To be returned to the Academic Registrar,
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON,
SENATE HOUSE, W.C.1.
with the Examiner's Report.

SINHA (B.P.)

Ph.D.
(Indian History)

1948.

LOAN COPY

BIBL.
LONDIN.
UNIV.

ProQuest Number: 10731181

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10731181

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.
This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

Abstract of the thesis entitled,

"Decline of the kingdom of Magadha from c.455 A.D. to
A.

presented for the degree of Ph.D. ~~degree~~ of the University of London,

by

~~Sinha~~, Bindeswari Prasad Sinha of the School of the Ori
and African Studies, University
London, W.C.1.

The present studies have been taken up to throw fresh ligh on many problems of the political history of Magadha during the period under review; many of these problems have been solved an better alternatives to some of the suggested solutions have b offered. The introduction contains a review of the work previou done by scholars, and a discussion on the impact of geography and e economics on the political history from the earliest times to death of Kumâra-gupta I. In the first chapter it has been show that Kumâra-gupta I was succeded by Puru-gupta and not by Skan gupta as generally held; Kumâra-gupta of the Sarnath inscripti is different from the Kumâra-gupta of the Bhitâri Seal. The sec chapter deals with the reign of Skanda-gupta and Kumâra-gupta and the third chapter is devoted to Budha-gupta who has been s to be the last great Gupta emperor and the coins of Prakâs'âdi have been assigned to him. The fourth chapter deals with the br up of the empire under the successors of Budha-gupta; and, ~~Vainy~~ Vainya-gupta, Prakaṭâditya and Bhânu~~-~~gupta have been placed i proper sequence. The fifth chapter proves that the original ho of the 'later Guptas' was somewhere in Magadha, not in Malwa. T sixth is concerned with the rule of the 'later Guptas' before conquest of Magadha by the Maukharis. Magadha under the Maukhar is dealt with in the seventh chapter, and ~~mark~~ its position under Jayanâga and ~~S'a~~ S'as'âṅka is discussed in the eighth; Pûrṇavarman and Harṣa tal up the ninth chapter. The tenth is devoted to the 'later Guptas and it is made clear that the kingdom of Adityasena and Devagu was much more extensive than is ordinarily believed. In the eleven twelfth and thirteenth chapters, which deal with the rise of the Pâlas and the rule of Dharmapâla and Devapâla, many fresh soluti have been offered as regards the genealogy and chronology of th period. The fourteenth deals with the disruption of the empire a the death of Devapâla and the fifteenth gives an account of th restoration of the empire under Mahîpâla I.

Thesis Presented for the Doctorate of Philosophy,

University Of London.

Decline of the kingdom of Magadha, cir. 455 A.D.-1000 A.D.

by

Bindeswari Prasad Sinha,

School of Oriental and African Studies.

1948.

Acknowledgement.

In the preparation of this work I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. L.D. Barnett, D.Litt., C.B. who has not only superfised my study and given me numerous valuable suggestions, but has taken great pains to go through the whole work. A kinder and more helpful teacher than he can hardly be met. To Mr. John Allan, the Keeper of the Coins of the British Museum, I owe much. Under him I read numismatics and without his willing co-operation and valuable help it would not have been possible for me to use the numismatic evidences fully in order to arrive at revealing conclusions. I express my profound gratitude to him. Mr. A.Master of the School of Oriental and African Studies initiated me into the mysteries of Indian epigraphy, and I am very grateful to him for the pains he took in reading the early inscriptions with him. My thanks are also due to Mr. C.A. Rylands for some useful Sanskrit lessons, and [illegible] due to Professor C.H.Phillips for some valuable suggestions and interesting seminars.

B.P.Sinha.

Contents.

Acknowledgement.

Select Bibliography.

Abbreviations.

Introduction pp. I - LXII.

Scope of the work - Extent and geography of Magadha - History of the country from the earliest times to the rise of Haryanka-Kula - Bimbisāra to the Nandas - the Mauryas - Break-up of the Mauryan Empire - Rise of the Guptas down to Kumāra Gupta I.

Chapter I. Death of Kumāra Gupta I and Accession of Puru Gupta. pp. 1-78

Last years of Kumāra Gupta - The problem of the Succession after Kumāra Gupta I - The theory of the Partition of the Empire - Asa Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta identical - Bhattaśāli's theory - Kaliyugarājavritānta and the Guptas - Theory of Pannalal and others - Who followed Kumāra Gupta I, Puru Gupta or Skanda Gupta - Internal dissensions in the family of Kumāra Gupta I - Accession of Puru Gupta and his overthrow by Skanda Gupta - Possible objections and their answers to their proposed theory.

Chapter II. Skanda Gupta and Kumāra Gupta II, pp. 79-112.

Skanda Gupta - Extent of the Empire - An estimate of Skanda

Gupta - The last years of Skanda Gupta - Kumāra Gupta II - Coins of Kumāra Gupta.

Chapter III. Budha Gupta pp.113-133

The accession of Budha Gupta - His parentage - Extent of the Empire - Coins of Prakāśāditya - Last years of Budha Gupta.

Chapter IV. Successors of Budha Gupta. pp. 134-207.

A. Narasiṁha Gupta - Identical with Bālāditya of Paramārtha - Bāla of the Manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa - Extent of the Empire - The Hūṇas under Toramāṇa - Prakaṭāditya or "Pra" - Vainya Gupta - Identity of Vainya Gupta and Tathāgata-rāja - Overthrow of Vainya Gupta and Restoration of Narasiṁha Gupta - The Hūṇa war - Last years of Narasiṁha Gupta.

B. Kumāra Gupta III - Coins - Rise of Yaśodharman.

C. Viṣṇu Gupta - Coins of Viṣṇu Gupta Candrāditya - Viṣṇu Gupta and the M M K. - Fifth Dāmodarpur copper-plate and Viṣṇu Gupta.

Chapter V. Later Guptas and their Home. pp. 207-246

Lineage of the later Guptas - The Ancestral Home of the later Guptas.

Chapter VI. History and Chronology of the Later Guptas

pp. 247-304

Krisnagupta - Harsagupta - Jīvitagupta - Kumāra Gupta IV - Dāmodaragupta - Mahāsenagupta - What was the Malwa of Mahāsenagupta - Last days of Mahāsenagupta.

Chapter VII. pp. 305-330

Magadha under the Imperial Maukharis - Sarva Varman - Avantivarman - The end of the Maukhari rule in Magadha - Grahavarman.

Chapter VIII. pp. 331-407

Magadha under the Gauḍas - The Gauḍas and Jayanāga - Śaśānka - The origins of Śaśānka - Accession and conquests of Śaśānka - Śaśānka, the Maukhari and the Vardhanas - Last years of Śaśānka.

Chapter IX. pp. 408-429

Magadha under Pūrṇavarman and Harsa - Pūrṇavarman - Gauḍa after Śaśānka - Harsa and Magadha.

Chapter X. pp.430-494

Magadha under the restored Later Guptas - Mādhavagupta - Ādityasena - Devagupta - Visnugupta - Jīvitagupta II.

Chapter XI. pp. 495-514

Rise of the Pālas - Home of the Pālas - Caste and Ancestors of Gopāla - The original kingdom of Gopāla -

Achievements of Gopāla - Date of Gopāla.

Chapter XII. pp. 515-559.

Dharmapāla C.783-818 - Dharmapāla, Vatsarāja and Dhruva - Conquests of Dharmapāla - Marriage of Dharmapāla - Dharmapāla and Nāgabhaṭa II - Campaign of Govinda III - Restoration of Dharmapāla's imperial position - An estimate of Dharmapāla - Date of Dharmapāla.

Chapter XIII. pp.560-585.

Devapāla - Conquests of Devapāla - An estimate of Devapāla - Capital of the Empire.

Chapter XIV. pp. 585-624.

Disintegration of the empire after Devapāla - Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla I - Nārāyaṇapāla - Rājyapāla - Gopāla II - Vigrahapāla II.

Chapter XV. pp. 625-653.

Restoration of the Pāla Empire under Mahīpāla I.

Appendix.

(I)a, Ib, Ic. British Museum Laboratory Report on coins. pp. 655-657.

(II) Coins of the Maukharis. pp. 658-667.

(III) Sūryavarman. pp. 668-683.

Genealogical Tables.

A. Imperial Guptas.

B. The Maukharis.

C. The Later Guptas.

D. The Pālas up to Mahīpāla I.

Maps, Charts and Plates.

i. Map of Bharatavarsa.

ii. Palaeographical chart to determine the date of Sirpur inscription of Śiva Gupta.

iii. Plate of Coins.

iv. Plates of Inscriptions.

Select Bibliography.

I. Works.

Absorption of the Vrātyas	H.P. Sastri. (Dacca University Bulletin No. 4)
Account of the District of Bhagalpur in 1810-11.	Francis Buchanan.
Account of the District of Patna and Bihar in 1811-12	Francis Buchanan.
Account of the District of Shahabad in 1809-10.	Francis Buchanan.
Age of the Imperial Guptas.	R.D. Bannerji.
Amarakośa, with the commentary of Maheśvara.	Revised and enlarged by R.S. Talekar and C.Sastri Thatte.
Ancient Geography of India	Cunningham (edited with notes by S.N. Majumdar)
Ancient History of the Deccan.	G.Jouveau Dubreuil.
Ancient India.	K.S. Aiyangar.
Ancient India.	Masson Oursel Grabowska and Stern.
Ancient India, From the Earliest Times to the Guptas.	K. de B. Codrington.
Ancient Indian History and Civilisation.	R.C. Majumdar.
Ancient Indian Tribes (2 vols.)	B.C. Law.
Antiquities of India.	L.D. Barnett.
Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India.	Martin Montgomery.
Antiquities of Tibet - (Kanjur).	A. H. Francke.
Arthaśāstra (Kautilya)	Trans. By R. Shamsastri
Arya-Manju-śrī-mūla kalpa	Edited by Ganapati Shastri

Ārya-manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa	Edited by R.Sankritayana and K.P. Jayasaval.
Ashtosh Mookerji Silver Jubilee volumes (Orientalia)	
Ashutosh Memorial volumes	
Bangalār Itihāsa	R.D. Bannerji.
Bhārata Kaumudī (A Study in in Indology in Honour of R.K. Mookerji)	
Bhāratīya Prācīna lipi Mālā	G.H. Ojha.
Bhilsa Topes.	Cunningham.
B.C.Law Volumes (2 vols.)	
Bombay Gazetteer - Vol.I, pt. II.	
Buddhist India.	Rhys Davids.
Buddha Gaya	R.L. Mitra.
Cambridge History of India, Vol.I	Edited by Rapson.
Candragupta Maurya	R.K. Mookerji.
Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts, University Library, Cambridge.	Cecil Bendall.
Catalogue of the Coins of the British Museum, Gupta Dynasties and Śaśānka.	J.Allan.
Catalogue of the Coins of the Guptas, Maukharis etc. in the Provincial Museum, Lucknow.	C.J.Brown
Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum, Vol.I.	V.A. Smith.
Catalogue of Palm-leaf and selected Paper Manuscripts, belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal.	H.P. Sastri with a historical introduction by Cecil Bendall.
Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts, British Museum.	Cecil Bendall.

Centenary Review of the Asiatic Society of Bengal	
Chronology of Ancient India.	S.N. Pradhan.
Coins of Ancient India.	Cunningham.
Coins of Mediaeval India.	Cunningham.
Colas.	K.A. Nīlakantha Shastri.
Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum I	Hultzsch.
Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum III	Fleet.
Descriptive List of Inscriptions in the Central Provinces and Berar.	H.P. Sastri.
D.R. Bhandarkar volume.	
Downfall of Hindu India.	C.V. Vaidya.
Dynastic History of Northern India (2 vols.)	H.C. Ray.
Dynasties of the Kanarese District.	J.F. Fleet.
Early History of Bengal.	F.J. Monahan.
Early History of Bengal.	P.L.Paul.
Early History of Bengal.	R.C. Majumdar.
Early History of the Deccan.	R.G. Bhandarkar.
Early History of India (3rd and 4th editions)	V.A. Smith.
Early History of Kāmarūpa	K.L. Barua.
Eastern Humanism. (Dacca University Bulletin, No.4)	Sylvain Lévi.
Elements of South Indian Paleography.	A.C. Burnell.
Gauḍalekhamālā	R.P. Canda.
Gauḍarājamālā	R.P. Canda.

Gaudavaho (vākpatirāja)	Edited by S.P. Pandit. Re-edited by Narayan Bapuji Ajikar
Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India.	Nundo Lal Dey.
Glories of Magadha.	G.N. Samaddar.
Gurjara-Pratīhāras. (Journal of the Department of Letters, vol.X.)	R.C. Majumdar.
Haihayas of Tripurī and their Monuments (Memoirs Archaelogical Survey of India, No. 23)	R.D. Bannerji.
Harsacarita (Bāna)	Edited by Kasineth Pandurang Pandit.
Harsacarita (Bāna)	Translation by E.B.Cowell and F.W. Thomas.
History of Bengal, Vol.I.	R.C. Majumdar.
History of Buddhism.	Buston, Trans. by Dr. E. Obermiller.
History of Gujerat.	Bhagwanlal.
History of the Guptas.	R.N. Dandekar.
History of India.	K.P. Jayasval.
History of India, as told by its Own Histories.	Sir H.M. Eliot and J.Dowson.
History of Kanauj.	R.S. Tripathi.
History of Mediaeval Hindu India (2 vols)	C.V. Vaidya.
History of Mediaeval School of Indian Logic.	S.C. Vidyabhushan.
History of North-Eastern India.	R.G. Basak.
History of Orissa.	R.D. Bannerji.
History of Tirhut.	S.N. Singh.

Imperial Gazetter of India.

Imperial History of India. K.P. Jayasval.

India Coins. E.J.Rapson.

Indian Palaeography. G.Bühler.

Indian Pundits in the Land of Snow. S.C. Das.

Kadambakula G.M. Moraes.

Kathāsaritasāgara (Somadeva) Trans. by Tawney.

Kādambarī (Bāṇa) Tr. by C.M. Ridding.

Kāmarūpa Śāsanavalī P.N. Bhattacarya Vidyavinod

(The) Kāverī the Maukharis and the Sangam Age. T.G. Aravamuthan.

Krisnaswāmi Aiyangar commemoration volume.

Lectures on Ancient History of India. D.R. Bhandarkar. (Carmichael Lectures, 1918)

Life in the Gupta Age. R.N. Saletore

Life of Hiuen Tsang. Tr. by S.Beal.

List of Ancient Monuments in Bihar and Orissa. M.Hamid.

Magadhas in Ancient India. B.C. Law.

Magadhan literature. H.P. Shastri.

The Maukharis. E.A. Piers.

Mahamahopadhyaya Hara Prasad ——— Shastri Memorial volume.

Mālavīya Commemoration Volume.

Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa Tr. by F.E. Pargiter.

Nālandā and its Epitgraphic Material - Hiranand Shastri. (Memoir Archaeological Survey of India, No. 66)

New History of the Indian People, Vol. VI. Edited by R.C. Majumdar and A.S. Altekar.

On Yuan Chwang (2 vols.)	Thomas Watters.
Oriental Studies in Honour of C.E.Pavry.	
Orissa in the Making.	B.C. Majumdar.
Pālas of Bengal. (Memoir Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol.V.)	R.D. Bannerji.
Political History of Ancient India. (3rd and 4th Editions)	H.C. Raychaudhuri.
Progress of Indian Studies, 1917-1942.	R.N. Dandekar.
Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age.	F.E. Pargiter.
Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago.	(I-Tsing) Tr. by Takakusu.
R.G. Bhandarkar Commemoration Volume.	
Rāmacarita (Abhinanda)	Edited by K.S.Ramaswamy Shastri.
Rāmacarita (Sandhyākaranandī) (Memoir Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol.III)	Edited and translated by Hara Prasad Sastri.
Rāṣṭrakūṭas and their Times.	A.S. Altekar.
Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal.	R.L. Mitra.
Sanskrit - English Dictionary.	Monier Williams.
Select Inscriptions, Vol.I.	D.C. Sarkar.
Social History of Kāmarūpa (3 Vols.)	N.N. Vasu.
Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal.	B.C. Sen.
Sources of the Mediaeval History of the Deccan.	G.Khare.
Si-yu-ke-Buddhist Records of the Western World.	Trans. by S.Beal.

Śrī Harsa of Kanauj.	K.M. Pannikar.
Students' Sanskrit-English Dictionary.	V.S. Apte.
Studies in Cola History and Administration.	K.A. Nīlakantha Sastri.
Studies in Indo-Muslim History.	S.H. Hodivala.
Study in the Chronicles of Ladakh (Supplement to the Indian Historical Quarterly)	Luciano Peteh.
Supplementary Catalogue of the Coins of the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Non-Muhammedan series.	B.B. Bidyabinod
Technique of casting of coins in Ancient India. (Memoir Numismatic Society of India, Vol.I.)	B. Sahni
Travels of Fah-Hien and Sung-yun.	S. Beal.
Udayasundarīkathā (Sōḍḍhala)	Edited by C.D. Dalal and E. Krisnmacarya.
Ujjainī in Ancient India.	B.C. Law.
University of Nālandā.	Sankalia.
Vedic Index (2 vols.)	A.A. Macdonnel and A.B. Keith.
Vikramāṅkadevacarita (Bilhana)	Tr. and edited by G. Bühler.
Volume of the Eastern and Indian studies presented to	F.W. Thomas.
Volume of Indian and Iranian Studies presented to	Sir E. Denison Ross.
Woolner Commemoration Volume.	

II. Journals and Periodical Publications.

Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Reserach Institute.

Annual Bulletin of the Nagpur University Historical Society.

Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports.

Archaeological Survey Reports (Cunningham)

Archaeological Survey of Mysore Reports.

Bhāratīya Itihāsa Samsodhaka Mandala Quarterly

Bharatīya Vidyā.

Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute.

Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies.

Calcutta Review.

Epigraphia Indica.

Hindusthan Review.

Indian Antiquary.

Indian Culture.

Indian Historical Quarterly.

Journal of the Andhra Historical Society.

Journal of the Assam Reserach Society.

Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.

Journal of the Bihar Research Society.

Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Journal of the Buddhist Text Society.

Journal of the Department of Letters.

Journal of the Ganganath Jha Research Institute.

Journal of the Greater India Society,

Journal of Indian History.

Journal of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute.

Journal of the Madras University.

Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, United Kingdom.

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society.

Journal of the University of Bombay.

Memoirs Archaeological Survey of India.

Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Memoirs of the Numismatic Society of India.

Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Patrikā.

Nagpur University Journal.

New Indian Antiquary.

Patna University Journal.

Proceedings and Transactions of All-India Oriental Conference.

Proceedings of Indian History Congress.

Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society.

University of Ceylon Review.

Viśvabhārati Quarterly.

Abbreviations.

Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.	A B O R I
Annual Bulletin of the Nagpur University Historical Society.	A.B.N.U.H.S.
Archeological Survey of India, Annual Reports.	A S I A R
Archeological Survey Reports (Cunningham)	C A S R.
Ancient Geography of India (Cunningham)	C A G I.
Ancient History of the Deccan	A H D
Ārya-Manju-śrī-Mūla-kalpa.	M M K
Bangalār Itihasa	B I.
Bhārātiya Itihasa Samsodhaka Mandala Quarterly, Bhandarkar's list of Inscriptions of Northern India	B I S M.Q. — B's List
Bombay Gazetteer	Bomb.Gaz.
Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies.	B S O S.
Calcutta Review	C R.
Cambridge History of India.	C H I.
Catalogue of Buddhist-Sanskrit Manuscript University Library, Cambridge.	Cat.Bud.Sans.Mss. Camb.Univ.
Catalogue of the Coins of the British Museum, Gupta Dynasties and Śaśānka	C C G D B.M. or B M C
Catalogue of the Coins in Indian Museum	C I M
Coins of Ancient India.	C A I
Coins of Mediaeval India.	C M I
Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum	C.I.I.
Dynastic History of Northern India.	D H N I
Dynasties of the Kanarese District.	D K D

Early History of Bengal (Paul)	E H B P.
Early History of Bengal (R.C. Majumdar)	E H B R
Early History of the Deccan.	E H D
Early History of India.	E H I
Epigraphia Indica	E.I.
Gaḍdarājamālā	G R
Harṣa carita	H.C.
Harṣa-carita (Tr. by Cowel & Thomas)	H.C. (CT)
Hindustan Review.	H R
History of Bengal (Majumdar)	H B R
History of Kanauj (Tripathi)	T K
History of North-Eastern India	H N E I
Imperial Gazetteer of India.	Imp.Gaz.
Imperial History of India.	I.H.I.
Indian Antiquary	I.A.
Indian Culture.	I C
Indian Historical Quarterly.	I H Q
Journal of the Andhra Historical Society	J A H R S.
Journal of the Assam Research Society	J A R S.
Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society	J B O R S.
Journal of the Bihar Research Society	J B R S.
Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.	J B B R A S.
Journal of the Bombay Historical Society	J B H S.
Journal of the Buddhist Text Society	J B T S.
Journal of the Department of Letters	J L.

Journal of the Ganganeth Jha Research Institute.	J G J R I
Journal of the Greater India Society	J G I S
Journal of the Indian History	J I H.
Journal of the Madras University	J M U.
Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.	J N S I.
Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (United Kingdom)	J R A S.
Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (New Series)	J A R S (N.S.)
Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.	J A S B.
Journal of the Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.	P J A S B or Pro.A S B.
Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (New Series)	J A S B(N.S.)
Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 3rd series	J A S B L.
Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society.	J U P H S.
Kielhorn's list of Inscriptions of Northern India	K's list
Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.	M A S I.
Memoirs of the Numismatic Society of India.	M N S I.
Memoirs of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.	M A S B.
Nāgarī Pracāraṇī Patrikā	N P P
Nagpur University Journal.	N U J.
New Indian Antiquary	N I A.
New Series.	N.S.

On yuan Chwang (Watters)	Watters.
Political History of Ancient India	P H A I,
Proceedings and Transactions of All-India Oriental Conference	P T O C.
Proceedings of Indian History Congress	P I H C.
Proceedings and Transactions	Pro.Trans.
Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society.	Q J M S.
The Rāṣṭrakūṭas (Altekar)	R A.
The Records of the Western World (Beal)	Records.
Select Inscriptions, vol.I.	S I, I.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

The present work has been undertaken as a revised study of the political history of Magadha from C.455-1000 A.D. Illustrious scholars like Hoernle, Smith, Barnett, Allan, Kielhorn, Hultzsch, Rapson, R.D. Bannerji, R.C. Majumdar, B.C. Sen, H.C. Ray, D.C. Sarkar, A.Ghosh, R.G. Basak, D.R. Bhandarkar, K.N.Diksit, K.P. Jayasval, A.S. Altekar, H.C. Raychaudhuri, Pannalal, Dasaratha Rai Sarma, R.K. Mookerji, K.L.Barua, V.V. Mirashi, E.A. Piers, R.S. Tripathi, T.G. Aravamuthan, K.S. Aiyanger, Richard Burn, N.K. Sastri, Rev. Father Heras and a host of other scholars have thrown light on one or the other aspects of the problem in books or learned articles. But recent discovery of some new inscriptions and a revised study of some other inscriptions and of the coins necessitated a reassessment of the events so far known. Moreover while learned scholars like R.D. Bannerji, R.C. Majumdar, R.S. Tripathi, N.K. Sastri and A.S. Altekar have written a connected History of Orissa, Bengal, Kanauj, the Colas and the Rāstrakūtas it was really surprising that no History of Magadha as such was available. Magadha more than any single unit of India dominated the history of the country in ancient times, and therefore a History of Magadha is a great desideratum.

But it was impossible to write in the time available to me a History of Magadha in all its bearings from the earliest time to the present day. Therefore I have limited the scope of my work. I have dealt with only the political and dynastic history of Magadha during the period under review; want of space and time prevented me from including administrative, economic, social and cultural history, much though I would have wished to do so.

The Gupta period has still many gaps to be filled in; but the outline of political history and dynastic succession up to Kumāra Gupta I is fairly well known. The period after the death of Kumāra Gupta is very complicated, and the discovery of the Nālandā seals has led scholars to suggest many alternative theories of the succession to the Gupta throne after Kumāra Gupta I. The problem of the Maukhari and later Gupta struggles also needs further careful consideration. The origins of Śaśānka were a mystery to be unveiled. The Pāla chronology and dynastic history deserved revision.

The present work is based on a first hand study of inscriptions, coins and relevant literature. This has led me to some conclusions which depart from generally accepted notions. I have shown that after the death of Kumāra Gupta, Puru Gupta came to the throne, as he was the legitimate heir,

being the son of the Mahādevī of Kumāra Gupta I. Skanda Gupta, a favourite son of Kumāra Gupta I and a national hero, successfully usurped the throne and frustrated the attempts of Puru Gupta and other royal princes to acquire control of the empire. I have proved that the theory that Skanda Gupta's heavy-weight coins were debased and so they suggest second Hūṇa invasions cannot stand. It has been established on the basis of numismatic and epigraphic evidence that Kumāra Gupta of the Sārnāth inscription is Kumāra Gupta II, while Kumāra Gupta of the Bhiṭṭāri and Nālandā seals is Kumāra Gupta III. The last king of the imperial Gupta dynasty was Viṣṇu Gupta. I have also tried to show that the original home of the later Guptas was Magadha, where they began their political career as feudatories of the later imperial Guptas. It was Mahāsena Gupta who was forced to retire to Malwa, and Magadha came under the Maukhari rule from the time of Sarvavarman. On the basis of coins and inscriptions I have suggested that Śaśāṅka was connected with Jayanāga and followed him. Harṣa's authority over Bengal and Magadha was possible only after the death of Śaśāṅka. Fresh light has been thrown on the history and extent of the empire of the later Guptas; on the authority of Hwhi-Lun recorded by I-Tsing I have shown that the China Temple lay far west of Magadha. The Pāla chronology has been revised to suit new discoveries. Various new interpretations of readings of inscriptions and their

dates have been suggested. In the introduction a new approach is taken on the question of the decline of the Mauryan empire and Aśoka's responsibility for it. The early Gupta history also has been subjected to original criticisms.

II.

What was the geographical extent of Magadha in the period under review? At the outset it is fair to remember that the boundaries of the various kingdoms or provinces in India have fluctuated owing to political and administrative exigencies. It has been generally assumed that Magadha embraced "the districts of Patna and Gaya in the southern part of Bihar".[1] According to Rhys Davids[2] "Magadha was a narrow strip of some considerable length from north to south, about twelve to fifteen per cent in area of the size of Kosala ..... Magadha corresponded in the time of Buddha to the modern district of Patna, but with the addition of the northern half of the modern district of Gaya. The boundaries were probably the Ganges to the north, the Son to the west, a dense forest reaching to the plateau of Chotā Nāgpur to the south, and Anga to the east. The

---

1. Advanced History of India, p.57.

2. C.H.I. I, p.182.

river Campā had been the boundary between Magadha and Anga." According to Cunningham[1], Magadha "was bounded by the Ganges on the north, by the district of Benares on the west, by Hiranyaparvata or Monghyr on the east, and by Kiranasurvarna, or Singbhum on the south." "It must therefore have extended to the Karmnasa river on the west, and to the sources of the Damuda river on the south". Anga, which corresponded to the modern districts of Monghyr and Bhagalpur, was annexed to Magadha by Bimbisāra in the time of Buddha. Therefore the eighty-thousand parishes over which the King of Magadha ruled included villages of Aṅga as well. It is true that off and on we find reference to Aṅga in inscriptions from the 6th to the 10th Century, but it can hardly be disputed that from the 6th Century B.C. down to our period of study, the country of Aṅga had been practically absorbed into Magadha. Therefore for our period of enquiry the eastern boundary of Magadha may be deemed to be conterminus with the eastern limit of Aṅga. . In the opinion of Buchanan, "Aṅga, according to the most commonly received opinion, and according to the traditions of the inhabitants, is bounded on the east by Gaur ".[2] Buchanan[3] refers to the Śaktisangamatantra, wherein it is stated that Magadha extends from the temple of

---

1. C.A.G.I. p.518.

2. An account of the District of Bhagalpur in 1810-11, by Francis Buchanan, p.56.

3. Ibid, p.58

Vyaseśvara Śiva on the Vindhya mountain, at the frontier of Gaur to Vyasa-Kuṇḍa on the Karmanāsā river. According to the opinion of the common inhabitants, "the country west of Teliagarhi is included in Magadha".[1] At Teliagarhi and Sikrigully (Sikrigali) the Rājmahal Hills almost touch the Ganges, and these have formed "excellent strategic points in Bengal's first line of defence."[2] Teliagarhi pass formed "the boundary between the Mughal provinces of Bengal and Bihar."[3] It may not therefore be incorrect that in the ancient and the early mediaeval period also the political boundary of Magadha extended up to the Rājmahal Hills in the east.

H.P. Sastri[4] has quoted later Brahmanical literature to show that Kīkaṭa (which meant Magadha) extended up to Chunār in the west. According to the learned Sastri "the vast territory to the south of the Ganges and north of the Vindhya ranges extending from Mudgagiri in the east to the Caranādri (Chunār) in the west is called Magadha. The tract lying between the Karmanāsā and Chunār however is often joined to Kaśī on the opposite side of the river." In the opinion of Nundalal Dey,[5] the western boundary of Magadha was the Sona.

---

1. Ibid, p58
2. H.B.R.I. p.3
3. Buchanan, loc.cit. p.58
4. Magadhan Literature, p.1.
5. Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India, p.116.

Rhys Davids[1] once observed that "Magadha was probably then bounded to the north by the Ganges, to the east by the river Campā, on the south by the Vindhya Mountains, and on the west by the river Sona." It is significant to note that we have a clear epigraphic evidence that Magadha included large parts of the modern district of Shahabad. From the Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II[2] we learn that the village (Deo-Baranārk), 25 miles south-west of Amah, was included in Nagara (Pāṭaliputra)-bhukti. Thus it is clear that the western boundary of Magadha extended beyond the river Son. The country between the Son and the Karmanāsā was known as Karukhdeśa from the Daitya Kārukh.[3] In the opinion of B.C. Law,[4] the Bāla-Kāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa appears to locate the Kārūsas or Karūsas in the modern Shahabad district. In the Mahābhārata they are mentioned along with the Matsyas, the Kāśīs, the Cedis and the Pañcālas . The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa[5] groups them among the inhabitants of the Vindhya mountains. Pargiter[6] concluded that "it was a hilly country south of Kāśī and Vatsa and between Cedi and Magadha, i.e. it comprised the hilly country of which Rewa in the centre,

---

1. Buddhist India, p.24. 2. C.I.I. III, No.46, p.214f.
3. An account of the district of Shahabad in 1809-10, by Francis Buchanan, p.39.
4. Ancient Indian Tribes, Vol.II, pp.31-33.
5. M.P.P. (Tr.) p.341. 6. J.A.S.B. 1895, p.249f.

from about the river Ken on the west as far as the confines of Bihar on the east." It appears that the southern district of Shahabad was called Kārūṣadeśa. In our period the entire district of Shahabad was an integral part of Magadha. It may therefore be reasonably assumed that the Karmanāsā formed the western boundary of Magadha, which at one time even extended to Chunār. There is no difference of opinion on the point that the Ganges formed the northern boundary of Magadha. Its southern boundary was marked by the Vindhyas, extending to the north-east through the Kaimur range and Chotā Nāgpur plateau beginning from about the Rāmgarh hills.

Thus we find that in our period Magadha compressed the modern districts of Patna, Gaya, Shahabad, Monghyr and Bhagalpur. The Gangelia valley is divided into three provinces, U.P., Bihar and Bengal. Magadha forms the central belt of the rich alluvial plain. Living in the centre of the continuous low-lying green plains the people of Magadha must have felt inspired to extend their arms right and left and bring the entire Gangetic-Yamunā plain under their grip. It was thus natural for the Māgadhas to think in, so to speak, imperial terms. The Central Gangetic valley, including both Magadha and Tirabhukti, found the loftiest mountain in the north, and elevated plateau in the south and south-west and

low-lying hills in the east. This geographical contrast must have contributed not a little to stimulate the political, religious and cultural activities of the people; and history bears it out. Though bounded on the south and south-west by the plateau and the extension of the Vindhya Mountains, Magadha was not cut off from the south, as these hill-ranges were very much broken; and a Candragupta or Samudra Gupta from Magadha could easily dream of bringing the Deccan under the suzerainty of Magadha.

Economic conditions also favoured Magadha. The country is very fertile, due to alluvial soil, and is watered by the Ganges and its tributaries. Agriculture flourished and industries developed. In the Ayodhyā-Kāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa we read that Daśaratha told his queen Kaikeyī, "I shall present to you articles manufactured in Magadha; pray do not trouble yourself about the banishment of Rāma."[1] From the Jātakas we learn that Magadha was full of great merchants and bankers. It was rich in seven kinds of gems, and was famous for conch shells. The Asampadāna Jātaka refers to a Magadhan setthi named Saṅkha, who was master of eighty crores of wealth. According to Yuan Chwang Magadha was a country of rich soil and luxuriant crops. A special

---

1. Quoted by B.C. Law in Ancient Indian Tribes, p.94.

variety of rice was grown. From the Mahabharata we learn that Rājagriha had a teeming population. According to Jinaprabha it contained 3600 houses of merchants.[1] Yuan Chwang also refers to populated towns. The Rig Veda refers to the kine (cattle) of Kikata.[2] This shows that cattle was an important kind of wealth in Magadha. Through Magadha passed the main trade-routes up and down the Ganges. A trade-route ran "from Savatthi (Srāvasti) to Rājagaha (Rājagriha), passing through Setavya, Kapilavastu, Kusinara, Pāvā, Hatthi-gāma, Bhandagāma, Vesali, Pāṭaliputra and Nālandā. The road probably went on to Gaya, and there met another route from the coast, possibly at Tāmralipti, to Benares." The main route between east and west was along the great rivers by boats on hire. We also hear of express boats. The boats went right down to the mouths of the Ganges and thence either across or along the coast to Burma. We also learn of traffic downwards as far as Magadha or Campā, and upwards to Kausāmbī, where it met the main trade-route running from Savatthi to Pāṭiṭṭhāna (Paithan). We are also told of traders going from Videha to Gandhāra and from Magadha to Sovira on the west coast.[3] Then we find that Magadha was

---

1. The Magadhas in Ancient India. 2. Magadhan Literature, p.2.
3. Buddhist India, pp.103-104.

connected by roads and river-routes from all parts of India, and must have gained much by way of custom duties from the immense traffic passing through it. Growth of trade and commerce and consequent contact with far and near countries exerted another stimulating effect on the people.

The racial complexity of the people of Magadha may have also proved conducive to their vigorous activities. It is self-evident that Magadha was one of the last countries to be completely Brahmanised. Whether the Vrātyas were non-Āryans or an earlier band of Āryans, it is clear that they were assimilated by the Magadhas and hence were looked down upon by the Āryans of Brahmāvarta. Weber also suggests the persistence of aboriginal blood in Magadha.[1] Thus it may be assumed that while in the Upper Gangetic valley the non-Āryans were completely subdued and enslaved, in the Magadha and further east the Āryans made less impression on the aborigines. This racial contrast may explain the tremendous political and religious revolutions with Magadha as the centre. Free from the shackles of Brahmanical orthodoxy and rigid pattern, the people of Magadha, greatly intermixed in blood, began to think for themselves, and developed imperialistic ideas as well. Thus a power which controlled Magadha and led her vigorous sons and daughters

---

1. Vedic Index, Vol.II, p.117.

was bound to assert its predominance over the rest of India.

III.

The history of Magadha from the earliest times to the dawn of the Buddhist Age is not well known. But there is no doubt that from very ancient times Magadha must have played a dominant role which her geography and economics ordained for her. A reading of the ancient and the early mediaeval history of India clearly brings out that there is no exaggeration in the assertion that "three-fourths of India's history is the history of Magadha."[1] The fact that the entire Vedic literature displays open hostility and disgust towards Magadha and its people suggests that Magadha must have been a great stronghold of the pre-Āryans and refused to be absorbed in the stereotyped Brahmanical pattern. Before the discovery of the ruins of Mohenjodāro and Harappā the Cyclopean walls on the hills of Rājagṛiha were almost the most ancient archaeological remains in India. From the point of archaeology even to the present day a huge gap separated the age of Mohenjo-dāro from that of the Mauryn period. We

---

1. Glories of Magadha, p.5.

have strong suspicions that thorough excavations in some test sites in Magadha may expose materials which would unveil many mysteries of the prehistoric past. It is quite possible that the civilisation that prevailed in the Mohenjo-dāro and Harappa regions spread not only westward but also eastward along the great rivers, and Magadha may have been one of the last if not also the earliest, centres of this great civilisation.

It is not therefore strange that we do not find mention of Magadha in the Ṛig-Veda. But it mentions a people called Kīkaṭa. Yāska declared that Kīkaṭa was the name of a non-Āryan country. Zimmer and Weber identified Kīkaṭa with Magadha. "But the identification is uncertain and is doubted by Oldenberg and Hillebrandt."[1] But in later literature Kīkaṭa is a synonym of Magadha. The Vāyu Purāṇa mentions Gaya and Rajagriha in Kikaṭa. The Bhāgavaṭa Purāṇa also mentions Kīkaṭa; and Gaya-pradeśa is in Kīkaṭa according to Śrīdhara. In the Abhidhāna-cintāmaṇi occurs the phrase "Kīkaṭā Magadhāhvayāḥ".[2] The name of Magadha occurs in the Atharvaveda and it is one of the countries where fever is wasted away. In the Vrātya hymn of the Atharvaveda the

---

1. Vedic Index, Vol.I, p.159.

2. Quoted in P.H.A.I. 4th edn. p.95, note 5.

3. Vedic Index, Vol.II, p.116.

Magadha is said to be connected with the Vrātyas and his Mitra, his mantra, his laughter and his thunder in the four quarters. In the Śrauta-Sūtra the equipment characteristic of the Vrātyas is said to be given when the latter is admitted into the Āryan Brahmanical community to a bad Brahmin living in Magadha.[1] It is therefore clear that the Magadhas were intimately connected with the Vrātyas. In the Vedic literature there are copious references to the India-vritra struggle. Were the vrātyas connected with Vritra? However, there is no doubt that the Vrātyas were objects of abuse by the vedic Āryans. Whether they were Āryans or non-Āryans is not clear. H.P. Sastri[2] thinks that the Vrātyas were a nomadic horde belonging to the earlier Āryan migration group, and made friends with the Magadhas, the pre-Āryan people. The Vrātyas were therefore not within the pale of the vedic Aryan society, and could be admitted into it only after some purification ceremony. But in the epic and Purāṇic literature Magadha becomes a powerful kingdom. Pargiter[3] points out that "though the (Purānic) account is said to have been narrated to Paurava kings or to ṛiṣis in the Naimiśa forest, yet the ground from which the historic changes are viewed is Magadha."

---

1. Vedic Index, Vol.II, p.116. 2. Magadhan Literature, pp. 6-11.
3. The Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age, p.X.

Except for the doubtful mention of Pramaganda as a king of Magadha, no king of Magadha is directly mentioned in the vedic literature. The Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas mention the earliest dynasty of Magadha founded by Bṛihadartha, the son of Vasu Caidya-Uparicara, and the father of Jarāsaṃdha. According to the Rāmāyaṇa Vasu himself had founded Girivraja. It is known from the great epic that Girivraja (Rājagṛiha) was the capital of the great king, Jarāsandha. He was a powerful ruler who had raided as far west as Mathurā. He was a friend of Kaṃsa and Karṇa, and was killed by Bhīma, the second Pandava prince. The dynasty continued for a long time afterwards. The second Magadhan dynasty was the Haryanka-kula, whose first important king was Bimbisāra.

IV.

The history of India obtains some degree of exactitude from the dawn of the 6th Century B.C. when the Puranic accounts can be profitably compared with the Buddhist and Jaiṇa traditions. The early Buddhist literature tells us of an India divided into sixteen Mahājanapadas, some of which were republics and some monarchies. Magadha, Aṅga, Vatsa, Kāśī, Kosala and Avanti were ruled by dynasties which dreamt of empires. Magadha, which was only one of the competitors,

finally overcame the centrifugal forces in Indian history and integrated a large part of the country under one political authority.

Bimbisāra of Haryanka-kula was the first king in the historical period, who launched Magadha on a career of expansion. He conquered Anga (East Bihar), and entered into matrimonial alliances with the ruling dynasty of Kosala and the Licchavis of Vaiśālī. He is said to have been killed by his son Ajātasátru.[1]

"The reign of Kuṇika-Ajātasátru was the highwater mark of the power of the Bimbisārian (Haryanka) dynasty."[2] War broke out with Kosala, and it ended with the addition of Kāśī to Magadha. The rising tide of Magadhan imperialism was bound to come into collision with the powerful freedom-loving republican confederacy north of the Ganges, which separated the Licchavi state from the Kingdom of Magadha. The war was a severe and protracted one, in which even the old enemy of Magadha, Kosala, too played a hostile part. Ajātasátru used all methods to break the

---

1. Buddhist sources are almost unanimous on this point. Smith regards the story as "the product of Odium theologicum or sectarian rancour." Raychaudhuri finds confirmation of the story "in many respects by the testimony of independent classical and Jaina writers."

2. P.H.A.I. (4th Edn.) p.170.

republic; improvements and inventions were made in the weapons of war, and dissensions were spread among the leaders of the oligarchy. Ultimately the war, which seems to have lasted for more than sixteen years, ended in favour of Magadha, and the powerful republic was annexed to the Magadhan empire.

The empire had become now quite extensive, and a new capital befitting the expansive dominion and economic needs led Udayana, the successor of Ajātaśatru, to build a new capital at Pāṭaliputra, where a fort had been constructed by Ajātaśatru. This marks the real beginning of the importance of the imperial city. The expansion of Magadha towards the west brought it into conflict with the ambitious Pradyota, the King of Avanti. Pradyota had annexed Kauśāmbī, and so Magadha and Avanti faced one another ominously.

There is some conflict between the Puranic and the Buddhist traditions about the successors of Bimbisāra. However, one great step in the rise of Magadha as the predominant power in Northern India was taken by Śiśunāga, who took away the glory of the Pradyotas. His son, Kālāśoka, or Kākavarṇa, is said to have called the second Buddhist council at Vaiśāli. He met an unnatural death.

The order of succession after Kālāśoka is not clear, but it is accepted on all sides that within a few

years after his death Mahāpadma Nanda Ugrasena occupied the throne of Magadha. He was the founder of the Nanda family, born of humble origin. He is the first historical emperor of India, and brought a very large part of North India, and possibly even part of the Deccan, under the royal umbrella of Magadha. He is referred to as the "destroyer of the Kṣatriyas and ekarāṭ." The classical writers note that a powerful people ruled over all territories east of the Beas with the capital at Pāṭaliputra. The Hāthigumphā inscription of Khāravela suggests the authority of one Nandarāja over Kaliṅga. The existence of "Nan Nand Dehra" (Nander) on the Godāvarī appears to refer to the Nanda suzerainty over a large part of the Deccan. Kuntala, according to some Mysore inscriptions, was ruled by the Nandas.

Thus Magadha emerged triumphant out of the inter-state conflicts for the supremacy of India. As happened on many occasions later, Magadha took the lead in champion-ing successfully the forces of integration against the equally natural and powerful tendencies of disintegration and localism at a time when national independence was threatened. After the end of the Mahābhārata war India was parcelled into tiny states, exhausted but at the same time mortally jealous of one another. Centrifugal forces

had their full sway, the spirit of local independence at its height. But Indian history affords numerous examples to illustrate the fact that simultaneously with the forces of disintegration let loose, centripetal influences also appear, and in the end win temporarily. But the process takes time, and before there is an integrated or politically united India, some ambitious foreign power appears on the scene, and gaining advantage from the divisions of the coungry, brings about, in a limited sphere, a centralised state. This is what was happening in the North-West frontier of India. The Uttarāpatha (i.e. North-West part of India) was parcelled out into various small principalities, and this invited the ambitious Achaemanian emperor of Persia, and the North-West part of India with the rich Indus valley was annexed to the Persian empire.

Note.- The dynastic history and chronology of Magadha are very confused. The Buddhist, Puranic and Jaina sources contradict one another. We have not considered it relevant to go into the details of these discussions. We have only given a brief outline of the main currents of history as they affected the emergence of Magadha as the predominant power in India. For discussion of intricate details, readers are invited to refer to Raychaudhuri, P.H.A.I. (4th Edn. pp. 153-192); Pradhan, Chronology of Ancient India (pp.211f.); Smith, E.H.I. (4th Edn.)pp.28-45f. and C.H.I. Vol.I.

One of the most important questions is whether Śiśunāga preceded or followed Bimbisāra. Barnett (Antiquities of India, p.37), Smith (E.H.I. 4th Edn. p.32) and others held that Śiśunaga founded the dynasty to which Bimbisāra belonged. The learned scholars relied on the Puranic tradition. H.C.Raychaudhuri held that the Purāṇas contradict themselves when they state that Śiśunāga destroyed the Pradyotas, as Pradyota was a powerful contemporary of Bimbisāra

(contd. next page.)

V.

But the North-Western part of India was divided into a large number of small states when Alexander invaded the country. The overthrow of the Persian empire by Alexander may have revived the localism in the Indus valley. After subjugating Bactria, Alexander crossed the Hindukush and entered the soil of India in 327 B.C. After reducing the mountaineer tribes, he advanced to the Indus and crossed it at or near Shind in early 326 B.C. He received the submission of Ambhī, the King of Taxila. In mid 326 B.C. was fought a severe battle on the Hydaspes (the Jihlam) in which Poros, assisted by the tropps of the King of Abhisāra (Kashmir), was finally defeated, but restored to his kingdom. Alexander advanced up to the Beas, and was eager to proceed further; but his soldiers refused and he had to retreat.

Note contd.

But G.C. Mendis (University of Ceylon Review, April 1947, pp.45-47) has pointed out a very important fact that "the remarks of Raychaudhuri are the result of a confusion of two independent traditions, Puranic and Buddhist, which do not always agree." The learned scholar points out that, though the Buddhist tradition makes Pradyota a contemporary of Bimbisāra, the Purāṇas do not say so; according to them Pradyota was the predecessor of Śiśunāga. Thus it is not judicious to assert a contradiction in the Purāṇas themselves on the basis of an independent tradition. The thing is that both the traditions are consistently in themselves and they do not agree. Therefore any one of the two traditions may be correct.

There is no denying the fact that the resistance that the Greeks had faced in India so long and the knowledge of the great powers of the people ruling beyond the Beas with their capital at Pāṭaliputra damped their spirits. Alexander retreated down the Indus, and had to face grim opposition from the Siboi and the Malloi (Mālavas). His retreat through the deserts of Sindh and Baluchistan was not very happy.

An Indian youth of remarkable vision took advantage of the situation. He was Candragupta, who founded the Mauryan dynasty. He probably belonged to the family of the Kṣatriya Moriyas, the ruling clan of Pipphalivana "which probably lay between Rummindei in the Nepalese Tarai and Kasia in the Gorakhpur district."[1]

---

1. P.H.A.I. (4th Edn. p.217). The ancestry of Candragupta is not yet settled. According to a tradition he was an illegitimate son of the last Nanda king by his courtesan Murā. Smith (E.H.I. 4th Edn. p.44) and Cunningham (Bhilsa Topes, p.87) regard him as an illegitimate scion of the (Nanda) family." H.C. Raychaudhuni on the authority of the Buddhist sources and mediaeval epigraphs has proved that Candragupta was a Kṣatriya (An Advanced History of India, p.98). R.K. Mookerji (Candragupta Maurya, pp.7-24) has very ably discussed the Buddhist, Puranic and classical sources, and has conclusively shown that Candragupta was "not of low but lowly origin." He was a man of good Kṣatriya origin, neglected by his guardian, as ~~Shivaji and~~ Shershah and Śivāji, great men in Indian history. According to a Buddhist tradition, he was reared by a cowherd at Kusumapura. He was picked up by Cāṇakya who had come to Pāṭaliputra for learned discussion but was insulted by Dhanananda, the last Nanda king. Cāṇakya took Candragupta to Taxila. It was in this part of the (contd. next page.)

Candragupta is said to have met Alexander and unsuccessfully invited him to invade Magadha. But undaunted, and assisted by Cāṇakya, he destroyed the rule of the Greeks in India, and also overthrew the Nanda dynasty, and made himself King of Magadha and emperor of India. The exact course of events and their precise dates are not known, but it is clear that Candragupta must have come into power between 325 and 321 B.C.[1]

Note contd. from previous page.)

country that Candragupta met Alexander. Sandrocottas of the classical writers has been identified with Candragupta Maurya. Some writers like D.S. Triveda (A.B.O.R.I. XXIII, p.502f.) have sought to identify Sandrokottas with Candragupta I of the Gupta dynasty, and regard the identification of Sandrokottus with Candragupta Maurya "as the greatest mistake ever committed in the field of Indian chronology, literature and history." But there are no good grounds to reject the long-established identification. H.C. Seth has recently strongly urged his point that Candragupta was not a native of Magadha but of N.W. India (A.B.O.R.I. XVIII, p. 150f.; J.I.H. XIX, p.17f.; Pro. I.H.C. (3rd Session, p.371f.)

1. E.H.I. 4th Edn. p.45. There is a great difference of opinion among scholars about the exact year of Candragupta's accession to the throne. Charpentier puts it in 313 B.C. (C.H.I. p.156); Bhattasāli (J.R.A.S. 1932, p.273f.) comes to the same conclusion; Fleet and Hultzch, 320 B.C. (C.I.I. I, p.XXXV); Barnett and Thomas 321 B.C. (Antiquities of India, p.39; C.H.I. I, p.471); Kern, and Smith, 322, B.C. (I.A. III, p.79f.; E.H.I. 4th Edn. p.45); R.K. Mookerji, 323 B.C. (Candragupta Maurya, p.53); S.N. Ray 324 B.C. (I.H.Q. XI, p.211f.); Cunningham, Jayasval and J.Sen, 325 B.C. (Bhilsa Topes, p.75; J.B.O.R.S. I, p.67f.; I.H.Q. V. p.6f.). H.C. Seth also believes that the beginning of Candragupta's career in the North-West may be dated in 325 B.C. (Pro.I.H.C. 3rd session, p.375). The basis for assuming a later date for Candragupta's accession was the assumption that his rule could begin only after the death of Alexander. But the history of the retreat of Alexander leaves no doubt that the prestige of the Greeks was very much damaged, and so "the greatest

(contd. next page.)

Soon after his accession, Candragupta "overran and subdued the whole of India." The Mysore inscriptions suggest that he pushed far into the South. He had to face an invasion by Seleukos Niketor, who dreamt of recovering the lost Greek possessions in India. But the outcome of the struggle was favourable to the Indian hero, and Selenkos made peace by ceding the Satrapies of Parapanisadai, Aria and Arachosia, and he entered into a matrimonial alliance with Candragupta. The treaty may be dated between 305 and 303 B.C.

According to Jaina traditions, Candragupta abdicated the throne and with Bhadrabāhu retired to the south in Mysore. The M.M.K. also suggests abdication by Candragupta with "tears in his eyes," probably due to opposition by Cāṇakya. V.R. Ramacandra Dikṣitar (Pro.I.H.C. 3rd Session, p.520f.) has

---

Note, contd. from previous page.)

opportunity was offered by the retreat itself; one had not to wait till his death." It is to be noted that while the Greek army was still in Karmania, Philippos, one of the Satraps of the Indian provinces, was murdered. It is quite possible that Candragupta became the leader of the discontented Indians, planned the war of liberation, and finally expelled the Greeks and liberated his country from the yoke of foreign servitude. It may have taken some time, and then, assisted by Canakya and the soldiers from the north-west, Candragupta launched more than one attack on Nanda, finally defeated him and occupied the throne of Magadha. Barnett (Antiquities of India, p.39) rightly held that Candragupta first became dominant in the North-West and then turned upon Magadha. His view has been recently upheld by H.C. Seth (A.B.O.R.I. XVIII, p.158f.) and R.K. Mookerji (Candragupta Maurya, pp.51-53). On the other hand Smith (E.H.I. p.124) thought it probable that "before he undertook the expulsion of the foreign garrisons, he had already overthrown his unpopular relation, the Nanda King of

(contd. next page)

tried to prove that the whole tradition of the synchronism of Candragupta and Bhadrabāhu has to be discredited; and the Candragupta of the Sravana Belgola inscription in Mysore is not Candragupta Maurya.

Megasthenes was the Greek envoy in the court of Candragupta Maurya, and he left an account of what he saw. Only a portion of his famous book has been recovered. It is very valuable for the history of the civilisation and administration of the period. The Arthaśāstra[1] by Kauṭilya is also thought by some to be a contemporary work by Cāṇakya, the minister of Candragupta.

Note contdi from previous page.)

Magadha." H.C. Raychaudhuri (P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.218) also holds that "Some time after his acquisition of sovereignty, Candragupta sent to war with the prefects or generals of Alexander and crushed their power."

A most ingenuous and ridiculous suggestion was advanced some time ago that Cāṇakya and Seleukos Niketor were identical (J.B.T.S. III, pt.3, p.26f.).

1. R.Shamsastry regards Kauṭilya, the author of the Arthaśāstra, as the same person as Viṣṇugupta or Cāṇakya, the contemporary of Candragupta Maurya (Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, Tr.By.Shamasastri, p.ix). There has been a very lively controversy about the authenticity of Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra. The late Dr. A.B. Keith's latest view after discussing most recent observations of scholars on the subject, was that Kauṭilya and Megasthenes and Candragupta were not contemporary (B.C. Law, Volume I, 1945, p.477f.). It is to be noted that there are very ancient traditions which refer the composition of a work on politics to a minister of Candragupta (A.B.O.R.I. III, p.89f.). Bhandarkar (A.B.O.R.I. VII, p.69f.) held that the work in its original form was contemporary with Candragupta in the 4th Century B.C., but later on some changes were introduced probably by a Kauṭilya school which may have arisen.

Candragupta was succeeded by his son Bindusāra, who maintained friendly relations with the Greek monarchy of Syria. Bindusāra is credited with the conquest of the Deccan,[1] but this is not definite,[2] as Candragupta himself might have added the Deccan to his empire.

Bindusāra was succeeded by his son Aśoka, a name that stirs the imagination and is enshrined as one of the most valuable treasures of world history. Aśoka apparently came to the throne in 273 B.C., and was formally crowned in 269 B.C.[3] In the early years of his reign he carried on the traditional policy of imperial annexation, enunciated by his predecessors. He declared war on Kalinga and after a severe struggle annexed it. Under Aśoka the Mauryan empire extended to its fatthest limits. Almost the whole of India from the Hindukush on the north-west to Kalinga in the east, from the Himālayas in the north to the Pennar river in the south, from the Arabian Sea in the west to the Bay of Bengal in the east was under one government presided over by Aśoka. Only the extreme south, ruled by the Colas, the

---

1. E.H.I. (4th Edn.) p.156. 2. P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.244.
3. E.H.I. p.164; Candragupta Maurya, pp.63-64

the Keralas, the Satiyāputras and the Pāṇḍyas, was outside the empire. The Gāndhāras, the Kāmbhojas, Yavanas, Rāṣṭrikas, Bhojas, Peteṇikas, Pulindas and Āndhras, did not lie beyond Aśoka's dominions, as Rapson seems to think.[1]

It is not difficult to imagine that the powerful Mauryan militarism could easily have swallowed what little remained outside its empire. It might not have been even impossible for the vastly increased resources of the well-organised empire to annex even extra-Indian dominions on the north-west frontiers of India. But Aśoka cried halt when he was in the midst of a resounding victory over a powerful enemy, Kalinga. It is a unique example in the annals of the world that a victorious conqueror stopped the military machine from moving when it was most violent and aggressively successful. The Kaliṅga war ended the era of aggressive militarism and ushered in an era of social progress, religious toleration, peace and international good-will. Asoka started on a new kind of conquest, that of Dharmavijaya. He preached religious toleration, social understanding, civic duties and above all consideration for the weak and helpless, including animals and birds. The entire administrative machinery was geared to the new ideal, and was inspired by

---

1. C.H.I. pp.514, 515; P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.260.

the enthusiasm of the emperor. Aśoka did not limit his benevolent activities to the frontiers of his dominion, but sent missions to far off lands in Asia, Europe and Africa, carrying the gospel of love and mutual understanding, and infect the essence of India's best heritage, the concentrated wisdom of her mature civilisation. It would be wrong to regard all these missions as mere religious propaganda to extend Buddhism. It is no doubt true that Buddhism spread far and wide through Asoka's endeavours, but it would be a grave injustice to the great man if we take him to be entirely interested in the propagation of sectarian Buddhism. Aśoka was a highly sensitive soul, and cut to the quick by the ravages of the Kalinga war, he was ready to atone for his sin of militarism. From a King of Magadha he raised himself to the status of a universal monarch reigning over the hearts of men. From Pāṭaliputra he enunciated the policy - the policy of <u>non-violence of the strong</u> - that the powerful state of Magadha bears no ill-will to its neighbours, weak or strong, but it expects them to allow it to carry on the work for the goodwill of all animate beings - men and animal. Here was a wonderful example for all time to come. The way to peace lies in the greatest power voluntarily to eschew visions of conquests and thereby disarm neighbours; and thus to release the entire resources of a rich empire for the good of all.

Asoka lived up to his ideal. After his death the Mauryan empire began to be dismembered. Weak successors, foreign invasions and rebellions within brought about the downfall of the grand design reared up by Candragupta and Asoka. H.P. Sastri[1] has advanced a theory that Asoka's policy alienated the privileged Brahmanical class, who led a movement of reaction which culminated in the rise of Pysyamitra Sunga, who killed Brihadratha, the last Maurya emperor. H.C. Raychaudhuri[2] after a long discussion held that "the theory which ascribes the decline and dismemberment of the Maurya empire to a Brahmanical revolution led by Pusyamitra does not bear scrutiny." Recently N.N.Ghosh[3] adduces strong grounds to establish the theory of H.P. Sastri that the Brahmanical supremacy and their privileged position in law and society were threatened by the well-intentioned edicts of Asoka; the learned scholar points out that instances quoted by Raychaudhuri are exceptions. We feel that possibly the long privileged and highly powerful Brahmin community may not have looked with equanimity upon the growth of Buddhist doctrines opposing sacrifices and the

---

1. J.A.S.B. (N.S.) VI, p.259f.
2. P.H.A.I. (4th Edn.) pp.294-301.
3. B.C. Law, Volume I, p.210f.

caste system. But the Brahmanical discontent could only have been a secondary influence fanned by ambitious persons, only when the dynasty was already tottering under incompetent rulers.

According to Raychaudhury[1] Asoka's abandonment of aggressive militarism must have seriously impaired the military efficiency of his empire. According to the learned scholar the conquest of Kalinga opened an era "of political stagnation, and perhaps, of military inefficiency during which the martial spirit of imperial Magadha was dying out for want of exercise." The learned scholar further observed: "The statesman who turned civil administration into religious propagandists, abolished hunting and jousts of arms, entrusted the fierce tribesmen on the north-west frontier and in the wilds of the Deccan to the tender care of "Superintendents of piety" and did not rest till the sound of the war drum was completely hushed and the pnly sound that was heard was that of moral teaching, certainly pursued a policy at which Candragupta Maurya would have looked askance. Dark clouds were looming in the north-western horizon. India needed men of the calibre of Puru and Candragupta to ensure her protection against the Yavana

---

1. P.H.A.I. (4th Edn.) pp.304, 252.

menace. She got a dreamer. Magadha after the Kalinga war frittered away her conquering energy in attempting a religious revolution, as Egypt did under the guidance of Ikhnaton. The result was politically disastrous .... Aśoka's attempt to end war met with the same fate as the similar endeavour of President Wilson."[1] Budha Prakasa[2] holds that Aśoka's instructions to his successors to eschew the policy of military conquest was faithfully, "syllable by sullable", followed by his descendants: "This led to the creeping of an inertia into the Hindu mind, and thus began the long process of degeneration and stagnation of the creative spirit of the race and that mystic and metaphysical turn of the national mind, which generated a deep sense of listlessness and lethargy, and ultimately led to the fall of India in the 11th and 12th Centuries ..... Such paralysing mentality was the aftermath of Aśoka's change of policy, and led in no small measure to the ruin of the empire." The learned scholar regards the foreign policy of Aśoka as "precocious internationalism". In his opinion the history of India from Bimbisāra to Aśoka was "a history of the crystallization of the ideology of localism into nationalism," and India needed a much longer time to foster the spirit of

---

1. Ibid, p.288.

2. J.B.R.S. March 1946, p.73f.

national unity among the people, and after it would have been safely entrenched it would have naturally flowed into internationalism"; but Aśoka's attempt was premature, and "lacking the force of arms it remained merely the shibboleth of minds".

This is a grave indictment of Aśoka. While one writer makes him responsible for the downfall of the empire, the other holds him guilty for all that happened to India in the 11th and 12th Centuries, more than 1400 years after his death. Can Aśoka defend himself before the bar of history? It is important to bear in mind that the dynasty of Aśoka survived for about fifty years after his death. This certainly shows that fairly long after his death, the dynasty was stable. It is true that his weak successors could not hold the entire empire intact. Subhagasena, "King of the Indians" appears to have made himself independent before 206 B.C., when Antiochus, the Great, crossed the Hindukush and went away after receiving 150 elephants and some provisions. It is significant that the Greek army did not come into collision with the Mauryan army. It is a grave injustice to Aśoka's idealism to dub his preachings as "religious propaganda", and his officers and missions as "religious propagandists". The inscriptions inform us that Aśoka called upon his people to believe in principles of religious

toleration, and social justice to the weak and poor. He instructed his officers, and created a new class of administrators to carry his message to the people, to liberalise and standardise justice, to establish hospitals for men and beasts, to preach economy, and respect for the elders, and to emphasize that the interests of the ruler and the ruled are identical. The state under Aśoka, for the first time in recorded history, realised its duty as well as its power, and used it to the furtherance of the interests of the common man irrespective of caste and creed. It is difficult to imagine how it could weaken the state or "arrest the progress of political science". Aśoka's state was at once an organic whole, and was not a mere police state. The entire civic and social life of the people was integrated into a purpose - the development of the personality of the man as a political animal and as an integral part of the state. He enunciated a laudable principle that the citizens of the state are to be cared for as a father cares for his children, and a father is not only interested in the bodily health of his children but wants to see his progeny develop as full men. The whole spirit of Aśoka's policy was to awaken to the full the best in man, to foster the creative spirit. It is undeniable that Indian creative genius did not show signs of decay in the post-Mauryan period,

and the fall of Hindu India in the 11th and 12th centuries was due to causes for which Aśoka could hardly be accused.

The gravest charge against Aśoka is that he eschewed the policy of aggressive militarism, and caused the weakness of the Magadhan military machine to the utter detriment of India. It is necessary to read the edicts of Aśoka with an unprejudiced mind. Nowhere in the edicts are we told that he completely demobilised the army, and that this encouraged his neighbours to show their teeth. He also did not declare that he had banished the use of force, come what may. We are expressly told that he would forgive only so far as "can be forgiven".[1] He desired to live in peace with his neighbours; he disarmed their fears of the empire, and solicited their trust and co-operation, even when he had "the power to torment them".[2] He tells the forest tribes ("āṭavīkāḥ") that he still possessed "the power to punish them in spite of his repentance". But he sought their good will and co-operation in the service of the people and in laying foundations of universal peace. His policy of religious toleration was very efficacious in an age when

---

1. C.I.I. I (Hultzsch), 13th Rock Edict (Shahbazgarhi) p.69.
2. Ibid, note 5.

religious competition was high. His call for peace arose not out of weakness but out of strength, born of confidence in his military superiority, and inspired by high ideals of humanitarianism and international fellow-feeling.

The sudden brake applied to the fast moving wheels of militarism must have produced some reaction among the vested interests, and a possible shock to the traditional orthodox bureaucracy. It has been suggested that Asoka should have used the increased resources of his empire in bringing under his sway the whole of India, i.e. the farthest south, which alone was outside the empire, and even lands beyond India, i.e. Bactria, under one sceptre. Asoka did not attempt it, so he was a dreamer. But Aśoka could very well have asked this militarist party to say what would be the limit. Magadhan imperialism had practically completed its role of bringing the whole of India under one political system. What was then needed was to show justification of the successful militarism. Aśoka has left posterity under an eternal debt by his unique attempt to transform militant imperialism into a great force for the development of human welfare and international co-operation. All imperialisms have risen and fallen, but it is due to Aśoka alone that Mauryan imperialism can claim its distinct role of nurse to the conquered peoples, friend of weaker states, and vehicle for the dissemination of India's best culture and ideal of

internationalism. The charge that it was precocious, that nationalism should have been allowed to strike deeper roots and then it would have flowered into internationalism, is hardly justifiable in view of recent history. There is no fixed stage from which nationalism would transcend itself and grow into internationalism; if nationalism is allowed free and full play, it leads to Chauvinism and fascism, bringing frequent wars and continuous tension. Internationalism's only hope is in the voluntary restraint by nations and a lead has to be given in clear language and actual practice by stronger powers to disarm the suspicion of weaker ones. Aśoka's way was the only way to secure that end, which has always up to the present proved so elusive to grasp. It is true that in the long run Aśoka failed, and so did President Wilson, but their failures do not discredit their attempts, but only prove how hard it is for the world to profit by lessons of history. But it has to be noted that Aśoka was successful in his mission in his life-time, and he claims success for his policy not only in India but also in the Hellenic monarchies of Asia, Europe and Africa.

Aśoka's change of policy should not be regarded as a mere instance of self-renunciation. Of course even that in itself is a great personal achievement which entitles him to be placed among the greatest men of all times. But his policy was also at once practical and ideal. It was practical because he realised that the march of militarism

had to be stopped consciously before it was played out, and then it would be followed by a reaction which would bring the whole edifice to collapse. It was better to keep the wheels in control, rather than to let them pull the driver. It is always safer to be the driver than the horse. The failure of Napoleon and Hitler was largely due to their inability to cry halt. Victories whet the appetite of great conquerors, and cloud their sense of proportion. Aśoka proved an honourable exception. He was also certainly inspired by genuine ideals of winning popular goodwill and international co-operation, and rendering unconditional service to the peoples of neighbouring and distant countries. This unique and unprecedented role of Magadhan imperialism has placed Aśoka, Magadha and indeed India as the first great leader in the movement of international co-operation which is yet to succeed. Notwithstanding the failures of the past, attempts are being made, will be made and must be made to the same end. Aśoka has shown the way, and the world has no other choice.[1]

It is difficult to believe that this peaceful foreign-policy should have weakened the inner strength of the empire. All great empires have perished, but not

---

1. America's "Europe Recovery Plan" is in a way guided by the same principles of self-interest and humanitarianism.

necessarily for their peaceful policy. What happened to the great Assyrian, Egyptian, Achaemenian, Macedonian, Kuṣāṇa, Roman, Gupta, Turko-Afghan and the Mughal empires? The Assyrians never eschewed militarism, and Aurangzeb was fighting to the last days of his life; but yet their empires fell. Those who make Aśoka's peaceful policy the cause of the dismemberment of the empire appear to suggest that but for this change of policy the Mauryan empire would have continued to exist for a longer time, if not for all times to come. But other causes of the downfall were present which would have brought about the nemesis.

The most important cause was that the successors of Aśoka were weak and incompetent. "His sceptre was the bow of Ulysses which could not be drawn by any weaker hand." There are reasons to suspect some wars of succession in the period following his death. One king, Śālisūka, was a tyrant and lover of disputes (duṣṭātma priyavigrahaḥ).[1] Members of the royal family began to carve out independent principalities for themselves; Jalauka in Kashmir and Vīrasena in Gandhāra.

The governors and ministers began to misgovern and oppress the people. This tendency of the provincial governors was noticed even in the time of Bindusāra and Aśoka.

---

1. Yuga Purāṇa of the Gārgī Samhitā (J.B.O.R.S. XVI, p.18f)

The latter's Kaliṅga Edicts proclaimed his policy to the people, promised equal and fair justice to all, and warned his officers to carry out loyally his policy of popular welfare. It may be safely presumed that with the disappearance of the great emperor and the coming in of weak rulers ministerial oppression continued and slowly and steadily "undermined the loyalty of the provincials".

The foreigners took advantage of the situation, and Antiochus the Great invaded Indian soil. It is true that this raid had no great significance, but it was a portent for the future. According to Raychaudhuri the verses of the Yunga Purana of the Gārgī Samhitā refer to foreign invasions of the Madhyadeśa and attack on Pāṭaliputra (Puspapura) after Śāliśūka.[1] K.H. Dhruva[2] takes the same verses to refer to the invasion of Demetrius long after Śālisūka.

The fundamental weakness of India has been the spirit of localism. Even when some sort of political unity is established over a fairly extensive part of the country the spirit of local independence lies ominously dormant, and as soon as the central authority becomes weak, the centrifugal forces appear on the surface and make quick work of what

---

1. P.H.A.I. (4th Edn.) p.293.

2. J.B.O.R.S. XVI, p.18f.

remains of the form of unity. Forces of disintegration and integration are the woof and warp of Indian history and they score one over the other alternately. This explains most of the history of the country and the rise and fall of the empires. The establishment of the Mauryan empire marked the climax of the success achieved by centripetal over centrifugal forces, and India attained an extent of unity hardly equalled in any period, save probably the British period; but even in this period India's north-west frontier was much further east than in the time of the Mauryas. A reaction was bound to set in, and it coincided with the death of Aśoka; but to make Aśoka responsible for the break up of the empire is to commit the fallacy of Post hoc ergo propter hoc. Forces of disintegration, held long in check, reappeared and gained ground.

The real trouble with all monarchic and despotic imperialisms is that it is the character of the ruler on the throne which determines the fate. But no dynasty can assume an unending line of able descendants. In Indian history after every three or four generations of able rulers, the dynasty becomes stale and throws out incompetent rulers: Bimbisāra, Ajātaśatru, Udayana; Kadphesis II, Kaṇiṣka, Vāsiṣka, and Huviṣka; Samudra-Gupta, Candra Gupta II, Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta; Gopāla, Dharmapāla and

Devapāla; Nāgabhaṭa II, Rāmabhadra and Miḥira Bhoja and Mahendrapāla; Akbar, Jahāngir, Shāhjahan, and Aurangzeb. Almost the same rule applies to all imperial dynasties in the history of the world. It is also quite just and reasonable. In the divine order of things no one family could be the chosen favourite for all times to come. The law of compensation must take its toll, and there is bound to be a change of fortune from one family to another "lest one good custom should corrupt the world." This coming-in of a line of weak rulers upon the thrones of great ancestors is the universal and unfailing cause of the downfall of all empires based on the hereditary principle. This encourages family dissensions and feudatories' rebellions, and invites foreign invasions. All these are not the cause but the symptoms of the real disease - the drying up of the stream of able rulers in the ruling family.

Thus we find that the Mauryan empire fell a natural victim to the logical process that was bound to occur, rather recur. Aśoka could hardly check the inherent spirit of disintegration which has almost become a "leading motive" of Indian history; and the centrifugal forces were bound to succeed over the forces of integration, as night follows day. Aśoka also could not assure for ever the continuity of the empire without introducing a revolutionary change in the nature of imperialism, i.e. without departing from the hereditary

principle or establishing a constitutional monarchy, as the British evolved. But to make Aśoka and the people of Magadha anticipate a thousand years of political maturity is to demand too much.

Thus it is obvious that even without Aśoka's change of policy the empire must have perished as all others, and for its downfall Aśoka's responsibility is very meagre, if indeed he bears any. The worst that can be said is that had Aśoka toed the traditional line, Magadha might have seen a little more of aggressive militarism. But is there anything to choose between a possible commonplace continuance of life and the spectacle of a real and novel experiment in the fields of international relations and benevolent administration? Aśoka is great because of these legacies that he left to posterity - and that by his change of policy.

VI.

In view of the conflicting account of the Purāṇas and Buddhist literature it is not easy to construct a history of the Mauryan dynasty after the death of Aśoka in C.232 B.C. One thing is certain, that the empire broke up, and ultimately Bṛihadratha, the last member of the dynasty was overthrown by Puṣyamitra Śuṅga in C.187 B.C.[1]

1. P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.320. Smith (E.H.I. 4th Edn. p.208) places the coup d'état in 185 B.C.

During his rule India was invaded by the Greeks. This is referred to by Patanjali, Kālidāsa and the Gārgī Samhitā. H.C. Raychaudhuri[1] and Jayasval[2] showed that the Greek invader was Demetrius, not Menander, as was believed by Smith.[3] According to the Hāthigumphā inscription of Khāravala, the Kalinga king invaded Magadha twice and defeated the King of Rājagriha. The inscription is one of the most discussed records of Indian epigraphy, and still its contents are not absolutely read without doubt. K.P. Jayasval and R.D. Bannerji did distinct service to the learned world in trying to decipher most of it. The late Dr. K.P. Jayasval read Bahapatimitam in the inscriptions and identified him with Pusyamitra, who was then made a contemporary of Khārvela.[4] But R.C. Majumdar[5] questioned the reading, and Rayachaudhuri[6] points out that the identification of Bahasati (Brihaspati-mitra) with Pusyamitra cannot be regarded as final in the absence of more convincing evidence. The Divyavadāna distinguishes between a king named Brihaspati and Pusyamitra. Therefore the invasion of Khārvela may not have taken place in the time of Pusyamitra. However, Demetrius's raids into the Madhyadesa were finally repulsed

---

1. P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. pp.323-324.
2. J.B.O.R.S. XIV, pp.127-28.
3. E.H.I. p.210.
4. J.B.O.R.S. III, pp.425-85; 486-507.
5. I.A. 1919, p.189.
6. P.H.A.I. p,311.

by Vasumitra, the grandson of Puṣyamitra. Demetrius had to hurry back owing to troubles in his home kingdom. Puṣyamitra celebrated his victory by the performance of two horse-sacrifices. The Śuṅga dominion included most of the Madhyadeśa and a part of the Deccan. Devabhūti, the last member of this dynasty was overthrown by his Āmatya Vāsudeva, though the Śuṅga power survived in Central India "till the rise of the so-called Āndhras."

The Kanva dynasty founded by Vāsudeva in C.75 B.C. was short-lived, and was overthrown in C.30 B.C. "Very little is known about the history of Magadha proper after the Kanvas."[1] It is generally held that the last king of the dynasty was overthrown by a king of the Āndhra or Sātavāhana dynasty, and Smith conjectured, without any positive evidence, that "the Āndhras may have controlled the kingdom of Magadha for a time."[2] In view of the absolute lack of any reliable materials it is no use speculating about the history of Magadha, which remains obscure before the rise of the Guptas.

The weakness of divided India was an opportunity to foreign invaders. The Śakas and the Pārthians conquered some parts of the country, but it was Kaṇiṣka I of the

---

1. P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.333.

2. E.H.I. 4th Edn. p.216.

Kuṣāṇa dynasty who built up a vast Indian and extra-Indian empire from his capital at Puruṣapura, modern Peshawar, in the first century A.D.[1]

Kaṇiṣka's Indian dominion in the east extended up to Ghazipur and Gorakhpur districts of Eastern United Provinces.[2] According to a tradition he attacked even Pāṭaliputra and carried off from that city a Buddhist saint, Aśvaghoṣa. Some Kuṣāṇa coins have been found so far east as Orissa. But it is hardly safe to conclude that Magadha and Orissa formed integral parts of the Kuṣāṇa empires. The decline of the empire began in the reign of Vāsudeva, who ruled at least from 152 to 176 A.D.[3]

In the opinion of the late Mr. V.A. Smith, "the period between the extinction of the Kuṣāṇa and Āndhra dynasties about A.D. 220 or 230, and the rise of the imperial Gupta Dynasty nearly a century later, is one of the darkest in the whole range of Indian history."[4] The late Dr. K.P. Jayasval claimed to have disproved the thesis of Smith, and in his work "History of India, 150 A.D. to 350 A.D." he sought to prove that the imperial Hindu revival

---

1. There is keen controversy on the date of Kaṇiṣka. Fleet held that Kaṇiṣka founded the Vikrama era commencing from B.C. 58. Marshall, Sten Konow and Smith held that the rule of Kaṇiṣka began in about 125 A.D.; R.C. Majumdar makes him the founder of Kalacuri era 248-79 A.D. According to Rapson, Oldenburg, Thomas, Bannerji, Jayasval and many other scholars, Kaṇiṣka was the founder of the Śaka era commencing from 78 A.D. We have followed Rapson.

2. P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.395. 3. Ibid, p.399-400.

4. E.H.I. 4th Edn. p.292.

began under the Bhāra-Śivas about a century and a half earlier than Samudra-Gupta.[1] The learned scholar asserted that "if there had been no Bhāra-Śivas there would not have come into existence a Gupta empire and the Gupta Vikramādityas."[2] He makes the Bhāra-Śivas the liberators of the Gangetic valley from the Kuṣāṇa rule, "which aimed at denationalising the Hindus and at the basic destruction of their national system."[3] He also attributed a few coins to the Bhāra-śiva rulers, whom he regarded as Nāgas, and he further held that the Bhāra-Sivas ruled from Kāntipuri. Altekar[4] has conclusively shown that the coins which Jayasval attributed to Bhāra-śiva Nāgas were not issued by Nāga rulers; Bhāra-śiva belonged to the Nāga dynasty of Padmāvatī, which lay just beyond the northern boundary of the Vākāṭaka empire. Bhāra-śiva married his daughter to Gautamīputra, son of Pravarasena I. In another place Altekar[5] showed that there is no conclusive evidence at all that the Bhāra-śivas ousted the Kuṣāṇas, as Vīrasena and Naga, whose coins have been found, were not Nāgas, as Jayasval suggested. Altekar[6] on

---

1. History of India, p.4.
2. Ibid, p.7.
3. Ibid, pp.48-51
4. J.N.S.I. V. p.21f.; p.111f.
5. I.C. XII, p.119f. Bhārata-Kaumudī, p.13f.
6. J.U.P.H.S. XVI, pt.I, p.52f.

the other hand suggested that the Yaudheyas and the Kuṇindas were responsible for the overthrow of the Kuṣāṇa rule in the Punjab and Western United Provinces. Jayasval's theory of an All-India Vākāṭaka empire under Pravarasena and Rudrasena I has also been questioned.[1] As a matter of fact, in spite of laudable efforts of distinguished scholars like Jayasval and Altekar to reconstruct the history of India during this period, it has to be confessed that at least so far as the political history of Magadha is concerned we are still in comparative darkness till we come to the beginnings of the Gupta empire.

---

1. I.C. IX, p.99f.

VII.

In the inscriptions of the imperial Guptas their genealogy begins with Mahārāja Gupta. Allan[1] has identified Gupta of the inscriptions with Śrī Gupta who built the China temple near Mṛigaśikhāvana, "about five hundred years ago", according to I-Tsing. Candra Gupta I, the grandson of Mahārāja Gupta, came to the throne in 319 A.D., and therefore his grandfather Gupta must have flourished in C.270-295 A.D. or 275-300 A.D. If I-Tsing is to be literally believed Mahārāja Śrī Gupta should have flourished in the latter part of the second century A.D., about a century earlier than the approximate period of Mahārāja Gupta. Fleet[2] therefore held that Gupta and Śrī Gupta were two different persons. Allen pointed out that Śrī may not have been an integral part of the name but a mere honorific, and that I-Tsing's statement "about five hundred years ago" should not be taken too literally, and as he relied on "a tradition handed down from ancient times by old men", the Chinese pilgrim's statement, considering the lapse of time, should not stand against the identification "on chronological grounds." The learned scholar pointed out that "another important argument in favour of the identification is that the lands of the patron

---

1. C.C.G.D.B.M. pp. XV-XVI.

2. C.I.I. III, p.8, note 2.

of the Chinese pilgrims must have lain within the Gupta territory, and it is unlikely that we should have had two different rulers in the same territory of the same name within so brief a period; had the Gupta mentioned by I-Tsing been an ancestor of and not identical with Gupta, he must have appeared in some of the genealogical lists."[1]

What was the original home of the imperial Guptas? It has been generally assumed that it was in Magadha.[2] Allan appears to have believed that the China Temple and the

---

1. C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.XV-XVI. R.N. Saletore (J.U.B., XIV, N.S. p.7f) has tried to work out the chronology of I-Tsing's writing of this account about Śrī Gupta in such a way as to diminish the discrepancy of the time alleged to separate Śrī Gupta from "Gupta", and thus he tries to reconcile I-Tsing's account with the proposed dates for Mahārāja Gupta of the inscriptions.

It may be pointed out that the identification proposed, though very likely is not conclusively proved. Raychaudhuri points out that there were two Candra Guptas and Kumāra Guptas ruling over the same territory within a brief period (P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.443). It is quite possible that Śrī Gupta was an ancestor of Gupta and had come into importance in the last quarter of the second century A.D. during the period of the struggle of the Nāgas, Yaudheyas', Kuṇindas' and others against the Kuṣāṇas. He is not mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions because he was not probably a direct ancestor of Samudragupta with whom actually the Gupta inscriptions begin the genealogy, referring to Gupta, Ghaṭotkaca and Candra Gupta only in relation to Samudra Gupta. A learned scholar placed Śrī Gupta in 192 to 224 A.D. (Q.J.M.S. XXIV, p.218f.)

2. P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.443; E.H.I. 4th Edn. p.295; C.C.G.D.B.M. p. XIV; Age of the Imperial Guptas, pp.4-5.

24 villages granted for its maintenance must have lain in the territory of Śrī Gupta, whose kingdom was in Magadha. Recently D.C. Gauguli[1] has come to the conclusion that the original home of the Guptas lay in the Murshidabad district of Bengal. The learned scholar bases his conclusion on a wrong premise that the China Temple built by Śrī Gupta, and near Mṛigaśikhāvana was 40 stages east of Nālandā. R.C. Majumdar[2] has added additional reasons to support this conclusion about the location of the temple and identified the Mṛigaśikhāvana with a Mṛigasthāpana-Stūpa of Varendra whose picture appears in an illustrated Cambridge MS. dated 1015 A.D. The learned scholar, though he was not sure whether the home of the Guptas was in Bengal, felt justified in holding that one Mahārāja Śrī Gupta was ruling in Varendra or near it. But we have shown elsewhere that in the work of I-Tsing, who is reporting the itinerary of Hwni-Lun, the China Temple and Mṛigaśikhāvana are situated west, not east of Nālandā.[3] Therefore Mahārāja Śrī Gupta, whether he was an ancestor of Mahārāja Gupta or identical with him, ruled over territory far west of Nālandā, about 40 stages or so, equal to 228 4/7 miles (1 stage 5 5/7 miles). The original kingdom of the Guptas was therefore in the United Provinces, probably with

---

1. I.H.Q. XIV, p.532f.
2. H.B.R.I. Appendix I, pp.69-70.
3. See infra.

Ayodhyā as the centre. It may have extended up to Mathurā in the west. The Mathurā origin of Samudra Gupta is suggested in the M.M.K.[1] It is important to note that there is no positive evidence at all to include Magadha or any part of Bihar in the Kingdom of the Guptas before Candra Gupta I. As a matter of fact Samudra Gupta is the first Gupta emperor whose inscriptions have been found in Magadha, and who has been positively connected with Pāṭaliputra (Puṣpapura) in the Allahabad pillar-inscription. The Purāṇas refer to the rule of the Guptas, in the early period, over Sāketa, Prayāga and Magadha, but no part of Bengal is mentioned in this connection; D.C.Ganguli's suggestion that "no importance should be attached to the Purāṇas until they are corroborated by authentic evidence" is really begging the very issue; it is no use shunning a clear evidence to hold fast to a pet hypothesis. Ayodhyā remained an important imperial city in the Gupta period. The Gaya inscription of Samudra Gupta[2] was issued from Ayodhyā. Vikramāditya and Bālāditya of Paramārtha's account were certainly Gupta emperors, but they are referred to as Kings of Ayodhyā. It is therefore permissible to assume that Ayodhyā may have

---

1. I.H.I. pp.52-53, Vs. 758-760.

2. C.I.I. III, No. 60, p.255f.

served as the original centre of Guptas' kingdom before the imperial dynasty made Magadha their new home. The Kuṣāṇa influence on the early coins of Samudra Gupta in a way strengthens the suspicion that the early centre of the Guptas' activity lay much farther west, which was directly under Kuṣāṇa rule, than Magadha, which may or may not have been so much politically under the foreigners and culturally dominated by them.[1]

The question who was ruling Magadha during this period cannot be effectively answered. But Smith's suggestion[2] that the Licchavis may have come to occupy Pāṭaliputra may prove to be a correct guess. A Nepal inscription suggests some connection between the Licchavi and Pāṭaliputra (Puspapura).[3] According to Dandekar,[4] as the Purānic traditions refer to the disregard of castes in the time of the rise of the Guptas, and mention the rule of even low castes against the law of Kṣatriya rule, it may strengthen the suspicion that the Licchevis, who were most probably a low caste were ruling

---

1. One learned scholar (N.P.P. XLIV, p.263f.) on the ground of the similarity of the coins, and the monograms on them, of the time of Samudra Gupta with those of the Kuṣāṇas suggested that the Guptas were originally inhabitants of China, and the ruling dynasty belonged to the Kuṣāṇa dynasty. The suggestion though interesting is not convincing.

2. E.H.I. 4th Edn. p.296.

3. I.A. IX, Inscription from Nepal, p.163f. No. 15.

4. Dandekar, op. cit. pp.36-37.

in Magadha at the time when the Guptas were rising in the Gangetic valley. Pargiter has pointed out that in the Purāṇas political changes have been noticed from the point of view of Magadha. The facts that the first Gupta to assume the imperial title of Mahārājādhirāja was Candra Gupta I,[1] who married Kumāradevī, a Licchavi princess; and that Samudra Gupta is referred to as "Licchavidauhitra",[2] and in the Candra Gupta Kumāradevī type of coins the legend "Licchavayah" occurs on the reverse,[3] go to prove that the rise of the Guptas to an imperial position was largely due to the alliance with the Licchavis. It may not be unreasonable to assume that Candra Gupta got the kingdom of Magadha in favour of his son, Samudra Gupta, who may have inherited it by virtue of his being the daughter's son of the Licchavi ruler. The facts that in all inscriptions Samudra Gupta is referred to as "Licchavidauhitra", and on the Candra Gupta-Kumāradevī type of coins there is the image of Kumāradevi, and her name, and that of her own tribe "Licchavayah" are inscribed, proves that Samudra Gupta's position was very much due to his connection with the Licchavis.

---

1. C.I.I. III, No. 1, pp. 15-16.
2. Ibid.
3. C.C.G.D.B.M. p.8.

It appears that Candra Gupta I and Samudra Gupta owed their rise to the Licchavis, and recognised this fact. But later on the Gupta kingdom absorbed the Licchavi state and we do not find any clear reference to their existence in the Gupta period and after. A striking parallel may be sought in the history of Harṣa. He at first took the Maukhari kingdom under his protection in favour of his sister, but later on the Maukhari kingdom was absorbed in the empire of Harṣa. It is very likely that the Licchavi state of Vaiśāli was merged into the Gupta empire in the time of Samudra Gupta, who may have inherited it. Candra Gupta thus came to rule over a territory extending from Sākata in the west to Magadha in the east.[1] Therefore we suggest that the early Guptas rose to power in the Kosala country during the troublous years following the break-up of the Kuṣāṇa empire, and they came into possession of Magadha in the time of Candra Gupta I, who married a Licchavi princess and had a son named Samudra Gupta by her. Thus the Guptas may have followed the Licchavis in Magadha.[2]

---

1. The Puranic verses: "Anugangā-prayāgani ca sāketam Magadhāmś tathā etān janapadān sarvān bhokṣyante Guptavamśajāḥ."

2. The conquest of Magadha by the Licchevis is referred to in the Kaumudīmahotsava, which may have some historical background (K.S. Aiyanger, commemoration volume, p.362). Jayasval regarded the work as historical drama, identified Caṇḍasena with Candra Gupta I and held Samudravarman and Kalyāṇavarman

(contd. next page)

Candra Gupta I was the first imperial ruler of the Gupta dynasty, as is clear from the imperial titles given to him when Gupta and Ghaṭotkaca are called merely "Mahārāja" in the inscriptions. Candra Gupta I ushers in the Gupta age, which in the opinion of Dr. Barnett "is in the annals of

---

Note contd. from previous page)

to be the kings of the Koṭa dynasty (A.B.O.R.I. XII, p.50f.; History of India, pp. 113-120). Many scholars accepted Jayasval's lead. Piers (The Maukharis, pp.14-14) identified the Magadha-Kula of Kaumudīmahotsva with the Maukharis. D.R. Mankad (J.U.B. X, p.141f) tries to find support for the theory from the Allahabad pillar-inscription of Samudra Gupta, and he holds that "the play Kaumudīmahotsva was avowedly written on the occasion of Kalyāṇavarman's accession to the throne and Mudrārākṣasa was written for the occasion of the re-accession of Candra Gupta I." Winternitz (K.S. Aiyangar commemoration volume, p.362) questioned the identity of Caṇḍasana with Candra Gupta, and he also challenged Jayasval's dating of the Kaumudīmahotsava in 340 A.D. In his opinion "neither Caṇḍasana, nor Sundaravarman nor Kalyāṇavarman are names known to history." K.Chattopadhyaya (I.H.Q. XIV, p.582f.) has exposed the hollowness of the theory by showing vital discrepancies between the account given in the inscriptions about Candra Gupta I and Samudra Gupta and the story of the Kaumudīmahotsava. In the opinion of D.C. Sarkar (J.A.H.R.S. XI, p.63f.) "the major part of the matter of this work is fictitious and the identification of Caṇḍasena with Candra Gupta is highly fantastic and even absurd. The identification is invalidated not only by the different forms of the name, viz. Caṇḍasena and Candra Gupta, but also by the plot of the drama. Excepting Caṇḍasena's relations with the Licchavis, everything that has been said in the drama about Caṇḍasena goes against his identification with Candra Gupta I." Jagan Nath (A volume of the Eastern and Indian Studies presented to F.W. Thomas, p.115f.) concludes that "the episode of the Kaumudīmahotsava has no bearing whatsoever on the early Gupta history."

According to Jagan Nath the early Guptas were feudatories of the Sātavāhanas (J.U.P.H.S. XII, p.101f.). But there is no positive evidence in support of this theory. There is nothing to connect the imperial Guptas with some officials where names ended in "gupta" in the Sātavāhana inscriptions (E.I. VII, p.71). Sātavāhana occupation of Magadha for a long

(contd. on next page.)

Classical India what the Periclean age is in the history of Greece. It is really a significant fact that Magadha, in the history of ancient India played the double roles of being both the focus of the country's cultural activities, and the centre of political development - the roles which were played separately by Greece and Rome in ancient Europe. Magadha was thus both the Greece and Rome of ancient India. The Gupta Age marked the efflorescence of the long-evolving Indian culture and political development. Candra Gupta came to the throne in 319 A.D. which is the first year of the Gupta era.[1]

Note contd. from previous page.

time cannot be proved.

On the basis of the Kaliyugarājavṛittānta, which is alleged to be part of Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa, it is held that the Guptas belonged to the dynasty of the Pārvatiyās and were servants of the Āndhras (J.B.R.S. XXX, p.1f.). But the entire verses have been shown by learned scholars to be spurious or suspicious (see infra.).

The imperial Guptas belonged to the Dhāraṇa gotra, as is known from the inscription of Prabhāvatīguptā (E.I. XV, p. 41). Jayasval's theory that the Guptas belonged to a caste lower than the Kṣatriyas may be true. According to Allan (C.C.G.D.B.M. p.XVI), the Guptas may have sprung from the Vaiśya or Śūdra castes. They may have belonged to a section of the Jāṭa community (History of India, pp.115-119). According to the M.M.K. (v.759), the Guptas were Jāṭs from Mathurā. Daśaratha Śarmā (J.B.O.R.S. XX, p.224) shows that "Dhāraṇa" gotra is prevalent among the Jāṭs. This may further strengthen the point that they originally were natives of a country far west of Magadha.

1. There had been a series of speculations on the origins of the Gupta era, but Fleet showed that the first year of the era started in 319 A.D., i.e. to transform a Gupta year into the current Christian era one had to add 319. But certain scholars have re-opened the question. According to R.P. Sundavavarman (J.I.H. XVI, p.132) the Gupta epoch is 284-85 A.D. Govindapai (J.I.H. XI and XII) suggested 272-73 A.D.; H.A. Shah, 200-201

(contd. next page)

We have coins on the reverse of which we have the King offering a ring to the queen, and the legend is Candra Gupta and Kumāradevī or Śrī Kumāradevī, and on the reverse the legend is "Licchavayaḥ". Allan[1] has attributed these coins to Samudra Gupta as commemorating the marriage of Candra Gupta I with Kumāradevī. The reign of Candra Gupta I was

---

Note contd. from previous page.

A.D. (Proc. Tr. A. I. O. C. 1st Session, p. cxxxiii), and D.N. Mookerji (I.H.Q. VII, p.85f.; J.I.H. XX, p.71f., XXI, p.134; XVIII, p.64; XVII, p.293f.) identified the Gupta era with the Vikrama era beginning in 58 B.C. All these suggestions cannot replace Fleet's conclusion. P.C. Sen-gupta (J.A.S.B.L. VII, p.41f) has shown by astronomical calculations that the Gupta era was started from about the 31st Dec. 318 A.D. and therefore zero hour of the Gupta era is equal to 319 A.D. D.N. Mookerji has re-asserted his hypothesis (Bhāratīya vidyā, V.p.96f.)

2. C.C.G.D.B.M. p.8f. Allan (ibid, pp.LXIV-LXVIII) has advanced various weighty grounds to prove that the coins in question cannot be attributed to Candra Gupta I, but were issued by Samudra Gupta in commemoration of the marriage of his father and his own Licchavi descent." Altekar (J.A.S.B.L. III, Num.Sup. XLVII, p.105f.) has adduced many reasons to hold that the coins were issued by Candra Gupta I under a special political situation. It is quite possible to assume that as Candra Gupta owed his position to his wife's family, the Licchavis, he may have been compelled to have the image and name of his wife and of the Licchvi tribe on his coins. The lion was a Licchevi symbol. But it is not easy to meet Allan's question why Samudra Gupta should have issued the standard type, which is a close imitation of Kuṣāṇa coins, when he had the Kumāradevī-Candra Gupta type, fairly original in design, before him.

over before the 5th year of the Gupta era, i.e. 324 A.D., in which year is dated the Nālandā inscription of Samudra Gupta.[1]

From the Allahabad Pillar-inscription of Samudra Gupta it is clear that he was chosen by his father to succeed him.[2] It is possible that his accession was not peaceful and unchallenged.[3]

---

1. A.S.I.A.R. 1927-28, p.138; E.I. XXV. p.50f An inscription dated in the year 9, belonging to the time of Samudra Gupta and issued from Ayodhyā, was found at Gaya, but was declared to be spurious by Fleet (C.I.I. III, No. 60, p.255f.) Another copper-plate belonging to the fifth year has been found at Nālandā, and following Fleet, A.Ghosh (E.I. XXV, p.50f.) held that it was also spurious, as it contained the same grammatical mistakes (the epithets of Samudra Gupta at first in the genitive case and then in the nominative). Fleet had held that some characters of the Gaya plate were comparatively modern. R.D. Bannerki (Age of the Imperial Guptas, pp.37-8) challenged this opinion. The characters of the Nālandā plate show early Gupta forms throughout. R.C. Majumdar (I.C. XI, p.225f.) has discussed the question in all its bearings, and concludes that "we can hardly think of one forger showing such strange inconsistencies or of two forgers at different times or places by chance hiting upon the same curious resemblance and blunders." It may be pointed out that some Vākāṭaka records also contain grammatical mistakes. In the opinion of Bhandarkar (E.I. XXI, p.290 note 1) the characters of the Nālandā plate belong to the time of Samudra Gupta, and one ungrammatical lapse common to both is not enough to stamp either of them as spurious. At any rate it is clear that even if they were not contemporary records, there was a tradition in quite early times that Samudra Gupta was ruling in the 5th year of the era.

2. C.I.I. III, No. I, p.7f. Fleet had taken the inscription to be posthumous; but it is now accepted that this was not the case, as the ll.29-30 refer to the king's fame, not the king, reaching heaven (J.B.O.R.S. Bk, III, No.2, p.259, note 6).

3. From the Allahabad pillar-inscription of Samudra Gupta we learn that his selection by Candra Gupta I was "looked at (with envy) by the faces melancholy (through rejection of

(contd. next page)

He was a great conqueror, and Smith refers to him as the "Indian Napoleon". He brought the entire Gangetic plain under his sway, and led a campaign to the Deccan, in course of which he overran at least the north-eastern part

---

Note contd. from previous page)

themselves) of others of equal birth". In the case of Candra Gupta II who was also selected by his father, no such mention of melancholy faces of persons of equal birth is made. The reference to this in the official inscription of Samudra Gupta by his court poet Harisena certainly suggests that the mention of this fact must have had some motive in an inscription which purports to give an account of Samudra Gupta's activities. It has been pointed out by a learned scholar that the passage which speaks of the war of Samudra Gupta after the election but before his campaign in Āryāvarta is very much damaged, but may refer to his wars with his brothers, who later on repented (A.B.O.R.I. IX, p.84f.). The M.M.K. refers to Samudra Gupta's brother Bhasma, who made himself master of Gauḍa for three days (I.H.I. p.48). We know of a few gold coins bearing the legend "Kāca" on the obverse. According to Allan (C.C.G.D.B.M. p.LXXIV) "the attribution of the coins bearing the name Kāca to Samudra Gupta is no longer doubted." But it may be pointed out that in the entire history of the Gupta coinage there is no instance of any king issuing coins in two different names. Candra Gupta II had another name, Devarāja or Deva Gupta, but we do not find any of his coins bearing this name. One of the meanings of the word "Kāca" is alkaline ashes; so it is possible that the author of M.M.K. used Bhasma for Kāca (J.N.S.I. V, pp.49-50). Smith conjectured that "at the time of the death of Candra Gupta I, his favourite son Samudra was absent from the court and this circumstance had enabled Kāca to seize and hold the throne for a short period". (J.R.A.S. 1897, p.19). It may be pointed out that the Gaya inscriptions of Samudra Gupta, belonging to the 9th year of his reign, had been issued from Ayodhyā. Was it the first capital of Samudra Gupta before his re-conquest of Pāṭaliputra from the hands of his brother and his allies? We have to consider the numismatic objections. The reverse legend "Sarvarājocchettā" on the Kāca coins reminds us of this particular epithet of Samudra Gupta on stone inscriptions of his successors. According to Raychaudhuri (P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.447, note 2) "it is unthinkable that the style 'uprooter of all kings' could have been assumed by a Gupta monarch other than the one who is actually credited with that achievement by a contemporary inscription, before the events presupposed by the expression had actually happened." The learned scholar

(contd. next page)

of the plateau. "No attempt was made to effect the permanent annexation of these southern states." But his conquests in northern India were of an entirely different nature. "The dominion under the direct government of Samudra Gupta in the middle of the 4th Century thus comprised all the most populous and fertile countries of northern India. It extended from the Brahmaputra on the east to the Yamunā and the Chambal on the west; and from the foot of the Himālayas on the north to the Narmadā on the south." The frontier tribes of the Punjab, Rajputana and Malwa in the west offered submission, and so did the kingdoms of Kāmarūpa, Samataṭa and Ḍavāka in the east. Foreign powers like the Kuṣāṇas, the Śakas and Ceylon and other islands solicited peace. He also performed the horse-sacrifice, as is clear from his Nalendā-Gayā, and Vākāṭaka inscriptions. His reign must have been pretty long, as the earliest known date of Candra Gupta II is G.E. 61[1]

Note contd. from previous page.

does not give weight to the fact that in the Poona Plates of Prabhāvatīguptā (E.I. XV, p.41) the epithet "Sarvarājocchettā" is applied to Candra Gupta II. Another point is that on numismatic grounds, Standard Type coins of Samudra Gupta are the earliest in date, being close imitations of Kuṣāna coins. In the manner in which the word "kāca" occurs in the coins, beneath the left arm of the king on the obverse, as names of other Gupta kings on coins, strongly suggests that Kāca was a proper name, not a title. Kāca coins resemble the Standard Type of Samudra Gupta with differences in certain details (C.C.G.D.B.M. p.LXXIV). It may be that Kāca had seen the Standard Type issues of Samudra Gupta and imitated them in the main with certain distinguishing features.

1. E.I. XXI, p.1f.

(380 A.D.). Samudra Gupta may have reigned for even more than fifty years.

From inscriptions we learn that Candra Gupta II, born of Dattadevī, was selected by Samudra Gupta to succeed him. Scholars are now generally agreed that Rāma Gupta, another son of Samudra Gupta II, stepped in between him and Candra Gupta II. The reign of Rāma Gupta was short and inglorious, and he was forced to give way to Candra Gupta II.[1]

Candra Gupta II was the most illustrious member of the dynasty. He crushed the power of the Śaka Kṣatrapas in Malwa and Surāṣṭra, and aspired to the conquest of the world.[2] The seals of Dhruvasvāminī and Ghaṭotkaca Gupta

---

1. Altekar (J.B.O.R.S. XIV, p.223f.; XV, p.134f.) marshalled overwhelming evidence to corroborate the story of the Devi-candraguptam that Candragupta restored the imperial prestige and family honour surrendered by Rāma Gupta to the enemy (Śaka or Khasa), and won the throne and married his brother's wife Dhruvasvāminī. D.R. Bhandarkar (Mālavīya commemoration volume, p.189f.) agreed with the main conclusion, but suggested, wrongly, that Kāca coins should be attributed to Rāma Gupta. K.P. Jayasval endorsed the main theory of Altekar (J.B.O.R.S. XVIII, p.17f.) Sten Konow (J.B.O.R.S. XXIII, p.444f.), N.N. Das Gupta (I.C. IV, p.216f.) Dasavatha Sarma (ibid, V, p.328f.) Mirashi (I.H.Q. X, p.48f.) R.D. Bannerji (op.cit. pp.26-30, and Jagan Nath (N.I.A. II, p.685f.) have generally accepted the theory that Rāma Gupta was overthrown by Candra Gupta, who was originally selected by Samudra Gupta to succeed him. R.C. Majumdar (A New History of the Indian People, VI, pp.161-65) suspends judgment on the historical character of Raina Gupta; H.C. Raychaudhuri (P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.465, note 1) regards the evidence as discrepant and hardly conclusive.

2. C.I.I. III, No. 6, p.36; E.H.I. 4th Edn. pp.307-308; P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.467.

found at Basarh (Vaiśālī)[1] are the earliest evidence to prove Gupta rule in North Bihar. If the Mehrauli iron-pillar-inscription of Candra is attributed to him, we may credit him with the conquests of Bālhika across the seven rivers, and of Vaṅga. He performed a horse sacrifice and assumed the title of Vikramādihya, The prosperity of the empire is illustrated in a large variety of gold, silver and copper coins, which also show originality and freedom from foreign influence. He married his daughter

---

1. A.S.I.A.R. 1903-4, pp.101-7f.

2. C.I.I. III, No. 32, p.141f. Fleet, Basak (I.A.XLVIII, p.98) and Aiyanger (J.I.H. VI, supplement) identified "Candra" of the inscription with Candra Gupta I. This is clearly untenable, because Candra Gupta I had a short reign and there is no evidence to attribute to him such vast conquests. H.P. Sastri identified him with Candravarman of the Susunia inscription, and took Candravarman to be a brother of Naravarman of Mandasor (I.A. XLII, p.217f.). R.D. Bannerji supported this view (E.I. XIV, pp.267-71). H.C. Seth (J.I.H. XVI, p.117f, N.I.A. II, p.625f.) suggests that the inscription records the achievements of Candra Gupta Maurya. But this is very improbable, and equally doubtful is Majumdar's identification of Candra with Kaniṣka (J.R.A.S., 1942, p.14f; J.R.A.S.B.L., 1943, p.179f.), Scholars like Jagen Nath (N.I.A. II, p.685f.), Govardhana Rai Sarma (I.H.Q. XXI, p.202f) Buddha Prakasa (N.P.P. LI, p.152f.) Dandekar (A History of the Guptas, pp.26-28), Dasaratha Sarma (J.G.J.R.I. Vol.I, p.185f), D.C. Sarker (S.I., I. Bk. III, No. 14, p.275, note 2), K.P. Jayasval (J.B.O.R.S. XVIII, p.17f) and others have identified him with Candra Gupta II. Bhandarker (I.C. III, p.511) and Dasaratha Sarma (ibid, V, pp.206-8) have held that the inscription is not posthumous.

Prabhāvatīguptā to the Vakataka maharaja Rudrasena II,[1] and the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hien, who visited India during this period, speaks highly of the benevolent administration and general prosperity prevalent in the kingdom. Tradition credits him with being the patron of nine "jewels", including Kālidāsa. The last known date of Candra Gupta II is the year 93 (= 412 A.D.)[2] and the earliest date of Kumāra Gupta I is 96 G.E.[3] Therefore his reign must have come to an end between 412 and 415 A.D.

Candra Gupta II was succeeded by his son Kumāra Gupta, born of Mahādevī Dhruvasvāminā. He maintained the peace and prosperity of the empire, as is abundantly attested by the existence of a large number of varieties of gold and silver coins. His inscriptions have been found in Northern Bengal, his coins in the Satara district in the West. He performed a horse-sacrifice and assumed the title of Mahendrāditya or Simha Mahendra. But his last years were very much disturbed owing to the rise of the Puṣyamitras and the invasions of the Huṇas. His reign came to an end in 455 A.D.[4]

---

1. J.A.S.B. XX, p.53f. According to Altekar when after the death of Rudrasena II Prabhāvatīguptā was regent Pravarasene II's tutor may have been Kālidāsa, sent by Candra Gupta II, as Kuntaleśvara was probably the Vākāṭaka king, (A New History of the Indian people, VI, pp.111-113, and notes). R.C. Majumdar casts doubts on the identification of "Kuntaleśa" with Pravarasena II, and holds that Prabhāvatī became a widow after the death of her father (J.A.S.B.L. XII, p.1f.)

2. C.I.I., III, No. 5, p.32f. 3. Ibid, No. 10, p.49f.

4. C.C.G.D.B.M. p.XLIV.

CHAPTER I

Death of Kumāra Gupta I and Accession of Puru Gupta.

Last Years of Kumāra Gupta I

The last years of Kumāra Gupta I were not peaceful.[1] This is suggested by the combined evidence of the Bhiṭāri pillar-inscription[2] and Junāgaḍh rock-inscription[3] of Skanda Gupta. Though there is no clear authority to hold that "Kumāra Gupta was killed in battle against the Puṣyamitras,[4] there is a positive hint that the latter had become very powerful.[5] Fleet[6] had placed the Puṣyamitras in the Vindhyan region in Central India. H.R. Deveker[7] read "Yudhyamitra" in place of Puṣyamitra in the Bhiṭāri pillar-inscription, and identified them with the Hūṇas. D.C. Sarkar[8] thinks that "it is not possible to be definite." Jagan Nath[9] has shown that the reading is "Puṣyamitrāṇ", and the Puṣyamitras

---

(1) C.I.M. Vol. I, p.97. (2) C.I.I. III, No. 13, p.55f.

(3) Ibid, No. 14, p.62f. (4) H.N.E.I. p.61.

(5) C.I.I. III, No. 13, p.55f. (6) Ibid.

(7) A.B.O.R.I. I, pt.2, p.99. (8) S.I. p.314, Note 2.

(9) I.H.Q., XXII, pp. 112f.

are known to have existed in Central India in the third century after Christ, and so may have continued to live there in the middle of the fifth century. An attempt to read in the aggressive campaigns of the Puṣyamitras an offensive by a king of Kāmarūpa and descendant of Puṣyavarman against the Gupta empire[1] is hardly worth serious consideration. We agree with Fleet in holding that during the later part of the reign of Kumāra Gupta I, the Puṣyamitras of Central India began to assail the might of the imperial Guptas, and Skanda Gupta as a prince had to wage severe battles against them. The critical years of Kumāra Gupta's reign are substantiated by numismatic evidence. The Bamnala hoard of Gupta coins found in Nimār district in Holker State in Central India contains coins up to the time of Kumāra Gupta I, and together with them a gold-bar has also been found.[2] Altekar[3] has rightly pointed out that "the hoard was buried during the days of Puṣyamitra rebellion", and the gold-bar might have been the result of melting the gold ornaments, quite a common practice in bad days in India up to the present days. Another hoard of gold coins found at Bayana[4] in the State of Bharatpur was also buried in the time of Kumāra Gupta I, probably during the same critical days. Thus it is obvious

---

(1) IHQ XXI p.24 (2) JNSI V, p.135f. (3) Ibid note 1, p.136
(4) Ibid, VIII, pt. 2, p.179f.

that the last years of Kumāra Gupta were not happy.

Besides the Puṣyamitras' rebellion the empire was menaced in the west by the Hūṇas, a savage tribe living in Central Asia. The Junāgarh inscription(1) mentions them as the Mlecchas, and the Bhiṭāri pillar-inscription(2) refers to them as the Hūṇas. According to the account given by Candragarbha Paripṛicchā, (3) it appears that the Yavanas Palhikas and S'akunas, (Kuṣāṇas) fought among themselves and invaded India up to the Ganges, but they were checked by Duḥpra-Sahahasta, son of King Mahendrasena, who crowned him king and himself retired to religious life. The tradition may not be absolutely true but it may contain some truth. Mehendrasena is probably Kumāra Gupta I and Duḥprasahahasta is Skanda Gupta. It appears that Kumāra Gupta may have appointed his son Skanda Gupta to deal with the troubles. When Skanda Gupta defeated his enemies, his father was dead and so he reported to his mother. There is some ground for suspicion that Skanda Gupta defeated the Puṣyamitras when he was a prince, while the final defeat of the Hūṇas followed immediately after his succession to the throne. The reference to the victory over the Hūṇas occurs after it is stated that "with his own arms (he) established the lineage that had been made to totter .... and with

---

(1) C.I.I. III, No.14, p.62f. (2) Ibid. No.13, p. 55f.

(3) Cited by Bu-Ston in 'History of the Buddhism', pp 171-72.

his two arms subjugated the earth."[1] According to Altekar[2] the Beyana hoard of the Gupta gold coins was buried towards the end of the reign of Kumāra Gupta or the beginning of that of Skanda Gupta, when person and property had become unsafe in the United Provinces and Rajputana. Thus the empire immediately before and after the death of Kumāra Gupta I in 455 A.D.[3] fell on evil days, and it is agreed on all hands that Skanda Gupta saved the empire from disruption and extinction.

---

(1) C.I.I. III, No. 13, p.55. (2) JNSI VIII pt. 2, p.179f.

(3) On one of the silver coins of Kumāra Gupta there is the date 136 (G.E.)
(CCGDBM, p. xliv; J.A. 1902, p.266)

The Problem of the Succession after Kumāra Gupta I.

Scholars like Smith,(1) Raichaudhuri,(2) Pannalal,(3) and others hold that Skanda Gupta was the immediate successor of Kumāra Gupta. But the Bhiṭāri seal of Kumāra Gupta(4) makes Puru Gupta(5) the son and successor of Kumāra Gupta.

---

(1) E.H.I. (4th Edn.) p.326. (2) P.H.A.I. (3rd Edn.) p.366

(3) HR. Jan. 1918, p.1f. (4) J.A.S.B. LVIII, p.84f.

(5) Hoernle read 'Pura' on the Bhiṭāri seal (J.A.S.B. LVIII, p.90f); Fleet (I.A. XIX, p.210) concurred with the reading. Smith at first accepted Bühler's reading as 'Sthira' (J.A.S.B. LXIII, p.166), but, later on, Smith (I.A. 1902, p.261, note 13) accepted Hoernle's reading of 'Pura'. In spite of Cunningham's earlier suggestion that the reading on the seal is 'Puru Gupta' (C.M.I. pp.10,13) scholars had so far accepted the name as Pura Gupta. But the recent discovery of the Nālandā seals (M.A.S.I. No. 66, p.64f; E.I. XXVI, pt. V, p.235f) has necessitated a revision of the accepted reading. Kṛiṣṇadeva drew attention to the Nālandā seal of Viṣṇu Gupta (E.I. XXVI, pt. V, p.235 f) where the sign of long ū of 'Pū' occurs. In the plate 3C (see infra), the long ū sign is clear. Therefore the name was written as Pūru in this Seal. In the Nālandā Seal of Narasiṁha Gupta, Pūru is clear (See the plate 3A, line 3). So the reading Pūru Gupta suggested by Kṛiṣṇadeva has been now accepted by scholars (A New History of the Indian People, vol. VI). But in the Nālandā Seal of Kumāra Gupta, of which an excellent reproduction is found in "The Nālandā and its epigraphic material," * Memoir No. 66 of the Archaeological Survey of India, the name is clearly 'Puru'. (See the Plate 3B). In the Bhitāri Seal of Kumāra Gupta in which Hoernle read 'Pura', the correct reading is 'Puru'. An electro facsimile of the Seal, almost as good as the original, is in the British Museum. We examined it and found out that what Hoernle and Fleet read as 'ra' is clearly 'ru'; the hook of medial 'u' below the straight line 'ra' is certainly present, though it is faint. Any magnifying glass would bear this out. Mr. John Allan who kindly examined the facsimile had no difficulty in reading 'ru' instead of 'ra'. It can be seen in the plate 2. The foregoing letter is 'Pu', not Pū. On the coin (CCGDBM, Pl.XXI, 23)

(Contd overleaf)

Thus the problem is who came first, Puru Gupta or Skanda Gupta? Were they identical? Did they ascend the throne simultaneously in different parts of the empire? Some have held that Skanda Gupta died childless and was succeeded by his brother, or half brother, Puru Gupta, followed by Narasimha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta of the Bhiṭāri Seal.(1) Some(2) have identified Puru Gupta with Skanda Gupta, while others(3) have postulated a partition of the empire between Skanda Gupta and Puru Gupta. Basak held that after the death of Kumāra Gupta I the empire was divided into two branches: one consisting of Skanda Gupta, Kumāra Gupta II, Budha Gupta and Bhānu Gupta, and the other of Puru Gupta, Narasimha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta III.(4) Allan(5) also believed in "the existence of another Gupta line parallel to that whose genealogy is established by the Bhiṭāri seal." Majumdar(6) once suspected

---

which is now in the British Museum, there is 'Pu' not Pū (See the Plate 1, No. 6). Thus it appears that both the forms 'Puru' and 'Pūru' were in use. In Monier Williams' Sanskrit Dictionary we have both forms 'Puru' and 'Pūru'. The Vedic literature also knows of both the forms. (Vedic Index, vol. II, pp.3, 11, 12.) We have adopted the form 'Puru Gupta'.

(1) Hoernle, J.A.S.B. LVIII, p.88f; Allan, CCGDBM p. 1-li; H.C. Raichaudhuri, PHAI (3rd edn.) p.392; Smith, EHI. p.329; I.A. XXI, p.237f.

(2) Hoernle, J.R.A.S, 1909, pt. I, p.129; Krisnadeva, E.I. XXVI, p.235f; Bhandarkar, D.R., IC XI p.231f.

(3) E.I. XV p.118; HNEI. pp.62-63.

(4) H.N.E.I. pp.62-63. (5) CCGDBM p. liii.

(6) JASB XVII (N.S.), p249f.

the existence of two branches of the Imperial Gupta family which were ultimately united under Budha Gupta.

The Theory of the Partition of the Empire.

Let us first examine the theory of the partition of the empire between Skanda Gupta and Puru Gupta. R. G. Basak is the champion of this school. He holds that Skanda Gupta was succeeded by Kumāra Gupta II of the Sārnāth inscription[1] dated in the year 154 (G.E.), who was followed by Budha Gupta of the Sārnāth inscription[2] and who should be identified with Budha Gupta of the Eran inscription[3] and Dāmodarpur copper-plates.[4] Budha Gupta was then followed by Bhānu Gupta of the Eran Posthumous stone-pillar-inscription[5] and the fifth Dāmodarpur copper plate[6] (?). The learned scholar then believes in another line of Gupta rulers running from Puru Gupta. He observes "it is evident that a line of Gupta rulers through Pura (?) Gupta ran parallel to that of which the genealogy has been established by the Sārnāth inscriptions and Dāmodarpur plates"[7] He further elaborates his theory, and relying on the authority of the Junāgadh rock-inscription of Skanda Gupta wherein it

(1) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15, p.124f (2) Ibid.

(3) C.I.I. III, No. 19, p. 90f. (4) E.I. XV p. 115f.

(5) C.I.I. III, No. 20, p. 93. (6) E.I. XV p. 115f. The reading is challenged by Dikshit (E.I. XVII p. 193, and note 1)

(7) E.I. XV pp. 118-120.

is said that "whom (Skanda) the Goddess of fortune and splendour of her own accord selected as her husband ... having discarded all the other sons of the king (Sarvān Manujendraputrān)"(1) he observes, "this aspect of political affairs in the beginning of Skanda Gupta's reign corroborates the present writer's view (E. I. XV pp. 119-20) that Pura (?) Gupta was the first king of a new line of rulers (a branch of the imperial dynasty) who was allowed by Skanda Gupta and his successors to enjoy a small kingdom, somewhere in the eastern portion of the Gupta empire, perhaps in South Bihar."(2)

The theory so strongly urged suffers from serious inner contradictions. Budha Gupta of the inscriptions and the Nālandā Seal is evidently a great emperor extending his sway from Bengal to Malwa. He has full imperial titles on the Dāmodarpur plates.(3) Against this it is hardly fair to postulate the continuous existence of a separate and independent kingdom under three or rather four successive sovereigns of four generations,(4) all claiming full imperial titles. Basak realises the difficulty inherent in his thesis and so suggests a peaceful partition of the empire, and that it was respected by the princes of the two royal branches of the family

---

(1) C.I.I. III No. 14, p.62f. (2) H.N.E.I. pp.62-63.

(3) E.I. XV p.114. (4) J.A.S.B. NIII, p.84f; E.I. XXVI pt. V, p.255f.

for a long time. He observes, "the rulers of the branch line through Skanda Gupta seem to have been more powerful than those belonging to the other branch, for in Budha Gupta's reign the Gupta power was in full height and splendour. It may be believed that the rulers of the stronger branch may by courtesy and in good-~~will~~ will have suffered the other branch to rule somewhere in the eastern portion of the Gupta empire - perhaps in South Bihar where only we have the evidence of Narasimha Gupta's (Bālāditya's) activity, e.g. building the famous temple in Nālandā. The other parts of the Gupta empire including North Bengal and perhaps North Bihar also continued under the sovereignty of the other or stronger branch".(1) To even a casual reader it would be obvious that the arguments, quoted above, are hedged by numerous 'perhaps' and improbable assumptions, unsupported by any evidence. Basak's pet theory of the partition of the empire has led him into a labyrinth of irreconcilable situations, all easily assumed but not squarely met. Codrington(2) who appears to believe in the division of the empire, finds it difficult to locate the rule of Puru Gupta, Narasimha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta III 'considering the evidence of the power of Budha Gupta'. It is very unlikely that the stronger branch would tolerate the existence of a weak

---

(1) E.I. XV, pp. 119-20.

(2) Ancient India-from the earliest times to the Gupta rule, p57 ff.

and independent kingdom for generations to follow, particularly in South Bihar (Magadha) which was the centre of the far flung empire. Bhattasali pricks the bubble when he observes that "it is easy to see that the supposition does not meet the situation and such a courtesy to a branch line whose origin was by revolt is, to say the least, impolitic"(1) The view that Puru Gupta and his successors were inferior rulers of a small kingdom in South Bihar is vitally assailed by the evidence of the find-spots and the contents of the Bhitari and Nālandā Seals where all these rulers are given customary imperial titles wont to the imperial Guptas. The numismatic evidence suggests that the rule of Narasimha Gupta and his successors prevailed in Bengal.(2) They were, therefore, ruling over a pretty large kingdom extending from at least Eastern U.P. in the west to Bengal in the east and were certainly not petty rulers of a small kingdom in South Bihar, ruling by the sufferance of the members of the stronger branch of Skanda Gupta, as Basak would lead us to believe. Moreover, he gives no reason for holding the close relationship that he assumes between Skanda Gupta, Kumāra Gupta II and Budha Gupta. Really that is the vital part of this theory of the division of the empire between two branches. But it should be rejected now in view of the discovery of the Nālandā Seal of Budha Gupta wherein he is found to be a son

---

(1) Quoted by R. C. Majumdar in J.A.S.B. (N.S) XVII p249f

(2) Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal -B.C. Sen, p.222, Note 1.

of Puru Gupta.[1] So Budha Gupta did not belong to a line different from that of Puru Gupta. As a matter of fact we have no basis to believe in the actual and formal partition of the empire and the continuous existence of two rival branches of unequal strength for many generations. It is no use postulating the theory of the division of the empire, when instead of solving the outstanding problems, it creates more of these.

---

(1) M.A.S.I. No. 66, p. 64; See infra [illegible] p. .

Are Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta identical?

The conjecture that Skanda Gupta and Puru Gupta were identical was first suggested by Hoernle,[1] suspected by R. C. Majumder,[2] and recently championed by Kṛiṣṇadeva.[3] The arguments advanced to support this theory may be summed up as follows:- (a) While according to the Bhiṭārī Seal[4] Puru Gupta appears to be the son and immediate successor of Kumāra Gupta I, according to the Bhiṭārī pillar-inscription[5] Skanda Gupta is said to succeed Kumāra Gupta I: both Skanda Gupta and Puru Gupta are spoken of as 'tatpādānudhyātaḥ' in relation to Kumāra Gupta in the Bihar stone-pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta(?)[6] and the Bhiṭārī Seal of Kumāra Gupta[7] respectively; therefore Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta are identical: (b) Paramārtha's Vikramāditya, the patron of Vasubandhu has been identified with Skanda Gupta by TakaKusu,[8] and his crown prince was Bālāditya, who is no other than Narasiṁha Gupta, son of Puru

(1) J.R.A.S. 1909, pt. I, p.129. (2) I.A. XLVII p. 161f; J.A.S.B. (N.S.) XVII p.249f.

(3) E.I. XXVI pt. V, p. 235f.

(4) J.A.S.B. LVIII p. 88f.

(5) C.I.I. III No. 13, p. 55f.

(6) Ibid No. 12, p. 51f. (The reading of Skanda Gupta in the inscription is incorrect (See infra)

(7) J.A.S.B. LVIII p. 88f.

(8) J.R.A.S. 1905, p. 33f.

Gupta;(1) therefore Skanda Gupta is the same person as Puru Gupta;(2) (c) According to the Ārya-manju-S'rī-mūlakalpa Mahendra (= Kumāra Gupta I) was succeeded by Sakāra (= Skanda Gupta), who had more than one name, and he was in turn followed by Bāla (= Bālāditya);(3) Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya succeeded Puru Gupta;(4) therefore Skanda Gupta is the same person as Puru Gupta with a different name;(5) (d) it is likely that Skanda Gupta came to be known as Puru Gupta, meaning 'the great Gupta' in recognition of the unique services that he rendered to his family by inflicting a crushing defeat on the Hūṇas who had threatened the stability of the Gupta empire;(6) (e) "The coins of Pura (?) Gupta and Skanda Gupta are certainly contemporaneous and the coins which are now assigned to Pura Gupta were previously attributed to Skanda Gupta;(7) it is no doubt true that there are coins bearing the legend 'Puru' and 'Śrī Vikramaḥ,' but it is not impossible for a king to issue coins bearing the legends of his different names, as Kāca coins have been attributed to

---

(1) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.88f.

(2) J.R.A.S. 1909, pt. I, p.129; E.I. XXVI, p.235f.

(3) I.H.I. p.48; Śāstrī's edn. pp.628-29

(4) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.88f.

(5) E.I. XXVI pp.235f.

(6) ibid.

(7) I.A. XLVII, p.161f.

Samudra Gupta;[1] therefore so far as numismatic considerations are concerned there is no ground for dismissing offhand the theory that Pura (?) Gupta and Skanda Gupta are identical;[2] (f) there is no coin of Puru Gupta, as the only coin attributed to contain the legend of 'Pura' is of Budha Gupta and the legend is 'Budha'.[3]

The arguments arranged above are interesting, though deceptive. A critical analysis of the data available to us exposes the utter hollowness of the theory. The Ārya-manjuśrī-mūla-Kalpa is a late mediaeval work, and is a Buddhist religious book, 'a holy book of the Buddhists and deserves to be placed along with the Vedas';[4] certainly we cannot reconstruct the history of ancient India by relying literally on the Vedas. The Buddhist work, mentioned above, contains 56 chapters, out of which only one (55rd chapter) appears to give historical traditions. The account is very cryptic, dynasties are spread over in a confused way, rulers are more often that not mentioned by the initial letter of their name or *birudas*, and chronology is almost irreparably confused. It cannot serve as a dependable basis for the reconstruction of the history of India. According to the Ārya-manju-śrī-mūla-Kalpa, Samudra was succeeded by Vikrama

---

(1) C.Ç.G.D.B.M. p. IXXIV. (2) J.A.S.B. (N.S.) XVII p.249f.
(3) I.C.I. p.691. (4) Śāstri's Edition, preface p.2.

(Candra Gupta II), and Sakāra (Skanda Gupta) by his younger brother (?) (Anuja) Bāla (Bālāditya).[1] Scholars[2] now place Rāma Gupta between Samudra Gupta and Candra Gupta II; and Bālāditya, who is identical with Narasiṁha Gupta of the Bhiṭārī Seal, is not the younger brother (Anuja) of Skanda Gupta, but the son of Puru Gupta[3] The contention that Skanda Gupta was called Puru Gupta after his victory over the Hūṇas[4] is very improbable. If it was so, then Skanda Gupta must have been popularly known as Puru Gupta and officially recognised as such in his time; Otherwise his successors would not have mentioned him as Puru Gupta on their Seals[5] (if Puru Gupta was another name of Skanda Gupta). It is important to bear in mind that in all the inscriptions of the time of Skanda Gupta well distributed in the period of his reign[6] we have his name Skanda Gupta and in none of those inscriptions is even casually the other alloged name 'Puru Gupta' mentioned. We know that Candra Gupta II had another name Deva Gupta[7] and we find

---

(1) I.H.I. p.48; Śāstri's edn. pp.628-29.

(2) J.B.O.R.S. XIV, p.223f; ibid XVIII p.17f; Age of the Imperial Gupta's p.26f.

(3) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.88f.

(4) E.I. XXVI p.235f.

(5) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.88f; M.A.S.I. No. 66, p.64f. E.I. XXVI p.235f.

(6) C.I.I. III No.14 (G.E. 136-138) p.62f; No.15 (G.E. 141) p.66f; No.16, (G.E.146) p.71f; No.13 (of early years) p.55f.

(7) E.I. XV p.39f.

him referred to as 'Devaraja' in the Sāncī inscription.(1) On the gold and silver coins of Skanda Gupta, issued early or later in his reign, only Skanda is mentioned. Thus, there is absolutely no shred of evidence to suggest that Skanda Gupta was known as Puru Gupta in his life, and therefore, it is certainly more than improbable that his successors would give up his well-known name and refer to him as Puru Gupta, which would confuse the people and the administration, a thing which must have been far away from their mind; rather they would have liked to mention their glorious ancestor by the name (Skanda) which must have been loved by the people because of Skanda Gupta's grand victories over his enemies. It may be further pointed out that the Ārya-manju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa which says that Skanda (Sakāra) had many names, mentions the other name as Devarāja.(2) If his name had been Puru Gupta, which he is alleged to have assumed after his victory over the Hūṇas, and in which name he issued coins and his successors issued seals, then the author of the Buddhist treatise should have mentioned Puru Gupta rather than Devarāja as the second name of Skanda Gupta.

Puru Gupta in all the seals of his successors is referred to as 'pādānudhyātaḥ' in relation to Kumāra Gupta.

---

(1) C.I.I. III, p.29, Devarāja which Fleet took to be the name of the officer of Candra Gupta II, is certainly another name of Candra Gupta II.

(2) I.H.I. p.33.

In the Bhiṭāri stone-pillar-inscription of Skanda Gupta[1] this technical phrase is absent in the description of the relationship between Skanda Gupta and Kumāra Gupta. Fleet[2] read the name Skanda Gupta immediately after Kumāra Gupta in the Bihar stone-pillar-inscription, and so it has been held that Skanda Gupta is referred to as 'Padānudhyātaḥ' in relation to Kumāra Gupta I. R. C. Majumdar[3] has recently challenged the reading and we have examined the facsimile and are convinced that there is no basis to read Skanda Gupta after Kumāra Gupta in the inscription.[4] Therefore, on the basis of the Bihar stone-pillar-inscription to believe that both Skanda Gupta and Puru Gupta are described as 'Pādānudhyātaḥ' in relation to Kumāra Gupta I, and therefore they are identical, is delusive.

Arguments based on numismatic considerations to support the identification of Skanda Gupta and Puru Gupta are not strictly relevant. The contemporaneity and similarity of

---

(1) C.I.I. III No. 13 p.55f.
(2) Ibid No. 13 p.49f and the plate.
(3) I.C. X p.170f.
(4) See infra.

the coins of Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta do not prove that they are the same person. Coins of Kāca are similar to those of Samudra Gupta with the similar legend 'Sarvarājocchettā' on the reverse,(1) and Allan(2) has attributed these coins to Samudra Gupta. But scholars(3) are not unanimous on the point, and the separate existence of Kāca is not beyond the realm of possibility. Naturally, therefore, it is not fair, relying on the alleged identification of Kāca with Samudra Gupta, to regard Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta as the same person, issuing coins in different names. The hypothesis is mortally affected by the existence of a coin of Puru Gupta with a distinct āditya title 'Śrī Vikramah',(4) Recently scholars have challenged the reading of 'Pura' on the coin by Allan. S. K. Cakravarty(5) reads the first letter below the arm on the obverse as 'Bu' and the second letter as 'Dha', and hence attributes the coin to Budha Gupta. Kṛṣṇadeva(6) echoes

---

(1) C.C.D.D.B.M. p.15.

(2) ibid pp.LXXIV, CX.

(3) Banerji, R.D. Age of the Imperial Guptas p.220; I.H.Q. XXII, p.60, According to the Ārya-mañju-śrī-mūla-kalpa, Samudra Gupta's younger brother "Bhasma will have government of Gauḍa for three days" (I.H.Q.p.48). He has been identified with Kāca (J.H.Q.XXII p.60). S.C.Sarkar J.B.O.R.S.XXVII p.352f) identifies Kās'a (of the Tibetan Sources) with Kāca of the coins.

(4) C.C.G.D.B.M. pl. XXXI, 23.

(5) I.C.I. p.692.

(6) E.I. XXVI, pt.V, p.235f.

the same opinion. D. C. Sarkar[1] thinks that "Cakravarty may be right in reading Dudha". R. C. Majumdar[2] is disposed to agree with Cakravarty but observes that "the question cannot be finally decided till clear specimens of this type of coins are available". N. N. Das Gupta[3] points out that the second letter is more like 'ra' than 'dha'. We have examined the coin, which is now in the British Museum. The second letter in question can never be 'Dha' as the semi-circle of 'Dha' attached to the straight line is inward in the epigraphy of the period (D), but on the coin if there is any faint trace of the semi-circle it is outward.[4] Mr. J. Allan very kindly re-examined the coin for me, and he was emphatically of the opinion that the letter cannot be 'Dha', and is certainly 'Ra'. The first letter because of its close top[5] may be read as 'Bu', but 'Bura' can never be a proper name. Therefore, the correct reading is, as Allan read it, Pura. Examples of closed 'pa' are not rare in contemporary epigraphy. In the second line of the Nālandā seal of Vishnu Gupta there is closed-topped 'Pu'[6]

---

(1) S.I. Vol.I. p.332 Note I.

(2) A New History of Indian People. VI p.186, Note I.

(3) B.C. Law Volume I. p.617f.

(4) Plate I No. 6

(5) Ibid

(6) Plate 3c.

just like 'Pu' on the coin. Therefore we feel to be on surer grounds to read 'Pura' on the coin. The engraving of the letters had been carelessly done, and it may be that the hook below 'Ra' to make it 'Ru' was wrongly or inadvertently added as a side stroke on the top of 'Ra'. It may be further pointed out that the existence of Puru Gupta is not dependent upon a single coin. R. D. Banerji points out that "Rai Bahadur Jaban, the well known banker and coin collector of Patna, possessed two gold coins on which the name Pura is very distinct. They were found in the Gaya district".(1) Thus it is clear that there was one Puru Gupta who had the title of Śrī Vikrama or Vikramāditya, and he issued coins. It is true that on some silver coins(2) Skanda Gupta is described as Vikramāditya, but no gold coin of his has been discovered with this Āditya title, while all the coins attributed by Allan to Puru Gupta have the reverse legend "Śrī Vikrama"(3) It is quite safe to hold that the specific title of Skanda Gupta was Kramāditya, while that of Puru Gupta was Śrī Vikrama (or Vikramāditya). There appears to be some force in Banerji's contention that "in the coinage of the imperial Gupta dynasty there is not a single instance in which the two personal names of the same emperor have been

---

(1) A.S.O.R.I, I. p.97f. (2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.120

(3) ibid p.134

used on his coinage."[1] Candra Gupta II had the second name Deva Gupta[2] or Devarāja,[3] but "this name has never been used on the coinage of this king."[4] On a critical examination of the numismatic evidence, it is clear that Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta were two kings who issued gold coins with their distinctive names and Āditya titles.

Takakusu's identification of Paramārtha's Vikramāditya of Ayodhyā, the patron of Vasubandhu, with Skanda Gupta[5] is not above criticism. The date of Vasubandhu is still a matter of controversy[6] and so is the identification of Vikramāditya. Smith[7] identified him with Samudra Gupta, Pathak[8] with Kumāra Gupta I, Bhandarkar[9] and Salotore[10] with Candra Gupta II Vikramāditya. Allan[11] rightly identified this Vikramāditya with Puru Gupta who was the father of Bālāditya (Narasimha Gupta), and who issued coins with

---

(1) A.B.O.R.I. I p.67f.

(2) E.I. XV p.41

(3) C.I.I. III p.29

(4) Age of the Imperial Guptas, p.220

(5) J.R.A.S. 1905, p.33f.

(6) Takakusu (ibid) put it between 420-500 A.D; Smith took it to be the 4th Century A.D. (E.H.I. pp.346-47)

(7) E.H.I. p.346-47

(8) J.B.B.R.A.S.XXIII p.196f.

(9) I.A. XLI p.1f

(10) Life in the Gupta Age, pp.27-29

(11) C.C.C.D.B.M. pp.L-LI

the legend "Śrī Vikrama". Therefore we have to reject the identification proposed by Takakusu, and with it goes the suggestion, apparently based on it, that Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta are identical. The identification when proposed by Hoernle puzzled him himself and he was at a loss 'how to account for the two names of the same person:'(1) Earlier he had rightly pointed out that 'it seems hardly probable that in such genealogies the same person would be called by different names'(2) All this discussion leads to the inevitable rejection of the theory of the identity of Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta: they were different persons.

---

(1) J.R.A.S. 1909, p.129 (2) J.A.S.B. LVIII, p.93

The theory of
N. K. Bhattasāli

N. K. Bhattasāli[1] after rejecting the theory of the partition of the empire between the two rival families of Skanda Gupta and Puru Gupta, hazarded a theory still more improbable. According to him Skanda Gupta was succeeded by Kumāra Gupta of the Sāmāth inscription, followed by Budha Gupta in about 470 A.D. The next king was Bhānu Gupta who came to the throne in about 495 A.D, and fought Mihirakula and died with Goparāja of the Eran inscription of the (Gupta) year 191. Bhānu Gupta was followed by Puru Gupta, who was a child of four or five when his father Kumāra Gupta died, and Puru Gupta must have been very old when he succeeded Bhānu Gupta and so he must have died soon after his accession and was followed by Narasimha Gupta in about 515 A.D. This theory is beset with serious and obvious objections and it is hardly possible for any one to presume with the learned scholar that "Puru Gupta patiently waited for a chance to ascend the throne, not available till fifty years after the death of his father at the best computation, in the meanwhile watching the successive reigns of at least four kings - Skanda, Kumara, Budha and Bhānu!"[2]

(1) E.I. XVIII p.81f

Kaliyngarājavṛttānta and the history of the Guptas

Some scholars have recently tried to rebuild the dynastic history of the Imperial Guptas on the basis of the Kaliyngarā-javṛttānta, said to belong to the Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa. It is alleged to contain verses which tell us a history of the Gupta period. The verses were first introduced to the learned world by Mr. T.S. Nārāyaṇa Śāstri, and Mr. Krishnamacāriar incorporated them in his "Classical Sanskrit literature." B. Bhaṭṭācārya (1) gave an English translation of some of the important extracts. According to this work, the Guptas belonged to a Pāraśavatiyā caste, and Candra Gupta served under an Āndhra king of Magadha. Candra Gupta married Kumāradevī, the daughter of the king of Nepal, and also a licchavī girl, sister of the queen of Candra Śrī, the Āndhra king. Candra Gupta murdered Candra Śrī and became a regent for the son of Candra Śrī; but the prince was also murdered, and Candra Gupta became the king of Magadha and associated his son Kāca in the government. Samudra Gupta, a son by Kumāradevī, killed Candra Gupta and came to be known as Aśokāditya. He was succeeded by Candra Gupta Vikramāditya who ruled for 36 years, and was followed by Kumāra Gupta Mahendrāditya. He was succeeded by Skanda Gupta Parakramāditya, who humbled the pride of the Hūṇas and destroyed Puṣyamitra. He was followed

(1) J.B.R.S. XXX P.1.ff.

by Narasiṁha Gupta Bālāditya, the nephew of Skanda Gupta, who appointed him king while he was himself alive. Narasimha Gupta was the son of Sthira Gupta Prakāś'āditya and ruled for 20 years. Kumāra Gupta Kramāditya followed him, and won victories against the Hūṇas and Īśānavarman.

The account is on many important points at variance with the known history of the Guptas. The Āndhra rule over Magadha could have hardly existed down to the 4th century A.D. The story of the murder of Candra Gupta by Samudra Gupta is clearly opposed to contemporary epigraphy from which we learn that Samudra Gupta was a favourite son of Candra Gupta. The title 'Aś'okāditya' for Samudra Gupta is unknown from coins and inscriptions. There is no other evidence to suggest that Skanda Gupta abdicated the throne in favour of his nephew Narasiṁha Gupta Bālāditya. There is no other authority to make the Guptas belong to a Pāṛavatiyā dynasty.

There has been a lively discussion among the learned scholars on the authenticity of these verses. The account is in many respects full of so many imponderables that it at once excites suspicion. The mention of Sthira Gupta Prakāsāditya as father of Narasiṁha Gupta Bālāditya clearly shows that the writer was aware of the discovery of the Bhitārī seal in which Bühler and Smith first read Sthira for Puru, and the coins of Prakāś'āditya were attributed to him. The mention of Kumāra Gupta and Īś'ānavarman reminds us of the Aphsad inscription of

Ādityasena. The work therefore appears to be a late forgery, sometime in the last decade of the 19th century. Scholars like R. C. Majumdar[1] D. C. Sarkar[2] Jagan Nath[3] and D. R. Mankad[4] after thoroughly discussing the verses in question and their source, have come to the conclusion that they are forged and unreliable. Therefore no serious consideration could be given to the opinion of Budha Prakāśa, who, relying on the Kalinganarājavṛttānta observed that "Skanda Gupta gave his brother Puru Gupta some territory in eastern Bihar to govern and by reason of brotherly feeling allowed him the right to issue coins and assume imperial titles"[5] The situation imagined is very unlikely in any ruling dynasty, and now when the very foundations of the hypothesis have been shown to be unreal, the theory should be outright rejected. The discovery of the Nālandā seal of Budha Gupta[6] necessitates the placing of Budha Gupta in the dynasty of the Imperial Guptas.

---

(1) I.H.Q. XX p.345f. (2) J.N.S.I. VI p.34.

(3) J.B.R.S. XXXI p.30f. (4) Ibid, XXXII p.319f.

(5) A.B.O.R.I. XXVII p.134f. (6) M.A.S.I. No. 66 p.64.

The order of succession proposed by Panna Lal and Others.

Finally, we have to examine the theory - holding the field to-day - that Kumāra Gupta I was immediately succeeded by Skanda Gupta and he was followed, in turn, by Puru Gupta, Narasimha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta of the Bhitārī Seal.(1) Panna Lal(2) on the authority of the correct reading of the date on a silver coin, held that Skanda Gupta's reign ended in 467 A.D. and he was succeeded by Puru Gupta (467-469), followed by Narasimha Gupta (469-75), Kumāra Gupta II (473-77 A.D., identified with the Kumāra Gupta of the Sārnāth inscriptions,(3) and Budha Gupta. He also placed Prakās'āditya, Dvādas'āditya and Chaturkaca between Skanda Gupta and Budha Gupta. Majumdar also appears to have independently come to the same conclusion about the chronology and the order of succession after Kumāra Gupta I.(4) Hoernle's(5) earlier view that "the probability is that Puru (?) Gupta is a younger brother of Skanda Gupta, and succeeded the latter, who died without an issue," is supported by Smith,(6) according to whom the best solution

(1) J.A.S.B.LVIII p.84f. (2) M.R. Jan.1918, p.1f.

(3) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15, p.124f (4) J.A.S.B. XVII (N.S) p.249f; I.A. XLVI p.161f.

(5) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.93

(6) I.A. XXX p.257f.

of the difficulty is "to assume that Skanda Gupta by reason of being childless is omitted from the genealogy of the Bhitari Seal and that he was succeeded by his brother Pura(?) Gupta." Later on he wholly accepted[1] the order of succession proposed by Panna Lal and Majumdar. Allen[2] also subscribes to the view that Skanda Gupta "left no heir and was succeeded by his brother Pura (?) Gupta." H. C. Raychaudhuri[3] is a strong champion of this theory, and B. G. Sen[4] appears to be sure that "amidst this array of rather intricate speculations Panna Lal's suggestion that Pura (?) Gupta's line immediately succeeded Skanda Gupta seems to be in best accord with the available materials in regard to Kumāra Gupta's successors." R. D. Banerji[5] is in general agreement with this theory with the slight modification that "during the third Hūṇa war (?) Pura (?) Gupta had set himself up as a rival emperor in Magadha and thus became the cause of Skanda Gupta's defeat and death." R. N. Dandekar[6] also subscribes to the view of Panna Lal and others.

The theory, though supported by eminent indologists, cannot stand in view of recent additions to our knowledge,

---

(1) E.H.I. (4th edn) p.329 (2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p. XLIX

(3) P.H.A.I. (3rd edn) pp. 594-96.

(4) Sen. O.C. p.222.

(5) Banerji R.D. O.C. p.52. (6) R.N. Dandekar - A History of the Guptas pp.128-130.

and also the inherent contradiction involved in the acceptance of the theory. The most serious objection against this theory is that between A.D. 467, the last year of Skanda Gupta, and A.D. 475-76, the first known year of Budha Gupta, we are asked by the learned scholars to place the reigns of the three kings of three generations - Puru Gupta, Narasimha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta of the Sārnāth inscription and the Bhitāri Seal. The situation imagined is certainly abnormal but Raychaudhuri asserts that it is by no means unique in ancient Indian dynasties. He points out that three Eastern Cālukya kings ruled for 8 years, and six Kāshmir kings for 6 years.(1) The analogy may not be absolutely relevant. The examples cited are from small and local kingdoms, but it is difficult to explain the continued existence of the fairly extensive Gupta empire down to Budha Gupta if change of succession was so rapid. Moreover the learned scholar has given no explanation to justify such short reigns in the Gupta history famous for its long reigns. The Nālandā Seal of Viṣṇu Gupta(2) will add another reign to the brief period. The Seal makes Viṣṇu Gupta son and successor of Kumāra Gupta of the Bhitāri Seal.(3) Naturally, therefore, the degree of probability in the correctness of the hypothesis is further lessened. N. N. Das Gupta(4) tries to stretch the period by a few years by

---

(1) P.H.A.I. (3rd edn) p.477 (2) E.I. XXVI pl.V p.235f.
(3) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.84f. (4) B.C. Law Volume I, p.617f.

assuming that Budha Gupta might have come to the throne later than the year 167 (G.E. 476 A.D.) as he is mentioned as 'Mahārāja' only in the Sārnāth inscription,(1) and so he might have been a mere governor then, and might have come to throne as a paramount ruler before 163 G.E. as in the Dāmodarpur copper plate inscription (2) he is given paramount titles. This modification hardly adds more than five years to the period alleged to be covered by Puru Gupta, Narasimha Gupta, Kumāra Gupta and Viṣṇu Gupta. This does not improve the situation. Moreover the mention of the title 'Mahārāja' to Budha Gupta in the Sārnāth inscription does not warrant the assumption that he was then not the imperial ruler. The phrase "when the earth was being ruled by Budha Gupta" certainly suggests that he was already a king. In the Mankuwar stone-image inscriptions dated in G.E. 129, Kumāra Gupta I is referred to as mere "Mahārāja", and this led Fleet to suspect that the use of the feudatory title 'Mahārāja' may point to a reduction in the status of Kumāra Gupta I.(3) But the suspicion was unwarranted as in the second Dāmodarpur copper-plate dated in the year 128(4) or 129,(5) Kumāra Gupta is referred to by full imperial titles. The imperial Pratīhāra rulers Bhoja and Mahendrapāla

---

(1) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15 p.124f (2) E.I. XV p.114

(3) C.I.I. III p.46 (4) E.I. XV p.114

(5) Ibid XVII p.193

are referred to by the epithet 'Mahārāja' in the Dighwa-Dubauli plate.(1) Moreover in the Eran stone inscription(2) dated in G.E. 165, Budha Gupta is given no imperial title at all while in the third Nūnodarpur copper-plate dated in G.E. 163(3) he is referred to with full imperial titles. Therefore, there is no ground for assuming that Budha Gupta was not on the throne in the current Gupta year 157, (Samatikrānta), the date of the Sārnāth inscription.(4) An attempt to escape from the difficulty inherent in the acceptance of the pot theory is to assume(5) that Viṣṇu Gupta did not precede but rather followed Budha Gupta, who succeeded Kumāra Gupta II, the father of Viṣṇu Gupta. There is no reason to presume a break in the line. Therefore, if one has to persist in the truth of the theory then he should place Puru Gupta, his son Narasimha Gupta, his son Kumāra Gupta and the latter's son Viṣṇu Gupta in the short period, 467-475-76 A.D: and, then, we are asked to place 'Dvādaśāditya, Prakāś'āditya and Chaṭoṭkaca Gupta(6) in this too brief a period.

In view of the lack of any positive evidence, it is not safe to assume a theory which cramps four kings (and probably

---

(1) I.A. XV p.105f. (2) C.I.I. III, p.90f.

(3) E.I. XV, p.114. (4) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15 p.124f

(5) D.C. Law Volume I, p.617f. I.H.Q. XX p.110f. (6) M.R. Jan. 1918, p.1f.

more) of four generations within 8 or 9 years. The order of succession proposed by learned scholars is vitally affected by the recent discovery of the Nālandā Seals, and R. C. Majumdar, one of the pioneers of the theory, is in a revisionist's mood. Any further persistence in the theory leads to serious incongruities even on the assumption of the most favourable computations. Kumāra Gupta I, who ruled for more than forty years, must have died at an old age, say about seventy, in 455 A.D. His son Puru Gupta could have been born by C. 410 A.D. when Kumāra Gupta would have been twenty five years old. Therefore if Puru Gupta succeeded Skanda Gupta in 467 A.D. as held by scholars, then he (Puru Gupta) was 57 years old; Narasimha Gupta could have been 34 years old in 460 A.D., when he is regarded as having come to the throne; his son Kumāra Gupta II could not have been more than a boy of thirteen years old in 473 A.D. when he came to the throne, and we are to place the reign of Vigṇu Gupta, his son, before 476 A.D. the first known year of Budha Gupta's reign: certainly a boy of thirteen (Kumāra Gupta) could not leave a son to succeed him. It may be pointed out that this calculation is ever generous and given even most favourable dates, exposes the physical impossibility of the theory. R. D. Banerji[1] who accepted the theory, under discussion, was constrained to observe that "Kumāra Gupta II must have been

---

(1) Banerji O.C. p.54

an infant in arms when he was placed on the throne," and "there is no evidence in favour of the existence of a third Kumāra Gupta in addition to the sons of Candra Gupta II and Narasimha Gupta".(1) But now as Viṣṇu Gupta is to be placed after Kumāra Gupta, it is certainly absurd to imagine "an infant in arms" leaving a son to succeed him "after two years." A. Ghosh(2) who has recently reasserted the pot theory confesses that "this is indeed a remarkable historical phenomenon," and to avoid the difficulty he suggests that "it is more likely that Viṣṇu Gupta followed and not preceded Budha Gupta." But this is hardly acceptable. The coins of Viṣṇu Gupta closely follow the weight and style, and quality of gold of the coins of Kumāra Gupta II. It is more reasonable to hold, unless there is some positive evidence to the contrary, that Viṣṇu Gupta succeeded his father Kumāra Gupta, rather than his grand-uncle Budha Gupta, the son of Puru Gupta. A. Banerji hazards an equally improbable suggestion, unsupported by any shred of evidence, to explain away the contradiction involved in the assumption of the theory proposed by Panna Lal. Banerji(3) conjectures that Puru Gupta died like Azim-us-Shan and was succeeded by Narasimha Gupta, who himself probably died for an ambitious brother in the person of Budha Gupta, while his adherents declared his son emperor, who is no other than Kumāra Gupta of the Sārnāth

---

(1) Ibid p.66 (2) I.H.Q. XX p.119f.

(3) J.U.P.H.S. XVII pt. II. p.54f.

inscription, and Seals. The analogy from the Mughal history has been carried too far, and the suggestion is simply gratuitous. Another defect in the theory is that even if one does somehow by arithmetical juggling place four generations of rulers within 8 or 9 years, the whole scheme of chronology is highly elastic. It is possible that Skanda Gupta may have continued to rule a couple of years after 467 A.D., the last known date on one of his silver coins. Similarly the current Gupta years 154 and 157 may not have been the years of accession of Kumāra Gupta and Budha Gupta respectively. Any allowance of slightest elasticity in the chronology adopted by Panna Lal and his school of thought throws the whole thesis to the winds.

Thus we find that the theory so dearly held by scholars is clearly untenable. The fundamental error was the identification of Kumāra Gupta of the Sārnāth inscription with Kumāra Gupta of the Bhitāri Seal. Banerji held that "there is no evidence in favour of the existence of a third Kumāra Gupta"(1) A. Ghosh(2) held that "the numismatic evidence supports the theory of Panna Lal in identifying Kumāra Gupta of the Sārnāth inscription with that of Bhitāri Seal as the Gupta series of coins makes us acquainted only with two

---

(1) Banerji O.C. p.56 (2) I.H.Q. XX p.121

Kumāra Guptas."[1] But we have shown[2] that the numismatic evidence proves just the reverse, and it is clear that there were two Kumāra Guptas, besides Kumāra Gupta I, and both of them issued coins.

Who followed Kumāra Gupta I,
Puru Gupta or Skanda-Gupta?

We have shown that the order of succession after Kumāra Gupta I, so long held by scholars, is not correct. But the problem that is to be discussed is whether Kumāra Gupta I was immediately followed by Puru Gupta or Skanda Gupta. As we have already rejected the hypothesis that the empire was divided between Skanda Gupta and Puru Gupta, it is clear that one of them must have become king earlier than the other. Scholars have generally assumed Skanda Gupta to be the immediate successor, and that there was a peaceful succession by Skanda Gupta after the death of Kumāra Gupta. But the theory of peaceful succession does not stand against the contemporary epigraphic evidence. The statement in the Junāgadh Rock-inscription that "the goddess of fortune and splendour of her own accord selected (Skanda) as her husband ... having discarded all (the other) sons of the king as not coming up to her standard,"[3] must be given its due significance; and it certainly suggests some extra-

---

(1) E.H.Q. XX p.119 f (2) See infra. (3) C.II.I. III, No.14 p.62f

ordinary situation in which Skanda Gupta came to the throne. Roychaudhuri[1] mentions that Prabhākaravardhana, shortly before his death referred to Harṣa as "Svayameva śriyā-gṛihīta," though Harṣa's devotion to his elder brother is well known. But this example does not cut much ice. Prabhākaravardhana was trying to persuade Harṣa much against the latter's will to ascend the throne when Rājyavardhana was away, and therefore he, to strengthen his point, he called Harṣa "accepted by the goddess of Prosperity herself," and not only by his dying father. So the phrase is not a statement of fact but an expression of a wish of a man on the death-bed with pent up emotions crying to his dearest son by his bedside that "Upon you, my happiness, my sovereignty, my succession, and my life are set, and as mine as those of all my people ... you wear marks declaring the sovereignty of the four oceans, one and all, to be almost in your grasp."[2] Thus the two situations in which almost the identical expressions have been used were entirely different, and, then, the reference to the discarding "of all the other sons of the king as not coming up to her standard" is not to be lightly brushed aside. It has been further urged that the passage in the Junāgadh inscription is a mere poetical

---

(1) P.H.A.I. (4th Edn.) p. 485 (2) H.C. (CT) p.142.

eulogy and means as much or as little as the passage in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta which describes his selection by Candra Gupta I "being looked at (with envy) by the faces, melancholy (through the rejection of themselves) of others of equal birth."(1) On the analogy of Samudra Gupta being selected by his father as the best among his sons, Raychaudhuri(2) holds that the passage in the Junāgadh inscription means that Skanda Gupta was selected by Kumāra Gupta I, as Samudra Gupta by Candra Gupta I, and Candra Gupta II by Samudra Gupta. The analogy may not be true, but at the same time it may be pointed out that the accession of Samudra Gupta might not have been as peaceful(3) as held by the learned scholar, and it is now generally accepted that Rāma Gupta intervened between Samudra Gupta and Candra Gupta II

It is to be borne in mind that Candra Gupta II, who was selected among others by Samudra Gupta to succeed him, is referred to as "tat-parigṛihīta" in the inscriptions.(4) Skanda Gupta is never mentioned as such in the relation to his father Kumāra Gupta I. The Bhitāri pillar-inscription of Skanda Gupta(5) is the only clearly official inscription inscribed in his name, and it is significant to note that while in that very inscription

(1) C.I.I. III, No.I p.14. (2) P.H.A.I. (3rd Edn.) p.387.

(3) See Supra. (4) C.I.I. III Nos. 4,12,13.

(5) C.I.I. III No.13, p.53. line 4.

Candra Gupta II is mentioned as "tat-parigṛihīta," no such phrase is mentioned to describe the relationship of Skanda Gupta with Kumāra Gupta I. The only conclusion that can be drawn from this is that Skanda Gupta did not claim to be specially selected by his father to succeed him.

The phrase "tat-pādānudhyātaḥ" used in the Gupta inscriptions should be given more weight than it has received. The phrase occurs in the Bhiṭāri pillar-inscription of Skanda Gupta to describe the relationship between Kumāra Gupta and his father Candra Gupta II, but its omission in the case of Skanda Gupta as standing in relation to his father Kumāra Gupta I[1] is more than significant. It is really apt to point out that instead of that usual rather conventional phrase 'Tatpādānudhyātaḥ' we have in the inscription[2] "śrīḥ-pi(tṛi)-pā(r)ijāta-pāda-padma-vartti-prathita-yaśāḥ" - "who (Skanda) subsisted (like a bee) on the wide-spreading water lilies which were the feet of his father." This round about way of expressing the same idea should not be explained as a poet's fancy: it is rather a deliberate non-use of the conventional phrase to describe an uncommon situation. We suggest that the phrase "tat-pādānudhyātaḥ" was a

---

(1) C.I.I.III, No.13, p.53, ll. 6-7, trans. pp.54-55.

(2) ibid.

technical expression to denote a legal or legitimate right to the throne, and because Skanda Gupta had no such right, the phrase though used in case of Kumāra Gupta I is scrupulously omitted in the case of Skanda Gupta in his own inscription.(1)

It may be pointed out that according to Fleet, the phrase "tat-pādānudhyātaḥ" to describe the relationship between Skanda Gupta and Kumāra Gupta, occurs in the Bihar stone-pillar-inscription.(2) Fleet's reading and restoration of illegible part of the inscription were indisputably accepted by scholars. But recently R.C.Majumdar(3) has challenged the reading and suggests modifications in the restoration by Fleet. We have ourselves pursued the matter and are convinced that Majumdar, if not wholly, is substantially correct. The lithograph of the inscription given by Fleet is very much blurred. He admits that much has been lost between the time when Cunningham and R.L.Mitra published their lithographs and his own. In the line 23 of Fleet's plate, "Gupta" is very clear, but before the letter "Gu" there are signs of two letters and Fleet restores the reading as "Skanda."(4) Evidently he was led away by Cunningham(5) who was convinced that the inscription

---

(1) ibid. (2) C.I.I. III, No.12 p.50f and plate.
(3) I.C.X p.170f, (4) C.I.I. III No.12, p.50f and plate.
(5) C.A.S.R.I., pp.p37-38, and the plate.

"belonged to Skanda Gupta as the remaining part of the upper part is letter for letter the same as the opening of the Bhitārī pillar-inscription." When Fleet edited his monumental work there was no doubt at all that Kumāra Gupta was succeeded by Skanda Gupta and no other Son of Kumara Gupta was known. [illegible] Therefore, Fleet unhesitatingly restored the next name of the King after Kumāra Gupta as Skanda Gupta. The lithograph given by Cunningham does not help us much as the letters before 'gu' in the line in dispute are completely blurred. But the lithograph published by R.L.Mitra(1) is really very revealing. Here the letter before 'gu' is clearly 'ru' and the letter preceding 'ru' is clearly [illegible] 'pū', which Mitra wrongly read as 'Pta.' It is very easy to confuse between 'pū' and 'pta' in contemporary epigraphy. The lithograph given by Dr. Mitra should be reliable. According to Mitra "Major Hollings got a baked clay impression of the inscription .... an ink impression of the inscription was subsequently communicated to me, but it contained nothing new that was not decipherable on the clay fassimile; the accompanying plate is a reduced facsimile of the clay impression and <u>every letter</u> on it has been <u>carefully</u> compared with those on the ink tracing."(2) Fleet's lithograph is in a worse condition naturally

---

(1) J.A.S.B.XXXV, p.270f, and the plate.

(2) J.A.S.B.XXXV, p.270.

because in course of time the inscription was more worn out, exposed to vagaries of nature. But even here the reading suggested by Fleet is not correct. In the beginning of the remaining line 23 of the plate, the letter before 'Gu' of the 'Gupta' is clearly 'Ru'. The straight line of 'Ru' and the hook below of the medial 'u' sign is as clear as it could be.(1) It is exactly similar to 'Ru' in line 12 of the plate of the Kāhaum pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta,(2) and in the Indore inscription(3) of the same ruler. The letter preceding 'Ru' is almost absolutely blurred in Fleet's lithograph but the faint extant sign which Fleet restored as 'Ska' more properly appears to be the sign of medial long ū, and the complete letter must have been 'Pū', and so the correct reading of the name in line 23 of the inscription is Pūru Gupta. In line 11 of the inscription(4) Fleet reads 'Skandaguptabaṭa'; 'Guptabaṭa' is absolutely clear, but the letter before 'gu' is not very clear, but with the elongated loop it is more like 'ndra', of Candra Gupta in the same inscription, then 'nda'. That the disputed letter is

---

(1) C.I.I. III, No.12 p.50, and plate. (2) Ibid, pl.IXa.
(3) Ibid, Pl.IXb. (4) C.I.I. III No.12 p.50 and plate.

'ndra' not 'nda' is clear from the lithograph given by Cunningham.(1) Therefore, the village is not Skandaguptabaṭa; it may be Candraguptabaṭa or Indraguptabaṭa or anything having 'ndra' as the second letter. Therefore it should now be taken as established that the Bihar stone-pillar-inscription does not belong to Skanda Gupta and it does not contain his name. Thus it is evident that it is incorrect, relying on this inscription, to assert that Skanda Gupta is described as "Pādānudhyātaḥ in relation to Kumāra Gupta I, as Puru Gupta is certainly described in the seals, and in the Bihar stone-pillar-inscription. R.C.Majumdar(2) also suggested that the genealogy was continued after Puru Gupta, because the mention of 'Paramabhāgavata' in the last part of the line 24, shows that the King whose name is missing in line 25 cannot be the same person(3), who is mentioned in line 23, as Fleet held. Really, it is very unusual to describe the issuer of the grant with all due titles which have been already referred to earlier in the description of the genealogy. The missing portion is just sufficient to fill in the usual form of the inscription continuing the

---

(1) C.A.S.R. I plate facing p.37. (2) I.C. X p.170f.

(3) C.I.I. III NO.12 p.50f. Fleet took the name to be Skanda Gupta in both the lines 23 and 25.

genealogy one stage further. If it is true, as it is very likely, that the Bihar stone pillar inscription was issued by Narasiṁha Gupta, the son of Puru Gupta or by Budha Gupta, who is also another son of Puru Gupta.(1) At any rate it was not issued by Skanda Gupta, and may belong to Puru Gupta or Narasiṁha Gupta or Budha Gupta. Therefore we find that the phrase 'tat-pādānudhyātaḥ', described to illustrate natural and legitimate succession, is significantly absent from all inscriptions, which give the genealogical table of the Guptas and refer to the relationship between Skanda Gupta and Kumāra Gupta. From the Bhiṭārī pillar-inscription(2) we know that Skanda Gupta was a son of Kumāra Gupta; but from the deliberate omission of the phrase 'tat-pādānudhyātaḥ' in the same inscription to express the relationship between Skanda Gupta and Kumāra Gupta, when that very phrase is used about Kumāra Gupta in relation to Candra GuptaII, we infer that Skanda Gupta was not a legitimate or natural successor of Kumāra Gupta as the latter was of Candra Gupta II. Naturally therefore, accession of Skanda Gupta must have followed some abnormal situation and dynastic troubles.

---

(1) M.A.S.A.NO.66 p.64. (2) C.I.I. III No.13 p.53f.

The inference is further strengthened by another significant omission in the inscriptions of Skanda Gupta. We have no inscription in which the name of the Mother of Skanda Gupta as the queen of Kumāra Gupta is given. This is quite out of tune with the other Gupta inscriptions giving the genealogy of the rulers. The mothers of the kings are mentioned together with the respective fathers. Mahādevī Kumāradevī mother of Samudra Gupta is mentioned in his Allahabad pillar-inscription;(1) Mahādevī Dattadevī, mother of Candra Gupta II is mentioned in his Mathurā pillar-inscription;(2) Mahādevī Dhruvadevī, the mother of Kumāra Gupta I is mentioned in his Bilsaḍ stone-pillar-inscription;(3) Mahādevi Anantadevī must have been mentioned in the Bihar stone-pillar-inscription.(4) The Bhitāri(5) and Nālandā seals(6) of Kumāra Gupta III mentions his mother Mahādevī S'rī Mitradevī; the Nālandā seal of Budha Gupta(7) must have mentioned the name of his mother, as the legend 'Mahādevyām utpannaḥ' is present but the name is lost, which must have been

---

(1) C.I.I. I pp 15-16. (2) E.I. XXI p.1f.
(3) C.I.I. III, No.10, p.72f.
(4) ibid, No.12 p.50f. and see supra.
(5) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.88f. The name was wrongly read as S'rī Mahālakṣmīdevī or S'rīmatīdevī.
(6) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.66. (7) ibid p.64.

Anantadevī; the Nālandā Seal of Viṣṇu Gupta[1] also contained the name of his mother, though the name is lost. Even the seal of Mahārāja Govinda Gupta[2] mentions the name of his mother, Mahādevī Dhruvadevī; and the Nālandā Seal of Vainya Gupta[3] contained the name of his mother, though the name is lost in the extant part of the inscription. It may also be pointed out that when the complete genealogy of many generations is given in the inscriptions or Seals, with the mention of the name of deceased father the name of the queen-mother is also given. All this leads to the inevitable conclusion, that as a general rule and normal procedure which had almost a constitutional significance, in all official seals and inscriptions of the Gupta dynasty purporting to give genealogy of the rulers, the names of the queen-mothers were mentioned. It is certainly remarkably significant that the Bhitārī pillar-inscription of Skanda Gupta[4] himself, mentions the names of Mahādevī Dattadevī and Mahādevī Dhruvadevī, the mothers of Candra Gupta II and Kumāra Gupta I respectively, but the name of the Mother of Skanda Gupta, the author of the inscription is omitted, and this omission cannot but be

---

(1) E.I. XXVI p.23sf. (2) A.S.I.A.R. 1903-4 p.107.

(3) M.A.S.I. No.66, p.67. (4) C.I.I. III No.13 p.55f.

deliberate and conscious. Raichaudhuri[1] cites instances from the Vākāṭakas and Harṣa's records to suggest that the omission of the name of the mother of Skanda Gupta does not have any special significance, and he mentions the case of Kuberanāga who was, though not the chief queen (Mahādevī) mentioned in her daughter's inscriptions;[2] while the name of Mahādevī Yaśomatī as the mother of Harṣa is not mentioned in the Banskhera[3] and Madhuban[4] plates, she is mentioned in the Sonapat Seal[5] of Harṣa. The learned scholar[6] mentions a number of inscriptions of the Pāla period in which while sometimes the names of Mahādeviṣ are mentioned, and sometimes not. The analogy is not relevant as the instances are picked out of non-Gupta records, and belong to much later time when the tradition may have lost some of its binding force. As for the mention of Kuberanāga in the Vākāṭaka records, it may be pointed out while the Gupta records refer to the queen-mothers or chief queens (Mahādevī), the Vākāṭaka records are silent on this point except when they refer to Prabhāvatīguptā, daughter of Candra Gupta II. It is interesting to note that in her inscription instead of giving the genealogy of her husband's family, she traces

---

(1) P.H.A.I. (3rd Edn) p.387. (2) J.A.S.B. XX (N.S.) p.53; J.B.O.R.S. XIV. p.465; E.I. XV. p.39f.

(3) E.I. IV p.208f. (4) E.I. I p.73f.

(5) C.I.I. III, No.52 p.232. (6) P.H.A.I. (4th Edn) p.483.

her genealogy from her father's side upwards to 'Gupta'. It is clear that she was very proud of her close relationship with the Gupta family through her mother Kuberanāga, who was not the Mahādevī of Candra GuptaII and so is not mentioned in the Gupta inscriptions, but is mentioned in her daughter's inscription just to trace her own proud parentage possibly only through her mother Kuberanāga. The mention of a non-Mahādevī, though a Gupta-queen, in a non-Gupta inscription of her own daughter, naturally partial to her, does not at all weaken our contention that the legitimate Mahādevīs are, as a constitutional convention or practice, always mentioned in the official Gupta records. About Yas'omatī it may be pointed out that in the Madhuban copper plate of Harṣa she is mentioned as the mother of Rājyavardhana, and as she was the mother of Harṣa as well, her name may not have been mentioned to avoid repetition. Therefore, we conclude that the scrupulous care to omit the name of Skanda Gupta's mother as the Mahādevī of Kumāra Gupta I proves that she was not the Mahādevī of Kumāra Gupta, and hence her son Skanda Gupta was not a legitimate heir to the throne.

Thus we can safely conclude that though Skanda Gupta was the son of Kumāra Gupta I[1] he was born not

---

(1) C.I.I. III No.13 p.55.

of the Mahādevī of Kumāra Gupta but of a secondary wife; and, naturally he was not the legitimate heir to the throne in preference to the son or sons of Kumāra Gupta by his Mahādevī. It is because of the absence of the legal claim for the succession to the throne that he is never referred to as 'Pādānudhyātaḥ' in relation to Kumāra Gupta. That Kumāra Gupta had more than one wife is clearly hinted by a special type of his coins. There is a coin in the British Museum catalogue of the Gupta coins, which has on the obverse a male figure with two female figures on left and right, and on the either side of the central figure is the legend "Kumāra-Guptaḥ"; on the reverse is the seated Lakṣmī with the legend which Allan read as 'Śrī Pratāpaḥ'(1) Recently another coin of the same type has been acquired by the British Museum and the legend on the reverse is clearly 'Śrī Praṇayaḥ'.(2) On the other coin(3) also we read 'Praṇayaḥ'. On this coin the letter after 'pra' is certainly 'ṇa' and not 'ta', and the third letter is 'ya' with the middle stroke of the tripartite 'ya' slightly blurred and so looks like 'pa' and Allan read it as 'Pratāpa.' Mr. Allan re-examined the coin

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.87, No. 257.

(2) Plate I, No.2.

(3) ibid, No.1.

and agreed with our suggestion that the legend should be read as 'Śrī Praṇayaḥ', not 'Śrī Pratāpaḥ'. Praṇaya means 'espousing'seizing (as in marriage), and it certainly suggests 'love, affection, attachment or likeness." The coins, therefore, prove that on the obverse are the two queens of Kumāra Gupta with the king in the centre, and [illegible] with the reverse legend 'Praṇayaḥ' demonstrates Kumāra Gupta's equal love and affection to his two queens. It is significent that on this type of coinswe do not get the usual title 'Śrī Mahendraḥ', or 'Śrī Aśvamedhamahendraḥ,' or 'Ajitamahendraḥ,' or 'Śrī Mahendra Simha,' or 'Siṃhamahendraḥ' or 'Mahendra Kumāraḥ' found on his gold coins, or 'Mahendrāditya' on his silver coins."(1) It may be reasonably assumed that the āditya title of Mahendrāditya or Siṃhamahendraḥ' or other synonyms must have been assumed some time after Kumāra Gupta came on the throne, possibly after the performance of the horse-sacrifice. Therefore, the Praṇaya type of the coins were the earliest issues of the reign of Kumāra Gupta. The foreign influence on the coins noticed by Allan also suggests an early period.

---

(1) C.C.G.D.D.M. pp 61 -112.

The obverse of the coins may be construed to suggest the competitive spirit of the co-wives, which was later on reflected in the rivalry of their sons. The mother of Puru Gupta was Mahādevī Anantadevī,(1) the mother of Skanda Gupta might have had the name of Devakī.(2) Puru Gupta is uniformly referred to in the inscriptions(3) as the son of Mahādevī Anantadevī and meditating on the feet of his father Kumāra Gupta. It has been shown that Puru Gupta was on the imperial throne and he issued coins. It is, therefore, obvious that as compared to Skanda Gupta, that he was a stronger claimant to the throne being the son of Kumāra Gupta and Mahādevī Anantadevī. It is, hence, natural to presume that he must have come to the throne immediately after the death of Kumāra Gupta but was soon after pushed aside by his abler step-brother Skanda Gupta.

---

(1) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.64f; M.A.S.I. No.66 p.64f.

(2) C.I.I. III, No.1, p.55_f:
If the story of Vikramaditya in Somadeva's Kathāsarita Sāgara (Tawney, [illegible], p.1f) refers to Skanda Gupta then his mother's name may have been Saumyadarsanā.

(3) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.68f; M.A.S.I. No.66 p.64f.

Internal dissension in the family after Kumāra Gupta I

The accession of Skanda Gupta within hardly a year after the death of Kumāra Gupta, therefore, certainly suggests some troubles in the family which ultimately ended in triumph for Skanda Gupta. This suspicion is remarkably confirmed by the internal evidence of the inscriptions. The words "vyāpetya sarvān manujendraputrān Lakṣmīḥ yaṁ varayām cakāra" occurring in the Junāgadh inscription (1) suggest that Skanda Gupta won the goddess of fortune against other royal princes. The Bhitārī pillar-inscription also contains veiled allusions to Skanda Gupta's victory over other royal princes of the family, besides the enemies like the Puṣyamitras and the Hūṇas. "Who (Skanda Gupta) when his father had attained the skies conquered his enemies by the strength of his (arms) and established again the ruined fortunes of his lineage; and then crying that victory has been achieved he took himself to (his mother) whose eyes were full of tears from

(1) C.I.I. III No.14 p.62f.

joy, just as Kṛiṣṇa when he had slain (his) enemies betook himself to (his mother) Devakī", and, "who with his own arms established (again), (his) lineage that had been made to totter .... and with his two arms subjugated the earth."[1] Rayachaudhuri[2] believes that the enemies, referred to in the Bhitarī pillar-inscription, "were the enemies of the Gupta family not belonging to the Gupta lineage." It is quite comprehensible that the enemies like the Puṣyamitras and the Hūṇas made the lineage of Skanda Gupta totter; but what is submitted here is that besides these enemies he had also to deal with the members of his own family. The Junāgadh inscription,[3] which certainly belongs to the early years of the reign of Skanda Gupta, clearly states that the Goddess Lakṣmī selected Skanda Gupta as her husband disregarding all the other sons of the King or Kings. The natural implication is that Skanda Gupta became the emperor by superseding the claims of others. It is certainly important to bear in mind that the Hūṇas and the Puṣyamitras could hardly stand in the way of peaceful succession by Skanda Gupta, if he was the lawful and

---

(1) Ibid, p.55f. (2) P.H.A.I. (3rd edn) p.387.

(3) C.I.I. III No.14 p.62f.

undisputed heir to the throne. The persistent emphasis in his inscriptions that he got the kingdom by force of his own arms lends additional weight to the hypothesis that he had no legal claim and hence boasted of his own strength. Therefore, the enemies with which he had to deal were not only the enemies of the Gupta family not belonging to the Gupta lineage, but also the enemies belonging to the same family.

The allusion to Kṛiṣṇa and Devakī in the Bhitarī pillar-inscription[1] may have some significance As Kṛiṣṇa fought and defeated his enemies including his relatives like Kaṁs'a, who had made his mother unhappy and, as Devakī must have received Kṛiṣṇa with 'eyes full of tears from joy', so because Skanda Gupta had defeated his enemies and outwitted his rival relations, he was a cause of great joy to his mother, who widowed after the death of Kumāra Gupta, must have been feeling miserable as she was not the Mahādevī, and she was consequently full of tears from joy to see the victorious Skanda Gupta, who had raised her to the high status of Queen-Mother[2], a status which she might not have dreamt of.

---

(1) Ibid, p.55f.

(2) N.N.Das Gupta carries the allusion to Kṛiṣṇa and Devakī too far by suggesting that Skanda Gupta's mother may have belonged to the tribe of the Pusyamitras, whose king was hostile to Skanda and who defeated them to the joy of his mother (B.C.Law volume I p.617f). D.C.Sarker also thinks likewise that Skanda fought his own maternal uncle (S.I.T.p.314,Note 2).

Kumāra Gupta I died leaving more than one grown up son. Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta are known to be the sons of Kumāra Gupta. From the Tumain inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Ghaṭotkaca Gupta[1] dated 116 G.E.(= 435 - 36 A.D.) we know that when Kumāra Gupta I, the son of Candra Gupta II 'protected the earth', Ghaṭotkaca Gupta was governing the province of Airikiṇā. The way in which Ghaṭotkaca Gupta is described in the inscription, as 'having attained the glory won by ancestors with the powers of their own arms', suggests that he was a prince of the royal family and may have won renown as the governor of the important province. A seal bearing the legend 'Śrī Ghaṭotkaca-Guptasya' has been found at Basārh, and Bloch[2] attributed it to Ghaṭotkaca, the father of Candra Gupta I. Smith[3] and Basak[4] accepted the identification. But Allen[5] rightly asserted that

---

(1) J.A. XLIX p.114f: E.I.XXVI p.115. K.R.N.Dandekar's suggestions that the inscription indicates that 'Ghaṭotkaca Gupta ~~was~~ was then trying to be politically independent, by severing all loyal connections, which he owed, in his capacity of a provincial governor, to his Sovereign in Magadha,' and that 'the internal discussions among the Scions of the Gupta royal family thus appear to have started even during the times of Kumāra Gupta I," (A History of the Guptas, p.119) seem to be overshooting the mark and carrying the theory to a dangerous extent.

(2) A.S.I.A.R. 1903-4 p.107. (3) J.R.A.S. 1905 p.153.

(4) H.N.E.I. p.67. (5) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.XVI-XVII.

"there is really no reason to identify Ghaṭotkaca, father of Candra Gupta I with Ghaṭotkaca Gupta of the Seal." We feel no hesitation in identifying Ghaṭotkaca Gupta of the inscription with that of the Seal. It appears that Ghaṭot-kaca Gupta, a royal prince, was attached to the provincial government of Vaiśālī under Mahārāja Govinda Gupta, the son of Candra Gupta II and Mahādevī Dhruvasvāmini, whose seal has been discovered at Basārh.(1) We donnot know anything definite about the exact relationship between Ghaṭotkaca Gupta and Kumāra Gupta. But it may be correct to presume that Ghaṭotkaca Gupta was 'the son or younger brother of Kumāra Gupta I.'(2) In the time of Candra Gupta II he was trained in the arts of Gupta administration and in the time of Kumāra Gupta I he was considered capable to hold the charge of the province of Airikiṇā, which is clearly suggested by the Tumain inscription.(3) If Ghaṭotkaca Gupta was a younger brother of Kumāra Gupta I, he must have been old at the time of Kumāra Gupta's death in 455, but it is equally possible that he was another son of Kumāra Gupta I.(4)

---

(1) A.S.I.A.R. 1903-4 p.107. (2) E.I. XXVI p.115f.

(3) ibid. (4) G.I.I. p.299, Note 1.

When Kumāra Gupta died events must have followed one another quickly in a sequence described below. Kumāra Gupta's last days were very much disturbed by the aggression of the Puṣyamitras and the inroads of the Hūṇas, and Prince Skanda Gupta was sent to deal with the troubles; Puru Gupta, probably the eldest son of Kumāra Gupta and Mahādevī Anantadevī, stayed at the Court. He must have felt jealous of his younger (?) step-brother Skanda Gupta who was put in charge of momentous campaigns against the Puṣyamitras and the Hūṇas. Kumāra Gupta's partiality towards Skanda Gupta may lie behind the story of Vikramāditya, son of Mahendrāditya of Ujjain, related in the Somadeva's Kathāsarita-Sāgara.(1) Allan(2) drew the attention of scholars to this story having a bearing on the Gupta history, and the learned scholar identified Vikramāditya of the story with Skanda Gupta, and Mahendrāditya with Kumāra Gupta I.

---

(1) The Ocean of Story (Tawney), Edited by Mr. N.M.Penzer, Vol. IX, Chapter XVIII, p.1f.

(2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.XLIX, Note. 1.

According to the story, Mahendrāditya appointed Vikramāditya to be the heir, and himself with his wife retired to Vārānasī.(1) The same tradition of Mahendrasena (Kumāra Gupta I) crowning his son Duhpraasahahasta (Skanda?) and himself retiring to religious life is contained in the account given by Candragarbha-paripṛicchā.(2) Jayaswal(3) has identified Mahendrasena with Kumāra Gupta I, and his son with Skanda Gupta. The account may be highly embellished in favour of the national hero Skanda Gupta, but it may be not far from truth to read in it a strong tradition current in the country that Skanda Gupta was specially favoured by Kumāra Gupta I. It is possible that the story may have had its source in the successful career of Skanda Gupta. At any rate it can be easily admitted that Skanda Gupta, who had not full claim to the throne, may have been a hot favourite of Kumāra Gupta I, and this must have annoyed Puru Gupta, who was definitely a better claimant to the throne. Therefore, when Kumāra

---

(1) The Ocean of Story (Tawney), IX, p.1f.

(2) Cited by Bu-Ston in "History of Buddhism" Pt. 2. (Eng. Trans.) p.171.

(3) I.H.I. p.56.

Gupta was on the death-bed, Skanda Gupta was away fighting the enemies of the empire, and Ghatotkaca Gupta was in Airikiṇā, far away from Magadha, Puru Gupta must have strengthened his position in the Court. As soon as Kumāra Gupta died, Puru Gupta proclaimed himself emperor. When Skanda Gupta returned from his victorious campaign against the Puṣyamitras and probably against some sections of the Hūṇas as well, he found his father dead and the throne, which he had come to look upon as his because of his services to the empire and the trust of his father in him, was in possession of his step-brother, Puru Gupta. Flushed with his victory over the Puṣyamitras 'who had developed great power and wealth',(1) Skanda Gupta could not be expected to ignore the challenge.

This rebellious attitude of Skanda Gupta against Puru Gupta, weak, but the legitimate heir to the throne, must have encouraged other royal princes to join in the fray or carve out independent principalities for themselves. One of them was

---

(1) C.I.I. III, p.55f.

Ghaṭotkaca Gupta. He asserted his claim to sovereignty and issued coins. We have in the St. Petersburg collection, a gold coin of Archer type. It has on the reverse, "the King, nimbata, standing to left, holding bow in left hand and arrow in right hand, Garuḍa standard on the left; beneath the left arm (there is the legend) Ghaṭo with crescent above, traces of inscription on the left ending in (gu) pta (ḥ). On the reverse is the goddess' nimbata seated facing on lotus, holding lotus in left and fillet in outstretched right arm, and on the right is (the legend) Kramāditya."(1) The coin, thus described, closely resembles the Archer-type coins of Kumāra Gupta,(2) Skanda Gupta,(3) and Narasiṁha Gupta,(4) and other Gupta coins of the same type. Hence there is no doubt that the Ghaṭotkaca Gupta of the coins is a Gupta king. This coin cannot belong to Ghaṭotkaca, father of Candra Gupta I, and on the basis of the style and weight of the coin, Allan(5) placed it in about the end of the 5th century. In the

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.149, pl. XXIV.3.

(2) ibid p.64;LXVIII. (3) ibid. p.114, No.417.

(4) ibid pp. 137f. (5) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.LIV.

learned scholar's opinion, the Basārh seal of Śrī Ghaṭotkaca Gupta is also earlier than the coin.(1) But this does not stand in the way of the identification of Ghaṭotkaca Gupta of the Seal with that of the Coin. We have seen that the Seal of Ghaṭotkaca Gupta may be dated in the time of ~~C~~ Candra Gupta II, while the coin may be about fifty years later, as Ghaṭotkaca could have issued it only after the death of Kumāra Gupta I. Therefore we have no doubt in our mind that the Ghaṭotkaca Gupta of the Seal, inscription and coin are one and the same person. The fact that so far only one coin bearing his name has been found certainly suggests that his attempt at Sovereignty was very short lived.(2)

Another defiant Gupta prince may have been Candra Gupta III. His existence can be inferred from coins only. In the Indian Museum Catalogue(3) Smith describes five gold coins of Suvarṇa standard with the legend Śrīvikramaḥ on the reverse, and he attributes

---

(1) ibid.

(2) P.L.Gupta (J.N.S.I. XXII p.316f) takes Ghaṭotkaca Gupta to be the immediate successor of Kumāra Gupta I and assigns a very short period to him. In view of the lack of any positive evidence to make Ghaṭotkaca Gupta, a full-fledged successor of Kumāra Gupta I, our suggestion that the former was only one of the claimants to the throne is more plausible.

(3) C.I.M.I. pp.106-7.

these base metal coins to a late provincial issue, or posthumous.[1] Allan[2] has attributed Nos. 33 and 34 of Smith's catalogue with no name or legend on the reverse to Puru Gupta. According to the same scholar, the other heavy weight suvarṇa standard coins of the catalogue (Nos. 30 and 32) should be assigned to a Candra Gupta III Dvādaśāditya 'unless the reverse legend is absolutely certain.'[3] It may be pointed out that the three coins in the British Museum with reverse legend Śrī Dvādaśāditya,[4] which Allan had attributed to a Candra Gupta III, now are shown to belong to Vainya Gupta[5], and Allan has accepted the revised reading. On the three coins Nos. 30-32 of the Indian Museum Catalogue, the name is certainly Candra not Vainya, and the reverse legend is probably Śrī Vikramah.[6] No. 31 of the coin has been admitted by Allan[7] to belong to Candra Gupta II. As there was no one like Candra Gupta Dvādaśāditya, the heavy weight base metal coins should be attributed to a Candra Gupta Vikramāditya. Smith[8] had attributed these coins to

---

(1) C.I.M.I. p.106, Note I. (2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.cii.
(3) ibid p.LIII and note I. (4) ibid, p.144, Nos. 588-90.
(5) I.H.Q. IX, p.784f; ibid, p.989; Bhārata Kaumudī, p.147.
(6) J.N.S.I. VII. p.13f. (7) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.LIII Note I.
(8) C.I.M.I.pp.166-7.

Candra Gupta II vikramāditya. Recently R.C.Kar (1) has strongly urged to regard these coins as issues of Candra Gupta II who, therefore, was the first Gupta emperor to issue heavy weight suvarṇa coins. But it is very unlikely that once Candra Gupta II Vikramāditya issued the suvarṇa standard of coins, no coin by Kumāra Gupta I was issued on that standard, which was a national standard. Moreover the coin No. 32 of the Indian Museum Catalogue (2) has "gold much alloyed," and it is certainly not explainable as to why should Candra Gupta II Vikramāditya issue base metal coins in a period of unexampled prosperity which is well illustrated by the variety and quality of his coins. Therefore it is better to attribute these coins to another Candra Gupta, who may have also assumed the title of Vikramāditya; and so to call him Candra Gupta III Vikramāditya. It is true that he is not known from epigraphy. But negative evidence in the field of ancient Indian historical research is most delusive, and we may be any day surprised by the discovery of an inscription or a seal which may refer to this Candra Gupta. The Tumain inscription of Ghaṭotkaca Gupta was such a valuable addition to our knowledge.

---

(1) J.N.S.I. VII p.13f.

(2) C.I.M.I. p.107. No. 32.

In the period immediately after the death of Kumāra Gupta I, Candra Gupta III, possibly another son of Kumāra Gupta I might have exhibited imperial ambitions, and assumed the high sounding title of Vikramāditya in imitation of his grandfather of the same name.

Thus we find that after the death of Kumāra Gupta I, numerous royal princes - Puru Gupta, Skanda Gupta, Ghaṭotkaca Gupta and possibly Candra Gupta III made a bid for the imperial throne. These were the "Sons of the King" out of whom the goddess Lakṣmī had to choose her husband, and we know that discarding all these, she selected Skanda Gupta.(1) The situation was very critical for the empire and the nation. The Hūṇas were overrunning the country, and internal dissensions were rife in the imperial family. It is only in this contest that the expressions 'Pitṛidevam upete' and 'Viluptām Vaṁs'alakṣmīm' mentioned in the Bhitāri pillar-inscription(2) of Skanda Gupta get their full purport and significance. It should be obvious that the accession of Puru Gupta was not palatable to Skanda Gupta. The latter had proved his mettle against the powerful Puṣyamitras and the Hūṇas. Therefore, he might have won the support of the people, and could

---

(1) C.I.I. III No.14 p.62f. (2) ibid. No.13 p.53f.

have easily pushed aside the weakling Puru Gupta and other claimants to the throne; and therefore in his inscriptions it is always emphasised that he won the kingdom by the force of his own arms and saved his lineage that 'was made to totter' by the foreign invasions during the days of internal dissensions. It is not necessary to assume that there was a bloody civil war. It is quite possible that the rise of the luminous sun in the firmament eclipsed the light of lesser luminaries. The situation could have been very similar to that which the Ck Cālukya king Vikramāditya VI had to face. From the Vikramāṅkadeva-Carita by Bilhaṇa we come to know that Vikramāditya was the second and favourite son of Āhavamalla, who wanted to make Vikramāditya yuvarāja in the supersession of the claim of Someśvara, the elder brother. Vikramāditya refused and went on a military campaign. When he was returning from the South he learnt that his father struck with a fatal disease had committed suicide and Someśvara had usurped the throne. There was cordial relation between the brothers for some time but ultimately civil war broke out and Someśvara was made a prisoner by Vikramāditya, who appears to have strengthened his

AUTHOR

Sinha Bindeshwari Prasad.

TITLE

Decline of the Kingdom of Magadh. Thesis Ph. D. 1948 Indian Hist.

CALL MARK

READER'S NAME

position by matrimonial and diplomatic alliances.(1) Skanda Gupta on the return from his victorious campaign might have faced a similar situation and the outcome was the triumph of Skanda over other suitors of the goddess of Sovereignty.(2)

Accession of Puru Gupta and his overthrow by Skanda Gupta.

Immediately after the death of Kumāra Gupta, Puru Gupta, the legitimate heir to the throne, being the son of Mahādevī Anantadevī, ascended the throne. He issued coins and assumed the title of Vikramāditya, like his grandfather Candra Gupta II. There are four coins in the British Museum Catalogue which are attributed to him.(3) One of the coins, now acquired by the British Museum, has the name 'Pura' on the obverse, and Śrī Vikramah on the reverse.(4) According to Allan,(5) the coins Nos. 33 and 34 of the Indian Museum catalogue, formerly attributed to Candra Gupta II

(1) Bilhaṇa's Vikramāṅkadeva-Carita. Trans. by Bühler, pp.30-37
(2) I am indebted to Dr. Barnett for this valuable suggestion.
(3) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.134-135. (4) ibid. (5) ibid, CII Note 1.

should be assigned to Puru Gupta. Scholars[1] attributed the gold coins of Prakās'āditya to Puru Gupta, but Allan[2] doubted the correctness of the contention, and we[3] have assigned these coins to Budha Gupta. Allan[4] has identified Puru Gupta with Vikramāditya of Ayodhyā, and father of Bālāditya, the patron of Vasubandhu according to Paramārtha.[5] The identification proposed can hardly be questioned. Thus Puru Gupta, not Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya[6] becomes the first Gupta emperor to have extended his active patronage to Buddhism under the influence of Vasubandhu. This pro-Buddhist king did not enjoy peaceful reign. Members of the royal family were challenging his authority and the Hūṇas were overrunning the kingdom. From the Bhitārī[7] and Junāgadh inscriptions,[8] and from the Kathāsaritsāgara[9] and Gāraṇagarbha-Paripriochā,[10] it is clear that Skanda routed the Hūṇas only after he came to the throne.

---

(1) Smith, V.A.- C.I.M.I. pp. 98,119. E.H.I. (4th Edn) p.329; Hoernle, J.A.S.B. LVIII pp.93-94. Later on he attributed these coins to Yaśodharman (J.R.A.S. 1909 Pt.I pp. 133-35)

(2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.LII. (3) See infra.

(4) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.L. (5) J.R.A.S.1905, p.33f.

(6) I.H.I. p.39 (7) C.I.I.III No.13 p.55f.

(8) ibid p.62f (9) The Ocean of Story, V. IX p.1f.

(10) Quoted by Bu-Ston in his History of Buddhism (Eng.Tr.) Pt.2 p.172.

During such difficult days, the feudatories and other Kings must have been lifting "their heads in pride and arrogance."(1) Almost all the causes - internal dissensions, foreign invasions and defiance of the feudatories, - which have led to the fall of great empires in the past and ultimately brought about the downfall of the Gupta empire itself, appeared at the same time and put the entire resources and intelligence of the royal dynasty and the nation to a severe test. Puru Gupta the pro-Buddhist King proved unequal to the task.

His half brother Skanda Gupta had earned a good name in crushing the Pusyamitras and in fighting the Hūṇas, and therefore the Court and the people must have supported him against Puru Gupta in the dark days of the empire. Therefore Skanda Gupta must have easily succeeded in his efforts to become emperor by "the strength of his own arms."(2) Puru Gupta must have succeeded his father in the year 455 A.D. and before the year was hardly out, he had to make way for his half-brother Skanda Gupta, who had not unimpeachable claims to the throne, being the son of a secondary wife of Kumāra Gupta I. We have already urged that the fact

---

(1) C.I.I. III No.14 p.62f.

(2) Ibid.

of Skanda Gupta not being mentioned in the inscriptions in any of the conventional phrases - tat-pādānudhyāta or tatparigrihīta - in the inscriptions to describe the nature of his relationship with his father Kumāra Gupta I, has a much deeper meaning than has hitherto been given to it by scholars. It is also not without significance that unlike the other Gupta inscriptions, all the inscriptions of the time of Skanda Gupta, though not generally giving the genealogy of their hero (Skanda Gupta), without exception, emphasize, rather over-emphasize that Skanda Gupta belonged to the Gupta lineage. He is 'the banner of the lineage',(1) 'born in the lineage of the Guptas',(2) the most eminent hero in the lineage of the Guptas.(3) This characteristic feature - the emphasis on being a member of the Gupta dynasty - is absent from other inscriptions of the imperial Guptas. Together with other considerations (set out above), it strengthens the suspicion that, as Skanda Gupta had no full rights to the throne according to the Gupta consitutional usage, his admirers stressed the fact of his being of 'Gupta lineage' for popular appeal. Probably because Skanda Gupta was constitutionally

---

(1) C.I.I. III No.14 p.64-65, line 24.

(2) Ibid, No.15, Page 67.

(3) Ibid, No.13, p.56, line 4.

a usurper of the throne, he is not mentioned in the seals of Puru Gupta's successors. The complete absence of his name from these seals is another link in the long chain of arguments, that bad relationship existed between Puru Gupta and Skanda Gupta, and this fact was never forgotten by Puru Gupta's successors, who completely omitted from the official seals the name of Skanda Gupta, the usurper, who had deprived their ancestor Puru Gupta of his legal sovereignty. (1)

Thus we have tried to establish that after the death of Kumāra Gupta I, the empire had to face external menace and internal dissensions simultaneously, and the troubles ended only with the successful coup d'état by Skanda Gupta who overthrew the weak but legitimate ruler Puru Gupta, and frustrated the attempts of other royal princes to grab the prize of sovereignty.

---

(1) Raychaudhuri (P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. pp. 494-95, Note 2) points out instances, from the Cālukya, later Pratīhāras and Vākāṭaka history, of omission of names of rulers in the inscriptions of their brothers and nephews. As against this it may be pointed out that if good relations existed between brothers, their names were added in the inscriptions of the other brother.
Bānskhera (E.I.IV. p.208f) and Madhuban plates (E.I.I.p.72f) mention the name of Rājyavardhana.

Puru Gupta had a very brief reign of less than a year to his credit, and his rule was inglorious. That may explain the omission of his name from the dynastic succession of the imperial rulers of Madhyadeśa in the Ārya-mañju-Śrī-mūla-kalpa. His very brief and disturbed reign may also account for the very small number of coins that can be safely attributed to him. His coins are of Suvarṇa standard and it appears that he was the first Gupta emperor to reintroduce the national standard. His authority could have been limited only to the Eastern provinces of the empire, where the Suvarṇa standard would have been more welcome as the Kuṣāṇa influence must have been less in this part of the country as compared to the Western. The fact that rival claimants to the throne appeared at the end of a long and prosperous reign is nothing unique in the dynastic history of the Imperial Guptas or as a matter of fact in the history of India as a whole. Our scheme, that Kumāra Gupta I was succeeded by Puru Gupta, who was later on forced to give way in

---

(1) It is possible that there were some troubles between Kāca and Samudra Gupta after the death of Candra Gupta I. Rāma Gupta and Candra Gupta II were rivals for the throne; Govinda Gupta may have contested with Kumāra Gupta I. (See Supra). It may be easily assumed that the palace of the imperial Guptas was hardly ever free from the atmosphere of family feuds at the prospect of every succession to the throne. Such feuds have been common in the history of the Cālukyas, the Pālas and throughout the Muslim period.

favour of the stronger half-brother Skanda Gupta, explains all the facts of history known from contemporary epigraphic and numismatic sources. It also explains the position of Ghaṭotkaca Gupta and a probable Candra Gupta III.

Possible objections against the proposed theory.

Against this theory (set out above) which places Puru Gupta between Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta, it may be urged that as the last known date of Kumāra Gupta is 136 G.E. and the first known date of Skanda Gupta is 136 G.E. known from the Junāgadh rock - inscription of Skanda Gupta,(1) the latter must be the immediate successor of Kumāra Gupta,(2) and 'began his reign in 455 A.D.'(3) With due deference to the learned scholars we may point out that the evidence of the Junāgadh inscription does not "necessarily mean that Skanda Gupta was ruling before 136 G.E. when the lake burst."(4) The inscription(5) at first eulogises the reigning King Skanda Gupta and then describes his anxiety to find 'a suitable man to bear the burden' of the governorship of Surāṣṭra; then it states that Parṇadatta was finally selected, and the latter in turn selected his son

(1) C.I.I. III, No.14 p.62f. (2) E.H.I. p.326.
(3) P.H.A.I. (3rd Edn.) p.387. (4) I.A. XXXI, p.257f.
(5) C.I.I. No.14 p.62f.

Cakrapālita as the protector of the city: then follows the history of the bursting of the lake which is said to have happened in 136 G.E., and in 137 G.E. "Cakrapālita displaying the height of his devotion to his father, holding in full view, for the welfare of the King and of the city," offered sacrifices to gods, certainly as a propitiatory measure, and by 138 G.E. the lake was repaired, a dam was constructed, the temple of Cakrabhṛta completed and the epigraph inscribed on this rock. This makes it certain that Skanda Gupta must have been on the throne in 137 G.E. Before he came to the throne the lake had burst and wrought devastation on the people, and this might have been one of the major worries of Skanda Gupta on his coming to the throne early in 137 G.E., which made him think hard over the question of the appointment of a suitable man as a governor of Surāṣṭra. The fact that Parṇadatta accepted the honourable but responsible job only after being hard pressed by rājādhirāja (Skanda Gupta), may have some significance. Was it because the dynastic feuds which had disfigured the country and ultimately ended in the success of Skanda Gupta, had so much shaken the confidence of men like Parṇadatta, at a time when the Hūṇas were still a menace, that it was not easy for Skanda Gupta to find a man for this onerous post?

Another objection based on numismatic evidence may be pressed against our contention that Skanda Gupta followed Puru Gupta on the throne of the imperial Guptas. According to Allan,(1) "we have gold coins of Skanda Gupta divided into two distinct classes, distinguished by weight, obverse and reverse legends: the coins of the type struck on a standard of about 132 grains, are, perhaps the earlier, as they are mostly connected in weight with Kumāra Gupta's gold coins; the second class coins struck on a standard of 144.6 grains of baser metal; these probably belong to the later period of the reign." Smith(2) also held the same opinion that "the incursions of nomad tribes from the North-West gradually shattered his power, ... his courage in his later years deteriorated." Elsewhere, the learned scholar observed: "The financial distress of Skanda Gupta's administration is plainly indicated by the abrupt debasement of the coinage in his later years. The gold coins of his early and prosperous days agree in both weight and fineness with those of his ancestors, but the later issues, while increased in gross weight, so as to suit the ancient Hindu standard of the Suvarna, exhibit a decline in the

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.XCVIII

(2) C.I.M.I. p.98.

amount of pure gold in each piece from 108 to 73 grains."[1] The alleged debasement of the coinage was attributed by Smith to "the difficulty which the treasury experienced in meeting the cost of the Hūṇa war."[2] It is important to point out that the theory of debasement of coins by Skanda Gupta is based on the report of chemical analysis given by Cunningham in his 'Coins of Mediaeval India."[3] In the chart given by Cunningham, 48 coins of Skanda Gupta of lighter weight have as the average 108.4 grains of pure gold and only 16.2 grains of alloy, while the average of 9 gold coins of Suvarṇa standard have as much as 67 grains of alloy and only 73 grains of pure gold. It is on the authority of this chart that the whole theory of the repetition of Hūṇa invasions in the last years of Skanda Gupta is based, and that in itself has been used to explain the debasement (?) of the coins of Suvarṇa standard, issued by Skanda Gupta. Because Puru Gupta's coins are of Suvarṇa standard, and are also considered debased, it is held that Puru Gupta must have followed, not preceded Skanda Gupta. But the entire foundation of this attractive theory is destroyed by the report of the British Museum laboratory on the coins of

---

(1) E.H.I. p.326. (2) ibid p.327.

(3) C.M.I. p.16.

Skanda Gupta and Puru Gupta. In all eight coins of Skanda Gupta were sent for chemical analysis, Nos. 417, 418, 419, 422 and 423 of the British Museum Catalogue, and having the old standard of 132 grains in weight contain 74 or 75%, 74%, 67%, 67% and 72% of pure gold respectively, while Nos. 426, 427 and 428 belonging to the heavier standard (Suvarna) of 146.4 grains, have respectively 79%, 76% and 79 or 78% of pure gold. (1) Thus it is clear that the heavy-standard coins of Skanda Gupta were not debased at all, and are in no case inferior in quality, if not superior, to the issues on old standard of 132 grains. It is evident, therefore, that Skanda Gupta issued gold coins of almost equal purity at the same time and there is no ground to postulate difficult days in the later years of Skanda Gupta. As a matter of fact on the basis of the report on the eight coins of Skanda Gupta, it may be remarked that the issues on the old standard are less pure in gold than those on the heavy standard. The two coins of Puru Gupta in the British Museum catalogue weigh 142.7 and 141.4 grains respectively, (2) and the weight of Hoey's coin, which is now in the British Museum is 142.2 grains. The two coins Nos. 33 and 34, in the Indian Museum catalogue, page 107, which were attributed

---

(1) Appendix I, a, b and c.

(2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.134 Nos. 550-551

to Candra Gupta II but correctly belong to Puru Gupta, weigh 142.1 and 146.2 grains, and are "fairly good gold," and "fairly well executed."(1) The Hoey's coin of Puru Gupta has 70% of gold(2) while No.550 of the British Museum catalogue Has 77% of gold.(3) Thus it is clear that there was no appreciable debasement of currency in the time of Puru Gupta, and therefore the theory that Puru Gupta followed Skanda Gupta, on the authority of purity of gold in their coins does not stand. What actually happened is that Puru Gupta could exercise his effective suzerainty only over the Eastern provinces of the empire, while the North-Western, Western and South-Western provinces were practically lost because of the raids by the Hūṇas and the rebellions by other claimants to the throne - Skanda Gupta, Ghatotkaca Gupta and Candra Gupta II. Puru Gupta issued the Suvarṇa standard of coins. When Skanda Gupta established his authority over the far flung empire he continued to issue the Suvarṇas but at the same time struck coins on the old standard popular with Kumāra Gupta I and Candra Gupta II. It is possible that the coins issued on the two different standards were circulating in different districts of the empire, and as Skanda Gupta was master of the entire

---

(1) C.I.M.I p.107, Nos. 33-34. (2) Appendix IC.

(3) Appendix Ia.

extent of the empire, he continued the two distinct standards.(1) When Skanda Gupta came to the throne, he had to be busy fighting the Hūṇas, and therefore in his early years he had no time to issue new varieties of coin-types. Therefore, he must have continued the issue of the common archer-type of coins, and except for the name and the title followed the style and weight of Puru Gupta's coins. A comparison between Nos.10-15, and 1-2 of plates XIX and XX of the British Museum catalogue representing the heavy standard coins of Skanda Gupta with those of Puru Gupta (Plate XXI, Nos. 23, 24 and 25) will bear this point out. It was probably when Skanda Gupta had completely routed the Hūṇas, frustrated the ambitious of his rivals and established peace and settled government throughout the dominion that he could issue a special variety of coins - King and Lakṣmī type - to emphasise his devotion to Lakṣmī, whose favouritism to Skanda Gupta is more than once stressed in the inscriptions. One of such coins (No.422, B.M.C.) has only 67% of gold; this may be due to its being worn out. Thus we have tried to show that the numismatic evidence does not go against our contention that Skanda Gupta followed, not preceded Puru Gupta.

---

(1) We are indebted for this suggestion to Mr.J.Allan.

Another objection against our contention may be noted. P.L.Gupta holds that Puru Gupta must have followed Skanda Gupta otherwise "if Skanda Gupta succeeded Puru Gupta after a struggle, he would never let him or his heirs survive to come into power again."(1) This is rather a dangerous premise and it is hardly fair to regard every successful winner in the race for the possession of throne to be a prototype of Shāhjahān or Aurangzeb. We have urged that it is not necessary to believe in a bloody and fratricidal war. The inherent qualities of Skanda Gupta, proved in the acute national crisis, must have helped him to stage the coup d'état without much bloodshed, if any at all; the rivals may have surrendered and then received pardon.

---

(1) I.H.Q. XXII p.319 Note. 16.

CHAPTER II

Skanda Gupta and Kumāra Gupta II.

Skanda Gupta.

Skanda Gupta followed Puru Gupta early in 137 G.E. (= 456 A.D.) But it was not to a bed of roses that he had fought his way. The terrible Hūṇas were over-running the country and desecrating the sacred mother-land. "The hostile kings, like so many serpents, were lifting up their heads in pride and arrogance."(1) Taking advantage of the internal and external misfortunes of the empire, "his enemies had put themselves forward in the desire for conquest that was so highly welcome to them."(2) The echo of the family troubles might not have died out, and Skanda Gupta must have had to make his authority felt in the different parts of the empire, affected by rebellions by members of the royal family. An empire distracted by ravages of the Hūṇas' raids, and thrown into confusion by rebellions within, needed peace and settled government. In other words, Skanda Gupta had to face all the problems which could

(1) C.I.I. III NO.14 p.62f.

(2) ibid, No.13 p.55.

have baffled the genius of the best statesman.

But Skanda Gupta rose equal to the occasion and proved to be the man of the hour. He utilised the authority of (his local) representatives, who were so many Garuḍas[1] against the hostile kings (Serpents), and subdued his enemies who had developed a desire for conquest.'[2] The war against the Hūṇas was hard and terrible. If Vikramāditya of Kathāsaritsāgara[3] is Skanda Gupta, then we are to believe that after his accession, he waged war against the Mlecchas. The story of the Candragarbha-Paripṛicchā[4] about the son of Mahendrasena (Kumāra Gupta Mahendrāditya) also suggests that Skanda Gupta had to continue war against the Hūṇas up to twelve years of his reign. The length of the period of the Hūṇic war, given in the story, may not be correct. From the Junāgaḍh inscription of Skada Gupta inscribed in 138 G.E.[5] we come to know that Skanda had crushingly defeated the Hūṇas, "having their pride broken down to the very root," and had driven them out of the country so successfully that his fame was sung

---

(1) ibid, No.14 p.62. (2) Ibid No.13 p.55

(3) Tawney (Penzer) IX, p.1f.

(4) Bu-Ston, op. cit. pp.171-2.

(5) C.I.I. III No.14 p.62f.

"even in the country of the Mlecchas." According to the Kathāsaritasāgara,[1] Vikramāditya (Skanda Gupta), soon after his accession sent an army on a digvijaya, and there is a reference to his conquest of the Southern countries, Madhyadeśa, Surāṣṭra, all the Eastern regions of the Ganges, and Kashmir. We are informed that the Kings of Gauḍa, Lāṭa, Kashmir, Sindha, and those of the Bhillas and the Persians surrendered to him. Of course the account is too conventional to be adopted as absolutely true history: but in view of the succession of Skanda Gupta being in nature of a coup d'état, amidst rebellions and foreign invasions, it is reasonable to believe that Skanda Gupta must have satisfied himself that his sovereignty was acknowledged throughout the length and breadth of the empire. Therefore, the early years of his reign must have been fairly busy and disturbed. But before 141 G.E., "complete peace and tranquility reigned in the empire,"[2] and this emphasis on the peaceful character of the reign in an inscription dated 141 G.E.[3] proves that the early years of the reign were not tranquil, but by 141 G.E. i.e. about five years after his accession, the troublous days were over and settled government was established throughout the empire.

---

(1) Tawney (Penzer) IX p.1f.

(2) C.I.I. III No.15 pp.67-68.

(3) Ibid.

The disturbances in the empire had naturally adversely affected the administration, and the provincial governors and high officers of the State must have lost their morale and impartiality. The anxiety of Skanda Gupta to find out a capable person to administer the Western provinces[1] shows that he was still apprehensive of the Hūṇas. The same inscription also informs us that "he appointed protectors in all the countries."[2] This fact - the new appointment of governors of the provinces - further strengthens our contention that Skanda Gupta had to deal with internal crisis as well. It is quite possible that he might have appointed new governors enjoying his confidence in place of others whose loyalty to him in the civil war was not above board. However, there can be no doubt that Skanda Gupta re-established a benevolent and efficient administration, and so the epithet "Parahitākāri"[3] on his coins is not misplaced.

---

(1) C.I.I. III No.14 p.62f

(2) ibid.

(3) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.CXXI

Extent of the Empire.

Thus, Skanda Gupta had successfully tided over a series of serious crises that overwhelmed the dynasty, the empire and the country. He had attained his objects step by step. He made his position secure on the throne, got his suzerainty acknowledged throughout the empire, warded off the Hūṇa menace, crushed the insubordinate spirit of the feudatories and established settled government and good administration in the land. All these achievements were made possible by the sterling qualities of his character - "by daily intense application, by means of his good behaviour and strength, and politic conduct,"(1) and by his skilful acquisition and employment of resources against his enemies. The Junāgaḍh rock inscription(2) shows that he was master of Surāṣṭra by 137 G.E; by 141 G.E.(3) he was master of the Eastern provinces. Some of his heavy-weight coins were found in Bihar(4) and Bengal.(5) His extensive and varied silver coinage proves that he ruled over the Western dominions of the empire.(6) The Garuḍa type was issued

(1) C.I.I. III No.13 p55. (2) Ibid, No.14 p.62f.

(3) Ibid, No.15 p.66. (4) C.C.G.D.B.M. No.429 p.118.

(5) J.N.S.I. VII. p.13f. (6) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.XLVIII.

for circulation in Western India,[1] and the Altar type in Central India, while the Bull or Nandī type circulated in Kāṭhiāwāḍ and the Gulf of Cambey area.[2] On one variety of the Altar-type of the Silver Coins, Skanda Gupta is referred to as 'Vikramāditya'[3] while the usual title given to him is 'Kramāditya.' The peacock type was in circulation in the central provinces of the empire and it is of two classes according to a slight difference in legend on the reverse. The legend on the Bull-type of the Silver coinage is usually defective.[4] Skanda Gupta also issued gold coins, but they "do not present the variety of types found in the preceding reigns."[5] Skanda was too preoccupied with more serious affairs to indulge in the luxury of introducing too many innovations in the coinage of his period. When all the dangers were successfully averted, and peace and prosperity reigned, he issued a special type of gold coins - King and Lakṣmī type[6] to celebrate his claim to be the special favourite of the goddess Lakṣmī, or to express his gratitude to the goddess who had selected him after discarding all the other sons of the King.

---

(1) Bannerji R.D. O.C. p.243. (2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p. CI

(3) C.C.G.D.B.M. p. CII. (4) Ibid p.CXXI

(5) Ibid, p. XCVIII. (6) Ibid p.116.

It is, therefore, clear that the rule of Skanda Gupta extended over almost the whole of Northern India, from the Himālayas in the North to the Vindhyas in the South, and from the Arabian Sea in the West to the Bay of Bengal in the East. He certainly maintained in tact the extensive dominion left by his father and grandfather.

An estimate of Skanda Gupta.

Skanda Gupta reigned from C. 456 - 470 A.D. (the last known date on a silver coin is 148 G.E.). During this short period, compared to the long reigns of his father and grandfather, he achieved wonders. He was the national hero, who relieved the suffering of the motherland, groaning under the oppressive hoofs of the barbaric Hūṇas, and saved the empire and the dynasty from total eclipse. He was a benevolent ruler with scrupulous regard for justice and law. His subjects must have suffered evils of maladministration during the disturbed years that intervened between the death of Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta's victories over his internal and external enemies; and, therefore, his virtuous and just administration is specially noted in the Junāgadh inscription[1] - "While, he, the King

(1) C.I.I. III NO.14 p.62f

is reigning, verily no man among his subjects falls away from religion; and there is no one who is distressed in poverty, or in misery, or avaricious or who, worthy of punishment, is over-much put to torture." Verily, such a paternal and just ruler would win the hearts of the grateful people and the heroism and patience of this saviour of the nation was "Sung in every region by happy men, even down to the children."(1) His anxiety for the peace and security of the empire and the prosperity of the people is illustrated by the tests or standards that he set for the appointment of a governor of a province. A governor was to be "suitable, endowed with intellect, modest, possessed of a disposition that is not destitute of wisdom and memory; endowed with truth and straightforwardness, civility and fame; loyal, affectionate; endowed with manly characteristics; 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

---

(1) Ibid, No.13 pp.55-56.

in lawful acquisition of wealth and also in 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."(1) The formidable list of qualities that Skanda Gupta sought in the appointed governor of Surāṣṭra compares well with the qualifications of the highest officers of the state laid down by Kauṭilya. Even a casual glance at the considerations that Skanda Gupta made in his choice of the governor of Surāṣṭra, will make it clear that he was as much guided by the desire for seeing the people happy and prosperous as for the enrichment of the treasury and the stability of the administration. The interests of the ruler and the ruled were identical, and Skanda Gupta must have been very keen that his ideals of administration were worked out by his provincial governors. This may also partly account for the hesitation on the part of Parṇadatta to accept the responsible post.(2)

Thus, Skanda Gupta was a great conqueror, a liberator of the nation, the restorer of the pride of the imperial Guptas, and above all the fountain head of a benevolent administration. His achievements clearly

---

(1) Ibid, No.14, p.62f.

(2) C.I.I. III, No.14 p.62f.

place him with his great ancestors Candra Gupta Maurya, As'oka, Samudra Gupta and Candra Gupta II Vikramāditya. It is quite in keeping with the facts of history that "the language of his inscriptions shows that his exploits were considered quite as great as those of Samudra Gupta."(1) It is no exaggeration to describe him as resembling "the God Sakra,"(2) and, as "the most eminent hero in the lineage of the Guptas."(3) Even the author of the Ārya-Manju Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa, a Buddhist religious work, observes as his considered opinion that "He will be the best, wise and religious king (Śreṣṭhaḥ buddhimāna dharmavatsalaḥ) in that low age (yugādhame)"(4) - a testimony which is well corroborated by the epigraphy.(5) He followed the traditional ancient Indian policy of religious toleration, and though he was a devotee of Visnu (Paramabhāgavata),(6) in his time Jaina images were set up;(7) Siva's bull is found on one type of his coins.(8)

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.XLVII. (2) C.I.I. III, No.15 p.67.

(3) Ibid, No.13 p.55. (4) I.H.I. pp.33, 47-48 (Text)

(5) C.I.I. III NO.14 p.62f. Analogus to the 'yugādhama' in the Ārya-manju-Śrī-mūla-kalpa, we have the expression in line 13, "Even in this time, which is a mean one.

(6) Found on his silver coins, C.C.G.D.B.M. p.119.

(8) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.121. (7) C.I.I. III No.15 p.66f.

The last known date of Skanda Gupta is 148 G.E. (= 467-68 A.D.), found on a silver coin.[1] We have an inscription from Sārnāth[2] dated in the Gupta year 154 (= 473-74 A.D.) when "Kumāra Gupta was protecting the earth." Therefore the reign of Skanda Gupta must have been over before 473 A.D. Scholars have identified this Kumāra Gupta with Kumāra Gupta of the Bhitāri seal, but it has been shown above that this identification should be given up. Therefore, there is no reason to place the end of Skandra Gupta's reign in 467 A.D. We may put the end of Skanda Gupta's reign in C.470 A.D.

The last years of Skanda Gupta.

It is very unfortunate that we have no materials to construct an authoritative history of the later years of Skanda Gupta's reign. It has been suggested by Smith[3] that in the last years of his reign there were renewed Hūṇa invasions and "he was unable to continue the successful resistance which he had offered in the earlier days of his rule, and was forced at last to succumb to the repeated attacks of the foreigners." It is really

(1) J.R.A.S. 1889 p.134.

(2) A.S.I.A.R, 1914-15, p.123.

(3) E.H.I. p.328.

very unfortunate that this severe indictment of the "best, wise and religious King of that low Age," though supported by no positive evidence, is repeated by many other scholars. R.D. Bannerji[1] speaks of more than one Hūṇa blow in the time of Skanda Gupta. "The subsequent history of the reign of Skanda Gupta is not known to us. But the Hūṇa invasions continued and most probably Skanda Gupta lost his life in trying to stem the mighty flood of the third invasion." The learned scholar then chooses the people of Magadha as a target for his attacks. "In India we do not know what preparations were made by the emperor Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta, to meet the outburst of barbarians through the Northern passes. Pāṭaliputra was still the capital of India, and Magadha still the leader of the nations of Northern India. Did the Māgadhas realise the importance of the sacred trust placed in their charge by the people of Northern India? The verdict of history is against them. For the last time in the history of Magadha, the people of that province failed in their duty. The Western gates of India were neglected in the time of Kumāra Gupta I and swarm after swarm of barbarians poured through it. Chinese historians have recorded the

---

(1) Bannerji O.C. pp.47-49

destruction of the cities of Bactria and Afghanistan. Did Kumāra Gupta I make any attempt to succour the minor Kuṣāna chiefs of these two countries? Our records are silent on this point and we have to admit that at the supreme moment the people of Magadha belied their trust. .... The influx of Roman gold and the soft life of a century of peace and prosperity had enervated the people of Magadha."

A critical analysis of the long quotation given above will show that Mr. Bannerji had no positive proofs to substantiate his grave charges against the Kings and the people of Magadha. When the subsequent history of the reign of Skanda Gupta is not known to us, it is hardly fair to postulate a dangerous hypothesis that 'Skanda Gupta died fighting the Hūṇas'. It is really unjust, to say the least, to condemn great rulers and a great people, "when our records are silent", and we do not know "anything about the preparations made by emperors Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta to meet this outburst of barbarians." It is true that the Hūṇas made inroads into Indian territories in the last years of Kumāra Gupta I, and probably also in the early years of Skanda Gupta's reign. The Hūṇa raids in Asia and

Europe in the 5th Century were the outcome of a series of mass movements of a terrible people who swept away everything that came in their way. Such mass human migrations are known to have happened before and after the Hūṇas. The Aryans, the S'akas and the Kuṣānas preceded, and the Turks and the Mongols followed the Hūṇas' adventures. Against such upsurging of restless and savage peoples great and powerful empires and civilizations have been "forced to bow down before the storm, and let the legions thunder past." The Hūṇas established themselves in the Oxus basin in about 448 A.D.(1) The North-west-Frontier kingdoms of India felt the weight of their onslaughts subsequently. We cannot make Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta directly responsible for the defence of the North-western passes, which were far outside the limits of their empire: the utmost that can be said is that the imperial Guptas like Samudra Gupta and Candra Gupta II should have included this region under their empire, but that is not the fault of Kumāra Gupta I, and certainly not of Skanda Gupta who had to deal with more serious problems of consolidation and preservation of the extensive kingdom than the extension of boundaries. The fact that while the Hūṇas were masters of the Oxus

---

(1) I.A. XLVI p.287

Valley in 448 A.D., and could enter the territories of the Gupta empire so late as in 454-55 A.D., implies that preparations were made to protect the North-western frontiers of the empire. The Hūṇas invaded the Gupta empire during the last days of the old emperor Kumāra Gupta I. Unfortunately the invasion coincided with the rebellion of the powerful Puṣyamitras and the death of Kumāra Gupta I. Worst of all internal dissensions broke out and the weak Puru Gupta on the throne was unable to cope with the situation. This gave to the Hūṇas an initial advantage and they may have even desecrated the plains of Northern India,(1) and the Western provinces of the empire. Fortunately, the days of darkness were shortlived, and the accession of Skanda Gupta brought forth the best in the government and the people to defeat the barbarians. Skanda Gupta won a resounding victory over the Hūṇas, certainly before 138 G.E. (457-58 A.D.) when the Junāgaḍh inscription(2) was inscribed. The Hūṇas were crushingly defeated; their "pride was broken down to the very root,"(3) and they were driven back to "their own country," where the

---

(1) Reference to the roaring of the Gangā in connection with the war with the Hūṇas (C.I.I. III No.13 p.56)

(2) C.I.I. III NO.14, p.62f.

(3) Ibid.

fame of Skanda Gupta was sung. The victory over the Hūṇas was final; the sacred soil of the mother land was freed from the "barbarian Mlecchas" and there is no ground to contend that the Hūṇas, even after their severe defeat, continued to invade the empire, and Skanda Gupta died fighting. Inscriptions of his reign do not give the remotest suggestion of any dark clouds, overhanging the horizon of the empire during the later years of his rule. The Kahāum Stone-pillar-inscription dated 141 G.E. speaks of "the tranquil reign of Skanda Gupta"[1] the Indor copper-plate-inscription of the year 146 G.E. (= 465-66 A.D.) refers to his "augmenting victorious reign"[2] and the Gaḍhwā inscription of the year 148 G.E. (= 467-68) which seems to have contained the name of Skanda Gupta, describes his reign as of increasing victory.[3] His last known date on a silver coin is 148 G.E. (= 467-68 A.D.).

Therefore, it may be assumed with a considerable degree of certainty that the defeated and humiliated Hūṇas had learnt to respect the might of the people of Magadha and their ruler, and dared not transgress the frontiers of the Gupta empire. The frontiers of the

---

(1) Ibid, No.15 p.67. (2) Ibid, No.16 p.71.

(3) Ibid No.66 p.268.

empire could hardly be neglected by an able ruler like Skanda Gupta; this is clear from the Junāgaḍh inscription[1] wherein it is stated that "having conquered the whole earth (and) having destroyed the height of the pride of (his) enemies" he, "appointed protectors in all the countries," and "cogitated in many ways" over the question of selection of the governor of a frontier province like Surāṣṭra. It is quite reasonable to conclude that such a ruler would not have neglected other vulnerable frontiers of the empire. The people of Magadha rose equal to the occasion, and in Skanda Gupta they produced a national hero, who saved the country from a terrible menace. The Māgadhas, as on other occasions, again fulfilled the mission of rescuing the country from peril. If Candra-Gupta Maurya liberated the country from the "yoke of the servitude of the Greeks", if Candra Gupta II Vikramāditya destroyed the power of the foreign Śakas, Skanda Gupta saved the empire and the country from the occuptaion of the Hūṇas. It was therefore in fitness of things that he assumed the titles Kramāditya and Vikramāditya and became a hero of Indian legends.[2] One class of his silver coins has the legend Vikramāditya.[3] Instead of

---

(1) Ibid No.14 p.62f. (2) Tawney (Penzer) O.C. IX, p.1f

(3) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.122-24f.

condemning Māgadhas and their king we have reasons to be grateful to them for saving the country and its civilization from the fate that the Romans and their civilizations suffered at the hands of the Hūṇas. "At the supreme moment" the people of Magadha and their ruler were put to a severe test and they proved that even "the influx of a Roman gold and the soft life of a century of peace and prosperity" failed to "enervate them" and deflect them from the duty of discharging their historical mission, which destiny has been pleased to entrust to Magadha more than once.

There is really no reason to believe in the repeated and successful (?) invasions of the Hūṇas in the life time of Skanda Gupta. The Hūṇas, after being repulsed from India in C.457 A.D. by Skanda Gupta, were busy hammering against the Persian empire, and it was only after the death of Firuz in 484 A.D., (long after the death of Skanda Gupta), that they could plan large-scale invasions of India. Toramāna's occupation of Malwa[1] must be dated after A.D. 484-85, the date of Budha Gupta's Eran inscription;[2] indeed much later, as some time must have elapsed subsequent to the death of Firuz in 484 A.D., in the invasion and occupation

---

(1) C.I.I. No. 36 pp. 158f. (2) Ibid, No.19 p.90f.

of the frontier kingdoms of India like Kabul and the adjoining territories governed by the Kuṣāṇas. Therefore, Toramāṇa's and Mihirakula's successful violation of Indian territories may be safely put in the last decade of the fifth and early sixth centuries after Christ.

The real sheet-anchor of the theory of more than one Hūṇa invasion in the time of Skanda Gupta and alleged consequent loss of some parts of the empire was the numismatic argument that the heavy-weight coins of Skanda Gupta were debased and therefore issued during the later critical years of the reign, and the elements responsible for this must have been the Hūṇas.(1) Allan supposed that there was a loss of some part of his Western dominions, besides troublous times in the later years of Skanda Gupta. Smith(2) believed that about A.D.465, the Huṇas made themselves master of Gandhāra and in about 470, they attacked Skanda Gupta who was unable to successfully resist them. It was the cost of the Hūnic war which was responsible for the "marked lowering of the purity of the currency." Bannerji(3) echoed the same sentiments. But the whole hypothesis is proved wrong by the British

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.XLIX. He refers to the depreciation in the purity of gold in the heavier-standard of coins, which he considered to be later in date (ibid XLVIII).

(2) E.A.I. p.328.

(3) Bannerji, op.cit. p.49.

Museum laboratory-report on the coins of Skanda Gupta[1] and therefore there is no ground to imagine Hūṇa invasions during the later years of his reign to explain the alleged debasement of the heavy-weight coins of Skanda Gupta. Moreover, it may be urged, just for argument, that even if there had been any regular debasement of currency, it is more reasonable to assign such a currency to the early years of his reign when we have positive evidence about the internal and external troubles facing Skanda Gupta.

Some have tried to find support for the theory that the last days of Skanda Gupta were not happy, from the Mandasore inscription of Prabhākara, dated in the Mālava year 524 (= 467-68 A.D.)[2] The inscription mentions the early Gupta emperor Candra Gupta II and his son Govinda Gupta. It records a donation by Prabhākara's commander-in-chief, Dattabhaṭa, son of Vāyurakṣita, the general of Govinda Gupta. The way in which Prabhākara is mentioned certainly suggests that he was a feudatory of the Guptas.[3] From the inscription it is not clear whether Govinda Gupta was then alive and whether he was a paramount ruler. Because Indra is referred to as being

---

(1) Appendix I -C.

(2) A.S.I.A.R. 1922-23.p.187

(3) E.I. XIX, Appendix, p.2. Note 5.

suspicious of Govinda Gupta, Bhandarkar[1] suggested that "the latter seems to have been a supreme ruler." The allusion to Indra may be only conventional, and Govinda Gupta may have been a high officer. The non-mention of Skanda Gupta's name in the inscription does not necessarily mean loss of his sovereignty in Western Malāva. The Pāli copper plate[2] found in a village close to Kosām in Allahabad district, and dated in 158 G.E., belongs to Mahārāja Lakṣmaṇa who must have been a feudatory or an official under Budha Gupta, who was definitely master of this part of the country, but the inscription does not mention his name. Moreover it may be pointed out that Kumāra Gupta II who followed Skanda Gupta, is referred to in the Mandasore stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman dated 472-3 A.D.[3]

It has been also suggested that during the last years of his reign, Skanda Gupta lost Malava to the Vākāṭakas. The source of this inference is the Bāṭāghaṭ plates of Pṛithvīṣena II: from this inscription we learn that the Commander of Narendrasena father of Prithvisena were honoured by the lords of Kosala, Mēkalā and Mālava.[4] The Vākāṭaka-Chronology is very much confused, and it is not yet settled whether Narendra Sena was a contemporary

---

(1) E.I. XIX, Appendix, p.2, Note 5. (2) E.I. II p.364f
(3) C.I.I. III, No.18 p.79f; H.R. Jan.1918 p.1f.
(4) E.I.IX. p.267f.

of Skanda Gupta. R.C. Majumdar[1] after a thorough discussion of the subject in view of recent addition to the knowledge, placed Narendrasena in the period after 480 A.D. and thus makes him a contemporary of Budha Gupta. V.V. Mirashi,[2] another scholar who has devoted much attention to the history of the Vākāṭakas, places the accession of Narendrasena in C.450 A.D. It may be pointed out that Narendrasena was the maternal great-grandson of Candra Gupta II, and therefore the Gupta contemporary of Narendrasena may not have been Skanda Gupta, the grandson of Candra Gupta II, but Budha Gupta the great-grandson of Candragupta II. Narendrasena may have taken advantage of the Hūnic raids in the early years of 6th Century A.D., and while Tramāna made himself master of Eastern Malwa (Eran)[3] Western Malwa may have surrendered to Narendrasena. But if the dates proposed for Narendrasena are not acceptable, and an earlier date proposed by Mirashi is ascribed to him, in that case it is possible that during the invasions of the Hūṇas and the internal dissensions in the Gupta empire immediately after the death of Kumāra Gupta I, Narendrasena extorted allegiance from Malwa temporarily of course. After his

---

(1) J.A.S.B.L. (XII) p.1f (2) A.B.N.U.H.S. Oct.1946 p.8f

(3) C.I.I. III No.36 pp.158f.

success against the Hūṇas and his rivals to the throne, Skanda Gupta must have recovered his Western province of Malāva. The Vākāṭakas lost their power; this is clear from the Bālāghāṭ inscription of Pṛithviṣena that he "raised his sunken family." Anyway, it should be accepted that there is no evidence that Malwa was lost to the Guptas in the later years of Skanda Gupta. As we shall see, Malwa including its Western part (Mandasore) remained in the possession of Kumāra Gupta II, the successor of Skanda Gupta. In view of the points urged above it should be safe to hold that in spite of troublous days in his earlier years of rule, Skanda Gupta, for the larger part of his reign, presided over a peaceful and prosperous empire, and left to his successors a realm almost unreduced in extent.

Kumāra Gupta II.

Skanda Gupta was succeeded by Kumāra Gupta II of the Sārnāth inscription.(1) We have seen that it is not correct to identify him with Kumāra Gupta of the Bhiṭārī Seal.(2) The identification cannot stand in view of the discovery of the Nālandā seals of Budha Gupta(3)

(1) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15 p.123. (2) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.84f.
(3) M.A.S.I. NO.66 p.64.

and Visnu Gupta.[1] Budha Gupta is a son of Puru Gupta,[2] and therefore it is more than improbable that Budha Gupta would succeed Visnu Gupta, his grand-nephew, and rule for at least nineteen years. It is physically impossible to cramp four reigns of four generations of fathers and sons - Puru Gupta, Narasimha Gupta, Kumāra Gupta and Visnu Gupta - between 467-68 A.D. the last known date of Skanda Gupta, and 476 A.D. the earliest known date of Budha Gupta.

Therefore, we take Kumāra Gupta of the Sārnāth inscription to be Kumāra Gupta II, and he of the Bhitāri and Nālandā seals becomes Kumāra Gupta III. Kumāra Gupta II succeeded Skanda Gupta in C.470 A.D., and according to the Sārnāth inscription he was ruling the earth in C.473-74 A.D.[3] The relationship between Kumāra Gupta II and Skanda Gupta is not known and equally obscure is the relationship existing between Kumāra Gupta and Puru Gupta. He may have been a son of Puru Gupta or Skanda Gupta, more probably of the latter, as in former case we will have to assume an abnormal situation that two sons of Puru Gupta, Kumāra Gupta and Budha Gupta died childless to be followed by Narasimha Gupta, another son of Puru Gupta.

---

(1) E.I. XXVI, p.235f.

(2) M.A.S.I. NO.66 p.64 I.H.Q. XIX p.274; XX. p.119f.

(3) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15. p.123.

Skanda Gupta may have had a son who succeeded him as Kumāra Gupta II.

Coins of Kumāra Gupta II.

That, there were two Kumāra Guptas besides Kumāra Gupta I, is proved by numismatic evidence. Allan[1] attributed all the Archer-type of gold coins with the legend Ku or Kumāra Gupta to Kumāra Gupta of the Bhiṭāri seal. These coins in view of their heavy weight and poor finish cannot be ascribed to Kumāra Gupta I Mahendrāditya. It is important to note (a fact so far ignored) that Allan distinguishes between two distinct classes of these coins, "(a) a small number of class I of good gold with traces of a marginal legend and of style fairly good for the period, and (b) a class II of very rude workmanship and base metal some of which seem never to have had a marginal legend, e.g. compare Nos. 13 and 14 with No.15 of plate XXII."[2] These two classes of coins are so different from one another that the same authority opined that "these two classes are probably the issues of different districts."[3] We suggest that they are

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.140-43; p.CIV.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

issues of two different rulers, the class I type belonging to Kumāra Gupta II (Sārṇāth inscription) and Class II to Kumāra Gupta III of the Bhiṭārī and Nālandā seals. A careful perusal of the gold coins of the Archer type alleged to belong to Kumāra Gupta, son of Narasiṁha Gupta, leaves no doubt about the correctness of our conclusion. The class I of the Archer type is better in style, clearer in legend, lighter in weight and purer in metal than the class II ones.(1) According to the generally accepted view that the heavier and baser coins are later in date than the lighter and finer ones, it is quite reasonable to assume that some interval of time must have elapsed between the issuing of the coins of the two classes. For the period, which Mr. Allan attributed to the coins, the class I type were, according to the scholar, of a style "fairly good for the period."(2) Actually the learned scholar was intuitively correct, as the class I type coins do belong to an earlier period. At the time of the preparation of the catalogue, he could have no knowledge of the existence of another Kumāra Gupta other than the son of Narasiṁha Gupta, hence the attribution of the entirely two different types of coin to this Kumāra Gupta. Compared with the coins of

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M., pp.140-143. (2) Ibid p.CIV.

Narasimha Gupta, the class I type of Kumāra Gupta coins are lighter in weight while class II type are heavier than the coins of Narasimha Gupta.(1) Therefore it may be reasonably held that class I type were issued before the time of Narasimha Gupta by Kumāra Gupta II, and the class II type, later than Narasimha Gupta, by his son Kumāra Gupta III.

Our contention has been remarkably confirmed by chemical analysis of the coins. On our request, Mr. J. Allan, sent the coins Nos. 571 and 576 of the British Museum catalogue to the laboratory to test the purity of gold in the coins. Coin No. 571 which belongs to class I type has 79% of gold, while No. 576 of class II type has only 54% of gold.(2) The obvious inference is that the two coins or rather the two classes of the coins under discussion were issued by two different kings of the same name at a considerable interval of time; this accounts for the great difference in the purity of the coins. On the report from the laboratory, Allan's remark is, "These show that you are right in attributing the base Ku coins to a Kumāra Gupta III."(3) The very high

---

(1) Ibid, pp.137-143.

(2) Appendix Ia.

(3) Ibid.

percentage of gold in class I type of the coins at once fixes these in a period much earlier than Kumāra Gupta, son of Narasiṁha Gupta. On this ground alone Kumāra Gupta II cannot be placed much later than Skanda Gupta.

Another equally important point is to be noticed. The custom of engraving a single letter between the feet of the king, on the obverse such as 'Ku', 'U', 'Gre', 'Go', 'jā', 'Bhā', etc., is later in time, as it does not appear on the coins of Samudragupta, Candra Gupta II, Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta. It occurs on the coins of Prakāsāditya; Narasiṁha Gupta, Viṣṇu Gupta and on class II variety of coins under discussion. It is certainly very significant that this practice is conspicuous by its absence on the class I type of Kumāra Gupta's coins. In the British Museum catalogue there are only two coins of this type and on none of them is any single letter engraved between the feet of the king;(1) while on coins of class II group we have invariably either 'Go' or 'jā' between the feet of the king on the obverse.(2) This distinguishing feature gives additional weight to our point that the two types of the coins - class I and class II - were issued by two different rulers. It should be, therefore, admitted that this practice of using a particular

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.170, Pl. XXII.13,14.

(2) Ibid pp.141-143. PL.XXII 15; XXIII, 4.

single letter in between the feet of the king on the obverse of the gold coins was begun by Prakās'āditya (Budha Gupta, son of Puru Gupta) and was loyally followed by the rulers belonging to Puru Gupta's line. This may serve as an additional proof for our hypothesis that Kumāra Gupta II belonged more probably to a line different from that of Puru Gupta. At any rate this particular point, noted above, should be regarded as another reason to hold that Kumāra Gupta who issued the class I type of coins preceded Budha Gupta, and should be identified with Kumāra Gupta of the Sārṇāth inscription and be distinguished from Kumāra Gupta of the Bhiṭārī Seal.

No less significant fact is the difference in the palaeography of the inscriptions in the two types of the coins. A look at the photographs of the three coins belonging to the two classes (under discussion) will substantiate the point. The letter 'Ku' on No. 3 of the plate I is much different from the same letter in Nos. 4 and 5. No. 3 belongs to class I, while 4 and 5 belong to class II.(1) The 'Ku' on 4 and 5 is much more developed in form than 'Ku' on No. 3, and the difference in the character of the letter 'Ku' on

(1) Plate I, 3, 4, 5.

the two types must be explained by an interval of time which may well have been about fifty years.[1] Allan was right when he suggested that class I type coins appear to belong to an earlier period.

The two classes of coins are so different in finish, style, purity of metal, legends on the inscription, and palaeography, that except for the common reverse title "Kramāditya" and "Kṵ" on the obverse, there is nothing to take them as issued by one and the same king. A mere look at the coins under discussion will substantiate the point urged above.[2] Allan points out the similarity in style, notably the treatment of the legs of the goddess on the reverse, between the coin of Ghaṭotkaca Gupta, and the class I type of coins of Kumāra Gupta II. We have already placed Ghaṭotkaca Gupta in the period immediately after the death of Kumāra Gupta I; and therefore the class I type of the coins of Kumāra Gupta II must be placed nearer to Ghaṭotkaca Gupta in time than to the period of Narasiṁha Gupta's successor in the 6th century A.D.

Thus, it should be now taken as established that the numismatic evidences instead of knowing only

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p. CIV.

(2) Ibid

one Kumāra Gupta besides Kumāra Gupta I (1) prove the existence of two Kumāra Guptas who must have been separated from one another by a period of about fifty years to allow the deterioration in the coinage and the development of the character 'Ku'. We have already adduced other reasons to reject the identify of Kumāra Gupta of the Sārṇāth inscription with Kumāra Gupta of the Bhiṭāri and Nālandā seals. Numismatic considerations confirm our stand. It is, therefore, clear that Kumāra Gupta II, succeeded Skanda Gupta and issued coins which are classified as Archer type of Class I by Allan. (2)

This Kumāra Gupta II Kramāditya of the coins is identical with Kumāra Gupta of the Sārṇāth inscriptions. (3) He may be also identified with Śakrāditya of Yuan Chwang, as the builder of the Nālandā monastery; (4) and he is referred to as an old king or 'a former king'. He has been generally identified with Kumāra Gupta I Mahendrāditya (= S'akrāditya) by scholars; (5) but the

---

(1) I.H.Q. XX. p.119f. (2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.140.

(3) A.S.I.A. R., 1914-15 p.123.

(4) Watters II pp. 164-65; The Life, p.110. Introduction XXXVII; Records Vol.II p.168.

(5) This supposed identity of S'akrāditya with Kumāra Gupta I led Heras (J.B.O.R.S. XIV, p.1f) to identify Budha Gupta with Skanda Gupta! It should be noted that the Chinese 'Chi'tsu' may not necessarily mean a son but a descendant. (The Life, p.110, Note. 4). As we know that Budha Gupta came after Kumāra Gupta II, Śakrāditya who preceded Budha Gupta should be identified with Kumāra Gupta I. Budha Gupta is not the son of Kumāra Gupta I Mahendrāditya, but a son of Puru Gupta.

statement of the Chinese pilgrim that Budha Gupta succeeded S'akrāditya is more in conformity with our opinion that Kumāra Gupta II should be identified with S'akrāditya because Budha Gupta succeeded Kumāra Gupta II. It may not be impossible that Kumāra Gupta II may have imitated Kumāra Gupta I (his grandfather?) by assuming the title of S'akrāditya. It is also equally possible that Yuan Chwang may have confused the two Kumāra Guptas (he has certainly confused the chronology), and has given the title 'Sakrāditya' to Kumāra Gupta II; the title rightly belonged to Kumāra Gupta I. Kumāra Gupta II was certainly interested in Buddhism and the Sārnāth inscription (1) is a Buddhist votive inscription belonging to the reign of Kumāra Gupta. Thus, there is nothing which stands against the identification of Kumāra Gupta II with S'akrāditya of Yuan Chwang.

Kumāra Gupta II continued to exercise his suzerainty over the Western districts of the empire. It may be conceded that Valabhi may have been practically lost and Bhaṭārka may have founded the famous Maitraka dynasty, which for a long time afterwards continued to respect formally the suzerainty of the Gupta emperors. But there is clear evidence that Malwa was still under

---

(1) A.S.I.A.R, 1914-15 p.123f.

the sphere of the Gupta empire. The Mandasore inscription dated in the Mālawa years 493 and 529,[1] refers to both Kumāra Gupta I and Kumāra Gupta II. The inscription opens with the sentence, "when Kumāra Gupta is ruling," and then relates the history of the building of the temple in M.E. 493 and the passing away of many kings since that time to its repair in M.E. 529 (= 472-73 A.D.) It has been suggested[2] with good reason that Kumāra Gupta II is also referred to in the opening line besides Kumāra Gupta I. As both the building of the temple and its repair were completed in the reigns of two kings each bearing the name of Kumāra Gupta, the scribe saved repetition and also introduced an element of intelligent speculation by mentioning King Kumāra Gupta only once. The fact that the temple had been neglected and was repaired in M.E.529, has led some to suggest that the damage was done by the Hūna invasions. But it is possible that the temple may have needed some repairs within 36 years of its construction. The last years of Kumāra Gupta I were critical, and the years following his death were full of internal and external troubles.

---

(1) C.I.I. III, No.18 p.84f.

(2) H.R. Jan.1918 p.1f; H.N.E.I. p.74; J.B.B.R.A.S. (N.S.) Vol. II p.176; Sen, O.C. p.229.

The neglect of the repairs of the temple was, therefore, natural. The reference about many kings having passed away between 436-37 and 472-73 A.D. does not necessarily suggest the Hūṇa kings and Vākaṭaka to rulers besides the successors of Kumāra Gupta I. The phrase may refer to Kumāra Gupta I, Puru Gupta, and possibly Ghaṭotkaca Gupta, Skanda Gupta, and Kumāra Gupta II.

The reign of Kumāra Gupta II must have ended before 476 A.D., when Budha Gupta is referred to as ruling the earth.(1) That Kumāra Gupta II had a short reign is proved by the existence of only two of his coins in the British Museum.(2) His reign may have come to an end in C.475 A.D. The end of his reign, in one sense, marks a turning point in the dynastic history of the Imperial Guptas. The line of Skanda Gupta (?) came to an end, and Puru Gupta's descendants sat on the throne for the next three generations - Budha Gupta, Narasimha Gupta (sons of Puru Gupta), Kumāra Gupta III and Viṣnu Gupta.

---

(1) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15 pp.124-26.

(2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.140.

CHAPTER III

Budha Gupta.

The Accession of Budha Gupta.

It is not known as to how the reign of Kumāra Gupta II ended and that of Budha Gupta began. There are two identical votive inscriptions, found at Sārnāth dated in the current (Gupta) year 157, belonging to the time when "Budha Gupta was ruling the earth."(1) It is significant that the inscription of Kumāra Gupta II dated the year 154 was also found at Sārnāth, and all these three inscriptions were engraved for the same donor, Abhayamitra.(2) Therefore it is clear that Budha Gupta followed Kumāra Gupta in or before 476 A.D., say in 475 A.D. The exact circumstances in which the line of Puru Gupta recaptured the throne are not known. The allusion to Budha Gupta seizing the throne after Śakrāditya (Kumāra Gupta II) in the Life(3) may suggest that Budha Gupta might have acquired the throne after

---

(1) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15, pp.124-25. The expression 'Samatikkrānte' suggests that the Gupta year 157 was current; usually, the inscriptions are dated in "the years having passed."

(2) Ibid p.126.

(3) The Life, p.110.

some sort of coup d'état. He may have overthrown Kumāra Gupta II, whose short reign then becomes explicable. D.C.Sarkar holds that the name of the reigning Gupta emperor is not given in the Mandasore inscription of Mālava year 493 and 529,(1) and therefore he suggests an explanation, that "about 473 A.D. a struggle for the Gupta imperial throne was going on and the author avoided the mention of the reigning Gupta emperor owing to the confusion caused by it."(2) As in the year 473-74 A.D. (G.E. 154), Kumāra Gupta II was ruling the earth,(3) it is not likely that any contest for the throne had begun in 473 A.D. However, it is very possible that the change of line affected by Budha Gupta may have preceded some struggle.

His Parentage.

Budha Gupta is regarded by some(4) to be a son of Kumāra Gupta I on the basis of Yuan Chwang's

(1) C.I.I. III, p.84ff.

(2) S.I.I. p.295. Note 4.

(3) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15, p.124.

(4) P.H.A.I. (4th Edn.) p.365.

statement[1] that Budha Gupta was a descendent of S'akrāditya. But we have seen that Śakrāditya of Yuan Chwang may be Kumāra Gupta II. Some[2] have thrown a hint that Budha Gupta may have been a son of Kumāra Gupta II of the Sārnāth inscription. But all these speculations should be set at rest in view of the discovery of the Nālandā seal of Budha Gupta.[3] The inscription makes it clear that Budha Gupta was a son of Puru Gupta. The Seal, which traces the genealogy of Budha Gupta from Śrī Gupta, proves that Budha Gupta belonged to the imperial Gupta family, and not to the alleged local Gupta dynasty of Eastern Mālwa as Allan[4] suggested. The Nālandā Seal is described as "elliptical, raised border, nearly one half of the seal broken and loose; proper left showing full face, and the left side of the plumage of the man-bird Garuḍa, above two straight lines, below which comes the legend."[5] A comparative study of the photograph of the seal with those of the other royal seals of Narasiṁha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta III[6] makes it clear that Budha

---

(1) The Life, p.115, The Records II, p.168.

(2) A.S.I.A.R., 1914-15 p.126; A.B.O.R.I. p.213;

(3) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.64.

(4) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.153. (5) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.64.

(6) Ibid p.64 f, and Pl. VIII a - e.

Gupta of the seal was a royal personage belonging to the dynasty of the imperial Guptas, whose genealogy is known from the Bhiṭārī[1] and Nālandā[2] seals. It is true that the vital portion of the legend on the seal which contained the relationship between Puru Gupta and Budha Gupta is irreparably damaged; but the seal, being elliptical in shape, had shorter lines in the end, and nothing much could have been there between 'taṯya putra' (end of the 6th line), and ... 'Mahādevyāṁ utpannaḥ' (the end of the 7th) and "Budha Guptaḥ (8th line),[3] except the name of the chief queen of Puru Gupta (Candradevī) and the usual imperial titles of Budha Gupta. D.C.Sarkar[4] has shown that "there is no space for the name of any other Gupta prince between the names of Puru Gupta and Budha Gupta," and that "there is hardly any doubt regarding their relationship as indicated by the word 'putra' occurring at the end of the line 6". A. Ghosh[5] restores the lines 7 and 8 as such "Syaputtras (tat - pādānudhyāta) Mahādevyāṁ (Candradevyāṁ) utpannaḥ (Paramabhāgavata Mahārājādhirāja Śrī) "Budhaguptaḥ." Therefore it is proved that Budha

---

(1) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.88f. (2) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.64f.

(3) Ibid, p.64.

(4) I.H.Q. XIX p.274.

(5) IBID XX. p.119f.

Gupta was the son of Puru Gupta, and of Mahādevī Candradevī. Budha Gupta of the seal is certainly Budha Gupta of the Sārnāth inscription,(1) the Eran Inscription,(2) the Dāmodarpur copper-plate inscription,(3) and the coins.(4) His last known date is 175 (G.E.) (= 494-95 A.D.), found on a silver coin.(5)

Extent of Empire.

Budha Gupta ruled over a fairly extensive empire. From his Eran stone pillar inscription dated G.E. 165 (= 484-85 A.D.)(6) we learn that "while Budha Gupta was king (nṛipa)," Mahārāja Surasmicandra was the governor of the country between the Kālindī and the Narmadā. The Khoh copper plate inscription of Mahārāja Hastin(7) dated in the G.E. 156 and 163, "in the enjoyment of the sovereignty of the Guptas," must have belonged to the time of Budha Gupta. The inscriptions of the Ucchakalpa Mahārāja Jayanātha and dated in the year 174 and 177(8) should be assigned

(1) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15 pp. 124-25
(2) C.I.I.III, No.19 p.90f.
(3) E.I. XV. p.114.
(4) C.I.I.III, No.19 p.153f.
(5) Ibid p.153, No.617.
(6) C.I.I.III, No.19 p.90f.
(7) Ibid, No.21 p.93f; No.22 p.101f.
(8) C.I.I.III, Nos. 26,27.

to the Gupta era,[1] and during this period, which falls in the time of Budha Gupta, they must have been the feudatories of the Guptas. Silver coins of Budha Gupta have, on the obverse, head to the right with data in front, and on the reverse is the peacock with wings and tail outstretched. The legend on the coins is "Vijibavaniravani pati (h) Śrī Budhagupta divi (divaṁ?) jayati."[2] The legend shows his claim to be the lord of the earth and has been found on the coins of Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta, which he imitated.[3] The nature of and the legend on the silver coins of Budha Gupta clearly connect him with the Imperial Guptas, and

---

(1) There is some controversy about the era in which the inscriptions of the Ucchakalpa Mahārājas is dated. Kielhorn took the era to be the Kalacuri era. (E.I.V App.p.55) Bhandarkar held the same opinion (Ibid XIX, App. Note 5, p.159). But the facts that the territories of the Ucchakalpa Mahārājas were adjacent to those of the Parivrājaka Mahārājas who used the Gupta era and were feudatories of the Guptas, and, Hastin and Śarvanātha were contemporaries (C.I.I.III No.24), raises a strong presumption that the Ucchakalpa Mahārājas also dated their inscriptions in the Gupta era. Ogha and Halder (E.I.XIX p.127) held that the era used was the Gupta era. Dikshit (Ibid XXI p.127f) has met the objections of Bhandarkar and has shown that it is impossible to date the Ucchakalpa inscriptions in the Kalacuri era. The Mahārāja Samvatsara of the Bhumarā Pillar-Inscription must have happened in 508 A.D. V.V. Mirashi (E.I.XXIII p.171f) has given additional reasons in favour of the theory that the Gupta era is used in the inscriptions of the Ucchakalpa Mahārājas.

(2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p. 153.

(3) Ibid, p LXII.

the connection is confirmed by his Nālandā seal[1] which shows that he was a son of Puru Gupta. Two Dāmodarpur copper-plates,[2] one of which is dated in the year 163[3] (= 482-3 A.D.), with high imperial titles, "u" Paramadaivata Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Budhagupta Pṛithvīpati" have been found at Dāmodarpur in the Dinajpur district of North Bengal. At the same place two inscriptions of Kumāra Gupta I[4] have been found with the similar imperial titles and context. Therefore these inscriptions of the time of Budha Gupta, closely following those of Kumāra Gupta I, prove that the authority of the Guptas and the character of the administration in North Bengal continued almost unaffected in the time of Budha Gupta. The fourth Dāmodarpur copper-plate which belongs to the time of Budha Gupta[5] refers to a temple (?) of Kokāmukhasvāmiṇ. D.C.Sarkar[6] regarded Kokāmukha to be a form of Śiva. Basak[7] took it to be a form of Durgā.

---

(1) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.64. (2) E.I.XV p.114.

(3) S.I.I. p.324. (4) E.I.XV p.110f.

(5) Ibid p.115. (6) S.I.I p.328

(7) E.I. XV. p.115.

Raychaudhurī[1] believes that it was a form of Varāha incarnation of Viṣṇu. Both Sarkar and Raychandhurī agree in placing the tīrtha in the Himālayan region. It may therefore be assumed that the Puṇḍravardhana-bhukti in the time of Budha Gupta extended up to the Himālayas in the North, and might have included Nepal where is situated Varāhakṣetra, which has been identified with Kokāmukhosvāmī tīrtha.[2] Thus it is clear that Budha Gupta continued to exercise his sway in the Eastern-most province of the Gupta empire. His Sārṇāth inscriptions[3] found on the pedestals of two beautiful Budha images, and dated in 157 G.E. (= A.D.476), prove his rule in the Eastern united provinces. Mahāraja Lakṣmaṇa of the Pāli copper plate dated 158 Samvat[4] found near Kosam in the district of Allahabad, and assigned to the 5th Century A.D., on the basis of palaeographic considerations may be safely regarded as a feudatory or a high official of Budha Gupta; and similarly the Pahārpur

---

(1) B.C. Law Volume, I p.88f.

(2) I.H.Q. XXI p.56f.

(3) A.S.I.A.R., 1914-15 pp.124-25.

(4) E.I. II p.364.

copper-plate grant[1] of the year 159, found in Paharpur in Rajshahi district of Bengal, should be attributed to the period of Budha Gupta's sway in Northern Bengal. The Nandapur copper-plate of the Gupta year 169[2] proves the continuance of the Gupta rule in Bengal. The plate was found at Nandapura in the district of Monghyr (Bihar). The Seal of Budha Gupta found in Nālandā[3] suggests his authority over Magadha. He should be certainly identified with "Buddha (Budha) Gupta" who built another Saṃghārāma at Nālandā.[4] His liberal attitude to Buddhism is further testified by the fact that two votive-images of Buddha[5] were donated during the period of his rule.

Thus the find-spots of the inscriptions, seal and coins prove that the territories over which Budha Gupta ruled were fairly extensive, and it is not correct to take him to belong to a local dynasty of Malwa. The style of the inscriptions, the legend on the coins, and the contents of the seal prove that Budha Gupta belonged to the imperial Gupta dynasty, and was a son of Puru Gupta. The empire of Budha Gupta certainly extended

---

(1) Ibid pp.59-60. (2) Ibid, XXIII p.52f

(3) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.64. (4) The Life, p.110 Note 4.

(5) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15 pp.124-25.

from the Himālayas to the Eastern Malwa and from the Eastern Punjab to Bengal. Cunningham, the great doyen of Indian research and archaeology had instinctively approached the truth, when he observed that "this vast empire was possessed by four (?) Gupta princes - the predecessors of Budha Gupta; and there is sufficient evidence to prove that his sway was equally extensive: he is called in the Eran pillar inscription, the king of the beautiful country between the Kālindī and the Narmadā, and his silver coins are of the Gupal style of the Sāhs of Surāṣṭra, which was used by his predecessors."

Coins of Prakās'āditya.

Budha Gupta was an imperial Gupta ruler who ruled over almost the whole of the Gupta empire administered by his predecessors. When we have gold coins of his Successors Narasimha Gupta, Kumāra Gupta III and Viṣṇu Gupta, it really sounds strange that no gold coins belonging to Budha Gupta are known. He issued silver coins in the style of Kumāra Gupta I and Skanda Gupta. Therefore he must have issued gold coins. The attempt to read 'Budha' on the coins of

(1) Bhilsa Topas, p.163.

'Pura' has been already discussed and rejected. The gold coins of Prakās'āditya are still a puzzle to the numismatists. Prakās'āditya is certainly an āditya title, and the coins must have belonged to a ruler with some other proper name. We propose to attribute these coins to Budha Gupta.

Smith[1] agreeing with Hoernle,[2] declared that "the coins of Prakās'āditya should be assigned to Pura Gupta." Allan[3] though he thought it very unlikely that Puru Gupta was called both - Vikramāditya and Prakās'āditya, appears to have taken Prakās'āditya to be "perhaps identical with Pura Gupta." It is very improbable that Puru Gupta who issued coins with the legend Śrī Vikramah, should have issued a large number of fine coins of a particular and special type with an altogether different āditya title, especially when he ruled for a few months only, and in this short period was beset with internal and external dangers.[4] Allan realised the improbability of the identity of Prakāśāditya with Puru Gupta, and, so, observed that "we must attribute these coins to some king, probably a Gupta whose name is not yet known and who must be placed about the end of the fifth Century." The learned scholar

---

(1) I.A.XXXI p.257. (2) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.88f.

(3) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.LII; 135. (4) Ibid p.LII.

when he wrote this remark, could not be aware of the evidences (discussed above) which prove that Budha Gupta was not a king of Mālwa, but an imperial Gupta ruler and lived about the end of the 5th Century A.D." (1) Hoernle, later on, identified Prakās'āditya with Yas'odharman, but Allan rightly pointed out that this "has no real foundation." (2) Basak (3) was disposed to identify Prakās'āditya with Kumāra Gupta II, but he gives no convincing grounds in support of this assumption. S.K.Dikshit (4) attributes the coins of Prakās'āditya to Kumāra Gupta II, as in his opinion "the letter 'u' or 'Ru' on the coins may be 'Ku'. Raychaudhuri (5) also suggested that Prakās'āditya's coins may belong to Kumāra Gupta II, as the letter 'Ku' seems to occur on the obverse of Prakās'āditya's coins." This appears to be an unwarranted suggestion. The letter between the feet of the king on the obverse of the coins is most probably 'u', it may be 'Ru', but it is never 'Ku.' (6)

---

(1) J.R.A.S. 1909 Pt.I pp.135-36.

(2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.Lii.

(3) E.J.XV. p.118f.

(4) I.C.V p.725.

(5) P.T.O.C. (second). p.335f.

(6) C.C.G.D.B.M. pl.XXII, Nos. 1-6; C.I.M.I. pl.XVI No.10. We have examined the coins personally and are satisfied that there is no 'Ku' on it.

Kumāra Gupta II and III had the title Kramāditya, and so it is not likely that any one of them would issue a special type of fine coin with a different āditya title. Moreover Kumāra Gupta III, son and successor of Narasimha Gupta, issued very rude coins of base metal,(1) and he flourished in the 6th century A.D., a period too late for the style and quality of Prakāsāditya's coins. Kumāra Gupta II ruled for too short a period to issue such a large number of fine coins when he had issued only a few coins with the title 'Kramāditya'.(2) Therefore, there is no valid reason to attribute the coins of Prakāsāditya to Puru Gupta or Kumāra Gupta II or III, or to Yasodharman.

On the other hand the numismatic considerations do not vitiate the identification of Prakāsāditya with Budha Gupta. The identification was half-heartedly suggested by Bannerji(3) and strongly urged by Jayesval.(4) Budha Gupta, the last great Gupta emperor, must have issued gold coins and his fairly long and prosperous reign of about twenty years was quite sufficient for him to strike fine gold coins of a special type - the Horseman-lion-slayer type. The Bharsar hoard(5) as examined, contained the

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp. 141-43. (2) Ibid p.140.

(3) Bannerji, op. cit. p.246. (4) I.H.I. p.39.

(5) J.A.S.B. 1852 pp.390-400. It is important to note that all the coins found could not be examined. The hoard may have contained coins of Puru Gupta and Kumāra Gupta II.

coins of Samudra Gupta, Candra Gupta II, Kumāra Gupta I, Skanda Gupta and Prakāśāditya. This does not necessarily lead to the deduction that "Prakāśāditya succeeded Skanda Gupta and that the hoard was buried in his reign."(1) The evidence of the Bharsar hoard may well point to the fact that after Skanda Gupta, Prakāśāditya was the next great Gupta emperor who issued large numbers of gold coins of a special type; such a ruler is Budha Gupta. It is possible that the hoard was buried either during the last years of Budha Gupta or after his death when troubles descended on the empire. The hoard was found at Bharsar near Benaress, where (Sārnāth) were found two inscriptions belonging to the reign of Budha Gupta.(2) We know that Narasimha Gupta and his successors exercised effective control only over the Eastern provinces of the empire. Therefore, it is quite explicable that Budha Gupta's (Prakāśāditya's) coins are the latest in time to be found so far west as Benaress. Prakāśāditya must be a Gupta King, as his coins in the Bharsar hoard are found with the coins of the great Gupta emperors. The nature of the coins, the character of the letters, and the legend on the coins all definitely prove that the coins were

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p. LI.

(2) A.S.I.A.R. 1914-15 pp.124-25.

issued by a Gupta King, after Skanda Gupta, and Budha Gupta is the only great Gupta emperor after Skanda Gupta. There is nothing in the style of the coins, although degraded in comparison with those of Kumāra Gupta I, which goes against the identification proposed. According to Allen[1] "they compare favourably with Narasimha Gupta's coins and this hardly permits them to be placed much later than the period suggested by the Bharsar hoard." According to R.D.Bannerji,[2] "the weight of the coins of Prakāśāditya vary from 136 to 146.2 grains, which would certainly indicate some period of coinage between Kumāra Gupta I and Narasimha Gupta." These valued opinions strengthen our contention that Budha Gupta, who came before Narasimha Gupta, issued the gold coins in his āditya title, Prakāśāditya. All the Gupta emperors - Samudra Gupta, Candra Gupta II, Kumāra Gupta I, Puru Gupta, Skanda Gupta, Kumāra Gupta II, Narasimha Gupta, Kumāra Gupta III and Viṣṇu Gupta - had issued coins with their āditya titles, and it is, therefore, reasonable to presume that Budha Gupta, who was a member of the imperial dynasty, also issued gold coins with his āditya title, and Prakāśāditya was such a title. The coins of Prakāśāditya are of fine metal and good execution, and above all are a type by themselves. The

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.Lii.

(2) Bannerji op. cit. p.249.

long and peaceful reign of Budha Gupta can well explain the improvement and innovations in the coinage. "The coins of Prakāsāditya are remarkable in that they present a new type; the Horseman type and the Lion-slayer had been very popular in the reigns of Candra Gupta II and Kumāra Gupta I, but here we have for the first time a combination of these types.(1) Another distinguishing feature is that the symbol (or monogram) "which is found on the reverse in all the known specimens is not found on other coins of the series."(2) The reverse of this type of coin is unique: "the King is represented seated on a horseback to right, cleaving with his sword a lion which is springing at him; around his body hangs a bow, while there is a Garuda standard behind the horse's head."(3) Between the feet of the horse is the single letter 'u' or 'ru'.(4) It is important to repeat that this strange practice of engraving a single letter between the feet of the king, or as in the present case between the feet of the horse, is not found on the coins of Samudra Gupta, Candra Gupta II, Kumāra Gupta I, Puru Gupta, Skanda Gupta and Kumāra Gupta II, but is found on the coins of Narasiṁha Gupta, Kumāra Gupta III and Viṣṇu Gupta. Another important feature

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.CIII. (2) Ibid. (3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid, Pl. XXII 1-6.

of thesecoins is their purity of metal compared with the coins of Narasimha Gupta, Kumāra Gupta III and Viṣnu Gupta. One of the coins, (No.552 B.M.C.) has 77% of gold.(1) We have already seen that a coin of Kumāra Gupta II (No.491 B.M.C.) has 79% of gold; thus the coins of Prakāśāditya closely follow the purity of Kumāra Gupta II's coins. Cunningham was puzzled as how to explain the high purity of Prakāśāditya's coins, and, he could not "even guess the reason of the strange freak."(2)

The only explanation that reconciles all the distinguishing features of Prakāśāditya's coins is to attribute these to Budha Gupta. His reign was sufficiently long and prosperous to issue a large number of coins of good metal and a special type. Budha Gupta, a son of Puru Gupta, is the real founder of the line of Puru Gupta on the imperial throne. Therefore, he was the fittest person to introduce a special type - Horseman-Lion-slayer type - of coin with a special symbol or monogram, and to introduce the practice of engraving a single letter on the obverse of the coins. The practice was faithfully followed by his successors, and may be looked upon as a distinguishing feature of the coins of later imperial Guptas from Budha Gupta to Viṣṇu Gupta, belonging to the branch of Puru Gupta.

---

(1) Appendix Ia.

(2) C.M.I. p.15.

"The fineness of the gold of all the specimens (of the coins of Prakāśāditya) likewise suggests a date previous to the coins of Narasiṁha Gupta and his successors."(1)

The weight of the coins of Prakāśāditya also places Prakāśāditya in between Kumāra Gupta II and Narasiṁha Gupta. The two coins of Kumāra Gupta II in the British Museum weigh 139.5 and 143.0 grains. All the coins of Prakāśāditya (save two, which are a bit worn out, hence lighter) weigh more than 145.1 grains; while the coins of Narasiṁha Gupta weigh from 143.5 to 148.7 grains.(2) The coins of Narasiṁha Gupta follow those of Prakāśāditya in one interesting feature; on the reverse of the coins of Prakāśāditya the two legs of the goddess are so joined as to give the shape of a long pillow-like object, and the same thing may be noticed on the reverse of the coins of Narasiṁha Gupta.(3) In our scheme of chronology, Budha Gupta is immediately followed by Narasiṁha Gupta. Thus all this overwhelming evidence clearly points out that the Prakāśāditya of the coins is Budha Gupta, the last great Gupta emperor who could issue such a fine quality of coin and introduce many innovations. Budha Gupta must have issued these special type of coins - unique in

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.Lii.

(2) Ibid pp.135-140; C.I.M. I pp.119-20.

(3) C.C.G.D.B.M. CIII (Pl.XXII 1-12.

many ways from the coins of his great predecessors - to celebrate his successful seizure of the throne, suggested by Yuan Chwang,(1) and to mark the restoration of the branch of Puru Gupta, overthrown earlier by Skanda Gupta. Therefore, it should be taken as established, as reasonably as possible, that Budha Gupta issued the gold coins by his āditya title 'Prakāsāditya'. Any of his archer-type of coins, when discovered, will give his name.

Last years of Budha Gupta.

Budha Gupta presided over a fairly extensive empire and issued gold and silver coins. The extant legend on the coins of Prakāsāditya (= Budha Gupta-), "vijitya vasudhāni divam jayati" "is the latter part of one of the usual metrical claims to have conquered earth and won heaven."(2) The legend on the silver coins of Budha Gupta "is a copy of that on class II of Skanda Gupta, but has the locative 'divi' for the usual divam."(3) The last known date of Budha Gupta is 175 G.E.(4) (= 494-95 A.D.), and therefore his reign may have come to an end in C. 496 A.D. He maintained almost the whole of Gupta empire intact, except

(1) The Life p.110 (2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.CXXII,
(3) Ibid, p.CXXIII. (4) Ibid P.153 No.617.

Surāṣṭra which became practically independent under Bhaṭārka. Therefore the view that "when Skanda Gupta passed away in 467 A.D., the empire perished"(1) cannot be tenable; nor can we believe in "the rapid decadence of Gupta sovereignty, after Skanda Gupta's death."(2) The theory of the break up of the Gupta empire in the later years of Skanda Gupta due to repeated and successive Hūṇa invasions must be given up, and there is no real basis to support the alleged hypothesis from believing in a debased currency of Skanda Gupta in his later years. There is no appreciable debasement in the heavy-weight coins of Puru Gupta, Skanda Gupta and Kumāra Gupta II. There is no reason why we should place the heavy-weight coins of Skanda Gupta in the later years of his reign? The empire, which Skanda Gupta ruled over, was practically undiminished down to the time of Budha Gupta, except for the extreme Western provinces of Surāṣṭra and Cutch, though at the same time it is to be admitted that the Maitrakas of Valabhi did not assume imperial titles in deference to their traditional Gupta overlords. The type of the silver coins of Budha Gupta certainly proves that his authority was recognised in

---

(1) E.H.I. p.328.

(2) Dandekar, op. cit. p.118.

Central India. The Hūṇas reappear in Indian history during the end of the fifth or the beginning of the sixth century A.D. Toramāṇa's undated Eran inscription belonging to the first year of his reign (1) must be placed after the Eran inscription of Budha Gupta, dated 484-85 A.D. (2) but belonging to the same generation, and therefore may be put in the last years of Budha Gupta or soon after his death. The Hūṇa occupation of Mālwā must have happened after the death of Budha Gupta or shortly before it.

Budha Gupta was, then, undoubtedly the last of the great imperial Guptas, and when he died, the empire declined rapidly. It is true that the Gupta dynasty continued some time longer, but the Gupta empire was a mere shadow of its past giant structure. The decline that set in, soon after his death or immediately before it, continued unabated; centrifugal tendencies reappeared on the scene and, coinciding with foreign invasions and internal dissensions, corroded the vitality of the empire. The imperial dynasty of the great Guptas had finished its role, and the law of compensation was at its work, leading to the rise of other powers in the country. So the death of Budha Gupta constitutes a turning point in the history of the empire and India.

---

(1) C.I.I.III, No.36 pp.158.

(2) Ibid. No.19, p.90f.

CHAPTER IV

Successors of Budha Gupta.

The death of Budha Gupta in C.496 A.D. marks the end of an epoch and the beginning of another. The age of the imperial Guptas is over, and though the dynasty lingered on, the empire passed away. The historic role of Magadha as the centre of Indian history was suspended for some time, and other powers and personalities outside Magadha dominated the scene. The empire practically broke up, and local dynasties in Kanauj, Thāneśvara, Valabhi, Malwa and even in Magadha rushed forth to fill the vacuum. India, again, witnessed the unhappy spectacle of warring states at a time when the foreigners - the Hūṇas were desecrating the holy land. Magadha, the pride of ancient India and the Saviour of the Country many times in her critical history, was laid low, exhausted. But her eclipse was temporary, and some time afterwards, she put forth great efforts to regain her due position in the comity of Indian states.

However, there is no denying the fact that her best days - the years of Mauryas' and imperial Gupta's' rule - were over, and the later history of Magadha read in contrast to Maurya greatness and Gupta splendour reads like a parody of its own past.

A. Narasimha Gupta.

Budha Gupta was succeeded by his brother Narasimha Gupta, son of Puru Gupta and Mahādevī Candradevī.(1) He has been rightly identified with the ruler who issued gold coins of the Archer-type on Suvarṇa standard with the legend 'Nara' on the obverse and 'Śrī Bālādityaḥ' on the reverse.(2) The full name, Narasimha Gupta is preserved in the marginal inscriptions of the better preserved specimens.(3) From a comparison of the coins of Prakāśāditya (Budha Gupta(4) with that of the coins of Narasimha Gupta,(5) it is clear that the latter follow the Suvarṇa standard, accepted uniformly by Prakāśāditya. We have two fragmentary seals of Narasimha Gupta from Nālandā,(6)

---

(1) Hoernle read the name of the queen of Puru Gupta as Vatsadevī (J.A.S.B.LVIII p.89); Hirānanda Śāstrī read it as Vainyadevī on the Nālandā Seals (M.A.S.I. No.66 p.65); N.P. Cakravarty corrected the reading as Candradevī (A.S.I.A.R.1934-35 p.63).

(2) C.I.M.I. pp.119-20. (3) C.C.G.D.B.M., p.137 Nos.558-560.

(4) Ibid, pp.135-136. (5) Ibid pp.137-139.

(6) M.A.S.I. No.66, p.65; Plate VIII b-c.

and they contain the genealogy from Mahārāja Śrī Gupta down to Puru Gupta, whose son was Narasimha Gupta, the author of the Seals. These seals also appear to have been decorated with the Garuḍa Symbol.(1)

Identical with Bālāditya of Paramārtha.

Narasimha Guptā Bālāditya is the Bālāditya, son of Vikramāditya of Ayodhyā (Puru Gupta), and the patron of Vasubandhu, according to Paramārtha.(2) Takakusu(3) has fixed the date of Vasubandhu to be C.420-500 A.D. Vāmana,(4) a writer of the 8th

(1) Ibid, Plate VIII b-c. (2) J.R.A.S. 1905 p.33f.

(3) Ibid. There is almost an unending controversy about the date of Vasubandhu and his patron. H.P.Śāstrī thought that Candra Gupta II Vikramāditya and his son Kumāra Gupta I (Bālāditya = young son) were the patrons of Vasubandhu (J.A.S.B.,I. (N.S.) p.253). According to D.R.Bhandarkar Candra Gupta II Vikramaditya was the patron of Vasubandhu, and Govinda Gupta was the Bālāditya. (I.A.XLI,p.1) V.A.Smith agreeing with M.Neol Puri held that the Candra Gupta I and Samudra Gupta were the Vikramāditya and Bālāditya, patrons of Vasubandhu (E.H.I. pp.346-47). According to Pathak, Vasubandhu was a contemporary of Kumāra Gupta I, Skanda Gupta and Narasimha Gupta (I.A.XL. pp.170-71).

(4) Scholars are divided as to whether the word Vasubandhu occurs in a passage of Vāmana's Kāvyālankāra Sūtra Vritti. Pathak (I.A.XL, p.170-71; J.B.B.R.A.S.XXIII p.185; IA.XLI, p.244f) and Hoernle (I.A.XL p.264,) read the name Vasubandh; while H.P.Śāstrī (I.A.XLI p.1f; J.A.S.B. I(N.S.)p.253), Narasimhachāri (I.A.XL. p.312) and Rangaswami Sarasvati (I.A.LIII, p.8) read Subandhu instead. We have followed Pathak and Hoernle. Watters (Vol.I p.211) has distinguished between this Vasubandhu and the Buddhist of the same name who is the 21st Patriarch of the Buddhist Church.

Century A.D. mentions Vasubandhu as a Sachivya of the son of Candra Gupta. Pathak[1] has rightly identified the latter with Kumāra Gupta I, son of Candra Gupta II Vikramāditya. Hoernle[2] has aptly pointed out that the word Sachivya may mean companionship, not necessarily a minister. Kumāra Gupta's interest in Buddhism may be inferred from the Mankuẓwar stone image inscription of the year 129[3] (= 448-49 A.D.), wherein we find invocation to Buddha and setting up of a Buddha image by Buddhamitra, who is identified[5] with Buddhamitra, teacher of Vasubandhu. Yuan Chwang[4] refers to a Vikramāditya of Śrāvasti, and he is the same person as the Vikramāditya of Ayodhyā in the account of Paramārtha.[6] This Vikramāditya of Ayodhyā, whom Takakusu identified with Skanda Gupta[7] has been rightly identified with Puru Gupta Vikramāditya by Allan;[8] Puru Gupta became a patron of

---

(1) I.A. XL pp.170-71.

(2) IBID p.264.

(3) C.I.I. III NO.11 pp.45f.

(4) I.A. XLI p.244f.

(5) Watters I, p.212.

(6) J.R.A.S. 1905 p.35.

(7) Ibid.

(8) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.Li.

Buddhism by the influence of Vasubandhu. This is very probable as during his last years, Kumāra Gupta appears to have shown sympathy towards Buddhism and Vasubandhu was his companion, and so Puru Gupta may have been influenced by the master-mind, Vasubandhu. From the account of Paramārtha[1] we learn that Vikramāditya (Puru Gupta) held discussions on Buddhism at his court; Buddhamitra, the teacher of Vasubundhu, was worsted in dispute by Vindhyavāsa in the court of Vikramāditya. The story in some modified form is related by Yuan Chwang.[2] In the discussion held at the court of Vikramāditya (Puru Gupta), Manoratha, the teacher of Vasubandhu was not given a hearing, and so he, (Manoratha), cut out his tongue and wrote a warning to his disciple Vasubandhu. "A short time afterwards Vikramāditya-rāja lost his Kingdom", and "was succeeded by a monarch who widely patronised those distinguished for literary merit, and in the assembly held under his patronage, Vasubandhu defeated his rivals and exhibited afresh the four conclusions of his master;" the monarch may have been Skanda Gupta who had ousted Puru Gupta. Vasubandhu had

---

(1) J.R.A.S. 1905, pp. 35.

(2) The Records I, pp.107-109.

earned great fame and he wrote many Śāstras, chief among which was Abhidharmakośa. When Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya came to the throne, he invited Vasubandhu to Ayodhyā.(1) It was at this time that Sanghabhadra challenged Vasubandhu, who came to Madhyadeśa(2) i.e. Ayodhyā at the court of Bālāditya. Vasubandhu who died at the age of 80 was thus a contemporary of Kumāra Gupta I, Puru Gupta, Skanda Gupta, Kumāra Gupta II, Budha Gupta and Narasimha Gupta. It was in the time of his pupil Narasimha Gupta that Vasubandhu died in C.500 A.D.

Bāla of the
Manjuśrī-Mūlakalpa.

Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya is certainly the Bālā of the MMK. He is said to have decorated the coast up to the sea with "Chaityas, Monasteries, Gardens, Pavilions, bridges and roads, and worshipped Buddha's images.(3) It is important to note in this connection that in his Nālandā seal(4) he is described as "Paramabhāgavata" and the seal has the image of Garuḍa with outstretched wings. It proves that though Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya was an active patron of Buddhism, he continued to be called "Paramabhāgavata"

(1) J.R.A.S., 1905 p.33f.

(2) Records I, pp.190-2

(3) I.H.I. p.33.

(4) M.A.S.I. NO.66. p.65 Pl.VIII b and c.

in conformity with the tradition of his ancestors; therefore in his official Seal he has Garuḍa symbol. He is the Parames'vara Bālāditya of the Deo Baranārk inscription,(1) which shows that he made a grant of the village Vāvvāṇika to the temple of Vaṃśvāmin. It is relevant to point out that while in the Gunaigarh inscription Vainya Gupta is described as a devotee of 'Mahādeva'(2) in his Nālandā seal,(3) he is called 'Paramabhāgavata'. It is difficult to avoid the suspicion that the epithet 'Paramabhāgavata' had become almost a part and parcel of the official titles of the Gupta emperors; devotion to Viṣṇu had become a family religion, and even when some of the Gupta princes showed strong favours to other deities or religion, in their official seals they continued the family symbol of Garuḍa and the epithet "Paramabhāgavata". Therefore, the fact that on his seal Narasiṃha Gupta is described as "Paramabhāgavata," is not enough to regard the claim made

---

(1) C.I.I. III No.46 p.213f.

(2) ~~Ibid.~~ I.H.Q. VI p.45f.

(3) M.A.S.I. NO.66 p.67, Pl. VIII f.

by the Chinese Pilgrim that Narasimha Gupta was a devout Buddhist[1] as contradictory[2] to his Nālandā Seal, or to dub as 'an absurdity'[3] the statement of Paramārtha that Bālāditya was a pupil of Vasubhandhu. Bālāditya was certainly a Buddhist according to Yuan Chwang,[4] Paramārtha[5] and the author of the Ārya-Manju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa,[6] and this Bālāditya was certainly Narasimha Gupta.

Extent of Empire.

Narasimha Gupta's coins were found in Oudh[7] and a large number of them were in the Kālighāt hoard.[8] One gold coin was recovered from Rānāghāt in the Nadia district.[9] Several coins of this king are said to be included in the Nāhar collection and the cabinet of the Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad of Calcutta.[10] One coin was found in the Birbhum district of Bengal. Allan[11] distinguishes two classes in the Archer type of gold coins of Narasimha Gupta. Class II coins are of very rude fabric without

(1) The Records I, p.168. (2) J.U.P.H.S. XVII Pl.2 p.34f.
(3) B.C.Law Volume, Pl.I, p.617f. (4) The Records I, p.168.
(5) J.R.A.S., 1905 p.33f. (6) I.H.I. p.33.
(7) J.A.S.B. LVII p.155. (8) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.138, Note 1.
(9) Pro.A.S.B. 1886, p.65. (10) E.I. XVIII p.81.
(11) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.137-38.

obverse marginal legend.[1] Two coin-moulds of Narasimha Gupta's Archer-type coins have been found at Nālandā.[2] His two fragmentary seals have been also found at Nālandā.[3] Yuan Chwang[4] informs us that Bālāditya built a temple at Nālandā, and he fought Mihirakula. From the Deo-Baranāk inscription we know that he ruled over the present district of Shāhābād, as the village was situated in the Nagara-bhukti Pāṭaliputra. The inscriptions of the Parivrājaka-Mahārājas dated in 191,[5] 198[6] 199[7] G.E., "in the enjoyment of the sovereignty of the Guptas," prove that Gupta sovereignty continued in Central India.

Thus from the distribution of his coins, seals, and inscriptions and from references in literature about him, it may be readily assumed that Narasimha Gupta ruled from Oudh to Bengal. One of his headquarters was Ayodhyā.[8] We possess none of his silver coins, and this suggests that he did not control the Western provinces and most of the Central India. The Parivrājaka Mahārājas used the Gupta era,

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.137-138; (2) A.S.I.A.R. 1935-36, p.50f In one of them a coin was actually cast (The Technique of Casting Coins in Ancient India - p.38).
(3) M.A.S.I. No.66, p.65. Pl.VIII b and c.
(4) Watters I. pp.288-89. (5) C.I.I. III NO.23 p.108.
(6) E.I. XXI p.125. (7) IBID VIII p.284.
(8) J.R.A.S., 1905 p.33f.

but no mention of the Gupta emperor in their inscriptions implies that their recognition of Gupta suzerainty was only formal. Surāṣṭra was lost by the Guptas with the death of Skanda Gupta in C.470 A.D., and Senāpaṭi Bhaṭārka founded, practically, an independent dynasty at Valabhi. Nevertheless, the rulers of Valabhi continued to use the Gupta era and feudatory titles of Mahārāja and Mahāsāmanta.(1) The phrase "Paramabhaṭṭāraka Pādānudhyatā" occurs in the inscriptions of Dhruvasena I who ruled till at least 545 A.D. Besides, Surāṣṭra, Mālwa was lost to the Hūṇas, as the Eran stone inscription of the first year of the reign of Toramāṇa(2) must have closely followed the Eran stone inscription of Budha Gupta dated 484-85 A.D.(3) If the Vākāṭaka Narendrasena was a contemporary of Budha Gupta, it is possible that he may have raided Malwa soon after the death of Budha Gupta or in the last years of the latter's reign.

It is therefore clear that though Narasimha Gupta ruled over a fairly extensive empire from Oudh to Bengal, there is no doubt that the empire was showing signs of disintegration. To make matters worse, while the king was proving an ardent disciple of Vasubandhu

---

(1) I.H.Q. IV. p.453 f.

(2) C.I.I.III No.36 pp.158-59.

(3) Ibid. No.19 p.90f.

and was busy in organising learned discussions, and building monastaries and Caityas all over the land, the flood of the Hūṇa invasions swept over the country, and for a time submerged even the home provinces of Magadha.

The Hūṇas under Toramāṇa.

The Ephthalites or White Hūṇas were pressing against Persia for some time, and in resisting them Firuz lost his life in A.D.484.(1) This success of the Hūṇas was followed by their occupation of the frontier kingdoms of India ruled by Kuṣṇa princes, and then they poured into India.(2) From the Eran stone inscription of Budha Gupta we know that in 165 G.E. (= 484-85 A.D.) Budha Gupta was the sovereign of Eastern Malwa, and Mahārāja Mātṛiviṣṇu and his younger brother Dhanyaviṣṇu erected the flag-staff of Janārdana;(3) but the Eran stone-Boyar inscription of Toramāṇa(4) informs us that Dhanyaviṣṇu (younger brother of Mātṛiviṣṇu, who was then dead) constructed the temple of Nārāyaṇa in the form of Boyar in his own Visaya of Airikinā (Eraṇ) during the first year of the rule of Mahārājādhirāja Toramāṇa. Unfortunately the inscription

(1) E.H.I. p.334. (2) Ibid; J.B.B.R.A.S. XXIV p.539f.

(3) C.I.I.III, No.19 p.90f. (4) Ibid; No.36, p.158f.

is not dated in any specific era, but there can be no doubt that it must belong to the same generation as the Eran Stone inscription of Budha Gupta, but certainly later than that.

The Hūṇas were in possession of Gandhāra during the later half of the 5th Century A.D. Sung-Jun who started from China in 517-18 A.D., speaks of the Kingdom of Gandhāra destroyed by the ye-thas (White Hūṇas), and the setting up of Lae-Ün as their King. These events are said to have happened two generations ago.(1) Lae-Ün might have been father of Toramāṇa who led the Hūṇas into India and succeeded in occupying Malwa by C.500 A.D. The Eran Posthumous stone-pillar inscription of Goparāja dated in 191 G.E. (= 510-11 A.D.)(2) does not necessarily mean that "Malwa was not occupied by the Hūṇas up to 510 A.D;"(3) The inscription may suggest an unsuccessful resistance to the Hūṇa occupation of Malwa. From his strategic base in Malwa, Toramāna could easily try to probe the defences of the Gupta empire, towards Surāṣṭra in the West, and the Eastern provinces of the empire in the North-East.

---

(1) The Records I, Intro. p.XCIX.

(2) C.I.I. III NO.20. p.23.

(3) I.H.I. p.40.

Practically independent but formally acknowledging the suzerainty of the Guptas, the Maitrakas of Valabhi appear to have successfully saved their kingdom from the ravages of the Mlecchas, and this must have won the admiration and gratitude of their formal overlord, Narasiṁha Gupta, the then reigning Gupta emperor. The Valabhi grant dated in the year 183 (= 502-3 A.D.) of Mahārāja Droṇa Simha, who succeeded his brother Senāpati Dharasena, son of Senāpati Bhaṭārka, describes Droṇa Simha as "meditating on the feet of his supreme lord."(1) It is to be borne in mind that this is the only known grant of Mahārāja Droṇa Simha; and in the grant of his successor, Mahārāja Dhruvasena I dated in the year 207 (= 526-27 A.D.), Droṇa Simha is stated to have been installed as Mahārāja by "the Supreme Lord, the sole Lord, the sole lord of the circumference of the whole world."(2) This statement is repeated in the other Valabhi grants of his successors. The Mālliyā copper-plate inscription of Mahārāja Dharasena II dated in the year 252 (= 571-72 A.D.) speaks of Mahārāja Droṇa Simha as one "who was installed in the

---

(1) J.B.B.R.A.S. XX, p.1f.

(2) Bhagawanlal, History of Gujarat, p.68

royalty by besprinkling performed by the paramount master in person, the sole lord of the circumference of the territory of the whole world."(1) The expression also occurs in the Watson Museum plates of Dharasena II dated in the year 270 G.E. (= 589-90 A.D.)(2) and in other inscriptions.(3) It is, therefore, clear that the fact of Dhroṇa Simha being installed as Mahārāja by the paramount overlord in person was considered to be of profound importance in the dynastic history of the Maitrakas of Valabhi, and it is certainly significant that in all the grants of the dynasty, Dhroṇa Simha is the first member to be honoured with the honorific "Mahārāja".

Who was the overlord who installed Dhroṇa Simha as Mahārāja in person? Jackson(4) considered him to be a predecessor of Yasodharman of Malwa, "a state which was rising at that period." Fleet(5) took the overlord of Dhroṇa Simha to be Yasodharman.

---

(1) C.I.I.III No.38 p.164f. "Akhilabhuvanamaṇḍalābhoga = ekasvāminā pavamasvāminā svayamupahita rājyābhiṣekaḥ."

(2) I.H.Q. IV. p.283.

(3) J.B.B.R.A.S. I (N.S.) p.16f.

(4) Ibid. XX pp.3-4.

(5) I.A. XV. p.187.

G. Hoernle[1] rightly pointed out that "Yasodharman was hardly in power at that time." In Cunningham's[2] opinion, Budha-Gupta was the overlord of Dṛoṇa Simha. The last known date of Budha Gupta is 494-95 A.D., and the only known inscription of Dṛoṇa Simha is dated in 502-3 A.D. He was preceded by his brother Dharasena and father Bhaṭārka. The Maitraka Kingdom may have been founded by Bhatārka between 470-475 A.D. It is very possible that when Dṛoṇa Simhawas installed as Mahārāja, in or shortly before 502-3 A.D., Budha Gupta was dead, and his successor Narasimha Gupta was on the throne. The Gupta emperor might have taken the trouble of personally visiting Valabhi and coronating Dṛoṇa Simha as Mahārāja, as a reward for his successful resistance to the Hūṇas. The event may also be interpreted as a diplomatic move of Narasimha Gupta to rally round him the rising and erstwhile independent dynasty of the Maitrakas of Valabhi. It is quite reasonable to suppose that the rise of the Maitrakas was at the expense of the Gupta empire, and was certainly a good stroke of diplomacy on the part of Narasimha Gupta to

---

(1) J.A.S.B. LVIII.p.97.

(2) Bhilsa Topes, pp.162-63.

reckon with the fact, and personally go to invest Dīvoṇa Simha as a recognised Mahārāja, practically independent but owing allegiance to the Gupta emperors just in the same way as the Parivrājaka Mahārājas. There is no positive authority to suppose that any king of Malwa was overload of Valabhi. The rise of Yasodharman of Mandasore stone-inscriptions (1) must be placed much later than the known date of Mahārāja Dīvoṇa Simha and the earliest known date of Dhruvasena I. We do not know anything about the predecessor of Yasodharman and his father was certainly too humble a man to be mentioned in the inscription of his son, and therefore he could hardly be the "Akhilabhuvanamaṇḍalābhogaṭeka-svāmi" of the Valabhi inscriptions. The nature of the grant of Dīvoṇa Simha, the address to the officers, the regulation of supplies, etc., and the quotation from Vyāsa, all are in complete harmony with, or rather imitation of, usual Gupta grants. The fact, that all the Valabhi grants from the earliest times onwards are dated in the Gupta era, certainly raises a strong presumption that the Maitrakas rose as feudatories or subordinates to the imperial Guptas, and the tradition was continued to the later days when the

---

(1) C.I.I.III Nos. 33 and 35, p.147f.

Gupta empire was a memory of the past.[1] Therefore it may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the paramount lord who invested Dṛoṇa Simha was the Gupta emperor Narasiṁha Gupta. Hoernle[2] has aptly observed that "the simple reference to the 'paramasvāmin' or paramount master, is more easily explainable if applied to the old accustomed suzerain power of the Guptas than to a new emperor like Yas'odharman." We have seen that the Gupta empire did not pass away with the death of Skanda Gupta; Narasiṁha Gupta, in the early years of his rule was acknowledged emperor over a fairly wide extent of territory and was not a petty ruler of Magadha. The clouds were threatening but had not yet burst. Therefore, Narasiṁha Gupta may have had the pleasure of the satisfaction to be invoked as an overlord in a distant province like Valabhi.

---

(1) Such a thing was very common in the history of the later Mughals after the death of Aurangzeb.

(2) J.A.S.B.LVIII p.97; Budha Prakāś'a (A.B.O.R.I. XXVII p.133) takes Vainya Gupta to be the overlord of Dṛona Simha. Dandeker (op cit. pp.147-177) comes to the same conclusion - we have placed Vainya Gupta later than 502 A.D. (see infra).

It is to this period of comparative peace and prosperity that the class I gold coins of Archer type belonging to Narasiṁha Gupta[1] should be assigned. These coins are far better in purity than those of class II type. The coin No.560 (B.M.C.) belonging to class I has ~~has~~ 71% of gold, while coin No.565 (B.M.C.) belonging to class II has only 54% of gold.[2] Cunningham[3] refers to an embassy to China sent by the King of India, named Ke-u-to (i.e. Gutta or Gupta) in 502 A.D. The description of the 'Kingdom of India' in the Chinese Record leaves no doubt that it meant the Gupta empire with Magadha as the centre and "including all the tributary provinces between the Himālayas and the Vindhyas." Cunningham[4] took the "King of India" to be Budha Gupta, but in our humble opinion, he can be well-nigh taken to be Narasiṁha Gupta. The embassy must have left India in 500-1 A.D., and the "devout Buddhist" Narasiṁha Gupta may have felt proud to send a mission with numerous presents to the great emperor of China.

But Narasiṁha Gupta Bālāditya was not destined to rule in peace. The Hūṇas under Toramāṇa ultimately burst out of the bounds of Eastern Malwa and invaded the heart of the Gupta empire; they overran the Eastern countries and occupied the city of the Gauḍas.

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.137. (2) APPENDIX. Ia.
(3) Bhilsa Topes, p.162. (4) Ibid.

This is clear from the Ārya-manju-Śrī-mūla-Kalpa in which he is addressed as Hakārākhyáḥ or Akārākhyáḥ and is described as coming from the West, and as a great king of Śūdra caste"[1] He has been rightly identified by Jayasval[2] with Toramāṇa. He was a master of a large part of Northern India, besides Western and Central Asia.[3] An undated inscription of the reign of Rājamahārāja Toramāṇa Śāhī or Śāh jauvl-jauval, was discovered at Kurā in Salt Range in the Punjab.[4] Jayasval[5] and Sten-Konow[6] have rightly held that Toramāṇas of the Kurā and the Eran inscriptions are one and the same person. Though Bühler[7], the editor of the Kurā inscription, doubted the identity, Cunningham had no doubt of it, and Smith[8] supported him. Toramāṇa issued silver and copper coins, whose main characteristic is their "want of originality."[9] The legend jabula or jaubula on these coins reminds us of the jauvla of the Kurā inscription, and Sten-Konow[10] agreed with Jayasval that jauvl-jauval was a title of Toramāṇa. Two silver coins of Toramāṇa in the British Museum are dated in the

---

(1) I.H.I. p.64. (2) Ibid, p.53.f.
(3) E.H.I. p.335. (4) E.I.I. p.238f.
(5) J.B.O.R.S.XVI p.287; XVIII p.201.
(6) I.H.Q.XII p.530. (7) E.I.I. p.238f.
(8) J.A.S.B. 1894 p.186. (9) Ibid, p.188.
(10) I.H.Q. XII p.530.

year 52. There is a difference of opinion about the interpretation of the date. Fleet[1] took it to be the regnal year of Toramāṇa. Such a long reign is rather abnormal. It is possible that the date is expressed in a special White Hūṇa era[2] of which we do not know when exactly it began. It might be 448 A.D., which is the exact date of the foundation of the Hūṇa empire in the Oxus basin.[3]

Toramāna was, thus, certainly a ruler of great importance who shook the Gupta empire to its very roots. From the Ārya-manju-śrī-mūla-Kalpa it is clear that he overran Magadha also.[4] Narasimha Gupta offered a feeble resistance and was forced to become a vassal and pay tribute. This information is given by Yuan Chwang, according to whom, 'Bālāditya refused to pay tribute," and Mihirakula, when defeated and imprisoned by Bālāditya, observed that "the subject and the master have changed places."[5]

---

(1) I.A.XVIII p.229. (2) J.A.S.B. 1894 p.195.
(3) I.A.XLVI p.287. (4) I.A.I. pp.64, 53f.
(5) The Records I pp.168-69; Watters I, pp.288-89. We feel no difficulty in identifying the Bālāditya of Yuan Chwang with Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya of the seals and the coins. It is unnecessary to postulate the existence of another imperial Gupta ruler with the title"Bālāditya."

Prakaṭāditya or 'Pra' ?

The comparatively easy conquest of Magadha and the defeat of Narasimha Gupta by the Hūṇa emperor Toramāṇa in C.503-4 A.D. were very much facilitated by the internal dissensions in the royal family and rebellious ambition of feudatories; and these tendencies were naturally encouraged by the clever invaders - Toramāṇa and Mihirakala. Toramāṇa caused 'Pakārākhya' or 'Prakārākhya' to be released from prison at Bhāgavatapura, returned him to Nandapura (Pāṭaliputra), and enthroned him as king of Magadha at Kāśī (Benares).(1) Jayasval(2) has rightly restored the full name of this Gupta prince as Prakaṭāditya. We have an inscription - the Sārnāth inscription of Prakaṭāditya.(3) Unfortunately this is very much broken, and no connected account can be read from it. The Prakaṭāditya of the inscription may be identified with Prakārākhya of the Ārya-Mañju-Śrī-mūla-kalpa.(4) But according to the inscription,(5) Prakaṭāditya belonged to a family in which a nṛipati Bālāditya

(1) I.H.I. p.53f. (2) Ibid p.73.
(3) C.I.I.III No.79 p.284.
(4) The inscription of Prakaṭāditya is found at Sārnāth near Kāśī, and Kāśī and Madhyadeśa are mentioned in the inscription. Prakārākhya was crowned at Kāśī, and Madhyadeśa was certainly under him.
(5) C.I.I.III, No.79 p.284.

was born, and the former was the son of another Bālāditya by his wife Dhavalā. We know that one Bālāditya - Narasimha Gupta - was a member of the Imperial Gupta family. The assumption of Āditya titles like Kramāditya, Vikramāditya, Mahendrāditya, Prakāsāditya and Bālāditya by Gupta Kings raises a strong suspicion that Prakaṭāditya was also an āditya title assumed by a Gupta prince. Was Prakaṭāditya another son of Narasimha Gupta by his queen (Dhavalā?) Kumāra Gupta III was a son of Narasimha Gupta by his Mahādevī S'rīmatīdevī.(1) Kumāra Gupta I and Candra Gupta II are known to have more than one queen. According to the Manju-S'rī-mūla-kalpa(2) Prakārākhya when a boy was imprisoned by King Gopa. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that Narasimha Gupta himself or his chief queen S'rīmatīdevī might have got Prakaṭāditya imprisoned by the help of King Gopa(3) as As'oka's wife

---

(1) Hoernle had read the name of the Mahadevī of Narasimha Gupta as S'rimatidevi (J.A.SB.LVIII p.89f) Fleet had read the name as Mahālakṣmīdevī (I.A.XIX p.225): The correct name is S'rīmitradevī (M.A.S.I. No.66, p.66).

(2) I.H.I. P.63; Teth. p.56.

(3) Jayasval identified king Gopa with Goparāja of the Eran inscription dated 191 G.E. It is more reasonable to identify King Gopa of the Manju-S'rī-mūla-kalpa with Gopacandra of Mallasārul and Faridpur copper-plates. Gopacandra may have been at first a feudatory of Narasimha Gupta, and imprisoned Prakaṭāditya at the behest of the Gupta emperor. Gopacandra may have made himself master of Vardhamāna Bhukti after the overthrow of Vainya Gupta.

had of the Kunāla exiled and blinded.(1) Such a prince would certainly be made good use of by a foreign conqueror like Toramāṇa, who installed him as a King to offset Narasiṁha Gupta. Toramāṇa from the beginning appears to have been in touch with some members, (probably disappointed ones) of the Gupta family. According to the Jaina author Udyotanasūri, writer of Kuvalayamālā, Toramāṇa's head-quarters of his Indian possessions was Pavvaiyā on the Chenaba, and his guru was Hari Gupta, who himself was a scion of the Gupta family.(2) According to the Ārya-manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa(3) Pra(4) (Kaṭāditya) was the son of Bhā

(1) Smith (E.H.I. p.201) doubts the historical value of the tradition because the theme is a common one occurring in many stories. But this fact is no argument against our suggestion that Prakaṭāditya was imprisoned by the reigning Gupta emperor and was put on the throne as a puppet by Toramāna.

(2) J.B.O.R.S. (XIV p.28f. Probably there is a copper coin of Hari Gupta found in Ahicchatra (C.C.G.D.B.M. p.152 No.616, Pl. XXIV, 16).

(3) I.H.I. p.63.

(4) Really, the actual position of Prakaṭāditya in the dynastic history of the Guptas is not clear. Jayasval identifies 'Bhā' with Bhānu Gupta whom he took to be the Baladitya of Yuan Chwang and conqueror of Mihirakula. Many scholars have held that Bhānu Gupta Bāladitya was an imperial Gupta ruler who defeated Mihirakula and fought the Hūṇas with Goparāja of the Eran inscription. (P.H.A.I. 3rd Edn. pp.401-2.) But to us there is no positive evidence at all to hold that there was a Gupta emperor Bhānu Gupta with the āditya title Bālāditya. We have coins of all the known Gupta rulers and so far no coin of Bhānu Gupta is known, nor is Bhānu Gupta known from any other inscription, save the Eran inscription.

(Bhakārākhya), who was a descendant (anuja) of Samudra Gupta.

Toramāṇa was a great conqueror, and a statesman of no mean order. His invasion of Magadha was an event of profound importance not only for the history of Magadha but

---

Ctd.from previous page:

The fifth Dāmodarpur copper-plate inscription, which according to Basak contained the date 214 G.E. and the name Bhānu Gupta (E.I.XV.p.115) has been shown to be dated in 224 G.E. (Ibid XVII p.193), and the name may be Kumāra Gupta (ibid, Note I) or Viṣṇu Gupta. Basak accepted the revised reading af the date (H.N.E.I. pp.92-93), and it is hardly possible to assume the existence of one Bhānu Gupta Bālāditya as emperor of India, and reigning from about 500 to 543 A.D. It is significant to note that in the Eran Posthumous inscription of Goparāja, (C.I.I.III, p.93), nothing is said about the ancestors of Bhānu Gupta, nor is he referred to with the usual imperial titles common to the Gupta emperors. The expression "the bravest man on the earth, a mighty king equal to Pārtha" is just formal. Bhānu Gupta may have been distantly connected with the imperial line, and during those critical years, he may have succeeded in carving out a fortune for himself before 510-11 A.D.. The invasion of Magadha by Toramāna and the consequent defeat and humiliation of the emperor Narasimha Gupta, afforded a favourable opportunity to different scions of the imperial family to embark on a career of adventure and carve out independent principalities. Vainya Gupta did it in East Bengal, (I.H.Q. VI p.45f), Kriṣna Gupta or his successor may have become quite influential in Magadha. Bhānu Gupta may have been one such adventurer, and he may have been supported by Goparāja. From the Eran inscription we come to learn that a mighty battle was fought and Goparāja was killed. We do not know what happened to Bhānu Gupta. It is possible that Bhānu Gupta lost the battle. It was most probably against the Hūna King Mihirakula that the battle was fought. In view of such flimsy and doubtful evidence it is safe to exclude Bhānu Gupta from the list of Gupta emperors.

for the whole of Northern India. Unfortunately for the Hūṇas, Toramāṇa died soon after his victorious march to Gauḍa and Magadha. According to the Ārya-manju-Śrī-mula-kalpa the powerful Śūdra King (Toramāṇa), soon after the installation of Prakārākhya in Kāśī, fell ill and died after crowning his son Graha (Mihirakula).(1) The event

---

Ctd.from previous page:

Narasiṁha Gupta Bālāditya clearly fits in the story of Yuan Chwang about Bālāditya and Mihirakula. It is true that the Sāraṇāth inscription of Prakaṭāditya appears to allude to more than one Bālāditya (C.I.I.III, p.284f), but the inscription is too broken to enable us to read a definite account from it, or to base thereon a conclusion; but one thing is clear that Prakaṭāditya was a son of Bālāditya, son of Narasiṁha Gupta.
Bhakārākhya of the Manju-Śrī-mūla-kalpa may be Narasiṁha Gupta, or the text is very much confused. On the coins of Vainya Gupta there is the simple letter 'Bhā' (C.C.G.D.B.M. p.144: what was read as Candra has been shown to be Vainya). Is Bhā of the Manju-Śrī the same as Vainya Gupta. In that case Prakaṭāditya would be a son of Vainya Gupta, who may have had another title. "Bālāditya" as a challenge to Narasiṁha Gupta, besides "Dvādaśāditya". Vainya Gupta was encouraged by Toramāna to become the ruler of the Eastern provinces of the Gupta empire, and the clever invader may have installed Prakaṭāditya, a son of Vainya Gupta on the throne at Kāśī. King Gopa or Gopacandra was jealous of Vainya Gupta and so helped Narasiṁha Gupta against him and after the overthrow of Vainya Gupta, made himself master of Western and Eastern Bengal.
It is impossible to be positive about one or the other possibilities.

(1) I.H.I. pp.64-65.

might have taken place in C.504 A.D. There is no denying the fact that Toramāna dealt a heavy blow to the prestige of the Gupta emperor and empire, and directly as well as indirectly encouraged centrifugal tendencies to assert themselves with success. Mahārāja Dhruvasena, who followed Dhoṇa Simha, assumed more high sounding titles like Mahāsāmanta, Mahā pratīhāra, Mahādaṇḍanāyaka and Mahākartakṛitika." (1) This certainly suggests definite improvement in the status of the Maitrakas of Valabhi after Mahārāja Dhoṇa Simha, and the further loosening of the tie with the imperial dynasty.

Vainya Gupta.

In the East Mahārāja Vainya Gupta assumed an independent status. A copper-plate with a seal attached, bearing the legend Mahārāja Śrī Vai (nya Gupta), and the picture of a bull in relief, has been discovered at Gunaigarh in the Tipperah district of East Bengal. The copper plate is dated in the current (Gupta) year 188, which is equivalent to December 506 A.D. (2)

(1) J.B.B.R.A.S. (N.S.) I, p.16; I.H.Q.IV. p.462.

(2) I.H.Q. VI. p.45f.

The absence of the imperial title, the use of the subordinate title Mahārāja, the invocation to Mahādeva and the Bull on the seal instead of Garuḍa may lead one to assume that Vainya Gupta was a petty chief, not a paramount ruler belonging to the Gupta dynasty.(1) We have already seen that the absence of the usual imperial titles does not prove the status of the man. Kumāra Gupta I is called Māhārāja in the Mankuwar Stone-image-inscription, and Bhoja and Mahendrapāla are referred to simply as Mahārājas in some inscriptions. The whole point is settled by the discovery of the Nālandā Seal of Vainya Gupta, which gives the imperial title Mahārājādhirāja.(2) Unfortunately the whole seal is not available, "only a triangular piece of baked red clay forming the bottom portion of the seal showing parts of at least four lines,(3) ~~have~~ been preserved to us, and the vital portions that gave the names of his ancestors and their queens are lost. But the extant portions of the seal leave no doubt that the names of the ancestors of Vainya Gupta ended in "Gupta"; the style of the inscription is clearly Gupta. The Seals have been

---

(1) Ibid.

(2) M.A.S.I. NO.66, p.67.

(3) Ibid.

found with the other royal seals of the Gupta emperors. There can hardly be any doubt that Vainya Gupta of the Seals is the same person as he of the Gunaigarh copper-plates. The coins which had been attributed to one Candra Gupta III by Allan,(1) have been shown to belong to Vainya Gupta,(2) and the attribution has been accepted by scholars.(3) The coins are of Archer type and the weight and the fabric of the coins clearly connect them with the coinage of the later imperial Guptas. In the Gunaigarh copper plate inscription(4) Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja Vijayasena, and Mahārāja Rudradatta, are subordinate officers of Mahārāja Vainya Gupta who is ruling the earth. Therefore the status of Vainya Gupta was certainly higher than that of a mere Mahārāja. It is true that from the Gunaigarh copper-plate and the seal it is clear that Vainya Gupta was a devotee of Śiva,(5) while in the Nālandā seal(6) he is called Paramabhāgavata, devotee of Viṣṇu. The coins of Vainya Gupta have Garuḍa standard on the left, on the obverse.(7) But "the question of a sovereign's religion has no relevancy in the matter of deciding the dynasty to which he belonged."(8) It is

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. P.144. (2) I.H.Q. IX p.784.
(3) R.C.Majumdar (I.H.Q.IX p.989f.); R. Burn (Bhārata Kaumudī-A study in Indology in Honour of R.K.Mookerji, p.148.); Allan has also accepted the revised reading.
(4) I.H.Q. VI. p.45f. (5) I.H.Q. VI p.45f.
(6) M.A.S.I. NO.66 p.67. (7) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.144.
(8) Daṇḍekar, op. cit. p.141.

possible that Vainya Gupta may have been a devotee of S'iva, and tolerant towards Buddhism, and at the same time continued the traditional use of Garuda standard on the coins, and the legend 'Paramabhāgavata' on official seals, following the imperial Guptas. Therefore, it is clear that Vainya Gupta of the copper-plate, coins and the seal is the one and the same person, and he must have belonged to the imperial Gupta family.

Many scholars have taken Vainya Gupta Dvādasāditya to be the successor of Budha Gupta.(1) Dandekar(2) has ~~made~~ no doubt that Vainya Gupta 'ascended the Gupta throne after Budha Gupta and ruled at least up to 506-7 A.D.' But we suggest that Vainya Gupta was a puppet raised on the throne by Toramāna after the defeat of Narasimha Gupta. Vainya Gupta was an ambitious member of the imperial dynasty. He may have been a son of Kumāra Gupta II or Budha Gupta.(3) Naturally, he was not happy over the accession of Narasimha Gupta. The Hūṇa invasion under Toramāṇa created havoc and confusion in the empire. Narasimha Gupta was defeated and he may have ~~been~~ gone into hiding.

---

(1) I.H.Q. IX p.788. (2) Dandekar, op.cit. p.143.

(3) According to Yuan Chwang, Tathāgatarāja was the son or direct descendant of Buddha (Budha) Gupta (The Life p.110). We have identified Tathāgatarāja with Vainya Gupta.

It was in these unfortunate days that some of his baser coins, belonging to class II, were issued. Toramāṇa was interested in encouraging the different members of the imperial family to parcel out the already shrunk empire among themselves. He had taken Prakāśāditya out of prison and installed him as a king in Kāsi. He must have encouraged Vainya Gupta to assume independence. Encouraged by the Hūṇa success against Narasimha Gupta, and probably directly assisted by Toramāna, Vainya Gupta proclaimed himself the emperor, issued seals with imperial titles, and coins with the āditya title Dvādaśāditya. His coins "are presumably from the Kālaghāṭ hoard."(1) His feudatory Vijayasena was the viceroy of a bhukti in Utteramaṇḍala in Samataṭa. The system of administration, that was in vogue in Puṇḍravardhana as known from the Dāmodarpur plates, prevailed also in Samataṭa. (East Bengal). His seal has been found in Nālandā(2) in Magadha. If his identity with Tathagatarāja of the Chinese pilgrim,(3) is accepted, then he built a Sanghārāma in Nālandā. It may therefore be assumed that Vainya Gupta - Dvadaśāditya exercised suzerainty over Bihar (at least South Bihar) and Bengal.

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.144, and Note 1.

(2) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.67.

(3) ~~C.C.G.D.B.M. p.liii.~~ The Life, p 110.

The period of his rule may be taken to be C.504-514 A.D., when Narasiṁha Gupta Bālāditya was in wilderness and was forced to issue coins of rude fabric and very base metal. The coins of Dvādaśāditya are "probably to be dated not later than Narasiṁha Gupta."(1) The numismatic evidence confirms our hypothesis that Vainya Gupta supplanted Narasiṁha Gupta for some time. The report from the laboratory on the late Gupta coins shows that while No.560 (B.M.C.) belonging to class I of Narasiṁha Gupta contained 71% of gold, No.565 of class II belonging to the same ruler has only 54% of gold; on the other hand, there is 73% gold in the coin No.589 of Vainya Gupta Dvādaśāditya.(2) Allan(3) remarks that "Vainya Gupta is earlier than appears in the British Museum Catalogue." The only reasonable inference is that in between Narasiṁha Gupta class I and class II Archer-type coins, we have to place the coins of Vainya Gupta. It is clear that Narasiṁha Gupta's class II coins which have baser metal, heavier weight and worse finis are later than the coins of Vainya Gupta. The great difference in the purity of the two classes of the coins of Narasiṁha Gupta

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p Lvii

(2) Appendix Ia.

(3) Ibid.

can only be explained by believing that Narasimha Gupta had experienced some great change for the worse in his fortunes. Toramāṇa had overrun the country, Narasimha Gupta was defeated and must have gone into wilderness, and from there, to assert the continuity of his sovereignty, went on issuing coins which could not but be of very poor quality and finis. Vainya Gupta, probably assisted or encouraged by Toramāṇa, came into the possession of the rich treasury of Magadha and issued coins of fine quality and good gold to proclaim his splendour.

Identity of Vainya Gupta and Tathāgata-raja.

We are disposed to identify Vainya Gupta with Tathāgata-rāja, who according to Yuan Chwang[1] followed Buddha (Budha) Gupta in building another Sanghārāma in the Nālandā monastery. The seal of Vainya Gupta has been found at Nālandā,[2] and his patronage to Buddhism is clear from the Gunaigarh copper-plate inscription.[3] Some may draw support for the theory that Vainya Gupta

(1) The Life, p.110.

(2) M.A.S.I. NO.66 p.67.

(3) I.H.Q. VI. p.45f.

immediately succeeded Budha Gupta from the statement of Yuan Chwang that Tathāgaṭha-rāja followed Budha Gupta and was followed by Bālāditya. But it is important to be borne in mind that the Chinese pilgrim is not giving a chronological history of the kings of Magadha, but a history of the building of monasteries in Nālandā by different kings. He mentions a king of mid-India, not of Magadha, after Vajra, who followed Bālāditya.(1) It should also be borne in mind that Tathāgaṭha-rāja's relationship to Bālāditya, who is said to have followed him in the construction of a sanghārāma in Nālandā monastery, is not mentioned, nor do the Records mention his relationship to Budha Gupta who preceded him.(2) Bālāditya who is mentioned after Tathāgaṭha-rāja in the construction of a monastery in Nālandā may have constructed the building later than Vainya Gupta. Thus the identity of Vainya Gupta and Tathāgaṭha-rāja does not contradict our hypothesis that Vainya Gupta came to the imperial throne when Narasiṁha Gupta was overthrown by Toramāṇa. Vainya Gupta, conscious of his weak and unpopular position, showed great religious eclecticism.

---

(1) The Life, p.111.

(2) Watters II pp.164-65; the Records II p.168.

He was a devotee of Mahādeva, and also a "Paramabhāgavata." He patronised Buddhists and built a Sanghārāma in Nālandā. He continued the traditional Gupta coinage and issued coins of fine metal.

Overthrow of Vainya Gupta and Restoration of Narasimha Gupta.

The authority of Vainya Gupta appears to have been short-lived. We have only three coins of his in the British Museum Catalogue.(1) A surer evidence is the Mallasārul copper-plate of Mahārāja Vijayasena, issued in the 3rd year of Mahārājadhirāja Gopacandra's reign.(2) This Mahārāja Vijayasena is evidently the same person who is referred to as Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja Vijayasena in the Gunaigarh copper-plate inscription of Vainya Gupta.(3) Gopacandra of the Mallasārul plate has been identified with he of the Faridpur plates.(4) Thus, it is obvious that Vijayasena was a feudatory of both Vainya Gupta and Gopacandra. While in the Gunaigarh copper plate Vijayasena used the seal of his overlord Vainya Gupta, the Mallasārul copper plate has the seal of Vijayasena himself. The unavoidable inference is that the status of Vijayasena was higher in the time of Gopacandra than in that of Vainya Gupta. Therefore, it may be reasonably

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M., p.144. (2) E.I.XXIII p.155f.
(3) I.H.Q.VI. p.45f (3) I.A. XXXIX p.193f.

held that Mallasārul copper plate is later in date than the Gunaigarh copper plate dated in December 506 A.D. Gopacandra's rule over West Bengal (Vardhamāna Bhukti) is proved by the Mallasārul plate while his authority over East Bengal is known from the Faridpur plates. We have copper plates of Dharmāditya discovered at the same place, and Pargiter[1] had held that Gopacandra had followed Dharmāditya. But R.C.Majumdar[2] has conclusively proved that Gopacandra preceded Dharmāditya. Therefore it appears certain that Gopacandra either overthrew the rule of Vainya Gupta in Bengal, or succeeded him in this part of the country. We have already suggested that Gopacandra may be identified with King Gopya who, according to the Ārya-Manju-s'ri-mūla-kalpa, helped Narasimha Gupta in imprisoning Prakaṭāditya. It is quite possible that Gopacandra, who was already a high official or feudatory (nṛipa), under Narasimha Gupta, could not tolerate the rule of the quisling Vainya Gupta, who also must have been fairly unpopular due to his relation with the barbaric enemies - the Hūṇas. Narasimha Gupta may have played some part in organising the opposition against Vainya Gupta, who had usurped his throne with the help of the enemies of the nation.

---

(1) I.A.XXXIX p.193f. (2) H.B.R.I. pp.52-53.

From the Eran Posthumous inscription of Goparāja[1] we learn that Goparāja and brave Bhānu Gupta (who had come from somewhere else) fought a mighty battle. The inscription is dated in the year 191 (= 510-11 A.D.), and the battle was certainly fought against the Hūṇas. Goparāja is said to have lost his life. We do not know what happened to Bhānu Gupta, and who won the battle? It is possible that Bhānu Gupta was defeated or killed. What is important to observe is that in 510-11 or shortly before it, a mighty battle was fought in Eran, presumably against the Hūṇas. We have already seen that much earlier than 510 A.D., Toramāṇa had made himself master of Eastern Malwa.[2] Therefore the battle referred to in the Eran posthumous inscription of Goparāja was fought against the Hūṇa occupation of Malwa. Vainya Gupta, the puppet of the Hūṇas, was on the imperial throne. Narasiṁha Gupta was in exile, running a refugee government.[3] At such a critical time, Bhānu Gupta, probably a scion of the Gupta family, "brave as Pārtha" was adventurous enough to go as far as Eran to lead a war of resistance against the foreign occupation. Whether Mihirakula lost or won the battle, it musthave given him a lot of worries. ~~Vainya~~

---

(1) C.I.I. III No.20 p.93f. (2) Ibid No.36 p.158f.

(3) Many European governments were in exile during the last two world-wars, and they ran the show from London.

Vainya Gupta had failed to assure safety to the Hūṇa empire. His authority was overthrown in Bengal by Gopacandra. Some seals of Candra princes have been discovered at Nālandā.(1) It is possible that the Candras may have even invaded Magadha and finally overthrew Vainya Gupta. Gopacandra was assisted by Vijayasena who was at first a high official under Vainya Gupta, and as a reward for his services, Gopacandra allowed an improvement in the status of Vijayasena, who obtained the privilege of using his own seal. Mihirakula, realising the hopeless position of Vainya Gupta, had no further use for such a quisling. Vainya Gupta then departed from the stage of history probably with the same fate as has befallen the lot of traitors in ancient and modern history.

This was a situation particularly favourable for Narasimha Gupta, who reoccupied his ancestral throne of Magadha, in about C.515 A.D., after about 10 years of exile. His first objective was to settle account with the Hūṇas. But that needed long and arduous preparations, and stupendous financial commitments. So the first need of the hour was peace, breathing time. Fortunately, Mihirakula also wished for peace.

---

(1) M.A.S.I. No.66 pp.29-30.

He had seen the rising tempo of Indian resistance in Eastern Malwa, and he may have been wary of war, and so anxious to resume his march back to his Indian headquarters. Narasimha Gupta must have realised the weakness of his position and the unfruitfulness of carrying on an unequal war against a powerful and ruthless enemy. The result was that a peace was concluded between Mihirakula and Narasimha Gupta according to which the Hūṇa king must have assured non-injury to the Kingdom of Magadha, and Bālāditya acknowledged the formal suzerainty of the Hūṇas and agreed to pay tribute, as we learn from Yuan Chwang.(1) The terms were certainly not very honourable to the descendant of the imperial Guptas, but peace and security, that were assured, were necessary to reorganise the resources of the Kingdom, to bide for time. Naturally, therefore, Narasimha Gupta could not indulge in the luxury of reissuing coins of good gold. The class II, Archer-type coins of Narasimha Gupta are of very rude workmanship, and base metal. Some of these seem never to have had marginal legend. One of the coins (No.565 B.M.C.) has only 54% of gold.(2) It appears that even after Narasimha Gupta was restored to the throne, financial stringency and exploitation of

---

(1) The Record I, p.168.

(2) Appendix Ia.

resources for the coming war with the Hūṇas, forced him to continue the issue of those heavily debased coins.(1)

The Hūṇa War.

While Narasimha Gupta was trying to reorganise his Kingdom, and was beautifying the land with monasteries and Buddha's images, Mihirakula ruling over his Indian provinces from Sialkoṭ in the Punjab, was carrying on a systematic persecution of Buddhism.(2) He can be safely identified with that King of Gandhāra who was "cruel and vindictive" and "practised the most barbarous atrocities," who "did not believe in the Law of Buddha, but loved to worship demons, "whom Sung-yun met and by whom he was not well received.(3) Gollas, the King of the White Hūṇas "whose word was law to the whole of India" according to Kosmas, has been rightly identified with Mihirakula by Stein(4) and Smith.(5) Mihirakula had inherited a vast empire from his father Toramāṇa. India was only one

(1) The coins of Narasimha Gupta have the letter 'Gre' between the feet of the king on the obverse (C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.137-39, Pl.XXII 7-12; C.I.M.I. pp.119-120). Therefore on the gratuitous supposition that on the coins of Nara-Bālāditya there is the letter 'Go' between the feet, attribution of these coins to Gopacandra (I.C. V.p.428) is clearly unwarranted.

(2) The Records I.pp.166-67. (3) Ibid.Intro. pp.XCIX-Ci

(4) I.A. XXXIV p.73f. (5) E.H.I. P.336.

province of the Hūṇa empire with a capital at Bamiyan, with Balkh as a secondary Capital,[1] and more than forty countries paid tribute[2] to the Hūṇa emperor. His silver and copper coins have been found in the Punjab. On some silver coins, we find the bull or bull-standard on a trident with the legend jayatṛi Mihirakula or jayatṛi Vṛiṣadhvaja on the obverse.[3] His coins clearly show that Mihirakula was a devotee of Śiva. From the story related by Yuan Chwang, it appears that at first Mihirakula was anxious to understand Buddhism, and wanted the Buddhist clergy to recommend a good teacher to him, but the clergy insulted him by recommending a servant of his own household. This enraged him and he "forthwith ordered the utter extermination of the Buddhist Church throughout all his dominions."[4] Bālāditya-rāja (Narasiṁha Gupta), a devout Buddhist,[5] naturally resented this order for the persecution of Buddhism. He had gained the love and affection of the people by his good and beneficient administration,[6] by "building orchards, reservoirs, gardens, passages, bridges,"[7] and he "tenderly

---

(1) Ibid p.335. (2) The Records, I. p.XCI.
(3) J.A.S.B. 1894, p.202f; C.I.M. I. p.236.
(4) Watters I. p.288. (5) The Records, I, p.168.
(6) Watters I. p.288. (7) I.H.I. p.23.

nourished his people."[1] The proud and once great and triumphant people of Magadha must have been feeling upset over the recognition of the Hūṇa overlordship. The peace that Narasiṁha Gupta had won for a few years gave to the state and the people the much needed breathing time, and what was needed was a good Casus belli to throw off the Hūṇa yoke. Bālāditya found in the policy of persecution of Buddhism by Mihirakula a very good excuse to rebel against the Hūṇa lord. Bālāditya was himself a pro-Buddhist, the people of Magadha were traditionally sympathetic to Buddhism, and, therefore, the rebellion of Bālāditya, became at once a war of national honour and of survival of religion. So Bālāditya was supported by "millions of his loayl subjects."[2]

When Bālāditya rebelled against Mihirakula, who had ordered a general persecution of Buddhism,[3] the latter started against the king of Magadha with a large force. Bālāditya found himself unequal to defending his territories. "Followed by the millions of his loyal subjects, he left the capital and retired to probably some islands of the Bay of Bengal, perhaps to the Deltaic region.[4] The Hūṇas under the cruel and vindictive[5]

---

(1) The Records I.p.168. (2) The Records I p.169.
(3) Watters I p.288. (4) The Records I p.169.
(5) The Records I, p.c.

Mihirakula passed through the Madhyadeśa, bringing untold miseries and destruction in their way. The Buddhist monasteries were the chosen victims of their savagery. The Kasia monastery was probably destroyed in the train of this invasion. Archaeological evidence puts the destruction of the monastery in C.500 A.D. and this coincides with the date of the Hūṇas invasions.(1) Mihirakula descended upon Magadha and its capital Pāṭaliputra. Though deserted by the king and many of its residents, the natural defences of Pāṭaliputra proved a serious obstacle to Mihirakula. Kosmas relates a story current among the people. "At one time when the Hūṇa king was besieging a city situated in Central India (Madhyadeśa), he was unable to take it on account of the moats full of water by which it was protected. Thereupon he made his elephants, horses, and myriads of soldiers drink the moat dry during the protracted siege, so that he was able to march dry-foot into the town."(2) We have no doubt that the strongly fortified city was none other than Pāṭaliputra. From the time of Candra Gupta Maurya, it was surrounded by a deep moat of water.(3) The fact that the Siege was "Protracted"(4) suggests that the capital, though deserted by the king, was defended by some chiefs and officials.(5)

---

(1) A.S.I.A.R. 1906-7 pp.50-51. (2) I.A.XXXIV p.73f.

(3) E.H.I. p.128. (4) I.A.XXXIV p.73f.

(5) Some successor of Kṛiṣṇa Gupta, probably Harṣa Gupta may have been the leader of the city's defence against the Hūṇas.

But ultimately Mihirakula succeeded in entering and the destruction of the historic city might have been caused by the savage Hūṇas, "who have no written character" and "whose rules of politeness are very defective." (1) The monastery of Nālandā may not have escaped some ravage. (2)

Mihirakula was anxious to get hold of Bālāditya, who cleverly allured him to come to the swampy country. Mihirakula, "committing the army to his younger brother, himself embarked on the sea to go to attack Bālāditya." "The king guarding the narrow passes, while the light cavalry were out to provoke the enemy to fight, sounded the golden drum, and his soldiers suddenly rose on every side and took Mihirakula alive as a captive and brought him into the presence of Bālāditya. (3) It was, thus, a surprise attack, and "the subject and master have changed places." (4) The zealous Buddhist victor Bālāditya passed the death sentence on Mihirakula, "who had overturned and destroyed like a wild beast the three precious objects of reverence." (5) Fortunately, the mother of Bālāditya intervened, and Mihirakula was released "to rule over some small Kingdom in the North." (6) The proud and vindictive Mihirakula was thus humiliated and Bālāditya had avenged his earlier defeats at the hands of Toramāṇa, the father of Mihirakula.

---

(1) The Records I, p.Xci. (2) J.B.O.R.S. XIV p.1f.
(3) The Records, I, p.169. (4) Ibid.
(5) Ibid. (6) Ibid.

When was this defeat on Mihirakula inflicted? It appears from the narrative of the Chinese pilgrim that Mihirakula was severely defeated by Bālāditya and had to take refuge in the north. Therefore it could be hardly possible for Mihirakula to maintain his hold on any part of Central India. The Gwālior inscription of Mihirakula is dated in his 15th regnal year.[1] It may be readily assumed that the defeat of Mihirakula could have happened later in his 15th regnal year or shortly after it. We have taken the accession of Mihirakula in the early years of 504 A.D., and therefore Bālāditya may have defeated Mihirakula in about 519-20 A.D.

Besides this defeat of Mihirakula by Bālāditya related by Yuan Chwang, we have inscriptional evidence that Yaśodharman also defeated him.[2] It has been a problem for Scholars to reconcile the statements of Yuan Chwang and the Mandāsore stone-pillar-inscriptions of Yaśodharman. Smith[3] proposed the theory that "the native princes under the leadership of Yaśodharman, a Rājā of Central India, appeared to have formed a confederacy against the foreign tyrant," and he further concluded that "the weight of evidence is now decidedly in favour of the rejection of Hiwen Tsang's story."

---

(1) C.I.I.III No.37 p.163 (2) C.I.I.III, No.33 p.147f.
(3) E.H.I. P.337, Note 2, p.330.

Earlier, the learned scholar had suggested that "Yaśodharman and Narasiṁha Gupta formed an alliance against the Hūṇas"[1] Allan[2] has rightly rejected the theory; "as contrary to the evidence of both our authorities, Hiwen Tsang and the inscriptions." Fleet opined that "Mihirakula was overthrown by Yaśodharman in the West and by Bālāditya in the direction of Magadha."[3] Hoernle[4] supposed that Yaśodharman-Viṣṇuvardhana was a feudatory of Narasiṁha Gupta and defeated Mihirakula's in latter's reign, and thereupon took advantage of his great success to found an empire for himself. But the truth is that the defeats of Mihirakula by Bālāditya and Yaśodharman were two different events which were not synchronous. The story told by Yuan Chwang may be "highly embellished,"[5] and his partiality to Bālāditya is natural. But it would be equally rash to reject the entire story as a mere figment of imagination. After making all allowances, it may be readily conceded that "probably we are justified in deducting from it that Narasiṁha Gupta inflicted a defeat on Mihirakula, the Hūṇa King."[6] The victory of Bālāditya may be put in C.520 A.D., while the success of Yaśodharman over Mihirakula is to be placed in or before 533 A.D.[7]

---

(1) E.H.I. (3rd Edn.) p.300. (2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.LIX
(3) I.A. 1889 p.228. (4) J.A.S.B. LVIII p.96.
(5) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.LVI. (6) Ibid.
(7) C.I.I.III, No.35 p.158f.

The Rev. Father Heras[1] relying too literally on the account of Yuan Chwang held that Mihirakula was first defeated by Yaśodharman earlier than his final defeat by Bālāditya, because according to the Chinese pilgrim after his defeat by Bālāditya, Mihirakula lost his estate and took asylum in Kashmir. There is nothing contradictory between the account of Yuan Chwang and the Mandasore stone-inscription of Yaśodharman; hence we are not disposed to regard the Chinese account as "mere romance,"[2] nor would we pass it over lightly as Madi[3] and Pathak[4] are inclined to do.

We are aware that the meagre data at our disposal allow no definite conclusion; but reviewing critically the account of Yuan Chwang with all its merits and defects, and the facts stated in the inscription of Yaśodharman, we suggest a course of events that might, most probably and reasonably, have happened. Mihirakula was a cruel and great conqueror, and a persecutor of Buddhism.[5]

---

(1) I.H.Q. III p.1f. (2) J.R.A.S. 1909 Pt.I pp.96-98.

(3) J.B.B.R.A.S. XXIII p.539f. (4) I.A. 1918 p.16f.

(5) Pathak has tried to identify Mihirakula with Kalkirāja of the Jaina tradition. I.A.1917 p.287; Ibid, 1918 p.16f.

Against his anti-Buddhistic policy Bālāditya revolted, and Mihirakula left his capital in the Punjab to face Bālāditya. But Mihirakula was ultimately defeated in C.520 A.D. He succeeded in getting away from Magadha, but misfortune dogged his steps, and his younger brother usurped the throne. Mihirakula temporarily in great trouble, took shelter in Kashmir, but soon after he captured the throne of Kashmir. Sung-Yun,(1) who visited Mihirakula sometime about 520 A.D., mentions that "his troops were engaged in war with Kipin" Thus it appears that Mihirakula's misfortunes were short-lived, he began an offensive against Gandhāra, and continued his policy of the persecution of Buddhism.(2) It was in the north that Yaśodharman found him and forced him to bow down his proud head before him.(3)

Last years of
Narasiṁha Gupta.

Narasiṁha Gupta was successful in recovering the independence of Magadha and saving Buddhism from utter destruction. He was quite satisfied with his achievements and more than thankful to Lord Buddha for

(1) E.H.I. Note I p.374; I.A. XXXIV p.73f.

(2) The Records I, p.171.

(3) C.I.I.III, No.33 p.148.

his success. He built another Saṅghārāma in Nālandā.(1) Yuan Chwang had stayed in the "College" of Bālāditya.(2) Bālāditya also built a temple where he placed an image of Buddha.(3) The testimony of the Chinese Scholar is corroborated by the Nālandā stone inscription of the reign of Yaśovarmadeva.(4) It mentions that "Bālāditya, the great king of irresistible valour after having vanquished all the foes and enjoyed the entire earth, erected, as if with a view to see the Kailāśa mountain surpassed, a great and extraordinary temple of the illustrious son of Śuddhodana, here at Nālandā."(5) There is no reason to suggest that "this Yaśovarmadeva was a contemporary with Bālāditya, the builder of the famous temple."(6) Hīrānanda Śāstrī hinted that Yaśovarmadeva may be really Yaśodharman.(7) A.K.Mrithyunjayan(8) supported Śāstrī and held that what has been read as Yaśodharman in the Maṇḍasore stone-inscription may be Yaśovarman. It has been proved by Majumdar(9) that the name in the Nālandā inscription is certainly Yaśovarmadeva, and that the palaeography does not support the suggestion of Śāstrī. The name in

---

(1) The Records II p.168. (2) The Life p.109.
(3) The Records II p.170. (4) E.I.XX p.43f.
(5) M.A.S.I. No.66, p.81. (6) E.I.XX. p.40.
(7) Ibid. (8) I.H.Q.VIII pp.228,615.
(9) Ibid VII p.664f.

Mandasore stone-inscription is Yaśodharman and Fleet[1] had considered the possibility of the name Yaśovarman and rejected it. Therefore Yaśodharman of the Mandasore inscription cannot be Yaśovarman of the Nālandā inscription; Yaśovarman was a king of Kanauj in the 8th Century. The main basis of Śāstrī's assumption is his assumption that the inscription was "written when Bālāditya was ruling and when king Yaśovarmadeva was holding the reins of Sovereignty."[2] Majumdar[3] has rightly pointed out that "there is no warrant for the assumption that Bālāditya was ruling at the time when the record was set up." The inscription only refers to the temple built by Bālāditya after he had defeated his enemies. This Bālāditya can be safely identified with Narasimha Gupta of the coins, and Bālāditya of Yuan Chwang. After defeating the terribly anti-Buddhist Mihirakula, Bālāditya celebrated his triumph, which was noticed by Yuan Chwang[4] about a century later, and was referred to in glowing terms as still standing aloft in the Nālandā stone inscription of Yaśovarmadeva,[5] belonging to the first half of the 8th Century A.D., two hundred years after Bālāditya. It was to this temple

---

(1) C.I.I. III No.33, p.145, Note 2. (2) E.I. XX p.40.

(3) I.H.Q. VII p.664f. (4) The Records II pp.173-74

(5) E.I. XX. p.40f.

to which "Mālāda made a pious permanent grant of pure water mixed with the powder of four fragrant objects.(1) The remains found on the site No.2 of Nālandā excavations are thought to be connected with the temple that Bālāditya had built.(2)

Narasimha Gupta, "the zealous Buddhist King"(3) now thought that his work was done, and influenced by some priests of China, "he gave up his royal estate and became a recluse."(4) According to the Records, "Bālāditya called an assembly for congregation (in his newly built vihāra at Nālandā), and priests from China came to the assembly. The King then was affected by a profound faith; he gave up his country and became a recluse. Having done so, he placed himself as the lowest of the priests, but his heart was always uneasy and ill at-rest; "formerly I was a king and the highest among the honourable; but now I have become a recluse, I am degraded to the bottom of the priesthood;" forthwith he went to the priests and said words to that effect; on this the Saṁgha resolved that they who had not received the full orders should be classed according to their natural years of life; this Sanghārāma is the only one in which this law exists."(5)

---

(1) M.A.S.I. NO.66 p.81. (2) Ibid, p.24.

(3) Watters I p.288; I.H.I. p.33; The Records I p.168.

(4) The Life p.111. (5) The Records II p.169.

This concession apparently satisfied him, and it suggests that Bālāditya must have been fairly advanced in years, so that he could now be placed high in the order of priesthood to his satisfaction. Ārya-manju-S'rī-mūla-kalpa also confirms the view that Bālāditya became a 'wanderer', but it is impossible to agree with it that Bālāditya died at the age of 36 years and one month only.(1) Bālāditya died at a very advanced age.

It is clear that after his victory over Mihirakula in C.520 A.D., and the completion of the building of a new monastery and a temple at Nālandā, Narasiṁha Gupta Bālāditya abdicated the throne in C.522 A.D. and became a Buddhist monk.

Kumāra Gupta III

Narasiṁha Gupta was succeeded by his son Kumāra Gupta III, born of Mahādevī Mitradevī, according to the Bhiṭārī and Nālandā seals,(2) and according to the Ārya-manju-S'rī-mūla-kalpa.(3) According to Yuan Chwang,(4) Baladitya was succeeded by Vajra, who built another monastery in Nālandā.

(1) I.H.I. p.

(2) J.A.S.B.LVIII p.86f; M.A.S.I.No.66 p.66. Fleet and Hoernle had read the name of the Queen of Narasiṁha Gupta as Mahālakṣmīdevī or S'rī'matīdevī, respectively. The correct reading is S'rī Mitradevī.

(3) I.M.I. p.

(4) Watters II p.165.

It is possible that Vajra may have been another name of Kumāra Gupta III. The discovery of his seal in Nālandā from Site No.1 confirms his association with Nālandā monastery. His seal has been found at Bhiṭāri[1] in Gāzipur district of the United Provinces. The Naṿa-grāma grant of Mahārāja Hastin[2] dated in 198 G.E., and the Betul[3] and Khoh plates[4] of Samkṣobha dated in years 199 and 209 respectively, show that the fiction of Gupta sovereignty continued in Central India. His coins are mostly from the Kālighāṭ hoard.[5] The Ārya-manju-S'rī-mūla-kalpa specifically mentions him as "the great lord of the Gauḍas." From the find spots of the coins, seals and inscriptions, it is obvious that Kumāra Gupta III who succeeded to the Kingdom of Magadha after the abdication of his father in C.522 A.D., ruled (at least in the early part of his reign) over territories extending from the Eastern part of the United Provinces to Western Bengal, and his suzerainty were acknowledged in Eastern parts of Central India.

---

(1) J.A.S.B.LVIII p.84f. (2) E.I. XXI p.127f.

(3) Ibid, VIII, p.284 (4) C.I.I.III No.37 p.163f.

(5) C.C.G.D.B.M. Note 1, p.142.

Coins.

Kumāra Gupta III issued coins with the Āditya title 'Kramāditya'. The gold coins of ruder fabric with 'Ku' beneath left arm, 'Go' or 'jā' between the feet of the king and the legend 'Mahārājādhirāja s'rī Kumāra Gupta Kramāditya on the obverse, and S'ri Kramāditya on the reverse[1] should now be assigned to Kumāra Gupta III, not to Kumāra Gupta II.[2] The weight of the coins varies from 146.0 to 151.8 grains.[3] We have seen that Narasimha Gupta issued two classes of the Archer-type of coins; class I is of purer metal and better finis, class II of rude fabric and baser metal. We have shown that these two classes of coins were not issued simultaneously for circulation in different districts of the empire, but were issued in different periods. The report from the laboratory shows that No.560 (B.M.C. p.137) belonging to class I has 71% of gold while No.565 (B.M.C.) belonging to classII has only 54% of gold.[4] Kumāra Gupta III's coins follow the latter issues of base coins by Narasimha Gupta both in weight and purity. The coin No.576[5] (B.M.C.) belonging to Kumāra Gupta III (not to

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.141-43 (2) See Supra.

(3) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp.141-43 (4) Appendix Ia

(5) Appendix Ia

Kumāra Gupta II[1]) has only 54% of gold. In its style, weight and purity it closely follows No. 565 (B.M.C.) Thus it is certain that on numismatic grounds alone, the base Ku coins should be assigned to Kumāra Gupta III, who must have immediately followed Narasimha Gupta and continued the type and quality of coins issued by the latter during his later years. Bhandarkar's[2] suggestion that coins of Kumāra Gupta with the letter 'Go' between the feet and letter 'Ku' beneath the left arm of the king should be assigned to Kumāra Gupta I whose other name was Govinda Gupta is clearly wrong as the weight, the finis and the purity of these coins make it impossible to be credited to Kumāra Gupta I.

Rise of Yas'odharman.

But Kumāra Gupta III was not destined to rule peacefully. Narasimha Gupta had defeated Mihirakula and recovered the independence of his dynasty and kingdom of Magadha. But Mihirakula, the tyrant, was still master of some part of the holy land. Gollas, the king of the White Hūṇas, about whom the monk Kosmas Indicopleustas who visited Western parts of India in

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. p.141-43. (2) IC. XI p.231.

about 530 A.D. refers to, has been identified by Stein[1] and Smith[2] with Mihirakula. From the account of Kosmas it is clear that at that time (C.560 A.D.) the Hūṇas were masters of vast territories, Mihirakula was a powerful king and levied tribute on distant lands.[3] From India "he exacted tribute by oppression, enforcing his demands with the aid of two thousand war-elephants and a great host of Cavalry."[4]

Naturally such a ruler was a source not only of national humiliation but of national calamity. Narasimha Gupta had abdicated the throne and gone to the Buddhist church. His son Kumāra Gupta II, identified with Vajra of Yuan Chwang, was a Buddhist king, 'possessed of a heart firm in the faith."[5] He could not be the hero, who could destroy the power of the Mlecchas. Even within the bounds of his own kingdom, new powers were arising and crossing swords with one another for the mastery of Northern India.

---

(1) I.A. XXXIV p.73f.

(2) E.H.I. p.336.

(3) I.A. XXXIV p.73f.

(4) E.H.I. P.336.

(5) The Records II p.170.

But the overwhelming national crisis ultimately produced a national hero in Janendra Yas'odharman.(1) We know of him only from three inscriptions.(2) In none of these is his genealogy described. This suggests that he may not have directly descended from a ruling family.(3) He emerged as a popular leader to save Hindu Law and Society in an age which was a "ravisher of good behaviour."(4)

---

(1) C.I.I. III. pp.155-56 (2) Ibid, No. s33-35 pp.142-158.

(3) From the Mandasore stone inscription of Yas'odharman-Viṣṇuvardhana dated in the Mālava year 589 (ibid No. 35 p.150) we come to know that his family belonged to the lineage that had the famous antikara crest (Prakhyāta-anti-kara-lāñchana). From the Bihar Kotra inscription of Naravarman's time (E.I.XXVI pt.3, p.130), we come to know that Naravarman, the father of Viśvavarman and grandfather of Bandhuvarman, belonged to the antikara lineage. This naturally suggests that Yas'odharman-Viṣṇuvardhana belonged to the hereditary ruling family of Varmans of Malwa. Accordingly, S.N.Chakravarty observed that "Yas'odharman can no longer be regarded as a military adventurer of the type of S'as'ānka of Gauda and Yas'ovarman of Kanauj." (ibid). From the Mandasore inscription of Prabhākara (B's ~~Watters~~ list No. 7) it appears that in 467-68 A.D., Prabhākara was the feudatory governor of Malwa. Was Prabhākara a direct successor of Bandhuvarman? There is no proof to hold that Yas'odharman belonged to the same family as Naravarman. It is possible that his family may have had the same lineage but Yas'odharman may have belonged to another branch of the lineage (Vaṁs'a). The fact that in none of his inscriptions, even the remotest hint is given that his ancestors were royal personages, certainly shows that he did not belong to any ruling family. Jayasval (I.H.I. p.59) following Fleet (C.I.I. III, No.33, p.148) that line 6 of the Mandasore pillar-inscription of Yas'odharman, which contains the statement that "his head has never been brought into the humility ofobeisance, to any other save (the god) Sthānu," refers to Yas'odharman, held that

The Mandasore stone-pillar-inscription of Yas'odharman[1] tells us that he spurned the boundaries of his own house and enjoyed the countries mentioned (svagṛiha-pariṣarā-vajñāyā yo bhukti).[2] This clearly shows that his power and new imperial status were far beyond the ken of his ancestors, who lived within limitations; the family was at best a small feudatory one. Thus, the rise of Yas'odharman was meteoric, and he extended his conquest "from the neighbourhood of the Lauhitya up to Mahendra, and from the Himālayas to the Western ocean." He

---

Ctd. from previous page.

"Yaś'odharman-Viṣnuvardhana evidently belonged to Thānes'vara itself, the seat of Lord Sthānu, to whom alone that hero bent his head, "and so Jayasval took him to be an ancestor of Vardharmānas of Thānes'vara (I.H.I. p.41) and observed that "the M.M.K. shows that he became known to Chronicles under the name Viṣnuvardhana, a style carried on by his descendants Naravardhana to Harṣavardhana." But there is no evidence at all to connect Yas'odharman Viṣnuvardhana with Naravardhana and Harṣavardhana. Kielhorn (I.A.XVIII pp.219-20) corrected the mistake of Fleet, and showedthat the passage in the inscription refers to Mihirakula not to Yaś'odharman. Mihirakula's devotion to S'iva is proved by his coins. Thus, at the present state of our knowledge we have got nothing to connect Yaś'odharman with any ruling family.

(1) C.I.I.III No.33, p.147.

(2) Ibid.

further claims to have enjoyed those countries which were not enjoyed by his Gupta-lords, and which the commands of the chiefs of the Hūṇas/established itself on the tiaras of (many) kings, failed to penetrate."(1) After taking into account the usual exaggerated nature of such inscriptions, it may be safely asserted that Yaśodharman was a conqueror of some importance, and his conquest in the North-east must have been at the expense of the Gupta kingdom which had already shrunk to a great extent. His invasion of Bengal, rather Puṇḍravardhana, led to the end of the hereditary "Datta" family as governors of the Bhukti, and no "-Datta" governor is mentioned in the 5th Dāmodarpur plate.(2) It is quite possible that in this struggle Kumāra Gupta III perished, and the event may be dated in 530 A.D. It may have been the news of his death that induced Bālāditya, father of Kumāra Gupta III, to commit suicide.(3) The king from mid-India (Madhyadeśa) who followed Vajra in building another Saṅghārāma at Nālandā,(4) was Yaśodharman; he could not be Harṣavardhana as there is "mention of his activities in Nālandā by the

---

(1) Ibid. Fleet translated "Guptanāthānān" as "lords of the Guptas' (ibid p.198). Jayasval corrected the translation as 'Gupta-lords' (I.H.I. pp.40-41). It is possible that Yaśodharman may have begun career as a feudatory of the Guptas.

(2) E.I.XV pp.114-15. (3) I.H.I. p.33.

(4) Watters II pp.167,171.

name of Śīlāditya. After his successful digvijaya in the East and the Madhyadesa, Yasodharman proceeded to the North where he forced Mihirakula to obeisance and broke the power of the Hūṇas in India.[1] The defeat of Mihirakula by Yasodharman may be almost fixed within close limits. When Kosmas[2] refers to him about 530 A.D. Mihirakula (Gollas) was a powerful and proud king, but he was certainly forced to bow to Yasodharman before 533 A.D.. Therefore the defeat of Mihirakula may be placed in C.531-32 A.D..

The Mandasore stone-inscription of Yasodharman and Viṣṇuvardhana[3] raises a ticklish problem, as it mentions the victorious Janendra Yasodharman as well as

---

(1) C.I.I.III, No.33. p.148. The Rev. Father Heras held that Yasodharman defeated Mihirakula in Malwa earlier than his defeat by Bālāditya(I.H.Q.p.1f). But the sequence in which the digvijaya of Yasodharman is recorded, leaves no doubt that he defeated Mihirakula in the East, and in the North. We know that after his defeat at the hands of Bālāditya, Mihirakula had gone over to the North. Therefore it is more reasonable to hold that after his victory over the Gupta-lord, Yasodharman marched forward and forced his authority over Mihirakula who was ruling harshly and arrogantly over the North and West of India including Kashmir.

(2) I.A.XXXIV p.73f.

(3) C.I.I.III, No.35 p.150f.

Narādhipati Viṣṇuvardhana, and speaks highly of both. Yaśodharman is said "to have plunged into the array of his enemies," and Viṣṇuvardhana is referred to as having "brought into subjection with peaceful overtures and by war, the very mighty kings of the East, and many kings of the North," and is described as "Rājādhi-Rāja" and "Parameśvara," and as "having conquered the earth with his (own) arms." It has been a problem as to how to explain the mention of both Yaśodharman and Viṣṇuvardahana in so glowing terms in the same inscription. Allan[1] held that the "natural explanation of the mention of both kings is that Yaśodharman was the suzerain of Viṣṇuvardhana." Fleet also was of the same opinion that "Viṣṇuvardhana, who though he had the titles of Rājādhirāja and Parameśvara would appear to have acknowledged a certain amount of Supremacy on the part of Yaśodharman."[2] Hoernle[3] held that Yaśodharman and Viṣṇuvardhana were the same person and he relied on the phrase "Sa eva" occurring in the inscription.[4]

---

(1) C.C.G.D.B.M. pp. LVII-LVIII. (2) C.I.I.III, No.35 p.151.

(3) J.R.A.S. 1909 Pt.I pp.89-93. J.A.S.B. LVIII p.96.

(4) C.I.I.III, No.35, line 5. Fleet (note 5) observed that this expression (sa eva) looks at first sight as if Yaśodharman and Viṣṇuvardhana were the same person," - But he concluded that they are different persons.

Jayasval[1] also held the same view, maintaining that "the very same events" are mentioned in both the inscriptions - the Mandasore stone-inscription of Yas'odharman[2] and the Mandasore stone inscription of Yas'odharman and Viṣṇuvardhana.[3] Yas'odharman in the former inscription is mentioned as S'amrāṭ and gaining victories in the East and the North. While Viṣṇuvardhana is referred to as "Nārādhipati, Rājādhirāja and Parames'vara" while Yas'odharman is called Janendra in the latter. Therefore, it is obvious that both Yas'odharman and Viṣṇuvardhana were addressed by imperial titles. Jayasval[4] posed a pertinent question, "How could two persons within very few years acquire sovereignty over the same area and both be emperors?" Both are mentioned in the records of the same place and also in one and the same place and in one and the same record. Therefore, Jayasval rightly concluded that "One was not a subordinate of the other; the Parames'vara and the supreme King of Kings of India, Viṣṇuvardhana was identical with S'amrāṭ Yas'odharman."[5] D.C.Sarker[6] comes to the same conclusion. It is possible that Yas'odharman because of his popularity was also given the honorific "Janendra". We feel certain that Visnuvardhana and Yas'odharman are identical.

---

(1) I.A.XLVI pp.145. (2) C.I.I.III No.33 p.177.

(3) Ibid No.35 pp.155-56 (4) I.H.I. p.41.

(5) Ibid. (6) S.I.I. p.386, Note 2.

Yas'odharman - Viṣṇuvardhana had brought a large part of Northern India under his control, and liberated the country from the Huṇa yoke. He appears to have been a good ruler who gave protection to the earth, was steadfast in successful carrying out of vows for the benefit of its mankind, and was credited with good intentions at a time when "kings were cruel through want of proper training, and transgressed the path of good conduct, and were destitute of virtuous delights."(1) But the attempt of Yas'odharman to re-establish a North-Indian empire, in place of the fast dissolving Gupta empire, was short-lived, as we don't know anything more about his empire and his successors, nor do we know what happened to him and when he died. But the facts, that so early as in 224 G. E. (= 543 A. D.) Pundravardhana was ruled by a Gupta prince, who meditated on the feeting of a Gupta emperor,(2) and in 533-34 A. D., Sarvanātha continued to use the Gupta era in central India, prove that Yas'odharman's success was ephemeral.

Viṣnu Gupta

We have already seen that Yas'odharman must have defeated the Gupta emperor Kumāra Gupta III. The references about the

(1) C.I.I.III. No. 33 p. 147. (2) E.I. XV pp. 114-115

(3) C.I.I. III. No. 31. p. 135f; for the era see infra.

tableland 'embraced by (the river) Gaṅgā' and the extent of territories 'not enjoyed by the Gupta-lords',[1] and the defeat of 'the very mighty kings of the east and the north'[2] clearly point to the success of Yas'odharman over the Gupta emperor. Kumāra Gupta III may have died in the fight in C530 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Viṣṇu Gupta, who is referred to as Mahārājādhirāja Paramabhāgavata in his seal discovered at Nālandā.[3] Unfortunately the name of the mother of Viṣṇu Gupta, and the Mahādevī of Kumāra Gupta is lost, but the importance of the seal lies in the fact that it carries the genealogy of the Gupta sovereigns a generation further than was known before.[4] Only four lines, that also damaged, are extant and contain the name of Pū(ru) Gupta, Narasiṁha Gupta, and Kumāra Gupta III.

(Coins of Viṣṇu Gupta
(
(Candrāditya

We have Archer-type gold coins of Viṣṇu (Gupta) Candrāditya weighing from 147.4 to 152.0 grains and with the letter 'u' between the feet of the king on the obverse.[5] These coins are from Kālighāṭ hoard.[6] Allan[7] put Viṣṇu Gupta in

---

(1) C.I.I.III. No.33. p.148. (2) Ibid. No35.P. 156.

(3) E.I. XXVI Pt.V. p.235f. (4) Ibid.

(5) CCGDBM. pp.145-146; CIM. I. p.121.

(6) CCGDBM p.CXXVI. (7) Ibid. p.145.

C.A.D. 540-560 A.D., and presumed that Viṣnu Gupta was the successor of Kumāra Gupta.[1] Hoernle[2] attributed these coins to Viṣnuvardhana, and took the reverse legend to be 'Dharmāditya', as according to him Candrāditya is 'in truth an impossible Sanskrit compound'.[3] He also explained the letter 'u' as signifying the mint of Ujjain. But the attribution of these coins to Yas'odharman-Viṣnuvardhana is hardly tenable. We have already seen that Hoernle attributed the coins of Prakās'āditya to Yas'odharman-Viṣnuvardhana on the ground that on those coins there was the letter 'u', standing for Ujjain. But this is no evidence at all. On the coins of the later imperial Guptas there are to be found such mysterious letters as 'gre','go', 'Jā', 'Bhā', exactly in the same position as the 'u' on the coins of Viṣnu. The reverse legend on the coins of Viṣnu is certainly Candrāditya,which is a quite well established Sanskrit word.[4] There is absolutely no basis to assume that Yas'odharman-Viṣnuvardhana issued these coins with the title of Candrāditya, as Hoernle[5] would lead us to think. As for no 'Gupta' on the coins, it is not an over-riding evidence to hold that the coins could not belong to a Gupta king. Many coins of Narasiṁha Gupta have only Nara and these is no trace of inscription on them.[6]

---

(1) Ibid. p. LXI.

(2) JRAS. 1903. p. 552.

(3) CCGDBM. p. LXI Note 2.

(4) CCGDBM note 2. p. LXI

(5) JRAS 1903.pp. 552-53.

(6) CCGDBM pp.137-39 plate XXII nos. 8-12.

Smith[1] rightly described Hoernle's attribution as 'impossible'. Smith[2] identified Viṣṇu Gupta Candrāditya of the coins with the later Gupta king of the same name, and he assigned the period to be about 700 A. D., and held that ' he was certainly not included in the list of the imperial Guptas'.[3] Altekar[4] also once identified Viṣṇu (Gupta) of the coins with the king of the later Gupta dynasty.[5] But the Nālandā seal has brought out an imperial Gupta ruler of the name of Viṣṇu Gupta. Therefore the basis of Hoernle's thesis that 'the only Viṣṇu known in that period is the well known Viṣṇuvardhana, king of Mālava'[6] is proved to be incorrect. Allan's presumption has again proved to be true,[7] as the Nālandā seal has proved that Viṣṇu Gupta was the son and successor of Kumāra Gupta,[8] as assumed by Allan. These coins of Viṣṇu - should be unhesitatingly attributed to Viṣṇu Gupta ~~after~~ of the Nālandā seal. The āditya title Candrāditya on the coins, agrees well with the similar āditya titles found on the coins of all the Gupta emperors before Viṣṇu Gupta; the presence of a mysterious letter 'u' between the feet of the king on the obverse is in absolute conformity with the practice common to the coins of all later imperial Guptas from Prakās'āditya

---

(1) CJM.I.p.121. note I.
(2) Ibid p. 121.
(3) JASB 1894. p. 202.
(4) JNSI. III. p.57f.
(5) E.I. XXVI Pl.V. P.235f.
(6) JRAS.1903. p. 552.
(7) E.I. XXVI Pl.V. p. 235f.
(8) C.C.G.D.B.M. p. Lxi

downwards.[1] The weight and purity of the coins also supports the attribution, proposed by Kṛṣṇadeva[2] and accepted by Altekar.[3] The average of the two variations of Kumāra Gupta III's coins is 149.2 and 149.5, while the average of Viṣṇu Gupta Candrāditya's coins is 148.3 grains.[4] A comparison of the coins of Kumāra Gupta III with those of Viṣṇu Gupta Candrāditya leaves no doubt that the coins of Viṣṇu Gupta are ~~slightly~~ generally heavier than those of Kumāra Gupta III, and must have closely followed the latter.[5] These coins in style and nature are certainly in line with the coins of the imperial Guptas, and the obverse and reverse of the coins are clear imitations of the Archer type coins of the Guptas.[6] Rapson truly observed that they 'bear a great resemblance to those of Nara (Gupta) Bālāditya and Kumāra Gupta II (III?) Kramāditya', and he suggested that Viṣṇu Gupta succeeded Kumāra Gupta. The British Museum laboratory report on the coins also proves this attribution. The coins of Viṣṇu Gupta have less percentage of gold than the coins of Kumāra Gupta III. While the coin of Kumāra Gupta III (No.576 BMC) has 54% of gold, No. 598 belonging to Viṣṇu Gupta has only 43% of gold.[7] Most of these coins came from the Kālighaṭ hoard

---

(1) Ibid. pp. 135-36, 137-39, 141-43.

(2) E.I.XXVI Pl.V. p.235f.

(3) JNSI III p.p.103f.

(4) CCGDBM. p.C-XXXIV

(5) CCGDBM. pp. 141-43, 145-46.

(6) Indian Coins, p. 26.

(7) Apendix Ia.

together with the coins of Narasimha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta III. All these numismatic considerations point to the only conclusion that the coins of Visnu Gupta followed those of Kumāra Gupta III.(1) This is confirmed by epigraphy from which we learn that Visnu Gupta was the son of Kumāra Gupta III.

(Visnu Gupta and
(M M K.

Visnu Gupta may also be identified with 'Ukārākhya' of the Ārya-manju-s'ri-mula-kalpa. According to this work, Ukarakhya is said to have followed Kumāra.(2) On the coins of Visnu Gupta Candrāditya, there is the letter 'u' between the feet.(3) His other name may have been Upendra, also meaning Visnu. The M.M.K.(4) also informs us that after him (Ukārākhya) there will be disunion or disruption. So far as our present knowledge goes, Visnu Gupta is the last Gupta emperor, and after him the dynasty

---

(1) Mr. Allan agreed with our suggestion that the coins of Visnu Gupta should be placed immediately after Kumāra Gupta III.

(2) IHI. p. 33.

(3) CCGDBM. pp. 145-46. P. XXIII9. Allan reads the letter as 'ru'. But we are sure that it is 'u'; 'ru' should have had a longer straight line and smaller loop below.

(4) Ibid. Jayasval identified Ukārākhya with Budha Gupta whom he took to be the Prakās'āditya of the coins, where is to be found letter 'u'.

appears to have ended and the kingdom disrupted. Therefore, there is no doubt that Viṣṇu Gupta who followed Kumāra Gupta is the Ukārākhya of the M. M. K. and is said to have followed Kumāra.

Fifth Dāmodarpur Copper-plate and Viṣṇu Gupta.

The fifth Dāmodarpur copper-plate[1] dated in the Gupta year 224 (= 543-44 A.D.) when the royal prince (Rājaputra-Deva-Bhaṭṭāraka) was governing the Bhukti of Puṇḍravardhana should be assigned to the period of Viṣṇu Gupta. The inscription refers to the imperial ruler as 'Pṛithvīpati, Paramadaivata, Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja S'rī-Gupta.' Unfortunately the portion which certainly gave the name of the sovereign is irreparably damaged. Basak[2] restored the name as Bhānu Gupta and read the date as '214'. Dikshit[3] corrected the date as 234, and it was suggested[4] that the name may be Kumāra. Basak[5] accepted the revised reading of the date. Y.R. Gupta[6] and Bhaṭṭaśāli[7] took the name to be Kumāra Gupta and identified him with Kumāra Gupta, the son of Narasimha Gupta. Dandekar and

(1) E.I. XV.pp. 114-14; XVII p. 193.
(2) E.I.XV pp.114-15.
(3) Ibid. XVII. p. 193.
(4) Ibid, note 1.
(5) HNEI. pp92-93.
(6) ~~JGH~~ J.G.H IV p 118
(7) E.I. XVII. p.84.

Sarkar[1] took him to be the later Gupta king, Kumāragupta. Sen[2] suggested that he was Dāmodaragupta, son of Kumāra Gupta of the later Gupta dynasty. Sen[3] has no doubt that the Dāmodarpur inscription belongs to a later Gupta. Raychaudhuri[4] thinks that it is possible, but by no means certain, that one of these kings (Kṛiṣṇagupta, Harṣagupta, and Jīvitagupta) is identical with the Gupta emperor mentioned in the Dāmodarpur plate of A.D. 543-44 A.D." He further observed that "the ruler whose name is missing may represent one or other of the 'Gupta' lines known to scholars or some new line."[5] According to Majumdar, "it appears very probable that the overlord in question belonged to the dynasty of the later Guptas who claimed suzerainty over Northern Bengal down to the end of the 6th century A.D."[6] R.D.Bannerji[7] took him to be Bhānu Gupta.

It may be pointed out at the outset that there is hardly enough space, where the name of the emperor was engraved, to contain four letters 'Dāmodara'. Moreover from the Harāhā inscription[8] we learn that Kumāragupta and Īśānavarman were contemporaries, and the inscription is dated in 554 A.D. during the reign of Īśānavarman. It is very unlikely that Dāmodaragupta

---

(1) Dandekar, op. cit. pp. S.I. I.p.33., note 4.

(2) Sen, op.cit. pp.239-40

(3) Ibid. p. 239

(4) PHAI (4th edn.) p.507

(5) Ibid. note 3.

(6) HBRI. p. 49.

(7) Bannerji, op.cit.p.59

(8) E.I. XIV p. 110f.

son of Kumāragupta, would be ruling with full imperial titles in 543-44 A.D. It is also to be borne in mind that neither Kumāragupta nor Dāmodaragupta is known by such high-sounding imperial titles in the Aphsad inscription (1) of this illustrious descendant Ādityasena. Bhānu Gupta is not an imperial ruler at all, and it is not safe to take him as ruling in 543-44 A.D., when we met him in 510-11 A.D. A comparison of the fifth Dāmodarapur plate with the other four Dāmodarapur plates, definitely belonging to the imperial Gupta rulers Kumāra Gupta I and Budha Gupta, leaves no doubt that it was also issued by a Gupta emperor using similar titles and carrying on the same type of administration (2) The scholars felt shy to attribute the fifth Dāmodarapur plate to an imperial Gupta ruler because they had identified Kumāra Gupta of the Bhitāri seal with he of the Sārnāth inscription, and therefore could not think of an imperial Gupta ruler in 543-44 A.D. But we have already shown that the chronology of the later imperial Guptas is to be revised, and in 543-44 A.D., a scion of the imperial Gupta dynasty could be easily on the throne. He may be Kumāra Gupta III, but as we have suggested that his rule must have ended with the rise of Yas'odharman, it is more possible that the missing name in the Dāmodarapur

---

(1) C.I.I. III 42 p. 200f.

(2) E.I. Xv p. 110f.

inscription is Viṣṇu Gupta who is given imperial titles in the Nālandā seal,(1) who issued gold coins with Āditya title, Candrāditya. The damaged portion of the plate could have easily contained the name 'Viṣṇu'. Viṣṇu Gupta was the son and successor of Kumāra Gupta III, and in our scheme ofmchronology, it is obvious that Viṣṇu Gupta was the imperial suzerain in 543-44 A.D., and his son was governing the province of Puṇḍravardhana bhukti. Therefore the suggestion of Paul (3) that the overlord referred to in the Dāmodarpur plate was Viṣṇu Gupta may be taken as established. We have seen that Viṣṇu Gupta succeeded to a difficult situation. Yas'odharman had over-run the eastern country up to the Lauhitya.(4) In East Bengal the successors of Gopacandra (5) were enjoying imperial status, and, in Kāmarūpa, the Varmans were rising in importance. The province of Puṇḍravardhana had a special strategic importance, and being recently over-run by a great conqueror, needed special care. It was because of these reasons that a royal prince was put in charge of the provincial administration. (6)

---

(1) E.I. XXVI p.235f. (2) CCGDBM. pp. 145-46.

(3) EHBP, I, pp.14-15. (4) C.I.I. III. No.33, pp147-48.

(5) Gopacandra, Dharmāditya and Samācārdeva's inscriptions with imperial titles were found in the district of Faridpur. (I.A. XXXIX. pp.193-216, E.I. XVIII, p.74f.)

(6) R.C.Majumdar (EHBR p.15) is of the opinion that "Rājaputra Deva Bhaṭṭārakа of the firth Dāmodarpur plate does not mean the son of the emperor but the son of the local king. In our humble opinion the simpler meaning of the expression is the son of the emperor. The use of the words 'Deva' and 'Bhaṭṭārakа' suggests the high status of the governor; he was a son of the emperor

It is not easy to fix the limits of the reign of Viṣṇu Gupta Candrāditya. It is no doubt true that he issued seals and coins and was referred to with imperial titles like his predecessors. His authority in North Bengal was recognised, and his hold on Magadha may be easily presumed. His seal has been found at Nālandā. Most of his coins were from the Kāḷighāṭ hoard. One of his coins was found in Cuttack, but it is too much to conclude from it that "his kingdom comprised Cuttack district as well."(1) But the disintegration of the empire, which had begun since the death of Budha Gupta, had now approached its final end. Viṣṇu Gupta may have been content with the use of imperial titles and issuing of debased coins, but he had lost real power. All round the once-great empire, new powers were rising

---

(Continued from previous page)

Was "Deva" the name of the prince?

M.M.K. appears to mention Deva as a king of Magadha after Ukārākhya and the disunion in the kingdom. (I.H.J. V.676 Text, p.50). It may be that after the death of Viṣṇu Gupta, his son Deva may have tried to succeed, but we know that Viṣṇu Gupta was followed by later Gupta rulers Kumāra Gupta and Dāmodaragupta. No coins of Deva are found.

(1) J.N.S.I. III, p.57.

in importance and behaving as practically independent. The Maukharis in the United Provinces, the Vardhanas in Western U.P. and the Eastern Punjab, the later Guptas in Magadha, Dharmāditya in East Bengal, and a few other powers began to contest for the imperial honour even when the emperor was alive. Like Shah Alam II Viṣṇu Gupta was an eye-witness to the slow death of the empire. He had lost real power, and was virtually a prisoner on the throne satisfied with the shadow of imperial privileges, devoid of real power. The sudden and sweeping offensive of Yas'odharman almost put out the already dimly burning lamp of the imperial Gupta dynasty, and Viṣṇu Gupta was perhaps its last perishing flicker. The empire did not survive the shock administered to it by Yas'odharman but the dynasty lingered on for some time. The quick disappearance of Yas'odharman from the stage of history explains the continuance of the dynasty for some time more. But it was all in vain. Most probably Puṇḍravardhana was conquered by Mahābhūtavarman, the King of Kāmarūpa. Almost the whole of the United Provinces was under the Maukharis. Even in Magadha, the feudatory family of Kṛiṣṇa Gupta was in real power. Thus the Gupta empire was already a carcase, and vultures were ~~already~~ hovering over it.

The length of the period of Viṣṇu Gupta's stay on the throne was pretty long, and it only meant the prolonging of the death-pangs of the dying empire. As compared to the coins of Narasimha Gupta and Kumāra Gupta III so far known to us,

we have a very large number of the coins of Viṣṇu Gupta in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, the Ashmolean Museum (Oxford), the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge), the Huntarian Museum (Glasgow), and the British Museum, London. This suggests that his rule was fairly long. From a passage in Jaine Harivaṁśa,[1] we come to know that the illustrious rule of the Guptas lasted for two-hundred and thirty-one years. Fleet[2] remarked that Jinasena has hit off pretty accurately the duration of the Gupta power." Therefore the rule of the Gupta dynasty may have come to an end in 319-20 + 231 = 550-1 A.D. In the Kāligha̱ṭ hoard Viṣṇu Gupta's coins were presumably last in time. It appears that the hoard was buried in his reign, with a large number of gold coins. So Viṣṇu Gupta was the last member of the imperial dynasty and his reign may have ended in 550-1 A.D. The Amauna copper-plate of Mahārāja Nandana[3] is dated in (Gupta) samvat

---

(1) I.A.XV.p.142. (2) Ibid p. 143

(3) E.I. X p.49f. If the phrase "meditating on Deva-guru", means meditating on king and guru, then it may be suggested that Deva may as well be the name of the king. He may be Deva, the king of Magadha of the M.M.K, and Rājaputra Deva Bhaṭṭāraka of the 5th Dāmodarpur plate.

232 (= 551-2 A.D.) and instead of mentioning the name of the emperor, with the usual titles, it mentions Nandana's guru. It may be that at that time there was no Gupta emperor worth the name, on the throne. The last days of Viṣṇu Gupta must have been overclouded with the deadly conflict of the Maukharis and the later Guptas, and it was actually amidst the rattling of swords between these, that the imperial dynasty breathed its last, almost unnoticed.

CHAPTER V

The Later Guptas and Their Home.

~~Maukharis.—Cir.~~

500-600 A.D.

The Gupta Empire's good days were over with the death of Skanda Gupta. Budha Gupta no doubt presided over a large extent of the empire, but there is no denying the fact that there were some premonitions of the impending break-up. The absence of the name of the Gupta overlord in the land grants of the Parivrājaka Mahārāja Hastin,(1) of the Maitrakas of Valabhi,(2) and in the inscriptions of Prabhākara(3) and Lakṣmaṇa,(4) certainly points to the loosening of the central authority and the consequent rise of the local authorities and feudal Vassals. Successors of Budha Gupta — Nara and Simha Gupta, Kumāra Gupta III and Viṣṇu Gupta, — no doubt, sat on the imperial throne of their ancestors, but proved themselves too weak to arrest the fast dissolution of the empire, reared up energetically by Samudra Gupta and Candra Gupta II, and saved by the heroic exertions of Skanda Gupta. The last dated record of the time of the Imperial Guptas is the 5th Dāmodarpur copper-plate of 224 G.E. (= 543-544 A.D.).(5)

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No. 21 p.96ff. (2) J.B.B.R.A.S. I. No. 22p.107ff. (N.S.) P.13ff.

(3) A.S.I.A.R. 1922-23 p.187 E.I.XIX App.p.2. (4) E.I.V.I. II p.364ff.

(5) E.I.XVII p.193

The nature of the inscription, and the mention of the titles of the ruler (whose full name is lost) certainly suggest that he was a member of the Imperial Gupta dynasty, and we have identified him with Viṣṇu Gupta Candrāditya of the Nālandā seal.(1) But there is no doubt that the vast Gupta Empire had already crumbled, and as is very common in Indian History, various powers arose in the north and the south to fill the vacuum. The later Guptas, the Maukharis, the Puṣpabhūtis in Northern India, the Kalacuris and the Cālukyas in the south came forward to compete for the heritage of the imperial Guptas.

The Gangetic valley was the economic nerve-centre of Northern India, and indeed of the whole of India, and was therefore its political hub as well. The trade of Northern India passed down the Ganges to the sea-ports of Eastern India, and therefore with the disappearance of the authority of the imperial Guptas by the first half of the 6th century, incessant sword-rattling went on among many ambitious powers, particularly the later Guptas, the Maukharis and the Kalacuris, to become masters of the rich Gangetic basin in order to control its vast trade and alluvial soil. It is clear from the history of India that the power that succeeds in getting the mastery over the Central-Gangetic plain - Magadha particularly - ultimately extends its authority

---

(1) See Supra.

to the lower as well as the upper Gangetic valley, and makes itself predominant in Northern India and sometimes in Southern India as well. The southward push of the northern power has brought, as a reaction, a challenge by the southern powers to preside over the destiny of Northern India. The activities of the Sātavāhanas, the Kalacuris, the Cālukyas, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, the Colas and the Marāthas in Northern India may be studied as reactions against the offensive of the Mauryas, the Imperial Guptas, Harṣavardhana, and the great Mughals in the south of the Vindhyas. The Mauryas and the Imperial Guptas had become paramount sovereigns over northern as well as large parts of southern India from their centre in Magadha. Therefore, after the downfall of the Gupta empire, the later Guptas (so called, to distinguish them from the Imperial Guptas), the Maukharis, etc. were anxious to succeed to the Imperial Gupta traditions and mastery over Northern India, particularly Magadha. The struggle between the later Guptas and the Maukharis constitutes the main theme of the history of Magadha after the downfall of the Gupta empire.

Lineage of the later Guptas.

The lineage of the later Guptas - the dynasty known

from the Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena[1] and the Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II[2] - is not known. The names of all these kings with the exception of Ādityasena, end in Gupta. But except this common suffix there is nothing positive to connect them with the Imperial Gupta dynasty. The Aphsad inscription[3] begins the genealogy with Kṛiṣṇagupta and mentions no predecessor of his, nor is the name of any dynasty mentioned except that Kṛiṣṇagupta was "of good descent", a vague term that sheds no light on the problem. It is no doubt tempting, - in view of the suffix 'gupta' and the discovery of their inscriptions[4] in Magadha and its neighbourhood, the seat of the Imperial Gupta dynasty - to connect them with the imperial dynasty. Some[5] have taken Kṛiṣṇagupta to be the same person as Govinda Gupta of the Basarh seal.[6] But there appears to be no basis for this identification. Kṛiṣṇagupta, the ancestor of Ādityasena, flourished much later than Govinda Gupta, son of Candra Gupta II and Dhruvasvāminī. The fact that in their inscriptions the

---

(1) C.I.I. III No. 42 p.201ff. (2) C. ibid No. 46 p.217ff.

(3) Ibid No. 42 p.205ff. (4) Ibid 42 p.201ff. No. 44 & 45 p.212ff; No. 43 p.208ff. No. 46 p.214ff.

(5) JBRS XXX p.199ff. (6) ASIAR 1903-4, p.102f

later Guptas do not claim the imperial dynasty as their own, - an honour that if justified they would have trumpeted with pride and gusto, - is a strong argument against the temptation of regarding them as the direct descendants of the Imperial Guptas. Similarity of name-ending may be accidental or as a result of imitation without much significance. Many Pratīhāra and Pāla rulers had identical names, e.g. Mahīpāla and Dēvapāla, and we find rulers of Mahā-Kosala with names ending in 'gupta'. The fact that Kṛiṣṇagupta is called a mere 'nṛipati' and his son Harṣagupta is addressed with the simple epithet 'śrī'[1] makes it clear that the origins of the family were modest. The family was most probably one of the feudatory families of the Gupta empire, and like many others came into importance during the years of the rapid desiccation of the empire during the last years of the 5th and the first half of the 6th centuries after Christ.

It is certainly within the realm of possibility that to strengthen their claim as the legitimate successors of the imperial Guptas in Magadha and to catch the imagination and traditional loyalty of the masses to the House of the 'Guptas', they adopted 'Gupta' as the suffix to their name. Of course there is nothing to disprove that these later Guptas might have been distantly related to the imperial family and had some particular reason for not proclaiming

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No. 42 p.205ff.

their descent from the Imperial family. In the present state of our knowledge the subject is yet sub-judice,

The Ancestral Home
of
the later Guptas.

Far more important and still more controversial is the question, 'what was the original home or the centre of activity of the later Guptas from Kṛiṣṇagupta to Mādhavagupta?' There could hardly be any difference of opinion on the fact that from Ādityasena down to Jīvitagupta II, Magadha was the centre of their activities. This is clear from the provenance of the inscriptions of Ādityasena, Viṣṇugupta, and Jīvitagupta II. But theproblem of the home of the ancestors of Ādityasena baffles all solutions. The fact of the inscriptions of Ādityasena, giving his genealogy, having been found in Magadha, leads to a strong presumption that his predecessors also ruled in Magadha, unless otherwise proved. Fleet[1] therefore regarded these rulers as belonging to the dynasty of the later Guptas of Magadha, to distinguish them from the imperial Guptas.

But many scholars find it difficult to believe that the line of Kṛiṣṇa Gupta from the very start ruled in Magadha. Hoernle[2] regarded them to belong to a branch of the

(1) C.I.I. III intro. p.14. (2) JRAS 1903 p.545ff.

imperial Gupta family, ruling in Eastern Mālwā. He has been followed by a large number of scholars. Vaidya[1] thinks that (the family mentioned in the Aphsad inscription ruled in Mālwā (eastern Mālava) at Ujjain until Devagupta, the contemporary of Rājyavardhana was killed in battle by him and the kingdom was seized by Harṣa in 606 A.D.', but to be fair to Vaidya, it may be pointed out that as to his 'surmise that the later Gupta line came from Mālava' he does not seem to 'speak with the same certainty'[2] Dr. R. K. Mookarji is also of the same opinion and believes that 'the fortunes of Mālava ~~and~~ family had a final setback in the defeat of Devagupta by Rājya, followed by the annexation of the kingdom by Harṣa, ... and extinction of the Guptas of Mālwā ..... and Harṣa provided his friend Mādhavagupta as the ruler of Magadha.'[3] Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri holds that Mālwā was ruled by the Gupta dynasty, and 'in the time of Ādityasena, Magadha now replaces Eastern Mālwā as the chief centre of Gupta power.'[4]

The sheet anchor of the theory of the Eastern Mālwā origin of the later Guptas is the identification of Mādhavagupta of the Aphsad inscription[5] with Mādhavagupta of the

---

(1) HMHI. I. p.24.

(2) Ibid. p.40

(3) Harṣa, pp53-56

(4) PHAI 4th Edn. pp.492-493

(5) C.I.I. III No. 42. p.205ff.

Harṣa-carita.[1] On the ground that Mādhavagupta of Harṣa-carita was a constant companion of Harṣa, and Mādhavagupta of the Aphsad inscription was desirous 'of the company of Harṣa', Hoernle[2] suggested that they were identical. He has been followed by most of the scholars, Vaidya, Dr. R. K. Mookerji, H. C. Raychaudhuri and others. Dr. R. D. Bannerji was the only exception who threw doubts on this identification;[3] but that drew a spirited reply from Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri,[4] who observed that the 'existence of two associates of Harṣa, each having the name of Mādhava-gupta, is not known to the biographer of Harṣa'. Kumāra-gupta and Mādhavagupta are called by Bāṇa 'sons of the king of Mālwā'[5] and therefore Mahāsenagupta, father of Mādhavagupta,[6] was the king of Mālwā, not of Magadha. It is further urged[7] that there is no place for the later Guptas in Magadha, which was under the Maukharis, Sarvavarman and Avantivarmanas, as is clear from the Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II,[8] which says 'not a word about the later Gupta contemporaries in connection with the previous grant of the village .... but the sovereignty of Sarvavarman

---

(1) Harṣa-carita CT. p.119 (2) JRAS 1904.

(3) JBORS XIV p.254ff. (4) Ibid Vol. XV p.651ff

(5) Harṣa-carita CT. p.119 (6) C.I.I. III No. 42 p.205ff.

(7) JBORS XV p.651ff (8) C.I.I. III No. 46 p.218 (translation)

and Avantivarman undoubtedly precludes the possibility of the direct rule of their contemporaries of the later Gupta line. Then we have the inscriptions of the Maukhari 'varmans' in the caves of Barābar and Nāgārjuni Hills,(1) belonging to the later Gupta period. Yuan Chwang,(2) who visited Magadha in the time of Harṣa, speaks about Śaśānka and Pūrṇavarman but does not say a word about Mādhavagupta or his father in connection with Magadha. The learned scholar concludes that 'the father of only Mādhavagupta, whom the biographer of Harṣa knew to be the associate of his royal patron, was a king of Mālwā, and that in the time of Harṣa and a little before it direct rule over Magadha was exercised not by the Guptas but by the Varmans'.(3)

Mr. Edward A. Piers is of opinion that the Maukharis ruled in Magadha from very early times. He identifies Kṣatravarman of Bāṇa as a Maukhari King of Magadha, and the Magadha-kula of the Kaumudīmahotsva with the Maukhari dynasty, and he concludes that 'the Maukharis actually dominated before Candragupta I usurped the throne from them,(4) and "when the Guptas succeeded Sundaravarman's dynasty on the throne of Pāṭaliputra, the Maukharis were relegated to a corner of Magadha, the Gayā district, there

---

(1) Ibid, No. 48-50 p.221ff. (2) Records Vol. II, pp.118-20.

(3) JBORS XV p.651f (4) E.A.Piers. The Maukharis pp.14-16.

to rule as petty and subordinate chieftains'.[1] This dynasty of Yajña-varman (known from Barābara and Nāgārjuni Hill-cave-inscriptions)was succeeded by the dynasty of Harivarman, who was 'a sister's son or a brother's son of Anantavarman'.[2] According to the learned scholar the imperial Maukhari dynasty continued to rule from Magadha, probably from Pāṭaliputra,[3] as the capital, where Grahavarman was killed by the king of Mālwā. Naturally in his scheme of chronology and lay-out of the facts the later Guptas were rulers of Mālwā. He observes "the common characterisation of Mādhavagupta as a companion of Harṣa is in my opinion a sufficient ground to identify the two kings of this name mentioned by Bāṇa, and the engraver of the Aphsad inscription. From this it follows that the later Guptas up to (but not including) Mādhavagupta should be regarded as kings of Mālwā'.[4]

A careful analysis of the arguments urged by the learned scholars in support of the Mālwā origin of the later Guptas shows that the theory rests on two basic conclusions: firstly that Mādhavagupta of the Aphsad inscription is identical with Mādhavagupta, the Mālava-Rājaputra of Bāṇa, and therefore his father and predecessors were kings of Mālwā; and secondly, that the sovereignty of the Maukharis

---

(1) Ibid, p.45. (2) Ibid, p.53.

(3) Ibid, pp.152-53. (4)Ibid, p.59.

in Magadha, established on epigraphic evidence precludes any possibility of the rule of the later Guptas in Magadha. In spite of there being no positive proof, we feel that unless otherwise definitely known, Mādhavagupta the son of Mahāsenagupta was the same person as Mādhavagupta the son of the king of Mālwā. As to the second assumption, it is interesting to note that Dr. R. C. Majumdar[1] has recently observed that "the Deo-Barnārka inscription does not prove the possession of Magadha or any part thereof by the Maukhari kings S'arvavarman and Avantivarman ... and the village granted might not be Vāruṇikā (Deo-Barnārka) but Kishoravāṭdka (another village mentioned in the inscription,[2] which might have been in the United Provinces, outside Magadha'. But according to our humble opinion the reading of the inscription (which certainly is much damaged), appears to leave hardly any doubt that Vāruṇikā was the village which was the subject matter of the grant. However, in the present state of our knowledge, we are inclined to agree that the inscription does suggest the exercise of sovereignty by S'arvavarman and Avantivarman over some parts of Magadha.

But the validity of the above propositions does not falsify the view held by us that the cradle of the activities

---

(1) I.C.I. p.214ff.

(2) C.I.I. III. No. 46 p.214ff. There is really no mention of a village named Kisoravāṭdka in the inscription (see infra)

of the line of Krisnagupta and his successors down to Mādhavagupta was the country of Magadha, the centre of power of the imperial Guptas. It appears to us difficult to defend the theory of the Mālawā origin of the later Guptas against the historical data contained in the Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena.(1) It is recorded about Mahāsena-gupta, the father of Mādhavagupta and son of Dāmodaragupta, that 'his mighty fame marked with the honour of victory in war over śrī Susthitavarman ... is still sung on the banks of the river Lauhitya'.(2) Some believe that Susthitavarman was a Maukhari. Fleet,(3) Thomas,(4) R. K. Mookherji(5) and Vaidya(6) held this view. But the discovery of the Nidhānapur plates(7) of Bhāskaravarman, king of Kāmarūpa, and his Nālandā seal,(8) and comparison of them with Harsa-carita(9) make it absolutely clear that Susthitavarman, defeated by Mahāsēnagupta on the banks of the Lauhitya, was not a Maukhari prince but a king of Kāmarūpa. There is almost unanimity on this point among scholars like Drs. Raychaudhuri,(10) Majumdar,(11) Tripathi(12) and Mr.

---

(1) C.I.I. III No. 42 p.205ff.
(2) Ibid p.206ff.
(3) Ibid. Introduction p.15
(4) H.C. (Trans) Intro, pxl, note 3
(5) Harsha, p.55.
(6) HMHI I. p.55.
(7) E.I. XII p.62ff.
(8) MASI No. 66 p.69; JBORS V p.302ff; VI p.151ff.
(9) H.C.(CT) p.217
(10) PHAI. 3rd Edn.p.408; JBORS XV p.651ff.
(11) JBORS XIV p.254ff.
(12) History of Bengāla Vol. I. pp.56-57

R. D. Bannerji.[1] Dr. Raychaudhuri[2] further observes that the victory of Mahāsēnagupta over Susthitavarman of Kāmarūpa does not at all prove the Mahāsēnagupta could not be a king of Mālawa. A ruler of Mālawa, Yas'odharman, had recently extended his conquest up to the Lauhitya.[3] So the learned scholar suggests that another king of Mālawa, Mahāsenagupta, could have won a victory on the banks of the Lauhitya. He writes, "Kumāragupta had pushed to Prayāga and Dāmodaragupta had 'broken up the proudly stepping array of mighty elephants belonging to the Maukharis', the same power which we have already seen, had control of Magadha, a little before Harsa. The Gauda expansion had already been stopped for a time by the victories of Īs'ānavarman. What was there to prevent the son of Dāmodaragupta, (who might have assumed command after the death of his father in the battle-field) from pushing on to the Lauhitya"?[3]

---

(1) T.K. pp.47-49.

(2) JBORS XV p.651ff.

(3) JBORS XV p.651ff.

A critical examination of the above quoted sentences suggests the following deductions:- (a) the victories of Kumāragupta and Dāmodaragupta over the Maukharis were decisive, and the later Guptas extended their authority from Mālawā to the Gangetic valley and upto the Lauhitya; (b) Mahāsenagupta, the son of Dāmodaragupta, capitalised these victories and extended his conquests up to the Lauhitya or defeated his adversary, a king of Kāmarūpa, on the banks of the Brahmaputra; (c) the expansion was therefore eastward from Mālawā to Prayāga and from Prayāga to the Lauhitya; (d) this should have naturally meant over-running Magadha and Northern Bengal; (e) from this it follows that probably Dāmodaragupta and certainly Mahāsenagupta controlled Magadha. But the evidence of the Deo-Baranārka inscription, according to the learned scholar himself, proves the sovereignty of the Maukharis - S'arvavarman and Avantivarman. S'arvavarman was a contemporary of Dāmodaragupta, who fought the Maukhari, and he is most probably, S'arvavarman, the Maukhari of the Deo-Baranārka inscription. Dāmodaragupta died fighting him; and therefore it is certain that Mahāsenagupta was the contemporary of S'arvavarman. Thus it is clear that the testimony of the Aphsad inscription when read together with the Deo-Baranārka inscription does suggest a situation when either we have to suppose that at least for some time both the later Guptas and the Maukharis shared control of Magadha, or that the later Gupta king Mahāsenagupta soon after his victory on the banks of the Lauhitya fell on evil days and lost Magadha to his

hereditary enemies the Maukharis. In any case the later Guptas must have ruled over Magadha, either before the Maukhari rulers mentioned in the Deo-Baranārka inscription, or after them. In our view, it was earlier, because we have at least two, possibly three generations of the Maukhari over-lords, 'Parames'waras' ruling over some parts of Magadha.(1) Naturally, therefore, it is hardly possible for the later Guptas to be masters of Magadha after them. Coupled with this is the fact that Kumāragupta after his victory over Īs'ānavarman died at Prayāga, which, therefore, lay in his dominion - an inference admitted by Rejchaudhuri.(2) This further strengthens our hypothesis that the Maukhari pushing to the east from Kanauj, (which was their centre), was not only repulsed but the later Guptas pushed towards the west as far as Prayāga. Moreover it should be borne in mind that the victory of Mahāsenagupta on the banks of the Lauhitya raises a very strong presumption that he was already master of Magadha and North Bengal.(3) In view of the discussion above, there seems to be not much force in the argument that "the sovereignty of S'arvavarman and Avantivarman undoubtedly precludes the possibility of the direct rule of their contemporaries of the later Gupta line"(4). The inscription does not at all disprove the hypothesis that the centre of the later Gupta activities could have lain in Magadha. What

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No.46 p.218 f. (2) P.H.A.I. 4th edn.p.512.
(3) C.I.I. III. No.42. p.205 f. (4) JBORS XV. p.617 f.

probably happened was that the Maukhari rule over Magadha was established in the later years of Mahāsenagupta when his fortunes were at a low ebb. He might have yielded to the offensive of S'arvavarman.

Raychaudhuri tried to escape the dilemma by supposing that "after the loss of Magadha, the later Gupta were, apparently confined to Mālwā till Mahāsenagupta once more pushed his conquests so far as the Lauhitya".(1) The learned scholar apparently means to say that Mahāsenagupta extended his authority up to the Lauhitya from his centre in Mālwā, evidently at the cost of the Maukharis, who were dominating the United Provinces and Bihar, including Magadha. We have already seen that the learned scholar has admitted the victories of Kumāragupta and Dāmodaragupta over the Maukhari kings Īs'ānavavarman and S'arvavarman. Therefore the Maukhari rule over Magadha could be established only after the death of Dāmodaragupta; and we have two, possibly three, generations of the Maukhari family exercising sovereignty over Magadha.(2) In view of this, it is hardly possible to accept the suggestion that Mahāsenagupta could extend his authority over the head of the Maukhari kings, from Mālwā to the Lauhitya. It is therefore more plausible that Mahāsenagupta's victory on the banks of the Lauhitya preceded the establishment of the Maukhari suzerainty over Magadha.

---

(1) JBORS XV. p.617 f. (2) C.I.I. III. No.46 p.217 f.

Mr. Piers, alive to the contradictions involved in the theory of the Mālawā origin of the later Guptas and the incontrovertible fact of Mahāsenagupta's victory on the Lauhitya, and at the same time the proof of Maukhari overlordship in Magadha, suggests a way out of the difficulty. According to him, "the Maukhari monarch must have been glad that the Mālawā king had taken upon himself the dangerous task of subduing the imperial ambitions and humbling the 'unborn pride' of the far-eastern potentate. Not satisfied with this, the Magadha emperor might have even lent some assistance and encouragement to Mahāsenagupta to march across Magadha" (1). This is a suggestion which is supported by not even the flimsiest evidence. From the inscriptions of the later Guptas it is clear beyond doubt that the Maukharis and the later Guptas were stubborn enemies for many generations, and therefore the view of the learned scholar that the Maukhari ruler, whosoever he might have been, would allow, much less encourage the hereditary foe, the later Gupta contemporary, to march through Magadha, is most illusory. At the same time it is insulting (without any cause known) the intelligence of the great conqueror Mahāsenagupta to suggest that he was drawing the chestnuts out of the fire for his hereditary enemy, the scion of the Maukhari family. Such things rarely happen in Realpolitik.(2) The Maukhari king could never have

---

(1) The Maukharis, p.102.

(2) Even in the Modern times, when diplomacy is more advanced and unscrupulous compared to the old days, we have the example of Poland refusing to allow the march of troops of Soviet Russia through Poland, even when Russia's help to Poland

forgotten the bitter family feuds against the later Guptas. Moreover, there is no sufficient explanation to show the pressing necessity for a king of Mālawā to fight a king of Kāmarūpa, when territories of independent rulers intervened. In view of the discussion above, it should be clear now that for Mahāsenagupta to defeat the king of Kāmarūpa on the banks of the Lauhitya, his control of Magadha and Gauḍa was necessary, and this could be only possible before the Maukharis conquered Magadha in the time of S'arvavarman.

The theory of the Mālawā-origin of the later Guptas is further fatally affected by the positive testimony of epigraphy. The Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena[1] says that Jīvitagupta, the son of Harsagupta and the third member of the dynasty, was "the very terrible scorching fever (of fear) left not (his) haughty foes even though they stood on sea-side shores that were cool with the flowing and ebbing current of water (and) were covered by the branches of plantain trees severed by the trunks of elephants roaming through the lofty groves of the palmyra palms; or even though they stood on (that) mountain (Himālaya) which is cold with the water of rushing and waving torrents full of snow". The people who stood on the sea-side shore are most likely the same people, the Gaudas, 'living on the sea-shore'

(Continued from previous page)
against Nazi Germany, threatening the independence of Poland could only be effectively by the Russian Army's march across the country. The most important reason of Poland's refusal of Russia's offer was Poland's memories of Russo-Polish struggles in the past.

---

(1) G.I. No.42 p.205 f.

as mentioned in the Harāhā inscription.(1) At least it is obvious that Jīvitagupta's exploits on the sea-shore and the Himālayan regions confirm our point that his centre of activity was nearer Bengal than in far-off Mālwā.

Some scholars on the authority of the Harāhā inscription of Īs'ānavarman and the Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II, hold that in the middle of the sixth century the Maukharis were in possession of the United Provinces and the Rajshahi division of Bengal. This, in their view, "proves with tolerable certainty that Magadha, which was situated between these two countries, was under the sway of the Maukharis .... This falsifies that the early rulers of Krisna-gupta's family ruled in Magadha; so long as the Maukharis were in power, their stubborn enemies, the family of Krisnagupta had no place in Northern India from Bengal right up to the Punjab. Hence on the authority of the Harsacarita we can take almost with certainty, the early members of Krisnagupta's family as the rulers of Mālwā." (2) But a critical examination of the evidence cited hardly substantiates the conclusion deduced above. The Harāhā inscription of Īs'ānarvarman merely states that he defeated the Gaudas living on the sea-shore. This does not prove rule by Īs'ānavarman, the Maukhari, over Gauda, much less the rule of the family for some time to come. His

---

(1) E.I. XIV. pp.119-120.

(2) Ganguli, JBORS XIX. p.319 f.

campaign was most probably in the nature of a raid against the growing power of the Gauḍas, who had already made themselves important in the time of Jīvitagupta I.[1] We have no evidence at all of the rule of the Maukharis over Gauḍa. Then it is known that Īs'ānavarman was defeated by Kumāragupta, son of Jīvitagupta,[2] and this event certainly happened after the victory of Īs'ānavarman over the Gauḍas. It has been already made clear that the Maukhari dominion in Magadha could only have been possible after the death of Dāmodaragupta. It is significant to note that both Ādityavarman and Īs'varavarman, grandfather and father of Īs'ānavarman, had married Gupta princesses[3]... Therefore it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the Gauḍa campaign of Īs'ānavarman might have been ostensibly in the nature of friendly assistance to the later Gupta contemporary, or to the last representative of the Imperial Gupta dynasty. It was after the ambition of Īs'ānavarman became patent to Kumāragupta, who found the imperial aspirations of the Maukharis clashing with the same objective of his family, that he fought Īs'ānavarman and defeated him ... The Deo-Barṇārk inscription[4] only shows that the Maukhari rule over Magadha was established in the time of S'arvavarman, and not before, as after the mention of Bālādityarāja, the name of the first Maukhari ruler mentioned

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No.42 p.205 f. (2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid. No.47 p.221 (4) Ibid, No.46 p.217 f.

is Sarvavarman. Thus the contents of the inscriptions do not lead to the conclusion that the early members of Kṛiṣṇagupta's line could not be the rulers of Magadha. This is not inconsistent with the view that Mahāsenagupta may have been king of Mālawā after losing his ancestral possession of Magadha to his enemies - the Maukharis.

The opinion of Mr. Piers[1] that the Maukharis were rulers of Magadha even before the advent of the imperial Guptas cannot be accepted as a sober conclusion. The chief basis of his thesis is the identification of the Koṭa family of the Allahabad Pillar-inscription of Samudra Gupta with the Magadha-kula of the Kaumudīmahotsava, a play discovered by Ramakṛiṣṇa Kavi. The late Dr. K.P. Jayaswal[2] declared the drama to be a historical one, and identified the dynasty of Sundaravarman and Kalyāṇavarman - the Magadha-kula of the drama - with the Koṭa family. He also identified Caṇḍasena of the drama with Chandra Gupta I of the imperial Gupta dynasty. The late Dr. Winternitz[3] challenged Jayaswal's dating of the drama in question and his identification of Caṇḍasena with Candra Gupta I, mainly on [illegible] grounds. The alleged historicity of the drama cannot be established. A learned

---

(1) The Maukharis pp.25-40. (2) A.B.O.R.I. XII. p.50 f.
(3) Kṛiṣṇa Swāmi Aiyangar Commemoration Volume p.362.

scholar has[1] rightly pointed out that "a careful study of the play will however reveal that several statements made therein are in conflict with the historical informations ascertained from the Gupta inscriptions .....; it must therefore be concluded that the episode of the Kaumudīmahotsava has no bearing whatsoever on the early Gupta history". That the name of Kalyāṇavarman is not mentioned in the list of the names of the defeated kings in the Allahabad inscription, and also that the family of Kalyāṇavarman is never mentioned as the Koṭa family in the play, are facts that cannot be ignored. It is made clear that "the end of Caṇḍasena as described in the Kaumudīmahotsava and his identification with Candragupta I is impossible".[2] Dr. Jayasval's theory has been now 'justly rejected'[3] and 'declared untenable'[4] by scholars. Thus the foundation of Piers' thesis is destroyed. It may be pointed out that throughout the play there is absolutely no mention of the Maukharis or the Koṭa.

Similarly gratuitous is Piers' opinion that "the Candravalli inscription of Mayūrasarman has revealed the fact that the Maukharis ruled in Magadha in the time of the early Kadambas.[5] The Candravalli inscription[6] speaks of

---

(1) Jagan Nath; a volume of Eastern and Indian studies presented to F.W. Thomas 1939, p.115 f.
(2) I.H.Q. XIV. p.382 f.
(3) A New History of Indian People Vol. VI. p.133 footnote 2.
(4) Ibid.
(5) The Maukharis. p.29.
(6) A.S.M.A.R. 1929 No.I.p.50 f.

Mayūraśarman's conquests in Traikūṭa, Abhira, Pallava, Parīyātrika, S'akāsthāna, Sayindaka, Puṇaṭa, and Mokari, and then, it ends abruptly. Piers, following Dr. Kṛiṣṇa, believed that Maukhari is written as Mokari in the inscription. Dr. Jayasval[1] challenged the reading of Dr. Kṛiṣṇa and held that the word Mokari does not occur in the inscription. But even if we accept the reading of Dr. Kṛiṣṇa, who in this particular instance is supported by Dr. D.C. Sarkar[2], and agree that it stands for the Maukhari, Mr Piers[3] has no justification at all to jump to the conclusion that the Maukhari alluded to was the king of Magadha and that he was Kṣatravarman, the Maukhari king spoken of by Bāṇa, and was defeated by Mayūras'arman. Bāṇa[4] mentions the foolish king Kṣatravarman, who being carried away by fondness for troubadours was cut down by bards, his enemy's emissaries. This is all that Bāṇa says about the Maukhari king Kṣatravarman, and as yet there is no other reference to him. In view of this it is impossible to fix his chronology and place him in the Maukhari genealogy. Cunningham[5] regarded him as the predecessor of Pūrṇavarman. Aravamuthan[6] places him earlier than the 5th century. Piers may be right in suggesting that Kṣatravarman may be earlier than Candra Gupta II, but there is no ground to make the former

---

(1) History of India. pp.220-221. (2) Select Inscriptions Vol.I. p. 449.

(3) The Maukharis pp.20-22. (4) H.C. CT. p.194.

(5) C.A.S.R. XV. p.165 (6) Aravamuthan, the Kāverī, the Maukhari and the Sangam Age pp.30-31

a king of Magadha, contemporary with Mayūras'arman. Bāṇa does not say anything about the enemy whose emissaries cut down Kṣatravarman. Some have tried to place him in the imperial Maukhari dynasty of Harivarman[1] a view which has been proved to be untenable.[2] We know of two more Maukhari families other than those of Harivarman and Yajñavarman. Kṣatravarman might have belonged to the Maukhari family whose four inscriptions so far have been discovered at Baḍvā,[3] in the Koṭāh state in Rajputana. There is absolutely no ground to regard him as a king of Magadha; certainly nothing can be based on the uncorroborated and incomplete inscription of Mayūras'arman. No other Kadamba inscription speaks of Mayūras'arman's conquest of the Maukhari. If he could have led a successful expedition against Magadha, the country of imperial tradition, the achievement must have been made an object of special mention in all the inscriptions of the Kadambas. It is also to be noted that if Mayūras'arman had really raided Magadha from Mysore, then the inscription must have mentioned some of the neighbouring countries of Magadha. It is well known that in various inscriptions of rulers and even feudatories when they lay claims to conquests of Magadha, (claims which are mere empty boasts) mention is made of Anga, Vanga etc. This further suggests that the scribe of the Candravalli inscription had even no intention to refer to Magadha. The campaigns referred

---

(1) Sant Lal Pro. & Trans. of the 7th Oriental Conference.
(2) Jagan Nath - Woolner commemoration Volume. Lahore 1940. p 116.
(3) E.I. XXIII p.42 f; E.I. XXIV. p.252 f.

to in the inscriptions are so extensive that it is difficult to believe that Mayūras'arman could have done all that the inscription ascribes to him. Dr. K.A. Sastri is thoroughly sceptical of the truth of the inscription and remarks, "This impossible record has all the appearance of a modern fake, and its evidence should await confirmation before accepted as history."(1) However, the Maukhari defeated by the Kadamba king could have been either a member of the Maukhari family of Badvā(2) or the Maukhari family of Karṇāṭaka in the neighbourhood of Puṇaṭa,(3) Whatsoever may be the case, there is absolutely no justification to make the Mayūras'arman conquer Magadha, and still less for making the king of Magadha, of the time, to be a Maukhari.

Equally untenable is the suggestion that the imperial Maukhari line of Harivarman succeeded the line of Yajñavarman in Magadha, and the capital of the Maukhari kingdom throughout was Pāṭaliputra.(4) It has been shown that the imperial

---

(1) A New History of Indian People Vol. VI. p. 238.

(2) E.I. XXIII p.42 f; E.I. XXIV p.252 f. The inscription of Mayūras'arman refers also to his conquest of S'akāsthāna which 'possibly indicates the kingdom of the S'akas in Western India' (Select Inscriptions, I pp.450 footnote 1.) The Maukharis of Badvā in Rajputana were close enough to bear the weight of Mayūras'arman's aggression.

(3) B.A. Saletore - a volume of Indian and Iranian studies presented to Sir E. Denison Ross, Bombay 1939 p.307 f.

(4) The Maukharis p. 53, 152.

Maukharis had their headquarters at Kanauj[1], and certainly not in Magadha. The place of Yajñavarman's line[2] in the history of the Maukharis is not clear. Vaidya assigned them 'to a date later than that of Harṣa'[3]; Sen [4] regarded them as a feudatory family granted a chieftainship by their more fortunate brothers - the Maukharis of the United Provinces - following the defeat inflicted on the Gauḍas; and according to some 'they ruled in the Bihar region as the governors of the Kanauj Maukharis', and 'were perhaps charged with the viceroyalty of Magadha region after its loss by Dāmodaragupta'.[5] But these hypothesas are against the palaeographic evidence, pointed out by the late Dr. N.G. Majumdar[6]. It is important to remember that no member of Yajñavarman's family assumed any sovereign and imperial titles. To us there appears to be no doubt that the Gaya family was a feudatory family owing allegiance to the later imperial Guptas. Naturally, therefore, these inscriptions do not at all falsify our stand that the later Guptas were from the very beginning associated with

---

(1) T.K. pp.32 - 36

(2) C.I.I. III. nos.48-50 pp.221-228.

(3) H.M.H.I.Vol.I.p.34.

(4) B.C. Sen - Some Historical Aspects of the Inscription of Bengal p.247

(5) C.R. 1928 p.210

(6) I.A. XLVI. p.217.

Magadha and its neighbourhood, first as feudatories or officers of the Gupta empire, and later on as the master of the same regions. It is true that a clay seal with Pāli legend 'Mokhalinām' in the Mauryan Brāhmi characters was found at Gaya(1). Dr. Jayasval(2) was probably right in regarding the Mauhari community of the Gaya and Patna districts as the descendants of the ancient Maukharis whose seal and inscriptions have been found in Gaya. Therefore, there is no reason to dispute the fact that the Maukharis as a community were not unknown in Magadha even in the fourth century before Christ. We have also the knowledge of another Maukhari family from their inscriptions found at Baḍvā in Rajputana.(3) The Maukharis of Yajnavarman's and Harivarman's lines are well known, with their centres in Magadha and Kanauj respectively. There is also some reference to a Maukhari family in Karnataka. But there is absolutely nothing to connect any one of these with one another. On the ground of Harivarman's line in Kanauj coming to power after the Gaya line, Dr. Tripathi felt that the theory of the westward migration of the Maukharis was strengthened. But the discovery of the Maukhari inscriptions

---

(1) C.I.I. III. Intro. p.14. (2) The Kāverī, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age p.80 footnote 1.

(3) E.I. XXIV. p.252 f; E.I. XXIII p.42 f.

at Baḍwā proves the existence of a Maukhari family in the 3rd century A.D., probably earlier than the family of Yajñavarman in Gaya district. This naturally throws serious doubt on the theory of the westward migration of the Maukharis. To us it appears that the Maukharis were a tribe whose different branches were spread in different areas. One thing is clear, that there is no evidence at all for the existence of any Maukhari dynasty exercising any independent political power before the rise of the family of Harivarman about the middle of the sixth century after Christ.

It is interesting to note that recently a learned scholar[1] has advanced the view that the later Guptas had their centre in Mālẖawā, and from the time of Kumāragupta had begun extending their sphere of influence eastward and came into conflict with the Maukharis, who were trying to expand their rule westward (presumably from their centre in the east), but the latter were successfully checked by the former. Kumāragupta had extended his authority up to Prayāga in the east, and this eastward push of the later Guptas culminated in Mahāsenagupta's triumph of the Lauhitya. This is the only way in which the learned scholar could reconcile his faith in the Mālẖawā origin of the later Gupta with Mahāsenaguptas victory on the bank of the Lauhitya. But this view runs counter

---

(1) Saletore R.N., Life in the Gupta Age pp.56-57.

to the positive testimony of the inscriptions. The Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II[1] certainly proves the sovereignty of the Maukhari kings S'arvavarman and Avantivarman. The fact that this direct reference of the Maukhari supremacy over Magadha, or at least over some part of it, is contained in the record of their rival family, should be by itself sufficient to reject Saletore's thesis that "much need not be made of the allusions of the powers of patronage of the Maukharis in the Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II"[2]. There is absolutely no basis to ignore the incontrovertible evidence of the inscription,[3] And to hold that 'claims of the Maukhari possessions made in the Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II could not have been considerable.[4] The discovery of the Maukhari seals at Nālandā certainly raises a strong presumption of Maukhari rule in Magadha. The memory of the Varman (Maukhari) supremacy in Magadha is alluded to in the Sirpur Stone inscription.[5] The omission of the mention of any victory of the Maukharis over the later Guptas is easily explainable. The Harāhā inscription of Īs'ānavarman, dated 554 A.D.,[6] is the latest known record of the activities of the Maukharis. And the first

---

(1) C.I. III. No.46 p.217. (2) Saletore. Op.cit.p.68
(3) C.I.I. III. No.46 p.27 f. (4) Saletore op.cit. p.68
(5) E.I. XI. p.195. (6) E.I. XIV. p.110.f.

known clash between the Maukharis and the later Guptas occurred after 554 A.D. Naturally the victories of the Maukharis over the later Guptas must have happened long after that, and therefore we do not find any mention of the former's victory over the latter, which came in the time of Mahāsenagupta. It may be that in future we shall come across some inscriptions which throw some interesting light on this subject. The seals[1] of S'arvavarman and Avantivarman found at Asīrgarh and Nālandā give only genealogical tables and no historical detail.

Another objection against the view that the later Guptas came into importance in the east in Magadha and its neighbourhood - not in Mālwā - is that, as the imperial Guptas continued to be the masters of Magadha and Northern Bengal down to the middle of the sixth century after Christ, there is no place for the later Guptas in Magadha in this period, and after that the Maukharis came into possession of Magadha. Hence, there is no place for the later Guptas in Magadha at all.[2] But the continuance of the imperial Gupta sovereignty in Magadha does not cancel the validity of our stand that the later Guptas had their original home in Magadha. The last years of the Gupta empire resembled to a great extent the situation in India after the death of Aurangzeb. The Mughal empire had practically

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No.47 p.221; E.I. XXI pp.73-74. Ibid XXIV p.283 f

(2) J.B.O.R.S. XIX p.399 f.

disappeared, but the fiction of the Mughal sovereignty continued for a long time afterwards, and various local and provincial powers arose to share the spoils of the defunct empire; but at the same time they did not repudiate the formal sovereignty of the emperor, who was then no more than an institution which had taken deep roots in the life and imagination of the people, and so could not be easily cast away by the numerous pretenders, rather they were anxious to use the name of the emperor and the dynasty ostensibly for the cause of the empire but really to grind their own axe. The Gupta empire after the death of Budhagupta was fast crumbling to pieces, and centrifugal tendencies were coming to the forefront. The invasions of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula added to the confusion and provided the most fruitful opportunity to the feudatories to raise their heads. It was in this period that the Maitrakas of Valabhi and the Parivrājaka Mahārājas of central India, though accepting the suzerainty of the imperial Guptas, exercised the sovereign right of issuing land grants in their own name without mentioning the reigning suzerain. It was during these difficult days that the families of Harivarman and Kṛiṣṇagupta came into importance. It is quite possible that Kṛiṣṇagupta or his successor became important and earned some special distinction in fighting the Hūnas, who invaded the heart of the Gupta empire in the time of Narasimhagupta. At the same time on the eastern frontier of the empire a new dynasty of independent

rulers had arisen in Eastern Bengal, and it sometimes encroached on the Western Bengal.(1) Prakaṭāditya was most probably master of the region round Sārnāth(2) and might have claimed his right over the whole empire. Further west the Maukharis(3) were rising in power on the Upper Gangetic valley, and in the south-west the Aulikaras(4) were practically masters of Mālavā. In those days of the fast shrinking of the empire the authority of the imperial Guptas was confined to Magadha and Gauda. Almost continuous crises forced the weak emperors to depend on the family of Kṛiṣṇagupta, which had helped the empire in the dark days of the Huṇa invasions. As has generally happened, in course of time this dependence further increased; and the result was that in the shadow of the name of the emperor and the empire-institutions well understood by the people - the family of Kṛiṣṇagupta went on adding to its power, and soon was strong enough to exercise the real authority in Magadha and Northern Bengal. It is certainly significant to note that the Aphsad inscription(5) does not give any imperial titles to the members of Kṛiṣṇagupta's line. This further confirms

---

(1) I.A. XXXIX. p.193; J.A.S.B. VII N.S. p. 475 f; E.I. XVIII p.75 E.I. XXIII p.155 f.

(2) C.I.I. III No.79 p.282 f. (3) C.I.I. III. No.51 p.229 f; E.I. XIV. p.219 f.

(4) E.I. XXVI. p.230; J.B.O.R.S. XXIX p.127 f; A.S.I.A.R.1922-23. p.187. Bhandarkar's list of Northern India No.7.p.2; C.I.I. III. No.35 p.135 f.

(5) C.I.I. III. No.42. p. 205 f.

the suggestion that Kṛisnagupta and his successors began their career as feudatories of the empire, as provincial governors and high officers.(1) Jīvitagupta's campaigns in the Himālaya region and in south-west Bengal were made in the name of the reigning Gupta emperor, Viṣnu Gupta, to restore Gupta sovereignty in these regions recently over-run by Yas'odharman.(2) There is no doubt about the fact that the successful campaigns of Yas'odharman (however temporary in result) whetted the appetite of all the ambitious feudatories, including the later Guptas. Soon after the sudden exit of Yas'odharman, the successors of Harivarman began to entertain imperial ambition.(3) But it is profoundly important that even then the fiction of the traditional sovereignty of the Gupta emperor was pretty strong and no power of the Gangetic valley formally assumed imperial titles before Īs'ānavarman. From the Harāhā inscription(4) it is clear that he could ~~not~~ have assumed the title of Mahārājādhirāja ~~before~~ nearabout 554 A.D. The last known date of the Gupta emperor is 543-544 A.D.(5) It appears therefore that Īs'ānavarman proclaimed himself Mahārājādhirāja only after the imperial line became extinct. Kumāra Gupta of the later Gupta dynasty was also waiting only for this usurpation of the imperial titles and traditions. Therefore the two

---

(1) A new History of Indian People, VI. p.208.

(2) C.I.I. III. No.33. p.148.

(3) Ibid, No.35, p.15

(4) E.I. XIV. p.119 ff

(5) E.I. XVIII, E.I. XVII

ambitious families, so long friendly, began serious hostilities, which continued for generations. In the first round the latter Gupta representative, Kumāragupta, triumphed over his Maukhari rival Īs'ānavarman (1) This victory really transferred the de facto as well as the de jure sovereignty of Magadha and Gauḍa to the family of Kṛiṣṇagupta. The family had already exercised real authority in the last years of the Gupta empire. Therefore it was not difficult for them to claim the extant parts of the empire for themselves. The suffix 'gupta' also must have helped them to come forth as the legatees of the empire. From Kumāragupta we may safely regard the status of the family as completely independent. But the mere change in status required great efforts to maintain their authority in the Gangetic valley. As masters of the Central Gangetic plains they were bound to attempt extension of their rule over the Upper Gangetic basin. The Maukharis also were influenced by the same political and economic considerations to extend their rule from their centre in the Upper Gangetic Valley to the central and lower Gangetic basin. The only natural result was a clash between the two. The defeat of Īs'ānavarman did not result in the abandonment of the Maukharis' ambitions. S'arvavarman made perhaps more than one attempt, but he was at first worsted in the fight with Dāmodaragupta. (2)

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No. 42. p.205f (2) C.I.I. III No.218.f.

Mahāsenagupta, who assumed command soon after the death of his father, in the battle-field, realised the seriousness of the situation. Besides the terrible Maukhari on his western borders, he had to pay attention to the rising power of the Varmans in Kāmarūpa. So he contracted a matrimonial alliance with the Puṣyabhūtis of Thānes'wara a powerful kingdom on the western frontier of the Maukharis of Kanauj. Making himself thus assured on his western frontier by offsetting the Maukhari menace by this alliance, he turned towards the Lauhitya and defeated Suṣthitavarman,(1) the king of Kāmarūpa. But soon after he appears to have been defeated by S'arvavarman, the Maukhari, who certainly annexed at least some parts of Magadha, as it clear by the Deo-Baranārk inscription. Mahāsena Gupta might have been the king who was defeated by Kīrtti-varman of the Cālukya dynasty. Thus menaced on all sides Mahāsena Gupta found himself squeezed out of Magadha, which was practically lost. He then retired to Malwa, which was also one of the provinces of the Gupta empire, whose successors were the later Guptas.

We do not know what immediately happened to Malwa after the exit of Yas'odharman. It is quite possible that the later Guptas might have succeeded in reimposing Gupta suzereignty there. Their intimate relation with the imperial Guptas and the fact that their name also ended in 'gupta' may have helped them. Mahāsena Gupta did not find peace in Malwa and was

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No. 82, p.205f.

defeated by the Kalacuri king, who conquered Ujjain.(1) In such distress, Mahāsena Gupta sent his sons Kumāra-gupta and Mādhava-gupta to the court of his nephew, Prabhākaravardhana of Thāneśvara. Mahāsena gupta might have lost his life in fighting the Kalacuris. Devagupta was ruling after him. The latter killed Grahavarman, the Maukhari king. It was because Mahāsenagupta was the king of Malwa at that time that Bāṇa called Kumara-Gupta and Mādhava-Gupta, sons of the king of Malwa. To refer to Māhasena-Gupta as king of Magadha would have been a cruel satire on him, an attitude which Bāṇa, the court poet of Harṣa, the relative and friend of Mādhava Gupta was last to take. Moreover it was more fitting to address Mahāsena Gupta as the Mālavarāja, ~~king~~ which was a recent acquisition, than to call him Magadha-rāja when he had lost it to the Maukharis. It is now generally accepted that the Maukharis imperial seat was at Kanauj, yet it is interesting to note that in some later inscription they are particularly remembered as sovereigns of Magadha which was a recent conquest. Sirpur stone inscription of Mahāśiva-Gupta refers to Varmans (Maukharis) as great on account of their supremacy over Magadha. Bāṇa also for the same reason might have referred to Mahāsena gupta as 'Mālavarāja'.

---

(1) E.I. IX. p. 296 ff.

Thus, the same objection which is raised against the Magadha-origin of the later Guptas can be put more strongly against the Malwa theory, because we have the incontrovertible evidence of the rise of Yas'odharman's empire from its centre in Malwa. If the later Guptas could not be in Magadha because the imperial Guptas ruled there, they also could not be in Malwa. As has been observed by a learned scholar that the view that they were originally rulers of Malwa, "is incompatible with the history of Yas'odharman whose centre of authority was Malwa."(1) If the later Guptas could be placed in Malwa notwithstanding the rise of Yas'odharman in that part of the country, then there cannot be any objection in placing them in Maghada as feudatories of the Gupta emperors.

Dr. Tripathi holds the view that Dāmodaragupta was defeated and killed by S'arvavarman, the Maukhari, and the later Guptas were ousted from Magadha and Maheśānagupta established himself in eastern Malwa in order to pursue his schemes of regaining the lost possessions.(2) But

---

(1) A New History of the Indian people Vol. VI. p. 209.

(2) Mālavīya. Com. Vol. p.261 ff.

this does not explain Mahāsenagupta's victory over the bank of the Lauhitya, and the clear testimony of the inscription that Dāmodaragupta had defeated the Maukhari king. Therefore our view that Mahāsenagupta was defeated by Sarvavarman after the former's victory over Susthitavarman, and retired to Malwa appears to be more plausible.

It has been generally held by scholars[1] that Harṣavardhana awarded his friend with the kingdom of Magadha after it came into his possession. If Mādhavagupta's and his ancestors' possession originally lay in Malwa then it would have been more apt for Harṣa to restore his friend on the throne of Malwa. The fact that Harṣa restored his friend on the throne of Magadha further confirms our thesis that Magadha was the ancestral home of the family of Mādhavagupta, and was unfortunately lost. When Harṣa came in control of it and was free from any complication of any claim by any near descendant of Grahavarman, he (Harṣa) gave it back to his friend Mādhavagupta 'who was always desirous of the company of Harṣa'[2]. This did not only suit his fidelity to a

---

(1) Harsa, p. 53-56. J.I.H. IV. p. 17 ff.

(2) ~~JBBRAS.XXIV. 1914-17. p. 235 ff.~~
C.I.I. III No. 42 p. 205 ff., JBBRAS, XXIV 1914-17 pp 236 f

devoted friend but also was in full accord with the opinion of ancient law-givers and the practice of many past and future kings.

Thus our exhaustive discussion has shown that the theory of the Malwa origin of the later Guptas is an unnecessary supposition and full of serious contradictions. There is nothing known so far which can not be more reasonably explained and reconciled by holding that Magadha was the original seat of the power of the later Guptas from the time of Kṛiṣṇagupta to Mahāsenagupta's early days. Up to the early years of Kumāragupta the later Guptas were subordinate officials or feudatories to the nominal emperors. From the time of Kumāragupta, the dynasty became independent and imperial in Magadha and parts of Bengal. Fleet was thus intuitively correct in designating them as 'the later Guptas of Magadha'[1]; there is no unimpeachable ground to dub them as the 'later Guptas of Malwa'.

---

(1) ibid, intro. p. 10.

CHAPTER VI

History and Chronology of the Later Guptas.

The two comparatively fixed points in the chronology of the period under review are:- firstly the contemporaneity of Īsānavarman, the 4th king of the imperial Maukhari dynasty, and Kumāra Gupta the fourth king of the later Gupta dynasty; secondly the synchronism of Mādhava Gupta, the Seventh king of the dynasty with Harṣavardhana, who ruled from 606-646 A.D. Harāhā inscription of Īs'ānavarmen[1] is dated 554 A.D.. Kumāra Gupta IV, therefore, may be placed between C.540 and 560 A.D. (A lower average of less than twenty years for those disturbed years may not be far from correct). Therefore Kṛiṣṇa Gupta and Harivarman, founders of the later Gupta and the Maukhari dynasties respectively, may be assigned to the last years of the fifth and the early autumns of the sixth century A.D..

Kṛiṣṇa Gupta.

The later Gupta genealogy as known to us begins with ~~the~~ Kṛiṣṇa Gupta. The only information that we get about him and his immediate successors is obtained from Aphsad inscription.[2] This is what it says, "Kṛiṣṇa Gupta was a king of good

(1) E.I. XIV pp.110ff. (2) C.I.I. III. No. 42 pp.205ff.

descent .... whose arm played the part of a lion, in bruising the foreheads of the array of the rutting elephants of his haughty enemies and in being victorious by its power over countless foes." Who were the enemies whom Kṛiṣṇa Gupta faced? The question may be answered by a criticial study of contemporary events.

According to our scheme of chronology Kṛiṣṇa Gupta may be placed in cir. 490-505 A.D. This was the period when the Gupta empire in the last years of Budha Gupta, and certainly after his death, was in its bad days, and Narasiṁha Gupta had to face Hūṇa invasions under Toramāṇa. The Hūṇa leader had made himself master of Mālwā, at least Eastern Mālwā,(1) and he is also reported to have invaded the heart of the empire, Magadha and Bengal.(2) We have already seen(3) that he was instrumental in the rise of Vainya Gupta in the east, and Prakaṭāditya in Sārṇāth, close to Magadha. Narasiṁha Gupta Bālāditya for some time at least had proved unequal to the task. But it can be safely conceded that Magadha, the land of heroes and glorious empires, must have offered some resistance to the invader. The fact that Narasiṁha Gupta soon after offered battle to Mihirakula may prove the suggestion that the Māgadhas were not a people who would yield to foreign aggression easily. It may not be therefore far from

---

(1) CII. III. No.36 pp.158ff. (2) I.H.I. pp.64f.

(3) CII. III. pp.158f.

the truth that Kṛiṣṇa Gupta won some distinction in resisting the Hūṇa invasion. The "Haughty Enemies"(1) of the inscription therefore refer to the proud or arrogant Hūṇas. Kṛiṣṇa Gupta's title 'nṛipa' does not show that he was necessarily an independent king. It is an innocent title having a connotation not higher than a sāmanta or a maṇḍaleśwara, a feudatory or a high official.(2) He was certainly a contemporary of Harivarman, the founder of the Maukhari line of Kanauj. It appears to be quite natural that as the influence of the imperial Gupta family was sinking, new families - subordinate in origin, of course - led by capable persons came into importance.(3) Harivarman and Kṛiṣṇa Gupta were two such influential leaders who ultimately became the founders of two imperial families. It is quite plausible that both might have realised the common advantages of strengthening one another in the scramble for the remains of the empire, which was counting its hours. They might have looked forward, at least for some time to come, to mutual advancement in the empire under the

---

(1) Mr. Piers has hazarded a conjecture that the "haughty enemies" were the Maukharis under Harivarman and the fight ended with a marriage alliance of Kṛiṣṇa Gupta's daughter Harsa Gupta with Ādityavarman, son of Harivarman. (The Maukharis, pp62-63). But we feel that there could be no cause for conflict between the two in so early a period.

(2) Amarakosa, VIII, 2-- 'Nṛipo'nyo Maṇḍaleśwaraḥ.'

(3) Numerous parallels are found in the later Mughal history after the death of Aurangzeb.

formal tutelage of the helpless emperor. This might explain the marriage of Harṣa Guptā with Āṛdityavarman, son of Harivarman.(1) This marriage alliance with the rising family of the Maukharis in the upper Gangetic valley must have added prestige and influence to Kṛiṣṇa Gupta in Magadha.

Śrī Harṣa Gupta.

King Kṛiṣṇa Gupta was succeeded by his son Deva Śrī Harṣa Gupta. The only thing that is known about him is that he "was always displaying a glorious triumph, the written record as it were of terrible contests."(2) His period may be taken to be 505-525 A.D. It was in this period that Narasimha Gupta rebelled against Mihirakula. The struggle was protracted, and must have been decided after more than one contest.(3) It is more than possible that Harṣa Gupta played the part of a loyal feudatory or gubernatorial family in the terrible fight against the Hūṇas. These fights are described as "terrible contests" in the inscription.

---

(1) CII. III. No. 47 pp.221. We know that Harṣa Gupta was son of Kṛiṣṇa Gupta. Fleet has rightly pointed out that Princess Harṣa Guptā was a sister of the later Gupta of the same name. (CII. vol. III. Intro. pp14). There/are again many parallels in later Gupta History.

(2) Ibid No. 42, p205ff.

(3) Records vol. I. pp168-171.

Jīvita Gupta I. C. 525-540 A.D.

Jīvita Gupta appears to be more important than his father Harṣa Gupta or even his grand-father Kṛiṣna Gupta. This fact is indirectly borne out by the space given to him and the description of his warlike activities in the Aphsad inscription.(1) He is called 'kṣhītiśa-cūḍāmaṇi', a title which appears to have more connotations than 'nṛipa', or at least, Sāmanta-cūḍāmaṇi'.(2) Jīvita Gupta's period may be fixed as from 525-545 A.D. These were the days when events were moving at a terrific speed in Northern India, and the fortunes of many families were rising or ebbing. In Mālwā Yaśodharman-Viṣṇuvardhana came into power. His rise may not be as meteoric as generally supposed.(3) He overran the whole of Northern India from the Himālayas to the Mahendragiri, and from the Lauhitya to the western ocea n.(4) The Gupta emperor Kumāra Gupta III might have perished in the struggle. Yaśodharman's digvijaya from

(1) CII. vol. iii. No. 42 pp205ff.

(2) The highest epithet of the members of the Gaya branch of the Maukharis was 'sāmanta-cūḍāmaṇi', attributed to Sārdūlavarman, father of Anantavarman (CII. vol. III. No. 48 p223). May we suggest that Jīvita Gupta finally succeeded in bringing (or disposing of) this family under his control. Anantavarman is not addressed with any high epithets and his struggles against enemies in the time of his father may suggest his conflicts with another chieftan (Jīvita Gupta). Such conflicts between various feudatories or official families were very common in the later Mughal history. The palaeography is not against us.

(3) B.C. Law Volume I p.25.

(4) CII. vol. III No. 33 pp147-48.

his centre in Mandasore in western Mālwā to the Lauhitya in the north-east and the Himālayas in the north must have resulted in his over-running of Magadha and northern and western Bengal. His empire certainly superceded the empire of his Gupta over-lords.(1) The last known date of Yas'odharman is 532-533 A.D. Though we do not know the actual circumstances in which he disappeared from the stage of History, there appears to be no doubt that soon after his exit his empire collapsed in or soon after 533 A.D.

But there is no doubt that the Gupta empire, which had already been reduced in extent, and was suffering from the shocks of the recent Hūṇa invasions, was shaken to its very foundations by Yas'odharman's aggression. His rise was a symptom, rather than a cause, of the virtual collapse of the all-Northern-India central authority represented by the Gupta empire. Yas'odharman was probably a feudatory of the empire, and therefore mentions his Gupta over-lords,(2) whose authority he challenged, and he conquered almost the whole of Northern India, including territories which were never within the empire. Therefore, he had a wonderful opportunity to save the country from the evils of fragmentation and create an all-India, at least an all-Northern-India central authority - the real remedy which India has needed many times in course

---

(1) Fleet translated 'Gupta-nāthāh' as 'over-lords of the Guptas' (Ibid). Dr. Jayasval rightly corrected the translation, as 'Gupta Over-lords' (I.H.I.p.40)

(2) CII. Vol. III No. 33 pp.147-48.

of her chequered history during her transition from the break-up of one empire to the rise of another. But Yas'odharman failed India. It is really unfortunate that while Yas'odharman failed to establish a durable central authority which could outlive him, he by his example and his aggression in the centre of the empire, sapped the prestige of the empire and the emperor, and thereby encouraged all the more the centrifugal forces, which now had fuller play.

After the exit of Yas'odharman, the Gupta emperor Viṣṇu Gupta succeeded in restoring the Gupta sovereignty over Magadha and northern Bengal. This is clear from the fifth Dāmodarpur Plate (1) and the Nālandā seal of Viṣṇu Gupta. (2) It appears to us that in this he must have been materially helped by his various feudatories, notably

---

(1) E.I. XVII. p. 193; see supra.

(2) ~~MASI. No. 88. p. 64.~~ E.I. XXVI p233f

Jīvita Gupta I and Īs'varavarman. (1) Jīvita Gupta's campaigns in the Himālayan regions and in south-western Bengal (2) were

---

(1) Īs'varavarman appears to have fought the aggressive design of a king of Dhārā (Jaunpore inscription C.I.I. III No 51 pp. 229-30) It is obvious that Īs'varavarman might have fought Yas'odharman during the latter's campaign in Northern India. Mahārāja Īs'varavarman had married Upa Guptā, the sister of Viṣṇu Gupta. We have identified Ukārākhya of the MMK. with Viṣṇu Gupta, on whose coins we have the letter 'U'. Another name of his might have been Upendra Gupta. (Many Gupta emperors, like Candra Gupta II and Skandra Gupta had more than one name). Upendra is a synonym of Viṣṇu. Therefore Viṣnu's sister could be Upa Guptā (a shorter form of Viṣnu Gupta). Dr. Jayasval had identified 'Ukārākhya' with Budha Gupta, an identification which cannot stand in view of recent addition to our knowledge. (See supra) Dr Raichaudhuri also rejected the view of Jayasval and suggested that he might be another Gupta prince Upa Gupta or Upendra Gupta. He hazarded a suggestion that he might be Kṛiṣṇa ('Upendra') Gupta. (PHAI. 4th edn. No. 2, p. 500). It is certainly significant that Īs'aravarman is described as a mere 'mahārāja', a feudatory title.

(2) CII. Vol. III, No. 42, p.205f.

probably made ostensibly in the name of the emperor though really they increased his own power and prestige. The enemy against whom he fought on the sea-shore was Gopacandra or Dharmāditya.(1) These enemies on the seashore xxxxx have been rightly identified with the Gaudas living on the sea-shore of the Harāhā inscription.(2) Jīvita Gupta's authority in Gauda was practically unquestioned, and therefore the author of the MMK looked upon the later Guptas as the kings of Gauda.(3)

Jīvita Gupta I, undoubtedly, raised the status of the family to a great height from a comparatively modest beginning. This is why the scribe of Ādityasena remembers his

---

(1) In December 506 A.D. Vainya Gupta was the ruler of eastern Bengal (I.H.Q. VI, p.45f) and his seal with the title of 'Mahārājādhirāja' has been found at Nālandā (MASI No. 66 p.Ø67). Recently another inscription recording the grant of land during the third year of the reign of Mahārājādhirāja Gopacandra has been found at the village Mallasārul in the Burdwan district of Bengal. This king has been identified with the king of the same name mentioned in one of the Faridpur Plates. (E.I. XXIII p.155ff). The Faridpur copper-plate is dated in the 19th year of Mahārājādhiraja Gopacandra. (I.A. XXXIX p.193f. No. C.). Dr. Majumdar has rightly shown that this Gopacandra must be earlier than Dharmāditya (HBR.I p.52), whose copper-plates have also been found at Faridpur and who was considered to be earlier than Gopacandra. (I.A. XXXIX p.193ff). It appears to us that Gopacandra had made himself master of western Bengal soon after Vainya Gupta, the Quisling, had disappeared from the scene, and Gopacandra made himself master of Eastern Bengal also. It is therefore very likely that Jīvita Gupta I recovered South western Bengal from Gopacandra or his successor Dharmāditya, whose rule was henceforth confined to Eastern Bengal.

(2) E.I. XIV p.110ff.

(3) I.H.I.pp. 42 and 57.

exploits "as superhuman deeds (which) are regarded with astonishment by all mankind, like the leap of (the monkey) Hanumant, son of Wind, from the side of (the mountain) Kośavardhana". (1) It was left to his son and successor Kumāra Gupta to capitalise the assets and start the family on an independent and imperial career.

Kumāra Gupta IV
540 - 560 A.D.

Kumāra Rupta, the son and successor of Jīvita Gupta I,(2) had not even a titulary suzerain to acknowledge. The last known date of the last Gupta emperor, as we have already seen, was 543-44 A.D. According to the Jain tradition the Gupta empire came to an end in 551 A.D. In our humble opinion the tradition appears to register a very near approach to truth.(3) From the number of the gold coins of Viṣṇu Gupta Candrāditra,(4) and the fact that the hoard appears to have been buried in his time it looks as if he was the last-

(1) C.I.I. III. p.205f (2) CII. Vol. III. p.205ff.

(3) Harivamśa Ch.60: "Guptānām ca śata-dvyam eka-triṃśaccha varṣāṇi kāla vidvirudāhritam." I.A. 1886 p.142: Bhand/com. Vol.195. A copper-plate grant found at Amauna in the Gayā district was issued by Kumāramātya Nanduna in the year 232 (G.E.?) or 551-552 A.D. The nonmention of the name of the Gupta emperor and the name of the era may suggest that the Gupta empire and the dynasty were over. Thus 551 A.D. may be taken to mark even the end of the nominal sovereignty of Viṣṇu Gupta, the last of the dynasty of the Guptas.

(4) 18 coins in Allan's catalogue of the coins of the Gupta dynasty in the British Museum, pp.145-46. Two coins in the Indian Museum Catalogue, Vol.I, p.120; Many are in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford and Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge and Hunterian Collection, Glasgow.

ruler of the imperial Gupta dynasty, and not only that, his reign was pretty long but also that it probably ended violently or that he was succeeded by a different family. The Jaunpur inscription[1] shows the growing power of the Maukharis of Kanauj. The inscription is unfortunately very much damaged, and it is not clear whether the reference to the victories over the lord of the Āndhras and the Spark from Dhārā is in connection with Īs'varavarman or his son Īs'ānavarman. Dr. Śāstrī[2] believed that the victories refer to Īs'ānavarman, who is reported to have defeated the Lord of the Andhras, including others. But the consensus opinion of most scholars is that the achievements are to be credited to Īs'varavarman.[3] It is quite possible for Īs'varavarman to have come into conflict with Yas'odharman of Mālwā, and after the latter's death, he might have had to face the aggression of the king Mādhavavarman II of the Viṣnukundin family. However, Īs'varavarman's son Īs'ānavarman was certainly more ambitious than his father. The Harāhā inscription of Īs'ānavarman dated (V.) S. 611 (554-555 A.D.),[4]

---

(1) CII. Vol. III. No. 51 pp.229-230.

(2) E.I. XIV. p.110ff.

(3) N.G. Majumdar, I.A. XLVI. p.125ff. Piers, E.A. - The Maukharis p.71. Fleet, J.F. CII. Vol. III. No. 51 pp.228-30. Tripathi, R.S. History of Kanauj, p.38.

(4) E.I. XIV p.110ff. I/A. XLVI p.125.

records that Sūryavarman the accomplished son of Īs'ānavarman, rebuilt the dilapidated temple of Śiva in (Vikrama) samvat 611, when Īs'ānavarman, the lord of the earth, occupied the throne, "after conquering the Lord of the Āndhras, who had thousands of threefold rutting elephants, after vanquishing in battle the Śūlikas, who had an army of countless galloping horses, and after causing the Gaudas living on the sea-shore to remain within their proper realm." The Āndhra king was probably Mādhavavarman I of the Viṣṇukundin family,(1) who "crossed the river Godāvarī with the desire to conquer the eastern region."(2) About the identification of the Śūlikas there has been an unending controversy. According to some they were the Mūlakas living on the N.W. part of the Āryāvarta;(3) Heras(4) identified them with the Colas; S. K. Śāstrī(5) made them to be neighbours of the Āndhras; Hīrānanda Śāstrī located them in the south-east along with Kalinga, Vidarvha and Cedi.(6) Dr. Raychaudhuri identifies them with the

---

(1) P/H/AI. 4th edition. p.509. (2) Dubreuil, AHD. p.92.

(3) T.G.Aravamuthan, The Kāverī, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age, p.98. Fleet, J.F.I.A. XXII. p.186. (4) JAHRS. Vol. I. pp.130-3. (5) JAHRS. II/ p.180.

(6) E.I. XIV. p.110ff.

Cālukyas.[1] B. C. Majumdar[2] placed them on the sea-coast near the modern district of Midnāpur. Dr. R. C. Majumdar rightly observes that the Śūlikas cannot be identified with certainty.[3] The reference to the Gauḍas in the inscription deserves more attention. Line 13 of the Hárāhā inscription reads, "kritvā c-āyatimocito sthala-bhuvo Gauḍān samudrāśrayān," and which has been translated as "after causing the Gauḍas living on the sea-shore to remain within their proper realm."[4] Dr. Basak[5] concluded from this that "Īs'ānavarman made the Gauḍa people take shelter towards the sea-shore after causing their land territories to be deprived of their future prospects." But this does not appear to be correct. From the verse in question it appears that Īs'ānavarman defeated the aggressive policy of the Gauḍas, deprived them of their maritime success, and pushed them further northwards towards the interior. This brings out the contrast between the sea-shore and the land-mass. It appears that the Gauḍas were at that time living in south-western Bengal, extending to the sea(6) It is significant that Jīvita Gupta also met his "haughty foes" on the sea-shore;[7] these

---

(1) PHAI. 4th Edn. p.509.

(2) Orissa in the Making p.105.

(3) A History of Indian People VI. p.20.

(4) E.I. XIV. p.119ff.

(5) HNEI pp. III.

(6) Varāha Mihira places Gauḍa in the Eastern division of India. On the basis of the Hárāhā inscription, Dr.R.C. Majumdar says that the "country could not be very far from the sea-coast," and further says that the Gauḍa Vishaya could [illegible] from the estuary of the Sarasvati."

(7) CII.Vol.III.No.42.p.205ff.

have been identified with the Gaudas of the Harāhā inscription. It appears that Jīvita Gupta was the first to reckon with the new rising power. It is plausible that Gopacandra, or more probably his successor Dharmāditya, might have tried to avenge the last defeat and to recover the lost dominion in western Bengal. The Gaudas, living in between the two dominions of the independent dynasty of East Bengal and that of Magadha, would have been encouraged by the rival dynasty in East Bengal against the kingdom of Magadha. In such circumstances Kumāra Gupta must have been anxious to seek alliances against the aggression of a rising power on his borders which was also backed by the powerful independent dynasty of East Bengal. Technically the Gupta Empire was being attacked, and therefore Kumāra Gupta (the wazir or the Peshwā of the empire) had every reason to look to the feudatories of the empire, and who could be more reliable than the powerful house of Maukharis, who were related to the family of the later Guptas and most probably to the nominal emperor Viṣnu Gupta Candrāditya?[1] Īs'ānavarman was a nephew of the emperor and cousin of Kumāra Gupta. The Maukharis were yet a subordinate family, and Īs'varavarman, the father of Īs'ānavarman, was content with the subordinate title of 'mahārāja.'[2] Īs'ānavarman's grand-father Ādityavarman

---

(1) We have identified 'Upaguptā', the mother of Īs'ānavarman with Viṣnu Gupta's sister. (See supra).

(2) CII. Vol. III. No. 47. p.221ff.

had married Harṣa Guptā, the sister of the later Gupta king Harṣa Gupta, the grand-father of Kumāra Gupta. All these factors might explain the invasion of Bengal by Īs'ānavarman. The latter might have come to the aid of Kumāra Gupta, or, more accurately, of his over-lord Viṣṇu Gupta. The result was the defeat of the Gauḍas.

But soon after this victory Kumāra Gupta and Īs'ānavarman came to clash.(1) The reason is not far to seek. The resounding victories over the Āndhras, the S'ūlikas and the Gauḍas must have increased the power and prestige of Īs'ānavarman, who could henceforth legitimately entertain imperial ambitions. Kumāra Gupta had similar aspirations and was waiting for the opportune time, when the imperial line was extinct, to transform his de facto authority into de jure as well. The victory of Īs'ānavarman happened some time before 554 A.D. the date of the Harāhā inscription.(2) Viṣṇu Gupta might have died in Cir. 551-52 A.D. There being now no longer any formal fountain head of authority or any common bond of over-lordship, however nominal it might have been, the two ambitious representatives of the two families were ready to cross swords for succession to the imperial titles and traditions.(3)

---

(1) CII. Vol.III. No.42. (2) E.I. XIV. p.110f. I.A. p.205ff. XLVI. p.125ff. -

(3) Aravamuthan suggests that from the fact that Is'ānavarman's wife was not a 'Gupta' princess like the wives of his two predecessors, it appears that there was no princess of the one line to marry the prince of the other, and this lack of matrimonial alliance may be a 'sufficient explanation of the cessation of peaceful relation between and also of the enmity passing into next generations' (Aravamuthan, op. cited, p.91)

It appears that Kumāra Gupta became aware of Īs'ānavarman's ambition, and the consequence was some scuffle in which he might have dragged the name and the person of the old emperor Viṣṇu Gupta who might have perished in the conflagration. As a direct consequence of this Īs'ānavarman assumed the imperial title 'Mahārājādhirāja'. It is certainly not without significance that Īs'ānavarman is the first Maukhari ruler who assumed this imperial title.(1) This was certainly done as an assertion of the imperial status, so long enjoyed by the members of the imperial Gupta dynasty. It is certainly more than possible that it was after the death of the Gupta emperor Viṣṇu Gupta that Īs'ānavarman assumed or rather usurped the imperial title. It is probably more than accidental that on the coins of Īs'ānavarman the head of the king is turned to the left as opposed to the portraiture on the Gupta coins. The same opposite trend we find on the coins of Toramāna. Toramāna's sovereignty was established in mid-India at the cost of the imperial Gupta ruler Narasimha Gupta. If the coins of the Hūṇa leader confirm the fact that his authority was established by his successful expeditions against the imperial Guptas, there appears to be hardly any room for doubt that the Maukhari coinage also largely substantiates the point that their imperial status was won against the

---

(1) CII. Vol. III. No. 47. p.221.

Guptas.[1] Whatsoever may be the detailed course of the events (which we cannot know at the present state of our knowledge), the outline of history could not have been very different than what we have drawn above. Undoubtedly, it was after the death of Viṣṇu Gupta and after his victory over the Gaudas that Īs'ānavarman proclaimed himself a 'Mahārājādhirāja.'[2] It may be that after the death of Viṣṇu Gupta (his maternal uncle) Īs'ānavarman claimed his right to succeed to the legacy of the imperial Guptas, and this must have hastened the conflict with the later Guptas, who considered themselves the residuary legatees of the empire. The relationship with the imperial Gupta family might have been a factor in whetting the ambition of Īs'ānavarman.[3] Kumāra Gupta, the representative of the later Gupta dynasty, which for generations had been increasing its hold on the central provinces of the empire, was anxiously waiting for the ripe fruit (the imperial prestige and title) to fall into his hands. Naturally, therefore, the ambition of Īs'ānavarman appeared to be a real impediment in his way. The result was a diplomatic revolution, and the families which were so long friendly and helpful, rather complementary to one another, now emerged as bitter rivals. Their rivalry constitutes the

---

(1) CASR. XVI. p.81ff: JRAS.1906.p.849ff.

(2) It is certainly significant that even in the Haraha inscription Īs'ānavarman is not given the epithet of Mahārājādhirāja.

(3) Dr. Raychaudhuri points to the part played by the Gupta princesses in stimulating the imperial ambition. (PHAI. 4th edn. 511.) The Habsburg princesses played the same part in European history.

main thread of the history of Northern India in the later half of the sixth century after Christ. The first round of the struggle ended in the victory of Kumāra Gupta who "like Mandāra churned that formidable milk-ocean, the cause of the attainment of fortune, which was the army of the glorious Īs'ānavarman, a very moon among kings."(1) Dr. R. K. Mookerji(2) and following him, Mr. N. Ray,(3) think that Kumāra Gupta was worsted in this encounter. But this view is absolutely against the spirit and the letter of the evidence of epigraphy. The inscription under review clearly proves that Īs'ānavarman was decisively defeated and "this was not an empty boast, for the Maukhari records do not claim any victory over the Guptas."(4) This victory of Kumāra Gupta over Īs'ānavarman happened after 554 A.D., the date of the Harāhā inscription. The battle is not even remotely alluded to in the inscription. The fact that in the Aphsad inscription(5) Īs'ānavarman is referred to in glowing terms as the "very moon among kings" and his army is highly praised, is an incontrovertible testimony to Such the power and prestige that

---

(1) CII. Vol. III. No. 42. p.205ff.

(2) Harsa, pp.54-55.

(3) C.R. Feb. 1928 p.207.

(4) PHAI; 4th edn. pp.511-12.

(5) CII. Vol. III. No. 42. p.205ff.

Īs'ānavarman and his army had already won in Northern India, and that even in the inscription of a rival dynasty it could not be ignored. This certainly suggests that before the contest with Kumāra Gupta, Īs'ānavarman had won great renown. Naturally, therefore, his victories referred to in the Harāhā inscription must have preceded his engagement with Kumāra Gupta. It is quite possible that this smashing defeat of his army might have occurred much later in the reign of Īs'ānavarman.(1)

After this victory in about 560 A.D. there was absolutely nothing in the way of Kumāra Gupta assuming independent and imperial status; and we may regard the later Gupta dynasty, from the time of Kumāra Gupta onwards, as an imperial and sovereign dynasty owing allegiance to none and claiming the imperial Gupta territories and traditions as its own. It is true that in none of the extant inscriptions are Kumāra Gupta and his immediate successors given imperial titles like Paramabhaṭṭāraka or Mahārājādhirāja. But this is no compelling evidence.(2)

The result of the Kumāra Gupta's victory over his contemporary Īs'ānavarman was far-reaching. The latter's pretensions to the central Gangetic valley were dispelled, and there is reason to hold that instead Kumāra Gupta's

---

(1) Aravamuthan opp. cited p.90; Piers, op. cited p.78.

(2) Kumāra Gupta I is mentioned as mere 'mahārāja' in the Mankuwar stone image inscription. (CII. Vol. III. No. II p.46)

authority was extended up the Ganges to Prayāga.[1] If Dr. Jayaswal's identification of 'Kakāra' of the MMK[2] with Kumāra Gupta of the later Gupta dynasty is accepted, then it appears that the latter was an "emperor of the three seas." He is further said to have possessed "a large army and a great power." But it also makes him a great Buddhist king, and says that he died of cholera. We have nothing

---

(1) CII. III. Vol. No. 42. p.205ff. From the inscription it is clear that Kumāra Gupta came to Prayāga and burnt himself on the funeral pyre. This appears to have been a form of religious sacrifice which was performed to be assured of eternal bliss in heaven and was a practice quite in vogue in the mediaeval period, and many kings like Dhanga and Gāngeyadeva ended their lives in the same manner. (See K. Chattopadhyaya's article in JUPHS. Vol. X. part I. July 1937, p.65ff). Ramapāla died by plunging himself into the waters of the Ganges. Śūdraka of the Mricchakaṭika embraced death by leaping into a sacrifical fire. Cālukya King Āhavamalla committed religious suicide. Therefore the fact of committing religious suicide by Kumāra Gupta does not lead to the conclusion arrived at by N. Ray that 'he was defeated by Īs'ānavarman. Otherwise there can scarcely be any reason of plunging himself into the funeral pyre just after the battle; it was certainly the humiliation of defeat. (Cal. Rev. XXVI (3rd series) 1928. p.201ff). Chattopādhyāya has pointed out that religious suicide at Prayāga was considered specially virtuous. Basak suggests that Kumāra Gupta advanced towards Allahabad from Magadha in order to meet the army of the Maukharis (H.N.E.). p.123). Was it true that he defeated Īs'ānavarman in a crucial battle and decided to give up his life in token of respectful gratitude to his Gods? Anyway it was nothing like 'a sad expression' in those days. It is certainly more thanprobable that as his funeral rites took place at Prayāga, it was included in his dominion. (PHAI. 4th edn. p.512).

(2) IHI. p.72.

to confirm it, while from the inscription[1] it appears that he committed religious suicide.

Dāmodara Gupta.

Kumāra Gupta was succeeded by his son Dāmodara Gupta. It is stated in the Aphsad inscription that, "like Mandāra, (he) killed his enemies. Breaking up the stepping array of the mighty elephants belonging to Maukhari, which had thrown aloft in battle the troops of the Hūṇas (in order to trample them to death), he became unconscious (and expired in the fight); (and then waking again in heaven, and) making a choice among the women of the gods, saying 'this one or that) belongs to me,' he was revived by the pleasing touch of the water-lilies that were their hands. He, while he was a king, gave away in marriage a hundred daughters of virtuous Brāhamaṇas, endowed with many ornaments and with youth (and) dowered with agrahāra-grants."[2]

Who was the Maukhari whom Dāmodara Gupta fought? We know that his father Kumāra Gupta fought and defeated Īs'ānavarman. It is quite possible that Īs'ānavarman might have made another attempt to recover the lost prestige after

(1) CII. Vol. III. No. 42. p.205ff. "He went to Prayāga, and there honorably decorated with flowers plunged into fire (enkindled) with dry cow-dung cakes as if "simply to bathe in water."

(2) CII. III. No. 42. p.206.

the death of Kumāra Gupta. Cunningham[1] referred to a coin of Īs'ānavarman in his possession dated 257. If it is dated in the Gupta era, then Īs'ānavarman would be ruling in 576 A.D. But it is impossible to make any sense out of the coins of the Maukharis, which are dated in different ways, and it is not certain as to what particular era or eras they refer to. Then the dates on the coins of different rulers appear to overlap. Great numismatists like Cunningham, Rapson, Burn, Fleet, Brown, and Dikshit have read the same coins differently and refer them to different eras. Aravamuthan,[2] who has discussed the question very thoroughly, has come to the conclusion that "We have, thus, very little justification for building elaborate arguments on the basis of these readings. They are so various and so fanciful ..... that little reliance can be placed on them." Dikshit,[3] quoted by Aravamuthan, suggests modification in dates of the coins and attributes them to the Gupta era, but it is difficult to accept his reading and also the theory in view of so great a divergence of opinion between great scholars. The only way is to verify the dates on the coins in question. But this is an impossible task today. N. G. Majumdar[4] says, "the date-marks on the coins of Śarvavarman have totally disappeared and as such it is impossible to say at what

---

(1) CASR XVI. p.81.

(2) Aravamuthan; - The kāverī, the Maukhari and the Sangam Age. pp.101-7.

(3) Aravamuthan Op Cit.p.103(table)

(4) I.A.XLVI. p.125ff.

particular date these coins were issued." Brown also would hesitate to accept any of the dates deciphered by Burn "without further corroborative evidence," and this is absolutely lacking. Naturally therefore we have to brush aside the evidence of the coins in fixing even approximately the chronology of the Maukhari kings. There is certainly no serious objection to regarding Īs'ānavarman as having fought Dāmodara Gupta, but it is more natural to assume that, as Kumāra Gupta was the contemporary of Īs'ānavarman, Dāmodara Gupta was contemporary of the son of Īs'ānavarman. Then was he the same as Sūryavarman, son of Īs'ānavarman, mentioned in the Harāhā inscription.(1) One Sūryavarman, "born in the unblemished family of the varmans great on account of their supremacy over Magadha"(2) is mentioned in the Sirpur stone inscription. It was hinted by Rāychaudhuri(3) that this Sūryavarman may be the same as Sūryavarman of the Harāhā inscription. The only serious objection to this identification is that in the opinion of Rai Bahadur Hīrā Lal, the editor of the inscription, "the characters belong to the Northern class of alphabets of about the 8th or 9th century A.D.(4) Palaeography is certainly not a very safe basis in fixing chronology. Fleet had assigned the inscriptions

---

(1) E.I. XIV. p.110ff. (2) E.I. XI. p.184ff.

(3) P.H.A.I. 4th edition p.512. f.n. I. (4) E.I. XI p.184ff.

of Pravarasena[1] to the 8th century A.D; but the discovery of the fact that Devagupta, the father of Prabhāvatī Guptā, the mother of Pravarasena II, was no other than Candragupta II Vikramāditya[2] of the Imperial Gupta dynasty, proves the inscriptions to belong to the 5th rather than the 8th century A.D. However, the script of the Sirpur inscription noted above may belong to the 7th century A.D. The supremacy of the varmans (Maukharis) over Magadha is known,[3] and there is a Sūryavarman in the Maukhari dynasty. Therefore we feel confident that the two Sūryavarmans are identical; the question is whether Sūryavarman ruled or not. He is not mentioned in the Asīrgarh[4] or Nālandā seals.[5] From these seals it appears that Īs'ānavarman was succeeded by his son Sarvavarman. But it has been rightly pointed out that, "this does not conclusively prove that he never came to the throne, for such lists are genealogical and not always dynastic."[6]

---

(1) CII. III. pp.235ff; 245ff. (2) I.A. XLII p.166

(3) CII. III. No. 46. p.218 (4) CII. III. No. 47. p.221ff.

(5) E.I. XXI. p.73ff; ibid XXIV, p.283ff. (6) Ibid

Saletore[1] thinks that Dāmodara Gupta fought Sūryavarman, who was a mere prince, and so his name does not occur in the later Gupta inscription. But the absence of his name from the seals, coupled with the fact that while we have coins of Īs'anavarman, Sarvavarman and Avantivarman we have no coins of Sūryavarman, certainly raises a strong presumption that he did not come to the throne.[2] It is true that in the Sirpur stone inscription[3] he is addressed as 'Nṛipa'; but, as we have seen, this was an innocent title in those days. We have seen that Krisna Gupta and his successors were called 'Nṛipa' but their status was subordinate. To us it appears that Sūryavarman was a younger brother of Sarvavarman, who put the former in charge of his recent conquest of Magadha, and therefore, though Sūryavarman is referred to as 'Nṛipa', what is specially emphasised is his varman dynasty famous for its supremacy in Magadha.[4]

---

(1) Life in the Gupta age, p.53. (2) Piers. E.A. - The Maukharis, pp.86-87.

(3) E.I. XI. p.184ff.

(4) E.I. XI. p.184ff. (It was quite natural for Mahāśiva-Gupta to feel proud of his close relationship with the Varmans (the Maukharis), who had so recently established their sovereignty over the famous country of Magadha. It probably created a great impression in contemporary times, and so it was thought more apt to remember them for their supremacy over Magadha than for anything else. Was it for the help or support that the Gupta family of Mahākos'ala obtained from their Maukhari (Varman) relatives that the latter are mentioned in the Sirpur inscription, as in the Allahabad Pillar inscription the Licchavis are mentioned?

Therefore, it appears more likely that the Maukhari ruler whom Dāmodara Gupta fought was Sarvavarman. In the Asīrgarh seal he is mentioned as the Maukhari,(1) and as Parameswara in the Deo-Baranārk inscription.(2) This is the view of the majority of scholars.(3)

The next question is, who was victorious in the engagement - Dāmodara Gupta or the Maukhari king (Sarvavarman?). Scholars have expressed different opinions on the point. Tripāthī(4) observes, "although the poet appears to make the

(1) CII. III. No. 47 p.221ff. It was considered that "the Maukhari" was a specific honorific of Sarvavarman, as he is mentioned as such in the Nālandā and Asīrgarh seals; but the argument (see Aravamuthan's The Kavery, the Maukhari and the Sangam Age p92) loses much force when we find that in the Nālandā seal of Avantivarman (E.I. XXIV. p.283, the epithet "Maukharih" is not attached to the name of Sarvavarman, but Avantivarman is mentioned as "Avantivarma Maukharih,"; but in the inscription of his son (ibid.) even he is not referred specifically as Maukharih. Was it just attached to the name of the last member of the dynasty referred to in the seals?

(2) CII. III. No. 46 p.218.

(3) Aravamuthan, op. cit. p.92.

(4) TK. pp.44-45.

conventional claim for his hero's victory, the result of the struggle was in effect certainly adverse to Dāmodara Gupta as he is reported to have been killed on the battle-field." N. Ray, who believes of course quite wrongly, that Kumāra Gupta was defeated by Īs'ānavarman, held that "the verdict of the struggle between Īs'ānavarman and Kumāra Gupta was repeated .... There cannot practically be any doubt as to the loss of Magadha after the ignomious defeat and death of Dāmodara Gupta."(1) Both Tripāthī and Ray hold that after this defeat the later Guptas retired to Malwa. Basak also holds that Dāmodara Gupta was defeated by the Maukhari king.(2) But there is no warrant for the assumption that Dāmodara Gupta was defeated in the battle, when the inscription clearly states that the Maukhari army was broken up.(3) The fact that Dāmodara Gupta died in the battlefield(4) should not necessarily mean that he was defeated. Posthumous victories are not unknown in history. Nelson's famous victory

---

(1) C.R. 1928 p.201ff. (2) H.N.E.I. p.115.

(3) CII. III. No.46.p.218ff.

(4) The view of Fleet, followed by R.K.Mukherjee, R.D.Banerji, H.C.Raychaudhuri and others, has been recently challenged and K. Chattopadhyay has interpreted the passage to mean that Dāmodara Gupta fell into a swoon but later on recovered (D.R.Bhandarkar, Vol. pp.180-181 & also see Saletore's 'Life in the Gupta Age,' p. 58), but we are inclined to agree with Fleet and others. It is clear from the Aphsad inscription (CII.III.No.42 p.205ff. lines 9-10 p.203) that Dāmadora Gupta died in the battlefield and went to heaven, where he found himself in the company of the women of the gods. This appears to be a reward which he gained because of his heroism and generous help and donations towards the marriage of a hundred young daughters of virtuous Brahmaṇas.

in the battle of Trafalgar is well known. Scholars like Raychaudhuri, (1) Majumdar, (2) Aravamuthan (3) accept the testimony of epigraphy and believe that Dāmodara Gupta was victorious in the battlefield, though he did not survive to reap the fruits of his well-earned victory.

The fact that Māhasena Gupta, the father of Mādhava Gupta, was the king of Mālwā, and the father of Kumāra Gupta and Mādhava Gupta (of the Harshacharita) does not force us to presume the defeat of Dāmodara Gupta. If Mahāsena Gupta immediately after the alleged defeat and death of his father retired to Mālwā, then his victory over Susthitavarman, king of Kāmarūpa, cannot be easily explained. It appears that S'arvavarman soon after the death of his father decided to wipe off the disgrace of the defeat sustained by Īs'ānavarman, but the verdict was repeated and S'arvavarman was defeated by his later Gupta contemporary. The event may be dated 562-63 A.D.

---

(1) P.H.A.I. 4th edn. p. 512

(2) History of Bengal, Vol. I. p. 57.

(3) Aravamuthan op. cit. p. 92.

Mahāsena Gupta.

Dāmodara Gupta was succeeded by his son Mahāsena Gupta. (1) He may have taken charge of affairs after the death of his father in the battle-field. (2) The repeated invasions of the

(1) CII. III. No. 42. p.205f

(2) According to K. Chattopādyāya (D.R.Bhandarkar, Volume pp.180-82), Dāmodara Gupta did not die in the battle-field but recovered and lived for some time more. He proposes an emendation "sukha spris'ayā" in place of "sukha spars'ād". The interpretation is not unwarranted; but even if it is accepted it does not make any vital chance in our narrative. It may only mean that the alliance with the Vardhana family could have been negotiated by Dāmodara Gupta.

Maukharis made it clear that his western frontier was very vulnerable. Naturally, therefore, he sought for allies, and found them in the rising kingdom of Thānes'vara, which touched the western frontier of the Maukhari kingdom of Kanauj. Mahāsena Gupta, believing in the dictum of Kautilya that the neighbour of one's enemy is his friend, contracted a matrimonial alliance with the Vardhana ruling family of Thānes'vara. He married his sister Mahāsena Guptā to Ādityavardhana, son of Rājyavardhana I.(1) This event must have taken place before 565 A.D.(2) This alliance was welcome to the Vardhana family, as marriages in the Gupta family had played some part in stimulating imperial ambitions of different families. It may not be a mere coincidence that the first member of the Vardhana family who assumed imperial titles and appeared to entertain imperial pretensions was Prabhākaravardhana, son of Ādityavardhana and Mahāsena Guptā.(3) It is quite possible that the small kingdom of Thānes'vara was also feeling alarmed at the expansion of the powerful kingdom of the Maukharis. Whatsoever might have been the real motives of the Vardhana family in grasping the extended hand of the later Gupta king, it may certainly be safely assumed that it

---

(1) CII. III. No. 52 p.232ff. E.I.I. p.73ff. As Harṣa Guptā was the sister of Harṣa Gupta, so Mahāsena Guptā was the sister of Mahāsena Gupta.

(2) The date of the birth of Harṣa has been calculated by Vaidya to be June 590 A.D. He was about two years younger than his brother Rājyavardhana II, so latter's birth may be put in 588 A.D. The marriage of his father could not have been later than 587 and his birth not later than 566, so the marriage of Ādityavardhana with Mahāsenaguptā could not be later than 565 A.D.

(3) C.I.I. III, No. 52 p 232 ff.

was advantageous to both. At any rate Mahāsena Gupta gained positive advantages from this alliance. He felt reassured of his western frontier. He might have calculated that the consecutive failures in their aggressive designs against the Kingdom of Maghada must have taught a lesson to the Maukharis at least for some time. The Gupta-Vardhana alliance, he thought, should act as a deterrent on the Maukhari policy. Encouraged by these thoughts, Mahāsena Gupta decided to face another growing menace on the eastern frontier of his kingdom. The Varmans of Kāmarūpa appear to have been rising in this period, and therefore the Gupta king marched against Susthita-varman, the king of Kāmarūpa, and so thoroughly defeated him that even fifty years later the scribe of the Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena, the grandson of Mahāsena Gupta, remarks that "his mighty fame ..... is still sung on the banks of the river Lauhitya."(1) This victorious campaign proves that the whole of Northern Bengal was under the suzerainty of the later Guptas.(2)

---

(1) CII. III. No.42. p.205ff.

(2) Barua (Early History of Kāmarūpa pp.50-51) holds that after the lightning raid of Yas'odharman and the consequent rapid dissolution of the imperial Gupta authority, the Varman rulers of Kāmarūpa extended their authority westward and reached the Kosi river in the Purnea district of Bihar, where Mahābhūtavarman, an ancestor of Bhāskaravarman, made grants of land in Candrapuri visaya bounded by the dried Kaus'ikā (E.I. XII. p.65ff; ibid

(Continued from previous page)

XIX. p.115ff.) which is identified with the Kosi river by Barua (I.C. p.139ff). If this identification is accepted, then it is clear that Mahābhūtavarman held Northern Bengal and a part of Northern Bihar. But J.C.Ghosh (I.H.Q. VI p.60ff; A Volume of Eastern and Indian studies p.85ff) has sought to establish that the lands donated by the Nidhānpur Copper-plate grants lay in Paragana Pancakhandā (where the plates were found) in Sylhet district (Assam). N.K.Bhattas'ali (J.A.S.B.L. (letters) Vol. I. p.419f) also agrees, in main with Ghosh in holding that the lands lay in Sylhat district. An objection against this theory is that in a land-grant of another Assam king, Vanamāla, Candrapari, west of the Trisrotā is mentioned, and this Candrapari is most probably the Candrapuri viṣaya of the Nidhānpur plates, and Pancakhandā is certainly not west of the Trisrotā. The only Kaus'ikā west of the Trisrotā is the river Kos'i of Northern Bihar. P.N.Bhattacarya (E.I.XIX p.11ff) believed that the locality of the Nidhānpur copper-plate grants must have been very near the precints of Karṇasuvarṇa. He appears to meet the objections of Ghosh and others, and is convinced that the lands lay in Bengal (J.A.S.B.L.(Letters) III p.45ff). The issue is not yet settled; but if Barua's suggestion is accepted, it appears that Mahāsena Gupta destroyed Kāmarūpa rule in Northern Bihar and Bengal, and successfully pursued the Varman ruler up to the Lauhitya, which appears to have become the boundary line between the kingdoms of the later Guptas and the Varmans of Kāmarūpa.

But Mahāsena Gupta soon fell on evil days. From the Deo-Baranārk inscription[1] it is clear that S'arvavarman succeeded in making himself master of at least a part of the kingdom of Magadha. His successor Avantivarman is also referred to as "parames'wara" in the same inscription. The seals of S'arvavarman, his son Avantivarman and the latter's son "Suva"or"s'uca" have been found in Nālandā.[2] Thus it is clear that Mahāsena Gupta lost a large part of Magadha to his hereditary enemy, the Maukharis. It is obvious that, S'arvavarman, contrary to the calculations of Mahāsena Gupta, persisted in his efforts, and ultimately his efforts were crowned with success. It is also significant that the Mahākūṭa Pillar inscription of Mangales'a[3] attributes to Kîrttivarman victories over many in which are included kings of Anga, Vanga, and Magadha. Kîrttivarman came to the throne in S'aka 489 or 567-68 A.D,[4] and he must have ruled up to 597 A.D, when his brother Mangales'a succeeded him.[5] If we accept the veracity of the inscription and hold that it contains some element of correct historical tradition, then it appears that Kîrttivarman's rival in Magadha might have

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No. 46 pp.218ff. (2) E.I. XXI. p.73ff; ibid, XXIV. p.283ff.

(3) I.A. XIX. p.7ff.

(4) EHD p.85. DKD p.281

(5) A.I.A XIX p.7ff.

been Mahāsena Gupta. We have already met the Gauḍas on the sea-coast, and have seen that their aggressive designs had been frustrated by Īs'ānavarman. The troubles of Mahāsena Gupta might have encouraged this restless people to be on offensive again. Jayanāga, who issued the Vappaghos'āvāṭa grant from Karṇasuvarṇa,(1) identified with Rangamāti on the west bank of Bhāgīrathī, 6 or 7 miles south of Behrampur in the Murshidabad district of Bengal,(2) was most probably the king of the Gauḍas. There is nothing to stand in our way in making the Gauḍa expansion in central Bengal synchronise with the troubles of Mahāsena Gupta. Thus pressed on all sides by different powerful enemies, Mahāsena Gupta felt himself obliged to leave his ancestral country - Magadha - and retire to Mālwā.(3) It is not possible to fix the date

---

(1) E.I. VIII p.60ff. (2) JASB IXII p.315ff.

(3) Sen (Some Historical Aspects of the inscriptions of Bengal, pp.243-66) suggests that after defeat at the hands of the Maukhāris, Mahāsena Gupta retired to Gauḍa and there discovered his natural enemy in the Kāmarūpa kingdom. After Mahāsena Gupta's death S'as'āṅka swooped down upon Puṇḍravardhana, and the two sons of Mahāsena Gupta took refuge with the Gupta king of Mālwā and were adopted as sons by him. Prabhākaravardhana was trying to place one on the throne of Gauḍa and the other on that of Mālwā, and hence S'as'āṅka and Devagupta came to an alliance. The whole thing appears to be an ingenious fiction. The arguments are not at all convincing. If Mādhava Gupta of the Harṣacarita and Mādhava Gupta of the Aphsad inscription are identical, as is believed by a vast majority of scholars, including Sen himself, then Mahāsena Gupta must be a king of Mālwā, at least in the last part of his life.

of his retirement to Mālwā. Making due allowances for his wars with the Maukharis, the king of Kāmarūpa, the Cālukyas, and possibly the Gauḍas, the retirement to Mālwā could have happened in about C. 582 A.D., as he came to throne in about 562 A.D.

What was the Mālwā of Mahāsena Gupta?

It has been generally assumed by scholars that 'Mālava' of Mahāsena Gupta denoted eastern Mālwā, corresponding to the Bhilsā region. Tripathi[1] observes, "It may not be unreasonable to suggest that Mahāsena Gupta son of Dāmodara Gupta retired to some part of Mālwā which continued to acknowledge the Gupta supremacy, even after the downfall of the imperial Gupta family. This was probably Eastern Mālwā corresponding to the Bhilsā district on the Vetravatī; for we are told in the commentary of the Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana (Adhikaraṇa III) that Ujjayinī or Ujjain denoted western Mālwā, and where Mālwā is only mentioned it should be taken to mean Eastern Mālwā." Sarkar (D.C.) also relies on the testimony of the commentary of the Kāmasūtra and holds that the later Guptas hailed from Eastern Mālwā.[2] Raychaudhuri[3] remarks that "Mahāsena Gupta is probably the king of Mālwā

(1) TK p.46

(2) J.A.S.B.L. (Letters) XI. (1945) p.69ff.

(3) P.H.A.I. (4th edn.) p.512.

(Mālava), possibly Eastern Mālwā, mentioned in the Harṣacarita, whose sons Kumāra Gupta and Mādhava Gupta were appointed to wait upon Rājyavardhana and Harṣavardhana by their father Prabhākaravardhana of the Puṣyabhūti family of S'rikantha (Thānes'wara."[1] Relying on a much later epigraphic evidence, he distinguishes between seven Mālavas and thinks that, though the precise location and extnent of the Mālava of the later Guptas cannot be determined, they probably held pūrva Mālava (round Bhilsā) and the districts round Prayāga, Kaus'āmbī and Fatehpur, and some times held Magadha as well.[1] In the learned opinion of Law,[2] "It is difficult to identify the Mālava kingdom of Mahāsena Gupta and Devagupta, but it is more probably identical with Pūrva Mālava, that lay between Prayāga and Bhilsā.

Except for the authority of the Commentary of Kāmasūtra, belonging to a very late period, there is no other evidence that when Mālwā is mentioned it should be taken to mean Eastern Mālwā. Raychaudhuri[3] says that The Bhāgavata Purāṇa, whose date is probably not far removed from that of the later Guptas, distinguishes Avanti from Mālwā and associates the latter with Arbuda (Abu). Certainly Abu cannot be taken to be in Eastern Mālwā round

---

(1) ibid p.492 ft.note 4. (2) Ancient Indian Tribes Vol. II p,41.

(3) P.H.A.I. (4th edn.) p.492 ft.note 4.

Bhilsā. Rājas'ekhara is also said to have distinguished between rulers of Mālwā and Avanti.(1) But it has to be borne in mind that Rājas'ekhara is much later than Bāṇa; and then it is not clear what territory was meant by Rājas'ekhara by the term Mālwā. It might have meant Mo'la-po of Yuan Chwang.

In arriving at a correct conclusion as to what properly constituted Mālava in the time of Mahāsena Gupta and Harṣavardhana, we should rely more on the testimony of contemporary authorities than on those who are later. It is certainly very unfortunate that Bāṇa nowhere in the Harṣacarita refers directly to the territorial boundary of Mālava. But there can be no two opinions on the point that when Bāṇa mentions Mālava or the Lord of Mālava or the sons of the Mālava Lord, he means by the term Mālava always the same geographical entity. When Prabhākaravardhana is called "an axe to the Mālava glory,"(2) or Kumāra Gupta and Madhāva Gupta are called the sons of the Mālava king,(3) or the murderer of Grahavarman is called "the wicked Lord of Mālava,(4) or when Rājyavardhana resolves" to uproot the Mālavas,(5)" or to "bring destruction on the family of the king of Mālava,"(6) Bāṇa always in all these different cases means the

---

(1) ibid.

(2) H.C. (CT;) p.101. H.C.Text (Parab) "Mālava-laksmîlatā-paras'u" p.120

(3) ibid p.119; text (ibid) "Mālavarājaputrau",p.138

(4) ibid p.173; ibid (Parab) "durātmanā Mālavarājena" p.182

(5) H.C. (text Parab) p.183

(6) ibid, "Mālavarājakulapralayāya" p.181

same geographical or political entity. An idea as to what Bāṇa meant by 'Mālava' can be gleaned through his Kādambarī. Of course, there cannot be any reasonable doubt that the term "Mālava" referred to in the Harṣacarita, is used to cover the same length of territory as in the 'Kādambarī.(1) In the latter work Bāṇa mentions Ujjain on the Siprā river, and he also refers to the women of Mālwā (mālavī), associated with Ujjain, in such a way that there is hardly any doubt that women of Ujjain were known as Mālavīs or women of Mālwā, at least in the time of Bāṇa. This makes it clear that Mālava of Bāṇa certainly included Ujjain. It is certainly significant that Bāṇa mentions the beautiful women of Mālava (Mālavī) in the Harṣacarita, when Harṣa inspects the spoils of victory won by his brother from the king of Mālava.(3) We have already seen that Mālavī (or women of Mālava) are associated with Ujjain, and therefore it is quite reasonable to hold that the Mālavīs of the Harṣacarita also must have included women of Ujjain. The Aihole inscription of Pulakes' inII(4) refers to the Lāṭas, Mālavas, and Gurjaras as feudatories. It is certainly clear in the context of the known geographical situations of the Lāṭas (southern Gujerat) and of the Gurjaras (W. Rajputana), that

---

(1) Kādambarī (Tr. Ridding) p.47.59. ol.

(2) D.C. Ganguli, J.B.O.R.S. XIX p.319 ff.

(3) H.C. Text. Para b.) p.227

(4) E.I. VI: p.1 ff.

the Mālava of the inscription must have included territories adjacent and can not be confined to Eastern Malva round Vidis'ā. Almost the same order of enumeration occurs in the Harṣacarita itself. Prabhākaravardhana is described as a "lion to the Hūṇa deer, a burning fever to the kings of the Indus land, a troubler to the sleep of the Gurjaras, a bilious plague to the furious elephant, the Lord of Gandhāra, a looter to the lawlessness of the Lāṭas, an axe to the creeper of the Mālava's glory".(1) The mention of Mālava together with the Lāṭas, the Gurjaras, and the people of the Indus land certainly suggest that by Mālava Bāṇa did not mean only Eastern Mālava (Bhilsā) but a Country which comprised the whole of central Malwa and most of the present Western Malwa, including Ujjain of course. The Mālava of Bāṇa therefore extended from the river Chambal in the west to Eran in the east, from the Vindhyas in the south to the northern bend of the river Chambal in the north.

Some have confused Mālava (Ujjain) with the Mo-lā-po of Yuan Chwang. Hoernle(2) thought Mol-lā-po and Malwa, including Ujjain, to be identical, and suggested that S'īlāditya of Mo-lā-po was Yas'odharman's son. Beal was so much obsessed with this theory that he mentions S'īlāditya as "king of Ujjain"(3) without any authority. But the theory is clearly untenable, as shown by Smith(4) and Vaidya(5), and now generally accepted by Scholars. S'īlāditya of Mo-lā-po was uncle of Dhruvabhaṭa

---

(1) H.C. (Tr.CT) p. 101.
(2) JRAS 1903 pp. 511f.
(3) The Life (Beal) P.148
(4) E.H.I.4th edn. pp 341-4.
(5) H.M.I.(I) pp.44-47.

or Dhruvasena II, son-in-law of Harṣa. So it is impossible for him to be a nephew of S'īlāditya who died in 580 A.D., according to Hoernle. It is certainly important to note that Yuan Chwang mentions Mo-lá-po and Ujjain as two distinct kingdoms of equal territorial extent. The description of Western India by the Chinese pilgrim is very confused, and therefore it is not easy to define the boundaries or the exact political status of the various countries, like Baroach, Valabhi, Cutch, Saurāṣ'tra, Mo-lá-po and others. After discussing all possibilities, Smith came to the conclusion that "Mo-lá-po was bounded on the north by the Gurjara kingdom of Bhinmal, on the north-west by Vāḍnagar (Ānandapura), on the east by the kingdom of Avanti, on the west by Valabhi, and on the south by the mouth of the Mahī river", and he observed that it "corresponds roughly to the modern districts of Kairā and Ahmadābād together with parts of the Baroda state and some adjoining territories." (1) But Grierson(2) and others criticise Smith on the ground that the latter has reduced the area of Mo-lá-po as given by the pilgrim. Yuan Chwang mentions countries which were subordinate to Mo-lá-po These are K'ie-cha, 300 li or so north-west from Mo-lā-po, O-nen-to-pu-lo (Ānandapura) 700 li or so north from Valabhi, and Su-la-cha, 500 li west from Valabhi. K'ie-cha has been identified with Cutch by Beal, Watters, Julien and Smith; the

---

(1) E.H.I. 4th Edn. pp.343-44. (2) JRAS. 1906. Pt.I. p.95 ff.

identification of Ānandapura with Vāḍnagara is fully certain.[1] Su-la-cha is S'urāṣṭra[2]. It is quite possible that when Yuan Chwang described the boundary of Mo-lá-po he included therein the area of the vassal states as well. It is certainly significant to bear in mind that, though the pilgrim mentions Mo-lá-po and its dependencies, he does not mention the king, as he does in the case of Ujjain, Valabhi and Baroach. It appears that Mo-lá-po with its dependencies was under the king of Valabhi. S'īlāditya the king of Mo-lá-po was uncle of Dhruvabhaṭa or Dhruvasena II of Valabhi. Kharagraha I was a brother of Dharmāditya S'īlāditya I, who has been identified with S'īlāditya of Mo-lá-po. The brothers are compared to Indra and Upendra, and this may indirectly refer to some dispute between the two brothers in which the younger, Kharagraha I, came out successful.[3] In the Bhadreniyalla grant of S'īlāditya I, sambat (Valabhi) 292 (611-612 A.D.)[4] the dûtaka is Kharagraha, though we know from the Alina Copper-plate[5] that S'īlāditya I had a son named Dherabhaṭa, who is associated with regions about the Sahya and the Vindhya mountains. It appears, as suggested by Raychaudhuri,[6] that some time in his reign

(1) E.H.I. 4th Edn. pp 344-345, ft. note 2.
(2) ibid. Thomas Watters (on Yuan Chwang vol II.) identifies Sulacha with Surat. This cannot be accepted.
(3) E.I. XXI p.116 ff. (B's List no. 1337, date wrongly read as 290).
(4) Ibid. (5) C.I.I. III. no.39. p.171 ff.
(6) R.H.A.I. 4th edn. p.534. footnote 1.

Śīlāditya I conceded to his brother Kharagraha I the control over Valabhi and for himself retained the rest of the kingdom, including Mo-lá-po and its dependencies. It was an extensive kingdom and ruled by an able and religious king Śīlāditya, as is testified by Yuan Chwang on the records of the country[1], and also by inscriptions which refer to his "pursuit of wealth, happiness and riches illumined by conformity with religion" and further state that "he acquired an eminent reputation by clearing out the blocked-up path of the good behaviour of the kings of the Krita age"[2]; so Yuan Chwang mentions the good Buddhist king and the country of his rule separately. But the kingdom soon came back to the ancient paternal state of Valabhi. Kharagraha I extended his dominion further westward by occupying Ujjain as is known from the Virdi grant.[3] In the time of the pilgrim, Mo-lá-po, with its dependencies was certainly under Dhruvasena II of Valabhi, son-in-law of Harṣa and nephew of Śīlāditya I. Burgess[4] had identified Mo-lá-po with Malwa proper, as he did not find any place in Gujarat that had a name even resembling Malwa. But it is very significant to note that in two grants of Dhruvasena II dated 320 and 322 (639-40, 640-641 A.D.)[5], belonging to the time when Yuan Chwang visited Mo-lá-po and Valabhi[6], we find grants of land made to Brāhmaṇas in the "Mālavaka viṣaya" or "bhukti". These grants incontrovertibly prove that there was

---

(1) H. Life p.148; On Yuan Chwang (2) C.I.I. III no.39 p.171. Vol. II.(Watters) p.242.
(3) P.T.O.C. (VII) p.659 ff. (4) JRAS. 1906 p. 220 ff.
(5) E.I. VII. p.188 ff (6) C.A.G.I. Appendix A. p.647 (Nogawa grant of Dhruvasena II)

a Mālavaka province included in the kingdom of Valabhi. This Mālavaka is certainly to be identified with Mo-lá-po of Yuan Chwang S.N. Majumdar Sastri observed that Mālavaka "was included in the territory of Valabhi, and as such this Mālavaka cannot be identified with Malwa. The diminutive suffix 'ka' also indicates that it was then known as 'lesser Mālava' to distinguish it from Malwa proper".(1) This is also the opinion of Law(2) who concludes, "Mo-lā-po must now be identified with Mālavaka or Mālavaka-āhāra referred to in a number of Valabhi grants as included in the kingdom of the Maitrakas of Valubhi .... That Mo-lá-po of Yuan Chwang cannot be identified with Malwa (i.e. Western Malwa) whose capital was Ujjain, is also proved by the fact that the pilgrim describes the former as being included within the territory of Valabhi." Vaidya rightly observes, "Bāṇa must be taken to use the word Mālava in one sense only, although the Malwa or Mó-lá-po of Hiuen Tsang and the Mālava of Bāṇa may be taken to be different".(3)

The preceding discussion makes it clear that Mālava and Mo-lá-po were two different geographical and political entities. Mo-lá-po is certainly phonetically similar to Malwa. The Mālava tribes, who were originally settled in the Punjab, had moved south and east and had their settlements in Rajputana, Central India, the United Provinces, and Lāṭa.(4) It is quite

---

(1) Ibid (edited by S.N. Majumdar Sastri) p. 478.
(2) Ancient Indian Tribes II. pp.41-2.
(3) H.M.H.I. vol. I. p.38
(4) Ancient Indian Tribes vol.II. p.37.

natural that a branch of these might have settled in north and eastern Gujerat, where Yuan Chwang found them and he therefore called the country Mo-lā-po. The fact that S'īlāditya was a Buddhist king[1] might have further encouraged the Buddhist pilgrim to regard him as the ruler of Malwa, a country traditionally famous for its civilisation. Naturally, therefore, he mentioned the proper Mālava country by its capital Ujjain; the kingdom of Thānes'vara was also called by the name of its capital.[2] Vaidya rightly observes that "the kingdom of Ujjain was pre-eminently Malwa and should have been so called".[3]

In our view, therefore, Mālava of the Harṣacarita and Kādambarī must be identified with the kingdom of Ujjain as described by Yuan Chwang. This was a fairly large kingdom of 6,000 li in circuit, and probably extended to Eran in the east. The significance of the fact that the Chinese pilgrim mentions, after Ujjain, the country of Chi-ki-to, north-east of Ujjain[4]

---

(1) On Yuan Chwang Vol.II. (Watters) p.242.
(2) It is certainly not without significance that when Yuan Chwang visited Thānes'vara, it was neither a capital nor a separate kingdom. The capital was Kanauj, and the paternal kingdom of Thānes'vara was amalgamated with the larger kingdom of the Maukharis by Harṣa. But the pilgrim still mentions Thānes'vara as a separate kingdom with the capital, probably because it was a fact of very recent history. But he does not mention the king, who was certainly Harṣa, mentioned in connection with Kanauj, the capital of the empire. The analogy may be very apt in the case of Mo-lā-po. He mentions it as a separate kingdom with its dependencies, but does not mention the king. This appears to show that Mo-lā-po was an independent kingdom under a famous king, but at that time was under another ruler, who was Dhruvabhaṭa or Dhruvasena II of Valabhi, nephew of S'īlāditya of Mo-lā-po.
(3) H.M.H.I. vol.I. p. 23.
(4) The Life p.150; The Records (II) p.271; Watters(II) P.251.

has been generally missed. The country of Chi-ki-to has been identified with Jajhoti, corresponding to Bundelkhand region(1). Yuan Chwang says "From going north-east from this country (Ujjain) 1,000 li we come to the kingdom of Chi-ki-to".(2) It is clear from any map of Central India that the distance from Ujjain to Bundelkhand is much greater than 167 miles or 1,000 li. Therefore it is more reasonable to hold that what the pilgrim meant was the distance between the boundaries of the two kingdoms. From Eran, the eastern limit of Mālava to Bundelkhand is not far removed from 167 miles. Yuan Chwang does not mention any country between Ujjain and Chi-ki-to. Thus it is clear that neither Bāṇa nor Yuan Chwang knows of any country as Eastern Malwa distinct from Mālava or Ujjain.

So when the later Gupta king Mahāsenagupta retired to Malwa, he certainly came to Eastern Mālava, whose capital was Ujjain. Since the time of Candra Gupta II, Ujjain was one of the most famous cities of the Gupta empire, and might have even served as a temporary capital for some time. It is true that we have not any silver coins circulating in the western provinces of the empire after Skanda Gupta, nor have

---

(1) C.A.G.I. (Cunningham, edited by S.N.Majumdar Śāstrī) p.551.
(2) Watters (On Yuan Chwang II. p.251) identified it with Chittore. But Chittore is west of Ujjain, and not north-east, as the pilgrim states.

we any inscriptional evidence to establish or prove the continuance of the Gupta suzerainty in Malwa and Surāṣtra during the days of the later imperial Guptas. The Maitrakas of Valabhi had risen in power and were masters of the whole of Gujerat. But the Mandasore inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman, dated 472 A.D.(1) shows the continuance of the Gupta rule in the western part of Malwa. Budha Gupta is known to have issued silver coins(2), and his inscription is found at Eran in Eastern Malwa(3). Subsequently the Hûṇas over-ran Central India and inscriptions of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula have been found at Eran(4) and Gwālior(5) respectively This makes it clear that large parts of central India were snatched away from the Gupta empire. But the inscriptions of the Parivrājaka Mahārājas(6) prove that the Gupta supremacy continued to be recognised in the eastern parts of Central India corresponding to the regions of Bundelkhand. The Hûṇa success ultimately reacted on the indigenous genious of India, and Yas'odharman arose in Mandasore, broke the power of the Hûṇas in Central and Northern India, crossed into the modern United

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No.18. pp. 84 f. (2) C.C.G.D.B.M. p. 153.

(3) C.I.I. III. No.19 p. 90. (4) ibid No.36. p. 158f

(5) ibid. No. 37, p.163 f. (6) ibid Nos. 21, 22, 23, 25; E.I.VIII. p. 284 f; ibid XXI. p. 125. f.

Provinces, destroyed the authority of Mihirakula, and overran the whole Gupta empire. He penetrated up to the Lauhitya in the east and the Himālayas in the north.(1) But his empire was short-lived and we know nothing of him after 532-533 A.D.. The fiction of the Gupta suzerainty was certainly continuing in Bundelkhand in 533 A.D.(2) and there is no reason to suspect that it might not have continued till the end of the Gupta dynasty in 551 A.D. The later Guptas as residuary legatees of the Gupta empire might have claimed their suzerainty over this region. After the exit of Yas'odharman there was no barrier to the later Guptas maintaining a semblance of overlordship over Mālava. The Maitrakas, though absolutely independent of the empire, continued the fiction of the Gupta overlordship for a long time, and there is no reason at all to suspect any hostility between the Maitrakas and the Guptas. Kumāra Gupta, sone of Jīvitagupta, had defeated Īs'ānavarman(3) who had also the ambition to control Central India.

Thus there was no political or geographical barrier to Mahāsenagupta's retirement to Malwa, with Ujjain as the capital, after he found himself forced to give up Magadha. Malwa was traditionally a Gupta province and Ujjain a Gupta

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No.33 pp.177-78. (2) ibid No.31 p.138 f.
(3) C.I.I. III. No. 72 p. 210 f.

city, and the legend of Gupta sovereignty might have even outlasted the end of the imperial Dynasty. Raichaudhuri[1] thinks that, as the Kalacuris were in possession of Ujjain and after them the Maitrakas held it, there was no place for Mahāsenagupta there. But this view appears to be erroneous. The Kalacuris came into possession of Ujjain in 595 A.D.[2] and were masters of Vidiśā in 608-9 A.D.[3] The Maitrakas occupied Ujjain before 616-17 A.D.[4] There can certainly be no contradiction involved at all in holding that Mahāsenagupta ruled Mālava with Ujjain as the capital from cir. 580-95 A.D.

---

(1) P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. pp.534 - 535.
(2) E.I. IX. pp. 296 f.
(3) ibid. XII. p.30 f.
(4) P.T.O.C. (Seventh) p. 659 f.

Last days of Mahāsenagupta.

But Mahāsenagupta was not allowed peace in his new haven - Malwa. From the Abhonā plates of S'ankaragaṇa dated the year 347 in the Kalacuri era - (595-96 A.D.), we come to know that the Kalacuri king S'ankaraṅgaṇa was in occupation of Ujjain, the victorious camp.(1) He has been rightly identified with S'aṁkarana, son of Kriṣṇaraṇa, of the Sankhedā grant of S'āntilla.(2) It is significant to note that S'ankaragaṇa, the second member of the dynasty, in his Abhonā plates(3), in the Sarasvani plates(4) and the Vādner plates(5) of his successor Buddharāja, is referred to by epithets which were traditionally peculiar to Samudra-Gupta and the Imperial Guptas in general. Kielhorn(6) was the first to point out this similarity. We may hazard an explanation that these epithets were assumed by S'ankaragaṇa after his conquest of Ujjain; and this assumption if accepted, would further strengthen our point that the Imperial Gupta traditions were still continuing in Malwa. The ruler of Malwa or Ujjain defeated by S'ankaragaṇa was certainly Mahāsenagupta, as suggested by Ganguli(7). It was this victory over a Gupta king, and in a stronghold of Gupta dominion, that encouraged the Kalacuri king to assume

---

(1) E.I. IX: pp.296 ff.
(2) ibid, vol. II p.21 ff.
(3) ibid, IX pp.296 ff.
(4) ibid, VI. pp.294 ff.
(5) ibid, XII. p.30 ff.
(6) E.I. VI. p.296 ff.
(7) JBORS XIX p. 399 ff.

epithets which were characteristic of the Guptas, specially of Samudra-Gupta, the great conqueror. This was a decisive victory, and the power of Mahāsenagupta was totally crushed.(1) The battle must have been waged immediately before the issuing of the grant in 595-96 A.D., as S'ankaragaṇa appears to have commemorated this victory by making land grants in Nasik district. Therefore the date of the battle may be 594 or 595 A.D. S'ankaragaṇa was succeeded by his son Buddharāja, who was defeated by the Cālukya king Mangales'a. From the Mahākūṭa Pillar-Inscription we learn that Mangales'a had "set his heart upon the conquest of the northern region", had "conquered king Buddha", had "taken possession of all his (Buddha's) substance" and had "an eager desire to set up a pillar of victory on the bank of the Bhāgīrathī", but had to satisfy himself by setting up a pillar of victory of religion."(2) This victory over King Buddha happened before the fifth year

---

(1) Saletpre (Life in the Gupta Age. p.60,68) thinks that Mahāsenagupta was victorious over S'ankaragaṇa, or at any rate the latter was not completely successful against the king of Malwa, because Buddharāja, the son of S'ankaragaṇa, is found issuing a grant from the victorious camp of Vidiśā in 608-9 A.D. The reasoning does not appear to be convincing. In those uncertain years the interval between 595 and 608-9 is fairly big, and it is possible that Buddharāja had to deal with another enemy. However, the Abhonā Plates make it crystal clear that Ujjain was conquered by S'ankaragaṇa before 596 A.D. It is certainly natural that the loss of his capital was symbolic of the total destruction of the power of Mahāsenagupta, the Mālava king.

(2) I.A. XIX p.7 ff.

of Mangales'a's reign, as the inscription under review is dated in his fifth year. Mangales'a came to the throne in 597 or 598 A.D.(1) Therefore the defeat of Buddha must have occurred before 602 or 603 A.D. The Kalatsūri (Buddharāja) whose wealth was expended by Mangales'a in the idol-procession of the temple of his own god(2) was the same king Buddha, the son of S'ankaragaṇa, and who was driven out by Mangales'a according to the Nerur grant(3). S'ankaragaṇa in his Abhonā plates is spoken of as belonging to the lineage of the Kalacuris and as son of Kṛiṣṇarāja(4). Therefore it cannot be disputed that Kṛiṣṇarāja, S'ankaragaṇa and Buddharāja were Kalacuris as suggested by Cunningham long ago.(5) Thus, before 602-3 A.D.

---

(1) Ibid. (2) Ibid.
(3) I.A.VII. p.161 ff. (4) E.I. IX p.296 ff.
(5) CASR. IX. pp . It is important to note that the early Kalacuris appear to have had their home in western India. No inscriptions of Central India dated in the Kalacuri era go back earlier than 973 A.D. (E.I. XXI p.148). The inscriptions of the Ucchakalpa Mahārājas which Fleet (C.I.I. III.Introduction p. 8.10) and Bhandarkar (B's List of Inscriptions of Northern India, E.I. XX p. 159 foot-note 5) thought to be dated in the Kalacuri era are really to be assigned to the Gupta era, as has been conclusively proved by Dikshit (E.I. XXI p. 12 5 ff), and Mirashi (E.I. XXIII p. 171 ff); and thus the suggestion of Kielhorn (E.I.VIII Supplement) has been proved to be true. All the inscriptions of the early Kalacuri rulers - Kṛiṣṇarāja, S'ankaragaṇa, and Buddharāja - are found in Gujarat and Mahārāṣṭra. Kṛiṣṇarāja of the coins, found at Devalane (Nasik Dt.), has been identified by Fleet with Kalacuri king Kṛiṣṇarāja, father of S'ankaragaṇa (DKD pp.295-96). These coins resemble the coins of the Western Kṣhatrapas or the western issues of the Imperial Guptas. He appears to have issued a large number of coins, which are found in Malwa, Rajputana, Bombay, Satara, Nasik and C.P., and were in circulation in Nasik district so late as in 710-11 A.D. (E.I.XXV p. 232). It is quite likely that Kṛiṣṇarāja's successors continued to circulate the coins of their ancestor. The discovery of a large hoard of the coins of Kṛiṣṇarāja at Amraoti (JNSI. III p.25 ff) does not prove

Mangales'a defeated Buddharāja, the Kalacuri king. That this was not a mere empty boast is indirectly proved by the mention of Mangales'a's seizure of the sovereignty of the Kalacuris in the Aihole inscription of Pulakes'in II, who had certainly no reason to give undue credit to his usurping uncle[1]. The inscription describes Mangales'a as "taking in marriage the damsel, the fortune of the Kalacuris", in the battlefield after 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 ... and obtained the possession of the island of Revati". So Buddharāja

---

that the home of the early Kalacuris was in the Central Provinces. A large number of coins of Kumāra-Gupta I. were found in Surat, but that could not make Surat the home of the Imperial Guptas. It is quite possible that after his conquest of Central India S'ankaragana might have circulated the coins of his father, who had issued them in a very large quantity. His successors, who appear to be greater kings than he, do not seem to have issued coins. Both S'ankaragana and Buddharāja might have continued Krisnarāja's coins in circulation, which explains the presence of these coins in Central India and C.P. It appears that the home of the early Kalacuris was in Southern, Gujarat or Mahārāṣṭra, and from there they began to expand in different directions. They appear to have advanced northward up to Ānandapura (Vādnagar); in the south their kingdom certainly extended up to Nasik district in Bombay. The coins of Krisnarāja were found at Satara, Bombay and Nasik. This southern push of the Kalacuris must have alarmed the Western Cālukyas, whose capital was at Badāmi in Bijapur district in Bombay. The decline of the Vākāṭakas also facilitated the Kalacuri expansion towards Central India, and the coins of Krisnarāja are found at Amraoti and Betul. This all round expansion in different directions naturally made many powers inimical to the Kalacuris. The conquest of Ujjain by S'ankaragana was the crowning achievement of the Kalacuri policy of expansion. Cālukya counterthrust was natural, and soon after we find the Maitrakas of Valabhi making themselves masters of northern Gujarat and even occupying Ujjain, presumably against the Kalacuris.

(1) E.I. VI. p.1 ff.

was defeated by Mangales'a in a fiercely contested battle. It is not clear whether the battle took place in the Lāṭa country round about Nasik district, where most of the donated lands of the Kalacuris lay, or near Ujjain, which was in the possession of S'ankaragaṇa in 595-96 A.D. It is known from the Mahākūṭa inscription that Mangales'a had "an eager desire to set up a pillar of victory on the bank of the Bhāgīrathī"(1). He certainly did not realise his ambition in 602-3 A.D. if ever at all. But it may be reasonably assumed that his war against the Kalacuris may have been a part of his plan to invade Northern India. On the other hand it is equally possible that his victory over the Kalacuri king encouraged him to aspire to reach the Ganges in the course of his victorious campaign. That he did not realise his ambition is beside the point. What we are trying to suggest is that his desire to set up a pillar of victory on the bank of the Ganges was in some way or other connected - either as a cause or as an effect - with his victory over the Kalacuris. Ujjain since ancient times was one of the principal cities that lay on the main road between Uttarāpatha and Dakṣiṇāpatha. Therefore we are inclined to believe that the Kalacuris, as a direct or indirect result of their defeat at the hands of the Cālukyas, lost Ujjain. It is quite possible that Prabhākara-vardhana, the king of Thāneś'vara and nephew of Mahāsenagupta(2)

---

(1) I.A. XXX p. 7 ff. (2) C.I.I. III No.52 p. 232 ff

might have joined the Cālukyas against the Kalacuris, who might be identified with the Lāṭas of the Harṣacarita. Here Prabhākaravardhana is described as "a looter to the lawlessness of the Lāṭas."(1) He had ample reason to be such for he would naturally desire to avenge the defeat of his relative Mahāsenagupta, and to restore to his cousins the country of Mālava, which was then under the Kalacuris as a result of the victory of S'ankaragaṇa over Mahāsenagupta. It is also equally possible to see in the above passage of the Harṣacarita a reference to Prabhākaravardhana's help to Mahāsenagupta against the Kalacuri invader S'ankaragaṇa in 594 or 595 A.D., but in this case with no appreciable success as Mahāsenagupta was defeated and probably killed.

---

(1) Hoernle (JRAS 1904 pp.) thought that Devagupta was a brother, or rather half-brother of Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta. Vaidya (H.M.H.I.I pp.35-39) accepted this in the main. It may or may not be a correct guess. But it should be borne in mind that for Prabhākaravardhana, who was Sister's son of Mahāsenagupta, Kumāragupta, Mādhavagupta and Devagupta, (if the last was a son of Mahāsenagupta as suggested by Hoernle) must have equally been related and should have been equally treated. Hoernle's theory fails to explain Prabhākaravardhana's war against Devagupta, his cousin and the latter's proposal to attack Thāneś'vara after the death of his cousin Prabhākaravardhana. It may be that Devagupta was a step-brother of Mahāsenagupta. As there is no clear light on this point from any contemporary source, we cannot come to any definite conclusion. At worst because of the name-ending 'gupta' and the fact that the Guptas controlled Mālava in the very recent past, it may not be wide of the mark to assume that Devagupta was a scion of the Gupta dynasty, though his exact relationship with Mahasenagupta cannot be definitely known.

However, the misfortunes of the Kalacuri king Buddharāja at the hands of the Cālukyas, offered a god-sent opportunity to Devagupta, who was a relative of Mahāsenagupta.[1] to declare himself king of Mālava. This destroyed the chances of Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta, sons of Mahāsenagupta and cousins of Prabhākaravardhana. The latter therefore waged a war against the king of Mālava, who was Devagupta, not Buddharāja as supposed by Ganguli[2], nor Śīlāditya of Molapo as believed by Hoernle. Prabhākaravardhana, though he failed to gain the throne of Mālava for his cousins, succeeded in rescuing them, and appointed them as companions of his sons, Rājyavardhana and Harṣavardhana[3]. Bāna refers to Prabhākaravardhana's war against the Mālava king in clearly exaggerated terms. He is described as "an axe to the creeper of Mālava's glory[4]. This Mālava campaign may be dated in about 603 A.D.,

---

(1) See Supra (2) JBORS. XIX. p. 399 ff.

(3) H.C.(CT.) p. 119.

(4) Ibid p. 101; Text(Para) p120, Mālava-lakṣhmī-latā-paraśu. Basak (HNEI. p.142) distinguishes between Mādhavagupta, father of Ādityasena, and Mādhavagupta, the son of the Mālava king, who is identified with Devagupta. He holds that on one occasion Prabhākaravardhana defeated the Mālava king and forced him (Devagupta) to lend the services of his two sons Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta as companions of Rājya and Harṣa. We are not convinced with this reasoning, and in line with many distinguished scholars we have accepted the identification of the two Mhādhavaguptas on grounds adduced above. If his two sons were hostages at the court of Prabhākaravardhana, it is difficult to understand Devagupta's attack on the Maukhari king and his idea to attack Thāneśvara, which would involve real risks to the person of his sons. Moreover, as we have seen, Kumāragupta was 18 years old when he was presented to Rājya, and certainly it was not so unimpressionable an age that he would forget the humiliation of his father and even fight against him in the company of Rājyavardhana. In view of these difficulties we have rejected the suggestion of Basak.

when, also, the two sons of the Mālava king were presented to Rājya and Harṣa", who were asked "to show a consideration not enjoyed by the rest of our dependents"(1). That the two sons of the Mālava king were very dear to Prabhākaravardhana is clear from his description of them "as inseparable as the arms from my side".(2) These kind references indirectly suggest the unfortunate state of these princes, with whom their cousin sympathised. Saletore(3) thinks that Mahāsenagupta had sent his sons Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta to the court of Prabhākaravardhana in 595 A.D. But this does not appear to be correct. It is obvious that Prabhākaravardhana must have introduced the princes to his sons soon after their arrival in his country. But at the time of the presentation to Rājyavardhana Kumāragupta is eighteen years old(4). It is obvious that Kumāragupta and Rājyavardhana must have been of almost the same age to become companions. Rājyavardhana was two years elder to Harsa, who was born in 590 A.D. Therefore Rājya in 595 A.D. would have been only seven years old, too young to be a fit companion of Kumāragupta, who was eighteen years old at the time of his presentation to Rājya. But in 603, which we have taken to be the date of Kumāragupta's arrival in Thānes'vara, Rājya would be certainly fifteen or sixteen, when a friend of eighteen years of age would be quite suitable for a prince.

---

(1) H.C. (CT.) p. 119. (2) Ibid.

(3) Life in the Gupta Age. p. 63. (4) H.C. (CT) p. 120; Text (Para b.) p.138.

Thus the first part of the history of the later Gupta dynasty came to an end in 595 A.D.; though Devagupta might have continued for a few years more, his was not a legitimate period to be included in that of the ruling dynasty and he is omitted in the dynastic list given in the inscription of Ādityasena. The family since 603 A.D. remained in exile and dependance. But it would be idle to minimise the importance of the dynasty in the history of Magadha or India as a whole. The later Guptas may not have been the direct descendants of the Imperial Guptas, but they certainly inherited the Gupta traditions, cultural and political. The family, from insignificant beginnings, made itself the predominant power in the country during the aftermath of the Hūṇa invasions and Yas'odharman's digvijaya. Its growth was gradual, slow but steady. From mere feudatories the descendants of Kṛiṣṇagupta became a de facto authority acting in the name of the weak successors of the Imperial dynasty. The bow of Ulysses could not be drawn by weaker hands, and therefore many ambitious families arose to fill the vacuum. The later Guptas ultimately succeeded in making themselves the real masters of the central Gangetic valley, which constituted the home provinces of the Imperial Guptas. Their rise and growth may be compared to the history of the Peshvās. From mere subordinate officials of the Gupta emperor, they became the "mayors of the palace", and finally emerged as the residuary legatees of the extinct empire. When the independence of Magadha was threatened by others,

they successfully saved it for a long time. In a way their period of rule may be construed to appear to mark the continuance of the Gupta sovereignty and traditions. Their name-ending 'gupta' was a strong point for them to conjure on the imagination of the masses. It is really unfortunate that at the very moment of their triumph they were overwhelmed by powerful enemies on all sides. With their withdrawal from Magadha, its independence disappeared for some time. Their refuge in Mālava was also cut short and the political career of the once ruling family was suspended till we come back to Ādityasena, the grandson of Mahāsenagupta, in the middle of the 7th century A.D.

CHAPTER VII

Magadha under the Imperial Maukharis.

We have seen that the dynasty of Harivarman, established at Kanauj in the Upper Gangetic valley, contested the possession of Magadha and its imperial traditions with the later Guptas. Īśānavarman, the fourth Maukhari king, raided as far as the home land of the Gauḍas in south-western Bengal.(1) Kumāragupta, the fourth later Gupta king, defeated him.(2) Thus began the hostility between the two families which continued for successive generations. Dāmodaragupta defeated the Maukhari again.(3) We have identified the Maukhari with S'arvavarman, the son of Īśānavarman. It may not be without some significance that while the head of the king on the coins of Īśānavarman faces left, as opposed to the Gupta silver coins, the head on some of the coins of S'arvavarman faces right as on the silver coins of the Guptas.(4) Burn has suggested that "the different arrangement of the head on the coins is connected with the relation between the Maukharis and the later Guptas".(5)

---

(1) E.I.XIV.pp.110 ff. (2) C.I.I.III.no.42 pp.205 ff.

(3) Ibid. (4) Catalogue of the coins of the Guptas, Maukharis etc. in the provincial Museum, Lukhnow (1920) p.39.

(5) JRAS.1906 p.843 ff.

If this is correct, then it appears that S'arvavarman might have been forced to accept some sort of subordination to the later Guptas for some time. But S'arvavarman was anxious to wipe out the disgrace of the defeats sustained by his father and himself; and he ultimately succeeded in defeating Mahāsenagupta, the Gupta king, and made himself master of Magadha. This vindication of his successful defiance is reflected in his coinage. On the later issue of his coins we find the head of the king to the left as opposed to the Gupta coinage. The Maukhari rule over Maghada begins with S'arvavarman from about 582 A.D.

S'arvavarman

S'arvavarman was the first Maukhari king who annexed Magadha to the Maukhari dominion. The Deo-Baranārk inscription[1] clearly refers to his supremacy over at least the western part of Magadha: he is referred to as 'parames'vara' in the inscription, and renewed the grant to the temple. His seal

(1) C.I.I.III no.46 p.213 ff; D.C. Sarkar (JASB, Letters vol.XI p.69 ff) has shown that there is nothing like another village, Kisoravāṭaka in the village, and the village granted was certainly Deo-Barānārk, in the Shāhābād district of Bihar.

with imperial titles is found at Nālandā.(1) The Varmans, whose sovereignty was alluded to in the Sirpur stone-inscription, were certainly the Maukharis. Sūryavarman of the inscription is to be identified with prince Sūryavarman, son of Īśānavarman, of the Harāhā inscription.(2) It appears that S'arvavarman after the conquest of Magadha appointed his brother as a governor or a subordinate ruler of the newly conquered dominion. The title 'nṛipa' was an innocent one, and was used by subordinate rulers and feudatories like the early members of the later Gupta dynasty(4), the Parivrājaka mahārājas(5), the members of Yajñavarman's line.(6) The palaeography of the Sirpur inscription is not so serious an objection, as the editor of the inscription thinks,(7) and recently many scholars have held that palaeographically the inscription may belong to the early part of the 7th century;(8) lastly palaeography is not a very sure basis to accept or reject any system of chronology if established on more reliable grounds.

---

(1) E.I.XXI p73ff; ASIAR91927 - 28 p.139.
(2) E.I.XIV.P 110 ff. (3) E.I.XI. pp 184 ff.
(4) C.I.I. III no.42 p.205 ff. (5) C.I.I. III nos 21 & 25
(6) C.I.I. III no.48-49 pp.221-28. (7) E.I.XI p.184 ff.
(8) V.V. Mirashi, E.I.XXII p. 15 ff.

A seal of S'arvavarman has been found at Asīrgarh[1] Fleet has pointed out that "a mere finding of his seal so far as Asīrgarh does not prove that his rule extended so far south from his centre in mid-India". The seal might have been brought to the locality from a different place.[2] Tripāṭhi[3] has therefore concluded that S'arvavarman could not have ruled over the region. But Aravamuthan[4] has pointed out that Īs'varavarman and Īs'ānavarman could fight the king of Dhārā, the Āndhras, and the S'ūlikas, and therefore it is not impossible that the Maukharis pushed their sphere of influence just south of the Vindhyas, and Asīrgarh may have been an 'outpost' of the Maukhari dominion. It is difficult to be categorical on this point, but it is possible that the Maukharis might have established some influence in the Vindhyan region. The fact that Rājyasrī, wife of Grahavarman, sought shelter in the Vindhyan region immediately after her release from the prison[5] lends colour to the suspicion that the country might have owed some sort of fealty to the Maukhari throne. The fact that Sūryavarman is mentioned in the inscription of his daughter's son Mahās'ivagupta[6] certainly suggests that the Varmans of Magadha, i.e. the Maukharis, helped the kings of Mahākos'ala in some

---

(1) C.I.I. III no.47 pp.219 ff. (2) Ibid.

(3) T K. pp 53-54 (4) Aravamuthan, op.cit.p.96-97.

(5) H.C. (CT.) p.224. (6) E.I. XI. p.184 ff.

effective way, because the mention of the maternal relations in the Indian inscriptions is generally consequent upon the help that the family received from the wife's or mother's family. Mirashi may be right in his opinion that the Somavams'ī kings of Mahākos'ala helped the Maukhari king against the Āndhras, whose king was at that time the Viṣṇukuṇḍin Mādhavavarman I: and the political alliance between the Maukhari and the Somavams'ī houses seems to have been cemented subsequently by the marriage of Vāsaṭā (daughter of Sūryavarman) and Harṣagupta, father of Mahās'ivagupta-Bālārjuna.(1) The Maukhari prince Sūryavarman might have helped Harṣagupta or his son against the Viṣṇukuṇḍin king, who was probably the successor of Mādhavavarman I, as the latter appears to have captured the capital of Tīviradeva, the grand-uncle of Mahās'ivagupta-Bālārjuna.(2) A possible allusion to the Maukhari supremacy in Bundelkhand may be sought in the Barāha copper-plate of Bhojadeva dated Vikrama samvat 893.(3) From this we come to know of a s'āsana of Parames'vara S'arvavarman granting some land in Udumbara viṣaya of Kālañjara-maṇḍala. We are tempted to identify the

---

(1) E.I. XXIII p. 113 ff.

(2) JAHRS. VI p.20; E.I. XVII p. 336; E.I. XXII p.15 ff.

(3) E.I. XIX p. 15 ff.

S'arvavarman of the inscription with the Maukhari king of the same name.(1) In view of the points urged above it may be conceded that the Maukharis exercised suzerainty over some parts of Central India, immediately south of the Jumnā and even further south. Father away in the north, a copper-plate

---

(1) Hīrānanda Śāstrī (ibid) takes this 'parames'vara S'arvavarmadeva' as a contemporary and feudatory of Nāgabhaṭa II; and identifies him with Mahārāja S'arvva of the Sanjan Plates of Amoghavarṣa I dated S'aka Samvat 793 (E.I.XVII p.235 ff). This Mahārāja S'arvva was a small ruler of a kingdom whose capital was at the foot of the Vindhyas and on the bank of the Narbadā; he was a feudatory of Govinda III, who, when he was turning to the west of the Narbadā, stayed in the petty kingdom of S'arva. Bhandarkar (ibid) has identified this S'arvva with a prince named Mārā-s'arva who had his capital at Śrībhavana, where Govinda III, after receiving the submission of the king of Malwa and marching to the Vindhyas (presumably on his way back to the Rāṣṭrakūṭa capital), spent the rainy season and received choicest heirlooms from Mārā-s'arva (E.I.VI.p.250). We find it difficult to identify Mahārāja S'arva or S'arvan or Mārā-s'arva with 'parames'vara S'arvavarmma-deva of the Barāha copper-plate of Bhojadeva. (E.I.XIX.p.15 ff). S'arvavarmma has the imperial titles 'parames'vara' and 'deva', while S'arva is a mere 'mahārāja' and 'mandales'a' a feudatory. Moreover while S'arva of the Sanjan plates or Mārās'arva of Rādhanpur plates(E.I. VI p.250) is a feudatory ruler of a small territory at the foot of the Vindhyas and on the bank of the Narbadā, Parames'vara S'arvavarman made grants of land in the province (maṇḍala) of Kālañjara, which is far away from the Narbadā and the foot of the Vindhyas. The late Dr.Śāstrī (E.I. XIX. p.15 ff) suggested that S'arvavarman might have extended his authority from the bank of the Narbadā to Kālañjara in the north during the defeat of Cakrāyudha by Nāgabhaṭa II, and was forced to accept the supremacy of Nāgabhaṭa when the latter conquered Kanauj; when the Gurjara king was defeated by Govinda III, Mahārāja S'arva submitted to him and conciliated him with gifts of heirlooms. This is not convincing,as there was hardly any time for a small king S'arva ruling on the bank of the Narbadā to extend his dominion as far as Kālañjara at the time of the defeat of Cakrāyudha by Nāgabhaṭa. It is generally accepted that Nāgabhaṭa came into possession of Kanauj, the imperial capital, as a direct result of his victory over Dharmapāla and his protégé Cakrāyudha, who therefore sought the alliance of Govinda III. Moreover there is a vital difference in name. There is 'mandales'a mahārāja S'arvva' in the Sanjan

/continued overleaf

inscription of the Mahāsāmanta and Mahārāja Samudrasena has been found at Nirmand, "a village near the right bank of the Satlaj, twenty miles north-east of Plach, the chief town of the Plach or sub-division of the Kullu division of the Kangra District in the Punjab".(1) The purport of the inscription is that Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja S'rī Samudrasena .... made grants of agrahāra lands for the maintenance of the temple of Kapiles'vara, and the same grants had been made before by Mahārāja S'arvavarman. Aravamuthan has identified this Mahārāja S'arvavarman with the Maukhari emperor S'arvavarman.(2)

---

plates (E.I.XVIII p.235 ff) or Mārās'arva (ibid.VI p. 250), while in the Barāha inscription we have 'parames'vara S'arvavarmmadeva'. In the Deo-Baranark inscription (C.I.I.III. p.218 ff) S'arvavarman is called 'parames'vara'. The only objection against this indentification proposed by us is that the Barāha inscription, (E.I. XIX. p.15 ff) which run "(parames'vara (S'rī) S'arvvavarmmadeva s'ās'anam P. Mahārāja-S'rī-Nāgabhaṭa-devānumatiñca dristvā bhāgañca mahā (line II) - rāja-S'rī-Rāmabhadradeva-rājye vyavāharino vaigunyātkiñcitkālam vihatam jñatvama (line 12) ya pitro puṇyābhivriddhaye" have been taken to mean that S'arvavarman issued the grant after the approval (anumati) of Nāgabhaṭa II, and therefore S'arvavarman was a feudatory and contemporary of Nāgabhaṭa. We think that the verses in question may be interpreted in a different way. The word 'anumati' may have nothing to do with the phrase 'parames' vara s'arvvavarmma-deva s'ās'anam'. The sentence ends there. Then after lapse of some time, Nāgabhaṭa II, who came in possession of this part of the country, appears to have been informed of this grant and approved of this request. But in spite of seeing (dristvā) this approval, which practically means renewal, by Nāgabhaṭa, the administrator in the reign of Rāmabhadra obstructed the execution. There is nothing abnormal in this proposed state of affairs. The grant made by Bālāditya was renewed by Parames'vara S'arvavarman more than fifty years afterwards. (Deo-Baranārk inscription, C.I.I. III p.218 ff.) The title Parames'vara and the absolute similarity of the name together with the fact that S'arvavarman appears to have been a generous patron of the temples, lend great strength to our suspicion that S'arvavarman of the Barāha inscription is to be identified with the Maukhari king of the same name. S'arvavarman, the Maukhari, could easily extend his authority over the district round Kālanjara.

(1) C.I.I.III no.80.p.286 ff. (2) Aravamuthan, op.cit. p. 92.

The script of the inscription is not opposed to this theory, as "it belongs to the 7th century".(1) S'arvavarman, who has been identified with the Maukhari who fought Dāmodaragupta, appears to have fought the Hūṇas.(2) Bāṇa mentions Prabhākara-vardhana's hostility with the Hūṇas(3), and during his last days he sent his son Rājyavardhana to fight the Hūṇas.(4) So it is clear that in the latter part of the sixth and early seventh century the Hūṇas were still a political force to be reckoned with. S'arvavarman might have fought them in the Punjab region. Tripāṭhī(5) believes that S'arvavarman could not have been master of the Kangra district of the eastern Punjab, which was certainly included in the kingdom of Thānes'vara, and there is no evidence that the Maukharis were ever on bad terms with the Vardhanas of Thānes'vara, rather from the Harṣacharita we learn that the two families were on the best of terms. But it may be pointed out that the Vardhana dynasty came into all-India importance only with Prābhakaravardhana, who is the first Mahārājādhirāja in the family. In the very inscriptions in in which he is called 'Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja', his predecessors are called 'Mahārājas'.(6) Bāṇa begins the history of the family with Prabhākaravardhana.(7) It would certainly not

---

(1) C.I.I.III No.80.p.286 ff.

(2) ibid. No.42 p. 205 ff.

(3) H.C.CT. p.101.

(4) ibid. p. 132.

(5) T.K. pp.54-55.

(6) E.I.I. p.73 ff; ibid,IV. p.208 ff; ibid, XXI. p.74 ff; C.I.I. III p.232 ff.

(7) H.C. CT.p.83-4, 101. He mentions only the legendary figure of Puṣyabhūti.

have been expedient for Bāṇa to refer to any case of previous hostility between the two families when his guru enjoyed the patronage of the Maukhari kings[1] and he was himself a court-poet of Harṣavardhana, who was brother-in-law of the Maukhari king Grahavarman. Any allusion to previous hostility was certainly most inopportune at the time when owing to activities of Dame Fortune the interests of the two families were inseparably linked. Therefore the silence of Bāṇa would not prove or disprove the point at issue. Bāṇa's statement that "at the head of all royal houses stand the Maukharis worshipped like S'iva's foot-print by all the world"[2] though it does not mean that "Prabhākaravardhana worshipped the Maukharis",[3] certainly makes it clear that the Maukharis in those days were one of the most, if not the most, important families in Northern India. There appears to be no sound basis for asserting that "when the seventh cemtury of the Christian era opened Prabhākaravardhana was undoubtedly the premier king of Northern India";[4] or that in 605 A.D. "he was by far the most Powerful king in Hindustan"[5] The strain in which Prabhākaravardhana spoke of the dynasty of the Maukhari kings Avantivarman and Grahavarman[6] definitely shows that he was obviously proud of the prospect of his relationship with the Maukharis. Therefore it is not impossible that the

---

(1) Kādambarī (Ridding) p.1. (2) H.C. CT. p.122.

(3) JBORS. XIX p. 399 ff. (4) H.M.H.I. I p.1.

(5) Ibid p.2. (6) H.C. CT. p.122-23.

that the Vardhanas of Thāneśvara, in their early days, enjoyed a status inferior to the Maukharis of Kanauj. S'arvavarman in the course of his fight with the Hūṇas in the north-west may have made his weight felt on the kingdom of Thānes'vara (1), and so he could have exercised control over the Kangra district. A serious objection against the identification of S'arvarvarman of the Nirmand inscription with the Maukhari king of the same name is that in the inscription under review S'arvarvarman has been given a minor title of 'Mahārāja' while Samudrasena and his predecessors have been called 'Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja'. Against this point it may be urged that even recognised emperors like Kumāra-Gupta I and Mahendrapāla have been called a "Mahārāja"(2); in the Gunaigarh inscription of Vainya-Gupta both he and his official Vijayasena are mentioned as 'Mahārāja', and it has been conclusively shown that Vainya-Gupta was an imperial ruler.(4) Therefore we feel that the S'arvavarman of the Nirmand inscription is the Maukhari king of the same name, though exact proof is lacking and there are difficulties in the way. The question is at any rate still open.

S'arvavarman was a ruler of an extensive kingdom. Even if we do not accept the testimony of the Nirmand inscription, his dominion certainly included Magadha in the east and

---

(1) Vaidya (H.M.H.I.I.p.2, foot-note 2) suggests that the Maukharis might have allied themselves with the Vardhanas of Thānes'vara, against the Hūṇas, as the kingdom of Thānes'vara intervened between Kanauj and the country of the Hūṇas.
(2) C.I.I. III. p. 46 ff; I.A. XLV p.122 ff; E.I.XIV.p.182 ff.
(3) I.H.W.VI p. 45 ff. (4) See supra.

touched the eastern boundary of Thānes'vara in the west. From the foot of the Himālayas in the north it approached the Vindhyas in the south. The entire upper and central Gangetic valley with the rich Doab was co-extensive with the Maukhari dominion. Barnett[1] has observed that "the area which we may safely infer to have been under the dominion of the dynasty reduced itself to a triangle of which the apex is Ahichchatra, and the base line drawn from Asīrgarh on the Tāpti to Nālandā and Aphsad in Magadha". There is no sure ground for making the Maukhari rule extend further east to include Gauḍa, as some have done.[2] Īs'anavarman's raid into Gauḍa was a mere punitive expedition and was not intended for the extension of the territorial boundary of his kingdom.[3] Even whatsoever influence he might have won must have been lost after his defeat at the hands of Kumāragupta.[4] We have no other evidence at all to connect the Maukharis with any part of the country east of Nālandā.

S'arvavarman also issued coins.[5] His reign must have been over by 586 A.D.

Avantivarman

There have been many speculations as to who was the immediate successor of S'arvavarman. The Deo-Baranārk inscription mentions Avantivarman immediately after S'arvavarman as renewer of the grant to the Sun-temple[6]. But the

---

(1) B.S.O.S. IV. p. 171 ff. (2) JBORS XIX p.399 ff; H.M.H.I. Vol.I. p.1(?).
(3) See supra. (4) C.I.I. III No.72 p.205 ff.
(5) J.R.A.S. 1906 p.844 ff. (6) C.I.I.III No.46 p.213 ff.

inscription only referred to those rulers who presided at different times and renewed the grant. It is not, nor is it intended to be, a dynastic or chronological account. Bāṇa mentions Avantivarman and his son Graharvarman; but he says nothing about the predecessors of Avantivarman.(1) In view of such a meagre knowledge it was natural to speculate. Susthitavarman, who was defeated by Mahāsenagupta, was regarded as a Maukhari(2), and placed between S'arvavarman and Avantivarman. But the discovery of the Nidhānpur copper-plates of Bhāskaravarman(3) and of his seals at Nālandā(4), read together with the testimony of the Harṣacarita(5), makes it clear that Susthitavarman was not a Maukhari but a king of Kāmarūpa. But the relationship between S'arvavarman and Avantivarman was still unknown. Some tried to place Kṣatravarman, known only from the Harṣacarita, between S'arvavarman and Avantivarman(7). Basak(8) remarked, "we cannot ascertain the relation between S'arvavarman and Avantivarman". But the Nālandā seal of Avantivarman(9) has definitely proved that he was the son of S'arvavarman. Jagan Nath (10) has rightly shown that there is hardly any place for any one to come between

---

(1) H.C. CT: p.122.

(2) C.I.I.III. Intro.p.15; J.I.H. IV.p.20; Harṣa, p.53.

(3) E.I.XII.p.65 ff, ibid XIX p. 115 ff.

(4) JBORS. VI. p. 151 ff.

(5) H.C. CT. p. 217

(6) P.T.O.C.(seventh) pp.569 ff.

(7) H.C. CT. p.194.

(8) H.N.E.I. p. 117.

(9) E.I. XXIV. p.283 ff.

(10) Woolner Commemoration Volume p. 116.

S'arvavarman and Avantivarman. Thus, it is clear that Avantivarman succeeded his father S'arvavarman on the throne of Kanauj in cir. 586 A.D.

Avantivarman appears to have ascended to an extensive dominion. The Deo-Baranārk inscription[1] refers to him as a 'parames'vara', and in his Nālandā seal he is given all customary imperial titles[2]. Bāṇa[3] speaks of the high status of the Maukhari kings in his days. Prabhākaravardhana must have been contemporary with Avantivarman, as the latter's son married the daughter of the former. Avantivarman must have controlled Magadha, at least during the early part of his reign. We know very little of him. He issued coins as well.

The end of the Maukhari rule in Magadha.

Ganguli[4] is of opinion that Avantivarman continued to rule over Magadha till his death, and was succeeded by Grahavarman, and S'as'ānka was a feudatory of Avantivarman and Grahavarman. Aramamuthan[5] also believes that Grahavarman was the master of Kanauj as well as Pāṭaliputra. It may be true

---

(1) C.I.I.III No.46 p. 213 ff. (2) E.I.XXIV. p.283 ff.

(3) H.C. CT. p. 122. (4) IHQ. XII. p. 456 ff.

(5) Aravamuthan, op. cit. p. 83.

that Avantivarman continued to hold Magadha till his death. He is mentioned as Parames'vara and his seal is found at Nālandā.[1] The coins of Avantivarman, so far found are greater in number than those of the other Maukhari kings[2]. All his coins have the head to the left, as the coins of Īs'ānararman, showing independence of the Guptas.[3] Bāna[4] calls him 'pride of the race'.

But it is important to bear in mind that there is nothing to connect Grahavarman with Magadha. He was murdered at Kanauj, which was the capital of the Maukhari kingdom. No coins of Grahavarman have so far been found: rather we have a seal of a son of Avantivarman, found at Nālandā, which shows that Avantivarman was not succeeded by Grahavarman, at least in Magadha[5]. The seal omits Grahavarman, and we learn that the son of 'paramamāhes'vara (Mahārā) jādhirāja Avantivarman Maukhari' was 'Para(.....)rājā(dhi)rājā s'rī Suva or S'uca (S'uchandravarman according to the editor). Manju-s'rī-mūla-kalpa[6] mentions Suvrata in the dynasty of the Maukharis. Jayasval thinks him to be a nominal ruler. From the Harṣacarita we know that Grahavarman was the eldest son

---

(1) E.I. XXIV. p. 283 ff. (2) JRAS. 1906 part II. p.843.

(3) Catalogue of the coins of the Guptas, Maukharis etc., in the Provincial Museum, Lukhnow (1920) p. 39. (1-4).

(4) H.C. CT. p. 122. (5) E.I. XXIV p. 283 ff.

(6) I.H.I. p.53 ff. (commentary)

of Avantivarman.[1] Therefore it is not easy to explain the Nālandā seal of Suva or Suca with imperial titles. From a critical study of the Harṣacarita it will be clear that Grahavarman was not only a prince but also the crowned king of Kanauj[2]. Ghosh[3] suggests that Suva or Suca, the second son of Avantivarman, came to the throne of the Maukhari kingdom as the rightful owner before Harṣa occupied it in the name of his sister. But the presence of his seal with imperial titles and that of his predecessors at Nālandā raises a strong presumption that Suva or Suca was the imperial lord of Magadha, which included Nālandā. The problem is made all the more complicated by the existence of the Rohtāsgarh stone seal-matrix of Mahāsāmanta S'as'ānkadeva[4], who has been rightly identified with S'as'anka the king of Karṇasuvarṇa and of Gauda who killed Rājyavardhana. The seal makes it clear that S'as'ānka was at first a feudatory or a governor of Magadha. Ganguli[5] proposed that he was a feudatory under the Maukharis, and Majumdar[6] thought that he was in service under Mahāsenagupta. But the subsequent history of S'as'ānka and a comparative study of his coins with those of Jaya[7] connect him with Jayanāga, who issued the Vappāghoṣāvāṭa grant from Karṇasuvarṇa[8]. That the rise of S'as'ānka was in rapid stages but not meteoric is

---

(1) H.C. CT. p. 122
(2) See infra.
(3) E.I. XXIV. p. 283 ff.
(4) C.I.I. II. no.78.p.283 ff.
(5) IHQ. XII p. 456 ff.
(6) History of Bengal Vol I.p.59.
(7) See infra.
(8) E.I.XVIII p. 60. ff.

indirectly proved by Bāṇa. (1)

We humbly suggest that there was some internal trouble within the Maukhari family either during the last days of Avantivarman or immediately after his death. We have seen that Sūryavarman, probably a younger son of Īs'ānarvamman, was appointed to hold charge of the newly conquered dominion of Magadha by his elder brother S'arvavarman. Sūryavarman's alliance with the Somavams'i ruling family of southern Kosala(2) may have contributed to augment his power and prestige. Avantivarman appears to have disliked this, and appointed his younger son Suva or Suca as the viceroy of Magadha. From the Mallar plates of Mahās'ivagupta(3), we learn that Bhāskaravarman was the maternal uncle (mātula) of Māhas'ivagupta; while we know from the Sirpur stone inscription of the same ruler(4) that 'nṛipa Sūryavarman', 'born in the family of Varmans famous for their sovereignty over Magadha', was his maternal grandfather. This Sūryavarman is the same person as Sūryavarman son of Īs'ānavarman, as known from the Harāhā inscriptions(5). Therefor Bhāskaravarman was the son of Sūryavarman. It may not be without some significance that while Sūryavarman is called 'nṛipa' and allusion is made to his connedtion with Magadha, his son Bhāskara varman is given no such title, neither is he connected with Magadha. It should be clear, therefore, that he did not succeed

---

(1) H.C. CT. p.168.275. (2) E.I. XI p. 184 ff.

(3) Ibid. XXIII p. 113 ff. (4) Ibid. XI. p. 184 ff.

(5) Ibid. XIV. p.110 ff; see supra.

to the high office of his father in Maghada. It appears that Avantivarman, who followed S'arvavarman, overruled the claims of Bhāskaravarman, his cousin, and appointed his younger son Suva or Suca to hold charge of Magadha. Bhāskaravarman found shelter under his sister's son Mahās'ivagupta. His poor state may be gleaned from the fact that according to the Mallar plate "the gift was on the occasion of a solar eclipse on the new moon day of Asāḍha at the request of the king's maternal uncle, the illustrious Bhāskaravarman(1). Was Bhāskaravarman himself not in a position to issue land-grants for his as well as his parents' spiritual merits?

After the death of Avantivarman, cir. 600 A.D., while Grahavarman, his eldest son, succeeded to the imperial throne of Kanauj, Suva or Suca declared himself to be the independent ruler of Magadha, where he was already acting as the governor, and issued his Nālandā seal with imperial titles, mentioning his ancestors but omitting his brother Grahavarman, against whom he had revolted, as the successors of Puru Gupta do not mention the name of Skanda-Gupta in their seals.

These internal dissensions proved fatal to the Maukhari rule over Magadha. The Maukharis were a foreign dynasty for Magadha, and internal troubles are naturally least conducive for any imperial power to continue to hold sway over a subject province. The troubles of the Maukharis

---

(1) E.I. XXIII. p. 133 ff.

proved to be the opportunities for the Gaudas. They had already made themselves masters of Central Bengal under Jayanāga. They now were emboldened to extend further west. The Gauda-Maukhari hostility had begun in the time of Īs'anavarman[1], and therefore the unfortunate discord in the imperial Maukhari family gave a welcome opportunity to the Gaudas to feed fat the ancient grudge. The Gaudas in the time of Jayanāga, and under the leadership of Śas'ānka, conquered Magadha up to the river Son in the west, and Rohtāsgarh became his centre. The Maukharis were thus driven out of Magadha, and their rule was confined to the United Provinces west of the Son. The Gaudas thus replaced the Maukharis in Magadha, and Suvva or Suca must have been a victim of their expansion. The event could not have been far off from 600 A.D. It was during this period of his subordinate status in relation to the Gauda king Jayanāga that S'as'ānka issued the seal.[2]

Grahavarman

Grahavarman, who succeeded Avantivarman on the Maukharii throne at Kanauj, continued to rule west of the river Son. He is only known from the Harṣacarita, from which we learn that he

---

(1) E.I. XIV. p. 110 ff. (2) C.I.I. XIII No. 78 p. 283 ff.

was the eldest son of Avantivarman[1]. He married Rājyas'rī, daughter of Prabhākaravardhana, and was killed by the king of Mālava. Prabhākaravardhana proposed the marriage of Rājyas'rī with Grahavarman to his wife in the following words, "In general too, though, the bridegroom may have other merits, the wise especially incline towards good family. Now at the head of all royal houses stand the Maukharis, worshipped like S'iva's foot-print by all the world. Of that race the pride is Avantivarman's eldest son, Grahavarman by name, who lacks not his father's virtues, a prince like the Lord of Planets descended upon earth, and seeks our daughter. Upon him, if your Majesty's thoughts are likewise favourable, I propose to bestow her."[2] It is not clear from this whether Avantivarman was dead or alive at this time. Reference to Grahavarman's virtues as that of his father may suggest a posthumous allusion to Avantivarman. The fact that Grahavarman himself proposed the marriage, and Bāṇa, though he describes the marriage at great length[3], does not, even indirectly refer to his father, suggest that Avantivarman was dead. When the betel-bearer from the bridegroom's palace arrives at the court of Prabhākaravardhana, the latter enquires of the health of Grahavarman alone, and not of his father.[4] This further confirms our suspicion that Avantivarman was dead, otherwise Prabhākaravardhana must have enquired of the former's health. When the bridegroom's party arrives at Thānes'vara,

---

(1) H. C. CT. p. 122. (2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid. pp. 122-28. (4) H. C. Text (para 6.) p. 144.

Prabhākaravardhana receives Grahavarman(1), and there is no mention of his father. Gāmbhīra, a wise Brahmin who was attached to the king, said to Grahavarman (at the bridegroom's halting place), "My son, by obtaining you Rājyas'rī has at length united two brilliant houses of Puṣhpabhūti (Puṣyabhūti?) and Mukhara".(2) Grahavarman had himself sought the hand of Rājyas'rī(3). It is important to bear in mind that Bāṇa says that many kings (rājānaḥ) sent envoys to the court of Prabhākaravardhana seeking the hand of Rājyasrī; subsequently Prābhakaravardhana informed his queen Yas'omatī that Graharvarman was one of the applicants.(4) This makes it clear that Grahavarman was one of the kings who made this request. In the Harṣacarita Bāṇa used the epithets 'deva' in reference to kings like Prabhākaravardhana, Rājya and Harṣa, whenever they are addressed in the narrative. Samvādaka, who came to inform Rājya about the death of Grahavarman, addresses Rājya as 'deva', and the deceased is also referred to as 'deva'(5). All these points taken collectively lead to the conclusion that Grahavarman was already king when he proposed to marry Rājyas'rī and was murdered by the king of Mālava. The fact was so well known at that time that Bāṇa did not specifically mention it in his story. The success of the Gauḍas in Magadha against the Maukharis may have induced Grahavarman to seek a firm alliance with the rising and powerful ruling dynasty of Thānes'vara:

---

(1) Ibid. (2) H.C. CT. p. 128.
(3) Ibid. p. 122. (4) H.C. Text para.b. p.140-41.
(5) Ibid. p. 182.

Prabhākaravardhana also eagerly welcomed the offer of this alliance with the famous imperial family, especially when he had fallen out with Devagupta, who had usurped the later Guptas' throne. It is equally possible that Devagupta of Mālava and the Gauḍa king had already come to some alliance against their enemies the Vardhanas of Thānes'vara and the Maukharis of Kanauj respectively. However, the marriage of Rājyas'rī and Grahavarman may have taken place in about 604 A.D.(1)

But soon after the happy event, the two families were engulfed in deepest gloom. Prabhākaravardhana sent Rājyavardhana "whose age now fitted him to wear armour"(2) (i.e. about eighteen years), to the north to attack the Hūṇas. Harṣa followed him for some distance and then engaged himself in pursuit of youthful adventure in the Himālayan region. Harṣa must have been about sixteen years of age. While thus busy in hunting expedition, a messenger informed him that his father was seriously ill, and Harṣa turned back. Prabhākaravardhana died, Yaśmatī burnt herself on the funeral pyre, and Harṣa was bewildered.(3) Rājyavardhana was away, and

---

(1) Rājyashrī was born about two years later than Harṣa, whose birth occurred in June 590 A.D. So Rājyas'rī was born in cir. 592 A.D. The normal age of puberty among girls in India is about 14th year. Bāṇa refers to Rājyas'rī's attaining maturity in a comparatively limited period, but it shall be admitted that she could not be a mature girl before twelve and, therefore, 604 A.D. is the earliest year when she could be married.

(2) H.C. CT. pp. 132-58. (3) Ibid, p. 165.

consequently the kingdom of Thānes'vara was in a sorry plight. Rājyavardhana came back tired and wounded.(1) He wanted to abdicate in favour of Harṣa, but was finally prevailed upon to give up his resolve to go to a hermitage.(2) Bāṇa does not specifically mention the formal coronation of Rājyavardhana, but this silence need not be taken to mean that Rājyavardhana did not ascend the throne. In the inscriptions he is invariably given imperial titles like his father or brother(3). In the Harṣacarita he is referred to as 'deva'. The fact that Rājyavardhana did succeed to the throne after the death of Prabhākaravardhana is clearly stated by Yuan Chwang, who says that "when the latter (Prabhākaravardhana) died, he was succeeded on the throne by his elder son Rājyavardhana"(4). He was hardly settled when Samvādaka, a distinguished servant of Rājyas'rī, arrived at Thānes'vara and informed Rājyavardhana that "His Majesty Grahavarman was by the wicked lord of Mālava cut off from the living, along with his noble deeds; Rājyas'rī has been confined like a brigand's wife with a pair of iron fetters and cast into prison at Kānyakubja." There is moreover a report that the villain proposes to invade and seize this country as well"(5). This event may have taken place in the early part of 606 A.D.

---

(1) H.C. (CT) pp 165-66. (2) Ibid p.170-71.

(3) C.I.I. III p.232 ff; E.I.I.p.73 ff; ibid IV, p.290 ff.

(4) On Yuan Chwang, (Watters) I. p. 343.

(5) H.C. p. 173.

The wicked lord of Mālava, who killed Grahavarman, was certainly not S'īlāditya of Mo-la'-po as suggested by Hoernle[1] and agreeded to by Mookerji. But it has been conclusively shown that S'īlāditya was not a king of Mālava but of Mo-la'-po, which was different from Mālava proper; moreover S'īlāditya of Yuan Chwang has been identified with S'īlāditya Dharmāditya of Valabhi. If S'īlāditya had been the murderer of Grahavarman, he should have been mentioned in the inscriptions of Harsa[2], in the list of those whom Rājyavardhana fought. Similarly untenable is the supposition of Ganguli[3] that it was Buddharāja, the Kalacuri king, who killed Grahavarman and occupied Kanauj. The basis of this theory appears to be the fact that in 595 A.D. S'ankaragaṇa was master of Ujjain[4], and in 609 A.D.[5] his son Buddharāja issued a grant from Vidiśā in East Mālavā. But a serious objection against his theory is that Buddharāja is not mentioned in the inscriptions in the list of the enemies punished by Rājyavardhana; this would be really surprising if he was the arch-villain, as Ganguli would lead us to think. It is really strange that while the name of Buddharāja is not mentioned, Devagupta is mentioned, whom Ganguli takes to be an accomplice of Buddharāja, while Hoernle and Mookerji make him the accomplice of S'īlāditya. There is absolutely no proof that Mālava remained in possession of the Kalacuris continuously from 595 to 609 A.D. The last years

---

(1) JRAS I.903 pp.554 ff. (2) C.I.I. III p.232 ff; E.I. I. p.73 ff; ibid IV. p.209 ff.
(3) JBORS.XIX p.399 ff. (4) E.I.IX.p.296 ff.
(5) Ibid. XII. p. 30 ff.

of the sixth and the early part of the seventh century were very extraordinary in the history of Mālwā. The Kalacuris, the Cālukyas, and the Maitrakas were competing with one another to control Central India, especially Mālwā, which was rich and was strategically important for states south of the Vindhyas ambitious to extend their power into the northern plains. It also lay, from very early times, on the high road of commerce between east and west, north and south. Kīrttivarman, the Cālukya king, had defeated kings of Aṅga, Vaṅga and Magadha(1). The Kalacuri king S'ankaragaṇa, as we have seen, defeated Mahāsenagupta, then king of Mālava, and conquered Ujjain. But before 602 A.D. Mangales'a defeated the Kalacuri Buddharāja and deprived him of all his wealth.(2) This Buddharāja has been rightly identified with Buddharāja, son of S'ankaragaṇa(3). It is true that Buddharāja was not crushed for ever, and in 609 A.D. we find him issuing an inscription from Vidis'ā, granting lands in Nasik district(4). But there is no evidence to believe that Buddharāja remained in possession of Mālava during the period 602 to 609 A.D. It is quite possible that as a result of this damaging and serious defeat, Buddharāja lost the new conquests of Mālava. This conflict between the Cālukyas and and the Kalacuris might have given an opportunity to Devagupta, a member of the Gupta dynasty. This usurpation of the throne deprived Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta, sons of Mahāsenagupta,

---

(1) I.A. XIX. p.7 ff. (2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid, VII. p.161 ff. (4) E.I. XII p.30 ff.

of their prospects.[1] Prabhākaravardhana made war on the king of Mālava[2], and therefore it was quite reasonable that Devagupta should make war on the Maukharis, relatives of Prabhākaravardhana. This feud with the Guptas might have induced Prabhākaravardhana to welcome the offer of alliance by the Maukhari king Grahavarman. This explains why Devagupta is always spoken of in abusive terms by Bāṇa and the scribes of the inscriptions. Devagupta carried on the traditional hostility between the two families - the Maukharis and the Guptas. The rupture between the Guptas and the Vardhanas encouraged Grahavarman to seek alliance with the Vardhanas, presumably against the Gauḍa menace. The marriage alliance between the two powerful families alarmed Devagupta, who concluded an alliance with the Gauḍa king. As soon as Prabhākaravardhana died, Devagupta decided to act. He attacked Grahavarman and killed him. This event may have happened in cir. 606 A.D.; thus the imperial Maukhari dynasty came to an end.

As soon as Rājyavardhana heard the sad story of the murder of Gravaharman and imprisonment of his sister by the king of Mālava, he decided "to lay the royal house of Mālava in ruins".[3] Leaving Harṣa in charge of the kingdom of Thāneśvara, he started with Bhaṇḍi and "ten thousand horses". But misfortune awaited him, and Harṣa learnt that his brother,

---

(1) See supra. (2) H.C. CT. p.101.

(3) H.C. p.174-5.

"though he 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 thus weaponless, confiding and alone, was dispatched in his own quarters"(1). The king of Gauḍa has been identified with S'as'āṅka.

Thus ended a crowded chapter in the history of India including Magadha. On the ruins of the Imperial Gupta dynasty, the Maukharis and the later Guptas emerged as rivals for imperial honour and encountered diverse vicissitudes. But by 606 A.D. the main lines of both the families were extinct. Magadha definitely lost her imperial status. The history of India for the next half century was moulded by three great personalities - Harṣavardhana, S'as'āṅka, and Pulakeśin I. Magadha was content to be low for some time.

---

(1) Ibid p. 178.

CHAPTER VIII.

Magadha under the Gauḍas.

The Maukharis, after defeating the Guptas, had made themselves masters of Magadha, and their dominion extended from the eastern boundary of the kingdom of Thāneśvara in the west to Nālandā in the east. But a new power was rising in Bengal. The Gauḍas under Jayanāga and Śaśāṅka emerged as powerful rivals for the imperial honour of Northern India. Ultimately the Maukharis appear to have lost to the Gauḍas the country of Magadha. Śaśāṅka raided as far as Kanauj and killed Rājyavardhana. This resulted in the aggressive campaign of Harṣa in the east, who made himself the sovereign of Magadha. Either during the last years of his reign or immediately after his death, Mādhavagupta son of Mahāsénagupta, became king of Magadha, and thus the later Gupta dynasty was restored after half a century dwelling in the wilderness.

The Gauḍas and Jayanāga.

The first clear epigraphic mention of the Gauḍas is made in the Harāhā inscription of Īśānavarman, where in it is stated that Īśānavarman 'caused the Gauḍas living on the sea-shore in future to remain within their proper

realm'[1]. It is clear from this that the Gauḍas lived on the sea-shore: they had started an offensive but were worsted by Īśānavarman, who forced them for the future, to remain within their proper realm. According to H. C. Raychaudhuri,[2] their proper realm 'was western Bengal, as it bordered on the sea, and included Karṇasuvarṇa and Rāḍhapuri'. The Aphsaḍ inscription mentions the victory of Jīvitagupta I over 'the haughty enemies even when they stood on the sea shore.'[3] These haughty foes were most probably the Gauḍas. In view of this it may be inferred with a degree of certainty that the Gauḍas in their early days lived in south-western Bengal bordering on the sea, though it is not certain whether in those days they controlled Karṇasuvarṇa and Rāḍhapuri. From the Mallasārul copper-plate of Vijayasena it appears that at least in the third year of the reign of Gopacandra, another of whose copper-plates has been found at Faridpur in eastern Bengal[4], western Bengal, including the Bardwan district (Vardhamāna-bhukti), was included in the dominion of Gopacandra. It is certainly significant that no other inscription of Gopacandra, Dharmāditya and Samācāradeva is found in Western Bengal. It appears that these kings had lost

---

(1) E, I.XIV. p.110 f.

(2) P.H.A.I. (4th edition) p.508.

(3) C.I.I. III.No.42 pp.205 ff.

(4) I.A. XXXIX.p.193 (no.c.)

their authority over these regions. The campaign of Jīvitagupta down to the sea-shore and the victory of Mahāsēnagupta on the banks of the Lauhitya show that Northern, Western and Central Bengal must have been under the control of the Guptas. It appears from the combined testimony of the Aphsad and Harāhā inscriptions that the Gauḍas were trying to extend beyond their limits towards the land-mass of Western Bengal and also might have been building up a maritime power. It was therefore that Jīvitagupta [1] defeated them on the seashore and Īsānavarman foiled their attempt at extension.

But the passage "kritvā cāyatī mau (mo) cita-sthala-bhuvo Gauḍān samudrāśrayān" of the Harāhā inscription [2] has been differently interpreted by different scholars. Basak [3] translates it as follows, "(Īsānavarman) made the Gauḍa people take shelter towards the sea shore after causing their land territories to be deprived of their future prospects", and he suggests that the Gauḍa king defeated by Īsānavarman was Jayanāga. Majumdar [4] suggested an emendation and read 'āpratimocita' for 'āyatimocita' and observed, "the engraver of the record at first took the letter to be 'ya' but at the last moment found out his

---

(1) E.I. XXIII p.155 ff.

(2) E.I. XIV p.120 (text), line 13 and plate.

(3) H.N.E.I. p.113

(4) I.C. XI. p.123 ff.

error and tried to make it as much like 'pra' as possible. It may be pointed out that not only is every 'pra' in the plate of the inscription different from what Majumdar reads as 'pra' in line 13, but every 'ya' in the inscription, specially in lines 1, 4, 6, etc. is quite similar to the 'ya' in line 13, and the very little difference may be better accounted for by the movement of the chisel. There is nothing unusual in the phrase 'āyati mocita'. There is no evidence for holding that the homeland of the Gauḍas was lost, and that "the Gauḍas having failed to redeem or recover their land territory were forced to remain on the seashore", and that "Īśānavarman was partially successful in checking the Gauḍas to recover their homeland on the decline of the Gupta Empire"(1). There is no ground at all to hold that Central Bengal was the homeland of the Gaudas from the very beginning. According to D.C. Sarkar, the correct interpretation of the exaggerated claim is that "Īśānavarman drove out the Gauḍa people for the future (for all ages to come=permanently) from the dry land and compelled them to take shelter into the waters of the sea"(2). According to the learned scholar the Gauḍas never lived on the seashore and the sea can hardly be a shelter of a people living on the shore. Ganguli (3) also takes the

---

(1) ibid.

(2) J.A.S.B.L.(Letters) XI. p.69.

(3) J.B.O.R.S. XIX.p.499 ff.

passage to mean that "Īśānavarman, some time before 554 A.D., deprived the king of Gauḍa (modern Rajshahi division) of his sovereignty of the same country, himself took possession of it, and forced the vanquished to move to sea presumably to the coastal tract of southern Bengal. It further suggests that the king of Gauḍa was compelled to live there for a long time."

In spite of these various meanings given to the passage of the inscription we are disposed to accept the simple and obvious meaning that the coastal districts of south-western Bengal were the original homeland of the Gauḍas, who were forced by Īśānavarman to give up their aggressive designs, and they might have for some time lost their homeland and taken shelter on the seashore. The disputed passage may yield a different and more reasonable meaning. Īśānavarman having deprived the Gauḍas, who were on the sea, (Samudrāśrayān), i.e. who had launched maritime enterprises) of their extension, (made them give up their oversea activities), and forced them to stay on land. This interpretation suits the composition of the verse and brings out the contrast between "Samudrāśrayān and Sthalabhūvah". Īśānavarman in the preceding lines is referred to as having defeated the Śūlikas and the Andhras; the latter were a sea-faring people on the east coast, and the Śūlikas were also, most probably, living in

Orissa. Therefore it is more natural to take the Gauḍas, in the same context, to be a maritime people. Their over-sea activities (piracy ?) must have alarmed their neighbours, and the Guptas. The pirates live on sea, take shelter of the sea. Īśānavarman's expedition against the Gauḍas may have been, therefore, directed against the growing menace of piracy by the Gauḍas, to the detriment of the trade and commerce of the country. That may explain why the scribe of Aphsaḍ inscription refers to them as "presumptuous or emboldened". The Gauḍas could be very easily a sea-faring people, and the maritime interests of some Gauḍas are known from literature (1). Śaśāṅka, the king of the Gauḍas, is referred to as ruling "over the earth surrounded by the girdles of the waves of the waters of the four oceans together with islands" (2). Therefore it appears that the Gauḍas lived in the S.W. Bengal. The modern districts of the Hooghli and 24 Parganas with parts of Midnapore may have constituted their home. From this region they appear to have begun to entertain aggressive designs, on the break-up of the Gupta empire, and led compaigns towards the north, and strengthened their navy. The Guptas became alarmed, and when the victory of Jīvita-gupta I did not crush them, Īśānavarman appeared to have come

---

(1) India and Java II p.7. (Chatterji and Chakravarty), quoted by Sarkar in J.A.S.B.L. (Letters) XI. P.69 ff.

(2) E.I. VI.p.143 ff,

to the aid of his relative (Viṣnu-Gupta Candrāditya) and repulsed the Gauḍas, whose king, probably the predecessor of Jayanāga, submitted to him. To us there appears to be nothing impossible in the sea being a shelter of a people living on the seashore. It is quite possible that though the Gauḍas were worsted by Īśānavarman they continued their resistance and succeeded in holding to the coastal districts. Both Pāṇini and Varāhamihira place the Gauḍas in Bengal in Eastern India. The Bṛihatsamhitā (XIV, 6-8) clearly restricts Gauḍaka to a part of Bengal which is distinguished not only from Paundra, Tāmraliptī, Vaṅga, and Samatata, but also from Vardhamāna. This is not against our plea that the Gauḍas may be located in the south-western Bengal bordering on the sea. It is true that according to Yuan Chwang Śaśāṅka was king of Karṇasuvarṇa (1), which has been identified with Rangamāṭī in Murshidabad district in Bengal. The author of Kathāsaritasāgara also makes Gauḍa conterminous with Rāḍha. The exact limits of Rāḍha are not as yet precisely defined. The fact that Yuan Chwang found the king of Gauḍa in central Bengal does not preclude the possibility of their being in Western Bengal bordering on the sea in the beginning. Jīvitagupta I and Īśānavarman

---

(1) The Life, p. 83.

found them on the sea coast. Therefore what appears to be the fact is that, sometime before the Chinese pilgrim, the Gauḍas had made themselves masters of Central Bengal and established their capital at Karṇasuvarṇa. Īśānavarman had only checked them, but had not crushed their power for ever. We have already seen that the campaign of Īśānavarman was in the nature of a punitive raid. The struggle between the Guptas and the Maukharis must have encouraged the Gauḍas to try again. They renewed their efforts to spread into Western and Central Bengal. The victory of the Maukhari king Sarvavarman over the Gupta king Mahāsenagupta may have coincided with the conquest of Western and Central Bengal by the Gauḍas, most probably under Jayanāga, who appears to have made Karṇasuvarṇa the capital of the kingdom. Jayanāga issued the Vappaghoṣavāṭa grant from Karṇasuvarṇa. The village Māliṇā where the grant was found has been identified with the village of the same name in the Singur police station of the Hooghli district.(1) Udumbara-viṣaya of the grant has been identified with the Adumbara sarkar of the Bengal Subah in the Āīn-i- Akbarī, and therefore the Udumbara viṣaya of the inscription was situated in Western Bengal.(2)

---

(1) ABORI. XIX. p. 81. (2) E.I. XIX. p.286-87 ff.

It is in this region that Yuan Chwang and the author of Prabodha-candrodaya found the Gauḍas, who appear to have given their name to the country, as the Mālavas gave a name to the country to which they migrated from the Punjab, where Alexander had found them, as Mālava or Malwa.

The first historical king of the Gauḍas was Jayanāga, not Śaśāṅka as believed by Majumdar (1) and others. We have already referred to his Vappaghoṣavāṭa grant issued from Karṇasuvarṇa in Murshidabad district of Bengal. The success of the Gauḍas must have coincided with the Maukhari and probably Cālukya offensives against the Gupta king Mahāsenagupta. His dominion in Bihar and Bengal appears to have been divided between the Gauḍas and the Maukharis. It is certainly significant that there is absolutely no direct or indirect evidence at all to connect the Maukharis with any part of Bengal, or as a matter of fact with any part of the country east of Nālandā.

But a trial of strength between the Maukharis and the Gauḍas could not be far off. The Gauḍas could hardly forget the defeat inflicted on them by Īśānavarman.(2) Ultimately the Gauḍas established their control over Magadha, and the Maukharis were confined to the modern United

---

(1) R.C. Majumdar (HBR.I. p.56) and Saletore (Life in the Gupta Age, p. 71) hold that Jayanāga followed Śaśāṅka. But we have adduced grounds (see infra) to suggest that Jayanāga was predecessor of Śaśāṅka. (2) E.I.XIV.p 110 ff.

Provinces. There are grounds for strong suspicion that there were some troubles in the Maukhari ruling family either during the last years of Avantivarman's rule or immediately after his death. We have seen that Bhāskara-varman, son of Sūryavarman and grandson of Īsānavarman, requested his sister's son Mahāśivagupta-Bālārjuna to make grants of land for his and his parent's spiritual merits.(1) While from the Harṣacarita we know that Grahavarman was the eldest son of Avantivarman(2), from the Nālandā seal of Avantivarman's son we come across another Maukhari ruler with imperial titles. It is significant that the seal mentions the ancestors down to Avantivarman with the due customary titles, but it omits to refer to Grahavarman.(3) Then we have the Rohtāsgarh seal-matrix of Śaśānkadeva(4) and we have coins of Jaya -(5). These coins are of Archer Type and are described as such:- "on the obverse - king, nimbate, standing left, holding bow in left hand and arrow in the right. Cakra standard left, beneath left arm 'Jaya'. No trace of marginal legend. On the reverse - the goddess (Lakṣmī), nimbate, seated facing on lotus, holding lotus in the left hand and fillet in out-stretched right hand; above on left, an elephant sprinkling her and the legend 'Śrī

---

(1) E.I. XXIII p.113 ff.

(2) H.C. (CT.) p.122.

(3) E.I. XXIV p. 283 ff.

(4) C.I.I.III.no.78 p.283 ff.

(5) CCGDBM. p.150-51. PL.XXIV (6-9).

Prakāṇḍayaśāḥ' [1]. The coins in general follow the style and design of the Archer type coins of the imperial Guptas, more particularly of the later imperial Guptas like Kumāra-Gupta III and Viṣṇu-Gupta Candrāditya. Allan, therefore, suspected 'Jaya' of the coins to be a 'gupta' and completed the name as 'Jayagupta' [2]. But there is no ground for this suspicion at all. There is no trace of 'gupta' on these coins. There is a copper coin in the same Catalogue on which Allan [3] suggests the reading (ja)yagu(ptaḥ), but the coin, according to the learned authority, is much earlier than the gold coins of Jaya-.[4] Therefore there is no warrant at all for restoring the name as 'Jayagupta' on the coins of Jaya-. The absence of the Garuḍa standard on these gold coins further shows that Jaya- was not connected with the Guptas. It should be now accepted as certain that Jaya of the coins is to be identified with Jayanāga of the Vappaghoṣavāṭa inscription, as suggested by Allan himself [5]. After weighing all these evidences critically and collectively we suggest that, taking advantage of the troubles in the Maukhari imperial family which led

---

(1) ibid. (2) ibid, plxi. (3) CCGDBM. p.151, Pl.XXIV,10
(4) ibid, ppciv-cv. (5) E.I. XVIII. p.60 ff.

Bhāskaravarman to seek shelter with Mahāsivagupta-Bālārjuna and the defiance of the authority of his elder brother Grahavarman by Śuva - or Śuca - of the Nālandā seal, the Gauḍas advanced into Magadha and occupied it after defeating the Maukhari ruler, Śuva - or Śuca -. The fact that we have no coins of the last Maukhari prince proves that his rule was very short-lived. As a result of this victory Jayanāga assumed the sovereignty of Magadha, and he celebrated it by issuing an Archer type of gold coins resembling in design and style the coins of the imperial Guptas, whose period was the Golden Age for Magadha.(1) On the reverse of the coin of 'Jaya' we have an elephant sprinkling water on the goddess Lakṣmī (2). This is also faintly visible on the seal of the Vappaghoṣavāṭa inscription(3). Probably it symbolizes the abhiṣeka of, or coronation of Jayanāga as an emperor of Magadha. A confirmation of Jayanāga's authority in Magadha comes from the discovery of a coin-mould of his coin at Nālandā.(4) Śaśāṅka was appointed

---

(1) Was it just to suggest to the Māgadhas that the rule of the foreign (non-local) dynasty was over and the new rulers (the Gauḍas) intended to revive the ancient traditions of the imperial Guptas? Did the people of Magadha acquiesce in this change of masters?

(2) CCGDBM. pp. 150-51, Pl. XXIV, 6-9. (3) E.I. XVIII p.60ff.

(4) ASIAR 1935-36 p.52, Plate XVII d. There is no 'Gupta' on the mould. 'Jaya' is exactly in the same character as on the coins. It is definitely a mould of the Archer type coins of Jaya- whom we have identified with Jayanāga.

the governor or high feudatory of Magadha by Jayanāga. Rohtāsgarh, on the Son, may have been chosen as the seat of the new government as it was strategically near the frontiers of the Maukhari kingdom in U.P., presided over by Grahavarman. This explains the presence of the seal-matrix of Mahāsāmanta Śaśāṅkadeva at Rohtāsgarh.(1) Ganguli thought that Śaśāṅka was a feudatory of Avantivarman, and for some time of Grahavarman as well, and so he was not a national hero of Bengal but rather a successful conqueror.(2) But there is no proof that Grahavarman was ever a ruler of Magadha. The coins of Śaśāṅka are very similar to those of Jayanāga. The latter is referred to as a 'Gauḍarāja' in the M.M.K.(3) Śaśāṅka is certainly the Gauḍa king who killed Rājyavardhana. Therefore Śaśāṅka was certainly a native of Bengal who became governor of Magadha. According to Majumdar, Śaśāṅka began his life as a 'Mahāsāmanta' under Mahāsenagupta, "who must have conquered Magadha, as otherwise he could hardly have proceeded up to the Brahmaputra river"(4). But this contingency, necessitating re-conquest of Magadha from the Maukharis by Mahāsenagupta,

---

(1) C.I.I. III no. 78 p. 283 ff. (2) IHQ.XII.p.456 ff.
(3) I.H.I. (Text) p.55, v.no. 750. (4) HBR. I. p. 56.

is hardly possible. Mahāsenagupta marched up to the Lauhitya not after his defeat at the hands of the Maukharis but before this. Naturally therefore Śaśāṅka could neither be a feudatory of a Maukhari king nor of Mahāsenagupta. He was a Gauḍa, and his rise began under the Gauḍa king Jayanāga. Śaśāṅka became the mahāsāmanta of Magadha under Jayanāga. Neither the Maukharis nor the Guptas could trust him with this high office in view of their past hostility with the Gauḍas. The upshot of the entire discussion is that the Gauḍas under Jayanāga took advantage of the trouble in the Maukhari family over the question of Magadha. Śaśāṅka was chosen as the leader of the campaign against Magadha, and after the successful expulsion of the Maukharis from the country, he became the high-feudatory under the Gauḍa king Jayanāga. Thus the rise of Śaśāṅka practically began with the disruption in the Maukhari family on the issue of Magadha. Our theory is singularly corroborated by the M.M.K., wherein it is clearly stated that "there will be mutual disunion in the Magadha monarchy in the east at the time of the rise of Soma (Śaśāṅka) (1)

---

(1) I.H. I. p. 65, sec. 41. ibid (text), p. 58, v. 780. "magadho nṛipaisteshām anyonyāvarodhinaḥ. Somākhye nṛipate vṛitte prāgdeśe samantataḥ."

ŚAŚĀNKA.

(1) The origins of Śaśāṅka.

The lineage and the early history of Śaśāṅka have been regarded as absolutely obscure and therefore have been the subject of numerous speculations. From the Harṣacarita we learn that Rājyavardhana was killed by the king of Gauḍa. The king of Gauḍa according to one manuscript of the Harṣacarita was named Narendragupta (1). According to Yuan Chwang, Śaśāṅka, the king of Karṇasuvarṇa in Eastern India, killed Rājyavardhana (2). Therefore it can hardly be contested that Śaśāṅka was the king of Gauḍa, and if we rely on the solitary authority of the manuscript quoted by Bühler, then Narendragupta might have been a second name for Śaśāṅka. Nagendra Nath Vasu thinks that the king of Gauḍa, who killed Rājyavardhana, was Narendragupta, and Śaśāṅka was his 'Mahāsāmanta' (3). But this is impossible, because the Chinese pilgrim makes a definite and positive statement that Śaśāṅka, the king of Karṇasuvarṇa killed Rājyavardhana:

(1) H.C. (CT) p. 78; E.I. I p. 70.

(2) On Yuan Chwang (Watters) I. p.34.

(3) Social History of Kāmarūpa III, quoted by K.L. Barua in JARS. I p. 97.

and besides this there is no place for a Narendragupta in the 7th century A.D. in the history of Madhyadeśa.

Some scholars have tried to connect Śaśāṅka with the Guptas. Vidyāvinoda takes him to be the son of Mahāsenagupta[1]. Bannerji suspected that probably 'he belonged to the Gupta dynasty of Magadha', and 'both he and Devagupta of Mālava, probably tried to restore the prestige of the Gupta dynasties of India immediately after the death of Prabhākaravardhana'[2]. The same provenance and the similarity of the coins of Śaśāṅka with those of the later imperial Guptas - e.g. Kumāra Gupta III, led Bannerji to this conclusion.[3] But there is no real basis for this suspicion. Alliance between Devagupta and Śaśāṅka against their common enemies, the Maukharis and their allies the Vardhanas, does not, and should not, suggest any blood-relationship between Śaśāṅka and Devagupta. Similarity in the style and provenance of the coins does not necessarily prove any family kinship between the Guptas and Śaśāṅka. On the same grounds Bhaṭṭaśāli connects Śaśāṅka with

---

(1) Kāmarūpa śāsanāvalī p. 15 (intro.)

(2) History of Orissa I, p. 129. (3) ibid; B.I. p. 105.

Samācāradeva[1]. The existence of the Rohtāsgarh seal-matrix does not prove any connection between Śaśāṅka and Mahāsenagupta or the imperial Guptas. On his coins we have 'nandidhvaja' instead of 'garuḍadhvaja' as commonly found on the Gupta coins. There is not even an indirect hint in the inscriptions of his feudatories about his alleged connection with the Guptas, which was certainly a point of special honour not to be missed by his vassals, when the latter were eulogising their sovereign overlord. No allusion to this suspicion is even indirectly made in the Harṣacarita when it refers to the king of Gauḍa on many occasions. Raychaudhuri[2] rightly remarks that "there is no reason to believe that Śaśāṅka belonged to the Gupta family, even if he had a secondary name, Narendragupta."

Bhaṭṭaśāli's suggestion that Śaśāṅka was the son and successor of Mahārājādhirāja Samācāradeva is equally unacceptable. The grounds on which this startling theory is based are that (a) a Rājalīlā type of coin of

---

(1) JASB. (N.S.) XIX. Num. Sup. P. 54 Nff.

(2) P.H.A.I. (4th edn.) P.514, foot-note 3: Barua (Early History of Kāmrūpa p. 60) comes to the same conclusion. He adds another reason that as Śaśāṅka was a persecutor of Buddhism he could not belong to the Gupta dynasty, which was a follower of the policy of religious toleration.

Samācāradeva was found with a gold coin of Śaśāṅka,[1] (b) both Samācāradeva and Śaśāṅka were Śaivas and have the bull on their coins, and (c) Allan[2] holds that the coins which have Narendrāditya on the reverse are earlier than those of Śaśāṅka. But all these grounds are weak and untenable. With a coin of Śaśāṅka and the Rājalīlā type coin of Samācāradeva were also found the coins of Candra Gupta II, Kumāra Gupta and Skanda Gupta[3], but because of this nobody would hazard the theory that Narendrāditya, i.e. i.e. Samācāradeva, as proved by Bhaṭṭaśāli (Loc.cit.), belonged to the Gupta dynasty. Śaśāṅka certainly came after Samācāradeva, and he may or may not have conquered Eastern Bengal, but this can never point to the conclusion that therefore Śaśāṅka was the son and successor of Samācāradeva, as by such reasoning any conqueror would become the descendant of the vanquished. As for the

---

(1) CCGDBM. p. cxxvii.

(2) CCGDBM. Intro. plxi, cxxiv, p. 149-50. Allan read 'Narendrāditya' on the reverse on both the coins, while on the obverse on the archer type he read 'saha' or 'sama' or 'yama' (ibid. p. cxxiv.); while on the 'Rājalīlā' type he read 'yama'?dha', on the obverse: Smith (C.I.M. Ip.120. No. 1) read on the archer type coin specified 'uncertain', 'ca' between the feet on the obverse, and possibly 'Narendravinata' on the reverse, and on the other designated as 'Throned-king type' i.e. Rājalīlā type (ibid p.122 No.1. Pl. XVI.13) he read 'yama' on the obverse and Narendrāditya. According to R.D. Bannerji the name of the king on both the coins is 'yama' and the reverse legend is Narendravinata. Bhattasali (loc. cit.) has conclusively proved that the two coins belong to Samācāradeva Narendrāditya, who is the same as Mahārājādhirāja Samācāradeva who issued a copper-plate grant found in the Faridpur district of eastern Bengal (JRAS VII. N.S. p.475 ff).

(3) CCGDBM. poxxvii.

similarity of the coins of Śaśāṅka with those of Samācāradeva, it is important to note the difference as well. We have only one coin (Archer type) of Samācāradeva, which has a bull standard on the reverse. His other coin is of Rājalīlā type and it has no sign of 'nandī-dhvaja' or any symbol connected with Śiva. Therefore it is obvious that the 'nandī-dhvaja' or bull-standard was no exclusive and permanent specific feature of the coinage of Samācāradeva Narendrāditya. But on all the specimens of the coin of Śaśāṅka (1) we have the 'bull' on the obverse with the moon and the image of Śiva. This certainly leads to the conclusion that the Nandī-symbol was a distinct and specific characteristic of the coinage of Śaśāṅka. Moreover it is interesting and necessary to note the vital differences between the Bull-standard coin of Samācāradeva and the coins of Śaśāṅka. The coin of the former has been described by Allan as follows:- Archer type, wt. 148.2 grs., obverse the king standing on left, holding bow in left hand and arrow in right hand, Bull (nandī) on left, beneath, left arm 'sa ha (?) ca', no trace of marginal legend; reverse, Goddess (Lakṣmī) nimbate, seated facing on lotus,

---

(1) CCGDBM. pp. 147-48; C.I.M.I. pp 121-22.

holding lotus in left hand and fillet in out-stretched right hand, symbol (?) on left. Śrī Narendrāditya."(1) No coin of Śaśāṅka exceeds 145.6 grains in weight.(2) The coins of Śaśāṅka have been described by Allan as follows:- obverse, Śiva nimbate, reclining to left on bull (nandī) to left, with left hand uplifted, holding uncertain object; moon (Śaśāṅka) above on left, on right Śrī Śa, below 'Jaya'; reverse goddess (Lakṣmī) nimbate seated facing on lotus, holding lotus in left hand which rests on knee, and with outstretched right hand empty; above on either side elephant sprinkling water over her (abhiṣeka), no symbol; on right Śrī Śaśāṅkaḥ."(3) The difference would be obvious to all. The 'bull' with Śiva and the moon on the obverse and the elephant sprinkling water on the goddess on either side on the reverse are features distinguishing these coins from the coins of Samācāradeva.

The most serious objection against the theories that connect Śaśāṅka with the Guptas or Samācāradeva is that Śaśāṅka was a Gauḍa(4) and neither the Guptas nor Samācāradeva nor his predecessors Dharmāditya and

---

(1) CCGDBM. p.149. (2) ibid, pp.147.48: C.I.M.I.pp.121-22.

(3) CCGDBM. p. 147. (4) The murderer of Rājyavardhana is called 'gauḍādhipa' 'gauḍādhamṃa', 'duṣṭagauḍabhujaṅga' (H.C. (parab) pp.187, 188, 192); and 'the vilest of the Gauḍas' (H.C.CT. p.180.) 'Gauḍa-serpent' (ibid,p.185). Harṣa promised to clear this earth of the Gauḍas' (ibid, p. 187), "nirgauḍam na karomi medinīm" (Parab. p.194). All these quotations make it clear that the Śaśāṅka, the murderer of Rājyavardhana, was a 'Gauḍa', or a native of Gauḍa, otherwise there was no reason to abuse the whole people.

Gopacandra are ever referred to as 'Gauḍa' in the inscriptions. The coins of Śaśāṅka may in style and provenance be common with the coins of the imperial Guptas, but the design on the obverse and reverse of the coins of Śaśāṅka disprove any dynastic connection between him and the Guptas. Majumdar suspected some relationship between Śaśāṅka and the Māna chiefs.(1) But there is absolutely no real basis for this suggestion. Much more absurd is the opinion of Gosavi(2) that as there is a Mṛigāṅka in the Varman dynasty of Kāmarūpa, so Śaśāṅka may be a prince of the Varman dynasty, probably a cousin of Bhāskaravarman. It needs no comment at all.

We proceed to discuss now the relationship between Śaśāṅka and Jayanāga. Jayanāga issued the Vappāghosavāṭa grant from Karṇasuvarṇa(3). The gold coins of Jaya- have been rightly attributed to Jayanāga(4). The period that elapsed between Jayanāga and Śaśāṅka, both kings of Gauḍa, could not be long, as is clear in the context of the history of the period, and the characters on the coins and inscriptions. A comparative study of the coins of

---

(1) JAHRS. X. pp.1ff. (2) JARS. II. p. 12.

(3) E.I. XVIII pp.60 ff. (4) See supra.

Jayanāga and Śaśāṅka confirms our suspicion that there was some sort of close relationship between the two and the one followed the other almost immediately. In Allan's expert opinion "the issuer of the coins which bear the reverse legend 'śrī prakāṇḍayaśāḥ' and have 'jaya' beneath the king's arm on the obverse may be connected with Śaśāṅka." After comparing the coins of 'Jaya-' and Śaśāṅka, the learned scholar concludes, "It is clear from the resemblance of the reverses that the coins of Jaya- and Śaśāṅka are closely connected"(1). Nāga appears to be an appellation of Jaya-, and there is no trace of 'gupta' on his coins(2). It may be of some significance to note that Śaśāṅka, or the Gauḍa king who killed Rājyavardhana, is at numerous places in the Harṣacarita compared to a serpent(3). Jayanāga and Śaśāṅka were associated with Karṇasuvarṇa, as the capital of their kingdom, and while Śaśāṅka is called the king of Gauḍa in the Harṣacarita,

---

(1) ibid. pCV. (2) ibid. pp. 150-51.

(3) H.C. Text. (Parab) "vṛithā vitatāvipulaphaṇā-bhāro bhujaṅgaṇā bhartta bibharti yo bhogena mṛit-piṇḍam eva kevalam" (p. 191) probably refers to Śaśāṅka or his government (CT. p. 183. fn. 8.); duṣṭagauḍabhujaṅga (Parab, p. 192), (H.C. CT.p.185.) It has to be admitted that nowhere in the Harṣacarita is Śaśāṅka compared to a serpent by the term 'nāga'.

Jayanāga is probably referred to as 'Gauḍarāja' in the Manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa.(1) Śaśāṅka is referred to as belonging to the Brāhmaṇa caste, and Jayanāga is also said to belong to the same caste(2). All these facts prove that Śaśāṅka and Jayanāga were closely related to one another. But the nature of the exact relationship between the two can only be guessed. Except for the reference to a 'Gauḍarāja Nāgarāja with 'Jaya' as the beginning of his name in the Manju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa, soon after Śaśāṅka(3), there is no positive evidence that Jayanāga followed Śaśāṅka. Though Jayasval has not taken this passage to refer to Jayanāga, (he takes it to allude to a much earlier period(4)), we may agree with Majumdar(5) in regarding the verse as referring to Jayanāga. The M.M.K. is at many places confused as regards chronology and details. At one place it says that Śaśāṅka was a brāhmaṇa, and in another it asserts that the murderer of Rājyavardhana was of a low caste(6). Then from the same source it appears that

---

(1) I.H.I. p.55 (Text) v.no.750. (2) ibid.

(3) I.H.I. p.50 (text) v.no. 750. (4) ibid, p.51.

(5) H.B.R. I. p. (6) I.H.I. p. 50.

Jayanāga was earlier than Soma (Saśānka) and that Jayanāga had made war in Orissa, and after him there was a division of Gauḍa-tantra between Saśānka and another man.(1) In view of such contradictory remarks and the perfunctory nature of the work, we may not be correct in arriving at any conclusion as to who followed the other. But one thing is clear: if we believe that Jayanāga preceded Saśānka, we can rely on the Manju-Śrī-Mūla-Kalpa as much or as little as the other side.

Our plea that Jayanāga was followed by Saśānka and not vice versa, is not against numismatic evidence. According to Allan(2) "the base gold coins which bear the name Jaya cannot be earlier than the end of the sixth Century A.D. ". It may be of some significance that the coins of 'Jaya-', having the average of 136 grains in weight, are lighter than those of Saśānka, whose average weight is 145.8 grains (3). As generally accepted, the lighter coins

---

(1) ibid p. 66, Text p. 62, v. no 829 B., 829 c.

(2) CCGDBM. p. CIV. (3) ibid, p. ~~CXXXIV~~ CXXXIV.

of Jaya- may be earlier than the heavier ones of Śaśāṅka. As against this it may be pointed out that the light weight 'is due to the fact that they are of very base metal' (1), and that Cunningham has shown that coins of 'Jaya- (gupta?) are much more alloyed than those of Śaśāṅka. On this ground Bhaṭṭaśālī (3) held that Jayanāga must have come later. Debasement of metal in the coins, though generally it may suggest a later period in comparison with coins of better metal, can never be taken as necessarily later as a universal rule. Coins of Prakāśāditya (4), whom we have identified with Budha Gupta (5), are much better than the coins of some of his predecessors as regards the fineness of the metal. Then we have a coin of Śaśāṅka (6) which for its purity of metal is unique not only among his own coins but also among the coins of the most of the later imperial Guptas like Kumāra Gupta III and Viṣṇu Gupta Candrāditya. Cunningham had very few coins of Jayanāga and Śaśāṅka at his disposal, and therefore his conclusion about the percentage of the pure metal and alloy may not be very reliable.

---

(1) ibid. (2) CM. I. (3) JASB. (N.S.) XXI, Num. Supp. pp. N 6 ff.
(4) CGDBM. pp. 135-36. (5) See supra. (6) CCGDBM. p. 148 (612) Pl. XXIV, 2.
(7) App. I b.

We have some of the coins of Śaśāṅka in the British Museum which are more debased than those of Jayanāga. Some of the coins of Śaśāṅka are so thoroughly debased that they are actually of copper with a plating of silver, and had a thin wash of gold over it, and must have circulated as gold coins.(1) The better quality of Śaśāṅka's coins may reflect a more prosperous period for the kingdom than was the case in the time of Jayanāga. The existence of the Seal-matrix of Mahāsāmanta Śaśāṅkadeva at Rohtāsgarh in South Bihar may be used to strengthen our contention that Śaśāṅka was a Gauḍa and came after Jayanāga. Sen(2) held that Śaśāṅka began his career as a Mahāsāmanta in Magadha', and, 'this post he held probably under Avantivarman, the father of Śarvavarman'. He further observed that "in this capacity he may have exercised some sort of control over the Varmans of Gayā, whose status does not seem to have been higher than that of a Sāmanta". He concluded, "Śaśāṅka was as yet only a high official, but the edifice of his future greatness was reared on this comparatively obscure basis .....

(1) Appendix I b.
(2) Some Historical Aspects of the inscriptions of Bengal p. 261.

and after the defeat of Avantivarman by the Cālukyas, he made himself master of Magadha ..... and swooped down upon Puṇḍravardhana immediately after the death of Mahāsenagupta." But the story suggested is highly improbable. The Varmans of Gayā were certainly earlier in time than the imperial Maukharis in Magadha. The enemy of Mangaleśa Cālukya was more probably Mahāsenagupta, not Avantivarman. The Śūlikas of the Harāhā inscription may not have been Cālukyas. The most serious flaw in this imaginative story is that Mahāsenagupta after his defeat at the hands of the Maukharis was not ruling in Puṇḍravardhan but in Malwa. On the same grounds we have to reject the theory of Ganguli (1) that Śaśānka was the high feudatory of Magadha under the Maukhari kings Avantivarman and Grahavarman, and later on, he conquered Magadha and invaded Gauḍa, and therefore he was a native of Magadha and successful conqueror of Gauḍa (Bengal). Really it is difficult to understand the ascription of a Magadhan origin to Śaśānka. If he was a native of Magadha, it would

---

(1) I.H.Q. XII. pp. 456 f.

have been more natural for him to keep the centre of his kingdom in Magadha, the country of glorious imperial traditions, than to make Karṇasuvarṇa in Bengal his capital. Majumdar held that Śaśāṅka was a feudatory of Mahāsenagupta, who rewarded his valuable help in his war against the Varman king of Kāmarūpa[1]. But we have already shown the weakness of the theory, as it makes us presume the reconquest of Magadha from the Maukharis by Mahāsenagupta, a very remote possibility, as we know that Mahāsenagupta's family must have suffered some serious calamity, as his sons were acting as attendants on Rājyavardhana and Harṣavardhana. Much more improbable is Barua's suggestion that Mahāsenagupta reconquered Northern and Central Bengal from the king of Kāmarūpa and appointed Śaśāṅka as Mahāsāmanta over this region, and that after the death of Mahāsenagupta Śaśāṅka declared himself independent.[2] Śaśāṅka was the Mahāsāmanta in Magadha, not in Northern and Central Bengal.

Thus we find that we have no real basis to connect Śaśāṅka with the Guptas or the Maukharis. Śaśāṅka was a Gauḍa and Jayanāga was also a king of Gauḍa. It appears to

---

(1) HBR. 1. p. 59.

(2) Early History of Kāmarūpa p.58-59.

be very plausible that Śaśāṅka was appointed as Mahāsāmanta of Magadha by Jayanāga, who extended his authority over Magadha. In the history of Magadha as known from Yuan Chwang, inscriptions and literature, there is no place for a powerful king like Jayanāga, in the period following Śaśāṅka. After Śaśāṅka we have to place Pūrṇavarman, Harṣa and Mādhavagupta in Magadha. Therefore if Jayanāga could ever be connected with Magadha, as certainly was the case, then he must have come before Śaśāṅka. This fact receives unexpected corroboration from the coins of Śaśāṅka. These coins[1] have on the obverse legends 'Śrī Śa' and below it 'Jaya', not 'Jayaḥ' as Cunningham read it[2]. It is clear from the coins that the legend 'Jaya' is complete by itself and is not a part of any fuller legend. It is exactly in the same form and characters as 'Jaya' on the coins of Jayanāga. It is a very general practice to have the name of the ruling king on the obverse of the coins, and therefore the legend 'Śrī Śa' certainly stands for Śaśāṅka and 'Jaya' for Jayanāga. It is quite possible that Śaśāṅka was the yuvarāja of Jayanāga and was associated with the government in the lifetime of Jayanāga, as was

---

(1) CCGDBM. pp. 147-48.

(2) C.M.I. p. 15, Pl. II 3.

very common in ancient India. The coins of Śaśāṅka may have originated in this way and continued later on, just to recall Jayanāga with gratitude and emphasize the close relationship between the two. It is certainly a rare example, but on the coins of the Kalacuri king Kṛiṣṇarāja we have the legend 'parama-māheśvara mātā-pitṛi-pādānudhyāta śrī-Kṛiṣṇarāja'.(1) Śaśāṅka may have advanced farther and put the name of his predecessor on his coins. A serious objection against the hypothesis proposed above may be raised: from his coins Jayanāga appears to be a devotee of Viṣṇu(2), as on these we have the 'cakra' standard and the king with bow and arrow, while Śaśaṅka was a Śaiva, as is clear from his coins with the image of Śiva, the Bull and the Moon, and also from the account of Yuan Chwang(3). It is quite possible that Śaśāṅka may not have been a son of Jayanāga. He might have belonged to a different family, and may have become the 'yuvarāja' or the 'regent' of the empire under the old king Jayanāga. Śaśāṅka being the viceroy of Magadha must have been the most powerful figure

---

(1) I.A. XIV, p. 68; JNSI, III, pp 21f.

(2) CCGDBM. pp. 150-51.

(3) WATTERS II p. 116

in the kingdom, and therefore it could not have been difficult for him to make himself the architect of the Gauḍa Empire. Thus the comparative study of the coins of Śaśāṅka and Jayanāga suggests that Śaśāṅka followed Jayanāga. Whether it was a peaceful succession or otherwise cannot be said at present. Śaśāṅka may have been an usurper, and therefore continued to put the name of Jayanāga on his coins to impress on the people that succession from Jayanāga was direct and legitimate. It is significant that on some of the coins of Śaśāṅka there is no mention of 'Jaya'(1). Such coins may have been issued in the later years of Śaśāṅka when his position was secure in Gauḍa.

The later history of Śaśāṅka shows that he was a man of restless energy and unbounded ambition. He would have been certainly the last person to be satisfied with the subordinate status of a Mahāsāmanta; specially when as a viceroy he controlled a largar and also more important territory than the overlord. Therefore his anxiety to become the master of the Gauḍa empire may easily be understood. But as a wise statesman he acted with moderation,

---

(1) CCGDBM., p. 148. No. 612, Pl. XXIV, 2. This coin is much lighter in weight than others and is of very fine metal. On this coin on the obverse Allan hesitantly reads 'Jaya'?, but I had the privilege to examine the coin with Mr. Allan and the legend is certainly not 'Jaya', and Allan agrees with this remark. Allan considers the coin to be a contemporary imitation. There is another coin of Śaśāṅka in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, on the obverse of which, Smith hesitatingly reads 'Saja'. Its weight is 145.6, the usual average weight of Śaśāṅka's coins.

and even when he became the real master of the kingdom he continued to show honour to Jayanāga by stamping his name with his own on his coins. It may be that the people of the empire might have welcomed the succession or usurpation of Śaśāṅka after the old king Jayanāga, who was a contemporary of Śarvavarman and Mahāsēnagupta, at a time when royal sovereignty was not stable with one person in Northern India, as hinted by Bāṇa (1), and specially when the Maukharis, ousted from Magadha by the Gauḍas, must have been feeling sore.

(ii) The accession and conquests of Śaśāṅka.

In view of the paucity of materials at our disposal, it is impossible to state in detail the exact course of events of Śaśāṅka's assumption of the sovereignty of the Gauḍa empire. It is very unfortunate that while his rival Harṣa had Bāṇa and a sympathetic Yuan Chwang to paint his life in rosy colours, Śaśāṅka, who is in no way inferior to

---

(1) H.C. (CT) p. 168, 'Śrī, the goddess of sovereignty is roaming'.

Harṣa in achievements and statecraft, had only prejudiced authors to tell his incomplete and distorted story. In view of the fact that Śaśāṅka was dead before 637 A.D., and is known to have been ruling in 619 A.D., we may not be wrong in assuming that he came to occupy the throne at Karṇasuvarṇa in about 602 A.D. The prosperity of Gauḍa under Śaśāṅka is indirectly proved by the coins, some of which are of finer metal than those of Jayanāga, and one of them is 'unique for its purity of metal, fabric and weight.' The reverses of the coins of Jaya- and Śaśāṅka treat the same subject - the abhiṣeka[1] - but on the coins of Jaya- we have only one elephant sprinkling water on the Lakṣmī, while on the coins of Śaśāṅka we have elephants on either side. Does this suggest greater power and pomp of Śaśāṅka?

Śaśāṅka was a powerful king ruling over a vast territory. This is, indirectly of course, attested by Bāṇa, Yuan Chwang, and M.M.K.. The various inscriptions of the time which have lately come to light show that his empire was extensive. The style and the provenance of his coins tell the same story. Between 602 A.D., when he came

---

(1) CCGDBM. p. CV.

to the throne, and 606 A.D., when he killed Rājyavardhana, he appears to have made his weight felt in the countries of Daṇḍabhukti, Utkala and Ganjām. He was master of Magadha and controlled almost the whole of Bengal.

From the Ganjām plates of Mādhavarāja II., dated the Gupta year 300 (= 619-20 A.D.) we know that Śaśāṅka was recognised as the 'Mahārājādhirāja' in Kongudha (Ganjām)-maṇḍala at that time (1). There can be no doubt that the Mahārājādhirāja Śaśāṅka of the Ganjām plates was the same Śaśāṅka who killed Rājyavardhana. The stages before the conquest of the Ganjām district of Orissa were not known. In the absence of any proof of the authority of Śaśāṅka over the northern part of Orissa, it was a matter of speculation whether Śaśāṅka controlled the modern districts of Balasore and Cuttuck, through which he must have passed for advancing to the Ganjām region. B.C. Majumdar realised how difficult it was for Narendragupta (Śaśāṅka) to come 'upon Purī without traversing the districts of Balasore and Cuttuck,' and how could he, from his seat in Bengal, 'keep the Kongada country under his rule when the northern portions of Orissa were under the rule of another house of rulers.' To meet

---

(1) E.I. VI. pp. 143 ff.

the difficulty he was constrained to suggest that "Śaśāṅka may have swooped down upon Kongoda (Ganjām) through the road from Bengal to Puri through Dalbhum and the hill tracts of Orissa." (1) But fortunately we are now in a position to state that Śaśāṅka took the usual and more convenient route from Bengal to Ganjām, through the districts of Midnapur and Balasore. From the two copper plates of Śaśāṅka's time found in Midnapur (2) it is clear that Śaśāṅka was master of Daṇḍabhukti and Utkala (Northern Orissa). These plates are dated, but most fortunately the dates are very difficult to decipher. Majumdar (3) reads the year 19 or 309 (G.E.) on the first plate and the year 8 on the second. He takes the dates to refer to the period of the office of the feudatories and not to the regnal year of the sovereign. This is very unusual. We feel that the plates must have been dated in the regnal years of the overlord Śaśāṅka. The numerical figures on the first plate are very unusual, and nothing of the kind appear on the inscriptions of the Guptas or even on those from Nepal. The first numeral appears to resemble the

---

(1) B.C. Majumdar- Orissa in the Making, pp. 110.

(2) JASB (Letters) XI. p. 1 ff.

(3) ibid.

first numeral of the date of the inscription of Buddharāja[1], and the latter has been read as denoting '300'. On this analogy the first letter denoting the date on the first plate of Saśānka may be read as '300'. But it may be stated that there is also some difference between the two, as will be clear from the examination of the plates in question. Because of similarity between this letter with the first letter signifying the days of the month in the same plate[2], Majumdar read it as '10'. But he was aware of the difference between the two. The second numeral which is very probably the sign for 'la', has been read by the learned scholar to be '9', on the analogy of the Pahārpur plate, where the same letter has been read by Dikṣit to mean '9'[3]. In the Svalpa-Veṭūra grant of Ganga Anantavarman, the numeral 'la' has been read as '9'.[4] But it may be pointed out that neither of the learned scholars has cited any authority for reading '9' from the sign 'la'. The numeral 'la' has been read as '3' in line 26 of the Chicacole plates of Devendravarman. Bühler read it for 3 in the Jirjinji

---

(1) E.I. XII p.30 f. (2) JASBL. XI. p. 1ff. (Letters)

(3) E.I. XX pp 61 ff. (4) ibid, XXIV.pp129 ff.

grant of Indravarman[1]. Subbarao,[2] D.C. Sarkar,[3] and Ghosh[4] read the same sign in the inscription as denoting '30'. Bühler read the syllable 'la' in the Chicacole plate as 3.[5] In the Table number 71 of Ojha's Bhartīya-prācīna-lipi-mālā, the numerical syllable 'la' has been read as 3 in the three inspections belonging to Śivaskandavarman and Jayavarman[6]. It is particularly important to note that the first two signs of the above table closely resemble the second numeral of the first plate of Śaśānka, denoting both the years and the day of the month. In view of this we feel that we may be nearer truth in reading the dates on the plate as year 303 or 13, and the day as 13th of the month. The first numeral of the syllables denoting day must be 'lo', as Majumdar has read on the analogy of the Biharsharif inscription of Mahendrapāla[7]. The date on the second plate is the year 8, as read by Majumdar[8]. Therefore Śaśānka was certainly ruling over the modern districts of Midnapur and Northern Orissa as is clear from the plates under discussion, either in 622-23 A.D., if the first plate

---

(1) E.I. III. p. 131 ff; Buhler's Table IX. Col. XV, 2.
(2) JAHRS. VII, p. 229 ff. (3) Ibid. (4) E.I.XXV.pp 281 ff.
(5) Indian Palaeography, p.78. (6) Bharatīya-Prācīna-Lipi-Mālā, Table 71
(7) M.A.S.I.No.66,p.105, Pl.XI d (8) JASBL XI. pp. 1 ff.

is dated in the Gupta era, or in 615 A.D., if it is dated in the 13th year of his reign. It may be pointed out that the date marks for the year on the second plate are very much damaged, and though it has been provisionally read as being dated in the 8th year, it may have been actually dated in the Gupta era, as are the Ganjām plates of Mādhavarāja II[1] or the Paṭiakella grant of Mahārāja Śivarāja[2], or the Soro plate A. of Mahārāja Śambhuyaśas[3]. But it is equally possible that the Midnapur plates are dated in regnal years, as are the other three plates from Soro and the Balasore plate of Mahārāja Bhānu.

Four copper plates have been discovered in Soro in the Balasore district of Orissa[4]. From plates B and C we come to know that Mahābalādhikṛita Antaranga and Mahāsandhivigrahika Somadatta made grants of land to Dhruvamitrasvāmin, Āraṅgamitrasvāmin and others in the year 15[5]. From Midnapur plate number I of Śaśāṅka we know that in the year 13 (read 9 by Majumdar) on the 13th

---

(1) E.I. VI. pp.143 ff. (2) ibid, IX. pp. 285 ff.

(3) ibid. XXIII. pp. 197 ff. N.G. Majumdar read the date in the Kalacuri era, but Majumdar has shown that it should belong to the Gupta era. (JASBL. XI. pp. 1ff)

(4) E.I. XXIII. pp. 197 ff. (5) ibid.

day of Bhādra, 'while the illustrious Śaśāṅka is protecting the earth ..... Daṇḍabhukti along with Utkala is ruled by the illustrious feudatory Mahārāja Somadatta'[1]. The learned scholar has adduced very good reasons for identifying Somadatta of this plate with Somadatta of the Soro plates. He has rightly presumed that the unnamed suzerain of the latter plates was Śaśāṅka.[2] The late Mr. N.G. Majumdar[3] on the basis of the difference in the palaeography between the Ganjām plates of Mādhavarāja II and the Soro plates held that the Soro plates belong to the earlier period and should be assigned to the Kalacuri era. But Majumdar[4] has conclusively proved that the Soro plates and the Midnapur plates of the time of Śaśāṅka betray exactly the same palaeographic characteristics, and therefore both sets of plates belong to the same period. The date 260 on the Soro plate[5] may therefore be read as of the Gupta era. From the Soro plate D[6] we learn that Mahāpratīhāra Mahārāja Bhānudatta in the year 5, meditating on the feet of his suzerain, made grants of land to Priyamitrasvāmin, Vaṭamitrasvāmin, Dhruvamitrasvāmin and

---

(1) JASBL. XI. pp. 1 ff. (2) ibid. (3) E.I.XXIII.pp.197f
(4) JASBL. XI. pp.1ff. (5) E.I. XXIII.p.197 ff.
(6) ibid.

Ārungamitrasvāmin. This Bhānudatta has been identified with Mahāpratīhāra-Mahārāja Sāmaṇta Śrī Bhānu- of the Balasore copper-plate inscription (1). This is also dated in the year 5, and in it mention is made of the fact that the feudatory was meditating on the feet of the sovereign overlord (Paramabhaṭṭāraka). The donees of the grant are Priyamitrasvāmin, Vaṭamitrasvāmin, Dhruvamitrasvāmin and Ārungamitrasvāmin. The donees of this grant are the same as of the Soro plate D, though the Balasore plate is earlier by a little over three months than the Soro plate (2). In Soro plates B and C the donees are, besides others, Dhruvamitrasvāmin and Ārungasvāmin. N.G. Majumdar, the editor of the Soro plates, opined that "there could be no difference of more than a generation between Bhānudatta and Somadatta" (3). R.C. Majumdar concluded that Somadatta was followed by Bhānudatta in the government of Uttara-Tosali on the grounds that the names of the two donees in the B and C plates from Soro reappear along with others in plate D of the same set, and the name Ārungasvāmi is changed

---

(1) IHQ. XI. pp. 611 ff.; E.I. XXVI. pp. 239 ff.

(2) E.I. XXVI. pp. 239 ff.

(3) Ibid, XXIII. pp. 197 ff.

into Ārungamitrasvāmin in the latter (1). We beg to differ with the conclusion arrived at by the learned scholar. The fact may be just the reverse. In the Soro plate D and in the Balasore plate of Śrī Bhānu the donees' names end in 'mitra', but in the Soro plates B and C the name of Ārungamitrasvāmin is changed into Ārungasvāmin. It appears that the real name was Ārungamitrasvamin and later on it was shortened into Ārungasvāmin.(2) The two other donees - Priyamitrasvāmin, and Vaṭamitrasvāmin - who do not appear in the Soro plates of Somadatta, were probably dead. It may have some significance that Dhruvamitrasvāmin and Ārungamitrasvāmin appear last in the list of the donees in the Soro and Balasore plates of Bhānudatta, while in the Soro plates B and C Dhruvamitrasvāmin and Ārungasvāmin are mentioned at the head of the list. Moreover as the dates on the copper plates of the feudatories must have been in the regnal years of the overlord Śaśānka, the date of Bhānudatta's plates(3) being 5, it is obvious that Bhānudatta must have come earlier than Somadatta, whose earliest date is probably 13 in the regnal year of his overlord. The

---

(1) JASBL. X.I. pp. 1 ff.

(2) E.I. XXIII. P.197 ff; IHQ. XI. pp. 611 ff; E.I. XXVI.pp.239 f

(3) E.I. XXIII. pp. 197. ff.

foregoing discussion makes it clear that before the 5th year of his reign Śaśāṅka was master of Uttara-Tosali, in modern Balasore and Midnapur districts. From the Paṭiākella inscription of the (Gupta) year 283 (= 602-3 A.D.) we learn that the sovereignty of the Māna family was recognised at least in the Cuttuck district of Orissa(1). The imperial titles in the inscription may refer to Śambhuyaśaś. From the Soro plate A it is clear that in the year 260 Mahārāja Śambhuyaśaś granted land in the Balasore district, then situated in Uttara Tosali(2). N.G. Majumdar thought that the date belonged to the Kalacuri era (3); but R.C. Majumdar has conclusively proved that the date should be assigned to the Gupta era(4). It is therefore clear that at least from G.E. 260 to 283 the sovereignty of the Māna rulers was recognised in Northern and Central Orissa. It is certainly significant that while imperial titles are not given to Śambhuyaśaś in the Soro plate, in the Paṭiākella inscription he seems to be referred to as

---

(1) E.I. IX. pp 285 ff. (2) ibid. XXIII. pp197 ff.

(3) ibid. (4) JASBL. XI. pp.1 ff.

Paramabhaṭṭāraka Devatādhideva[1]. He belonged to the Mudgala family[2]. It is also notable that Mahārāja Śambhuyaśas.is referred to as 'va (ba) ppa pādānudhyātaḥ' [3]. This may suggest that in 260 G.E. (= 579-80 A.D.) Śambhuyaśas' may have been subordinate to his father, but in 283 G.E. (=602-3 A.D.), the date of the Paṭiākella grant [4], he was the supreme lord himself. Śambhuyaśes'may have belonged to the Māna family. Whether the sovereignty of the Māna rulers extended further south to the Ganjām district, where the early Śailodbhava rulers are given feudatory titles, as suggested by Majumdar[5], may or may not correct. Therefore the conquest of Orissa, at least Northern and Central Orissa, must have happened between the years 602-3 A.D., the last known date of Śambhuyaśas' and the 5th year of Śaśāṅka's reign, the date of Bhānudatta's plates. If the accession of Śaśāṅka took place in about 602 A.D., as assumed in these pages, then the conquest of Orissa must have been over before 607 A.D.. This success must have been achieved against the Māna ruler Śambhuyaśas'. It appears

---

(1) E.I. IX. pp.285 ff. (2) ibid; ibid, XXIII.pp.197f

(3) E.I. XXIII. pp.197 ff. (4) ibid, Ix.pp.285 ff.

(5) JAHRS. X. pp.1.ff.

reasonable to conclude that after the conquest of Northern Orissa, as is clear from Śaśāṅka's Midnapur plates, he advanced further south, made himself master of the Cuttack district, and extended his dominion at least up to the Ganjām district in the south, as is clear from the Ganjām plates of Mādhavarāja II[1]. Bhānudatta appears to have been appointed to hold charge of the newly conquered province of Northern Tosali or Northern Orissa and Daṇḍabhukti (Midnapur). Bhānudatta was followed by Somadatta. It appears from a close study of the Midnapur plates of Śaśāṅka that in the beginning Utkala and Daṇḍabhukti were separately governed. In the 8th year we find Mahāpratīhāra Śubhākṛiti ruling the Daṇḍabhukti[2], but in the 13th year Somadatta is governing Utkala with Daṇḍabhukti. From the Soro plates B and C we find that Somadatta was ruling the Sarephāhāraviṣaya (identified with the village Soro in Balasore district), which was situated in Uttara-Tosali in Oḍraviṣaya.[4] This shows

---

(1) E.I. VI. pp.143 ff. (2) JASBL. XI. pp.1 ff.

(3) Ibid. (4) E.I. XXIII. pp 197 ff.

that at that time Odra and Utkala meant the same region, i.e. Northern Orissa. Daṇḍabhukti comprised the modern district of Midnapur. Traditions also connect Śaśāṅka with Midnapur.

Śaśāṅka certainly exercised control over almost the whole of Bengal. His conquests in Orissa prove his sovereignty over South-western Bengal, including ancient Tāmralipti (Tamluk). From the Harṣacarita we learn that he was king of Gauḍa, and Yuan Chwang expressly informs us that his capital was at Karṇasuvarṇa. Thus he was master of Central and Western Bengal. A coin of Śaśāṅka was found with the Rājalīlā type of coin of Narendrāditya (identified with Samācāradeva) at Muhammadpur, near Jessore[1]. This may suggest that Śaśāṅka's authority extended even to the eastern parts of Bengal. But it may be pointed out that coins are very portable, and it is very possible to find them in places which may have nothing to do with their issuer. But we are on surer grounds in assuming that Śaśāṅka ruled over Northern Bengal or ancient Puṇḍravardhana.

---

(1) CCGDBM. p. CXXVII.

(2) Sen. op. cit.

A tradition connects a tank in the Bogra district of Northern Bengal, with the name of Śaśāṅka. During this period no other power is known to have exercised rule over this region. The M.M.K. clearly associates Śaśāṅka with Puṇḍra[1]. This conclusion is confirmed by a newly found inscription in Assam, where we are told that a Gauḍa army crossed the Lauhitya[2] into the Kāmarūpa country. This could have been easily done from Puṇḍravardhana.

Śaśāṅka's dominion included Magadha. This is clearly proved by the account of the Chinese pilgrim who mentions Śaśāṅka's activities in Magadha[3]. His Seal-matrix was found at Rohtāsgarh[4]. His coins have been found at Nālandā[5] and Gayā[6]. His dominion is said to have extended up to Benares in the west[7].

Śaśāṅka had succeeded to the Gupta heritage, and would naturally have tried to imitate his distinguished predecessor Mahāsenagupta in attempting to make his weight felt in Kāmarūpa. In a new set of copper-plates discovered at Doobi in the Kāmarūpa district and belonging to

---

(1) I.H.I. p. 50. Text No. 712-715. (2) JARS. XI. (1944) pp. 33 ff.
(3) Watters LI, pp. 92, 114-15. (4) C.I.I. p. 283.
(5) ASIAR. 1924-25. p. 136. (6) C.M.I.PL.II. no. 5, p.19.
(7) I.H.I. p. 49.

Bhāskaravarman, it is stated that the Gauḍa army invaded Kāmarūpa after crossing the Lauhitya, and was defeated.(1) The record gives "a vivid description of the battle that ensued between the Bengal army (Gauḍabala) on the one side and the two Kāmarūpa princes, Supratiṣṭhitavarman and Bhāskaravarman on the other; and "the inscriptions further state that the Bengal army was defeated and the two princes of Kāmarūpa returned home victoriously".(2) From the inscriptions it is clear that it was not the Kāmarūpa army which had taken the offensive, but it was the Gauḍa army which was proceeding towards the country of Kāmarūpa after crossing the Lauhitya. We are further informed that the victory did not lead to any part of Bengal being occupied by the forces of Kāmarūpa. Therefore the war, from the point of view of the Kāmarūpa dynasty, was defensive, though successful. This set of plates is certainly earlier than the set of the Nidhānpur plates of Bhāskaravarman, wherein it is stated that Bhāskaravarman was in possession of Karṇasuvarṇa the capital of the Gauḍas.(3)

---

(1) JARS. XI. pp. 33f. (2) ibid.

(3) E.I. XII. pp. 65 ff.

The new set of plates from Doobi proves that Supratiṣṭhitavarman was a king and must have succeeded his father Suṣṭhitavarman[1] who had suffered a defeat at the hands of Mahāsenagupta.[2] This Gauḍa invasion must have happened before the accession of Bhāskaravarman and after the death of Suṣṭhitavarman, who must have been mentioned if he was alive at that time. The mention of Supratiṣṭhitavarman-kaṭaka in the Nidhānpur plates[3] suggests that Supratiṣṭhitavarman had reorganised the army. This was probably done after the defeat sustained by Suṣṭhitavarman at the hands of Mahāsenagupta[4]. The reorganisation of the army by Supratiṣṭhitavarman may have alarmed the Gauḍas, who decided to take the offensive before it was too late. This may explain their invasion of Kāmarūpa. The Gauḍa king who was responsible for this invasion was either Jayanāga or Śaśāṅka, more probably the latter, whose warlike activities are well known. The invasion, though it failed in its immediate objective, must have created a sense of danger in the minds of the rulers of Kāmarūpa. This served as the real background of Bhāskaravarman's mission to Harṣa.

---

(1) JARS XI p 33f (2) C.I.I., III. no. 42 p 205f.

(3) E.I. XII. pp. 65 ff. (4) C.I.I. III. no. 42 pp.205ff.

with Śaśāṅka reminds us of the Śiva, the Bull and the full moon on his coins[1]. The use of the word 'maṇḍalam' is very significant. It shows that Śaśāṅka had continued the tradition of Kauṭilya's policy and was at the head of the circle of vassal states. Bāṇa makes him not a petty king of Gauḍa but a king at the head of a circle of states. Ārya-manju-śrī-mūlakalpa also indirectly proves that Śaśāṅka was already a great king before he met Rājyavardhana. About R. (Rājyavardhana) we are told that he will be 'as powerful as Soma (Śaśāṅka)[2]. This certainly suggests a status and power of Śaśāṅka which an author, prejudiced against him and biased in favour of Rājyavardhana, could not but mention as an object worth comparison. At another place in the same work we are informed that Soma (= Śaśāṅka) was "an unparalleled hero and will become king up to Benares and beyond".[3]

III. Śaśāṅka, the Maukharis and the Vardhanas.

It is clear that between 602 and 605 A.D. Śaśāṅka's hegemony was established over a large part of Northern India. His rapid rise to the position of an all-India

---

(1) CCGDBM. p.147, PL. XXIII,14 and 15 and 16; XXIV. 1.

(2) I.HI. p. 50. (3) ibid, p. 49.

power had profound effects on the international, or rather inter-state, relations of India. The Maukhari king Grahavarman sought the alliance of the powerful Puṣyabhūti family of Thāneśvara and offered himself as candidate for the hands of Rājyaśrī, the daughter of Prabhākaravardhana.(1) The latter had come into confliot with Devagupta of Malwa(2) and therefore welcomed this alliance. After the Puṣyabhūti-Maukhari alliance, caused partly by the rise of Śaśāṅka, the counter alliance between the Gauḍas and the Guptas of Malwa against their enemies - the Maukharis and the Vardhanas respectively - could not be far off.(3) It is no doubt true that, while we have positive literary evidence about the alliance of the Maukharis with the Vardhanas, we have only to assume the Gauḍa-Gupta entente. The subsequent events make such an eventuality not only probable but almost a certainty, though there is no warrant for the assumption that "the Gauḍas and East Malwa were allied even before the time of Śaśāṅka and Devagupta"(4).

Assured of the powerful support of Śaśāṅka, Devagupta attacked Kanauj, killed Grahavarman, imprisoned

---

(1) H.C. (CT.) p.122. (2) See supra.

(3) It is really an irony of History that, while Mahāsenagupta had sought the alliance with the Vardhanas against the growing menace of the Maukharis, his successor Devagupta made an alliance with the Gauḍas against the Vardhanas.

(4) JASBL. XI. pp. 69 ff.

Rājyaśrī and was planning to attack Thāneśvara, immediately after he heard of the death of Prabhākaravardhana.(1) Devagupta may have been waiting for Śaśāṅka to join, and so did not march towards Thāneśvara, but was planning to attack it. But before Śaśāṅka could appear on the scene, Rājyavardhana acted with terrific rapidity. Leaving Harṣa to take care of Thāneśvara, probably to counter any surprise attack and also any panic among the people during the critical situation, Rājya started with Bhaṇḍi and ten-thousand horsemen 'to lay the royal house of Mālava in ruin'(2). Success followed his efforts(3), and the Mālava king (who was certainly Devagupta), was severely defeated and thousands of elephants, uncountable ornaments of various kinds, beautiful women of Malwa, numerous regal paraphernalia and the vassals of the Mālava king were captured by Rājyavardhana.(4) From the Madhuban and Banskhera plates of Harṣa we learn that Rājyavardhana had subdued in battle 'king Devagupta and others who resembled wicked horses'(5). Thus it is clear that Devagupta was thoroughly defeated by him and a large booty fell into the hands of Rājyavardhana.

---

(1) H.C. (CT.) p.173. (2) ibid, p. 175.

(3) ibid, p. 178. (4) ibid. p. 255.

(5) E.I.I. p.73 ff; IV p. 209.

It is not clearly stated that Devagupta lost his life in the contest. One thing is clear, that as a result of the defeat of the ruling king of Malwa, the country passed at least temporarily into the hands of the Kalacuris, as we find Buddharāja issuing a land-grant from Vidiśā in 609 A.D.(1).

But Rājyavardhana had to face a more powerful and skilful foe in Śaśāṅka. The history of Kanauj since the murder of Grahavarman is crowded with events, and unfortunately their sequence is not absolutely clear. Śaśāṅka appears to have occupied Kanauj, as Rājyasrī managed to escape from there 'during the Gauḍa trouble'(2). In some manuscripts of the Harṣacarita instead of 'guptanāmnā gṛihīte kuśasthale', we have 'gauḍair gṛihīte'(3). What actually happened was that before Śaśāṅka could join Devegupta, Rājyavardhana swooped down upon the latter. Devagupta, who was waiting for his ally to join in an attack on Thāneśvara, was forced to give battle to Rājyavardhana. Devagupta joined battle away from Kanauj, probably en route to Thāneśvara or even on

---

(1) ibid, XII, pp. 30 ff. (2) H.C.(CT.) p.251.

(3) Sen. op. cit. p. 267-68, note 4.

his way to Malwa. After the defeat of Devagupta, Rājyavardhana marched towards Kanauj, but before he could reach the place he was forestalled by Śaśānka, who had hurried to meet his ally, but was too late. It is clear that as a result of his victory over Devagupta, Rājyavardhana did not come automatically into possession of Kanauj. Had he ever come to occupy the imperial city, he must have released his imprisoned sister immediately. But she was not released by her brother. Now a struggle between Śaśānka and Rājyavardhana was inevitable, as the former occupied Kanauj, the capital of his (Rājya's) brother-in-law, and his sister was enchained there. The result of this conflict was fatal to Rājyavardhana, who was murdered in 606 A.D. (1).

---

(1) There is some controversy over the manner in which Rājyavardhana met his death at the hands of Śaśānka. Bāṇa says that 'the Gauḍa king allured Rājyavardhana to confidence by false civilities' and 'thus weaponless, confiding alone, he was despatched in his quarters' - (H.C. CT. p. 173). Yuan Chwang states that "Śaśānkarāja, hating the superior military talents of this king (Rājyavardhana), made a plot and murdered him" (The Life, p. 83.) From the Si-yu-ke' we learn that Śaśānka or his ministers called Rājyavardhana to a conference and murdered him" (Records, I. p.210; Watters. On Yuan Chwang I. p.343). According to the Madhuban copper plate inscription of Harṣa, Rājyavardhana "in consequence of his adherence to a promise gave up his life" (E.I.I. p. 73 ff). In view of these references, many scholars like Vaidya (HMHI. I. p. 44), Basak (HNEI. pp. 144-50) Ganguli (IHQ. XII. pp. 462-64) and others believe that Śaśānka was guilty of some foul play in his dealing with Rājyavardhana, who met his death through the treachery of the king of Gauḍa. But some scholars like R.C. Majumdar (HBRI. p.71-76), R.P. Chanda (GR.p.8ff.) and R.D. Bannerji (B.I. p.107) have cast doubts on the story of Bāṇa, Yuan Chwang and the scribes of Harṣa. They point out differences between the story of Bāṇa and the

Thus within a few months, the thrones of Kanauj and Thāneśvara fell vacant in a gloomy atmosphere. Harṣa, a young man of barely sixteen, had to face problems which could have baffled the stoutest of hearts any time in history. But he rose equal to the occasion. That he immediately after learning of the unfortunate death of his brother, ascended the ancestral throne of Thāneśvara, is undoubted, and there is no basis for Smith's statement that the nobles of Thāneśvara hesitated to offer their allegiance to him(1). From the Harṣacarita it is clear that the nobles immediately rallied round Harṣa, who complied with all the forms of royalty(2). Vaidya has

---

(note cont.) Chinese pilgrim. In view of complete absence of any corroborative account from any other source they are not inclined to accept in toto the statements of Bāṇa and Yuan Chwang, who were partial to Harṣa and interested in painting his enemy Śaśāṅka in very bad colours. Moreover they poimt out that it is difficult to believe that Rājyavardhana would attend a conference in the camp of his enemy without any precaution. It is equally possible that the allusion of Rājya meeting his death in consequence of his promise, may refer to his promise to release his sister, and that he faced Śaśāṅka with men and materials that had suffered some depletion due to the war against the king of Malwa. Though we feel that there must have been some substratum of truth in the story of Bāṇa and Yuan Chwang, which is indirectly confirmed by epigraphy of the period, the matter may be considered still subjudice in the absence of any evidence from the other side.

---

(1) EHI. 4th edition, p. 451. (2) H.C. (CT).pp.180-94.

has rightly shown, and in this has been followed by subsequent writers, that Yuan Chwang's account of the hesitation of Harṣa in accepting the throne is in connection with Kanauj rather than with Thāneśvara[1].

When Harṣa heard of the sad fate of his brother and the advise of Sinhanāda "to so deal that for the future no other follow his (Śaśāṅka's) example"[2], he took a vow that "unless in a limited number of days I clear the earth of the Gaudas and make it resound with fetters on the feet of all kings who are excited to insolence by the elasticity of their bows, then will I hurl my sinful self like a moth into an oil-fed flame"[3]. He ordered Avanti, the supreme minister of war and peace, to issue the necessary proclamation and make adequate preparations.[4] From the account of Bāṇa it is clear that huge preparations were made by Harṣa to wage war against the Gauḍa king. Unfortunately we do not know what arrangements were made by Śaśāṅka to meet this grave emergency. It is possible to assume that the heavy financial burdens necessary to meet this menace led to the

---

(1) HMHI. I. p. 7; TK. pp 68-70: Harṣa. p. 28, note I.

(2) H.C. CT. p. 182. (3) ibid, p. 187.

(4) ibid, p. 188.

issuing of actually copper coins with a thin wash of gold over them to be used as gold coins.(1)

But it appears that he left Kanauj in the hands of his officer named 'gupta', who released Rājyaśrī, probably to divert the attention of Harṣa,(2) or the 'Gupta kulaputra' might have been a friend of the Maukharis(3). A more compelling reason for Śaśāṅka to hurry to his capital was the attitude of his eastern neighbour, the king of Kāmarūpa.

---

(1) App. I.

(2) H.C.(C.T.) p. 251 D.C. Ganguli (JBORS. XIX. p. 407, note 48) thinks that this 'Gupta' was Devagupta. This is a gratuitous suggestion. Devagupta the king of Malwa was thoroughly defeated by Rājyavardhana and therefore there is no ground to suppose that he conquered Kanauj from Śaśāṅka when we have reasons to suspect that there was an alliance between the two. We have no basis at all for assuming that Devagupta and Śaśāṅka fell out among themselves after the death of Rājyavardhana. Moreover the Malwa king who is so badly abused by Bāṇa can hardly be referred to as 'kulaputra', as 'Gupta' is. Moreover, when Devagupta had imprisoned Rājyaśrī, there is no reason to assume that he was responsible for her release. Then Devagupta is spoken of very disparagingly in the inscriptions of Harṣa, which could never be the case if he had released Rājyaśrī. We have already seen that in some manuscripts of the Harṣacarita instead of 'gupta-nāmnā gṛihīte Kuśasthale' we have 'gauḍair gṛihīte', which shows that 'Gupta' came from Gauḍa. Some have identified this 'kulaputra Gupta' with Śaśāṅka, the king of Gauḍa, who is called Narendra-gupta in some manuscripts of Harṣacarita (E.I. I. pp. 70 ff.) Whether Śaśāṅka had another name as Narendragupta must be proved on the basis of more solid grounds than the solitary reference by Bühler. Then Śaśāṅka would be the last person to be called 'kula putra' by Bāṇa, who only abuses him. So the Gupta was a Gauḍa officer.

(3) I.H.Q. VIII. pp. 1 ff.

Bhāskaravarman, who succeeded Supratiṣṭhitavarman on the throne of Kāmarūpa, must have been feeling alarmed at the all round successes of his hostile neighbour, Śaśāṅka, The absence of Śaśāṅka in the west away from his capital, might have encouraged the king of Kāmarūpa to entertain some aggressive intentions against the Gauḍa king. The news of Śaśāṅka's falling out with the Vardhanas and Harṣa's vast preparations against him, induced Bhāskaravarman to seek an alliance with Harṣa against the common enemy. Shrewd Śaśāṅka must have got an inkling of what was going on in the mind of the king of Kāmarūpa, probably by his foreign espionage. This explains his evacuation of Kanauj before meeting the challenge from Harṣa. That Śaśāṅka was correct was proved by subsequent events. Bhāskaravarman sent an envoy to Harṣa who met him in a camp on his march from Thāneśvara against the enemy. Hamsavega reported to Harṣa that "the sovereign of Kāmarūpa desires with your majesty (Harṣa) an unperishable alliance"(1). Harṣa welcomed the offer, and the mission of Hamsavega was successful. Harṣa sent valuable presents for Bhāskaravarman and asked the envoy 'to use his influence in such a way that my (Harṣa) yearning to see Kumāra (Bhāskaravarman) may not torment me long'.(2)

---

(1) H.C.CT. p. 218. (2) ibid p. 219.

The events that followed the conclusion of this alliance are not clearly known. Many scholars have readily assumed that immediately afterwards the combined armies of Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman invaded Gauḍa and defeated Śaśāṅka. Vaidya[1] held that Śaśāṅka submitted to Harṣa, and was pardoned by him, and allowed to retain his kingdom. Panhikkar[2] thought it probable that 'the Gauḍa king (Śaśāṅka) accepted Harṣa's suzerainty and was allowed by him to rule his state as a vassal. A mould at Rohtāsgarh describes him as a Mahāsāmanta" N. Ray takes the same line and observes "Śaśāṅka afterwards (after the death of Rājyavardhana) was defeated by the combined forces of Bhaṇḍi and Bhāskaravarman, and probably it was then that the Rohtāsgarh seal was inscribed which speaks of him as Mahāsāmanta"[3]. The facts that are known do not make it easy to agree with the so simple a conclusion. It is impossible to reconcile the fact of Harṣa taking vow to exterminate the Gaudas with the alleged assumption that he would ever pardon the murderer of his brother and appoint him as a high feudatory to hold charge of the important

---

(1) HMHI; I.p. 30. (2) Sri Harsa, p. 17.
(3) C.I.I. III, no.78 p 283 f.; CR, 1920 p 207 f.

province of Magadha, even if we concede the most unlikely possibility of such a powerful king as Śaśāṅka agreeing to serve as a vassal of his enemy. Some have gone so far ~~as~~ to believe in the utter discomfiture of Śaśāṅka that it has been suggested in a learned journal that Śaśāṅka was defeated by Harṣa and was forced to give up a part of his dominion and marry his daughter to Harṣa, who permitted him to use the title of 'Mahārājādhirāja', 'otherwise it is not possible to account for the continued survival of Śaśāṅka as a king of Gauḍa for the next seven years'(1). The above remarks are completely imaginary and the product of a prejudiced mind, not deserving to be taken seriously. On the basis of the Nidhānpur copper-plate inscriptions of Bhāskaravarman issued from Karṇasuvarṇa(2), Barua held that the alliance between Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman 'was disastrous for Śaśāṅka,' as "while Harṣa's cousin Bhaṇḍi attacked from the west, Bhāskaravarman at once attacked from the east and occupied Karṇasuvarṇa; being defeated from two sides Śaśāṅka fled towards Orissa"(3). The late Mr. R.D. Bannerji was also 'in no doubt about the fact that eventually he (Śaśāṅka) was driven out of Karṇasuvarṇa', and it was "quite possible

---

(1) IHQ. XII. pp. 142-43. (2) E.I. XII. pp. 65 ff.

(3) Barua, op. cit. pp. 65-66.

that this event had taken place before the dates of the Ganjām plates and at that time he lost his possession in Bengal and was the master of Orissa only"[1]. Heras also concluded that Śaśāṅka was driven out of Magadha by Harṣa[2]. Yuan Chwang, who mentions the king of Kāmarūpa and Magadha, does not mention the ruling kings of Karṇasuvarṇa, Puṇḍravardhana, Tāmraliptī and Samataṭa. The conclusion which has been generally drawn from this is that at that time these countries had no kings and were dependencies of Harṣa. The Manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa also refers to the defeat of Soma (Śaśāṅka) by 'Ha' (Harṣa).[3]

On the other hand there are important considerations which throw serious doubts on the theory of the defeat of Śaśāṅka by Harṣa. Bāṇa, who describes in detail the preparations by Harṣa against Śaśāṅka, makes no mention of his victory over Śaśāṅka. This silence becomes all the more significant when we find Bāṇa referring to Harṣa's victory against the king of Sindh and the king of 'an accessible land of the Himālayas', but being silent over the alleged

---

(1) History of Orissa. Vol. 1, p. 129.

(2) JBBRAS (N.S.) I-II. p. 116 ff. (3) I.H.I. p. 50.

success against his most serious enemy.[1] The incident of the falling of the golden seal on the ground, which was taken by the courtiers to be a sign of bad luck, might have been mentioned by Bāṇa to suggest indirectly that Harṣa met with failure in his chosen mission.[2] Yuan Chwang, who mentions the fact that Śaśāṅka had murdered Rājyavardhana[3] does not even indirectly refer to his defeat at the hands of Harṣa. The Chinese pilgrim was very much biased against Śaśāṅka, as is clear from the Records and the Life, and therefore if Harṣa had thoroughly defeated Śaśāṅka, this event could never have been ignored by the pilgrim, partial to Harṣa. It is important to note that the pilgrim mentions important events that happened in the recent past. He refers to Harṣa's failure against Pulakeśin[4], the rise of Pūrṇavarman in Magadha, the change in the political condition of Hiraṇyaparvata[5], Lampa (Laghman)[6], and others. Naturally the success of Harṣa against Śaśāṅka was too important an event to be missed by the pilgrim. Then according to the account of the pilgrim Śaśāṅka was

---

(1) H.C. (CT.) p. 76. (2) ibid, pp. 198-99.

(3) The Life (Beal) p. 83. (4) ibid, p. 147.

(5) Watters I, p. 115 (6) ibid I, p. 181

(7.

followed by Pūrṇavarman in Magadha. Whenever Śaśāṅka is mentioned by the pilgrim, it is always in association with Magadha or Karṇasuvarṇa and not with Orissa or Ganjām. We have already seen that Śaśāṅka's conquests of Orissa and Ganjām happened before he faced Rājyavardhana, and therefore it is hardly correct to hold that "being forced to abandon his scheme of expansion in the west, Śaśāṅka found a fresh outlet for his military energy in the east - conquest of Orissa".(1) The Ganjām copper-plates of Śaśāṅkarāja dated in 619 - 20 A.D. are so worded that it appears that up to that date Śaśāṅka was in the fullness of his glory(2) and could not have undergone the humiliation of a severe defeat. In the Midnapur plates of his time he is referred to in glowing terms.(3) These plates are dated, and we have read the dates as 13 and 8 in the regnal years of Śaśāṅka(4), though Majumdar reads 19 and 8 on them. Whatever be the correct reading, it is clear that up to the 19th or 13th years of his reign, Śaśāṅka was master of the Daṇḍabhukti and Utkala regions. The fact that in the Midnapur as well as in the Ganjām plates Śaśāṅka is referred to as the overlord by his feudatories

---

(1) Sen, op. cit. 272. (2) E.I. VI. pp. 143 ff. Śaśāṅka is referred to as 'the Mahārājādhirāja Śaśāṅka, ruling over the earth surrounded by the girdle of the waters of the four oceans together with islands, mountains and cities'.

(3) JASBL. XI. pp.1 f. (4) See supra.

may suggest that he was ruling over these regions from his centre in Karṇasuvarṇa. Thus it is clear that up to 620 A.D. at least Śaśāṅka was enjoying the fruits of his sovereignty. In view of these overwhelming facts it is not possible to agree with Barua that Śaśāṅka was driven out of Bengal and his empire was divided between Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman before 610 A.D., which he considers to be the date of the Nidhānpur plates[1]. Much reliance cannot be placed on the statement of Yuan Chwang that Harṣa "went from east to west subduing all that were not obedient", and that "after six years he had subdued the five Indias", and "after thirty years his arms reposed and he governed everywhere in peace"[2]. The passage is evidently confused. In the Life we are told of Harṣa's campaign in Ganjām in about 6+42-43 A.D.[3]. His war with Pulkeśin also happened long after 610 or even 615 A.D.[4]. Therefore it has been rightly pointed out that "the account of Yuan Chwang about Harṣa should be accepted with caution"[5]. The Chinese pilgrim visited Magadha in 637 for the first time, and he speaks of the vandalism of Śaśāṅka in Magadha

---

(1) JARS. 1. pp. 97 ff. (2) Records vol. 1. p.213.
(3) The Life, (Beal) p. 157. (4) ABORI. XIII. pp. 300 ff.
(5)

'in recent times'[1], or 'lately', in 'late times'[2]. This also tends to confirm our point that Śaśāṅka's rule over Magadha was quite fresh and his rule could not have ended far away from 637 A.D.

The only other point in this connection that remains to be examined is the account in the Manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa which refers to a defeat of Śaśāṅka by Harṣa. Before we discuss the relevant passage of the work it is important to understand its nature. It is a Buddhist work of a purely sectarian kind. Only one chapter purports to give an account of important events and personalities in a prophetic manner, as do the Hindu Purāṇas. The names of the kings are mentioned by initials which often cause a serious headache in their identification with known personages of History. Very often chronology and sequence of events and persons are inextricably confused. The whole thing is done more to confuse than clarify facts, and, being profoundly coloured with religious and sectarian notions, it is often impossible to separate the grain from chaff, facts from fiction. It is not an impartial history,

---

(1) Watters II pp92, 115

(2) Records II pp91, 118

neither is it intended to be so. Therefore even when identification of the persons is possible, the account about them may not be absolutely correct. If they are Buddhists then their account would be exaggerated; and if they are non-Buddhists, they would be maligned and their smallest failures would be described as terrible disasters. The account of Soma, rightly identified with Śaśāṅka clearly suffers from all these defects. He is spoken of in vilest of terms and cursed many times. Naturally therefore any account of the mutual relation between the pro-Buddhist Harṣa and the anti-Buddhist Śaśāṅka found in this partial sectarian work should be treated with suspicion. It is no doubt true that the book contains in important particulars genuine historical traditions; but it would be risky to rely on it for details, especially in matters in which the author was obviously interested one way or the other. About the struggle between Śaśāṅka and Harṣa the Manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa appears to give details. It says "Ha (Harṣa) will be with a great army ..... and decides against Śaśāṅka (soma). The powerful vaiśya king with a large army marched against the Eastern country, against the capital Puṇḍra of that characterless man. Adopting the duty of Kṣatra with the sense of personal injury and indignation, he, though kind, prone to religion and learned, kills many, becomes an oppressor of living creatures for the reason of

being engaged in the duty of chastisement. He defeated Soma, the pursuer of wicked deeds; Soma was forbidden to move out of his country (being ordered) to remain therein (henceforth). He returned, having been honoured (?) in that kingdom of the barbarian (Mlecchas). He, an excellent king amongst followers of Artha (-śāstra) and Dharma (śāstra), was successful in his undertaking". (1) Jayasval calls it 'the battle of Puṇḍravardhana' (2). It is certainly significant that while Karṇasuvarṇa was the capital of Śaśāṅka the battle is alleged to have been fought in Puṇḍra (Puṇḍravardhana, identified with Mahāsthāna in the Bogra district of Northern Bengal). It is called (puram uttamam) here (3) and Jayasval translates it as the capital (4). More probably Puṇḍravardhana had continued to be the capital of the province of Puṇḍravardhana in the time of Śaśāṅka. Realising the danger from the Varman dynasty of Kāmarūpa, Śaśāṅka may have concentrated at Puṇḍravardhana, which lay on the Karatoya, which was the western boundary of the kingdom of Kāmarūpa in the time of Yuan Chwang. It is certainly not safe to rely on the evidence of the Manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa alone for

---

(1) I.H.I. p. 50. (2) ibid. p. 51.

(3) ibid, Text, p. 53. v. 723. (4) ibid, p. 50.

the alleged battle between Harṣa and Śaśāṅka. But even when one reads between the lines of the quoted passage it appears that Harṣa was not completely successful, as alleged in the work. Śaśāṅka could not be crushed, and was left in possession of his kingdom (svadeśa). Harṣa had to withdraw. The use of the word 'Mlecchа' in connection with Puṇḍra or the country of Śaśāṅka indirectly suggests that, whatever may be claimed for Harṣa in the work, really he was not welcomed by the people there and had to return after patching up a truce with Śaśāṅka. Harṣa, who had promised to exterminate the Gauḍas from the earth, could never willingly have left Śaśāṅka in possession of his kingdom and be satisfied with mere subordination. Therefore even if the verses quoted above contain some element of genuine historical tradition, they only show that Harṣa was at best only partially successful, which is referred to in the Life, wherein we are told that Harṣa "was soon able to avenge the injuries received by his brother".(1) But Thomas Watters translates the similar passage in the Records differently: "continuing the narrative, the pilgrim goes

---

(1) The Life (Beal) p. 83.

on to state that as soon as Śīlāditya 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"(1). Here it is obvious that it is not expressly stated, as in the Life, that Harṣa succeeded in avenging the death of his brother. We are not in a position to explain this vital difference in the accounts of the Records and the Life. However, we do not feel that there is sufficient authority to hold that Śaśāṅka was thoroughly defeated by Harsa in the early years of his reign. What actually appears to have resulted from Harsa's first campaign against the Gauda king was that Śaśāṅka had to eschew his ambition to become the master of the whole of Northern India. He evacuated Kanauj and the Maukhari territories and had to be content with his own kingdom of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, where he was ruling before he came into conflict with Rājyavardhana or entered into an aggressive alliance with Devagupta of Malwa. This partial success of Harsa has been exaggerated by partial authors. Smith was instinctively right in observing that "Śaśāṅka escaped with little loss"(2).

---

(1) Watters I. p. 343. (2) EHI. (3rd Edn) p. 339.

IV. Last Years of Śaśāṅka.

The rule of Śaśāṅka over Magadha is characterised by the Chinese pilgrim as a period of vandalism against the Buddhist institutions and sacred monuments. Śaśāṅka tried to efface the foot-print of Buddha on the stone in Pāṭaliputra[1]; he cut down the Bodhi Tree and destroyed its root "down to the water and burnt what remained"[2]. He destroyed the image of Buddha in the vihāra east of the Bodhi Tree[3], and as a dire consequence of this irreligious act he perished by a fell disease[4]. He is referred to as 'overthrowing and destroying the law of Buddha'[5]. We are informed that by "Śaśāṅka's extermination of Buddhism "the magnificent establishment founded by wealthy Brāhmaṇa at Kuśinagara, suffered much, as "the groups of the Brethren were all broken up".[6] The state of Buddhism had become so low that the most important factor which weighed with Avalokiteśvara to advise Harṣa to accept the throne was to "raise Buddhism from the ruin into which it had been brought by the king of Karṇasuvarṇa"[7].

---

(1) Watters II. p. 92. (2) ibid, pp. 114-5.

(3) Records (Beal) II, pp.121-22. (4) ibid. (5) ibid, p.91.

(6) Watters I. p. 43. (7) Watters. I. p. 343.

The author of the Manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa says: "Soma (Śaśāṅka) enamoured by the words of the Tīrthakas, will burn that great bridge of religion (dharma), as prophesied by former jinas (Buddhas) ..... and fell down all the monasteries, gardens and chaitya ..... and he will die of a disease in his mouth"(1). That Śaśāṅka was not a Buddhist is clear from his coins, on which we find the bull, the moon and Śiva.(2) This is confirmed by the account of Yuan Chwang, where we are told that Śaśāṅka wanted to remove the image of Buddha and replace it by that of Śiva in the temple east of the Bodhi Tree.(3)

But we have no other authority except the prejudiced pilgrim and the Manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa to confirm Śaśāṅka's acts of vandalism against Buddhism. Of course there must have been some element of truth in the account of Yuan Chwang, who could not invent only lies about a king who had passed away almost immediately before him. Moreover the excavations in Nālandā clearly show that the famous monastery suffered destruction many times in its long chequered history. It is quite possible that after the Huṇas, Śaśāṅka also attacked the famous Buddhist seat of learning.(4)

---

(1) I.H.I. pp. 49-50.

(2) CCGDBM. pp. 157-8, Pl. XXIII. 14.

(3) Watters II. p. 116.

(4) ASIAR. 1924-25. p. 136; JBBRAS. N.S. I-II.p.216.

Allan has rightly concluded, "It is certain, then, that Śaśāṅka was a persecutor of Buddhism, although the Chinese pilgrim may credit him with more than he deserves"(1). But it is fair to bear in mind that, while the pilgrim refers to Śaśāṅka's persecution of Buddhism in Magadha, he does not allude to a single instance of such acts of fanaticism in Karṇasuvarṇa, the capital of Śaśāṅka. Yuan Chwang observes that in Karṇasuvarṇa, there were ten Buddhist monasteries and above 2000 Brethren who were all adherents of the Sammatīya school, and he also mentions the magnificent Raktāmṛita monastery beside the capital.(2) This fact makes it difficult to explain Śaśāṅka's persecution of Buddhism in Magadha, when he appears to have followed the traditional Ancient Indian policy of religious toleration in the home-provinces. It may be suggested that the reasons for the persecution of Buddhists in Magadha may have been more political than religious. Magadha was the centre of Buddhism from the very beginning. There were numerous Buddhist monasteries and seats of learning, and it is quite reasonable to assume that the Buddhists, probably the most fully organised sect in

---

(1) CCGDBM. p. LXIII.

(2) Watters. II. pp. 191-92.

India, must have exercised some force in the history of the country. The later imperial Guptas patronised the Buddhist monasteries. The Maukharis were also patrons of these monasteries and their seals have been found at Nālandā. Grahavarman, who was the victim of the Devagupta-Śaśāṅka conspiracy, had an inclination towards Buddhism, and his great friend was Divākaramitra[1] Rājyaśrī was a follower of Buddhism[2], and Rājyavardhana was also a devotee of Buddha[3]. Harṣa also had eclectic views on religion, and appears to have been attracted towards Buddhism from the very beginning. It was probably the expulsion of the pro-Buddhist Maukharis from Magadha by the more orthodox Gauḍas which made the latter unpopular with the powerful Buddhists of Magadha. The murder of the pro-Buddhist Grahavarman and the Buddhist Rājyavardhana must have made still worse the relations between the Gauḍa rulers and the Buddhists of Magadha. A deadly struggle between the king of Gauḍa and Harṣa was imminent; and Śaśāṅka may have suspected some disloyalty on the part of the Buddhists of

---

(1) HC. (CT) p. 233. (2) ibid, p. 254.

(3) E.I. I. p. 73-74. Parama Sangatah Rājyavardhanah.

Magadha. In this connection it is of some significance to note that, according to the Chinese pilgrim, only a few months after the uprooting of the Bodhi Tree by Śaśāṅka, Pūrṇavarman restored the tree to life. If one is permitted to romance in the realm of history in view of lack of positive facts, it may be speculated that Pūrṇavarman, probably a scion of the Maukhari family, was the leader of the Buddhist discontent and a rival to Śaśāṅka. The latter, therefore, for pure security reasons decided to attack the powerful Buddhist community. The uprooting of the Bodhi Tree may have been an economic move against the Buddhist hierarchy of Magadha, as presents from all over the Buddhist world were offered at the Bohdi Tree. It is quite understandable that a foreign religious scholar like Yuan Chwang would notice in these acts of Śaśāṅka a deliberate policy to overthrow and destroy the Buddhist religion. Later on Buddhist writers consciously or unconsciously interpreted the actions of Śaśāṅka as guided purely by religious fanaticism. Such misunderstanding and exaggeration of only one of the various motives of conquerors is not unknown in Indian history. Mahmud of Ghazni has suffered from the same misunderstanding, and modern research has shown that his breaking of Hindu temples and images were inspired more by greed and lust than by religious fervour.

It is not definitely known when exactly Śaśāṅka died. But it appears certain that he was holding Magadha till his death. Yuan Chwang observes, "In recent times Śaśāṅka, the enemy and oppressor of Buddhism, cut down the Bodhi Tree ..... A few months afterwards Pūrṇavarman, the last descendant of Aśoka on the throne of Magadha, by pious efforts brought the tree back to life"(1). This certainly proves that Śaśāṅka was immediately followed by Pūrṇavarman in Magadha. The pilgrim further observes that Śaśāṅka ordered the destruction of the Buddha's image in the vihāra east of the Bodhi Tree, and as soon as he heard of the destruction of the image he "was seized with terror: his body produced sores and his flesh rotted off and after a short while he died"(2). This confirms our stand that at the time of his death Śaśāṅka was the sovereign of Magadha. The destruction of the image could only be simultaneous with the uprooting of the Bodhi Tree, which was followed by the coming into power of Pūrṇavarman only after a few months of this act of vandalism. Yuan Chwang visited Magadha in 637 A.D., for the first time, and he describes Śaśāṅka as

---

(1) Watters II. p. 115.

(2) Records (Beal) II, p. 122.

having destroyed the Bodhi Tree "in recent times" (1). He visited Karṇasuvarṇa in April 639 A.D. (2), and does not mention the reigning king. This certainly proves that Śaśāṅka was dead before 637 A.D. Śaśāṅka died of a natural disease. This is clear from the account of the pilgrim (3) and the Mañju-śrī-mūla-kalpa (4). According to the latter authority Śaśāṅka ruled for 17 years 1 month and 7 or 8 days (5). This may not be precisely accurate, but is not far from the actuality. Śaśāṅka came to the throne in the early years of the 7th century after Christ, and his rule may have come to an end by 625 A.D.

After the death of Śaśāṅka in cir. 625 A.D., the Gauḍa empire, built up largely by the genius of Śaśāṅka, collapsed like a house of cards. The Mañju-śrī-mūla-kalpa gives a description of the Gauḍa-system at the death of Śaśāṅka. It says "After the death of Soma (Śaśāṅka) the Gauḍa political system (Gauḍa-tantra) was reduced to mutual distrust, raised weapons and mutual jealousy-one (king) for a week; another for a month; then a republican constitution - such will be the daily (condition) of the

---

(1) Watters II. p. 115. (2) CAGI (S.N. Majumdar edn. p. 647).

(3) Records (Beal) II. p. 122. (4) I.H.I. p. 50.

(5) ibid.

country on this bank of the Ganges where houses were built of the ruins of the monasteries. Thereafter Soma's son Mānava will last for 8 months" (1). This may probably reflect a true picture of Gauḍa after the exit of Śaśāṅka from the stage. In this state of political and constitutional instability in the centre of the empire, the distant provinces could not be expected to adhere to the aprons of Gauḍa. Magadha became independent under Pūrṇavarman, a few months after the death of Śaśāṅka. The Śailodbhavas of Ganjām declared their independence. While in the Ganjām plates of Mādhavarāja II Śaśāṅka is mentioned as overlord (2), in the Khurda plates of the same ruler, Mādhavarāja II, there is no mention of any overlord, and Mādhavarāja is referred to as 'master of all Kalinga', and the grant is issued from the victorious camp of Kongoda. Bengal passed into the control of Harṣa (as will be shown later), and Orissa also appears to have ultimately fallen into his hands, as is clear from the account of Yuan Chwang. Thus the first Bengal empire in Indian History perished with the death of the first great national hero of Bengal.

---

(1) I.H.I. pp. 50-51.

(2) E.I. VI p 143 f

CHAPTER IX

Magadha under Pūrṇavarman and Harṣa

(1) Pūrṇavarman.

From the account of Yuan Chwang it is perfectly clear that Pūrṇavarman immediately followed S'as'āṅka on the throne of Magadha. There is no basis for the supposition that Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman defeated S'as'āṅka in or before 610 A.D., and divided his empire. S'as'āṅka ruled in full glory at least up to 619-620 A.D., the date of the Ganjām inscription. A few months after his death Pūrṇavarman is reported to have restored the Bodhi Tree to life. He certainly came after S'as'āṅka and before Harṣa came into possession of Magadha. After Pūrṇavarman, 'the Lord of Magadha', had failed to induce Jayasena, the Buddhist scholar of Yaṣṭivana in Magadha to come to his court; and after Pūrṇavarman was dead S'īlāditya-rāja (Harṣa) made the same request to Jayasena.(1) This makes it clear that Pūrṇavarman was a king of Magadha and preceded as such Harṣavardhana.

Our only source for the knowledge of Pūrṇavarman is the Chinese Pilgrim, who regards him as 'the last descendant of As'oka on the throne of Magadha.(2) We do not know of any descendant of the ancient Mauryan dynasty as a king of Magadha after the coup-d'état by Puṣyamitra S'unga in about 184 B.C.

---

(1) The Life. pp.153-54.

(2) Watters. II. p.115.

It is highly improbable that the dynasty of As'oka remained unknown and insignificant for more than 800 years, and its last member came to the throne of Magadha in the 7th century A,D. Was it because Pūrṇavarman was a zealous Buddhist king that Yuan Chwang thought him to be a descendant of As'oka, the great Buddhist emperor? Pūrṇavarman was, probably, a scion of the Maukhari family, as suggested by Cunningham. The Maukharis were for some time rulers of Magadha and were ousted by the Gauḍas. But Maukharis continued to be found in Magadha even in later times, and according to Jayasval the Mauhari community of Patna and Gaya districts are the descendants of the ancient Maukharis.(1) Of course it is a mere hypothesis. But if he was a Maukhari, he may have been related to the line of Yajñavarman or the imperial Maukhari dynasty. The offensive and defensive alliance between Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman against the Gauḍas, must have encouraged Pūrṇavarman to hope for the return of good days for the Maukharis. It is not improbable that he may have held the leadership of the discontented Buddhists of Magadha under S'as'āṅka's rule, and, in this he may have been encouraged by Harṣa, a very common policy for rival kings to follow in the ancient as well as in modern times. This may explain S'as'āṅka's vandalism in Magadha. The unpopularity of the Gauḍas must have facilitated Pūrṇavarman's usurpation of the throne of Magadha immediately

---

(1) Aravamuthan, op. cit. p.80 foot-note.

after the death of S'as'āṅka. Harṣa may have tolerated this revolution, if he did not actually welcome it, as he was not anxious to alienate the Maukharis, whose throne and kingdom he had practically usurped, though he continued to associate his sister with him in his government.

Pūrṇavarman was a Buddhist king par excellence. He brought the Bodhi Tree back to life and 'built round it a stone wall 24 feet high'.(1) He was responsible for the construction of 'a copper image of Buddha about 80 feet high housed over a pavilion in six stages'.(2) He had 'a great respect for learned men and honoured those distinguished as sages'.(3) When he heard of the fame of Jayasena, the learned Buddhist scholar living in Yaṣṭivana, he invited him to come to his court, nominated him 'master of the kingdom', and assigned for his support the revenue of twenty large towns. But the master of the S'ās'tras declined 'to receive them'.(4)

It is not clear from the account of Yuan Chwang when Pūrṇavarman died. The pilgrim came to Mālandā for the first time in 637 A.D. He refers to Pūrṇavarman as having restored the Bodhi Tree to life and having constructed a copper image of Buddha. He also refers to him as having invited Jayasena to become the master of his kingdom. But there is nothing to

---

(1) Watters II. p.115. (2) The Life. p. 119.

(3) ibid, pp. 153-54. (4) ibid, p.154.

show clearly that Pūrṇavarman was dead at that time. He may not have been dead, and in this case Yuan Chwang's account of the king of Magadha who 'respects and honours the priestsand has remitted the revenues of about 100 villages for the endowment of the convent (Nālandā)'(1) may refer to Pūrṇavarman. It may be of some significance that whenever the pilgrim refers to Harṣa, he refers to him by his title S'īlāditya. Naturally it may be inferred that the king of the country (Nālandā) casually referred to by the pilgrim was certainly not Harṣa. Therefore that king must be Pūrṇavarman or Mādhavagupta, as both of these could be easily assumed to have been subordinate to Harṣa. Either of these would have gladly consented to Harṣa's construction of a bronze temple in Nālandā.(2) In the Life we are told that during the first visit to Nālandā the pilgrim noticed the 'brass-covered vihāra constructed by S'īlāditya rāja; the work, though not yet finished, is sufficiently advanced to show that its plan denotes a height of 100 feet and more when completed'.(3) It was later on completted, as is clear from the Records.(4) But when the pilgrim returned to Nālandā in either April 642(5) or in January 643 A.D.,(6) Pūrṇavarman was certainly dead. Harṣa had

---

(1) The Life, p. 112. (2) The Records (Beal) II.p.174

(3) The Life, p. 119. (4) Watters, II. p. 171.

(5) CAGI (edited by S.N. Majumdar Śāstrī), appendix A. p.648.

(6) Watters vol.II., Itinerary of Yuan Chwang (Smith) p. 336.

repeated the offer to Jayasena, originally made by Pūrṇavarman, and was ready to grant him the revenue of 80 large towns of Orissa. From the Chinese sources we come to know that in the mission which Harṣa had sent to China, he was described as king of Magadha.(1) These facts make it clear that Harṣa had assumed the title of king of Magadha before 641 A.D. probably even before 639 A.D. Therefore Pūrṇavarman may have died in 638 A.D. and was followed by Harṣa.

(ii) Gauḍa after S'as'āṅka

We have seen that immediately after the death of S'as'āṅka, Magadha passed out of the Gauḍa empire. What happened to the home provinces of the empire? From the Nidhānpur copper-plate inscription of Bhāskaravarman we learn that from Karṇasuvarṇa, once the capital of S'as'āṅka, Bhāskaravarman the king of Kāmarūpa re-issued grants of land to various Brāhmaṇas. It has been rightly held that clearly Karṇasuvarṇa was in the possession of the Kāmarūpa king. But the important question is: when did Bhāskaravarman come into possession of Karṇasuvarṇa? The theory that in the early years of Harṣa's offensive against S'as'āṅka after the latter's defeat at the hands of the combined forces of Harṣa and the Kāmarūpa army was advanced by Mr. P.N. Bhattacarya in the pages of the Indian Historical Quarterly in 1927.(2) Rai Bahadur K.L. Barua strongly championed the view that Bhāskarvarman came to possess the territories of

(1) Watters I. p. 351. (2) I.H.Q. III. pp 837 ff.

of the Gauḍas in Bengal after the alleged defeat of S'as'āṅka.(1) But we have already rejected the view that S'as'āṅka was defeated and that in consequence Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman divided the empire among themselves. But the question what happened to Bengal immediately after the death of S'as'āṅka is a different one.

Pundit Vidyāvinod at first observed that "Bhāskaravarman occupation of Karṇasavarṇa must have happened after the death of Harṣa, as he could not have allowed the possession of so great a rival to be included in the territory of Bhāskaravarman, a weaker king to all appearance, however friendly he might have been".(2) Tripathi(3) subscribes to the same opinion. R.C. Majumdar(4) also at first (later on he cast doubts on this view) appears to have held the view that after the removal of the dreaded rival (S'as'āṅka), there occurred 'the absorption of his kingdom by Harṣa'. But recently scholars have questioned this simple theory. D.C. Ganguli(5) for the first time emphasized the point that as Bhāskaravarman passed unopposed with his vast army from his country to Kājangala, presumably through Northern and Western Bengal, to meet Harṣa, this fact proves that these provinces or parts of the country belonged to Bhāskaravarman. R.C.Majumdar observes "It is obvious from Hiên Tsang's account that S'as'āṅka's

---

(1) Barua. op. cit. pp.65-66.
(2) E. I. XII. p.65
(3) T.K. p. 102.
(4) Ancient Indian History and Civilisation p. 348.
(5) I.H.Q. XV. p.122 ff.

death loosened the bonds which united North and West Bengal and these formed separate kingdoms in 638 A.D. Within a few years both these kingdoms were conquered by Bhāskaravarman".(1) According to the learned scholar the dominion of Harṣa comprised only "the districts roughly corresponding to the present United Provinces of Agra and Oudh together with Bihar and a small portion of the Eastern Punjab"(2). Barua(3) has shown good reasons for holding that Bhāskaravarman was not a mere vassal ruler in relation to Harṣa. There is certainly no basis for the opinion of Ray(4) that Bhāskaravarman 'did not enjoy sovereign and independent authority'. The title Kumāra, which was a second name of Bhāskaravarman according to the pilgrim(5), does not show that he was a subordinate ruler. From the Harṣacarita it is clear that Bhāskaravarman was an independent king who had submitted to none except S'iva and that he had sought with Harṣa an enduring alliance on equal terms.(6)

But in spite of these objections we feel that the balance of arguments is in favour of holding to the opinion that after the death of S'as'āṅka, Northern and Western Bengal passed into the hands of Harṣa. There is no doubt that originally the alliance between Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman was an alliance between equals propelled by identical reasons to oppose S'as'āṅka; but in later years, when the factor which had

---

(1) H.B.R. I. pp. 76-77. (2) JBORS. IX. p. 311 ff.
(3) Barua, op. cit. pp. (4) IHQ. III pp 785
(5) Watters II. p. 186. (6) H.C. (CT) p. 212.

brought them together disappeared, there was bound to occur some change in the nature of the relationship. With the death of S'as'āṅka, it appears that Harṣa gained greater advantage. It is not impossible that as a consequence of the exit of S'as'āṅka Harṣa did not feel the same necessity to treat his ally with the deference due to an equal. This fact is clearly brought out by an episode reported by Yuan Chwang. We are informed that during his second stay in Nālandā the pilgrim was invited both by S'īlāditya-rāja and Bhāskaravarman to come to see them. Ultimately he went to Kāmarūpa and stayed with the king. When Harṣa came to know of this he wrote to Bhāskaravarman bidding him send the pilgrim to him. The tone of Harṣa's message is certainly overbearing. Harṣa said "I frequently asked him to come here before this, - and he did not come; how is it that he is living there?" "Sending a messenger therefore he bade Kūmāra-rāja to send the priest of China at once." The King of Kāmarūpa replied, "He can take my head, but he cannot take the Master of Law as yet". Harṣa was 'greatly enraged', and he sent another messenger who said in an abrupt manner: "Send the head that I may have it immediately by my messenger who is to bring it here". As a result of this attitude of Harṣa, Bhāskaravarman was 'deeply alarmed at the folly of his language', and he immediately started with the pilgrim and a vast army of elephants and ships to meet Harṣa.(1) This incident clearly brings out that if

---

(1) The Life, p. 172.

there was any Kanauj-Prāgjyotiṣa axis, Kanauj was the stronger partner, as was Germany in the Rome-Berlin Axis in recent times. Viewed in this background, Bhāskaravarman's attendance in the religious assembly at Kanauj may suggest some slight subordination. Though there was no rule that only vassals could attend the religious assembly, and it may be that Bhāskaravarman attended it as an ally, still it is equally possible that, after the insulting letter that he had received from Harṣa, Bhāskaravarman thought it prudent to please his powerful ally by attending the assembly with his full retinue. Bhāskaravarman may not have been a feudatory of Harṣa in the constitutional sense, but, in view of the points urged above, it may not be far wrong to agree with the view of Majumdar, enunciated some time ago that "after the removal of the dreaded rival by the death of S'as'āṅka and the absorption of his kingdom by Harṣa, Bhāskaravarman came to be looked upon more as a feudatory vassal than an equal ally." (1) Such changes in the relationship between political powers have not been rare in ancient and modern history. Moreover we know from Yuan Chwang that Harṣa led campaigns into Ganjām and subdued it. (2) He also was master of Orissa, otherwise he could not promise to grant the revenue of 80 towns of Orissa to Jayasena. (3) Then, when he was returning from the subjugation

---

(1) Ancient Indian History and Civilisation. p. 348.

(2) The Life, p. 159. (3) ibid, p. 154.

of Kongodha (Ganjām) he came to Orissa, and the manner in which he was addressed and questioned[1] leaves no doubts that he was recognised as the suzerain of the country. It appears that Harṣa certainly inherited S'as'āṅka's kingdom of Orissa and Ganjām. He (Harṣa) must have followed the same strategy as was followed by his great rival, S'as'āṅka: that is, his conquest of Orissa and then of Ganjām must have followed his control over Western Bengal and its sea-board. This was certainly the much easier way to penetrate into Orissa and Ganjām than through the hilly parts of Chotā Nāgpur. The fact that the Chinese pilgrim does not mention the kings of Karṇasuvarṇa, Puṇḍravardhana, Samataṭa, and Tāmraliptī does not prove that these parts of the country were under Harṣa. It may be that they were under different rulers. But the silence of the pilgrim, if it does not prove the rule of Harṣa over these provinces, does not also by itself disprove it. There is no doubt that it raises a suspicion in the minds of the readers that these provinces were subject to Harṣa. As we have seen, Bhāskaravarman was certainly a weaker partner of the axis, and therefore Harṣa could not willingly allow him to step into these vast territories after the death of S'as'āṅka. D.C. Ganguli remarks that "as a matter of fact there is not the slightest evidence to prove that Harṣa ever held sway over Bengal".[2] It is really strange that though there is clear and unimpeachable

---

(1) The Life, p. 159 (2) IHQ. XV. p. 122 ff.

evidence pointing to Harsa's control over some parts of Bengal, no scholar has pointed to this fact. The Banskhera plate of Harsa, dated in the year 22 and granting lands in Ahicchatra-bhukti, was issued from the victorious camp Vardhamāna-khoṭī, where the king appears to have been staying with his vast fleet of ships, elephants and horses.(1) Where was the Vardhamāna-koṭī which could be suitable for the vast army and navy of Harsa to be encamped? In our opinion it can be identified with the modern Burdwan in Western Bengal. Dey has identified it with Bardhanakoṭi in Dinajpur district in Bengal(2). In the Mārkandeya Purāṇa we are told of a people like Vardhamānas in Eastern India.(3) Pargiter has identified this Vardhamāna with Burdwan in West Bengal, and he observes that it is comparatively an old town. In the Mallsārul copper plate inscription of Vijayasena of the early sixth century A.D., we are informed of the existence of Vardhamāna-bhukti(5) It is also mentioned in the Irdā grant of the 10th century and the Naihati and Govindpur grants of the 12th century. Thus we find that from the sixth to the twelfth century after Christ there was a division of Bengal known as Vardhamānabhukti. It is not easy to define the exact boundaries of this bhukti, as these have changed many times for geographic and administrative reasons. Majumdar thinks that "it embraced

---

(1) E.I. IV. p.208 ff. (2) Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India.p.25.
(3) Mārkandeya Purāṇa (Tr) Canto LVIII. p. 358. (4) Ibid.
(5) E.I. XXIII. p. 155 ff.

the valley of the Dāmodara river and is known to have included the Uttara-Rāḍha and Daṇḍabhukti mandalas."(1) According to Bhaṭṭaśāli, Vardhamāna-bhukti was identifcal with the old division of Rāḍha.(2) Whatever may have been the exact boundaries of the bhukti in the sixth and seventh centuries after Christ, it should be obvious that the name must have been derived from the town or base Vardhamāna. As Puṇḍravardhana was the capital or administrative centre of the Puṇḍravardhana-bhukti so Vardhamāna also was the capital of the bhukti of the same name. Vardhamāna or modern Burdwan stands very close to Dāmodara river, and could therefore be quite suitable as a base or camp for the army and fleet of Harṣa. Of course we know of a Vardhamāna in Kaṭhiāwāḍ which has been identified with modern Vadhvāṇ in Eastern Kāṭhiāwāḍ.(3) But the inscription which refers to this Vardhamāna is much later than the Banskhera plate of Harṣa. Moreover there is hardly any ground to think that Harṣa conquered Eastern Kāṭhiāwāḍ; and this Vardhamāna or present Vadhvāṇ could hardly serve the purpose of a camp for Harṣa's vast fleet of boats. No doubt there was a Vardhamāna-bhukti in the Valabhi dominion,(4) but it can hardly be identified with Vardhamānakoṭī of Harṣa's inscription. There is a mention

---

(1) [illegible] (2) HBR: I. pp. 26-27.

(3) JRAS. 1935. pp. 73 ff. (4) J. A. XII, pp 190 f

(5) JBBRAS. XI. p. 331 ff.

of Vardhamāna-pura in Malwa[1] in an inscription of the 15th century. It is probably the same Vardhamāna-pura which is mentioned in an inscription of the Paramāra king Jayavarmadeva[2] But we feel ourselves justified in identifying the Vardhamānakoṭī of the Banskhera inscription of Harṣa with the modern town of Burdwan. This identification does not go against any known fact, rather it confirms in a remarkable way some of the genuine suspicions of students of Harṣa's history. The Banskhera inscription[3] is dated in the year 22, presumably of Harṣa's era, and therefore should belong to 628-29 A.D. It appears therefore that Harṣa was master of Western Bengal in 628-29 A.D. The fact that he issued the grant from the 'victorious camp' where he was lying with his army and navy may suggest that his conquest of this part of the country maynot have been far away from 628-29 A.D. We know from the account of Ma-Twan-Lin that in the period 618-27 serious disturbances broke out in India and "King S'īlāditya raised a great army and fought with an irresistible valour"[4] This also suggests Harṣa's occupation in campaigns against some important enemy. The fact appears to be that after the death of S'as'āṅka in about 625 A.D. Harṣa decided on offensive against the Gauḍas. It may be that Mānava, son of S'as'āṅka, suffered this humiliation. Harṣa conquered the home provinces of the Gauḍa empire, and it may be safely assumed that Puṇḍravardhana also must have automatically

---

(1) JASB. LII. p. 67 ff. (2) I. A. XIX. p. 350 ff.

(3) E. I. IV pp 208 f. (4) I.A. IX. p. 19.

come into his power. This may explain why the pilgrim does not mention the kings of Karṇasuvarṇa and Puṇḍravardhana. The facts as related by the pilgrim leave no doubt that Harṣa was master of Utkala and had led a successful campaign in Ganjām. It appears that Harṣa had followed up his success in Bengal by establishing his authority in Orissa. The fact that Bhāskaravarman passed unopposed with his army and navy through Bengal does not lead to the inevitable conclusion that he was sovereign of this part of the country. It is equally possible that, as he was an ally of Harṣa and was going to meet him with due respect and probably to apologise for his harsh language and to accompany him to the assembly at Kanauj, he could easily pass through the territories which were under Harṣa. Certainly he passed with the entire retinue of his army and navy through the Central India (Madhyadeśa) unopposed, but nobody would suggest that he was master of the country up to Kanauj. In view of these facts we come to the conclusion, that after the death of Śaśāṅka Karṇasuvarṇa, Puṇḍravardhana and probably Daṇḍabhukti, including Tāmralipti, were conquered by Harṣa, between 625 and 629 A.D.(1)

---

(1) Even if Nandlal Dey's indeitification of Vardhamānakoṭī of the Banskera inscription with Bardhankoṭi in Dinajpur is accepted, our essential point that Harṣa came into possession of Bengal after the death of Śaśāṅka remains unassailed. If Harṣa was master of a large part of Bengal in 628-29 A.D., it is obvious that he must have passed through the country of Magadha which was then under Pūrṇavarman. This could have been quite possible as Pūrṇavarman had no quarrel with Harṣa. As a matter of fact it is obvious that Pūrṇavarman could have enjoyed his soverignty

(iii) Harṣa and Magadha

We have seen that immediately after the death of S'as'āṅka, Pūrṇavarman came to the throne of Magadha. Though Harṣa may not have assumed the title of 'king of Magadha', there is no doubt that he must have exercised some sort of benevolent suzerainty over this much coveted land. At any rate it is certain that after the death of Pūrṇavarman, Harṣa became overlord of Magadha. Yuan Chwang says that "to the south of the vihāra built by Bālāditya-rāja in Nālandā, is a vihāra of bronze in course of construction by S'īlāditya-rāja"(1). In another place we are told that "after the obsequies of Pūrṇavarman, S'īlāditya-rāja invited him (Jayasena) to be 'the Master (of the country)' and assigned him the revenue of eighty large towns of Orissa".(2) Harṣa is described as 'king of Magadha' in

---

(Continued from previous page)
over Magadha only at the sufferance of the much more powerful king, Harṣavardhana. One more point remains to be considered. Bhāskaravarman told Yuan Chwang that if he selected the Southern route for his return journey to China, he (Bhāskaravarman) 'will send official attendants to accompany you (Yuan Chwang)' (The Life p. 188.) From I'tsing's account we learn that Tāmralipti was the place of embarkation or disembarkation for travellers to China from India or from China to India. (ibid. Intro. p XXVI) But on this meagre evidence along it may not be safe to hold that Bhāskaravarman ruled over Tāmralipti. It is possible that he may have exercised some control over southern waters.

---

(1) Watters II. p. 171. (2) The Life. p. 154.

documents connected with his embassy to China in 641 A.D.[1] A terracotta seal of Harṣa has been found in Nālandā[2]. Use of Harṣa era in Magadha, as is clear from the Shahpur inscription of Ādityasena[3], further strengthens our contention that Harṣa was the suzerain of Magadha. An incident mentioned by the biographer of Yuan Chwang throws an interesting light on this point. The pilgrim came to Nālandā in the early months of 637 A.D., and after staying for some time went out to visit neighbouring objects of interest. Then he came back to Nālandā and stayed for fifteen months. As soon as he came back to Nālandā after visiting the sacred places all round, he requested S'īlabhadra" to explain the yoga-s'āstra, in the presence of many thousand auditors. The exposition being ended, after a little time there was a Brāhmaṇa, who uttered some pious cries outside the assembly, and then in turn began to laugh". After he had explained the cause of his weeping and laughing, "S'īlabhadra requested him to remain there and listen to the explanation of the Sūtras for fifteen months;

---

(1) Watters I. p. 351. Watters thinks that Harṣa sent the envoy in 641 A.D. From the Extracts from Ma-Twan-Lin as translated by Burgess it appears that S'īlāditya assumed the title of the king of Magadha in 641 A.D. and sent an ambassador with a letter to the emperor (I.A. IX. p.19). According to Bushell, "The great king S'īlādityarāja, who called himself 'king of Magadha' is mentioned (in Chinese records) as having sent a mission to the Tang emperor after his interview with the Buddhist monk, which arrived in 641 A.D." Thus it is not absolutely clear whether S'īlāditya sent the mission to China in 641 or the mission arrived in China in 641 A.D.

(2) MASI. No.66. pp.67-68 (3) C.I.I. iii. p. 200 ff.

and after the lectures, he sent a man with the Brāhmaṇa to Śīlāditya rāja, who allotted him the revenues of three villages for his sustenance".(1) This makes it clear that Harṣa was the overlord of the country and patron of Magadha at least before 639 A.D., when the Brāhamaṇa must have seen him at the end of fifteen months of lectures. Thus Harṣa came into possession of Magadha before 639 A.D., and it is very likely that soon after this he nominated his favourite and relation, Mādhavagupta, to the throne of Magadha. From the Aphsad inscription we learn that Mādhavagupta was desirous of the company of Harṣadeva (Harṣavardhana).(2) Mādhavagupta remained a loyal and sincere vassal to his benefactor Harṣa.

Harsa was not only master of Magadha but also extended his authority in different degrees in the countries east of Magadha. We have already seen that he was ruling over a large part of Bengal, including most of Northern and Western Bengal, even if we exclude Tāmralipti. The kingdoms of

---

(1) The Life, pp. 120-121.

(2) C.I.I. III. p.200 ff.

Hiraṇyaparvata (Monghyr)[1], Campā (Bhāgalpur)[2] Kājangala (Rājmahal)[3] Oḍra (Orissa)[4] and Kongodha (Ganjām)[5] felt the weight of Harṣa in some form or other.

---

(1) About the political status of the kingdom I-lan-na-po-fa-to, identified with Monghyr, it is stated in the Records that "In recent times the king of a neighbouring state had deposed the ruler and given the capital to the Buddhist Brethen, erecting in the city two monasteries each of which had about 1000 Brethren of the Sarvāstivāda school". (Watters II. p. 178) Beal translate the passage slightly differently: "Lately the king of a border country deposed the ruler of this country and holds in his power the capital. He is benevolent to the priests and has built in the city two sanghārāmas, each holding some thing less than 1000 priests." (Records II. p. 187.) In the Life we are told that "Recently there was a frontier king who deposed the ruler of this country and bestowed the capital on the priests". (The Life, p.127). The king of the country who deposed the ruler must have been the king of Magadha, which is adjacent to the district of Monghyr. The king may have been Pūrṇavarman or Mādhavagupta. Harṣa, who was sovereign of Magadha and master of Bengal, must have exercised sovereignty over Hiraṇyaparvata.

(2) Campā-(Bhāgalpur). It was east of Hiraṇyaparvata, 300 li along the southern bank of the Ganges. Nothing is said about its political status. But Anga, the capital of which Campā was, was from the time of Bimbisāra included in Magadha. Therefore it is certain that even in the 7th cenutyr it was politically apart of the kingdom of Magadha. As Harṣavardhana was the sovereign of Magadha, so Campā must have been included in his empire.

(3) Kājangala (Rājmahal). From Campā 400 li east was the kingdom of Kājangala, which has been identified with Rājmahal district in Santal Pargana in Bihar. (Watters II. pp.183-84.) The pilgrim observes that "the native dynasty had been extinguished some centuries before the time of the pilgrim's visit and the country had come under a neighbouring state. So the capital was deserted and the people lived in towns and villages. Hence when king Śīlāditya in his progress to East India held his court here, he cut grass to make huts and burned these when leaving". (Watters II. p.183). We are told in the Life that Śīlādityarāja returning from his attack on Kongodha heard that Yuan Chwang was staying with the king of Kāmarūpa. Harṣa sent a messenger to Kāmarūpa to bring the pilgrim, and he stayed at Kājangala. The facts that Śīlāditya held his court there

Harṣa died in the last months of 646 or early part of 647 A.D. After his death the empire, and with it the large amount of unity of Northern India that he had so laboriously built up, collapsed. An idea of the confusion and anarchy that set in immediately after the exit of his powerful personality is obtained from the Chinese Annals.

(Continued from previous page)
to receive Yuan Chwang and Bhāskaravarman certainly prove that Kājangala was in the sphere of Harṣa's influence. Majumdar thinks that Harṣa passed through Kājangala and had only a temporary residence (there), built of branches and boughs which was burnt on his departure. (JBORS:IX. p.311 ff). In another place the learned scholar observes, "Could anybody believe that the pilgrim who took care to record a temporary residence of king S'ilāditya would have used almost in the same breath the expression, 'neighbouring state' to denote the dominion of Harṣa?(I.H.Q. V: p.234). It may be pointed out that it is possible that the pilgrim's reference to the fact that the country had come under 'the neighbouring kingdom' may refer to an earlier period, 'some centuries before the visit of the pilgrim', and Yuan Chwang only referred to it because it had brought about havoc among the people and led to the desertion of the capital. It has been rightly pointed out that the custom of constructing temporary residences in the course of a visit to the different parts of the empire by the sovereign was in vogue in the time of the pilgrim. Moreover the fact that Harṣa passed through the country unopposed and later on stayed there on his return from the Kongodha campaign certainly proves that Kājangala was under Harṣa's control. It is quite possible that the neighbouring king was Harṣa or his vassal king of Magadha. A vassal king is mentioned by the pilgrim: Yuan Chwang mentions th king of Mātipur, who was of Sūdra caste and did not believe in Buddhism (Watters II. p.322). The kingdom of Mātipur, which was on the eastern bank of The Ganges, must have been included in the Empire of Harṣa.

(4) Odra (Orissa). From the Life we know that from Tāmraliptı going south-west the pilgrim came to Uda or Odra. It has been identified with Orissa. It should be identified with Northern Orissa. No king of this country is mentioned. But there are certain incidental hints, which are therefore more important and reliable that suggest that Northern Orissa was under Harṣa's suzerainty. In the Life (p.154) we are told that S'ilādityarāja

We have already seen that Harṣa had sent a mission to China in 641 A.D. and the envoy returned with a Chinese mission in 643 A.D. Another Chinese mission which arrived in India immediately after the death of Harṣa was attacked by Arjuna, who had usurped supreme power. With the help of the army of Tibet, aided by Kumāra, the king

---

(Continued from previous page)
assigned to Jayasena, the Buddhist scholar, revenues of eighty large towns of Orissa. From this the only reasonable conclusion is that some parts of Orissa, at least, were under Harṣa. At another place in the same work (pp. 159-61) we learn that after returning from the subjugation of Kongodha Harṣa came to Orissa. There he was met by Kāpālika priests, who were not pleased with the report of Harṣa's building a brass vihāra in Nālandā, and so asked him "But why did your majesty construct a Kāpālika temple or some other building of that sort?" They requested the king to call a conference to investigate the matter and come to the truth. Harṣa promised to do so, and we know that he called such a conference at Kanauj. This incident together with the Kāpālikas' anxiety to secure the patronage of Harṣa, certainly suggests that Orissa was under him. This is also quite consistent with the known facts of history. We know from the Midnapur plates of S'as'āṅka that Utkala was under his sovereignty. It is natural that after the death of S'as'āṅka, when Harṣa conquered Bengal, he also claimed North Orissa and exercised his authority there.

(5) Kongodha (Ganjām) - From Uḍra (Orissa), 1200 li south-west the pilgrim came to Kongodha, identified with Ganjam. Yuan Chwang, who visited Ganjām in 639 A.D., says "The country contained some tens of thousands of towns which stretched from the slopes of the hills to the edge of the sea. As the towns were naturally strong there was a gallant army which kept the neighbouring countries in awe and so there was no powerful enemy" (Watters II. pp.196-97). This suggests that when the pilgrim visited the country, it was independent and powerful, though the king is not mentioned. Watters' inference that at the time of the pilgrim's visit, the country had been invaded by S'īlāditya rāja (Watters II. pp.197-98), is not corroborated by the Life. Nothing about Harṣa's expedition into Ganjām is said at the time of the pilgrim's visit there. (The Life, p.134). It was about three years later that the invasion is referred to. Yuan Chwang returned to Nālandā in the middle of 642 A.D. (C.A.G.I.p.648) It was when he was in Nālandā that Harṣa wrote a letter to S'īlabhadra from Orissa, where he had

of Eastern India (Bhāskaravarman) and the king of Nepal, the Chinese envoy returned, defeated Arjuna, and took him prisoner. It is possible that Tirhut or North Bihar passed under Tibetan suzerainty for some time. The death of Harṣa gave a god-sent opportunity to Bhāskaravarman to attack and incorporate the Benga

---

(Continued from previous page)
returned 'after the subjugation of Kongodha (C.A.G.I. pp.159-60). But the pilgrim went to Kāmarūpa; and when Harṣa, 'returning from his attack on Kongodha heard that the Master of the Law was staying with Kumāra', he exchanged hot words with Bhāskaravarman and waited at Kājangala (Rājmahal) to receive the pilgrim. This makes it clear that Harṣa's expedition to Ganjām could not be much removed from 642-43 A.D. . This expedition might have been actuated by political and military exigencies. From the Aihole inscription of Pulakes'in II we know that the Kalingas were humbled by him. (E.I. VI. pp.1 f.) Kalinga was south of Ganjām, and therefore the advance of the Western Cālukyas to the East coast must have alarmed the ruling dynasty of Kongodha. We have already seen, that Mādhavarāja II declared his independen after the death of S'as'āṅka. It was probably he or his successor who commanded the powerful army referred to by the Chinese pilgrim during his visit to Kongodha. Harṣa may have invaded Ganjām against a Cālukya claim or he may have come to the aid of the local ruler. We know that during Yuan Chwang's visit to Mahārāṣṭra "The great king S'īlāditya rāja 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 refused to become subject to him (Watters II. p.239). Beal translates the relevant passage slightly differently: "At the present time S'īlāditya-rāja has conquered the nations from east to west and carried his arms to remote districts, but the people of this country alone have not submitted to him. He has gathered troops from the five Indies and summoned the best leaders from all the countries and himself gone at the head of his army to punish and subdue these peoples, but he has not yet conquered their troops". (Records II. pp.256-57). It appears, therefore, that even after the first defeat inflicted upon Harṣa by Pulakes'in some time before 634 A.D., the two powerful personalities faced one another, probably in a different theatre. However, it is certain that Harṣa led an expedition into Ganjām between 641-43 A.D. But without any corroborative evidence it is risky to believe that Kongodha formed an integral part of Harṣa's empire. Even in the Life at one place the word 'subjugation' is used and at another 'attack'. In view of this it may

empire of Harṣa and the territories of his rival Śaśāṅka. The Nidhānpur copper-plates of Bhāskaravarman were issued from the victorious camp of Karṇasuvarṇa[1]. The inscription clearly proves that at the time of issue Bhāskaravarman was in possession of Karṇasuvarṇa, and it was not a mere halting place, as suggested by Basak[2]. We have already shown that after the death of Śaśāṅka his empire in Bengal passed to Harṣa. Therefore it appears certain that Bhāskaravarman came into possession of Central Bengal after the death of Harṣa in 646-47 A.D. He may have also made himself master of Northern Bengal (Puṇḍravardhana), as we find him helping the victorious Thibetan army with men and materials.[3] This could have been forced on him by his control over Northern Bengal, the ancient Puṇḍravardhana-bhukti, whose boundary touched the Himālayas on the north and Tirhut in the west, both of which had come under the sway of Tibetan imperialism.

It was in such critical times that the later Gupta dynasty again came into real power in Magadha, and gradually again united a large part of Northern India. The story of the political regeneration of Magadha belongs to a different chapter.

(Continued from previous page)
be safe to agree with Majumdar that the invasion of Ganjām was of the nature of a mere military raid for some purpose we are not in a position to know.

---

(1) E. I. XII. p.65 f. (2) H.N.E.I. pp 228-229
(3) HBRI, p92; J.A. IX pp 19-20

CHAPTER X

Magadha under the restored later Guptas from cir. 647-725A.D.

After a period of prolonged political subjugation for more than half a century, Magadha reasserted its traditional claim of empire-building in Northern India under its rejuvenated and restored dynasty of the later Guptas. Kumâragupta and Mâdhavagupta, sons of Mahâsenagupta, had taken refuge with their cousin Prabhâkaravardhana of Thâneśvara after the misfortunes suffered by their father at the hands of the Maukharis and the Kalacuris. Kumâragupta waited on Râjyavardhana, and Mâdhavagupta on Harṣa. Kumâragupta had followed Râjyavardhana in the latter's campaign against the Hûṇas. Both had returned to Thâneśvara on hearing of Prabhâkaravardhana's death, and Râjyavardhana's favourite wept with him.(1) We do not know what happened to Kumâragupta; unless in the statement that 'Kumâra was crowned by Harṣa'(2) we have a reference to Kumâragupta's formal coronation by Harṣa. The learned translators of the Harṣacarita see a reference to Kumâra or Kumâragupta in the passage wherein

(1) H.C. Text. (Parab), p. 177. 'Râjaballabheṇa'

(2) Ibid, pp. 91.

it is stated that "In him the 'man of might' has loosened a king from a circling trunk and abandoned an elephant".(1) But it is more plausible that Kumāra died in some of the later campaigns of Rājyavardhana. The coronation of Kumāra (a prince) may suggest Mādhavagupta, who was certainly a Kumāra before his accession to the throne of Magadha. The passage may thus point to the fact of Harṣa's formally investing his favourite Mādhavagupta with the sovereignty of Magadha.(2) Whatever may be the actual fact, it appears to be fairly certain that Kumāragupta did not succeed to the throne of Magadha, and Mādhavagupta is mentioned in the Aphsad inscription as succeeding Mahāsenagupta.(3)

Mādhavagupta

In the present state of our knowledge it is not easy to fix the precise date of the accession of Mādhavagupta on the throne of Magadha. In the early years of his life, he enjoyed the company of Harṣa. He had accompanied Harṣa in the latter's quest of Rājyaśrī in the Vindhyan region.(4) Even when Harṣa was on the throne, his favourite was at his side. This is noticed by Bāṇa, when he came to the court of Harṣa for the first time.(5) This association with Harṣa

---

(1) H.C.CT., p. 76, note 3. (2) H.C. Text.(Parab),P.9I.,TK.p 105, note
(3) C.I.I.III.no 42. pp.200f. (4) H.C.CT. p.235.
(5) H.C. Text. (Parab) p.79. 'Mālavarājasūno'.

was ~~described~~ desired by Mādhavagupta even when the latter was on the throne of Magadha.(I) We have seen that Śaśāṅka held Magadha down to the end of his life. He was followed by Pūrṇavarman on the throne of Magadha. In 641 A.D. Harṣa is described as 'king of Magadha' in Chinese records.(2) Mādhavagupta may have been put in charge of Magadha by Harṣa even before 641 A.D., and may have acquiesced in his overlord assuming the title of 'the king of Magadha'. On the other hand it is equally plausible that Mādhavagupta might have been formally installed on the throne of Magadha by Harṣa after 641 A.D. However, one thing is obvious, namely that Mādhavagupta remained subordinate to Harṣa till the latter's death. The scribe, noting by that Mādhavagupta 'was guided by the desire to associate with Harṣadeva (Harṣavardhana)'(3) confirms the point.

After the death of Harṣavardhana in the last months of 646 A.D., or the early part of 647 A.D., chaos and confusion descended on the green plains of Northern India. The withdrawal of the strong hand led to the usual spectacles of usurpation of the throne, defection of subject provinces and the coming of foreign invasion. The unity of Northern

---

(I) C.I.I.III.No.42. pp 200f.

(2) Watters. I. p.343: I.A. IX. p.19

(3), C.I.I.III. pp.200f.

India was broken, and every power, large or small, began to entertain competitive ambitions, which weakened the country and encouraged the foreigners. Arjuna or Arunās'va is said to have usurped 'supreme power'.(1) Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa conquered Bengal.(2) The army of Tibet, helped by Nepal, invaded India.(3) In this confused state of affairs, pregnant with great possibilities for bold men, it is obvious that Mādhavagupta must have thrown off the yoke of vassalage and declared himself an independent king. He is described as having a 'cakra' in the palm of his hand.(4) This is a poetic way of describing him as 'cakravartin'. "The word 'cakravartin' denotes an universal ruler, and is one of the technical titles of paramount sovereignty."(5) The Aphsad inscription of his son Ādityasena eulogizes him as 'killing his enemies in battle.'(6) Giving due allowance to the panegyrics implicit in such inscriptions, the reference to the wars and victories in battle may suggest that Mādhavagupta had accompanied Harṣa in his wars and claimed the credit of the victories; as happens elsewhere in the case of feudatories accompanying their overlord on campaigns. It is also possible that Mādhavagupta

---

(I) I.A. IX. P.20. (2) E.I. XII. pp. 65f.

(3) I. A. Ix. p. 20. (4) C.I.I.III. p.200f.

(5) Ibid. P. I8. note 4. (6) Ibid. PP. 200f.

might have had to encounter some opposition from different quarters before he could declare himself an independent ruler. He might have successfully resisted the usurper Arjuna, who is reported to have 'forced neighbouring kings into submission.'(I)

Did Mādhavagupta come into conflict with Bhāskaravarman and Tibet? Some scuffle between Bhāskaravarman, who inherited the Gauḍa empire of Harṣa, and Mādhavagupta, who claimed to be independent ruler of Magadha, is certainly not beyond the realm of possibility. An encounter with the Tibetans is also plausible. From Ma-twan-lin(2) we learn that the Chinese emperor sent Wang-hiwen-tse under the title of Yen-wai-so-tu-chang-si to the kingdom of Magadha in 646 A.D. But before the mission could reach its destination, Harsavardhana Śīlāditya was dead, and the kingdom had fallen into a state of anarchy. It is further related that one of the ministers named Arjuna or Aruṇāśva (A-lan-na-shun) usurped the supreme power and attacked the Chinese mission. Wang-hiwen-tse escaped to Tibet. The Tibetan army, aided by Nepal and the king of Eastern India (Kāmarūpa) defeated Arjuna, stormed his capital Ta-po-no-la (Chaprā or Champāran)

(I) I.A. IX. p.20. (2) Ibid

and captured Arjuna, who was taken to China. Tibet's debut in Indian politics is known from the Chinese and Tibetan sources. Sroñ-btsan-sgampo, the king of Tibet, was born in 569 A.D.(I) He was the greatest king of the country and forced the king of China to give him his daughter in marriage.(2) He also married the daughter of king Amśuvarman of Nepal.(3) It has been proved by Jayasval that Nepal became subject to Tibet in about 643 A.D.(4) That explains Nepal's help to the Tibetan army against India. According to the Chinese sources, the Tibetan army attacked T'ienchu and inflicted a great defeat. Chung-T'ienchu meant Central India or Magadha.(5) We are informed that "the king of Tu-fan (Tibet) led 1200 well armed warriors together with over 7000 Nepal horsemen to follow Yuantse. He and the assistant envoy Chang Shihjen led the troops of the two countries and advanced as far as the capital of Central India, where they fought for three days in succession and inflicted a great defeat, cutting off 3000 heads, while some 10,000 were drowned in the river, the minister was taken (prisoner) and brought with them to

---

(I) A study on the Chronicles of Ladakh by Dr.Luciano Petech. (Supplement, IHQ. XV. pp. 39f).

(2) JRAS. 1880. pp. 438f. (3) Op. cit. IHQ. XV

(4) JBORS; XXII. pp.161f. (5) JRAS. 1880. pp. 446,528.

the imperial capital, where they arrived in 648 A.D."[1]. The allied army, besides storming the capital city of Arjuna, obtained the submission of 580 walled towns of India.[2] Śrī Kumāra of Eastern India sent him (Hiwen-tse) thirty thousand horses, oxen and provision for the victorious army.[3] It appears that Bhāskaravarman purchased a peace which facilitated his conquest and consolidation of Northern and Central Bengal, after the death of Harṣavardhana. "During the lifetime of Sroṅ-btsan-sgampo all the kingdoms on the frontiers were united under his rule, and every one of the little kings sent presents and letters."[4] But the story of Tibet's conquest of Central India or Magadha, to say the least, is doubtful. The Indian sources are absolutely silent on this, and the Chinese or Tibetan sources are not clear whether the Tibetan army actually invaded Magadha or returned after punishing Arjuna, presumably in North Bihar. We do not know the basis of Sir R.C. Temple's conclusion that "at this period the Tibetan rule must have spread widely northward into Asia and southward into Bengal, as is shown by the Chinese annals, though the Indian records are silent on the subject."[5] It is also to be borne in

---

(1) JRAS. 1880. p. 528. (2) E.H.I., p 367 HBR.I.p.92.

(3) I.A.Ix. p.20.

(4) Antiquities of Tibet, Vol. II. p. 82.

(5) I.A. 1916.p.39.

mind that the Chinese records are used to exaggerate the importance of events in their favour without any solid basis. Harṣa's sending of a mission to China and his receiving of a Chinese mission to his court have been interpreted in the Chinese records to suggest his vassalage to the emperor of China. Therefore the Chinese story about the success of the Chinese envoy, aided by the Tibetan and Nepalese armies, has to be taken with caution. A minor victory over a petty ruler of North Bihar may have been coloured out of all due proportion, and the submission of the whole of Central India or Magadha was believed in. It is no doubt true that the Chinese mission of Wang-hiwen-tse was sent to Magadha in return for the mission sent by Harṣa to China, but it is not definite that 'the incidents referred to above took place there'.(1) Out of the maze of exaggerated accounts, often differing in details, about the activities of the Tibetan army in India according to the Chinese and Tibetan sources, the fact that can be discerned is that after the death of Harṣa confusion set in throughout the empire, as Harṣa appears to have left no son to succeed him, and so Arjuna, who may have been of the ministerial rank, but in charge of Tīrabhukti (North Bihar), claimed imperial status and forced neighbouring provinces to submit to him. Bhāskaravarman conquered Central and Northern Bengal, and Mādhavagupta declared himself independent. The latter must have resisted, rather successfully, the pretensions of Arjuna. This might have been

---

(1) H.B.R. I. p.92, note 1.

one of the causes why Arjuna fell upon the Chinese mission. The mission was going to Magadha, and at that time Mādhavagupta was on the throne of Magadha. Arjuna might have seen that the success of the mission would raise the prestige of Magadha in the eyes of the people at home and abroad, and, therefore, he attacked the mission and thus destroyed any chances of its success. But Arjuna had miscalculated that the mission had no friend, powerful enough to vindicate its position and avenge its humiliation. Arjuna's assault brought about the invasion of his kingdom by the Tibetan army and, more than that, it whetted the appetite of the growing Tibetan imperialism under the great king Sroṅ-btsan-sgampo. With the aid of his vassal, Nepal, the king of Tibet swooped down upon North Bihar (modern Tirhut), the kingdom of Arjuna, and stormed his capital and also other towns of the kingdom. Arjuna was captured; and it is quite possible that Tirhut was brought under Tibetan imperialism. Nepal was already under Tibetan overlordship since 643 A.D., Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa wisely saw the advantages of winning peace and friendship, and, therefore, sent men and materials to the victorious allied army. Possibly the conquest of Tīrabhukti, which lay in Central India (Madhyades'a), was boastfully represented as the conquest of Central India by the Tibetan army.(1) Magadha under the wise leadership of

---

(1) H.B.R. I. p.93

Mādhavagupta kept itself aloof from these events, as time and peace were needed to rejuvenate the emaciated country. Thus the reason why Mādhavagupta, and even Ādityasena in his early years of rule, did not assume imperial and paramount titles may well have been due to the wish to avoid calling the attention of powerful neighbours by seeming presumption and thus jeopardising the consolidation of their kingdom, menaced as it was by Kāmarūpa under Bhāskaravarman on the East and the Tibetan empire on the North.

Ādityasena

Mādhavagupta was succeeded by his son Ādityasena, born of S'rīmatīdevī[1] in cir. 650 A.D. In his Aphsad inscription he is described as 'kṣitīs'acūḍāmaṇi' and 'lokapāla', 'the guardian of the world by whose white umbrella the whole circuit of the earth is covered'.[2] This shows that he was a powerful king. He is given the unassuming title of 'S'rī' or 'the fortunate' in the Aphsad[3] and Shāhpur[4] inscriptions; the latter is dated in the year 66, presumably in Harṣa era and therefore equivalent to 672-73 A.D. But in the two rock-inscriptions on the Mandāra Hill, belonging to the period of Ādityasena, he is given full imperial titles such as 'Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja S'rī Ādityasenadeva', and his queen is described as 'Paramabhaṭṭārikā-Rājñī-Mahādevī Koṇadevī,[5] - the titles which are those

(1) C.I.I. III.No.42. p.200 f. (2) Ibid (3) Ibid.
(4) Ibid. No.43. p 208 f. (5) Ibid. No.44 & 45. p.211

of the wives of paramount sovereigns[1]. Therefore there can be no doubt that Ādityasena was a paramount and imperial sovereign.

The question that arises is whether the non-mention of the paramount and imperial titles for Ādityasena in his Aphsad and Shāhpur inscriptions indicates that he enjoyed a subordinate status for some time? The fact, that imperial titles are omitted in some inscriptions and mentioned in some others of the same period and of the same king, raises some suspicion. Fleet[2] hinted that it was probably after the death of Harṣa that Ādityasena assumed these titles. But Harṣa died in 646 or 647 A.D.; and even in the inscription of 672-73 A.D. there is no mention of any imperial titles for Ādityasena. Some scholars have suggested that the kings of Kāmarūpa exercised overlordship over Magadha, and Ādityasena was a vassal king at least up to 672-73 A.D. According to N.N. Das Gupta 'the significance of the Nālandā seal of Bhāskaravarman seems to be much greater than is ordinarily supposed to bear'[3]. According to the learned scholar, Devavarman of I-Tsing's Records was a king of Kāmarūpa, probably a lineal descendant of Bhāskaravarman.[4] Barua re-enforces this suggestion with his usual emphasis, and holds that "After S'rī Harṣa's death, (the twenty villages of) Magadha came into the possession of Bhāskaravarman, the king

---

(1) C.I.I. III. Nos.44 & 45.p.211 f. (2) Ibid. p.212.

(3) I.C. II. p.37 f. (4) Ibid.

of Eastern India,"[1] and "even after Bhāskaravarman, at least the eastern part of Magadha with perhaps the whole of modern Bengal, excepting probably Samataṭa, was under the overlordship of Kāmarūpa"[2]. He further observes that "this supremacy lasted for at least 100 years till the overthrow of the Kāmarūpa king Harṣavarmadeva"[3]. The learned scholar at another place remarks that "the fact, which can hardly be contested, is that the successors of Bhāskaravarman down to at least Harṣavarmadeva held all their possessions in Bihar and Bengal"[4]. But there is no adequate basis for holding that the Kāmarūpa kings held sway over Magadha for more than a century. It is definitely known that Ādityasena assumed paramount and imperial titles, certainly after 672-73 A.D., and the inscriptions mentioning these titles are found on the Mandāra Hill in the Banka subdivision of Bhāgalpur district in East Bihar. This makes it clear that Ādityasena was ruler of Bihar up to its eastern limits; the plea for the rule of Kāmarūpa kings on the eastern part of Magadha thus fails miserably. The presence of the seal of Bhāskaravarman in Nālandā[6] may be explained better by believing that it accompanied some of the correspondence which the Kāmarūpa king is known to have carried on with the authorities of Nālandā over the issue of the Chinese pilgrim. We do not know of any Kāmarūpa king of the name of Devavarman. From the known history

---

(1) Barua. op.cit.pp.71-72. (2) Ibid.
(3) Ibid. (4) JARS. I. p.97 f.
(5) C.I.I.III.Nos.44 & 45.p.211 f. (6) JBORS.VI. p.151 f.

of Kāmarūpa it appears that "after the death of Bhāskaravarman, his dynasty was overthrown by a barbarian S'ālastambha by name, and Kāmarūpa passed under Mlecchа rule."(1) Devavarman of I-Tsing cannot be identified with a supposed king of Kāmarūpa. Thus we find that there is no ground for holding that Ādityasena was a vassal of Kāmarūpa kings. It is also very difficult to persuade ourselves to believe in the Tibetan conquest of Magadha and to make Ādityasena a feudatory of Tibetan empire. Jayasval's suggestion that Mādhavagupta or Ādityasena accepted the suzerainty of the Valabhī king Dharasena IV, can hardly be a subject of serioms consideration. He relies on the Manju-s'rī-mūla-kalpa, which can hardly be accepted without any corroborative evidence. Moreover it is hardly fair to identify the 'Dha-kāra' with Dharasena.(2) The long discussion above leads to the only safe conclusion, that there is no adequate ground, except suspicion, to believe in the conquest of Magadha by a foreign power or by any other power of India. After the death of Harṣavardhana, Magadha became independent under Mādhavagupta, and Ādityasena remained an independent king. The epithet 's'rī' applied to Ādityasena in his inscriptions does not necessarily mean that he was a subordinate king, though it has to be admitted that in comparison to titles like 'Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja' it is unassuming and innocuous. We feel that actually Mādhavagupta and Ādityasena up to at least 672-73 A.D. were mere local, though independent, kings of Magadha;

---

(1) Ancient Indian History and Civilisation, p.348.
(2) I.H. I. pp.66-68.

and it was probably after that date that Ādityasena began to extend the sphere of his influence and ultimately assumed imperial and paramount titles befitting his improved position.

The mention of the high-sounding imperial titles of Ādityasena in the Mandāra-Hill-rock-inscriptions may have been accidental or a formality without suggesting any change in his political status. But, if an explanation for the improvement in his titles must be sought, it is to be found in the political condition of Northern India at that time. After the death of Harṣa, while the centrifugal forces in India had their full play, a powerful imperialism had established itself in the north of India, in Tibet. The triumphant Tibetan imperialism overawed China, reduced Nepal to subjection, and raided North Bihar. It may or may not be possible that the Tibetan army reached Magadha. But it is obvious that Magadha must have been influenced by the emergence of this new menace. On the eastern frontier of Magadha, Bhāskaravarman was extending his influence and had brought Northern, Central and a large part of Western Bengal under his rule. In such troubled times, when the future was not clear, Mādhavagupta and his son Ādityasena wisely refrained from indulging in imperial hysteria. They were content with their unambitious rôle and unassuming titles so as to avoid being plunged into the fire of power-politics of Great Powers. They concentrated, for the time being, upon consoldiation of their power in Magadha, which needed time and peace to repair the moral and material damages wrought by a

prolonged period of foreign subjection. When the Indian horizon became clearer, when the dynasty of Bhāskaravarman was overthrown by the Mlechha ruler S'ālastambha, and when Tibet fell on evil days, following hostile relations with China, then Ādityasena realised that the time had come for the rejuvenated and rehabilitated Māgadhas to reassert successfully, their claim to become the paramount power of Northern India. The prospect of another All-Northern-India empire with Magadha as the centre was bright, and Ādityasena emerged as the rightful heir to the imperial heritage of his great predecessors. It was then only that he could legitimately assume the imperial titles like 'Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja', in the Mandāra-Hill-rock-inscriptions, evidently after 672-73 A.D., when he was described by the simple epithet 's'rī' in the Shāhpur stone-image-inscription.(1)

Ādityasena was a powerful king, ruling over a fairly extensive kingdom. His inscriptions have been found at Aphsaḍ (a village, 15 miles north-east of Nawadah in Gaya district)(2) at Shāhpur (9 miles south-east of Bihar)(3) and on Mandāragiri (7 miles south-east of Banka, the chief town of Banka sub-division of Bhāgalpur district)(4). It is clear therefore that ancient Magadha and Anga - that is, modern South Bihar -

---

(1) C.I.I. III. No.43 p 208 f. K.S. Aiyangar (J.I.H.V. p.313 f) is obviously wrong in stating that the inscription of 672-73 A.D. gives him paramount titles.

(2) C.I.I. III. No.42 p.200. (3) Ibid. No.43 p.208 f.

(4) Ibid. p.211 f.

certainly formed an integral part of Ādityasena's kingdom. In an inscription from Nepal of the time of Jayadeva, Ādityasena is referred to as 'great' and 'king of Magadha' 'Magadhā-dhipasya mahatah s'rī Ādityasenasya'(1). He is certainly the Gupta king of the same name. This confirms the opinion of Fleet that Magadha was the centre of the later Gupta dynasty.

The assumption of imperial and paramount titles in the later years of his reign must have followed the conclusion of some victorious campaigns and addition of new conquests to the kingdom. On the door of the Vaidyanātha Temple in Deogarh, there is a Vaiṣṇava inscription which was brought there from the Mandāra Hill(2). The late Dr. R. Mitra thought that the alphabet was Maithili in character.(3) In the opinion of Fleet, the inscription could not be earlier than the 16th century A.D.(4) According to Marshall, "the inscription is written in Bengali characters of perhaps 300 years ago".(5) From it we learn that "the king Ādityasena of renowned prowess the ruler of the (whole) earth up to the shores of the oceans, the performer of the as'vamedha and other great sacrifices ... in the kṛita age ... arrived with his queen Kos'adevī from the Cola city, (and) having sacrificed with three as'vamedha sacrifices, he with his consort, the glorious Kos'adevī, caused

---

(1) I.A. IX. p.178 f. (2) C.I.I. III. pp.213-14(note)

(3) JASB.LII(part I) pp.190-91. (4) C.I.I. III. p.214 (note)

(5) ASIAR.1902-3, p.230.

to be made the whole of the famous work (kīrtti), and made an establishment of (the god) Nṛihari. A Boar, (i.e. the image of the god Viṣṇu in that form) has been set up by Balabhadra ... Thus runs the chapter on the Mandāragiri".(1) There is no doubt that the king Ādityasena of the inscription is the later Gupta king of the same name, and the allusion to him as belonging to the Kṛīta age confirms that the inscription was engraved much later than his time. The name of Ādityasena's wife, as Kos'adevī, instead of Koṇadevī, (the correct form as we know from the contemporary inscriptions) "is to be explained by the usual inability of the people, then or now, to read correctly the ancient characters of the inscription".(2) The mention of the famous work (kīrtti) constructed by Ādityasena's wife confirms the identification. Two inscriptions found on the Mandāragiri Hill near the Pāpaharani Tank(3) refer to the excavation of the tank by 'Paramabhaṭṭārika-Rājnī-Mahādevī-s'rī-Koṇadevī', wife of 'Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja S'rī Ādityasenadeva'. There is no doubt that this very kīrtti is referred to in the Vaidyanāthadhāma inscription. The scribe of the later inscription must have seen the inscriptions of Ādityasena on the Mandāra Hill. According to Bloch, 'the last S'loka referring to Balabhadra is actually found in characters

---

(1) C.I.I. III. p.213 (note) (2) ibid. p.214 (note)

(3) ibid, Nos. 44 & 45 p.211 f. "The position of the inscription no.45 seems to be not now known at all". But it is obvious that it could not have been far away from the Tank.

of about the same time as Ādityasena's on the top of the Mandāra Hill close to the modern Jaina temple, which stands there."(1) The Deogarh inscription was therefore certainly based on Ādityasena's inscriptions. But in the Deogarh inscription Ādityasena and his wife are referred to as having come from the Cola city with vast wealth. We have nothing at all to connect the Gupta king Ādityasena with a city so far south as the 'Colapuram'. It may give an idea that his authority or influence extended up to the Cola city, But such an assumption, to say the least, would be 'unsafe', and Aiyangar suggested that there might have been an error in transcription.(2) It may be possible that Ādityasena had gone to the south on a pilgrimage to the sacred places there and might have received vast presents as a matter of courtesy from different rulers of the country. Bloch has a good suggestion to offer. He observes that "the statement that Ādityasena was a native of the Cola country deserves no credit whatsoever". According to the learned scholar, the scribe mixed up different traditions in the same epigraph, the tradition of Ādityasena being known as a great king of Magadha, or rather of Northern India, and the common tradition, prevalent locally and noted by Buchanan, about a Cola king suffering from leprosy and getting cured after taking a bath in the Tank. The scribe knew the

---

(1) ASIAR. 1902-3. p.230.

(2) JIH. V. p.313 f.

traditions and had also noticed the inscriptions of Ādityasena on the Mandāra Hill, and he mixed them up and made Ādityasena come from the Cola city. As the Linga of Vaidyanātha also enjoys the ancient fame of the Pāpaharani Tank in curing leprosy, "an inscription purporting to be a history of the Mandāra Hill was placed near the entrance to the temple of Vaidyanātha".(1)

The Deogarh inscription is much later than the time of Ādityasena; but there is no doubt that it plainly contains 'a memorial of the great Ādityasena of Magadha'(2). Majumdar takes the inscription to be "too conventional to be regarded seriously"(3) We are alive to the fact that the scribes sing the praise of their patrons in exaggerated terms. But the inscription under review is not by a court poet. It belongs to a period when there could hardly be any earthly reason to praise Ādityasena to the skies. The only reasonable explanation appears to be that Ādityasena was a great king and his achievements were remembered down to much later days. Only great and remarkable men leave an undying impression on successive generations. There is nothing in the record which must be regarded as impossible for achievement by Ādityasena. If Mādhavavarman I of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin family could perform eleven horse-sacrifices, Ādityasena may have performed more than one. It is known from his inscriptions that he assumed imperial

---

(1) ASIAR. 1902-3. p. 230 (2) C.I.I. III. p.214 (note)
(3) HBR. I. pp.81-2 (note 7)

titles. The assumption of such titles and the performance of horse-sacrifices must have followed some conquests.[1] Basak's supposition that Adityasena's kingdom extended up to Vanga in the east may not be correct, but it is very possible that Central and South-Western Bengal, including the sea-coast, were a part of his kingdom. The Aphsad inscription was composed or engraved by Sūkṣmaśiva of the Gauḍa country.[2] According to the Vaidyanāthadhāma Temple inscription Ādityasena ruled up to the shores of the ocean.[3]

An inscription has been found in Dudhpāni in the Hazaribagh district.[4] Unfortunately no facsimile of it has been published. The only source is a rubbing of it by Cunningham. The characters may be assigned 'to the end of the eighth century'.[5] It mentions one Ādi-Simha, king of Magadha 'in former days'. We are told that three brothers whose names ended in 'māna' went to Tāmraliptī from Ayodhyā, and after amassing much wealth they tarried at one of the villages-Bhramaraśālmali, Chiṅgalā and Nalihutiśandalla. Ādisimha came to a forest near the villages on a hunting expedition, and was pleased to grant the villages to Udayamāna, who was hailed as their lord by the people of the locality. We do not know of

---

(1) HNEI. p. 128. (2) C.I.I.IIII. No.42.pp.200f.

(3) Ibid. pp. 213-14 (note). (4) E.I.II. pp.343f.

(5) Ibid.

any other king except Ādityasena whose name even remotely resembles Ādisimha. In the inscription under review Ādisimha is compared to Jarāsandha, one of the mighty kings of Magadha in the days of yore. Ādityasena was a powerful king of Magadha, and therefore we suggest that Ādisimha of the Dudhpāni inscription should be identified with Ādityasena of the Gupta dynasty. The palaeography is not against this identification, as in an inscription of the end of the eighth century, Ādityasena could be easily referred to as belonging to 'former days'. If the identification proposed is accepted, then the southern limits of his kingdom must have extended to the Chotā Nāgpur HHills.

Having made himself the master of the central Gangetic valley, it was natural for Ādityasena to try to extend towards the west into the upper valley of the Ganges. His empire certainly included large parts of what is today called the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. The Deo-Baranārk inscription (2) of Jīvitagupta II was issued from the fort near Gomatīkoṭṭaka. This place must be looked for along the river Gomatī, which,

---

(1) It may not be surprising that in the facsimile of the inscription there is Ādityasena instead of Ādisimha. In the epigraphy of the period 'simha' and 'sena' may be confused. P.L. Paul (JHAQ XI p. 70f) indentified Ādisimha with Ādiśūra of Kulaśāstra of Vaidik Brāhmaṇas.

(2) C.I.I.III. No.46. pp. 213 f.

rising in Shahjahanpur district of Western U.P., passes Lucknow and Jaunpur and falls into the Ganges about halfway between Benaress and Gajipur, and about 85 miles west of Deo-Baranārk'.(1) Therefore this inscription makes it clear that the district of Shāhābad and large parts of the United Provinces were included in the empire of the later Guptas. It is very likely that it was Ādityasena, the first Gupta king to assume imperial titles and to perform horse-sacrifices, who represented this urge of expansion towards the west.

In connection with the westward expansion of Ādityasena's kingdom it may be useful to examine the relevant account of I-Tsing. He refers to the travels of Hwui-lun, a Corean, who came by the 'northern route', following Hiuen-Chiu, who had returned to Kaśmir in 664 A.D. and later on came back and met I-Tsing in Nālandā(2). "Passing through the eastern frontiers and thence proceeding northward, he (Hwui-lun) came to Tu-ho-lo (Tukhāra) Temple. This temple was originally built by the Tukhāra people for their own priests. The establishment is called Gandhārasaṇda. To the west is the

---

(1) ibid.

(2) The Life. p. XXVIII.

Kapiśā Temple. The priests of this establishment study the Little Vehicle. Priests from the north also dwell here. The temple is called Guṇacarita. Two stages to the east of the Mahābodhi is a temple called Kiu-lu-kia. It was built long ago by a king of the Kiu-lu-kia country, a southern kingdom (Kurukṣetra) ..... Recently a king called Sun-army (Ādityasena) built by the side of the old temple another which is now newly finished. Priests from the south occupy this temple. About forty stages east of this, following the course of the Ganges, is the Deer Temple, and not far from this is a ruined establishment with only its foundations remaining called the China Temple. Tradition says that formerly a Mahārāja called Śrī Gupta built this temple for the use of the Chinese priests"(1). Scholars have generally identified this Mahābodhi with the Bodhgayā Temple in Magadha. Allan placed the China Temple built by Śrī Gupta in Magadha(2). Recently Ganguli, believing that according to I-Tsing the Mṛigaśikhāvana Temple existed 40 stages east of Nālandā, placed it in the Murshidabad district of Bengal.(3)

---

(1) ibid. p. XXXVI. (2) CCGDBM. p. XV.

(3) IHQ. XIV. pp. 532 f.

Majumdar[1] has reinforced this suggestion by pointing out that in an illustrated Cambridge Ms. (Add. 1643) dated in 1015 A.D. there is a picture of a Stūpa with the label 'Mṛigasthāpana Stūpa of Varendra', which is probably the Mṛigaśikhāvana of I-Tsing's Records. The learned scholar, therefore, observes that "the Temple of China was near the Mṛigasthāpana stūpa in Varendra and must have been situated either in Varendra or not far from its boundary, on the bank of the Bhāgīrathī and the Padmā[2]. But there are valid arguments against this conclusion. Beal's translation of I-Tsing's memoirs does not show that the Mṛigaśikhāvana Temple (Deer Temple) was 40 stages east of Nālandā. Beal notes that "it is doubtful whether the Mahābodhi named here does not refer to the Tu-ho-lo Temple mentioned above"[3]. More definite is another translation by Beal himself, where he renders the passage thus, "To the north-east of the great Bodhi (the temple just mentioned), about a couple of stages, is another temple called Cālukya"[4]. Thus, it is plain that in the context of Hwui-lun's travels the great Bodhi first

---

(1) HBR. I. p. 69. (2) ibid.

(3) The Life, p. XXXVI. note 1. (4) I.A.X. p. 110.

mentioned is different from the Mahābodhi Temple of Gayā, which the traveller mentions later. Probably it was to distinguish between the two temples of the samename, or rather to avoid confusion in the mind of readers, that the traveller while mentioning the first Mahābodhi added the words 'just mentioned' immediately after the mention of the Guṇacarita Temple, and when he came to refer to the Mahābodhi Temple of Gayā he qualified it with the phase 'near the Diamond Throne'.(1) Therefore it should be clear that the first Mahābodhi Temple mentioned by I-Tsing in connection with the account of Hwui-lun was different from the Gayā temple, and should be more plausibly identified with the Tu-ho-lo or Ta-hsio (Great learning) Temple mentioned by the Corean traveller(2). If we free ourselves from the obsession of identifying the great Bodhi with the Mahābodhi Temple of Gayā, which Hwui-lun described later, it becomes easier to locate the Cālukya(3) and Ādityasena's temples. According to Hwui-lun, "forty stages or so to the eastward of this (Ādityasena's temple) we come to the

---

(1) The Life, intro. pp. XXXVI-XXXVII.

(2) ibid XXXVI; I.A. X. p. 110.

(3) In the Life, Beal translates Kiu-lu-kia as Kurukṣetra (' but earlier he took it to be Cālukya (I.A.X. p. 110). It appears to be more correct. Chavannes thought it to mean Kolkai or the Pāṇḍyan capital. (JMU. XIII; p. 168).

Nālandā Temple. First taking the Ganges and descending it, we reach the Mṛigas'ikhāvana Temple. Not far from this is the China Temple built by Mahārāja S'rīgupta for the use of the priests for going to Mahābodhi".(1) Beal himself shows some discrepancy in the translation of the passage at another place. In the introduction to the Life, he translates the same passage thus, "About forty stages east of this (Ādityasena's Temple), following the course of the Ganges, is the Deer Temple, and not far from this is the China Temple".(2) The same translation occurs at another place.(3) This creates some confusion: whether the Nālandā Temple was forty stages east of Ādityasena's Temple or the Mṛigas'ikhāvana Temple was forty stages east of Ādityasena's Temple. It is more likely that what I-Tsing meant was that Hwui-lun was describing the route from Ādityasena's Temple to the Nālandā Temple, and in the course of this he first came across the Mṛigas'ikhāvana Temple. Therefore it was the Nālandā Temple which was forty stages east of Ādityasena's Temple. Jagannath has pointed out that in the other translation Beal omitted the word 'first', "that has created an ambiguity".(4) However, what concerns us is that

---

(1) I.A. X.(1881) p.110. (2) The Life, p. XXXVI.

(3) J.R.A.S. 1881 p.570. (4) I.H.Q. XXII. p.28 f.

the temple built by Ādityasena was west of the Mṛigas'ikhāvana and Nālandā, and the Mṛigas'ikhāvana Temple itself was west of the Nālandā Temple. Hwui-lun, who is coming from the north, describes the Tokhāra Temple and the Kapiśśā Temple called Guṇacarita, also known as the great Bodhi, and then he mentions the temple built by the king of the Cālukya kingdom of the south. By the side of this was the newly finished temple of Ādityasena. From there going east, he came to the Deer Temple, near which was the China Temple built by S'rīgupta; and east of that was the Nālandā Temple, which was the destination of the traveller. After noting the China Temple, he mentions the Mahābodhi Temple of Gayā, and after that the Nālandā Temple, which is east of the Mahābodhi Temple. Following the route of Hwui-lun, it is plain that the traveller, while coming from the north-west to the south-east, found the Mṛigas'ikhāvana Temple between the Ādityasena Temple in the west and the Nālandā Temple in the east. Near this Mṛigas'ikhāvana Temple was the China Temple. Jagannath identifies the Mṛigas'ikhāvana Temple with the Deer Park in Sārnāth.(1) We do not know what exactly the Corean traveller meant by the phrase 'not far from this' when he referred to the China Temple after the Deer Temple.(2) Deer Park (Sārnāth) was twenty or so stages west of Nālandā.(3) Ādityasena's Temple was forty stages west of Nālandā, as appears from the

---

(1) I.H.Q. XXII. p.28 f. (2) ibid The Life, intro. p XXXVI

(3) The Life, intro. p XXXVII

translation of Beal, then it should have been situated about $228\frac{4}{7}$ miles (one stage = $5\frac{5}{7}$ miles) west of Nālandā, in the United Provinces.(1) It does not by itself prove that Ādityasena's rule extended over that part of the country. The Ceylonese, the Javanese, the Cālukyas and others built temples for their travellers in Northern India, but that does not necessarily mean that they exercised rule over that part of the country where they built the temples: but at the same time, in the political conditions prevailing at that time in Northern India coupled with the testimony of the Deo-Baranārk inscription, it is possible that Ādityasena may have extended his influence far west of Magadha into the modern United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. The suspicion is confirmed by the fact that in the Cālukya records(2) reference is made to an All-Northern-India empire, and Raychaudhuri points out that this could refer only to the later Gupta empire of Ādityasena or his successor Devagupta.(3) If Jayasval's identification of king 'S'rī'of Gaudatantra of the M.M.K.(4) with Ādityasena is accepted, then his rule

---

(1) Dr. W. Simon of the Far East Department of the School of the Oriental Studies read for me the Chinese manuscript of I-Tsing's book in India Office (Nanj. Cat.1491) and in his opinion Beal's translation in Indian Antiquary Vol X. is correct and in the Introduction to the Life, Beal omitted one full sentence. Thus our point that Mṛigas'ikhāvana lay west of Nālandā is confirmed.

(2) I.A. VII. p.303 f; ibid IX.p.229.

(3) P.H.A.I. (4th Edn) p.516.

(4) I.H.I. pp.68-69.

certainly extended up to Gauḍa in the east. According to Basak[1] "the extension of his (Ādityasena's) conquests towards the shores of the ocean" as known from the Vaidyanātha Temple inscription, "suggests that Bengal, specially Southern Rāḍha and Vaṅga, might have come under his dominion". Southern Rāḍha might have formed a part of his dominion, but there is no reason for including Vaṅga (East Bengal) in the empire of Ādityasena.

A copper-plate grant of King Lokanātha has been found in the district of Tipperah[2]. It mentions a Mahān Sāmānta S'rīnātha and his son Bhavanātha. The latter abdicated the throne in favour of his brother's son, whose son was Lokanātha. V.7, refers to a fact that a large number of soldiers belonging to the chief sovereign (Parames'vara) met with annihilation in a battle. Another battle in which Jayaturaṅgavarṣa seems to have been a party is referred to in V.8. V.9 mentions that a king named Jīvadhāraṇa made over to Lokanātha his own viṣaya and army without engaging in further battle. Basak[3] read the date as the year 44 and referred i.e. to the Harṣa era. Later on he modified his earlier opinion and observed that it could be interpreted as the year

---

(1) H.N.E.I. p.128. (2) E.I. XV. p.301 f.

(3) E.I. XV. p. 301 f.

344 in the Gupta era, and so equivalent to 663-664 A.D.(1) It may be significant that the first member of the dynasty whose name ended in - nātha is referred to as 'Adhimahārāja' ('Mahārājādhirāja'?)(2) (or more than a Mahārāja), and the succeeding members are given feudatory titles of Sāmanta or Mahārāja. Basak(3) conjectured that the title 'Adhimahārāja' may denote independent status for the early king, and he might have adopted a defiant attitude towards any of the sovereigns mentioned in the Faridpur plates, i.e. Dharmāditya, Gopacandra or Samācāradeva. The reference to Parames'vara in the inscriptions clearly proves that Lokanātha was a feudatory to some overlord. In Basak's opinion "it is not unlikely that Lokanātha owed allegiance to Ādityasena, who may have sent an army to help his feudatory against King Jīvadhāraṇa"(4), whose simple title of 'nripa' shows that he, too, was a local ruler in Bengal. The learned scholar warned us against taking Jayatuṅgavarṣa as the overlord of Lokanātha. J.C. Ghosh(5) took the date to the year 244 in the Gupta era and identified Jīvadhāraṇa of the inscription with Jīvitagupta I of the later Gupta dynasty, and Jayatuṅgavarṣa with Varṣa, son of Simha, of Tārānātha's account. Das'aratha Śarmā,(6) ignoring the warning of Basak, held Jīvadhāraṇa to

---

(1) H.N.E.I. p.195. (2) E.I. XV. p.301. f.

(3) H.N.E.I. p. 196 (4) E.I. XV. p. 301. f.

(5) I.H.Q. VI. p. 564 f. (6) Ibid. XI. p. 326 f.

be the overlord of Lokanātha, read the date of the inscription as 144 Harṣa era, and identified Jīvadhāraṇa with Jīvitagupta II of the later Gupta dynasty. The identification of Jīvadhāraṇa with Jīvitagupta I or II is absolutely gratuitous. There is nothing to suggest that the later Guptas also belonged to the Dhāvaṇa gotra, as did the imperial Guptas. It has been rightly pointed out that, 'it is not however understood how Jīvitagupta first became Jīvagupta and then transformed himself into Jīvadhāraṇa".(1) Recently Bhaṭṭaśāli(2) pointed out that the correct date of the inscription is 244, and it should be assigned to the Gupta era. He further tells us that Basak has confirmed his revised reading of the date. From the recently discovered Kailan plates of S'rī Dhāvaṇa Raṭa it appears that Jīvadhāraṇa was the father of Dhāraṇa Raṭa. Therefore it is likely that Lokanātha and his ancestors were at first feudatories of the Guptas, and later on changed their allegiance to the kings of Kāmarūpa, if they ever extended their authority over Tipperah district. N.N. Vasu(3) reads Jayaturigavarma instead of Jayaturigavarṣa in the line 14 of the copper-plate inscription, and takes him to be a successor of Bhāskaravarman, king of Kāmarūpa. We may point out that in the facsimile of

---

(1) J.A.R.S. III p.103. (2) I.H.Q. XXII. p.162 f.

(3) Social History of Kāmarūpa Vol.III. pp18-24.

the plate[1] it is clear that there is no 'ma' but 'sa', and so the reading Jayatuṁgavarma cannot stand unless we believe that the scribe made a mistake. It may not be out of place to mention that Bloch[2] thought that the characters of the inscription show that it was written in the 9th or 10th century after Christ. Sen[3] reads Jayatuṁgadharma for Jayatuṁgavarṣa. He accepts the earlier reading of Basak about the date i.e. 44 and takes it to mean the regnal year of the overlord of Lokanātha, and identifies the Parames'vara of the inscription with Dharmapāla, the second Pāla king. In view of so numerous different views on the date and the identification of Jīvadhāraṇa, Jayatuṁgavarṣa and the Parames'vara of the inscription, it is hardly safe to rely on it to suggest that Āditysena's kingdom extended up to Eastern Bengal. Vaṛiga and Samataṭa were never under the rule of the later Guptas. It was lost to the imperial Guptas after Vainyaguptа. During the 7th century, the Khaḍgas probably ruled over the region. It is quite probable that Lokanātha was a feudatory of the Khaḍga rulers.

---

(1) E.I. XV. plate facing p. 308. line 14.

(2) ASIAR 1903-4. p.120 f.

(3) Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal, pp. 327 - 334.

N.N. Vasu[1] threw out a suggestion that Ādityasena's authority was acknowledged in Kāmarūpa. This is absolutely unwarranted; and because Ādityasena assumed imperial titles and performed a horse-sacrifice, it is not proved that "as a result ... the whole of Āryāvarta including Kāmarūpa had to acknowledge his supremacy."[2] As a matter of fact, we have no positive evidence at all to make the whole of Bengal a part of Ādityasena's empire. The testimony of the Ārya-manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa, the Aphsaḍ and Vaidyanāthadhāma inscriptions enable us to assume that at best Central and South-West Bengal bordering on the sea were included in his kingdom. That was the eastern limit of his dominion.

It is therefore clear that after the death of Harṣa, Ādityasena was the first ruler to claim to have established an All-Northern-India empire, now with Magadha as the centre. His empire included a large part of Northern India extending from the Ganges in the North to the hills of Chotā-Nāgpur in the South, along the river Gomatī in the West to the Bay of Bengal in the East. From a Nepal inscription of king Jayadeva, dated the year 153, we learn that his father Śivadeva married Vatsadevī, who was the daughter of Bhogavarman, the crest-jewel

---

(1) Social History of Kāmarūpa I. p.155.

(2) Ibid.

of the illustrious varmans of the valorous Maukhari race, and grand-daughter of the great S'rī Ādityasena, lord of Magadha.(1) There can be no doubt that this Ādityasena, the lord of Magadha, is Ādityasena of the later Gupta dynasty. The inscription thus proves that a matrimonial alliance was concluded between the Maukhari and the later Gupta families - which were hereditary enemies since the time of Īs'ānavarman and Kumāragupta. The record is silent about the status of Bhogavarman; whether he was a king or a prince. But the fact that the great Ādityasena married his daughter to Bhogavarman certainly suggests that the latter must have been a man of considerable importance. The 'valorous Maukhari race' to which Bhogavarman belonged suggests that the family was the same as the imperial Maukhari dynasty. As Bhogavarman is described as the 'crest-jewel' of this dynasty, he may have been the king or a royal-prince. The point is further strengthened by the fact that in the same inscription Bhogavarman is said to have "by his glory put to shame (all) hostile kings". Thus there are grounds for strong suspicion that Bhogavarman belonged to the imperial Maukhari dynasty, and he may have been a descendant of Pūrnavarman, if the latter was a Maukhari. After the overthrow of Arjuna, (the minister of Harsa), it is possible that Bhogavarman may

---

(1) I.A. IX. p.178 f.

have come into possession of Kanauj, the ancestral capital of the Maukharis: but the Nepal inscription gives no regal title to him, nor does it suggest his connection with Kanauj. It is possible that he became a vassal to Ādityasena, who in order to win the valorous Maukharis to his side in the difficult days of empire-building, married his daughter to him. Such a contingency is not rare. Harṣa married his daughter to Dhruvasena II after the latter's defeat.

In this connection it may be noted that a Nepal inscription of Ams'uvarman and S'ivadeva dated 318 (G.E.?)[1] mentions one Svāmī Bhagavarman as the dūtaka of the grant. From another inscription dated in the year 39, we learn that Ams'uvarman's sister was married to Rājaputra S'ūrasena and had a son Bhagavarman and a daughter Bhāgyadevī.[2] Fleet[3] appears to be right in identifying S'rī Bhagavarman, the sister's son of Ams'uvarman, with Bhagavarman the dūtaka of the other grant dated in 318 G.E.. But can we identify this Bhagavarman with Bhagavarman of the Maukhari race and son-in-law of Ādityasena? In the opinion of Fleet[4] "he (Bhagavarman of Ams'uvarman's inscriptions) must not be confused with S'ivadeva II's father-in-law (or Ādityasena's son-in-law) ... who was at least a generation later." Basak[5] identifies the Bhagavarman,

---

(1) I.A. XIV. p.97 f; Fleet took the date to be 316 (C.I.I. III. App. IV. p.178)

(2) I.A. IX; C.I.I. III. App.IV. pp.179-80.

(3) C.I.I. III. App. IV. P.177 note 4.

(4) Ibid. (5) H.N.E.I. p.290

Sister's son of Ams'uvarman, with the son-in-law of Ādityasena, and he suggests that S'ūrasena, the father of Bhagavarman of Ams'uvarman's inscriptions, may have succeeded to the throne of Kanauj after the death of Harṣa and the disappearance of the pretender Arjuna. It is possible to argue that Arjuna's rebellion may have been due to the occupation of the imperial throne of Kanauj by a member of another family, different from that of Harṣa. Ādityasena came to the throne in C 650 A.D., and it was not impossible for him to marry his daughter to Bhagavarman who is mentioned in a Nepal inscription dated in the year 39, and in G.E. 318 (= 637 A.D.). The marriage may have taken place in C 650 A.D. soon after the accession of Ādityasena and before his digvijaya. If so, Bhagavarman must have been middle-aged at the time of the marriage. This is not strange, specially when it was guided by political considerations. S'ūrasena father of Bhagavarman, may have sought refuge in Nepal after the death of Pūrṇavarman, or after the latter's practical vassalage to Harṣa. S'ūrasena is called 'Rājaputra', so he may have been a royal prince of the dynasty of Harivarman or Pūrṇavarman. Bhagavarman, the son of S'ūrasena, rose into prominence in the court of his maternal uncle Ams'uvarman, and may have been favoured with the important job of a dūtaka of the grant at quite an early age. When Nepal became subject to Tibetan imperialism and Northern India fell into confusion soon after the death of Harṣa and possible Tibetan aggression,

when Arjuna became ruler of Tīrabhukti, and Mādhavagupta of Magadha, Bhagavarman may have left Nepal and come to Kanauj, the ancient Maukhari capital. Ādityasena, who was inspired by imperial ambitions like Samudragupta, may have won him over by a matrimonial alliance at a time when his kingdom was surrounded by hostile powers. Bhagavarman also may have seen obvious benefits accruing from such a relationship, and agreed to remain a subordinate vassal to his more powerful father-in-law. This alliance may have helped Ādityasena to extend his dominion far into the Western portion of the United Provinces along the river Gomatī.

Ādityasena not only inherited the political legacy of his great predecessors, the imperial Guptas and Harṣa, but also their religious eclecticism. He was a follower of Brahmanism and worshipped Viṣnu: he is called 'Paramabhāgavata' in the Deo-Baranārk inscription.(1) His queen Koṇadevī excavated a tank on the Mandāra hill.(2) He is said to have established an image of the god Mrihari(3) - a form of Viṣnu. He is also credited with the performance of the horse and other sacrifices.(4) During his reign his balādhikṛita Sālapakṣa installed an image (of the Sun) in the agrahāra of Nālandā.(5)

---

(1) C.I.I. III p.214 f. (2) ibid p.212 f.
(3) ibid, p. 213 (note); J.A.S.B.LII.pp.190-91. (4) ibid.
(5) C.I.I. III p.208 f.

He caused to be made a temple of Viṣṇu.[1] He is referred to as laying out 'the path of the Vedas'[2]. Though he was, thus, certainly a follower of Brāhmanism and its sacrifices, he also patronised Buddhism. The Chinese pilgrim Hwui-Lun noticed a temple newly finished by Ādityasena for the priests of the South.[3] King S'rī (Ādityasena?) in the M.M.K. is described as having built seven or eight monasteries and to have lived up to eighty-one years. His reign may have come to an end in 675 A.D.

Devagupta

Ādityasena was succeeded by his son Devagupta, born of Mahādevī Koṇadevī. He is described as 'Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parames'vara' in the Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II.[4] He succeeded to the extensive empire and paramount status earned by his father. In Cālukya records, Vinayāditya, who came to the throne in 680 A.D.[5] is reported to have fought with and defeated some paramount soverign of Northern India (whose name is not given), and to have acquired all the insignia of paramountcy such as a certain standard called Pālidhvaja, the drum called Dhakkā and others. This

(1) C.I.I. III p.200 f. (2) ibid, p.213, note.
(3) The Life, Intro. p.xxxvi (4) C.I.I. III p.214 f.
(5) Bomb. Gaz. Vol I. pt.II. p.367.

event must have taken place after 616 S'aka, since they are not mentioned in his grant of that year, but in those of his successors.(1) His son Vijāyāditya, "pushing on further to the north even than himself, acquired again the pālidhvaja banner, and also the Signs of the rivers Gangā and Yamunā, the dhakkā drum and other attributes and wealth" (2) Therefore it is reasonable to hold that the Cālukya victory over the paramount ruler of Northern India occurred after the S'aka year 616 (= 694 A.D.) and before 696 A.D., when Vijayāditya came to the throne. The paramount ruler of Northern India referred to in the Cālukya records was most probably Devagupta. No other king could possibly be described as such in the latter part of the seventhy century after Christ. We have already seen that the temple built by Ādityasena by the side of Kṛu-lu-kia temple was situated in the United Provinces west of Allahabad. His successor Devagupta could easily have held suzerainty over the Doab, and therefore by defeating him, Vinayāditya claimed to to have acquired the imperial signs of the rivers Ganges and the Yamunā.

I-Tsing, who came to India in 672-73 and returned to Si-King in 695 A.D.(3) has written kāu-fā-kao-sang-chüen in two parts, being an account of eminent priests of Buddhist converss who visited India from China and bordering districts. In this

---

(1) Bomb. Gaz. Vol.I. Pt.II.p.189
(2) Ibid. p.368
(3) Takakusu, O.C. Intro. P.XVIII.

is included the account of the Korean traveller Hwui-Lun. He mentions a Chinese Temple built by S'rī Gupta, who also granted land and revenue of about twenty villages for the upkeep of the temple. This temple was not far from the Deer Temple. The land formerly granted to the China Temple was then under the king of Eastern India whose name was Devavarman, but "he is said to be willing to give back the temple land and the endowment in case any priests came from China"(1) There has been going on an unending controversy about the identification of the King Devavarman. We have already seen that some try to identify him with an unknown king of Kāmarūpa. R.C. Majumdar(2) identified him with Devakhaḍga of the Kaḥaḍga dynasty. D.C. Ganguli(3) supports Majumdar. Inscriptions of the Khaḍgas have been found at Ashrafpur in the Dacca district. The first inscription mentions Devakhaḍga, his wife Prabhāvatī and their son Rājarājabhaṭa.(4) R.L. Mitra wrongly read the date as 713. Hoernle read the date as year 13 on both the inscriptions(5) and referred it to the Newar era, which commenced with 880 A.D.

---

(1) The Life. Intro. p.XXXVII.
(2) J.A.S.B. XIX. (N.S.) p.375 f; E.H.B.R. p.23
(3) I.H.Q. XIV. p.532 f.
(4) P.J.A.S.B. 1885, p.49 f.
(5) P.J.A.S.B. 1891. p.119 f.

G.N. Laskar also followed Hoernle in holding that both the inscriptions are dated in the year 13, but claimed that this is the regnal year of Devakhadga.(1) He assigned the inscriptions to the 8th or 9th century A.D. In the opinion of R.D. Bannerji the grants are to be dated in the first part of the 10th century.(2) But Bhattasali held that the writing is akin to the Banskera and Madhuban plates of Harsa, and less advanced than those of the Aphsad and Shahpur inscriptions of Adityasena; and therefore in his opinion the plates must belong to the 7th century A.D.(3) R.C. Majumdar agreed with this conclusion based on epigraphy.(4) According to Majumdar, while the first plate is dated in the year 13 ~~and~~ the second plate is dated in year 73 or 79, which is to be assigned to the Harsa Era.(5) Basak finds it difficult to endorse the revised reading of Majumdar, and points out that "attention may be drawn to the fact that the day of the month in the plate, whether it be 25 or 28, is indicated by the system of letter-numerals, the first sign being a symbol for 20, and the second for either 5 or 8: the use of the two different systems in two successive lines in the same inscription for indicating number cannot be easily explained". The learned scholar is constrained to remark that "the first

---

(1) M.A.S.B. I. No.6. p.85 f. (2) M.A.S.B. V. P.67.
(3) J.A.S.B. X(N.S.) p.85 f. (4) ibid. XIX. p.375 f.
(5) E.H.B.R. p. 22.

symbol in the reading of the year number is really a puzzling one" and he fully agrees with Bhattasāli's opinion that these Khadga inscriptions "cannot be assigned a date posterior to the beginning of the 8th century A.D."(1) An examination of the facsimiles of the two inscriptions makes it absolutely obvious that there is a vast different between the two numeral figures in the two inscriptions, although both have been read as denoting 10 by Hoernle and Laskar. D.C. Ganguli(2) on the authority of the 1st Dāmodarpur plate and the Mallasārul copper-plate reads the date on the second Ashrafpur plate as 7, and holds that it is in the regnal year of Devakhadga. We are disposed to agree with this reading. It is really important to bear in mind that we have no other instance of an inscription in East Bengal dated in the Harsa era, and it is, therefore, more plausible that both these inscriptions are dated in the regnal years of Devakhadga. From the inscriptions we learn of four generations of the dynasty - Khadgodyama, his son Jātakhadga, his son Devakhadga, and his son Rājarāja or Rājarājabhatta. Rājarāja, son of Devakhadga, according to the second copper-plate, may be identified with Rājarājabhatta son of Devakhadga and Prabhāvatī of the 1st copper-plate. But it is to be noted that in none of these two inscriptions is Rājarājabhatta

---

(1) H.N.E.I. pp.202-3. (2) E.I. XXVI. pp.125-126.

described as a king. Scholars, as we have already seen, are divided as to the period to which these rulers belong. I-Tsing memtions Hwui-Lun noticing Devavarman, a king of Eastern India, who was the master of the land and endowment granted to the China Temple. Seng-chi, who arrived by the sea route, found a Buddhist king Rājabhaṭa in Samataṭa.(1) Majumdar has identified Devavarman and Rajabhaṭa with Devakhaḍga and Rājarājabhaṭa(2). But there is no agreement among scholars on the date of the Khaḍga kings. Moreover, the China Temple and the endowed land were situated far west of Nālandā, and there is absolutely no evidence at all to make the kingdom of the Khaḍgas extend to Magadha, and much farther West. Their rule appears to have been confined to the Samataṭa region. D.C. Ganguli's thesis that the China Temple lay in Murshidabad district of Bengal - a hypothesis supported by Majumdar - may have added weight to the proposed identification of Devavarman with Devakhaḍga, but we have already shown that it rested on an accidental omission of the vital part of a sentence in the translation of the passage by Beal in the Life. Again, Devakhaḍga was a devout Buddhist, but Devavarman of I-Tsing's account does not appear to be so.(3) Devavarman "was willing to give back the temple-land and the endowments in case any priests came from China"(4). Had he been a Buddhist, he must

(1) The Life. Intro. P.XL-XLI. (2) H.B.R. I. p.87; J.A.S.B. XIX (N.S.) p.375 f.

(3) I.C. II. p.37 f. (4) The Life, p.XXXVII.

have continued the endowment to the temple, and taken it under his charge, and would not only have expressed his willingness to hand it over to the Chinese priests: certainly the temple itself, and not only its foundations should have remained in existence if the lands lay in the kingdom of a devout Buddhist king like Devakhadga. R.N. Saletore[1] takes Devavarman to be a Maukhari and successor of Bhogavarman as the ruler of Eastern India. Except for its novelty, the suggestion is hardly worth serious notice. Bhogavarman could not be a king of Eastern India, and it is hardly fair to suppose the existence of another Maukhari ruler of the name of Devavarman. In view of these objections and above all the uncertainty of the chronology of the Khadga dynasty, we agree with Basak[2] in identifying Devavarman with Devagupta II, son of Ādityasena. Majumdar[3] is not quite correct in stating that according to I-Tsing Devavarman and Ādityasena were contemporaries. Ādityasena is referred to as 'a recent king', or 'in recent times', and Devavarman is mentioned as the ruling king. It appears that Devavarman immediately followed Ādityasen

---

(1) J. U.B. XIV.(N.S.) p.12. (2) H.N.E.I. p.130

(3) J.A.S.R.S.(N.S.) XIX. p.378

and we know from the Deo-Baranārk inscription (1) that Ādityasena was succeeded by his son Devagupta, who was a devotee of S'iva (Paramamāhes'vara); so Devavarman, 'king of Eastern India' of I-Tsing's account, is Devagupta of the later Gupta dynasty.(2)

Devagupta was a paramount ruler and has been described as 'Paramambhattāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parames'vara' in the Deo-Baranārk inscription. It is obvious that he maintained intact the empire bequeathed to him by Ādityasena. His rule may have come to an end in C.695 A.D.(3)

---

(1) C.I.I. III. p.214 f.

(2) It is no doubt true that in the Chinese records, Magadha is placed in Madhyadeśa and not in Eastern India. It may be that because Devagupta was master of Gauḍa as well, which has been placed in Eastern India, that Devavarman (Devagupta) is referred to as king of Eastern India. I-Tsing travelled by the Southern Sea route and he came to Gauḍa first. At that time Devagupta was ruling over Gauḍa in Eastern India. Therefore he took Devagupta, whom he called Devavarman, to be a king of Eastern India. It may be of some significance to note that in the Sanskrit literature, Magadha is often placed in Eastern India. Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa does so /M.P.P. p.330/. In Yādavaprakāś'a, a work of the 11th century, Magadha is included in Prācya(I.H.Q XIX.P.214).

(3) From the inscription of Vijayāditya(I.A. IX.pp.127 and 131 dated 700 A.D., we come to know that Vinayaditya had defeated some 'paramount sovereign of Northern India and had acquired many signs of paramountcy (parames'vara chihna)'. This happened between 694 and 696 A.D., many say in 695 A.D. Devagupta, who is the Sakalottarāpathanātha of Cālukya records, may not have survived the Cālukya invasion of his dominion. If 'Deva, the king of Magadha' of the Ārya-mañjuś'rī mūla-kalpa is identified with Devagupta (I.H.I. pp.42-43), then it appears he met a violent death, as he is reported to have been "surrounded on all sides by enemies, suppressed and killed" He might have died fighting the Cālukyas.

Visnugupta

Devagupta was succeeded by his son Visnugupta, born of Paramabhattārikā rājnī mahādevī Kamatātadevī[1]. An inscription of the 'Mahārājādhirāja Parames'vara S'rī Visnugupta' has been found at Mangraon, situated in the area between the bed of the river Ganges at Buxar and the northern parts of the Kaimur plateau in the Shāhābad district of Bihar. The plate is in the Patna Museum. From the plate it appears that in the 17th year of the glorious reign of Visnugupta, one Avimuktajna of the Kuttuka country, purchased a pala of oil from the householders of the village Angāra (Mangaraon) and presented it to the lord S'rī Subhadrasvara to be placed on the scale of flowers attached to the temple of S'rī-mittra-Kesavadeva, situated in the hermitage of Cundaskilā. This Mahārājādhirāja Parames'vara has been identified with Visnugupta of the later Gupta dynasty, on the grounds of paleography, as the characters of the inscription are much later in development than those of the Nālandā seal of Visnugupta.[2] The inscription proves beyond doubt that Visnugupta, the King of Magadha, continued to hold the south-western limits of the present district of Shāhābad. It may be easily surmised that some parts of the United Provinces must have been included in his kingdom. It is possible to believe that Visnugupta continued to rule in glory over the extensive empire of Magadha,

(1) C.I.I. III. p.214 f. (2) J.B.R.S. XXX. p.199 f.

like his father and grandfather. Visnugupta may have ruled for twenty years or more i.e., from c. 695 to 715 A.D..

Jīvitagupta II

Jīvitagupta II, begotten on the Paramabhaṭṭārikā Rājñī AMahādevī Ijjādevī, succeeded to the throne after the death of his father Viṣṇugupta. We have only one inscription - that of Deo-Baranārk[1] - issued by him. The record informs us that from the victorious camp situated near the fort of Gomatīkoṭṭaka, Jīvitagupta II granted the village (Deo-Baranārk) which was formerly granted by the emperors Bālāditya, S'arvavarman and Avantivarman. Fleet read in line 10 of the inscription the name of a village Kiśoravāṭaka. He was also not certain whether the village granted was Deo-Baranārk or Kiśoravāṭaka(?)[2] Majumdar[3] went further and held that the village granted was Kiśoravāṭaka, and it may have been situated west of Benares along the river Gomatī, and Jīvitagupta II may have conquered the region west of Magadha. The learned scholar observed that in such a case 'the inscription may be regarded as a reminiscence of the reconquest of a portion of the old Maukhari Kingdom by Jīvitagupta II'[4]. It may be pointed out that the above suggestion is based on a mistake committed by Fleet. The inscription leaves no doubt that

(1) C.I.I. III p.214f. (2) ibid.

(3) I.C. XL p.124f. (4) I.C. XL p.124f.

the village Vāruṇikā (or modern Deo-Baranārk) was certainly the object of the grant. As for the alleged village Kiśoravāṭaka, it is important to note that Fleet doubtfully restored the reading as such. The relevant part of the inscription is very badly damaged. Kielhorn[1] had suggested that it did not contain the name of a village like Kiśoravāṭaka but was part of a fuller legend - 'Kiśoravadavāgomahiṣyādhikṛita D. C. Sarkar has suggested an improvement on the reading of the ll.8-12 of the inscription by Fleet, and Sarkar finds no place-name like Kiśoravāṭaka in line 10; he also reads, instead, 'Kiśoravadavāgomaṅki (ṣyāḍhikṛita). He observes that 'there is certainly no question of the name of any village in ll.8-11 which contains the customary list of officers; there is thus no doubt that the Vāruṇikā is the village granted by Jīvitagupta.[2] The inscription makes it clear that Deo-Baranārk, 25 miles S. W. of Arrah, was under Jīvitagupta II. The fact that the grant was issued from near the fort Gomatīkoṭṭaka, which must have been situated along the river Gomatī in the United Provinces, proves that his dominion extended far west into the United Provinces,

---

(1) In Fleet's personal copy of the corpus Indicarum Inscription Vol. III, now in the Library of the School of Oriental Studies, London, we saw a reference about Kielhorn's modification of Fleet's reading in Fleet's own handwriting. We have not been able to find the source of Fleet's statemen

(2) JASBL XI. p.69f. C.I.I. III p.277

west of Benares. The grant was issued 'from the victorious camp possessed of shouts of victory acquired by the three constituents of power, and invincible though (its) equipment of great ships and elephants and horses and foot-soldiers (and) situated near the fort of Gomatīkoṭṭaka'.(1) The description of the camp near the fort of Gomatīkoṭṭaka suggests that Jīvitagupta was on a military campaign against some enemy, who may have been Yaśovarman of Kanauj.

Jīvitagupta II is the last known member of the later Gupta dynasty, and he appears to have perished fighting Yaśovarman. The meteoric career of Yaśovarman is known from the Gauḍavaho, a prākrit poem by his court-poet Vākpatirāja. Kalhana's Rājataraṅgiṇī also throws some light on Yaśovarman, the king of Kanauj.(2) The Gauḍavaho, according to its title, purports to give an account of the slaying of the king of Gauḍa by Yaśovarman, but actually it contains a detailed and highly embellished story of the digvijaya of Yaśovarman, and disposes of the slaying of

---

(1) C.I.I. III. p.217.

(2) Many scholars have taken Yaśovarman to be a Maukhari (JMU XVII, 1947; CASR XV p.169; Cal.Rev. 1928, p.216; JIH V pp.325-26; The Maukharis p.136). Except for the 'Varman' ending of the name, there is no other evidence.

the Gauda king in about four couplets in all.[1] The poem alludes to the defeat of the king of Magadha by Yaśovarman. The conqueror arrived in the valley of the Sone river and proceeded to the Vindhyan mountains. It is in the course of the description of Yaśovarman's activities in the Vindhyan region, that 'it is said in somewhat obscure passage that the king of Magadha (Magadhanātha) fled before him through fear 'darkening the space before him with the dāna (the liquid oozing from the temples) of his elephants in rut, as if he caused before him the darkness of a night which he created by charms.'[2] Then, after the description of the rainy season, the poet says that the vassals and the nobles of the king of Magadha, who took to flight with him, felt ashamed of their conduct and immediately returned to fight Yaśovarman. A fierce and bloody battle was fought in which the blood of the allies of the king of Magadha reddened the field. The king of Magadha fled and was pursued by Yaśovarman who killed him, and, then, he proceeded to that coast "which was covered with woods perfumed by the Cardamom". He enjoyed his wanderings through the long and extensive plantations of the cocoa-palms. After this, Yaśovarman is described as having conquered the king of the Vangas.[3] The poet further observes that after Yaśovarman returned back to Kanauj the ladies of the harem of the king of

---

(1) Gaṇḍavaho, p. XLVIII (2) ibid p. XXIV, V. 354

(3) ibid pp. XXIV-XXV, VS. 414-417

Magadha plied cāmaras over him in public darbar.(1) It should be obvious, therefore, that Yaśovarman defeated and killed the king of Magadha, whose ladies of the harem were reduced to slavery. It is important to note that Yaśovarman is reported to have come to the Sone valley, then wandered into the Vindhyas and visited the Vindhyavāsinī Temple, in the Mirzapur district of the Eastern United Provinces; it is in the Vindhyan region that the king of Magadha fled before him. The king of Magadha was certainly Jīvitagupta II. The testimony of the Gauḍavaho read together with the Deo-Baranārk inscription suggests that Jīvitagupta had massed his army at Gomatīkoṭṭaka, and he might have won some sort of pyrrhic victory, which has been exaggerated in the inscription.(2) Yaśovarman pressed hard and entered the Sone valley, Jīvitagupta retreated to the north-eastern Vindhyan region, - and visited the Vindhyavāsinī Temple. The Vindhyan region of the Gauḍavaho must have included the Kaimur range, which is the extreme north-eastern extension of the Vindhyan chain, and is in the south-west of the Shāhābad district of Bihar,(3) then included in Magadha. Jīvitagupta, deserted by his feudatories, fled before Yaśovarman; then he regrouped his forces and exhorted them to face aggression with dignity.

---

(1) ibid p. XXXII, V.696-97 (2) C.I.I. III, p.214f.

(3) Imp. Gaz. XVI, map No. 29.

But all was in vain. Yas'ovarman inflicted a crushing defeat on him and pursued him, until he was ultimately killed. This event may have happened in Magadha or Gauda.

The poem appears to suggest that the king of Magadha and the king of Gauda were the same person.(1) S.P.Pandit has assumed it to be so without any hesitation. From the poem we learn that the assembly of the learned expressed a desire of hearing from Vākpati "a complete narrative (niḥ S'eṣa) of the manner in which Yas'ovarman had killed the lord of Māgadhas." (2) According to the Commentator Magadhanātha was Gaudādhipati as well. (3) Another important point to be borne in mind is that in the account of the digvijaya, there is no separate mention of a country named Gauda. After defeating and killing Megadhanātha, the conqueror reaches the sea-coast covered with woods perfumed by the Cardamoms. The next country over-run by Yas'ovarman was Vaṅga, i.e., Eastern Bengal. The sea-coast that was visited by Yas'ovarman before the conquest of Vaṅga was the south-western coast of Bengal, including Tāmralipti, and then Yas'ovarman wandered into the deltaic region before he came to Vaṅga. As Gauda was then under the king of Magadha

---

(1) K.S.Aiyangar (JIH V p. 329) and Piers, E.A. (The Maukharis, p. 139) held that the king of Magadha and the king of Gauda were different persons.

(2) Gaudavaho, XXXIV. p.844 (3) Ibid p. 235.

no separate mention of Gauḍa in the digvijaya of Yas'ovarman is made. We have already seen that Ādityasena had extended his conquest to the shores of the ocean, i.e., the Bay of Bengal, and Jīvitagupta II may have continued to hold that part of Bengal under him. R.C.Majumdar, on the other hand, suggests that "if both Magadha and Gauḍa were under the same ruler, it was the ruler of Gauḍa who had Magadha under his sway rather than vice versa: otherwise, there is no justification for the name Gauḍavaho." (1) It is really strange that in the entire poem there is only one verse (v. 1194) which definitely mentions the slaying of the king of Gauḍa, and that also in a very incidental manner. (2) It is also significant that the assembly of the learned requested Vākpati to relate to them the story of the slaying of the king of Magadha by Yas'ovarman. (3) The poet then narrates the qualities of his patron and then requests his audience to listen to "the proud valour of the King's arm which is distinguished for the slaying of the eastern King", and then says that "the Gauḍavaho has been composed or related by him." As in reply to the request for the story of the assassination of the king of Magadha, Vākpatirāja refers to "the slaying of

---

(1) HBRI, p. 95.

(2) Gauḍavaho V, 11904 and Commentary.

(3) Ibid, V. 844.

the eastern King" and to the text of the poem as the Gauda-Vaho,(1) it confirms our suspicion that the king of Magadha is referred to as the king of the eastern country and of Gauda. According to S.P.Pandit and Bühler, the extant poem is a prelude to the real poem that was to follow. Jacobi regarded the work as complete, and Utgikar concludes that "the present poem was all that Vākpati wrote." (2) Whatever may be the case, there is no doubt that in the context of the extant poem it is not easy to explain its title "Gauda-Vaho", even if Magadhanātha was the Gauda king, because even the slaying of the king of Magadha is disposed of in a few couplets. The reason may lie in Bühler's dictum that "the author bestows as much care as possible on the accessories and gives as little as possible on the real history." (3) The imperfect state in which the poem has been left to us may be due to the political condition prevailing during the time. (4) The work may have been taken up during the victorious days of Yas'ovarman, but before it could be completed, Yas'ovarman's fortunes sank low. Utgikar further suggests that the explanation of the title may be sought for "in the latent ill-will that can historically be

---

(1) Ibid. p. XXXIX, Vs. 1073-74 and commentary.

(2) Ibid, pp.XLIII-XLIX; CCXXXIX; Tripāthī (TK p.200) also believes that the Gauda-Vaho is incomplete and that "the poet conceived the digvijaya as a probable event and not as an actual fact", but the learned scholar admits that the killing of the king of Gauda and Magadha was an historical reality.

(3) Ibid, p. CCXXXIX.

(4) Ibid, p. CCL. Sanskrit literature, p.

proved to have existed between the two kingdoms of Kanauj and Gauḍa before the time of Yas'ovarman." (1) The king of Gauḍa and the Magadhanāṭha were the same person, and as we have no other evidence to postulate the existence of the Gauḍa supremacy over Maghaḍa in the first half of the 8th century, it is more reasonable to believe in the suzerainty of the king of Magadha over Gauḍa. Barua's identification of the Gauḍādhipa with Harṣadeva, the alleged king of Kāmarūpa, is not convincing, and his proposed date of the battle, C. 750 A.D., is much later than the event. (2) H.C.Ray's suggestion (3) that the Magadhanātha of the Gauḍavaho may be the Saiha prince referred to in the Ragholi plates of Jayavardhana II is also not correct. (4)

Thus, we find that Yas'ovarman defeated and killed Jīvitagupta II, who was the king of Gauḍa and Magadha. From the Chinese and Tibetan records we learn that in C. 703 A.D. Nepal and Indian provinces of the Tibetan Empire revolted. (5) It is quite possible that Tīrabhukti, which may have formed a part of the Tibetan empire since 648 A.D., may have been ne

---

(1) Gauḍavaho, p. CCLii. (2) Barua, K.L., O.C.p.p.114-20

(3) DHNI. p. 277. (4) E.I. IX pp. 41-47; see infra.

(5) A study in the Chronicles of Ladakh, IHQ. XV supplement, pp 59-62; JRAS 1880. p. 456.

annexed to the empire of Maghada in the time of Viṣṇugupta or Jīvitagupta II. But the later Gupta dynasty and the extensive empire came to an inglorious end at the hands of Yas'ovarman. That Yas'ovarman overran Magadha is confirmed by the Nālandā inscription of Yas'ovarmadeva.(1) The inscription mentions 'the illustrious, prosperous and highly glorious Yas'ovarmadeva', who, 'has risen after placing his foot on the heads of all kings'. Mālāda, the son of his minister, made gifts to the temple which the king Bālāditya had erected at Nālandā. S'āstrī, the editor of the inscription, wrongly assumed Yas'ovarman to be a contemporary of Bālāditya and so took Yas'ovarman to be the same as Yas'odharman of the Mandasore inscriptions of the 6th centruy A.D.(2) R.C. Majumdar has conclusively proved that Bālāditya mentioned in the inscription is not referred to as a contemporary of Yas'ovarman, and therefore Yas'ovarman of the inscription should be identified with the hero of Gaṇḍavaho.(3) Scholars have now accepted this identification.(4)

---

(1) E.I. XX. p.37 f. (2) ibid.

(3) R.C. Majumdar, I.H.Q. VII. p.664 f; ibid VIII p.371 f.

(4) Tripathi, R.S. (T.K. P.205). K.A.N.K. S'āstrī (J.M.U. XIII p.147 f); E.A. Piers (The Maukharis, pp.144-45). Recently, M. Rāmakṛiṣṇakavi has doubted even the existence of any king of the name of Yas'ovarman of Kanauj, (D.R. Bhandarkar volume, p. 45 f.), on grounds which are not conclusive.

In this connection, it may be pointed out that there is a mention of Yas'ovarmapuravihāra in the Ghosrāwān inscription of Devapāla.(1) Yas'ovarmapura has been identified with the town of Bihar by Cunningham.(2) Kielhorn(3) thinks that it may be Ghosrāwān (near Bihar), where the inscription has been found. Whatever may be the exact site of Yas'ovarmapura, it is clear that it was in the heart of Magadha, and in or near the modern town of Bihar in the Patna district. This proves the connection of Yas'ovarman with Magadha. The town of Vihāra of Yas'ovarmapura must have been named after Yas'ovarman, who may have founded it 'either to commemorate his victory on the lord of Magadha and Gauḍa, or to mark the site of the battle'(4).

When did Yas'ovarman defeat and kill the king of Magadha and overrun the country? We know from the Rājataraṅginī that Lalitāditya of Kāśmīra and Yas'ovarman of Kanauj were contemporaries. Lalitāditya is referred to as exercising his sway over Northern India and even trans-Indian regions. He is reported to have extracted tribute from many eastern kings, and to have worn the turban of victory over Antarvedi the Doab. It is said that after the subjugation of the eastern kings, he

---

(1) I.A. XVII. p.309 f. (2) C.A.S.R. III. pp.120,135-36; VIII p. 76.

(3) I.A. XVII p.311, note 30. (4) T.K. P.201.

obtained a bloodless victory over King Yas'ovarman of Kanauj; but later on war broke out between the two, and Yas'ovarman wa deposed, and later on became a dependant of Lalitāditya and was employed in proclaiming his praises like a court bard. Lalitāditya then proceeded to the Eastern Sea and defeated the king of the Gaudas, and led a victorious campaign into the Deccan. Relying on the Rājatarangiṇī, S.P. Pundit came to the conclusion that Lalitāditya came to the throne in 695 A.D.(1) and his victory over Yas'ovarman must have taken place in the latter part of the 7th century. Cunningham(2), taking the Chinese Sources into account, pointed out an error of exactly thirty-one years in the Kashmirian chronology. The view of Cunningham has been generally accepted by scholars, and Lalitāditya's accession has been taken to be in 724 A.D. Jacobi points out that verse 829 of the Gaudavaho mentions an eclipse of the sun which was visible on the 14th August, 733 A.D.(3) Verse 832 in the text is fairly consistent in all the MSS., and the commentator refers to the 'corner of his (Yas'ovarman's) eye twisted on account of the shaking of his position that was brought about temporarily' or 'in a moment'.

---

(1) Gaudavaho, pp.LXXI-XCV. (2) C.A.G.I. pp. 105-6.

(3) Gaudavaho, p. CCLVI.

This 'shaking of his position' has been taken by Jacobi to refer to Lalitāditya's invasion of the dominion of Yas'ovarman, and the consequent defeath of the latter. Bhandarkar[1] agrees with Jacobi in this interpretation of the verse. R.C. Bhandarkar refers to the fact that the Chinese authors mention I-cha-fon-mo, a king of Central India, sending an embassy to China in 731 A.D. This I-cha-fon-mo has been 'properly identified' with Yas'ovarman[2]. It may be reasonably assumed that the sending of the mission to China by Yas'ovarman and the latter's defeat at the hands of Lalitāditya must have taken place after Yas'ovarman had returned from the Digvijaya and the murder of the King of Gauḍa. In 733 A.D. Yas'ovarman was defeated by Lalitāditya and accepted his overlordship, thus becoming a subordinate ally. In Lalitāditya mission to China in 736 A.D., Yas'ovarman is claimed as an ally. It was sometime after this that Yas'ovarman was finally crushed by Lalitāditya, who raided the whole of Northern India, includin Gauḍa. Therefore it should be clear that Yas'ovarman defeated and killed Jīvitagupta II before 731 A.D. The Digvijaya must have taken some years, and from the poem it is known that the king of Magadha opposed him more than once. Therefore we may not be far from wrong in placing the defeat and death of Jīvitagupta II in c. 725 A.D.

---

(1) Gauḍavaho, p.CCLVII (2) ibid

With the exit of Jīvitagupta II, the later Gupta dynasty quitted the stage of history. The empire of Magadha laboriously rebuilt by Ādityasena thus perished. The centre of gravity again shifted from Magadha to Kanauj in Madhyadeśa. Since the defeath of Mahāsenagupta, Magadha had yielded the palm to Kanauj, and had remained its appendage for many years, though for some time it had transferred its allegiance to Karṇasuvarṇa in Bengal. With the rise of Ādityasena, Magadha regained much of its lost position and emerged as the supreme power in Northern India. But the struggle for the imperial honour and status continued for many centuries afterwards, and Dame Fortune as usual sometimes favoured Magadha and sometimes Kanauj.

But the end of the later Gupta dynasty did not only mean the eclipse of Magadha, at least for some time to come. Worse than that, it heralded an era of anarchy and confusion in the Gangetic valley, and Magadha and Bengal suffered most. The fall of Yas'ovarman was as rapid as his rise. Though he was a great conqueror, he failed to consolidate his newly acquired prizes and became a prey to the covetous eyes of his more powerful contemporary, Lalitāditya of Kashmir. After defeating Yas'ovarman, Lalitāditya invaded Eastern India down to the sea, and defeated the king of Gauḍa, who later on went to Kashmir, where he was treacherously murdered. Even if the story of the Rājatarangiṇī is true, it is not easy

to identify the unfortunate king of Gauḍa.[1] Lalitāditya's invasion was soon followed by Jayāpīḍa's wandering in lands ea of Prayāga. He is said to have come to Puṇḍravardhana, married the daughter of Jayanta, the king of Puṇḍravardhana, and helped the latter in bringing 'the five Gauḍas' or 'the five kings of Gauḍa', under subjection to his father-in-law. The Raghoḷi plates of Jayavardhana II refer to the conquest of Puṇḍra by a prince of the S'aila dynasty, and the brother of this prince captured Kās'ī.[2] H.C. Ray[3] takes this S'aila prince to be the Magadhanātha of the Gauḍavāho. We believe that Magadhanātha was Jīvitagupta, and the activities of the new rising dynasty of the S'ailas in North Bengal and Eastern U.P. and possibly including Magadha, must be placed in the period following the defeat of Jīvitagupta by Yas'ovarma and possibly after Yas'ovarman's discomfiture at the hands of Lalitāditya. To this period also belongs Harṣadeva of the Nepal stone inscription. After the disruption of the Gupta

---

(1) Jayasval (I.H.I.p.71) suggested that the king of Gauḍa was Jīvitagupta II. We think that the Gauḍa king defeated and murdered by Lalitāditya was S'ri Harṣadeva of the Bhagadatt royal line and the lord of Gauḍa, Oḍra, Kosala and other lands, whose daughter Rājyamatī was married to Jayadeva of Nepal. (I.A. IX. p.178 f.) The inscription is dated in the year 153, if the era began in 595 A.D. then its date is 748 A.D. It is possible that Harṣadeva was dead at the time. He may have been the victim of Lalitāditya's aggression and of the treachery of the Kāśmiri people.

(2) E.I. IX. pp.41-47.

(3) D.H.N.I. I. pp.275-77.

empire, consequent upon the lightning raid of Yas'ovarman, Gauḍa may have come under Harṣadeva, who is referred to as 'the lord of Gauḍa, Oḍra, Kalinga, Kosala and other lands', and was the father-in-law of Jayadeva, the King of Nepal.(1) He may have suffered at the hands of Lalitāditya and finally lost his life in Kashmir. The king of 'the five Gauḍas' reduced by Jayāpīḍa, the prince of Kashmir, may have belonged to the S'aila dynasty known from the Ragholi plate. The short period of just above thirty years between the death of Jīvitagupta and the rise of Gopāla is, thus, full of external invasions and consequent chaos. The reference to 'five Gauḍas' in the Kashmire chronicles and later literature proves the political dismemberment of the Gauḍa-tantra mentioned in the Ārya-Manju-S'rī-mūla-kalpa. To fill the

---

(1) I.A. IX. pp.178 f. Harṣadeva is described as belonging to the royal Bhagadatta line. K.L. Barua (o.c.pp.111-119 took him as a king of Kāmarūpa. N. Vasu distinguished between Harṣadeva and Harisadeva of Kāmarūpa, and suggested that ~~suggested that~~ Harṣadeva may have ruled in the western portions of Eastern India. (Social History of Kāmarupa, III. pp.30-32). Sen (o.c. P.288) and Basak (H.N.E.I. pp.237-238) also take Harṣadeva to be a king of Kāmarūpa. The king of Gauḍa defeated by Lalitāditya had numerous elephants "carrying the couch of Lakṣmī who was attached to the king". Elephants were always associated with the kings of Kāmarūpa from the days of the Mahābhārata. So the Gauḍa king defeated by Lalitāditya may have been a king of Kāmarūpa. But it has been recently shown that the kings of the Kara dynasty of Orissa also claimed descent from Bhagadatta, and Harṣadeva may have belonged to Orissa. (I.H.Q. XIV. p.841 f; H.B.R.I. p. 85).

vacuum, created by the disappearance of the later Gupta dynasty, competing powers and upstart dynasties appeared on the scene, which, instead of re-establishing peace, added to the miseries of the people, victims of unsettled government or rather anarchy.

It is, therefore, obvious that the extinction of the later Gupta dynasty marks the end of an epoch. The era of Pax-Magadhica established by the imperial Guptas and restored by Ādityasena disappeared. Yas'ovarman did worse mischief than Yas'odharman. The raids of Yas'odharman had sounded practically the death knell of the Gupta empire; but fortunately the later Gupta dynasty under Kumāragupta rapidly succeeded to the heritage, and therefore the death or disappearance of Yas'odharman did not usher in a period of as much anarchy as the failure of Yas'ovarman to build up a consolidated and well-governed empire in place of the one which he had overthrown. So the quick discomfiture of Yas'ovarman was in a sense more unfortunate to Magadha and Gauda than their humilitation by the defeats inflicted by Yas'odharman. The rich central and lower Gangetic valley became a prey to internal disorder and external aggressions. No one single power or personality arose immediately on the ruins of the Gupta dynasty to give the desired peace and settled government necessary for economic development and cultural advance. A period of 'Matsyanyāya' - of anarchy

in which the larger fish swallowed the smaller descended on Bihar and Bengal after the death of Jīvitagupta, and continued till the rise of Gopāla, who was elected king to end this period of 'the Law of the fish'.

CHAPTER XI.

The Rise of the Pālas.

With the extinction of the later Gupta dynasty, peace and security departed from Magadha and Gauḍa. Yaśovarman's invasion of the eastern countries was only a prelude to other raids. Lalitāditya of Kashmir, the Śailas, and the Bhagadattas, as we have seen, raided the fair provinces. As a result of these raids, there was complete confusion in the provinces, parcelled into fragments under petty rulers determined to prey upon one another. The people must have suffered terribly from this misgovernment, indeed non-government. When rulers failed to give peace, which was their first responsibility, people and their leaders decided to terminate the state of anarch - "matsyanyāya". It was under such critical circumstances that the Pālas under Gopāla came to power.

The Buddhist historian Tāranātha says that Gopāla was elected king.[1] This is corroborated by epigraphy. The Khalimpur copper-plate inscription of Dharmapāla informs us that "the people made (Gopāla) take the hand of Fortune, to put an end to the practice of fishes".[2] From this it is,

---

1. I.A. IV. p.366.

2. E.I. IV. p.251.

no doubt unsafe to hold that there was a regular election of Gopāla by the people in a formal constitutional way, We do not know how the election was conducted and what were the qualifications of the electors. It is quite possible that Gopāla was chosen king by the leaders of the important elements of population, and the selection was popular. Whatever may have been the precise conditions regulating the rise of Gopāla, the fact that he is described as an elected king is a very important event in the history of India. It suggests political consciousness of the people.

Home of the Pālas.

Tāranātha gives us a mythical story, perhaps intermingled with a streak of historical tradition about the birth of Gopāla and his election as a king. According to the Tibetan historian, Gopāla was born of a Kṣatriya woman and a Tree-god near Puṇḍravardhana. This boy was a devotee of the goddess Cuṇḍā, who directed him (in a dream) to go to the vihāra of Khasarpaṇa; there he prayed for a kingdom and was bidden to proceed towards the east. At that time the kingdom of Bhangala had been without a king for many years, and people were suffering. Many kings were elected, but all were killed by a Nāga woman. Ultimately Gopāla killed the woman, and the people hailed him as their king.[1] A similar tradition is recorded by another Tibetan historian

---

1. I.H.Q. VIII, pp.530-31; ibid XVI, p.219f.

Bu-Ston. "In the eastern Khadiṛa forest, in the trunk of a high tree dwelt a tree-spirit. Now it happened that a shepherd of that country had died and his beautiful wife was tending the sheep. The tree-spirit mentioned had sexual intercourse with her, and from their union a remarkable son was born, named Gopāla. He obtained the royal power over the whole country by the force of his virtues."[1] In the Rāmacarita[2] Varendra is referred to as "janakabhū", or paternal kingdom of the Pālas. It is true that a very overwhelming majority of the inscriptions of the Pālas are found in Bihar. The Pāla dynasty continued longest in Magadha. Buddist monasteries of Magadha were patronised by them and many new monasteries were established in Magadha. All these facts lead to a strong presumption that Magadha was the heart of the Pāla kingdom, but it was not the home of the Pālas.

The Caste and Ancestors of Gopāla.

The Khalimpur copper-plate inscription of Dharmapāla,[3] the Son of Gopāla, begins the genealogy from Dayitaviṣṇu the grandfather of Gopāla. Dayitviṣṇu is described as "bright with learning", and "the progenitor of the

---

1. Bu-Ston - History of Buddism, (Eng.Trans.) Part II. p.156.
2. M.A.S.B. III, pp.20-21. 3. E.I. IV. p.251.

foremost line of kings." His son was Śrī Vāpyaṭa, "who, full of piety, as far as the ocean embellished the earth with massive temples, and became famous as the destroyer of adversaries." According to J.C. Ghosh,[1] Śrī Vāpyaṭa was the first king of the line and he identifies him with Rājabhaṭa of the phrase "Rājabhaṭādivaṃśapatita" occurring in the colophon of a commentary of Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñā-pāramitā by Haribhadra in the time of Dharmapāla.[2] Muhammad Shahidullah[3] takes Vāpyaṭa to be the king of Puṇḍra, who was killed by the elder brother of the grand-father of Jayavardhana II of the Ragholi Plates.[4] Except for the epithet Śrī there is nothing to confirm the suggestion that Vāpyaṭa was the first king of the dynasty. A.C.Bannerji[5] was rightly pointed out that it is not universally true that in making grants, the genealogy is begun from the grandfather of the grantor; and, therefore, the fact that Dayitaviṣṇu and Vāpyaṭa are not mentioned in any grant of the Pāla rulers except in the Khalimpur copper-plate, proves that they were considered insignificant compared to Gopāla and his successors. Vāpyaṭa was "perhaps a military chief".[6] From the account of Tāranātha,

---

1. I.H.Q. IX. p.489.
2. M.A.S.B. III, pp.5-6.
3. I.H.Q. VII, p.535.
4. E.I. IX. p.41f.
5. I.H.Q. VIII, p.367f.
6. H.B.R.I., p.98.

Bu-Ston[1], M.M.K. and inscriptions, it is obvious that Gopāla was the first king of the dynasty, and his ancestors were persons of inconsiderable importance.

In a colophon of the commentary of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajnā-pāramitā by Haribhadra belonging to the reign of Dharmapāla, the latter is described as "Rājabhaṭādivaṁśapatita".[2] H.P. Sastri[3] suggested that Dharmapāla "belonged to the family of a military officer of some king", and proposed that Dayitaviṣṇu may have been connected with Mātṛiviṣṇu of the Eran inscription.[4] There is really no real evidence to connect the Pālas with the family of Matṛiviṣṇu in Malwa, save and except the fact that the name of the grandfather of Gopāla ended in -viṣṇu. Some scholars have taken Rājabhaṭa to be a proper name and identified him with Rājabhaṭa of Sing-Chi's account,[5] and Rājarajabhaṭa, son of Devakhaḍga of the Khaḍga dynasty.[6] In the Cātsu inscription[7] of Bālāditya, Saṅkaragaṇa is said to have defeated Bhaṭa, the king of Gauḍa. Bhandarkar[8] took "Bhaṭa" to mean more than a mere soldier, probably a dynastic appellation, and identified him with Sūrapāla. R.C. Majumdar,[9] who made Saṅkaragaṇa contemporary with

---

1. Bu-Ston (Pt.II), op cit. p.156.
2. M.A.S.B. III. pp.5-6.
3. Ibid, p.6.
4. C.I.I. III, No. 19.p.88
5. The life, intro. pp. xl-xli.
6. J.A.S.B. 1923, p.378.
7. E.I. XII. p.10f.
8. Ibid.
9. J.L. X. pp.40-41. Note 4 on page

Dharmapāla, translated "Bhaṭa" as a "warrior". The supposed connection of the Pālas with the Khaḍgas may find support from the fact that both the Pālas and the Khaḍgas were Buddhists, and the Pālas may have succeeded the Khaḍgas in Samataṭa. But the word "patita" is generally used in a derogatory sense. Some suggest that it may mean "descent from the female line."[1] The most simple and plausible meaning of the phrase is "descended or fallen from the dynasty of military chiefs." It is possible that during the confused and unstable days in the first half of the 8th century, a family of military chiefs might have come into some prominence. Bengal, especially Northern Bengal, was the scene of many foreign invasions and changes of regime, and in these days Vāpyaṭa must have fought many battles, as known from the Khalimpur plate.[2] H.P.Sastri's suggestion[3] that Vāpyaṭa may have played an important part in the troublous times which followed the fall of the King of Gauḍa at the hands of Yaśovarman, is very plausible.

The wife of Gopāla and the mother of Dharmapāla was Daddadevī, who is described as "Bhadrātmajā".[4] Kielhorn[5] took it to mean that Daddadevī was the daughter of the Bhadra

---

1. I.H.Q. VII, p.533. Muhammad Shahidulla thinks that Daddadevī, wife of Gopāla, may have been a grand-daughter of King Rajabhaṭa.
2. E.I. IV. p.251.
3. M.A.S.B. III. p.2.
4. E.I. IV. p.251f.
5. ibid, note 6.

King. Some took it to stand for the wife of Kubera, while A.K. Mitra thought that it meant "the daughter of a gentleman." Kielhorn[1] regarded "Bhadra" as the tribal or family name of the ruling king whose daughter was Daddadevī. It may be pointed out that if "Bhadra" meant a mere gentleman, there is no sufficient reason why the Scribe of the Khalimpur plate of the Emperor Dharmapāla would mention this insignificant (?) fact. The only logical presumption is that if "Bhadrātmajā" does refer to Daddadevī, it signifies some important family connection. According to Yuan Chwang[2] Śīlabhadra, the Patriarch of Nālandā, belonged to the Brahmanical royal family of Samataṭa. This postulates the existence of a royal Bhadra family in Samataṭa. It may be that Gopāla married a princess of this ruling family, and, naturally, for the Pālas of humble ancestry, it was a fact to be worth noting in the inscriptions.

The Pālas inscriptions of earlier times do not allude at all to any glorious and legendary descent - a custom otherwise common with contemporary dynasties. The Ārya-Manju-srī-mūla-kalpa[3] takes Gopāla to be of menial caste (dāsa-jēvinaḥ). In the colophon of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajnā-pāramitā, quoted above, Dharmapāla is referred to as

---

1. Ibid, note 6.
2. Watters, II, p.109; I.C. II. pp.795-97.
3. I.H.I. p.72, v.883.

"Rājabhaṭādivaṁśa-patitaḥ".[1] In the Vyāsa-Purāṇa embedded in the Ballāla-carita, the Pālas have been described as "the worst of the Kṣatriyas".[2] Tāranātha[3] says that Gopāla was born at Puṇḍravardhana of a beautiful Kṣatriya woman who was in liaison with a tree-god. Bu-Ston[4] refers to the traditions that Gopāla was born of a shepherd's widow and a tree-spirit, and Dharmapāla makes the offspring of the queen of Gopāla and a Nāga king. The Bengali tradition as embodied in the Kanurpāla of Ghenarāma's Dharmamangala informs us that Devapāla was born of the wife of Dharmapāla and the Ocean-god in the guise of Dharmapāla.[5] It is true that none of the traditions quoted above is absolutely reliable, but these many references belonging to different periods and entirely different sources about the unorthodox birth of the early Pāla kings certainly lead to a strong presumption that there was a persistent tradition that the Pālas belong to a low caste or impure descent; the reference to Nāgas and tree-spirits was made to cover their illegitimacy. That may explain the use of the word "patita" in the Colophon, cited above. H.P. Sastry's suggestion[6] that the dynasty was illegitimate may be true.

---

1. M.A.S.B. III, pp.5-6.
2. Ibid, p.4.
3. I.H.Q., VIII, pp.530-531.
4. Bu-Ston, op.cit., Part II p.156.
5. M.A.S.B. III. p.2.
6. M.A.S.B. III. p.6

An epigraphic confirmation of this suspicion may be sought in a verse referring to Gopāla in the inscriptions of Nārāyaṇapāla and his successors. Gopāla is compared to Buddha. The verse includes this - "Jitvā yaḥ kāmakāri-prabhavamabhibhavaṁ śāśvatīṁprāpa śāntim sa śrīmanlokanātho jayati dasabalonyaśca Gopāladevaḥ." It is significant to note that this verse about Gopāla does not appear in the inscriptions of Drahmapāla and Devapāla and for the first time appears in the Bhāgalpur plate of Nārāyaṇapāla.[1] The phrase"Kāmakari prabhavaṁ abhibhavaṁ" when referred to Gopāla may perhaps mean "overcoming (the scandal attached to his) profligate birth." The Pāla dynasty founded by Gopāla had established itself in the country and Gopāla and his successors had brilliant achievements to their credit. It is therefore very natural that in the fourth generation from Gopāla in the time of Nārāyaṇapāla, it was possible for the latter to claim that whatever scandals may have been attached to his birth, Gopāla had overcome these by his good work.

It is true that because the Pālas were Buddhists, they were not interested in parading a mythical descent from epic heroes or Brahmanical gods, as did other contemporary dynasties. Therefore, it is suggested that the absence of the mention of such claims in their inscriptions does not

---

1. E.I.A. XV. p.305.

show that they were not of good descent. But it is hard to avoid a feeling of suspicion when we find that coupled with a studied silence about their descent, we have many references about their impure or unnatural origin. The suspicion is further strengthened when we find that in later years, when the Pālas had established themselves as a powerful ruling dynasty, claims were made for their descent from the mythical Solar dynasty and Samudra-kula. Vaidyadeva in his Kamauli inscription[1] referred to the Pālas as belonging to the dynasty of the Sun (Mihiravaṁśa). In the Rāmacarita,[2] the Buddhist Pāla king Rāmapāla is said to belong to the dynasty of the Ocean, - Samudra-kula. Dharmapāla, the king of Northern India referred to in the Udayasundarī-kathā by Soḍḍhala of the 11th Century A.D., is spoken of as belonging to the family of Māndhātā (solar family), and this Dharmapāla is most probably the famous Pāla emperor of the same name.[3] J.C. Ghosh[4] tried to identify Samudra-kula with Sūryakula. In the opinion of R.C. Majumdar, as Gopāla became first a king of Bhangala, i.e. South-East Bengal, bordering on the sea, his dynasty may have been called "Samudra-kula". It may be pointed out that both Dayitviṣṇu and Vāpyaṭa are closely associated with the sea. Verse 2

---

1. E.I. II. p.350.
2. M.A.S.B. III. p.20.
3. A.B.O.R.I. XIII, p.197f.
   Udayasundarīkathā, p.4.
   Māndhatṛivaṁsaprabhavaḥ.
4. I.H.Q. IX. p.484-5.

of the Khalimpur inscription[1] states that "as the sea is the birth-place of the blessed goddess of Fortune, and the moon the source of that lustre which gladdens the universe, so Dayitaviṣṇu, bright with all learning, became the progenitor of the foremost line of kings." Verse 3 of the same inscription sepaks of Vāpyaṭa building temples "as far as the ocean embellished the earth." R.D. Bannerji, relying on these verses and on the allusion to "Samudrakula" in the Rāmaracita believed that the Pālas had descended from the sea. The fact is that only in much later times the Pālas are connected with the Sun or Sea dynasty. At the present state of our knowledge it is not possible to fix their lineage; but it is very probable that their origin were not only humble but also impure from the point of view of the Hindu Law of Caste. But when they established their position as a powerful ruling dynasty, they were accepted as Kṣatriyas, even though the worst of them. They intermarried with the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Haihayas. It appears that the mother of Gopāla had some promiscuous relations which made the Pālas "patita" or "dāsajīvinaḥ". Abul Fazul[2] took them to be Kṣāyasthas.

The original kingdom of Gopāla.

What was the original kingdom of Gopāla? This is

1. E.I. IV. p.251. 2. Jamek, II. p.145.

a subject still obscure. In the Rāmacarita and its Commentary there are passages which show that Verendrī (North Bengal) was the "janakabhū" of the Pālas. From the Dinajpur pillar-inscription we learn that in the latter part of the 10th Century, Northern Bengal was occupied by the Kāmbojas.[1] In theBangarh grant of Mahīpāla I we are told that he "obtained his paternal kingdom which had been snatched away through pride of prowess by people who had no claim to it."[2] This may relate to Mahīpāla's reconquest of Northern Bengal from the Kāmbojas. In the Kamauli inscription of Vaidyadeva,[3] Rāmapāla's victory over the Kaivartas has been described as leading to the acquisition of "janakabhū". Thus, one is led to suppose that Verendrī or North Bengal was the paternal Kingdom of the Pālas. But Tāranātha[4] informs us that Gopāla was born at Puṇḍravardhana (in North Bengal), and was elected king in Bhangala, which may be Vaṅga or East Bengal, or Vangāla (South-East Bengal). In the Gwālior inscription[5] Nāgabhaṭa is reported to have defeated the Vaṅgapati. This Vaṅgapati is certainly Dharmapāla. R.C. Majumdar,[6] relying on the confused account of Tāranātha, believes that Gopāla was a native of Northern Bengal, but was elected king over the dominion of the Candra

---

1. J.A.S.B. (NS.) VII, p.615f.
2. E.I. XIV. p.328f.
3. Ibid, II. p.350.
4. I.A. IV. p.366.
5. E.I. XVIII, p.110f.
6. I.H.Q. XVI, p.219f.

kings in Vaṅgāla, to the east of the Brahmaputra. The learned scholar[F] observes that "it may be presumed that the original kingdom of the Pālas is also to be located in the region where Govīcandra ruled." Besides the doubtful character of the authority of Tāranātha, scholars are very much divided as to whether Vanga and Vangāla were two different geographical entities. The easy victory of Vatsarāja over the King of Gauḍa, referred to in the Wani plates,[1] certainly alludes to Vatsarāja's victory over a Pāla king, Dharmapāla or Gopāla. From the Sanjan Plates of Amoghavarṣa[2] we learn that Dhruva had defeated a king of Gauḍa, who was certainly a Pāla king. Therefore even in quite early times, Pālas were sometimes mentioned as kings of Gauḍa, and sometimes as kings of Vaṅga. In view of such uncertainty it is risky to assert that the original kingdom of the Pālas were in North Bengal, or East Bengal or South-East Bengal. What is certain is that it was somewhere in Bengal.

Achievements of Gopāla.

Whatever may have been the ancestry or the ancestral home or the paternal Kingdom of the Pālas, there is no denying the fact that Gopāla laid the firm foundations of the

---

1. I.A. XI. p.156f.

2. E.I. XVIII. p.245f.

future greatness of the Pāla empire. He put an end to the anarchy prevailing in the country. The state of "matsyanyāya" or the law of fishes, the larger one devouring the smaller, is referred to in the Khalimpur inscription[1], and it is specifically mentioned that Gopāla was elected king to put an end to this intolerable situation. The anarchy in the eastern provinces is also alluded to by Tāranātha. "In Odivisa, in Bhangala, and the other five provinces of the east, each Kṣatriya, Brāhmaṇa and Vaiśya (merchant) constituted himself king of his surroundings, but there was no king ruling the country."[2] The author then relates the mythical story how a wife of one of the late kings assassinated every one of the kings chosen by the people, but after a certain number of years, Gopāla was elected king for a time, delivered himself from her, and was made king for life.[3] Thus the account of Tāranātha agrees in the main with the inscriptional evidence. Thus it is clear that Gopāla was a chosen leader of the people and he put an end to the state of lawlessness prevailing in the kingdom.

According to Tāranātha,[4] "Gopāla began to reign in Bengal and afterwards reduced Magadha also under his power."

---

1. E.I. IV. p.251.
2. I.A. IV. p.243f.
3. Ibid, p.366.
4. I.A. IV. p.366.

He is also credited with the foundation of the Nālandavihāra not far from Oddantapuri (modern town of Bihar). Bu-Ston[1] states that Gopāla "obtained the royal power over the whole country by the force of his virtues and built the monastery of Nālandā." On account of the fact that the conquest of Magadha is not explicitly referred to in the Pāla inscriptions, which refer to Gopāla in general terms, R.C. Majumdar[2] hesitates to attribute the conquest of Magadha to Gopāla. It may be pointed out that Gauḍa and Magadha from the 7th Century onwards had become politically so closely intertwined that they were sometimes not considered separate at all. The Gauḍa-tantra referred to in many places in the M.M.K. included Magadha. The conquest of Bengal appears to have automatically led to the addition of Magadha. After the death of Jīvitagupta II we do not know of any independent ruler of Magadha. It should be obvious that the anarchy that is referred to by Tārānātha and the Khalimpur inscription, was not confined to parts of Bengal, but pervaded Magadha as well. The establishment of order and security

---

1. Bu-Ston, op.cit. p.156. Dr. S.C.Sarkar (I.C. VII. p.183) distinguishes between Nalandā and Nalendra vihāra built by Gopāla. According to the learned scholar, it was Narendravihāra (King's monastery) and its name probably survives in the Narinda ward of the city of Dacca.

2. H.B.R.I. p.103.

by Gopāla benefited Magadha too. The fact that Gopāla's son Dharmapāla could emerge as a keen competitor with the Pratīhāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas for the paramountcy of Northern India further strengthens the point that Gopāla was a great conqueror, and he might have established his rule over the whole of Bengal, including the sea-coast, and Anga and Magadha (South Bihar). On the basis of the following verse "jitvā yah kāmakāri prabhavaim-abhibhavaṁ śaśvatīm prāpa śāntim sa śrī-mān lokanātho jayati daśaba lonyaśaGopāladevaḥ," occurring in the Bhagalpur inscription of Nārāyaṇapāla,[1] it has been held my Muhammad Shahidullah[2] that Gopāla defeated a king of Kāmarūpa. The above epithets are applied to both Buddha and Gopāla, and the obvious meaning is that Gopāla defeated his enemies who acted as they desired. There is not even an iota of evidence to believe in Gopāla's conquest of Kāmarūpa. His grandson Devapāla is credited with the achievement of victory over the King of Prāgjyotiṣa.[3]

Gopāla was a successful king both as a conqueror and administrator. He is referred to as the "type of well-conducted kings", as "having carried on his beneficent rule," in such a successful measure that "even kings like Pṛithu and Sagara came to be believed in."[4] Gopāla laid

---

1. E.I. XV. p.304f.
2. I.H.Q. VII. p.531f.
3. I.A. XV.p.304f.
4. I.A. XXI. p.253f. line 4.

the foundations of the empire, on which a grand superstructure was raised by Dharmapāla and Devapāla. Gopāla was a Buddhist, and in the inscription of Nārāyaṇapāla[1] he is compared to Buddha. Tāranātha[2] credits him with the foundation of the Nalendra Temple near Oddantapura. But Gopāla tolerated other religions as well. The M.M.K. informs us that he "will become the maker of vihāras, caityas, gardens, reservoirs, beautiful free hotels, bridges, deva temples and caves."[3] This shows that he was a benevolent ruler and was interested in the welfare of the people.

The Date of Gopāla.

According to Tāranātha[4], Gopāla ruled for 45 years. The Ārya-manju-śrī-mūla-kalpa[5] credits him with the reign of twenty-seven years, having died on the Ganges at the age of eighty. In view of the fact that both Dharmapāla and Devapāla are known to have had long reigns, it appears that the M.M.K. is nearer the truth than Tāranātha and we may assign roughly a reign of about 25 to 27 years to Gopāla.

Let us try to fix the chronological limits of Gopāla's regnal period. His son Dharmapāla was definitely

---

1. Ibid, XV, p.304f.
2. Ibid, IV, p.366.
3. I.H.I. V, S. 683-90.
4. I.A. IV. p.366.
5. I.H.I. p.42.

a contemporary of Govinda III,[1] whose period is 794-814 A.D. Dharmapāla was also a contemporary of Nāgabhaṭa II, whose known date is 815 A.D.[2] In 783 A.D.[3] according to Jinasena, Vatsarāja, the glorious ruler of Avanti, was ruling over the east, Indrāyudha was ruling over the north, Śrī Vallabha son of King Kṛiṣṇarāja was governing the south, and Varāha was ruling over the kingdom of the Sauryas in the west. Śrī Vallabha may be Govinda II or Dhruva.[4] Indrāyudha has been identified with Indrarāja of Kanauj, who was defeated by Dharmapāla.[5] If this identification is accepted,[6]

---

1. E.I. XVIII, p.245f.

2. Ibid, IX. p.198f.

3. I.A. XV. p.141. Śākeṣvabdaśateṣu saptasu diśam pañcottareṣūttrāṁ
Pātīndrāyudhanānti(mni) kṛiṣṇanṛipaje śrīvallabha dakṣiṇāṁ
Pūrvāṁ śrī madavartti(nti) bhūbhṛiti nṛipe Vatsāti rājai(je) parāṁ
Souryāṇāmadhimaṇḍalaṁ jayayute vīre varāṭe (he) vani (ti).
Fleet (I.A. XV.pp.141-2) had translated the passage to mean that in 783-84 A.D., Indrāyudha was ruling in the north, Śrī Vallabha in the South, Vatsarāja was the King of Avanti in the east, and in the West in the territory of the Sauryas, Varāha or Jayavarāha was the king. D.R. Bhandarker at first objected to this translation and took Vatsarāja to be the king of the West, different from the king of Avanti in the east. Many scholars, like R.P. Canda, S.Konow (E.I. XII, p.200) Smith (J.R.A.S. 1909, p.253), and Bannerji (M.A.S.B. V.p.50) accepted the opinion of Bhandarkar. But Dr. Bhandarkar has now accepted the translation of Fleet in toto (E.I. XVIII, p.239). The question is again reopened by Dasaratha Sarma (A.B.O.R.I. XVIII, p.396f.). We have followed Fleet.

4. R.A. P.52. R.G. Bhandarkar definitely identified Śrī Vallabha of the Verse with Govinda II (Bomb.Gaz.I, Pt. II, p.197). Fleet took him to be Govinda III (ibid, p.392, note 1) and concluded that Govinda II did not reign (E.I. VI, p.172; Bomb.Gaz. I, pt. II, p.393). But D.R. Bhandarkar (J.B.B.R.A.S

(cont. next page)

as has been generally done, then it is clear that Dharmapāla must have defeated and dethroned Indrarāja after 783. A.D., when he is mentioned as ruling in the north. Vatsarāja is said to have defeated the king of Gauḍa[1] and was himself worsted by Dhruva in C.789. A.D.[2] It has been generally assumed that the Gauḍa king defeated by Vatsarāja was Dharmapāla. According to Altekar,[3] the Gauḍa king "could

---

(contd. from previous page)
XX, p.131f.) and A.S. Altekar (R.A. pp.48-49, note 1) have shown that Govinda II did reign, though for a short time. However it is more reasonable to identify Śrī Vallabha of the Harivamsa, with Dhruva who is known by other records to be a contemporary of Vatsarāja. This appears to be confirmed by an unpublished grant of Dhruva lying in the treasury of the State of Bhor, which is dated in Saka 702, i.e. 780-81 A.D. and is issued by Dhruva Dhāravarṣa(R.A. Addenda, p.421).

5. I.A. XV, p.304; ibid XX pp.187-88; E.I. IV, p.246.

6. R.C. Majumdar (J.L. X, p.37, note 2) identified Indrarāja of Kanauj defeated by Dharmapāla with Indrarāja, a brother of Govinda III.

Notes this page.

1. I.A. XI, p.156f.

2. R.A. p.57.

3. R.A. pp.56-57.

not have been Gopāla, for the latter is not known to have sent any expedition outside the province of Bengal." Gopāla, who had made himself the popular ruler of Bengal and South Bihar, may have been encouraged to extend further west, and a clash with the Gurjara Pratīhāras is possible. However, as we know that Dharmapāla's army was operating in the Doab, it is more likely that the Gauḍa adversary of Vatsarāja was Dharmapāla, rather than Gopāla. Vatsarāja's victory over Dharmapāla, therefore, must have been before 789 A.D.. Consolidation of the kingdom, conquest of Magadha and establishment of a sound basis of administration must have taken some time for Gopāla, and therefore it is not proper to assign him "a very short reign," as R.D. Bannerji[1] has suggested. His regnal period may be fixed with tolerable certainty to be C. 756-783. A.D.[2].

---

1. MAA.S.B. V. p.47.

2. Muhammed Shahidullah fixes the period of Gopāla's reign from 715 to 760 A.D. (I.H.Q. VII, pp.530-536). J.C. Ghosh (Ibid VII, pp.751-3) takes him to be a contemporary of Bhāsakaravarman, King of Assam, on the ground that a Gopāla is mentioned as "an issuer of hundred commands and the receiver of fine gust sounds" in the Nidhānpur plates of Bhāskaravarman. The opinion is hardly worth serious consideration: it is too early a period for Gopāla. Later on J.C Ghosh appears to have changed his view and makes Dharmapāla ascend the throne in 761 A.D. (I.H.Q. IX, p.489) Shahidulla's view on Pāla chronology has been shown to be utterly untenable (B.C. Sen, p.308); but Sen's identification of Gopāla with Jayanta is unlikely.

1 2 3 4 5
BRITISH MUSEUM

Eran Boar Inscription of Toramāṇa (C.E. 500)										
	k	D	Bh	M	Y	L	S'	S	H	
Aṛang Plate of Bhimasena Gupta-Samvat 182 [?] (C.I.I. III p. 306)										
Bhandak inscription of Narendra (J.B.B.R.A.S. VIII p. 215)										
Harāhā Inscription 554 A.D. (E.I. XIV p. 110 f.)										
Bodh-Gaya Inscription of Mahānāman Dat. 588-89 A.D. (C.I.I. III rev. ed. p. 276 f.)										
Ganjām plates of the time of Śaśāṅka, G.E. 300 = 619-20 A.D. (E.I. VI p. 143 f.)										
Two Midnapur Plates of Śaśāṅka (early part of the 7th century) (JASBL. XV p. 1 f.)										
Banskhera plate of Harṣa, 628-29 A.D. (E.I. IV p. 208 f.)										
Madhuban Plate of Harṣa, 631-32 A.D. (E.I. VII p. 155 f.)										
Sirpur Inscription of Mahāśivagupta and Vāsaṭā (E.I. XI p. 184 f.)										
Kahaum and Sārnāth Inscriptions (dated 141 and 154) in the latter half of Skandagupta										
C. 750 Nālandā (Stūpa) Nālandā (Stūpa)										

CHAPTER XII

Dharmapāla, c.783 - 818 A.D.

Gopāla was succeeded by his son Dharmapāla. Tāranātha's[1] statement that Devapāla was the son of Gopāla cannot be accepted in view of clear epigraphic evidence[2] that Dharmapāla was the son of Gopāla. According to Bu-ston[3] also, Dharmapāla was born of the queen of Gopāla and a Nāga King.

Dharmapāla-Vatsarāja-Dhruva

When Dharmapāla came to the throne, the stage was completely set for the tripartite struggle between the Pratīchāras, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Pālas for the possession of the hegemony of Northern India. Vatsarāja, the Gurjara-Pratīhāra King, scored a victory over the Pālas. From the Radhānpur plates we learn that Vatsarāja had won two white umbrellas from the Gauḍa king (Dharmapāla), and these were in turn captured by Dhrura, who drove Vatsarāja into the Maru country. It is not necessary to assume that Vatsarāja advanced into Bengal from Central India. It is more probable that both the Pratīhāras from the West and the Pālas from the east were extending their influence with similar motive to acquire

---

(1) I.A. IV.p.366.
(2) E.I. IV p.251.
(3) Bu-Ston Op.cit., Pt.II, p.156
(4) E.I.VI.p.239 f.

the mastery over Northern India and possess the imperial city of Kanauj, then under Indrāyudha, a weaker ruler in comparison to the ambitious Vatsarāja and Dharmapāla. The result was an inevitable clash between the Pālas and the Pratīhāras, away from their home provinces, somewhere near Allahabad. This was a prelude to the more deadly conflicts in the offing; but in the first round the Pālas were worsted, and Vatsarāja "boasted of having with ease appropriated the royalty of Gauda" and carried away two white umbrellas of the Gauda King. But the Pratīhāra-victory proved to be ephemeral. The Rāstrakūtas, who had become the predominant power in the Deccan, emerged as keen competitors for the trophy - the control of the North-Indian plains.

The real motive guiding the competitive policy of the Pālas, the Pratīhāras and the Rāstrakūtas was economic. The Gangetic Valley, including the Doab, was rich in resources and was an economic unit. Through it passed the main trade-routes down the Ganges to different parts of the country, even to foreign lands. It was, therefore, natural for any great power of the North or the South to aim at controlling the main trade-routes of the country; and Kanauj, because of its central position, occupied from the 6th century onwards, the commanding position. The consequence of this was an intermittent

struggle between powers of the North and the South to push out others from this rich and strategically vital part of the country, and to establish monopolistic control over this area with its trade-routes. When the Pālas and the Pratīhāras entered the arena of conflict with dogged determination, they found a powerful intruder in the Rāṣṭrakūṭas of Mānkhed. Dhruva, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king, who followed Govinda II,(1) snatched away the fruits of victory from the grip of Vatsarāja. Dhruva defeated him, captured the two white umbrellas of the Ruler of Gauḍa,(2) which Vatsarāja had taken away by force from him, and drove Vatsarāja into the desert of Maru (Marwar). Dhruva's victory over Vatsarāja may have taken place in 789 A.D., and therefore the success of Vatsarāja against the Gauḍa King, i.e. Dharmapāla, should be placed earlier, say in c. 785-6 A.D.

The defeat of Vatsārāja and his retreat into the deserts of Rajputana encouraged Dharmapāla to realise his imperial ambition. He appears to have advanced into the Doab, but he had not calculated the strength and ambition of Dhruva, and the result was the first clash between the Pālas and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, in which the Pāla King Dharmapāla suffered a rebuff. We know from the Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa(3) that the defeat of the Gauḍa King by

(1) R.A.pp.48-49; (2) E.I. VI p.248 f.
(3) E.I.XVIII p.235 f.

Dhruva took place in the Gangetic-Yamunā Doab. In these plates, Dhruva is said to have "seized the white umbrellas, the sporting lotuses of the Lakṣmī of the Gauḍa King, as he was fleeing between the Ganges and the Yamunā".(1) The campaign of Dhruva in the Gangetic Valley is indirectly alluded to in the Surat and Baroda plates of Karka Suvarṇavarṣa.(2) According to Altekar,

---

(1) "Gangā yarmunāyormmadhye rājño Gauḍasya nasyataḥ | Lakṣmī līlāravindāni svetacchatrāṇi yo haret." Prinsep (JASB, 1839, p.30) wrongly interpreted the verse to mean that Dhruva immersed himself "at the junction of the waters of Gaṅgā and the Yamunā." It is to be noted that while in other inscriptions, Dhruva is said to have seized from Vatsarāja the two umbrellas of State belonging to (the king of) Gauḍa (E.I. VI p.248 f), the Sanjan plates refer to the capture of white umbrellas by Dhruva from the Gauḍa king, who was fleeing between the Ganges and the Yamunā. B.C. Sen (op.cit. p.319) thinks that the verse refers to the same struggle mentioned in the stereotyped draft of the inscriptions of Govinda III. D.R.Bhandarkar suggested that after the defeat of Vatsarāja by Dhruva, Dharmapāla may have made common cause with the ruler of Kanauj against Dhruva, who inflicted a crushing defeat on the Gauḍa king. (E.I. XVIII p.239). There is no reason to believe that Vatsarāja was a king of Kanauj, and the hypothesis that Dharmapāla joined Vatsarāja against Dhruva is improbable. The most reasonable explanation appears to be that Vatsarāja had defeated the King of Gauḍa and took away the umbrellas, - the insignia of sovreignty: Dhruva defeated Vatsarāja and snatched away these white umbrellas. Dharmapāla tried to take advantage of the discomfiture of his adversary Vatsarāja and advanced into the Doab, but was worsted by Dhruva, who captured the umbrellas - the banners of the Rāja-Lakṣmi of the Gauḍas - from Dharmapāla, who was retreating to his kingdom from the battle in the Doab. Thus Dharmapāla was defeated both by Vatsarāja and Dhruva.

(2) E.I., XXI p.133 f. The editors differ from this interpretation.

the expression "Gangaugha - santati - nirodha - vivriddha - kīrtih" occurring in verse 25 of the Surat plates of Karkarāja Suvarṇa-Varṣa[1] and used to describe both Dhruva and Śiva, "clearly refers to Dhruva's victories over the Western Gangas and possibly also over the Pālas and the Pratīhāras." The Baroda grant of Karka Suvarṇavarṣa refers to Dhruva "as the personification of fame, who taking from his enemies the Gangā and Jamunā, charming with their waves, acquired at the same time the supreme position of lordship (which was indicated) by (these rivers) in the form of a visible sign".[2] Therefore it may be accepted that Dhruva defeated both Vatsarāja and Dharmapāla and became the paramount ruler of Northern India by making himself master of the Doab. The Rāṣṭrakūṭas by 790 A.D. were supreme in Northern India and the dreams of the Pālas and the Pratīhāras were shattered. In the first round of the tripartite struggle, Dharmapāla lost to Vatsarāja and Dhruva. But, as usual, the Southern power failed to reap the harvest, and Dhruva had to retire to the South. It is worth noting that though different powers south of the Vindhyas have attempted in different periods of history to build up an all-India

---

(1) Ibid

(2) I.A.XII p.159. Fleet took the verse to refer to Govinda III. Mejumdar (JL X.p.35,note 2) rightly showed that it refers to Dhruva.

empire from their base in the Deccan, they have failed to maintain any permanent or durable hold in North India and have been forced to draw back into their homes South of the Vindhyas. The Sātavāhaṃa dominion in the North was very short-lived; the Vākāṭaka empire in the North, suggested by Jayaswal, has been shown to be a myth: the Cālukya raids into Northern India led to no permanent acquisition of territory. The Rāṣṭrakūṭas' debut in Northern India, though persistent, and causing violent changes in the North-Indian political set-up, failed in its ultimate aim of establishing paramountcy over Northern India. The Mavāthas in the 18th and 19th centuries made many attempts to that effect, and achieved some success, but it is clear that they did not prove empire-builders.

Conquests of
Dharmapāla.

The retirement of Dhruva to the Deccan and the discomfiture of the Pratīhāras, who had not yet recovered from the shock of the defeat sustained at the hands of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, gave to Dharmapāla the much sought-for opportunity to realise his imperial ambitions. From the Khalimpur copper-plates inscription[1] of Dharmapāla we learn

(1) E.I. IV p.251. The inscription is dated in the 32nd regnal year of Dharmapāla, but the events referred to belong to much earlier period of the reign. In the 32nd year, Dharmapāla was still the paramount ruler of Northern India, and therefore earlier events of glorious success have been mentioned in a triumphant note.

that he made himself entitled to coronation as emperor of Kānyakubja, to the delight of the elders of Pancāla and with the acquiescence of the Bhoja, Matsya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gandhāra and Kīra Kings; but Dharmapāla, instead, installed on the throne the King of Kānyakubja.(1) The Bhāgalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla adds very valuable information. We are told that "Dharmapāla acquired the sovereignty of Mahodaya by defeating Indrarāja and other enemies, and he gave it back to the suppliant Cakrāyudha as Bali had given the sovereignty of the three worlds, which he had acquired by defeating Indra and his other enemies, to the begging Cakrāyudha (Viṣṇu) who had descended to the earth as a dwarf."(2) Kielhorn rightly pointed out the historical allusion in the verse, and suggested that as Viṣṇu was the younger brother of Indra, so Cakrāyudha may have been a younger brother of Indrarāja.(3) This Indrarāja has been identified with Indrāyudha,(4) who was ruling, according

---

(1) E.I.IV p.252; D.R.Bhandarkar (E.I.VII p.26 f) has suggested a slight emendation of the otherwise unintelligible verse.
(2) I.A.XV, p.304 f. (3) ibid. XX p.187.
(4) M.A.S.B. V p.50; E.I. VI p.197; D.R.Bhandarkar identified this Indrarāja with the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king, Indra III (E.I.VII p.32). But the identification is clearly untenable because Dharmapāla was a contemporary of Govinda III. Majumdar (JL X, p37, note 2) identified Indrarāja with Indrarāja, the younger brother of Govinda III.

to Jinasena, in the North in 783-84 A.D.[1] The confirmation of the close alliance between Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha comes from the Sanjan Plates of Amoghavarṣa,[2] which inform us that both Dharma (Dharmapāla) and Cakra (Cakrāyudha) voluntarily submitted to Govinda III. From the Gwālior Prešasti of Bhoja[3] we learn that Cakrāyudha's "lowly demeanour was manifest from his dependence on others"; Cakrāyudha depended on Dharmapāla.

Thus it is obvious that Dharmapāla became the real master of Kanauj, and installed his protegé Cakrāyudha on the throne as a vassal ruler. Dharmapāla after the acquisition of the imperial city of Kanauj appears to have held a durbar where he was formally recognised as overlord by the Bhoja, Matsya, Yadu, Avanti, Madra, Kuru, Yavana, Gandhāra and Kīra kings; and he installed Cakrāyudha on the throne of Kanauj. From the Munghyr copper-plate of Devapāladeva[4] we learn that in the course of expeditions, the soldiers of Dharmapāla bathed at Kedāra, and where the ocean is joined by the Ganges, and performed the holy rites at Gokarṇa and other sacred shrines.

---

(1) I.A. XV p.141.
(2) E.I. XVIII p.235 f.
(3) ibid, p.110 f.
(4) I.A. XXI. p.253.

The extent of Dharmapāla's sphere of influence can be examined with reference to the evidence supplied by the Khalimpur and Monghyr copper-plates. Gandhāra, Madra and Kīra constitute the Punjab and some parts of the North-West frontier. The Kingdom of Kīra has been placed by Majumdar (1) in the neighbourhood of Jallandhur. The Yadus may belong to Mathurā or Dvārakā region or may be identified with the Yādavas of Simhapura (2) in the Punjab. Matsya constituted the territories of Alwar with parts of Jaipur and Bharatpur states. Avanti stands for Malwa; and it appears that the Gurjara king of Avanti may have acknowledged Dharmapāla's overlordship. The Bhojas may be placed in Berar, and the Yavanas of the inscription may be located in the Indus Valley or in the North-West. Kedāra was the famous Kedāranātha in the Himālayas, and the confluence of the Ganges and the Sea was probably Gangāsāgara in Southern Bengal. There is some controversy about the situation of Gokarna after Monghyr copper-plate. Kielhorn (3) identified it with Gokarna in the North Kanara district of Bombay Presidency. H.P. Sastry (4) also places it on the Malabar coast. N.N. Das-Gupta (5) placed it in

---

(1) I.H.Q. IX p.11 f.
(2) H.B.R.I. p.108.
(3) I.A. XXI p.259, note 6.
(4) M.A.S.B. III p.5.
(5) I.C. IV p.264 f.

Nepal, and Majumdar[1] supported him. But it may be pointed out that if the story of Udayasundarī-Kathā about one Dharmapāla, lord of Uttarāpatha,[2] is taken to refer to the Pāla king, then Dharmapāla may have led a campaign to the Western Coast, and gone on a pilgrimage to Gokarṇa in Karṇāṭak. If the Yavanas of the Khalimpur plate are the Arabs of the Indus Valley, Dharmapāla's push into Valabhi is not impossible. Karṇāṭas and Lāṭas are mentioned among royal officers in the Nālandā inscription of Dharmapāla.[3] Brahmins of Lāṭa are referred to in the Khalimpur inscription.[3a] If Kedaranātha is in the North, Gangāsāgara in the east, it is more logical to assume that Gokarṇa in the west would mark the western limits of Dharmapāla's expedition.

Dharmapāla, thus, succeeded in establishing himself as the paramount ruler of Northern India. Soḍḍhala, a Gujrat poet of the 11th century, refers to him as 'uttarā-patha-svāmi'.[4] His empire extended from the Punjab in the west to Bengal in the east, from the Himālayas in the north to central India and probably even up to Berar in the south. It touched the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. His authority over Northern Bengal is attested by Tāranātha,[5] who observes that in the time of

---

(1) H.B.R.I. pp.106-7 note 2. (2) A.B.O.R.I.XII p.197 f.
(3) E.I.XXIII p.290.f. (3a) E.I.IV.p.251; udayasundarī kathā p.4. Uttarā-pathasvāmi.
(4) A.B.O.R.I. XIII p.197 f.
(5) I.A.IV.p.102.

Dharmapāla lived Dhiman and his son Vitpala in Varendra. A Nepall MSS mentions King (Nripa) Dharmapāla of Varendra as able in government.(1) It is true that all the distant parts of the country were not merged in the Pāla dominions, and administered directly by Dharmapāla. The conquered territories were left in charge of the local rulers, who acknowledged the suzerainty of Dharmapāla. The nature of his conquests may be compared with the digviyaya of Samudra Gupta in the Deccan. We get a clear notion of the nature of Dharmapāla's conquests from the Monghyr copper-plate. We are told that "when he (Dharmapāla) had completed the conquest of the regions, he released the princes (he had made captive), and they (were) made to forget all their distress by the various great honours shown to them; and having returned to his own country, (he) pondered upon his generous deeds, and their hearts were fondly looking for him."(2) Dharmapāla followed the example of his illustrious predecessor Samudra Gupta and satisfied himself with the recognition of his sovereignty by the vanquished kings, whom he treated generously so as to win their gratitude and promise of loyalty in adverse times. As a farseeing statesman he realised the strength

---

(1) A catalogue of Palf-leaf and selected paper MSS. belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal - by M.M. H.P. Sastri - page 134. No.1608 cha.
(2) I.A. XXI p.253 f.

of localism prevalent in the country and did not attempt the impossible task of establishing a completely unitary and centralised state like the great Mauryas. The establishment of the Pāla hegemony in Northern India must have been accomplished between the retirement of Dhruva from the North in 790 - 91 A.D., and the invasion of Northern India by Govinda III in the closing years of the 8th century.

Marriage of Dharmapāla

From the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāladeva[1] we learn that Dharmapala had married Rannādevī, the daughter of Parabala, the ornament of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa race. The Pathāri pillar-inscription dated (Vikrama) Samvat 917 (= 860-861 A.D.)[2] reveals the existence of a Parabala, an ornament of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa family ruling in Central India. Kielhorn[3] identified this Parabala with Parabala, the father-in-law of Dharmapāla. This identification has been rejected by Altekar[4] and Majumdar.[5] Fleet[6] thought that

---

(1) I.A. XXI. p.253 f.
(2) E.I. IX p.248 f. A.R.I.A.R. 1908-9 p.116.
(3) E.I. IX p.251. At first Kielhorn had conjectured that Parabala, father-in-law of Dharmapāla was Govinda III, on the ground that Gopāla may have lived in the beginning of the 9th century when Govinda III lived. (I.A. XXI p.254). Gopāla flourished much earlier.
(4) R.A. p.55, note 12.
(5) H.B.R.I. p.114, note 2.
(6) Bomb.Gaz. I. pt. II. p.394.

Govinda III may have had another name, Parabala;[1] Majumdar thinks it "very likely that the Parabala of the Monghyr plate belonged to the well-known Rāṣṭrakūṭa family of the Deccan." We know of numerous epithets of Govinda III and other Rāṣṭrakūṭa kings of "the well-known dynasty of the Deccan", but so far no one is known as 'Parabala'. The only objection that is raised against Kielhorn's proposed identification is that Parabala was alive in 861 A.D., and "the reign of Dharmapāla had ended about 50 years, at least, before that year, and therefore he could not have been Parabala's son-in-law".[2] But this is not an unsurmountable objection. Dharmapāla may have married Raṇṇādevī in about 798 A.D. at the age of about 45, - not a very advanced age for marriage. Parabala could have lived for about 100 years in 861 A.D. The Candella ruler Dhanga[3] lived for more than a hundred years. Prabhāvatīguptā, the Vākāṭaka queen, lived for more than a hundred years.[4] Gopāla[5] lived for 80 years. 'Pra' of the MMK[6] lived for 94 years.

---

(1) H.B.R.I. p.114
(2) R.A.p.55, note 19.
(3) E.I. I.p.139.
(4) J.P.A.S.B. XX (N.S.) p.53; J.A.S.B.L. XII p.1 f.
(5) I.H.I. p.44
(6) ibid. p.66.

It may be suggested that Dharmapāla in the course of his campaigns in Central India[1] came into contact with the Rāṣṭrakūṭa prince Parabala. To offset any renewal of hostilities by the Pratīhāras, and at the same time to gain the support of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas in times of duress, Dharmapāla may have foreseen distinct political advantages in a matrimonial alliance with him. The Rāṣṭrakūṭa Parabala could not have risked any refusal on his part of the overtures of the great emperor Dharmapāla; indeed Parabala may have felt honoured by the prospect. Davapala, the son of Rannādevī and Dharmapāla, may have been born in 799-800 A.D. Devapāla was certainly not the eldest son of Dharmapāla, as the dūtaka of the Khalimpur grant, dated in the 32nd year of Dharmapāla's reign, is not Devapāla, but Yuvarāja Trilocanapāla[2], who appears to have predeceased his father. Devapāla must have been comparatively young at the time of his accession. The suspicion is strengthened by the internal evidence of the Badal pillar inscription of Nārāyaṇapāla[3]. We find that the victories of the time of Devapāla are credited to the hereditary ministerial family, Darbhapāṇi and his grandson Kedāramiśra. As both the grandfather and the grandson served Devapāla, it is very likely that Devapāla came to the throne early. It is possible that as Devapāla was

---

(1) E.I. IV p.251.
(2) E.I. IV p.251 f.
(3) E.I. II p.160.

quite young in age and inexperienced, the real weight of administration fell to the lot of the ministerial family. It may have been during the early years of young Devapāla's rule, that Nāgabhaṭa II recovered Kanauj, some time after 815 A.D. Thus "it is not impossible for Dharmapāla to marry a daughter of Parabala"[1], who was alive in 861 A.D.

Dharmapāla
and Nāgabhaṭa II

Dharmapāla had soon to defend his imperial title and position. The Gurjara-Pratīharas under Nāgabhaṭa II, the son and successor of Vatsarāja, made a determined bid to regain their lost glory and reclaim the imperial honour from the Pālas and their protegé. He appears to have made necessary preparations before challenging his powerful adversaries. The Gwāliar Praśasti of Bhoja[2] informs us that "the kings of Āndhra, Sindhu, Vidarbha and Kaliṅga submitted to his (Nāgabhaṭa's) youthful energy as moths do unto fire". Majumdar[3] has rightly pointed out the significance of the simile "as moths do unto fire", and has suggested that "as moths are by themselves attracted to the fire, so the four abovementioned kingdoms voluntarily joined Nāgabhaṭa and ultimately they lost their power".

---

(1) M.A.S.B. III. p.5.
(2) E.I. XVIII p.110 f.
(3) J.L. X pp.38-39.

"The position of these four countries confirms this view. Joined to Avanti and the Gurjara states of Rajputana, they form a central belt right across the country bounded in the north by the empire of the Palas, and in the south by that of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. It appears therefore to be quite likely that they formed a confederacy against the two great powers that pressed them from two sides, although as so often happens, the most powerful member of the confederacy ultimately reduced the allies to a state of absolute dependence."(1)

Thus protecting himself from an attack from the south, Nāgabhaṭa with the increased resources of his confederacy marched, at first, against Cakrāyudha and defeated him. This defeat of Cakrāyudha is referred to in the Gwāliar inscription of Bhoja. This Cakrāyudha is undoubtedly the same man who was installed on the throne of Kanauj by Dharmapāla.(2) This is confirmed by the Gwāliar inscription, wherein Cakrāyudha is described as one "whose law state was manifest by his dependence on another (or others)".(3) We have already seen that Cakrāyudha depended on Dharmapāla for his position. Bannerji(4) concluded that "it is evident that Dharmapāla tried his best to support his protegé, and "in so doing he must have suffered reverse at the hands of the Gurjara king". The Gwāliar praśasti of Bhoja refers to a terrible

---

(1) ibid. (2) I.A. XV. p.304 f.
(3) E.I. XVII p.110 f. A.S.I.A.R, 1903-4, p.277 f.
(4) M.A.S.B. V.p.51.

contest between the king of Vaṅga and Nāgabhaṭa. The inscription speaks of Nāgabhaṭa "as having vanquished his enemy, the lord of Vaṅga who appeared like a mass of dark dense cloud in consequence of the crowd of mighty elephants, horses, and chariots; Nāgabhaṭa as the sun, alone reveals himself by vanquishing dense and terrible darkness."(1) The Vaṅgapati is certainly Dharmapāla. It was only after defeating the Pāla emperor that the sun of the Pratīhāra glory could shine in the sky. The Jodhpur inscription of Pratīhāra Bāuka dated (V) S.894 (= 837-38) informs us that Kakka, the father of Bāuka, "acquired fame by fighting with the Gauḍas at Mudgagiri."(2) Majumdar(3) has rightly suggested that Kakka was a feudatory of Nāgabhaṭa II and may have accompanied the latter in his campaign against the Pāla emperor, Dharmapāla.

From the Una plates of Balavarman dated in Valabhi Samvat 574 (= 893-94 A.D.)(4), we learn that he was a feudatory of the Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Mahendrāyudhadeva. From the Una plates of

---

(1) E.I. XVIII p.110 f.
(2) J.R.A.S. 1894 p.1 f; E.I. XVIII pp.87 f. P.L.Paul (E.H.B.P.I p.40 note 1) thinks that the inscription is dated not in V.S. 894 but in Samvat 4. Devi Prasad had also dated the inscription in year 940, Kielhorn in year 4 (J.R.A.S. 1894, p.9); Bhandarkar (A.S.I.R. 1906-7 p.30) read it as Samvat 894, and it is accepted by Majumdar (E.I. XVIII p.89).
(3) J.L. X p.40.
(4) E.I. IX p.1.

of Avanivarman II,[1] son of Balavarman, we know that Avanivarman was also a feudatory of Mahendrapāla. From this very inscription we learn that Avanivarman's great-grandfather, Vāhukadhavala defeated Dharma and conquered kings who were well-known as Rājādhirāja and Paramesvara. Kielhorn[2a] held that Dharma was certainly Dharmapāla, and Vāhukadhavala was a contemporary of Bhoja. It is more reasonable to make Vāhukadhavala a contemporary of Nāgabhaṭa II, who was the great-grandfather of Mahendrapāla, whose feudatory was Avanivarman, the great-grandson of Vāhukadhavala. The Cātsu inscription of Bālāditya[3] informs us that Śankaragaṇa defeated Bhaṭa, the king of Gauḍa, and Harsarāja, son of Śankaragaṇa, presented horses to Bhoja. Bhandarkar took Bhaṭa to be a proper name and identified him with Śūrapāla I of the Pāla dynasty. Majumdar translated 'Bhaṭa' as a great-warrior and took the passage to mean that Śankaragaṇa defeated the king of Gauḍa, a great warrior. The learned scholar[4] rightly pointed out that Śankaragaṇa must have been a contemporary of Nāgabhaṭa II, whom he must have accompanied in his campaign against Dharmapāla, the king of Gauḍa; otherwise it is hard to believe that a petty

---

(1) ibid. p.2.
(2) ibid. p.3.
(3) ibid. XII p.10 f.
(4) J.L. X pp.40-41, note.

Guhilot chief like Śankaragaṇa would by himself defeat the king of Gauḍa, who was certainly Dharmapāla. All this points to the inevitable conclusion that Nāgabhaṭa, supported by his feudatories, defeated Dharmapāla.(1) This

---

(1) Tripathi (T.K. pp. 233-35) holds that Nāgabhaṭa defeated Dharmapāla after the return of Govinda III from his North-Indian expedition. But it is hardly possible for Nāgabhaṭa, who appears to have been severely defeated by Govinda III, to have completely recovered his power immediately after Govinda's return, and begun his offensive against Dharmapāla. That the discomfiture of the Gurjara king was complete is clear from the Radhānpur inscription, wherein it is stated that the Gurjara king "in fear vanished nobody knew whither so that even in a dream he might not see battle". (E.I. VI p.239, U.27-28). The Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa also refer to Govinda's "carrying away the fair and unshakable fame of Kings Nāgabhaṭa and Candragupta" and Govinda is described as being "the destination to valour of the head of the thundering Gurjaras". (E.I. XVIII pp.253-54, vs. 22 and 32). These verses suggest the thunder and fair and unshakable fame of Nāgabhaṭa, and also his complete defeat at the hands of Govinda III. We know that Vatsarāja, the father of Nāgabhaṭa II, was severely defeated by Dhruva. Therefore the "fair and unshakable fame" of Nāgabhaṭa must have been built upon some solid achievement. Nāgabhaṭa must have earned his claim to be valorous "head of the thundering Gurjaras".

Such laudatory references in the records of the enemies certainly prove that Nāgabhaṭa had defeated the great Pāla emperor, and as a consequence had won "fair and unshakable fame", and was at the head of the proud and arrogant Gurjaras, dizzy with success. Therefore we reject the opinion of Tripathi (T.K. pp.233-35) and Sen (op.cit, pp.298, 323-24) that the contest between Nāgabhaṭa and Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha happened after the incidents relating to the campaign of Govinda III in the North.

victory over Dharmapāla, the imperial lord of Northern India, made Nāgabhaṭa supreme over large parts of Northern India. He followed that up by forcible "seizure of the hill forst of kings of Anārta, Mālava, Kirāta, Turuṣka, Vatsa and Matsya." This is mentioned immediately after the reference of Nāgabhaṭa's victory over the King of Vaṅga (Dharmapāla) in the Gwāliar Praśasti of Bhoja. If this list is compared with the list of kings who submitted to Dharmapāla and recognised the accession of Cakrāyudha, as known from the Khalimpur copper-plates inscription of Dharmapāla,(1) it will be clear that Nāgabhaṭa succeeded to the imperial position of Dharmapāla. 'Matsya' is common to both the inscriptions. Turuṣka of the Gwāliar inscription may mean the same people as the Yavanas of the Khalimpur plate; Mālava and Avanti may refer to the same territory. Vatsa stands for the territory whose capital was Kauśāmbī, identified with the village Kosam near Allahabad, and must have been under Dharmapāla. Therefore it is apparent that Nāgabhaṭa's authority was recognised by some of the very peoples who had formerly paid homage to Dharmapāla. The King of Kirāta, who was defeated by Nāgabhaṭa, may have been a king of Nepal, or of some Himālayan state.(2) Thus Nāgabhaṭa's influence reached up to the foot of the Himālayas. Dharmapāla

---

(1) E.I. IV p.251.
(2) Levi, Le Nepal II pp.77-78. (Quoted by Majumdar) JRAS, 1909 p257

was humiliated, his vassals had changed allegiance, his protegé was defeated and his empire was reduced. The battle against Dharmapāla may have been fought near Monghyr, in C.797 A.D.

Campaign of Govinda III

Providentially for the Pālas, just at this time, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas reappeared on the scene. Govinda III, after successfully crushing the rebellion at home and establishing his authority in the kingdom, planned a vigorous campaign into Northern India. The revival of the Pratīhāra power, defeated by his father Dhruva, could not have been welcome to Govinda III. Nāgabhaṭa's alliance with the powers situated on the extensive northern frontier of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa dominion must have alarmed Govinda. The success of the Pratīhāras over the Pālas made the former the unquestioned paramount power in Northern India. This could not be without concern to Govinda III, who himself entertained imperial ambition to bring North India under his subjection.

From the Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa,(1) we learn that Govinda III defeated Nāgabhaṭa and obtained the voluntary submission of Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha,

(1) E.I. XVIII p.245 f. 'Svayamevopanatau ca yasya mahatas tau Dharma-Cakrāyudhau.'

N.N. Das-Gupta (1) strongly urged that Govinda III had defeated Dharmapāla in a battle, and the latter was defeated by Nāgabhaṭa II after that. We do not however find his arguments convincing, and prefer Majumdar's translation of the disputed passage of the Gwaḥar Praśasti. When Govinda III marched towards the north, Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha, recently vanquished by Nāgabhaṭa II, were not in a position to oppose the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king.

---

(1) J.B.O.R.S. XII pp.361 f. N.N. Das Gupta thinks that the use of the word 'mahataḥ' in relation to Govinda III, and reference to submission of Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha prove that Dharmapāla was defeated in a battle by Govinda III. He draws support from the Nilgund inscription, where the fettering of the Gauḍas by Govinda III is mentioned. Verse 10 of the Gwaḥar praśasti of Bhoja has been so interpreted by the Das-Gupta to mean that 'the chariots, horses and elephants' which caused terrible darkness, belonged to an enemy of the Vaṅgapati, not to the Vaṅgapati, himself, and the enemy was Govinda III.

In our humble opinion the verse in question has been rather twisted to bear a meaning not intended by the author. The force of the phrase 'svayamevopanataḥ' is clearly voluntary submission without risking a war, otherwise the word 'svayam' would become meaningless if the submission was a consequence of a military defeat. The word 'mahataḥ' as an adjective of Govinda III, does not necessarily mean his victory in a battlefield.

Realpolitik may have induced Dharmapāla to welcome the Rāṣṭrakūṭa invasion, as it would certainly engage his powerful enemy, Nāgabhaṭa. It is possible that Parabala, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa chief and the father-in-law of Dharmapāla, may have played some part in bringing about the alliance between the Pāla king and Govinda III. It may be, though it is by no means certain, that the suggestion of R.D.Bannerji (1) that "defeated by Nāgabhaṭa II, Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha sought the help of Govinda III", is quite near the truth. It can hardly be questioned that when Govinda III attacked Nāgabhaṭa II, Dharmapala wisely avoided any conflict with the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king, believing that after the Rāṣṭrakūṭa raid was over, and Nāgabhaṭa was crushed and his territories over-run, he (Dharmapāla) would get an opportunity to reassert his claim to supremacy over Northern India. The most important result of Govinda III's campaign in the North was the defeat of the Gurjara king, "who vanished no body knew where." The Gurjara king defeated by Govinda III was Nāgabhaṭa II, who is specifically mentioned in the Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa. (2)

---

(1) M.A.S.B. V p.51.
(2) E.I. XVIII p.245 f.

What is the approximate date of the defeat of Nāgabhaṭa and the submission of Dharmapāla? On the ground that the defeat of the Gurjara is mentioned in the Rādhanpur plates dated in July 808 A.D.,[1] but omitted in the Wani grant 807-8 A.D.,[2] learned scholars presumed[3] that the defeat of Nāgabhaṭa and possibly also the submission of Dharmapāla must have happened between these two dates. Altekar[4] held that the attack of Govinda III on Nāgabhaṭa II may have taken place "sometime in 806 or 807 A.D.".

But the recent discovery of some inscriptions suggests modification in the long accepted chronology of Govinda III's campaigns. The stereotyped draft, which is found in the Rādhanpur plates[5] dated in 808-9 A.D., including the reference to the defeat of the Gurjara king, and which is repeated in later documents such as in the Maṇḍala plate of Govinda III, dated in S'ake 732 (= 810-11 A.D.)[6], is not found in the Paithan plates of 794-95 A.D.,[7] and in the Anjaṇavati plates of Govinda III dated in June 800 A.D.[8] None of these last plates refers to even the rebellion of Stambha. The Wani-

---

(1) E.I. VI p.239 f.
(2) I.A. XI p.156 f.
(3) Fleet ibid, p.156-7 Note I; Majumdar, R.C., J.L. X p.44; Tripathi, R.S., T.K. pp.231-2; B.C.Sen, Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal, p.298.
(4) R.A.p.65.
(5) E.I. VI p.239
(6) B.I.S.M.Q. XVI, No.4 p.27 f.
(7) E.I. III p.103 f.
(8) ibid. XXIII p.8.

Dindori[1] plates, dated in 807-8 A.D., mention all the celebrated events of Govinda III's reign except the defeat of the Gurjara king and the humiliation of the King of Vengi(?). But the Sasvani plates[2] of the year 807 A.D. and so earlier than the Wani-Dindori inscription contain the identical draft known from the Rādhanpur plates, and including therein the mention of the defeat of the Gurjara King. The same draft, including the reference to the Gurjara king, occurs in the Nesari grant[3] dated the 21st Dec. 805 A.D. Alketar[3a] takes the date to be Jan. 806 A.D. and holds that "Govinda gained all his victories including that on the Gurjara king before 806 A.D." But it appears that the date is to be shifted still earlier. The first set of Mayne Plates of Ranāvaloka Stambha[4], elder brother of Govinda III, contains, in the main, the stereotyped draft about the conquests of Govinda III - there are references to Govinda III's success over the rebellion of twelve kings, release and reimprisonment of the Ganga King, defeat of the Gurjara king, submission of the king of Mālava, campaign on the ridges of the Vindhya mountains, presents from Mārā Sarva, stay at Śrībhavana during the rainy season, advance to the Tungabhadrā, resubmission of the

---

(1) I.A. XI p.256 f.
(2) E.I. XXIII p.204 f.
(3) G.Khare - Sources of the Medieval History of the Deccan, I, p.13; E.I. XXIII, p.216.
(3a) D.R.Bhandarkar Volume p.153 f.
(4) Ep.Carn. IX No.61.

Pallava king and discomfiture of the ruler of Veṅgi. It is therefore obvious that all the victories of Govinda III were achieved before Nov. 802 A.D., the date of the first set of the Manne Plates. The fact that none of these achievements is mentioned in the Anjaneavatī plates dated June 800 A.D.,(1) may lead one to presume that either all the conquests of Govinda III happened between June 800 and Nov. 802 A.D., or the Manne plates are forged.(2) Mivashi, after discussing the subject threadbare, concluded that "there are, thus, no insuperable difficulties in admitting the Manne Plates of S'ake 724 to be genuine; all the important conquests of Govinda III seem, therefore, to have been made during the first seven or eight years of his reign". The non-mention of any of these achievements in the Anjaneavatī plates should not be taken to mean that the years 794-800 A.D. were uneventful and all these conquests happened between June 800 and Nov. 802 A.D. What actually may have happened was that Govinda was very busy from 794 onwards in wars against his brother aided by twelve kings, war against the Gaṅga king, and his expedition in Northern India. These were over probably just before the Anjaneyatī plates were issued, and therefore there was hardly any time to engage a scribe

---

(1) E.I. XXIII p.8 f.
(2) ibid. pp.213-17.

to prepare a new draft to include all the recent conquests of Govinda. Soon after he had to lead an expedition against the Southern kings, which was over by the middle of 802 A.D., and a new draft was prepared. Govinda's brother Stambha, who had been pardoned and appointed Governor of Gangavàḍè, had to use the new draft prepared by a court poet of Govinda III. This explains why the first known occurrence of the stereotyped draft is to be found in the Manne plates of Stambha.(1) Altekar tried to prove that though the plates were genuine they were not issued in the S'aka year 724 but in S'aka year 730 and 731 when the permission of Govinda was obtained.(2) His arguments are:- (a) the irregularity in the date, which he explains by imagining that the grant was promised in the year 724 S'aka, but the permission of Govinda was obtained in S'aka 730, and by that time the exact month of the year when the grant was promised, was forgotten and so, while the year of the promise was remembered and put down, the month mentioned was of the year when the permission was obtained; (b) the charter in its spirit and expression is more akin to a charter of Govinda III than of Stambha, whose defeat also is mentioned in Verse 13 of the plates, and therefore Stambha appears to have been forced to incorporate the relevant draft into

---

(1) ibid.
(2) E.I. XXIII p.293; D.R.Bhandarkar Volume p.153 f.

the charter; (c) it is unlikely that the draft which had so strongly appealed to the emperor, should have been first allowed to be used in a grant issued by his elder brother who was erstwhile a rebel; (d) for the first time the draft was used by Govinda in his Nesari plate of the S'aka year 727.[1] Mirashi has squarely met all these objections:- (a) the irregularity in date may be explained by postulating a delay of four days rather of 6 or 7 years; the grant was made on the occasion of a lunar eclipse on the 13th Nov. A.D.802, the plates were issued on the 17th Nov. when the moon was in conjunction with aseterism Pusya; this the delay of four days is not unique, the 2nd set of Mamne plates (Q.J.M.S. XIV p.82 f) were issued two days later than the grant was made; (b) why should Stambha have waited for 6 or 7 years to get the permission of Gavinda, and certainly why after S'aka 727, when the draft was used in one of Govinda III's grants (Nesari plates)?; (c) it is true that the draft was prepared by a court poet of Govinda III and may have been forced on Stambha, but it is equally possible that it may have been used in some of the grants of Govinda himself, which are not yet known to us; it is also possible that as Stambha was issuing a grant at a time which coincided with the completion of the conquests of Govinda, the draft was prepared at the imperial court and hurriedly sent to Stambha to be incorporated in his

---

(1) E.I. XXIII pp.295-97

charter; (d) it is not impossible that Govinda won all his victories in the North and the South within six years of his reign; Indra III defeated enemies in the North and in the south within three years, and Karṇa had vanquished powerful enemies within seven years. Thus it may be granted that the Northern expedition of Govinda III has to be dated between C.799 and 801 A.D.

The name of Nāgabhaṭa, as an enemy of Govinda III, is mentioned for the first time in the Sanjan Plates of Amoghavarṣa.[1] The same record tells us of the march of Govinda's army to the foot of the Himālayas, and submission of Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha. There is no reference to Govinda's victory over Dharmapāla in any of his inscriptions which contain the stereotyped account of his conquests - including that over the Gurjara king, whose name is not mentioned in these records.[2] Altekar, therefore, suggested that Govinda fought the Norther powers twice: on the first occasion he repulsed an attack of the Gurjara king (Nāgabhaṭa) and this is what is described in laudatory terms in his inscriptions; on the second occasion, after he was free from this preoccupation in the South, he marched forwards to the North with the aggressive ambition of conquest some time after 808 - 9 A.D. and on this occasion he defeated Nāgabhaṭa, pursued him, reached the foot of the Himālayas and obtained the submission of

---

(1) E.I. XVII p.245 f.
(2) D.R.Bhandarkar Volume p.153 f.

Dharmapāla. This later campaign must have taken about two years, and on his return he had to wage war against the Dravidian Kings in C.812 A.D.; and as he died in 814 A.D. he had no time to engage a scribe to describe his grand victorious campaign in the North. Therefore these events were first described in the Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa. The arguments advanced by Dr.Altekar are not convincing. The non-mention of the names of Nāgabhaṭa and Dharmapāla, and the march of Govinda III to the foot of the Himālayas, in Govinda's inscriptions, should not necessarily lead to the conclusion that these events happened after 810-811A.D., about four years later than the stereotyped draft is first known to have been used in the inscriptions of Govinda III. Argumentum ex silentio is after all a deceptive reasoning. The Wani-Dindorī plates of Govinda III dated in the year 807-8 A.D. do not refer to Govinda's victory over the Gurjara King, but the fact is mentioned in the Sisvani, the Nesari and the first set of Mayna plates - all earlier than the Wani-Dindorī plates. The way in which the defeat of the Gurjara king is mentioned in the inscriptions of Govinda III does not suggest that it was the Gurjara king who took the offensive, as believed by Altekar. The verse, translated, runs thus:- "As the rains cease on the approach of the starry season of autumn, which having quickly placed its bees on bana and asana flowers, enhances the beauty of the bandhujīva flower and favours

the growth of day lotus so the Gurjara - on seeing how he (Govinda) who made the lives and wealth of relatives prosper, and was favoured by increase of fortune and before whom warriors desponded, had come near, quickly placing on his bow the arrows aimed at himself - in fear vanished nobody knew whither, so that even in dream he might not see battle."(1)

The phrase "as the rains cease on the approach of the starry season of Autumn", and the expression that when "he (Govinda III) had come near", clearly prove that Govinda had marched against the Gurjara king and not vice versa. The Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa also refer to the same idea: here Govinda III is described as "carrying away in battles the fair and unshakable fame of kings Nāgabhaṭa and Candragupta."(2) According to Alketar himself, the campaign in Northern India was over before 810-11 A.D., and Govinda died in 814 A.D. Therefore, there was enough time left to Govinda to engage a scribe to prepare a draft to eulogize his victorious march to the North to the foot of the Himālayas in course of which he defeated Nāgabhaṭa and reduced Dharmapāla to submission - both the great kings of Northern India. The Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa contain a chronological account of the campaign of Govinda III.(3) Here the activities are referred to in the following order: reinstatement of some

---

(1) E.I. VI p.250.
(2) ibid. XVIII p.235 f.
(3) E.I. XVIII p.235 f.

of the feudatories, release of the Gaṅga king, disaffection of vassal kings, rebellion and suppression of a confederacy of twelve kings led by Stambha, reimprisonment of the Gaṅga king, defeat of Nāgabhaṭa and Candragupta, victorious march to the North to the springs at the foot of the Himālayas, submission of Dharma and Cakrāyudha, return to the Narmadā, turning to the east, conquest of Mālava, Kosala, Kaliṅga, Veṅgi (?), Ḍāhala and Oḍraka, following the other part (western) of the river encampment in a capital of a Kingdom at the foot of the Vindhyas under Mahārāja S'arva, the birth of Amoghavarṣa, march against the Dravida kings and the conquest of Kerala, Pāṇḍya, Caulika (Cola) and Pallava. From this fairly detailed account of Govinda's campaigns, we get absolutely no hint of more than one campaign in the North. From the account given in the Sanjan plates, it is clear that Govinda's stay in the capital of Mahārāja S'arva at the foot of the Vindhyas happened after Govinda's return from the campaign in the North, when he had defeated Nāgabhaṭa, marched to the foot of the Himālayas and received the submission of Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha. The Maṇḍalesa'a Mahārāja s'arva of these plates has been rightly identified with the king (Mahīpati) Mārā S'arva, who "having heard through his spies that his (Govinda III's) camp was pitched on the ridges of the Vindhyan mountains and apprehending that he was moving towards his own country, quickly went to

conciliate his mind by chosen heirlooms,"[1] and at whose capital S'rībhavana Govinda spent his rainy season, during which sojourn a son was born to him. These events are mentioned in the stereotyped draft of Govinda's inscriptions, and also in the first set of Manne plates dated Śaka 724 A.D.[2] This leads to the logical inference that Govinda's expedition to the North, which preceded his stay in the capital of Mahārāja S'arva, must have heppened before 802 A.D., probably in 800 A.D., immediately before the issue of the Anjanavatī plates in June 800 A.D.[3] It is true that the submission of Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha, and Govinda's army's march to the foot of the Himālayas are not mentioned in the known inscriptions of Govinda. But because of this it is not safe to assert that these events must have happened in the later years of Govinda, at least after the stereotyped draft was made. The victory of the Cālukya King Vinayāditya over the Pallavas, Kalabhras, and others, was regarded as having occurred between his eleventh and fourteenth regnal years, as it is not mentioned in the grant of the 11th year, but is mentioned in the grant of the 14th year. But the discovery of the Jejuri plates,[4] dated in the S'aka year 609 makes it clear that the event must have happened at

---

(1) E.I. VI p.250.
(2) Ep. Carn. IX No.61.
(3) E.I. XXIII p.8 f.
(4) E.I. XIX p.62 f.

least in the 9th year of his reign. Therefore it is not unlikely that some new inscription of Govinda may come to light which may refer to the submissionof Dharmapāla and the advance of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa army to the water-springs of the Himālayas.[1] Mirashi has pointed out that "we do not know for certain the exact length of the stereotyped draft when it was prepared though it has been used in as many as eleven charters, it is well known that it is not of uniform length in all these cases....: we cannot therefore conclude that the original form of it did not contain any verses descriptive of Govinda's sensational victories over Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha and others - much less that these victories had not been attained when it was prepared." Another probable alternative explanation of the non-mention of Dharmapāla's submission to Govinda in his grants may be that, as the account refers to the glorious victories won by Govinda III in wars, the voluntary submission of Dharmapāla was not considered to be as important an event in the time of Govinda, as it was in the time of Amoghavarṣa.

The discussion leads us back to the question whether Govinda III had defeated Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha in battle. At the present state of our knowledge it is hardly safe to assume the defeat of Dharmapāla in battle

---

(1) ibid. XXIII, pp.296-7

by Govinda. None of the inscriptions, which refer to the defeat of the Gurjara kings, mentions the defeat of Dharmapāla by Govinda. On the other hand the Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa clearly state that Kings Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha surrendered of themselves.(1) Before the mention of Dharmapāla's submission, the inscription refers to the defeat of Candragupta and Nāgabhaṭa and Govinda's march to the foot of the Himālayas, "the water of whose springs was drunk by his horses". As the account is chronological in nature, the conclusion appears to be that after his victory over Nāgabhaṭa, Govinda marched to the foot of the Himālayas, probably in pursuit of Nāgabhaṭa, who, in other inscriptions, is said to "have vanished nobody knows where".(2) Nāgabhaṭa, who had defeated Dharmapāla, whose authority was recognised up to the Himālayas in the North, may have extended his sphere of influence to the foot of the Himālayas. From the Gwālior praśasti of Bhoja,(3) we learn that one of the fortresses seized by Nāgabhaṭa belonged to the King of Kirāta, and Kirāta was certainly a Himālayan state, probably Nepal. It may be that either in the Himālayan region or during Govinda's return journey thence, Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha voluntarily offered homage to Govinda.

---

(1) E.I. XVIII p.235 f. v.23.
(2) E.I. VI p.239 f.
(3) E.I. XVIII p.110 f.

It may be that Nāgabhaṭa was finally defeated in the Doaba, and the reference to the soldiers of Govinda III bathing in the Himālayan springs and their noise leading to the resounding of the Himālayas is "merely poetic, and the armies of Govinda III may not have marched beyond the Ganges - Jamunā Doaba".(1) Even if the Sanjan plates record a genuine historical event, it is likely that Govinda may have taken advantage of his stay in the North to pay a visit to the sacred place - the source of the Ganges. Even conceding that it was in course of his military campaign that his army reached the Himālayas, it is not necessary to imagine that it could be possible only after the defeat of Dharmapāla, as N.N. Das-Gupta(2) would lead us to believe. Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudhas were already defeated by Nāgabhaṭa II, and therefore Govinda's march to the North up to the Himālayas was directly against the then paramount ruler of Northern India, Nāgabhaṭa, and not Dharmapāla, who was suffering from the humiliation of defeat and loss of territory. It may be that because Dharmapāla was not a great ruler at the time of Govinda's triumphant march to the North, that he (Dharmapāla) is not mentioned in the inscriptions of Govinda. The voluntary nature of Dharmapāla's submission to Govinda as against the defeat of the Gurjara King in battle is clearly hinted at in

---

(1) R.A.p.66 note 52. (2) J.B.O.R.S. XII p.361 f.

another verse of the Sanjan plates.

In verse 32, while Govinda III is referred to as "destruction to the valour of the head of the thundering Gurjaras", we read that "the kings of Magadha and Kaliṅga were made to sit and fast to death".[1] The editor points out that 'Prāyāsaka' means fasting to death with some objective.[2] The King of Magadha, then, was certainly Dharmapāla. This strengthens the suggestion that Dharmapāla waited upon Govinda to secure his valuable alliance. V.24 of the same record refers to the return of Govinda to the bank of the Narmadā; and then marching along the eastern bank of the river, he acquired the countries of Kosala, Kaliṅga and Vaṅga. Now verse 32 refers to the King of Magadha, who was certainly Dharmapāla. The Vaṅgapati[3] defeated by Nāgabhaṭa was certainly Dharmapāla. Therefore if verse 24 of the Sanjan plates refers to the acquisition of Vaṅga, this was possibly only at the expense of Dharmapāla. It is not clear why in the same record Dharmapāla should be referred to separately as King of Magadha and of Vaṅga. The editors of the journal suggested that in place of Vaṅga in v.24, one should read Vegi or Veṅgi, the Āndhra Kingdom.[4] The Nilgund inscription of Amoghavarṣa I, dated in 866 A.D.[5] informs us that Govinda III fettered the people of Kerala, Mālava

---

(1) E.I. XVIII p.235 f.
(2) ibid. p.254
(3) ibid. p.110 f.
(4) ibid, p 245 note 39, p 253, note 1
(5) E.I. VI p.98 f.

and Gauḍa, together with the Gurjaras who dwelt on the hill-fort of Citrakūṭa.[1] N.N.Das Gupta sees in their statement a clear confirmation of his thesis that Govinda III had defeated Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha in battle and their submission was a consequence of military defeat. H.C.Ray[2] held that the inscription shows that the alliance between the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Pālas hinted at in the Sanjan plates was short-lived. This view is hardly tenable. The Sanjan plates[3] are dated in 871-2 A.D., and the Nilgund inscription[4] is dated in 866 A.D. It is not easy to explain why the two inscriptions should refer to two separate successive events without mentioning both of them, when the alleged events happened much earlier. The reasonable explanation is that what was considered not very important in the time of Govinda III was given undue weight in the time of Amoghavarṣa, and the voluntary submission of Dharmapāla, the King of Magadha, Gauḍa and Vaṅga, was described as fettering of these peoples by Govinda III in the records of Amoghavarṣa I.

Thus in the present state of our knowledge the only positive thing about the relationship between Dharmapāla and Govinda is that Dharmapāla voluntarily submitted to Govinda III, and this is the only incident which has been

---

(1) J.B.O.R.S. XII p.361 f.
(2) D.H.N.I. I. p.292.
(3) E.I. XVIII p.235 f.
(4) ibid., VI p.98 f.

differently referred to in the inscriptions of Amoghavarṣa. This submission of Dharmapāla to Govinda could not have been later then 800 A.D.

Restoration of
Dharmapāla's imperial position.

Govinda's campaign in the North was of the nature of a digvijaya. He crushed, at least for the time being, the Gurjara-Pratīhāras and returned to the South. Probably the only positive addition to the Rāṣṭrakūta empire was the province of Malwa.(1) The person who gained most from the Northern expedition of Govinda was Dharmapāla, who must have taken advantage of the eclipse of his rival Nāgabhaṭa, and re-established his authority as a paramount power in Northern India. The Khalimpur copper-plate inscription,(2) dated in the 32nd year of the reign of Dharmapāla, is couched in a spirit of triumphant and prosperous imperialism, and Pāṭaliputra is described in pompous phrases befitting the capital of a rich and extensive empire. In the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla(3) we are told that "Devapāla inherited the kingdom of his father free from troubles as a Bodhisattva attains the status of a Buddha". Therefore, it should be taken as granted that Dharmapāla left his empire intact to his son and successor Devapāla, and that his

---

(1) R.A. p.67.
(2) E.I. IV p.251 f.
(3) I.A. XXI p.253 f.

(1)

last years were peaceful.

An Estimate
of Dharmapāla

Dharmapāla was a great conqueror. He established an extensive empire in the teeth of bitter opposition.

---

(1) Because of the defective chronology adopted by Dr. B.C.Sen (op.cit. pp.338-39), this learned scholar believed that "Dharmapāla began well but the end of his reign saw the undoing of his principal work abroad, and he lost to Nāgabhaṭa a large part of his territories and his vassal allies in the closing years of his reign. N.N.Das Gupta (J.B.O.R.S. XII p.361 f) also held that "the last days of Dharmapāla could not be happy or prosperous, for two great invasions, one after another certainly much debilitated his strength and power", and "it is possible that he did not long outlive his defeat by Nāgabhaṭa II". We have already shown that the defeat of Dharmapāla by Nāgabhaṭa II happened long before the closing years of Dharmapāla's reign, and that there is no evidence of an invasion by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas of the territories of Dharmapāla. It is true that in the Bodh Gaya inscriptions of the 26th year of Dharmapāla (J.A.S.B. (NS) IV p.102), he is referred to without any imperial title. But this does not necessarily show that Dharmapāla was not an emperor in his 26th year. The Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla clearly shows that Dharmapāla left his empire free from troubles. N.N. Das Gupta thinks that it has no bearing on the achievement of Dharmapāla at all: Devapāla inherited a kingdom free from troubles because the Rāṣṭrakūṭas were in trouble. This is hardly convincing. The comparison with Bodhisattva and Buddha, and the succession to the kingdom after Dharmapāla clearly show that Devapāla's inheritance of a kingdom free from troubles was due to Dharmapāla.

He was a clever diplomat. Reverses did not daunt him. He was always ready to take judicious advantages of the changing situation. He voluntarily submitted to the invader Govinda, when he (Dharmapāla) foresaw that prudence is the better part of valour. Dharmapāla was a real empire-builder, who knew when to wage war and when to conciliate his defeated enemies. His real merit was that he knew the limitations of his conquest and the exercise of his power - a virtue very rare in great conquerors of ancient and modern times. The Bhagalpur copper-plate of Nārāyaṇapāla refers to him as one "who was the only refuge of those kings, who approached him fearing the destruction of their party", and "who was always eager to keep within the bounds (maryadā), and whose majesty possessed the coquettish smile of the milk-ocean".(1)

Dharmapāla is the first Pāla king to assume full imperial titles of Mahārājādhirāja, Parames'vara and Paramabhaṭṭāraka; his father is referred to simply as Māhārājādhirāja.(2) He was an able administrator, and his popularity is specifically mentioned in the Khalimpur copper-plate inscriptions. The Bhāgalpur copper-plate inscription refers to him as an imposer of "just terms"(3)

---

(1) I.A. XV. p.307.
(2) E.I. IV pp 251 f; ibid XXIII p.290 f; ibid XXI p.253 f
(3) I.A. XV p.307 f.

(samakarah) and as "being able to bear the burden (of the rule) of the earth."

Dharmapāla was a Buddhist. He is described as 'Paramasaugata' in his own inscriptions[1] as well as in those of his successors.[2] He is credited with the foundation of the Vikramas'ilā monastery, which was one of the most important Buddhist seats of learning in India from the 9th to the 12th centuries A.D. Cunningham[3] had suggested Silao near Rājagriha as the site of the ancient monastery.[4] S.C. Vidyabhus'ana located it at Sultanganj in Bhāgalpur district in Bihar. A.P. Bannerji Sastri[5] placed it at Kewr, just behind the south-west corner of the Hilsa police-station in Patna district.[6] N.L. Dey, after thoroughly discussing the subject, came to the conclusion that the Vikramas'ilā vihāra was situated at Patharghāṭā, which is six miles to the north of Colgong, 24 miles to the east of Bhāgalpur. This identification has been generally accepted. Dharmapāla founded the Somapura Vihāra in

---

(1) E.I. IV p.307 v.2
(2) I.A. XXI p.253 f.
(3) C.A.S.R. VIII p.83
(4) Bharatī, 1315 -
(5) J.B.O.R.S. XV p.263.
(6) J.A.S.B. V. (N.S) p.1 f.

Varendrī: recent archaeological excavations have proved that Paharpar in Rajshahi district of Bengal was the ancient site of the famous monastery.[1] Some of the seals discovered here bore the inscription that the Somapura Vihāra was of (founded by) Dharmapāla.[2] An inscription incised on the rim of a sculptured stūpa bearing a number of seated Buddha figures carved on it has been found at Nālandā and it belongs to the time when "the illustrious Dharmapāla of wide fame was the king".[3]

Though Dharmapāla was a Buddhist, he did not persecute other religions of the land. His Khalimpur inscription[4] speaks of him as honouring all the sects, especially the Brāhmaṇas. Four villages were granted to the temple of N(u)nna - Nārāyaṇa.[5] Dharmapāla's scrupulous regard for the rules of caste is mentioned in the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla.[6] He is described as "conversant with the precepts of the s'āstras", and as having "made the castes conform to their proper tenets". The Bodh Gaya inscription[7] refers to the consecration of an image of four-faced Mahādeva in Campas'āyatana. A

---

(1) A.S.I.A.R. 1927-28, pp.138-39
(2) ibid.
(3) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.85-87.
(4) E.I. IV p.243 f.
(5) ibid. p.254. The deity may be Nanna-Nārāyaṇa (ibid. note 3)
(6) I.A. XXI p.253 f.
(7) J.A.S.B. IV (N.S) p.102

M.S. of the Haricarita Kāvya by Caturbhuja refers to a grant of a village in Varendra to one of his ancestors, Suvarnaraksa, by nṛipa Dharmapāla. The donor was a Bhrahmin, well versed in S'ruti, Smṛiti and Purāṇas.(1) According to H.P. S'āstri,(2) Dharmapāla's liberal attitude towards Brahmanism was due to the influence of his Hindu wife Raṇṇādevī, who was a daughter of Parabala, a Rāṣṭrakūṭa chief who erected a Vaiṣṇava temple at Paithan. We have three inscriptions of the time of Dharmapāla. A votive inscription recording the erection of a four-faced Mahādeva at Campas'āyatana by one Keg'ava of Mahābodhi is dated in the 26th year of Dharmapāla.(3) A copper-plate grant by Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Dharmapāla has been found at Nālandā; the dated portion is damaged.(4) The village granted lay in the Gaya Viṣaya in Nagarabhukti.(5) The Khalimpur copper-plate found in Maldah district of Bengal is dated in the 32nd year of Dharmapāla's reign. According to Tāranātha,(6) Dharmapāla ruled for 64 years. This appears to be a long period. We assign him a rule of 35 years.

---

(1) Catalogue of Palm-leaf and Selected Paper MSS belonging to the Durbar Library of Nepal, p.134.
(2) M.A.S.B. III p.6
(3) J.A.S.B. IV (NS) p.102.
(4) E.I. XXIII p.290 f.
(5) ibid. IV p.245 f.
(6) I.A. IV p.366.

Date of
Dharmapāla

According to Cunningham,[1] the accession of Dharmapāla took place in 831 A.D. Bhandarkar[2] had once suggested that Dharmapāla may be placed in the earlier part of the 10th century. But such speculations have been proved to be fanciful. Dharmapāla was a contemporary of Indrarāja, who is most probably Indrāyudha,[3] referred to as ruling in the north in 783 A.D., according to Jinasena.[4] The Sanjan plates of Amoghavarsa[5] definitely make Dharmapāla, Nāgabhaṭa II and Govinda III contemporaries. The last known date of Nāgabhaṭa II is 815 A.D. from the Buchkala inscription.[6] Govinda III came to the throne between April 793 and May 794 A.D., and died in the first half of 814 A.D.[7] Therefore Dharmapāla must have flourished during the last quarter of the 8th and the early part of the 9th centuries A.D. after Christ. His regnal period may have extended from c.783 to 818 A.D.[8]

---

(1) C.A.S.R. XV p.150. (2) E.I. VII p.33.
(3) I.A. XV p.304 f; ibid XX p.189.
(4) I.A. XV p.141
(5) E.I. XVIII p.235 f.
(6) ibid. IX p.198
(7) R.A. pp.58-59, 71.
(8) Sen (o.c. pp.328-9) suggests that the Tipperah plates of Lokanātha (E.I. XV p.304) belong to the time of Dharmapāla, and are dated in the 44th year of his reign. The arguments advanced in support of this contention are not convincing. (see supra).

CHAPTER XIII

Devapāla

Dharmapāla was succeeded by his son Devapāla. He was not, perhaps, the youngest son of his father, as in the Khalimpur copper-plate[1] Trilocanapāla was the yuvarāja, and dūtaka. Trilocanapāla appears to have predeceased his father, and so the throne passed on to his younger brother Devapāla, who may have been comparatively young when he came to the throne. This must have encouraged the Gurjara-Pratīhāras, and it is possible that Nāgabhaṭa II retrieved his lost fortunes.[2] But Devapāla

---

(1) E.I. IV p.243 f.

(2) Tripathi (T.K. pp.233-35) has suggested that Nāgabhaṭa II defeated Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha after Govinda III had gone back to the Deccan. We have already shown that Nāgabhaṭa's success against Dharmapāla is to be placed earlier than Govinda's invasion of the North. Tripathi identified Nāgāvaloka King of Kanauj, according to the Jaina work Prabhāvakacarita, with Nāgabhaṭa II. Nāgāvaloka, the grandfather of Bhoja, is said to have occupied Kanauj and died soon after. The identification may be accepted. K.S.Aiyangar, (J.B.B.R.A.S. III N.S. p.101f) on the basis of Bappa-Bhaṭṭicarita, identifies Nāgāvaloka with a son of Yaśovarman. It is difficult to base any conclusion on such works of very doubtful historical value. Nāgāvaloka is said to have died in 833 A.D. If he is Nāgabhaṭa II, whose last-known date is 815 A.D. (Buchkala inscription, E.I. IX p.198 f), it is possible that he may have conquered Kanauj in C.818-9 A.D., immediately after the death of Dharmapāla. His death in 833 A.D. would leave hardly three years of reign for his son Rāmabhadra, as the earliest known date of Bhoja is 836 A.D. Nāgabhaṭa's occupation of the province of Kanauj may also be inferred from the Barāha copper-plate of Bhojadeve (E.I. XIX p.15 f), which informs us of Nāgabhaṭa's approval of a grant of a village in Kālanjaramaṇḍala of Kānyakubjabhukti.

had not only inherited the empire of Dharmapāla, but also his high qualities. Devapāla was well-served by his cousin(?) Jayapāla and a distinguished line of hereditary ministers. His reign is the high-water mark of the Pāla imperialism; fresh laurels were added to the glory of Pāla arms. He and his advisers rightly thought that the best way to defend and maintain the extensive empire was to exhibit aggressive designs to provoke fear in the hearts of ambitious vassals and to bring prospective enemies under subjection.

Conquests of Devapāla.

The Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla[1] states that in the course of a military campaign, the army of Devapāla reached the Vindhyan forest and Kāmboja.[2] The Badal

---

(1) I.A. XXI p.255.

(2) There is a controversy about the location of Kāmboja in the Pāla records. From the inscriptions of As'oka we know of the Kāmbojas living on the North-West frontier of India. Kāmboja of the Monghyr plate may refer to this part of the country; but it may also stand for Tibet (H.B.R.I. Appendix II pp.190-91). It is not impossible that the mountainous region north of the Gangetic plains may have felt the weight of Devapala's arms. From Tibetan sources we learn that Kings Khri-srong-lde-btsan and his son Mu-tig-btsan-po subdued India, and Rājā Dharmapāla King of India submitted. Another Tibetan King Ral-pa-can (c.817-836 A.D.) is said to have conquered India as far as Gaurgāsāgara (J.G.I.S. VIII p.92 f) It is not beyond the realm of possibility that when Dharmapāla was defeated by Nāgabhaṭa II, the Tibetan King may have also scored a victory over the Pāla King. Later on, Devapāla may have defeated them.

pillar-inscription of the time of Nārāyaṇapāla[1] adds valuable information regarding this. From it we learn that the minister Vīradeva, who had made Dharma (Dharmapāla) the regent of the east and sovereign over all the regions, had a son Darbhapāṇi. "By his (Darbhapāṇi's) policy, the fortunate king Devapāla made tributary the east as far as the Revā's parents (Vindhya mountains), as far as Gaurī's father (the Himālayas), and as far as the two oceans whose waters are red with the rising and setting of the sun".[2] Another verse of the same inscription gives some details about the conquests. M.M.H.P. Śāstrī[3] had taken the verse under discussion to refer to Śūrapāla, the next king after Devapāla. Kielhorn[4] and R.D. Bannerji[5] rightly pointed out that the verse is connected with Devapāla. It contains the valuable information that "attending to his (Kedāramiśra's) wise counsel, the Lord of Gauḍa ruled the sea-girt earth, having eradicated the race of the Utkalas, humbled the pride of the Hūṇas and scattered the conceit of the rulers of the Draviḍas and the Gurjaras."[5a]

There is hardly any good reason to dismiss the description of Devapāla's conquest as "mere bombast".[6]

---

(1) E.I. II p.165 f. (2) ibid.
(3) M.A.S.B. III p.8.
(4) E.I. II p.165.
(5) M.A.S.B. V p.58. (5a) E.I.II p.165
(6) ~~E.I. II p.165.~~
T.K. p.240

The Rāṣṭrakūṭas immediately after the death of Govinda and during the early years of the reign of Amoghavarṣa I were engrossed in internal troubles;[1] and Amoghavarṣa had neither the time nor the inclination to take energetic part in the politics of Northern India.[2] Rāmabhadra, who had succeeded to the Pratīhāra throne after the death of his father Nāgabhaṭa II, was a weak king, and during his short reign the fortunes of the Pratīhāras sank low. From the Barāha copper-plate of Bhojadeva dated V.S. 893 (= 836-37 A.D.)[3] we know that the grant of the agrahāra, called Vālākāgrahāra, which lay in the Udumbara Viṣaya of the Kālanjaramaṇḍala in the Kānyakubjabhukti, was approved by Nāgabhaṭa, but "was for some time obstructed through the incapacity of a legal officer during the reign of Mahārāja Rāmabhadradeva", and "the abovementioned agrahāra together with all the income... has been given by me (Bhoja)... after having surmounted the obstruction (of the grant) which had lasted for some time."[4] Another grant in Gurjaratrābhūkti

---

(1) R.A. pp.71-77 (2) ibid. p.77
(3) E.I. XIX p.15 f.
(4) ibid. " Mahārāja-śrī-Nāgabhaṭadevānumatiñca dṛiṣṭvā bhāganca Mahārāja-śrī Rāmabhadradeva-rājye Vyavahāriṇo -Vaiguṇyāt kincitkālam vihatam jñātvā maya pitro puṇyābhivṛiddhaye"....

originally made by Vatsarāja, and renewed by Nāgabhaṭa II had fallen into disuse as it was noticed by Bhoja.[1]

Thus it is obvious that both the Gurjara-Pratīhāras after the death of Nāgabhaṭa II, and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas after Govinda III, were involved in troubles. This was a good opportunity for the Pālas under Devapāla, assisted by a family of able ministers, to score fresh triumphs and even to extend their influence over lands so far free from the scent of Pāla imperialism. The fact that no victory is ascribed to Rāmabhadra in the Pratīhāra inscriptions is significant. The Gwālior Praśasti of Bhoja refers to Rāmabhadra as one "who had no desire for the world".[2] We are further told that he had "the haughty and cruel commanders of armies forcibly bound down by (his subordinate) kings who had the best cavalry under their charge". This appears to be a veiled reference of an invasion by some powerful enemy.[3] R.C.Majumdar may be right in suggesting that the enemies were the Pālas, and Devapāla defeated Rāmabhadra.

---

(1) E.I. V 208. Kielhorn read the date as 100 and assigned it to the Harṣa era. But D.R.Bhandarkar (J.B.B.R.A.S. XXI p.411) showed that the correct date is 900 and should be assigned to the Vikrama era. Hoernle (J.R.A.S. 1904 p.64) was convinced that "Mr.Bhandarkar's readings are correct." Majumdar suggests that the inscription shows that the province was lost in the time of Rāmabhadra. (E.I. XVIII p.106).
(2) E.I.XVIII p.108f.
(3) J.L. X. p.47.

It is not necessary to assume that as a result of this defeat, Rāmabhadra lost his kingdom. He appears to have bowed down before the storm. The Hūṇas defeated by Devapāla may have been living in the North-West, where we find them in the Harṣa Carita;[1] or they might have been settled in Malwa, as there is a reference to Hūṇamaṇḍala in Malwa in inscriptions.[2] In view of the fact that Devapāla is credited with having penetrated into South India, it may not be an improbable guess that the Hūṇas referred to in the Badal Pillar-inscription may have been living in Central India. From the Nālandā metal image-inscription of Devapāla belonging to the 3rd year of his reign, we learn of one 'Kalacuri-antaka' and his wife living in a village in Rājagṛihaviṣaya. 'Kalacuri-antaka' does not appear to be a proper name, and it may mean that the donatrix's husband was a great warrior who must have routed the Kalacuris before the third year of the reign of Devapāla.[3] It further strengthens the suspicion of Devapāla's push in Central India, south of the Vindhyas. From the Bhāgalpur plate we learn that the King of Prāgjyotiṣa submitted to Jayapāla (a cousin of Devapāla) when Jayapāla was on a conquering expedition.[4] Prāgjyotiṣa is an ancient name of Kāmarūpa.[5] The Badal

---

(1) H.C. (CY) p.132
(2) E.I. XXIII p.102; ibid. I p.223; I.A. XVI p.156.
(3) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.87. The Editor (K.N.Dikshit) reads "Kalacuri-Anta(ka)Ka", instead of Kalacuri-antakeka, read by H.Sastri.
(4) I.A. XV p.304 f. (5) Barua, op.cit. p.1 f.

Pillar-inscription[1] informs us that the Utkalas were exterminated. Tāranātha[2] also speaks of the subjugation of Odivisa (Orissa) to Devapāla. The Bhāgalpur copper-plate[3] of Nārāyaṇapāla refers to the submission of the Utkala king to Jayapāla.

There is a mention of a 'Kara' dynasty in Orissa in inscriptions. Māhārāja Śubhakaradeva is the third member of this dynasty, and an inscription belonging to the 8th year of his reign has been found.[4] Sylvain Lévi[5] has identified him with the king of Wu-ch'a "who does what is pure" who sent an embassy to the emperor of China in 795 A.D. The king of Orissa, who suffered defeat at the hands of the Pāla army, may have been S'ivakara II who was a son of S'ubhakara, and who bore imperial titles.[6] Who was the Lord of the Draviḍas, whose pride was "brought low"? Altekar[7] identified him with Amoghavarṣa I, though he wrongly took Nārāyaṇapāla to be the victor. It is quite possible that, taking advantage of the uneasy years of the earlier part of Amoghavarṣa's reign, Devapāla may have scored some triumph over the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. The subjugation of Orissa and the push through the Vindhyas

---

(1) E.I. II p.164 f. (2) I.A. IV p.366.
(3) ibid. XV p.304
(4) E.I. XV p.1 f. (5) ibid. p.363.
(6) H.B.R.I. p.117.
(7) R.A. p.79.

into Central India may have been part of the same strategy against the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. But the Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa (1) refer to the subjugation of the Draviḍas by Govinda III. Therefore unless we assume, which is likely, that in the inscriptions of Northern India the term "Draviḍa" was used loosely to denote any southern power, including the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, it is reasonable to take the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Draviḍas as different peoples. In such a case the Draviḍas of the Badal pillar inscription might possible have been the Pallavas of Kāñchī. In the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla (2), reference is made to his ruling over the earth as far as the bridge which proclaimed the fame of Rāvaṇa's foe, i.e. Adam's bridge. Thus Devapāla's success over the Draviḍas may suggest his thrust into the far south. (3) Viewed in this light, the campaigns of Devapāla against the Utkalas and the Vindhya region may be explained as

---

(1) E.I. XVIII p.254 v.30. (2) I.A. XXI p.255
(3) H.B.R.I. pp.120-121.
H.C.Raychaudhuri (K.S. Aiyangar Commemoration volume p.197 f) suggests that the Draviḍas may have been the Pāṇḍyas. He identifies the Pūrvarāja of the Velvikkudi grant, defeated by Mārangāri the officer of the Pāṇḍya King Neḍuñjaḍaiyan, with a Pāla King. The inscription belongs to 769-70 A.D. and this was too early a period for a Pāla king to penetrate so far south. From another inscription we learn that the Pāṇḍya King S'rī-Māra S'rī vallabha (815-862) defeated a confederacy of the Gaṅgas, Pallavas, Colas, Kaliṅgas, Māgadhas and others. It is not safe to rely on this exaggerated statement for holding that the Māgadhas were the Palas.

measures to press the Rāṣṭrakūṭa power from the north and the east, and his pressure on the Tamil Kingdom was thus a part of the same policy, to contain the Rāṣṭrakūṭas within limits and render them innocuous.

The later years of Devapāla synchronised with the revival of the Pratīhāras under Bhoja I, who came to the throne before 836-37 A.D., the date of the Barāha inscription.(1) The reconsolidation of the Pratīhāra power and its extension in the North-West, to the foot of the Himālayas, in the Punjab, was a veritable challenge to the Pālas. The early successes of Bhoja I in Rajputana and the Punjab must have made him arrogant enough to defy the Pāla emperor. The v.18 of the Gwālior Praśasti of Bhoja(2) seems to suggest that Lakṣmī, the goddess of sovereignty, who had been consort to Dharma's son (= Devapāla), went to Bhoja. From the Cāts'u inscription of Bāladitya(3) we learn that Harṣarāja, son of S'ankaragaṇa, conquered Kings in the North and presented horses to Bhoja. Harṣarāja, the Guhilot prince of Rajputana, may have accompanied Bhoja in his campaigns. It is possible that Bhoja may have won some initial success which made him "arrogant". But Devapāla, though the elder in age, proved equal to the occasion, and guided by the wise counsel of Kedāramiśra, he "brought

---

(1) E.I. XIX p.15 f.
(2) ibid, XVIII pp109, 113, note 4.
(3) ibid. XII pp.10 f.

low the arrogance of the lord of the Gurjaras".[1]
Bannerji[2] took him to be Rāmabhadra, but Majumdar[3] rightly pointed out that as Kedāramis'ra, the grandson of Darbhapāṇi, who had served Devapāla, is given the credit for this success over the 'lord of the Gurjaras", the event musthave happened in the last years of Devapāla, and then his contemporary at that time must have been Bhoja I. It is true that both the Pāla and Pratīhāra records claim victories; this shows that the result was not decisive. However, it may be true that Devapāla succeeded in holding to his own against the arrogant Pratīhāra Bhoja. It is quite possible that Devapāla had defeated Rāmabhadra and checked Bhoja. This event may be placed some time between 843 and 850 A.D.[4]
Soon after this Bhoja was defeated by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas.[5]

Devapāla was the greatest emperor of the Pāla dynasty. Under his leadership the boundaries of the empire reached their farthest limits in the east and the south. For the first time in the history of the Pālas, their influence penetrated into Kāmarūpa and Orissa; if the inscriptions are to be believed, the Pāla arms extended far into the South. The hereditary enemies of the Pālas - the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Pratīhāras - were forced to be on the defensive. The boast, that "he

---

(1) E.I. II p.164 f. (2) M.A.S.B. V p.56.
(3) J.L. X. p.50.
(4) ibid.
(5) ibid.

has ruled the earth, free from rivals, up to the mountains celebrated for the Gaṅgā's descent, as far as the bridge which proclaims the fame of Rāvaṇa's foe,[1] as far as the ocean which is Lakṣmī's birth-place", allowing for the formal exaggerated panegyrics, does contain a substratum of fact. The claim to have won the enjoyment of universal sovereignty[2] is not far from truth.

There is thus no doubt that under Devapāla the Pāla empire reached its acme, and till his death he ruled over the vast empire unreduced in extent, though hammered by his powerful adversary, the Gurjara-Pratīhāra king, Bhoja I. His last known date is the 39th year;[3] recently some have read 35 instead,[4] on the Nālandā copper-plate. We may assign to him a regnal period of 40 years, and so his rule may have extended from C.818 to 858 A.D.

An Estimate of Devapāla.

Devapāla had succeeded to an extensive empire conquered and consolidated by his father Dharmapāla. An able family of ministers assisted Devapāla from the very beginning of his reign, when he was young and inexperienced. He was well-served by his cousin Jayapāla. All these favourable factors contribute to explain the golden days,

---

(1) I.A. XXI p.253 f. (2) ibid. XV p.304 f.
(3) E.I. XVII p.307.
(4) J.R.A.S.B.L. VII p.215; H.B.R.I. Appendix I p.173

of the empire under him. But one should not hesitate to give the larger share of the credit for the glorious achievements to the man at the helm of affairs. Throughout his long reign, Devapāla kept the Gurjaras in check, and extended his sphere of influence into distant parts of the country. He maintained a large army befitting his extensive empire.

Devapāla also followed the religious policy of his father. He was a patron of Buddhism, and is described as "Paramasaugata" in his inscriptions.(1) A votive inscription on a metal image dated in the 3rd year of his reign has been found at Nālandā.(2) Tāranātha(3) credits him with the re-establishment of the Buddhist religion. An undated Buddhist inscription from Ghosrāwān(4) (7 miles S.E. from Bihar) informs us that Vīradeva of Nagrahāra visited Mahābodhi and came to Yaśovarmapuravihāra, and was appointed by Devapāla to be the principal abbot of Nālandā. Another copper-plate inscription(5) with the seal of Devapāla has been found at Nālandā. The seal, soldered to the top of the plate, "bears" an emblem of the Dharmacakra flanked by two gazelles, which is the insignia of Nālandā". It has the legend 'S'rī Devapāladevasya'. The copper-plate contains a lengthy inscription (6).

---

(1) E.I. XXI p.253. (2) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.87.
(3) I.A. IV p.366.
(4) I.A. XVII p.307 f. Kielhorn identified yas'ovarmapura-vihāra with Ghosrāwān, the find-spot of the inscription. (ibid. p.311 note 30). (5) A.S.I.A.R. 1921-22 p.27
(6) E.I. XVII p.307 f.

The introductory portion, consisting of the first twenty-four lines, is identical with the Monghyr plate of Devapāla; and like that it was also issued from Mudgagiri (Monghyr). The inscription informs us that Bālaputradeva, King of Suvarṇadvīpa, requested the permission (of Devapāla) to grant four villages for the maintenance of the monastery at Nālandā built by Bālaputradwa himself. The Permission was granted, and Balavarman, the ruler of Vyāghrataṭi-Maṇḍala,(1) acted as a messenger of Devapāla. The inscription is dated in the 39th(2) or 35th(3) year of the reign of Devapāla. Another inscription on the statue of the Buddhist goddess Tārā has been found at Hilsa (25 miles from Patna junction and 15 miles from Nālandā). It mentions Devapāla and Manjus'rīdeva of Nālandāmahāvihāra and registers a gift by Gangādhara a lay devotee of Sakka (Buddha). It is dated in the 35th year of Devapala's reign.(4) Another inscription incised on a bronze image of Saṅkarṣaṇa and referring to Devapāla and Nālandā was ~~been~~ discovered at Nālandā.(5) The excavations at Nālandā have brought to light another votive inscription, incised on the back of a female image. It mentions the

---

(1) Vyāghrataṭimaṇḍala in Puṇḍravardhana bhukti is mentioned in the Khalimpur copper-plate of Dharmapāla. Therefore there is no doubt that Balavaman was a subordinate of Devapāla.
(2) E.I. XVIII p.307 f.
(3) H.B.R.I. App.I p.173.
(4) J.B.O.R.S. X p.31 f. Majumdar has suggested the reading of 35 (J.A.S.B.L. IV p.390.
(5) A.S.I.A.R. 1920-21 p.35.

reign of Devapāla.[1] Another is a bronze image of Balarāma. It has the legend 'Devapāladevahaṭṭa'. Palaeographically it may belong to the time of Devapāla.[2] The Kaśyapa image inscription from Silao (midway between Nālandā and Rājagṛiha) may be assigned to the same period as "the script of the present record bears a close resemblance to that used in the Ghosrāwān inscription of the time of Devapāla".[3] Another inscription on the pedestal of an image of Buddha has been found at Nālandā and its characters resemble those of the records of Devapāladeva.[4]

The Pāla empire reached its zenith in the time of Devapāla. But with the death of Devapāla it began to disintegrate.

Capital of the Empire.

What was the capital of the extensive empire of Dharmapāla and Devapāla? We have already seen that the Pālas, whenever they are mentioned in the inscriptions of their adversaries, are generally referred to as lord of Vaṅga or Gauḍa. The Gwālior prasásti of Bhoja I refers to Nāgabhata's victory over the "king of Vaṅga".[5]

---

(1) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.88.
(2) E.I. XXV p.334 f.
(3) ibid, pp.328-34.
(4) M.A.S.I. No.66 p.89.
(5) E.I. XVIII p.110 f.

In the Jodhpur inscription of Pratihara Bāuka[1], Kakka is credited with having acquired fame by fighting with the Gauḍas at Mudgagiri. In the Badal pillar-inscription[2], Devapāla is referred to as Gauḍeśvara. S'ankaragaṇa, a Guhilot prince[3], defeated 'the King of Gauḍa'. From the Kahla plates[4], we learn that Guṇāmbodhideva, a feudatory of Bhoja I, "took away the fortune of the Gauḍas". In the Waṇi-Diṇḍorī[5] and Rādhanpur[6] grants Vatsarāja is said to have become "intoxicated with the goddess of the sovereignty (of the country of) Gauḍa". The Baroda plates of Karkarāja[7] state that the lord of the Gurjaras became "evilly inflamed by conquering the lord of Gauḍa and lord of Vaṅga". From the Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa[8] we learn that Dhruva defeated the lord of Gauḍa in the Gangetic-Yamunā Doab. The Nilgund inscription of Amoghavarṣa[9] refers to the "fettering of the Gauḍas". Dharma is the King of Vaṅga in the Prabhāvakacarita. There is no doubt that in all these reference to the lord of Gauḍa, or Vaṅga, the Pālas are meant. Therefore the

---

(1) ibid. p.87 f. (2) E.I. II p.164 f.
(3) ibid. XII p.10 f. (4) ibid. VII p.86 f.
(5) I.A. XI p.156. (6) E.I. VI p.273 f.
(7) I.A. XII p.164. (8) E.I. XVIII p.235 f.
(9) ibid. VI p.98 f.

natural presumption is that the centre of the empire of Dharmapāla and Devapāla was somewhere in Bengal.

But at the same time there are certain facts which point to a different conclusion. There are three inscriptions of Dharmapāla's time, and of these two, the Bodh Goyā and the Nālandā inscriptions have been found in South Bihar, particularly in Magadha. All the eleven known inscriptions belonging to the period of Devapāla have been found in South Bihar. Two inscriptions of S'ūrapāla have been found in Nālandā. Four out of five inscriptions of Nārāyaṇapāla belong to the same part of the country. All the inscriptions of Rājyapāla II and Vigrahapāla II come from South Bihar. Out of eight inscriptions of Mahāpāla I, five belong to Bihar. Actually out of about 38 inscriptions belonging to the Pāla period up to Mahāpāla I, only six have been found outside Bihar. This overwhelming geographical distribution of the inscriptions strongly tends to prove that Magadha was the centre of the empire since its conquest by Gopāla I.

The personal interest of the Pāla kings in Magadha was great. Gopāla is credited with the foundation of Nalandravihāra, not far from Oddantapura (town of Bihar). Dharmapāla or Devapāla founded the Vikramaśilā monastery. Whatever controversy there may be as regards the exact site of the university, all are agreed that it was in Magadha. Dharmapāla's and Devapala's interest in Nālandā is proved by their inscriptions found there, and

the archaeological excavations at Nālandā.[1] The fact that the last remnant of the Pāla rule survived in Magadha long after the Pālas were uprooted in Bengal, should be given its due importance. Govindapāla was perhaps the last Pāla King, and his inscription has been found at Gaya.[2] All this leads to the irresistible conclusion that the Pāla rule and its tradition were more deeply rooted in Magadha than in Bengal. In a sense, Magadha had become more 'Pala-ised' than Varendri or Gauḍa or Vaṅga, which may have been the original home and kingdom of the Pālas.

Another more important point in this connection is worth discussion. The Khalimpur copper-plate[3] of the 32nd year of the reign of Dharmapāla is an official royal grant and is issued from Pāṭaliputra. TheNālandā copper-plate[4] of the same ruler is issued from Kapila(?). The Monghyr[5] and Nālandā copper-plates[6] of Devapāla and the Bhāgalpur plate of Nārāyaṇapāla[7] are issued from Mudgagir. The Khalimpur copper-plate inscription describes Pāṭaliputra in such glowing terms:- "Now from his royal camp of victory, pitched at Pāṭaliputra, where the manifold fleets of boats proceeding on the north of the Bhāgīrathī make it seem as if a series of mountain-tops had been sunk to

---

(1) A.S.I.A.R., 1928-29 pp.97-98
(2) M.A.S.B. V. p.109
(3) E.I. IV pp.245 f.
(4) ibid. XXIII p.290 f.
(5) I.A. XXI p.253 f.
(6) E.I. XVIII p.324 f.
(7) I.A. XV p.304 f.

build another causeway: where the brightness of daylight being darkened by dimly packed arrays of rutting elephants; the rainy season (with its masses of black clouds) might be taken constantly to prevail: where the firmament is rendered green by dust, dug up by the hard hoofs of unlimited troops of horses possessed by many kings of the North; and where the earth is bending beneath the weight of the innumerable foot-soldiers of all the kings of Jambudvīpa, assembled to render homage to their supreme lord - the devout worshipper of Sugata, Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Dharmapāladeva."(1)

The term "Jayaskandhāvāra" has been usually translated as a "royal camp of victory". It is true that inmany inscriptions where it has been used, it can scarcely mean the royal capital. The Nidhānpur plates of Bhāskaravarman(2) were issued from 'Skandhāvāra karṇasuvarṇa' which may have been then in possession of Bhāskaravarman, but could hardly be the capital of the empire of Kāmarūpa. The Madhuban copper-plate(3) of Harṣa was issued from Kapitṭhikā, "the royal residence of victory", and it has been identified with modern Sankisa, about 40 miles north-west of Kanauj;(4) The Banskhera plate of Harṣa was issued from 'Jayaskandhāvāra' Varhamānakoṭī.(5) It is admitted on all hands that the capital of Harṣa's empire was Kanauj, neither Kapitthikā nor Vardhamānakoṭī. The Deo-Baranārk

---

(1) E.I.IV pp.252-53. (2) ibid. XII p.65 f.
(3) ibid. VII pp.157-58. (4) ibid.
(5) ibid. IV p.208 f.

inscription of Jīvitagupta II[1] was issued from the Jayaskandhāvāra near Gomatīkoṭṭaka. It is obvious that the capital of the later Gupta King could not be so far away on the banks of the Gomatī in the United Provinces. There are many such examples which go to show that by the term "skandhāvarā" it was not the capital of the Kingdom that was necessarily intended, but at best the place where the king was staying during the issue of the grant. Therefore it may be urged that Pāṭaliputra and Mudgagiri, from where the royal grants were issued by Dharmapāla, Devapāla and Nārāyaṇapāla, were not the royal capitals, but temporary royal residences or camps, as Vardhamānakoṭī in the time of Harṣa. But it should not be forgotten that the phrase 'Skandhāvāra' has been also used to signify the capital of the kingdom. The Vappaghoṣavāṭa grant of Jayanāga[2] was issued from Karṇasuvarṇa, and it is certain that it was the capital of the Gauḍa Kingdom. The Dighwā-Dubauli plate of Mahārāja Mahendrapāla[3] was issued from Skandhāvāra Mahodaya. Fleet took Skandhāvāra to mean only 'a camp', and so placed Mahodaya somewhere near Benares. D.R.Bhandarkar[4] has conclusively shown that Mahodaya was another name for Kānyakubja (Kanauj). The Daulatpura inscription and Barāh copper-

---

(1) C.I.I. III No.46. p.215.
(2) E.I. XVIII p.60 f.
(3) I.A. XV p.105 f.
(4) J.B.B.R.A.S. XXI pp.407-8.Fleet accepted the identification. (E.I. VI p.198)

plate of Bhoja[1] were also issued from Skandhāvāra Mahodaya. Bengal Asiatic society plate of Vināyakapāla[2] was also issued from Mahodaya. There is no doubt that Kanauj was the capital of the Pratīhāra empire under Bhoja I and his successors. Therefore the term Skandhāvāra or Jayaskandhāvāra was also used to mean the royal capital.[3] Halayudha in Abhidhānaratnamālā[4], II, 131, says that Skandhāvāra is also known as 'Rājadhānī'[5] (capital).

Therefore, if the use of the phrase 'Jayaskandhāvāra' with reference to Pāṭaliputra and Mudgagiri in the Pāla inscriptions does not by itself prove that they were the royal capitals of Dharmapāla and his successors, it cannot be made to disprove our suggestion that these places were the capitals of the empire. Our hypothesis draws support from many facts known from the history of the Pālas.[6] According to Tāranātha, Gopāla conquered Magadha and founded the monastery of Nālandhā, near Oddantapura. Dharmapāla made extensive conquests and brought practically the whole of Northern India under his sceptre. He came into conflict with Nāgabhaṭa II, and submitted to Govinda III. As all these events

---

(1) E.I. V. p.208 f. E.I. XIX p.15 f.
(2) I.A. XV p.138 f.
(3) In Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p.114 one of the meanings of Skandhāvāra is a royal residence or capital.
(4) quoted by Kielhorn, E.I. V. p.209 note 1.
(5) I.A. IV p.366.

happened earlier than c.800 A.D.[1] it may be safely asserted even if Gopāla's conquest of Magadha is doubted[2], that Dharmapāla must have come into possession of Magadha in the very early years of his reign. His Khalimpur plate[3] was issued from Pāṭaliputra and is dated in his 32nd regnal year, which fell in the last years of Dharmapāla. There is absolutely no evidence that Dharmapāla had to carry on some military campaign in his 32nd year near Pāṭaliputra, where he may have been then encamping. The eloquent words in which Pāṭaliputra with its river-borne trade is mentioned in the inscription, suggest that Pāṭaliputra was not a temporary military camp but a prosperous and proud city, befitting a royal capital of a great empire. The clear statement that "the innumerable foot-soldiers of all the Kings of Jambudvīpa ensembled (at Pāṭaliputra) to render homage to their lord (Dharmapāla)" further tends to heighten the possibility of Pāṭaliputra being the imperial capital where the king resided and the representatives of vassal states paid homage. It appears very probable that Dharmapāla was in the habit of holding imperial durbars, presumably at the capital, and on such occasions a lavish parade of the various units of the armed forces, joined by the representative soldiery of the vassal states, was held. One such

---

(1) See Supra.
(2) H.B.R.I. p.103.
(3) E.I. IV p.251 f.

grand imperial ceremony was held during the 32nd year of Dharmapāla's reign and that may have been the occasion of the issuing of the Khalimpur grant. In India there has always been a traditional love for imperial pomp and splendour which catches the imagination of the credulous masses, satisfies the pride of the imperial authority, and overawes feudatories. Even the British held imperial durbars in London where representatives and soldiers of the dominions and colonies took part. If Pāṭaliputra was not the capital of Dharmapāla, it is not easy to explain why an imperial durbar should be held there, and why the foot-soldiers of the vassal-kings should pay homage to their overlord at Pāṭaliputra.

The fact that it was not an ordinary victorious camp from which the Khalimpur copper-plate was issued, is further strengthened by a comparison of the inscription with the Nālandā copper-plate inscription of the same ruler. The Nālandā plate was issued from Kapila (?), which is simply described as "mahanau-hastya'śva-ratha-patti-sampattyupatta jaya-s'obdāt kapila (?) vāsakāt s'rīmaj jaya-skandhāvārāt". Its comparison with the description of Pāṭaliputra in the Khalimpur plate and that of Mudgagiri in Monghyr and Bhāgalpur plates clearly shows that Pāṭaliputra and Monghyr had a far greater status than Kapila (?), the royal camp of victory. In this connection it may be pointed out that exactly the

same verse which is used to describe 'Kapila' has been used to describe Karṇasuvarṇa in the Nidhānpur plates of Bhāskaravarman. In identical words is described the Skandhāvāra near Gomatīkoṭṭaka in the Deo-Baranārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II. It is known that Karṇa-suvarṇa and the camp near Gomatīkoṭṭaka were not the capitals of the kingdoms of Bhāskaravaman and Jīvitagupta II respectively. So Kapila (?) was also one such temporary camp of the King Dharmapāla, but Pāṭaliputra was the imperial city. It was the capital of India since the time of Udayin in the 5th century B.C., down to the days of the imperial Guptas. But the Hūṇa invasions of the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. devastated Pāṭaliputra and in the time of Yuan Chwang in the mid-seventh century A.D., it was in ruins. But it is clear from the Khalimpur inscription that it was a prosperous city. It appears that between the departure of Yuan Chwang and the engraving of the Khalimpur plate, Pāṭaliputra revived. It is possible that Dharmapāla may have been responsible for its restoration to its former honourable position. When Magadha passed under the control of the Pālas, and Dharmapāla entered the race for imperial honour with the Gurjara-Pratīhāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, Magadha, with its great city Pāṭaliputra situated in the centre of the Gangetic valley and controlling the trade routes, suggested to Dharmapāla the advantage of shifting his

centre of activity from somewhere in Bengal to Pāṭaliputra in Magadha. Dharmapāla had imperial designs and was anxious to emulate the imperial Mauryas and the Guptas. Naturally therefore, the unrivalled imperial traditions of Magadha and Pāṭaliputra impressed him enormously, and he chose Pāṭaliputra to be the capital of his extensive empire.

Devapāla appears to have shifted the capital from Pāṭaliputra to Mudgagiri (Monghyr). The Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāladeva dated in the 33rd year of his reign is issued from Mudgagiri.(1) The description of Mudgagiri is in verses identical with those in the Khalimpur copper-plate used to describe Pāṭaliputra.(2) The Nālandā copper-plate(3) of Devapāla was also issued from Mudgagiri, and is dated in the 39th year. It is important to note that these two are the only royal and official copper-plates issued by Devapāla. The Nālandā copper-plate is surmounted by a seal of the emperor bearing the legend: 'Śrī Devapāladevasya'.(4) The Bhāgalpur plate of Nārāyaṇa-pāla(5) is dated in the 17th year, and was also issued from Mudgagiri. The description of Mudgagiri in 11,24-28 is in the same verses as in the Monghyr and Nālandā plates of Devapāla. The fact that in the 33rd and 39th years of

---

(1) I.A. XXI p.253 f. (2) Compare 11. 25-29 of the Khalimpur plate with 11.24-27 of the Monghyr plate.
(3) E.I. XVII p.310 f.
(4) A.S.I.A.R. 1921-22 p.27.
(5) I.A. XV p.304 f.

Devapāla's reign and in the 17th year of Nārāyaṇapāla, Mudgagiri was the royal residence, makes it clear that it could hardly be a mere temporary military camp. It was, really, the capital of the Pāla empire in the time of Devapāla and continued to be so under his successors. The fact that Kakka is said to have fought the Gauḍas at Mudgagiri[1] confirms the association of the Pālas with it. It is possible that the persistent pressure of the Pratīhāras may have induced Devapāla to shift the capital further east to the naturally fortified city of Mudgagiri on the Ganges.

In view of the discussion above, we feel that unless any positive evidence to the contrary is forthcoming, on the known evidences it is reasonable to hold that during the early Pāla period Magadha became the heart of the empire, and Pāṭaliputra and Monghyr served as capitals, one after the other. The fact that the Pālas are referred to as lords of Vaṅga or Gauḍa in the inscriptions does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the capital of Dharmapāla was somewhere in Vaṅga in Eastern Bengal, and that of Devapāla was in Gauḍa.[2] We have already seen that the home of the Pālas and their original kingdom were somewhere in Bengal, and Magadha was a conquered province. It may be because of this that

---

(1) E.I. XVIII p.87 f.
(2) H.B.R.I. p.31.

the Pālas were referred to as lords of Vanga or Gauḍa. But their close association with Magadha was not unknown.[1] In the Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa, Govinda III is referred to as having caused "the king of Magadha to sit and fast to death". The King of Magadha was certainly Dharmapāla. The Rāṣṭrakūṭas continued to be called the Karṇāṭas when they had their nerve centre far away from Karṇāṭaka. The dynasty of Nānyadeva of Mithilā was referred to as a Karṇāṭa even when it was settled in Mithilā for a long time. Therefore it is very likely that even when the Pālas had made Magadha their political centre, they continued to be known as people of Gauḍa or Vaṅga, in view of their original home or ancestral kingdom being in that part of the country.

So the best days of the Pāla empire under Dharmapāla and Devapāla contributed in a substantial way to the revival of Magadha. It was from Magadha that the rays of Pāla imperialism radiated to the different parts of India. The Pālas became the paramount power in Northern India under Dharmapāla andDevapāla, and Magadha, containing the capital of the empire, actively shared in the glory. In a way the conquered had made the conqueror captive. Magadha became the adopted home of Pāla imperialism and the radiating centre of culture and civilisation of the period.

---

(1) E.I. XVIII p.254 v.30.

Chapter XIV.

Disintegration of the empire after Devapāla.

Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla I.

The problem of the succession to the Pāla throne after Devapāla is fairly complicated. From the Bhāgalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla[1] it appears that Devapāla was succeeded by Vigrahapāla. In the Badal pillar-inscription[2] of Guravamiśra belonging to the time of Nārāyaṇapāla, Śūrapāla is mentioned immediately before Nārāyaṇapāla and after Devapāla. It has been generally held by scholars that Vigrahapāla and Śūrapāla were different names of the same person. R.D. Bannerji[3] observed that "Vigrahapāla I is no doubt the same as Śūrapāla, mentioned in the Badal pillar-inscription, because it is the only name mentioned between Devapāla and Nārāyaṇapāla, and, again in the Bhāgalpur grant Vigrahapala's name is the only one mentioned between Devapāla and Nārāyaṇapāla. Moreover, in the Manahali grant of Madanapāla we do not find the name of Śūrapāla before or close to the name of Nārāyaṇapāla. Had there been a different prince of the name of Śūrapāla, his name would surely have been mentioned in it as the inscription contains almost all the names of

---

1. I.A. XV. p.304f.
2. E.I. II. p.161.
3. M.A.S.B. V. p.57.

the Pāla dynasty." Kielhorn[1] readily admitted Hoernle's[2] suggestion that Śūrapāla is identical with Vigrahapāla I. Many scholars[3] have accepted this identification. It is not impossible that they are identical, but in view of the lack of any positive evidence, the subject cannot be taken as closed.

As a matter of fact there are certain equally cogent reasons to presume that they are different persons. From the Bhāgalpur plate of Nārāyaṇapāla[4] it appears that Vigrahapāla I was the son of Jayapāla, brother (cousin?) of Devapāla.[5] In the Badal pillar-inscription there is

---

1. E.I. II. p.161.

2. Centenary Review of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Part II, Appendix II, p.206; I.A. XIV. pp.162-65.

3. Paul, P.L., E.H.B.P. I. p.47: H.C. Roy, D.H.N.I., I. p.297: R.C. Majumdar, H.B.R.I. p.127: H.P. Sastri, M.A.S.B. III.p.8.

4. I.A. XV, p.304. Hoernle (Centenary Review of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, p.206) held that Vigrahapāla was the son and not the nephew of Devapāla. The learned scholar relied on the Amgachi grant of Vigrahapāla III, whom he mistakenly took to be Vigrahapāla I. So he held that the Amgachi grant was earlier than the Bhāgalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla. In the Bhāgalpur grant mention is made of Dharmapāla and his younger brother Vākpāla, and then Jayapāla is mentioned as having been born from him (tasmāt), (the pronoun stands for Vākpāla) and then Devapāla is referred to as Pūrvaja (elder brother), and laudatory references are made about Jayapāla, after which Vigrahapāla is mentioned as having been "from him". But in the Amgachi plate the verse praising Jayapāla is omitted, and immediately after the mention of Devapāla Vigrahapala is referred to as "his son" (tat-sunuḥ), which Hoernle takes to refer to Devapāla. The learned scholar observed, "In the Bhāgalpur grant this reference is obscured through the interpolation of an intermediate verse in praise of Jayapāla. The fact of this interpolation, by the way, (contd. on next page)

absolutely no hint about the relationship that may have existed between Devapāla and Śūrapāla. Cunningham[1] suggested that Śūrapāla was the son and successor of Devapāla, and younger brother of Rājypāla.

(Note, contd. from previous page)

shows that the version of the formula on the Amgachi plate is the earlier and original one, on which the more fulsome writer of the Bhāgalpur grant tried to improve, with the effect of obscuring the genealogy." But the very basis of Hoernle's contention disappears when it is now absolutely established that the Amgachi plate belongs to Vigrahapāla III, not to Vigrahapāla I, and, therefore, the Bhāgalpur plate of Nārāyaṇapāla is much earlier than the Amgachi inscription; so the alleged interpolation could not occur in the earlier record. It appears more reasonable to hold that some later scribe forgot to incorporate the verse in praise of Jayapāla - the verse that occurs in the Bhāgalpur plate, the earliest of such records - and the result was that in later documents Vigrahapāla I is immediately mentioned after Devapāla, and an impression is got that Vigrahapāla was the son of Devapāla. But the Bhāgalpur plate, being the earliest to mention Jayapāla and Vigrahapāla is much more reliable. In view of this Vigrahapāla should be taken to be the son of Jayapāla, and younger cousin (?) of Devapāla. The fact that Vākpāla and Jayapāla are not mentioned in the inscriptions of Dharmapāla and Devapāla, but are invariably mentioned in the records of the successors of Vigrahapāla I also confirms the suspicion that Vigrahapāla I was a descendant of Vākpāla and Jayapāla. Keilhorn therefore appears to be right in holding that Vigrahapāla was the son of Jayapāla and grandson of Vākpāla. It is true that in the Bhāgalpur plate, after the mention of Vākpāla's activities and the fact of Jayapāla being his son, Devapāla is referred to as Pūrvaja. But Pūrvaja may here mean elder cousin, and not necessarily the elder brother.

5. E.I. II. p.161f.

Note this page.

1. C.A.S.R. 18, p.178.

The non-mention of the name of Śūrapāla in the Bhāgalpur inscription of Nārāyaṇapāla does not necessarily mean that Śūrapāla could not have existed independently of Vigrahapāla I, who is mentioned as the son of Jayapāla. It should be borne in mind that such royal grants are genealogical not dynastic. It is quite natural not to find the name of Śūrapāla in the genealogical table of Nārāyaṇapāla, who was not directly connected with him. Skanda Gupta is omitted in the inscriptions of the successors of Puru Gupta. The Badal pillar-inscription of Guravamiśra belonging to the time of Nārāyaṇapāla[1] is interested in giving the genealogy of the hereditary family of the ministers, and it mentions only those Pāla rulers who were patrons of the ministerial family. It is possible that Vigrahapāla I did not employ a member of that family as a high minister, and therefore his name is omitted in the inscription. In this connection attention may be drawn to the very significant fact that while Garga, his son Darbhapāṇi and his son Kedāramiśra are made actively responsible for the achievements of Dharmapāla, Devapāla and Śūrapāla, Guravamiśra appears to be satisfied with the simple fact that "Nārāyaṇapāla held him in high esteem". Compare

---

1. E.I. II, p.165-66.

this passage with the verses which refer to Devapāla waiting on Darbhapāṇi and Śūrapāla relying on Kedāramiśra as Indra on Bṛihaspati.[1] We suggest that the verses covertly allude to an eclipse of fortune of the ministerial family, and its revival under Nārāyaṇapāla. This temporary fall in the status of the family must have been due to some crisis in the imperial dynasty, and therefore the fact that Nārāyaṇapāla held Guravamiśra in high esteem was quite gratifying to him. The dūtaka of the Bhāgalpur copper-plate is Bhaṭṭa Gurava,[2] who has been rightly identified with Guravamiśra of the Badal pillar.[3] Therefore it is clear that before the 17th year of his reign Nārāyaṇapāla had become reconciled with the ministerial family.

Another important fact is that from the Bhāgalpur plate we learn that there was a definite change of line in the ruling dynasty. Vigrahapāla I, father of Nārāyaṇapāla, was descended from Vākpāla and Jayapāla. The direct line of Dharmapāla and Devapāla was superseded. The successor of Devapāla according to the Bhāgalpur plate was not the son of Devapāla, but a son of Jayapāla. Thus there was a break from the main line commencing from Dayitaviṣṇu to Devapāla. Such a clear change of succession from one branch of the

---

1. Ibid.
2. I.A. XV. p.304f.
3. E.I. II. p.161f.

family to another is generally preceded by some family troubles leading to a war of succession.

The suspicion of an internal crisis in, and possible division of the empire immediately after the death of Devapāla is strengthened by another evidence. The Nilgund and Sirur grants of Amoghavarṣa I[1], dated 866 A.D., state that rulers of Aṅga, Vaṅga and Magadha paid homage to him. We have already seen that Aṅga, Vaṅga and Magadha were in those days one political unit, and in the inscriptions of the Pālas, the Pratīhāras, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and their founders the Pāla kings Dharmapāla or Devapāla were addressed as either kings of Vaṅga or Gauḍa or Magadha; but never in one such contemporary record were all the units of the system - Gauḍa, Vaṅga, Aṅga or Magadha - mentioned together as different political units. It appears to us that before 866 A.D. the organic unity of the states mentioned above was broken and Vaṅga, Aṅga and Magadha had become three separate independent states which are claimed to have paid homage to the Rāṣṭrakūṭa monarch. Amoghavarṣa obtained complete success against the Vengi forces some time about 860 A.D.[2] The Konnur inscriptions dated in Śaka samvat 782 A.D. (- 3rd Oct. 860 A.D.)[3] do not mention Aṅga, Vaṅga or Gauḍa. It is evident that Amoghavarṣa's northern push must have happened

---

1. E.I. VI. p.103, line 6; I.A. XII. p.218, line 6.
2. R.A. p.75.
3. E.I. VI. p.25f.

after 860 A.D. It must have synchronised with the disintegration of the Pāla empire immediately after the death of Devapāla. So the Rāṣṭrakūṭa intervention in the north should be placed in C. 861-62 A.D. during which period the Gauḍa political system was temporarily dissolved and Aṅga, Vaṅga and Magadha became separate independent units, which were too weak to resist Amoghavarṣa, and so submitted to him.

It may also be incidentally pointed out that in the long list of the Pāla kings we do not know of any one of these having such distinct secondary names as Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla. There is only one instance of a Pāla king, Dharmapāla or Devapāla, being known as Vikramaśīla.[1] Vikramaśīla may be a biruda, but Śūrapāla or Vigrahapāla can hardly be a biruda of the other.[2] The name Śūrapāla reappears in Pāla history. One Śūrapāla was a son of Vigrahapāla III. Therefore it appears certain that Vigrahapāla I and Śūrapāla I were two different persons, belonging to the same period.

The exact course of events that followed the death of Devapāla cannot be known at present because of lack of material. But it is perhaps permissible to hazard a guess

---

1. H.B.R.I. p.115, note 1.

2. Dr. B.C.Sen's suggestion that Rājyapala and Śūrapāla may have been identical (op.cit. p.357) is unacceptable on the same grounds.

as to the reasonable sequence in which the events might have happened. From the Monghyr copper-plate of Devapāla we learn that in the 33rd year of his reign, the dūtaka of the grant was Yuvarāja Ragyapāla.[1] We do not know if Rajypāla predeceased his father. From the Udayasundarīkathā by Soḍḍhala[2] we learn that the poet Abhinanda lived in the court of King (Nareśvara) Yuvarāja. The Rāmacarita composed by the poet Abhinanda, a native of Bengal, refers to a King Hāravarṣa, also known as Yuvarāja.[3] He is referred to as "Pālānvayaḥ", Pālakūlapradīpaḥ", "Pālavaṁśapradīpaḥ" and "Pālakulacandraḥ". There is no doubt that Hāravarṣa belonged to the Pāla dynasty. The editor has adduced numerous references from the work to show that Hāravarṣa was not a mere prince or heir-apparent, but a ruling king who patronised Abhinanda in the capacity of a sovereign. Hāravarṣa is referred to as "nṛipa", "nṛipatiḥ", "naraloka-pati" and "jagatīpati" etc. Abhinanda flourished before the 10th Century A.D. Yuvarājadeva is described as "Sridharmapālakulakairavakānanendu".[4] Thus it is absolutely certain that Yuvarāja Hāravarṣa belonged to the dynasty of Dharmapāla, and that Abhinanda flourished after Dharmapāla.

---

1. I.A. XXI. p.255f. 2. Udayasundarī Kathā, pp.2-3.
3. Rāmacarita (G.O.S. No. XLVI), Intro. p.VII-XXIII.
4. Ibid, p.253.

It is not easy to identify Yuvarāja Hāravarṣa. The editor identifies him with Devapāla and suggests that Hāravarṣa may have been another name of Devapāla"during his stay in his maternal uncle's household", as his mother was a Rāṣṭrakūṭa princess. In the same work Yuvarāja Hāravarṣa is described as "Vikramaśīlanandanaḥ"[1] and "Vikramaśīla-jaṃmā".[2] So Hāravarṣa was a son of Vikramaśīla. The colophon of the Sragdharā-stotra-ṭīkā mentions Jinaraksita of Vikramaśīladeva-mehāvihāra.[3] It appears that the founder of the Vikrakaśilām monastery was also known as Vikramaśīla-deva. Dharmapāla is credited with the foundation of this monastery.[4] Therefore Hāravarṣa, who was a son of Vikramaśīla, was a son of Dharmapāla and should be identified with Deva-pāla. The learned editor of Abhinanda's Rāmā-Carita also points out the similarity of ideas in the description of the liberality of Devapāla in his Monghyr plate to those expressed in many stanzas referring to the generosity of Hāravarṣa in the Rāmacarita. According to the learned editor "these verses are so remarkably similar that on the strength of this alone the identity of Devapāla and Hāravarṣa may be established."

In spite of so many arguments in favour of the

---

1. Ibid, beginning of the fifth Sarga.
2. Ibid, Sarga XXIX.
3. History of Mediaeval School of Indian Logic - S.C. Vidyābhuṣana, Appendix C, page 150 note 2; R.L.Mitra, Sanskrit Buddist literature of Nepal, p.229
4. H.B.R.I. p.115; J.B.T.S. I. p.11.

identification of Hāravarṣa with Devapāla it has to be pointed out that the proposed identity is not proved. According to some tradition the monastery of Vikramaśīlā was founded by Devapāla,[1] and therefore he may be the Vikramaśīladeva, and Hāravarṣa, a son of Devapāla. It has been shown on many occasions that it is very risky to base conclusions on the similarity of ideas contained in different works; it may be just accidental, and some such popular ideas about the patron may be used in similar verses by different poets in different periods for entirely different patrons. It may also be pointed out that in one verse in the Rāmacarita Hāravarṣa is mentioned as "Pṛithvīpāla";[2] if the latter is a proper name, then Hāravarṣa is certainly a different person from Devapala.[3]

---

1. H.B.R.I. p.115, note 1; J.B.T.S. I. p.10 note. According to S.C. Das Mchims Thame̊s c'ad mkhoyen-pa, the historian of Atīśa seems to have confused the name of King Dharmapāla with that of his son Devapāla. According to Tāranātha Gopāla or Devapāla founded the monastery at Odantapurī. But according to Bu-ston (op.cit.p.157), Dharmapāla built the monastery at Odantapurī. According to Tāranātha, Devapāla built a vihara at Somapuri, but the legend related by Bu-Ston about the foundation of Odantapurī vihāra by Dharmapāla is exactly the same as told by Tāranātha about the foundation of a vihāra at Somapura in Varendra by Devapāla. From archaeological excavations (A.S.I.A.R., 1927-28, p.105f.), it appears that Somapura vihāra was built by Dharmapāla. Thus it is obvious that the Tibetan traditions about the foundation of the Buddhist monasteries by the Pāla kings are unanimous. It is possible that either Dharmapāla or Devapāla founded the Vikramaśīlā mahāvihāra, and was known as vikramaśīladeva.

2. Rāmacarita (Abhinanda), beginning of the 4th Sarga.

3. According to Bu-Ston (p.157) one Mahīpāla was a son of Devapāla. Could the Pṛithvīpāla Hāravarṣa Mahī = Pṛithvī.

The fact that Hāravarṣa is referred to as a powerful king and conqueror by his court-poet Abhinanda should not be taken too literally. Even small chiefs have been praised to the skies in general terms by their court-poets. It is possible that Hāravarṣa was another son of Dharmapāla, or more probably of Devapāla, and after the death of the latter may have succeeded in obtaining control over some part of the empire in Bengal. The editor's suggestion that the name Hāravarṣa was due to Rāṣṭrakūṭa influence may be accepted.

Śūrapāla, who is referred to in the Badal pillar inscription,[1] and whose two inscriptions are known,[2] was either a son of Devapāla or of Yuvarāja Rājypāla,[3] who may have predeceased his father Devapāla.

We have seen that Dharmapāla's younger brother Vākpāla is credited with helping Dharmapāla;[4] according to the Badal pillar-inscription[5] Garga, the father of Darbhapāṇi is said to have made Dharmapāla the regent of the east. According to the Bhāgalpur plate of Nārāyaṇapāla[6] Jayapāla, the son of Vākpāla, won victories including one over the king of Utkala, for Devapāla. In the Badal pillar-

---

1. E.I. II. p.161f.

2. J.A.S.B. IV (NS.) p.108 R.D. Bannerji showed that the inscriptions belong to Śūrapāla I, not to Śūrapāla II as N.M. Chakravatti held.

3. I.A. XXI, p.253f.

4. I.A. XV. p.304f.

5. E.I. II. p.161f.

6. I.A. XV. p.304f.

inscription of Guravamiśra, the credit of eradicating the race of the Utkalas is taken by Kedāramiśra, the great-grandson of K.Garga. The inference that can reasonably be drawn is that since the time of Dharmapāla the two families - the family of Garga and that of Vākpāla - were rising in importance. Vākpāla and Jayapāla were probably the Commanders-in-Chief of the army under Dharmapāla and Devapāla, while the family of Garga supplied a line of hereditary and loyal ministers.

After the death of Devapāla, it was natural for Vigrahapāla, son of Jayapāla and grandson of Vākpāla, to aspire to the kingdom which had been strengthened and extended by his ancestors. The ministerial family represented by Kedāramiśra and Guravamiśra supported Śūrapāla, who belonged directly to the main line. Such internal troubles resulted ultimately in the division of the empire. Śūrapāla controlled Magadha as his two identical inscriptions[1] dated in the second[2] or third year,[3] recording the erection of images at and the vihāra of Uddantapura (identified with the modern town of Bihar[4]) are known. Kedāramiśra, who had served Devapāla, continued to serve Śūrapāla, but the latter was a weak king. Instead of mentioning his warlike activities, the inscription refers

---

1. J.A.S.B. (N.S.) IV. p.108. 2. M.A.S.B. V.p.57.
3. I.H.Q. 1927, pp.586-88. 4. M.A.S.B. V.p.57

to his attending sacrifices performed by Kedāramiśra, and for the welfare of his Kingdom, "he (Śūrapāla) with bent head received the pure water."[1] Such reliance on sacrifices suggests some unfortunate turn of events. It appears that Vigrahapāla, assisted by his able son Nārāyaṇapāla, had made himself master of Aṅga. Vaṅga also was lost for the main line. Hāravarṣa (if he is different from Devapāla) may have made himself master of Vaṅga. At any rate we find Vaṅga some time later in the possession of the Candra kings, and one of their ancestors may have made himself king of Vaṅga in this reign.[2] Thus the Pāla empire was parcelled into separate units, and the three separate rulers may have offered submission to Amoghevarṣa in 861-2 A.D. The reign of Vigrahapāla I could not have been long, as his son ruled at least for 54 years. Śūrapāla's inscriptions are dated in the third year. Therefore we assign a period of four years to Vigrahapāla I and Śūrapāla, who were contemporaries. Their reigns were over by 862 A.D.

Nārāyaṇapāla.

Vigrahapāla abdicated his throne, and was succeeded

---

1. E.I. II. p.166.

2. The date of Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Candra, on palaeographic grounds "may be assigned to the close of the 10th or beginning of the 11th century A.D." (H.B.R.I. p.196). His great-grandfather Pūrṇacandra may have flourished in the period C.860-90 A.D.

by his son Nārāyaṇapāla[1] in C.863 A.D. From the find-spots of the inscriptions of his time it is clear that he not only ruled over Aṅga (Monghur and Bhagalpur districts), but over Magadha (Patna and Gaya districts), and Puṇḍravardhana (North Bengal). Thus almost the whole of the home provinces of the Pāla empire were brought back under one sceptre. Thus the family of Vākpāla and Jayapāla ultimately triumphed over that of Śūrapāla, and this change of fortune affected adversely, though temporarily, the hereditary ministerial family of Garga. It is possible that Nārāyaṇapāla may have received some assistance from the Haihayas, to whose family his mother Lajjā belonged.[2]

Nārāyaṇapāla was master of Western Magadha before the 7th year of his reign, in which the Gaya temple inscription is dated.[3] "The purpose of the inscription is to record the erection of a monastery for Brahmanical ascetics by Bhaṇḍadeva in the seventh year of the king Nārāyaṇapāladeva[4]

---

1. I.A. XV. p.304f. Verse 17 of the inscriptions suggests the abdication of Vigrahapāla in favour of Nārāyaṇapāla. It informs us that as Sagara said to Bhagīratha thus, "Let penance be mine and the kingdom thine," so did Vigrahapāla speak to his son Nārāyaṇapāla. This strengthens our suspicion that the period of Vigrahapāla's rule was stormy. The invasions of Amoghavarṣa and Bhoja I may have occurred at this time, and Vigrahapāla entrusted the kingdom to his able son.

2. Ibid. The Haihayas of the inscription may have been the Kalacuris. Two Kalacuri families - one of Dāhala and the other of Gorakhpur are known. "The quen of Vigrahapāla I belonged presumably to one of these families." (H.B.R.I. p.27, note 3.

3. M.A.S.B. V. pp.60-61. 4. Ibid, p.61.

Another document, now known as the Indian Museum stone-inscription is dated in the 9th year of his reign. It records the erection of an image by a Buddhist elder Dharmamitra, an inhabitant of the Āndhra country.[1] According to R.D. Bannerji this inscription "most probably came with the other sculptures from the Bihar museum founded by Mr. Bradley, when that collection was shifted to Calcutta, according to the directions of the government of Bengal."[2] This inscription, therefore, may have been found in the Patna district. The Bhāgalpur copper-plate of Nārāyaṇapāla, dated in the 17th year, was issued from Madgagiri (Monghyr).[3] Thus it is clear that down to the 17th year of his reign Nārāyaṇapāla ruled over the whole of Magadha, including Aṅga. The Badal pillar-inscription of Guramiśra, belonging to the time of Nārāyaṇapāla and found at Badal in Dinajpur district of North Bengal, is not dated, but its period cannot be far removed from that of the Bhāgalpur plate. Bhaṭṭa Gurava, the dūtaka of the Bhāgalpur grant, has been identified with Guravamiśra of the Badal pillar. In the Badal inscription, Guramiśra is proud to mention the simple fact that Nārāyaṇapāla held him in high esteem; but in Bhāgalpur plate he is holding a very high office - that of a dūtaka of a royal grant.

---

1. Ibid, pp.61-62.
2. Ibid.
3. I.A. XV. p.304f.

It is reasonable to presume that soon after his accession, Nārāyaṇapāla became reconciled with the ministerial family and pardoned Guravamiśra for the part that he or his father may have played during the internal troubles in the family. This may have occasioned the erection of the Garuḍa pillar. Later on Guravamiśra was appointed to the high office of a dūtaka. Thus, it appears that the Badal pillar is earlier in date than the Bhagalpur copper-plate. Therefore it may be safely stated that before the 17th year of his reign, Nārāyaṇapāla ruled over Magadha and Gauḍa, including Puṇḍravardhana.

Between the 17th year of his reign when the Bhāgalpur grant was issued, and the 54th year, the date of the Bihar image-inscription, we have no dated record of Nārāyaṇapāla. The presumption is that this pretty long period of thirty-seven years was one of misfortunes for him. We have positive evidence which shows that during this period his authority was overthrown and the Pratīhāras took possession of the home provinces of the Pāla emperor. We have already seen that Amoghavarṣa had invaded the Pāla kingdom. The conquest of a portion of Rāḍha by the Śulki king Mahārājādhirāja Raṇastambha[1] may also be assigned to the same period.

---

1. History of Orissa, I. pp.193-96.

Those who gained most from the misfortunes of the Pālas were the Gurjara-Pratīhāras. Mihira Bhoja, whose first attempt at establishing an All-North Indian Empire was checked by Devapāla[1] and Dhruva[2] of the Gujarat Rāṣṭrakūṭa branch, renewed his efforts and this time was successful. The Pāla kingdom, torn by internal dissensions and presided over by the pacific rulers Vigrahapāla I and Nārāyaṇapāla, was not in a position to stop the Pratīhara advance. Neither the Badal pillar-inscription nor the Bhāgalpur copper-plate refers to any clear victory in battle by Nārāyaṇapāla. His literary accomplishments and generosity are emphasised in the Bhāgalpur inscription.[3] It appears that Nāyāyaṇapāla did not inherit the military favours of Dharmapāla and Devapāla, and was engaged in peaceful pursuits, when dark clouds were about to burst on him.

Mihira Bhoja, the real founder of the Gurjara-Pratīhāra empire, though then old, was ambitious enough to try again. He began his offensive in the east, and appears to have gained some success. From the Kahla plates of Soḍhadeva dated in the vikrama year 1134 or 1077 A.D., and discovered in the pargana Dhunapur of Gorakhapur district,[4] we learn that Guṇāmbhodhideva, a chief of the Kalacuri family

---

1. See Supra.
2. J.E. X. p.50.
3. I.A. XV. p.304f.
4. E.I. VII, pp.85-93.

and ninth in ascent from Sodhadeva, received land from Bhoja and "took away sovereignty from the Gauda king." Gunāmbhodhideva must have been a contemporary of Bhoja I, and may have accompanied Bhoja in his eastern campaign. The famous Kalacuri king Kokalla I is said to have granted freedom from fear to Bhoja, and plundered the treasures of many kingdoms, including that of Vanga.[1] This Bhoja is probably Bhoja I.[2] The Guhilot chief Harṣarāja may have also accompanied Bhoja in his earlier campaign against Devapāla, and Guhila II may have joined Bhoja[3] in his latter expedition against the Pāla king who must have been Nārāyaṇapāla. We may detect a reference to Bhoja's victory over the Pālas in his Gwālior prasasti, wherein he is said to "have burnt the Vangas, his formidable enemy, by the fire of anger."[4] The "Bṛihad Vangāḥ" were certainly the Pālas, whom Bhoja had been fighting from the very early years of his reign, and it was only during the last years of his rule that he won success. His

---

1. E.I. I. p.256; II. p.297f.; XIX, p.75f.

2. H.B.R.I. p.128, note 5. Tripathi (T.K. pp.255-56) identifies him with Bhoja II. But chronology of Kokalla I makes it very likely that he was a contemporary of Bhoja I, father of Bhoja II. Kielhorn is of the same opinion (E.I. II.p.300).

3. E.I. XII. p.15.

4. A.S.I.A.R. 1903-4, p.285. Hirananda Sastri reads "Bṛihadvangān in v.21. R.C. Majumdar (E.I. XVIII. p.109) reads "Bṛihadvanśān". However this formidable enemy must have been the Pālas.

Gwālior inscription,[1] dated in 876 A.D., states that Bhoja was "desirous of conquering the three worlds", and therefore his victory over the people of Vaṅga, i.e. the Pālas, may be placed about 880 A.D., after the 17th year of Nārāyaṇapāla.

Nārāyaṇapāla may have also suffered some reverse at the hands of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Kṛiṣṇa II, who succeeded Amoghavarṣa in 880 A.D..[2] From the Karhād inscription of Kṛiṣṇa III we learn that Kṛiṣṇa II was the preceptor "charing the Gauḍas with the vow of humility", and that "his commands were obeyed by Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Gaṅga and Magadha."[3] Malla I of Velanāṇḍu, who is credited with the subjugation of the Vaṅgas, Magadhas and Gauḍas,[4] besides others may have accompanied Kṛiṣṇa II in his northward expedition. As a result of this campaign of Kṛiṣṇa II, Nārāyaṇapāla married his son Rājypāla to the daughter of Tuṅga,[5] who may be identified with Jagattuṅga, son of Kṛiṣṇa II.[6]

Thus Nārāyaṇapāla had to face troubles from all sides; and he was ultimately evicted from Magadha by the Pratīhāras. Bhoja had succeeded in establishing the Pratīhāras as the

---

1. E.I. I. p.156, v.22. Śrīmadādivarāhēṇatrailokyaṃ vijigīṣuṇā.
2. RA. P.90.
3. E.I. IV, p.283-88.
4. Ibid, IV. pp.40, 48.
5. ibid, XIV. p.324f.
6. H.B.R.I. p.131 and note 4.

predominant power in Northern India. His empire included Karnal district[1] in the North-West; it touched the Himālayas in the north; and on the east it reached to the boundaries of the Pāla kingdom of Bihar and Bengal. Gunāmbhodhideva, the Kalacuri chief of Gorakhpur district,[2] east of Bihar, had become a feudatory of Bhoja I. His authority was recognised in Saurāṣtra in the west,[3] and approached Mālava in the South, where "frontier affrays against the Rāṣtrakūṭas went on.[4] His supremacy over Bundelkhand and Central India may be also inferred from the Barāh copper-plate[5] and Devgarh[6] inscriptions. Backed by resources of such a vast empire. Mahendrapāla, who succeeded Mihira Bhoja in C.885 A.D,[7] completed the task left unfinished by his predecessor. Urged by the hereditary hostility against the Pālas, intoxicated by the success of Bhoja, and impelled by the economic motive of controlling the trade-routes running down the Ganges, Mahendrapāla immediately after the accession to the throne launched his grand offensive to conquer the easternmost parts of the country. It is possible that some parts of

---

1. E.I. I. p.188.
2. Ibid. VII. p.85f.
3. I.H.Q. V. pp.129-33; T.R. pp.245-246.
4. R.A. pp.96-97.
5. E.I. XIX. p.15f.
6. Ibid, IV. p.309f.
7. T.K. p.248.

Magadha may have been acquired by Bhoja himself. But the epigraphic evidences positively prove Mahendrapāla's occupation of Magadha and Northern Bengal in the early years of his reign. An inscribed image of the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu has been found at Rāmagaya in the district of Gaya. It is dated in the 8th year of the coronation (Rājyābhiṣeka) of Mahendrapāla.[1] Another inscription has been found at Gunaṇya, a village near the Grand Trunk Road in the district of Gaya. It is dated in the 9th year of the reign of Mahendrapāla.[2] There are two inscriptions of his reign dated in the 2nd and 6th years, and they are in the British Museum.[3] Kittoe had noticed another inscription found somewhere in Bihar, and he read the date to be the 19th regnal year of Mahendrapāla.[4] Bannerji[5] suggested that Kittoe's reading of the date may be incorrect and the inscription may be one of the two present in the British Museum. The suggestion may not be correct, and the inscription may have been unfortunately lost. Some time ago another Buddha image-inscription belonging to the 4th year of the reign of Mahendrapāla was found in Bihar.[6] Another inscription on a Buddha image belonging to the 4th year of Mahendrapāla was found at Bihar by Hiranand Sastri in 1933.[7] An inscription

---

1. M.A.S.B. V.pp.63-64. 2. Ibid.

3. Königi Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften; 1904 pp.210-11; K'slisk E.I. V. App.p.47, note 5.

4. M.A.S.B. V. 64. 5. Ibid.

6. A.S.I.A.R., 1923-24, p.102. 7. M.A.S.I. No. 66, pp.105-106.

belonging to the time of Mahendrapāla has been found in Itkhori in Hazaribagh district of Bihar.[1] In Nālandā, in the Stūpa area of the site under exploration several stupas have been exposed. Three fine little stupas "in all probability were built in the reign of Mahendrapāla. All of them bear inscriptions in early Nāgarī script and Sanskrit language."[2] One of them records the construction of a Caitya in the reign of Mahendrapāla. This Mahendrapāla was at first taken to be a Pāla king, but Bannerji conclusively proved that he was Mahendrapāla, son of Bhoja, the Pratīhāra king. The learned scholar had at first suggested that while Western Magadha was lost to the Pratīhāras after the 17th year of the reign of Nārāyaṇapāla, the latter continued to rule in Eastern Magadha, including Udantapura.[3] But this theory is no longer tenable in view of the discovery of the Bihar and Itkori inscriptions of the time of Mahendrapāla. An inscription belonging to the 5th year of the reign of Mahendrapāla has been found at Paharpur in Rajshahi district in North Bengal.[4] This Mahendrapāla is certainly th Pratīhāra ruler. The conquest of North Bengal must have come after the annexation of Mogadha. Therefore it is clear that before the 5th year of his reign, Mahendrapāla was master of South Bihar, including Chota Nagpur and North

---

1. M.A.S.I. No. 66, p.106.
2. M.A.S.B. V. pp.63-64.
3. I.A. XLVII. p.109f.
4. A.S.I.A.R. 1925-26. p.141.

Bengal. This may explain why the name of a Mahendrapāla is mentioned by Tāranātha[1] in the list of Kings of Bengal. As no inscription of Bhoja I has been discovered outside the eastern limits of the United Provinces, it is reasonable to credit Mahendrapāla with the conquest of South Bihar and North Bengal.

During the period of the Pratīhāra domination over South Bihar and North Bengal, "the Pāla dominion was limited to Western Bengal and Northern part of the Gangetic delta."[2] It may be assumed, unless positive evidence is forthcoming to the contrary, that Mahendrapāla retained his hold over South Bihar and North Bengal down to the end of his reign. The Dighwa-Dubahī plate was issued by Mahendrapāla in (Vikrama) year 955 (= 898-99 A.D.).[3] It relates to a village about 25 miles South-east of Gopalganj in Saran district of Bihar. Thus Mahendrapāla's hold over North Bihar is proved. His last known date is 907-08 A.D.[4]

Before the 54th year of his reign, Nārāyaṇapāla had

---

1. I.A. IV. p.366.

2. J.B.O.R.S. XIV. p.508.

3. I.A. XV. p.105f. Fleet read the date as 155 and assigned it to the Harṣa era. He also took Mahendrapāla of the inscription to be a different person from the Pratīhāra emperor Mahendrapāla. But D.R. Bhandarkar (J.B.B.R.A.S. XXI, pp.405-412) satisfactorily showed that Mahendrapāla of the inscription was the Pratīhāra king of the same name, and son of Bhoja I. He corrected the date as v.s. 955. (E.I. XIX. App. No. 40.)

4. E.I. I. p.173.

recovered Magadha. This is proved by the discovery of a votive image inscription belonging to the 54th year of his reign and found in the town of Bihar.[1] The 54th year of his reign must be later than 907-8 A.D., the last known date of Mahendrapāla, who may have ceased to reign in C.910 A.D.;[2] and Nārāyaṇa's reconquest of Magadha must have happened after it. After the death of Mahendrapāla - the greatest sovereign of the Gurjara Pratīhāra dynasty, who ruled from Saurāṣṭra in the west to North Bengal in the east, from the Himālayas in the north to the Vindhyas in the south - internal dissensions and foreign invasions brought about the dismemberment of the Pratīhāraṣ empire. According to the Pratāpgarh inscription of the time of Mahendrapāla II, Mahendrapāla I was succeeded by Viṇāyakapāla.[3] According to the Bengal Asiatic Society plate of Viṇāyakapāla,[4] Mahendrapāla was succeeded by his son Bhoja II; but the Asni inscription[5] makes Mahīpala successor of Mahendrapāla. Mahīpala was a son of Mahendrapāla.[6]

Kielhorn[7] and Bhandarkar[8] have held that Mahīpāla,

---

1. I.A. XLVII, p.109f.
2. T.K. p.255.
3. E.I. XIV. p.176f.
4. I.A. XV. p.140.
5. Ibid.XVI. pp.173-75. Fleet read Mahīṣapāla for Mahindrapāla.
6. E.I. I. pp.170-71. J.L. X. p.58
7. E.I. I. pp.170-71.
8. J.B.B.R.A.S. XXI, pp. 406-7.

Kṣitipāla, Viṇāyakapāla and Herambapāla were the names of the same person. G.S. Ojha[1] held that Viṇāyakapāla was a different person than Mahīpala and was another son of Mahendrapāla. R.C. Majumdar[2] appears to be divided on this issue, though he admits the force of G.S. Ojha's arguments. At any rate, it is very likely that Bhoja, Mahīpāla and/or Viṇāyakapāla claimed right to succession. While the Bengal Asiatic plate of Viṇāyakapāla mentions his brother Bhoja, Mahāpāla is excluded. If Mahīpāla is different from Viṇāyakapāla then it appears that he (Mahāpāla) was considered an usurper by Viṇāyakapāla.

However Tripathi's suggestion that there may have been civil war between Bhoja II and Mahāpāla I[3] is very plausible. Mahāpāla occupied the throne before 914 A.D.[4] Before he was secure on the throne, he had to face the invasion of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king, Indra III. He came to the throne in the early months of 915 A.D.[5] The internal dissensions in the Pratīhāra family encouraged Govinda III to emulate the examples of Dhruva and Govinda III.[6] From the Cambay plates of Govinda IV we learn that Indra during his campaign to Northern India halted at Ujjain and paid

---

1. E.I. XIV. p.180.
2. J.L. X p 63
3. TK p 255
4. ibid; J.A. XII p 195-
5. Bom. Gaz. I pt 2 p 415-
6. E.I. VII pp 24f.

respect to the deity, Mahākāla. Then "his steeds crossed the unfathomable Yamunā ...." and "he completely devastated the hostile city of Mahodaya, which is even today greatly renowned among men the name of Kuśasthala." Kanauj, the capital of the Gurjara-Pratīhāras was traditionally the centre of the hereditary enemies of the Rāṣṭakūṭas. Indra III sacked it"though the complete devastation of Mahodaya which Indra III is said to have brought about, is merely poetical."[1] It is certain that as a result of this defeat Mahāpāla lost the throne temporarily and was pursued by Indra's feudatory Narasimha up to the junction of the Ganges, i.e. Allahabad. According to the Kanarese poet Pampa, the author of Vikramārjunavijaya or Pampa-Bhārata, Narasimha "plucked the goddessof victory from the arrows of Ghurjararāja, defeated a king named Mahīpāla, and bathed his horses at the junction of the Ganges.[2] The defeat and the helpless condition of Mahīpāla are confirmed by another independent source. A fragmentary stone-inscription from Khajurāho[3] informs us that Harṣadeva, or his successor, Yaśovarman, restored again Kṣitipāla on the throne. From another inscription of the Same place we

---

1. E.I. VII p.30
2. Quoted by Fleet, Bomb.Gaz.I. pt.II, p.380.
3. E.I. I. p.121

learn that Kṣitipāla was a predecessor of Devapāla, the paramount ruler of Kanauj.[1] It has been shown that Mahīpāla, Vināyakapāla, Kṣitipāla and Herambapāla were the names of the same person.[2] So it appears that when Indra III sacked Kanauj and defeated Mahīpāla, the latter fled and was later on restored to the throne with the help of his feudatory Candella king Harṣadeva or Yaśovarman. The Candellas were the feudatories of the Pratīhāras.[3] As the last known date of Indra III is 916-17 A.D., and the earliest known date of Govinda IV is December 918 A.D.,[4] the invasion of Indra III is to be placed in 916-17 A.D. The Pratīhāra power revived after the restoration of Mahīpāla I. But it can hardly be questioned that the unfortunate turn of events in the Pratīhāra empire after the death of Mahendrapāla must have been utilised by Nārāyaṇapāla, who liberated Magadha and also North Bengal from the yoke of the Pratīhāras some time between 910 and 916 A.D.[5] The reign of Nārāyanapāla came to an end in 916 A.D.

---

1. Ibid. p.124.
2. J.L.X. pp.56-63, see supra.
3. Ibid.
4. Bombay Gaz. I, pt. II. p.416.
5. If Rāṣṭrakūta Turiga, the father-in-law of Rājyapāla, the son of Nārāyaṇapāla, is to be identified with Kṛiṣṇa II or his son, then the marriage of Rājyapāla must have been performed before Indra's invasion of Northern India. It is possible that these two events were correlated.

Rājyapāla.

Nārāyaṇapāla was succeeded by his son Rājyapāla.[1] An inscription belonging to the 24th year of his reign has been found in a Jaina temple in Nālandā.[2] His four inscriptions on bronze images dated in the 28th, 31st and 32nd years of his reign, have been discovered in Kurkihara in the district of Gaya.[3] It is clear that Rājyapāla ruled at least for thirty-two years, and Magadha was under his control. He is mentioned as having built many temples.[4] He married Bhāgyadevī, daughter of Tuṅgadeva, the moon of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa family.[5] Kielhorn identified Tuṅgadeva with Jagattuṅga, son of Kṛiṣṇa II; N.Vasu suggested that he was Kṛiṣṇa II himself. Another suggestion is that Tuṅgadeva is the Rāṣṭrakūṭa prince Tuṅga-Dharmāvoloka whose stone inscription was discovered at Buddha Gaya.[6] The reign of Rājyapala came to an end in C.948 A.D.

Gopāla II.

Rājyapāla was succeeded by his son Gopala II, born of Bhāgyadevī, daughter of Tuṅga, the moon of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa family.[7] It was most probably during the early years of his reign that Gauḍa and Varendra were lost. No inscription of

---

1. E.I. XIV. p.328f.
2. I.A. XLVII. p.111.
3. J.B.O.R.S. XXVI, p.236f.
4. E.I. XIV. p.328.
5. Ibid, p.324f.
6. Buddha Gaya, p.194, ins. No. 8. The record belongs to the 10th Century.

Rājyapala and Vigrahapāla II have been found in North Bengal. But a copper-plate inscription belonging to the 6th year of Gopāla's reign has been found in Jajilpārā in North Bengal.[1] This proves that at least up to the 6th year of his reign, Gopāla continued to hold North Bengal. But soon afterwards North Bengal, if not the whole of Bengal, was lost, and Mahīpāla I later on recovered it.[2] Some interesting light is thrown on the subject by the Dinajpur pillar-inscription.[3] It refers to the building of a Śiva temple in the year read by some as "888"[4] by that King of Gauḍa of Kamboja family, whose ability in subduing the irresistible forces of the enemy and whose discrimination of the merits of the "suitors in giving gifts are sung by the Vidyādharas in heaven with delight." Palaeographically the incription "cannot be assigned to an age much earlier than that of the Badal pillar-inscription of Nārāyaṇapāla and it cannot be later than that of the Deopārā inscription of Vijayasena."[5] Therefore it has been argued that the Gauḍa king, belonging to the Kāmboja family must have invaded and conquered Northern

---

1. Bhāratavarṣa, 1344 (B.S.) Part I, p.269.

2. J.A.S.B. VII, (N.S.) p.615f. 3. Ibid.

4. "Kunjaraghaṭavarṣa" has been taken to mean 888 and assigned to the Śaka era. Bhandarkar differed from this interpretation by Messrs. R.D. Bannerji, R.P. Canda etc. J.C. Ghosh (I.H.Q. IX, p.789f.) has taken Kunjavaghaṭavarṣa to be a proper name of Vigayasana and makes him a contemporary.

5. J.A.S.B. (N.S.) p.615f.

Bengal in the time of Gopāla II. The Bangarh grant of Mahīpāla I, dated in the 9th year of his reign, refers to Mahīpāla as "having obtained his paternal kingdom which had been snatched away through pride of prowess by people who had no claim to it."[1] It has been argued that it was from the Kāmbojas, who came from Tibet, Bhutah or some other Himālayan country that Mahīpāla recovered his paternal kingdom, i.e. Northern Bengal.[2] The theory of the Kāmboja invasion and occupation of Northern Bengal has become complicated by the discovery of the Irda copper-plate of Nayapāla.[3] The plate was obtained from the zamindar of Irda in Balasore district in Orissa, and the grant was issued from Priyaṅgu, the capital (Rājadhānī) by the Parambhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Nayapāla, who was the younger brother of Nārāyaṇapāla and the son of Parameśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Rājyapāla, a scion of the Kāmboja family and a worshipper of Buddha. The inscription further states that Priyaṅgu was founded by Rājyapāla, and Nayapāla issued the land-grant to a Brāhmaṇa in Daṇḍabhuktimaṇḍala of the Vardhamānabhukti.[4] The name of the queen of Rājyapāla was Bhāgyadevī. It is

---

1. E.I. XIV. p.328f.
2. J.A.S.B. VII. (N.S) p.615.
3. A.S.I.A.R. 1934-35, p.561.
(4) E.I. XXII p 150 f.

very tempting to identify Rājyapāla of the Irdā copper-plate with the Pāla king Rājyapala, son of Nārāyaṇapāla and father of Gopāla II. Both have their queen of the name of Bhāgyadevī. Both are devotees of Buddha; both have imperial titles. The seal of the Irda copper-plate resembles that of the Pāla records. Their names end in -Pāla. Therefore it has been suggested that they are identical and there was a division of empire between Gopāla II and Rājyapāla, both sons of Nārāyaṇapāla.

But there are considerations which vitiate this simple conclusion. Rājyapāla of the Irda ccopper-plate is referred to as "Kāmboja-vaṃśa-tilakaḥ";[1] in no Pāla records, Pālas are connected with Kāmbojas. D.C. Sarkar suggests that Palas are silent about their lineage, and it is not impossible that they may have been related to the Kāmboja family on the mother's side. J.C. Ghosh[2] suggests an emendation and instead of "Kāmboja-vaṃśa-tilakaḥ" he reads "Kāmboja Dhangvatiparaḥ", "an inveterate foe of Kāmboja and Dhaṅgu". But such a tampering with epigraphic records to suit certain pet notions is really unwarranted.[3] Whether Rājyapāla belonged to the Pāla dynasty or not, he certainly belonged to the Kāmboja family. The son and

---

1. E.I. XXII, p.150f.

2. E. I. XXIV p 43f

3. Ibid, p43, note 6.

successor of Rājyapāla of the Irda plate was Nārāyaṇapāla, which was the name of the father of Rājyapāla of the Pāla dynasty. Nayapāla of the Pāla dynasty was son of Mahīpāla I while Nayapāla of the Irda plate was a younger brother of Nārāyaṇapāla. Bhāgyadevī is the common name of the wives of the two Rājyapalas. But a vital difference is that whenever Bhāgyadevī, the queen of Rājyapāla, is mentioned in the Pāla inscription she is always referred to as the daughter of Tuṅga, the ornament of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa race: in the Irda plate Bhāgyadevī is not described as the daughter of Tuṅga. Therefore it is very likely that Bhāgyadevī of the Irda plate is not the Bhāgyadevī of the Pāla records, and so Rājyapāla of the Irda plate is also not the Rājyapāla of the Pāla records. The names of the kings of the Irda copper-plate, no doubt, end in "Pāla", and such names are common in the Pāla dynasty, but the Gurjara-Pratīhāra dynasty had also kings whose names ended in Pāla, and the names of some kings like Mahipāla and Devapāla and Rājyapala are common. Nobody would suggest that identity of names proves identity of person. Samudravarman and Dattadevī were the names of the king and queen of Kāmarūpa almost in the same period in which Samudra Gupta and his queen Dattadevi flourished, but it would be absurd to take the two Dattadevīs to be the same person. On these grounds we feel that Rājyapāla of the Irda plate was a different person from that of the Pāla dynasty,

and at any rate "we have to be very cautious in accepting the proposed identification." Assumption of imperial titles by both the Rājyapālas proves nothing, as in those days even local rulers like the Candras assumed imperial titles such as Paramabhaṭṭāraka and Mahārājādhirāja.

One thing is obvious. Gopāla II, soon after his 6th regnal year, did not rule over Northern and Western Bengal (Rāḍha). The Irda copper-plate is issued from Priyaṅgu, (a place not yet identified) and refers to a grant of land in Daṇḍabhuktimaṇḍala in Vardhamānabhukti.[1] Daṇḍabhukti comprised large parts of South-Western Bengal including portions of the Midnapore district of Bengal and Balasore district or Orissa. Rājyapala may have been connected with the Kāmboja ruler of Gauḍa who inscribed the Dinajpur pillar-inscription.[2] Yaśovarman, the Candella ruler, is said to have defeated some time before 953-54 A.D. many kings, among whom is included a king of Gauḍa,[3] who may have been Gopāla II or one of the rulers mentioned in the Irda plate. Mithilā (North Bihar) was also one of the targets of Yaśovarman's attack. It may show that Mithilā was a separate independent unit out of the Pāla empire. The Cedi attack[4] on Gauḍa and Vaṅgāla may also belong to the same period. The repeated

---

1. E.I. XXII, p150f.
2. J.A.S.B. (N.S.) VII.p.615f.
3. E.I. I.p.123. It is to be noted that the inscription was written by Jaddha, the son of Jayaguṇa (?) of the Gauḍa country.
4. E.I. II. p.297; XI. p.142.

foreign invasions acted both as a cause and an effect of the weakness of the Pāla military machine and of the rapid disintegration of the empire. The separate mention of Aṅga, Vaṅga, Gauḍa, Rāḍha, Vaṅgāla, and Magadha may suggest the break up of the political unit. The Candras, the Kāmbojas and the Pālas ruled over southern and eastern Bengal, western and northern Bengal, and Aṅga and Magadha respectively.

Gopāla succeeded to the kingdom of Magadha. The Nālandā Vāgisvarī stone-image-inscription is dated in the first year of the reign of Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Gopāladeva.[1] Another inscription belonging to the time of Gopāla has been found at Buddha Gaya.[2] Gopāla's rule over Magadha is unquestioned. His rule over Aṅga (Eastern Bihar) is also proved. From the British Museum manuscript of Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñā-Pāramitā we know that in the 15th year of the reign of Gopāla the manuscript was written in the Vikramaśīlādevavīhara,[3] which was situated in Bhāgalpur district (ancient Aṅga). There is a Palm leaf manuscript of the Maitreya-Vaiyākaraṇa belonging to the reign of Gopāladeva, and it bears a date on the reading of which there is a serious controversy. H.P. Sastri[4] read it as "57",

---

1. J.A.S.B. IV (N.S.) pp.105-6.
2. J.A.S.B. (N.S.) IV. pp.102-5.
3. J.R.A.S. 1910. pp.150-51.
4. A descriptive catalogue of Sanskrit MSS. in the Government collection by H.P. Sastri, Vol.I, pp.14-15.

Bhandarkar[1] as "11" and Bannerji[2] as "17". It is true that in the official records (e.g. Bangarh, Amgachi and Manhali grants), Gopāla is said to have been the sole lord of the earth for a long time (cirantanair), and on this basis it has been urged that "a very long reign (more than fifty years) has got, therefore, to be provided to Gopāla II."[3] But the verse is a mere formal panegyric. In an inscription of Gopāla II himself, dated in the 6th year of his reign,[4] the same verse is used, and certainly it is no proper explanation for "cirantanair". Nārāyaṇapāla ruled for 54 years, Rājyapala for 32 years, and so a long reign of 57 years for Gopāla II is very unlikely. Therefore we have attributed to him a reign of 17 years, and his regnal period may have lasted from 848 to 865 A.D.

Vigrahapāla II.

Gopāla II was succeeded by his son Vigrahapāla II. The Bangarh grant of Mahīpāla I[5] speaks of Vigrahapāla in the following words:- "As the moon, the scatterer of myriads of rays, from the sun, so from him (Gopāladeva) was born Vigrahapāladeva, the scatterer of innumerable riches. By his rise (or birth), who was pleasing to the eyes on account

---

1. JBORS XIV p 491
2. J.B.O.R.S. XIV. p.490f.
3. I.H.Q. VI. p.153f.
4. Bhāratavarṣa 1344 (B.S.) Part I, p 269
5. E.I. XIV p 324f.

of personal beauty (or by his soft rays), who was pure (or spotless), who was learned in the arts (kalāmaya), was alleviated the distress of the world ..... whose war-elephants, like clouds having drunk clear water in the eastern country, which abounds with water, after they having roamed according to their own will in the sandal forests of the valleys of the Malaya (country), (and) having caused a coolness in the Maru lands by throwing dense sprays, enjoyed the slopes of the Himālayas."[1] Kielhorn took these verses to refer to tours of conquest; even if this interpretation of the verses be accepted, the statements in them should not be taken too literally. A.K. Maitreya[2] sees in these verses an aimless wandering of Vigrahapāla after some serious defeat. Exactly the same verse is included in the newly found inscription of Gopāla II,[3] and therefore the suspicion that troubles had begun in the time of Gopāla is strengthened, and both Gopāla and Vigrahapāla had to roam aimlessly. Immediately after these verses in the Bangarh and other grants is included the verse which refers to the "slaying of all the enemies and obtaining his paternal kingdom (by Mahīpāla) which had been snatched away through pride of prowess by people who had no claim to it."[4] It is very possible that the Kāmboja Pālas, who had at first

---

1. E.I. XIV. p.328f.
2. Gaudalekhamālā, p.100, footnote.
3. Bhāratavarsa, B.S. 1344, p.264.
4. E.I. XIV, p.328f.

made themselves masters of Gauda and Varendrī, extended their conquests further south and west, and from the Irda copper-plate we learn that Daṇḍabhuktimaṇḍala and Vardhamānabhukti were under their suzerainty. Thus almost the whole of Bengal was lost by the Pālas. Eastern and south-eastern Bengal was under the Candras, while Northern, western and south-western Bengal was under the Kāmbojas. This loss of the entire paternal dominion of Bengal may have happened in the time either of Gopāla II or of Vigrahapāla II. It may not be without some significance that except the roaming of Vigrahapāla with his war-elephants in different parts of the country, the inscriptions do not mention any military activity, much less a victory of Vigrahapāla. His beautiful personality, pure character and proficiency in arts are emphasized.[1] So he appears to have been a ruler of peaceful disposition, and in those days of storm and stress a peaceful ruler was always a weak and incapable ruler. The Khajurāho inscription refers to Dhanga's victory over kings of Rāḍha and Aṅga.[2] The king of Anga was Gopala II, while the king of Rāḍha may have been Nārāyaṇapāla or Nayapāla of the Irda copper-plate.[3]

A MS. of the Pañcarakṣā written in the 26th year of

---

1. E.I. XIV. p.328f.
2. E.I. I.p.138
3. Ibid. XXII. p.150f.

the reign of Parameśvara-Parambhaṭṭāraka Paramasaugata Mahārājādhirāja Śrīmad-Vigrahapāladeva is preserved in the British Museum.[1] Bendall suggested that Vigrahapāla of the manuscript may be identified with Vigrahapāla II, and R.D. Bannerji[2] accepted the identification on palaeographic evidence. D.C. Bhatteracerya[3] pooh-poohs the reliance on palaeography in determining a date within a short interval of 100 years. R.C. Majumdar[4] challenges the very basis of the theory by questioning the validity of identifying Gopāladeva of the MS. of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā in the British Museum[5] with Gopāla II, and Mahīpāla of the MSS. of Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñapāramitā of the Bengal Asiatic Society[6] and Cambridge University Library[7] with Mahīpāla I as suggested by Bendall and Barnett, and accepted by Bannerji. It is hardly possible to assign a reign of 6 years to Mahīpāla II. H.C. Ray gives him hardly one year. Therefore the Mahīpāla of the MS. must be Mahīpāla I, and so the plausibility that Vigrahapāla of the Pañcarakṣā MS. is Vigrahapāla II is very much increased. So Vigrahapāla II may be assigned a reign of twenty-six years. In such a case

---

1. Bendall - Cat. of Sans. MSS. Br.Mus. p.232-33
2. M.A.S.B. V. p.67; J.B.O.R.S. XIV. p.489f.
3. I.H.Q. VI, p.153f.
4. J.A.S.B. XVI. (N.S.)p.301f.
5. J.R.A.S. 1910, pp.150-51.
6. Pro. A.S.B. 1889. p.69.
7. Bendall, Cat. of Budd. Sans. MSS. in Univ. Lib. Cambridge,

Hist. Buddhism (Sil) 101

the three bronze image inscriptions discovered at Kurkihāra in Gaya district and belonging to the 3rd and 19th years of the reign of Vigrahapāla should be assigned to Vigrahapāla II, and not to Vigrahapāla III, as the learned editor has done.[1] The rule of Vigrahapāla II was over by C.991 A.D.

---

1. J.B.O.R.S. XXVI. p.235f. No. 1,4,5. It is significant that no inscription of a Pāla king after Mahīpala (I) is noticed in 96 inscriptions.

Chapter XV.

Restoration of the Pāla Empire under Mahīpāla I.

Vigrahapāla II was succeeded by his son Mahīpāla I. Under Mahīpāla there was a revival of the Pāla empire, which had been shrinking after the death of Devapāla and had been almost confined to Magadha. The Bangarh grant of Mahīpāla I, dated in the 9th year of his reign, was found in Bangarh in Dinajpur district of North Bengal. This is a clear proof of Mahīpāla's restoration of authority, in Northern Bengal before the 9th year of his reign. The inscription[1] informs us that he recovered the paternal kingdom which had been snatched away by people who had no claim to it. The people who had usurped the kingdom were probably the Kāmbojas, or the kings mentioned in the Irda plate. Their rule extended to the South-West corner of Bengal and Northern Orissa. There is no ground to assume that all this was lost only in the time of Vigrahapāla II, the father of Mahīpāla, or that by "paternal kingdom" only North Bengal was meant. At one time the ancestors of the Mahīpāla had ruled over practically the whole of Bengal, but Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II gradually lost the country which included Puṇḍravardhana, Gauḍa, Rāḍha,

---

1. E.I. XIV, p.328f.

Vaṅga and Samataṭa. Therefore when we are told that Mahīpāla obtained his paternal kingdom before the 9th year of his reign, we have to assume that he re-established the Pāla authority also over other divisions of Bengal besides Varendra. This receives confirmation from the discovery of the Baghaura Visnu-image-inscription[1] of the third year of the reign of Mahīpāla. The inscription was found at Baghaura in the Comila district of Eastern Bengal, then in Samataṭa. Thus it is clear that in or before the third year of his reign Mahīpāla's authority was recognised in Samataṭa. Bhaṭṭaśāli interpreted V.12 of the Bangarh grant to mean that Vigrahapāla II after losing his kingdom took shelter in the eastern country, where water abounds (deśe Prāci pracura-payasi), and so he suggested that the Baghaura inscription proves that it was in Samataṭa that Vigrahapāla II took shelter, and it was there that Mahīpāla was crowned.[2] The suggestion is open to serious criticism. The verses which refer to the roaming of Vigrahapāla with his elephants mention his sojourn not only in the eastern

---

1. J.A.S.B. XI (N.S.)p.17f. The inscription has been referred to the reign of the Pāla king Mahīpāla I (E.I. XVII, pp.353-55; D.H.N.I. I.p.311). D.C. Ganguli (I.H.Q. XVI. p.179f) takes him to be the Pratīhāra king, Mahīpāla I, son of Mahendrapāla. We feel that the suggestion is very unlikely. We have an inscription of Mahendrapāla in Northern Bengal, and so far no Pratīhāra inscription has been found in East Bengal. Moreover Mahīpāla, the Pratīhāra king, in his early years of rule had to wage a civil war and to face the terrible enemy, Indra III. Therefore he can hardly be expected to conquer East Bengal befo the 3rd year of his reign.

2. Ibid.

country but also in the Malaya, Maru and Himālayan regions.[1] The War-elephants of Vigrahapāla roamed in all the four quarters, and there is no reason why he should be regarded as having taken shelter in the eastern country alone, where water abounds. It may also be pointed out that the same verse occurs also in a recently found inscription of Gopāla II.[2] Therefore the Baghaura inscription does not prove that Mahīpāla was crowned there, but it suggests that Samataṭa was reconquered by him before the 3rd year of his reign. This point is strengthened by the discovery of the Nārāyaṇapura Vināyaka image-inscription belonging to the fourth year of the King Mahīpāla, found at Nārāyaṇapura in Tipperah district of East Bengal.[3] This Mahīpāla is certainly Mahīpāla I, as Mahīpāla II had a very short and troublous reign. These two inscriptions prove beyond doubt that the present Tipperah and Comila districts were included in Samataṭa. R.C. Majumdar[4] has rightly suggested that it was hardly possible for Mahīpāla from his centre in Anga or Magadha to reduce East Bengal without overrunning West and North Bengal. It may therefore be accepted that before

---

1. E.I. XIV. p.328f.
2. Bhāratavarṣa BS. 1344, pp 264
3. I.C. IX. p.121f.
4. H.B.R. I.p.137.

the 3rd year of his reign Mahīpāla had recovered North Bengal (Varendra), Western Bengal (Rāḍha) and South-East Bengal (Samataṭa).

An inscription incised on the pedestal of an image of Buddha in the "Bhūmi-sparśamudrā" is dated in the 11th year of Mahārājādhirāja-Parameśvara-Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahīpāla.[1] Another inscription of the same year was found among the ruins of the Nālandā monastery. "According to this inscription the great temple of Nālandā was restored, after being burnt down, by a man named Bālāditya, a jyāviśa of Telāḍhaka (Telārā) who had emigrated from Kauśāmbī, in the 11th year of Mahīpāladeva".[2] For the reasons already advanced the

---

1. M.A.S.B. V. p.75.

2. Ibid, p.75. The reference to the burning down of the great temple of Nālandā reminds us of the Nālandā inscription of Vipulaśrīmitra (A.S.I.A.R. 1930-34, p.212f.; E.I. XXI, p.291,f.). Vipulaśrīmitra was the disciple of Aśokaśrīmitra, who was a disciple of Maitrīśrīmitra, who was a disciple of Karuṇāśrīmitra. The inscription states that a Vangāla army set fire to Somapura and Karuṇāśrīmitra died. He may be placed in the last part of the 10th or early part of the 11th century. Somapuravihāra has been identified with Paharpur (A.S.I.A.R., 1927-28, p.105f.), in Rajshahi district of North Bengal. According to Tāranātha (I.A. IV. p.366), after Mahīpāla his son Śrestha ruled for 3 years, and his maternal uncle Caṇaka for 29 years. At this time the people of Bhaṅgāla revolted and entered Magadha, but were subdued. J.C.Ghosh (I.C.I. p.291f.) makes this Bengal invasion responsible for the burning of the Nālandā temple referred to in the Nālandā inscription belonging to the 11th year of Mahīpāla. Tāranātha is not reliable for chronology, but even his account refers to an invasion of Magadha by the people of Bhaṅgala after Mahīpāla I. Therefore we feel that it is not possible to connect the burning of the temple of Nālandā with the account of Tāranātha or Vipulaśrīmitra's inscription. The temple may have been burnt through some natural causes.

(contd. overleaf)

Mahīpāla of these inscriptions should be identified with Mahīpāla I.

A Nepal palm-leaf MS. of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā was copied at Nālandā in the 6th year of the reign of Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja, Parameśvara, Paramasaugata-Mahīpāladeva, who mediated on the feet of Paramabhaṭṭāraka Parameśvara, Mahārājādhirāja, Paramasaugata Vigrahapalādeva.[1] A bronze image-inscripion belonging to the 31st year of the reign of Mahīpāladeva has been found at Kurkihāra in Gaya district.[2] Thus, there can be no doubt that Mahīpāla was master of Magadha from the very beginning down to the later years of his reign.

Another notice of Mahīpāla is found in a Cambridge Library palm-leaf-manuscript of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā[3] which was copied in the 5th year of his reign.

Mahīpāla's authority over Tīrabhukti (North Bihar, Tirhut) is proved by two identical image-inscriptions found in the village of Imadpur in Muzaffarpur district (Bihar) and dated in his 48th year.[4] In this connection it is necessary

---

(contd. from previous page)
If a foreign invasion be deemed necessary for this catastrophe to happen, it may have happened in the time of Vigrahapāla II.

1. Pr.A.S.B. 1899. pp.69-70.
2. J.B.O.R.S. XXV. p.236f. No. 49.
3. Bendall. Cat.Budd.Sans.Mss. Univ.Lib.Cambridge, Add.1464, p.101.
4. I.A. XIV. p.165, note 17. Śrīmān-Mahīpāladevarājasa Samvat 48 jesta dinasukala-paksa 2.

to discuss the evidence of a MS. of the Rāmāyaṇa. Bendall[1] drew attention to the colophon of a MS. of the kiṣkindhākāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa. He transcribed the relevant passage as follows: "Samvat 1076 aṣāḍha badi 4. Maḥārājādhirāja Puṇyāvaloka-somavamśodbhava-gaṇḍa-dhvaja-śrīmad Gāṅgeyadeva-bhujyamāna-Tīrabhuktau kalyāṇavijayarājye Nepāladeśīya-śrī-bhāṇcuśālika-śrī Ānandadāsya Pāṭakāvasthiṣṭa (= kāyastha) paṇḍita śrī -śrīkurasyātmaja śrī Gopati ālekhidam". Bendall took the date to be in Vikrama year and identified Gāṅgeya-deva with the famous Kalacuri king, father of Karṇa. If Bendall is right, then the colophon proves that in 1019 A.D. the Kalacuri Gāṅgeyadeva was ruling over Tirhut, and therefore Mahīpāla I must have reconquered it from the Kalacuris. But the identification proposed by Bendall is not above criticism. Bannerji[2] accepted Bendall's opinion, and scholars like

---

1. A catalogue of the Palm-leaf and selected paper MSS. belonging to the Durbar library, Nepal, by M.M.H.P. Sastri; with historical introduction by Cecil Bendall. Intro. pp.18-19.

2. M.A.S.B. V. p.75. R.D. Bannerji held that Mithilā passed out of the hands of the Pālas in 1120 A.D., as in that year it was in the possession of Gāṅgeyadeva, and soon after this Benares passed into the hands of the Cedis. The learned scholar held that Tīrabhukti was never recovered by the Pālas. We have positive evidence that Mithilā was in the possession of Mahīpāla in his 48th year, and therefore, according to Bannerji, the 48th year of Mahīpāla should be earlier than 1120 A.D., when Gāṅgeyadeva was master of Mithilā. The longest reign attributed to Mahīpāla is 52 years by Tāranātha, and Bannerji takes it as "most probably correct". So the reign of Mahipala must have been over by 1123-24 A.D. The Sārnāth inscription, which refers to Gaudeśvara Mahīpāla, is dated 1026 A.D., and according to Bannerji, Nayapāla came to the (contd. overleaf)

H.C. Ray,[1] Jayasval,[2] and A.Ghosh[3] have followed Bendall. But distinguished scholars like Sylvain Levi,[4] R.C. Majumdar[5] and Mirashi[6] have cast doubts on this identification. No Cedi ruler is known to have assumed a title ending in "avaloka" The phrase "Gauḍadhvaja" suggests some authority over Gauda, but there is no evidence that the Kalacuri king Gāngeyadeva had any pretension to suzerainty over Bengal. There is no other evidence to prove Gāngeyadeva's supremacy over Tirhut. R.P. Canda[7] points out that as Magadha was under the Pālas, and the territory to the west under the Candellas, it is difficult to believe that the Kalacuri king would rule over Mithilā. R.C. Majumdar[8] suggested that the date 1076 may be referred to the Śaka era and so equivalent to 1154 A.D., and Gāngeyadeva Puṇyāvaloka of the Colophon should be identified with Gāngeyadeva, son of Nānyadeva of Mithilā,

---

(contd. from previous page)
throne between 1025 and 1030 A.D. (ibid, p.76). Therefore Mahīpāla's reign extended beyond 1023-24 A.D. It is therefore clear that the 48th year of Mahīpāla's reign was later than 1019-20 A.D., and if Bendall's identification is accepted, Mahīpāla must have recovered Tirhut after 1019-20 A.D.

1. D.H.N.I. I, p.317.
2. J.B.O.R.S. IX, p.300f.
3. I.C. VII, p.3f.
4. Le Nepal, II, p.202, Note 1, quoted by Majumdar in I.H.Q. VII, p.679f.
5. I.H.Q. VII, p.679f.
6. A.B.O.R.I. XXIII, (Silver Jubilee Volume) p.291f.
7. Gauḍarājamālā, p.42 note, quoted by R.C. Majumdar (I.H.Q. VII,p.679f.
8. I.H.Q. VII, p.679f.

who came to the throne in 1097 A.D.[1] One Nānyadeva is mentioned by Sārangadeva, the author of the Sangītaratnākara, as one of the authors on music. In the Colophon, Nānyadeva gives his own opinion on music under the names of Nānyapati, Nānya, Mahāsāmantādhipati, Dharmāvaloka, Dharmādhārabhūpa, Mithilesvara and Karnāṭaka kulabhūṣaṇa.[2] This Nānyadeva is certainly the king of Mithilā of the same name; and if he had the epithet Dharmāvaloka, his son Gāngeyadeva may have been "Puṇyāvaloka". A.Ghosh[3] points out that "the word Samrāṭ is not usually used singly in connection with the Śaka era". Kielhorn[4] remarked that out of 400 Śaka dates of inscriptions there are only five in which the word Śaka is not mentioned, of which three are spurious or suspicious and two are in verse. Mirashi[5] referred to the fact that we rarely find Śaka dates in the inscriptions of the 10th and 11th centuries in North-East India. Majumdar,[6] on the authority of the Colophon of the commentary of Bharata's

---

1. J.B.O.R.S. IX, p.304.
2. J.A.H.R.S. I, p.55f.
3. I.C. VII, p.7.
4. E.I. IX. p.128.
5. A.B.O.R.I. XXIII, p.291f.
6. I.H.Q. VII, p.679f.

Nāṭyaśāstra written by Nānya,[1] holds that as Nānya had broken the powers of "Vaṅga and Gauḍa", his son Gāngeyadeva may have assumed the title of "Gauḍadhvaja". On the other hand, A Ghosh[2] tries to prove that Gāngeyadeva, who held Benares and invaded Gauḍa and Aṅga, occupied Tirhut for some time. Mirashi[3] also finds no inherent impossibility in the Kalacuri Gāngeyadeva ruling over Tirhut. But Mirashi has tried to knock down the whole theory of Kalacuri occupation of Tirhut by pointing out that he saw a copy of the Rāmāyaṇa (a photostat copy of the Colophon under discussion) in Lahore in 1940, and found out that what Bendall had read as Gauḍadhvaja was really Garuḍadhvaja. In the accompanying facsimile, given by Mirashi the word "Garuḍa" is clear and it cannot be read as Gauḍa. All speculation about the alleged connection between Gāngeyadeva and Gauḍa should cease. According to Mirashi, Gāngeyedeva of the Colophon, who had the biruda Puṇyāvaloka and was a worshipper of Viṣṇu (Garuḍadhvaja) could not be the Kalacuri king Gāngeyadeva Vikramāditya. No Kalacuri king had any biruda ending in "avaloka", and they were worshippers of Śiva, not of Viṣṇu. The earliest known date when Gāngeyadeva is referred to with

---

1. J.A.H.R.S. I, p.55f.
2. I.C. VII. p.3f.
3. A.B.O.R.I. XXIII, p.291f.

imperial titles such as Mahārājādhirāja etc. is 1037-38 A.D., the date of the Piawan inscription.[1] In a stone-inscription, recently discovered in Makundpur, near Rewah, Gāngeyadeva is mentioned as Mahārāja and Mahārāja-Mahā-Mahattaka.[2] It is possible that in 1019 A.D., the date of the last mentioned inscription, Gāngeyadeva was not an imperial ruler. A Mahoba inscription[3] informs us that "the moon of the Kalacuri (Gāngeyadeva) and king Bhoja worshipped full of fear, like a pupil, the Candella prince Vidyādhara, who had caused the destruction of Rājyapāla, the King of Kanauj." The defeat of Rājyapāla took place in 1019 A.D., and therefore in that year, or soon after, Vidyādhara must have overawed Gāngeyadeva. Therefore it is not very safe to identify Gāngeyadeva of the Colophon with the Kalacuri king of the same name, who appears to have won most of his successes long after 1019-20 A.D. The proposal to identify him with Gāngeyadeva, son of Nāṇyadeva is very doubtful. Even Nāṇyadeva entitled himself "Mahāsāmantādhipati",[4] and we have no evidence that his son Gāngeyadeva assumed the imperial title of Mahārājādhirāja. Mahārājādhirāja Gāngeyadeva Puṇyāvaloka of the Colophon is descended from the dynasty of the moon, and we have no authorit

---

1. C.A.S.R. XII, p.113.
2. E.I. XXIV, p.118, note 4.
3. Ibid, I, p.122.
4. J.A.H.R.S. I, p.56.

to connect Nānyadeva with the lunar dynasty. Mirashi[1] has suggested that Gāngeyadeva of the Colophon may have been a Rāṣṭrakūṭa. Rāṣṭrakūṭa princes have been known to have assumed birudas ending in "avaloka".[2] They were worshippers of Viṣnu, and used the Garuḍa seal for their copper-plates. In later records (like the Cambay Plates of Govenda IV) they claim descent from the moon. It is possible that Gāngeyadeva Puṇyāvaloka may belong to the Rāṣṭrakūṭa dynasty whose inscription has been found at Buddha Gaya.[3] It is possible that this local Rāṣṭrakūṭa dynasty was ruling Mithilā and its members had assumed imperial titles. The find spot of the inscription in Gaya does not prove that they ruled over the district. It is a mere religious inscription. Really, the question is still open. At any rate, whoever may have been the Gāngeyadeva, whose rule over Mithilā in 1019-20 A.D. is known, it is beyond dispute that Mahīpāla I recovered North Bihar in or before the 48th year of his reign.

From an inscription discovered at Sārnāth we learn that Mahīpāla, the lord of the Gauḍas, had caused Sthirapāla and his younger brother Vasantapāla to establish

---

1. A.B.O.R.I. XXIII, p.291f.

2. Dantidurga's biruda was Khaḍgāvaloka (Bomb. Gaz. Vol.I, pt.2.p.389).

3. Budha Gaya, p.193f.

in Kāśī hundreds of precious monuments of his glory. The inscription is dated in (V) Samrat 1083 (= 1026 A.D.).[1] The inscription is obscurely worded. But it has been generally accepted that it suggests possession of Sārnāth by Mahīpāla. A Ghosh[2] differs from this assumption. It is true that repair and constructions of temples in a renowned religious place like Sārnāth by any ruler not necessarily prove his political sway over the place. Kings of Ceylon and Java built temples in Buddha Gaya and Nālandā respectively. However, the onus of proving that the Sārnāth was not under Mahīpāla lies on those who deny that the Sārnāth inscription suggests Mahīpāla's supremacy over the region. The invasions of Mahmud of Ghazni, the defeat of the Pratīhāra king Rājyapāla, and the confederacy led by Vidyādhara to punish Rājyapala, must have brought about chaos in the upper Gangetic valley, and Mahīpāla, true to the legacy of his ancestors, may have taken advantage of the Pratīhāra's misfortunes, and extended his authority westward up to Benares. Soon afterwards Benares passed into the hands of the Cedis before 1033 A.D., as it was then under Ganga who may be identified with Gāngeyadeva.[3]

Mahīpāla, then, ruled over a fairly extensive kingdom which included large parts of Bengal, the whole of

---

1. I.A. XIV. pp.139-40. 2. I.C. VII, p.3f.
3. Elliot, History of India, Vol.II, p.123; I.C. VII, p.7.

Bihar, and possibly the Eastern United Provinces.[1] Never was the Pāla dominion so large in extent after the death of Devapāla, and therefore Mahīpāla may be rightly

---

1. From the Tirumalai and Tiruvālangādu plates we learn that the army of Rājendracola defeated Dharmapāla of Daṇḍabhukti, Raṇaśūra of Southern Rāḍha, and Govindacandre of Vaṅgāla. Prof. N.K.A. Sastri suggests that from the tone of the inscriptions it appears that Mahīpāla exercised some sort of overlordship over these princes and their overthrow culminated in the final struggle with Mahīpāla (The Colas, pp.251-2). K.S. Aiyangar (J.R.A.S. 1937, p.85) and H.P. Sastri (M.A.S.B. III, p.10) held the same opinion. But R.C. Majumdar (H.B.R.I. p.139) and H.C. Ray (D.H.N.I. pp.320-21) think that the empire of Mahīpāla was much circumscribed, and Dharmapāla, Raṇaśūra and Govindacandra were independent kings. We know from the Irda copper-plate that Rāḍha and Daṇḍabhukti lay in the dominion of the Kāmboja Pālas. Dharmapāla may have been a scion of this dynasty, probably a successor of Nayapāla, and held Daṇḍabhukti (Midnapur and Balasore districts), while Dakṣiṇa Rāḍha was under the Śūra dynasty. Therefore it is urged that Mahīpāla's kingdom in Bengal was confined to the North and a part of East Bengal together with Northern Rāḍha, i.e. that portion of the present Burdwan division that lies to the north of the Ajay river. In the present state of our knowledge there is no ground to prove one or the other of the suggestions. But it may be pointed out that Mahīpāla I may have exercised some sort of suzerainty over Dharmapāla and Raṇaśūra. The Kāmboja-Pālas had under their control Northern Bengal as well (Dinajpur pillar inscription), but we know that Mahīpāla had recovered it. It is quite reasonable to expect that when he was successful in overthrowing the Kāmbojas in North Bengal and extending his authority in East Bengal, he may have destroyed the Kāmboja rule in Western and South-Western Bengal as well, i.e. in Rāḍha and Daṇḍabhukti. Nayapāla (the issuer of the Irda copper-plate) or his successor may have suffered defeat at the hands of Mahīpāla. Dharmapāla may or may not have been of Kāmboja descent. Even if he was of Kāmboja-Pāla dynasty, Mahīpāla may have appointed him to hold charge of Daṇḍabhukti. Instances of appointment of the scions of defeated inimical families are not rare in Indian history. Raṇaśūra may have been another vassal ruler governing Southern Rāḍha. The break-up of Western Bengal into two administrative divisions - Southern Rāḍha and Daṇḍabhukti which were under Kāmboja rulers before as one political unit - proves the political sagacity of Mahīpāla in not letting the large

(contd. on next page)

regarded as the second founder of the Pāla empire. But this re-emergence of the Pālas as one of the predominant powers in India embroiled them in conflicts with the Cedis, the Cālukyas and the Colas.

The conflict with the Colas is based on positive epigraphic evidence. The Tirumalai inscription of the 13th year of Rājendra Cola I states: "(He) seized by (his) great warlike army (the following) .... Oḍḍaviṣaya which was difficult to approach (and which he subdued in) close fights; the good Kosalai-naḍu, where Brāhmaṇas assembled; Taṇḍabhutti, in whose gardens bees abounded (and which he acquired) after having destroyed Dharmapāla (in) hot battle; Takkana-Lāḍam, whose fame reached (all directions), and (which he occupied), after having forcibly attacked Raṇaśūra; Vangāladeśa, where the rain-wind never stopped (and from which) Govindacandra fled, having descended (from his) male elephant; elephants of rare strength and treasures of women (which he seized), after having been pleased to put to flight on a hot battle-field Mahīpāla, decked (as he was) with ear-rings, slippers and bracelets; Uttira-Lāḍam, as

---

(contd. from previous page)
division stand by itself and in not entrusting Dharmapāla (a scion of the hostile Kāmboja family?) with the government of a large territory. Govindacandra, whose relationship with the main Candra line is not known, may have enjoyed some such subordinate status.

rich in pearls as the ocean; and the Gaṅgā where waters dashed against bathing places (tīrtha covered with sand.)"[1] The northern invasion of Rājendra Cola's army should be placed roughly between 1021 and 1025 A.D.[2] The Tiruvālangādu plates[3] describe the conquests in a slightly different order. According to these, the attack on Raṇaśūra preceded that on Dharmapāla, the overthrow of Dharmapāla led the Cola general to the banks of the Ganges, and Mahīpāla was defeated on the return march of the Cola army. N.K.A. Sastri[4] regards the Tamil praśasti (Tirumalai inscription), which was recorded almost immediately after the campaign, as more authentic. Oḍḍa Viṣaya is Orissa; Kosalainadu is Mahākosala or Dakṣina Kosala. Then he came to Daṇḍabhukti, whose king was Dharmapāla. There is some difference of opinion about the location of Daṇḍabhukti. H.P. Sastri[4a] and K.S. Aiyanger[5] placed it in Bihar and identified it with the modern town of Bihar, which was also known as Uddantapura or Adwandvihāra. But the identification can no longer stand in view of positive epigraphic evidence to the contrary. The Irda copper-plate of Nayapāla[6] refers to a grant of land in

---

1. E.I. IX. pp.229f.
2. D.H.N.I. I, p.318.
3. A.S.I.A.R. 1911-12. p.171f.
4. The Colas I, p.251.
4a. M.A.S.B. III. p.10.
5. J.I.H. II. p.317f.
6. E.I. XXII, p.150f.

the Dandabhuktimandala in Vardhamānabhukti. The inscription belongs to the latter part of the 10th century, and was obtained from the Zamindar of Irda in Balasore district of Orissa. Vardhamānabhukti was undoubtedly a political division which must have included a large part of the modern Burdwan division in West Bengal and there is no authority at all to hold that any part of Bihar, much less so far west as the town of Bihar, ever formed a part of Vardhamānabhukti. It was a part of Nagarabhukti in the time of Dharmapāla and Devapāla. The exact geographical position of Dandabhukti is made clear by the Midnapur plates of Śaśānka.[1] From the Plate I we learn that the province (bhukti) of Dandabhukti was near Utkala (= Odra), as it was governed along with Utkala by Somadatta; according to Plate 2, Dandabhukti was ruled by Śubhakīrtti. R.C. Majumdar[2] therefore concluded that "the present boundary between Balasore and Midnapur districts roughly corresponds to that between Dandabhukti and Odra or Utkala". The epigraphic evidence has thus confirmed the opinion of R.D. Bannerji,[3] expressed many years ago that "Dandabhukti was the marsh-land between Orissa and Bengal, corresponding to the modern districts of Midnapore and Balasore."

---

1. J.A.S.B.L. XI, p.1f.
2. Ibid.
3. M.A.S.B. V. p.71.

After defeating the kings of Odra and Mahākosala, the Cola general entered Daṇḍabhukti and defeated Dharmapāla. Then he appears to have invaded Dakṣiṇa Rāḍha[1] and defeated Ranaśūra. Dakṣiṇa Rāḍha and Uttara Rāḍha together constituted most of West Bengal and a part of North Bengal. From Dakṣiṇa Rāḍha the Cola army, instead of moving further north, rushed to the South-East and defeated Govindacandra of Vangātadeśa (Eastern Bengal). Then the army turned west and defeated Mahīpāla (who fled), and occupied Uttara Rāḍha, thus realising the ambition of reaching the Ganges. It is important to note that it did not cross the Ganges.

A manuscript copy of a drama "Caṇḍakauśika" by Kṣhemiśvara was discovered by H.P. Sastri. It contains a verse which refers to the play being enacted in the presence of a King Mahīpāla, who is compared to Candragupta, and the verse also mentions the Karṇāṭas, who are compared with the Nandas.[2] The suggestion is apparent that a King Mahīpāla exterminated the Karṇāṭas as Candragupta had destroyed the Nandas. H.P.Sastri[3] identified the Mahīpāla of the drama with Mahīpāla I of the Pāla dynasty, and the Karṇāṭas with

---

1. There had been some controversy about the identity of Takkana-Lāḍam and Uttiraladam of the inscriptions. (M.A.S.B. V. PP.71-72; D.H.N.I. I. pp.319-20). But it is now accepted that these refer to Uttara and Dakṣiṇa Rāḍha, well known divisions of Western Bengal.

2. J.A.S.B. LXII, pp.250-51.

3. M.A.S.B. III, p.10.

the Colas. Bannerji[1] accepted the suggestion, and he held that the fact that Rājendracola's army did not cross the Ganges may be explained on the supposition that Mahīpāla actually defeated the Colas and celebrated the victory by witnessing the enactment of the play. But the identification of the Colas with the Karṇāṭas has been shown to be untenable.[2] H.C. Ray has suggested that the Karṇāṭa army may be identified with the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa, who were at this period the rulers of Karṇāṭa. Some[3] have taken the Karṇāṭas to refer to the Kalacuri invasions of North-Eastern India and held that Karṇāṭas may have formed a part of the Kalacuri army. It is important to bear in mind that the Rāṣṭrakūṭas were generally regarded as Karṇāṭas, and there were Mahīpālas in the Gurjara-Pratīhāra dynasty. Aiyangar[4] suggested that Mahīpāla and the Karṇāṭas of the Caṇḍakauśika may be identified with Mahīpāla I of the Pratīhāra dynasty, and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas.

---

1. M.A.S.B. V. p.73. 2. D.H.N.I. I, p.316. note 3.

3. J.B.O.R.S. IX, p.300f.

4. J.I.H. II, p.317f. We know that Mahīpāla was defeated by Indra III, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king in C.916-17 A.D. But after the departure of Indra to the Deccan, the Gurjara-Pratīhāra King Mahīpāla I recovered Kanauj, regained a large part of his dominion and made new conquests. In the course of these campaigns he must have defeated the remnant of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa force in Northern India, and this success was apparently celebrated by the performance of Caṇḍakauśika.

The Pāla king Mahīpāla I is said by Tāranātha to have ruled for 52 years. The latest known date is the year 48 in the Imadpur image inscription.[1] So he must have ruled at least for 48 years. The Sārnāth inscription mentioning the Gaudeśvara Mahīpāla I is dated in Vikrama Samvat 1083 (1026 A.D.). According to R.D. Bannerji,[2] Mahīpāla was dead when the inscription was engraved. R.C. Majumdar,[3] originally placed the death of Mahīpāla in 1026 A.D. But the Sārnāth inscription, written in verse, does not prove that Mahīpāla was dead at that time. The latest limit of his reign is set by a Tibetan tradition that Nayapāla was a contemporary of Karna and that Atīśa brought about a reconciliation between them.[4] There is a difference of opinion among scholars about the exact date of Atīśa's departure from India. Atīśa died in 1053 after a stay of 12 or 13 years in Tibet.[5] So Atīśa may have left India at latest in 1040 or 1041 A.D.[6] Karna came to the throne in C.1041 A.D., and he was contemporary with Vigrahapāla III. Nayapāla, who ruled for at least 15 years, must have come to the throne in C.1040 A.D. So the last years of Mahīpāla may

---

1. I.A. XIV. p.165, note 17. 2. J.B.O.R.S. XIV, p.489f.
3. J.A.S.B. XVII,(N.S.) p.1f.
4. S.C. Das, Indian Pundits in the Land of Snow, p.51.
5. Ibid, pp.76, 83.
6. I.A. XVII, p.211; XVI, p.230, I.C. VII, p.3f.

be placed in 1039-40 A.D., and his accession in C.991 A.D. During the last years of his reign, Mahīpāla appears to have come into conflict with the Kalacuris. The Gurgi inscription of Prabodhaśiva[1] appears to refer to a conflict between Gāngayadeva and a Gauḍa king. The Gauḍa king must have been Mahīpāla. From the Goharwa copper-plate[2] we learn that Gāngeyadeva defeated a ruler of Aṅga, who might be Mahīpāla. In 1033 A.D. when Niyaltigin invaded Benares, it was under Ganga (or Gāngeyadeva).[3] Mahīpāla thus appears to have lost his western dominion to the Kalacuris, and may have even suffered invasion of his home provinces. Karṇa persisted in his offensive and invaded Aṅga, which was then under Nayapāla, successor of Mahīpāla I.[4]

Estimate of Mahīpāla.

Mahīpāla justified his long reign and restored the Pāla empire to a dignified extent. It is possible that the invasions of Mahmud Ghajnvi may have facilitated his task of

---

1. E.I. XXII, p.129; M.A.S.I. No. 23, p.122f. line 41.

2. Ibid, XI, p.143, v.17. 3. I.C. VII, p.3f.

4. J.B.T.S. I.p9. note. Mawmohan Cakrawarty showed that "King of Karnya" was really King Karṇa. - The Haihayas of Tripuri and their Monuments (M.A.S.I. No. 23, p.21 and note 1) Atīśa is said to have brought about peace between Nayapāla and Karṇa. This must have happened before he left for Tibet in 1040 or 41. According to Fleet (I.A. XI, p.146) and A.Ghosh (I.C. VII, pp.10-11) Gāngeyadiva died in early 1041 A.D. Karṇa's invasion may have taken place during the last years of Gāngeyadeva.

conquering and consolidating his dominion without any fear from his hereditary enemies - the Gurjara-Pratīhāras. Mahīpāla a king of considerable a part of Northern India, does not appear to have taken any part in resisting the Muslim invasions of India. He did not join the Confederacy against the Muslims, who were repeatedly plundering the country and weakening the existing kingdoms. It appears that Mahīpāla did not take a national view of the crisis. He may be accused of lack of patriotism and failure to foresee that the Pāla dominion also in the long run could not escape the nemesis that had overtaken the kingdoms of Upper India. The Buddhist Sthavira Ratnākara, living in Vikramaśilā monastery, spoke to the Tibetan Ngag-tcho, who was taking Atīśa to Tibet, about the clouds overhanging the horizon. He observed, "The looming signs prognosticate evil for India. Numerous Turuskas (Mussalmans.) are invading India, and I am much concerned at that."[1] It is really strange that while a Sthavira could see the coming danger, Mahīpāla was "unconcerned". But to be fair to Mahīpāla, it must be admitted that the problems that faced him must have demanded his entire energy and time. The once extensive Pāla empire had been torn into bits, and Bihar and Bengal parcelled into independent states. Mahīpāla

---

1. Indian Pundits in the Land of Snow, p.68.

brought back a large part of Northern India under the Pāla rule and re-established the traditional benevolent administration. He was a very popular king, and many works of great public activity in Bengal are associated with him. He was so loved that songs were composed to celebrate the works of his life.[1] The problems of reconquest and reconsolidation were enough to tax him. Had he plunged himself into the vortex of North-Indian politics complicated by Mahmud Ghaznawi's raids, the rapid disintegration of the Pratīhāra empire and the rise of new powers like the Candellas and the Cedis, Mahīpāla might have found himself unable to recover and then retain his kingdom.

However, with the death of Mahīpāla I, the Pāla empire again began to decline. Rāmapāla attempted a partial rejuvenation, but the essential vitality of the empire had gone. The Cedis of Tripuri, the Karṇāṭas of Mithilā, the Kaivartas of North Bengal, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas of Piṭhi (in Bihar), the Candras of Kanauj and the Senas of Eastern Bengal hammered at the Pāla kingdom, which ultimately succumbed, and disappeared from the stage of history by the end of the 12th Century.

---

1. M.A.S.B. III. p.10.

Conclusion.

A rapid survey of the history of India from the dawn of history to C. 1000 A.D. brings out clearly the fact that for most of the time Magadha held the key to Indian history. The historical period beginning with 600 B.C. saw India divided into numerous states: but almost at the same time began the process of integration, and the lead was taken by Magadha, which under Bimbisāra, Ajātaśatru and Mahāpadma Nanda organised the first historical All-India empire, embracing practically the whole of North India and a large part of South India. The Mauryas under Candragupta and Aśoka carried on the process to the logical conclusion, and their empire touched the Hindukush to the West, Kashmir in the North, the Bay of Bengal in the East and the Arabian Sea in the West. Only the extreme south of the Peninsular India remained out of the territorial limits of the empire; but it can be easily assumed that they were left out because of self-restraint imposed by Aśoka, and not because of their strength against the mighty imperialism of the Mauryas. After the death of Aśoka, the process of disintegration asserted itself, and Magadha, and with it, the whole of Northern India fell a prey to the invasions of the Greeks, Andhras, Kaliṅgas, Śakas and ultimately the Kuṣāṇas; the last mentioned established an extensive Indian and extra-

Indian empire with its centre in the extreme north-west of India. This was the first Indian Empire worth the name to be administered from the north-west corner.

This state of Magadha, and indeed of India, could not last long. The Kuṣāṇas had to give way to the rising local spirit of the Kunindas, the Yaudheyas, and the Bhāraśivas. But it was Magadha under the imperial Guptas which re-established an All-India empire, and released the renascent spirit of vigorous and confident political nationalism and cultural traditions to have their full and creative play, on an All-India basis. The establishment of the Gupta empire was as much a cause as an effect of the restlessness and impatience of India's unconquerable spirit to break through the bondage - cultural and political - which the foreigners, the Mlecchas had imposed on her. The spirit and action of resistance began earlier than the rise of the Gupta empire; and all these diverse streams running to the same end were mingled in the mighty flood of Gupta imperialism, which consequently became the representative of New-India confident and rejuvenated. That is why the Gupta Age is the golden age of India in both its political and its cultural fields. Magadha again resumed its traditional role as the integrating medium of India cultural and political aspirations In a way it is at once both Greece and Rome of ancient Europe.

The break-up of the Gupta empire, the invasions of the Hūṇas and the sudden emergence and exit of Yaśodharman gave rude shocks to Magadha from which it could not recover for a long time. The struggles of the later Guptas and the Maukharis, and the rise of the Gauḍas under Jayanāga and Śaśāṅka may be viewed in broader perspective as competitive attempts to continue the Gupta traditions. When Magadha failed, and the Gauḍas and the Maukharis collided, Harṣa from his centre in Kanauj, far west of Magadha, emerged as the successful champion of the centripetal tendency amidst centrifugal forces. The death of Harṣa gave a new chance to Magadha to reassert its traditional role as leader of the forces of union, and under Ādityasena and Devagupta an extensive North-Indian empire with its base in Magadha was established. But the sands were fast running out; new powers, like Yaśovarman of Kananj, Lalitāditya of Kashmir, the Śailas of Puṇḍra and Central India and the Bhagadattas of Kāmarūpa and Orissa battered Magadha, which had to surrender its claim to suzerainty for a time. In a way the downfall of the later Guptas registered a fatal blow to the political supremacy of the Māgadhas. The Pālas did not belong to Magadha; but they adopted it as their political home, and under them Magadha shared in the splendour of the Pāla Age. But after the death of Mahīpāla I, Magadha lost

even this partial glory, and we find Rāmapala building the Capital Rāmāvatī in Gauda. It is no doubt true that the last flicker of Pāla rule found shelter in Magadha, but Govindapāla was the last king of the Pāla dynasty. Soon after him the Muslims overran Magadha. The centre of Indian history shifted to Delhi and Agra. Shershah in the 16th Century, though practically a native of Bihar, transferred his centre of activities from Bihar to Delhi after he had won the empire of India. It may be asserted without any fear of contradiction that after Mahīpāla I the centre of Indian history, for all times to come, shifted away from Magadha. The key to Indian history was lost by Magadha which had proved its "reliable safe" for centuries.

It can hardly be a mere coincidence that the best days of ancient India were those when Magadha was the hub. Most cherished treasures and memories of the people, whether in the realm of international relations, political greatness, cultural pre-eminence, artistic development, literary excellence, thought and religions, are in one way or the other closely associated with Magadha. Buddhism - the first world religion - found in Magadha its most fertile soil. The grammarians Pāṇini and Patañjali, and the practical politician and political thinker Kauṭilya radiated their imperishable light from Magadha. The first great internationalist who tried to build up a foreign policy not on the basis of

exploitation and Power Politics but on service to humanity was Aśoka, who proclaimed and preached his theory of international fellow-feeling from Pāṭaliputra. The sculptors of the Mauryan age have left to posterity the undying polish on their stone-works. The grand national efflorescence of all-sided Indian civilisation in the Gupta Age was directed and canalised from Magadha. India is rightly proud of her ancient universities, and the most famous of them - Nālandā, Vikramaśilā and Oddantapura - were situated in Magadha, whither came students from all parts of the then known world to drink at the ocean of learning. The great Indian names of ancient and early mediaeval history are associated with Magadha. The fact of Magadha being thus the unrivalled custodian of great Indian traditions is largely due to the interesting phenomena that successful attempts to establish peace and benevolent administration for a very large part of the country and for a considerable time - necessary for the growth of arts of peace - were made only in Magadha; the Nandas, the Mauryas, the imperial Guptas, the later Guptas and even the Pālas all established, in turn, stable empires and good government in India from Magadha as base. The periods of temporary eclipse of Magadha have been unhappy periods for North India at best.

It is not easy to answer the question as to why Magadha lost this unique position of being the pulse of

India. The death of Mahīpāla I really marks the end of the Magadhan epoch. The Kalacuris of Tripuri, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, the Gahaḍavālas of Kanauj invaded Magadha, and cut off slices of its territories. It might have been possible, as happened many times, for some native genius - a Candragupta, or Samudra Gupta - to arise to redress the balance in favour of Magadha. But all such possibilities were completely frustrated by the emergence of the Muslims in the role of conquerors, not raiders. It is certainly true that even divided India offered stiff resistance to the invaders, but for causes well known the Hindu states one by one succumbed to the Turko-Afghans. Kutbuddin Aibak made Delhi the capital of new Muslim India, and since then - except for a brief period in which there was a British capital at Calcutta - Delhi has remained the capital of India. The second battle of Tarain in a way decided the fate of India and of Magadha. The defeat and death of Prithvīrāja, who had his capital at Delhi, made the Muslims choose Delhi as their centre. It was more convenient for them to have their capital in Upper India at Delhi than in Magadha, because Delhi was nearer the North-West, through which their ranks were always replenished by the coming of fresher and hardier bands of co-religionists; moreover they could pay greater attention to the security of the vulnerable frontiers. The Muslims could not be inspired by the hoary traditions of

Magadha to drink from the wells of Candragupta, Asoka or Vikramāditya. Delhi, owing to its central position for an all-India empire, could not lose its importance.

As a matter of fact a critical comparative study of Magadha through the centuries of its past history impresses on readers an idea that Magadha since the end of the Mauryan age was gradually going down. Her best days were the Mauryan times; she then reached the height of political greatness, international prestige and spiritual leadership. Then came a temporary set-back; under the Guptas the good days returned; but in more than one sense we lose the Mauryan touch. The empire is not so extensive, the moral plane is not as high, sculpture does not overreach the lion capital, and we seek in vain for a Kauṭilya. The Gupta Age is the classis age of Indian civilisation, but after the end of the Gupta empire the eclipse of Magadha is more pronounced. In the time of the later Guptas and the Pālas, great strides are made in the realm of religion, thought, art and politics, but the excellence of the Gupta Age is not even approached, except in the field of education. Thus the history of Magadha is a zig-zag curve with the next top always lower than the former. But will not the wheel of history turn back the trend?

Appendix Ia.

DEPARTMENT OF COINS AND MEDALS,
BRITISH MUSEUM,
LONDON, W.C.1.

14th Apr. 48

Dear Mr. Sinha,

The report from the Laboratory on the late Gupta coins arranges them in the following order of purity:

					Gold
1.	Skandagupta.	B.M.C. 428	Specific gravity	15.3	78%
2.	Kumāragupta II	B.M.C. 571	" "	15.38	79%
3.	Purugupta.	B.M.C. 550	" "	15.06	77%
4.	Prakāśāditya.	B.M.C. 552	" "	15	77%
5.	Narasinhagupta.	B.M.C. 560	" "	14.1	71%
6.	Narasinhagupta.	B.M.C. 565	" "	12.29	54%
7.	Vainyagupta.	B.M.C. 589	" "	14.54	73%
8.	Kumāragupta II (?III)	B.M.C. 576	" "	12.26	54%
9.	Śaśānka.	B.M.C. 608	" "	12.65	58%
10.	Viṣṇugupta.	B.M.C. 598	" "	11.32	43%
11.	Jaḍagupta.	B.M.C. 614	" "	10.56	34%

These show that you are right in attributing the base Ku coins to a Kumāragupta III and suggest that Vainya is earlier than appears in the B.M. Catalogue. The difference between Skandagupta and Kumāragupta is too insignificant to make any serious difference in time probable.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd. J.Allan)

B.P. Sinha Esq.

Appendix Ib.

DEPARTMENT OF COINS AND MEDALS,
BRITISH MUSEUM,
LONDON, W.C.1.

24 Apr. 48

Dear Mr. Sinha,

The gold coin of Skandagupta, no. 417, proves to be of the same quality as the other - 75% pure gold. The Śas'ānka (no.611) on the other hand is copper with a plating of silver which probably had a thin wash of gold over it anyway.

Yours sincerely

(Sgd.) J.Allan.

B.P. Sinha Esq.,
c/o The School of Oriental Studies.

Appendix Ic.

DEPARTMENT OF COINS AND MEDALS,
BRITISH MUSEUM,
LONDON, W.C.1.

3 May 48.

Dear Mr. Sinha,

The following are the purities of the gold coins you asked about.

Skandagupta.

No.	417.	74%
	418.	74%
	419.	67%
	422.	67%
	423.	72%
	426.	79%
	427.	76%
	428.	79%

Purugupta (Hoey). 70%

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) J.Allan.

Appendix 2.

The Coinage of the Maukharis.

Silver coins of the Maukhari kings Īśānavarman, Śarvavarman, and Avantivarman have been found in the United Provinces.[1] But the dates on these coins are not clear and therefore have given rise to diverse readings and numerous speculations about the era or the eras to which they belong. The different readings of the dates on the coins by scholars may be best illustrated by the table given below.

king.	Cunningham[2]	Rapson[3]	Burn[4]	Brown[5]	Dikshit[6]
Īśānavarman	55? or 155 257	54 55	4x?	4x xx5?	54 55 57 245 257
Śarvavarman		58	234? 23x?	(2)34 (2)3x	258 259 25x 58
Avantivarman			250 57(?) or 67(?) 71	250 -57 -70	260 26x 67(?) 71

1. J.R.A.S. 1906 pt II pp843f
2. C.A.S.R. IX, p.27, Plate V, No.20-22; ibid, No. XVI, p.81.
3. India Coins, p.27
4. J.R.A.S. 1906, part II, pp. 843ff.
5. Catalogue of the coins of the Guptas, Maukharis etc. in the Provincial Museum, Lucknow, pp.39-40.
6. Aravamuthan, op.cit. p.103 and footnote 4.

The first point that strikes us, besides the differer readings of the dates on the coins by learned scholars, is tha some coins have their dates in two and some in three digits. Burn[1] suggested that the two-digit dates may be taken to belong to a Maukhari era; the three-digit ones being in the Gupta era, some even in the Kalachuri era if the reading of 257 on one of the coins of Īśānavarman by Cunningham is to be accepted. From the Harāhā inscription it is clear that the Maukharis also used the Vikrama era on their inscriptions.[2] Therefore if the theory of Burn is to be accepted, it means that altogether four eras were simultaneously used by the Maukharis on their coins and inscriptions, including an era started by themselves. This is certainly a contingency which is obviously very improbable and cannot be entertained without definite and overwhelming proofs, which are conspicuously lacking. It is difficult to believe that the Maukharis started an era of their own when we do not find any instance of the use of the alleged era in their inscriptions, and at the same time it is hardly comprehensible that they should use any other era or eras on their coins when they are alleged to have used their own era, on at least some

---

1. J.R.A.S. 1906, part II, p.843ff.

2. E.I. XIV. pp.110ff.

of them. The theory of the use of the Kalacuri era is also incorrect. In this part of the country where the coins of the Maukharis have been found, there is hardly any coin or inscription found which may be definitely assigned to the Kalacuri era.[1]

Therefore the only possible theory appears to be to take the dates in the Gupta era, which was very generally current in this area. The coins with two digits may be examples of "omitted hundreds", and we should put "2" in the hundred place on the two-digit coins.

But even this simplification does not solve the problem and reconcile the different readings on the coins. Cunningham[2] read 257 on one of the coins of Īśānavarman and assigned it to the Gupta era. But it is certainly puzzling, to say the least, that he did not discuss this coin nor give its photographic impression in his "Coins of Medieval India". Elsewhere he noticed three coins of Śāntivarma (Īśānavarman?), on each of which he read 55, which he would have completed to 155 if he had been sure that Śāntivarma (?) was the same king who is mentioned in the Aphsad inscription.[3] He later on appears to have doubted his reading of the dates on the coins,

1. B's List, E.I. XX, Appendix. The inscriptions of the Uchchhakalpa Mahārājas, the Paṭiākella plate of Śambhuyaśas, the Sohaval plate of Mahārāja Śubandhu are certainly not in the Kalacuri era; at least their assignment is not without doubt.

2. C.A.S.R. XVI. p.81.

3. Ibid, IX, p.27, plate V. No. 20-22.

and in his "Coins of Medieval India" he mentions two specimens of the coins of Īśānavarman from Ahicchatra and gives their impressions as well; but he remarks, "the date in front of face, not read", and from the impressions of the coins given in the plate it is impossible to read the dates with any degree of certainty.[1] Thus it is clear that no reliance can be placed on the readings of the coins of Īśānavarman by Cunningham.

According to Fleet[2] on one of the coins of Īśānavarman (no. 22 of Plate V, C.A.S.R. IX) there are two marks which may perhaps be the numerical symbols for "40", "60" or "70" and "5", but they are very imperfect and the reading is doubtful. Cunningham had read "55" on the same coin.[3] Fleet has cast doubt on the reading, but has not fixed any alternate reading because the data are not clear.

Smith[4] has read "54" on the same coin of Īśānavarman which Cunningham had described as not read.[5] Smith refers to another coin in Dr. Hoey's collection which is dated "54", and he thinks that it is probably of Īśānavarman. According to the learned author three coins in the British Museum

---

1. C.M.I. p.19, Pl. II, 12. 2. I.A. XIV, p.68
3. C.A.S.R. IX. p.27, Plate V, no. 22.
4. J.A.S.B. LXII (1894) p.193 5. C.M.I. Pl.II,12.

dated "54", but not belonging to Toramāṇa may also belong to Īśānavarman.[1] Rapson[2] also supports the reading of Smith, and Dikshit[3] accepts it. Thus there appears to be some amount of agreement among scholars on this reading, but it is not clear as to which era the date belongs. Smith[4] held that it was the same era as that used on the coins of Tormāṇa - the White Hūṇa era starting in 456 or 448 A.D. But this does not appear to be an acceptable theory as it necessitates the assumption of the circulation of at least three or four eras in the Maukhari kingdom. But if we hold that the coin is dated in 254 of the Gupta era (= 573-74 A.D.), this leads to serious contradiction, as the coins of Sarvavarman are dated in 234 G.E. and the coin of Avantivarman in 250.

Thus the dates on the coins of Īśanavarman are so imperfect and hence so doubtful that nothing can be made out of them. B.B.Vidyavinoda, therefore, rightly omitted any reference about dates on the coins of Īśānavarman in his Supplementary Catalogue.[5]

Similar uncertainty prevails about the dates on the coins of Sarvavarman and Avantivarman as well. There is some

---

1. J.A.S.B. LXIII, p.193.
2. Indian Coins, p.27, Pl.iv,13
3. See the table above
4. J.A.S.B. LXIII, p.193.
5. Supplementary Catalogue of the Coins of the Indian Museum (non-muhammedan series), Calcutta, pp 36-37

amount of agreement on the date "58" on one of the coins of Sárvavarman. But on two coins of Sárvavarman, Burn[1] reads "234" and"23x" but observes that the "reading '200' is not quite certain". If the readings of Burn are accepted together with the readings of Smith and Rapson, then we have to assume the use of two different eras on the coins of the same Maukhari ruler. Dikshit, in order to avoid the anomaly, emends the readings of the coins of Sárvavarman, but absence of any grounds for his alterations, we cannot accept his readings as opposed to the readings of other scholars. Another difficulty is that the reading of "234" for the coin of Sárvavarman, which is equivalent to 553 A.D., is against the testimony of the Harāhā inscription, according to which Īśánavarman was ruling in 554 A.D.[2] In view of all these facts it is safe to conclude that in the present state of our knowledge we can attach no importance to the coins of Īśānavarman and Sárvavarman for the specific purpose of their chronology.

The coins of Avantivarman further complicates the situation. On one of his coins the date is read as "250", and it is said to belong to the Gupta era.[3] But it is against the reading "257" on one of the coins of Īśānavarman.[4]

---

1. J.R.A.S. 1906, p.843ff.
2. E.I. XIV, p.110ff; I.A. XLVI, p.125ff.
3. J.R.A.S. 1906, pp843ff.
(4) CASR XVI p 81

If the two-digit coins are also in the same era as the three-digit ones and therefore in the Gupta era, then the reading "250", which is considered to be "distinct", contradicts all the dates, as read, on the coins of Īśāna-varnam and Śarvavarman. If the reading of "57" on one of the coins of Avantivarman is accepted,[1] then it is difficult to explain the date "58"(?) on the coin of Śarvavarman. Piers[2] had imagined that it was possible that Avantivarman had rebelled and set himself up as an independent ruler in 250 G.E. (569-70 A.D.). But the discovery of the Nālandā seals[3] has conclusively proved that Avantivarman was the son of Śarvavarman, and there is no ground to imagine his rebellion in 568 A.D. Therefore the readings of the dates on the coins of Śarvavarman and Avantivarman must be wrong. Burn[4] appeared to be sure of "250", but felt that "57" may be "67"; while Dikshit changed "250" into "260". Even if we accept the readings of Dikshit, we have to allot a reign of hardly three or four years to Śarva-varman, which appears to be too short for him as he has left many coins and inscriptions and even seals.

Dikshit's readings have one great advantage that

---

1. J.R.A.S. 1906, p.843ff.
2. The Maukharis, pp.162-63
3. E.I. XXIV, p.283ff.
4. J.R.A.S. 1906, p.843ff.

they reconcile all the contradictions involved in the different readings by the scholars; and the suggested readings also do away with the need of assuming different eras, and all of them can be assigned to the Gupta era.[1] But unfortunately, we do not know the grounds on which Dikshit based his revised readings. His paper, which he submitted to the Second Oriental Conference, was not published in its proceedings, and we do not know if it is published anywhere. Aravamuthan[2] refers to this and gives the conclusions of Dikshit without giving his reasons. The readings are so much at variance with those of other learned scholars that it is impossible to accept the opinion of Dikshit without actual verification of the coins under review. But now it is impossible. N.G. Majumdar observes, "Through the courtesy of Mr. R.D. Bannerji I had occasion to examine the hoard of the Maukhari coins (discovered in the Fyjabad district), now deposited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, I am sorry to say that the date-marks on the coins of Īśānavarman (as well of other Maukhari kings) have totally disappeared and as such it is impossible to say at which particular date these coins were issued. So it is better not to infer anything from them and hazard a doubtful reading

---

1. See table above.

2. Aravamuthan, op.cit. 103 and footnote 4.

that may or may not be correct. I may add that Mr. Bannerji is also of the same opinion and I am sure that will be the opinion of all who examine the coins with care."[1] Brown[2] would also "hesitate to accept" the readings of dates on these coins of the Maukhari kings. B.B. Vidyavinoda does not refer to the dates of the coins of the Maukhari kings, when he describes them in the Supplementary Catalogue.[3] Aravamuthan, who has discussed the subject very thoroughly, concluded that, "We have, thus, very little justification for building elaborate arguments on the basis of these readings. They are so various and fanciful ..... that little reliance can be placed on them".[4]

In view of the discussion above, we are disposed to brush aside the evidence of the dates on the coins of the Maukhari kings for the purpose of building the chronology of the period. Even if the readings "54" and "55" on the coins of Īśānavarman be correct, as there is some amount of understanding between scholars on this, it is not certain to which era they belong, and so long as it is not settled nothing can be concluded about the dates of the kings on the

---

1. I.A. XLV. p.125f.

2. Catalogue of the Coins of the Guptas, Maukharis, etc. in the Provincial Museum, Luknhow. Introduction, p.v.

3. Supplementary Catalogue of the Coins of the Indiam Museum, Calcutta, (non-Muhammedan Series) pp.36-37.

4. The Kāverī, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age, p.106.

basis of their coins.

But this does not reduce the historical importance of the coins. They corroborate the testimony of epigraphy and confirm that Īśānavarman, Śarvavarman and Avantivarman were independent and sovereign rulers. The fact that no coin of Īsvaravarman has been found so far may strengthen the belief that he was not an independent ruler; and from the inscriptions also we know that Īsvaravarman was a mere "mahārāja" and Isanavarman was the first "mahārājādhirāja" in the family, and we have his coins which have their head to the left as opposed to the silver coins of the Guptas. The way in which the head of the coins of the Maukharis faces on the coins may suggest their relationship with the Guptas. The inscriptions also speak of hostile relations between the Guptas and the Maukharis.

Appendix 3.

Sūryavarman.

From the Sirpur stone inscription of Mahāśivagupta[1] we learn that his mother was Vāsaṭā, daughter of King (nṛipa) Sūryavarman "born in the unblemished family of the Varmans, great on account of (their) supremacy over Magadha". The Harāhā stone-inscription of the time of Īśānavarman[2] informs us that his son Sūryavarnam repaired the śiva temple in (v) s. 611 (= 554 A.D.). Raychaudhuri[3] suggested that King Sūryavarman of the Sirpur inscription may be identified with the Maukhari prince Sūryavarman of the Harāhā inscription.

But several objections have been raised against this. It has been urged by A.Ghosh[4] that the Maukharis of the line of Harivarman "were never characteristically a Magadhan dynasty, their headquarters being at Kanauj." But this does not appear to be a valid objection. The Sirpur inscription does not refer to Sūryavarman's dynasty as a Magadhakula or a Magadhan dynasty: the Varman dynasty (Kula) is famous for its supremacy over Magadha (Magadhādhipatyamahatām jātaḥ kule Varmaṇām). The imperial Maukhari line of

---

1. E.I. XI. p.184f. vs.11-12. 2. E.I. XIV. p.110f.
3. P.H.A.I. 4th edition p.512, note 1. 4. E.I. XXV, pt.VI, p.266f.

Harivarman came into possession of Magadha in the time of Sarvavarman, the son of Īśānavarman: this is proved by the Nālandā seal of Sarvavarman[1] and the Deo-Barnārk inscription of Jīvitagupta II.[2] The conquest of Magadha was bound to give tremendous prestige to the Maukhari dynasty; and hence the Varmana dynasty of Sūryavarman is referred to by the proud epithet "great on account of its supremacy over Magadha".

The Maukhari dynasty is the only "Varman" dynasty which is known to have exercised suzerainty over Magadha. All the members of this dynasty have names ending in "Varman". The only Sūryavarman born in the family of the Varmans, who exercised sovereignty over Magadha, is the Maukhari prince Sūryavarman, son of Īśānavarman. Hirahak suggested[3] that the Sūryavarman of the Sirpur inscription belonged to the 8th Century A.D., and was a member of a Varman dynasty of Western Magadha. In the light of the known history of Magadha it is hardly possible to postulate a Varman dynasty buling in Magadha in the 8th Century. Pūrṇavarman was dead before 641 A.D. and there is no evidence that a descendant of his would continue to exercise sovereignty over Magadha after the lapse of about one hundred years.

A more serious objection that may be raised is that

---

1. Ibid, XXI, pp.73-74
2. C.I.I. III, No. 46, p.213f.
3. E.I. XI, p.184f.

Sūryavarman of the Sirpur inscription is addressed as (nṛipaḥ) and there is no proof that Sūryavarman, son of Īśānavarman, ever came to the throne. Īśānavarman was succeeded by Śarvavarman and the latter by Avantivarman.[1] It may be pointed out that such seals and inscriptions are genealogical, not dynastic, and it is not impossible that Sūryavarman, the son of Īśānavarman, may have come to the throne, but was ousted by Śarvavarman or his son Avantivarman.[2] But there is no need to postulate any was of succession after the death of Īśānavarman or Śarvavarman. The title "nṛipaḥ" does not necessarily mean a full-fledged independent ruler. Sāmanta-cūḍāmaṇi Śārdūla is addressed as "nṛipaḥ";[3] Yajñararman is also called "nṛipaḥ",[4] Kṛiṣṇagupta is referred to as "nṛipaḥ";[5] Viśvavarman and Bandhuvarman of Malwa are mentioned as "nṛipaḥ";[6] the Parivrājaka Mahārājas are referred to as nṛipatis.[7] All these rulers were feudatories of their overlords and cannot be regarded as completely independent sovereigns. According to Amarakośa "'nṛipa' is another

---

1. The Asirgarh Seal, C.I.I. III, No.47, p.219f; E.I. XXI, p.74-75; ibid XXIV, p.283f.; C.I.I. III, No. 46, p.213f.
2. E.I. XXII, p.15f.; Q.J.M.S. XXX, p.315.
3. C.I.I. III. No. 48, p.223.
4. Ibid, No. 49, p.224.
5. Ibid, No. 42, p.202f.
6. Ibid, No. 18, p.82.
7. Ibid, No. 21, p.95.

name for mandaleśvara."[1] Thus it is clear that the title "nripa" was often used by feudatories. It appears that after his conquest of Magadha, Śarvavarman appointed his brother Sūryavarman as the governor of Magadha, and the latter may have been allowed to be addressed as "nripa". The conquest of Magadha by the Maukharis may be dated in C.582 A.D. and it was about this time that Sūryavarman married his daughter Vāsatā to Harṣagupta, the Somarvaṁśī Pāṇḍaya king of Mahākosala.

The Pāṇḍava Somarvaṁśī kings of Mahākosala trace their descent from Udayana.[2] An inscription found at Kālanjar refers to the building of a temple of Bhadreśvara by Pāṇḍavavaṁśī Udayana in former times.[3] Kielhorn[4] identified him with Udayana, the ancestor of the Somavaṁśī kings of Mahākosala. Recently a copper-plate inscription has been discovered in the Sohagpur taksil of the Rewa state in Baghalkhand in Central India. The inscription mentions a Pandavavaṁśī dynasty consisting of Jayabala, Vatsarāja, Nāgabala and Bharata alias Indrabala, ruling over Mekalā. B.Ch.Chhabra[5] took this dynasty to be a contemporary rival

---

1. Amarakośa II, (VIII), No. 2, p.180.
2. I.A. XVIII, p.179.
3. C.A.S.R. XII, p.40, pl.IXL.
4. J.R.A.S. 1905, p.221.
5. Bhārata-Kaumudī, p.215f.

clan with the Pāṇḍavavaṁśī kings of Mahākosala. V.V. Mirashi[1] has taken this Central Indian dynasty to be the ancestors of the Mahākosala kings, and held Bharata or Indrabala of the inscription to be the grandfather of Indrabala, son of Udayana. According to the learned scholar Indrabala II, son of Udayana, was ousted from the Mekalā region by Hastin, the Parivrājaka king. Indrabala fled to Mahākosala, and joined the service of the Śarabhapura king, Mahāsudeva, as in the Sārangarh plates[2] of the Śarabhapura king we come across a Mahāsāmanta Indrabalarāja who is most probably the same man, son of Udayana and father of Īśānadeva. V.V. Mirashi[4] has conclusively proved, and it has been accepte by A.Ghosh[5] and D.C. Sarkar[6] that the Śarabhapura kings preceded, not followed, the Somavaṁśī kings in Mahākosala, as Hira Lal[7] had suggested. From the Kharod inscription[8] it is apparent that Indrabala and his son Īśānadeva were rulers of Bilaspur district. It is very likely that Indrabala overthrew Mahapravara, the last Śarabhapura king, and thus began the rule of the Somavaṁśī kings in Mahākosala. Thus it is

---

1. Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute, Vol XIII, p.47f.
2. I.H.Q. XXI, pp.274-75.
3. Ibid, XXII, p.62f.
4. E.I. XXII, p.15f.
5. Ibid, XXV, p.268.
6. I.H.Q. XIX, p.143.
7. N.P.P. (N.S.) XX, p.1f.
8. E.I. XX, Appendix, p.229, No. 1651.

evident that the early members of this dynasty had their centre of activity in Northern India, and it is not out of the realm of possibility that there they may have come into contact with the Maukharis. We have already seen that Udayana was associated with the Kālanjar region. From the Barāh copper-plate of Bhojadeva[1] we come to know of one Parameśvara Śārvavarman holding sway in Kālanjara-maṇḍala. We[2] have identified him with the Maukhari king Śārvavarman. Besides many reasons given in support of this identification, we may here add another valuable one. In the Barāh copper-plate it is stated that Nāgabhaṭa signified his assent (Nagabhatadevānumatim dṛiṣṭvā) to the grant of Parameśvara Sarvavarman. On this ground Bhandarkar had taken Śārvavarman to be a feudatory of Nāgabhaṭa II. In the Daulatpura plate of Bhojadeva[3] it is stated that Nāgabhaṭa signified his consent to a grant made by Vatsarāja (Vatsarajadevena ..... śāsanena dattā ..... Nāgabhaṭadevenā-numatir-dattā). Nobody would suggest that Vatsarāja was a feudatory of his son Nāgabhaṭa. 'Anumati' here, then, means renewal. So the grant of the Maukhari king Śārvavarman was renewed by Nāgabhaṭa as the grant of Bālāditya[4] was renewed by Śārvavarman. We do not know when Kālanjar

---

1. E.I. XIX, p.15f.
2. See infra.
3. E.I. V. p.208f.
4. C.I.I. III, No. 46, p.213f.

came under the Maukharis. In the inscriptions we often find Kālanjaramaṇḍala included in the bhukti of Kānyakubja. The Maukharis had made themselves de facto rulers of Kānyakubja in the last years of the 5th or the early years of the 6th century. It is possible that the Maukhari advance into the Kalanjar region and Mahārāja Hastin's push into Mekalā induced Indrabala to proceed to Mahākosala and seek service under the contemporary Śarabhapura king, who employed him as an high officer in the state. Thus for some time early Pāṇḍava kings may have been the feudatories of the Maukharis.[1] From the Maukhari inscriptions[2] we come to know that probably Īsvaravarman, and certainly Īśānavarman led a campaign or campaigns against the Andhra king, who was most probably Mādhavarvarman I, of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin family.[3] It is very likely that the Somavaṁśī kings helped the Maukharis against the Viṣṇukuṇḍins. Tīvaradeva, son of Nannadeva and grandson of Īśānadeva, may have been the contemporary king of Mahākosala, and helped Īśānavarman against Mādhavarvarman I. Tīvaradeva is referred to in his seals as "Kosalādhipati",[4] and in the Baloda plates he is

---

1. Pro.I.H.C. III, p.319f.
2. C.I.I. III, no. 51, p.228; E.I. XIV, p.110f.
3. J.L. XXVI, p.96f.; P.H.A.I. 4th Edn. p.509.
4. C.I.I. III, No. 81, p.291f.; E.I. VII, p.102f.

said to have "acquired the sovereignty of the whole of Kosala". The Rajim[1] and Baloda plates[2] were issued from Śrīpura. Thus it is clear that Tīvaradeva was the ruler of the entire country of Mahākosala, and Īśānavarman's push into the South-East must have been through this country, as was the route followed by Samudra Gupta. This event must have happened before 554 A.D., the date of the Harāhā inscription.[3] Soon after then Īśānavarman came into conflict with Kumāra Gupta of the later Gupta dynasty, and was defeated.

Mādhavavarman I, the Viṣṇu-Kuṇḍin, must have been anxious to avenge the defeat, and a marriage with a Vākāṭaka princess[4] must have still further goaded him to occupy Kosala, which not long before had recognised Vākāṭaka suzerainty.[5] He invaded Mahākosala, defeated Tīvaradeva and entered "Trivaranagara", where he "delighted the hearts of the young women standing on (the top of) the palaces of Trivaranagara".[6] The earliest inscription to mention this event is the first set of Ipur plates dated in the 37th year of Mādhavavarman's reign.[7] D.C. Sarkar[8] held that

---

1. C.I.I. III, No. 81, p.291f.
2. E.I. VII, p.102f.
3. E.I. XIV, p.110f.
4. J.L. XXVI, p.97, note 1.
5. E.I. IX, p.267f.
6. E.I. XVII, p.336.
7. Ibid.
8. J.L. ~~XXVI~~ p.112. J.A.H.R.S. VI p.17f.

"Trivaryanagara means city of Trivara". This "Trivara" should be identified with Tīvaradeva.[1] Thus it is clear that before the 37th year of his reign, Mādhavavarman I had fully avenged his defeat, and in course of the struggle Tīvaradeva m have lost his life. The event may have happened in C.570 A.D. Tīvaradeva's brother Candragupta had to face "an insurmountable task", and he accomplished this "single-handed" as he had"no guide" nor "any friend (who can) share the burden."[3] The apparent suggestion is that Candragupta inherited an unhappy situation, and with great difficulty he retrieved his lost fortunes; the weakness of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin kingdom after the death of Mādhavavarman may have facilitated this task. The Maukharis saw an obvious advantage in contracting a matrimonial alliance with the Somavaṁśī dynasty of Mahākosala. So Sūryavarman's daughter, Vāsaṭā, was married to Harṣagupta, son of Candragupta. The event may have happened in C.582-3A.D. It is not improbable that the Maukharis may have helped Candragupta or Harṣagupta in rehabilitating the kingdom after the sack by the Viṣṇukuṇḍins. It has been seen that when the mention of the family of the

---

1. Ibid.

2. Mirashi (E.I. XXII, p.15f.) had at first held that Tīvavadeva's period was 530 to 550 A.D.; later on he modified his view, and observed that Tīvaradeva may have come to the throne in about 560 A.D. (ibid, XXVI, p.227f.).

3. Ibid, XI, p.194.

mother is made in the inscriptions, it generally suggests some help given by the mother's family to the dynasty. Mahāśivagupta may have come to the throne in C.596 A.D., and he ruled at least for 57 years.[1] So his period may have extended from 595 to 655 A.D.[2] Sūryavarman, the maternal grandfather of Mahāśivagupta Bātārjuna, was the governor of Magadha after its conquest by the Maukharis, and this fact together with the connection with the illustrious Maukhari family could not be ignored by Śivagupta in his inscriptions.

Thus we find that the facts of history as known from different sources can be easily fitted in without jeopardising the identification of Sūryavarman of the Sirpur inscription with Sūryavarman the son of Īśānavarman. The only objection that remains to be discussed is paleographic. Keilhorn[3] assigned the Sirpur stone-inscription of Śivagupta to the 8th or 9th Century A.D.; later on he placed it in the beginning of the 9th Century A.D.[4] Hiralal[5] placed another Sirpur grant of the same ruler in the 8th or

---

1. Q.J.M.S. XXXVI, no. I, p.1f.

2. Mirashi Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute, VIII, p.47f. suggests that the period of Mahāśivagupta extended from 590 to 650 A.D. The fact that he ruled for 57 years suggests that he may have come to the throne as a minor and his mother acted as the regent. This also explains why his maternal uncle could take his refuge there.

3. I.A. XVIII, p.179.

4. E.I. IV. p.258

5. Ibid, XI, p.184.

9th Century A.D. Kielhorn[1] held that the characters of the Sirpur stone inscription "resemble those of Ghosrawan inscription" belonging to the time of Devapāla. A Ghosh[2] has brought forward new data in support of a later date of Tīvaradeva and Śivagupta.

There is no doubt that Kielhorn was guided by the lead given by Fleet[3] that the Rajim plate of Tīvaradeva was "undoubtedly almost, if not quite, the latest record" in his Corpus of Gupta inscriptions. Fleet was himself led by his mistaken identification of Devagupta, father of Prabhāvatī-guptā with Devagupta son of Ādityasene of Magadha.[4] But it is now established[5] that Devagupta father of Prabhāvatī-guptā was no other than Candragupta II Vikramāditya of the imperial Gupta dynasty. Therefore the Vākāṭaka inscriptions of box-headed characters are not to be assigned to the 8th Century A.D., but to the 4th to 6th Centuries. The Rajim and Baloda plates of Tīvaradeva are also in the same characters, and therefore paleographically they may be placed in the 6th Century A.D. The inscriptions of his grand-nephew Śivagupta or Mahāśivagupta may belong to the 7th Century A.D.

---

1. I.A. XVIII, p.179.
2. E.I, XXV, p.266f.
3. C.I.I. III, Intro. p.16.
4. C.I.I. III, Intro. p.15.
5. J.R.A.S. XX, (N.S.)p.53f.

The characters of the Ghosrawan inscription of the time of Devapāla[1] appear to be much more developed than the characters of the Sirpur inscription. It is significant to note that the inscriptions belonging to the time of Mahāśivagupta Bālārjuna are written both in box-headed and Kuṭila scripts. The Sirpur and Lakṣmaṇa temple inscriptions are in Kuṭila script, but the Mallar and Lodhiá plates have box-headed characters.[2] "It appears that the official script was box-headed".[3] Mirashi[4] has shown that neither the script, nor the language nor the style of the inscriptions of Tīvavadiva shows that they are later in date. A Ghosh[5] pointed out that the Bhandak inscription of Nannarājādhirāja and the Sirpur inscription of Śivagupta have more developed characters than the Ārang copper-plate of Bhīmasena II, which is dated in 182 G.E. (601 A.D.),[6] and therefore even Nannadeva the father of Tīvaradeva must have flourished long after Bhīmasena II. Mirashi[7] rebutted the arguments of Ghosh by showing that the test letters had assumed the forms which we

---

1. I.A. XVII, p.307f., and plate.
2. I.A. XVIII, p.179. E.I. XI, p.184f.; Q.J.M.S. XXXVI, p.1f. E.I. XXIII, p.113f.
3. Q.J.M.S. XXXVI, p.1f
4. E.I. XXII, p.15f.
5. Ibid, XXXV, p.266f.
6. Ibid, IX, p.342f.
7. Ibid, XXVI, p.227f.

find in the Sirpur inscription much earlier than even 600 A.D., and the characters of the Harāhā inscription are not earlier than those of the Ārang plates. Therefore paleographically the Ārang plates should be earlier than even 554 A.D., and Mirashi[1] suggested that the correct reading of the date is 182, not 282 G.E. i.e. 501, not 601 A.D. D.C. Sarkar[2] disagreed with Mirashi, and upheld the reading of the date as 282. The learned scholar in order to obviate the difficulty (as he also held that the Somavaṁśī kings flourished in the 6th Century A.D.), suggested that Bhīmasena II was ruling along the northern fringe of the country. But Mirashi[3] has shown that the discovery of the Bamhani plate proves the rule of Somavaṁśī Pāṇḍavas for at least four generations in Mekalā; so there is no place for the dynasty of Bhīmasena II ruling over the northern fringe of Mahākosala in 602 A.D. It is therefore more reasonable to believe that Bhīmasena was ruling in Mahākosala in about 502 A.D. and was overthrown by Śarabhapura kings, who were followed by Indrabala and his successors of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśa. As a matter of fact a comparative examination of the plates of inscriptions belonging to the 6th to 8th Century A.D. leaves no doubt that the Sirpur stone

---

1. Ibid
2. I.H.Q. XXII, p.62f.
3. Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute, VIII, p.47f.

inscription of Śivagupta belongs to the early 7th Century, and his maternal grandfather Suryavarman could easily be the Maukhari prince of the same name.

The palaeographic chart attached herewith will show that there is no real palaeographic difficulty in attributing the Sirpur inscription of Mahāśivagupta and Vāsaṭā to the middle of the 7th Century A.D. Alphabet "K" is very similar in form to the "Kas" of Banskhera plate of Harṣa (628-29 A.D.) Ganjām plates of the time of Śaśāṅka (619-20 A.D.), and Bodh Gaya inscription of Mahānamān. Some of the "das" of the Sirpur inscription show a near approach to the later forms which are quite established in the inscriptions of Ādityasena and in Multai inscription, later in date. The letter "ha" is one of the alphabets which has the antiquated form according to Hiralal.[1] 'Mas' of the Sirpur inscription show a very close resemblance to those of the Bodh Gaya inscription of Mahānāmān (588-89 A.D.). Bipartite "ya" may be seen in the Harāhā (554 A.D.) and Mahānamān inscriptions; the same can be said of "la". Some of the "śa" of the Sirpur inscription resemble those of the Bodh Gaya inscriptioniand Midnapur plates of Śaśāṅka. Both forms of "sa" are noticed in the Sirpur inscription, but exactly the same feature is found in the Ganjām

---

1. E.I. XI, p.184..

plates of Śaśānka. Some of the "sas" of the Midnapur plates of Śaśānka show forms which are found in the Bodh Gaya inscription. The "has" of the Sirpur inscription have exactly the same forms as are to be seen in the Bodh Gaya inscription. Thus on palaeographical grounds the Sirpur inscription can be easily placed after the Bodh Gaya inscription and in the period following Śaśānka and Harṣa. The Sirpur inscription should be placed earlier than the Aphsad and Multai inscription where the more developed forms of ka, da, ma, bha, ya, ha, are regularly met with.

According to Ghosh[1] the Harāhā inscription is distinctly earlier than the Bhaṇḍak inscription of Nannarāja and the Sirpur inscription of Mahāśivagupta, and therefore Sūryavarman of the Harāhā inscription cannot be the father-in-law of Harṣagupta. But the evidence of palaeography is not as conclusive as the learned scholar thinks. There are bi-partite "yas" in the Harāhā inscription though there are the tripartite forms - the earlier ones - as well. There is nothing else which would definitely make the Harāhā inscription earlier than the Bhaṇḍak inscription of Naṇṇarāja. It is very important to bear in mind that in some later documents earlier forms may occur sporadically, as "alphabetical forms characteristic of late documents are mixed with ancient forms in much earlier documents", and, therefore, "this fact must be remembered as

---

1. E.I. XXV, p.266.

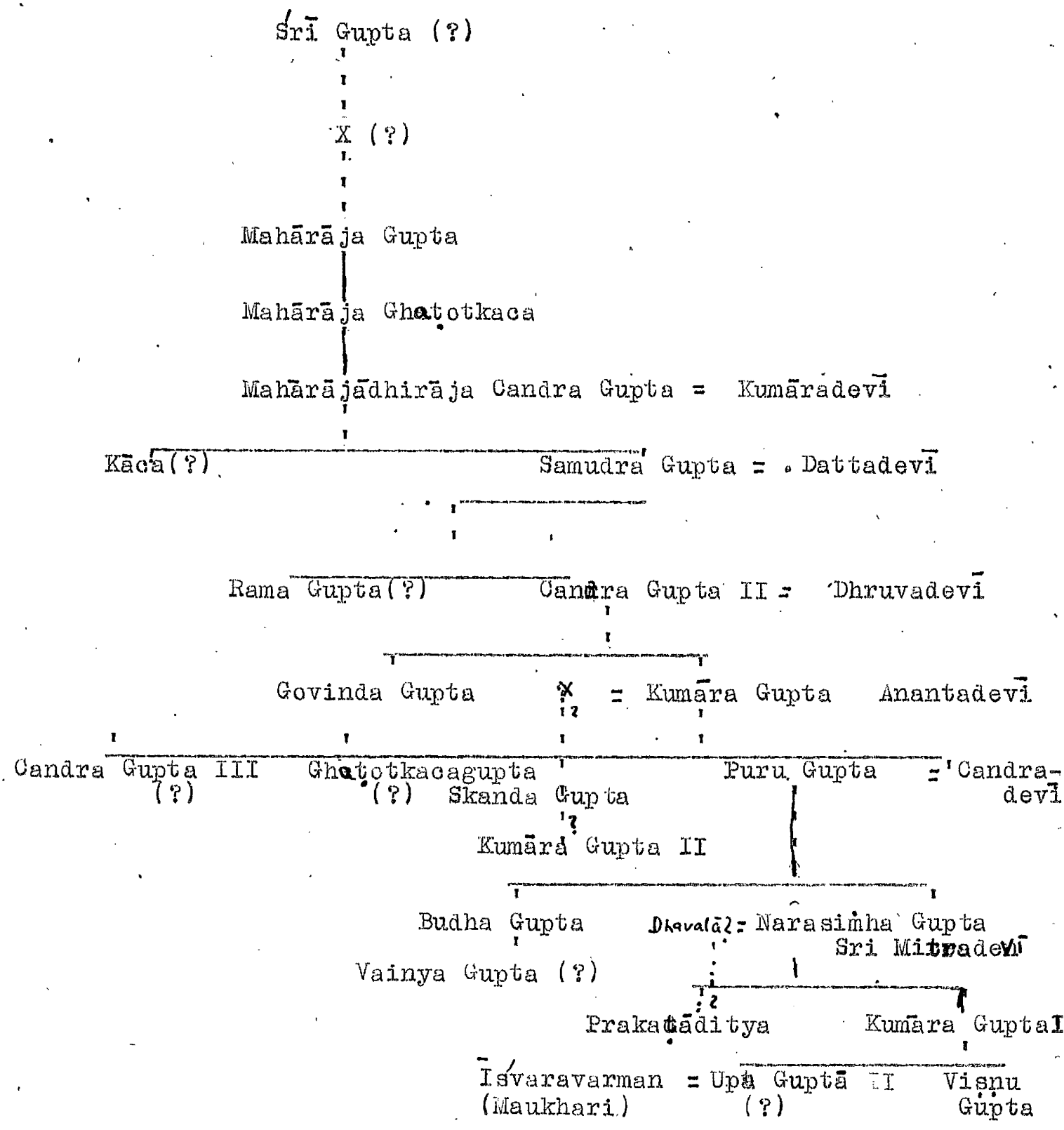
a check upon hasty determination of date based solely upon palaeographical considerations."[1] On palaeographic grounds the Arang plate of Bhīmasena should be placed earlier than the Harāhā inscription as is clear from the comparison of letters "ka", "bha", "ya", "śa" and "ha"; and we agree with Mirashi[2] in reading the date of the inscription as G.E. 182, not 282. Therefore there is no unsurmountable palaeographical hurdle in identifying Sūryavarman of the Sirpur inscription with Sūryavarman, son of Īśānavarman. It is not necessary to believe that Sūryavarman was alive when Vāsaṭā constructed the temple during the reign of her son. All the known facts of history clearly support the identification, and therefore there is no reason to doubt the identity, and then to construct an imaginary course of events. To those who put great trust in palaeographic evidence one may remind them of the learned opinion of the great indologist Sylvain lévi in whose opinion "palaeographic tests have little independent value although they may be used as a check upon or guide to the interpretation of positive history".[3]

---

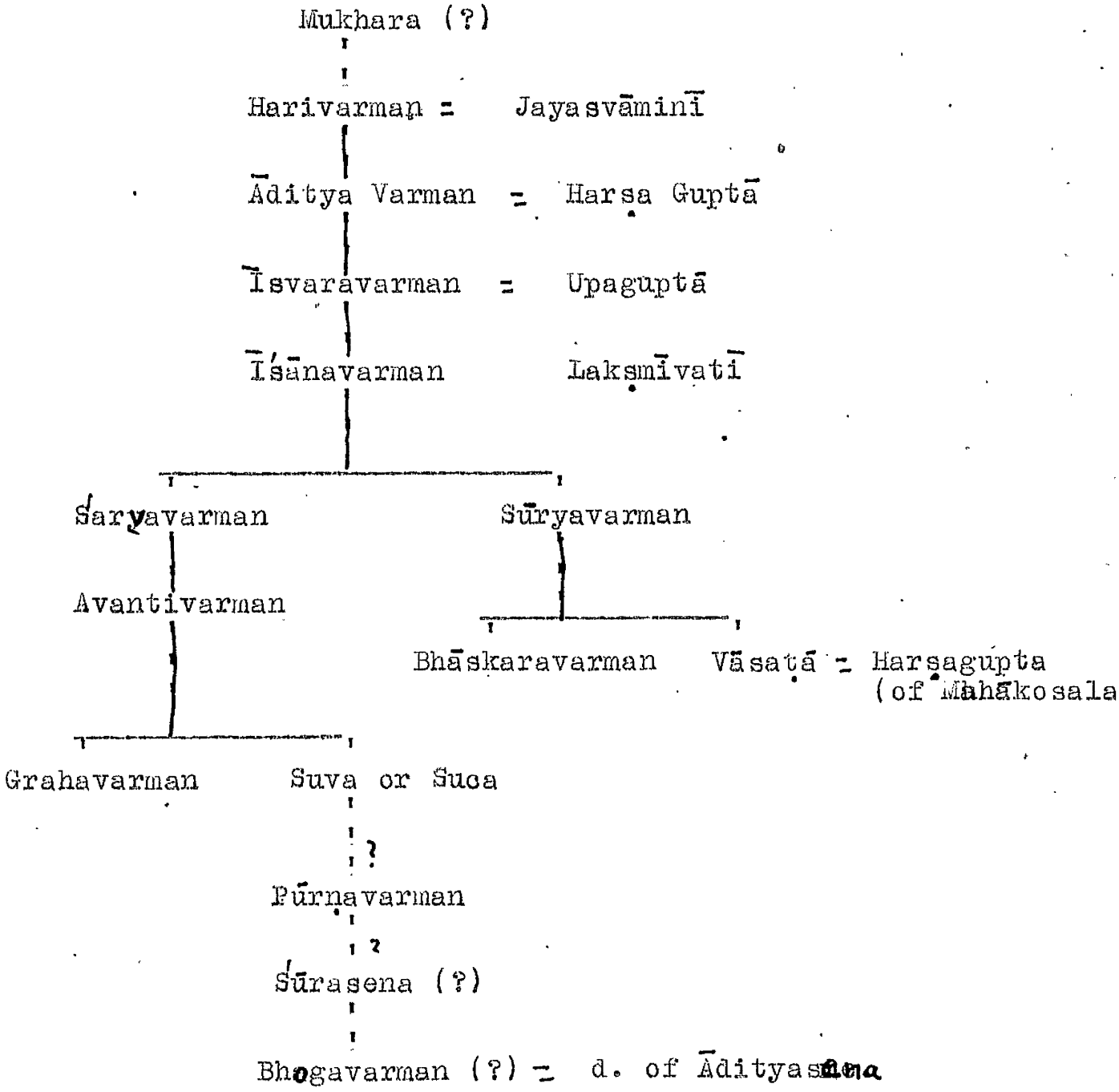
1. I.A. XXXI, p.196f.
2. E.I. XXVI, p.227f.
3. I.A. XXXI, p.196.

Genealogical Tables.

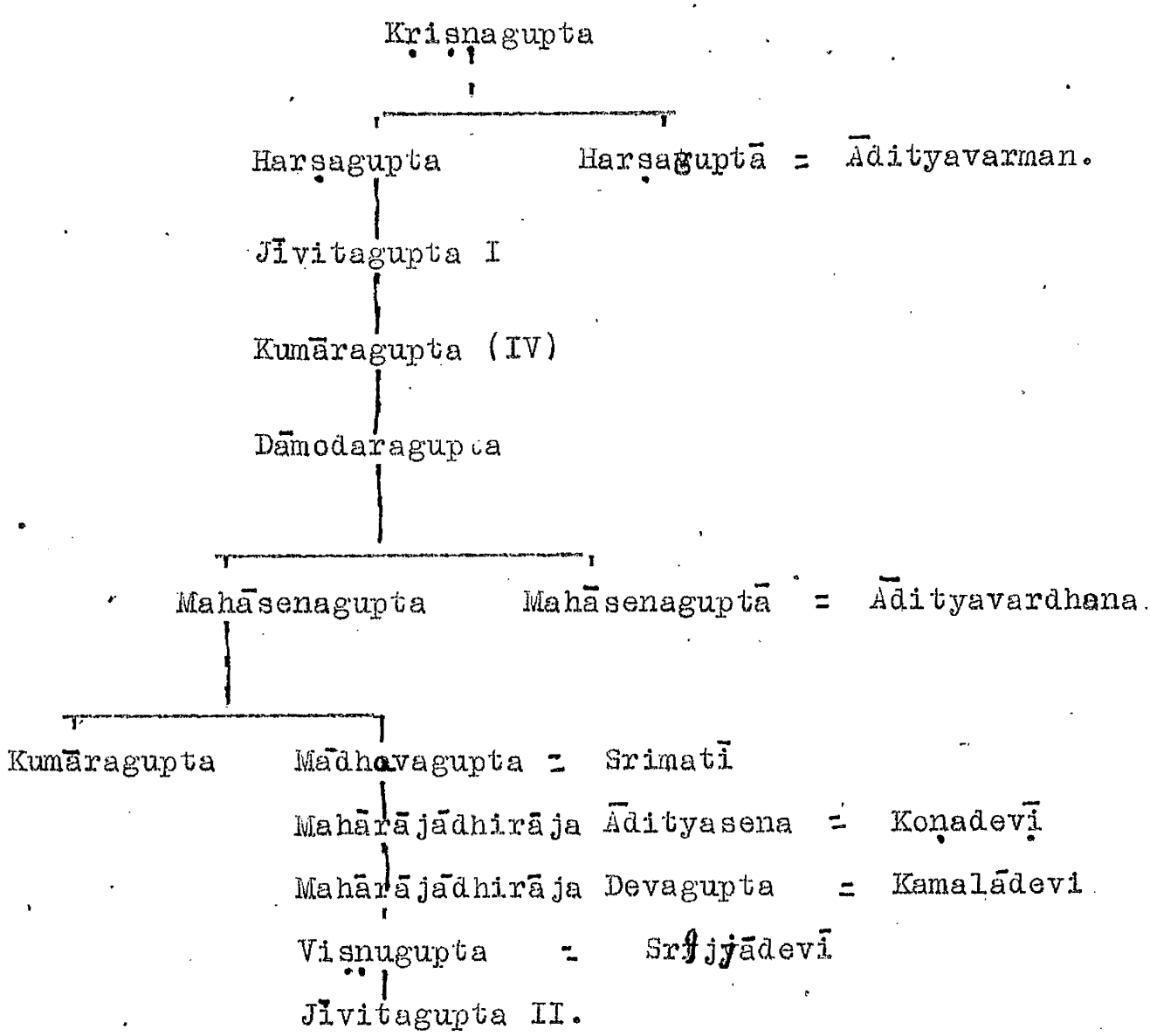
A. The Imperial Guptas.



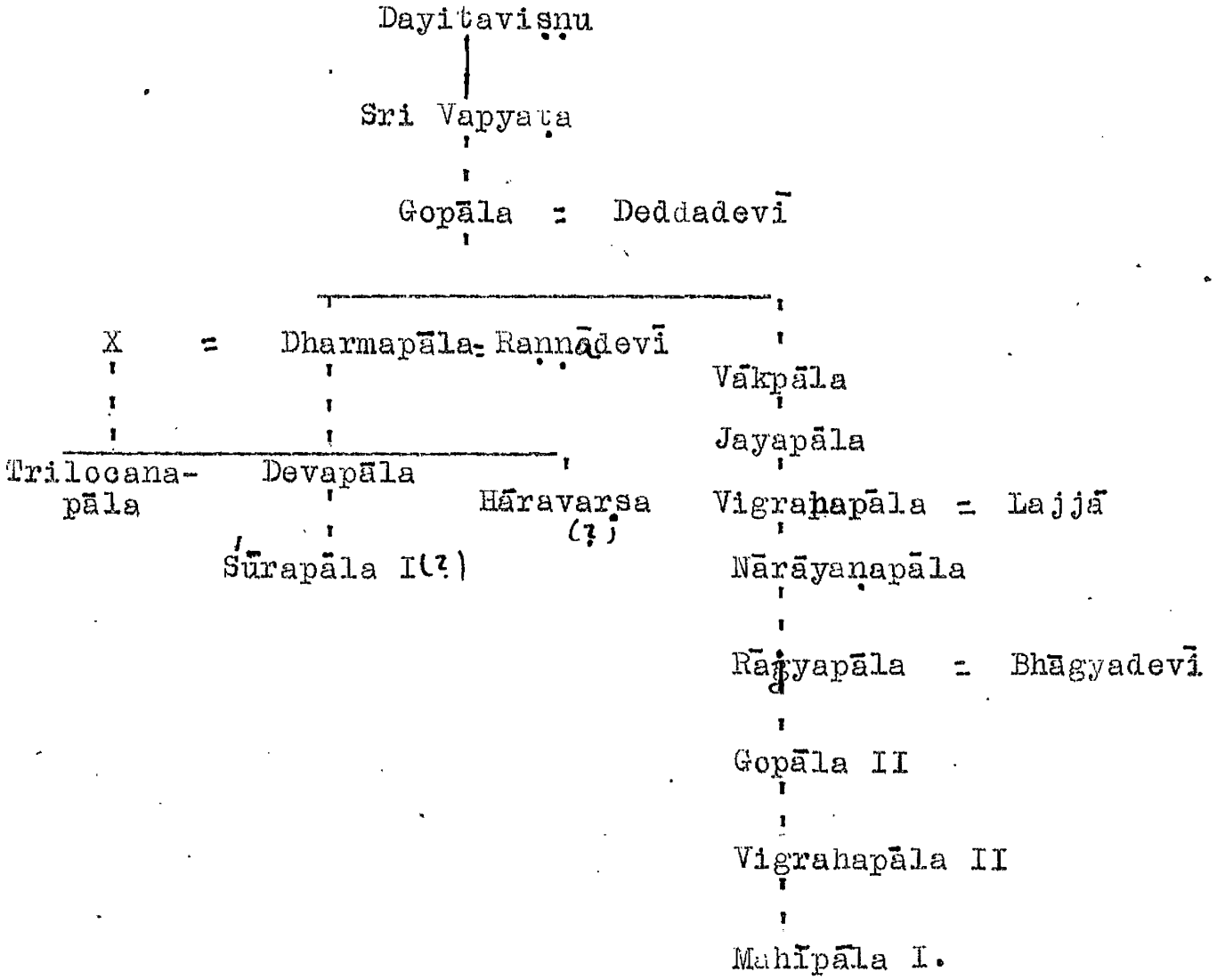
B. The Imperial Maukharis.



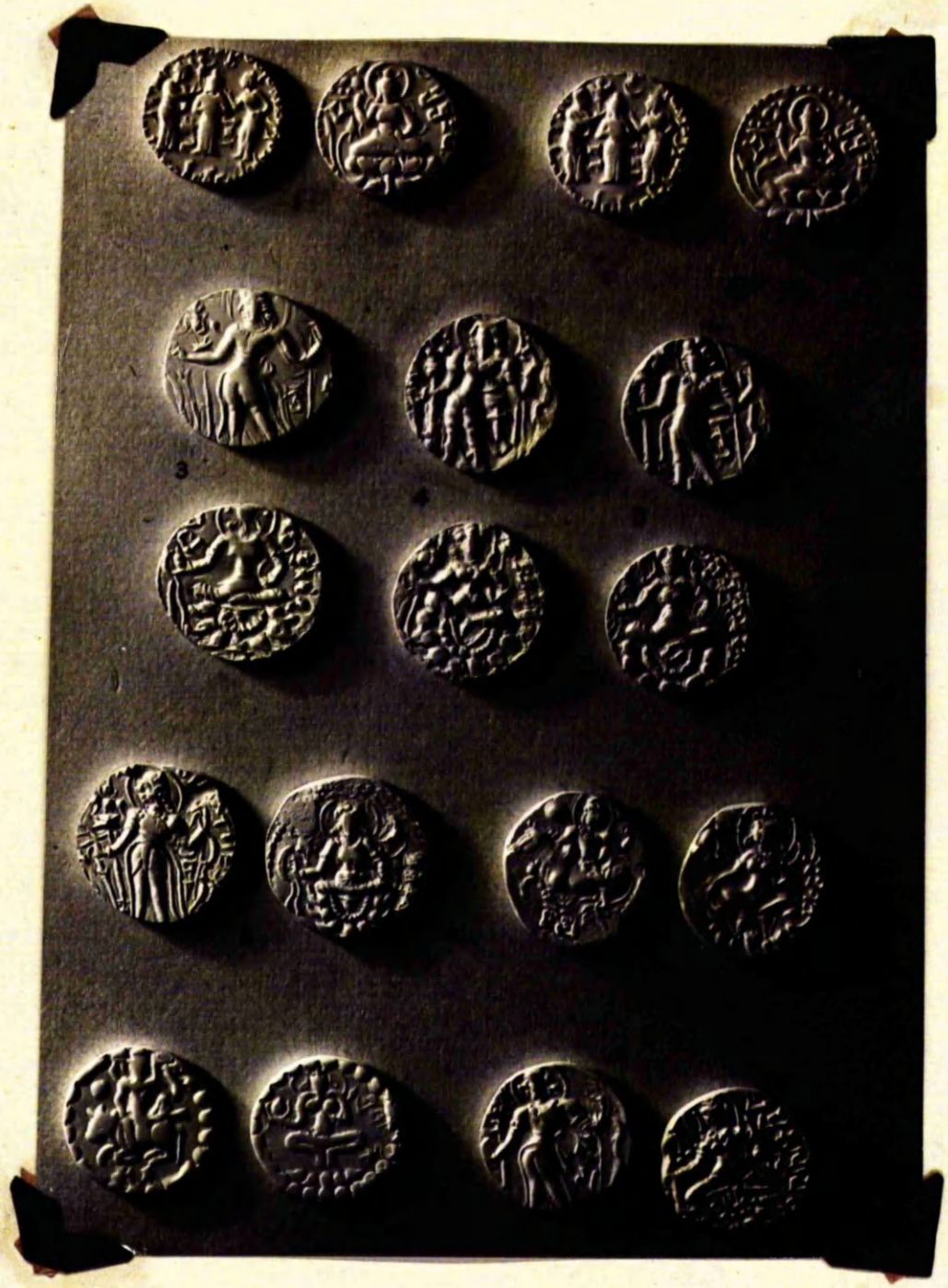
C. The Later Guptas.



D. The Pālas up to Mahīpāla I.



P L A T E. 1.



Coins of Kumâra Gupta 1(Nos.1&2);Kumâra Gupta II(No.3). Kumâra Gupta III(Nos.4&5); Puru Gupta(No.6);S's'ânka(Nos.7&8) Jaya-Nāga(No.9).

P L A T E II.

Bhitari Seal of Kumâra Gupta III.

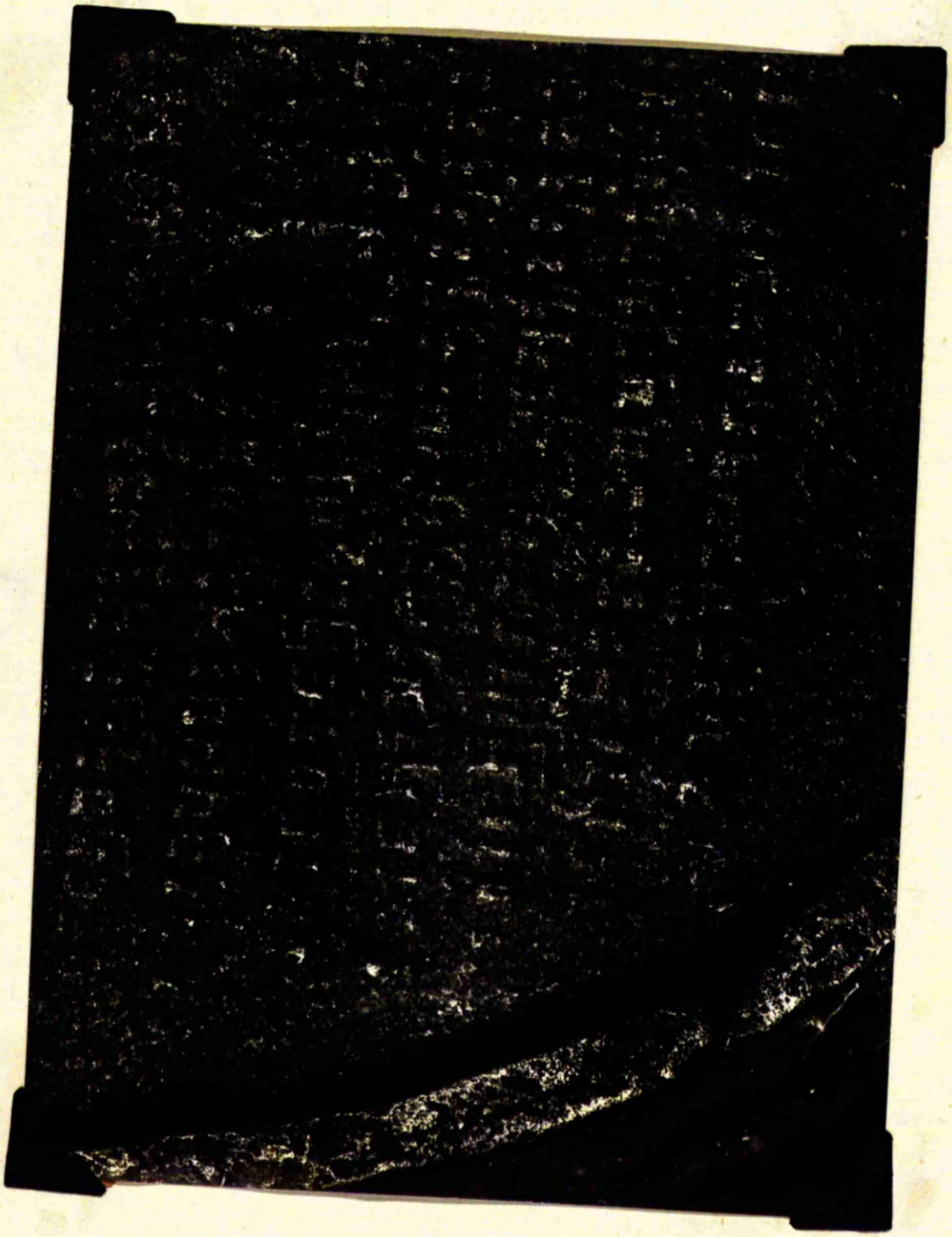
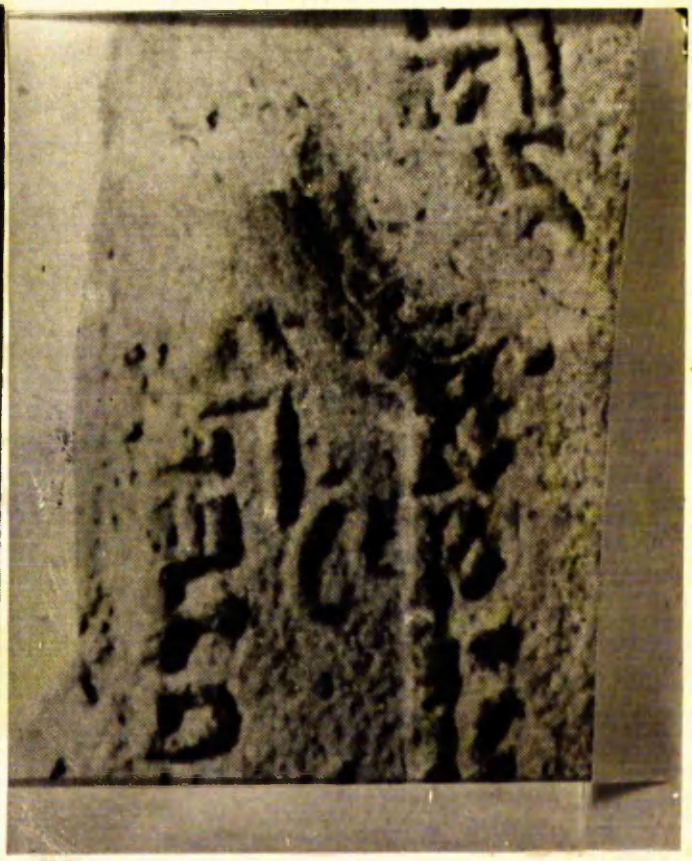


PLATE III

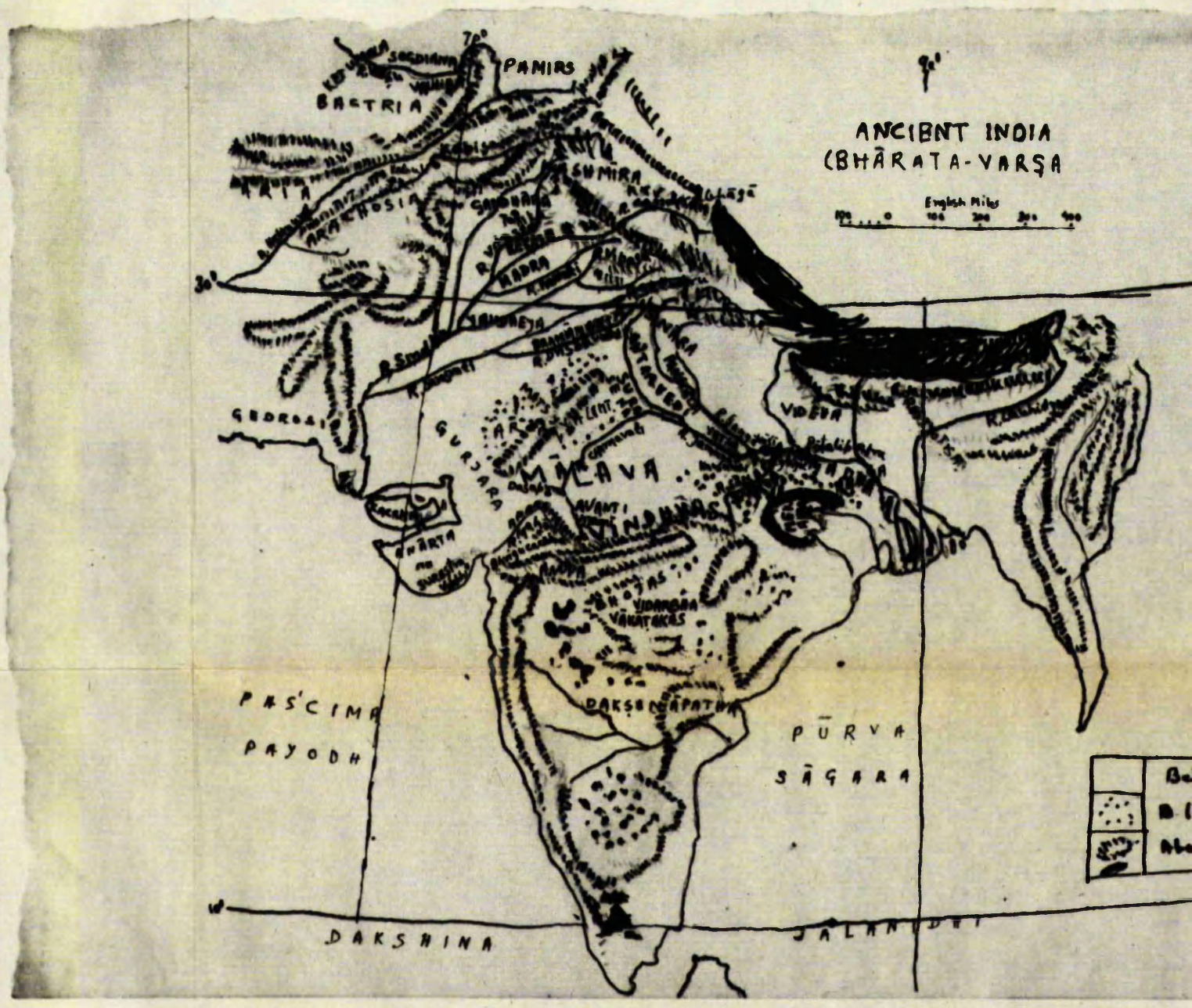
(a) Nālandā Seal of Narasimha Gupta







(b) Nālandā Seal of Kumāra Gupta III. (c) Nālandā Seal of Viṣṇu Gupta.



1 2 3 4 5
BRITISH 1 MUSEUM 2