, p. 226, Waddel, *Lamaism*, p. 28.

[3] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 129-30.

[5] *I. A.*, XI, p. 247; Jacobi, *Intr. Kalpasūtra*, p. 15.

[6] Merutuṅgasvāmi, *Prabhaṅda Ciṅtāmaṇi*, text, pp. 13-16, trans. pp. 10-14, *I. A.*, XI, p. 247, R. G. Bhandarkar, *Report on Sanskrit Mss*, pp. 118, 140.

[7] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

[8] Siddhasena Divākara, *Sannati Tarka, Intr.*, pp. 1-18; (Sanghvi and Doshi); Saletore, *J. U. B.*, X, Pt I, pp. 187-198.

writer, Siddhasena Gani, a Svetāmbara, composed a commentary on Umāsvāti's *Tattvārthādhigama-Sūtra* known as the *Tattvārthaṭīkā* wherein he fully discusses the principles of the sources of knowledge (*Pramāṇa*) and the system of understanding things from particular view-points (*Naya*).[1] As he refers in this work to Siddhasena Divākara, his predecessor, he has been rightly placed after him.[2]

Among the Digambaras too there were some notable men of literary ability. Sāmantabhadra wrote a well-known commentary on Umāsvāti's *Tattvārthādhigama Sūtra* styled as *Gandhahasti Mahābhāṣya*. He also composed the *Yuktyānuśāsana*, the *Ratnakaraṇḍaka* (also styled as the *Upāsakādhyayana*), the *Svayaṁbhū Stōtra* and the *Caturviṁśati Jinastuti*. He is referred to by Jina Sena in the *Ādi Purāṇa* which is ascribed to A. D. 838, and by Kumārila,[3] the Hindu philosopher, the contemporary of Dharmakīrti, who is usually attributed to have lived in the eighth century. Sāmantabhadra is consequently supposed to have survived in about A. D. 600.[4]

Another important Digaṁbara writer of this period was the famous logician Akalaṅka Deva, who has been styled like Sāmantabhadra, as a *kavi* or a poet of repute. He is remembered for his commentary on Sāmantabhadra's *Āptamīmāṁsā* called *Aṣṭa-Śati*, a work on Jaina philosophy and logic, *Nyāya-Viniścaya*, *Akalaṅka-Stōtra*, *Svarūpa-Saṁbhōdana* and *Prāyaścitta*. He was celebrated as the "crest-gem of all logicians" (*Sakala tārkika-cakra-cūḍāmaṇi*).[5] He has rightly been placed in *circa* A. D. 750[6] and can hardly be declared to have lived in the last quarter of the seventh century.[7]

The next notable Digaṁbara author who lived towards the close of this age was Vidyānanda, who is mentioned by the Hindu philosopher Mādhavācārya in the fourteenth century. He wrote the *Āptamimāṁsālaṅkṛti* also styled as *Aṣṭasāhasri*, being an elaborate exposition of various logical principles. He refers in this work to Sāmantabhadra and Akalaṅka, mentioning besides Dinnāga, Udyotkara, Dharmakīrti, Prajñākara, Bhartṛhari, Śabarasvāmi, Prabhākara

[1] Peterson, *Third Report*, pp. 83–86.
[2] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
[3] R. G. Bhandarkar, *Report on Sanskrit Mss.*, p. 118; *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XVIII, p. 227.
[4] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.
[5] Peterson, *Seventh Report*, p. 217.
[6] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 28. In this connection also see K. B. Pathak, *J. B. R. A. S.*, XVIII, pp. 219, 221-22, Peterson, *Second Report on the Search for Mss.*, p. 79; Altekar, *Rāstrakūṭas and their Times*, p. 409, Saletore, *Mediaeval Jainism*, pp. 34-35, 232-233.
[7] Upadhye, *N. I. A.*, II, pp. 128-134. The arguments adduced in support of this contention are, to say the least, uncritical and unhistorical.

and Kumārila.[1] He was also known as *Pātra Kesari Svāmi* and as he is praised in the *Ādi Purāṇa* (*circa* A. D. 838), he is believed to have lived in the beginning of the 9th century at Pāṭaliputra.[2] As Dharmottara lived about A. D. 837, Vidyānanda his commentator has been assigned to about A. D. 827.[3]

Another interesting Jaina writer who throws some light on the life of this period is the first Haribhadra Sūri, the author of the *Samaraiccha Kahā*. He is to be distinguished from his namesake who is reckoned to have survived in *circa* A. D. 1168 and to whom are ascribed the *Saddarśana-samuccaya*, *Daśavaikālika-niryukti-ṭīkā*, *Nyāya-praveśaka-sūtra* and the *Nyāyāvatāravṛtti*. The first Haribhadra Sūri is stated to have died in *Saṁvat* 535 or A. D. 478 which is also the view of modern Jaina pandits. Leumann and Jacobi, however, considered that his date has been wrongly referred to the *Saṁvat* instead of the Valabhi or the Gupta era which commenced in A. D. 319. Consequently according to Jacobi, Haribhadra Sūri I must have died in Gupta era 535 or A. D. 854 and the works which are attributed to the second Haribhadra Sūri must have been written by the first Haribhadra Sūri. But it has been pointed out that a verse in the *Saddarśana Samuccaya* refers without doubt to the definition of the *Pratyakṣa* and the *Anumāna* given by Dharmakīrti who lived about A. D. 650. Moreover it is inexplicable why Vācaspati and Udayanācārya do not refer to an excellent work on Indian Philosophy like the *Saddarśana Samuccaya* if it existed as early as the 9th or 10th century. Against this contention it has been maintained that Haribhadra uses the word *viraha* in the *Samaraiccha Kahā*, which is alluded to by Siddharsi who wrote in A. D. 905, and he therefore must have lived before this date viz. A. D. 854.[4] But against this argument again it has been maintained that as Haribhadra Sūri I uses in his work *Anekāntajayapatākā* the term *Akalaṅkanyāya* Haribhadra Sūri must have lived before A. D. 700.[5] The context, however, appears to show that the term *Akalaṅka* implies rather the spotless (*akalaṅka*) *nyāya* of the Jainas and not the *nyāya* propounded by the *guru* Akalaṅka.[6] Even if the latter is maintained to be

[1] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[2] Pathak, *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XVIII, pp. 227, 229.

[3] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[4] *Cf. Ibid.*, pp. 48-49. (f. n.)

[5] Kailāsacandra Śāstri, *Nyayakumudacandra*, Intr. p. 105 (Hindi-Granṭha-Rathnākara Kāryālaya, Bombay, 1938).

[6] Saletore, *The Age of Guru Akalaṅka*, *J. B. H. S.*, VI, no. I-II, pp. 10-33.

the case, then it would imply that Haribhadra Sūri I lived after Akalaṅka or was possibly his contemporary. But we know definitely that Akalanka Deva was a contemporary of Sāhasatunga Dantidurga II for whom we have two specific dates namely A. D. 742 and 754.[1] Some writers would nevertheless assign Haribhadra Sūri I to the period ranging from A. D. 705-775.[2]

[1] *E. I.*, XXV, pp. 25-31; Rice, *Mysore and Coorg*, p. 67; Fleet, *D. K. D.*, p. 389.

[2] Jinavijaya Muni, *Haribhadrācāryasya Samayanirṇayah, P. O. C.*, 1919, p. CXXV. It is interesting to note that Udyotanasūri, who wrote his *Kuvalayamāla* in *śaka* 699 (A. D. 777) refers to Haribhadra Sūri I who must have been either his contemporary or his predecessor. *P. O. C.*, 1919, *op. cit.*, Hermann Jacobi agreed with this view: see his Intr. to Haribhadrasūri's *Samarāicchakahā*, I, p. 2, (Calcutta, 1926).

CHAPTER VII

Religion

I. Introduction

We may now turn to the various types of religion which prevailed in the Gupta empire from the beginning of the third till the close of the eighth century A. D. In the age of Gupta sovereignty the most important religions which deserve scrutiny are Bhāgavatism, Śaivism, Jainism and Buddhism. The first creed was fostered by the imperial Guptas themselves and therefore it naturally spread throughout the length and breadth not only of their empire, but it even penetrated into the confines of Dakṣiṇāpatha. This does not imply that Śaivism perished, because as contemporary inscriptions indicate, it occupied a strong position especially in view of the fact that many ruling families of this period followed the cult of Śiva. In the presence of these two religions, Jainism which had once, prior to the advent of the Guptas, assumed great importance and power, fell on evil days; and though it lost its prominence when compared with the other creeds, as contemporary evidence bears out, it continued to survive and exert some influence. In comparison with Jainism, Buddhism during this age again was still on firm ground in the Gupta empire as can be gathered from epigraphs, travellers' accounts, literary works and coins of this period.

1. Concepts of Religion in Pre-Gupta times—Bhāgavatism

The staunchest supporters of Vāsudeva, called Bhāgavatas, were to be found only in the Mathura region as early as the fourth century B. C. This conclusion can be maintained on the authority of Megasthenes who was the Macedonian ambassador at the court of Candragupta Maurya in the last quarter of the fourth century B. C. Megasthenes and Arrian state that *Herakles* was held in special honour by the *Sourasenoi* who possessed the two large cities called *Methora* and *Kleisobora* through which flowed a navigable river called the *Iobares*. The *Sourasenoi*, *Herakles* and the river *Iobares* have been identified with the Sūrasenas (Śātvatas), Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa

and the river Yamuna or Jumna,[1] while *Methora* and *Kleisobora* have been identified with Mathura and Kṛṣṇapura.[2] If these identifications are accepted then it follows that there was an early and definite connection between Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, the celebrated Yādava and the Śātvatas of Mathura.[3] This prince was the first preacher of the Bhāgavata *Dharma* to Arjuna.[4] His *garuḍa* and *cakra* are associated with solar mythology[5], and it has been maintained that Kṛṣṇa, a prince of the Sātvata Yādavas, was a follower of Ghōra Āṅgīrasa, a priest of the Sun.[6]

Though little is heard of Bhāgavatism after the fourth century B. C., it is evident that this faith spread beyond the confines of the Mathura region, as can be observed from the inscriptions at Ghāsuṇḍī[6] and Besnagar. The Besnagar inscription conclusively proves that Bhāgavatism existed in the second century B. C., when the object of Bhāgavata worship was Vāsudeva, god of gods, and his votary was Heliodora (Heliodorus), the son of Diya (Dion), a native of Taxila.[7] From Pāṇini we gather that Saṅkarṣaṇa was the companion of Kṛṣṇa,[8] as is suggested by the Ghāsuṇḍī stone inscription which refers to a *pūja* stone wall (*śilāprākāra*) for Bhāgavata Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva. The further conquest of Bhāgavatism is proved by the Nānāghāṭ cave inscription, which records, after an invocation to *Dhamma* (*Dharma*), Īda (Indra), Saṁkamsaṇa (Saṅkarṣaṇa) and Vāsudeva, the descendants of Caṁda (Candra), the four *Lōkapālas*, Yama, Varuṇa Kubēra and Vāsava, that some fee (*dakṣiṇā*) was given at various sacrifices by a daughter of the Mahāraṭhi Kaḷalāya, the scion of the Aṁgiya family, the wife of Siri, the mother of prince Vēdisiri, the son of a king who is called Lord of Dakṣiṇāpatha and mother of Sati Sirimata.[9] This inscription reveals the beginnings of a rapproachement between the Brāhmaṇas

[1] Mc'Crindle, *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, pp. 201-2, (1877); Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, IV, Pt. I, pp. 12-13.

[2] Lassen, *I. A.*, V, p. 334; Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 459.

[3] *Cf.* Raychaudhuri, *Materials for the study of the Early History of the Vaiṣṇava Sect*, p. 23. (1920); S. K. Aiyangar, *Śātvatas*, *P. O. C.*, 1922, pp. 351-64.

[4] *Mahābhārata*, XII, 348, 8: *samupoḍhēśvanīkēṣu Kuru Pāṇḍavayor-mṛdhe*
Arjune vimanaske ca gitā Bhagavata svayaṃ.
Also see H. Raychaudhuri, *J. A. S. B.*, N. S., XIX, pp. 371-73.

[5] Macdonnell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 39.

[6] *Cf. Kauśitala Brāhmaṇa*, 30, 6; Keith, *J. R. A. S.*, 1915, pp. 548-50. Also see *I. A.*, XVIII, p. 189; XXIII, p. 248; XXXVII, p. 253; Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 466.

[7] *E. I.*, X, App. p. 2; *J. A. S. B.*, LVI. Pt. I, pp.77-78.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 63.

[9] *Ibid.*, no. 1112, p. 121.

and the Bhāgavatas,[1], when Vāsudeva is depicted as one among the Brāhmaṇic deities and indicates how the Bhāgavata faith had spread down to Dakṣiṇāpatha.

Bhāgavatism probably did not flourish at Mathura, first because only a few Bhāgavata epigraphs are found there;[2] secondly because the Śaka and Kuṣāṇa rulers, who reigned from the first century B. C. to the third century A. D., being usually either Śaivites or Buddhists, were not after all the patrons of Bhāgavatism.

With the rise of the Guptas, the religion of Vāsudeva once again became the living faith of a large empire. As contemporary inscriptions state it appears to have prevailed throughout the Punjab, Rajputana, Magadha, Central and Western India. One of the main reasons for such a revival of this faith appears to have been because the famous Gupta rulers themselves began to adopt it and called themselves *Parama-Bhāgavatas.*

2. Śaivism

A critical examination of the post-Saṁhitā literature proves that Rudra-Śiva as a deity was not "at first a sectarian god." His worship appears to have been common to all Āryas and he was known before the Vāsudevic deities came to contest his supremacy.[3] Some of the Śaka and Kuṣāṇa sovereigns, who reigned from the first century B. C. to the third century A. D., were Śaivite by religion and with a few exceptions became hostile to the followers of the cult of Bhāgavata.[4] The earliest dated reference to Śiva worship, however, is evidently that of Megasthenes.[5] In the second century B. C. Patañjali refers to the Śiva-Bhāgavata ascetics moving with iron tridents in hand. He also refers to images of Śiva, Skanda and Viśākha made of precious metals and evidently used for domestic worship by persons who possibly derived an income from these images. It has been asserted that they could not "have been meant for the use of a particular sect."[6] About this time in Western India, a teacher who became celebrated as Lakulīśa, the last incarnation of Maheśvara, founded the sect of the Pāśupatas, whose tenets,

[1] *Cf., Mahābhārata*, I, 190, 33; III, 29-46; V, 70-3; XII, 341-41.

[2] *Cf., E. I.*, I. p. 95, ff; *Ibid.*, VIII, p. 60; *M. A. S. I.*. no. 5; Lüders, *A List of Brahmi Inscriptions, E. I.*, X, no. 1340, p. 160.

[3] *Cf.* R. G. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

[4] Rapson, *Cambridge History of India*, I, pp. 586-92; *J. R. A. S.*, 1912, pp. 1003-04; *Ibid.*, 1924, p. 402.

[5] Mc'Crindle, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23; *Cf.* Elliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, II, pp. 137-38.

[6] Patañjali, *P. V.* 3-99; Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

Mādhavācārya has summarised under the name of Lakulīśa-Pāśupata in his *Sarvadarśana Saṅgraha.*[1] The icon of Lakulīśa, invariably represented conjointly with a *liṅga* and often seen in sculpture and literary sources, has been well-defined.[2]

3. Buddhism

The next most important creed of this age was Buddhism the antiquity of which also deserves to be ascertained. The majority of historians agree that Siddhārta, the founder of Buddhism, was born towards the end of the sixth century B. C. and that the date of his death was probably 477 B. C.[3] At the moment of his death he left behind him a little religious community, but as he appointed no successor, his oldest religious disciple Kāśyapa summoned an assembly of five hundred *arhats* (sages) to work out a canon at Rājagṛha under the patronage of king Ajātaśatru, which according to the Pāli *Mahāvaṁsa* took place in 543 B. C. and canonised a scripture known as *Theravāda.* Subsequently as ten thousand monks of Vaisāli violated certain rules of the *Theravāda* they were expelled by the decision of the Second Council from the community of the *Theras.* This Second Council is recorded to have met under the patronage of Cālāśoka in 443 B. C. according to the Pāli *Mahāvaṁsa* at Vaisāli. These ousted priests, called the Mahāsaṅgikas, were the first heretical sect of the Buddhists and made many changes in the *Theravāda.* Aśoka ascended the throne in 272 B. C. and in the 17th year of his reign the Third Council met about 255 B. C. at Pāṭaliputra under his patronage.[4] The teachings of Buddha as canonised by the Theras at this Council in the form of the *Tepiṭaka* are said to have been carried by the son of Aśōka called Mahinda to Ceylon where they are declared to have been reduced to writing for the first time in Ceylon during the reign of Vaṭṭagāmani in 104-76 B.C.[5] The texts of the teachings of the Buddha as discussed and settled in these councils became the sacred scripture of the Buddhists and are

[1] Sāyaṇa Mādhava, *Sarvadarśana Saṅgraha,* VI, text, pp. 161-73, trans., pp. 103, ff., (Poona, 1924) *Cf.* Bhandarkar, *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XXII, pp. 151-167; *A. S. W. I.*, 1906-07, p. 178.

[2] *Cf.*, Fleet, *J. R. A. S.*, 1907, pp. 419-426; H. D Sankalia, *I. C.*, V, pp. 358-39.

[3] The exact date of Buddha is not known, but the date of his *nirvāṇa* has been considered by European scholars to have occurred between 470-480 B. C. *Cf.*, Fleet, *J. R. A. S.*, 1904, pp. 1-26, wherein he discusses the date of Buddha's death. The *Mahāvaṁsa* places it in 543 B. C. *Cf.* Vidyabhusana, *History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic,* p. 57.

[4] For an account of the first and second Councils see *Vinaya Piṭaka, Culla Vagga,* 11th and 12th *Khaṇḍhakas,* XX, pp. 370, 386. (trans. by Rhys Davids and Oldenburg). *S. B. E.* For the third Council vide *The Mahāvaṁsa,* Ch. V, pp. 25-29, (trans-Wejesiṁha.)

[5] *Cf.*, *Mahāvaṁsa,* Ch. XXXIII, pp. 207-08. (trans. G. Turnour, 1837.)

known by the name of *Tepiṭaka* in Pāli or *Tripiṭaka* in Saṁskṛta, signifying the "Three Baskets i.e. collections." The followers of Aśōka drew up a final canon and resolved to send missionaries to foreign countries to propagate the Law of the Buddha, but while the faith spread outside, in India owing to several schisms Buddhism began to decline. King Kaniṣka of the Yue-Chi (Indo-Scythians) assembled the Fourth Council towards A. D. 100 at Jālandhara in Kashmir, which culminated in a definite schism between the Buddhists of northern India, namely, the followers of the Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna) and those of Ceylon who believed in the Little Vehicle (Hīnayāna). The canon that was drafted at this Council became the foundation of the teaching of Nāgārjuna, the founder of the Mahāyāna school, who lived in the second century A. D.[1]

From the first century B. C. to the third century A. D., as several inscriptions point out, many of the Śaka and Kuṣāṇa sovereigns were either Buddhists or Śaivites. In northern India the findspots of several records reveal that Sāñci, Bharaut (Bhatanmāsa), Sārnāth, Gopālpūr and Bodh-Gaya, were among the most important centres of the Buddhist faith.[2]

4. Jainism

The birth of Mahāvīra, the twenty-fourth and last of the Tīrthaṅkaras has been assigned to 599 B. C. as he is said to have lived for seventy-two years and attained *nirvāṇa* in 527 B. C. at Pāvā.[3] The scriptures which the Jainas follow are founded on his teachings. One of his disciples called Indrabhūti, often also known as Gautama, collected all his precepts. He was styled as a Kevalin and was the first of the leaders of the Assembly (*Gaṇa-dhara*).[4] These scriptures of the Jainas, usually regarded as canonical, are divided into forty-five *siddhāntas* or *āgamas* classified as eleven *Aṅgas* etc. They were composed in the Ardha-Māgadhi or Prākṛta languages and it is generally stated that the *Aṅgas* were twelve in number, but the twelfth was written in Saṁskṛta. This twelfth *Aṅga* called the *Dṛṣṭivāda*, though not extant, is recorded to have existed in the days of Sthūlabhadra who is stated to have died in 327 B. C. But by A. D. 474 it had disappeared completely.[5]

[1] *Cf.*, J. Deniker, Intr. Alice Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism* p. XXVI, Bhandarkar, *Aśōka*, pp. 94, 170.

[2] Luders, *List, E. I.*, X, Appendix nos. 56-98, pp. 11-18; also see Fa Hien, *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms*, p. 34.

[3] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, p. I.

[4] R. G. Bhandarkar, *Report*, 1883-84, p. 122.

[5] *I. A.*, XX, pp. 170-82.

The teachings of Mahāvīra, as collected in the Jaina Āgamas, are believed to have been handed down through oral tradition for centuries until in *Vīra Saṁvat* 980 (A. D. 453) they were finally codified in writing by Devardhi Gaṇi, who was also known as Kṣamāśramaṇa, during the Council held at Valabhī. According to this theory the authentic history of Jainism commences from this date, while all which preceded it is *traditional.*[1]

At the time of Alexander's invasion some Jaina monks were observed on the banks of the Indus,[2] but from the north however Jainism slowly passed on to the south. A band of disciples under the leadership of Bhadra Bāhu, who is believed to have been accompanied by the great Maurya emperor Candragupta, went southwards and settled at Śravaṇa Belgoḷa. Here an ancient rock inscription commemorates his visit and the hill, which has a cave dedicated to him, is known after him as Candragiri.[3] King Khāravela of Kalinga was a Jaina who patronised this faith and set up Jaina images.[4] From early years of the Christian era, as the inscriptions and monuments reveal, Mathura in the north and Śravaṇa Belgoḷa in the south became the strongholds of Jainism. Among the rulers referred to in the Jaina inscriptions from Mathura, some of which were found at Kankali Tila, mention is made of the Indo-Scythian rulers like the Mahākṣatrapa Śoḍāsa, Śivamitra, Kaniṣka, Huviṣka and Vasudeva.[5]

II. Religion in the Gupta Age—Bhāgavatism

1. The Rise of Bhāgavatism

The rise of Bhāgavatism probably took place in the reign of Samudra Gupta because his Allahabad stone pillar inscription relates how his father went to the abode of Indra,[6] how he was equal to the gods Dhanada, Varuṇa, Indra and Antaka,[7] how he put to shame Kāśyapa, the preceptor of Indra, "the lord of gods", and Tumbūru and Nārada,[8] all of whom are Brāhmaṇic deities. Moreover he is stated to have been the supporter of the real truth of the scriptures,[9]

[1] *I. A.*, XI, p. 247.

[2] Mc'Crindle, *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 98; *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, p. 358. (1893).

[3] Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, pp. 3-4.

[4] *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIII, p. 236; *Ibid.*, IV, p. 403.

[5] *E. I.*, X, Appendix, pp. 1-26.

[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), l, 29, p. 10.

[7] *Ibid.*, (29, 27), pp. 10, 14; also see (60), p. 257; Hirananda Śāstri, *M. A. S. I.*, no. 66, p. 78.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[9] *Ibid.*, l. 5, p. 11: *śāstra-tatvārtha-bhartuḥ.*

which are, however, not specified; that he was the building of the pale of religion,[1] and that he was the "giver of many hundreds of thousands of cows"[2] obviously to the Brāhmaṇās.

He was, nevertheless, "a mortal only in celebrating the rites and the observances of mankind."[3] Most prominent among these was the revival of the horse-sacrifice (*Aśvamedha*). Therefore, we find in his Gaya copper plate grant, dated A. D. 328-29, that he was styled as the restorer of the *Aśvamedha*, which had long been in abeyance.[4] There is no doubt that he performed such a sacrifice for in the undated Bhitarī stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta,[5] this statement is again repeated and what is more important, in his own Erāṇ stone inscription there is a reference to the distribution of gold[6] which must have been distributed during this ceremony. Gold coins, struck on this occasion for distribution, are still extant and they bear the figure of a horse doomed for sacrifice before an altar with the legend: "The *Mahārājādhirāja* is of irresistible valour, having conquered the earth (new) wins heaven (i.e.,) by sacrifice." On the reverse is the figure of his queen Dattādēvī, who played an important part in this sacrifice, depicted with this legend: *Aśvamedhaparākramaḥ*.[7] It is also surmised that a mighty stone image of a horse, now placed in the Lucknow Museum and bearing an incomplete Prākṛta reference: *adaguttasa dēyadhamma*, might refer to Samudra Gupta's horse sacrifice.[8]

These activities of Samudra Gupta do not positively prove that he was a devotee of Bhāgavatism about which, however, there can be no doubt. This can be seen for instance in his Allahabad stone pillar inscription wherein it is said that one of his deeds was the offering of the Garuḍa tokens,[9] which must have been representations of Garuḍa, who is associated with Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu.[10] As the record of Heliodorus referred to above shows, the Garuḍa standard[11] was the recognised emblem of Vāsudeva. Several of his coins bear this

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Fleet, *op. cit.*, I. 15, p. 12: *dharma-prācira bandah.*

Ibid., l. 25, p. 14.

Ibid., (1) l. 28, p. 9: *lokasamayakriyānuvidhāna mātra mānuṣasya.*

Ibid., (60), p. 257.

Ibid., (13) p. 53: *cirōtsanna-asvamedhāhartuh*

[6] *Ibid.*, (2), p. 20: *suvarṇa-dānē.*

[7] Allan, *Catalogue*, p. xxxi.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. XXXI. In this connection see J. D. Ratnakar, "*Discovery of a new Historical Stone Horse.*" *I. H. Q.*, III, pp. 719-28; Smith, *E. H. I.*, p. 305 (4th ed.)

[9] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (1), p. 8.

[10] *Cf.*, *Bodhāyana Dharma Sūtra*, ii, 5, 24: *garutmān.*

[11] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-13.

Garuḍa as their dynastic emblem. More specific proof of his Bhāgavatism can be noticed in his Gaya copper plate grant which clearly states that he was a *Parama Bhāgavata Mahārājādhirāja.*[1] No better proof is necessary to show that he was an ardent devotee of Bhāgavatism.

The successors of Samudra Gupta became the great champions of Bhāgavatism and many of them adopted the title of *Parama Bhāgavata.* In the Mathura and Gaḍwa stone inscriptions,[2] and in some royal Nālandā seals[3] Candra Gupta II is called by this title. The Udayagiri cave inscription of G. E. 82 (A. D. 401-02), reveals that a subordinate of Candra Gupta II *Vikramāditya, Mahārāja* Viṣṇudāsa, was a Bhāgavata, and his name denotes that he was a servant of Viṣṇu. His son, whose name is missing, made a votive offering (*dēyadharmaḥ*),[4] to the two deities, carved on the upper part of the panel, one of the four-armed god Viṣṇu attended by his two consorts, and another of a twelve-armed goddess, who has been supposed to be some form of Lakṣmī.[5] As this is a Vaiṣṇava cave and the donor, obviously a Vaiṣṇava son of an avowed Vaiṣṇava father, there is no doubt that this is a Vaiṣṇava inscription. This record evidently points that A. D. 401-2 marks the beginning of the exact period when Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva was first identified with Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu. According to the Gaḍhwa stone inscription of Candra Gupta II, dated A. D. 407-8, the orthodox Brāhmaṇās are obviously shown as worshipping in a perpetual alms-house, the deity *Parama-Bhāgavata,* who is mentioned twice in the same inscription.[6]

His son Kumāra Gupta I was also a follower like his father of the Bhāgavata cult. The two Bhitarī and Gaḍhwa stone inscriptions of Kumāra Gupta I, the date of the first of which is lost and that of the second is A. D. 417-18, open with an invocation to this deity thus: "*jitaṃ Bhāgavatā*" and style the emperor a *Parama Bhāgavata.*[7] Both of these records, as several others too later on, refer to the five great sins, which are invoked to affect any one who interfered with the gifts made, are said to be allusions to the slaughter of a Brāhmaṇa, drinking of liquor, theft (of gold belonging

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (60), p. 256.
[2] *Ibid.*, (2), (7), pp. 27, 37.
[3] Hirananda Śāstri, *M. A. S. I.*, no. 66, pp. 64-66.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (3), p. 25.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[6] *Ibid.*, (7), pp. 37-38.
[7] *Ibid.*, (8), p. 40; (9), p. 41.

to a Brāhmaṇa), adultery with the wife of a spiritual benefactor, and association with any one guilty of these crimes.[1] Two records pertaining to the reign of Kumāra Gupta I are extant but they do not prove or suggest in any way the faith of this emperor. There is nothing strange in this as the Bilsad stone pillar inscription, dated A. D. 415-16 and the Mankuwar stone image inscription dated A. D. 448-49 of this ruler, are both Śaivite records and naturally do not refer to the rival creed of Bhāgavatism. From this absence of any reference to his creed, it need not be inferred that Kumāra Gupta I was a Śaivite, because in the Bihar stone pillar inscription of his son Skanda Gupta, he is clearly called the *Parama Bhāgavata Mahārājādhirāja śrī* Kumāra Gupta.[2] This epithet is once more repeated in Skanda Gupta's Bhitarī stone pillar inscription,[3] and these statements confirm the fact that Kumāra Gupta I, like his forefathers, was an ardent Bhāgavata although he tolerated Śaivism, the rival creed.

The coins of Kumāra Gupta I too bear further testimony to his adherence to the Bhāgavata religion. His archer type of coins reveal the Garuḍa[4] and the goddess Lakṣmī,[5] while on his silver coins he is often called *Parama Bhāgavata*.[6] The royal Nālandā seals of Budha Gupta and Narasiṁha Gupta also support this claim of Kumāra Gupta.[7]

More light is shed on Bhāgavatism by the records of his successor and son Skanda Gupta. The Gaḍhwa stone inscription, dated A.D. 467–8, relates how in a flat-roofed temple probably at Gaḍhwa, was installed an image of the god Anantasvāmin (Viṣṇu) while a grant of land to the same god under the name of Citrakūṭasvāmin was made in a certain village.[8] Skanda Gupta, like his forefathers, was a *Parama Bhāgavata* as can be ascertained from his Bihar stone pillar inscription[9] and his coins.[10] It is very interesting to note how his Vaiṣṇavite type of mind sought to interpret his triumph over the Hūṇas. In his Bhitarī stone pillar inscription, it is related how after his father Kumāra Gupta had died, Skanda Gupta conquered his enemies by the strength of his arm, established again the ruined

[1] *Manu*, IX, v. 235, p. 383; Fleet, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12), p. 50.
Ibid., (13), p. 53.
Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-63, 65, 87.
Ibid., pp. 65, 67, 88.
Ibid., pp. 89, 94, 96, 97, 98, 100, 111.
M. A. S. I., no. 66, pp. 64-65.
Fleet, *op. cit.*, (66), p. 268.
Ibid., (12), ll. 23-24, p. 50.
[10] Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 119, 122, 124, 129.

fortunes of his lineage, and then, crying 'victory has been achieved' betook himself to (his) mother, whose eyes were full of tears from joy, just as Kṛṣṇa, when he had slain his enemies, betook himself to (his mother) Dēvakī'[1]. This record further relates that he made an image of that famous god Śārṅgin, which was installed and allotted a village to perpetuate its worship and to increase the religious merits of his father.[2] This deity Śārṅgin was the god Viṣṇu, who is said to bear in his hand the bow of horn named Śārṅga.[3]

The Junāgadh rock inscription of Skanda Gupta waxes eloquent in its praise of Viṣṇu. It says: "Victorious is he (the god) Viṣṇu, the perpetual abode of the (goddess) Lakṣmī, whose dwelling is the water-lily; the conqueror of distress; the completely victorious one, who for the sake of the happiness of (Indra), the lord of the gods, seized back from (the demon) Bali, the goddess of wealth and splendour, who is admitted to be worthy of enjoyment, (and) who had been kept away from him for a very long time."[4] Viṣṇu's vehicle Garuḍa is given a further allegorical touch in the sense that the local authority of Skanda Gupta's representatives, "who were so many Garuḍas" was used by him against hostile kings, who were so many "serpents". It has been suggested that this is possibly an allusion to his overthrowing of some well-known Nāga kings.[5] His feudatory Parṇadatta's life is stated to have been devoted "to the worship of the feet of the god Gōvinda", who is Viṣṇu, and he too built a shrine for Viṣṇu, while his son, Cakrapālita, raised another temple for the god Cakrabhṛt.[6] Again, as the Indor copper plate inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated 465-66, reveals Brāhmaṇās like Dēvaviṣṇu,[7] began to use freely the name of the god Viṣṇu, as must have been the case from the times of Candra Gupta II.

2. The Patronage and Spread of Later Bhagavatism

The later and lesser emperors too were the supporters of Viṣṇu. The coins of Pura Gupta, his son Narasiṁha Gupta and his grandson, Kumāra Gupta II, have the figure of Lakṣmī, nimbate, seated facing on a lotus, holding this flower in her left and a fillet in her right hands. On the archer type coins of all these rulers on the left there appears the standard of Garuḍa, the *vāhana* of Viṣṇu.[8]

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (13), p. 55.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[3] *Ibid.*, (33), p. 147
[4] *Ibid.*, (14), pp. 61-62.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 62, f. n. 3.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 65.
[7] *Ibid.*, (16), p. 71.
[8] Allan, *Catalogue*, pp. 135-143.

The Ērāṇ stone pillar inscription of Budha Gupta, dated A. D. 484-85, eulogises the glories of the four-armed god Viṣṇu "whose couch is the broad waters of the four oceans, who is the cause of the continuance, the production, and the destruction etc. of the universe, (and) whose ensign is Garuḍa".[1] The adoption of Viṣṇu's name by now had become so common that we hear how *Mahārāja* Mātṛviṣṇu, the grandson of Varuṇaviṣṇu and the son of Hariviṣṇu, erected a flag-staff of the divine god Janārdana, for increasing the religious merits of his parents. Moreover Mātṛviṣṇu's younger brother, Dhanyaviṣṇu, under the aegis of Toramāṇa, erected a temple for the god Nārāyaṇa, 'who has the form of a boar, who is Viṣṇu'.[2] The Ērāṇ stone boar inscription of Toramāṇa, engraved on the chest of a colossal red stand-stone statue of a boar, eleven feet high, representing the god Viṣṇu, in such an incarnation, opening with an invocation to him, does not necessarily mean that Toramāṇa was a Bhāgavata,[3] but it indicates that he tolerated his feudatory Dhanyaviṣṇu to sing the praises of Viṣṇu, raise standards in his name and build temples for his votaries.

Some of the early feudatories of the Gupta emperors for sometime followed the creed of their overlords. In the Gangdhar inscription of Viśvavarman, dated A. D. 424-25, this ruler, a contemporary of Kumāra Gupta I, glorifies the 'arm of Viṣṇu', and he is compared in strength to this god, stating clearly that he had 'the most extreme devotion towards Viṣṇu'.[4] In A. D. 457-58, Parṇadatta, the governor of the emperor Skanda Gupta in the west (*pūrvvetarasyāṃdiśī*) and the *Gōptā* of the island in that region (*dvīpasyagōptā*-Surāṣṭra) erected a temple of Viṣṇu.[5]

Later on, in the Eastern Country (*Pūvarāṣṭra*) there were occasional followers of Viṣṇu. The Rāypur copper-plate grant of *Rāja* Mahā Sudevarāja hails him as a *Parama Bhāgavata* while on its upper portion is a standing figure of the goddess Lakṣmī.[6] The Aphsad stone inscription of Ādityasēna relates how this ruler caused to be built an excellent temple for the god Viṣṇu. His father Mādhava Gupta, probably his namesake mentioned by Bāṇa as the young associate of Harṣa,[7] was also a Vaiṣṇava, because he is described in

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Fleet, *op. cit.*, (19), p. 90.
Ibid., (36), pp. 160-61.
Ibid.
Ibid., (17), pp. 76-78.
Ibid., (14), p. 65.
Ibid., (41), pp. 196-97.
Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 119, 121, 235.

this record as having carried a discus like Viṣṇu in the palm of his hand.[1] In the Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II, it is revealed how Ādityasēna was styled as a *Parama Bhāgavata.*[2]

In the western regions of the Gupta empire there was occasionally a ruler who professed the Vaiṣṇava faith. *Mahārāja* Dharasena I, according to the Māliyā copper plate grant, dated A. D. 571-72, was a *Parama Bhāgavata.*[3] The Sāranāth stone inscription attributed to the seventh century, pertaining to the reign of king Prakaṭāditya, tells us that he built a shrine for the god Muradviśa viz., Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa.[4] The shrines at Deogarh, Jhansi District, in the United Provinces and at Pathari, in the Bhopal Agency, ascribed to the first half of the sixth century, contain Vaiṣṇava sculptures. A sculpture in the first is stated to represent Viṣṇu reclining on the serpent Ananta with the other gods watching, while that in the second is the new-born Kṛṣṇa, by his mother Dēvaki's side, watched by attendants.[5]

III. Śaivism

1. The Beginnings and Growth of Śaivism

Under the imperial Guptas Śaivism, however, continued to flourish. The Mathura pillar inscription of Candra Gupta Vikramāditya, II, states how in A. D. 380, Ārya Uditācārya, tenth from Bhāgavata Kuśika, fourth from the Bhāgavata Parāśara, installed the images of his *guru* and *guru's guru* Kapila and Upamita respectively in the *guruvāyatana.*[6] From this record it is clear that there was a continuity of preceptors from the founder of the sect, the Lakulīśa Pāśupata, and that image-portraits (*guru-pratimā*) of the preceptors were set up as though in a gallery for their commemoration and the augmentation of religious merit. In this inscription Udita further prays that all *Maheśvaras* and *Ācāryas* should preserve, worship and honour them as their own property.

In the reign of this king cave-temples for the god Śiva were excavated. In the Udayagiri cave inscription of this emperor it is related how Śāba-Vīrasena, the *Saṅdhivigrahika* of Candra Gupta II,

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (42) pp. 207-08.
[2] *Ibid.*, (46) p. 215.
[3] *Ibid.*, (38), p. 165.
[4] *Ibid.*, (79), p. 286.
[5] *Cf.* Smith, *History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, p. 164, pl. XXXVI; also see Brown, *Indian Architecture*, fig 3. pl. XXV.
[6] *E. I.*, XXI, no. 2, p. 9.

who had accompanied his overlord in person, through devotion towards the divine (god) Śambhu, caused the excavation of the Udayagiri cave as a temple for that deity.[1]

Although most of the Gupta emperors were the followers of Bhāgavatism, as their records show they evinced great toleration to other sects like Śaivism, Buddhism and Jainism. The reign of emperor Kumāra Gupta I reveals some evidence of this toleration shown towards Śaivism. In the Bilsaḍ stone pillar inscription of this monarch, dated A. D. 415-16, one Dhruvaśarman is related to have built in a temple of "the divine god Svāmi Mahāsena, whose wondrous form is covered over with the accumulation of the lustre of the three worlds...who is the god Brahmaṇya", a *pratōli* or gateway with a flight of steps, a *sattra* or charitable almshouse and a column to record this donation.[2] *Svāmi* Mahāsena is another name of Kārtikēya, the son of Śiva. In the Karamdaṇḍā inscription of this ruler, dated A. D. 436, obeisance is first made to Mahādeva, while his minister *Kumārāmātya Mahābalādhikṛta* Pṛthvīṣeṇa, is recorded to have given, for the sake of obeisance to the lord Mahādeva, known as Pṛthvīśvara, "proper and righteous offerings," at the feet of the lord Śaileśvarasvāmi Mahādeva, from Ayōdhyā, probably the *liṅga* on which the inscription is inscribed. This epigraph further indicates how Brāhmaṇas in Ayōdhya of different *gōtras* and *caraṇas*, perfect in their respective observances and studies, "in the *mantras*, the *sūtras*, the *bhāṣyas* and *pravacanas*," participated in the procession of the image (*dēvadrōṇi*) (of Śiva?) at Bharāḍi.[3] His feudatory, Bandhuvarman, as the Manḍasor stone inscription, dated A. D. 437-38 suggests, although a worshipper of the sun, was apparently not hostile to the cult of Śiva, for this record refers to the season (*śiśira*) when Kāmadēva's body was destroyed by Hara.[4]

It is possible that the toleration of the Gupta rulers[5] towards Śaivism can be traced to some names given to Gupta emperors. The name of Skanda, the son of Śiva, was given to Skanda Gupta, the son of Kumāra Gūpta. But though his name suggests that he might have been a Śaiva, it has been shown already that he was an ardent Bhāgavata—a *Parama Bhāgavata*. His Bihar stone pillar

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (6), p. 36.
[2] *Ibid.*, (10), pp. 44-45.
[3] *E. I.*, X, no. 15, p. 72.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), p. 87.
[5] On this point see Kunjagovinda Goswami, *I. H. Q.*, XIII, no. 2, pp. 323-28; R. S. Tripathi, *Ibid.*, XV, pp. 1-12; *P. I. H. C.*, 1938, pp. 63-70.

inscription, the first of which is undated, indicates that it belonged to the Śaiva form of worship in its Śākta or Tāntrik development as it refers to the erection of a sacrificial post, (*yūpa*) evidently by some minister whose sister had been espoused by Kumāra Gupta I. This record refers to some deities headed by the god Skanda and by the divine Mothers.[1] These are the *Saptamātṛkas* or the Seven Mothers, generally found together in a group,[2] being the independent manifestations of Pārvatī. In fact, as the Gangdhar stone inscription of Viśvavarman, a feudatory of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 423-24, indicates, his minister (?) Mayūrākṣaka, built not only a shrine of Viṣṇu, but also a temple of these Divine Mothers.[3] This shows how as early as A. D. 423-25 the *Sapta Mātṛkas* became special objects of worship as well as the tutelary deities of the feudatories of the Guptas.[4]

After Skanda Gupta, however, the cult of Śiva did not perish. The Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 475-76, commences with the invocation to Mahādeva.[5] This adoration is repeated in two of his epigraphs dated A. D. 482-83[6] and 510-11, respectively.[7] From these references to Mahādeva in the records of Hastin, it may be inferred that he was a follower of Śiva, a fact which is obviously substantiated by the Bhūmarā stone pillar inscription of Hastin and Śarvanātha, which specially records that the former "meditates on the feet of (the god) Mahādeva."[8]

His successors do not, after all, appear to have been the followers of Śiva, since Saṁkṣōbha was a Vaiṣṇava and built in A. D. 528-29 a temple of the divine goddess Piṣṭapurī, an incarnation of Lakṣmī, the wife of Viṣṇu.[9] It is not possible to ascertain the religious leanings of Oghadēva, Jayaswāminī and Jayanātha, though they were probably Vaiṣṇavas.[10] Jayanātha's son Śarvanātha again was a Vaiṣṇava as he built a shrine for Piṣṭapurikā-dēvī, as his

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12), p. 50-51.

[2] *Cf.* Burgess, *Ellora Cave Temples*, pl. XXXIV; H. Krishna Śāstri, *South Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses*, pp. 190-96.

[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (17), p. 76.

[4] The *Sapta Mātṛkas* were also the tutelary deities of the early Kadaṁbas and Cāḷukyas. *Cf. I. A.*, VI, p. 27, 74; *Ibid.*, VII, p. 162; *Ibid.*, XIII, p. 137.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (21), p. 96.

[6] *Ibid.*, (22), p. 102.

[7] *Ibid.*, (23), p. 107.

[8] *Ibid.*, (24), p. 111.

[9] *Ibid.*, (25), p. 116.

[10] *Ibid.*, (27), p. 122.

fore-father Saṁkṣōbha had done before.[1] His son Śarvanātha, in A. D. 533-34, granted like his father two villages, named Vyāghrapallikā and Kācarapallikā in the Maṇināga pēṭha for the purpose of another shrine of the goddess Piṣṭāpūrika in the town of Mānapura, possibly the modern Mānpur, near the river Son.[2]

Śaivism found, nevertheless, a champion and defender in Yaśodharman, who ruled over a region, as his undated Mandasor stone pillar inscription states, from the Brahmaputra to the western ocean and from the Himālayas to the "mountain Mahēndra." He never bowed his head to any other save Sthāṇu (Śiva) and this record opens with a great prayer to Śūlapāṇi.[3] This homage is again repeated in the Mandasor stone inscription of Yaśodharman and Viṣṇuvardhana, dated A. D. 533-34, although in this record Pināki, Śambhu and Svayaṁbhū are also invoked.[4] As this is an epigraph issued under the joint names of the above mentioned ruler, who had evidently a double name it may be said to be a land-mark in the history of toleration in the Gupta age, as Yaśodharman was an acknowledged Śaiva name and Viṣṇuvardhana as his name suggests, probably a Vaiṣṇava appellation. Among the Hūṇa kings, the chiefs of whom were routed by Yaśodharman,[5] Mihirakula, the son of Toramāṇa, must have been a persecutor of Śaivism, for his Gwalior stone inscription, issued in the fifteenth year of his reign, relates how he himself broke the power of Paśupati.[6]

2. The Development of Śaivism

The Maitrakas of Valabhi were invariably the followers of Śiva. *Senāpati* Bhaṭāraka, the progenitor of this dynasty of rulers, and his royal descendants namely, *Senāpati* Dhārasena I, *Mahārājas* Droṇasiṁha, Dharapaṭṭa, Guhasena, and his son Dharasena II, as his Māliyā copper plate grant dated A. D. 571-72, shows, were all worshippers of the god Maheśvara.[7] The successors of this Guhasena called Śilāditya I, Dharmāditya, Kharagraha I, Dharasena III, Dhruvasena II and Dharasena IV, were also likewise all worshippers of Maheśvara. This faith was adopted by the grandson of Śilāditya I, named Dhruvasena III, and the lineal heirs of Śilāditya II and his namesakes named the III, IV, V, and VI.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (29), p. 132.
[2] *Ibid.*, (31), pp. 136, 138.
[3] *Ibid.*, (33), p. 147.
[4] *Ibid.*, (35), pp. 154-55.
[5] *Ibid.*, (33), p. 148.
[6] *Ibid.*, (37), pp. 162, 163: *Mihirakul-eti-khyāto bhaṅgo yaḥ Paśupatiṃ.*
[7] *Ibid.*, (38), p. 167-69.

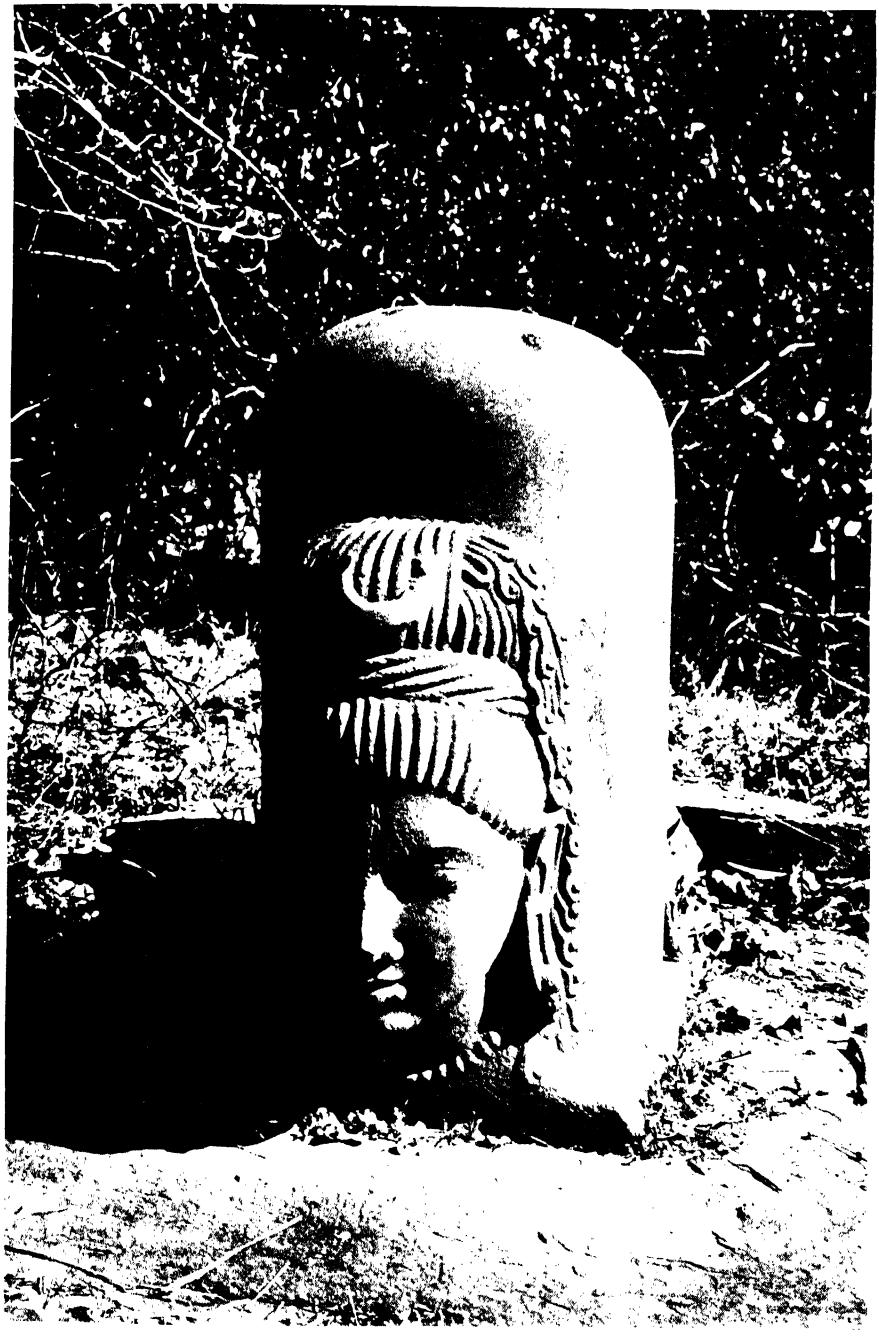
The son of this ruler, christened Dhrūbhaṭa (Dhruvabhaṭa) and his son Śilāditya dēva VII, according to his Alīnā copper plate grant dated A. D. 766-67 were also Śaivites.[1]

Among the Later Guptas and Maukhāris all were not Vaiṣṇavites. The son of Ādityasēnadeva and Kōṇādēvī, the glorious Deva Guptadeva, was the most devout worshipper of the god Maheśvara.[2] Likewise among the Maukhāris, as the undated Nāgārjuni Hill cave inscription indicates king Anantavarman installed an image representing Śiva in the cave of the god Bhūtapati (Śiva) and the goddess Dēvī (Pārvātī).[3] As another undated Nāgārjuni Hill cave inscription of this ruler reveals, this Dēvī was invoked, a charming village granted to the goddess Bhavānī and an image of Kātyāyanī placed in that cave.[4] The former (Bhavānī) it may be remembered, is the name of the goddess Pārvatī in her pacific and amiable form, while the latter is her representation as Durgā, the terrible.

The Vākāṭakas, too, like the Maitrakas of Valabhi, appear to have been the followers of Śiva. The Chammak copper plate grant informs us that the son of Rudrasēna II was a Vaiṣṇava but Rudrasēna I was an excessively sincere devotee of the god Svāmi Mahābhairava. Pṛthvīṣēṇa, a follower of Maheśvara, and his grandson Pravarasena II, possessed "the favour of the god Śambhu." Rudrasena I was the son of the daughter of the illustrious Bhavanāga, *Mahārāja* of the Bhāraśivas, whose royal family owed its origin to the great satisfaction of the god Śiva, caused by their carrying a *liṅga* of Śiva "placed as a load upon their shoulders."[5] The Siwaṇi copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasēna II reiterates all these statements, although this as well as the Chammak copper plate grants were issued in the eighteenth year of his reign.[6]

Traces of later Śaivism especially during the reign of Harṣavardhana of Kanauj, can also be found out. Yüan Chwāng relates that he saw three "*deva*" temples with more than five hundred professed non-Buddhists of the Pāśupata sect at *She-lan-ta-lo* (Jālandhara).[7] At *Ngo-hi-ch'i-ta-lo* (Ahicchatra?) "there were above 300 professed adherents of the other systems of Pāśupatas who worshipped Īśvara

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (39), pp. 181-89.
[2] *Ibid.*, (46), p. 217.
[3] *Ibid.*, (49), p. 225.
[4] *Ibid.*, (50), pp. 227-28.
[5] *Ibid.*, (55), pp. 240-41.
[6] *Ibid.*, (56), pp. 247-49.
[7] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 296; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 176.



(A private record by the Archaeological Survey of India).

Eka Mukha Linga, Nakti-K-Talai, Khoh.

(Śiva)".[1] At *Mo-la-p'o* (Mālwa) the majority of non-Buddhists belonged to this sect.[2] The same was the case at *Mo-hi-ssŭ-fa-lo-pu-lo* (Mahēśvarpura) and at several other places.[3] This Chinese traveller has stated that there were several temples dedicated to Maheśvara at Kānyakubja during his visit to that city.[4] Further, Bāṇa himself while recording that only Pāśupata was the progenitor of his family observes that, among the representatives of other sects who came to visit his patron Harṣa, there were some Pāśupatas.[5]

That Śiva worship prevailed during Harṣa's regime there can be no doubt. Bāṇa relates how the citizens, dependents, councillors, and neighbouring sovereigns honoured the king with presents which were granted in accordance with the custom in Śaiva worship. They gave king Prabhākaravardhana large bulls let loose in honour of Śiva, ringed about their horn-tips with gold-leaf creepers. Other gifts were golden ewers, oblation vessels, censers, flowered clothes, lamps on yellow stands, Brāhmaṇical threads, and *Mukhakośas*[6] inlaid with bits of precious gems.[7]

3. Mahākāla - Worship

The more fiery aspects of Śiva were also worshipped in the days of Kālidāsa. The rite of Mahākāla must have been known to Kālidāsa, for he refers to this deity. In his *Mēghadūta* occur the following words: "Though reaching Mahākāla at any other time (than the evening) thou shouldst stay (wait), O cloud, till the sun is lost to human eyes".[8] From this allusion it is evident that there was at Ujjainī a shrine dedicated to Mahākāla, where people must have congregated to worship the deity. The adoration of Mahākāla, popular in the times of Kālidāsa, appears to have survived to the days of Bāṇa.

Bāṇa in his *Kādambarī* reveals how there was a shrine of Mahākāla at Ujjainī. "There the sun," he narrates, "is daily seen paying homage to Mahākāla, for his steeds vail their heads at

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[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 331; Hiuen Tsiang. *Ibid.*, I, p. 200.
[2] *Ibid.*, II, p. 242; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 260.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 251, 257, 262, 296; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 261, 271, 276.
[4] *Ibid.*, I, p. 352; Hiuen Tsiang, *Ibid.*, I, p. 207.
[5] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 31, 49.
[6] The commentator says: *mukhayuktāḥ-kośā-mukhakośā ye liṅgōpari dīyante:* Perhaps it was a covering for wrapping the image of the *liṅga*.
[7] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
[8] *Mēgh.*, I, 34, p. 29: *apyanyasmin-jaladhara-Mahākālamāsādya kālc.*

the charm of the sweet chant of the women singing in concert in the lofty white palaces, and his pennon droops before him".[1]

Measures to appease this fiery deity appear to have been undertaken only in times of a national crisis. One of such moments was the severe illness of Prabhākaravardhana or his great desire for an heir to succeed him. On the former occasion, says Bāṇa: "Elsewhere distressed young servants were pacifying Mahākāla by holding melting gum on their heads. In another place a group of relatives was intent on an oblation of their own flesh, which they severed with keen knives. Elsewhere again young courtiers were openly resorting to the sale of human flesh."[2] Such a procedure suggests that human sacrifices must have been performed to satiate Mahākāla.

4. The Mahākālahṛdaya Ritual

But what were the rites which gave Mahākāla the greatest satisfaction have not been recorded by Kālidāsa. It is only Bāṇa who gives us an extraordinarily vivid and realistic picture of the rite styled *Mahākālahṛdaya*, which satiated this fiery form of Śiva, in the biographical account of his patron Harṣa. The potent rite called *Mahākālahṛdaya* was performed in a cemetery at night. Bhairavācārya, an ascetic, told Prabhākaravardhana that he had performed in the cemetery the exordium of this rite "by a crore of muttered prayers . . . in garlands, clothes, and unguents, all of black as enjoined in the *Kalpa*. . . " Its completion ended with the slaughter of a goblin and without companions this object was unattainable. He told the king that he was capable of performing this rite, and if he desired to undertake it, he had to be given three assistants, Tīṭibha the mendicant, (*Maskarī*) Pātāḷasvāmin, a Brāhmaṇa, and Karṇatāla, a Dravidian. On the king agreeing to such a suggestion, Bhairavācārya offered Prabhākaravardhana the great sword called Aṭṭahāsa, which Pātāḷasvāmin had received from the hand of a Brahmarākṣasa,[3] so that for one day he might become 'the bolt of one quarter of the heavens'. When the king had accepted it, Bhairavācārya made the following appointment: "Your honour, armed with your sword, will find us in the empty house near the great cemetery here at this hour on the approaching fourteenth night of the dark fortnight".

[1] Bāṇa *Kādaṁbarī*, p. 213. For a description of Mahākālā's temple, see *Ibid.*, pp. 213-214.

[2] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-136.

[3] *Cf.* Manu, XII, 60. p. 497.

When this day arrived, the king after an initiation in the Śaiva ritual, fasted; then he worshipped and honoured with scents, frankincense, and wreaths, the sword Aṭṭahāsa. At the dead of night, clasping a gleaming dagger in his left hand, with Aṭṭahāsa drawn out in his right, the king set forth from the city and reached the appointed spot.

There the three assistants came up and announced themselves, armed, bathed, garlanded and strangely attired. Bāṇa describes them thus: "About their top-knots of flowers ranged murmuring bees, which formed as it were a magical hair tie. On their heads they wore turban wraps with large *Svastika* knots fastened in the centre of their foreheads and resembling huge mystic seals." They wore dazzling ear-rings and brandished sharp swords, and had buckles which bore crescents. They had put on thick new clothes girt with golden chain-belts and daggers were fastened to their waists.

With the king at their head, this party marched to the graveyard where pounded resin, flaming in magic lamps filled the heavens with incense and smoke. In the centre of a great circle of ashes Bhairavācārya was sitting on the breast of a corpse which lay supine, anointed with red sandal and arrayed in garlands, clothes and ornaments all draped in red. Bhairavācārya himself, wearing a black turban, black unguents, a black amulet and black garments, had begun a fire-rite in the mouth of the corpse, where a flame was burning. Then he offered some black sesamum seeds to the corpse. Some lamps were burning near him, from his shoulder hung a Brāhmaṇical string of many threads encircling his form and he was muttering some charms.

Having approached Bhairavācārya, the king saluted and set about his own task. Bāṇa tells us that "Pātālasvāmin chose Indra's quarter, Karṇatāla of Kubēra, Tiṭibha of Prācetas, and the king that marked by Triśaṅku's light".[1] Then Bhairavācārya "entered the case composed of their arms" and proceeded with his awful work. After the opposing fiends had offered fruitless resistance and the uproar had been allayed, at the very instant of midnight, the earth was rent open to the north and not far from the magic circle displayed a fissure. Forthwith from this chasm a Nāga fiend arose. He was dark with thick square shoulders and in his crisp curled hair there gleamed a *Mālati* wreath. He had red eyes, a throbbing voice

[1] *Cf. Rāmāyaṇa*, I, 60.

and he was irregularly bespotted with moist sandal paste. Above a white petticoat, his flank was drawn tight by a long white cotton scarf.

Shouting and sneering at these worshippers, he was about to attack them all, when the three disciples rushed at him but were foiled and dashed to the ground. But the king, with the sword Aṭṭahāsa, fell on him and finished him. Then the king, continues Bāṇa, saw as if in a vision the goddess Lakṣmī[1] who offered him a boon. The monarch besought the success of Bhairavācārya. Highly gratified, the goddess replied: "So be it" and added that, on account of this magnanimity and excessive devotion displayed by him to Śiva, she blest him so that he might be 'the founder of a mighty line of kings persisting unbroken upon earth . . . wherein shall arise an emperor named Harṣa, governor like Hariścandra of all the continents, world conquering like a second Māṅdhātrī, whose chowrie this hand, spontaneously abandoning the lotus, shall grasp.' So saying she vanished."[2]

These details of the *Mahākālahṛdaya* rite evidently give a substantial account of its actual performance in the first half of the seventh century. Possibly Prabhākaravardhana did perform the rite, but Bāṇa's statement as embodied in Lakṣmī's blessing, that Prabhākaravardhana would be the founder of a deathless line, was evidently in the typical courtier's vein of homage to his master, for it is well-known from the Soṇpāt seal inscription of Harṣa that at least two kings, Rājyavardhana I and Ādityavardhana, had preceded Prabhākaravardhana himself.[3] But it is interesting, nevertheless, to note how the performance of such a rite implied probably a human sacrifice.

In such circumstances, therefore, it is not strange that the goddess Kālī evidently found favour with a number of devotees. She was considered to be capable of destroying sin,[4] bringing about happiness,[5] protection,[6] slaughter of foes,[7] purification,[8] and the removal of ignorance.[9] She was known by twenty names, such

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 90–97.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (52), p. 232.
[4] Bāṇa, *Caṇḍīśataka*, I, p. 267.
[5] *Ibid.*, II, p. 268.
[6] *Ibid.*, X, p. 277.
[7] *Ibid.*, XIV, p. 280.
[8] *Ibid.*, LII, p. 316.
[9] *Ibid.*, LVIII, p. 321.

as Dēvī, Śivā, Durgā, Pārvatī, Kālī, Aṁbikā, Kātyāyanī, Umā, Haimavatī, Bhavānī, Bhadrakālī, Gaurī, Kṣamā, Caṇḍikā, Kālarātṛī, Āryā, Sarvāṇī, Rudrāṇī and others.[1] Buffaloes and he-goats (*aja*), birds and other animals were offered as sacrifices to her.[2]

The cult of human sacrifice must have prevailed in northern India as it is corroborated by a terrific experience of Yüan Chwāng, the Chinese traveller. When proceeding eastwards in a ship from Ayodhyā down the Ganges, with about eighty passengers, some pirates pounced on their ship. This Chinese pilgrim, on account of his good looks, was unfortunately selected by them to be offered as a sacrifice to their goddess Durgā, but despite the protests and prayers of his fellow passengers, the pirates would not relent from their object. Then the captain of the gang despatched some men with water to arrange the ground and to erect in the midst of the flowering grove an altar besmeared with mud. He then commanded two of the company to bind the Master of the Law upon an altar. As he showed no signs of fear they were astonished, but in a little time, he is stated to have fixed his thoughts on Maitrēya. Suddenly a black tempest (typhoon) arose and frightened the robbers away.[3] It is worth remembering in this connection that the goddess Durgā was the tutelary deity of the Śabaras and the Kirātas worshipped her as Kāli.[4]

IV. Sun-Worship—Its Significance and Development

1. Features of Early Sun-Worship

The worship of the Sun (*Sūrya*) must have been in existence prior to the rise of Bhāgavatism, for the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, one of the oldest Upaniṣads and an apparently pre-Buddhist work,[5] refers to Kṛṣna Dēvakīputra as a disciple of Ghōra Āṅgīrasa, a priest of the Sun.[6] With the rise of Bhāgavatism and the survival of Saivism,

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, I p. 267, (2), p. 268, etc ; *Cf.* Somadeva, *Kathāsaritsāgara*, IV, pp. 179-80.

[2] *Ibid.*, XXIV, p. 289.

[3] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *The Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, pp. 86-89.

[4] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, pp. 26-28, 90. For further details on the deities of the Kirātas and Śabaras, see B. A. Saletore, *The Wild Tribes in Indian History*, pp. 25-32, 45.

[5] *Cf.* Hopkins, *The Great Epic of India*, pp. 27, 42, 53, 1901 ; Macdonnel, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 226, also see H. C. Ray, *Allusions to Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa in Vedic literature, J. A. S. B.*, (N. S) XIX, pp. 371-73.

[6] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, III, 17, 6; *Kauśitala Brāhmana*, 30, 6.

Buddhism and Jainism during the period of the Śakas and the Kuśāṇas, the cult of Sūrya worship did not perish.

From the fifth century onwards it revived for a considerable time, although it cannot in any way be compared fairly with Bhāgavatism or Śaivism, either in its influence or popularity. As will be seen presently, the cult of Sūrya ultimately merged in that of Viṣṇu, although it preserved a certain individuality of its own. But from the reign of Candra Gupta I till the death of Candra Gupta II, little, indeed, can be ascertained about the worship of the Sun, for it has been noticed that Bhāgavatism and Śaivism not to mention either Buddhism or Jainism, wielded considerable influence. In the days of Kumāra Gupta I, as is revealed in the Mandasor stone inscription dated A. D. 473-74 and issued during the reign of his feudatory Bandhuvarman, the governor of Daśapura, the modern Dasor in the western Malwa Division of Central India, a guild of silk-cloth weavers built a temple of the Sun. It had broad and lofty spires. In the course of a long time, the record continues, under other kings, part of this temple fell into disrepair; therefore, "in order to increase their own fame, the whole of this most novel house of the Sun has been repaired by the munificent corporation..... By the command of the guild and from devotion (this) temple of the Sun was caused to be built."[1] From this inscription it may be observed that Sun-worship, which prevailed in Central India from a considerable time, was patronised by corporations.

Another example may be cited to prove how Sun-worship was followed by guilds in the Antarvēdi country lying between the Ganges and the Jumuna. The Indor copper plate grant of Skanda Gupta I, dated A.D. 465-66, records how a Brahmaṇa named Devaviṣṇu granted a perpetual endowment to a temple of the Sun at Indrapura, the modern Indore.[2] This epigraph was issued during the reign of *Viṣayapati* Śarvanāga, a feudatory of the early Gupta king Skanda Gupta, when he was the governor of Antarvēdi. Moreover, it may be noticed that this endowment referred to in the above grant was made by a Brāhmaṇa; this temple was the perpetual property of the guild of oil-men and a lamp for the divine Sun was established in that shrine by two persons called Kṣatriyas.

In the early days of the sixth century A. D. an inscription records how Sun-worship became occasionally merged in the

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (18), pp. 85, 97.
[2] *Ibid.*, (16), p. 71.

Vaiṣṇava and Saiva creeds. The Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 512-13, reveals how he granted a village named Aśramaka on the north bank of the river Tamasā, the modern Tamas in the Mahiyar State, to four persons (named) for the repairs and maintenance of *bali*, corn, *sattra*, perfumes, incense, garlands and lamps in a temple of Viṣṇu (Bhāgavata) under the name of the sacred Sun (*āditya-bhaṭṭāraka*).[1] A century later, another example may be cited to show how solar worship was, at times, combined with Śaiva worship as well. The Nirmand copper plate grant of *Mahāsāmanta* and *Mahārāja* Samudrasena, ascribed to the seventh century, reveals how he granted the *agrahāra* of Nirmanda to the temple of god Kapāleśvara, and of the holy (god) Mihireśvara, the divine Tripurāntaka.[2] It is interesting to note here that his mother is called Mihiralakṣmī, while he, her son, was a worshipper of Maheśvara.

In the first half of the sixth century (*circa* A. D. 532-33) there were some traces of the survival of Sun-worship under Mihirakula,[3] the son of Toramāṇa. The name of the former suggests that he might have been a Sun-worshipper though his Gwalior stone inscription, issued in the fifteenth year of his reign, points to no such indication. It relates, however, how one Mātrcēta erected on the mountain called Gōpa, the hill on which the Gwalior fortress stands today, a stone temple of the Sun (*bhānoḥ prāsāda*), for the purpose of increasing the religious merit of his parents, of himself and of those who dwelt on that mountain.[4]

There are reasons to believe that Toramāṇa and his son Mihirakula were both worshippers of the Sun and Fire. The former must have succeeded Budha Gupta in his possession of Eastern Malwa, towards the end of the fifth century, and in an extant coin issued by him can be seen the symbol of the wheel. In another coin pertaining to the reign of his son, Mihirakula, on the reverse is a fire-altar and attendants, an emblem probably adopted from Sassanian coinage.[5] The former is a symbol of the Sun and the latter of fire-worship. It is no wonder therefore that under the protection of Mihirakula, a Sun temple was built on the Gōpa mountain, perpetuated by an inscription which commences with an

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (28), pp. 128-29.

[2] *Ibid.*, (80), p. 290.

[3] Concerning the tribe of the Maitrakas, Mihiras or Meharas, see Fleet's note in *I. A.*, XV. p. 361 ff ; also see *E. I.*, III. no. 46, p. 320.

[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (37), p. 163.

[5] Rapson, *Indian Coins*, pl. IV, nos. 19-20. (1897.)

invocation to the Sun, and which is stated to have been composed by a person named Keśava, devoted to the Sun. The Asirgadh copper seal grant of Śarvavarman also shows a wheel or a Sun-emblem on the top of it, and it is known that he was a follower of Maheśvara.[1]

Among the rulers of Valabhi, perhaps the only Maitraka ruler who was a Sun-worshipper was *Mahārāja* Dharapaṭṭa, the younger brother and successor of Dhruvasena I. He is called in the Māliyā copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dhārasena II, as a most devout worshipper of the Sun.[2] If, for instance, twenty-five years each, are allotted to the reigns of Dharasena II, his father Guhasena and his grandfather Dharapaṭṭa, then it may be roughly estimated that he must have been a worshipper of the Sun in about A. D. 496 or towards the end of the fifth century A. D., being almost a contemporary of the Hūṇa king Toramāṇa.

During the age of the Guptas of Magadha, especially during the reign of Jīvita Gupta II, there is evidence to indicate that solar worship was current at Deo-Baraṇārk. The Deo-Baraṇārk inscription of this ruler reveals how the *Bhājaka* Sūryamitra, belonging to the establishment of the sacred god Varuṇasvāmin, was permitted to continue the granting of a village, either Vāruṇika or Kiśoravāṭaka, to the Sun, under the title of Varuṇasvāmin.[3] This name, before it became the name of the ocean-god Varuṇa, being originally considered to have been one of the twelve Ādityas or forms of the Sun,[4] the offspring of Aditi, was only another name of the Sun.[5] This record further relates how these villages had been bestowed from ancient times by *Bālāditya* Śarvavarman and Avantivarman.

2. Sun-Worship in Later Days

Besides the Guptas of Magadha and the Maitrakas of Valabhi, there were other dynasties in the Gupta age, who were the followers of the Sūrya cult. The Puṣpabhūtis of Kanauj were another dynasty devoted to the worship of the Sun. Rājyavardhana I, his son Ādityavardhana, his grandson Prabhākaravardhana and his great-grandson Rājyavardhana II, and his great-great-grandson the famous Harṣavardhana are all declared in the Soṇpaṭ copper seal inscription

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46), p. 219.
[2] *Ibid.*, (38), p. 167, *paramāditya bhakta.*
[3] *Ibid.*, (46), p. 218.
[4] *Cf.* Monier Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, pp. 12, 68.
[5] Muir, *Sanskrit Texts*, I, p. 27, note 42.

of Harṣavardhana, to have been the most devout worshippers of the Sun (*Paramāditya bhakta*).[1] The only exception to this creed in this seal is the illustrious Harṣa (as the epithet regarding his creed is missing in the record) who, however, as is well-known from other sources, was also a worshipper of the Sun as well as that of Śiva and of Buddha.[2]

Bāṇa, his court-poet, affirms that Harsa's father Parabhākaravardhana, was an ardent Sun-worshipper. "The king", he says, referring to the latter, "was by natural proclivity a devotee of the sun (*Ādityabhakta*). Day by day at sun-rise he bathed, arrayed himself in white silk, wrapt his head in a white cloth and kneeling eastwards upon the ground in a circle smeared with saffron paste, presented for an offering a bunch of red lotuses set in a pure vessel of ruby and tinged, like his own heart, with the Sun's hue. Solemnly at dawn, at midday, and at eve he muttered a prayer for offspring, humbly with earnest heart repeating a hymn having the Sun as its centre (*jañjapūka*)".[3] His son might have also been a Sun-worshipper and the title *Paramāditya bhakta* is evidently missing in the Sonpāṭ seal inscription. Yüan Chwāng himself records that at Kānyakubja there were also splendid temples to the Sun-god and to Māheśvara respectively.[4] Bāṇa, moreover, observes how "the moons of the women's foreheads undertook vows of paying homage to him, (the Sun)—being decorated with sandal-lines on their foreheads as sectarial marks, and wearing their curls as the ragged garments of ascetics, and bearing rosaries with the pearly drops of perspiration for beads."[5]

The Indor copper plate grant of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 465-66, gives us some details of the ritual of Sun-worship as it prevailed in the last quarter of the fifth century A. D. The Brāhmaṇa grantor of the endowment for the Sun-temple at Indrapura always recited "the hymns of the *hōtra* sacrifice", and the proceeds of his grant were to be utilised for the maintenance of a lamp for the divine Sun, for which two *pālas*[6] of oil by weight were provided.[7] The *Agnihōtra* was one

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (52), p. 232. *Cf.* Gupta epithet—*Paramabhāgavata.*

[2] *Cf.* Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 344; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 218.

[3] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 104, text, p. 123: *Jañjapūko mantraṃ Āditya hṛdayaṃ. Cf.* Weber, *Ind. Stud.*, IX, p. 91.

[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 352; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I. p. 223.

[5] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.

[6] One *pāla=4 suvarṇas* (*gold pieces*) or 64 *māṣas* (beans). *Cf. Mānavadharmaśāstra* VIII, p. 135, trans. p. 200. (Burnell.)

[7] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (16), p. 71.

of the five great sacrificial rites, the rest being *bali*, *caru*, *vaiśvadēva* and *atithi*, as revealed in the Mālīyā and Alīna copper plate grants of Dharasena II and of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 571-72 and 766-67 respectively.[1]

In the kingdom of the Later Guptas of Magadha, as the Deo-Bāraṇārk inscription of Jīvita Gupta II suggests, the priest in charge of the Sun-temple at Vāruṇikā, the modern Deo-Baraṇārk, was called Bhōjaka, an official title applied to priests named Sūryamitra, Haṁsamitra, Ṛṣimitra and Duradhamitra.[2]

V. Buddhism

I. Aspects of Buddhism during the early Guptas

With the advent of the imperial Guptas, the Buddhist religion continued to survive along with other faiths like Bhāgawatism, Śaivism and Jainism. The beginnings of the history of Buddhism during the imperial Guptas are still lost in the mists of antiquity and are therefore obscure although some information can be gathered from the accounts of Chinese travellers. Hwui Lun, ascribed to A. D. 665 relates the following account which was recorded by I-Tsing: "The old story goes that this temple (Mṛgaśikhavana) was built by Śrī Gupta for the use of priests from China. At this time there were some monks, twenty or so in number, who, having wandered away from Sz'chuen by the road known as Ko-yang (?) came out near the Mahābodhi and there offered their worship. The king moved with reverence on account of their piety, gave them a village of considerable extent, where they might remain and finally settle—twenty-four places in all.....This occurred some five hundred years ago or so."[3] If this were historically correct then it would mean that there must have been a monarch in A. D. 118, namely five hundred years prior to the record of I-Tsing (A. D. 618-907), but we have already examined the circumstances, which led to the rise of the imperial Guptas and it is difficult, in the teeth of existing evidence, to state that there was a Gupta ruler called Śrī Gupta so early as A. D. 118, or that this Śrī Gupta was in any way connected with his name-sake who may be styled the progenitor of the imperial Guptas. It is very likely therefore that there was a Śrī Gupta who had no connections with the Śrī Gupta, the great-grand-father of Samudra Gupta. We have moreover already

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 170; (39), p. 190.

[2] *Ibid.*, (46), p. 218; Monier Williams, *Dictionary*, p. 768.

[3] *Cf.* C.S.K. Rao Sahib, *Śrī Gupta*, *Q.J.M.S.* XXIV, no. 3, pp. 218-23. I intend discussing this question at length in a separate paper.

noticed that, prior to the advent of the imperial Guptas there were many rulers who evidently belonged to the Gupta family but who need not necessarily have belonged to the imperial Gupta dynasty. It is interesting to note here that the Chinese writer I-Tsing in the seventh century recorded the above tradition that a *Mahārāja* Śrī Gupta built a temple near Mṛgaśikhavana and according to him this Śrī Gupta would be placed about A. D. 118[1]. Mr Allan, however, is not disposed to accept this date, as he identifies this Śrī Gupta with the founder of the imperial Guptas,[2] who, as has been already pointed out must have lived at least a century later. Fleet was correct in pointing out that the Śri Gupta of Chinese tradition cannot be identified with the progenitor of the imperial Gupta family.[3] It must be remembered here that the Chinese traveller Hwui Lun (whose memoirs were written by I-Tsing) recorded this tradition nearly five hundred years after the advent of the Buddhist Śrī Gupta, and hence much reliance cannot be placed in their evidence.

Hiuen Tsiang in his turn also refers to a Śrī Gupta, who was at first a hater of Buddhism but later on became a convert. "To the north of this place", he observes, "not far off, (Rājagṛha?) there is a very deep ditch, by the side of which is built a *stūpa*; this is the spot where Śrī Gupta (*She-li-kio-to*) wished to destroy Buddha by means of fire concealed in the ditch and poisoned rice." But owing to a miracle which Buddha performed, this Śrī Gupta became a disciple of Buddha.[4] This Śrī Gupta was a contemporary of Buddha, and was at first a persecutor of Buddhists but later on adopted the Buddhist faith himself. This Śrī Gupta therefore cannot be identified with the Śrī Gupta mentioned by either Hwui Lun or I-Tsing or even with the Śrī Gupta of Gupta history. In fact, as Fleet pointed out long ago, there were quite a number of Śrī Guptas prior to the advent of the imperial Guptas and they should not be confounded with the progenitor of the Gupta dynasty,[5] who is referred to in Jaina tradition as well.[6]

It is interesting to note, however, that this shrine of Mṛgaśikhavana continued to flourish till the seventh century. Hwui Lun records how "Afterwards the Tang priests, having died out, the village

[1] *I. A., X, p.* 110.
[2] Allan, *Catalogue,* Intr. p. XV.
[3] Fleet, *C. I. I.,* III, pp. 8-9. f. n. 3.
[4] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.,* I, pp. 151-52.; also see Shamans Hwui Lun and Yen Tsung, *Life,* pp. 113-14.
[5] Fleet, *op. cit.,* pp. 8-9.
[6] *Cf., Harivaṁsa Purāṇa,* Ch. LX, *I. A., XV,* p. 142.

and its land attached came into the possession of aliens, and now these persons belonging to Mṛgaśikhavana Temple occupy it. This occurred some 500 years or so. The territory now belongs to the king of Eastern India, whose name is Devavarmā. He has given back the temple and its land to the villagers to avoid the expense of keeping it up, as he would have to do, if many priests came there."[1] From this information three conclusions may be drawn: first, that land granted even in perpetuity to a religious community like that of the Buddhists, reverted on its extinction to the State,[2] secondly, that such plots were again granted by the king to similar institutions especially on financial considerations; thirdly, that there was in the 7th century a tolerant ruler named Devavarmā, who was in all probability a kinsman or relation of the later Maukhāri rulers like Pūrṇavarman and Bhōvarman, about whom mention has already been made.[3]

But nevertheless it cannot be said that Buddhism did not flourish during the early Imperial Guptas like Candra Gupta I and his illustrious son Samudra Gupta, although we have, of course, not much evidence in support of such a conclusion. We are, however, informed that during the reign of Samudra Gupta, king Mēghavarṇa of Ceylon sent an embassy to the Gupta court to obtain permission to build a monastery at Bōdh-Gayā. If this tradition were again to be given credence then it would appear to be more or less a variation of the visitation of the Chinese priests who visited the dominions of the Srī Gupta as recorded by I-Tsing and Hwui Lun. The two sources of information for the details of this embassy are the history of the Chinese ambassador Wang-Hiuen-t'se, ascribed to about the middle of the seventh century A. D., and the well-known seventh century traveller Yüan Chwāng. The former was sent by the Chinese emperor T'ang T'ai Tsung and he came to the district of Bōdh-Gayā where he was entertained by the monks as the guest of the establishment.[4]

Wang Hiuen T'se states that two monks, the senior named Mahānāman and the junior called Upa-? were sent by king Mēghavarṇa of Ceylon to pay homage to the Diamond Throne and to visit

[1] There is a Chinese book in two parts called *K'iu-fā-ko-sang-chüan*, which contains brief memories of Chinese Buddhist priests who visited India during the early period of the I-Tsing of the same dynasty. (A.D. 618-807). *I. A.*, X, p. 109-110.

[2] *Cf.* For further details on this point see Chapter V *ante*, Sect. II, pp. 327-41.

[3] *Cf.* Chapter I *ante*, Sect. III, 9, pp. 80-82.

[4] *Cf.* Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 137-38. Sylvan Levi, *The Inscriptions of Mahānāman at Bodh-Gayā*, *I. A.*, XXXI, p. 192; *Mahāvaṁśa*, p. XXXIX (trans. 1912); Smith, *E. I. H.*, pp. 303 4. (4th ed); *Revised Chronology of the Early or Imperial Guptas*, *I. A.*, XXXI, p. 257.

Aśōka's monastery to the east of the Bōdhi Tree. As they were not properly received, on their return they complained about the scant hospitality, which was offered to them during their visit, to their king Mēghavarṇa, who, however, thereupon sent them back with valuable presents to the ruler of northern India (Samudra Gupta?) under whose patronage suitable arrangements were made for the residence of the Ceylonese pilgrim from that time onwards at Bodh Gaya.[1]

Yüan Chwāng while, commemorating the same old tradition observes that a king of Ceylon had a brother who, on becoming a monk went to India where he endured great hardship during his visit to the holy Buddhist places and on his return to Ceylon complained about it to his brother whom he besought to build monasteries at all holy Buddhist places in India. The king, on accepting this suggestion, despatched an envoy to the Indian monarch named *Mahā Śrī Rāja* with gifts and jewels of all kinds, which the Indian ruler accepted as tribute and in return granted the envoy permission to erect a monastery at one of the holy places where the Tathāgata had left traces of his presence. When the envoy returned home to Ceylon, the king after due deliberation decided to build the monastery, which was specially assigned for the accommodation of the priests from that land, so that priests from there could "obtain independence and be treated as members of the fraternity of this country."[2]

A comparison of these two accounts reveals the following discrepancies. Wang Hiuen T'se does not name the ruler of India, while Yüan Chwāng does, calling him *Mahā Srī Rāja*, who has been identified with Samudra Gupta, who had the title of *Mahārājādhirāja*. Wang Hiuen T'se tells us that two monks came to India, while Yüan Chwāng relates that only one monk came to India and that that monk was a brother of the king of Ceylon, but this relationship is not mentioned by Wang Hiuen T'se who, however, names the king of Ceylon. Nevertheless, it may be concluded from these two accounts that some monks probably came to India with a view to visit Buddhist religious places and they must have been received with little courtesy, about which, on their return home they must have complained to their king. This ruler, on considering over the

[1] Sylvan Levi, *J. A., Mai-Jun.*, 1900, pp. 406-11; reprint, pp. 45-55; Smith, *The Ins. of Mahānāman at Bōdh Gayā, I. A.*, XXXI, p. 192; *Mahāvamsa, p*, XXXIX, (trans. 1912) also see Smith, *Revised Chronology of the Early or Imperial Guptas, I.A.*, XXXIX, p. 257.

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 137-38; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 133-35.

matter must have come to the conclusion that, in order to ensure the safety and comforts of pilgrims from his country, it would be desirable to send an embassy to the Indian court with a request for permission to build a monastery at Bōdh Gāya where in future Ceylonese monks could stay in peace during their pilgrimages to India. The Indian king must have been highly flattered when he saw that an embassy had been sent to his court by a foreign potentate and readily granted the required permission to build the monastery, where henceforth Ceylonese monks lived undisturbed till the seventh century. This can be proved from the fact that, when Wu-hsing and his companion, Tao-Fang, arrived at the monastery of Bōdh Gayā, the great officials there made them honorary members (*Chu-Jen*). The pilgrim Tao-Fang like Wang Hiuen T'se, on his arrival at that monastery, was received there as the head of the establishment.[1]

Little can be gathered about the state of the Buddhist faith during the brief and troubled reign of Rāma Gupta.

But from the reign of his successor Candra Gupta II, the history of Buddhism can be traced with some precision, on account of the existence of contemporary epigraphs and travellers' accounts. If Bodh Gayā continued to be an important centre of Buddhism during the reign of Samudra Gupta, then during the regime of his son Candra Gupta II, Sāñcī was not insignificant from that point of view. The Sāñcī stone inscription of this emperor, dated A. D. 412-13, shows that there was a great *vihāra* at Kākanādabōṭa (Sāñcī), where an official of Candra Gupta II, named Āmrakārdava, made an endowment of twenty-five *dināras*, the interest on which was to be used in providing for the maintenance of five *bhikṣus* and the burning of a lamp in the *ratnagṛha*.[2]

But it is the Chinese traveller Fa Hien who gives us a detailed account of the state of Buddhism in northern India between A. D. 399-414. He noticed that it flourished at Gāndhāra, where the people were mostly students of the Hīnayāna school.[3] There were more than seven hundred monks at Puruṣapura (Peshawar), where there was a great stūpa.[4] The faith prevailed at *He-lo* (Hidda), the country of *Nagara*, *Lo-e* (Rohi), *Pe-t'oo* (Bhida)[5], but at *Ma-t'āou-lo* (Mathurā)

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 137-38; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 133-35.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (5), pp. 32-33.

[3] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-32, 1886.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 36-42. Hidda is to west of Peshawar, five miles south of Jelalabad. Rohi, is a name for Afghanistan—only a portion being, here intended, while Bhiḍa is a portion of the Punjab.

there were, according to him three thousand monks. "Everywhere," he adds, "from the sandy desert, in all the countries of India, the kings had been firm believers in that Law"; and after Buddha's death the kings of the various countries and the heads of the Vaiśyas built *vihāras* for the priests and endowed them with fields, gardens and orchards in perpetuity.[1] He observed that at Śankāsya (*Samkāssaṃ*)[2] a thousand monks and nuns received their food from the common store, some being Hīnayānists and some Mahāyānists.[3] At Kānyakubja he found two monasteries filled with students of Hīnayāna. *Shā-che* (Saketa?) Śrāvastī, Kosala, were all filled with the ruins of Buddhist monasteries. Kapilavastu was deserted, at Rāmagrāma there were a few monks, and at Kuśinagara, the inhabitants were few and far between, and to the north of the city of Vaiśālī was a large forest, having in it a large *vihāra*. At Pāṭaliputra there were two monasteries, one Mahāyānist and the other Hīnayānist, and the inhabitants celebrated an annual procession of images. Rājagṛha, the Gṛidhrakūṭa hill,[4] was filled with Buddhist ruins, Gaya was empty and desolate but in Vāraṇāsī (Benares) he found some monks.[5]

From the reign of Kumāra Gupta I onwards some traces of Buddhism can be noticed. The Mankuwar stone image inscription of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 448-49, records how the *Bhikṣu* Buddhamitra installed an image of the Buddha.[6] An attempt has been made to identify this Buddhamitra with his namesake, the teacher of Vasubandhu.[7] As in the times of Candra Gupta II and earlier, Sāñcī continued to maintain some importance as a centre of Buddhism. The Sāñcī stone inscription ascribed to the reign either of Kumāra Gupta or to that of his son and successor Skanda Gupta dated A.D. 450-51, refers to the great stūpa at Sāñcī. It relates how the *upāsikā* Harisvāminī, for the sake of her parents, gave twelve *dināras* as a permanent endowment to the community of the faithful at the great *vihāra* of Kākanādaboṭa. The interest accruing from this sum was to be utilized for feeding one *Bhikṣu*, introduced into the community. She gave three *dināras* to the jewel-house (*ratna-gṛha*)

[1] Fa Hien, *op, cit.*, pp. 42-43.

[2] Samkassam is a village 45 miles north-west of Kanauj.

[3] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-53.

[4] A hill near the village of Giryek, on the bank of the Pancana river, about 36 miles from Gaya.

[5] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-96.

[6] Fleet *op. cit.*, (II), p. 47.

[7] K. B. Pathak, *I. A.*, 1912, p. 244; also see Allan, *Catalogue*, p. xlii.

and one in the place where the images of four Buddhas are seated (*catur-Buddhāsana*).[1]

In several places Buddhism lingered. Mathurā also must have continued to shelter and patronise some Buddhists. The Mathurā stone inscription, probably issued during the reign of Skanda Gupta, and dated A. D. 454-55, records the gift of a statue by the *Vihārasvāminī* Dēvatā.[2] The Deorīya stone image inscription, attributed to about the fifth century A. D., likewise registers the gift of a statue of Buddha by a Śākya mendicant named Bodhivarman.[3] Another epigraph, probably of the same age as the preceding one, styled as the Kāsia stone inscription, states how *Mahāvihārasvāmin* Haribala made a similar gift.[4] The Sāñcī stone inscription, which is not dated and which does not refer to the reign of any king, but which is assigned on palaeographic grounds to about the fifth century, reveals the gift of a pillar on which it is inscribed, by a *Vihārasvāmin*.[5] The *Bhikṣu*, Harigupta, according to the Sārnāth stone inscription of the same period, caused an image to be made for enhancing the religious merit of his spiritual preceptor and parents.[6]

In the sixth century, in some of the centres of Buddhism noticed above, this faith did not completely perish. In the Mathurā stone image inscription, dated A. D. 548—50, we are told how a Śākya female mendicant named Jayabhaṭṭā made the gift of a standing statue of Buddha, crowned with a nimbus behind his head and shoulders, to a monastery called the Yaśōvihāra.[7] Another Buddhist place of importance was Bodhimaṇḍa (Bodh-Gayā). The Bodh-Gayā image inscription of Mahānāman, dated A. D. 588—89, relates how Mahānāman II, an inhabitant of Āmradvīpa, born in the island of Laṅkā, delightful in the welfare of others, caused to be built a beautiful mansion (*maṇḍapa*) of Buddha. It was dazzling white and had an open pavilion on all sides.[8] This donor appears to have made another gift of a Buddha statue at Bodh-Gayā.[9] The suggestion that this Mahānāman was in all probability the scholar of that name who

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (63), p. 262.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 263.
[3] *Ibid.*, (68), p. 272.
[4] *Ibid.*, (69), p. 273.
[5] *Ibid.*, (73), p. 280.
[6] *Ibid.*, (75), p. 281.
[7] *Ibid.*, (70), p. 274.
[8] *Ibid.*, (71), p. 278.
[9] *Ibid.*, (72), p. 279.

composed the more ancient part of the Pāli *Mahāvaṁsa* or the history of Ceylon, cannot be reconciled with certain chronological difficulties which stand in the way of its acceptance.[1] Yet another epigraph from this place mentions the gift of an image of Buddha by two Śākya *bhikkus*, Dharmagupta and Daṁṣṭrasēna.[2]

2. Aspects of Later Buddhism

In the first half of the seventh century (A. D. 629-643) the enthusiastic Chinese traveller Yüan Chwāng gives us a survey of the conditions of Buddhism. At Bāmiyan there were numerous Buddhist monasteries with several thousands of brethren who were adherents of the Hīnayāna school, while at *Ka-pi-shih* (Kapiś) there were above one hundred monasteries with more than six hundred brethren who were chiefly Mahāyānists. At *Lan-p'o* (Lampa) there were above ten Buddhist monasteries and a few brethren most of whom were Mahāyānists. In Gāndhāra over a thousand Buddhist convents were utterly dilapidated and untenanted.[3]

Across the banks of the Indus, there were traces of Buddhism. At Takṣaśilā (Taxilā) although the monasteries were numerous, many of them were desolate and the brethren, who were very few, were all Mahāyānists. *Sêng-ha-pu-lo* (Siṁhapura) was a Jaina centre, with a monastery having more than a hundred Mahāyānists.[4] Yüan Chwāng states that in Kashmir there were over a hundred monasteries and more than five thousand monks, while in the *Ho-lo-she-pu-lo* (Rājapura?) country there existed ten Buddhist monasteries but the brethren were few in numbers. In the *Che-ka* (Tekka?) country there were only ten Buddhist monasteries; and there lived as many in *Chi-na-p'u-ti* (Cina-Bhukti), while the *Ta-mo-sa-fa-na* (Tamasāvana) monastery protected more than three hundred Hīnayānists. *She-lan-to-lo* (Jālandhara) had more than fifty monasteries in which there were more than two thousand monks who had specialised in the Great and Little Vehicles, while in the *P'o-li-ye-ta-lo* (Pāriyātra) eight monasteries though in ruins sheltered a few Hīnayānists. More than two thousand monks and twenty monasteries survived at Mathurā, while at *Sa-t'a-ni-ssu-fa-lo* (Sthāṇvīśvara) in three *vihāras* there were seven hundred Hīnayānists and at *Mo-t'i-pu-lo* (Matipura) more than ten *saṁghārāmas* which were occupied by eight hundred monks, still maintained the faith of the

[1] *Cf.* Fleet, *op. cit.*, (71), p. 275; Turnour, *Mahāvamsa*, pp. ii, liv, lxii; *J. A. S. B.*, VII, p. 922.

[2] *Ibid.*, (76), p. 282.

[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 110, 122, 181, 202; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 98.

[4] *Ibid.*, I, pp. 240, 251, 255; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 143-44.

Buddha. At Kānyakubja too above one hundred Buddhist convents continued to be the homes of more than ten thousand brethren, who were the students of both the Vehicles.[1]

In considering this survey of the condition of Buddhism as revealed by the traveller Yüan Chwāng, it may first be borne in mind that he was primarily an enthusiastic Buddhist sojourner; and from what we read about his accounts of these monasteries it is highly probable that he recorded all his information about them, evidently from hearsay which appears to have been tinged with some exaggeration. Moreover, his constant vagueness about the numerical strength of the convents makes it almost conclusive that he was not at all quite sure of what he stated or what he possibly heard. But his narrative gives us, nevertheless, an exaggerated yet typical Buddhist view of the condition of the faith as it survived in northern India in the first half of the seventh century.

Yüan Chwāng not only offers us some details of the state of the Buddhist religion, but he also throws much light on some features of its patronage by Harṣa, who was of course not exclusively a Buddhist himself. "He erected thousands of topes", says Yüan Chwāng, "on the banks of the Ganges, and erected Buddhist monasteries at sacred places of the Buddhists. He regularly held the Quinquennial Convocation; and gave away in religious alms every thing except the material of war. Once a year he summoned all the Buddhist monks together, and for twentyone days supplied them with the regulation requisites. He furnished the chapels and liberally adorned the common halls of the monasteries. He brought the Brethren together for examination and discussion, giving rewards and punishments according to merit and demerit."[2] Despite this it is well-known from Harṣa's epigraphs that he was possibly also a Sun-worshipper and not an avowed Buddhist.

3. Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna Controversies

Another important characteristic of Buddhism of this period is the constant feud which raged between the followers of the Little and the Great Vehicles. As Yüan Chwāng noticed "the tenets of the schools keep these isolated, and controversy runs high; heresies on special doctrines lead many ways to the same end. Each

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 284, 286, 291, 294, 296, 300, 301, 314, 322 and 340; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I. p. 207.

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I. p. 344; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 214.

of the eighteen schools claims to have intellectual superiority."[1] It has been recorded by Yüan Chwāng that in Orissa the Buddhist priests were the students of the Little Vehicle and did not believe in the Great Vehicle and when Harṣa visited that place, they scorned the followers of the Great Vehicle. On Harṣa's despatching a messenger to Nālandā with a letter to Śīlabadra to send four scholars of ability to Orissa, he selected Sāgaramati, Prajñarasmi, Siṁharasmi and the Master of the Law, Yüan Chwāng, who were the best representatives of the Great Vehicle, but on receiving again another letter from Harṣa that there was no immediate pressure for his former request, they were not sent to Orissa.

But sometimes the followers of other sects also came forward to discuss problems of religion. About the time when the above mentioned incidents occurred, a heretic of the "Shun-si" sect (the *Lōkāyatikās*), who came to dispute with the Nālandā monks, wrote out forty theses and hung them up at the Temple gate. "If any one within can refute these principles", he said, "I will give my head as a proof of his victory." Several days having passed without any response to this challenge, the Master of the Law sent an attendant from his quarters to go and pull down the document, tear it to pieces and trample it under foot. The Brāhmaṇa was enraged but the Master of the Law bade him come in and discuss the points, and in the presence of all the priests and Śilabhadra discussed the matter with him. He then examined in succession the various opinions of the different heretical schools and said: "The Bhūtas, Nirgranthas, the Kāpālikas, and the Jūtikas, are all differently arrayed." But in the end the Brāhmaṇa was defeated, became a slave and later a liberated admirer of Yüan Chwāng, went to Kāmarūpa and informed Kumāra Rāja about the high qualities of this Chinese scholar. The result was that Yüan Chwāng received an invitation from Kumāra Rāja to visit Kāmarūpa.[2]

But the best example of this conflict between the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna schools can be seen in the convocation of the Grand Assembly called "*Mōkṣa*"[3] which Harṣa convoked in order to settle their differences. To use Harṣa's own words he proposed to "call a grand assembly in the town of Kānyakubja, and command the Śramaṇas and Brāhmaṇās and heretics of the Five Indies to attend in order to exhibit the refinements of the Great Vehicle, and demo-

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *Life*, pp. 159-61.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 161-65; *cf.* Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 236.

[3] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 214.

lish their abusive mind, and to make manifest the exceeding merit of the Master (Yüan Chwāng), and overthrow their (Little Vehicle) proud thought of 'self'."

On the same day Harṣa sent an order throughout the country that all the disciples of the various schools should assemble at Kānyakubja to examine the treatise of Yüan Chwāng. Then the Chinese pilgrim, at the beginning of winter, in company with Harṣa, advanced up to the river Ganges and arrived at the rendezvous.

What actually happened there can best be described in Yüan Chwāng's own words: "There were present kings of eighteen countries of the five Indies; three thousand priests thoroughly acquainted with the Little and Great Vehicle, besides about three thousand Brāhmaṇs and Nirgranthas and about a thousand priests of the Nālandā monastery. All these noted persons, alike celebrated for their literary skill, as for their dialectic, attended the assembly with a view to consider and listen to the sounds of the Law; they were accompanied with followers, some on elephants, some in chariots, some in palanquins, some under canopies. Each was surrounded by its own peculiar attendants, like the clouds for multitude, which in the winter time spread through many scores of miles.....

"The King had previously ordered two thatched halls to be constructed at the place of the assembly for receiving the figures (*of Buddha*) and the body of the disciples.

"When he (Harṣa) arrived they were both finished; they were lofty and spacious, each capable of seating a thousand persons. The travelling palace of the king was some five *li* to the west of the place of assembly; he had in this palace cast a golden statue, and now, ordering a great elephant to be equipped with a precious daïs on its back, he placed therein (*the statue of*) Buddha. Then Śilāditya rāja, under the form of Lord Śakra, with a white chowrie in his hand, went on the right, and Kumāra-rāja, under the form of Brāhma-rāja, with a precious parasol in his hand, went to the left. They both wore tiaras like the Dēvas, with flower wreaths and jewelled ribbons.

"Moreover, they harnessed two other great elephants and loaded them with jewels and flowers (or, *precious flowers*) to follow behind the image of Buddha, and each step they took they scattered these flowers abroad.

"The Master of the Law and the chief servants of the king were directed severally to mount a great elephant, and to follow the king in order; moreover, there were other 300 great elephants, appointed for the princes, great ministers, and chief priests of the different countries, on which they rode in double file on each side of the procession course, chanting laudatory verses as they went. The procession began at early dawn from the travelling palace (*of the king*). As they drew nigh the gate of the outer court of the place of assembly, each one was directed to dismount whilst they conducted the figure of the Buddha within the hall. There they placed it on a precious throne, whilst the king and the Master of the Law presented it with offerings.

"After this the king ordered the princes of the eighteen countries to enter the Hall; then, of the most renowned priests celebrated for learning he selected about one thousand to enter the hall; of celebrated Brāhmaṇs and followers of heretical doctrine he selected five hundred to enter the hall, and about two hundred of the great ministers of the different kingdoms. The unbelievers and secular persons (*who were not able to be admitted*) he ordered to be seated outside the gate of the entrance hall.

"The king then sent to those within and without, alike, food to eat. This done he presented as an offering to Buddha, a golden dish, a golden cup, seven golden ewers, one golden staff, three thousand gold pieces, and three thousand vestments of superior cotton-stuff.

"The Master of the Law and the other priests each offered according to their different ability.

"This being over, the king caused a precious couch to be arranged, and invited the Master of the Law to sit upon it as lord of the discussion.

"The Master then began to extol the teaching of "the Great Vehicle," and announced a subject for discussion, and he commissioned *Ming-hien*, a Shaman of the Nālandā monastery, to exhibit it to the members of the great Community. He also caused a placard to be written and hung outside the door of the place of assembly, exhibiting the same to the whole people, and adding, "if there is any one who can find a single word in the proposition contrary to reason, or is able to entangle (*the argument*), then at the request of the opponent, I offer my head as a recompense."[1]

[1] *Cf.* Martin Luther affixing his thesis to the Church at Wittenberg. For later similar practices see Rice, *Mysore and Coorg*, p. 33.

"Thus until night there was no one who came forward to say a word.

"Śilāditya-rāja, very well pleased at the event, adjourned the assembly and returned to his place; whilst the princes and the priests all returned to their resting places. So also Kumāra-rāja and the Master of the Law retired to their resting-places.

"On the morrow they again escorted the image, the king and the others, as before.

"After five days had passed, the unbelievers of the Little Vehicle, seeing he had overturned their school, filled with spleen, plotted to take his life."

Harṣa, on hearing about this, issued a proclamation that if any one should hurt or touch the Master of the Law, he would be forthwith beheaded; whoever spoke against him, his tongue would be cut, but all who desired to profit by his instruction need not fear this manifesto.[1] "From this time the followers of error withdrew and disappeared, so that when eighteen days had passed there had been no one to enter on the discussion." On the evening before the dispersion of this assembly "a vast number of men were converted from error and entered on the right path." Finally Śilāditya, revering Yüan Chwāng more than ever, bestowed on him 10,000 pieces of gold, 30,000 pieces of silver, 100 garments of superior cotton, whilst the princes of the eighteen kingdoms each presented him with rare jewels. But all these the Master of the Law declined to accept.

In conclusion Harṣa paid Yüan Chwāng the highest honours which he could bestow on a scholar of his reputation for achieving this success in defeating the followers of the Little Vehicle. "The king then ordered his attendant ministers to place a howdha upon a great elephant, with the request that the Master of the Law would mount thereon, whilst he directed the great Ministers of state to accompany him; and as they passed through the throng he directed the proclamation to be made that "he had established the standard of right doctrine, without gainsaying." Yüan Chwāng was loth to accept this honour but Harṣa prevailed upon him and issued the proclamation that "the Master of the Law from the kingdom of China has established the principles of the Great Vehicle and overthrown all opposing doctrines; for eighteen days no one has dared to enter on the discussion. Let this be known everywhere, as

[1] On the types of punishments in Gupta times see ch. IV, *ante*, sec. VI, pp. 277-287.

it ought to be!" The whole multitude was filled with joy on account of Yüan Chwāng's success and all wished to fix for him a name in connection with his principles. "The congregation of the Great Vehicle called him Mahāyāna Deva, while the followers of the Little Vehicle styled him Mokṣa Deva; i.e., the Deva of deliverance. Then they burnt incense, and scattered flowers, and paid him reverence and departed." [1]

It is worth noting that during such a quinquennial assembly, at least, according to Buddhist travellers there appears to have been an extraordinary display of royal munificence. Yüan Chwāng tells us that Harṣa distributed his wealth in the following way: "Once in five years he (Harṣa) held the great assembly called *Mōkṣa*. He emptied his treasuries to give all away in charity, only reserving the soldiers' arms, which were unfit to give as alms. Every year he assembled the Śramaṇas from all countries, and on the third and seventh days he bestowed on them in charity the four kinds of alms (*viz.*, food, drink, medicine, clothing). He decorated the throne of the law (*the pulpit*) and extensively ornamented (*arranged*) the oratories. He ordered the priests to carry on discussions, and himself judged of their several arguments, whether they were weak or powerful. He rewarded the good and punished the wicked, degraded the evil and promoted the men of talent. If any one (*of the priests*) walked according to the moral precepts, and was distinguished in addition for purity in religion (*reason*), he himself conducted such an one to "*the lion—throne*" and received from him the precepts of the law. If any one, though distinguished for purity of life, had no distinction for learning, he was reverenced, but not highly honoured. If any one disregarded the rules of morality and was notorious for his disregard of propriety, him he banished from the country, and would neither see him nor listen to him. If any of the neighbouring princes or their chief ministers lived religiously, with earnest purpose, and aspired to a virtuous character without regarding labour, he led him by the hand to occupy the same seat with himself, and called him "illustrious friend"; but he disdained to look upon those of a different character." [2] If these details were

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *Life*, pp. 177-181; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 218-21. Padmapāṇi, a non-Tantra form of Avalokiteśvara, is supposed to have created the actual world and produced Brahma for creating; Viṣṇu for preserving and Mahēśa (Śiva) for destroying the universe. See Alice Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, pp. 58, 65-66. Śakra, who is Indra in the Buddhist pantheon, is looked upon by Buddhists as the protector of Buddhism: *Ibid.*, p. 148; Grunwedel identifies Vajrapāṇi with Śakra or Indra, the Indian god of rain. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[2] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 214-15; Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 344.

in reality actual facts, then we may presume that the royal munificence as recorded by Yüan Chwāng, must have been probably a formal affair for a monarch like Harṣa could hardly afford to give away his wealth in such a manner. The other characteristics, as noted by Yüan Chwāng, have already been illustrated in the treatment which Harṣa meted out Yüan Chwāng in the discussions which took place between the followers of the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna schools of thought.

4. Buddhism and Toleration

Despite controversies and schisms among themselves the Buddhists of this age showed commendable toleration to other creeds. A good example of Buddhist toleration can be found in the royal munificence which was displayed by Harṣa for eight successive days on the "*Arena of Charitable Offerings*" at *Po-lo-ye-kia* (Prayāga). Yüan Chwāng states that "the king directed them to portion out on this space a square enclosure for distributing the charitable offerings, enclosed by a bamboo hedge 1000 paces each side, and in the middle to erect many scores of thatched buildings in which to deposit all the treasures (*intended for distribution*); to wit, gold, silver, fine pearls, red glass, the precious substance called the *Ti-tsing-cha* (the Indranila pearl), the *Ta-tsing-cha* (the Mahānila pearl), and etc. He constructed, moreover, by the side of these, several hundred store-houses (*long buildings*) in which to place the silk and cotton garments, the gold and silver money, and so on." Some time before these preparations were made Harṣa had summoned by decree from all the Five Indies the Śramaṇas, heretics (Jainas) Nirgranthas, the poor and the bereaved to come to this Arena of Charity to come and receive the gifts.

For this occasion Harṣa, his contemporary ruler, friends and subordinates all came to this place in all their splendour. Harṣa pitched his tent on the north bank of the Ganges, the "king of South India," *Ta-Lu-po-pa-cha* (Dharasēna ?) located himself on the west of this junction, and Kumāra Rāja by the southern side of the river Jamuna. All the recipients of bounty occupied the area to the west of the position taken up by Dharasena. On the morrow appointed for this distribution the military followers of Śilāditya (Harṣa) and of Kumāra Rāja embarked in ships, while the attendants of Dharasena, mounted on their elephants and so arranged in an imposing order they proceeded to the place, and there the "kings of the eighteen countries" joined the cortege.

Then the great ceremony of distribution commenced. On the first day the image of Buddha was installed in one of the thatched buildings, and they then distributed precious articles and cloth of the first quality, offered exquisite meats and scattered flowers to the sound of music. At the close of the day they retired to their tents. On the second day they installed the image of Āditya Dēva and distributed precious things and clothing equal to half the amount of the previous day. On the third day they installed the image of Īśvara Deva and distributed gifts as on the previous day. On the fourth day they granted gifts to ten thousand of the religious community arranged in a hundred ranks: each received a hundred pieces of gold, one pearl, one cotton garment, various drinks and meats, flowers and perfumes. On the fifth day the Brāhmaṇas received gifts for twenty days. On the sixth day the "heretics" (Hīnayanists) were given rewards for ten days. The seventh day was reserved for the bestowal of alms to those who came from distant places to beg for charity and this lasted for ten days. On the eighth day grants were made to the poor, the destitute and orphans for one month.[1]

Such a distribution of wealth implied several considerations. This liberality appears to have been extended for seventy-five days in all and must have caused a considerable yet avoidable drain of wealth. According to Yüan Chwāng "by this time the accumulation of five years was exhausted" and excepting the horses and military accoutrements reserved for defending the land, nothing else remained. Harṣa of course seems to have freely given away all his personal property without stint and finally bereft of everything, virtually begged from his own sister a second hand garment after which he offered worship to the Buddha.[2] It is worth noting that in this exhibition of royal charity the Buddhists were given preference but the others who differed from them like the Nirgṛanthas, Brāhmaṇas and even the indigent were not forgotten. Harṣa, at least from his prayer to the Buddha, appears to have made this distribution of wealth in order to acquire religious merit, or as he is said to have expressed, "in the field of religious merit." But the personal belongings of Harṣa were not considered to be worthy of being given away in this fashion, so the other kings who had assembled there individually distributed their own money and treasure for redeeming the royal jewels and court-vestments which were thus recovered and restored to Harṣa. But probably on reconsideration

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-86.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 187.

"the same things" were given away in charity as before. Finally all the guests departed after the close of this sixth quinquennial assembly.[1]

As this was the sixth quinquennial assembly convoked by Harṣa the year of this assembly may now be determined. If Harṣa commenced his reign in A. D. 606, then this convocation must have taken place in A. D. 636. This can be confirmed by the words of Harṣa who is recorded thus to have said to Yüan Chwāng at Nālandā two days prior to the commencement of this assembly: "Your disciple, succeeding to the royal authority, has been lord of India for *thirty years and more.*"[2] If this is admitted then it may also be stated that, as he came home after his subjugation of Konyōḍha (Ganjam),[3] Harṣa's conquest of Ganjam may also be assigned to the year A. D. 636.

VI. Jainism—Its Survival and Patronage.

1. Features of Early Jainism

With the rise of the Guptas, Jainism as a religion did not prosper for the Jaina epigraphic records are only a few when compared with the inscriptions of Bhāgavatism, Śaivism and Buddhism. The extant records of Samudra Gupta and of his son Candra Gupta II strangely enough have not a single Jaina inscription. It is equally strange that Fa Hien too does not specifically refer to the Jainas, although he often mentions the Śramaṇas. When he alludes vaguely to the opponents that some teachers of another doctrine once disputed with the Śramaṇās regarding the right to (*Saṁkassaṃ*) as a place of residence,[4] it is difficult to ascertain whether he alluded to the Brāhmaṇas[5] or the Jainas. His indifference to other creeds can be observed by examining some more vague statements which he makes. In Kuśīnagara, according to him, "the inhabitants were few and far between, comprising only the families belonging to the (different) societies of monks".[6] Though he might have meant only the Buddhists, nevertheless, his vagueness does not at all clarify the point at issue and whom he implied is, indeed, difficult to ascertain.

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 183. Italics mine.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 159, 172.

[4] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

[5] Legge maintains that "the parties would not be Buddhists of any creed or school, but Brahmanas or of some false doctrine, as Fa Hien deemed it." *Ibid.*, p. 50, f. n. 8.

[6] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 71.



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Monastry No. 1B, at Nalanda (after conservation).

In the days of Kālidāsa, the practices of Jainism must have attracted some attention and one of them was their system of ending life. He refers, for instance, to the usage of *prāyōpaveśana* as a means of suicide.[1]

Some light, however, can be thrown on the state of Jainism during the reign of Kumāra Gupta I. A Jaina inscription at Mathurā, incised on the base of a large seated Jaina, issued in the year 113 (A. D. 432) during the reign of Kumāra Gupta I, on the twentieth day of the winter month of *Kārttika*, relates that an image was set up by Samāḍhyā (Śyāmāḍhyā), daughter of Bhaṭṭibhava and house-wife of the ferryman (?) Grahamitrapālita, having received the command to make the dedication from Datilācārya pertaining to the *Koṭṭiya Gaṇa* and the Vidhyādhari *Śākhā*.[2] This record reveals how like the Hindus, *viz.*, the Bhāgavatas and the Śaivas and the Buddhists, the Jainas, too, dedicated votive images apparently of their *Tīrthaṅkaras*. To make such a dedication a formal sanction was probably necessary from the preceptor (*Ācārya*) whose *Gaṇa* and *Śākhā* were generally specified. Another inscription of this emperor supports how such a practice was common among the Jainas. The Udayagiri cave inscription of the reign of this ruler, dated A. D. 425-26, states how one Śankara caused to be made and set up at the mouth of the cave an image of the *Tīrthaṅkara* Pārśvanātha. It was richly endowed with the ornaments of a snake and an attendant female divinity. This Śaṅkara, though the son of *Aśvapati* Saṅghila, adhered to the path of ascetics, conformed to the sacred precepts and was the disciple of *Ācārya* Gōśarman.[3]

During the reign of his successor Skanda Gupta another inscription yields some more information about the condition of the Jaina faith. The Kahaum stone pillar inscription of his reign, dated A. D. 460-61, commemorates the installation of five images in a column in the village of Kakubha (Kahaum) by a certain Madra. This person who was especially full of affection for Brāhmaṇas, religious preceptors and ascetics, alarmed when he observed that the whole of this world was passing through a succession of changes, set for the sake of final beatitude and for the welfare of all, five excellent stone images of the Arhats (*Tirthaṅkaras*).[4] Here again this inscription reveals how in the fifth century also, the dedication of images continued for the augmentation of religious merit.

[1] *Raghu.*, VIII, 94, p. 181.
[2] *E. I.*, II, no. XXXVIII, p. 210-11.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (61), pp. 259-60; also see *A. S. W. I.*, I, p. 25.
[4] *Ibid.*, (15), pp. 67-68.

In a Prākṛta *kathā* called *Kuvalayamālā*, completed in A. D. 779, Udyōtanasūri tells us that the river Candrabhāgā followed through the Uttarāpatha. On the bank of that river was situated the well-known and prosperous town of Pavvaiyā. It was when he was there that Śrī Torarāya enjoyed his authority over the earth. *Ācārya* Harigupta, who was born in the Gupta dynasty, was the *guru* of this sovereign and at the same time he was living there. Dēvagupta, a great poet, became his pupil.[1] On the strength of this tradition it has been suggested that Śrī Torarāya was the Hūṇa Toramāṇa, that *Ācārya* Harigupta was the *Śrī Mahārāja* Harigupta and that this Dēvagupta was the Dēvagupta mentioned in the Madhūban copper plate grant of Harṣa.[2]

The extant evidence is not strong enough to enable us to accept these identifications without any reserve. Fleet suggested that Toramāṇa's rule must have commenced roughly about A. D. 460 and ended in circa A. D. 514, and that his son Mihirakula commenced to reign in A. D. 515.[3] Neither the Ērāṇ stone boar inscription of Toramāṇa nor the Gwalior stone inscription of his son Mihirakula, gives us any information regarding the faith either of the father or of the son.[4] But the presence of the wheel, the symbol of Sun-worship and the fire-altar, on the coins of both these rulers,[5] show not only a possible Sassanian influence, but evidently suggest that they must have been worshippers of the Sun and Fire. Such an inference can be confirmed to some extent by the Māḷiyā copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72. It relates how the founder of his dynasty, *Senāpati* Bhaṭṭāraka, who possessed glory acquired in a hundred battles, fought with the large armies possessed of unequalled strength of the *Maitrakas*.[6] It is now accepted that these Maitrakas, *viz.*, the Mihiras, who were a Sun-worshipping people, were possibly the particular family or clan to which the Hūṇa Toramāṇa and Mihirakula belonged.[7] But when the Hūṇa Toramāṇa was an acknowledged Sun-worshipper, whether he would have accepted a Jaina *guru* as his preceptor appears highly doubtful especially, first, because this is a tradition recorded three

[1] Muni Jina Vijaya, *Kuvalayamāla Kathā*, III, pp. 169 ff., *Jaina Sāhitya Saṁśodhaka*.
[2] Shah, *Jainism in Northern India*, pp. 211-15.
[3] *Cf.* Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III; Intr. pp. 11-12; *I. A.*, XV, p. 252.
[4] *Ibid.*, (36-37), pp. 158-164.
[5] Rapson, *Indian Coins*, pl. IV, nos. 19-21. 1897.
[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (38), p. 167.
[7] *Cf. Ibid.*, Intr. p. 12; Bhau Daji, *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, VIII, p. 244; V. N. Mandlik, *Ibid.*, XI, p. 346; Fleet, *I. A.*, VII, p. 303.

centuries after the death of Toramāṇa; secondly, there is no other independent evidence to support such a conclusion; thirdly, none of the extant inscriptions of these Hūṇa rulers and of their contemporaries or even of later sovereigns till the eighth century A. D. makes any reference to such an inference; fourthly, it is highly improbable whether a Hūṇa conqueror like Toramāṇa would ever have tolerated a Gupta king like Harigupta to be his *guru* especially as the Hūṇas and the Guptas were avowed enemies.

Regarding the other two personalities there is much divergence of opinion. The mere existence of a flower-vase (*kalaśa*) on a pedestal on a single coin cannot decide the point at issue, when it is claimed that the *kalaśa* is one of the popular Jaina symbols.[1] But it may here be remembered that it was as popular a symbol with the Hindus as well.[2] Almost nothing is known of this Harigupta in Gupta history either from epigraphs or literary sources, and what is most important, the reading of this coin itself is uncertain, for the word *guptasya* alone can be considered as definite.[3] Lastly, the identification of Dēvagupta of the Madhuban copper plate grants is rather far-fetched, first, because the length of time between the suggested Harigupta and this Dēvagupta is too great, for if the former lived in the fifth century, the latter, as Bāṇa tells us, lived in the seventh century. Moreover, the mere mention of the name Dēvagupta is not sufficient to identify him with either his namesake, the king of Mālwa, who is not known to have been a great poet as this tradition avers, or with any other representative of the Gupta dynasty.[4]

2. Characteristics of Later Jainism

During the reign of Harṣavardhana of Kanauj, some light again dawns on the state of Jainism in northern India. Yüan Chwāng observed the practices of the Svetāmbaras in the *Sengha-pu-lo* (Siṁhapura) country in the neighbourhood of Takṣaśilā (Taxila), going south-east across hills and valleys above 700 *li*. He narrates that "Not far from the Buddhist tope", which was unoccupied, "was the place at which the founder of the white clothes" sect having come to realise in thought the principles for which he had been seeking first preached his system.... The disciples (of the founder of the white clothes sect) practise austerities preserving day and

[1] Jinavijaya, *op. cit.*, p. 184.
[2] Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, pp. 25-26, 64-66, (1928, Washington).
[3] Allan, *Catalogue*, p. 152.
[4] *Cf.* Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46), p. 217; (55), p. 240.

night without any relaxation. The system which their founder preached...was largely taken from the doctrines of the Buddhist canon. He proceeded according to classes and made rules of orderly discipline; the great (i.e. senior) disciples are *bhikṣus* and the small ones are called Śramaṇas; their rules of deportment and ritual observances are much like those of the Buddhist system; but they leave a little hair on the head and they go naked, or if they wear clothes these have the peculiarity of being white....The images of their "deva teacher" they have ventured to make like those of Buddha, with the difference as to clothing, the distinguishing marks being the same."[1] It is worth observing here that his Buddhist enthusiasm did not enable him to see the difference between these two religions.[2]

Yüan Chwāng noticed the Digaṁbaras at Gṛdhrakūṭa, the modern Śailagiri.[3] In a monastery on the top of this mountain he found how "many Digaṁbaras now lodge here and practise austerities incessantly; they turn round with the sun, watching it from the rising to its setting."[4] He evidently refers to the Jaina practice of costume when he remarks that among the non-Buddhists "some wear peacock's tails; ...some are quite naked; .. some pull out their hair and clip their moustaches."[5] These practices which were noticed by Bāṇa, his contemporary, are still current among the Jainas.

In Harṣa's reign Jainism did not perish even according to the evidence of his contemporary Bāṇa. The Digaṁbaras as well as the Śvetāṁbaras are spoken of with a little contempt. Bāṇa, for example, when he refers to "the gathering up (of) the scattered peacock's feathers as if they (the winds) had learned the ways of wandering mendicants,"[6] obviously alludes to the Digaṁbara Jainas who carried peacock's tails in their hands to sweep away insects from their path.[7] Among the people who came to see Harṣa are mentioned the Jainas, Arhatas and Pāśupatas.[8] Bāṇa appears to have been much prejudiced against the Digaṁbaras as can be seen from his description of one of them, whose appearance was considered as a

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 251; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 144-45.
[2] *Cf. Ibid.*, I, pp. 343-44; Hiuen Tsiang, *Ibid.*, I, p. 145.
[3] Cunningham, *Ancient Geography*, p. 466.
[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 154.
[5] *Ibid.*, I, p. 148; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 76.
[6] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
[7] *Cf.* Sayaṇa Mādhava, *Sarvadarśana Saṅgraha*, p. 63. (trans).
[8] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 49.

bad omen. He observes how "Against him (Harṣa) came a naked Jaina bedecked with peacock's tail feathers, a fellow all lamp-black as it seemed with the collected filth of many days' besmirching the body".[1] In the Vindhyan forest Harṣa saw among the devotees dead to all passion, Jainas in white robes, the Śvetāmbaras.[2] Their munificence was not lost sight of; for it is recorded that "the Jaina saintship is ever ready to help everybody."[3]

3. Jainism in the 8th Century

Daṇḍin too like Bāṇa and Yüan Chwāng before him appears to have noticed some features of Jaina religious life in his day. He tells us the following story of a man named Vasupālita who became a convert to Jainism through disappointed love. "Listen, kind sir," he said, "I am the eldest son of a prosperous merchant named Nidhipalita in this very Champa and my name is Vasupalita. But my nickname is Ugly, because I *am* ugly. There is another named Handsome in town, and he is handsome; he is rich in social attractions, but ill endowed with wealth. Between him and me a quarrel was fomented on the subject of good looks and cash by such city scoundrels as pick a living out of quarrels. One day in a holiday gathering we indulged ourselves in a budget of cutting taunts, rooted in mutual disdain. The scoundrels had started the squabbles themselves, but they claimed to appease it by laying down this principle: "Neither looks nor cash is the proof of manhood; but he is the best man whose youthful vigour attracts the gayest girls. Now Kāmamanjari is the nonpareil among these young persons. He whom she prefers may fly the flag of fortune". We agreed and sent her our proposals.

"Now it was I who awakened a loving rapture in the creature. At least, she came to me, as he and I sat there; darted at my person, a dark-eyed, side-long glance that was both flower and fetter; and caused my embarrassed rival's face to fall. I fancied myself happy, made her mistress of my money, of my house, of my household, of my person, of my life. She left me a loin cloth. Cast off as a beggar, the target of universal ridicule, unable to endure the gibes of the city's dignitaries, I welcomed instruction concerning the path of salvation from a certain monk in this heretic monastery; then, considering how natural was such a costume for those emerging

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-35.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 236.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 244.

from a house of evil fame, I felt a surge of religious despair, and abandoned the loin cloth, too.

"But presently, when the dirt caked on my person, when my hair was plucked till it hurt terribly, when I suffered the exquisite tortures of hunger and thirst, when even in standing, sitting, lying, and eating I was cramped like a new-caught elephant in disciplinary chains, I pondered profoundly: "I am of Brahman origin. It is irreligious in me to condescend to this heretical course. My forefathers trod the path prescribed by revelation and sacred tradition. And I am sunk so low as to wear scandal-breeding canonicals, to invite condign chastisement and even—by hearing constant blasphemies against Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, and other true gods—to harvest hell when I am dead. Such doctrine, fruitless, deceitful, false! To think that I should practise it as true!." With that estimate of my own perversity, I betook myself to this lonely clump of *ashokas*, and here I weep profusely."[1]

From this account of a Brāhmaṇa convert to Jainism which did not seem to appeal to the convert, it may be inferred first that conversions from one religion into another were possible. Secondly, in order to become a convert one had to go, for instance in this case, to a follower of the Jaina faith in a Jaina *Saṅgha*, who naturally instructed the new-comer in the mysteries of the Jaina religion. Thirdly, the convert then had during his training to undergo a rather severe course of disciplinary ritual which almost amounted to tribulation, and then the convert's hair of the head was shorn until he became bald. Lastly, on being given the loin-cloth of the Jaina monks the convert became a genuine Jaina and commenced to live in the *Saṅgha* itself. It is interesting to note that, during this course of conversion, the Jaina priests evidently attempted to run down creeds other than their own and here we are informed that they were constantly blaspheming the faiths of Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism.

It is interesting to learn how Haribhadra Sūri throws some additional light on this subject. In his work *Samaraiccha Kahā* in Ajita's story we are told how a person was initiated into the Jaina priesthood. On his return to his town the minister Brahma-datta caused presents to be distributed and a festival to be celebrated in the Jaina temples in honour of the forthcoming ordination of his son Śikhin. When the day fixed for it came round his son was

[1] Daṇḍin, *Daśakumāracarita*, pp. 78-79.

carried in a palanquin with great pomp to the place outside the town where Vijaysimha lived. The *Ācārya* conducted the ceremony of Śikhin's initiation which Haribhadra describes in great detail. After a few days' stay together the monks along with Śikhin broke up their camp and went away elsewhere.[1]

VII. Some Aspects of Gupta Symbolism

1. Preliminary Remarks

We may now turn to some features of symbolism in the Gupta period. Attempts have recently been made to interpret some features of Gupta symbolism from the point of view of the *Purāṇās*. Of all the religions which flourished in this age the most prominent was Vaisnavism, especially because it was patronised by the royalty; and it is not strange that it left behind in its wake some of its symbols. Saivism, it may be remembered, was the creed of the Vākāṭakas whom the Guptas vanquished but whose faith they did not adopt; nevertheless, this religion too left behind some of its *lāñchanās* as well.

2. Purānic Influences

Some writers have suggested that some of the Gupta emblems which can be found occasionally in Gupta sculptures can be explained and interpreted in the light of Purāṇic evidence. This type of symbolic interpretation can hardly be accepted with any finality without being corroborated by any other independent authority. On the decorative pilaster of a Later Gupta pillar, now in the Allahabad Municipal Museum, there is a representation of a figure which has been construed to be the quelling of the dragon Vṛtra. It is a semi-circular façade of one of the four faces near the capital, where the circular form of the pillar develops a four-faced band on each side of which there are four different representations of four animals. On the two opposite faces appear a *haṁsa* emblem and a dragon (*makara*), which has been stated to be a popular Chinese motif.[2] Mr. O. C. Gangoly considers that this figure is a representation of the Tṛta Āpta (Agni) who, with the help of Indra, slays or vanquishes the Asura Viśvarūpa, who is depicted in Indian literature as a three-headed demon, who was rich in horses and cattle. The legend goes that Tvaṣṭṛ after Viśvarūpa's death prepared a Sōma sacrifice, from which Indra was excluded, but Indra seized the Soma by force. Thereupon Tvaṣṭṛ whirled the

[1] Haribhadra Sūri, *Samaraiccha Kahā*, Intr. p. LIII; text pp. 187-88.

[2] Gangoly, *The Indian Dragon, A Vedic Motif on a Gupta Relief*, *M. R.*, 1942, June, pp. 544-45; *Cf.*, Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life*, p. 111.

remaining Sōma on the sacrifice announcing—"Hail wax great as Indra's foe!" It sprang to life and was called Vṛtra, either because it enveloped and covered all the worlds or because Tvaṣṛṭ, the progenitor of the monster, diverted it into the fire. Mr. Gangoly remarks that "the inverted and whirling posture of our relief follows the latter alternation."[1] This representation, he further observes, follows very closely the Vedic texts and ignores Purāṇic versions of the same story.[2] There is, however, no epigraphic, literary or numismatic evidence in support of the above interpretation.

3. Vaiṣṇavite Symbols

Now let us trace some interesting Gupta symbols from the Vaiṣṇava point of view. One of the most important symbols of the Gupta age was the Garuḍa, the *vāhana* of Viṣṇu. He is picturesquely represented in Samudra Gupta's Gayā copper-plate grant in relief as a bird, standing to the front, with outstretched wings.[3] The copper coins of Kumāra Gupta I also bear a similar image.[4] But in the Rajim copper-plate grant of *Rāja* Tivara Deva, ascribed to earlier than A. D. 800, the figure of a Garuḍa appears facing full-front, with the head of a man and the body of a bird and outspread wings. He has evidently human arms hanging between the wings and the feet, and there is a serpent with an expanded hood standing up in front of and over each shoulder.[5]

More than inscriptions, the coins of the Gupta rulers were stamped with the image of Garuḍa. In the Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudra Gupta, it is related how his feudatories gave Garuḍa tokens (*Garutmatāṅka*) to their over-lord.[6] The allusion is probably, as Fleet suggested, to certain cash payments in the shape of coins.[7] Several of his standard type coins bear this emblem,[8] which also appears on many coins of his successors. It can be seen on the archer coins of Candra Gupta II.[9] The sword-man, *Pratāpa* and silver coins found in his western provinces, and the silver-plated coins of Kumāra Gupta I, have all the figure of Garuḍa.[10] The archer, king and

[1] Gangoly, *op. cit.*, p. 547.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 546-47. *Cf.* Macondonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 66-67.
[3] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (60), p. 255.
[4] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (81), p. 292.
[6] *Ibid*, (1), p. 14.
[7] *Ibid*, f-n. 3.
[8] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 32.
[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 67, 87, 94, 96, 98.

Lakṣmī, later issues, and silver coins found in the western provinces of Skanda Gupta, also bear the image of Garuḍa.[1] The archer type coins of Pura Gupta have the Garuḍa standard on the left.[2] Some of the coins of the known as well as unidentified Gupta rulers also bear the image of Garuḍa. It can be seen on the horse-man type coins of Prakāśāditya,[3] the archer coins of Narasiṁha *Bālāditya*,[4] and on those of Kumāra Gupta II.[5] It can well be noticed on the coins of Candra Gupta *Dvādaśāditya*, Viṣṇu Gupta *Candrāditya*, and Ghaṭōtkaca Gupta, who still remain some of the unidentified Gupta monarchs.[6]

Lakṣmī, the wife of god Viṣṇu, who is also the goddess of wealth and fortune, appears on the seals and coins of Gupta rulers. She is represented on almost all the coins of Gupta monarchs seated, facing on the throne, nimbate, wearing loose robes, a necklace and armlets, holding a fillet in her outstretched right hand and a cornucopia on her arm. Her left hand rests on a lotus, while there are traces of the back of a throne.[7] She is represented as Aṁbikā on some of the coins of Candra Gupta II.[8]

This does not imply that the queen was not at all represented on the coins of the Gupta emperors. On the coins commemorating the marriage of Candra Gupta I and Kumāra Dēvī, the king is seen offering what is evidently a ring.[9] On the *Aśvamedha* coins of his son Samudra Gupta his chief queen (*mahīṣi*) is represented.[10] The image of the empress can also be seen on some of the *Aśvamedha* coins of Kumāra Gupta I with a chowrie held over her left, and some other indefinite object in her right hand.[11] This reveals how a practice, which had originated in the times of Candra Gupta I, continued to the days of Kumāra Gupta I as a kind of regal tradition. This representation of the royal consorts and *Devīs* like Lakṣmī has, with some justification, been interpreted to mean a "strong movement for the assertion of the rights of woman."[12]

Some other symbols can also be seen on some of the coins of the Gupta emperors, and among these may be noticed the wheel,

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Allan, *op. cit.*, pp. 114, 116, 117, 119.
Ibid., p. 130.
Ibid., p. 130.
Ibid., p. 137.
Ibid., p. 140.
Ibid., pp. 144-45, 149.
Ibid., pp. 1 ff.
Ibid., pp. 38-39.
Ibid., p. 8.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 68.
[12] Nivedita, *Footfalls of Indian History*, p. 213, Raychaudhuri, *Vaiṣṇava Sect*, p. 106.

(*cakra*), the altar and the vase (*kalaśa*). In the *Kāca* type coins of Samudra Gupta the king holds in his left hand a standard surrounded by a wheel.[1] This wheel can be observed on some of the archer coins of Candra Gupta II.[2] If the altar can be said to be in any way symbolic of Sun-worship, then it may probably be suggested that Kumāra Gupta I was also a Sun-worshipper but it has already been noticed that he was a Vaiṣṇava by religion. It is possible that he was like Harṣavardhana of Sthāṇvīśvara eclectic by nature. On some of his copper coins he is seen with his hands on his hips, apparently throwing some incense on an altar with his right hand.[3]

The vase (*kalaśa*) was not probably a religious symbol like some of those which have already been examined. On some of the coins of the emperor Kumāra Gupta I, the flower vase with flowers hanging down its sides is visible.[4] This motif can also be observed on a coin attributed to a ruler called Hari Gupta, whose identity has not been established.[5] It is interesting to note that this emblem also appears on some Gupta temples as an architectural motif, as has been observed earlier.

4. Śaivite Symbolism

In comparison with these Vaiṣṇava motifs those pertaining to Śaivism are, indeed, very few. One of them was the familiar bull (*nandi*) which makes its appearance on a coin of king Narendrāditya.[6]

Another of these motifs was the Gaṅgā-Yamunā symbol which might have had a Śaivite origin but which appears to have assumed later a political significance. This emblem had evidently its roots in the past. It is possible that the female figure, which holds a jar in its raised right hand on a coin of the Nāga king Vīrasena, represents the emblem of Gaṅgā.[7] As the distribution and different issues of his coins suggest, Vīrasena seems to have ousted the Kuṣāṇas from Mathurā and the Doab embracing the Ganga-Yamuna regions, now known as the United Provinces, about A. D. 180.[8] From the Nāgas this emblem passed on to the Vākāṭakas, one of whom known as Pravarasena I issued in the year 76 coins bearing this symbol.[9] His

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 113.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 60.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 152. (reading uncertain).
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 149.
[7] Rapson, *J. R. A. S.*, 1900, p. 102, fig. 15, p. 97; Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
[8] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
[9] Smith, *Cat. Ind. Mus.*, no. XXII, fig. no. 15.

grandson, Rudrasena II, was possibly vanquished by Samudra Gupta, who appears to have usurped this *lāñcchana* from the Vākāṭakas. On his tiger type of coins can be seen the figure of Gaṅgā, standing to the left on a *makara* (the elephant-headed fish), nude to the waist, wearing ear-rings, a necklace, anklet and armlets, holding a lotus in her left hand and outstretching her right hand.[1] Soon this symbol began to make its appearance in the temples of the Guptas which can be seen at Bhūmarā and at Deoghad.[2] This *lāñcchana* evidently continued to be adopted both by the Vākāṭakas and the Guptas, and later on by the Pallavas from whom most probably it was borrowed by the Western Cāḷukyas, who conquered them; and when these were overpowered by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas early in the 9th century, it was transmitted to them like a dynastic heir-loom.[3]

Another little known motif, pertaining to the Śākta literature of this age, is that of the figure of a man who is represented as offering his own head evidently in devotion. A terra-cotta panel now in the Mathurā Museum reveals "a bearded monk with emaciated ribs detaching his own head with a sword which has half entered his own throat."[4] Another plaque recovered from the main shrine at Pahārpur, Bengal, also discloses how a monk kneeling with the right hand grasping the sword while with his left he grasps his tuft of hair[5] exactly as can be found in some of the Pallava sculptures seen for instance in the Draupadi Ratha and the Varāha Cave at Mahāmmalapuram, as well as in the figures in the lower cave at Trichinopoly and in the temple at Pŭllamangai, ten miles south of Tanjore.[6] The two panels referred to above have been assigned to the Gupta period,[7] which implies that the usage which this type of motif commemorates may, in this case, be traced to the Gupta age. Dr Vogel has already explained that the Pallava sculpture mentioned already portrays a type of a Durgā devotee, who, in fulfilment of a great vow or resolution, offers his own head as a sacrifice to the goddess Durgā, whose image however is not

[1] Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[2] *A. S. I. R.*, X, p. 104; temple no. 5.

[3] For further details on this topic see my forthcoming paper on this subject.

[4] Agarwala, *Handbook of the Sculptures of the Curzon Museum of Archaeology*, p. 51, fig. 39, fig. 2.

[5] Dikshit, *Excavation at Pahārpur*, *M. A. S. I.*, no. 55, p. 67.

[6] Vogel, *The Head Offering to the Goddess in Pallava Sculpture B. S. O. S.*, VI. pp. 539-43.

[7] Ghosal, *Head Offering Motif in Ancient Bengal Terra Cotta*, *P. I. H. C.*, 1939, fig. 2. opp. p. 466.

represented.[1] In view of this plausible explanation it may also be stated that, in the case of the sculptures assigned to the Gupta period, such a practice must have existed especially among the devotees of Durgā, whose worship, as observed previously, was fairly common. Whether such a system was popular or in which region in the Gupta empire it largely prevailed, it is not possible to state with any certainty, but nevertheless its existence in this period is a matter which appears beyond little doubt.

This interesting usage has been traced to the *Rāmāyaṇa*, where Rāvaṇa is related to have appeased Brahma in a similar manner.[2] This type of extraordinary devotion has been found to be fairly common in Śākta literature which offers constant "sanctions for ritual offering of his own blood by the devotee in honour of the goddess."[3] It is worth remembering here that a similar kind of devotion was prevalent in the Dakṣiṇāpatha during the Hoysaḷas and in the Vijayanagara empire, although the object of the self-slaughter was not perhaps quite the same.[4]

[1] Vogel, *op. cit.*, pp. 540-541.

[2] *Rām.*, *Uttarakhāṇḍa*, Chs. IX-X, X, 10-12.

[3] Ghosal, *op. cit.*, p. 469.

[4] Saletore, *Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagara Empire*, II, pp. 248-51. For a similar practice in early and later times see Marshall, *Mohenjo Dāro and the Indus civilisation*, I, pp. 104-105; Woolley, *The Sumerians*, pp. 39-40; Saletore, *A Sumerian custom and its Historic Indian Parallels*, *J. As. R. S.*, IV, no. 1, 1936, pp. 1-11; Hira Lal, *The Golaki Maṭha*, *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIII, p. 144.

CHAPTER VIII

Religious Institutions

I. Introduction

The religions of this period developed certain institutions which left permanent impressions on the culture and life of the people of northern India. The Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva Brāhmaṇas were granted *agrahāras* where they settled in groups, or endowments were made for the establishment of *maṭhas* which, being attached to temples, became in course of time notable centres of education. The Jainas too lived, so far as their clergy was concerned, in their *vihāras* where they spent their time in secular studies, meditation and peace. The Buddhist monks dwelt in their numerous *saṅghārāmas* which attracted students from the far East, and became with the passing of years celebrated throughout the eastern world in this period as the cynosures of learning and sanctity.

II. Hindu Religious Institutions and their Significance

1. Agrahāras

That the *agrahāra* was a typically Hindu institution in Gupta times can be made out from many contemporary inscriptions of this period. With the rise of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism the rulers of the country did not lag behind in making grants of land to Brāhmaṇas for specified objects. One of the earliest of such *agrahāras* in the Gupta age was the village of Revaṭikā, which was attached to the Gayā *viṣaya*, as recorded in the Gaya copper-plate grant of Samudra Gupta. The object for which it was granted has been clearly recorded in the words addressed to the (*village*) *Valatkauṣaṇs* and other officials of the locality:— "Be it known to you! for the sake of increasing the religious merit of (*our*) parents and of myself, this village is granted by me, as an *agrahāra*, with the assignment of *Uparikara* to the religious student, the Brāhmaṇa Gōpasvāmin of the Bhāradvāja *gōtra* (*and*) the Bahvṛccha (*Śākhā*)"[1]. From this grant it may be concluded, first, that *agrahāras* were given to learned Brāhmaṇas with the assignment of one particular tax like the

[1] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (60), p. 257.

Uparikara, besides other privileges like free labour, which was probably forced labour, and a kind of local isolation which almost amounted to a monopoly of unspecified advantages. Secondly, this grant of land was made chiefly for the propagation and perpetuation of religious merit not only of the donor's parents but also of himself. Thirdly, it is interesting to note that invariably the *gōtra* and the *śākhā* of the Brāhmaṇa are clearly recorded in these grants so that his religious or rather his sectarian tendencies become apparent.

This system of bestowing *agrahāras* certainly continued after the reign of the great Samudra Gupta. In the Bihar stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta mention is made of a certain *agrahāra* the name of which is missing, but in it an allusion is made to three shares probably granted by one Anantasena, evidently in the town of Ajapura, while reference is also made to the official *Agrahārika*.[1] This allusion may be said to throw some light on the practice of how an *agrahāra* was divided into so many shares which were given away in charity.

But it is only from some of the records of the Parivrājaka kings that we can learn something more about these *agrahāras*. The Khoh copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 482-83, refers to the *agrahāra* of Korpārika, which was granted by this ruler "in the northern *paṭṭa*...with the *Udraṅga* and the *Uparikara* (*with the privilege that it is*) not to be entered by the regular or irregular troops," to (*certain*) Brāhmaṇas commencing with Devasvāmin, of the Bhāradvāja *gōtra* (*and*) Gosvāmin of the Kautsa *gōtra*, a student of the Vājasanēya (*Śākhā*) and Svātisvāmin, Varuṇaśarman of the Bhārgava *gōtra*, a student of the Vājasanēya *Śākha* (*and*) Bappasvāmin and Maitraśarman, a student of the Vājasanēya *Śākha*, Nāgaśarman..." The boundaries of the plot are then described in detail and the grant ends with the following assurance:— "Therefore, in future times, no obstacle (*to the enjoyment of this grant*) is to be caused by those who are born in our family, or by my feudatories."[2] Consequently it may be inferred that the gift of an *agrahāra* implied, first, that the donor assigned to the donee more than one tax, *viz.*, *Udraṅga* and *Uparika*, as in this case; secondly, one of the other privileges of the *agrahāra* was that it was not to be entered into by either the police (*Cāṭa*) or the soldiers (*Bhaṭa*) most probably

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (12), p. 51. On the identification of Ajapura mentioned in this grant, see P. C. Chaudhuri, "*Ajapura of Skanda Gupta*," *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIX, Pt III, 1933, pp. 337-43.

[2] *Ibid.*, (23), p. 109.

to exact unauthorised dues or to impose forced labour; thirdly, such grants were usually made to scholarly Brāhmaṇas who specialised in particular *śākhās*; fourthly, the boundaries were defined as though in accordance with the dictates of the *Smṛtis*; and lastly, the gift was made over in perpetuity not only by the donor and by his descendants but it was also made binding on the donor's feudatories.

2. The Objects of Agrahāra Grants

The object of granting *agrahāras* was not only to increase either the donor's or any of his relative's religious merit, but there were also some other motives in making such pious gifts. In the Khōh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, dated A. D. 496-97, a command is issued to the cultivators, beginning with the Brāhmaṇas and down to the artisans of the village of Dhavaṣaṇḍikā:—"Be it known to you that, for the purpose of increasing my own religious merit, (*and*) for the benefit of the feet of the Divine One, this village is granted by me as an *agrahāra* of the god to continue for the same time with the moon and the sun to the *Divira* Sarvavāḍha[1] of the Sāśātanēya (*gōtra*) (?) and the *Bhāgavata* Gaṅga and his sons Raṅkabōṭa and Ajagaradāsa. And the increase of their own religious merit should be effected by the succession of (*their*) sons, (*son's sons*), etc., by repairing whatever may become broken or torn, and by attending to the maintenance of the *bali*, *charu*, *sattra* and other (*such rites*) of the feet of the Divine One... You yourselves shall render to these persons the offerings of the tribute of the customary dues, royalties, taxes, gold, etc., and shall be obedient to (*their*) commands."[2] This donation of land was made not only in perpetuity to Brāhmaṇas, but it was specially enjoined that anything which might become torn or broken was to be repaired by the donees, and it was incumbent on them to maintain the specified rites such as *bali* and *caru*. Such rites were to be conducted by them from the income which they derived not only from the land that was granted but also from the taxes which were given over to them by special sanction of the ruler. In this case not only free labour but three types of State dues were also to be given to them. But such a licence did not mean that these donees were free from all State taxes, since they had clearly to pay to the State, especially the one styled as the fines imposed on thieves. In this same inscription it is recorded thus:—"And those kings, who shall be born in Our

[1] *Divira* has been interpreted to mean a clerk or an accountant: See Bühler *I. A.*, VI, p. 10.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (27), pp. 123-24.

lineage—by them this grant should not be confiscated (*but*) should be assented to; (*and*) with the exception of fines imposed on thieves, *the tribute of the taxes which by custom should not belong to the king should not be taken;* and (*this grant*) should be preserved from time to time."[1] This grant implied, therefore, that a permanent gift of an *agrahāra* never meant that the donee was exempt from all dues payable to the State, but he was safeguarded by a written decree that he was not to be molested by the recovery of illegal exactions. Such a guarantee was made binding on all future rulers as well.

This practice of bestowing *agrahāras* on scholarly Brāhmaṇas continued in the Gupta age from the fourth into the seventh century. The Aphsaḍ stone inscription, ascribed to the seventh century, relates how Dāmodara Gupta gave to virtuous Brāhmaṇas, "endowed with many ornaments and with youth...*agrahāra* grants."[2] Again during the reign of Ādityasena Deva, according to the Shāhapur stone image inscription, dated A. D. 672-73, Nālandā appears to have been a great *agrahāra*. It reveals how the virtuous Sālapakṣa who was a *Balādhikṛta* made a "gift of religion" in the *Mahāgrahāra* of Nālandā for the purpose of increasing the religious merit of his parents and of himself.[3]

That these *agrahāras* were made over to Brāhmaṇas, who were scholars, is certain; and such gifts may be said to have been indirectly responsible for the rise and spread of Vedic and other Saṁskṛtic studies in this age. The Nirmand copper plate grant of *Mahāsāmaṁta* and *Mahārāja* Samudrasena refers to this allotment "as an *agrahāra* of the god of Brāhmaṇas, who study the Atharva Veda at the *agrahāra* of Nirmanda."[4] In such an *agrahāra* like that of Sthāṇvīśvara, as Bāṇa has borne out, the scholarly Brāhmaṇas formed a Logic Society where they discussed problems of Logic, and "exhibited excessive delight in the Mīmāṁsa" and dulled "all pleasure in other authoritative books."[5]

3. Agrahāras and Sacrifices

In these *agrahāras* the learned Brāhmaṇas were required to perform several sacrifices the names of some of which are known. Of course the great sacrifices like the *Aśvamedha* must have been

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (27), p. 124. Italics mine.
[2] *Ibid.*, (42), p. 206.
[3] *Ibid.*, (43), p. 210.
[4] *Ibid.*, (43), p. 290.
[5] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, p. 71.

performed by the kings themselves in their own palaces. In the Bilsaḍ stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I it is recorded that Samudra Gupta was the "restorer of *Aśvamedha* sacrifice".[1] This famous sacrifice appears to have been performed four times, as is revealed in his Chammak plates, by Pravarasena II, while the Bhāraśiva emperor Bhavanāga celebrated it ten times. The former is also known to have performed the *Agniṣṭōma*, *Jyōtiṣṭōma*, *Āptōryāma*, *Ukthya*, *Soḍaśin*, *Ātirātra*, *Vājapēya*, *Bṛhaspatisava* and the *Sādyaṣkra* rites.[2] Of these it is known that the *Agniṣṭōma* was connected with Agni and the *Jyōtiṣṭōma* with the sacred Sōma plant and juice.[3]

The lesser sacrifices were obviously performed in the *agrahāras* themselves. It has been already noticed that in the Khoh grants of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, the Brāhmaṇas of the Dhavaṣaṇḍika *agrahāra* were enjoined to continue the *bali*, *caru* and other rites.[4] These being five in number were styled as the *pañcamahāyajñikā*, *viz.*, the *Bali*, *Caru*, *Vaiśvadēva*, *Agnihōtra* and *Athiti* sacrifices, as stated in the Alīna copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII.[5] It may be remembered that these rites are also alluded to in the Māḷiyā copper plate grant of Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72.[6] This reference only shows that they were current not only in the eastern, in the central but also in the western dominions of the Guptas where, of course later in the sixth century, the Maitrakas established their supremacy.

4. Agrahāra Grants and Imprecations

These *agrahāras* were endowments made in perpetuity but with certain reservations, because the right of confiscation lay ultimately with the king himself. Light is sometimes thrown on these provisos which were definitely specified. In the Śiwaṇi copper plate grant of the Vākāṭaka ruler, Pravarasena II, the village of Caramāṅka was granted to the Brāhmaṇas provided that they committed "no treason against the kingdom, consisting of the seven constituent parts, of (*successive*) kings; that they are not slayers of Brāhmaṇas and are not thieves, poisoners of kings, etc., that they do not wage

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (10), p. 44. On the *Aśvamedha* and its importance, see D. C. Sarkar *I. C.*, I, no. 2, pp. 311-13, *Ibid.*, II, pp. 789-793; K. A. Nilakantha Śāstri, "*A Note on a Greek Text bearing on the Aśvamedha.*" *J. O. R.*, VII, Pt I, pp. 89-91; Amalananda Ghosh, "*A Note on the Aśvamedha*," *I. C.*, III, no. 4, pp. 759-60.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (55), p. 241.

[3] *Ibid.*, note.

[4] *Ibid.*, (27), pp. 123-24.

[5] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 190.

[6] *Ibid.*, (38), p. 170.

war (*and*) that they do no wrong to other villages. But if they act otherwise or assent (*to such acts*), *the king will commit no theft in taking the land away.*"[1] From these requirements it is clear that lands granted as *agrahāras* could be confiscated by the State if, first, treason against the State was committed by the donees in any form; secondly, if personal harm was inflicted on the ruler or his descendants; thirdly, if they did not slay Brāhmaṇas and commit thefts; and fourthly, if they did not wage a civil war and disturb the peace of the country. These stipulations were to be fulfilled in the Vākāṭaka dominions no doubt, but it may be presumed that similar conditions must have also prevailed in the Gupta empire as well.

These grants were safeguarded from even such remote chances of confiscation by the perpetuation of curses which sometimes assumed fierce expression. In the Udayagiri Cave inscription, dated A. D. 412-13, of Candra Gupta II it is recorded that: "Whosoever shall interfere with this arrangement (*of the grant*)—he shall become invested with (*the guilt of*) the slaughter of a cow or of a Brāhmaṇa and with the five sins that entail immediate retribution."[2] The same fate is declared for those who dared to despoil the settlement laid down in the undated Gaḍhwa stone inscription.[3] Such a type of inhuman invocation of destruction passed down the centuries and generations. A similar expletive is again repeated in the Gaḍhwa stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta II, the date of which is missing.[4]

Such an invocation at times appeared in varying forms. In the Indōr copper plate grant of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 465-66, it is stated that "Whosoever shall transgress this grant that has been assigned that man, (*becoming as guilty as*) the slayer of a cow, (*or*) the slayer of a spiritual preceptor (*or*) a Brāhmaṇa, shall go down (*into hell*), invested with the (guilt of) those well-known five sins, together with the minor sins."[5] The five major sins (*mahāpātaka*) according to Manu were the slaughter of a Brāhmaṇa, the drinking of spirituous liquor (*Surā*), stealing the gold of a Brāhmaṇa, adultery with a preceptor's (*guru's*) wife, and association with such offenders.[6] With these were associated the minor sins (*Upanipātakāni*) which

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (55), p. 242. Italics mine.
[2] *Ibid.*, (5), p. 34.
[3] *Ibid.*, (7), p. 39.
[4] *Ibid.*, (8), p. 40.
[5] *Ibid.*, (16), pp. 71-2.
[6] Manu, XI, (55), p. 441.

Manu also elaborately describes. With the *mahāpātaka* of killing a Brāhmaṇa were connected the minor sins, such as falsely attributing to oneself high birth, giving information to the king regarding a crime, and falsely accusing a teacher. With the drinking of spirituous liqour were linked the minor sins of forgetting the Veda, reviling the Veda, giving false evidence, slaying a friend, eating forbidden food, or swallowing substances unfit for consumption. The robbing of a Brāhmaṇa's gold was associated with the theft of a deposit or men or a horse and silver, diamonds and other gems. Adultery with a preceptor's wife brought in its wake the sins of sexual intercourse with sisters by the same mother, with unmarried maidens, with females of the lowest castes and with the wives of a friend or of a son. The other minor sins were slaying kine, sacrificing for those who were not worthy to sacrifice, adultery, selling oneself, casting off one's teacher, mother, father or son, and giving up of the daily study of the Veda.[1] This type of curse therefore should be traced not only to Buddhist influence,[2] but evidently also to that of Manu, the Law-Giver.[3]

5. Imprecations and their Origins in Gupta Records

Let us now attempt to trace the origins of some of the imprecations found in the Gupta records. The Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 475-76, lays down that the "giver of land enjoys happiness in heaven for sixty thousand years, (*but*) the confiscation (*of a grant*), and he who assents (*to an act of confiscation*), shall dwell for the same number of years in hell": "*Saṣṭiṃ ba (va) sahasrāṇi svarggē mōdati bhūmi-daḥ ā cchēttā cānumaṅtā ca tāny-ēva narake vasēd iti.*"[4] This curse is repeated in the Khoh copper-plate grants of the reign of the same ruler dated the year A. D. 482-83,[5] and his Majhgawam copper-plate grant, dated A. D. 510-11. This Majhgawam record adds the clause that "those who confiscate a previous grant, are born (*again*) as black serpents, inhabiting the dried up hollows of trees, in desert places destitute

[1] Manu, XI, (60-67), pp. 442-44.

[2] *Cf.* Childers, *op. cit.*, *Pancānatariyākammam*, s. v.

[3] On this point see Pargiter, *Verses relating to gifts of land cited in Indian Land Records, J. R. A. S.*, 1912, pp. 248-54; Hultzsch, *Verses relating to gifts of Land, Ibid.*, pp. 476-77; Jolly, *Imprecations in Indian Land grants, J. R. A. S.*, 1913, pp. 674-77; Narasimhacar, *Some more verses relating to gifts of land, Ibid.*, pp. 388-9, Batakrishna Ghose, *Imprecatory verses in copper plate grants, I. H. Q.*, III, p. 432.

[4] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (21), text, p. 96, trans. p. 99.

[5] *Ibid.*, (22), p. 105.

of water!"[1] To this threat is added another qualification in the Māḷīyā copper-plate grant of Dharasena II, dated A. D. 571-72, that the black serpents in the trees will be "in the Vindhyan regions."[2] This specification does not any how appear in many other grants of this period, but nevertheless it can also be particularly noticed in the Alīnā copper plate grant of Śilāditya VII, dated A. D. 766-67[3] while, what has been noticed in the records of *Mahārajā* Hastin, can also be observed in the Arang copper-plate grants of Mahā Jayarāja of Śarabhapura[4] and the Raypur copper-plate of Mahā Sudevarāja.[5] The Siwaṇi copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Pravarasēna II, however, adds that "whosoever confiscates land that has been given, whether by himself, or by another, he incurs the guilt of the slayer of a hundred thousand cows!"[6] The giver of land was of course always praised but the person who dared to retrieve that gift was invariably cursed. In the Karitalai copper-plate grant of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, dated A. D. 493-94, is stated, for example that "Fathers (*in the world of the dead*) clap their hands upon their arms (*and*) grandfathers leap (*from joy*), (*saying*)—a giver of land has been born in our family; he shall become our deliverer! He who confiscates land, rich in all (*kinds of*) grains, (*that has been granted*)—he becomes a worm in the ordure of a dog, and sinks (*into hell*) together with his ancestors."[7]

The text of the above curse runs thus:

19. *Āsphoṭaḷa-yaṁti pitaraḥ pravalgaṁti pitāmahāḥ bhūmi-dō-smat-*
20. *ttrātā bhaviṣyati Sarvvasasya-samṛdhhāṁtu yo harēta vasuṁ-*
21. *dharāṃ sva viṣṭhāyaṃ kṛmi-*
r-bhūtvā pitṛbhis-saha majjyati.[8]

It may be noted that this verse can also be seen in the Khoh copper-plate grants of Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 512-13,[9] 516-17[10] and 533-34.[11]

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (23), p. 109.
[2] *Ibid.*, (38), p. 171.
[3] *Ibid.*, (39), p. 190.
[4] *Ibid.*, (40), p. 195.
[5] *Ibid.*, (41), p. 200.
[6] *Ibid.*, (56), p. 249.
[7] *Ibid.*, (26), p. 120.
[8] *Ibid.*, (27), p. 124.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 119; also see (28), p. 129.
[10] *Ibid.*, (30), p. 134.
[11] *Ibid.*, (31), p. 139; also see (27), p. 124.

All of these verses can be traced to Purāṇic influences. It has been pointed out already that the passage which lays down that the giver of land shall dwell for sixty thousand years in heaven and for the same period in hell appears in the *Padma Purāṇa* thus:[1]

Bahubhir vasudhā dattā rājabhiḥ Sagarādibhiḥ|
Yasya yasya yadā bhumis tasya tasya tadā phalaṃ,||
Brahma-ghno vātha strī-haṅtā bāla-ghnaḥ patito 'tha vā,|
Gavāṁ śata-sahasrāṇi haṅtā tat tasya duṣkṛtaṃ.|
Sva-dattāṃ para-dattāṃ vā yo haret tu vasuṅdharāṃ,||
Sa ca viṣṭhā kṛmir bhūtvā pitṛbhiḥ saha pacyate.|
Saṣṭi-varṣa sahasrāṇi svarge tiṣṭati bhūmi-daḥ;
Āhartā cānumantā ca tāvad vai narakaṃ vrajēt.||[2]

These verses can also be found in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* with this change in the imprecation:

Sa naro narake ghore kliśyaty-āpralayāṅtikaṃ,[3]

while in the *Brahma Purāṇa* runs the couplet thus:

Sva dattāṃ para-dattāṃ vā hareta vasuṅdharāṃ,|
Saṣṭir varṣa-sahasrāṇi viṣṭhāyāṃ jāyate kṛmiḥ.||[4]

This would imply that the verse threatening the confiscator of grants to a life of hell for sixty thousand years can be traced also the *Bhaviṣya* as well as the *Padma* and the *Brahma Purāṇas*.

Now we may turn for example to some Gupta records in order to ascertain whether this type of imprecation was adopted by the donors of grants in the Gupta age. We may cite a typical Gupta inscription to illustrate the point at issue. In the Khoh copper plate grant of *Mahārāja* Jayanātha, dated A. D. 496-97, we find for instance the following imprecation which is fortunately given at some length:

16. *sva dattāṃ para dattāṃ va yatnād-rakṣa Yudhiṣṭhira mahīṃ mahimatāṃ śreṣṭha dānāch-śrēyō-nupāla*

17. *naṃ. . . .*

18. *Saṣṭiṃ varṣa sahasrāṇi svargge modati bhūmi-daḥ ācchettā cānumaṅtā ca tānyēva narake vasēt. . . .*

[1] Pargiter, *J. R. A. S.*, 1912, p. 251.
[2] *Padma Purāṇa*, VI, 33, 26-30.
[3] *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, IV, 164, 22, 34.
[4] *Brahma Purāṇa*, 155, 6-7.

19. *Bahubhir-vvasudhā bhuktā rajabhis-Sagarādbhiḥ rya(ya)sya yasya yadā bhūmis-tasya tasya tadā phalaṃ.*

20. *Sarvva-sasya-samṛddhāṅ(ṭ)u yō hareta vasuṅdharāṃ sa viṣṭhāyāṃ kṛmir bhūtvā pitṛbhiḥ saha majjyate.*[1]

A similar verse can be found in the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* where it appears in the following words:

Sva dattāṃ-para dattāṃ vā yatnād rakṣēd Yudhiṣṭira,
Mahīṃ mahī-bhṛtāṃ srēṣṭha dānātśreyo'nupālanaṃ.[2]

Again the verse that the confiscators of previous grants will be born as black serpents (*Ā-pānīyeṣv araṇyeṣu śuṣka-koṭara-vāsinaḥ kṛṣṇāyo 'nhijāyaṅte pūrva-dāyaṃ haraṅti ye*) which has been referred to already, has been traced to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* where it runs thus:

Toya hīneṣva arāṇyēṣu śuṣka koṭara vāsināḥ
Kṛṣṇāhayo 'bhijāyaṅte narā brahma-sva hāriṇaḥ.[3]

The last type of imprecation which states that the confiscator of grants will become a worm in the ordure of a dog and sink into hell together with his ancestors can be traced to two sources, the *Padma Purāṇa* and the *Bṛhaspati (Smṛti) Saṅhitā*. In the former we find the following verse:

Āsphoṭayaṅti pitaro varṇayaṅti pitāmahāḥ
Bhūmi-dātā kule jātaḥ sa nas=trātā bhaviṣyati,[4]

while in the latter, ascribed roughly to the 11th or 12th century, occurs the verse:

Svadattāṃ vā yo hareta vasuṅdharāṃ|
Sva viṣṭhāyāṃ kṛmir bhūtvā pitṛbhiḥ saha pacyate. ‖[5]

Lastly, the following type of curse found in the Arang copper-plate grant of Mahā Jayarāja, the Raypur copper-plate grant of Mahā Sudevarāja, and the Rajim copper plate grant of Rāja Tīvaradeva, can also be traced to a Purāṇic source:

Agnēr apathyaṃ prathamaṃ suvarṇam
bhūr Vvaiṣṇavī Sūrya-sutās ca gāvaḥ|
dattās trayas tēna bhavaṅti lokāḥ
yaḥ kāncanaṃ gāṃ ca mahīṃ ca dadyāt. ‖[6]

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (27), pp. 122-23; also see nos (26, 28, 30), pp. 119, 127, 133.
[2] *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, IV, 164, 38.
[3] *Ibid.*,
[4] *Padma Purāṇa*, VI, 33, 17.
[5] *Bṛhaspati Saṅhitā*, vs. 26-29 (Calcutta, ed. *san.* 1296).
[6] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (40, 41, 81), pp. 194, 198, 296.

This verse has been traced to the *Padma Purāṇa* where it is found with the following additional verse:

Teṣāṃ anantaṃ phalaṃ aśnuvīta yaḥ kāñcanaṃ ca mahīṃ ca dadyāt.[1]

It is interesting to observe that this verse appears at first in the *Mahābhārata* where it is found in the following form:

Agner apatyaṃ prathamaṃ suvarṇaṃ
bhur Vaiṣṇavī Sūrya-sutāś ca gāvaḥ:
Lokas trayas tena bhavanti datta,
yaḥ kāñcanaṃ gās ca mahīṃ ca dadyāt.[2]

These imprecations were adopted in the inscriptions of the Gupta age with considerable variations in the choice of expression, and it has been perhaps suggested rightly that the donors quoted the versions which were current in general use.[3] It may consequently be inferred that the *Padma*, *Bhaviṣya* and *Brahma Purāṇas* must have been well-known to the people of those days and these *Purāṇas* cannot possibly be later than the earliest centuries of the Christian era. It is also worth noting how these curses served to preserve the solidarity of the religious institutions of the Hindus like the *agrahāras*.

6. Life in a Brāhmaṇa Agrahāra

We have already noticed how Kālidāsa refers to some features of a type of hermitage life, especially in his play *Śākuntalā*[4] and it is worth remembering how later writers too have left behind them some memories of this phase of life in the Gupta period. Kāmandaka, who was in all likelihood a writer prior to Bhavabhūti and Daṇḍin as remarked earlier,[5] evidently alludes to this nature of life when he describes the duties of a Brahmacārin thus: "The duties of a Brahmacārin are to live in the family of his preceptor, to worship the sacred fires, to study the *Vedas* and their auxiliaries, to observe vows, to perform ablutions during the three periods of the day (in the morning, at noon, and in the evening), to beg and to live for life with his spiritual guide."[6] But Kāmandaka is more explicit when he depicts how those who resorted to the forests had

[1] *Padma Purāṇa*, VI, 32-33.

[2] *Mahā.*, III, 199, 13480.

[3] Pargiter, *op. cit.*, *J. R. A. S.*, 1912, p. 253; Narasimhachar, *J. R. A. S.*, 1913, p. 676.

[4] *Cf.* Chapter I *ante*, Sect. VI, p. 129.

[5] *Cf.* Chapter VI *ante*, Sect. X, A-2, p. 467.

[6] Kāmandaka, *Nītisāra*, Sect., II, vs 22-23, pp. 20-21, text, *Sarga* 2, *Prakaraṇa* 4, pp. 32-33. (trans. M. M. Dutt, 1896, text, ed. Gaṇapati Śāstri, 1912).

to live, for he observes that they had "to keep matted hair, to perform *Agnihōtra* sacrfices, to sleep on the bare earth, to wear black deer skin, to live in solitary places, to sustain themselves on water, esculent roots, *Nivāra* crop and fruits, and to refuse to accept alms, to bathe thrice in the day, to observe vows and to adore the gods and the guests."[1] In spite of some apparent similarities in the duties of the Brahmacārin and the forest-dweller, these faint sidelights on domestic life appear to throw some light on some aspects of *Agrahāra* life in this period.

In such a Brāhmaṇa village lived the Brāhmaṇas in a way some features of which have fortunately been preserved for us in the works of Bāṇa, who probably lends a touch of idealism to the picture which has been created evidently from a contemporary atmosphere. In all probability Bāṇa describes what he calls a penance grove (*tapōvana*) in a forest but there is hardly any reason to doubt that the life which he depicts could hardly have been far different from the one which the Brāhmaṇas must have led in their *agrahāras*. "Its precincts," he says, "were filled by *munis* entering on all sides, followed by pupils murmuring the Vedas, and bearing fuel, *kuśā* grass, flowers, and earth. There the sound of the filling of the pitchers was eagerly heard by the peacocks; there appeared, as it were, a bridge to heaven under the guise of smoke waving to exalt to the gods the *muni* race while yet in the body by fires satisfied with the ceaseless offering of ghee; all round were tanks with their waves traversed by lines of sunbeams stainless as though from contact with the hermits they rested upon.....the hermitage received homage from woodland creepers with their tops bent by the wind, and from the trees with their ever-falling blossoms, and was worshipped by trees with the *añjali* of interlaced boughs; parched grain was scattered in the yards round the huts, and the fruit of the myrobalan, *lavalī*, jujube, banana, bread-tree, mango, *paṇasa*, (jack-fruit) and palm pressed on each other; the young Brāhmaṇas were eloquent in reciting the Vedas; the parrot race was garrulous with the prayer of oblation that they learnt by hearing it incessantly; the Subrahmaṇyā[2] was recited by many a *mainā*; the balls of rice offered to the deities were devoured by the cocks of the forest, and the offering of wild rice was eaten by the young *kalahaṁsas* of the tanks close by. The eating-places of the sages were protected from pollution by ashes cast round them. The fire for the *munis' homa*

[1] Kāmandaka, *op. cit.*, vs. 27-28, pp. 21-22, text, *Ibid.*, vs. 24-25, p. 33.

[2] The commentary explains it as '*Veda.*'

sacrifice was fanned by the tails of their friends, the peacocks; the sweet scent of the oblation prepared with nectar, the fragrance of the half-cooked sacrificial cake was spread around; the crackling of flames in the offering of a stream of unbroken libations made the place resonant; a host of guests was waited upon; the Pitṛis were honoured; Viṣnu, Śiva and Brahmā were worshipped. The performance of Śrāddha rites was taught; the science of sacrifice explained; the Śāstras of right conduct examined; good books of every kind recited; and the meaning of the Śāstras pondered. Leafy huts were being begun; courts smeared with paste, and the inside of the huts scrubbed. Meditation was being firmly grasped, *maṅtras* duly carried out, *yōga* practised, and offerings made to woodland deities. Brāhmaṇical girdles of *munja* grass were being made, bark garments washed, fuel brought, deer-skins decked, grass gathered, lotus-seed dried, rosaries strung, and bamboos laid in order for future need. Wandering ascetics received hospitality, and pitchers were filled."[1]

Besides these features of religious life Bāṇa gives us some more characteristics of those who lived in such Brāhmaṇa colonies. There they appear to have attempted to avoid defilement in evil conduct, sharpness in disputations, wavering of the mind, clasping of necks, binding of girdles in quarrels, *pakṣapāta* in scientific disputations, error in the *Śāstras*, longing for wealth, and similar traits of worldly men.[2]

Besides describing these details of life and the practices of the Brāhmaṇas living in such a Brāhmaṇa colony, Bāṇa sometimes also throws more light on some other aspects of Brāhmaṇa religious life of his day. The type of life which he has depicted till now must have continued throughout the day until the day-light drew to a close. Then the hermits went to take their bath and on completing it offered a sacrifice, the smoke of which spread out a fragrance of sandal-wood. When the sun set and the twilight commenced " then the hermitage became the home of quiet thought, as the pleasant sound of milking the sacred cows arose in one quarter, and the fresh *kuśā* grass was scattered on the altar of Agni, and the rice and oblations to the goddesses of space were tossed hither and thither by the hermitage maidens." When the stars filled the sky the hermits with their faces turned unto the heavens cast towards the

[1] Bāṇa, *Kādaṁbarī*, pp. 38-39.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

stars their sacred oblations.[1] When half a watch of the night had passed the Brāhmaṇas partook of their meals and rested on bamboo stools, while their pupils waved fans of antelope skin white as *Darbha* grass and sat in a circle to chat.[2] It may be presumed that, after spending some time in this way, they must have retired.

III. Jaina Religious Institutions

1. Some Pre-Gupta Jaina Orders

The *Kalpa Sūtra*, one of the canonical works of the Svetāmbara Jainas, tells us that there were six schools of thought (*Gaṇas*) with their respective branches (*Śākhās*), each of which separated in course of time into its own family (*Kula*). It is interesting to note that several of these Jaina orders are mentioned in Kuṣāṇa records.

The *Kalpa Sūtra* relates that there were seven *Gaṇas*: Godāsa, Uddeha, Uduvāṭika, Veśavāṭika, Cāraṇa, Mānava and Kauṭika. The first *Gaṇa* had four *Śākhās* and no *Kulas*.

The second *Gaṇa* Uddeha was founded by Ārya Rohaṇa and was divided into four *Śākhās* and six *Kulas*. The former were styled as Udaṁbarikā, Māsapūrikā, Matipatrikā, Pūrṇapatrikā, while the latter were called Nāgabhūta, Sōmabhūta, Ullagakkha, (Ardakakkha ?) Hastilipta, Nāṅdika, and Parihāsaka.[3] Among the only identifiable *Kulas* in the records are the Nāgabhūtikīya[4] and the Paridhāsika,[5] which may be identified with the Nāgabhūta and the Parihāsika *Kulas* of the *Kalpa Sūtra*.

The third *Gaṇa* mentioned in the *Kalpa Sūtra* is the Uduvāṭika which is subdivided into four *Śākhās* and three *Kulas*. The former was called the Kampīyikā, Bhadrīyikā, Kākandikā, and Mekhalīyikā, while the latter went by the names of Bhadrayakṣa, Bhadraguptika and Yaśobhadra.[6] None of these can be traced in any of the Kuṣāṇa inscriptions.

The fourth *Gaṇa* referred to in the Jaina *Kalpa Sūtra* is the Veśavāṭika which was subdivided into four *Śākhas* and four *Kulas*. It was founded by Kāmaṛddhi and the *Śākhās* were called Srāvastikā, Rajyapālikā, Antaranjikā, and Kṣemaliptikā while the *Kulas* are

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 46.
[3] Bhadrabāhu, *Kalpa Sūtra*, p. 290. (S. B. E., XXII)
[4] *E. I.*, I, no. XIX, p. 391.
[5] Luders, *Epig. Notes*, I. A., XXXIII, p. 109.
[6] Bhadrabāhu, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

known as Gaṇika, Maighika, Kāmarddhika and Indrapuraka.[1] Among these only the Mehika *Kula* is mentioned in Kuṣāṇa grants.[2]

The fifth *Gaṇa* recorded by the *Kalpa Sūtra*, which was identified by Bühler with the Vāraṇa *Gaṇa* of the inscriptions,[3] was subdivided into four *Śākhās* and seven *Kulas*. The former were known as Hāritamālākāri. Sāṁkāsikā, Gavedhuka and Vajranāgari, while the latter were styled as Vātsalīya, Prītidharmika, Hāridraka, Puśyamitrika, Mālyakā, Āryacētaka, and Krṣṇaśakha.[4] The Kuṣāṇa inscriptions refer to many of them, and they may conveniently be set down as follows:

Śākhā	*Kula*
?	Puśyamitrīya.[5]
Harītamālagaḍhī	Ārya Ceṭika[6]
Vārjanāgari.	Ārya Hāṭikīya[7]
Vajanagari.	Āryya Hāṭṭiya (Ārya Hālīya)[8]
Vājanāgari	Petivāmika (Praitivarmika)[9]
Saṁkāsiyā.	Ayyabhyiṣṭa (?)[10]

The *Śākhās* may be identified with the Haritamalikari, Vajranāgari and Sankāsikā, while the *Kulas* are to be identified with the Puṣyamitrika, Āryaceṭikā, and Paritidharmika of the *Kalpa Sūtra*. The rest appear to be variations or additional changes in the Order.

The sixth *Gaṇa* mentioned in the *Kalpa Sūtra* is the Mānava *Gaṇa* which was divided into four *Śākhās* and three *Kulas*. The former were named Kāśyapīyā, Gautamīyā, Vāṣiṣṭīyā and Saurāṣṭrikā, while the latter were styled as Ṛṣiguptika, Ṛṣidattika and Abhiyaśasa.[11] But few of these are mentioned in Kuṣāṇa records.

The last but not really the least of the *Gaṇas* referred to in the *Kalpa Sūtra* is the Kauṭika *Gaṇa* which was founded by Suṣṭhita and Supratibuddha and was subdivided into four *Kulas* and seven *Śākhās*. The *Śākhās* were called Uccanāgarī, Vidhyādharī, Vajrī, and Madhyamikā, while the *Kulas* went by the names of Brahmaliptaka,

[1] Bhadrabāhu, *op. cit*,. p. 291.
[2] *E. I.*, I, no. 11, p. 382.
[3] Bühler, *On the Indian Sect of the Jainas*, p. 598.
[4] Bhadrabāhu, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-292.
[5] *E. I.*, I, no. VI, p. 385.
[6] *Ibid.*, no. IX, p. 387.
[7] *Ibid.*, no. XI. p. 388.
[8] *Ibid.*, no. XXXIV, p. 397.
[9] *Ibid.*, no. XXX, p. 396.
[10] *Ibid.*, II, no. XXXVI, p. 209.
[11] Bhadrabāhu, *Kalpa Sūtra*, p. 292.

Vātsalīya, Vāṇīya, and Prṣnavāhanaka.[1] This *Gaṇa* is well represented in the Kuṣāṇa inscriptions and its details may be set forth thus:

Śākhā.	*Kula*
Vera.	Sthānikīya[2]
Arya Vajrī.	Thāniya[3]
Majhamā.	Pavahaka[4]
Ucchenāgari.	Brahmadāsiya[5]
Vacchhalīya.[6]	?

The *Śākhās* must be identified with the Vajrā, Madhyamika Uccānagari, and the Vātsalīya of the Jaina canon, while the *Kulas* from the inscriptions may be identified with the Vāṇīya, Brahmaliptika, and the Prṣnavāhanaka of the *Kalpa Sūtra*.

In this connection it may be observed that the "*Saṁbhoga*" i. e. complete enjoyment, of the Jaina monks is many a time also mentioned. In a Jaina inscription from Mathurā reference is made to a certain Suśila "out of the Koṭṭīya *Gaṇa*, the Thāṇīya *Kula*, the Srīgriha *Saṁbhōga*, the Ārrya-Veri (Ārya Vajrā)".[7] The expression *Saṁbhōga* has been interpreted by Bühler to mean a District Settlement.[8] Invariably the Jaina inscriptions of the Kuṣāṇās point first to the *Gaṇa*, then to the *Kula* and lastly to the *Saṁbhōga*.[9]

The Jaina school of religious thought, which was thus divided into these main branches of thought, appears to have been organised into the Jaina *Saṅgha* which was chiefly administered by the *Saṅghaprkṛta* and the *Saṅghapramukha*.[10]

2. Jaina Orders and Institutions in Gupta Times

Most of these orders and institutions must have continued to Gupta times. It is interesting to observe how the Koṭṭiya *Gaṇa* still prevailed in the Gupta age and could count in its fold some adherents, and it may also be remembered how the other Jaina sects

[1] Bhadrabāhu, *op. cit.*, p. 292.
[2] *E. I.*, II, no. VII, p. 204.
[3] *Ibid.*, I, no. III, p. 383.
[4] *Ibid.*, II, no. XXII, p. 205.
[5] *Ibid.*, I. no. IV, p. 384.
[6] *Ibid.*, II, no. XIII, p. 202.
[7] *Ibid.*, I, no. III, p 383.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 379.
[9] *Ibid.*, II, no. XVIII, p. 206, no. XXXVI, p. 209.
[10] Vogel, *Cat. of the Mathurā Museum*, no. 24, p. 37. For a later account of life in the Jaina *Saṅghas* see my paper "*Monastic Life in Śravaṇa Belgoḷa*", *Śravaṇa Belgoḷa Number, J. A.*, V, no. III, pp. 123-32.

like the Nirgranthās also survived in this period during which Udayagiri was one of the centres of Jainism. The Udayagiri inscription of the reign of Kumāra Gupta I, dated A. D. 432–33, relates how one Śankara who conquered "the enemies (*of religion*) (*and*) is possessed of tranquillity and self-command, caused to be made (*and set up*) in the mouth of this cave, (*this*) image of a Jina, richly embellished with the expanded hoods of a snake[1] and an attendant female deity (*and*) having the name of Pārśva, the best of the Jinas. He is indeed the disciple of the Saint, the *Ācārya* Gōśarman, who was the ornament of the lineage of the *Ācārya* Bhadra (*and*) sprang from a noble family; but he is more evidently renowned on the earth (*as being*) the son (*begotten*) on Padmāvati, of the *Aśvapati*, the soldier Saṅghila."[2] From this epigraph it may be concluded that, in the first half of the fifth century, Jaina religious institutions were presented with images of their *Tīrthaṅkarās* by private individuals, and that the chief of such houses was called the *Ācārya*. The ancestry of such preceptors was traced back to three generations; and it may be noticed in this case that the father of Gośarman was an *Ācārya* while his grandfather was a cavalry officer (*Aśvapati*).

Another centre of Jainism in this period was Mathurā. An epigraph, dated in the year 113 (A. D. 443) in the victorious reign of Kumāra Gupta I, states how an image, obviously of a *Tīrthaṅkara*, was set up by Sāmāḍhyā (Śyā), the daughter of Bhaṭṭibhava and housewife of the ferryman (?) Grahamitrapālita, who had received the command of dedication from Dattilācārya of the *Koṭṭiya Gaṇa* and the Vidhyādhari *Śākhā*.[3] It may be seen from this case that the *Śākhā* as well as the *Gaṇa* of the *Ācārya* were also recorded whenever his name was given in the inscriptions.

Another interesting record is the Kahauṃ stone pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta, dated A. D. 460–61, which registers one more dedication of five Jaina images. It tells us how "in this jewel of a village, which is known by people under the name of Kakubha, (*and*) which is pure from association with holy men (*iti janais = sādhu-saṁsargapūtē*) (*there was*) the high-minded Bhaṭṭisōma, who (*was*) the son of Sōmiḷa, that receptacle of many good qualities. His son (*was*) Rudrasōma, of great intellect and fame, who had the other appellation of Vyāghra. His son was Madra, who (*was*) especially full of

[1] *Cf. A. S. W. I.*, I, p. 25, wherein is represented an image of Pārśvanātha with a five-hooded snake as a kind of nimbus. On the *Ari-Śaḍvarga* see Fleet, *op. cit.*, pp. 156, 260, 264.

[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (61), pp. 259–60.

[3] *E. I.*, II, no. XXXIX, pp. 210–11.

affection for the Brāhmaṇas, and religious preceptor and ascetics." We are told in this record that he set up for "the sake of final beatitude (*and*) for the welfare of all existing beings, five excellent images (*pañca mudrāṃ sthāpayitvā*), made of stone, (*of*) those who led the way in the path of the Arhats[1] who practise religious observances, there was then planted in the ground this most beautiful pillar of stone."[2] This inscription is another example which shows how tolerant people continued the practice of presenting Jaina *maṭhas* with *Tīrthaṅkara* images, which kept alive the faith of Jainism. If an average of twenty-five years is allotted to each of these persons mentioned in this inscription from Madra upwards, since four generations are noted here in this record dated A. D. 460–61, it may be stated, provided that these persons remained in the same place and were not later converts, that Kahaum, the ancient Kakubha, in the Gorakpur District of the Central Provinces, was probably a centre of Jainism during the reign of Samudra Gupta in A. D. 360–65. If this were so, then this *Maṭha* must also have been most probably in existence in this place at that period.

Jainism during this age seems to have flourished also at Vaṭa Gohali. The Pahārpur copper plate of the Gupta year 159 (A. D. 479) refers to a *maṭha* presided over by a succession of Nirgraṅtha monks, at least a hundred and fifty years prior to the visit of Yüan Chwāng to this locality. It refers to the *Śramaṇācārya* Guhanandi, who was evidently the *Ācārya* of this *vihāra* and who conducted the worship of the Arhats with the "*gaṅdhadhūpa-sumano-dīpādyarthān.*"[3] It has been surmised that, as the names of the Digaṁbara *Ācāryas* of the fifth and sixth centuries invariably bore the names ending in *naṅdin*, and as Puṇḍravardhana is mentioned as one of the seats of Jaina pontiffs beginning with Gupti Gupta or Viśāka-Ācārya, or disciple of Bhadrabāhu II, "Guhanandin must have been one of them."[4] Yüan Chwāng, it may be recollected, visited Puṇḍravardhana in the second quarter of the 7th century. He observes how "there are some 100 Deva temples, where secretaries of different schools congregate. The naked Nirgranthas are the most numerous."[5] This statement only corroborates what is set forth in the Paharpur plates regarding the state of Jainism in this particular locality.

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (15), pp. 67–68.

[2] *Cf.* For remarks on "*Arhat*" see B. C. Bhattacharya, *The Jaina Iconography*, p. 88.

[3] *E. I.*, XX, p. 62.

[4] Bhandarkar, *Ibid.*, p. 60. Vaṭa Gohali has been identified with the modern Goalbīṭa, see p. 61.

[5] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 184; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 195

If one turns to the contemporary inscriptions of this age, it is possible to know something more about the Jaina institutions of Gupta times. A grant of the reign of Kākusthavarmā says how he gave away a full field of twelve *nivartanas* at the village of Siddhakēdāra to the sects of the Yāpanīyas for the "purposes of the glory of repairing anything that may be broken and performing the worship of the temple of the holy Arhat."[1] From this grant it is clear that there was at this time a sect of the Jainas known as the Yāpanīyas and that grants of land were made to Jaina *vihāras* more or less on the lines of those gifts made to Brahmaṇa *agrahāras* holders. It is worth observing that, as in the case of the *agrahāras*, with the Jainas, too, one of the conditions of the gift, apart from the maintenance of the worship, was the effecting of repairs in the *vihāra* in which the monks lived.

In the days of Kākusthavarmā's grandson Mṛgeśavarmā something more can be ascertained about some of the other Jaina sects. In one of the inscriptions of Mṛgeśavarmā it is related how, while at Vaijayantī (Banavāsi), he "gave the holy *Arhats* thirty-three *nivartanas* (*of land*), from the river Mātṛsarit up to the sacred confluence of rivers called Ingiṇasaṅgama, for the purpose of supporting the Kūrcakas, who are naked religious mendicants."[2] Besides the Kūrcakas there were other sects among the Jainas in this period. The village of the Kāḷavaṅga, for instance, was divided into three portions "firstly one share was for the holy *Arhat* and the great god Jinendra, who inhabited the supreme and excellent place (*called*) "the hall of the *Arhat*." The second was for the enjoyment of the sect of eminent ascetics called Svētapaṭa, which was intent on practising the true religion declared by the *Arhat*. The third was for the enjoyment of the sect of eminent ascetics called Nirgranthas."[3]

These gifts of land from the State enabled the Jaina monastics to carry on their feasts and religious observances. The Halsi plates of king Mṛgeśavarmā give the following details about some endowments in the city of Palāśikā (*Halsī*). "The lord Ravi," we are informed, "established the ordinance at the mighty city of Palāśikā, that the glory of Jinendra, (*the festival of*) which lasts for eight days, should be celebrated every year on the full moon of (*the month*) Kārttika from that village; that ascetics should be supported during the four months of the rainy season; that the learned men, the chief

[1] *I. A.*, VII, pp. 34-35.
[2] *Ibid.*, VI, p. 25.
[3] *Ibid.*, VII, p. 38.

of whom was Kumāradatta,—whose intellects had been wearied long (*by excessive study of*) many scriptures and collections of precepts; who were renowned in the world, who abounded in good penances; and whose sect was his authority for what he did,—should according to justice enjoy all that material substance of that greatness, and that the worship of Jinendra should be perpetually performed by the pious countrymen and citizens."[1] From this record it may, therefore, be noted, first, that the State supported the Jaina monasteries with substantial financial assistance for performing annual festivals; secondly, that the inmates of a *vihāra* were aided by the government for four months during the rainy season with the revenues from one village; and thirdly, that the head of such *vihāras* was invariably a man of considerable learning and celebrity. The object of making such gifts was mainly to perpetuate the worship of the Jaina deities, as was the case in the Brāhmaṇa *agrahāras* and the Buddhist *saṅghārāmas*. As in the Brāhmaṇa *agrahāras* the Jaina scholar monks must have continued their studies and maintained their own Svetaṁbara and Digambara schools of thought. What was true of the Jaina *vihāras* in the Kadaṁba kingdom in the days of Mṛgeśavarma may also have been true of the dominions of the Guptas of Magadha.

3. Features of Jaina Vihāra Life

Some of the Jaina Prākṛta stories, which have been ascribed to the sixth century A. D., help us in elucidating some details pertaining to Jaina institutions of this period. If a novice desired to become a priest he usually approached a preceptor (*guru*) and said: "Reverend Sir, grant us your own vow, viz., make us monks." When he thought that they were fit to be ordained, he consecrated them. In course of time they became fully instructed monks. Thereupon perfecting themselves by fasting for two and a half, three and a half, four and a half months, a half month, a whole month and by other austerities, the monk either lived in a particular monastery or wandered from place to place.[2]

These monasteries appear to have been sometimes situated in the forests and each monastery seems to have had an official known as the "head of the community" (*Kulavai*) under whose guidance the monastery must have been administered. In these monasteries there were apparently not only monks but many young boys who were

[1] *I. A.*, VI, p. 27.

[2] Meyer, *Hindu Tales*, pp. 10-11, 78, 114.

obviously to be trained in the Jaina rituals and studies. They are said to have wandered about in the woods gathering bulbous roots, flowers, and fuel from the neighbourhood.[1] They must have been instructed in Jaina studies by the elderly Jaina monks who often must have discoursed to them thus: "Unsubstantial is the *saṁsāra*, perishable the body..... Therefore such being the case, let the course of delusion be abandoned, let the mind be fixed on the religion preached by the prince of Jainas."[2] The true religion was sometimes further defined: "The true religion is the refuge of beings in the ocean of existence; and he whose aim is the true religion by enquiring tries to find God, the true religion and the teacher..... God, i.e. the Jaina, is free from the eighteen faults, the true religion is accompanied by perfect compassion; and the good teacher is he who practises strict chastity and refrains from all worldly undertakings and possessions."[3] It is also interesting to learn that the Jainas also had organised hermitages, which were intended exclusively for women.[4]

Yüan Chwāng saw some features of Jaina religious life while he was at Nālandā. As noticed earlier during this period there appears to have raged considerable religious controversy between the Buddhists and the representatives of other creeds. There Yüan Chwāng in the presence of Śīlabhadra heard "the various opinions of the different heretical schools, and said: The Bhūtas, Nirgranthas, the Kāpālikas, and the Jūtikas, are all differently arrayed...The Nirgranthas and their followers go without clothing, and so attract notice, making it a meritorious act to pull out their hair by violence; their skin dried up and their skin hard, and in appearance like the decayed wood on the river bank."[5] This shows how even at this time the Jaina monks participated in religious controversies although they only excited the contempt of the Buddhists.

Another feature of the religious life of these Nirgranthas which attracted Yüan Chwāng's attention was their skill in divination. He had heard long ago that these people were skilled in divination viz. divining by lots. He therefore asked a Nirgrantha named Vajra to cast his horoscope and enquired whether it was advisable for

[1] Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 107. Regarding the 18 faults *Cf.* Śāyaṇa Mādhava, *Sarvadarśanasaṅgraha*, p. 62. (trans).

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

[5] Shamanas Huwi Li and Yen-Tsung, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-62; *Cf.* Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 44-55.

him to stay or to go as he was doubtful about his own life. The Nirgrantha then took a piece of white stone and drew a figure on the ground and replied that it was very good for him to stay and that he would live for ten years more. He could not, he added, divine anything about his present good fortune. The Master of the Law then again asked him: "My mind's purpose is to return, but having a great number of images and sacred books, I hardly know if I shall succeed in arriving with them." To this the Nirgrantha gave an assurance that Harṣa and Kumāra Rāja would give him escorts and that the Master would return successfully without accident.[1] Although this prophecy as far as the accident was concerned proved false, for Yüan Chwāng did meet with one in which he lost some of his valuable manuscripts,[2] it reveals that in spite of religious rivalry there appears to have existed between the rival creeds some amity and that the Jainas were considered experts in Astrology at least near abouts Nālandā in the early seventh century.

IV. Buddhist Sanghārāma Life

1. The Great Buddhist Sanghārāmas

Monasticism could be seen in all its aspects in the great Buddhist monasteries which flourished at this period from the fourth to the seventh century. Fa Hien refers to two monasteries at Pāṭaliputra (Pāṭṇa) where lived about seven hundred monks. Such institutions were exclusively for Buddhist priests and students, who frequented these *vihāras* in the search for Truth. They must have been considered ideal monasteries for, he says, the rules of demeanour and the scholastic arrangement in them were worthy of observation.[3] Unfortunately he has not left us a picture of these shrines of learning.

During this period the inscriptions of the Gupta emperors disclose how there were several celebrated monasteries. There was the holy great monastery (*śrī mahā vihāra*) at Kākanādabōṭa (Sāñci) in A. D. 412-13.[4] The Sāñci stone inscription, dated A. D. 450-51, shows that it continued to survive in prosperity until the reign of either Kumāra Gupta I or of Skanda Gupta.[5] The Mathurā stone

[1] Shamans Huwi Li and Yen Tsung, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-67.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 191-92.
[3] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79.
[4] Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (5), p. 31.
[5] *Ibid.*, (62), p. 261.

image inscription, dated A. D. 549-50, which does not refer to any king, mentions another monastery named Yaśa(śō)vihāra,[1] which must have been situated in Mathurā itself. Mahānāman II, an immigrant from Ceylon, possibly built in A. D. 588-89 a *maṇḍapa* at Bodh-Gayā,[2] where another monastery must have existed. About this period there was one more prominent *vihāra* in Surāṣṭra. A grant of king Guhasena of Valabhi, dated the year 266 (*circa* A. D. 586) had the representatives of the eighteen schools of the Hīnayāna assembled together in the great convent of Duḍḍā.[3] Yüan Chwāng in the seventh century saw that there were more than a hundred monasteries with six thousand adherents of the Hīnayāna school.[4] I-Tsing also refers to this great *vihāra* where, according to him serious monks instructed by their teachers who also instructed others, spent two or three years. There as well as at Nālandā, eminent men assembled in crowds, discussed possible and impossible doctrines, and after having been assured of the excellence of their opinions by wise men, became far-famed for their wisdom.[5]

But probably the most famous of all the monasteries in I-Tsing's day were those of Nālandā, Tāmralipti and Valabhi. Yüan Chwāng tells us that the rise of the Nālandā *saṅghārāma* was due to the munificence of *Śakrāditya* (Kumāra Gupta I?), who became according to him, its founder.[6] As this Chinese traveller himself has related,[7] and as the Nālandā stone inscription of the reign of Yaśovaramadeva, attributed to the early sixth century A. D. proves, Nālandā continued to receive the patronage of the Gupta emperors.

The Sorath stone inscription of Prakaṭāditya, attributed on palaeographic grounds to about the end of the seventh century A. D., mentions two *Bālādityas*,[8] one of whom must be called *Bālāditya* II,[9] who became the victor over Mihirakula and it is evidently to this *Bālāditya* that the Nālandā inscription refers as one of the patrons of Nālandā.[10] This patronage must have been continued during

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (70), p. 273.

[2] *Ibid.*, (71), p. 278.

[3] *I. A.*, IV, pp. 175-76.

[4] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 246; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.* II, p. 266.

[5] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

[6] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 164; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 167-69. In this connection see *J. B. O. R. S.*, XIV, pp. 8-9,; *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, II, N. S., pp. 215-16.

[7] *Ibid.*, 164-65.

[8] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (79), p. 286.

[9] Fleet first pointed this out. *Cf. C. I. I.*, III, p. 304; also see Raychaudhuri, *P. H. A. I.*, p. 505; Jayaswal, *Imperial History of India*, pp. 37-38.

[10] *E. I.*, XX, no. 2, p. 45.

Harṣavardhana (Śīlāditya) of Kanauj, who was building at the time of Yüan Chwāng's visit a bronze temple at Nālandā.[1]

The royal patronage of the Gupta emperors, as the Shāhpur stone image inscription, dated, A. D. 672-73, indicates, survived down to the days of Ādityasena, whose *Balādhikṛta*, the virtuous Śālapakṣa, installed an image in the great *agrahāra* of the Nālandā.[2] This Ādityasena, was the son of Mādhava Gupta, the contemporary of Harṣa,[3] and the father of Dēva Gupta.[4]

In this celebrated monastery the Chinese pilgrim, I-Tsing stayed for ten years, and therefore his account of the various aspects of social activity, which he observed among his brother monastic forms, when it is at times compared, confirmed or supplemented by the accounts of his two illustrious predecessors, Fa Hien and Yüan Chwāng and the indisputable evidence of contemporary inscriptions, a very valuable commentary on the monasticism of the Gupta period. This is because there was little change in the system of living, especially among the monks, even after the extinction of the imperial Guptas as a ruling dynasty.

Another important centre of Buddhism during the days of Bāṇa appears to have been in the Vindhyan region where, when Harṣavardhana went in search of his sister Rājyaśri, he found the *saṅghārāma* of the Buddhist monk Divākaramitra. Bāṇa gives a glowing description of this monastery, which was apparently situated in the forest regions of the Vindhyas. "Then in the middle of the trees" describes Bāṇa, "while he (Harṣa) was as yet at a distance, the holy man's presence was suddenly announced by the king's seeing various Buddhists from various provinces seated in different situations,—perched on pillars, or seated on the rocks or dwelling in bowers of creepers or lying in thickets or in the shadow of the branches or squatting on the roots of trees,—devotees dead to all passion, Jainas in white robes, white mendicants, followers of Kṛṣṇa (*Bhāgavatāḥ*), religious students, ascetics who pulled out their hair, followers of Kapila, Jainas, Lokāyatikas, followers of Kaṇāda followers of the Upaniṣads, believers in God as a creator, assayers of metals, students of the legal institutes, students of the *Purāṇās* adepts in sacrifices requiring seven ministering priests, adepts in grammar, followers of the Pañcarātra and others besides, *all*

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II p. 171,; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 174.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (43), p. 210.
[3] *Cf.* Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 119, 121, 235.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (46), p. 217.

diligently following their tenets, pondering, urging objections, raising doubts, resolving them, giving etymologies, disputing, studying, and explaining, *and all gathered here as his disciples*. Even some monkeys who had fled to the "three Refuges" were gravely performing the ritual of the caitya, while some of the devout parrots, skilled in the Śākya *śāstras*, were explaining the *Kośa*, and some *mainās*, who had obtained calm by the exposition of the duties of the monastery life (*śikṣāpadas*) were giving lectures on the law, and some owls, who had gained insight by listening to the ceaseless round of instruction, were muttering the various births of the Bōdhisattva, and even some tigers waited in attendance who had given up eating flesh under the calming influence of Buddhist teaching, while the fact that some young lions sat undisturbed near his seat shewed at once what a great sage he was, as he thus sat as it were on a natural lion-throne."[1] From this very interesting account of what was an apparently open-air resort of the Buddhist monk Divākaramitra, it may be seen that this monastery was in a secluded and silent place which was well-suited for meditation and discussion of religious topics. What is more interesting is that this was a type of cosmopolitan monastery, where the followers of several creeds came together with the sole object of discussion, study and explanation. But, as Bāṇa carefully observes, there was no obligation for all of these who met there to follow only the Buddhist creed, because the head of this monastery was clearly a Buddhist, while all were diligently following their own tenets and were attempting to clarify their own doubts. The atmosphere which prevailed in that institution appears to have been decidedly cosmopolitan in the sense that a Buddhist monk accepted as his disciples people who professed so many creeds, and yet permitted them the privilege of adhering to their own individual beliefs and convictions. But it is highly doubtful whether the birds and beasts which are said to have gathered in such a docile and ideal way about this monk, ever really played such a part; and for all the historical sense which Bāṇa really displays in his work, this domestication of tigers and lions may be characterised as fantastic, although there may have been some birds and beasts which were kept as pets in the monastery of Divākaramitra.

It has also been recorded by Bāṇa that this Divākaramitra was a convert to Buddhism. He seems to have been a follower of the Maitrāyaṇiya *Śākhā* and the boy-friend of the Maukhāri prince

[1] Bāṇa, *Harṣacarita*, pp. 235-37. Italics mine.

Grahavarman, who was the son-in-law of Harṣa. He is said to have abandoned the three Vedas when he was the leading Brāhmaṇa teacher, and though still young in years he turned his studies to the Buddhist doctrine and assumed the red dress. Then he became a wandering mendicant and lived in this region of the Vindhyas on alms "with a train of disciples."[1]

When I-Tsing visited India, there was another famous monastery at Tiladha in Magadha.[2] He observes that it was two *yōjanas* distant from Nālandā,[3] and it has been identified with the modern Tillāra, west of Nālandā.[4] Yüan Chwāng who had visited it calls it Tiladaka and states that it was under the control of a renowned priest called Prajñabhadra.[5]

2. Royal Patronage

The Buddhist monks in their *vihārās* or monasteries led a peaceful life, which was from long usage reduced to a routine. The regular business of the monks, relates Fa Hien, was "to perform acts of meritorious virtue, and to recite their *Sūtras* and sit wrapt in meditation".[6] They were able to lead such a peaceful life and maintain the scholarly tradition of monasteries like those of Nālandā, Taxila or Duḍḍā for centuries, especially owing to the great patronage of the Gupta emperors. These rulers gave away large plots of land, the revenue from which was utilised for the maintenance of these *vihārās* and the advancement of knowledge. Fa Hien evidently alludes to such grants when he states that "the kings of the various countries and the heads of the Vaiśyas built *vihārās* for the priests, and endowed them with fields, houses, gardens, and orchards, along with the resident populations and their cattle, the grants being engraved on plates of metal."[7] That such grants were actually made is borne out by Yüan Chwāng, who visited northern India between the years A. D. 629-645. Referring to the Nālandā monastery, he remarks that "soon after the decease of the Buddha, Śakrāditya, a former king of this country, esteeming the One Vehicle, and reverencing the Three Precious Ones, built a monastery. This king's son and successor Budhagupta, continuing his father's

[1] Bāṇa, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

[2] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

[3] *Cf.* Chavannes, *Memories of I-Tsing*, p. 146, note.

[4] Cunningham, *Ancient Geography of India*, p. 456. (1871).

[5] Shamans Huwi Li and Yen-Tsung, *Life*, p. 153; *cf.* Hiuen Tsiang. *op. cit.*, II, p. 102.

[6] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

good work, to the south of this monastery built another one; to the east of this King Tathāgatagupta built a third monastery; and to the north-east of this king Bālāditya added a fourth." His son and successor Vajra, built another; and to the north of this a king of Mid-India afterwards erected a large monastery.[1] It has been suggested, however, that the *Saṅghārāma* of Nālandā rose to prominence not with the reign of *Śakrāditya* (the *Maheṅdrāditya* of the coins, namely, Kumāra Gupta I) but with the reign of Candra Gupta II *Vikramāditya*, for his contemporary *Ācārya* Āryadeva was the rector of the Nālandā monastery. Fa Hien, of course, does not refer to the edifices at Nālandā because there were two narratives and one of them, probably dealing with Candra Gupta II's munificence at Nālandā, is now lost.[2] It may be recollected that Cunningham also assigned the foundation of the Nālandā monastery to the "beginning of the Christian era."[3] If the Nālandā monastery was in reality founded in the reign of Candra Gupta II, about whom so many legends are current in the shape of tradition, despite the loss of Fa Hien's narrative, it would be interesting to know why any reference or even an allusion to Candra Gupta has not been made by Yüan Chwāng or even I-Tsing, who appear to have been more careful observers than Fa Hien. Moreover, it is worth remembering that Yüan Chwāng, as has been noticed already, mentions Ārya Deva about whom he knew some information.[4]

Though epigraphic evidence does not reveal that the Gupta monarchs were great patrons of Buddhism, it is possible that, owing to their tolerance, they sometimes made certain gifts; and such presentations evidently entailed a ceremonial procedure which has been happily recorded by Fa Hien. He narrates that "When they (the kings) make their offerings to a community of monks, they take off their royal caps, and along with their relatives and ministers, supply them with food with their own hands. That done, (the king) has a carpet spread for himself on the ground, and sits down on it

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 164-65; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 170.

[2] Dhirendra Mookerjee, *P. I. H. C.*, 1939, pp. 427, 431. Mr. S. V. Venkateshwara, had pointed out earlier at that *Śakrāditya* was another likely name of Candra Gupta II, who was also called (Deva Rāja) and if so, the monastery was built by him. (see *Indian Culture Through The Ages*, I, pp. 228-29. Also see S. K. Das, *The Educational System of the Ancient Hindus*, pp. 358-59 for remarks on this point.

[3] Cunningham, *A. S. I. R.*, XI, p. 146.

[4] *Cf.* Ch. VI *ante* Sec. X, p 480.

in front of the chairman;—they dare not presume to sit on couches in front of the community".[1]

Two of the most outstanding endowments of regal benevolence in the Gupta period, so far as the Buddhist monasteries are concerned, were the *saṅghārāmas* of Nālandā and Duḍḍā.[2] Much has been written about the former,[3] while little is known about the latter, which may be said to have been the Nālandā of the West. It may not be too much to maintain that, what Nālandā was to the imperial Guptas, Duḍḍa was to the Maitrakas of Valabhi. It was established in the reign of Dhruvasena I owing to the religious fervour of his sister's daughter, who appears to have been a Buddhist. His Wāla grant records how he granted the village of Pippalaruṅkharī (Piplod) to the "worshipful Buddhas endowed with perfect intelligence" for the purpose "of repairing the fallen and broken portion of the monastery, and for procuring frankincense, lamps, oil and flowers (for worship) and for procuring food, medicine for the sick, clothing and so forth."[4] Another gift was made by Guhasena of four villages "by pouring out water to the Community of the revered Śākya monks belonging to the eighteen schools (of the Hīnayāna) who have come from various directions to the great convent of Duḍḍā built by the venerable Duḍḍā.....in order to procure food, clothing, seats, remedies and medicines for the sick and so forth."[5] Therefore, it may be noted that the objects of such gifts were not only religious but also humanitarian. Similar grants was made by Dharasena III, Dharasena IV, and Śilāditya III.[6] If Nālandā had at least six royal patrons if not more,[7] as Yüan Chwāng has observed, then it may be noticed that Duḍḍā, too, had almost as many regal benefactors.

The great *saṅghārāma* of Nālandā left a memorable impression on Chinese travellers like Yüan Chwāng and I-Tsing. The former has given us a charming picture of this *vihāra* as it stood in his

[1] Fa Hien, *op. cit*, p. 42.

[2] I shall discuss this problem separately.

[3] S. K. Das, *The Educational System of the Ancient Hindus*, pp. 357-372 (1930), H. D. Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, 1934; K. A. Nīlakanta Śāstri, *Nālandā, J. M. U.*, XII, no. 2, 1941, pp. 147-202.

[4] *I. A.*, IV, pp. 106-7.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 175-76.

[6] *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, I, (N. S.), pp. 36, 37, 39, 40.

[7] *Cf. M. A. S. I.*, no. 66, pp. 64-66. Attempts have been made to identify the patrons mentioned by Yüan Chwāng. See Heras, *The Royal Patrons of the University of Nālandā, J. B. O. S.*, XIV, Pt I, pp. 1-23. These identifications have been simply followed by Mr. H. D. Sankalia, *The University of Nālandā*, pp. 47-50, They deserve to be reconsidered.

days, when he saw it probably in the heyday of its celebrity. "Moreover," he says, "the whole establishment is surrounded by a brick wall; which encloses the entire convent from without. One gate opens into the great college, from which are separated eight other walls, standing in the middle (*of the Saṅghārāma*). The richly adorned towers, and the fairy-like turrets, like painted hill-tops; are congregated together. The observatories seem to be lost in the vapours (*of the morning*), and the upper rooms tower above the clouds.

"From the windows one may see how the winds and the clouds (*produce new forms*), and above the soaring eaves the conjunctions of the sun and moon (*may be observed*).

"And then we may add how the deep, translucent ponds, bear on their surface the blue lotus, intermingled with *Kie-ni* (*Kanaka*) flower, of deep red colour, and at intervals the *Āmra* groves spread over all, their shade.

"All the outside courts, in which are the priests' chambers, are of four stages. The stages have dragon-projections and coloured eaves, the pearl-red pillars, carved and ornamented, the richly adorned balustrades, and the roofs covered with tiles that reflect the light in a thousand shades, these things add to the beauty of the scene.

"The *Saṅghārāmas* of India are counted by myriads, but this is the most remarkable for grandeur and height."[1] From this description it may be concluded that the structure in the centre was the original building, and that the rest were raised by royal benefactors in course of time. This is of course evident from Yüan Chwāng's remarks that *Śakrāditya* first built this convent, then Budha Gupta towards the south, Tathāgata in the east, *Bālāditya* in the north-east, and Vajra and the Mid-Indian king in the north, raised other edifices.[2] Only the west, perhaps the entrance, was left alone.[3]

This description of the Nālandā *vihāra* may now be compared with the pen pictures of some other monasteries which Yüan Chwāng saw with his own eyes. Comparing them with some of the common houses which he had noticed elsewhere Yüan Chwāng observes: "But the Buddhist monasteries are of most remarkable architecture. They have a tower at each of the four corners of the quadrangle and three high walls in a tier. The rafters and roof beams are carved with strange figures, and the doors, windows, and

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, pp. 111-12.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 110-11.

[3] For details about excavations on this site see *A. S. I. R.*, 1924-25, pp. 82-86.

walls are painted in various colours. The houses of the laity are sumptuous inside and economical outside. The inner rooms and the central hall vary in their dimensions and there is no room for form or construction for the tiers or the rows of high rooms. The doors open to the east and the throne faces the east."[1]

This appears to have been the description of Buddhist *vihāras* in general and the Nālandā monastery was apparently one of the most important of such structures. As it constantly received the benefit of regal donations from time to time the original monastery continued to enlarge until in course of time the Nālandā *saṅghārāma* became a series of such structures amounting to what may be termed in modern phraseology, a university. According to Tibetan accounts the large library of this great monastery was situated in the Dharmaganja (Piety Mart) which consisted of three fine buildings named Ratnasāgara, Ratnodadhi and Ratnarañjaka. In the second of these, which is said to have been nine-storeyed, were housed sacred books like the *Prajñāpāramitā-Sūtra* and *Tāntrik* works like *Samajāya Guya* and others.[2] It is not strange that in such a large edifice, according to I-Tsing, there were at Nālandā, eight halls, three hundred apartments and more than three thousand resident monks.[3] It has been surmised probably with little justice that, owing to the intercourse between this monastery and that of Vikramaśila, which was founded by Dharma Pāla towards the close of the 8th century,[4] the Nālandā *saṅgāharāma* must have survived approximately till A. D. 850,[5] but as the Later Gupta family collapsed almost a century earlier it is doubtful whether this date will find general acceptance.

3. Popular Patronage.

When kings were so munificent in their patronage of the Buddhists, it is only natural that the nobles and common people should have imitated their rulers. While at Takṣaśilā (Taxila), Fa Hien noticed that "the kings, ministers and peoples of the kingdoms around vie with one another in making offerings at them (*topes*). The trains of those who come to scatter flowers and light lamps at them, never cease."[6] For the people in general there was

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 147; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 74.

[2] *Cf.* Vidyabhusana, *History of the Mediaeval School of Indian Logic*, p. 147.

[3] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 65, 154, pp. XXXIII.

[4] Das, *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*, pp. 50-76. On this topic see Nundo Lal Dey, *The Vikramaśila Monastery, J. A. S. B.*, (*N. S.*) V, pp. 1-13.

[5] Vidyabhusana, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-47.

[6] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

a certain period when they were to make offerings to the priests. "A month after the (annual season of) rest", continues Fa Hien, "the families which are looking out for blessing stimulate one another to make offerings to the monks, and send round to them the liquid food which may be taken out of the ordinary hours. All the monks come together in a great assembly, and preach the Law; after which offerings are presented at the tope of Śāriputtra, with all kinds of flowers and incense. All through the night lamps are kept burning and skilful musicians are employed to perform."[1] Besides these seasonal offerings, gifts were made by the Vaiśyas and Brāhmaṇās after every harvest.

4. Saṅghārāma Life at Nālandā.

When Yüan Chwāng visited the monastery of Nālandā, he noticed some features of the scholastic life in that great centre of learning. He observes that "In the establishment were some thousands of Brethren, all men of great ability and learning, several hundreds being highly esteemed and famous; the Brethren were very strict in observing the precepts and regulations of their Order; they were looked up to as models by all India; learning and discussing they found the day too short; day and night they admonished each other; juniors and seniors mutually helping to perfection. If among them were any who did not talk of the mysteries of the Tripiṭaka, such persons, being ashamed, lived aloof. Hence foreign students came to the establishment to put an end to their doubts and then became celebrated; and those who stole the name (of Nālandā Brother) were all treated with respect wherever they went. Of those from abroad who wished to enter the schools of discussion the majority, beaten by the difficulties of the problems, withdrew; and those who were deeply versed in old and modern learning were admitted, only two or three out of ten succeeding."[2]

These details reveal to us that even so early as the seventh century A. D., centres of culture like Nālandā attracted vast crowds of students, as Oxford or Cambridge do at present. What exactly were the curricula of studies adopted at Nālandā cannot be defined according to current standards but evidently the Buddhist texts formed the subjects of intensive study and discussion. Among these the mastery of the *Tripiṭaka* was considered essential, and such a subject appears to have attracted even foreign students. This attraction of alien

[1] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 165; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 170-71.

students irresistibly reminds us how, in our own days, eastern scholars are lured to the great universities of the West. On completing their studies at Nālandā, it was evidently considered a rare privilege to be known as a Nālandā Brother even as at present it is thought a distinction to be an Oxford or a Cambridge man. Admission into the portals of Nālandā was consequently difficult to secure, and it is interesting to note how it was obviously stiffened to almost five per cent, probably every year, by means of a *viva voce* test, the stiffness of which must have been considerable.

5. The Preceptors at Nālandā

Such a great monastery like Nālandā had its famous professors, some of whose names are fortunately recorded. These were Dharmapāla and Candrapāla, who gave 'a fragrance to Buddha's teaching'; Guṇamati and Sthiramati of excellent reputation among contemporaries; Prabhāmitra of clear argument, and Jinamitra of elevated conversation; Jñāncandra of model character and perspicacious intellect; and Śīlabhadra whose perfect excellence was buried in obscurity. All these were men of merit and learning and authors of several treatises widely known and highly respected by contemporaries.[1] They had their own rules of gradation. "The brother who expounds orally one treatise (or class of scripture)", says Yüan Chwāng, "in the Buddhist Canon, whether Vinaya, Abhidharma or Sūtra, is exempted from serving under the Prior; he who expounds two is invested with the outfit of a Superior; he who expounds three has brethren deputed to assist him; he who expounds four, has lay servants assigned to him; he who expounds five rides on an elephant; he who expounds six rides an elephant and has a surrounding retinue. Where the spiritual attainments are high, the distinctions conferred are extraordinary."[2] From these details it is clear that the respect and distinction due to a monk increased in proportion to his mastery of the Buddhist Canons.

Moreover, there was another usage at the monastery of Nālandā, which Yüan Chwāng had carefully observed. The status of the members of the establishment, who were not fully ordained, was based only on the question of seniority and not on any other consideration. This rule was said to be due to the abdication of a Bālāditya who, on becoming a monk, was placed according to seniority below all the other brethren. He presented his case before the ordained clergy

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 165; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 171.
[2] *Ibid.*, I, p. 162; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 80-81.

who considered over the matter and changed the rule.[1] When such priests delivered daily lectures to the students, who had gathered there in the monastery to study, they were exempt from the burden of administrative duties which were usually imposed on monastics.[2]

The consequences of such rewards and apparent emulation are not known, but certain distinctions were awarded to scholars triumphant in the course of debates, while those who were unsuccessful in these discussions appear to have been punished. "Those who bring forwards", states Yüan Chwāng, "(or, according to some text estimate aright) fine points in philosophy, and give subtle principles their proper place, who are ornate in diction and accurate in refined distinctions, ride richly caparisoned elephants preceded and followed by a host of attendants. But as for those to whom religious teaching has been offered in vain, who have been defeated in discussion, who are deficient in doctrine and redundant in speech, perverting the sense while keeping the language, the faces of such are promptly daubed with red and white clay, their bodies are covered with dirt, and they are driven out to the wilds or thrown into the ditches."[3]

Just as these distinctions were made between the intelligent and the ignorant, for offences against the Vinaya texts too the Community of the brethren laid down a gradation of penalties. "If the offence is slight a reprimand is ordered. For an offence next above this in gravity, there is added a cessation of oral intercourse with the Brethren. When the offence is serious the punishment is that the community will not live with the offender, and this involves expulsion and excommunication. Expelled from a community, the monk has no home; he then becomes a miserable vagrant, or he returns to his first estate."[4] Such a procedure, states Yüan Chwāng, was followed by Harṣavardhana of Kanauj. Those Brethren who adhered strictly to the rules of their Order, and were thoroughly sound in theory and practice, he "advanced to the Lion's throne" (*i.e.*, promoted to the highest place) and from these received religious instruction; those who, though perfect in the observances of the ceremonial code, were not learned in the past he merely honoured with formal reverence; those who neglected the ceremonial practices of the Order, and whose immoral conduct was notorious, he banished from his presence and from the country.[5]

[1] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 164-65; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 168-69.
I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 162; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 81.
[3] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 162-63; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 81.
[4] *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 344; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 214.

At the time of I-Tsing's visit there were some celebrated teachers of Buddhism in the most important monasteries in India. Just as Yüan Chwāng refers to the great Nālandā professors, even so I-Tsing mentions some renowned contemporaries. Jñānacandra lived in the monastery of Tiladha (Tillāra) in Magadha, Ratnasiṁha taught at Nālandā, Divākaramitra was in Eastern India; in the 'southern-most district' dwelt Tathāgataga Gupta, and in Śrībhōga (in Sumatra) resided Śākyakīrti.[1] Among these Yüan Chwāng reveals how Jñānacandra "of model character and perspicacious intellect" was, between A. D. 629-45, a teacher in the Nālandā monastery.[2]

6. Scholars and Scholarship

In the Nālandā monastery Yüan Chwāng saw some of the types of scholars and the range of their scholarship. He found that this university was one of the most remarkable. The priests, either belonging to the convent or those who came there as visitors, always reached the number of ten thousand. They all studied the Great Vehicle and also the works of the eighteen schools of Buddhism. They also mastered even ordinary works such as the Vedas and other books, the *Hetu, Vidyā, Śabdavidyā*, the *Cikitsavidyā*, the works on magic (*Atharvaveda*) the *Sāṁkhya*, and besides they made a thorough investigation of other "miscellaneous" works. There were one thousand teachers who could explain twenty collections of *Sūtras* and *Śāstras*, five hundred who could explain thirty collections and perhaps ten, including Yüan Chwāng himself, who could explain fifty collections. Śīlabhadra alone had studied and understood the whole number. His eminent virtue and advanced age caused him to be regarded as the chief member of the community at Nālandā. Within the temple they arranged every day about a hundred pulpits for preaching and the students attended these discourses without fail.[3]

In this great university Yüan Chwāng himself found considerable material for study and so he remained there and listened to the explanations of the *Sūtras* for fifteen months. During this stay there he attended the explanations of the *Yōga Śāstra* thrice, the *Nyāya-Anusāra Śāstra* once, the *Hin-hiang-tui-fā-ming* once, the *Hētuvidyā Śāstra* and the *Śabdavidyā* and the *tsah liang Śāstras* twice, the *Prāṅyamūla-Śāstra ṭīka* and the *Śata Śāstra*, thrice. Although he had

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 184. This Divākaramitra is evidently to be identified with his namesake whose cosmopolitan monastery in the Vindhyan jungles has been so well described by Bāṇa. See *Harṣacarita*, pp. 233-34.

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, II, p. 165; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, II, p. 171.

[3] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

heard the explanations of the *Kośa, Vibhāśa* and the *Śaṭpadābhidharma Śāstras* in the different parts of Kashmir before he came to Nālandā, he studied them over again in order to clarify some of his doubts. When he had finished with all these studies he devoted himself to the study of the Brāhmaṇa books and the works called *Vyākaraṇa*. This implies that he took to the study of Grammar and went through Pāṇinī's *Sūtras*, and other treatises known as *Maṇḍaka, Uṇādi, Aṣta-Dhātu* (*Dhātu-vṛtti*?) and other treatises.[1]

In the monastery of Hiraṇya also Yüan Chwāng stayed for one year and studied the *Vibhāsa* and *Nyāya-Anusāra Śāstras* and other works under Tathāgata Gupta and Kṣāntisimha who belonged to the Sarvastavādin school.[2]

These learned Buddhist monks were considered authorities in certain branches of knowledge. Jayasena, Yüan Chwāng tells us, in his youth studied under Bhadraruci, probably at the monastery of Parvata, the *Hētuvidya Śāstra*, and later under Sthiramati Bodhisatta he had mastered the *Sabdavidyā Śāstra* and other *Śāstras* pertaining to the Great and Little Vehicles. Again under Śīlabhadra, probably at Nālandā, the *Yoga Śāstra*. Then once more he had fathomed the numerous productions of secular (outside) writers; the four Vedas, works on astronomy and geography, on the medicinal art, magic and arithmetic to such an extent that he became "the admiration of the period." This celebrated scholar had established a monastery on the mountain Yaṣtivana where he took charge of some hundreds of disciples "teaching and leading them to persevere, and expounding the books of Buddha." Here Yüan Chwāng lived and studied for two years.[3]

Another equally famous scholar was the renowned Prajñabhadra who had embraced the religious life of the Sarvāstavādins. This man had distinguished himself by his knowledge of the three *Piṭakas*, the *Śabdavidyā* and the *Hētuvidyā Śāstra* and other works. This scholar had established his monastery at Tilaḍaka (Tillāra) where Yüan Chwāng remained for two months for his studies.[4]

The third most important centre of learning at this period was of course the great Nālandā where Śīlabhadra, the Master of the *Śāstra*, deputed Yüan Chwāng to expound to the congregation the

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-122.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 127.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 153-54.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

Mahāyāna-Saṁparigṛaha-Śāstra and comment on the difficulties of the *Vidyā-Mātra-Siddhi-Śāstra.* Here at this time another eminent priest Siṁharasmi was explaining for the sake of the fraternity (the four classes) the *Prāṇyamūla-Śāstra* and the *Śata-Śāstra*, newly arranged, the object of which was to refute the principles of the Yōga. Yüan Chwāng by writing a *Śāstra* called *Hwui-Tsung* in 3000 *ślokas*, refuted this opponent who out of shame left Nālandā and went to the Bodhi monastery at Gayā.[1] These side-lights on the lives of these savants reveal to us the various branches of knowledge which they not only studied by themselves but also imparted to their disciples.

7. Some Practises at Nālaṅdā

The people of Pāṭaliputra celebrated, according to Fa Hien, the festival of the *Ratha Yātrā*, in which they carried the images of the Buddha in a chariot. "Every year," observes Fa Hien, "on the eighth day of the second month they celebrate a procession of images. They make a four-wheeled car, and on it erect a structure of five storeys by means of bamboos tied together. This is supported by a king-post, and with poles and lances slanting from it, and is rather more than twenty cubits high, having the shape of a tope. White and silk-like cloth of hair is wrapped all round it, which is then painted in various colours. They make figures of *devas*, with gold, silver, and *lapis lazuli* grandly blended and having silken streamers and canopies hung out over them. On the four sides are niches, with a Buddha seated in each, and a Bōdhisattva standing in attendance on him. There may be twenty cars, all grand and imposing, but each one different from the others. On the day mentioned, the monks and laity within the borders all come together; they have singers and skilful musicians; they pay their devotions with flowers and incense. The Brahmans come and invite the Buddhas to enter the city. These do so in order, and remain two nights in it. All through the nights they keep lamps burning, have skilful music, and present offerings."[2] The tolerance of the Brāhmaṇas in inviting the Buddhists to participate in their religious customs, in Pāṭaliputra, deserves notice.

A similar ceremony was observed towards the end of the seventh century A. D. by another Chinese traveller, I-Tsing. He informs us that on the fifteenth day of the retreat, in the morning the monks went round villages or towns and worshipped all the *caityas*. "They

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-58.
[2] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 79

bring", he says, "storied carriages, images in sedan-chairs, drums, and other music resounding in the sky; banners and canopies hoisted high in regular order (lit. entwined and arranged); flattering and covering the sun; this is called *Sa-ma-kin-li* (*Sāmagrī*) which is translated as 'concord' or 'thronging together'. All great Upavastha days are like this day".[1]

An almost complete account of the monastic life can be obtained from the observation of the Chinese traveller I-Tsing, who visited India between A. D. 671-95. He studied at Nālandā, the centre of Buddhist learning, at the east end of the Rājagṛha valley. During his stay in this country and prior to his departure to China, he collected some four hundred Sanskrit texts.

8. Ordination—*Upasaṁpadā*

Any one who desired to be a priest went to meet a teacher of his own choice and revealed to him his wish. The latter inquired whether he had committed any crime like patricide or matricide which would be an impediment in the adoption of this vocation. If he found no difficulty, the candidate was accepted, given a limit of ten days or a month, and then the five precepts[2] were imparted to him. Then commenced his initiation. The man not hitherto a member of the seven Assemblies (*Pariṣads*)[3] was now called an *Upāsaka*, the first step into the Law of the Buddha. Then the teacher, having arranged a simple cloak (*Paṭa*), a *Śaṅkakṣikhā*, a *Nīvāsana*, a bowl and a filter for the novice, informed the *Saṅgha* that that person desired to become a priest. When the *Saṅgha* admitted him, the teacher on his behalf requested the *Ācāryas* to conduct the ceremony. The candidate in a private place had his hair and beard shaved off by a barber and he took a bath, hot or cold, according to the season. The teacher by some means or other found out whether or not the novice was a eunuch and then gave him the undergarment (*nīvāsana*). Then he received the upper cloak (*uttarāsaṅga*), touching it with his head; and putting on his priestly cloak, he was given the symbolic bowl. Then he was called a homeless priest *Pravarjita*, and in the presence of the teacher (*Upādhyāya*), the *Ācārya* imparted to him the ten precepts (*śikṣāpādas*), either by reciting or reading them. After the priest had been instructed in them, he was called a *Śramaṇēra*.[4]

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

[2] *Cf.* Childers, *Śikhā*, s. v. p. 474.

[3] *Bhikṣus, Bhikṣuṇis, Śikṣamaṇas, Śramaṇeras*, "Sramaneris, Upāsaka, Upāsikas."

[4] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

When the novice became acquainted with all the religious rites, and had attained the required age,[1] if he was desirous of receiving full ordination, the teacher arranged for him the six requisites,[2] and asked nine persons to participate in the ceremony. The ceremony could be held either on a small terrace or within a large enclosure or within a natural boundary. In this area, mats belonging to the *Saṅgha* could be used or each one could use his own. Incense and flowers were prepared in an expensive way. Then he was taught to pay respect thrice to each priest present, or sometimes to touch the feet of every priest approaching his person. After this ceremony, he was instructed to learn the Great Precepts (*Mahāśīla*) thrice, and then the *Upādhyāya* invested him in the presence of the assembly with the garments and the bowl.

The novice then carried the bowl around to show it successively to every one of the assembled priests. If it was a proper one, all of them said: "A good bowl"; if they did not say this, they incurred the fault of transgressing the Law. After this ceremony the bowl was to be accepted by him according to the Law. Then the *Ācārya* conducting the ceremony (*Karma*) imparted to him the Great Precepts (*Mahāśīla*), either by reading the texts which were held up before him for both were allowed by the Buddha or by muttering them; and one who had received the precepts was called an *Upasaṁpanna*. As soon as this ceremony was over, he had to measure the shadow of the sun in order to determine the date of ordination and write down the name of the season.[3] After the ordination, he had to offer as presents gifts such as a girdle or a fetter, to the teachers present to show his sincere gratitude. Then the *Upādhyāya* taught him the contents of the *Prātimōkṣa*, the characteristics of the offences and the system of reciting the precepts.

Having learnt these, the novice began to read the larger *Vinaya Piṭaka*, day after day. On completing this course of instruction, he took to the study of the *Sūtras* and *Śāstras*.[4] After the lapse of five summers, from the time the pupil mastered the *Vinaya*, he was allowed to live apart from his preceptor, the *Upādhyāya*. He could then go about among the people and pursue some other aim; nevertheless,

[1] *Cf.* Kāśyapa, *Mahāvagga*, I, 49. 5-20 yrs.

[2] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 54: They are the *saṅghāṭi* (double cloak), *uttarāsaṅga* (upper garment), *aṅtaravāsa* (inner garment), *pātra* (bowl), *niṣidana* (something for lying or sitting on), *parisrāvaṇa* (a water strainer). *Cf. Abhidhānapradipikā*, 439, for the eight *Pariṣkāraṇas*.

[3] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100, 103.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

he was obliged to be under the care of some teacher wherever he went. Such a guidance would cease after he was able to understand the *Vinaya*, namely a lapse of ten summers.[1]

Among the Buddhist monks there were certain grades. After the *Upasaṁpadā* ordination, the priest was called a *Cha-gā-ra* (*i. e., Dahara*)—small teacher; on completing the summer retreats, he was styled as a *Sthavira* (elder) meaning a settled person; and such a person could also become an *Upādhyāya* or a teacher.[2]

The student and the preceptor were obliged to perform certain formalities for mutual benefit. The pupil had to wait on his teacher, and he went for his tuition to his master during the first and last watches of the night. The teacher bade him sit down comfortably and, selecting some passages from the *Tripiṭakas*, taught him every day a lesson that suited the circumstances explaining every fact or theory. He watched over his pupil's moral conduct, warning him of defects and transgressions.[3] When the student was found to be faulty, he was made to seek remedies and repent. As a recompense the pupil massaged his teacher's body, folded his clothes, and sometimes swept his apartments and yard. After examining the water to see whether it contained insects, he offered it to the teacher. If the disciple fell ill, the teacher himself nursed him, supplied him with all the necessary medecines and looked after him as if he were his own child.[4]

9. Etiquette

There was a code of etiquette among the Buddhist monks of this age. That such a traditional usage was current can be proved from the observations of Fa Hien. "When stranger monks", he observes, "arrive (at any monastery), the old residents meet and receive them, carry for them their clothes and alms-bowl, give them water to wash their feet, oil with which to anoint them, and the liquid food permitted out of the regular hours. When (the stranger) has enjoyed a very brief rest, they further ask the number of years that he has been a monk, after which he receives a sleeping apartment with its appurtenances, according to his regular order, and everything is done for him which the rules prescribe".[5]

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-4.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 104, 119.
[3] *Cf.*, with the Catholic *Confession*.
[4] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 120.
[5] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 44. See *Kullavagga*, Ch. VIII, pp. 272-74, S. B. E. XX.

That much of this procedure was followed with some variations down to the seventh century can be seen from the records of I-Tsing, who gives us illuminating details of monastic life of this period. Whenever any monk perceived a person coming to the monastery, whether he was stranger, a friend, a disciple, a pupil or an acquaintance, he instantly proceeded to receive him, with a warm weclome (*svāgata*). If the visitor was a stranger, he was welcomed with a *susvāgata*, meaning most welcome. When the guest arrived, the host took off the former's water-jar and bowl, hung them up on pegs on the wall, and bade him be seated comfortably in a private place, if he was a novice, or in a front apartment, if he was a venerable guest. If the host was junior to the visitor, he held the calves of the visitor's legs, then stroked all parts of his body. If the host was a senior, and not very learned, he was treated as a mere priest. If a lay man came with the intention of entering the priesthood, his motive was thoroughly inquired into, then he was shown and his name entered into the Register-Book of the assembly. If he violated the laws and failed in his religious performances, he was expelled from the monastery with the sounding of the bell (*ghaṇṭā*).[1]

10. Dinner

Prior to the partaking of a meal, the monks had to take a bath. Such a practice could be well observed in a great monastery like that of Nālandā. I-Tsing tells us that there were more than ten large pools near this great university. Every morning, a bell (*ghaṇṭā*) was sounded to remind the priests of the bathing-hour, and everyone took a bathing-sheet with him. Sometimes a hundred, or even a thousand priests, left the monastery together, and proceeded in all directions towards these pools, where they took their bath.[2]

Dinner was generally served after a bath but if it was evening, the priests washed their hands and feet, and sat on separate small stools. A stool was about seven inches high, a foot square, its seat was of wicker-work, made of rattan cane, its legs rounded, and on the whole it was not heavy. For junior priests blocks of wood were used. The stools were arranged at intervals of one cubit, so that persons sitting on them did not touch each other: none sat cross legged on a large couch. They placed their feet on the ground which was strewn with cow-dung, and fresh trays on which food

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 108-9.

was served were placed before them. Fresh leaves were scattered all over.[1] When the priests arrived, they untied the fastenings of their cloaks, examined the water-jars to see whether there were any insects, washed their feet, sat on the small chairs and rested for a while until the host, observing that the sun was nearly at its zenith, announced: "It is the time."[2]

The priests sat in their places in the dining-hall for a meal. The undated Nālandā inscription of the reign of Yaśovarmadeva, who reigned in the first half of the sixth century (A. D. 533-34), shows how one Mālada brought clarified butter, curds, and distributed daily rice with various preparations, curds, and copulous ghee to the four monks. He again gave to the assembly of monks pure and fragrant water, perfumed with the four objects (scents)[3]. These items of food must have formed only some of the types of food which the Buddhist monks were wont to consume, for it is known that a full course dinner among the Buddhist priesthood was a much more elaborate affair.

A clear idea of a Buddhist dinner can best be obtained by observing the customs of entertainment on a fast (*upavastha*) day. It was not a custom, at least in the seventh century, to recite a prayer before meals. If the dinner was in the home of a host, he cleansed his hands and feet, made an offering to saints (images of *arhats*) at the upper end of the row of seats and then distributed food to the priests. At the lowest end of the row an offering was made to the mother Hāritī[4].

Then food was served. First one or two pieces of ginger about the size of the thumb and a spoonful or half of salt were given to every guest, on a leaf. He who distributed the salt, stretching forth his folded hands, knelt upon the floor before the head priest and muttered: "Welcome" (*saṁprāgataṃ*), and then the latter said: "Serve food equally". He who served the food, stood before the guests, whose feet were in a line, bowing respectfully, while holding plates, cakes, and fruits in two hands, and served them about one span away from or above the priests' hands. Every other utensil or food was

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23, also see p. 36.

[2] Fa Hien, *op. cit.*, p. 42,

[3] *E. I.*, XX, no. 2, p, 46. Also see p. 39. The four objects (*caturjātaka*) are said to have been (*a*) *tvak*-bamboo manna, (*b*) *clā*, cardamom, (*c*) *patraka-Laura Cassia*, (*d*) *nāgakēsara-Mesua Roxburghii*.

[4] Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, pp. 42, 70, 75-76; Stein, *A. S. I. R.*, 1911-12, p. 8.

to be offered one or two inches above the guests' hands. If anything was served otherwise, the guests were not to receive it. The guest began eating as soon as the food was served: they were not to "trouble themselves to wait till the food has been served all round".

Then came some more food. Some gruel made of dried rice and bean soup with hot butter sauce was to be mixed with the other food with the fingers. The guests ate with the right hand which they did not raise, while eating, higher than the middle part of the body. Next came cakes and fruits, which were followed by ghee and also some sugar. If any guest felt thirsty, he drank cold water, whether in winter or in summer. Onions and raw vegetables were not eaten for fear of suffering from indigestion.[1]

After the dinner was over, the mouth was washed with a little water which was to be drunk. Some water was poured out in a basin in order to wash slightly one's right hand. Then after taking a handful of food in the right hand which was to be given to others, one could leave the table. This food was brought before the elder (*Sthavira*), and the person knelt down, and the elder sprinkling a few drops of water, muttered a prayer, after which, it was placed in a hidden spot, either in a forest, grove, river or pond, to be given away to the departed.

After this ceremony was over, the host (*dānapati*) offered tooth-woods and pure water to the guests. On taking leave, the guests cried out: "All the meritorious deeds that have been done I gladly approve of." Each guest read a stanza (*gāthā*) and he could do what he liked with the food left over. He could order a boy to carry it away or give it to the needy.[2]

Once the remaining food was removed, the ground was cleansed and flowers scattered on it. Incense was burned to perfume the air and whatever was to be given to the priests was ranged before them. Perfumed paste, about the size of a fruit of the *Wu*-tree (*Dryandra* seeds) was given to each of them and they rubbed their hands with it in order to make them fragrant and clean. Then some *Pin-lang* fruit (betel nuts) and mut-megs, mixed with cloves and *Beros* camphor, were distributed to perfume the mouth, digest the food and remove the phlegm.

The host, then approaching the priest first in rank or standing before the reciter of the *sūtras*, poured water from the beaked mouth

[1] I-Tsing, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, p. 40.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

of a jar (*kuṇḍin*) into a basin. The priest, while taking flowers and receiving them with the flowing water, muttered the *dānagāthās*. First were recited the words of the Buddha, and then these verses composed by other persons. Then the priest, calling out the host's name, prayed for his happiness and wished to transfer the happy regard of good actions done at present to those dead, to the sovereigns, snakes (*nāgas*), and spirits. Finally, gifts were distributed. Beautiful flowers and white clothes were proffered in profusion. When the priests departed they exclaimed "good" (*sādhu*) or "thou art approved" (*anumata*).[1]

Great distinction was made between pure and impure food. If only a mouthful of food was eaten, it was considered unclean (literally 'touched'), and the utensils in which it was used were not to be used again. As soon as the meal was over, the utensils were removed and piled up in a corner. The remaining food was given to those who were believed legally entitled to eat it, viz., the departed spirits, birds and the like, for it was thought very improper to keep the food for a long time. I-Tsing came to hear that recently in his day, meals were often delayed till the afternoon, noon being the prescribed meal-time, while the preparation was being supervised by the priests or nuns. He thought that such a procedure "was not good, as one commits a fault in doing good."

When the meal was over, those who partook of it washed their hands with water. Either a water-jar was fetched or some of those in attendance were ordered to do so. This cleansing was done with the water taken from a spring out of a basin, or in some secluded place where water was at hand, or in a conduit (*praṇālī*) or on the steps leading down. Tooth-wood was also chewed in the mouth, so that the tongue and the teeth were cleaned, while lips were washed either with pea-flour or with mud made by mixing earth with water, so as not to leave any taint of grease.[2]

Fresh water was kept separately for the purpose of washing and there were two kinds of jars (*kuṇḍi* and *kalaśa*) for each monk. Earthenware or porcelain was used for the clean-water jar, while the jar which was used to keep the water for purifying purposes was made of copper or iron. It was considered no fault to drink from a jar holding it upright in front, but drinking water in the afternoon was not permitted. In order to avoid the entry of insects or dust,

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-49.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 24-26.

the mouth of the jar for pouring in the water and the hole in it for drinking were covered with bamboo, wood, linen, or leaves.[1]

The impression that may have been created from the foregoing details about the Buddhists having been given to vegetarian habits of living is dispelled when we make a study of their customs and manners from contemporary records, which show that the Buddhist priests were sometimes addicted to the consumption of meat as well as liquor. The Buddhist priests in "the islands of the southern sea", according to I-Tsing, consumed three kinds of meat.[2] The *Mahāvagga* tells us that these were, first, the meat of animals, etc., pure when it was not seen that it was being killed for oneself; secondly, when it was not heard that it had been killed for oneself; and, thirdly, when it was not suspected that it may have been killed for oneself.[3] Commenting on these injunctions, I-Tsing, who evidently favoured meat-eating, remarks thus: "When the cause and instance (of our eating flesh) are so clear and faultless, then the doctrine we advocate becomes also clear and firm".[4] But in northern India, he states that even laymen rarely had the taste of grease or flesh.[5] Constantly in Harṣa's 'travelling-palace' he would provide choice meats for men of all religions, among whom the Buddhists would be a thousand and the Brāhmaṇas, five hundred.[6]

The Buddhist priests were also addicted to drink, at least according to the testimony of Yüan Chwāng. Unlike Fa Hien, he observes that "The Buddhist monks and the Brāhmins drink syrup of grapes and of sugar cane".[7] Such alcoholic drinks must have been consumed in great secrecy. It is related how in the monastery of Vikramaśila, a monk named Maitri, who belonged to a class of Tāntrikas called *Kiṁśukha*, was found to possess a quantity of wine, which he had kept secretly in the place where he lodged. It was alleged that he had brought it to be given as a gift to a Buddhist *yōgiṇī*, whom he desired to consult. When this discovery was brought to the notice of the *Saṅgha*, it became indignant and desired to expel him; but Maitri opposed this decision as there was no unanimity of opinion in the *Saṅgha* itself on this matter, but at last he was finally expelled.[8]

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 46.
[3] *Mahāvagga*, VI, 31, 14, 2, p. 117; *S. B. E.*, XVII. p. 117.
[4] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 59.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[6] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 344; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 215.
[7] *Ibid.*, I, p. 178; *Ibid.*, I, p. 89.
[8] *Cf.* Das, *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*, pp. 11-12.

11. Costume

The *Vinaya* laid down that the blessed (Buddha) enjoined upon the *Bhikṣus* the use of an under robe, an upper robe and a waist cloth of torn pieces.[1] Yüan Chwāng gives some more details about this costume. The classical costume of the *Sha-mẹn* (*Śramaṇas*) consisted of only three robes and the *Sêng-kio-ki* (*Saṅghāṭi*) and *Ni-fo-se-na* (*nīvāsana*). Regarding the three robes the schools adhered to different styles having broad or narrow fringes and small or large folds. "The *sêng-kio-ki* goes over the left shoulder, covers the arm-pits, joined on the right and opening on the left side and in length reaching to below the waist. As to the *Mi-po-sa-na*, since no belt is worn when it is put on, it is gathered into plaits and secured by one of these, the size and colour of the plaits vary in different schools."[2] The first three of the robes which Yüan Chwāng refers to were the double-cloak (*aṅtaravāsaka*), the upper garment (*uttaravāsaka*) and inner garment (*aṅtarvāsa.*)

The *Kullavagga* has set forth that the costume of the nuns should consist of the waist cloth, the upper garment, the under garment, the rest, and bathing dress.[3] These five garments, a pot a bowl and an apartment were considered in I-Tsing's day sufficient to maintain their lives, which they did chiefly by begging.[4] I-Tsing states that when he visited India, the mode of wearing the under-garment of a nun (*Bhikṣuṇi*) was the same as that of a *Bhikṣu* of her respective school.[5]

12. Ritual at Nālandā

I-Tsing witnessed the Buddhist system of worship especially at Nālandā. In this monastery he found that the number of priests was "immense, and exceeds three thousand,"[6] and it had more than two hundred villages as landed property. The monastery had eight halls and three hundred apartments. The worship could only take place separately in a way convenient to each monk. It was customary to send out every day one 'precentor' to go round from place to place chanting hymns, preceded by monastic lay servants

[1] *Mahāvagga*, VIII, 12, 2, p. 207, (*S. B. E.*, XVII.)

[2] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 149-50; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 76.

[3] *Kullavagga*, X, 17, 4, p. 351; *S. B. E.*, XX: *saṅghāṭi, uttarāsaṅga, aṅtravāsa, saṅkakṣikā.*

[4] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 79, 80.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 65. Julien supports this assertion; but in his *Memoirs*, I-Tsing says it was 3,500. See, Chavannes, (translation), p. 97. I-Tsing stayed in the Nālandā monastery between A. D. 675-85. See *Ibid.*, p. 211.

and children carrying with them incense and servants. He went from one hall to another, and chanted in each the service, every time three or five *ślōkas* in a loud tone, so that it was heard all round. At twilight he finished this duty. This precentor was generally presented by the monastery with some special gift (*pūjā*). In addition there were some other monks, who sat alone, in meditation, facing the shrine (*gaṅdhakūṭa*) and praised the Buddha in their hearts. Others went to the temple in small parties, knelt side by side with their bodies upright, putting their heads on the ground touched it with their heads and thus performed the three-fold salutation.[1]

In the rooms where the priests resided, sometimes a holy image of the Buddha was placed either in a window or in a niche especially made for it. When they sat down for meals, they screened it with a linen curtain. They bathed it every morning and always offered it incense and flowers. At noon they offered it a portion of whatever food they were going to eat. The case containing their scriptures was placed on one side. At the sleeping hour they retired into another room. Every monastery had its holy image enshrined in a special temple. The priests had to wash it and it was not permitted that the "simple offering of food should be made only on a fast day".[2]

13. Morality

In the monasteries owing to the presence of nuns, the question of morality assumed great importance in the life of the monastics. There is reason to think that by the time of Harṣavardhana, immorality must have assumed somewhat alarming proportions, for Yüan Chwāng records how Harṣa banished from his presence and the country those monks whose moral conduct was notorious.[3]

In order therefore to avoid the spreading of immorality, great precautions appear to have been taken. I-Tsing states that he saw, probably at Nālandā how, when the nuns were going to the priests in a monastery, they proceeded thither after having announced their purpose to the Assembly, (*Saṅgha*). The priests, who had to go to the apartments of the nuns, went there after having made an inquiry. The nuns walked together in twos, if they wanted to go away from their monastery, but when they had to go to a layman's house, for some necessary cause, they went in batches of four.[4]

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 154-55.
[2] *Ibid*,, p. 113.
[3] Yüan Chwāng, *op. cit.*, I, p. 344; Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 214.
[4] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

If a monk was discovered to be immoral, then his case was first discussed in the Assembly and if found guilty he was punished with expulsion. I-Tsing noticed one day how a minor teacher sent to a tenant's wife a boy with two *Shăng* (*prastha*) of rice. As this was considered a sort of a trick, it was brought by a person to the notice of the Assembly. Though absolved from crime, yet out of shame the culprit withdrew his name from the *Saṅgha* and retired from it for ever. His preceptor sent him his clothing, which he had left behind, through some other person. The consequence of such an examination of cases by the monastic assemblies was, in the words of I-Tsing, that "all the priests submitted to their own laws, without ever giving any trouble to the public court."[1] This reference to the public court is evidently to the *Adhikaraṇa* where, as has been shown already,[2] cases were discussed and decisions granted by the officials of the State.

Whenever women entered a monastery they never entered the apartments of the priests but spoke with them in a corridor for a moment and then withdrew. I-Tsing records how he met the famous *Bhikṣu* Rāhulamitra who, since his ordination, had not spoken face to face to any woman, except his mother and sister whom he saw outside his room. Such a practice, however, was not in accordance with the holy law,[3] and when asked why he was behaving in such a way, he replied: "It may be right to keep them (women) off, if it is meant to prevent our evil desires."[4]

14. The Seasons

The Buddhists had of course their own system of calculating time and of noting the passing of the seasons, and this practice can be well understood if it is compared with the Hindu usage of watching the seasons, which appears to have been in vogue from early times. We have previously dwelt at some length on the details of the Hindu system of calculating time, the water-clock and the Hindu Calendar.[5] We may now turn to a comparative examination of the Hindu and Buddhist ideas of looking at the seasons. Kauṭalya informs us that "the same (30 days) less by half a day makes one lunar month (*Caṅdramāsa*). Twenty-seven (days and nights) make a sidereal month (*Nakṣatramāsa*). Once in thirty-two

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

[2] See Ch. IV *ante*, Sect. V, A, pp. 268-72.

[3] *Cf. Kullavagga*, X, i, 4, pp. 322-23; *S. B. E.*, XX.

[4] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.

[5] *Cf.* I. See Ch. IV *ante*, Sect. III, 4-6, pp. 105-110. On the Hindu Calendar see S. K. Das, *I. H. Q.*, IV, pp. 483-511.

months there comes one *malamāsa*, profane month, i. e., an extra month added to the lunar year to harmonise it with the solar. Once in thirty-five months there comes a *malamāsa* for *aśvavāhas*. Once in forty months there comes a *malamāsa* for *hastivāhas*. Two months make one *Ṛtu* (season). *Śrāvaṇa* and *Proṣṭapada* make the rainy season (*Varṣā*). *Āśvayuja* and *Kārttika* make the autumn (*Śarada*). *Mārgaśīrṣa* and *Pauṣa* make the winter (*Hēmanta*). *Māgha* and *Phāḷguṇa* make the dewy season (*Śiśira*). *Caitra* and *Vāiśākha* make the spring (*Vasanta*). *Jyēṣṭamūlīya* and *Āṣāḍha* make the summer (*Grīśma*). Seasons from *Śiśira* and upwards are the summer solstice (*Uttarāyaṇa*) and (those) from *Varṣā* and upwards are the winter solstice (*Dakṣiṇāyaṇa*). Two solstices (*Ayaṇas*) make one year (*Saṁvatsara*). Five years make one *yuga*."[1] These details give us an idea of the demarcations of the seasons as they existed during the times of Kauṭalya.

That such a usage had become traditional by the days of Kālidāsa can be made out from his works. It is worth remembering that Kālidāsa describes at length all the seasons in detail in his well-known work *Ṛtusaṁhāra* in which he begins the descriptions of the seasons not in the traditional way. He depicts in sequence the *Nidhāgakāla* (*Grīśma*),[2] *Varṣā*,[3] *Śarada*,[4] *Hemanta*,[5] *Śiśira*[6] and *Vasanta*.[7]

It is interesting to note in this connection that occasional references are made in contemporary inscriptions to these seasons which are elaborately described in contemporary literature, although, as pointed out earlier, the months are all clearly and specifically recorded. The Maṇḍasor stone inscription of Yaśovarman and Viṣṇuvardhana, dated A.D. 533-34 refers to the Autumn season in the significant phrase that "five hundred autumns (*Śaradāṃ*) together with ninety less by one, having elapsed from (the establishment) of the tribal constitution of the Mālavās."[8] But such references to the seasons are only occasional although the more specific years are not left unmentioned. The Majhgawam grant of *Mahārāja* Hastin, dated A. D. 510-11, is stated

[1] Kauṭalya, *Arthaśāstra*, Bk. II, Ch. XX, p. 120 (3rd ed.).
[2] *Ṛtu.*, I, I, p. 2.
[3] *Ibid.*, II, 4, p. 17.
[4] *Ibid.*, III, I, pp. 31-32.
[5] *Ibid.*, IV, I, p. 47.
[6] *Ibid.*, V, 8, p. 61.
[7] *Ibid.*, VI, 3, p. 67.
[8] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (35), pp. 154, 158; also see *A.S.I.R.*, X, p. 33; pl. XI; Fleet, *C.I.I.*, III, Intr. pp. 66-67, f. n. 2.

to have been issued in the *Mahā-Caitra Saṁvatsara*,[1] while the Bhūmarā stone pillar inscription of *Mahārājas* Hastin and Śarvanātha, dated A. D. 508-9, is recorded to have been engraved in the *Mahāmāgha Saṁvatsara*.[2]

Unlike the inscriptions, the Chinese travellers have left us more details about these seasons. Yüan Chwāng tells us that "The period from the new moon till the full moon is called the white division (*Śuklapakṣa*) of the month: the period from the full-moon till the disappearance (*of the light*) is called the dark portion (*Kṛṣṇapakṣa*). The dark portion comprises fourteen or fifteen days because the month is sometimes long and sometimes short. The preceding dark portion and following light portion together form a month; six months form a "march" (*hing, s·ayaṇa*). The sun when it moves with (*the equator*) is said to be on its north-ward march; when it moves without (*the equator*) it is on its southern march. These two periods form a year (*vatsara*). The year, again, is divided into six seasons. From the 16th day of the 1st month till the 15th day of the 3rd month is the season of gradual heat; from the 16th day of the 3rd month till the 15th day of the 5th month is called the season of full heat; from the 16th day of the 5th month till the 15th day of the 7th month is called the rainy season; from the 16th day of the 7th month till the 15th day of the 9th month is called the season of growth (*vegetation*); from the 16th day of the 9th month to the 15th day of the 11th month is called the season of gradual (full) cold; from the 16th day of the 11th month to the 15th day of the 1st month is called the season of great (full) cold."[3]

The six seasons referred to above are respectively *Vasaṁta* including the months of *Caitra* and *Vaiśākha*; *Grīśma* during *Jyēṣṭha* and *Āṣāḍha*; *Varṣā* covering *Śrāvaṇa* and *Bhādrapada*; *Śarada* embracing *Āśvayuja* and *Kārttika*; *Hēmaṁta* in the course of *Mārgaśirṣa* and *Puṣya*; and *Śiśira* during *Māgha* and *Phālguṇa*.[4] But it may be observed that there is a slight variation in the ways in which Kālidāsa and Yüan Chwāng refer to the seasons. The former in his work *Ṛtusaṁhāra*, which is itself an elaborate description of the seasons, commences with a survey of the *Nidhāghakāla*, viz., *Grīśma*, while Yüan Chwāng begins with the mention of the month which is apparently *Vasaṁta*. Beal, however, suggested that "in the south

[1] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (23), p. 109: also see Thibaut's note in this connection; *I.A.*, XI, p. 322.

[2] *Ibid.*; (24), p. 112.

[3] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 71-72.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 72, f. n.

they (the months) are reckoned as beginning a month later",[1] namely in *Grīśma*.

It is worth noting here that I-Tsing also refers to the seasons. "After the middle of the eighth moon," he observes, "the month is called *Kārttika*; a meeting is held on the *'Ka-ti'* (*Kārttika*?) in Kiang-nan (in China), that is, at the time when the first summer ends."[2] But he is not as specific as his predecessor and he sometimes gives a general idea of the seasons when he remarks that "according to the usages in different districts there are three seasons, or four or six, which are mentioned elsewhere."[3]

When I-Tsing mentions that in his days in India some persons considered that there were three or four seasons he evidently had in mind the Buddhist practice of noting the passing of the seasons. This system has been well described by Yüan Chwāng himself, who states that "according to the holy doctrine of Tathāgata, the year is divided into three seasons. From the 16th day of the 1st month till the 15th day of the 5th month is called the hot season; from the 16th day of the 5th month till the 15th day of the 9th month is called the wet season; from the 16th day of the 9th month to the 5th day of the 1st month is called the cold season."[4] From this statement it would appear that the Buddhists in the seventh century were in the habit of observing the three seasons but the usage of noting the four seasons was also not forgotten. For example Yüan Chwāng also records this practice. He says: "Again there are four seasons, called spring, summer, autumn, winter. The three spring months are called *Chi-ta-lo* (*Caitra*) month: *Feï-she-kie* (*Vaiśākha*) month, *She-se-ch'a* (*Jyēṣṭha*); these correspond to the time from the 16th day of the 1st month to the 15th day of the 4th month. The three summer months are called, *An-sha-cha* (*Āśāḍha*) month, *Chi-lo-fa-na* (*Śrāvaṇa*) month, *Po-ta-lo-pa-to* (*Bhādrapada*) month; these correspond to the time between the 16th day of the 4th month to the 15th day of the 7th month. The three autumn months are called, *An-shi-fo-ku-che* (*Āśvayuja*) month, *Kia-li-ta-ka* (*Kārttika*) month; *Wi-kia-chi-lo* (*Mārgaśīrṣa*) month; these correspond to the time between the 16th day of the 7th month to the 15th day of the 10th month. The three months of winter are called *P'o-sha* (*Puṣya*) month, *Ma-ku* (*Māgha*) month, and *P'o-li-kiu-na* (*Phālguṇa*) month;

[1] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 72, f. n.
[2] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 102.
[4] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 72.

these correspond with the time between the 16th day of the tenth month to the 15th day of the 1st month in China. In old times in India the priestly fraternity, relying on the holy teaching of Buddha, had a double resting-time (*during the rains*) viz., either these periods were either from the 16th day of the 5th month to the 15th day of the eighth month, or from the 16th day of the 6th month to the 15th day of the 9th month." [1]

From the above accounts of the seasons we may set down below a comparative table of the seasons as they were known to the Hindus and the Buddhists during the Gupta age:

HINDU		BUDDHIST	
SEASON	MONTHS	SEASON	MONTHS
Vasaṅta	*Caitra-Vaiṣākha*	*Grīśma*	*Caitra-Vaiśākha*
			Jyēṣṭa-Āṣāḍha
Grīśma	*Jyēṣṭha-Āṣāḍha*		
Varṣā	*Śrāvaṇa-Bhādrapada*	*Hemaṅta*	*Srāmaṇa-Bhādrapada*
			Aśvina-Kārttika
Śarada	*Āśvayuja-Kārttika*		
Hemaṅta	*Mārgaśīrṣa-Puṣya*	*Śiśira*	*Mārgaśīrṣa-Puṣya,*
			Māgha-Phālguṇa
Śiśira	*Māgha-Phālguṇa*		
		Vasaṅta	*Caitra-Vaiśākha-Jyēṣṭha*
		Grīśma	*Aṣāḍha-Śrāvaṇa*
			Bhādrapada
		Sarada	*Āśvayuja-Kārttika-*
			Mārgaśīrṣa
		Hemaṅta	*Puṣya-Māgha-Phālguṇa.*

15. Saṅgha Administration

The polity of early Buddhist monastic administration has been considered republican.[2] This has been suggested by the fact that Buddhist *Bhikṣus* were recruited from several tribes of north-eastern India in early times, when the constitutions of such tribes were of a republican nature.[3] Nevertheless, it has not been proved that the Buddhist brotherhood, the *Saṅgha*, was an adaptation of the political *Saṅgha*, the republic,[4] especially because little is known of the constitution and the organization of the early Buddhist *Saṅgha.*

[1] Hiuen Tsiang, *op. cit.*, I, p. 72.

[2] Sukumar Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism* p. 137, (1924).

[3] *Cf.* Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 2. (1903).

[4] Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, Pt. I, pp. 103-4,

The *Saṅgha* in the seventh century A. D. was composed of the monks in the monastery, but its heads were the *settled persons*, *Sthaviras*, who were the elders. These had preferential treatment, for before the rainy season (*Varṣā*) commenced, rooms were assigned to each member, while to the elders, better rooms were given, and thus "gradually to the lowest." Such an assignment was made by the assembly itself at Nālandā.[1]

Several Gupta inscriptions refer to the Buddhist technical names of the monks and their superiors which were current in those days. The great *vihāra* of Kākanādaboṭa was the abode of the most excellent *Śramaṇas*, while the common monks went also by the name of *Bhikṣus*.[2] The assembly was known as the *Ārya-saṅgha*, while a lay worshipper was christened a pure brother-*Upāsaka*.[3] The monk probably in charge of a *vihāra* was styled as *Vihārasvāmin*, while his wife, not necessarily the holder of an office, was called a *Vihārasvāminī*.[4] The preceptor was the *Ācārya*, while the teacher was the *Upādhyāya*.[5] The difference between these must have been in the subjects they taught at the various stages of a *Bhikṣu's* career in the monastery. The most eminent among the learned in the monastery were the elders, those who were the settled—the *Sthaviras*.[6]

This practice of having nomenclatures like *Ācārya* and *Upādhyāya* was common also among the Hindu priesthood. In the undated Tusam rock inscription, assigned to the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century A. D., mention is made of the *Ācārya* Somatrāta, who was the younger brother of the *Ācārya* and *Upādhyāya* Yaśastrāta.[7]

Possibly this pre-eminence of the *Sthaviras* may help us in interpreting a rather obscure term in the Sāñci stone inscription of Candra Gupta II, dated A. D. 412-13. In this record it is said that Amrākārdava, a dependent of the emperor, "having prostrated himself in an assembly of five persons" (*pañca-maṇḍalyāṃ praṇipatya dadāti pañca viṃśatīś = (ñ) ca*) granted them the village or allotment of Īśvaravāsaka.[8] These five monks (*Śramaṇas*) were evidently the

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 86; also see p. 64.
[2] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (5), pp. 32-34.
[3] *Ibid.*, (62), p. 262.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (63), p. 263, Cf. *I. A.*, X, p. 252, f.n. 20, also (73) p. 280.
[5] *Ibid.*, (76), p. 282.
[6] *Ibid.*, (72), p. 279.
[7] *Ibid.*, (67), pp. 270-71.
[8] *Ibid.*, (5,) p. 33. In this connection also see Ch. IV, *ante*, *Sect.*, VIII, 4, p. 303.

elders (*Sthaviras*), who must have been the chief officials of the great monastery of Kākanādabōṭa. That is why this donor approached them, prostrated before them and offered to them the allotment and an endowment with some specified objects. Therefore this *pañca-maṇḍali* appears to have been the Buddhist ecclesiastical counterpart of the village jury (the *gīṭā-pañcālika*) mentioned in the Kāṭmāṇḍu (Nepal) inscription of Jiṣṇugupta[1] and the forerunner of the modern *pañcāyat*.

Probably I-Tsing refers to such *Sthaviras* who journeyed from place to place in comfort. "Venerable and learned priests", he says, "of Nālandā monastery ride in sedan-chairs, but never on horseback, and those of the Mahārāja monastery do the same. In this case, necessary baggage is carried by other persons or taken by boys."[2]

It has been noticed already that several Gupta monarchs granted large endowments to Buddhist monasteries, especially to the Nālandā *vihāra*. The income from these allotments of land was pooled into a common fund of the resident priests. This fund was used for the clothing and maintenance of the *bhikṣus*. "The produce of the farms and gardens", states I-Tsing, "and the profits arising from trees and fruits, are distributed annually in shares to cover the cost of clothing. The Indian monasteries possess special allotments of land, from the produce of which the clothing of the priests is to be supplied."[3] As several of the Gupta inscriptions reveal, the *Saṅgha* must have managed the endowments of private persons as well. The Sāñcī stone inscription for example, dated A. D. 450-51, issued in the reign either of Kumāra Gupta I or his son and successor Skanda Gupta, relates how the *Upāsikā* Harisvāminī, for the sake of her parents, granted twelve *dināras* as a permanent endowment, to the community of the faithful (*āryasaṅghāya*) at the holy *vihāra* of Kākanādaboṭa (Sāñci).[4] In fact, as I-Tsing specifically remarks, the will of the assembly was supreme. "Whenever anything, even a stalk of vegetable was given (to the priests) by other persons, they made use of it through the assent of the assembly". In the great monastery of Tāmralipti, no principal officer was appointed without its sanction. When any business had to be transacted, it was settled by the *Saṅgha*. If any priest decided anything by himself alone, or treated priests either favourably or unfavourably at his own pleasure, without submitting it to

[1] *I. A.*, IX, pp. 170, 173.
[2] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 193.
[4] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (62), p. 262.

the will of the assembly, he was condemned as a *Kulapati* (*viz.*, that he behaved like a householder) and banished from the monastery.[1]

It must have been a practice in the monasteries to maintain proper accounts in an official register of the inmates, past and present. I-Tsing tells us that once a layman was accepted by the assembly into the Buddhist *Saṅgha* as a priest, his name was entered in the Register-Book of the assembly, and thenceforth his name had no concern with the Register of the State.[2] From this practice it appears that he probably ceased to be a lay citizen of the State. Since monasteries like those of Kākanādaboṭa had survived from the times of Candra Gupta II, as the Sāñcī stone inscription of this ruler, dated A. D. 412-13, bears witness, it may not unreasonably be inferred that such registers must have been maintained even in those days. But Fa Hien, however, states that in the Middle Kingdom, people had "not to register their households,"[3] which they appear to have done, as I-Tsing suggests, during the reign of Harṣa. It is, nevertheless, doubtful whether Fa Hien's statement can be accepted as correct. If they kept such registers, it is not improbable that they were much more careful about their material wealth.[4]

There are some reasons to conclude that the monastics introduced civil offices into the administration of their *Saṅghārāmas*. It is well-known that an official in charge of documents (*Karaṇa*)[5] was known as a *Karaṇika*. A similar officer was employed at Nālandā, as is revealed by the Nālandā stone inscription of the reign of Yaśovarmadeva. As soon as a grant was made, it was composed by the composer and engraved by the scribe. Thus in this inscription it is stated that on a certain Mālada making a grant, "Śīlacandra and the well-known *Karaṇika*, Svāmidatta, *having placed the order of the Saṅgha on their head without considering the weight* (*of responsibility*) composed at once".[6] From this statement it is evident that the composer and engraver set to work immediately on being ordered to do so by the Assembly whose unanimous verdict was final.

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 65.

[3] Fa Hien, *op. cit.* p. 42.

[4] See in this connection some of the officials in the commissariat of an *āvāsa* between 600 B. C. and 100 B. C. *Cf.* Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism*, pp. 187-88.

[5] Fleet, *op. cit.*, (55), p. 242.

[6] *E. I.*, X, no. 2, p. 46. Italics mine.

I-Tsing refers to the "many servants, male and female"[1] in monasteries, but who they were and what designations they had cannot at present be ascertained. But among the important officers of the monastery may be mentioned the *Ching-fa-tsong*, the Treasure of the Good Law, the *Sthavira*, the presiding priest, and the *Karmadāna*. At Nālandā, the congregation, out of the excessive respect they had for Śīlabhadra, the Treasure of the Good Law, not venturing to call him by his name, gave him the appellation of *Ching-fa-tsong*. There was another officer designated as the "Chief Almoner", who provided Śīlabhadra with all things necessary without stint, paying his respects according to ceremonial: approaching him on his knees, kissing his foot and bowing his head to the ground. After the usual greetings the *Ching-Fa-Tsong* ordered seats to be brought and spread out and desired the Master of the Law, Yüan Chwāng and the rest to be seated.[2] In the Tāmralipti monastery, this "Managing Priest" examined water at the side of a well. If it had no insects, the water was fit for consumption; if it had some, it was filtered.[3]

Hwui Lun, a Korean, who probably followed Yüan Chwāng, saw some of these officers at Nālandā. "The Superior", he says, "is a very old man; the *karmadāna* or *vihārasvāmi* or *vihārapālā* is the chief officer after the superior; and to him the utmost deference is paid."[4]

Yüan Chwāng refers to an important officer of the monastery, whom he calls *Karmadāna*. When he went to Nālandā, he was cordially received by the whole community of monks, proferred a special seat by the side of the *Sthavira* (the presiding priest), and when he took his seat, the rest too sat down. After this the *Karmadāna* was directed to sound the bell (*ghaṇṭā*) and proclaim: "Whilst the Master of the Law dwells in the convent, all the commodities used by the priests and all the appliances of religion are for his convenience, in common with the rest".[5]

This important officer in the monastery, also called the "sub-director" (*Karmadāna*), had several duties. He supervised the monastic tasks with his three garments (*trikīvara*), especially when a woman came into a *vihāra*; but this practice was considered by I-Tsing "too strict a custom".[6] He was also called the Managing

[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, p. 106.
[2] *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. XXVII.
[3] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
[4] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *op. cit.*, p. XXVII. (Intr.)
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 106. Also see *Ibid.*, pp. XVII, XXVI; I. A., X, pp. 109-110.
[6] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

Priest. If there was any dispute in "measuring the shadow", he suffered the disputant monks to decide the matter themselves.[1] From sunset till dawn, the duty of announcing the passing of time in the monastery, after observing the water-clock, fell to the lot of this officer.[2] When monastics were going to bathe the image of the Buddha, this priest who was in charge of this function, struck a gong (*ghaṇṭā*) as an announcement.[3]

I-Tsing informs us further that one who built a monastery was called a *Vihārasvāmin*, "owner of a monastery"; while the Keeper, the Warder of the Gate, and he who announced the affairs of the *Saṅgha* were called *Vihārapālas*.[4]

Owing to the large endowments, the Nālandā monastery was wealthy and self-supporting. Yüan Chwāng has observed that "The king of the country respects and honours the priests and has remitted the revenues of about 100 villages for the endowment of the convent. Two hundred householders in these villages, day by day, contribute several hundred *piculs*[5] of ordinary rice, and several hundred *catties* in weight of butter and milk.[6] Hence the students here, being so abundantly supplied, do not require to ask for the four requisites.[7] This is the source of the perfection of their studies, to which they have arrived."[8] Yüan Chwāng further noticed that these priests of Nālandā were so naturally dignified and grave, that during the seven hundred years since the foundation of the establishment, there was not a single case of guilty rebellion against rules.[9] Living among these dignified and well-nourished monks, Yüan Chwāng spent one of the happiest moments in his life. "Each day," he says, "he received 120 Jambiras (a fruit), 20 (*Pin-long-tseu*) (*pūga, areca nut*), 20 *tau-k'au* (nut-megs) an ounce (*tael*) of Camphor, and a *ching* (peck) of *Mahāśāli* rice. This rice is as large as the black bean, and when cooked is aromatic and shining like no other rice at all. It grows only in Magadha, and nowhere else. Every month he was presented with three measures of oil, and daily a supply of butter and other things according to his need. A pure brother (a *Upāsaka*)

[1] I-Tsing, *op. cit.* p. 102. On the customs of measuring the shadow, see I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 145.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

[4] *Nanjio Catal.* I, no. 1491 *Ibid.*, p. 148.

[5] 1 *picul* = 133⅓ lbs.

[6] 1 *catty* = 160 lbs.

[7] Clothes, food, bedding and medicine.

[8] Shamans, Hwui Li and Yen-Tsung, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-13.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 112.

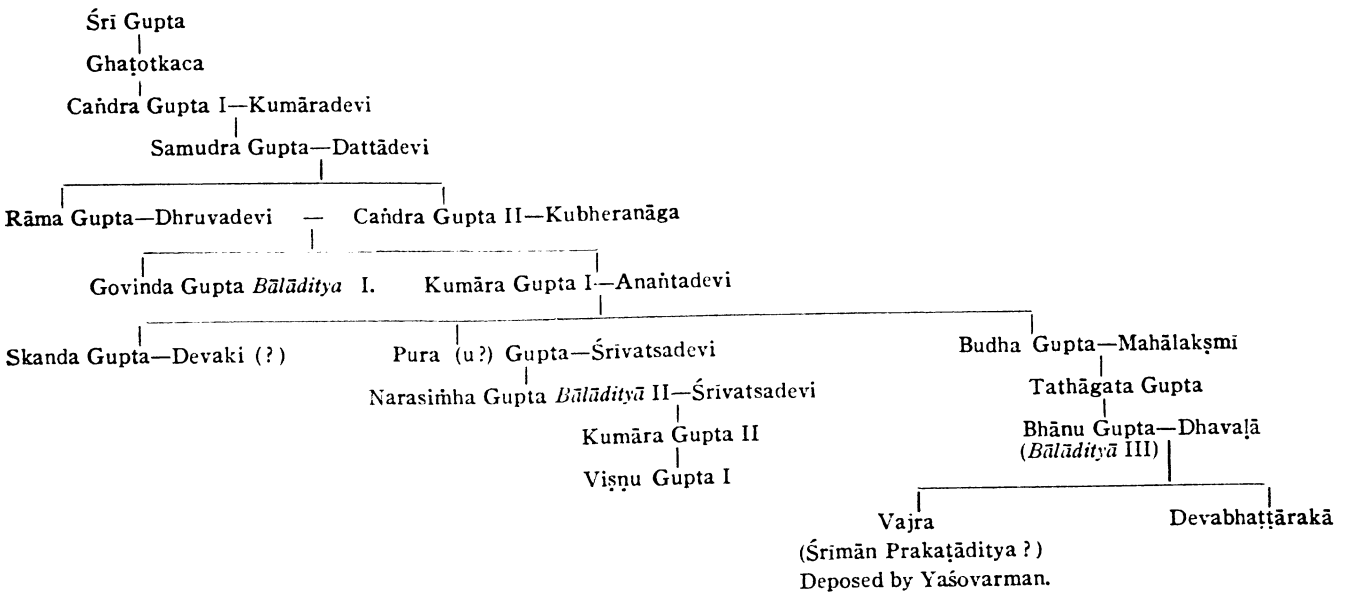
and a Brāhman, relieved from all religious duties, accompanied him with a riding elephant. In the Nālandā convent the abbot entertains a myriad priests after this fashion."[1]

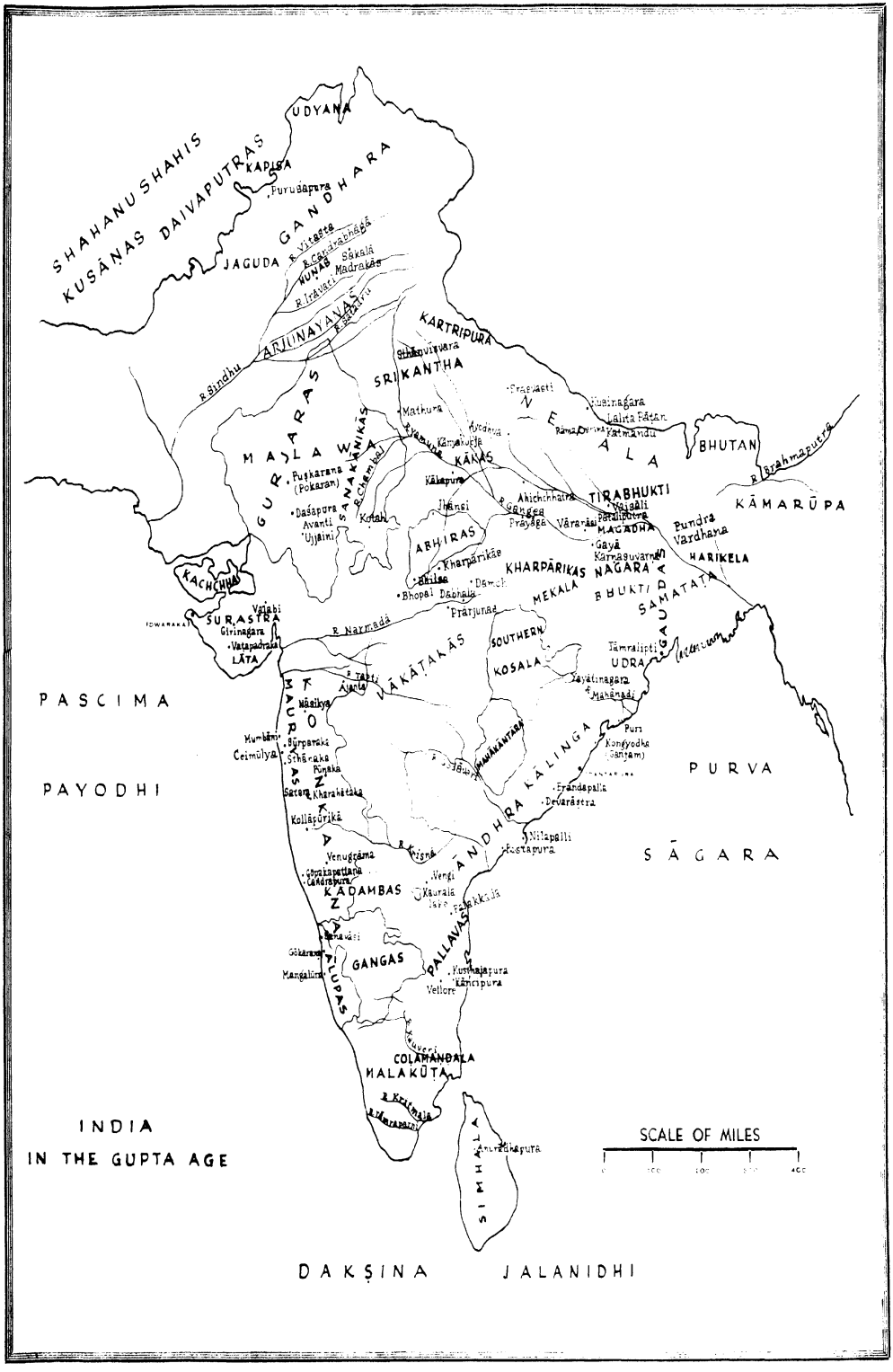
In the monastery of Tāmralipti, I-Tsing observed a strange custom. As they were great "observers of the precepts", and knowing that cultivation by the priests themselves was prohibited,[2] they suffered their taxable lands to be cultivated by others freely, and partook only of a portion of the produce. Even vegetables, which were bought by some of the tenants of the monastery's lands into the *saṅghārāmas*, were divided by them into three portions, one of which was presented by them to the priests, while they took the rest with them.[3] If this was the proportion which was applied to all the various kinds of produce, then it would follow that the Tāmralipti *Saṅghārāma* recovered only one third of its produce.

finis

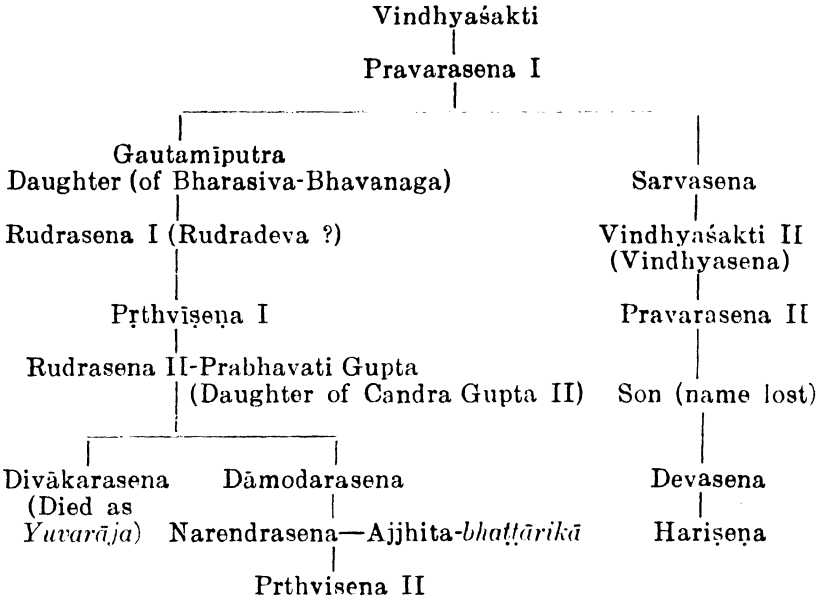
[1] Shamans Hwui Li and Yen Tsung, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-10.
[2] *Cf. Pātimokkha*, 10, p. 33, *S. B. E.*, XIII.
[3] I-Tsing, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

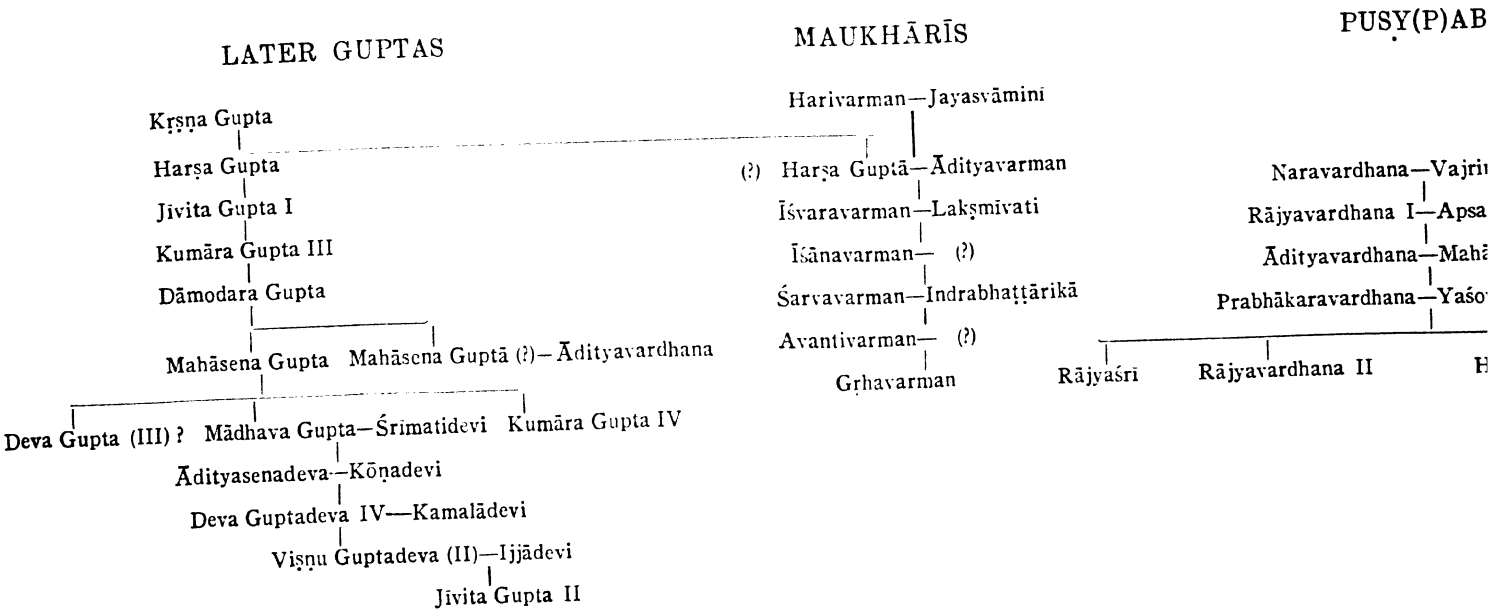
APPENDIX A


Śrī Gupta
Ghaṭotkaca
Caṅdra Gupta I—Kumāradevi
Samudra Gupta—Dattādevi
Rāma Gupta—Dhruvadevi
Caṅdra Gupta II—Kubheranāga
Govinda Gupta Bālāditya I.
Kumāra Gupta I—Anaṅtadevi
Skanda Gupta—Devaki (?)
Pura (u?) Gupta—Śrīvatsadevi
Narasiṁha Gupta Bālāditya II—Śrīvatsadevi
Kumāra Gupta II
Viṣṇu Gupta I
Budha Gupta—Mahālakṣmī
Tathāgata Gupta
Bhānu Gupta—Dhavaḷā
(Bālāditya III)
Vajra
(Śrīmān Prakaṭāditya ?)
Deposed by Yaśovarman.
Devabhaṭṭārakā


SHAHANU SHAHIS
KUSĀŅAS DAIVAPUTRAS
UDYANA
KAPIŚA
Puruṣapura
GANDHARA
JAGUDA
R. Vitasta
R. Candrabhāgā
KUNAB
Śākala
Madrakas
R. Iravati
R. Vipāśā
ARJUNAYAVAS
R. Sindhu
KARTRIPURA
Śrīkaṇṭhavara
SRIKANTHA
GURJARAS
MAULAWA
SANAKANIKAS
R. Chambal
Mathura
Ayodhya
Kāmpilya
KAKAS
Kālapura
Jhānsi
Pushkarana (Pokaran)
Daśapura
Avanti
Ujjaini
Kotah
ABHIRAS
Kharparikas
KHARPARIKAS
Bhilsa
Bhopal
Damoh
MEKALA
Prāruṇa
R. Narmadā
KACHCHHAS
SURASTRA
Valabhi
Girinagara
Vatapadraka
LATA
SOUTHERN KOSALA
VĀKĀṬAKAS
R. Tapti
Ajanta
Māhiṣya
Mumbānr
Śūrpāraka
Ceimūlya
Sthānaka
Punaka
Sarasa
Kharaparika
Kollāpurikā
Venugrāma
Śrīśaipattana
Candrapura
KADAMBAS
Śaṅkhoddhāra
Gokarṇa
Mangalūr
GANGAS
Vengi
Śālaṅkāyanas
PALLAVAS
Kusumapura
Kāñcipura
Vellore
R. Kāverī
COLAMANDALA
MALAKŪTA
R. Kṛṣṇā
R. Tāmraparṇī
SIMHALA
Anurādhapura
Tāmraliptī
UDRA
Jayantinagara
Mahānadī
Puri
Konyodka (Ganjam)
KALINGA
Eraṇḍapalla
Devarāṣṭra
Piṣṭapura
Nilapalli
ANDHRA
PASCIMA PAYODHI
PURVA SĀGARA
DAKṢINA JALANIDHI
INDIA
IN THE GUPTA AGE
SCALE OF MILES
0
100
200
300
400

APPENDIX B.


Vindhyaśakti
Pravarasena I
Gautamīputra
Daughter (of Bharasiva-Bhavanaga)
Rudrasena I (Rudradeva ?)
Pṛthvīṣeṇa I
Rudrasena II-Prabhavati Gupta
(Daughter of Candra Gupta II)
Divākarasena
(Died as
Yuvarāja)
Dāmodarasena
Narendrasena—Ajjhita-bhaṭṭārikā
Prthvisena II
Sarvasena
Vindhyaśakti II
(Vindhyasena)
Pravarasena II
Son (name lost)
Devasena
Hariṣeṇa


LATER GUPTAS
Kṛṣṇa Gupta
Harṣa Gupta
Jivita Gupta I
Kumāra Gupta III
Dāmodara Gupta
Mahāsena Gupta
Mahāsena Guptā (?)—Ādityavardhana
Deva Gupta (III) ?
Mādhava Gupta—Śrimatidevi
Kumāra Gupta IV
Ādityasenadeva—Kōṇadevi
Deva Guptadeva IV—Kamalādevi
Viṣṇu Guptadeva (II)—Ijjādevi
Jivita Gupta II
MAUKHĀRĪS
Harivarman—Jayasvāmini
(?) Harṣa Guptā—Ādityavarman
Īśvaravarman—Lakṣmivati
Īśānavarman— (?)
Śarvavarman—Indrabhaṭṭārikā
Avantivarman— (?)
Gṛhavarman
PUSY(P)AB
Naravardhana—Vajrii
Rājyavardhana I—Apsa
Ādityavardhana—Mahā
Prabhākaravardhana—Yaśo
Rājyaśri
Rājyavardhana II
H

APPENDIX D

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

Lekhaka

Jīvita
|
Bhujaṅgadāsa
|
Iśvaradāsa
—

Rājyila (*Bhōgika Amātya*)
|
Dhruvabhaṭa (*Bhōgika*)
|
Guṅjakīrti (*Bhōgika*)
—

Phalgudatta (*Bhōgika Amātya*)
|
Varāhadinna (*Bhōgika*)
|
Gallu (*Saṅdhivigrahika*) | Manoratha (*Mahāsaṅdhivigrahika*) | Nātha (*Saṅdhivigrahika*)

Dūtaka	Date
	A. D. 528-291
Sarvadatta: *Bhōgika*	A. D. 493-94[3]
Sarvadatta: *Uparika*	A. D. 496-97[3]
Sivagupta:	A. D. 512-13[4]
Mahābalādhi Kṛta	A. D. 516-17[5]
Dhṛtīsvāmika:	A. D. 533-34[6]

Dūtaka Date

Vakra (*Amātya*)
|
Naradatta (*Bhōgika Amatyā*)
|
Ravidatta (*Bhōgika*)
|
Suryadatta (*Mahāsaṁdhivigrahika*)
|
Vibhudatta (*Māhasaṁdhivigrahika*)

Bhāgraha: A. D. 471[7]

Mahābalādhikṛta Nāgasiṁha: A. D. 482-83[8]

A. D. 510[9]

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1 Fleet, *C. I. I.*, III, (25), p. 116.
2 *Ibid.*, (26), p. 120.
3 *Ibid.*, (27), p. 124.
4 *Ibid.*, (26), p. 129.
5 *Ibid.*, (30), p. 134.
6 *Ibid.*, (32), p. 139.
7 *Ibid.*, (21), pp. 99-100.
8 *Ibid.*, (22), p. 105.
9 *Ibid.*, (23), p. 109.

For further particulars in this connection see *Ibid.*, (30), p. 131; *E. I.*, XII, no. 13, pp. 65-79; *I. A.*, XLIII, pp. 95-96.; *J. A. S. B.*, (Letters), I, no. 3 pp. 419-422.

APPENDIX E.

Some of the Gupta inscriptions reveal the gotras of the Brāhmaṇas which may be set down as follows:

ŚĀKHĀ	*GOTRA*	REFERENCE
Vajasanēya ...	Kautsa ...	Fleet, *op. cit.* (21) p. 97
Mādhyaṁdina ...	... ...	...
Vājasanēya ...	Bharadvāja ...	*Ibid.* (22) p. 105
Ibid. ...	Bhārgava ...	...
Ibid. ...	Kauṇḍinya ...	*Ibid.* (40) p. 195
Kaṭha ...	Vāsula ...	*Ibid.*
Chhandōga-Kauthuma ...	Aupamānyava ...	*Ibid.* (23) p. 109
—— ...	Śāsātaneya (?) ...	*Ibid.* (27) p. 123
Maitrāyaṇīya ...	—— ...	*Ibid.* (36) p. 160
Vajasaneyin ...	Vatsa ...	*Ibid.* (38) p. 170
Kaṇva ...	... ...	
Bāhvṛicya ...	Śārkarākṣi ...	*Ibid.* (39) p. 190
? ...	Śāṭyāyana ...	*Ibid.* (55) p. 242
? ...	Pāraśarya ...	*Ibid.*
... ...	Kāśyapa ...	*Ibid.*
... ...	Vātsya ...	*Ibid.* p. 243
... ...	Gautama ...	*Ibid.*
... ...	Ātreya ...	*Ibid.*
... ...	Śāṇḍilya ...	*Ibid.*
Taittirīya ...	Maudgalya ...	*Ibid.* (56) p. 248
Rāṇāyanīya ...	Varṣagaṇa ...	*Ibid.* (16) p. 71
? ...	Viṣṇuvṛddha ...	*Ibid.* (55) p. 241

For some more contemporary *Śākhas* and *Gotras* see *E. I.*, XIX, no. 19. pp. 121-125.

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