Offprint from

ISLAM IN ASIA

VOLUME I

SOUTH ASIA

Edited by

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4c. 2.3

New bib. info.

The Origins and Significance of the Chach Nāma

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The *Chach Nāma*, which is the most extensive account of the Arab invasion of Sind in 711–712, has received less than its due share of attention. A partial translation of it was included by Elliot and Dowson.[1] A full translation was published in 1900;[2] the first and only edition of the Persian text appeared not earlier than 1939.[3] The *Chach Nāma* completely escaped the attention of modern historians who described the early expansion of Islām eastwards. Only scholars who dealt specifically with the history of Islam in India have used it to any significant extent.[4] Various opinions have been expressed regarding the reliability of the book,[5] but no systematic attempt has been made to classify the information included in it, to establish its origins whenever feasible, or to analyse the attitudes and ideas implied in some of the episodes related. The purpose of this article is to make a contribution in this direction.

I

The *Chach Nāma* may be divided into four main parts. After an extensive *basmala* and several passages praising the Prophet, extolling the commandment of *jihād* and expatiating on the virtues of Mu'izz al-Dīn Muhammad b. Sām and Nasīr al-Dīn Qabācha,[6] 'Alī b. Hāmid b. Abī Bakr Kūfī[7] relates how he came across a manuscript describing the military exploits of Muhammad b. al-Qāsim in Sind.

The manuscript was in the possession of the *qāḍī* of Alōr, Ismā'īl b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. Ṭā'ī b. Ya'qūb b. Ṭā'ī b. Mūsā b. Muḥammad b. Shihāb b. 'Uthmān al-Thaqafī.[8] It is noteworthy that the *qāḍī* claimed descent from the Arab tribe of Thaqīf to which Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim belonged.

The second part of the book describes events which took place in Sind on the eve of the Arab invasion.[9] We hear about the kingdom of Alōr, ruled by Rāi Sāhasi, about his death, about the way in which a Brahman called Chach acceded to the throne and married the late king's widow. After the death of Chach, his brother Chandra ruled for seven years. After Chandra's death, Dāhir, the son of Chach, became king of Alōr. The story is interwoven with numerous tales of palace intrigues and considerable space is devoted to the illicit marriage of Dāhir with his sister, caused by an astrologer's prediction that she would be married to the king of Alōr.

Dāhir was the ruler of Sind at the time of Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim's invasion and he is one of the principal personalities in the third part of the book,[10] which is of the greatest interest to students of Islam and will therefore be the main subject of our inquiry. The fourth part[11] deals with the pitiful end of Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim. The youthful commander sent two daughters of Dāhir, who were captured after the defeat and death of their father, to the *khalīfa*. The girls accused Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim of indecent behaviour towards them. The *khalīfa* promptly ordered that Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim be cruelly executed. When his body was brought to the *khalīfa*, the girls admitted the falsity of their accusations, explained that they made them in order to avenge the death of their father, reproached the *khalīfa* for his hasty decision and were duly executed in turn.

II

As we have said earlier, the *Chach Nāma* is the most extensive account of the Arab invasion of Sind in the early years of the eighth century. It is much more detailed than the account in al-Balādhurī's *Futūḥ al-Buldān*[12] or in any other classical Muslim historian.[13] An in-

quiry into the relationship between the *Chach Nāma* and early Arab historiography has to be made in order to establish the provenance and historical value of the book. This inquiry is considerably hampered by the great difference in size between the *Chach Nāma* and even the longest relevant account in early Arab historiography. Al-Balādhurī devoted but ten pages to a description of the Arab incursions into India from their beginning in 15 A.H. to the execution of Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim; the same events run through some 170 pages of the Daudpota edition of the *Chach Nāma*. Hence, some episodes which are extensively dealt with in the *Chach Nāma*, are either briefly mentioned or completely ignored in al-Balādhurī and the other Arab historians. Nevertheless, the comparison will yield some results.

Let us turn first to the battle descriptions and the identity of the warriors in both traditions. Here a literary dependence can be demonstrated despite the difficulties referred to above.

It is significant that both the *Chach Nāma* and *Futūḥ al-Buldān* begin the description of the Arab incursion into Sind with the same tradition: the dispatch of a raiding party to India by 'Uthmān b. Abī al-'Āṣ al-Thaqafī during the reign of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.[14] Most elements in both versions of the tradition are identical: the names of most participants, the fact that the raiding party was sent across the sea[15] and the prohibition of 'Umar against sending any further expeditions to India. There are some divergent details: according to al-Balādhurī, al-Mughīra b. Abī al-'Āṣ is said to have won the battle near Daybul; according to the *Chach Nāma* he was killed in it. According to al-Balādhurī, 'Umar prohibited further expeditions to India because of the danger involved in sea travel; the reason given in the *Chach Nāma* is the pugnacious and refractory nature of the ruler of Sind. There is also a shift of interest in the *Chach Nāma* description: while al-Balādhurī says nothing about the identity of the Indian ruler of Sind at the time, the *Chach Nāma* gives full details about him. It is evident from the very beginning that the *Chach Nāma* is going to devote much more attention to local Indian matters than al-Balādhurī deemed necessary.

The identity of this initial tradition as well as the almost identical

sequence of Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim's battles in both descriptions
indicate that the author of the *Chach Nāma* had the Arab
historiographical tradition at his disposal. Other passages also seem
to reflect the fact that Kūfī used material hinted at in Arab
historiography. *Futūḥ al-Buldān* says, for instance, that "letters of al-
Ḥajjāj were received by Muḥammad (b. al-Qāsim) and letters of
Muḥammad (b. al-Qāsim) were received by al-Ḥajjāj every three
days. Muḥammad (b. al-Qāsim) used to describe the situation to al-
Ḥajjāj and to ask his opinion about the proper course of action" (*wa
kānat kutub al-ḥajjāj tarid 'alā muhammad wa kutub muhammad tarid
[qiba] 'alayhi bi-ṣifat mā-lahu wa-'stiṭlā' ra'yihi fīmā ya'mal bihi fī kull
thalāthat ayyām*).[16] This passage evidently refers to the extensive
exchange of letters between al-Ḥajjāj and Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim
incorporated in the *Chach Nāma*. Similar conclusions can be reached
by comparing numerous episodes in both sources. The destruction of
the Daybul flag-pole was an essential factor in the conquest of the
city according to both traditions. A huge catapult called "the bride"
(*al-'arūs, 'arūsak*) and operated by 500 men was used for that purpose.
The first person to climb the walls of the city was, according to the
Chach Nāma, Sa'dī(?) b. Khuzayma of Kūfa; according to al-
Balādhurī, it was a man of Kūfa, belonging to the tribe of Murād.[17]
According to al-Balādhurī, 'Abd Allāh b. Sawār fought two battles
against the Qīqān. After the first battle, in which he was victorious, he
went to Damascus and presented Mu'āwiya with Indian horses
captured in the battle. Later he returned to India and was killed in
another battle.[18] The *Chach Nāma* also mentions 'Abd Allāh b. Sawār
and the two battles which he waged against the Qīqān. It does not
mention 'Abd Allāh's visit to Mu'āwiya; instead it has a speech in
which 'Abd Allāh encouraged his troops to fight bravely and it
mentions a duel in which warriors of both sides took part.[19] Another
part of the 'Abd Allāh b. Sawār episode seems to have been
misunderstood by Kūfī. Al-Balādhurī says that 'Abd Allāh b. Sawār
was "generous and nobody except him used to light fire in his camp"
(*wa kāna sakhiyyan lam yūqid aḥadun nāran ghayra nārihi fī 'askarihī*).[20]
The refusal of 'Abd Allāh b. Sawār to allow members of his camp to
have fires at night was intended to attract all wayfarers who were

passing by exclusively to his own fire and to enable him thereby to prove his boundless generosity. Kūfī says that "in his camp nobody lit fire, because they had (enough) provisions ready" (*wa dar lashkar-i ū hīch kas ātish na-furūkht wa* (sic) *az ān chih zād-rā sākhta wa muhayyā dāshta*).[21]

It may be said in general that a considerable number of Arab warriors who appear in the *Chach Nāma* are well-known in the Arab tradition; the names of Dāhir, Jaysinha and Dawhar are also mentioned in al-Balādhurī and other early Arab historians. The much longer *Chach Nāma* naturally contains many episodes and mentions many traditionists and warriors whom it is not easy to locate in extant Arab histories; however, the number of those who appear in both traditions is sufficient to establish that the *Chach Nāma* is dependent to a considerable extent on the Arab historical tradition. While there is little doubt regarding the validity of this rather general statement, it is not quite certain which early Arab history or histories served as sources for the *Chach Nāma*. There is some material to substantiate the suggestion that the *Chach Nāma* draws largely upon the works of al-Madā'inī.[22] Ibn al-Nadīm mentions in *Kitāb al-Fihrist* two books by al-Madā'inī which could have been used by the compiler of the *Chach Nāma*: "The book of the Indian frontier' (*kitāb thaghr al-hind*) and "The book of the governors of India" (*kitāb 'ummāl al-hind*); it is possible that "The book of the conquests of Sijistān" (*kitāb futūh sijistān*) may also be relevant.[23] Al-Balādhurī mentions 'Alī b. Muhammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Sayf (al-Madā'inī) as his source for the history of the Indian conquests;[24] the connection which we have established between *Futūh al-Buldān* and the *Chach Nāma* would suggest that the latter book also draws on al-Madā'inī. This suggestion can be corroborated by the fact that the *Chach Nāma* contains some traditions specifically attributed to al-Madā'inī in *Futūh al-Buldān*. According to one of them, a warrior called 'Amr b. Khālid killed Dāhir, the king of Sind, in battle.[25] This person seems to be 'Amr b. Khālid b. Husayn al-Kilābī, who is mentioned by al-Tabarī.[26] Al-Balādhurī says, quoting al-Madā'inī, that the person who killed Dāhir was a man from the tribe of Kilāb.[27] Hence, the tradition attributed in *Futūh al-Buldān* to al-Madā'inī appears in its full form in

the *Chach Nāma*. We must, however, point out that the *Chach Nāma*
has also another tradition regarding the same episode: according to
that one, Dāhir was killed by a person called Shujā' 'Arabī.[28] It is also
noteworthy that Abū Muḥammad al-Hindī, one of al-Madā'inī's
authorities on Indian matters,[29] and al-Madā'inī himself appear in a
few places in the *Chach Nāma*.[30] It is possible that the *kunya* Abū al-
Ḥasan, which appears several times in the *Chach Nāma*,[31] refers to al-
Madā'inī as well. It is thus likely that the *Chach Nāma* draws largely,
though not exclusively, on al-Madā'inī.

III

Having established the existence of a close connection between the
Chach Nāma and early Arab historiography, we would like to turn to
an analysis of those elements in the *Chach Nāma* which do not seem
to be mentioned by historians such as al-Balādhurī, al-Ya'qūbī or al-
Ṭabarī or appear there in a different form. One of the most con-
spicuous elements of this kind is the large number of warriors and
traditionists who figure in the *Chach Nāma* and are absent in the other
accounts of the conquest. It seems to us, however, that most of them
must have been included in the Arabic source used by Kūfī. Some of
them are persons who also played a part in events taking place
outside India and are mentioned as such in Arab historiography. For
instance, Nubāta b. Ḥanẓala al-Kilābī, who played a central role
during Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim's campaign according to the *Chach
Nāma*,[32] later became an important commander of the Umayyad
army.[33] Sufyān b. al-Abrad[34] was in 77 A.H. commander of a
campaign against the Khawārij.[35] Al-Ḥakam b. 'Awāna, who is said to
have organized the payment of taxes due to the Brahmans,[36] was
appointed governor of Khurāsān in 106 A.H.[37] Jarrāḥ b. 'Abd Allāh[38]
was governor of several provinces on behalf of the Umayyad
dynasty.[39] Though numerous other persons who appear in the *Chach
Nāma* are not to be located easily in Arab historiography, one has the
distinct impression that Kūfī had the Arab tradition at his disposal
and used it extensively. The *Chach Nāma* thus seems to be the only

extant book which contains the detailed Arab tradition regarding the conquest of Sind.

The preservation of the aforementioned tradition is only one reason for the importance of the *Chach Nāma*. Equally important is the material which does not seem to be part of early Arab historiography and represents in all probability a local Indian Muslim tradition. It is our intention now to consider how this tradition views the period of the conquest, the response of the Indian princes and population to the Arab invasion and the attitude adopted by the conquerors vis-à-vis the vanquished Indians.

The *Chach Nāma* depicts the Indian princes, with the exception of Dāhir and some members of his family, as more than willing to surrender to the Arab conquerors and to offer them their co-operation. The same attitude seems to have been adopted by the religious dignitaries. The population of the conquered territories, on the other hand, is said to have taken a much less co-operative attitude towards the Arabs. The rulers were afraid of the popular reaction to their co-operation with the conquerors to such an extent that in some cases they attempted to make their surrender look like capture.

The first Indian ruler to offer his co-operation to the Arabs was the *samanī* ruler of Nīrūn, who sent messengers to al-Ḥajjāj and volunteered to pay tribute after the unsuccessful incursion into India of Budayl b. Ṭahfa al-Bajalī,[40] even before his city came under any direct military threat. Later, when the Arab army laid siege to Nīrūn in the absence of its ruler, the people closed the gates of the fort. When the *samanī* returned after a few days, he tendered his apologies for the behaviour of the people, the fort was opened and surrendered to the Arabs.[41] In another description of the same event, not only did the *samanī* open the gates of the fort but also enabled Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim to build a mosque instead of a temple (*bi-jā but-kada masjid binā farmūd*).[42] When the army of Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim was about to attack Daybul, "suddenly a Brahman from amongst the garrison came out, asked for *amān* and said: 'Long live the just amīr! It is stated in our astrological books that the province of Sind will be conquered by the army of Islam and the infidels will be defeated. The flags of the temple are a talisman. As long as they are in place, it is not

possible to conquer the fort. You should strive to destroy the pinnacle of the temple and to tear the flags to pieces. The conquest will then be made possible.' " (...*nā-gāh brahmanī az dākhil-i ḥiṣāriyān bīrūn āmad wa amān khwāst wa guft: baqā bād amīr-i 'ādil-rā! dar kutub-i tanjīm-i mā chunān ḥukm kardand kih wilāyat-i sind bar dast-i lashkar-i islām fatḥ shawad wa kuffār munhazim gardad fa-ammā īn rāyāt-i but-khāna ṭilasm ast tā mā dāma rāyat-i but-khāna bar qarār ast żabṭ āwurdan-i īn ḥiṣār imkān na-dārad dar ān bāyad kūshīd kih sar-i īn but-khāna bi-shikanad wa rāyat-i ū pāra pāra shawad fatḥ muyassar gardad*).[43]

Prince Mōka b. Bisāya willingly agreed to Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim's suggestion to appoint him ruler of certain areas, but stressed that he was obliged to be loyal to Dāhir and could not let his submission look like surrender without a fight. His enemies and the people would consider this a disgrace. He therefore suggested that the Arabs wait for him at a certain place and take him into custody.[44] A very similar story is told of Rāsil, Mōka's brother. He also contrived to stage his own capture, but when he arrived at the place agreed on with the Arabs, his soldiers fought in earnest and Rāsil found himself in a dilemma: he "was ashamed to run away and at the same time avoided the fighting" (*rāsil az gurīkhtan nang dāsht wa az jang ham iḥtirāz mī-kard*).[45]

IV

Thus, the *Chach Nāma* describes most of the Indian leadership, political as well as religious, as collaborating with the Arabs. As for the Arabs, they were only too willing to reciprocate. Mōka b. Bisāya, who promptly surrendered to the Arabs and promised to supply them with boats which they needed to cross the Indus, was given a huge sum of money, royal insignia and a dress of honour; he was also confirmed as ruler of three districts.[46] Together with an Arab called Ḥuzaym b. 'Amr he was on one occasion put in command of a raiding party sent to pursue Dāhir's son Jaysinha.[47] When the city of Dahlīla(?) was conquered, Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim appointed

Banūna (or Nūba), son of Dhāran (or Wahāran) to be its governor.[48] The *samanī* Bawād (or Lawān) and the Buddhist Baman (or Man) Dhōl were appointed to rule the city of Manhal (or Mathal).[49] Kaksa, the cousin of Dāhir, was made counsellor to Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim and given the honorific title *mubārak mushīr*.[50] Local merchants were entrusted with the financial administration of Brahmanābād.[51]

The above-mentioned instances of Indian notables appointed governors and officials in their native localities should not obscure the fact that in many other cases Arabs are said to have been appointed to such positions. The policy of Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim in this matter is not described as consistent. Much more consistency is evident in the Arab conquerors' attitude to the structure of Indian society. Here the *Chach Nāma* presents a clear-cut picture: Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim gave his unqualified blessing to the characteristic features of the society which he encountered and sanctioned both the privileges of the high castes and the degradation of the low ones. Responding to the submission of the Brahmans of Brahmanābād, Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim declared that they were "good and faithful people" (*nikū wafā-dārān and*).[52] He re-appointed every one of them to the position which he had held under the deposed Hindu dynasty and stressed that these appointments were hereditary and would not be altered. The notables were given the title *rānā*.[53] Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim later received a group of local residents who explained to him the indispensability of the social functions performed by the Brahmans; they requested permission to rebuild their temples and to resume their worship so that the Brahmans could again make a living.[54] After consulting al-Ḥajjāj, Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim not only permitted them to rebuild the temples, but also decreed that the people "should treat the destitute Brahmans with kindness and consideration, celebrate their festivals and ceremonies like their forefathers and pay the Brahmans the same alms which they had been paying them in the past..." (*wa-fuqarā-yi brahmanān-rā bi-iḥsān wa ta'ahhud tīmār dārand wa-a'yād o marāsim-i khwud-rā bi-sharā'iṭ-i ābā' o ajdād qiyām numāyand wa ṣadaqātī kih pīsh az īn dar ḥaqq-i barāhima mī-dādand nīz bar qarār-i qadīm bi-dihand...*).[55] All these arrangements were finalized by Tamīm b. Zayd

al-Qaysī and Ḥakam b. ʿAwāna al-Kalbī.[56] The *Chach Nāma* also
seems to imply that the Brahmans were exempted from the payment
of the *jizya:* after speaking of the Brahmans, Kūfī says that "a tax was
imposed upon the rest of the subjects according to the *sunan* of the
Prophet" (*wa bāqī raʿāyā-rā bar māl qarār dādand bar sunan-i rasūl*).[57]

Having thus settled the question of the freedom of religion and the
social status of the Brahmans, Muḥamad b. al-Qāsim turned his
attention to another group of Indians — the Jats of Lūhāna. He
summoned to his presence Môka b. Bisāya and his newly appointed
wazīr Siyākar and asked them what the attitude of Chach and Dāhir
was towards this group. He was told that the Jats were obliged to
wear coarse clothing and to be bare-footed and bare-headed. If they
were apprehended wearing soft clothing, they were fined. When they
went out of doors, they had to take their dogs with them so that they
might by this means be recognized (*wa chūn az khāna bīrūn raftandī
sagī-rā bā khwud ham-rāh burdandī kih maʿrifat-i īshān mubarhan
shudī*).[58] If they were caught stealing, they were executed by burning
together with their children and other relatives. None of them was
allowed to ride on horseback; if he had to, he rode without saddle or
reins. They were of a rebellious nature and frequently committed
highway robberies. Having heard all this, Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim
became convinced that they were depraved people (*makrūh khalqān*)
and decided to perpetuate their lowly status. He also declared that in
accordance with the conditions imposed by ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb on
the people of Syria, they would have to entertain travellers who
happened to pass through their territory. Here there is a clear
connection between the decree of Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim and the
regulations concerning *ahl al-dhimma* in the central Islamic lands.[59]

V

We have seen that the *Chach Nāma* contains, *inter alia,* a detailed
Arab tradition describing the conquest of Sind, probably that of al-
Madāʾinī. It is not easy to establish which parts of the *Chach Nāma*
are based on that tradition and which represent a tradition of local

origin. Much additional work on the subject is necessary and the question will not be solved fully unless al-Madā'inī's work on India is brought to light. It is, however, our assumption that the parts which describe the battles against the Indians and those that deal with the internal matters of the Muslims (such as the correspondence between Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim and al-Ḥajjāj or appointments of Arab governors) derive from the Arab tradition. The general statement regarding the inclusion of the Hindus in the category of *ahl al-dhimma* is also part of it. This material is not less reliable than that found in classical Arab histories and the sceptical attitude of Gabrieli to the book as a whole does not seem to be fully justified.[60] It seems to us, on the other hand, that the extensive description of Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim's transactions with the Indian chieftains and his detailed regulations concerning the Brahmans and the Jats originated at a later period, probably in Indian Muslim circles. As we shall see later, this material was perhaps intended to explain and justify the persistence of the Indian social structure under Muslim rule. The book also contains traditions which are explicitly attributed to Indian sources: a tradition attributed to a Brahman called Rāmsiya,[61] and another to "some Brahman elders" (*ba'żī mashāyikh-i barāhima*).[62] It is likely that the tradition dealing with the rise of the Chach dynasty and the story of Darōhar, Jaysinha and Janki are also of local origin. It is noteworthy that despite the reticence of Muslim historians about using non-Muslim sources, Kūfī incorporated the *"jāhilī"* history of the Chach dynasty in his book. Bernard Lewis's apt remark that "the Islamic community as a whole has some earlier history... but the individual Islamic countries begin theirs with the advent of Islam"[63] is not applicable in the case of the *Chach Nāma*. It would be interesting to discover whether it is at all applicable to the further Islamic lands.

An important and fascinating part of the *Chach Nāma* describes the attitude of the conquerors to the various strata of the Indian population. Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim upheld the central and indispensable function of the Brahmans in Indian society. He confirmed the privileges accorded to them by ancient tradition and decreed that the population would continue to pay them the customary alms. They were exempted from the payment of the *jizya*.

Muslim law allows such exemption for men of religion under certain conditions;[64] in our case, however, the exemption seems to reflect the Brahmans' privileged social status rather than any injunction of the *sharī'a*.

As for the Jats, some of the regulations enacted against them by the Chach dynasty and confirmed by Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim resemble the disabilities imposed on the *śudra*s in Indian society.[65] They also bear a striking similarity to the discriminatory measures employed against *ahl al-dhimma* according to Islamic law. The restrictions on riding, the distinctive dress, the apparent prohibition on growing hair — all these have their almost exact counterparts in the *sharī'a*. Only the regulation concerning the dogs and the punishment of burning for thieves are not attested in the Muslim books of law. It is fascinating to observe the way in which *shar'ī* injunctions were projected into the past, transposed into the Indian milieu and probably blended with local customs. Even more fascinating is the transformation of the injunctions themselves: according to the *Chach Nāma*, they are not applied to all non-Muslims, irrespective of class, because of their refusal to embrace Islam; rather they serve as an instrument to demonstrate and perpetuate the inferior social status of an ethnic group. It is true that this group was not Muslim at the time, but this fact is patently immaterial in our context. The disabilities were imposed on the Jats by the Chach dynasty and confirmed by Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim not because of their infidelity, but because of their social inferiority.

Thus, Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim is depicted as accepting and ratifying some of the most essential features of Indian society. The conquest of Sind, as described in the *Chach Nāma*, caused the removal of the ruling dynasty, but did not result in any significant changes in the structure of Indian society. On the contrary, the book occasionally sounds like a document intended to accord Islamic legitimacy to the Indian social structure, to sanction the privileges and prestigious social standing of the Brahmans and to confirm the degraded status of the low castes. The book seems to serve as a literary, historical and perhaps even religious justification of a social phenomenon which is in sharp conflict with the Islamic world view. It

could be considered an illustration of Imtiaz Ahmad's statement that "....if the formal Islamic ideology rejects caste, the actual beliefs held by the Muslims not only recognize caste distinctions but also seek to rationalize them in religious terms".[66]

NOTES

[1] Elliot and Dowson, *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians* (London: 1867), vol. 1, pp. 131–211.

[2] Mirza Kalichbeg Fredunbeg, *The Chachnama. An Ancient History of Sind Giving the Hindu Period Down to the Arab Conquest* (Karachi: 1900).

[3] Daudpota, Delhi 1939.

[4] The most extensive use of the *Chach Nāma*, coupled wih an intriguing attempt at interpretation, seems to have been made in I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim community of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent* (The Hague: 1962), pp. 37 ff. See also P. Hardy, "Is the *Chach Nāma* intelligible to the historian as political theory?" in Hamida Khuhro, ed., *Sind through the centuries* (Karachi: 1979?), and Irfan Habib, "A study of Hajjāj bin Yūsef's outlook and policies in the light of the Chach nāma", *Bulletin of the Institute of Islamic Studies*, 6–7 (1962–1963), pp. 38–48.

[5] These opinions range from Elliot and Dowson's statement that "there is no reason to doubt that the work is a translation of a genuine Arab history, written not very long after the conquest" (Elliot and Dowson, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 135) to the almost complete mistrust of Gabrieli in his article "Muḥammad ibn Qāsim ath-Thaqafī and the Arab conquest of Sind", *East and West*, vol. 15 (1964–1965), pp. 281–295.

[6] *Chach Nāma*, ed. Daudpota, pp. 1–8. References are to this edition unless otherwise stated. I have occasionally compared Daudpota's text with BM Or 1787 and India Office MS Ethé 435.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 8; see on him Storey, *Persian Literature* (London: 1929–1939), p. 650.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10. His genealogy is slightly different in the BM Or 1787 version (fol. 9a).

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 14–72.

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 72–243.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 243–247.

[12] Ed. de Goeje (Leiden: 1886), pp. 431–446.

[13] See a survey of the material concerning India prior to 1000 A.D. in my article "A contribution to the early history of Islam in India" in M. Rosen-Ayalon, *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet* (Jerusalem: 1977), pp. 309–333.

[14] *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, pp. 431–432; *Chach Nāma*, p. 72. BM Or 1787 gives here a wrong date: 11 A.H. instead of 15 A.H. The graphical similarity between *yāzdah* and *pānz-dah* will easily account for the error.

[15] The *Chach Nāma* speaks explicitly about boats (p. 72[13]); in *Futūḥ al-Buldān* we read: *aqṭa'a jayshan ilā tāna*.

[16] *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, p. 437.

[17] *Chach Nāma*, p. 107 [4-5]. Daudpota reads here Kh-r-y-m-h; I have followed BM Or. 1787, fol. 48a[11-12]; *Futūh al-Buldān*, p. 437.

[18] *Futūh al-Buldān*, p. 433.

[19] *Chach Nāma*, p. 79.

[20] *Futūh al-Buldān*, p. 433.

[21] *Chach Nāma*, pp. 78[18]-79[1].

[22] A. Schimmel, *Islamic Literatures of India* (Wiesbaden: 1973), p. 12; Irfan Habib, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

[23] Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist* (Leipzig: 1872), p. 100; cf. Yāqūt, *Irshād al-Arīb* (Leiden: 1911), vol. 5, p. 315 (*a'māl al-hind* instead of *'ummāl al-hind*).

[24] *Futūh al-Buldān*, p. 431. For the connection between al-Madā'inī and al-Balādhurī in general, see S.D. Goitein's introduction to his edition of al-Balādhurī's *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 5 (Jerusalem: 1936), pp. 14-15. For al-Madā'inī's full name and his *kunya* Abū al-Hasan, see Yāqūt, *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 309.

[25] *Chach Nāma*, pp. 184[16]-185[2].

[26] Al-Tabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, ed. de Goeje, vol. 2, p. 1031.

[27] *Futūh al-Buldān*, p. 438.

[28] *Chach Nāma*, p. 182 *infra*.

[29] *Futūh al-Buldān*, p. 438.

[30] *Chach Nāma*, p. 239[17].

[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 78[16]; 79[15]; 81[7]; 96[2, 6]; 103[14]; 157[6] (Abū al-Hasan Madā'inī); 164[18] (Muhammad b. Abī al-Hasan al-Madā'inī); 181[11].

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 106[18]; 115[2-3]; 122[15]; 131[4]; 135; 155[12-13]; 172[11]; 180[12]; 192[7]; 202[15].

[33] Al-Tabarī, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1885 and index; M. Sharon, Kahtaba, *EI²*.

[34] *Chach Nāma*, p. 102[8].

[35] Al-Tabarī, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 1018 ff. and index.

[36] *Chach Nāma*, p. 214[8].

[37] Al-Tabarī, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1501.

[38] *Chach Nāma*, p. 102[12-13].

[39] Al-Tabarī, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 1077, 1091, 1191, 1208 and index.

[40] This is his full name, as recorded in *Futūh al-Buldān*, pp. 435-436. The *Chach Nāma* has Budayl only (p. 91; cf. BM Or. 1787, fol. 42a-42b)

[41] *Chach Nāma*, pp. 116-117.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 131[19].

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 104 *infra*; Freudunbeg, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82. It is interesting to note that, according to al-Balādhurī (*op. cit.*, p. 437), the suggestion to aim the catapult at the flag was made by al-Hajjāj.

[44] *Chach Nāma*, pp. 134-135.

[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 164 *infra* — 166.

[46] *Ibid.*, pp. 133[6-9]; 135[14]-136[5].

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 207[7-18].

[48] BM Or 1787, fol. 86b[8-12], Ethé 435, fol. 126b[12]-127a[3]. Daudpota's preference for the partly Muslim name Nūba b. Hārūn (p. 200[13-15]) does not seem to be justified.

[49] BM Or 1787, fol. 94a[14-15], Ethé 435, fol. 138b[7-8], Daudpota, p. 219[8-9]; Fredunbeg, p. 173. The reading of this name, like that of many other Indian names mentioned in the *Chach Nāma*, is far from certain.

[50] *Chach Nāma*, pp. 225[12]-226[11].

[51] *Ibid.*, p. 217[12-16].

[52] *Ibid.*, p. 208[9].

[53] *Ibid.*, pp. 210[9-18], 214[12-16].

[54] *Ibid.*, p. 212[8-18].

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 214[2-4].

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 214[7-8].

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 208[14].

[58] This sentence provides us with a clue for the understanding of a curious passage in *Futūh al-Buldān* (pp. 445–446), which has baffled a number of scholars. The passage refers to the activities of 'Imrān b. Mūsa, a scion of the famous Barmaki family, who was appointed governor of Sind by the *khalīfa* al-Mu'taṣim in 221/835–836. Having described several victories of 'Imrān, al-Balādhuri says: "Then he summoned the Zuṭṭ who were in his vicinity. They came to him and he sealed their hands, collected the *jizya* from them and ordered that whenever anyone of them is met (out of doors), he should have a dog with him. And the price of a dog reached fifty dirhams" (*thumma nādā bi-'l-zuṭṭ alladhīna bi-ḥaḍratihi fa-atawhu fa-khatama aydiyahum wa akhadha al-jizya minhum wa amarahum an yakūn ma'a kull rajul minhum idhā' 'turiḍa 'alayhi kalb fa-balagha al-kalb khamsīna dirhaman*). It seems that were are faced here with a sort of *ghiyār*, a device by which *dhimmīs* are humiliatingly distinguished from the Muslims. See my "A contribution to the early history of Islām in India", in Rosen-Ayalon, *op. cit.*, pp. 331–332.

[59] *Chach Nāma*, pp. 214[17]–216[3].

[60] Gabrieli, *op. cit.*, pp. 281–282.

[61] *Chach Nāma*, p. 179[4].

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 197[12]. See also *ibid.*, pp. 206[14], 110[1-3].

[63] B. Lewis, "The use by Muslim historians of non-Muslim sources", in Lewis and Holt, eds., *Historians of the Middle East* (London: 1962), pp. 182–183.

[64] Cf. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Aḥkām ahl al-dhimma* (Damascus: 1961), pp. 49–50.
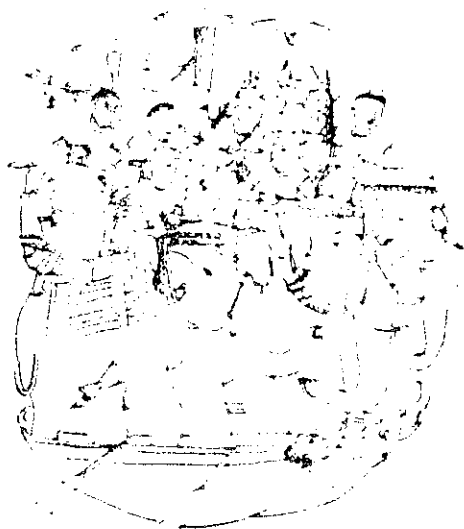
[65] A.L. Basham, *The wonder that was India* (London: 1971), p. 145.

[66] Imtiaz Ahmad, *Caste and social stratification among the Muslims* (New Delhi: 1973), p. XXVIII.

Trade and Trade Routes
in Ancient India

MOTI CHANDRA

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

IN THIS book* Moti Chandra deals with the problems related to ancient Indian merchants, their trade, the trade regulations and the network of trade routes. In his studies he has made use of the material extending from the Vedic period to the eleventh century available in Sanskrit, Pāli and Prākrit languages. Geographical information from the Greek and the Roman sources, the accounts of the Chinese pilgrims and Indian art, by assembling the tit bits of information he has given shape to the lofty mountain of the *Sārthavāha* of whose summit the resplendent sun of Indian literature radiating in all lustre has brought to light hundreds of new facts. He has as a matter of fact laid the foundation stone of the all comprehensive history of Indian culture in the years to come. After reading the book one is bound to know where these precious historical facts lie hidden and the methodology the young historian should apply for discovering new facts and on these bases and a comprehensive style create the new edifice of Indian history and culture. While reading the book one gains the sight of the relations of India with the countries and islands lying across the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. The *Daśakumāra Charita* of Daṇḍī mentions the name of the naval captain Rāmeshu. Who knew that this word is of Syrian origin whose meaning is handsome Jesus (rāma=handsome, Īshu=Jesus)? Owing to the spread of Christianity this name had become common among the sailors from Western Asia. In the Gupta period Indian fleets were capable of defending the sea-girt coastal regions of the country and increase trade with other countries. Daṇḍī therefore observes that a battle ship named *Madgu* (sea-gull) accompanied by other boats attacked a Yavana ship.

The word *Sārthavāha* is self explanatory. Kshīrasvāmin, the commentator of the *Amarakośa* comments "one who is the leader of travelling merchants who invested their own capital" (*sārthān sadhanān pānthān vahati sārthavāhaḥ: Amara-kośa*, III. 9. 78). *Sārtha* is defined as 'the group of travellers' (*sārthodhavanavrindam, Amarakośa*, II. 6. 42). In actuality *sārtha* means 'merchants who invested equal amount of capital and who carried on trade with outside market travelling in a caravan'. Their leader was known as *sārthavāha*. The nearest English equivalent to the term is caravan leader. The Hindi *sātha* has been derived from the Sanskrit *sārtha* but in original technical import has been lost. According to the author in the Sindhi the meaning of the original *sārtha* is still preserved. Some courageous merchant made himself the head of the caravan after joining it. Those who joined the caravan were governed by its own rules and regulations. The starting of a caravan was an important event for the merchant community. As for pilgrimage

*This book is the English version of Moti Chandra's *Sārthavāha*.

sangha was organised and its head was *sanghapati* (*sanghavaī, sanghavī*), similar was the position of *sārthavāha* in the field of trade and commerce. In the golden farm of Indian trade, the picking was done by the caravan leader. Rich in organising skill, truthful, the treasure house of courage, ready to grapple with fresh problems, replete with commonsense, liberal, bestower of alms, interested in religion and culture, expert in the knowledge of his own country and foreign lands the caravan leader rubbed shoulders with foreigners as the Yavanas, Śakas, Pahlavas, Yüe-chi etc. Masters of their languages and customs, the Indian caravan leaders extended their activities from Tāmralipti in the Bay of Bengal to Antioch in Syria, from Java to Kedah, and to the ports of Cholamaṇḍala and to Alexandria and East African ports.

In the present book the material about *sārthavāha* and his activities has been arranged systematically in thirteen chapters which present a moving picture of the two millennia of Indian trade. In the first chapter the network of Indian trade routes with their arteries is presented. In our literature for the first time in the *Prithvī Sūkta* of the *Atharva Veda* our attention has been drawn to the *panthas* or routes of our great land.

Ye te panthāno bahavo janāyanā rathasya
vartmānascha yātave |
yaiḥ sañcharantyubhaye bhadrapāpāstam panthānam
jayemānamitramataskaram yachchhivam tena no mṛiḍ | | *A.V.* XII. 1. 47.

This hymn seems to have been the keynote of the caravan leaders. It draws our attention to the following points:

1. This land had many routes and their arteries.
2. These routes were the principal means of communication of the people.
3. On these routes the chariots plied.
4. They were principal means of communication for bullock carts for transporting goods.
5. Good or bad every one had the right to use those roads.
6. However, it was necessary to safeguard the people of those routes against the depredations of the wild animals and robbers.
7. Those well-guarded and safe routes symbolized the happiness of the earth.

The same principles hold good for the road system of India today as in ancient times. The account of the Grand Route in northern India in this work deserves our attention because in ancient times this served as an artery for the land mass of the whole Asia extending from the Caspian Sea to China and from Bāhlīka to Pāṭaliputra-Tāmralipti. Pāṇini (c. 500 B.C.) gives its contemporary name as Uttarapatha (*Uttarapathenāhṛitam*, V. 3.77). Megasthenes taking it as the northern route describes its various constituents. The Haimavatapatha of Kautilya indicated the Vāhlīka-Taxila sector of the route. The great French savant A. Foucher has studied the history of this sector in two volumes. I am happy to note that the

author has fully utilised A. Foucher's work. The true identification of Hārahūra is with Harahvaitī modern Argandab region in South Afghanistan. The ancient Iranian name for Herat was Haraiva (S. Sārava). The name of the river Sarayū is even now preserved in the Harī Rūd. The other name for the Parisindhu region was Pāresindhu mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*. Its exact equivalent in English would be trans-Indus. Pāṇini (VI. 2. 42) gives *pārevaḍavā* the name for the mares from the other side of the Indus. Moti Chandra has made a thorough search of Indian literature about these routes. In the Nalopākhyāna of the *Mahābhārata* standing in the Kontwār region of Gwalior (between the Chambal and Betwa) it is observed: *ete gachchhanti bahavaḥ panthāno dakshiṇāpatham* (*Āraṇyaka Parvan*, 59. 2). Many routes and their many arteries started from this place to the Deccan. There are also mentioned the routes proceeding to Vidarba, Dakshiṇa-Kosala and Dakshiṇā-patha. Even now the rail roads follow the same directions.

The Vedic literature does not mention *sārthavāha*; but it names the merchant Paṇi and his business. It is worthy to note that the Hindi word *gatha* forca pital could be derived from the Vedic *grathin* meaning a capitalist. The frequent occurrence of technical terms in the Vedic literature supports the view that the Vedic Aryans were well acquainted with the sea (*veda nāvaḥ samudriyaḥ*). From the Pāli literature of about the fifth century B.C. important information about travelling is available. In the travellers besides the merchant community were included monks, pilgrims, pedlars, horse traders, acrobats and actors, students and tourists. Attention was paid for the safeguarding and repairing the roads. But even then they were infested with robbers known as *pānthaghātaka* or *paripanthin* (Pāṇini, IV. 4.36: *paripantham cha tishṭhati*). The commentary on Pāṇini V. 2.89 quotes a Vedic prayer as an example—*mā tvā paripanthino vidan* ('God forbid that you should meet a robber on the way'). Even then the responsibility of the *sārthavāha* for protecting the caravan was great and he employed guards for that purpose. While passing through the forest leader of an aboriginal tribe took the responsibility of guarding a caravan on payment; they were known as forest guards or *aṭavīpālas*.

The *sārtha* provided itself with provision and other necessities of life. Proper arrangement was made for desert journeys. Vaṇṇupatha, the route to Bannu from the Middle Country, passing through the desert which could be identified with the *thal* desert of Sindh to the east of the river Indus. In the same way a route from Dvārāvatī (Dwarka) passing Marudhanva in the Marwar district reached Roruka (the present Roḍī), the capital of ancient Sauvīra, and from there after many stages it reached Central Asia (Kamboja); from there it had to cross Airāvatadhanva (Gobi desert). In this desert journey the caravan was guided by the 'land captain' (*sthala-niryāmaka*) with the help of the stars. In the same way on the sea route the captain (*jalaniryāmaka*) commanded the ship. There was arrangement for training the crew in nautical science (*niryāmaka sūtra*) in the port of Sopara. The amount of information assembled about sea-voyages in this work was never made available before. Those who travelled together on ships were known as *sāmyātrika*. In the *Mahāja-naka Jātaka*, after the shipwreck Mahājanaka swimming for his life was addressed

by the goddess Maṇimekhalā. The dialogue between the two proves the indomitable courage and power of Indian sailors.

"Who is the fellow who in the vast ocean is ineffectively beating his hands. Depending upon whom you are making this effort.

"O Goddess. It is my firm belief that in life one should exert as far as possible, and, therefore, even though the shore is not visible, I am continuing my effort to reach it.

"It is useless to show your courage in the sea. You are bound to perish before reaching the shore.

"O Goddess, why do you say like this. Even if I perish making effort then I will be saved at least from calumny. One who exerts like me has not to repent afterwards.

"But an effort which is destined not to succeed, of which there is no end in sight, what is the use of such an effort when the death is inevitable.

"The fellow taking it for granted that he will not be able to cross the ocean ceases his efforts then it is due to his own weakness. Whether success accrues or not a man who draws up his own programme and tries for its success then he is sure to succeed. It is evident from the fact that all my comrades have been drowned but I am still swimming and alive. So far as any energy is left in me I shall continue to exert and so far any power is left with me I shall certainly make efforts to cross the ocean." *Mahājanaka Jātaka*, Vol. VI, no. 539, pp. 35-36).

Maṇimekhalā was the presiding goddess of the sea travellers and sailors in South India. Her worship extended from the Cape Comorin to Kedah and in Puhar at the mouth of Kaveri, there was a big temple in her honour.

Like Maṇimekhalā, the presiding deity of the caravan leaders in the north was Yaksha Maṇibhadra. All over northern India there were temples in his honour. The colossal statue of a Yaksha found from Parkham in the Mathura district represents him. But Pawayan (Padmāvatī in the former Gwalior state) was a great centre of the Maṇibhadra cult. Caravans passing from the north to south had great regard for him. It is mentioned in the *Nalopākhyāna* of the *Āraṇyaka Parvan* (61.125) that a very big caravan with a view to make a large profit proceeding to Chedi Janapada crossed the river Vetravatī (Betwa) and Damayantī joining it reached the Chedi country. Reaching a dense forest the leader of the caravan invoked Maṇibhadra, the king of Yakshas: *paśyāmyasminvane kashṭe amanushyanishavite, tatha no yaksharaḍ Maṇibhadraḥ prasīdatu* (*Āraṇyka*, 61.123).

Fortunately, there is a very good account of a *mahāsārtha* in chapters 61-62

of the *Āraṇyaka Parvan*. That big caravan was crowded with elephants, horses and chariots (*hastyāśvaratha samkulam*) and the number of oxen, donkeys, camels and men on foot was so overwhelming that the caravan appeared as the moving ocean of men (*janārṇava* 62.12). The members of this prosperous *sārthamaṇḍala* (62.10), were the *sārthikas* (62.8). It included not only merchants (*vaṇijaḥ*) but also the Brahmans well versed in the *Vedas* (62.17). The leader of the caravan was known as the *sārthavāha* (*aham sārthasya netā vai sārthavāhaḥ śuchismite*, 61.122). The caravan included the young, old, children and women: *Sārthavāham cha sārtham cha janā ye chātra kechana* (62.117) *yūnaḥ sthavirabālāścha sārthasya cha purogamāḥ* (62.118).

The caravan was also accompanied by some lascivious chaps who wanted to make fun of Damayantī, but gentlemen taking pity on her made enquiries about her condition. At this point we are further informed that the caravan had a vanguard or a labour force which cleared the roads. The *sārthavāha* was not only the leader of the caravan, but during the period of the journey he acted as its master (61.121). When evening approached and everybody was tired then with his permission the caravan encamped at a suitable place (*niveśa*, 62.4). The caravan made the mistake of encamping in the way leading to a waterpool. In the midnight a herd of wild elephants came to drink water and trampled the sleeping members of the caravan. Some of them died and others took to their heels. There was utter confusion all round. Those who managed to escape from this calamity continued their journey. In the *Mahābhārata* this account of the pomp and glory of a big caravan in ancient India has survived.

The caravan leaders and Indian travellers by land and sea routes, were also the carriers of Indian story literature. Seamen often related miraculous stories of Yakshas, Nāgas, demons and spirits and aquatic animals connected with the seas. These stories diverted the people during their travels; such stories were adopted by literature as motifs as well. Attention may be drawn to the *Samudra vaṇija jātaka* (Jataka, Vol. IV) which informs us that once upon a time some carpenters borrowed money for making furniture, but they could not complete their work in time. Pestered by the creditors the carpenters decided to migrate to some foreign land and after constructing a large ship they sailed. Following a favourable wind the ship reached an island rich in coconut and other edible fruit trees. Even before their arrival a traveller from a wrecked ship lived there who sang joyously: "They are simpletons, who eke out their existence by farming and the sweat of labour. They are not required in my domain. India! no, this place is far better." This account reminds us of the island described in the Odyssey of Homer where indolent men without any work known as lotus eaters lived on honey who invited Odyssus to live that kind of life with them, but the offer was declined by him. The *jātaka* seems to refer to the same kind of life.

The author has raised a pertinent question whether at this time merchants entered into a partnership or agreement (*samaya*). From the evidence he has collected from the *Jātakas*, it is almost certain that merchants travelling

with a caravan apointed one of themselves as a leader or elder (*jetthaka*). Partner-
ship by agreement was entered by two or more than two merchants. They agreed
among themselves about the distribution of profits and losses. Though it was not
necessary that every member of the caravan should enter into such an agreement.
Those merchants who transacted business after such an agreement, for them the
literary sources appeared to have used the word *sambhūyasamutthāna*. It is possi-
ble that with a view to enter into agreement about profit and loss the caravan was
divided into many units. They entered into agreements of their own choice. But
the merchants sailing on the same ship under the leadership of a *sārthavāha*
whether they had entered into a partnership or not were known as *samayātrika*:
"travelling in a body". In reality, their relationship and its limitations from the
legal viewpoint is not so clear as Moti Chandra has accepted. A thorough study
of *samhitās*, their commentaries and medieval legal compendiums (*nibandhas*) may
throw some more light on this vexed problem. In the centuries following the
foundation of the Mauryan empire many important events occurred in Indian his-
tory. The empire of Kanishka extending from Kapiśa to Karnatak exercised great
influence on trade and commerce, literature and religion. In this connection the
author has discussed Indian geography at the time of Alexander. In reality, the
Indian names given by the Greek historians owing to the Hellenisation of the
Sanskrit orthography appear as if they are of foreign origin. It has been possible
to find out the original Sanskrit forms of some of them with the help of Pāṇini.
The area occupied by Hastin near Nagarahāra is Hāstināyana of Pāṇini (IV.4.174)
and Astakenoi of the Greeks situated around Purshkalāvatī. The Greek historians
mention two other names Aspasioi who settled in the valley of the Kunar
river were the Aśvāyana of Pāṇini (IV. 1.110) and the second Assakenoi settled in
the valley of the Swat river were the same as the Aśvakāyana of Pāṇini (IV. 1.99).
Their other Greek name was Assakeoi which is equivalent to Pāṇini's Aśvakāḥ.
The impregnable stronghold of the Aśvakāyanas is mentioned as Aornos, in sub-
duing which even Alexander was put to a lot of trouble. Pāṇini (IV.2.82) names
it as Varaṇa. Stein has identified Aornos with the present day Ūnā or Ūnarā. The
heroic Aśvaka men, women and children fought to the last, but so far they were
alive they did not allow Alexander to enter the hill fortress. In other name the
Gourians lived on the bank of the Gauri river. Nyasa seems to be the Naiśa *jana-
pada* of Pāṇini, the Greek Musicanos stood for Muchukarni, Oretai for Vārtteya,
Arbitai for Ārabhaṭa which has given the name of Ārabhaṭī style in Sanskrit.
Brāchmanoi was the Brāhmaṇa Janapada which has been mentioned by Pāṇini
(V.2.72, *Brāhmaṇakoshṇike samjñāyām; Brāhmaṇako desah yatrāyudhajīvino
Brāhmaṇkāḥ santi*). They are mentioned both by Patañjali and the Kāsikā (*Brah-
maṇako nāma janapadah*). The Kāsikā and Patañjali also mention *Brāhmaṇa ka
nama janapadah*. Patañjali also mentions Sūdrakas who lived in their neighbour-
hood. They could be identified with the Sodrae or Sambos of the Greeks. These
and other identifications of Moti Chandra provide ample evidence that the source
of the Greek names was Indian geography. For further identifications we have
to probe our literature. The author's suggestion that twenty-four and half *bhuktis*
of the Jain literature probably represent the *bhuktis* of the Mauryan empire is a
sound one. Kauṭilya has mentioned at length several kinds of roads and the rules

governing the customs duties. *Droṇa mukha* has, however, been referred to in the Kharoshṭhi inscription from Sakardara across Ohind situated on the Indus as *Daṇamukha*. The term indicated those market towns which were situated at the end of the river valleys as serving exits for the produce of those valleys. Such towns could be located on the sea-coast as well for example Śūrpāraka and Bharu-kachchha served the network of valleys lying behind them. The term *himsrikā* for *pirate* boat is worth noting. In the Maurya period great attention was paid to the organisation and well-being of business; the *Arthaśāstra* contains enough material about these topics. The Śuṅga period continued those rules. Whatever steps the Mauryans had taken for the propagation of sea trade, the *Sātavāhanas* improved upon them.

The four Scythian tribes mentioned by Strabo, their equivalents have been found in the Indian literature. For instance Asii stands for Ārshika or Ṛishika tribe. In the inscritpion on the pedestal of the Bodhisattva image a woman named Amohā is called Āsī (Ārshī). In the alms house pillar inscription of Huvishka are mentioned Śaukreya and Prāchīnī which could be equated with Sacaraucae and Pasiani respectively. The Tochari is definitely Tushāra. Tokī ṭīlā on which Kanishka's *devakula* was situated at Mat is now known as Tokari tila, mound of the Tukhāras. The references to the Ṛishikas in the *Mahābhārata* have been discussed by the author. They are the Yüe-chi of the Indian history. The meaning of the Chinese word Yüe-chi as 'moon-tribe' supports the view of the *Ādiparvan* where the Ṛishikas are said to be descendants of the moon. According to the *Sabhaparvan*, Arjuna is said to have fought a great battle with the Ṛishikas somewhere in Central Asia. They could be located somewhere in the vicinity of the river Yarkand. If this is so then the country of the Parama-Ṛishikas should have been somewhere in the north which must have been the place of origin of the Yüe-chis.

In the Kushāṇa period Kanishka occupied the silk routes of Central Asia and the great northern route at the same time. Before him no other ruler had the good fortune even partly to acquire those routes. As a result Indian culture, reli-gion and trade spread with force from Termiz valley in the east and Sogdiana in the west. In this age manuscripts written in the Brāhmī script also reached that region. In the time of Kanishka Mathura was the biggest centre of art. In recent years archaeological researches found sculpture at Termiz in Sogdiana apparently influenced by the Mathura tradition.

The Kushāṇa art also exercised influence on eastern and western routes of Centrial Asia. Kapiśa was in this age also in the dominion of the Kushāṇas, and the finding of ivory caskets from Begram show that these caskets were influenced by Mathura art, so much so that some scholars regard them of Mathura origin. In the Kushāṇa period India's trade and commerce with the Roman empire had reached its zenith, but in this sea-borne trade caravan seems to have played a great part. Ghaṇṭāśāla from where remains of a Buddhist stupa have been recovered is

identified with Kaṇṭakasela of inscriptions and Kantakossul of Ptolemy. This is an important identification in Indian geography. The writer is quite correct in his estimate that the spread of Buddhism on the eastern sea coast of India which had once flourishing trade with the Roman empire enabled the followers of Buddhism to raise the magnificent stupas at Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda and Jagayyapeta. Similarly, on the western sea coast the Mahā-chaityas and Vihāras at Bhaja, Karle and Kanhari were due to the munificent gifts of the Buddhist businessmen who were making huge profits from the Roman trade. In the fifth chapter the author has tried to visualize how the foreign conquerors like the Ṛishikas, Śakas and Kushāṇas with their hordes on the Grand Route of India, gradually entered northern India and the Deccan and how the Sātavāhanas keeping the spirit of national resistance finally themselves came to an end. The long rivalry between the Śakas and Sātavāhanas was not only due to political reasons but also due to commerce. While the Sātavāhanas were firmly established in the Kalyan-Nasik region the Śakas held sway over Sopara-Bharukachchha region and these regions exchanged hands several times depending on the strength or weakness of the rivals. In this connection a new fact has been brought to light that one of the names of Kanishka was Chandana and according to the *Periplus* Sandanes or Chandana exercised authority on Bharukachchha. This theory of Sylvan Levi remains unsupported by known events, but at least one fact supports his theory and it is the statue of Chashṭana along with that of Kanishka found in the Devakula at Mat. So far the relation of Kanishka with Chashṭana remains unexplained. From the assertion of the *Periplus* that Sandanes (Chandana or Kanishka) controlled Bharukachchha it could be suggested that there must have existed some relationship between Kanishka and Chashṭana and that Kanishka extended his control over Bharukachcha-Sopara through Chashṭana. The Mat statue of Kanishka represents him as a middle-aged man, and Chashṭana was a young man. It may be suggested that Chashṭana was a younger brother or a close relation of Kanishka. It is also possible that he was racially related with Kanishka's family. Sylvan Levi has also suggested that between 25 and 120 A.D. the Yüe-chi were in the Deccan. This is as well supported by grammatical literature where Mahishaka and the Ṛishika Janapadas are shown as related (*Kāsikā Sūtra* IV. 1. 132; *Ṛishikeshu jātaḥ ārshikaḥ; Mahishakeshu jātaḥ Māhishikaḥ*). Prof. Mirashi had identified Mahishaka with South Hyderabad and Ṛishika with Khandesh. Prof. D.C. Sircar, however, disagrees with this view (*Epig. Ind.* XXXV, pp. 69 ff). As a matter of fact in this region there were located a group of five *janapadas*. The Ṛishikas were in Khandesh; Akola and Amaravati included Vidarbha; in the Aurangabad district the spur of the Sahyādri extending from Ajanta to the Godavari was the Mūlaka land, and to the south of the Godavari the region of Ahmednagar represented Aśmaka and to its south-east was situated Mahishaka. In the Nasik inscription of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi the mention of Ṛishika, Aśmaka, Mūlaka and Vidarbha is an additional link in supporting the existence of the Ṛishikas in the Deccan. In the *Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* as well Sugrīva describes the settlements in the Deccan— Vidarbha, Ṛishika and Mahishaka together (*Vidarbhānṛishikānchaiva ramayān-māhishakānapi* 41.10). The geographical references of the *Rāmāyaṇa* mention Suvarṇadvīpa and the seven states of Java probably in the Śaka-Sātavāhana period.

The ancient capital of the Pāṇḍyas located at Kolkai (Tirunelveli) is said to have been on the Tāmraparaṇī river. In this period trade in black pepper was at its zenith. Black pepper was loaded on ships in the port of Nakhon-Dharmarāḍ situated on the eastern Malay coast, and was unloaded in the sea port of Kolkai and was despatched to Rome by Indian merchants through the Arab intermediaries. The rememberance of this trade has survived in two names of black pepper namely *Dhāmapattana* and *Kollaka*. These trade names also reached northern India where the compiler of the *Amarakośa* collected them.

The sixth chapter mentions the story of commerce between India and the Roman empire in which the author has made full use of the *Periplus* and Ptolemy. The port of Barbaricum situated between the seven mouths of the Indus was named because of its trade relation with Berber or East Africa. This port has also been named in *Takashaśilādigaṇa* of Pāṇini (IV. 3.93). The name of Bāvarias of Saurashtra, however, could be derived from Vāvayia=Vyāpārika. The word Ramaṇaka in the Nasik cave inscription stands for the Romans.

The *puṭabhedana* for emporium and *samudraprasthāna paṭṭana* for ephetarium are appropriate Sanskrit equivalents. In this chapter Moti Chandra has also pointed our attention to the *cotymba* and *trappaga* mentioned by the *Periplus* which were the boats sailing near the Broach coast. In a letter dated 9th March 1953 he informed me that other boat names also appear in Jaina *Aṅgavijjā*.[1] The Indian boats referred by the *Periplus* such as *cotymba, trappaga, sangar* and *colyndia,* so far I did not get these names in the Indian literature. But this problem has been solved by the *Aṅgavijjā*. Following is the text:

nāvā poto sālikā tappako plavo kaṇḍe velu tumbo
Kumbho datī cheti-tattha mahāvakāsesu nāvi potovā
vinneyā-majjhimakāyesu koṭṭimbo, sālikā, saṅghāḍo
plavo tappako vā vinnayā. majjhimanāntaresu kaṭṭham
vā veluma vinneyo-pachchambarakāyesu tumbo vā
kumbho va datī va vinneyā.

In the Indian form they appear as under:

Koṭṭimbo = Cotymba
Tappaka = Trappaga
Samghāṭa = Sangar

In the above account boats are divided into four categories. The larger ships (*mahāvakāsa*) are *nāva* and *pota*, the middle sized boats (*mujjhimakāya*) are *koṭṭimba*, *samghāṭa*, *plava* and *tappaka* and the small boats are *kaṭtha* and *velu*, and the smallest boats are *tumba, kumbha* and *datī*. The same *Aṅgavijjā*[2] gives a list of the following Greek, Iranian and Roman goddesses:

1. *Aṅgavijjā*, p. 166 ed. by Shri Punajavijayaji, Varanasi 1957.
2. *ibid*. p. 69.

Rambham Timissakasītti Tidhiṇı śālimālinı
Apalā Aṇādi (hi) tā vatti Airāni tti vā vade

Here Apalā stands for Pallas Athene; Aṇāhitā for Anahita; Timassakesı for Artemis. Airāṇi probably stands for the Greek goddess Aphrodite and Tidhiṇī probably for the Roman goddess Diana. Śālimāliṇı is probably the moon goddess Selene.

The *Periplus* names Sri Lanka as Palesmoundu (Skt. *Pāresamudra*) which is also mentioned in the *Mahābhārata.* In this connection attention may be drawn to the silver tray found from Lampascos a village in Anatolia now preserved in the Ankara Museum, which represents Mother India. She wears an India-made perfumed chaplet; at one time exported to Rome. The Greek and Roman women wore them on their heads. Those chaplets were made of flower-shaped cotton pieces dipped in perfume and could be preserved for a long period. The statue of the Kambojikā in the Mathura Museum wears such a chaplet.

Pliny calls India as the source of precious stones. In this connection the words of an Arab merchant Hazrat Oman several centuries later are worth noting: "The Indian rivers are pearls, the mountains rubies and trees perfumes." In the seventh chapter basing his information on the Sanskrit and Buddhist literatures from the first to the fourth century A.D. to the eleventh century the author has solved many geographical and business problems. Its discussion on several topics in the *Mahāniddesa, Milindapraśna,* the *Mahābhārata* and the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* are worth following. It is astonishing to see many foreign ports mentioned by the Greek and Roman writers, for the first time mentioned in Indian literature: Vesuṅga, Tamali (Tamiling island), Vaṅga (Banka island), Gaṅgaṇa (Zanzibar) have been properly identified. The identification of Kamalapura of the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* with Khmer or the Arabic Kamar is appropriate. In the *Sabhāparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* Antākhī, Romā and Yavanapur are identified as Antioch, Rome and Alexandria respectively. These were important foreign capitals with which India had well established trade relations. The sea route from Cambodia (Kamala) to Alexandria and Rome was well known to Indian sailors. Their indomitable courage in this connection gave birth to Bāṇas dictum: "To them the earth appeared as a platform in the courtyard, and the sea as a mere channel (*aṅganavedīvasudhā kulyā, jaladhiḥ. Harshacharita).* This high mountain of the north and the wide coastline of the seas of the south offered no impediments but served as bridges for adventurous travellers. They contributed largely in bringing Central Asia and Indonesia within the fold of Indian culture. The *avadānas* of the sea-merchants Pūrṇa, Supāraga and Kotikarṇa serve as beacon light in the Indian nautical science. The lists of twenty-four guilds, twenty-two heads of guilds and thirty professions preserved in the *Mahāvastu* represent a flourishing world of trade providing the true index of the production of the goods.

The Tamil literature of the south also gives a convincing picture of the sea trade. The description of the port of Kāveripaṭṭīnam or Puhār with its seashore

godowns, foreign merchants and markets is so realistic that it is not found any-where else. At some time the great sea ports of Barbaraka, Bharukachchha, Murichipaṭṭana, Dantapura, Tāmralipti etc., repeated the pattern of Kāverīpaṭṭi-nam. The statements of two Tamil poets about Muchiri is worth noting. Accord-ing to them "The foreign ships bring gold to the sea port of Muchiri within the boundary of Kerala passing the frothy water of the Periyar river. This gold was transferred from larger ships to smaller boats. Bags of black pepper were brought from houses to markets and merchants loaded them on ships in exchange for gold. At Muchiri the music of the waves never stopped."

In the ninth chapter the author has thrown light on caravan and the goods they carried basing his information on the Jaina *chūrṇis, bhāshyas* and *niryuktis*. Caravans were divided into four categories and the goods they carried were of four kinds. The sixteen kinds of winds mentioned in the *Āvaśyaka chūrṇi* have been adopted from the nautical terminology which appears in the later Arabic literature. The *Jñātādharma* uses the word *potapaṭṭana* for sea port, elsewhere *jalapaṭṭana* and *velātaṭa* have also been used for sea port. It is possible that *kālīyaka* stands for Zanzibar. When some sea merchants talked to their king about the striped horses or zebras of the place, then he specially commissioned them to bring some to him. The *Jñātādharma* also gives a list of articles loaded on ships; mention may be made of certain musical instruments, toys and skinful of perfumed oil, which formed a part of the cargo. The list of the foreign female slaves in the *Antagaḍa-dasāo* is also interesting as it informs us that they came from the trans-Oxus country, Ferghana, Sri Lanka, Arabia, Balkh, Iran etc., and employed in the harems for service. This list includes many countries extending from Sri Lanka to the Pamirs and from there to Greece which indicates that part of the world with which India had trade and cultural relations in the early centuries of the Christian era.

In the Gupta period earning wealth by sea trade had got credence in the people. According to Bāṇa, Lakshmī is self drawn by sea voyage (*abhramaṇena Śrīsamākarshaṇane, Harshacharita* 189). A sentence in the *Mṛichchhakaṭika* gives prominence to the spirit of the age. At the instance of Chārudatta the jester went to Vasantasenā to return her ornaments. Seeing the grandeur of her palace with eight courtyards, he was surprised and he told to the *cheṭī* whether her mistress was interested in shipping business so that she had such riches (*bhavati kim yushmākam yānapatrāṇi vahanti*).

In the Gupta period when the great sea traders returned after earning much gold and precious stones then they distributed a part of their earnings in charity. Among the sixteen great alms of the *Matsya Puraṇa* is included the *sapta-smudra mahādāna*, the water of the wells from the *saṅkalpa* was taken from the seven seas. Such wells have even now survived in great commercial cities as Mathura, Kāśī, Prayāga and Pāṭaliputra. The figure of Śrī Lakshmī standing on a boat depicted on a sealing from Bhītā symbolised the gainful contemporary sea trade. Moti Chandra for the first time has rightly interpreted the figure on the seal. The

close intimacy of the Indian people with the seas is also evident from the contemporary literature and inscriptions. This is further supported by the name of Samudragupta and from the adjective in his inscription: *chaturadadhisvādita : asa* and in the imagery of Kālidāsa in the *Raghuvamśa* in which the four oceans are regarded as the four udders of the cow-shaped earth (*payodharībhūtachatuhsamudrām jugopa-gorūpa-dharamivorvīm* and in *nihśesha pītojjhitasindhurājah*) (the sea is nothing but the symbol of Agastya who once soaked the sea and then threw it back), and raising eighteen *yūpas* in eastern archipelago (*ashṭādaśadvīpanikhātayūpāh*). These were the common motives of Gupta age.

In the 7th-8th century Indian trade developed further. In the very beginning we find Bāṇa decorating the earth with the auspicious necklace (*mangalakamālā*) made of eighteen strands. He also imagines about *sarvadvīpāntarasañchārī pādalepa (Harshacharita)*. By the eighth century the Arabs proved very strong competitors of Indians. The horse trade in this country passed entirely into their hands and the Sanskrit names for horses were gradually being replaced by their Arabic equivalents. Haribhadra who wrote the *Samarāichchakahā* in the eighth century, used for the first time the Arabic term *vollāha*. After him Hemachandra discusses the indigenous names of horses as adopted from the Arabic nomenclatures. He even did not know that *vollāha, serāha, kokāha, gīyāha* etc., were foreign words. He regarded them as Indian and tried to trace their fanciful etymologies from Sanskrit (*Abhidhana-Chintamani* IV.30.3-7). This clash between India and the Arab world increased with hurricane force and by the eleventh century it extended as far as Kāśī. In the Deccan, while the Rāshtrakūṭas were friendly to the Arabs in the 8th-9th century the Gurjara-Pratihāras of the north faced the situation boldly and were feared by foreigners. In the 11th-12th century the Chauhāns and Gāhadavālas acted as bulwark against the foreign invaders, but in these wars of survival the most glorious part was played by the Hindu Shāhis of the Panjab and Kabul. With their defeat, however, the gates of northern India lay open. Even then it took almost 450 years for the Islamic forces to reach Kāśī from Sindh, while other countries fell like a house of cards before the advancing forces of Islam.

Moti Chandra's identification of the naval battles depicted on the hero stones at Eksar near Bombay is also noteworthy. He has suggested that Bhoja of Mālavā had conquered the Konkan in about 1019 and the representations of naval battles depicted on the hero stones show his engagement with the rulers of the Konkan.

This book also acquaints us with the terms used in the construction and building of ships. The bow is termed as *galahī, maṭhā* and *mukha*. The decoration of the bow with animal heads is termed *gilāsa* by the boatmen of Varanasi. The word could be derived from *grāsa* which in Sanskrit architectural terminology is synonymous with *simhamukha* (lion-head). The Jain literature uses the word *purao* for the bow. The other words in current use are *mathākāṭha* (outrigger), *lahartoda* (washtrake), *ghoḍī* (portside), *pāla kī tedhī lakḍī* (boom), *jālī* (grate), *pichhāḍī* (stern), *puliā* (derrick), *mattavāraṇa* (deck house), *agramandira* (cabin), *chhallī*

(coupling block), *gunarakhā* (S. *guṇavṛikshaka*), *naukūpadaṇḍa, mastūla* (mast), *karṇadhāra, patvāria* (helmsman) etc. Many technical terms used by boatmen sailing in the rivers and seas could be usefully gathered. Maiku, a boatman plying his boat on the Triveni Saṅgam of Allahabad, informed me that at one time a thousand boats such as *paṭailā, mahelia, ḍakela, ulākī, dogī, bajarā, malhanī, bhaulia, panasuiyā, kaṭar, bhaḍaria* etc., plied on rivers. I am indebted to him for the following terms: *bandheja* (two poles on top of the boat), *batī* (parallel wooden sticks between the two poles), *humās* (vertical poles from the bottom to *bandheja*), *battā* (horizontal wooden strips between the *humāses*), *galahī* (the bow, from where the boatman plies his oars), *baghaudī* (the iron rings for the oars), *bāhā* (the string loops in which the oars are inserted), *paṭṭā* (the terminating point of the oar), *sikkā* or *ginnī* (the decorative rosette on the bow), *gūna* (the long thin rope used for dragging the boat against the current), *jaṅghā* (the string tied round the ropedrawer), *phoḍī* (the box in which rolls of the rope are kept), *ghiranī* (pulley), *bhaṭī* (flow), *ujāna* (against the current), *gilāsapaṭṭī* (S. *grāsapaṭṭī*), *ukerī* (the wooden piece of the bow), etc. The terminology of the sailors on the western sea coast is even more interesting, for example Guj. *pāṭan*, Mar. *malakā* (peel), *gabhaḍā* (leak), *oṭa* (lee), Mar. *dāmanvāḍā* (leeward), Guj. *vamaṇī*, Mar. *vahaṇī* (jettison), *dhūrā* (hold, hatchway; Mar. *palaṭa*), Mar. *kāṭhapāḍā* (hull), Guj. *khokū, chabūtaro* (bunk), *pāṭyū* (board), *talayū* (bottom), *phārada* (break water), *bharatī* (burden), *kalphat* (caulking), *galbat* (craft), Guj. *galari* (derrick, crane), Mar. *goḍī* (dockyard), *phanna* (forward deck, forecastle), *nūra* (freight), *nūra chiṭṭhī* (bill of lading), *sukanū* (helm), Mar. *hoka yantra* (compass), *kabalā* (charter party), *pāthar* (dunnage), *chhalakā* (pier) etc.

It is difficult to understand the story of Indian history without understanding the great achievements of Indian sailors and sea captains and their close cooperation with caravan leaders. Particularly is this true with reference to the eastern Archipelago and the Arabian Sea. According to the *Milindapraśna* a determined and dutiful sailor always thought, "I am a servant who works on the ship for wages. It is due to this ship that I earn my livelihood. I should never be idle and neglectful in my duties. I should always be busy in my work attentively." This thought was the true foundation of the ancient Indian shipping.

The Indian caravan always extended an earnest invitation to people to come out of the safety of their houses and lead a healthy outdoor life. Travelling with a caravan was never burdensome for an individual as it was accompanied by happiness, courage, comradeship and helpfulness. The key to this happy life is found in the following dictum in the *Mahābhārata* where in answer to a question from Yudhisthira, the Yaksha said:

Sārthaḥ pravasato mitram bhāryā mitram gṛihasataḥ

(*Āraṇyaka Parvan* 297.45)

"To those who go out on a journey the caravan is a friend in the same way as wives are friends when they are residing in their homes."

The ever flowing current of life in the caravan attracted others to join it, its spirit of comradeship being irresistibly compelling.

The Buddhist-Jain-Brahmana and Sanskrit-Pāli-Prākrit literatures equally irrigate the vast field of Indian culture. They are linked strongly and they are full of historical references and meaningful words. The present study by Moti Chandra is an indication that for the national history of India not only the study of Indian sources is necessary, but one has to approach the Greek, Chinese and Arabic sources for its better understanding. Many studies of this nature are required. Then in years to come we will be able to raise the magnificent edifice of Indian history.

V. S. AGRAWALA

FOREIGN TRADE
AND
COMMERCE IN ANCIENT INDIA

PRAKASH CHARAN PRASAD
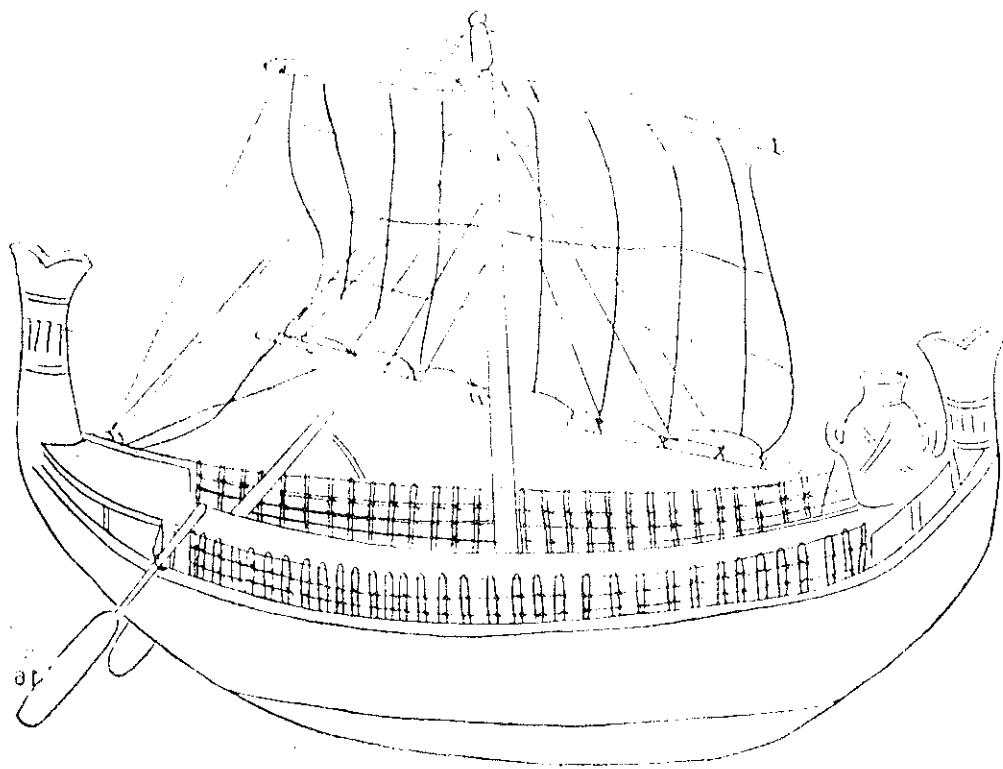
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