

Masters Program in

**Kautilya Politics and Economics  
(MKPE)**

**Study Material**

(For Private Circulation only)

**Kautilya in Historical Perspective  
(MK03)**

**Bhishma School of Indic Studies**

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## Contents

UNIT 1 : CHRONOLOGY OF INDIAN HISTORY .....	4
1.1 Introduction .....	4
1.2 Date of Rgveda .....	11
1.3 The Bharata War.....	23
1.4 The Puranas as Valuable source books.....	52
1.5 Sarasvati-Sindhu Civilisation and Mahabharata .....	78
1.6 Who was this Sandrocottus: .....	101
1.7 Date of Buddha:.....	103
1.8 Paurava Dynasty: .....	104
1.9 Suryavamshi Dynasty of Ikshwaku: .....	105
1.10 Magadha Emperors: .....	106
1.11 Nanda Dynasty: .....	110
1.12 Maurya Dynasty:.....	111
1.13 Kanva Dynasty: .....	115
1.14 The astronomical evidence: .....	137
1.15 Date of Mahavira .....	140
1.16 Gupta Chronology.....	148

UNIT – 2 : POST-BHARATA-WAR DYNASTIES.....	166
2.1 Paurava Line : .....	166
2.2 Solar line.....	168
2.3 Shishunaga Dynasty : .....	173
2.4 Nanda Dynasty: .....	174
UNIT 3 : ARYA CHANAKYA .....	180
3.1 Arya Chaçakya the Great: .....	180
3.2 Arthashastra : .....	185
3.3 King's responsibilities:.....	187
3.4 Social life: .....	198
3.5 Regulated City-life: .....	205
3.6 Was he Machiavellian? .....	210
Reference Books List – Masters in Kautilya Politics and Economics .....	214

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## UNIT 1 : CHRONOLOGY OF INDIAN HISTORY

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### 1.1 Introduction

From a layman to a serious scholar in the field, the problem of Indian chronology appears to be fraught with many imponderables. This was not so prior to the advent of the Western scholars on the scene. The Westerners looked at our chronology with suspicion. They felt that when the Biblical age did not extend beyond 4000 B.C. how can Indians — the vanquished people claim and unquestionably believe that the world has no beginning and no end. From this notion of theirs, they further smugly believed that Indians had no sense of history and so their claim to a hoary antiquity for their history was untenable. Of late this attitude of the Westerners is changing perceptibly. But the damage has been done. It is, therefore, necessary to study the question afresh and point out the flaws in the Westerners' arguments and establish the historicity of the major events in our history—such as the Bharata War, the actuality of the rule of Sakari Vikramaditya, Salivahana, the date of Adi Sankara etc. The ancient Indian sages started consideration of our history right from the beginning of the Creation. For the purpose of reckoning, however, the Creation of this universe has been based on 100 years of Brahma's life. So far, 50 years, they state, have elapsed, and the 51st year of Brahma is running.

One human year is one day and one night of the gods. It consists of two *ayanas*. *Ayana* is a six-month period. The first *ayana* is called the *Uttara-yana*. It begins with the first day of winter solstice i.e. about the 21<sup>st</sup> December of every year. It ends about the 20<sup>th</sup> of June every year. This period of six months is the day of the gods. Similarly, the period of six months beginning with the autumnal solstice is called *daksinayana*, i.e. from 21st June to 20th December every year. It is the night of the gods. Twelve thousand such god-years make one *Caturyuga*.

- One caturyuga =**
- (1) 1200 god-years = Kaliyuga (the age of lethargy)  
= 1200 x 360 days = 432000 human years. This age is also called 'the age of discord'.
  - (2) 2400 god-years = *Dvaparayuga* i.e., the age of action  
= 2400 x 360 days = 864,000 human years.
  - (3) 3600 god-years = *Tretayuga* i.e., the age of movement = 3600 x 360 days = 1296000 human years.

- (4) 4800 god-years = Satya or *Krtayuga* i.e., the age of righteous action. = 4800 x 360 days = 1728000 human years.

The total of one *Caturyuga* is thus 4320000 human years. There is a verse in Sanskrit, which describes the characteristic quality of each of these four *yugas*, thus:

---

***Kalih sayano bhavati sanjihanah tu dvaparah  
Uttisthanah treta bhavati krtam sampadyate caran||***

---

In *kaliyuga*, the human beings tend to be lethargic. In *dvapara*, they are action-oriented. In *Treta*, they are more active. In *satya* or *krtā*, they are prone to righteousness.

One thousand such *caturyugas* is one day of Brahma, ie. 4320000 multiplied by 1000 = 4320000000 human years which constitute one day of brahma. Of these half i.e. 216 crores of years are day years and the rest are night years. In other words the creation process will continue for 216 crores of years -and then Brahma's night will start thus signifying the commencement of the destruction process.

Fourteen Manus i.e., great kings flourish in every such day of Brahma which is called a *kalpa*. Now is the 51st year of Brahma. So 50 years of brahma have already elapsed. This works out 432 (with seven zeros on it) x 360 days = 155520,0000,000 x 50 = 7776000,0000,000 human years. A mind-boggling figure indeed!

The Hindus in their daily worship recite a *sankalpa* (a pledge to start the day with the resolve to do some good and auspicious work):

*Srimad bhagavato mahapurvsasya visnorajmaya pravartama- imanasya adyabrahmano dvitiye parardhe sri svetavaraha kalpe... 9... saptame vaivasvatamanvantare astavimsati tame yugecatuske uske kaliyuge prathama carane....* (this name changes with every man human year) *namnisarnvatsare*. ... (the title of this day also adya changes every day) *adya vasare*" etc.

This *sankalpa* indicates the present *kaliyuga* year i.e., 5088 (in January, 1987). it says "The Lord Visnu - the benign Almighty has commanded the start of this second half of Brahma's year. This *kalpa* is called Whitebear. To-day is day of 196,29,40,088th human year in Brahma's present *kalpa* in His 51st year". So 1987 AD is *yugabda* 5088. We get this figure in any current Hindu almanac. The *kalpa* day will end in about 30 (216-196=) crore years and then the

beginning of end (i.e. *kalpa*) night of the world would commence. So for another 30 crore years at least the mankind will survive according to these calculations.

This recital of the hour, the day and the year at which it is given vent to, reminds everybody of the number of human years elapsed since the beginning of the present period of Creation i.e., the day called *kalpa* of Brahma. Countless of such *kalpas* have elapsed and countless would follow. So, the universe has no beginning and no end. And this appears to be a perfectly rational view. From this we are at least sure that the present *Kaliyuga* started about 5088 years ago.

There are 14 Manus in this one day of Brahma. Their names are —

(1) Svayambhuva, (2) Svarocisa, (3) Uttama, (4) Tamas, (5) Raivata, (6) Caksusa, (7) Vaivasvata, (8) Savami, (9) Dasa Savami, (10) Brahma-Savami, (11) Dharma Savami, (12) Rudra Savami, (13) Deva Savami and (14) Indra Savami.

The current Manu is Vaivasvata, who is the seventh. This name indicates that the present Manu commenced his period as son of the Sun i.e.. Vivasvan. It does not mean that the name of the present king is Manu. It simply indicates that the current cycle of human years had at its beginning, the great king who had directly descended from the Lord Sun. In other words, it means that this first king was a very pious, valorous and bright person. He had all the great and good qualities as if he was the direct descendent of the Lord Sun.

So, the present Creation is roughly 1960 million years old. This figure is over and above the 13 digit human years (7776000,0000,000) of the previous Creations of Brahma. This process is continuous, without a beginning or an end.

As these figures run into trillions and trillions of years, one has to stretch one's imagination far beyond one's mental capacity. Our Vedic seers, therefore, tell us that this Universe has no beginning (*adi*) and no end (*anta*). They do not claim any credit for such a momentous discovery. They simply say that this is the knowledge, unsullied, purest intuitive knowledge the Vedas have revealed to them through their sages. Even though the name 'Vedas' now-a-days is used to denote the four Vedas — *Rg*, *Yajus*, *Sama*, and *Atharva*; originally, Vedas only meant<sup>1</sup> a body of revealed knowledge. The word Veda' is derived from the root *vid* meaning 'to know'.

The Vedic seers are not dogmatic about their views. Their only claim to this body of knowledge is that they obtained it through their purest intuition, when the intellect was unsullied by any emotions like anger, hate, passion or egoism. In such a state, they claim, pure and true knowledge dawns. With such

a mental equipment, they arrived at the conclusion that the Vedas are eternal and this body of knowledge, which they obtained through *tapas*, i.e. intellect trained for imbibing the truth and nothing but the truth - or as Sri Aurobindo would put it, through ..." the pressure of consciousness on its own being."

When *Mahabharata* declares:

---

***"Yugante antarhitan vedan sa itihasan maharsayah  
lebhire tapasā pūrvam anujñāta svayambhuvā ||  
Santiparva, 210-19.***

---

The great Rsis enjoined by Svayambhu (the self born), formerly obtained, through *tapas* (religious austerities or *sadhana*) the Vedas and the *itihisas* which had disappeared at the end of the preceding *yuga*".

This is because in each day of Brahma, the Creation starts, has its existence and in every night of Brahma, the universe disappears, i.e., it is destroyed. This is hinted at in Rgvedic hymn 10-72-1;

---

***"Devānām nu vayam jānāpravocam vipanyayā  
Uktheṣu sasyamāneṣu yah paśyāt uttare yuge.***

---

We shall now, by a special prayer, describe the process of Creation of the gods, so that when these hymns will be recited in later ages (*yugas*) the future generations will come to know about this process".

This hymn goes on to state that Brahmanaspati (Brahma), like a smith, forged this universe, as if from nothing. This manifest universe came into existence from the unmanifest Brahman.

For a detailed discussion as to how the universe came into existence, we have to turn to Rgvedic hymn X-129. This is a very beautiful hymn and in imagery, it is the loftiest and the most articulate description unsurpassed by any human genius so far the world over. Its translation would read thus:

*"Neither the unmanifest, nor the manifest was then. There were no spacial depths, nor was there heaven beyond. There was nothing and so what cover can there be or who can there be to nurture it?" (1)*

*"There was neither death, nor immortality. There was no differentiation as to day or night. In such an airless state (vacuum) that One, by its own power, was pulsating. Beyond That One nothing existed." (2)*

*"Then, there arose at first darkness i.e., undifferentiated consciousness and water principle likewise. And now arose that consciousness principle covered by thin layer of darkness." (3)*

*"In That One, first arose desire, the primordial seed of mind. The seers in their hearts, discovered that the Creation has kinship with the Unmanifest." (4)*

*"A bright ray divides the below and the above (the manifest below and the unmanifest above). The seed and its power of glorious manifestation is existing there. The power of free-will is there below, and its energy lies above." (5)*

*"Who can know (this process of Creation), and who can describe it to us? What is the birth place of this Creation? And what is the process of Creation? The gods<sup>4</sup> are born after this Creation. Then who can Know how it all came into being?" (6)*

*"This Creation with all its variety, from where has it sprung? Whether That One has caused it or not; He, who is there in the highest intellectual region, knows it. Well! If He does not know, then none else can know it." (7)*

These hymns tell us in simple language the process of Creation. What was there in the beginning? That One was alone there in the beginning. This is the Brahman of the Vedanta philosophy. It is so called because, it is the Eldest ever (*vrddhatamatvat*) — Such is the explanation given by that unique and great genius — Adi Sankara. He further describes it as *Brha* 'to grow' or 'to be great' - it is the greatest of all (*brhattamatvat*). The concept of Brahman is not anthropomorphic i.e., the concept of a personal god. It will be seen here that It is not separate from the universe. 'Brahman' and 'Universe' (springing from Brahman) are synonymous terms in Vedanta philosophy.

This One by Its self-will, desired that It will manifest and show Itself in this varied Creation. It further desired that this Creation will have free-will, but the energy behind this manifest Creation will be that of That One.

The process by which It manifests Itself is described as follows:

*"From That One arose undifferentiated consciousness i.e., vast spatial depth. In its arose movement, air and water. Brightness arose then and from that the seed of Creation."*



We may say that these are the basic forces created by it. In scientific terms, these are (1) gravitation (2) weak interaction, (3) strong interaction, and (4) electromagnetism.

Further details also are available in Rgvedic hymn X-121. But it will be seen from these brief notes that the Rgvedic seers had attained and displayed intellectual heights unparalleled in the history of human thought.

Bloomfield, therefore, rightly assesses the achievements of these Vedic seers in these terms: "The language and literature of the Vedas is, by no means so primitive as to place it with the real beginning of Aryan life."

He further observes: "These in all probability and in all due moderation, reach back several thousands of years..... and it is, therefore, needless to point out that this curtain, which seems to shut our vision at 4500 B.C. may prove in the end a veil of thin guage."

Jan Gonda of the University of Utrecht, Netherlands, says — "The *Rgveda* is not only a highly important religious and literary document, and as such the object of study for philologists and historians, but it is also a work of art and a source of inspiration and edification."

Geanine Miller, now working in British Museum, states in her introduction to the *Vedas*, "The *Rgveda* - the oldest of the four Vedas, is extremely rich in lore of every kind: social, psychological, religious, philosophical, historical, anthropological, mythical."

But A.B. Keith following in the tradition of the nineteenth century Indologists says, .....the Rgvedic poets never attain any very great command of their material whether in language or metre, though in certain cases poetic results are attained by simple means. To the end the structure of these sentences remains naive and simple and when the poet seeks to compass more elaborate thought, his power of expression seriously fails him." A.A. Macdonell in his introduction of his *Vedic Mythology* (1887) observes. "Such myths have their source in the attempt of the human mind, in a primitive and unscientific age.

Such a prejudicial and ill-digested judgement passed on Vedic languages and culture would not be accepted by any serious indologist. The Rgvedic hymn No. X-129 quoted above describes how this Creation came into being. This description would appear to be the poetic version of the modern atomic physicists.

These physicists say that hydrogen is the original material of which this universe is made. It consists of one electron and one proton. It has no neutron, it is a unique atom, the building block of this vast and infinite universe. Because

of this unique position, it is always seen to pulsate. It is not a stable atom, as it has no neutron. It cannot be seen by the ordinary eye. It cannot be even imagined by a layman. It can be seen by the scientist's eye. It is not caused by any transformational causation. The Law of Causation as conceived by the classical physicists does not operate here. In fact, no law can explain as to how it is there. It is just there and that is all what we know about it.

Where does it pulsate? The physicists of the last century would have stated, it does in ether - an infinitely permeable, infinitely elastic medium - a substance which fills the whole space and which reacts to the input of energy by generating particles. But this last century concept of 'ether' is found to be inadequate. Modern physicists explain this by the term 'Vacuum' - a still vaguer term. But it has nothing in common with emptiness in the sense of there is nothing' or nothingness. What is this Vacuum' of modern physics? What does it consist of? Well, the scientists have no answer.

But the Rgvedic seer says. "In an airless atmosphere *it* pulsated by its own power. This is the transitional stage of That One i.e. Brahman from Its original quiet state to this 'pulsating state in vacuum.' It cannot be described by words. But its qualities like existence (*Sat*), energy (*chit*), and bliss (*ananda*), can be noted.

An atom of hydrogen consists of one proton and one electron. We shall say here, that these are electrically charged particles. The scientists also state that this language does not very accurately describe the exact nature of this original substance. They also use the terms 'not this'. - '*neti neti*' - like the Upanisads, or strangely by the term 'anomaly principle'. The use of the terms 'anomaly' and 'principle' is in fact a contradiction in terms. But in the micro-world of atoms, the laws governing the macrocosm around, do not operate at all. It is a strange world bordering on mysticism. In the description of the Ultimate Reality - Brahman of the Vedanta philosophy and of the ultimate particle as conceived by the nuclear physicists, there is a striking unanimity in the use of the language.

The modern physicists also seem to be talking about this phenomena — in Vedantic terms. Suffice it here to assert, that the Vedas are not the puerile outpourings of a primitive and unscientific mind as Macdonell of the last century wants us to believe.

Having said this, one would naturally conclude that the Rgvedic people were highly advanced and belonged to a remote antiquity - a view laid down by the Indian tradition. But Max Mueller, the doyen among the Western Indologists advances the date of the composition of the Rgveda to as late as 1200 B.C. He

divides the Vedic literature into four periods — the *Chandas*, *Mantra*, *Brahmana* and *Sutra*. The last is prior, "if not to the origin, at least to the spreading and political ascendancy of Buddhism." He takes Buddhism to be dominant in India in the 4th century B.C. and places the *sutra* period at 600 B.C., the *Brāhmaṇa* period at 800 B.C. the *Mantra* period, at 1000 B.C. and the *Chandas* period at 1200 B.C.

Haug, following the same arbitrary method, allots 500 years to each of these four types, and fixes the Vedic period between 2400 - 2000 B.C.

Weber, on geographical and historical grounds believes that the beginnings of the Indian literature, "May perhaps be traced back even to the times when the Indo-Aryans still dwelt together with the Persian Aryans." This may be the period around 4000 B.C., the Biblical beginnings of man's life on earth. Tilak's conclusions also point to the same period as the beginnings of the Vedic *Samhita* literature, though according to him actual composition of the *Rgveda* may go back to remote antiquity. The European scholars are unwilling to assign even this late date for the Vedic literature. Tilak therefore, writes, "I cannot also understand why scholars should hesitate to assign the Vedic works to the same period of antiquity which they allow to the Chinese and the Egyptians."

## 1.2 Date of Rgveda

The only reliable data for the determination of the date of the *Rgveda* is the astronomical evidence as gleaned from this Veda itself.

The calculation of the year is based on the movements of the moon round the earth and that of the earth round the sun. The first is called the lunar year, but this is unsuitable for our calculations, as it does not fit in with the formation of seasons - the summer, the autumn and the winter, it being of 354 days only. The other year is the solar year and it is based on the sunrise and it is of 360 days. But this also is not suitable for annual observations, as the earth takes a little longer, over 365 days to complete one revolution round the sun (to be exact, a period of 365 days, six hours, nine minutes and 11 seconds according to Tilak almanac). This exact calculation is according to the *Naksatra* year i.e., the period taken by the earth to complete one rotation from one constellation to return to the same. But this year also called 'sidereal' is greater by 20.4 minutes than the tropical year i.e. the start of the vernal equinox every year. The seasons are based on this tropical year as it is suitable for our practical purposes i.e., to know when the rains start or winter sets in.

Hindu almanacs, since ancient times, are based on this tropical year calculations. Actually the Hindus follow the lunar year-i.e., from *Amavasya* (No-moon day) to *Amavasya*, or *Paumima* (full moon day) to *Paumima*, the lunar year remaining unchanged. But by adding one more month called *Adhika* (intercalary month) after about 27 months, they bring it in conformity with the tropical year. But this year being short of the *naksatra* year by 20.4 minutes, after about every 2,000 years, there is a recession of the vernal equinox by one month. Tilak says, "The difference between the sidereal and the tropical year is 20.4 minutes which causes the seasons to fall back nearly one lunar month in about every 2,000 years, if the sidereal solar year is taken as the standard of measurement.

The ancients considered "the start of vernal equinox as the mouth of the seasons — (*mukham va etad rtunarh yad vasantah*).” After adducing evidence from the Vedic literature, Tilak has come to the conclusion : "The oldest period in the Aryan civilization may, therefore, be called the *Aditi* or the pre-Orion period and we may roughly assign 6000 - 4000 B.C., as its limits,". It was a period when finished hymns do not seem to have been known and half-prose and half-poetical *nivids*, which "are sacrificial formulae were probably in use.

"We next come to the Orion period which, roughly speaking extended from 4000 B.C. to 2500 B.C. This is the most important period in the history the Aryan civilization. A good many *suktas* (hymns) in the Rgveda (i.e., *vsakapi*, which contains a record of the beginning of the year where the legend was first conceived) were sung at the time."

"The third, the *krttika* period commences with the vernal equinox in the asterism of the *krttikas* and extends up to the period recorded in the *Vedanga Jyotisa*, that is, from 2500 B.C. to 1500 B.C. It was the period of the *Taittiriya Samhita* and several of the *Brahmanas*.<sup>11a</sup>

Tilak knows: "There appears to be no express passage in the Vedic works, which states that *Mrgasiras* like the *Krttika* was ever the mouth of the *naksatras*. He is also aware that *agrahayanam* is not used in the Vedic texts to expressly denote the constellation of *Mrgasiras*.

In spite of these difficulties, he takes *agrahayanam* to be *Mrgasiras* and further assumes that *Mrgasiras* is the mouth of the *naksatras*. As a corollary, he draws the conclusion that once the vernal equinox was in this constellation, that period could be 4000 B.C. to 2500 B.C. But the express passages in the Vedic literature, tell us a different story.

In *Satapatha Brahmana*, we have the following passage: "*Krttikasu ādadhita, etā ha vai prācyai diśo na cyavante, sarvāni ha vā anyāni naksatrāni*

*prācyai diśah cyavañte*. (One should consecrate the sacred fire in the *kṛttikas*. They do not swerve from the east. All other constellations in the east are not steady. They swerve from it.)

This is a positive statement showing the position of the *kṛttikas* when it was made. It is further stated that this constellation was the mouth of the *naksatras* in the same way as the vernal equinox (*vasaṇṭa rtu*) was the mouth of the seasons.

This statement means that when it was made, the *kṛttika* constellation was seen on the Eastern horizon at the central equatorial point. The late S.B. Dixit had observed the position of the *kṛttikas* in about 1900 A.D. He found them to be at about 68° above i.e. to the north of the equator. It is established that for 1° change in the position of the constellations, a little less than 72 years are required. On this basis, 4896 (68 x 72) years are required for the *kṛttikas* to be, at 68° above the equator in 1900 A.D. which means that the passage in *Satapatha Brahmana* was written in 2996 B.C. (4896-1900) or 2990 B.C. in round figure.

We have another passage in *Taittiriya Brahmana* : *Brhaspatih prathamam jāyamānah tisyam naksatram abhisambabhūva*. 3-1-15. *Brhaspati* (Jupiter) crossed the *pusya* constellation for the first time in 4650 years B.C.

This shows that *Taittiriya Brahmana* belongs to the period 4650 B.C. If this is so, the period of the *Rgveda* would be much earlier than 4650 B.C. For the Brahmanas are compositions of a period later than the *Rgveda*.

We get a similar passage in R.V. (4-50-4) "*Brhaspatih prathamam jayamano mahah'jyotisah parama vyoman*" (When Brhaspati first appeared, he was seen in the highest regions above the most resplendent place.) It is just possible that these two statements at different places refer to the same incident. This would show that the Brahmana books were also being written at the same time as the composition of the Vedic hymns.

Let us now refer to yet another reference in the *Satapatha Brahmana*. (6-2-2-18): "*Esāha samvastarasya prathamā ṛatri yat phālguni purnimasi*." (The night of *phaiguni* full-moon is the year's first night.) This means that the vernal equinox then was in the *phaiguni* full-moon day.

*Taittiriya samhita* (vii-4-8) has also an identical passage: "*Esa vai prathama ratrih samvastarasya yad uttare phalguni*". (This is the first night of the year when vernal equinox is in *uttara phalguni* constellation i.e., in *uttara bhadrapada*.) In 1986 also the vernal equinox was in *uttara-bhādrapada*. This would show that full cycle has been completed from *uttara-bhadrapada* to

*uttara-bhadrapada*. At the rate of 72 years per degree, it would work out to 72 years x 360° = 25,920 years for the equinoxes to come back to the same point on the ecliptic. It is exactly calculated at 25,868 years for the equinoctial precession to complete its full cycle. But by curious phenomenon this period is reduced to about 21,000 years. Tilak says. "We cannot suppose that the *ptialguni* full-moon commenced the year at the vernal equinox in *uttara-bhadrapada*, which to render possible in the *pre-krttika* period we must go back to something like 20,000 B.C. The only other alternative is to make the full-moon commence the year, at the winter solstice.

But Tilak himself, after detailed examination of the point seemed to veer round to the conclusion that the year in the Vedic times commenced with the vernal equinox. So the period indicated by the above passages in the Brahmana literature points to a period of about 20,000 B.C. Tilak is however reluctant to follow this natural interpretation, for the reason that "the suggestions in my opinion are too extravagant to deserve any consideration." He feels that we cannot place the composition of the Vedas and the Brahmanas in such remote antiquity.

Tilak himself vehemently argues, "Prof. Weber and Dr. Schrader appear to doubt the conclusion (that primitive Aryans had contrived a means for adjusting the lunar with the solar year) on the sole ground that we cannot suppose the primitive Aryans to have so far advanced in civilization as to correctly comprehend such problems. This means that we must refuse to draw legitimate inference from plain facts when such inferences conflict with our preconceived notions about the primitive Aryan civilization. I am not disposed to follow this method nor do I think that people, who knew and worked in metals, made clothing of wool, constructed boats, built houses and chariots, performed sacrifices and had made advance in agriculture, were incapable of ascertaining the solar and the lunar year."

Again he observes, "The knowledge implied by these (astronomical) observations may appear to be too much for a Vedic poet in the opinion of those who have formed their notions of primitive humanity from the accounts of savages in Africa or the Islands of the Pacific. But as observed before, we must give up these a priori notions of primitive humanity in the face of evidence furnished by the hymns of the Rgveda." And yet Tilak discards the period 20,000 B.C. for the Brahmana passage quoted above on the ground that it is 'too extravagant' to suppose that the Vedas belonged to such hoary antiquity.

Any way the conclusion that the *Vedas* and the *Brahmanas* have come down to us from a remote past and the memories of these past periods have come down to us by the word of mouth and these have been reduced to writing

and given the present form some time prior to 3300 B.C. when the *Samhitas* of the *Vedas* and the *Brahmanas* were finally compiled by *Vedavyāsa* — the grandfather of *Duryodhana*, *Arjuna* etc., — the heroes of the *Bharata War*, is irresistible.

Tilak is also not dogmatic about his dating of the *Vedic* hymns. He is also aware, "This is a question which has baffled the ingenuity of many an ancient and a modern scholar, and though I have ventured to write on the subject, I cannot claim to have finally solved this important problem in all its bearings."

In fact, he states in terms. "In short, the ancient hymns, poets or deities, mentioned in the *Rgveda* must be referred to a bygone age and not to post-glacial times."

How were these old traditions preserved? This is the question baffling the occidental minds. Tilak gives an explanation. "The Greeks and the Parsis who lived together with the Indians in the early Vedic period have retained no traditions of this period, for the simple reason that they have carried with them only the calendar which was in force when they left the common home, while the Indian Aryans have preserved all the traditions with a super religious fidelity and scrupulousness. It is thus that I explain why the oldest Greek and Parsi traditions do not go beyond Orion."

Further he asserts: "We may not be able to fix definitely when each hymn of the *Rgveda* was sung: but we may safely say that those who survived the catastrophe (*very* severe winter which made them leave their original home in the polar regions) or their immediate descendents, must have incorporated into hymns the religious knowledge they had inherited as a sacred trust from their forefathers at the first opportunity, that is, soon after they were able to make at least temporary settlements."

He makes it absolutely clear, that "The Vedic hymns were sung in post-glacial times (about 8000 B.C.) by poets, who had inherited the knowledge or contents thereof in an unbroken tradition from their antediluvian forefathers."

Max Muller had further revised his opinion about the fixing of the date of the *Vedas* at 1200 B.C. V. Rangacharya points out that "Max Muller (in Gifford Lectures, 1890) was careful enough-to warn students that his intervals of 200 years were purely arbitrary, that it was only terminus *ad quern*: that it was impossible to fix the earliest date; that whether Vedic hymns were composed in 1000 or 1500 B.C. or 2000 or 3000 B.C. no power on earth could ever fix."

This extremely important caution, however, has been ignored and the scholars take the suppositions of Max Muller as proved facts, and hold the date of the Vedas as 1200 B.C.

### **Date of Rgveda by the philological method**

Now let us see how this date of 1200 B.C. has been philologically arrived at. That Sanskrit and Zend languages have very closer affinity is an undisputed fact. Most of the European languages have some words in common with Sanskrit and Zend. So the language from which all these languages including Sanskrit and Zend have been derived, is designated as 'Indo-European or 'Indo-Germanic'.

These scholars want to claim their ancestry to these Aryans which, of course, none can deny them. In fact considering the Vedas to be the heritage of mankind, these contradictions would automatically vanish from their minds. They should not feel shy and should consider this original language as Sanskrit itself, instead of Indo-European.

It should be borne in mind here that the term 'Arya' is not to be found in any other literature except that of the Indians. Its origin is in Sanskrit language. And yet these indologists suggest that 'Aryan' is a primitive Indo-European language and the 'Aryan' is a primitive barbarian race which spoke this language. They also thereby imply that Sanskrit is derived from this primitive Indo-European language. Is it not surprising that they should designate such a primitive language as Aryan, when this word is nowhere to be found except in Sanskrit which according to them is a later language? Lured by the temptation to use the romantic term 'Arya' ('Arya' means civilized in *Rgveda*), they designate their primitive barbarian ancestors as Aryans — certainly a contradiction in terms. They are caught in a trap. They know that *Rgveda* is the oldest extant literature. Yet they want to deny it the antiquity, which is revealed from its internal evidence. 'Aryan' is the term used in *Rgveda*. So 'Aryans' become the ancient - most civilized people on the earth.

The Western Indologists state that the language of Avesta i.e., Zend is an old form of Persian which is used in the Behistan Document of the sixth century B.C. This is an important inscription running into 68 verses and inscribed on four huge pillars. It is found in Northern Iran and the name of the great king who got it inscribed is given as Darayavahu. This may be *Dirghabahu* in Sanskrit. Its English rendering is given as Darius. The language used is stated to be modern as compared to Zend of the Avestan volumes and so if the period



of these inscriptions is determined at 600 B.C., the scholars put the period of Avesta at not earlier than 1000 B.C. As Sanskrit of the Vedas is stated to be similar to Zend of the *Avesta*, the date of the vedas is taken to be the same as that of Avestas determined by them. So the date of the Vedas according to these scholars is taken to be 1000 B.C.

This date of the Vedas is also arrived at by these Indologists on the analogy of the Greek speaking people entering Greece at about 1200-B.C. Greek is stated to be the oldest Indo-European language and it is, the scholars aver, imported into Greece from outside. To quote Hall, "Like Sanskrit, Greek with all its entirely Indo-European syntax and grammar, has vast non- Indo-European vocabulary. The reason was the same in both cases. In both lands the invading warriors (i.e., the Indo-Europeans) found a previously existing non-Aryan race with which they mingled! the Hindus with the Dravidians, the Greeks with the Minoans, and in both cases, while the language of the conqueror prevailed, that of the conquered supplied innumerable names and words to its vocabulary. In both countries the conquered race continued to exist side by side with the conquerors, the dark Dasyus with the fair Aryans, the dark Minoans with the fair Hellenes,"

This opinion of Hall bristles with many misconceptions. It is now the considered opinion of the scholars of eminence of Max Muller and others that Aryan race was not there at all. The eminent archaeologist H.D. Sankalia, deplors this attitude in no uncertain terms. He says, "All this underlines the vagueness and our very, very partial realization of the truth. because of our often one-sided approach. This is also true of the sister sciences of linguistics and anthropology leaning on which many theories are propounded. Unfortunately, these, though cautiously formulated, are passed on as accepted truths doing immense harm in the sequel to peoples and nations, thus the Aryan theory in Germany and the Dravidian in South India."

D.G. Gordon, another archeologist admits, "Almost all the interpretation of the archaeological material of these early times is in fact speculative.

The opinion of Hall quoted above, is not only speculative but highly prejudicial. In India there are no Aryans or Dravidians or Dasyus. But Hall makes such a statement which is unwarranted by facts. The Avestan scholar S.K. Hodiwala in his book on Zarathustra states,"... the Dasyus mentioned in the Vedas and especially the *Rgveda* were the Dakhyus — the followers of Zarathustra .... such an able scholar of Sanskrit, as Prof. R.R. Bhagawat has anticipated me.. - .In his book named *Mihr Vast* (p.31) he says. 'But the Avestic literature is as valuable in fixing the original meaning of Dasyu as is the Vedic in fixing that of the Deva. The political organisation of the Ahura-worshippers

recognised the four divisions of the nmana -house, the visa - village, the zantu - small district, and the dakhyu, a large district."

He further points out that according to Yasna Ha 19-18, Zarathustra, besides being the spiritual lord in Ragha region was also the temporal lord-Dakhyuma. So the dasyus in *Rgveda* are not the aboriginals of the Punjab as some of the Indologists suppose. There is no stigma attached to this word 'dasyu' and the Parsis do not resent this appellation being attached to their Prophet Zarathustra.

Thus, there is no separate Dravidian race in India nor are or were there dasyus i.e., the aboriginals as opposed to the Aryans here. This is nothing but a figment of imagination of these Indologists who believe what they dream.

The other misstatement of Hall is that the Aryans were fair skinned and they conquered the aboriginal dasyus and the South Indian Dravidians in India. The original postglacial Home of the Vedic Aryans, comprised of the Caspian Sea and Asia Minor on the West, the Hindukush mountains, the Sindh, the Punjab and Kashmira on the East, the Pamir plateau on the north and the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea on the South. So the question of Aryans entering India from a far off land and conquering the aboriginals in the Punjab and elsewhere, does not arise at all. The Aryas (the Vedic people) living together as one political entity till the Dasarajna war i.e.. about 6000 B.C., began spreading westward and south-ward. They occupied Greece and other European countries in the West and moved southwards to India. But that event also occurred prior to 4500 B.C. The present-day Indians separated from their Iranian brethren at the same time. The connection between India on the one hand and Afghanistan and Iran on the other, however continued till very recent times i.e., till the advent of Islam in Afghanistan by about 800 A.D.

As these are the historical facts, the other misstatements made by Hall need not be taken cognizance of here. Suffice it to say that there is no conclusive evidence against the view that ascribes the authorship of the Indus valley civilization to the Rgvedic Aryans.

If, therefore, it is proved that the *Rgveda* is anterior to the Indus valley civilization, the theory propounded by the philologists that the Rgvedic composition is not earlier than 1200 B.C. would then have no legs to stand down.

Malti R. Shende (*The Harappans in Rgveda*) quotes M. Wheeler, the famous archaeologist thus: "The Sargonid period is now agreeably established at 2370-2280 B.C. and we know from a number of recent soundings (1964-66) that the occupation of Mohenjodaro goes back to a very considerable way below the levels at which the excavations have recovered materials recognisable as

Sargonid sites at Mesopotamia. It may well be that the initial date 2500 B.C. conjectured for Harappans may yet have to be pushed further back by a century or two." She further states that the findings at Tepe fahya might ask for a bigger change than that. The Harappan period may be earlier than 3100 B.C.

If according to the archaeologists, now the period of the so called Indus Valley Civilization goes back to 3100 B.C., or even earlier, and that it had spread from Nile in Egypt to the whole of northern India, their own pet theory that the Aryans — the undiluted barbarians came in hordes to India around 1500 B.C. and destroyed the highly evolved civilization like the Indus Valley, stands totally demolished thereby. T. Burrow, for example, admits The Aryan invasion-of India is recorded in no written document and can not be proved archaeologically. And yet scholars including A.L. Basam priest in supporting such a baseless theory.

K.C. Verma observes: "The researches of Kedar Nath Shastri and others show that the final destruction of Harappa was not due to any attack by Aryans or any one else and that it is to be dated near or even earlier than 300 B.C."

As very ably summarised by K.C. Verma, "The archaeologists like Sir Marshall, Leonard Woolley and others, held the Aryan advent in India in the middle of the second millennium B.C. and ascribed the Harappan (Indus) civilization to the Dravidians. But now there is a change, as a result of complete failure of the Dravidian hypothesis. Even such protagonists as I. Mahadevan have now been shaken; archaeologists like Fairservice, Jean Deshayas and even B.B. Lal, B.K. Thapar are veering round to the view that the Aryans were present in India at least as early as the commencement of the Indus civilisation."

"Actually this view that the Aryans were in India even before the Indus civilization, was first posited by Langdon, and then supported on independent grounds by B.W. Datta (*Man In India*, 1936-37), Kedar Nath Shastri (*New Light on the Indus Civilization*, 2 vols.). Sir Max Mallowan, Arun Kumar. Dilip K. Chakravarty, Lambefg Karlovasky, F.R. Allchin and a host of others, also on archaeological grounds that the Indo-Europeans were already in Anatolia and Palestine in the 4th millennium B.C."

"Actually as acknowledged by Western Sanskritists, like E.G. Rapson and Indians like Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, to say nothing of the inveterate supporter of a late date for *Rgveda*, the late B.K. Ghosa, have admitted that there is not even an indirect memory or legend of Aryan invasion or infiltration in the Vedic literature and S.P. Gupta (*Archaeology of Soviet Central Asia and Indian Borderlands*, 1976 Vol. II. p.139) has been forced to observe: "The analysis of the Soviet scholars also shows that archaeologically it cannot be proved that the Vedic Aryans came either from Dagestan-Kapet Dag region of Western

Turkemia and Northern Iran, or from Tedjen Murgab deltas of South-eastern Turkemia or from the Oxus basin in southern parts of Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan and northern parts of Afghanistan." (B.K. Thapar, *Vivekananda Comm. Vol.*, 1970, pp. 147-164).

K.C. Verma, therefore, concludes, "Thus there is neither literary nor archaeological evidence for the entry of Aryans into India. They may have come or India itself may have been a part of the original Indo-European home. In any case the Max-Mullerian chronology of the Vedic literature is dead as dodo."

### **Aryan race - theory untenable:**

It is interesting to see as to how the theory of separate Aryan and Dravidian races, was developed by the European scholars with an eye on creating schisms among different sections of the populace of India, with their varied languages, customs, caste distinctions, religious affinities etc.

The British imperialist circles were hatching a plot to perpetuate their rule in India by adopting the doctrine of 'divide and rule'. The following extract in the minutes of the Royal Asiatic Society. London, gives us the date of birth of this 'Aryan-Dravidian hypothesis'.

"The meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society on 9th April, 1866 Rt. Honourable Viscount Strangford in the Chair: Mr. Thomas then proceeded to advert to the single point open to discussion, involved under the 4th head, tracing the progress of the successive waves of Aryan immigration from the Oxus into the province of Ariyana and the Hindukush, and the downward course of the pastoral races from their first entry into the Punjab and the associate crude chants of the Vedic hymns to the establishment of the cultivated Brahmanic institutions on the banks of Saraswati and the elaboration of Sanskrit Grammar at Taxila."

Thomas further said: "The Aryans invented no alphabet of their own for their special form of Aryan speech, but were in all their migrations indebted to the nationality with whom they settled for their instructions in the science of writing. Devanagari was appropriated to the expression of Sanskrit language from the pre-existing Sanskrit, Pali or Lat alphabet which was obviously originated to meet the requirements of the Turanian dialects."

This is the genesis of birth of this outstanding 'theory', unbelievable but true. The imperialists wanted to din into the ears of the subjugated Indians, that the Indians were always conquered by foreigners. First they gave the name 'Brahmi' for the Lat alphabet and the word 'Dravidian' was afterwards

substituted for the word 'Turanian'. Then they spread the canard that these Dravidians who peopled India from north to south, were conquered by the Aryan barbarians some time in 1500 B.C. These invading hordes brought with them a crude language and adopted the developed Sanskrit and Pali languages and assimilated themselves with the Dravidians and developed their sophisticated institutions. These latter day Indians were later on invaded by the Sakas, Huns and the Greeks. So the story of India and Indians as pictured is one of constant defeat at the hands of the foreigners and invading tribes.

From this casual but probably motivated resolution moved by Thomas and adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society, London, in the year 1866, the Indologists began to adopt this very thesis as gospel truth. As a natural corollary, when the Indus valley civilization was discovered and its date was adjudged to be around 3000 B.C., this thesis was further developed and conclusion drawn that the Aryan barbarians came from the North-west and destroyed the locally developed civilization.

This 'Aryans verses Dravidian theory' was further developed by the Christian missionaries from R. Caldwell to Heras on grounds of philology. Heras and others of his tribe vociferously proclaim Dravidians to be the civilisers of the world. One may heartily agree with this compliment but let it be noted clearly that doing so they unknowingly give credit to the Indians to be the civilizers of the world, whether we name them as Dravidians or Aryans. The Indians should be thankful for this compliment even though they did not mean it. But the main theme of the Rgvedic people as proclaimed by themselves that they are the civilizers of the world — '*krnavanto visvamaryam*' (Rg. 8-63-5) after the glacial epoch and there are no such distinctive races as Aryan or Dravidian, has deliberately-been suppressed. As a result, the seed of schism between the Tamilians of the South and the rest of the Indians has been sown and developed.

This is the result of 150 years of brain-washing. It is worth noting that Max Muller, later in 1888, admitted his mistake in accepting the 'racial Aryan' theory. He writes: "I have declared again and again that if I say 'Aryan' I mean neither blood or bones, nor hair nor skull; I mean simply those who speak an Aryan language. To an ethnologist, an Aryan race, Aryan blood, Aryan eyes and hair, is as great a sinner as a linguist who speaks of a dolicocephalic dictionary of a brachycephalic grammar." Even a social scientist as Nesfield remarks; "There is no division of the people as the Aryan conquerors of India and the aboriginals of the country, that division is modern and that there is essential unity of the Indian races. The great majority of the Brahmins are not of the lighter complexion or finer or better bred features than any other caste or distinct in 'race and blood' from the scavengers who swept the roads." It would,

therefore be seen that the westerners have created the myth of the Dravidians being the earlier inhabitants of the whole of India, north as well as the south, and the destruction of their fine civilization by the Aryan barbarians coming down from Central Asia. In fact, there was no separate race as the Dravidian, nor was there any race then as the Aryan. Rgveda stands witness to the fact that the original home of the Rgvedic people covered a vast expanse from the Russian Steppes to the Punjab. And afterwards they spread to the west from the Mediterranean to the British Isles.

In fact, we would put it this way: the *Rgveda* is the heritage of mankind and the Rgvedic people were the civilizers of the world in the post-glacial epoch. The whole world of today, should be proud of this heritage. The Rgvedic period is as old as the hills and is to be counted backwards from 3500 B.C. According to this view, the distinction between the Aryan and Dravidian culture is imaginary and the Harappa civilization was a part and parcel of the Aryan achievements. It has to be termed as 'Sarasvati-Sundhu civilization'. The Aryans very much belonged to India and they had not come to India from outside. It may be pointed out that the word 'Arya' does not connote the name of a particular race, but only means 'a civilised one'.

But the western view is that the Dravidians from India went out and civilized the West, as they did civilise the Aryan barbarians who had invaded them (the Dravidians) in India and had destroyed their civilization namely the Indus valley civilisation. Hall says, "There is little doubt that India must have been one of the earliest centres of human civilization and it seems natural to suppose that the strange un-Semitic un-Aryan people who came from the east to civilize the west were of Indian origin, especially when we see with our eyes how very indian the Sumerians were in type."

Heras in conclusion says: "We are, therefore, forced to acknowledge that the Dravidians of India, after a long period of development in this country (India), travelled westwards and settling successively in the various lands, they found their way from Mesopotamia up to the British Isles, spread their race, afterwards named Mediterranean owing to the place where they were known anthropologically—through the west and made their civilisation flourish in the two continents, being thus the originators of the modern world civilization."

Heras determines the date of Indus valley civilization at 6594 B.C. to 4980 B.C. He states, "In fact, the beginning of the constellation of Ram coincided with the winter solstice in the year 6594 B.C."

This calculation is arrived at on the basis of the Chaldean conception of the Zodiac. They had twelve constellations in the zodiac, while Mohenjodarians

had eight. So he states that the beginning of Ram constellation of the Mohenjodarians cannot be placed later than 4980 B.C. Tilak has also determined the Aditi period of the Rgveda at about 6000 B.C.

These conclusions of Heras get further corroboration from the recently discovered archaeological evidence. Garridge, a French Geologist with his team carried out the Bolan river bed excavations, He states in his report of 1980 (vide-Scientific American - September-October 1980) that they date 6000 B.C. and indicated the expertise in fine rice cultivation.

### 1.3 The Bharata War

Let us now see what according to the Puranas and the Itihasas was the situation around 3100 B.C. in India — the latest date fixed by the archaeologists for the Indus Valley Civilization; even though as we have just seen its period goes back to 6000 B.C. if not earlier. The *Vishnu Parana* states:

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***"Yadeva bhagavān Visnoramso yāto divam dvija  
Vasudevakulodbhūstadevatrāgatah kalih: 4-24-108.***

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(The moment Lord Visnu's incarnation, born in the family of Vasudeo left his mortal remains, O, Brahmana, Kali age descended on this earth.)"

There is yet another verse in the same Purana, giving the exact moment when Kali era was ushered in. It is:

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***"Yasmin Krsno divam yāstasminneva tadahani  
pratipannam kaliyugam iti prāhuh purāvidah 4-24-113***

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Those who know ancient history, state kaliyuga was ushered in at that very moment in that day when Krsna left for his heavenly abode."

Traditionally, the Hindus have to recite a *sankalpa* at the commencement of any ceremony or rite whether daily or periodical, in that *sankalpa* (a resolution), the calculation of time since the beginning of creation is noted. The start of the Kali-age is fixed exactly at 27 minutes and 30 seconds past 2 a.m. on the night of the first day of the first month of the year Pramathi, the name of the first Kali year corresponding to 20th February, 3102 B.C. Reckoning from this beginning, the Indian astronomers prepare their almanacs from year to

year. These almanacs are in vogue throughout the country - from Kasmira in the North to Kanyakumari in the south and from Saurashtra in the West to Assam in the east.

At the start of the Kali yuga seven planets were in conjunction in the constellation Mesa (Aries). The French astronomer Bailley and others admitted that the conjunction of the planets described by Hindu astronomers occurred exactly at the time correct to the minute and the second. Western historians have fixed the commencement of the Kali era at 2-27'-30" on 20th February. 3102 B.C.

The Visnu Purana further states that as long as Bhagavan Krsna (Incarnation of Visnu and the leader of the Yadus) was alive, Kali dared not touch this earth. Many unbelievable and untoward events began to take place after his departure from the earth and the old king Yudhisthira decided to abdicate the throne of Hastinapura in favour of Arjuna's grandson Parikshita, adopted Vanaprastha asrama, and left for heavenly abode 25 years later i.e., in 3076 B.C. along with his brothers and other relations. From this year i.e., 3076 B.C. the Kashmiris reckon their Loukikabda or Yudhisthira Saka. This era is still current in Kasmira.

The thought that with the advent of Kali on the-scene, things began to look topsy-turvy to the aged Yudhisthira finds an echo even in the Mahabharata Mousal Parva—

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***"Śattrimṣe atha samprāpte varse kauravanañdanah dadarśa viparītāni nimittāni Yudhisthirah". 2-2***

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"When Yudhisthira had completed thirty six years of his reign, he began seeing around unforeseen and untoward incidents happening."

*Visnu Purana* in explicit terms states:

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***"Vipahtāni drstvā ca nimittāni hi Pāṇḍavah yāte Kṛṣṇe cakāra atha so abhisekaṃ Parikṣitah" 4-23-111***

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"The son of Pandu seeing inauspicious signs around after Krsna's departure from this earth, crowned Parikshita."

This Purana also states:



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***Yasmin Kīṣṇo divaṁ yātaḥ tasmin eva tadahani pratipannaṁ  
kaiiyugam tasya saṅkhyāṁ nibodha me.***

**4-24-115**

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“The day and the moment at which Kṛṣṇa left for his heavenly abode, Kaliyuga was ushered in. Know now the number of years it will continue”(4,32,000 years).

The other Puranas also voice the same sentiments and detail the same incidents as Viṣṇu Purana.

It will be seen from these narrations that Yudhishthira was on - the throne of Hastinapura for about 36 years at the time when Kṛṣṇa left his mortal coil.

The date of Kṛṣṇa's departure from this earth is shown as 20th February 3102 B.C. So 36 years before this date i.e., in about 3138 B.C. Yudhishthira was crowned king of Hastinapura, after the fall of the Kauravas in that great battle fought on the grounds of Kurukṣetra. This is known as the Bharata War. This was fought in 3139-38 B.C. The exact dates of this war are given in that great Epic — the *Mahabharata* itself.

In this great war, Bhīṣma, the greatest of the heroes of the *Mahabharata*, fell down mortally wounded on the tenth day of this war. It is the wish of the Hindus to die in Uttarayana i.e., between the beginning of winter solstice and its end. In the Bhīṣma Parva of this great epic, we are told that this war was declared to have commenced on the last day of the lunar month of Kartika i.e., on Kartika amavasya. Bhīṣma fell wounded on the tenth day of the war. Uttarayana was 58 days away. This grand old man did not allow- the arrows sticking to his body to be removed. He preferred to suffer the excruciating pain, to which one with a less magnificent physique would have speedily succumbed. So firm was the indomitable will of this stem warrior, this noblest flower of ancient chivalry, that he cared little for the terrible agony of these fifty-eight nights and more.

### **Calculation of 58 nights:**

In the calculation of the 58 nights, there is some confusion. This is cleared by G.V. Kaveeshwara, who has propounded the theory that though the Bharata war was actually fought for 18 days, its duration was of 35 days, every alternate day being the day of rest. He has thus clearly shown that the narration of events of this war is true and not imaginary. As we all know this war was being fought according to certain set rules agreed to by both the parties to the war. This war was fought on a very gigantic scale. Everyday thousands of soldiers were killed

on both sides and many weapons of war destroyed. The horses, the elephants and other animals used for carrying war materials were also killed. It was necessary to clear this vast debris from the ground before it was readied for the actual conduct of the war again. So the war was fought every alternate day, there being the day of rest between the two war days.

The above theory is based on the text of the epic and is well-founded. The actual date of the start of the war is given in the epic thus:

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***"Saptamāt ca apī divasāt amāvāsyā bhaviṣyati saṅgrāmo  
yujyatām tasyām tāmāhuh sakradevatām. (Udyog 142-18)***

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The seventh day from to-day is amavasya. The war be started on that day, it being the day of constellation presided over by the deity Indra.'

This date of the start of the first great war in recorded history is the amavasya day of the month of Kartika according to the system of amavasya ending months, while it is the month of Margasirsa on the *Pumima* ending system in the year 3139 B.C. Bhagavan Kṛṣṇa had thus told in specific terms to Karna, the chief spokesman for Duryodhana, the Kaurava hero, who had spurned the last effort made by Lord Kṛṣṇa at reconciliation between the Pandavas and the Kauravas.

This amavasya day for the start of this war has, however, not been unanimously accepted by all the scholars, because they think it conflicts with other statements made in the epic itself regarding the progress of the war. The scholars have, therefore, tentatively fixed this date as eleventh day of the bright half of the month of Margasirsa of that year. There is no authority for such an assumption in the text itself. And in fact Neelakantha, the Sanskrit commentator of *Mahabharata*, advocates the Bright fourteenth of Margasirsa is the starting date of the war; while Bharata-Savitri, an old Sanskrit poetical composition, names the Bright thirteenth as that date.

On this very first day of the war, that great philosophical treatise — the *Bhagvadgita*, the Lord's song, was born. This is the dialogue between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the Pandava hero. This day is even today celebrated as the date of birth of Gita. But to assign that date to the Bright eleventh of Margasirsa (instead of the preceding amavasya) is incorrect.

Let us see why this Margasirsa has been taken as the date of the start of the war.

On the thirteenth day of the war, Abhimanyu, the 16-17 year old lad of Arjuna was treacherously killed by Jayadratha, one of the army commanders

belonging to the Kauravas. Hearing this, Arjuna was greatly enraged. He vowed that he would fight with Jayadratha and kill him before the sun-set of the next day of the war i.e., the fourteenth day or else immolate himself in fire. Arjuna carried out this threat to fruition and killed Jayadratha according to his vow. Duryodhana felt that Dronacarya, the chief commander had been sympathetic to the other side and so at his (Dronacarya's) behest the war was continued even during the night, disregarding the normal rule that war is not to be fought during the night. Dronacarya felt greatly aggrieved and vowed to fight non-stop till the end i.e., till victory or death. The war was, therefore, continued not only during the night of the fourteenth day, but it was continued non-stop, even throughout the subsequent day. At the end of that day Dronacarya fell to the arrows from Arjuna.

It has further been stated that on this fourteenth day the moon rose late in the night. Here there arises a difficulty. If we take Amavasya as the day of the start of the war, then this fourteenth day — if the war is taken to have been fought every day after the start and not every alternate day as suggested by Kaveeshwara — would be the full-moon day. Naturally the moon cannot be said to rise late in the night of this day. This is the reason why the scholars are inclined to advance the day of the start of this war from Kartika Amavasya to the eleventh of the bright half of the month of Margasirsa so that the fourteenth day from this eleventh day would be about the 12th or 13th day of the dark half of the month and so the moon would naturally rise late in the night.

These scholars had not taken into account the possibility of the war being fought on every alternate day. G.V. Kaveeshwara has solved this difficulty by interpreting all the difficult verses in this regard through this key of the war being fought every alternate day.

This key solves many other puzzles which the author of the epic as stated in the epic itself, had deliberately woven into its fabric. It is stated therein that the author Vedavyasa wanted Lord Ganesha to be his scribe. Lord Ganesha laid down the condition that he be fed with verses non-stop. If the author pauses to ponder over the composition of the subsequent verses, then Lord Ganesha would refuse to be his scribe any longer. Bhagavan Vedavyasa agreed on one condition that Lord Ganesha should understand the import of the verses composed by him, before he wrote them. The author, therefore, used a strategem through which he inserted certain riddles the meaning of which Lord Ganesha would take a little time to comprehend. In the meanwhile Vyasa would think of further lines of composition.

The following verses from Adiparva reveal this strategem adopted by Vyasa:

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***"Grantha granthim tadā cakre munirgūdhām kutuhalāt yasmin  
pratijñā prāha munirdvaipayanaḥ tvidam/1.80***

***Astau slokasahasrāṇi astau śloka-ṣatani ca ahaṁ vedmi Śuko  
vetti Sañjaya vetti vā navā/1.31***

---

Then the sage through fun composed many verses full of deep meaning. The sage stated that there were eight thousand eight hundred riddle verses, the meaning of which he knew, Suka his son knew and he was not sure whether Sanjaya knew the meaning of all these or not."

Whatever the truth in this episode, it is clear that there are many verses in the epic, the meaning of which is not apparently clear. One of such verses regarding the duration of the Bharata war is as follows:

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***"Catvarinsat ahāni adya dve ca me nihśritasya vai pusyeṇa  
saṁprayato asmiśravane punaragataḥ.***

***Salya-34-6."***

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In this verse Balaram, the elder brother of Shri Kṛṣṇa tells: As soon as the date of war was declared (i.e., seven days before Kartika amavasya) he left on pilgrimage. (He did not like this fratricidal war). On the day he set out, the moon was in the Pusya constellation, and when he returned on the last day of the war the moon was in the constellation of Śravana. Thus in all for forty two days he was out on pilgrimage."

According to the traditional view, the last day of the war i.e., eighteenth day would be  $7 + 18 = 25$ th day from the day Balaram set out on pilgrimage. But this statement of Balaram contained in this verse, unambiguously states that the eighteenth day of the war, was his forty second day from the day he started on his pilgrimage. This would mean that  $42 - 25 = 17$  extra days are added in his calculation. The 17 days are the days of rest according to this key namely, that the war was fought on every alternate day.

This key also explains one other verse connected with this war, the verse runs thus:

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***"Tatra te sumahātmāno nyavasana Pāndu-nañdanāh souce  
nīvartayīṣyañto masamatram bahih purāt Santi, 1-2.***

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The sons of Pandu (righteous as they were) observed one month of grief over the departed souls and during this period stayed out of the town." They did not rush to the town to grab the throne.

Uptill now it was felt that the Pandavas could not be away from the capital for a month after the war. The mention of this one month of the observance of grief over the dead may, therefore, include the 18 days of war, as it was thought. Thus the actual grief period was restricted to  $30 - 18 = 12$  days only against the explicit statement that they had stayed out of the town for 30 days. Even today, only 12 days are observed as grief period.

Kaveeshwara has very convincingly explained the whole matter in his book *Chronological secrets of the Mahabharata War* (1972)

Let us work out the different dates on the basis of this newly found key:

The date of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's declaration of the date of war would be seven days before Amāvasyā i.e., it would be 7th day of the dark half of the month of Kārtika, on which day, it has been stated that the moon was in Pusya constellation. Balaram had started on pilgrimage on this day.

Amavasya was on the seventh day from the date of declaration of the war. Thus one tithi (moon-day) was dropped (*ksaya-tithi*) in this latter period of the half month as stated in the epic. Amavasya was thus the eighth day of Balaram's pilgrimage. (One moon-day lost, was during the first six days of this dark half of the month of Kartika).

## Table of Dates

(7<sup>th</sup> day - Tithi — of dark half of Karlika was the day of declaration of war.  
8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> — with one moon-day lost — 6 days — preparation of the actual war)

Day of fight:	Tithi and month
I —	Amavasya of Kartika. 1 <sup>st</sup> day of Margasirsa — bright — half-a day of rest.'
II —	2 <sup>nd</sup> of Margasirsa — day of fight 3 <sup>rd</sup> —day of rest.
III —	4 <sup>th</sup> — day of fight. This way 5 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> . 13 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup> days of bright half of Masgasirsa would be the days of rest
IV to VIII—	6 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup> Tithis would be the days of fight-bright half.
IX —	1 <sup>st</sup> day of dark fortnight of Masgasirsa.
X —	Would be 3 <sup>rd</sup> day of dark fortnight-day of Bhishma's fall.
XI to XIII —	4 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> & 11 <sup>th</sup> days are days of rest, 8 <sup>th</sup> is dropped (Ksaya-Tithi)
XIV —	12 <sup>th</sup> day of fight — Death of Jayadratha no day of rest. Fighting continued during night. Moonrise in the latter part of night.
XV —	13 <sup>th</sup> day — Drone fell. — 14 <sup>th</sup> day — day of rest.
XVI —	Amavasya — day of fight — 1 <sup>st</sup> of bright half of the month of Pausa.
XVII —	2 <sup>nd</sup> —Kama fell. — 3 <sup>rd</sup> — day of rest.
XVIII —	4 <sup>th</sup> - Salya fell at noon. Vz day fight. — 5 <sup>th</sup> mace duel between Bhishma and Duryodhana. Other ½day of fight.

As two *tithis* were lost in the earlier half, the bright half of the month of *Margasirsa* was of 1.5 days. This way, the tenth day of the war would be the

third day of the dark half of the month of *Margisirsa*, On this day, *Bhishma*, the commander Of the *Kauravas*, fell wounded. He wanted to die in the *Uttarayana* i.e., when the Sun started on His northerly course. So he did not allow the arrows sticking to his body to be pulled out. It was his first night on the bed of arrows.

*Jayadratha* fell on the fourteenth day i.e., on the twelfth *tithi* of the dark half of the month of *Margasirsa*. This day works out to be the thirty—fourth day of *Balarama's* pilgrimage. There is a day's difference in this (moon-days). The total number of days in a lunar month are about 29.

The war was continued on the fourteenth day without break as we have noted earlier. *Drona* fell on this day. On the eighteenth day which was thus the 4th of the bright half of the month of *Pausa*, *Salya*, the commander-in-chief fell at noon. So war was fought only for *half* day. *Duryodhana*, the king was now the only important warrior left on the *Kaurava* side. He fled and hid himself in a lake. The *Pandavas* searched him out and *Bhima* challenged him for a mace-fight.

Thus on the fifth day of the bright half of the month of *Pausa* the latter half of the eighteenth day of war *Duryodhana* fell and the war came to an end. This is the 35th day from the start of the war and the 42<sup>nd</sup> day of *Balaram's* pilgrimage. He was persuaded to return to this day to, witness the mace-fight between two of his disciples *Duryodhana* and *Bhima*. This also is the seventeenth night of *Bhishma's* lying on the bed of arrows.

Thereafter the *Pandavas* observed 30 days of grief, paid oblations to the departed souls of their kith and kin and other soldiers and entered *Hastinapura*, the capital town where *Yudhisthira* was coronated the next day. The day of *coronation* thus works out to be the seventh day of the bright half of the month of *Magha* or the 50th day of the lying of *Bhisma* on the bed of arrows.

*Yudhisthira* then set out to the place where *Bhisma* was lying on his bed of arrows and listened to his great discourse on the ethics of war and peace. This was done at the behest of lord *Sri Krisna*.

When the 58<sup>th</sup> night was over and the sun had started on His northerly course, *Bhisma* left his body for his heavenly abode. This day works out to be full-moon day of the month of *Magha*. The actual words put in the mouth of *Bhisma* are :

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***"Astapañcāśatam rātryah śayanasya-adya me gatah śaresu  
niśitāgresu yathā varśaśatam tathmā, Māgho ayam'***

***samanuprapto masah saumyah Yudhisthira tribhagasesah  
pakso ayam sukio bhavitumarhati***

Today, 58<sup>th</sup> nights have passed since I am lying on this bed of pointed arrows. I felt as if I have been lying on it for the last hundred years. So excruciating is the pain I have experienced. Only about three *muhurtas* (one muhurta = 48 minutes so 48 minutes x 3=144) i.e., about 2.24 hours were remaining for the rising of the sun of the first day of the dark half of the month and it can still be called the bright half of the month ". But the scholars have fumbled about the meaning of *tribhagasesah*. They felt that this term means- 'three-fourths of the month is still there. 'But from the words, 'it can still be called bright half of the month', it is clear that this half was almost complete as the full-moon night was also over and only about 2.24 hours were left for the rising of the sun of the first day of the dark half of the month. So the words '*tribhagasesah*' would actually mean that only 3 muhurtas were remaining before the bright half of the month would end.

Those who had not used this key of alternate-day war, were not able to accept the explicit statement in the epic that the war would start on the *Amavasya* day. In order to place the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the continuous war in the dark half of *Margasirsa* month, they assumed that eleventh day of the bright half of *Margasirsa*, was the day of the actual start of the war. Again when *Bhisma* fell on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of this non-stop war, i.e. 6<sup>th</sup> day of dark half of *Margasirsa*, (according to their calculations), then (10 days of *Margasirsa* + 29 days of Pausa + 19 days of *Magha* =) 58 nights would be over on 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> day of dark half of *Magha*. This part of the month cannot obviously be called bright half of the month. But *Bhisma* actually uses the words 'this is bright half of *Magha*', If, however, this war is taken to have started on *Amavasya* day and the key of alternate day war is not used, then 10<sup>th</sup> day of war would be 9<sup>th</sup> day of the bright half of *Margasirsa* and 58 nights would be over on 8<sup>th</sup> day of bright half of the month of *Magha*. This would be alright. But then the other statements like late moon rise on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of war and the 42 days of Balaram's pilgrimage and many other descriptions of the actual conduct of war would not tally.

So a key has to be used, and it solves all riddles implicit in different verses as noted above.

Incidentally, it also proves that the war was an actual event, as its day-to-day conduct is described with such meticulous care and details.

One should not regard that this key is the flight of imagination of some scholars. The day of rest is required for clearing dead bodies of the animals and the soldiers from the battlefield. We get so many direct clues in its support. For



example, each day of the war, the armies on both sides were arranged according to a very complicated and preconceived plan. It has been stated that the *Pandavas* adopted '*Krauncaruna*' plan for the formation of their army on the second day, while the *Kauravas* adopted the '*Garuda*' plan. Many plans like '*Makara*', '*Vajra*', '*Syena*', '*Half moon*', etc. have been noted with elaborate details. Now for the arrangement of the plan (*Vyuha*) and its rehearsal by the armies to follow these plans, the rest day is necessary. Other-wise when the armies on both sides become tired and sleepy at day's end, these armies and their commanders cannot make these arrangements before the sunrise of the next day. After all these wars in ancient India were fought according to certain set rules and ethics. Some such plan of a day's rest must have been accepted by both the sides.

Again, elaborate details of installation of the different commanders after the death of the predecessors, according to certain rituals have been given. These rituals could have been performed only on the day of the rest.

The grand old sire *Bhisma*. while he lay on his bed of arrows-saratalpa, advised the contesting parties to desist from war and make peace, but *Duryodhana*, the leader of the *Kauravas*, did not heed this saner counsel and the war continued for another 8 days. On the evening of the last and the eighteenth day. *Bhisma* and *Duryodhana* fought in single combat with mace and *Duryodhana* had his thigh broken and he lay mortally wounded. The three surviving *Kauravas* — *Asvathyama*, *Krpa* and *Krtavarma* fell on the camp of the *Pandavas* by night and destroyed all the army except the *Pandava* brothers, who were-luckily away that night. Thus the great war came to an end.

As is usual with the Hindus, the *Pandavas* observed the *Sutaka* for thirty days on account of the death of so many of their kith and kin. On the 31st day from the date of the death of *Duryodhana* the obsequial rites in honour of the dead were performed. On the 32nd day exhorted by *Sri Krsna* to shake off the grief for the loss of his kinsmen and to rise up and counselled by *Vedavyasa* to assume charge of the vacant throne, *Yudhishthira* set out for *Hastinapura*, the capital of the *Kauravas*. On the 33rd day, he was duly installed on the throne.

On the 34th day *Yudhishthira* appeared before his subjects and bowed before them and obtained their blessings. *Sri Krsna* then instructed him to report at once to *Bhisma* for instructions. The *Pandavas* with *Sri Krsna* and *Satyaki* their Commander-in-Chief set out at once in their chariot on the morning of the very next day, towards the spot where *Bhisma* was still lying on the bed of arrows for all these 53 nights.

Beholding Bhishma from a distance, all of them got down from their chariots and paid their respectful obeisance to the grand old hero. Sri *Kṛṣṇa* granted *Bhishma* divine sight as he had done to Arjuna. Thereby the physical weakness and mental darkness or illusion of this righteous hero vanished. *Sri Kṛṣṇa* then showered praise on this *Kuru-Hero* by telling him that he was the repository of learning and so he should now speak to *Yudhishthira* the words of truth full of morality. As otherwise, with his passing away, this knowledge would be lost to the future generations.

Accordingly, the great discourse on various topics concerning man and his welfare ensued and it is recorded in *Santi* and *Anusasana* Parvas of this great epic *Mahabharata*.

On the 68<sup>th</sup> day from the start of the war or on the 59<sup>th</sup> day from the fall of *Bhisma*. *Sri Kṛṣṇa*, *Vidura*, *Vyasa* along with *Yudhishthira* and the other surviving kings went forth to the sacred spot where he was lying on his bed of arrows. *Bhishma* accepted their salutations and addressed *Yudhishthira* thus:

"*Distyā prāpt oasi kaunteya sahāmātyo Yudhishthira, parivrtto hi bhagavān sahasrāmś'uh divakarah, astapañcāsatam rātryah śayānasya adya me gataḥ śaresu nisitāgresu yathā varsaśatam tathā, māgho ayaṁ samanuprāpto māsah saumyo yudhiṣṭhira tribhāgaśesah pakśah ayaṁ śuklo bhavitumarhati* (Anushasan) — By good luck O son of *Kunti*, O *Yudhishthira* you have come here with all the counsellors. The holy *Surya* - maker of the day has started on his northward course. Eight and fifty nights have passed since I am lying on this bed of sharp-pointed arrows. I felt as if I am lying thus for a hundred years. O *Yudhishthira* the lunar month of *Magha* has come. This is bright fortnight and still 3 *muhurtas* of the day are yet to elapse" (28).

The day to day account of this famous war is also given in detail in this Epic. It would, therefore, be seen that this war is not a myth but a reality and all astronomical details given also tally with the actual positions of stars, if we take that the Great war was fought in the year 3139 B.C. The dates according to Gregorian calendar point to 8th October 3139 B.C., as the day on which this war was started. *Bhishma* fell on 26<sup>th</sup> October 3139 B.C. The war came to an end on 24<sup>th</sup> November 3139 B.C. and *Bhishma* departed for his heavenly abode on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 3139 B.C. before sunrise, the day on which the Sun started on his northerly course. *Yudhishthira* was coronated as Emperor of *Bharata* and installed on the throne of *Hastinapura* on 17<sup>th</sup> Dec., 3139 B.C. *Kaliyuga* was ushered in on 20<sup>th</sup> February 3102 B.C. and *Yudhishthira* immediately vacated thereafter in favour of *Parikṣita*. *Yudhishthira*, was thus, King Emperor for about 36 years, as is stated in the Epic itself.

### **Clues from Sumerian chronology:**

The Indian sources such as the epic *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* clearly establish the date of Bharata war to be 3139-38 B.C. On the basis of the evidence furnished by the cuneiform clay tablets unearthed in Mesopotamia. Waddell fixes the date of the Bharat war at 670 B.C. There is thus a gap of about 2400 years between the date of Bharat war according to Indian sources and the one fixed by Waddell.

The study is all the more necessary as it has been agreed on all hands that the Sumerian and Indus civilisations have close links. The term '*Arya*' used by the Vedic people though not used in racial sense it appears to have been widely used by these people wherever they later on migrated. The meaning of this term "the exalted or noble one" had an attraction of its own. The Sumerian term 'Ar. Are-exalt lofty' has a close affinity with the Vedic '*Arya*'. Her, Hera, Hearra, or Herr - lord or master — of the Goths. Scandinavians, Germans and Anglo-Saxons, the Aire-Chieftan<sup>1</sup>— of the Irish, Scots are all derivations of '*Arya* or Ar. Ara'. Darius the great calls himself 'An Arya of Arya descent Xerxes called himself Harri.

Shuruppak was the name of the Sumerian capital city. Its site is stated to be near modern Arab Village of Fara on the old Euphrates channel, not far to the south of Bismaya or Adas, the town where some of the inscriptions have been found (Waddell P-134). Shuruppak phonetically appears to be the same as *Shurparak*, the modern town of *Sopara* near Mumbai (India).

"That there was contact established between the merchants of the Kulli culture in South Baluchistan and those of Early Dynastic Sumer probably soon after 2800 B.C." has been admitted by scholars. Piggot also points out "that contacts between the Harappa culture and that of Kulli — were continuous through the life of the two great cities (Harappa and Mohenjo-daro)".

The point is that the Sumerian and Indus civilisations have much in common and they were contemporary. If, therefore, Waddell determines the date of Bharata war at 670 B.C. on the basis of the Sumerian inscripational evidence, it should be fully scrutinised.

A series of cuneiform clay tablet lists were found. They have the lists of early kings of Mesopotamia — an early name of the land of the twin rivers the Euphrates and the Tigris. These were compiled by the priests at Isin — a capital town. Before this discovery, at Kish an ancient Sumerian capital city, a tablet was unearthed containing first five Sumerian dynasties. Kish is the old Imperial

Sumerian capital at the site of the modern Arab village of El Ohimeir, South of Baghdad the present capital of Iraq. It was the old channel of Euphrates.

Incidentally Sumerian name of Euphrates as Puranunu or Puratti has been identified by Waddell with Parushni or Ravi of the present Punjab (Pakistan), suggesting that when the Indo-Aryan crossed the river Sindhu and settled on the equally big river east of Sindhu, gave it the familiar old name of *Purannu*.

The date of this Kish chronicle is fixed at 2496 B.C. the date of Gothic invasion. This date is stated to be the date of the last king of the last (i.e. the fifth) dynasty. The penultimate or Fourth Dynasty is that of Sargon the great of Agade. On this basis, the date of the first king of the first dynasty is fixed at 3378 B.C. working backwards from Sargon whose date is relatively fixed at 2725 B.C.

The name of the first king of the first dynasty of Sumeria as revealed by this Kish chronicle is read as 'UKUSI by Waddell. He reads the first line of this Kish tablet as "At UKHU city UKUSI became king and reigned 36 years". This UKUSI is identified as *Iksh-vaku* of the first Indian solar dynasty. Naturally Waddell fixed the date of Ikshvaku at 3378 B.C. He counts the kings from Vishnu-Purana and states that this old list of solar line kings closes just before the Bharata war. This date of last solar king he works out as 717 B.C. Once he arrives at this date, he works out the date of Bharata war at 670 B.C.

It will be seen from this brief narration that Waddell arbitrarily fixes the date of the first king of the first dynasty of the Sumerian kings as revealed by the Kish chronicle at 3378 B.C. and as a natural corollary Waddell advances the date of Bharata war to 670 B.C.

Let us see what the Isin-priests have to say about their chronology. The inscriptions of these priests from Isin are available and Waddell has critically examined them. According to Isin-lists, Messanipadda or Passipadda, the first king of Ur a small state in Mesopotamia flourished about 4942 years before the first dynasty-of Kish Chronicle. The commencement of the First Dynasty has arbitrarily been fixed by Waddell at 3378 B.C. Even accepting this date as correct, the date of the first king at Ur would be  $3378 + 4942 = 8320$  B.C. And Waddell places Passipadda as the contemporary of the 24th king of Kish chronicle, 23rd king to that list being Sargon the great. We have seen that Sargon's date has relatively been fixed at 2725 B.C.

This is clearly a confusion. The first Ur king cannot be 4942 years prior to the first king of the first dynasty of Kish and at the same time the contemporary of 24th king of Kish chronicle.

These lists provide us with full regnal years for each king separately. So  $3378 + 4942 = 8320$  years would be the correct date of the first Ur king. But Waddell would not countenance such an antiquity for the Sumerians.

The Isin priests give further lists of pre-flood dynasties. The Chaldean priest Berossos has also compiled such pre-flood lists of Mesopotamian dynasties. But these pre-Flood lists denote periods like 288000, 241200, and so on. Naturally, Waddell dismisses them as 'fabulous ages (invented) by the myth-mongering Isin and Chaldean priests.

But surprisingly the Assyriologists led by the veteran Prof. Scheil think that the Isin chronicle constitutes the most important historical document of the kind ever recovered among cuneiform records". The Assyriologists however with characteristic liberty arbitrarily reduce the date of 8320 B.C. to "about 4216 B.C."

The point to note is that these Kish and Isin chronicles like our Puranas take the Flood as the dividing line between antediluvian and the postdiluvian ages. When did this Flood occur? There is no direct evidence to ascertain it with any degree of certainty. From geological and other evidence Tilak states that during the last glacial period climate at the Polar and circum polar regions was mild and at the end of it, it became severe and so uninhabitable for man. During the post-glacial period, therefore, the Vedic people left their old habitat and moved to the Southern regions around Caspian sea and Caucasus mountains. This he proves by common flood-myths in the Vedic and Avestan literature. This flood marks the end of the glacial period. Tilak draws the conclusion: "According to the latest geological evidence, which cannot be lightly set aside, the last Glacial period must have closed and the post-glacial commenced at about 10000/- years ago or 8000 B.C. at the best and the freshness of the Siberian fossil-deposits favours this view" 8000 B.C. on the flood date perfectly agrees with the date of 8320 B.C. the date of the first post flood king of the Kish chronicle i.e. the first king of the first dynasty of Sumeria.

Waddell takes the *Puranas* to be genuine historical documents and states that the names of the kings in Kish and Isin chronicles remarkably tally with those of the Indian *Puranas* as represented by their Solar and Lunar lines. The first king of the Solar line *Ikshvaku*, Waddell has identified with the first king UKUSI of the Kish chronicle. It is not necessary for-us to agree to all the conclusions that Waddell draws. Most of the Assyriologists also do not see eye to eye with him. But the chronological details, given by him may be used with Flood date at about 8320 B.C. He himself does not determine the Flood date, but he states arbitrarily that 3378 B.C. is the date of the first king of the first Sumerian dynasty when it actually works out to 8320 B.C. On this basis, he

closes the early Indian Solar line of Kings and starts the Kuru dynasty at Hastinapur and arrives at 670 B.C. as the date of Bharata war. Using the same details as Waddell and other Assyriologists give, we can with confidence state that the date of the first king of the Indian solar dynasty would be 8320 B.C. and this time would close at 3139 B.C. the date of the Bharata war, as we have already seen.

### **Dabistan Document:**

In his travels in Northern India, Kashmir and Western Asia, William Jones had procured what is known as Dabistan document. He has stated that the kings mentioned in this document were Indian kings and that they ruled Bactria from a time 6000 years before the invasion of Alexander i.e. from about 6326 B.C. The antiquity of political history of India also has been proved from many epigraphical sources.

### **Is Bharata-War a myth:**

The western scholars however deny that the *Bharata* war was a historical fact. They state that *Mahabharata* is a great epic and the persons and events described there in are mythical ones. They are not however sure of this point of view. They therefore, accept the war as a fact, but they deny the chronology as detailed above. They have their own views in the matter. They have fixed the date of Rama's year of birth as 961 B.C. and have packed all events in the *Ramayana*, (about 4100 B.C. according to the conservative view of the majority of the Indian scholars.) Mahabharata and the Puranas (from 4100 B.C. to 1000 B.C.) i.e. the history of about 3100 years or more in a span of about 600 years i.e. between 941 B.C. to 326 B.C. This fact they accomplish by stating that the Indians have no real history prior to 326 B.C. —the date of Alexander's Indian excursion, described by them as invasion of India. Let us see what our historians have to say about our history upto 326 B.C. Traditionally, the Indians believe that the events in Ramayana took place around 4100 B.C. By consensus, among scholars the date of Bharata war is determined at 3139-38 B.C. Puranas declare that 1500 years elapsed between the date of Bharata war and the accession of the Nanda Dynasty. Nine Nanda Kings ruled for another 100 years. The last of the Nandas was overthrown by Chandragupta Maurya, the assumed contemporary of Alexander. During these 1600 years (1500 + 100) from 3138 to 1600 B.C., in all 46 kings occupied the throne of Magadha - the Emperors of India. The period actually works out to 1604 years and not 1600.

After the Nandas, came the Mauryas. According to this Puranic calculation Chandragupta Maurya's date of ascending the Magadha throne works out to 1534 B.C. (3138-1604-1534). **But according to the current theory as propounded by the western scholars and as taught in our schools and colleges, this date is 326 B.C., because these Indologists take the contemporaneity of Chandragupta Maurya with Alexander — the Greek Commander as the 'sheet anchor of Indian Chronology.'**

Megasthenes, the Greek Ambassador at the court of the Indian Emperor Sandracottus (and this Sandracottus is taken to be Chandragupta Maurya by these Western Indologists), notes that from Bacchus to Sandracottus there were 153-kings on the throne of Magadha. Before the Bharatawar, 48 -king-Emperors ruled India, the first amongst them being Ikswaku, the first king of the Solar dynasty after the Flood. Iksavaku's son Bekuksi is said to be this Bacchus. According to the Puranas from the Mahabharata war to the end of the Nandas only 46 kings ruled over Magadha — the then Imperial Capital of Bharata. Thus we account for  $48 + 46 = 94$  kings from Bacchus to the accession of Sandracottus (Chandragupta Maurya - according to the present line of thinking) leaving 59 rulers (153-54) unaccounted for. But the Pandits do not bother about this difficulty facetiously declaring, 'well! the period before Chandragupta Maurya i.e. prior to 326 B.C. is a dark period in Indian history'.

## **Do the Indians possess a sense of History?**

Western scholars generally stress that ancient Indian history has not been properly recorded by the then scholars and chroniclers mainly because they had no sense of history. Barring a few exceptions, all the writings of ancient Indians are marked by philosophical thinking and they betray lack of sense of time element and so the particulars of individual rulers and other historical personages are not easily available. In the circumstances, Western scholars attached more importance to evidence furnished by inscriptions, edicts, copperplates, coins,- articles of antiquities excavated and accounts by foreign travellers. Unfortunately, their view, about lack of sense of history seems to have been accepted by many Indian scholars too. The fact is, far from lacking the sense of history, ancient Indians have produced innumerable works which are full of historical information. In order to understand the circumstances which led the Western scholars to hold the above view, one must study the background of the beginning of historical researches in India in modern times.

With the advent of the British in India, roughly some two hundred years ago, many British officers realised the importance of the knowledge of Indian language for perpetuation of their suzerainty. They soon came to know that Sanskrit was the mother of all Indian languages and it was the store-house of all ancient lore. It was Warren Hastings who, by his study of Bhagvadgita, induced other Britishers to study the *Vedas* and the *Upanisads*. Their curiosity in the study of Sanskrit literature was gradually aroused and they began to inquire into the antiquity of these works. They were also keen to know the ancient Indian theory of Creation. They gathered that the Hindus implicitly believed the Vedas to be a divine creation and that the earth was created in the unknowable past. Further, according to the Hindu concept, there are four Yugas or epochs viz, *Krita, Treta, Dwapara* and *Kali*. The total of all these epochs works out to 43,20,000 years. One thousand such epochs make one day of Brahma and so far some 50 years of Brahma have elapsed, so on and so forth.

Under the spell of Biblical knowledge, the British scholars then believed that when their own sacred book was of recent origin of hardly 1000 B.C. how could the books of such vanquished people like the Hindus be older than their own? They simply could not accept this and thought that the ancient Indian Chronology was fictitious or imaginary. The first few generations of Indians were overwhelmed by the superiority of the British — their new masters in every branch of human activity and blindly accepted what they stated about ancient Indian literature. When Max Muller arbitrarily asserted "we propose to fix-600 to 1200 B.C. as the limits Of the Vedic Age". Indian scholars accepted his verdict without any demur. "The vast majority took the suppositions of Max Muller as



proved facts and held that the date 1200 -600 B.C. for *Rig-Veda* as quite proved."

Surprisingly, Goldstucker, himself a western scholar of Vedic literature had the courage to ask "But is 1200 B.C. a primary age of the world except in Biblical geography?" B.G. Tilak following the Western method of historical research, did point out certain internal evidence from the Vedas. Some Western scholars like Jacobi and others followed the same method as Tilak and arrived at the same conclusion and fixed the latest date of the Vedas as 4500 years B.C. In later times, E.J. Rapson in his *Cambridge History of India* came out with a candid assertion that the *Rgveda* was as ancient as the seventh millennium B.C.

There are references to the rivers *Saraswati* (RV 7-95-2) and *Shatudri* i.e. Sutlej (RV 3-33-1) which point out that these rivers were very big and they carried vast volume of water straight to the sea. Now the latter river in present day India is just a tributary of the great river *Sindhu*. While *Saraswati* is not seen at all. The description of these rivers given by the poets is so graphic as to appear that they were describing what they had seen with their own eyes. This description does not agree with the geographical setting of the region today. Geologists confirm that the above description applied to Rajasthan of some 25000 years or more before, when there was ocean there. Plato has referred to the destruction of a very big island Atlantis in the Atlantic ocean in his *Critias*. He has dated this event to an age around 15000-17000 years.

Geologists today have interred that the planet Earth was born about 450 crores of years ago. This modern theory gives credence to the ancient Hindu belief in calculation of Brahma's one day consisting of 432 crores of human years. It was not after all imaginary as the Western scholars of the by gone days thought it to be.

*Rgveda* clearly mentions that the earth revolves round the sun "*yatbhumim viavartayat*. Indra made the Earth revolve round the Sun" (8-14-5).

Andrew Thomas, an Australian scholar, in his book "*We are not the First- the riddle of ancient sciences*" has quoted an example which shows the extent of advancement of ancient Indians in the field of mathematics. Indians then could calculate upto 1/3rd of a second, as is evident from *Sidhanta Kaumudi*. *Brhat Jatak* contains a table thus; *Ahoratra-Kala-Vikala-Para-Tatpara-Vitatpara-Ima-kastha*. The last item from this table '*Kastha*' was equal to 1/32400000 of a second. Slowly but surely, the western scholars have now begun to realise that there is some substance in the ideas entertained by ancient

Indians. Not only in astronomy, mathematics and the other allied sciences, but about history also, the Ancient Indians were particular to record the political and sociological events of historical importance. In the Vayu-Purana (Calcutta 1965 - Guru Mandal Granthmala) 1-31 & 32.

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**"Svadharmah esaḥ sutasya sadbhiḥ dṛṣṭah purāṇanaiḥ  
devātanām rsinām ca fajñām ca amita-tejasām Vamsanam  
dhāranām kāryāśrutānām ca mahātmanām itihāsapurāṇeṣu  
diṣṭā ye brahma-vādidbhiḥ**

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The ancient lovers of truth state that it is the duty of these Sutas — the chroniclers in the court of the Kings — to record in their histories and Puranas the exploits and achievements of Kings, seers and other great sons (gods and goddesses) of immeasurable capacities. They have also to record the genealogies of the high souled and the way they accomplished their objectives as laid down by the *Brahmavadins* (the truth-seekers and lovers of the knowledge of Brahman — the Ultimate Reality)"

It would thus be seen that every king in ancient India, had in his service a special class of persons known as *Sutas* trained for the purpose of recording the exploits and achievements of not only the kings but also of the seers and of those who suffered for the upliftment of man.

But, the western scholars of the last two centuries, discarded in one sweep the *Puranas* and the *Itihasas*, as the authentic source books of Indian history. A strange attitude indeed!

Why do these scholars adopt such a strange approach to the period in the Ancient History of India? They state that the history as it is recorded in our *Puranas* is untrustworthy for the simple reason that it is not corroborated by the foreign source or inscription. The same deficiency (if at all it may be called so) is true of Greek history also. It is not supported by any foreign authority or any inscriptional evidence. It is based on the traditions or hearsay evidence. And yet is accepted today. On the other hand the very object of our *Puranas* was to compile, bring together and retain the old, traditions as handed down from remote antiquity.

The Puranas themselves declare their object thus:

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***"Sargaḥ pratisargah ca vaṁśo manvaṅtarāṇi ca Varīśānucaritaṁ  
caiva purāṇaṁ pañcalakṣaṇam - Bhaviṣya-2-4.***

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Puranas record the history of primary creation, secondary creation, the genealogies of Kings and patriarchs and reigns of different kings. They also record the history of ancient dynasties. Purana has these five characteristics".

Vayu-Purana in 1-20-3 explains in no uncertain terms the very name 'Puranas'-Pura Api Navam. It means — 'though old still new'. It is because they record the living traditions of the ancient Indians and times, that they are called *Puranas*.

The *Mahabharata* in 1-1-267 tells us that "it is the object of history books like *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* to bring to the common man, the knowledge contained in the *Vedas*. Otherwise the *Vedas* will be unintelligible and the common man would distort the meaning of the *Vedas*. The *Vedas* would then cry and say — these ignoramuses would attack me because they know not what I am-

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***"itihāsa purānābhyāṅ vedaṁ samupabṛṅhayeta  
bibhetyalpas'rutād vedo mān ayam prahariṣyati."***

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The Western scholars felt that the Indian chronology according to the Puranic records goes back to several centuries before Christ. They then reasoned to themselves: How could this be possible, when our own Bible records that the first man — Adam set his foot on the earth only about 4004 years B.C.?

### **Speculative and arbitrary approach of Jones and others: -**

William Jones laid the foundations of modern Indological research. He was a man of remarkable intellectual capacities. He was the Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court and founder-President of Royal Asiatic Society established in 1784 A.D. He found the *Puranic* accounts conflicting with the *Buddhist* accounts and so declared "We may establish as indubitably the two following propositions: that the three first ages of the Hindus (Krita, Treta and Dwapara) are chiefly mythological, and that the fourth, or historical age (Kali) cannot be carried further back than about two thousand years before Christ."

Further in his discourse on 28th Feb 1893 he acquainted his audience, with his discovery: "Chandragupta who from a military adventurer, became like Sandracottus, the sovereign of upper Hindustan actually fixed the seat of his

empire at Pataliputra, where he received ambassadors from foreign princes, was no other than the very Sandracottus who concluded a treaty with Seleukas Nicator."

It is surprising that Jones does not find any inconsistency (William Jones has identified and published that the kings of Bactria mentioned in the Dabistan Document were Indian Kings, who ruled Bactria 6000 years before Alexander's invasion — K. Venkatachellam : Chronology of Ancient Hindu History p.9) in taking the accounts of Greek classical writers more trustworthy than the accounts given in the *Puranas*. Greek accounts are based on the notes they kept during the brief sojourn of the Greek ambassadors and the other writers who accompanied them. They had a very casual acquaintance with India and the Indians, while *Puranic* accounts are from several *Vyasas* —the editors of these vast works. Theirs is a labour of love spending their whole life-time in compiling and completing these from different sources available. In fact, these *Vyasas* deserve our highest respect and their works should be given due weightage. But instead of adopting such an approach to our real sources of history Jones writes; "Indian history is .... so much clouded by the fictions of the Brahmins, who to aggrandise themselves, have designedly raised their antiquity beyond the truth. We must be satisfied with probable conjectures."

So the basis on which the Westerners have written our history is 'probable conjectures', discrediting our authentic sources handed down to us from generation to generation.

The Greek classical historians mention Xandramas, Sandracottas and Sandrucyptus as the three kings in connection with Alexander of Macedon's alleged invasion of India. Jones identifies Sandracottus with Chandragupta of the Maurya Dynasty and takes him to be the contemporary of Alexander. . By so doing he had to identify Xandrames with Mahapadma Nanda, the father of Maurya Chandragupta and Sandracyptus with Bindusara, his successor. Thus Maurya Chandragupta of 334 B.C. is made the contemporary of Alexander of 326 B.C. He then declared this date to be the sheet anchor of Indian Chronology. He did not care to explain, as to how Xandramas can be phonetically identified with 'Mahapadma Nanda' or 'Sandracyptus' with Bindusara'.

Toeing the same line, Elphinstone writes:

"No date or public event can be fixed before the invasion of Alexander." Troyer, one of the Indologists, (1859 A.D.) held the view that the contemporaneity of Alexander with Maurya Chandragupta is wrong. He identified Sandracottas with Chandragupta of the Gupta Dynasty. This way

alone, Xandramas can be identified with Chandrabija, the predecessor of this Chandragupta and Sandracypus with Samudragupta. his successor.

In this connection Max Muller writes, "Although other scholars., and particularly M. Troyer, in his edition of the Raja-tarangini have raised objections, we shall see that the evidence in favour of the identify of Chandragupta (Maurya) and Sandracypus is such as to admit of no reasonable doubt".

In fact, Jones had studied *Puranic* chronology and had arrived at the following chronology after a detailed study:

1. 20 kings of Barhadrith dynasty - ruled for 1000 years - 3101-2100 B.C. (in round figure)
2. 8 kings of Pradyota dynasty - ruled for 138 years - 2100-1962 B.C.
3. 10 kings of Shishunaga dynasty 360 years -1962-1602 B.C.
4. 1 king of Nanda dynasty-100-1602-1502 B.C.

He then writes:

"This Nanda king is said to have been murdered by a very ingenious but passionate and vindictive Brahmin whose name was *Canakya* and who raised to the throne a man of the Maurya race named Candragupta",

Then he has noted 4 more dynasties, namely -

- 10 Maurya kings - 137 regnal period — 1502-1365 B.C.
- 10 Shunga kings - 112 -do- -1365-1253 B.C.
- 4 Kanva kings - 345 -do- -1253- 908 B.C.
- 32 Andhra kings -456 -do- - 908- 452 B.C.

Total years from Barhadritha to the end of the Andras, work out to 2648 years.

He then concludes thus:

"After the death of Chandrabiji, the last Andhra King, which happened according to the Hindus 369 years before *Vikramaditya* or in 452 B.C., we hear no more of Magadha as an independent Kingdom."

Jones did not however believe in this chronology. His reasons are that 4 Kanva kings cannot rule for 345 years and one Nanda king cannot rule for 100 years. In fact Puranas give for these 4 Kanvas the regnal period of 85 years and there are 9 Nanda kings who have ruled for 100 years and not one king. Jones has however failed to note these correctly and has proceeded to prepare his own table based on wrong notions.

He took 1027 B.C. as the date of *Buddha* as fixed by the Chinese authorities which is also controversial. He had collected some information that

*Kaliyuga* had started some 1002 years before Buddha. So he worked out the date of starting of Kaliyuga at  $1027 + 1002 = 2029$  B.C.

Then Barhadrita dynasty of 1000 years =  $2029 - 1000 = 1029$  B.C.

This way ( $2029 - 2648$ ) = 619 A.D. would be the date of the end of the Andhra dynasty against 452 B.C. as Jones had worked out earlier on the basis of the Puranas. He saw that this upsets the whole of Indian chronology of the recent period also.

He, therefore, blamed the Brahmins for this confusion and declared that the Greek accounts proclaiming Sandracottus as the contemporary of Alexander was the correct one. This Sandracottus according to Jones was Chandragupta Maurya. He based this identification on the *drama* 'Coronation of Chandra' and said "proofs must be reserved for a subsequent essay". He however died on 27-4-1794.

Wilford then took up the thread where Jones had left it and stated "Sir William Jones from a poem written by Somadeva and a tragedy called the 'Coronation of Chandra' discovered that he really was the Indian king mentioned as Chandragupta by the historians of Alexander under the name Sandrocottus'. This poem I have not been able to procure but I have found another dramatic piece entitled 'Mudra Rakshasa', which is divided into two parts viz. 'Coronation of Chandragupta' and 'Reconciliation with Rakshasa' and that the author of drama was Anant who resided on the banks of Godavari.

It will be seen that this scholar also had not studied the drama Mudra-Rakshasa. He misspells it. Again he tells us that the author of the drama is Anant when he should actually be Visakhadatta. The drama has no parts, as Col. Wilford informs us and it starts only after the coronation of Chandragupta.

Another scholar H.H. Wilson points out Jones<sup>1</sup> further mistake. He states, that the 'beautiful poem' is not 'Coronation of Chandra', but it is Somadeva's *Brhatkatha*'. It is '*Katha-Sarit-sagara*' an adaptation in Sanskrit of *Gunadhya's Brhatkatha* originally in Paisāci language.

Wilson says "Wilford has not investigated the drama, for he continues to quote Mudraraksasa for various matters which it does not contain."

Lassen also tried his hand in this melee, but it was Max Muller who, in 1859 boldly asserted that Sandracottus in the Greek literature is Chandragupta Maurya of our Puranas. He certainly knew that this identification was against all Hindu, Buddhist and Jain traditions and authorities. He states, "Every attempt to go beyond to bring the chronology of the Buddhists and Brahmins into harmony has proved a failure."

After denouncing the chronology of the *Puranas* as 'Vague' and 'un-systematic', Max Muller asserts that Sandracottus is Chandragupta Maurya the grand father of Ashoka. And he is happy at this denouncement, for he says *"there is but one means through which the history of India can be connected with that of Greece, and its chronology be reduced to its proper limits."*

And there was a sound reason for adopting such a view. All these scholars were devout Christians. In 1642 A.D. there arose a controversy about the age of Creation. Usher, Archbishop of Ireland, decreed in 1664 that 'Creation took place at 9 A.M. on 23-10-4004 B.C. and one who will say anything else about it will be considered a heretic.'

Tilak also notes in his 'Orion' 'According to Christian Theology the world was created only about 4000 B.C. years before Christ'. In other words, the notion of antiquity, entertained by these writers, could not go beyond 4000 B.C. and not being able to say anything about the period preceding it, they placed the beginning of the world at about 4000 B.C.

But with such notions as the foundations of their thinking, these scholars pontifically lay the blame at the door of our forefathers. I shall just note a representative opinion of such type of scholars. AA Macdonell summarising the opinions of the Western Orientalists states, "History is one point in Indian literature. It is, in fact, non-existent — They wrote no history because India never made any .....Brahmins embraced the doctrine that action and existence was a positive evil and could, therefore, have felt but little inclination to chronicle historical events."

In Feb. 1838 Prinsep published the text and a translation of Ashoka's second rock edict, the Girnar version of it and identified 'Antiyoka yonaraja' with Antiochus III of Syria" Thereafter, the other king Antiikini was identified as Antigonos Gonatus of Macedon, Maka as Mag of Cyene, Turamaya as 'Ptolemy Philadelphos of Egypt, and Aliksudale as Alexander of Epirus. But Fleet says, "In recent years, indeed there has been a tendency to believe that we have something still more definite in the reference to certain foreign kings in the XIII rock edict of Ashoka. But there is nothing that enables us to improve upon what we could already determine about Chandragupta.' He further says "we would find that the *Rajatarangini* will place him somewhere about 1260 B.C. and then we should set about arranging the succession of the Kings of India itself from the *Puranas* with 1260 B.C. for the approximate date of the succession of Ashoka as our starting point."

Mac-Crindle tells us that the Greek classical accounts by Skylax Mil-letus. Herodotus and Ktesius were prior to the advent of Alexander and none of them

had ever visited India. Their authority is not known. They wrote from heresay. Moreover, their original books are not available.

Deimachos was ambassador to Amitrochades. Patrocles was the admiral of Seleukas and Megasthenes was the ambassador at the Court of Sandrocypus. They have written about India, but only some fragments from their writings are available.<sup>92</sup>

Schwanbeck, a German scholar, delved deep into these fragments and has written his book 'Indika in 1846 A.D.' Mac-Crindle has based his two books viz. *Ancient India* —(1877) and *The Invasion of India by Alexander* —(1893) on this book.

Thus, the fragments of lost books and whatever was left in public memory in about five centuries after Alexander form the basis of these Greek accounts.

V.A. Smith, in writing his *Early History of India* has taken into account only those *Puranas* which give the minimum regnal period for any particular dynasty:

Thus the majority of the *Puranas* give to the *Nanda* dynasty, 100 years as its regnal period but the shortest period allotted is 45 years. A mention of the names of these *Puranas* may be made. They are: *Vishnu*, *Bhagwata*, *Matsya*, *Vayu*, *Brahmanda*, *Bhavishya* etc. Smith is inclined to adopt the reading which notes 45 years as correct. The following table gives that difference in regnal years of the different dynasties.

Dynasty	Regnal period, according according to the majority of the Puranas	Regnal years according to a stray reading
1 - Nanda	100	45
2 - Maurya	316	137
3 - Shunga	300	112
4 - Kanva	85	45
5 - Andhra	506	289
6 - Gupta	245	149
<b>Total</b>	<b>1552</b>	<b>777</b>



This is nothing but tampering with our chronology by biased historians and has roused the ire of a very learned and extremely sober mind, Justice K.T. Telang. He remarks "And now, I trust. I may allow myself here one general remark, suggested not merely by Dr. Lorinser's essay, but by various writings of the most celebrated Sanskrit scholars of Europe. It appears to me that in these days, there has set in a powerful tendency in Europe, to let down individual works and classes of works of our ancient Sanskrit literature to as late a date as possible."

This considerate and dispassionate Indian scholar was also aghast at the arbitrary method adopted by Max Muller in fixing dates of our ancient literature. Prof. Max Muller in his Introduction to his translation of *Rgveda Samhita* Vol. I. p XXXIX says, "I should like to see a possibility by which we could explain the addition, not of the Valakhilaya hymns only, but of other much more modern soundings hymns, to a later time than the period of the Pratishkhya — I say again, that I am not free from misgivings on the subject and my critical conscience would be far better satisfied if we could ascribe the Pratishakhya and all it presupposes to a much later date."

This unequivocally shows that Max Muller wanted somehow to bring down the *Rgvedic* hymns from the high pedestal of antiquity to about 1000 B.C. Justice Telang therefore, soberly observes, "Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that the above deliverances of Prof. Max Muller, put into words a feeling entertained more or less vaguely, more or less consciously by the vast majority of European scholars, yet I submit with all respect but with very great confidence, that betray a frame of mind which is the reverse of scientific ..... But what right has he to express or to feel 'likings' and 'satisfactions' regarding one explanation, more than another?

He further observes, "It appears to me, I confess, that it is these 'likings' and 'satisfactions' and foregone conclusions', lying in the background of most of the logical artillery which European scholars have brought to bear upon the chronology of our ancient literature; it is this that temporarily does damage to antiquity. These foregone conclusions easily throw these scholars into the frame of mind, in which, to borrow the terse vigour of Chilling-Worth's language, 'they dream what they desire and believe their own dreams.'"

He wisely concludes "Not only are hypotheses formed on the weakest possible collection of facts, but upon such hypotheses further superstructures of speculation are raised. And when that is done, the essential weakness of the case is often effectually kept out of view. By such methods the whole of Sanskrit literature, or nearly the whole of it, is being shown to be much more recent than it has hitherto been thought".

Bhandarkar, the doyen of Indian Orientalists then, and who was knighted later, could not help condemning, "the tendency of most European scholars and antiquarians to modernise everything Hindu".

These are strong words indeed !

But these proved to be a cry in the wilderness. The Indian and Western scholars followed unquestioningly whatever Max Muller had suggested, as proved facts, and built up their researches on such shaky foundations. And such works have become original source books to all the Orientalists, Indian and foreign.

R.C. Dutta (of the Indian Civil Service) has to his credit the first "History of Civilisation of Ancient India". In its preface he writes "I have freely quoted from them (the translations and other works) - and I have seldom thought it necessary to consult those original Sanskrit works which have been translated in this faithful and valuable series."

If the intellectuals of the calibre of R.C. Dutta had such adoration for the Indologists of Europe, the resultant damage done to our history and culture can easily be imagined.

These orientalist discard *Puranic* accounts about Indian history on the ground that there is no other external evidence in the form of inscriptions, coins, monuments etc. But they themselves declare the contemporaneity of Maurya Chandragupta with Alexander' as the sheet anchor of Indian chronology', without adducing any such evidence in support of it at all.

V. A. Smith writes :- "Unfortunately no monuments have been discovered which can be referred with certainty to the period of Chandragupta or his son, and the archaeologist is unable to bring the tangible evidence afforded by excavation to support the statement of Greek observers".

Max Muller is eulogised in India for his monumental labour in making the Sanskrit literature of India available to the western intelligentsia, but what was his motive in doing so?

**Max Muller wrote to his wife on 9-12-1866, "I hope I shall finish that work and I feel convinced, though I shall not live to see it. yet, this edition of mine and the translation of the Veda, will hereafter tell to a great extent on the fate of India and on the growth of millions of souls in that country. It is the root of their religion and to show them what the root is. I feel sure, is the only way of uprooting all that sprung from it during the last 3000 years".**

On 16.12.1868, he further wrote to the then Secretary of State for India, the Duke of Argyle, "The Ancient religion of India is doomed and if Christianity does not step in whose fault will it be?"

While acknowledging very gratefully and sincerely the debt we owe to William Jones, Max Muller and the other European Orientalists, for their pioneering efforts in the field of Indology, let us not be blind to the motivation behind their efforts. They, deliberately set out on the task of distorting not only Indian Chronology to suit their own notions, but they tried to paint the Vedas- the root of our religion and culture and the other historical records such as the *Puranas*, the great epics like the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* is of no consequence, in constructing the history of India and her culture.

The translations of the vast Ancient Sanskrit Literature, were brought out with a clear motive to convert Indians to Christianity. It is surprising how the Indian intelligentsia was beguiled into believing the translations and the erroneous conclusions drawn by these Europeans.

After the political conquest of India, the British design to subdue the whole populace spiritually and turn the Indian masses, including the intelligentsia, into meek followers of the. British ways and ideas, became apparent.

**To quote Max Muller again "India has been conquered once, but India must be conquered again, and the second conquest should be by education .... A new national literature may spring up impregnated with Western ideas yet retaining its national spirit and character"**

The avowed object in introducing the system of English education in the words of Lord Macaulay, was: "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, in opinion, in morals and intellect". He further hoped that "If our plans are followed, there will not be a single idolater among the respectable classes in Bengal in twenty years". His hopes soon bore fruit beyond his wildest imagination.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a great patriot, and the founder of the Brahmo Samaj wrote to Lord Amnerst in 1833 "The Sanskrit language is so difficult that almost a life time is necessary for its acquisition, It is well known to have been for ages a lamentable check on the diffusion of knowledge, and the learning concealed under this most impervious veil is far from sufficient to reward the labour of encouraging it".

Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar another patriot and intellectual of the mid-nineteenth century, says: "That the Vedanta and Sankhya are false systems of philosophy is no more a matter of dispute".

Such biased utterances of the leading lights of the day, paved the way for a wholesale absorption of the prejudiced views of the Western scholars, by the Indian intelligentsia.

**It should be clear by now to any objective historian of India that our forefathers had a sense of history and they have recorded it in our *Puranas* and *Itihasas* and that the Indian Chronology has been distorted by the Westerners beyond any doubt. It is the duty of scholars, of Free India to present this history in its true colours.**

#### **1.4 The Puranas as Valuable source books**

We would have to take the *Puranas*, as very valuable source books for determining Indian Chronology. R. Morton Smith, University of Toronto, Canada, has thrown a flood of light on India's Ancient Chronology. He has this to say of *Puranas*: "There is one independent authority for the period, the *Puranas*, which itself bears witness to the changing atmosphere. The evidence has been received with apriori scepticism, partly because it tells of the distant past and partly because it appeared to disagree with the Buddhist accounts. The only valuable work on it in England by Pargiter was treated with an unwarranted rudeness, especially by A. B. Keith, under the influence of XIX Century principle that because an oral tradition has been handed down, it was probably wrong. If the trend of recent work on our own dark ages or on the Greek and Roman, has been to rehabilitate tradition, it is quite wrong to refuse that benefit to the Indian. To say that they told nothing but lies is to make high demands on credulity. Apriori case for belief for the *Puranas* has more rational support than that for scepticism".

"It is said that work on the Purana is valueless because it can not be checked. There is at least the test of consistency to check it. It is probable that there is considerably more evidence for the Brahmanical writings than has yet been recognised or used to check the Puranas."

It is claimed by the Indian-tradition that the *Puranas* have originally been written by Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasa - the compiler of the Vedas. The Epic *Mahabharata* tells us that he is the grand father of Arjuna, the hero of the Bharata war. It is now established that the date of this war is 3139-38 B.C. So

the original composition of the *Puranas* goes back to this hoary past. These Puranic accounts are read and explained every where in India since the time of its composition. It is thus a **living tradition** in India from this remote antiquity. Of course, these accounts are embellished by the Purana writers while reciting these originals and they have also added the historical data from time to time, so the original Puranas as composed by Veda-Vyasa are not what we read today. But the facts as recorded therein have come down to us by an unbroken tradition which, by and large should be accepted.

We have earlier seen that the scholars in Sumerian history despite the fabulous and super natural ages in the Isin lists have accepted these lists as good and authoritative sources of the history of Mesopotamia.

The value of tradition or even hearsay as a source of ancient history, is immense especially in the absence of other records or evidence. The history of Greece has been written largely on the authority of hearsay. This is what the historian Frederic Harrison has to say about such a source material of history. "Where scientific verification is not possible, it is well to have a variety of working hypotheses. Hearsay evidence indeed is anything but good evidence. But where a strict evidence is not to be had, it is useful, in great decisive events, to collect all the hearsay evidence that is forthcoming at all. And this is what Herodotus did".

If, therefore, the hearsay accounts compiled by Herodotus — the Greek historian, can pass as authentic history, it is difficult to imagine why the Puranic accounts of our distant past handed down to us as a living tradition can not be so accepted. The Indians firmly believe that the Vedas are eternal in the sense that they have been handed down to them from a remote antiquity. They further believe that the epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* are valuable and authentic sources of Indian History. But Max Muller and others however, did not accept this view and arbitrarily decided the date of the *Rgveda* to be 1200 B.C.

As is obvious, this determination was based on the affinity of Indo-Germanic languages or what is known as comparative philology. From the study of the structure of Sanskrit, the language of the sacred books of India, they discovered intimate relationship between Sanskrit and Zend — the language of the Avesta, the sacred book of the Parsis. Zend is just a corrupted form of Chandas — the name applied to the Vedic meters. It was further noticed that the principal languages used by the Europeans, bore close resemblance to Sanskrit and Zend. From this they deduced that all these languages must be the off shoots or dialects of a single primitive tongue. And as a natural corollary, they surmised the existence of a primitive Aryan people.

Max Muller was emphatic in denouncing the use of the appellation 'Aryan' to a race. "Aryan in scientific language, is utterly inapplicable to race. It means language and nothing but language."

**In spite of this, the so called scientific historians and the philologists have persisted in spreading the myth of the Aryan race as supplanting the original Dravidian race in India. They surmise that in that primitive society, language would create racial overtones and thus the language and race would be indistinguishable. Even Dravidian as a race-name is also not found in any ancient Indian text.**

The *Puranas* have been held in high esteem by our ancients. It is stated 'Lord Brahma' remembered the *Puranas* as the foremost amongst all the arts and sciences — *Puranam sarva-sastranam prathamam brahmana smrtam*.

From the foregoing, the conclusion is inevitable that the history and culture of the people of India the *Puranas* are therefore the main sourcebooks. The history and culture as recorded in the *Puranas*- and the epics. *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and further in other history books handed down to us by our forefathers have to be accepted as authentic, unless there is other definite evidence to the contrary. With this analysis let us now proceed again to determine the date of Bharata war on the basis of inscriptional and other evidence.

### **Inscriptional and other evidence:**

On the analysis of the opinion of some hundred and twenty scholars, it is seen that seven scholars have worked out the date of the Bharata war as later than 1000 B.C.; another forty scholars including B.G. Tilak have opined that this date is between 1500 B.C. to 1.000 B.C. Most of these scholars have accepted the Western formulation of the contemporaneity of Alexander of Macedon with Chandragupta Maurya, the date of Alexander's invasion of West Asia being 326 B.C. About sixty scholars take the date of Bharata war to a period around 3000 B.C. The rest five take it beyond that date and put it variously between 6228 B.C. to 5000 B.C.

It would be seen from this analysis that but for the Alexander-Maurya synchronism the consensus amongst scholars about the date of Bharata war is around 3000 B.C. This synchronism has vitiated the whole of Indian chronology beyond measure.

In fact, up to the Mahabharata war, the Indian political history is rather sketchy. It is more detailed since this major event in India's past. The whole of

Indian chronology thus depends on the date of Bharata war. The genealogical lists of the ruling dynasties of India as given in the different *Puranas* are full and complete with their regnal years and these are more or less common to all the *Puranas*. Some discrepancies do occur here and there, but the reason for this state of affairs is purely scribal errors. The Western scholars had no faith in the historicity of this Great War. "Looking in the epic not as history but as poetry: Western scholars tried to find the different linguistic and poetical strata and in consequence the so called discrepancies were taken as interpolations. The word interpolation itself denotes the intention of the interpolator to interpolate. No such intention however, is found at any stage. The so called interpolations are, really speaking, scribal errors. It is quite natural that in a vast country like India, when epic is being transmitted through regional dialects, discrepancies creep in. Such discrepancies were exaggerated by the Western scholars in their publications and the result was, as expected, withering away of faith in the authenticity of the epics as well as the date of the-Bharata war, in the minds of common Indian readers and listeners".

What is said of the epic is equally true of the *Puranas*. They were more ridiculed than the epics and declared to be unworthy of any serious attention as source books of history.

Haraprasada Shastri writes: "In the eighties, my European friends advised me not to touch the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* for the purpose of getting Indian History from them. They worked hard with the coins, inscriptions, notices of foreign travellers, archaeology, sculpture. Architecture, for extracting chronology and history from them. In fact they studied everything but the *Puranas*. But Mr. Pargiter and Mr. Jayaswal now produced a chronology from the *Puranas* themselves, which agreed in the outline prepared with so much toils of nearly 150 years by orientalist.....they rescued the *Puranas* from the disrepute in which they were placed and heightened the respect for them".

The atmosphere has now changed. The scholars are now veering round to the view that the Ancient history of India ends with this war and the mediaeval history of India starts from this date and that this date is "the sheet anchor of Indian Chronology. The historical period in India starts with the close of this war.

In determining the date of this war as 3139 B.C. we have taken 3102 B.C. as the year of starting of Kaliyuga as our daily *Sankalpa* and the *Puranic accounts point to this Kali* date. There are many who doubt on conjectural grounds the validity of this date also. We shall now proceed to record other evidences in support of this date for the start of *Kaliyuga*.

Bailley, the famous French astronomer wrote "The Hindu systems of astronomy are by far the oldest, and from them the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and even the Jews derived their knowledge"

Count Bijornstierna in his memorable work "The Theogony of Hindus" — concedes; "According to the astronomical calculations of the Hindus, the present period of the world Kali Yuga, "commenced 3102 years before the birth of Christ, on 20th February, at 2 hours 27 minutes and 30 seconds, the time thus calculated to minutes and seconds. They say that conjunction of the planets there took place and their tables show this conjunction. Bailley also stated that Jupiter and Mercury were then in the same degree of the ecliptic. Mars at a distance of only eight and Saturn of seven degrees. The calculations of the Brahmins is so exactly confirmed by our own historical 'Takes' (data) that nothing but an actual observation could have given to correspondent a result".

Bailley further writes," The Indian tables give the same annual variation of the moon as that discovered by Tycho Brahe, a variation unknown to the school of Alexandria and also the Arabs who followed the calculation of this school".

Megasthenes was a Greek ambassador at the court of the Magadha King whom we have identified as Samudragupta, the son and successor of Chandragupta-I. Megasthenes was in India around 302 B.C. and had written a book entitled *Indika*. Although this book was lost, some excerpts from this book are found quoted in the writings of the later Greek historians. From these we gather that there were 138 generations of Kings since Heracles to Sandracottus. Scholars unanimously agree that Heracles is *Man Krishna* of *Mahabharata*. Even taking 20 years as the average per generation, Shri Krishna's date would work out to 3080 ( $138 \times 20 = 2760 + 320$  date of Sandracottus) B.C. This is a very rough calculation. But it remarkably tallies with the traditional date of Shri Krishna. According to tradition, he lived for about 125 years and left his mortal coil in 3102 B.C. which marked the start of Kaliyuga. The actual date of his birth thus works out to 3227 B.C. ( $3102 + 125$ ). Thus the record of 302 B.C. (Megasthenes's date) proves that Kaliyuga started in 3102 B.C.

The Megasthenes's record is mentioned here only to show that even in his time (about 302 B.C.), Krishna of *Mahabharata* was known and that Krishna's date was around 3100 B.C.

There is inscriptional evidence also to corroborate this date. This inscription is found in the village of Aihole in Karnatak State which reads thus:



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***"Trimśatsu trisahasreṣu bhāratadāhavāditaḥ  
Sahābdśatayukteṣu satesuabdesu pañcasu  
Pañcāśatsu kalau kāle satsu pañcāśatasu ca, samāsu  
samātitasu śakānāmapi bhūbhujām.***

---

[After the end of the Bharata war, 3236 (30 + 3000 + 100 + 1 + 100 + 5) years have elapsed. And likewise from the Shaka-kings 556 years (50 + 6 + 500) have elapsed — This calculation is according to Kaliyuga.]

Apparently this calculation is based on the supposition - that *Kaliyuga* started in 3101 B.C. This is the usual practice and the exact calculation of 3102 B.C. (Feb. 20 etc) is ignored in practice. 36 years before *Kaliyuga*, *Bharata war* was fought. So this poet takes the date of war as 3137 B.C. (3101 + 36) But the total Kali years from the start of the war, are calculated at 3236. So the inscription-date works out to 99 A.D. (3236-3137). When this is so. the date of *saka era* taken for calculation would be 457 B.C. (556-99). Now according to Alberuni, the Arab traveller who Visited India in 1031 A.D, one Harsha of Ujjain scored a momentous victory over the combined forces of saka-kings and started this era.

Alberuni writes about the origin of Shri Harsha Era thus: "His Era is used in Mathura and the country of Kanouj. Between Shri Harsha and Vikramaditya there is an interval of 400 years as I have been told by some of the inhabitants of that region". Vikramaditya Era has been started in 57 B.C. thus the Shri Harsha Era would start from 457 B.C. (400 + 57)

Buhler however has no faith in Alberuni. He writes: "Though Alberuni when speaking of the Shri Harsha Era, merely says about its founder. It is certain that this personage can be no other but the hero of Bana Bhatta's Shri Harsha charita, whom his protege Hieun Tsang calls Harshavardhana or Siladitya".

Here Buhler substitutes his own conjecture for Alberuni's statement which was based on his information gathered from local sources. There is no corroboration any where in Indian record or elsewhere that Shri Harsha-varhdhana had ever started Era in his name.

When this reading of the inscription can easily give us a cohesive and connected narration of events, it is not necessary to tamper with it and substitute some words there, to obtain from it some other desired meaning. Fleet,

one of the renowned Orientalists did not believe that some powerful monarch was ruling over Ujjain some time by 457 B.C. So he substituted the words 'saptabda' for "sahābda" and the word 'gatesu' for 'satesu' and worked out the figure 3735 in place of 3236, and proceeded to determine the date of Pulkeshin II the powerful Chalukya king of Badami at 634 A.D. (3735 — 3101 Kali years). According to the original wording this date actually works out to 99 A.D. if the saka era in the figure 556 is taken to be of Harsa shaka started in 457 B.C. (556 — 457 = 99) Curiously enough the substitution of words also gives satisfactory figures based on two types of calculations, Bharata war and the shaka era., namely 3101 as the date of the Kali .era and 78 A.D.(= 634-556) as the date of the start of Salivahana saka era. The point that this inscription proves is that around 99 A.D. Bharata War was considered to have been fought around 3137 B.C.

In *Brhatsamhittā* 13-3 Varāhamihir declares the motion of the seven sages (saptarsi-stars) by deriving it from the doctrine of Vrddha-Garga <sup>119</sup> thus:

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***āsan maghāsu munayah śāsati prthivim yudhisthire nrpatau  
śad-dvik pañcadvi-yutah śakakālah tasya rajñah ca***

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[The seven sages were in the constellation of *Magha*, when king *Yudhisthira* ruled over the earth. And the period (*Śakakala*) of that king elapsed is 2526 years".]

P.V. Kane in his criticism of K. Venkatachellam's article on 'Indian Eras', translates the second line as — 'and the time of that king is represented by the Shaka-kala plus 2526 years'. This gave rise to the whole controversy as to what this 'shakakala' is. It is well-known that Saptarshi Era or *Loukikabda* which is even now current in Kashmira, has been started from 3076 B.C. So if 2526 years have elapsed since the start of this Era. when Yudhisthira was ruling this earth, it simply means that this statement is made by Vrddha-Garga in the year 550 B.C. (3076-2526). Kane, however, takes Shakakala as Shalivahan Shaka with its start in 78 A.D. Yudhisthira period would then be 2448 B.C. (2526-78). Kalhana in *Rāj-tarangini* takes it this way. He declares that the *Bharata* war was fought in 2448 B.C.

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***"śatesusatsu sardhesu tryadhikesu ca bhutale  
kalergatesu varsanamabhavat kuru-pandavari 1-51.***

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After 653 years of Kali-era, the battle between Kurus and Pandavas was fought".

Curiously Kalhana accepts the start of Kaliyuga as from 3101 B.C. But quoting this above verse of Varaha-mihira, he determines the date of *Bharata war* as 2448 B.C. He is obviously wrong in doing so. In fact the verse 1-51. quoted here is in conflict with his own statement in 1-55. This verse runs thus:

---

***"rksat rksam śatenabdaiḥ yātsu citrakhandisu  
tatare samhitākāraiḥ evam datto atra niniayah-1-55:***

---

One hundred years is the period of passage of the seven sages from one star to the other. This is the verdict of the compiler of Astronomical treatises and I take it as my authority here"

After making this statement he has quoted the verse 13-3 of *Brhat Samhita* noted above. Now Vrddha-Garga whom Varahamihir follows states that the seven sages were in Magha Constellation when Yudhisthira was ruling the earth.

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***"kalidvāpara sandhau tu sthitāste pīrdaivatam"***

---

Your family's presiding deity resided in the star Magha at the transition stage of Dvāpara and Kali."

This is the same as Varahamihir's statement in 13-3 noted above.

All the *Puranas* are unanimous in stating that the seven sages were in Magha-Constellation when Yudhisthira was coronated in the year 3139 B.C. Viewed in the light of the above, Kalhana also would be of the same opinion as Vrddha-Garga. Thus, it would be seen that the translation of verse 13-3 of *Brhat-samhita* given above is the only logical one. The verse 1-51. in *Raj-Tarangirji* appears to be an interpolation. It does not fit in there. Similarly, the two verses preceding this also are incongruous vis-a-vis his own conclusion drawn in 1-55.

Buhler himself states that the Saptarsi era begins from 3076 B.C. and in support quotes the following verse:

---

***"kalergataiḥ sāyakanetravarasaiḥ yudhisthiradyāḥ tridivam  
prayātāḥ lokaḥ hi samvatsarapatikāyām saptarsi-mānam  
pravadaṇti santah.***

---

When 25 years of *Kali* had elapsed, *Yudhisthira* along with his relations and others ascended heaven. In the almanacs of Kashmira this era is used.

The astronomers reckon *saptarṣiera* from this year."

This era which *is*, current even today is called *Loukikābda* (Era as is used by the people) in Kashmira.

This unbroken tradition records in unmistakable terms that Yudhisthira and his brothers left their earthly abode in the 25th year from Kali i.e. in 3076 B.C. (3101 B.C.-25)

*Varahmihira* speaks of himself as hailing from Avantikā. He was in the court of Śakari Vikramaditya who founded the Vikrama Era in his name, in the year 57 B.C. Obviously neither Vrddha-Garga (who made this statement in about 550 B.C. about Magha-Constellation when Yudhisthira ruled over earth), nor Varahmihira (who happened to be in the court of Vikramaditya, the founder of the era in 57 B.C.), could be aware of Sakakala starting in 78 A.D. So, the controversy based on incorrect translation is futile. Varahmihira mentions Saka-kala 427 in the *Pañca-Siddharitika* I-98. This verse is quoted in Alberuni's India. Alberuni mentions Sakakala — started at 457 B.C. So Varahmihira must at least be 30 years (= 457-427) old in 30 B.C.

That the Saptarsis remain in one constellation for about 100 years is not in dispute, and this fact is mentioned as such in almost all the Puranas:

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***"Tena saptarṣayo yuktastiṣṭhanti abdaśatam nmam te tu  
pāriksite kāle maghāsu āsan dvijottam-Visnu-Purāna,  
4-24-106.***

---

The saptarsis are in one constellation for 100 human years. In the days of Pariksit (the grandson of Arjuna) they were in the constellation of Maghā." Then we have in the same Purana:

---

***"yāvat pariksito janma yāvat nāṇḍabhise-canaṁ, etadvarṣa  
sahasram tu jñeyam pañcha-śatattaram  
4-24-104.***

---

From the birth of Pariksit to the coronation of Nandas 1500 years have elapsed."

We know from *Mahabharata* that *Parikshita* was born soon after the Bharata War i.e. in 3138 B.C. So the date of the coronation of the Nandas would be 1638 B.C. (3138-1500) Chandragupta Maurya ascended the throne of Magadha in about 100 years after the overthrow of the Nandas i.e. in about 1538 B.C. It should, therefore, be clear that the contemporaneity of Alexander (326 B.C.) and Chandragupta Maurya (1538 B.C.) is an impossibility. The only Chandragupta who could be contemporary of Alexander is Chandragupta I of the Gupta Dynasty who ruled from 327 B.C. to 320 B.C.

There should, therefore, be no doubt that *Kalhana* also states that Mahabharata war took place in 3138 B.C.

Even the Western scholars accept *Rajatarangini* as a unique history of Kashmira. To quote V.A. Smith "The Sanskrit book which comes nearest to the European notion of a regular history, is the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana, a metrical chronicle of Kashmira in the twelfth century by the son of a minister of the Raja."

Kalhana is the son of Campak-Cheif Minister in the Court of Harsa, a king of Kashmira (1089-1100 A.D.) He has written this history of Kashmira in 1148 AD. He tells us:

---

**"Drstaṁ drstaṁ nrpeditaṁ badhvā pramayamiyuṣāṁ arvākkāla  
bhavairvārtā yatprabandhesu pūryate dāksyam kiyadidaṁ  
tasmād asminbhūtārtha-varnane sarva prākārām skalite  
yojanāya mamodyamah 1-10.**

---

The Pundits living in those times have written the lives of their contemporary kings on the basis of first hand information. But the later writers have added some more details gathered from hearsay and informal talks. While doing so, they have not shown skill. I have, therefore, taken care to remedy those errors and correct those contradictions."

For this purpose, he had consulted old records, gift deeds and inscriptions at his disposal. He tells us that the old history volumes were very detailed. They were condensed by one *Suvrat* under the title *Rajakatha*. Later on *Ksemendra* wrote one *Nrpavali*. *Kalhana* has consulted these works and in addition has referred to all other histories. *Nilamata Purana* a detailed work on history of Kashmira has also been used by him. After consulting and studying these different works on the history of Kashmira, *Kalhana* has compiled this metrical composition. He gives the date of this compilation as 1148 AD.

Incidentally this also shows that the Indians cared very much for their history. Voluminous records on history were prepared. But most of them are lost now.

In spite of the care bestowed by *Kalhana* on *Rajatarangini*, Buhler rejects this work as of no significance.

He writes, "as" regards the use of the contents of the *Rajatarangini* for the history of Kashmir and of India, a great deal remains to be done for the earlier portion, upto the beginning of the Karkotaka Dynasty. Kalhands chronology of the Gonandiya dynasty is, as Prof. Wilson, Prof. Lassen and General Cunningham have pointed out, valueless. An author who connects the history of his country with the imaginary date of legendary event like the coronation of Yudhishtira and boasts that "his narrative resembles a medicine and is useful for increasing and diminishing the statements of previous writers regarding king's place and time (This is the translation of Kalhanas Verse — /yam nrpanam ullase rhase va desakalayoh bhaisajyab-hutasamvadikatha yuktopayujyate 1-21-Editor) must always be sharply controlled and deserves no credit whatever in those portions of his work, where his narrative shows any suspicious figures or facts."

It is thus clear that with the built-in prejudice, Buhler along with his other colleagues has belittled the authenticity of such an outstanding work of great historical value. This is mainly because these Western Scholars take the *Bharata war as a mythical event*.

Yet while discussing the general nature of the *Puranas* and of their value as historical records, Wilson had to admit, "After the date of the Great War, the *Visnu Purana*, common with other *Purana*, which contain similar lists, specifies kings and dynasties with greater precision, and offers political and chronological particulars to which on the score of probability there is nothing to object. In truth, their general accuracy has been incontrovertibly established."

Max Muller himself appears to have realised that the Western scholars, on the whole, were not free from committing falsehood. He states, "during the last twenty years, however, I have had some excellent opportunities of watching a number of native scholars under circumstances where it is not difficult to detect a man's character, I mean in literary work, and, more particularly in literary controversy. I have watched them carrying on such controversies both among themselves and with certain European scholars, and I feel bound to say that with hardly one exception they have displayed a far greater respect for truth, and a far more manly and generous spirit than we are accustomed to even in Europe and America. They have shown strength, but no rudeness, nay

I know that nothing has surprised them as much as the worse invective to which certain Sanskrit scholars have condescended, rudeness of speech being according to their view of human nature, a safe sign not only of bad breeding but of want of knowledge. When they were right they have never sneered at their European adversaries. There has been with few exceptions, no quibbling, no special pleading, no untruthfulness on their part, and certainly none of that low cunning of the scholar who writes down and publishes what he knows perfectly well to be false, and snaps his fingers at those who still value truth and self respect more highly than victory or applause at any price."

Unfortunately this realization came after the damage was done, and Max Muller did nothing to rectify the blunders the Western orientalists had committed. One inevitable conclusion emerges therefore, that it is unsafe to rely on the conclusions arrived at by these scholars.

Swami Vivekanand has unerringly put his finger on this weakness of the Europeans. He says' "I will tell you something for your guidance in life. Everything that comes from India take it as true until you find cogent reasons for disbelieving it. Everything that comes from Europe take as false until you find cogent reasons for believing it."

With these remarks, let us proceed to scrutinise further evidence regarding the authenticity of the epic *Mahabharata* as a work of history.

An inscription of a gift-deed by Emperor *Janamejaya*-the son of *Parikṣita* has been found (Indian Antiquity pp 333-334), it runs thus:

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**"Sri kuruvamsāvataṁsa śrī janmejyabhūpalānām  
dānaśasana-patram svasti śrī jayābhyudaye  
yudhisthiraśake plavaṅgākhye ekonānavatī vatsare —**

---

This is the document of gift by the noblest of the Kuru-family the Emperor Janmejaya. This is the gift of land by the Emperor in the 89th year of *Jayābhyudaya Yudhisthira śaka*, the year is called *Plavaṅga*."

This is calculated from the first *Kali* year — *Pramathi* and so it is 3012 B.C. (3101-89). This gift deed is in favour of *Muni Vṛndārmatha* as a provision for the worship of Sri *Sita* and *Rama*, on the bank of the *Tungabhadra* river.

Similar gift deed of the same date, was made to Sri *Gosvamy Āṇḍaliṅg Jangama* of *Usāmatha* for the worship of God *Kedarnath* situated in north - Himalayas. This inscription has been preserved in the Matha even to this day.

This is *Jayābhyudaya Yudhisthira Śaka* starting from *Kali* first year as this happens to be the date of the commencement of the writing of *Mahabharata* by *Vedavyasa*. This epic was at first named *Jaya*. *Vedavyasa* begins his *Jaya* (*Mahabharata*) with —"*Jayo nama itihaso ayam*— This is the history book named *Jaya*—."

But these inscriptions are considered by the Western scholars as forged on the ground that the capital city in the first is named '*Kiskindha*', while in the second it is '*Ithdraprasthapuri*'. In the first *Yudhisthira* is named as the great grand father, while in the second his name does not appear.

But on these differences they cannot be deemed to be 'forged'. If they had been so, the forger would not have made such simple mistakes. He would have been careful to be faithful to the details as given in the *Mahabharat*. What has happened is that Janmejaya is the king Emperor of the whole of Bharata. 'Kiskindha' must have been the southern capital of the Governor of the province of 'Kiskindha'. It is also because of this that there are 7 verses in the first and 4 in the second. Though the tenor of both the inscriptions is the same, the wording differs in minor particulars. The first one is at the extreme southwest of *Bharata*, while the other is at the Northernmost end of *Bharata*. These are the reasons why there is a little difference in the wording here and there. Had they been forged ones, at least the difference in material particulars such as the name of the "Capital town" would not have been there.

Another objection is that these are in modern Devanagari script which was not in vogue in about 3000 B.C. The fact appears to be that, these inscriptions are copies of the old original ones which have obviously been lost. Whatever was the position of the gifts at the time when these were carved, has faithfully been recorded in the copies, and there seems to be no reason for committing any forgery.

These inscriptions are important because they are the oldest engravings now available and they give details about the start of the *Kaliyuga* and the names of *Yudhisthira*, the great grand father of *Janamejya*. It also proves that '*Jaya*' the history book was written immediately after the *Bharata war*.

Another inscriptions at *Nidhanpur* (India's Eastern border) has been found. It is dated 590 A.D. It states "*Vajra-Dutta* was the grandson of *Narakasura* and that 3000 years after him, *Pusya Varma* became the king." Hiuen Sang (619-644 A.D.) the Chinese traveller states that he met *Bhaskara Varma*, the 12th King after *Pusyavarma*. Here there are rough calculations and it can, therefore be stated that *Narakasura* of *Karnrupa* (Assam) who was killed by Lord Krsna prior to *Bharata war*, must have



flourished about 3150 B.C. and *Vajra-Dutta*, his grandson may be there around 3050 B.C., just after the start of *Kaliyuga*. Suleman, the Arab traveller has said that many kings in India have ruled for 50 years each. So *Vajra-Dutta's* date can be fixed around 3050 B.C. Pusya Varma may, therefore, be assigned the date 50 B.C. (3050-3000) So *Bhaskara-Varma* during whose reign (i.e., in 590 A.D..) this inscription is found, being the 12th king from *Pusya-Varma* the inscriptional record proves the historicity of *Narakasura*, the contemporary of *Sri Krsna*. All the dates tally remarkably.

About the start of *Kaliyuga*, there are very significant references in *Mahabharata* itself. *Bhima* kicked *Duryodhana* after the duel fight on the last day of that Great War. Sri Krsna considers that action as improper and re- marks "*etad kaliyugam acirad yat pravartate* - know that kaliyuga will soon start now."

Same is the opinion of *Hanuman* the devotee of *Sri Rama* also. In *Adi-Parva* (I-2-3) we are told: "*antare caiva samprāpte kalidvāpārayora bhūta syamaṇṭapañcake yuddham kuru-pāṇḍava-senayoh*

During the transition period between *Kali* and *Dvapara*, the war between the armies of *Kurus* and *Pandavas*, was fought at *Kuruksetra*."

Alberuni has recorded that in 1031. A.D, 4132 years had elapsed since the beginning of Kali i.e. Kaliyuga started in 3101 B.C. (4132-1031). This again points to the date of the Bharata war being fought around 3138 B.C.

Abul-Fazal's *Ain-e-Akbari* states that 40th year of *Din-e-Ilahi*, is the 4696th year of *Yudhisthira s'aka*. This *Yudhisthira Saka* was started 3044 years before *Vikram-era* i.e. before 57 B.C. Thus the start of *Kali* is in 3101 B.C. This is also the start of the *Jaya-Abhyudeya Yudhisthira saka*. Thus *Din-e-Ilahi* was started in 4656<sup>th</sup> year (4696-40) from 3101 .B.C. i.e, in 1555 A.D. (4646-3101)

Grants in Gupta era reckon the time from *Bharata War* (Fleet CII Nos. 120, 124, 129. 134, 139).

Buchanon mentions an inscription in the temple of *Madhukeśvara* at *Banavasi* in North Canara. Its date is 168th year of *Yudhisthira saka* or 2908.

### **B.C. (3076-168)**

Inscriptions at Belgaum (in Karnatak state) bear the date of the reign of *Yudhisthira*.

*Arya Bhatta* the great astronomer and mathematician was 23 years old in *Samvat* 556 i.e. in 499 A.D. (556-57). He states that *Kaliyuga* started 3600

years ago i.e. 3044 years (3600-556) prior to Samvat era. This again indicates that Kali era commenced in 3101 -B.C. (3044 + 57)

An argument is sometimes advanced that before *Aryabhatta Kali*- era has nowhere been recorded and that it is *Aryabhatta* who for the first time has recorded that *Kali-era* started in 3101 B.C. after making deep research in the matter. This statement is not prima- facie true. For before him *Vridha-garga* has referred to it in 550 B.C. Again *Anshu Varma* the Nepal king of *Thakuri* dynasty has been placed in 101 B.C. according to an inscription No. 12 discovered by Buhler, The coronation of this king is placed in Kali 3000 i.e. 101 B.C. (3101.-3000)

Even granting that Arya Bhatta was the first researcher to discover the date of Kali-era, what is wrong about it? Even the Christian era now-current, was not in use prior to 879 A.D. In spite of this scholars firmly believe in the veracity of dates furnished according to that era. (*Dates of Buddha*. Shri RamSathe, 1987, p 167).

The author of *Jyotirvidabharana* — an account of the reign of Vikramaditya composed in 24th Vikrama Era i.e. in 33 B.C. (57-24) states that this 24th year corresponds to 3101 (3068 + 33) before Vikrama Era. which is the same as 3101 B.C.

American archaeologists have discovered that a verse from the Gita, "*Vasamsi jirnani yatha vihaya navani grhnati naro aparani* (just as man discards the old body and takes on the new") has been engraved on a slab from excavations at an Egyptian Pyramid, it is dated 3000 B.C.

Seals found in Mohenjodaro and Harappa excavations depict a tree god standing between two persons holding a tree. The tree-god is seen extending his hands to them. According to Mackay, the Western Archaeologists, who supervised these excavations during 1921-31 A.D. this picture is that of Lord Krsna - lila (Child-hood playful activities) - when he was bound to the tree by his foster-mother *Yashoda* for his naughty but innocent actions. The Indian scholar V.S. Agarwala agrees with this interpretation. The date of this tablet is about 2600 B.C. This would show that Lord Krsna was a popular figure with the people of Indus Valley civilisation (hereafter referred to as Sarasvati-Sindhu civilization).

*Mahabharata* refers to a war in which over 40 lakhs of soldiers fought. Some scholars doubt as to how a small battle ground like *Kuruksetra* could accommodate them? This figure of 40 lakhs might perhaps be a slight exaggeration but it was no doubt a war between two formidable opponents and not a skirmish between two village clans. A war was fought on this same battle

ground in the 18th century between the Marathas and the Afghans in which lakhs of soldiers were involved on both sides. The horse, elephant and foot cavalry participated in it. The *Bharata war* also mentions war commanders such as *Rathi*, *Maharathi*, and *Atirathi*. *Chakravyuha*, a kind of war-strategy is also referred to. *Gada* (mace), bow and arrow were the weapons. This same strategy and war methods were used in India till the advent of gun-powder. Even some of the freedom-fighters had used these ancient weapons in the first war of independence in 1857 against the British. It would, therefore, be wrong to regard *Mahabharata war* as a trifling event.

The towns and places of pilgrimages mentioned in *Mahabharata* are still known by their ancient names. The Hindu tradition and even the Buddhist and Jaina traditions accept the history given in *Mahabharata*. The Chinese traveller Hieun-Tsung has specifically referred to it. He had visited Kuruksetra during his travel of India (619-645 A.D.) and he says that even the upper layers there contained hundreds of bone-remains. The-Greek writer Doyan Crisostome (50 A.D) has also mentioned this great epic *Mahabharata*.

It would be seen from this analysis that but for the Alexander- Maurya synchronism the consensus amongst scholars about the date of *Bharata* war is around 3139 — 38 B.C.

The Western scholars had no faith in the historicity of this Great War. Moreover as N. Bhashyacharya, puts it "The writings of many of these orinetalists are often characterised by an imperfect knowledge of Indian literature, philosophy and religion and of Hindu traditions and a contemptuous disregard for the opinions of Hindu writers and Pandits. Very often facts and dates are taken by these writers from the writings of their predecessors or contemporaries, on the assumptions that they are correct, without any further investigation by themselves:"

### **Evidence from Nepal Raja-Vamsavali:**

The dynastic list of Kings of Nepal is also available from 4159 B.C.- to 1768 A.D. i.e. for about 5927 years. The genealogy of the rulers of Nepal was brought to light by Bhagwanlal Indraji for the first time. Commenting on it, Buhler admits the existence of this and other genealogies in the private family collections of Indian rulers, but adds that they should be used as historical evidence with utmost care. Only that part of the genealogy, according to him, can be accepted which is corroborated by rock-inscriptions, coins and other contemporary literature. It should be noted that these latter sources in themselves are not conclusive because many times, the inscriptions do not bear

the exact name of Saka (era) to which they refer or the coins lack the particulars of the kings and their regnal periods during which the coins were minted. Nonavailability of evidence by way of inscriptions or coins should not therefore, be regarded as an argument against the authenticity of recorded genealogies.

Nepal genealogy traces its origin to 4159 B.C about 1000 years prior to *Bharata* war, and even gives regnal periods of kings of pre-Bharata war age. Solely on this account, Buhler totally rejects it. Buhler believes that *Bharata* war is a mythical event. Actually, this genealogy starts with the thesis that the *Kali-era* commenced 3101 years before Christ and proceeds to give regnal periods of various dynastic rulers in India. As such, it should be regarded as one of the most important sources for constructing ancient Indian chronology. Buhler however thinks otherwise and gives very flimsy reason.

This list is edited and published by Buhler commenting on this,- Buhler writes "It is evident that though this *Vamshavali* contains many elements of historical truth, it possesses no value whatever as a whole".

His reasons are the same as those he had advanced for rejecting the Kashmira Chronology. He says, "The ancient writers of Bharat described the founders of the dynasties of kings in the different parts of the country as the contemporaries of the Kauravas and the Pandavas of the Bharat war out of a desire to establish their antiquity and hence their dignity. It was for the same reason the historians of the provinces of Kashmir and Nepal described their kings too, as the contemporaries of the Kauravas and Pandavas."

The Western scholars consider the *Bharata* war as a myth and so whoever tries to start the chronology of that region of *Bharata*, in which he is interested, from the Great War or from a date beyond it, is considered to be unreliable. The chronology recorded and the evidence of such historical authorities as this Raja Vamshavali, is dismissed on the same grounds. In fact the earlier Indian historians consider this Great War as the historical fact and take it as the sheet anchor of Indian chronology.

This is the main ground on which the *Vamshavali* is discarded as unauthentic. Other reasons adduced are:

(a) The first Royal dynasty mentioned in this *Vamshavali* is that of *Mata-Tirtha Gopal* dynasty of eight kings who ruled for 522 years. Regnal of each king is given below:

	Years of Reign
1) Bhukata Mangata Gupta	88
2) Jayagupta — Son of 1	72

3) Param Gupta — son of 2	80
4) Harsha Gupta — son of 3	93
5) Bhima Gupta— son of 4	38
6) Marti Gupta — son of 5	37
7) Vishnu Gupta — son of 6	42
8) Yakshagupta — son of 7	72
	<hr/> 522

It appears that the kings had long and peaceful reigns and their sons who inherited the crown appear to have been born to them in their later stages of life. It will have to be assumed here that No. 2 in the list must have been born to No.1 at his age of about 68. Similarly the 3 and 4 in the list must have been born to the predecessors in their late 70s. Again between Nos. 4 and 5 there may have been one more king, making the total of the kings of this dynasty to 9 or the figure of 93 for the fourth king noted by Buhler may have been 33. It has to be remembered that these lists have been handed down from hoary antiquity and copied century after century from old worn out lists. Some discrepancies are bound to be there. But only on this count, the whole *Vamshavali* cannot be outright rejected. The third dynasty is named *Kirata* (Kshatriya) and 29 rulers of this dynasty are stated to have ruled for 1118 years i.e. average reign of 39.25 years. Buhler rejects the authenticity of the total number of years of these two dynasties on the spacious ground "The number of 1118 years allotted to the 29 kings of this race is. However too great, for in India the duration of a generation amounts as the statistical tables of the life-insurance companies show, at the outside, only to 26 years. So, he reduces the regnal period of the Kirata dynasty to 600 or 700 years from 1118 years.

What a surprising argument! He assumes the average span of life of Nepal kings who lived about 5000 years ago, on the basis of the mortality table prepared by the Life Insurance Companies in the 19th century.

Today the Life Insurance Corporation of India has worked out this average at about 53 years. Had Buhler been alive today he would have certainly revised his calculations and accepted the Nepal Raja-Vamshavali as correct. It is astounding that Buhler should attempt to change the *Raja-Vamshavali* according to his whims and fancies and expect us to accept such conclusions as unquestionable.

The evidence with regard to longevity in India prior to two thousand years is available in the writings of the Greek historians. "The Indians are not afflicted with headache or ophthalmic, nor have they mouthsores or ulcers in any part of

the body. The age of which they live is 120, 130 and 150 years, though the very old live to 200 years"

V. A. Smith's assertion is also supporting. "The inhabitants were believed to attain the age of hundred and thirty years."

There are even comparable examples from recent Indians history. The 96 years old 'Rama Raja' of Vijayanagar went to the battle of Talikot in 1468 A.D. where he died fighting with the Mohamedans. Gangasimha, the last king of the Panwar Dyansty, went to the Kurukshetra to assist Prithvi-Raja against Mohammad Ghori, when he was 90 years old. Many more such instances, not only in the history of India but in history of other nations, can be cited.

Buhler's pet argument is that Indians are fond of tracing the origin of their history to the age of the *Pandavas*, and the histories of Nepal and Kashmira according to him, are written with that end in view. What is wrong in it? The *Bharata War* of which the *Pandavas* were the heroes, was an epoch making event in Indian history. The epic of *Mahabharata* has become an immortal source of Indian history whether the Western scholars accept it or not.

Some of Buhler's strange acrobatics are indeed amusing. According to *Vamshavaii*, *Amshuvarma*, the first king of *Thakuri* dynasty had been crowned King in 101 B.C. However, Buhler dismisses this part of the *Vam-shavali* as totally unreliable and places him in 637 A.D. For this, he cites the statement of Hieun-Tsang, running thus:

"Lately, there was a king called An-Shu-fa-mo who was distinguished for his learning and ingenuity. He himself has composed a work on sounds (*Sabda-Vidya*), his esteemed learning and respected virtue, and his reputation was spread everywhere'. Bhuler explains this statement thus:

"Now it can not be doubted that the king referred to by Hieun-Tsang is the prince of this name whom the *Vamshavaii* places in Kali Yuga 3000 or 101 B.C. and whose inscriptions are dated Samvat 34, 39 and 45? For, the *Vamshavaii* and the inscription know of one *Amshuvarman* only"

Buhler further points out that Hieun Tsang visited Non-hern India in 637 A.D. So *Amshuvarman* must belong to 637 A.D. and the characters of the inscriptions according to him also belong to this period only. He, therefore, concludes that the author of *Vamshavaii* has antedated his reign by more than 700 years. Buhler does this because he does not believe that some *Vikramaditya* had established *Vikram Era* in 57 B.C. and that he had visited Nepal in that year and inaugurated the Era in his name as stated in the *Vamshavaii* itself. *Amshuvarman's* inscriptions belong to 34th, 39th and 45th years of his reign,

for according to *Vamshavaii Ashuvarman* died in 33 B.C. These inscriptions count *Kali* era as from 3101 B.C.

Hieun Tsang states that this *Amshuvarman* was a grammarian of repute and his fame had spread far and wide. It is clear that if Amshuvarman's name was on the lips of everybody, he could not be a contemporary of Hieun Tsang. He must belong to quite a few centuries before his visit to, India. Is it not surprising that the statements in the *Vamshavaii* corroborated by as many as three inscriptions of 34th, 39th and 45th year of his reign, are rejected in favour of Hieun Tsang's hearsay statement? Moreover, this statement of the Chinese traveller does not categorically state that Anshuvarma belonged to 637 A.D. He uses the term, 'lately' this means that there was a king who belonged to some earlier date than 637 A.D. The word 'lately' may well have been 'formerly'. The translator Seal, whom Bhuler quotes, may have wrongly translated the original Chinese word. This is obvious from the fact that this way only the statement in the *Vamshavaii* corroborated by as many, as three inscriptions, can be satisfactorily explained. Bhuler's statement that the author of *Varnshavaii* used 34th, 39th and 45th of Vikram Era, is also incorrect. It has been the custom in India since her distant past that the court poets prepare the accounts of the reign of each patron king and so these figures 34, 39 and 45 must be of the years of the reign of *Amshuvarman* himself.

We have to note that many statements of the foreign travellers are based only on hearsay and conjecture and, therefore, these are likely to be erroneous and inaccurate. This is also the opinion of General Cunningham, the famous Indologist of the last century. He said, "In this part of the - Pilgrim's (Hieun-Tsang) travels, the narrative is frequently imperfect and erroneous and we must, therefore, trust our own sagacity, both to supply his omissions and to correct his mistakes."

Rapson in his *Cambridge History of India* points out the errors in the writings of another foreigner Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador at the Court of Sandracottus in 300 B.C.

"His separation of the Brahmins into different, castes according to their employment, priestly, administrative or political, makes it difficult to suppose that he was reproducing what any Indian had told him."

One member of Alexander's suite, Chares of Mytilene. His Chief Usher is quoted as saying "the Indians worshipped a god 'Soraodeios' whose name being interpreted meant 'Maker of wine'. It is now recognised that the Indian name which Chares heard was 'Suryadeva' i.e. 'Sungod'. Some ill educated interpreter

must have been misled by the resemblance of 'Surya-Sun with 'Sura meaning Wine".

Megasthenes said, "girls were marriageable and could bear children at seven".

K. Venkatachellam notes one such incorrect version of foreigners' account. Saucha (1915) has translated Alberuni's History of India. While translating, he has omitted the names of *Bhaskaracharya* and his father Mahadeo. Instead, he has substituted the names of *Vitteswara* and his father *Bhadatta*. Now these names are not found in Weber's history of Indian Literature. K. Venkatachellam states "(these names) are not at all found in the original work of Alberuni. This he had done as he could not understand how Bhaskaracharya who according to Western historians belonged to the 12th century A.D. could have been the author of a work translated in the 9th century A.D. It has been proved in our Kali Saka vignana (part-I-pages 73-75) that Bhaskara belonged to the 5th Century A.D. The same might not have been proved by the time of Saucha, But a historian or translator of History must be open-minded and leave the readers freedom of further research but should not close further chances of certain riddles being solved".

Mark here the audacity of this translator — Saucha, who assumes the authority of substituting what is not there in the original.

It is, therefore, clear that the translation of the original Chinese word of Hieun Tsang must be 'formerly' and not 'lately' as noted earlier:

K. Venkattachellam therefore, rightly observed, "The history of a country should not be based on the writings of foreigners - In their construction of the history of any country the literature of that country should form the essential basis and not the writings of foreigners invariably vitiated by ignorance and half knowledge or superficial understanding."

Unfortunately, the Western writers have set for us quite the reverse test of constructing our history by co-ordinating our literature and traditions with the foreigner's accounts of our country. This test is not acceptable to any scholar of any other nation. And it should not be acceptable to Indians either.

If no information is locally available and if something is found recorded in the writings of foreigners which is not inconsistent with our known customs and traditions, then we may consider such accounts but when local accounts are available, they would have to be regarded as more authentic as compared to the foreigners' version of the same. These foreign sources can be studied for



corroboration or comparison; these cannot have any independent historical authority or cannot form the basis for reconstruction of history.

### **History of Bharata War:**

Bharata War is an epoch making event in the history of India and it may be regarded as the starting point of the chronology of the Indian historical period. Views of Western scholars on this important event differ widely. Some scholars express their doubts whether this event took place at all.

The Western scholars have gathered from some of the Puanas that some 1015 or 1050 years elapsed from the king Parikshita son of Abhimanyu, one of the heroes of the Bharata War) to the end of the Nanda kings, the predecessors of Chandragupta Maurya. Thus Mahabharat War, according to them, could be placed roughly at 1376 B.C. ( $326 + 1050 = 1376$ ), 326 B.C., being the date of the invasion of Alexander. They regard this latter event as the starting point of the Indian historical period. This way they would like to place the Shungas after the Mauryas. Kalidasa has based his play *Maiavikagnimitram* on the life of Agnimitra Shunga. This would put Kalidasa somewhere in the 1st or 2nd century before Christ. But this is also not acceptable to them. Before discussing these matters in details, it would be necessary to examine critically the views of some scholars about the date and the historicity of the Mahabharata war.

Archaeologists like Sarkar and Sankalia boldly assert that the epic Mahabharata is no history at all. According to them it is a fantasy and if at all there is any grain of truth in it, it is very insignificant. This so called war, they maintain, was at the most a scuffle between some petty village clans. The basis for this conclusion is that no inscription or other archaeological evidence is available so far to corroborate the evidence provided for by Mahabharata, the great epic.

We have seen that there is ample internal evidence in *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* to show that they are historical works.

The term 'Itihasa' is also defined as: "*Dharmārtha-Kama-moksanām upadeshasamanvitam purvavrttam kathāuvpam itihasam pracaksyate*".

The record of past events told in the form of stories interspersed with the advice as how to lead a balanced way of life with the intention to achieve the four fold objective of life namely Dharma (righteous conduct) Artha (sufficient means of livelihood) Kama (enjoyment of regulated and legitimate desires of life) and Moksha or liberation (integral vision of life)."

The above works were most important in the social life of the country as they carried the message of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishadas* to the common man. These also portray intellectual attainments, social customs and contain scientific developments achieved from time to time. It is true that sometimes, there are exaggerations or strange episodes in them. They are interwoven in the fabric of the main story to drive home the uninitiated masses some cultural aspects of moral or philosophical truth.

The kings like Mandhata, Bhagiratha, Sagar, Nahusha, Kakustha, Ravana, the kings of the great dynasty of Raghu, Laxman and Yudhishtira were men of great heights. Even then their lives have been presented by the authors of the Puranas with minimum essential details for the reason that personal achievement was regarded as a transitory phase. *Vishnu Purana* states: "*Yudhishtirādyā ca bahavah — Satyam na mithyā kva nu tena vidmah?*" These are undoubtedly men of historical importance but where are they now?" They are left in the stories only. The moral is clear. Man should know that these events are just transitory and so he should lead a righteous and well regulated life. In order to drive home this lesson, the cultural and moral rather than personal aspects are emphasized in the Puranas. This does not mean that their value as historical works is in any way affected.

*Bharata* war has an individuality of its own. Though apparently a family feud between the sons of the two brothers Dhrtarastra and *Pandu* — the Kuru kings, the basic issue was of morality. Left to itself, *Dharmaraja* the eldest of the *Pandavas*, would have renounced his rightful claim to the throne of *Hastinapura* in favour of his cousin *Duryodhana* who, through cunning manouevers was occupying it. The *Bharat* war was therefore a conflict between the good and the evil, under the advice of Srikrishna — who has since been regarded as God head, it was decided that the evil forces should not be allowed to triumph whatever the cost such decision may involve.

This great event has, therefore, carved out its niche in the heart and literature of India. The earliest *Puranas* the *Vayu* and *Matsya* of the fifth and fourth century B.C. regard this war as a dividing line between the past and the present — the *Dwapara* and the *Kali* — the two great epochs. The *Kuru* line has become extinct and the Pandava line has started from Dharmaraja the eldest of the *Pandavas* succeeded by Arjuna's (the third Pandava) grandson Parikshita. Kautilya (321 B.C.), Panini, the grammarian who preceded Kautilya, take this war as a real event in the life of the nation. Sankhyayana and Asvalayana (who even according to the present reckoning flourished prior to 800 B.C.) take this event as real in the history of India. Sankhyayana mentions a sacrificial error

which brought misfortune to *Kurus*. *Asvalayana* notes *Vaisampayana* as a pupil of *Bharatacarya*.

Early vedic literature notes names of several personages connected with *Kauravas* and *Pandavas* the main parties to this great event.

According to B.B. Lal the archaeological evidence in support of Bharata war is available indirectly. At Hastinapura the horse bones, the vestiges of Asvamedha have been recovered. There is further stratigraphical evidence at Hastinapura showing the flood level thereby corroborating the Puranic evidence of floods in the times of Nichakshu. the sixth in line from Pariksha.

Sankalia argues that on the basis of archaeological evidence. Mahabharata people did not know the use of iron in warfare. It is said that iron technology, was known in about 1100 B.C. So the war must have been fought, if at all, with crude weapons. As B.P. Sinha countering the arguments of Sankalia has argued that the dates for iron use are the earliest *known* dates and not necessarily the earliest dates. The absence of iron weapons and massive structures at the sites may be due to climatic and geological reasons.

Much is made of the absence of iron in India prior to 1100 B.C. or at best before 1900 B.C. It has to be remembered that iron was no new discovery, particularly in India where massive iron ore deposits have been located "Iron tools were occasionally used, both in Egypt and Mesopotamia as early as third millennium B.C. but were costly and difficult to produce in quantity because with low furnace temperatures in use at that time, iron was extremely difficult to melt and reduction left only a mingled mass of iron and slag which then had to be purified and beaten into 'blooms' by hammering."

Iron ore is one of the commonest ores in the earth's crust and more plentiful. If iron weapons and tools were used in third millennium B.C. in Mesopotamia, the ore being more plentiful than as now, it is reasonable to assume that iron weapons were in use in India since much earlier times. Particularly it must have been so, for it is generally agreed that there had been very close links between the Sarasvati-Sindhu Civilization and the Sumerian as almost indistinguishable. The cultivation of land has been known to India since the Vedic period and it is not possible without iron implements in howsoever crude form they may have been.

Iron (*śamāyasa*) is mentioned in *Yajurveda* and subsequent literature.

The Vedic literature mentions words like sword, corselet, missiles, bow, arrows, helmet, lance, army, foot soldiers, chariot fighters and generals. It shows that the Vedic people had sufficient technical skills to produce and to use

these weapons. If the archaeological excavations have so far not yielded any concrete evidence, such as skeletons of war victims, arsenals or workshops for making weapons, such negative evidence cannot act as a veto against other positive evidence such as historical records in the *Puranas*, the epics and continuous traditional belief in the happening of the event as enshrined in later literature. The Hindus traditionally have the method of cremation for the disposal of their dead and so these skeletons may not be found. Again due to climatic and geological upheavals, the iron weapons may either have been reduced to rust and dust or may have been buried deep into the crust of the earth. D.D. Kosambi argues on the other hand that the war was fought over the possession of the rich iron ore mines in the south west (of northern India) area, as also of the slate and marble and other precious stones.

With few exceptions almost all the Indian scholars are unanimous that this war was a historic event. D.C. Sarkar believes that this war was a 'family feud' and there was nothing more than a series of duels. The very fact, however, that this event has assumed an all-India importance is sufficient to prove that it was not merely a local affair. The entire area of Kuruksetra is still lit up with several *tirthas* associated with the events and heroes of *Mahabharata*. The graphic description of the war, with horses and chariots and the different types of missiles, the bows and arrows, and the battle-lines also supports the view that this was a significant event and not just a series of duels.

There is no unanimity amongst scholars about its date. We have already seen that the traditional date of the war is 3139-38 B.C. on the evidence of the epic *Mahabharata* itself. The puranas support this view.

P.V. Vartak a noted scholar, is of the view that Mahabharata has not mentioned the beginning of Kaliyuga at all. It has mentioned the evening of Dvapara i.e. the twilight period between Dvapara and Kali. On the basis of some astronomical details, Vartak arrives at 16th October 5562 B.C. as the date of the Bharata war.

But majority of the scholars, as we have seen earlier, hold that there are clear statements in the epic itself that Yudhisthira was coronated about 36 years before the arrival of the Kaliyuga. It is agreed on all hands that Kaliyuga started in 3102 B.C. According to *Visnu-Purana* as we have noted earlier, Kali arrived the day and the moment Bhagavan Krsna left his mortal coil. And this date is invariably given as 3102 B.C. In the face of these clear and unambiguous statements, we agree with the majority view that the war was fought in the year 3139-38 B.C.

On the basis of astronomical details alone, K. Raghavan fixes the date as 3076 B.C. which is nearer to 3139-38 the date according to literary records.

But the main argument against fixing the date of Bharata war at 3139-38 B.C., is that the mention of Kaliyuga is made by the well-known astronomer *Aryabhatta* of fifth century A.D. Before that there is no reference to Kaliyuga. On the face of it the weakness of this argument is obvious. Nobody suggests that Aryabhatta has invented this method of reckoning. Traditionally Krta, Treta, Dvapara and Kali are the four yugas with periods running into several lacs of years and these yugas are recognised methods of reckoning the periods in astronomy. What is suggested is that the exact date of ushering in of Kali has first been noted by Aryabhatta. But is this true?

Buhler, writes with reference to Nepal Rajavamshavali, thus: According to the inscriptions... "Manadeva's grandson Vasantadeva Varman was crowned in Kali 2800 or 301 B.C.... Amsuvarman is placed in Kali 3000 or 101 B.C.."

Here, the possible objection would be that the Kali start year is not given. But, when all the other details of the particular dynasties tally by assuming the start of Kali at 3101, such an objection would not be valid.

Another objection to the determination of the date of Bharata war of 3139-38 according to a section of the Indologists is that it is incompatible with our knowledge of the proto-historic period i.e. the discovery of the late-Harappan settlements (C. 2000-1500 B.C.) at places like Daulatpur, Karnaka-Qila ..... The dates in the 15<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C. are contrary to the accepted norms of an average reign per generation between the war and king Udayan of Puranic genealogy." When the *Puranas* give the actual regnal periods for each king, why at all such imaginary assumptions are needed?

The archaeologist's view that the Sarasvati-Sindhu civilization is pre-vedic is against the literary tradition of India. And there is no evidence to prove that the literary tradition is incorrect.

On astronomical and epigraphic evidence S. B. Roy and others calculate the date of the Bharata War as 1424-1414 B.C. This calculation presumes contemporaneity of Alexander and Chandragupta. We have shown that this is erroneous.

Almost all the historians argue that Buddha and Jaina "Traditions are of little use for the reconstruction of the early periods of Indian history and (they) only suggest that the war was fought sometimes before Mahavira and Buddha."

In determining the chronology of the kings ruling India after the *Mahabharata* war, therefore, we have necessarily to turn to *the Puranas*, for the genealogies of the kings after that great event.

It is possible to glean genuine historical references from the *Puranas* and to reconstruct a fairly accurate history. Pargiter has rightly stated that these ancient books do contain authentic history of India. Even scholars such as William Jones, Max Muller, Fleet and Bühler concur with this view with the difference that these scholars give perverted interpretation of traditions. They also accept the genealogies given in the *Puranas* but do not accept their chronologies. They are inclined to regard Chandragupta Maurya (326 B.C.) as a contemporary of Alexander (326 B.C.)

### **1.5 Sarasvati-Sindhu Civilisation and Mahabharata**

It should be noted here that the Carbon-14 test does not help us very much in fixing the date of *Mahabharata* war. The archaeological remains which are carbon-dated may have been mentioned in the epic-Mahabharata but this is no evidence to say that the particular thing is from the Mahabharata age. The last recension of *Mahabharata* is of 500 B.C. It is just possible that the last writer may have noted some peculiarities he was particular about. These may not belong to the actual age of the War.

Carbon 14 Tests are mostly carried on river beds adjacent to the epic centres of historical significance. In the river bed area, the Carbon dioxide intake by the trees (fossilised) is only 40% as compared to the other areas. By such tests at Hastinapur, the archaeologists have fixed the date of Mahabharata war at about 1400 B.C.

These tests as stated above are not conclusive. At best, they show that the *latest date* of some remains presumed to be connected with *Bharata* war is 1400 B.C. the earliest thus, remaining undecided.

In Mohenjo-daro, there is a picture of tree from which two faces are shown to be peeping out. There is yet another picture of a tree from which six faces are shown to be emerging out of the branches. The scholars imagine these to be the representatives of ghosts residing in trees. This is indeed poor scholarship which can not conceive something higher than mere ghosts as haunting these highly civilised and evolved people of this world famous civilisation.

These may be representing the two 'Suparnas' of the Asya Vamiye hymn of the *Rgveda*, — the two golden hued birds, one of which eats the fruit of the tree and the other just keeps on gazing at it. There is also the mention of the 'Aja' (unborn or better not known when it was born) that protects the 'six abodes' in the universe. It is these highly philosophical ideas that appear to have been represented by the carvings of the two trees in Mohenjo-daro. (*Glimpses of Vedic Nation* — Balashastri Hardas 1967). The pictures and drawings in these places, really represent ideas either from the *Vedas* or *Mahabharata*.

From the remains discovered in the Indus valley excavations, however, it can be inferred that the exploits of the heroes of this Mahabharata War are noted. Rev. Heras states: "In the original country of the Sumerians i.e. India, this great hero (Bhima the second Pandava of the Mahabharata fame) is also shown nude in his struggle with the two lions in the four seals of the Indus valley which reproduce the scene. We have identified this hero as Bhima the great strongman of India, of epic fame."

Heras, however, suggests that the Mahabharata story is borrowed from the stories current in Indus areas. Heras quotes *Mahabharat* (Vanparva-verse 11362-Calcutta edn.) and states "Now the epic narrates that in his great fights with lions, Bhima was clad in deer skins and wearing golden armlets and equipped with weapons and with his sword girded in". Heras concludes; "The Dravidian influence in the field of Sanskrit literature is everyday clearer."

In order to prove that this Dravidian civilisation has been destroyed by the invading barbarian Aryans, he has adduced no evidence except the hunch of John Marshall, the then Director General of Archaeology, that Indus valley had Dravidian civilisation and it was destroyed by the barbaric hordes.

Sunittkumar Chatterji writes, in the same strain, "the idea of karma and transmigration, the practice of yoga the religious and philosophical ideas centring round the conception of the divinity as Shiva and Devi and as Vishnu, the Hindu ritual of Puja, as opposed to the Vedic ritual of homa — all these and much more in Hindu religion and thought, would appear to be non-Aryan in origin, a great deal of Puranic and epic myth, legend and semi-history is pre-Aryan, much of our material culture and social and other usages e.g. the cultivation of some of our most important plants like rice and the coconut etc., the use of betel-leaf in Hindu life and Hindu ritual, more of our popular religion, most of our folk crafts, our nautical crafts, our distinctive dress (the Dhotis and the Sari), our marriage ritual in some parts of India and many other things — could appear to be a legacy from our Pre-Aryan ancestors."

This would mean that the whole Sanskrit literature including the Vedas, is but a concocted and borrowed edition of the culture prevalent in India prior to the advent of the alleged Aryan barbarians on the scene. The only strange thing is that nothing in writing is available to prove this except what has lately come down to us from the fertile imagination of the Western Indologists and their Indian followers.

It has already been shown, how the scholars like Jones, Max Muller Elphinstone and others, not out of ignorance but more by design have tried to falsify Indian history, by first using the information from the *Puranas*, *Rajatarangini*, *Nepal Rajavamshavali*, *Mahabharata* and such other works, and then declaring that these sources are unreliable.

According to Indian sources and traditions, therefore, the date of Bharata war would be 3139-38 B.C. As a natural corollary the Sarasvati-Sindhu civilisation would, be the post-Vedic civilisation. There 'being no separate Aryan or Dravidian races, the question of one destroying the other does not arise.

Once the year of Mahabharata war is thus determined, subsequent chronology of Indian history can be given with sufficient accuracy.

## **Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka and Alexander**

The present day Indologists hold Chandragupta Maurya (1534 B.C. according to the Puranas) to be a contemporary of Alexander, (326 B.C.)- This wrong thesis has vitiated the whole of ancient chronology in the Indian History. We shall now examine this point critically with the help of inscripational and certain other evidence.

In all 26 inscriptions grouped under the following four categories are stated to be of the authorship of Ashoka Maurya. It should be noted that Ashoka Maurya was the son of Bindusar and grandson of Chandragupta.

**1. THE ROCK EDICTS:** They are seven in number and are located at (a) Girnar - a sacred mountain in Gujarat State, (b) Kalsi, a town in Dehra Dun District of Uttar Pradesh, (c) Shahazgarhi, a village on the Makam river in Peshawar District (now in Pakistan), (d) Mansehra, a tahsil town in the Hazara District of North West Frontier Province (now in Pakistan), (e) Dhauri, a village in Puri district in Orissa, (f) Jaugada, a ruined fort in the Ganjam District in Tamil Nadu and (g) Sopara near Vasal town in Thane district, Maharashtra.

There are 14 inscriptions at each place with more or less similar contents. Edicts VI to XIII are not found at Dhauri and Jaugada. Instead there are two



separate edicts at these places detailing the work of the judicial officers, enjoining on them their duty to treat all subjects as their own children.

At Sopara, some remains of edict VIII only are to be found, the others having been completely destroyed or lost.

These edicts inform us that they have been engraved by 'the king the beloved of the Gods and the one with amiable appearance — "*devanam priya, priyadarsi*." But in none of these there is a direct mention of the name of the king.

**2. THE PILLAR EDICTS:** They are 6 in number. Of these the Delhi-Topra and the Delhi-Merath edicts were originally at Topra, a village in Harayana State and at Merath, a district town in Uttar Pradesh respectively. These were removed to Delhi by Firoz Shah (1357-83 A.D.) On the first there are seven inscriptions while on the next there are only 6. Similarly on the two others at Lauriya Aroraj and Lauriya Nandangarh - the two villages in Champaran and Beliya Districts of Bihar respectively there are only 6 inscriptions.

Also on the Rampurva lion pillar - in Champaran District of Bihar, there are 6 inscriptions.

There was one such pillar at Kosam (Kaushambi of the former days). It was removed to Allahabad by Akbar, the Mogul king of the sixteenth century A.D. This also has 6 inscriptions, in addition, this pillar has on it two more edicts. One is known as 'Queen's edict' and the other as 'Kaushambi edict. There is also on this pillar, one more inscription of Maharajadhiraj Samudra-gupta of the Gupta dynasty. Some small inscriptions of Birbal (Akabar's court poet) and Jahangir Akbar's son, are also found on this pillar.

These pillar edicts nowhere mention directly the name of the king who got them inscribed. Here too, the author is simply '*devanam priya priyadarsi raja*'.

These two sets, the rock edicts and the pillar edicts are the major ones. And the only information about the author we get from these major inscriptions is that he is the king "*devanam priya priyadarsi raja* — reigning probably from Pataliputra. The name of the city of Pataliputra is only an inferred drawn from the word 'Pata' found in rock edict No. V.

The further information we get from these inscriptions is that this king conquered Kalinga country eight years after his coronation (Rock edict XIII), He paid a visit to Sambodhi (Bodha Gaya) ten years after his coronation. The rescripts on morality are contained in pillar edict VI and are issued twelve years after his coronation. The Mahamatras were to supervise the work of his judicial

officers (rock edict V) thirteen years after his coronation. It was the duty of these Mahamatras (the High Commissioners) to supervise whether the king's instructions about establishing morality amongst all classes of his subjects were being carried out and welfare and happiness of his subjects were ensured.

From the rock-edicts V and XIII we also get information about this king's suzerainty over all parts of India. The Mahamatras were to see that morality is established, among the Yonas, Kambojas, Gandharas, Rishtikas, Bhojas, Petenikas, Andhras, Cholas, Pandyas and the region as far removed as Tamaraparni river. He had also governors at Ujjain and Takshashila. The line R in Kalsi rock-edict XIII tells us that in these territories of this King, everywhere people are conforming to "*devanam priya's*" instructions in morality. The line Q in this edict mentions that 'this conquest by morality has been won even amongst people along his Western borders, as far as the distance of six hundred yojnas (about 1200 to 2400 miles probably from his seat) where the Yona king "Antiyoga" (Antiyoka in some) is ruling.' This king "Anti-yoga" is identified by the scholars with Antiochus II Theos of Syria (261-246 B.C.)

Ashoka had also won by morality the kings on the borders of this Antiochus. Their names are: Tulamaya (or Turamaya) Antikina (or Antikini), Maka (or Maga) and Alikashudala (or Alikashudara). These four kings are identified by Western scholars as:

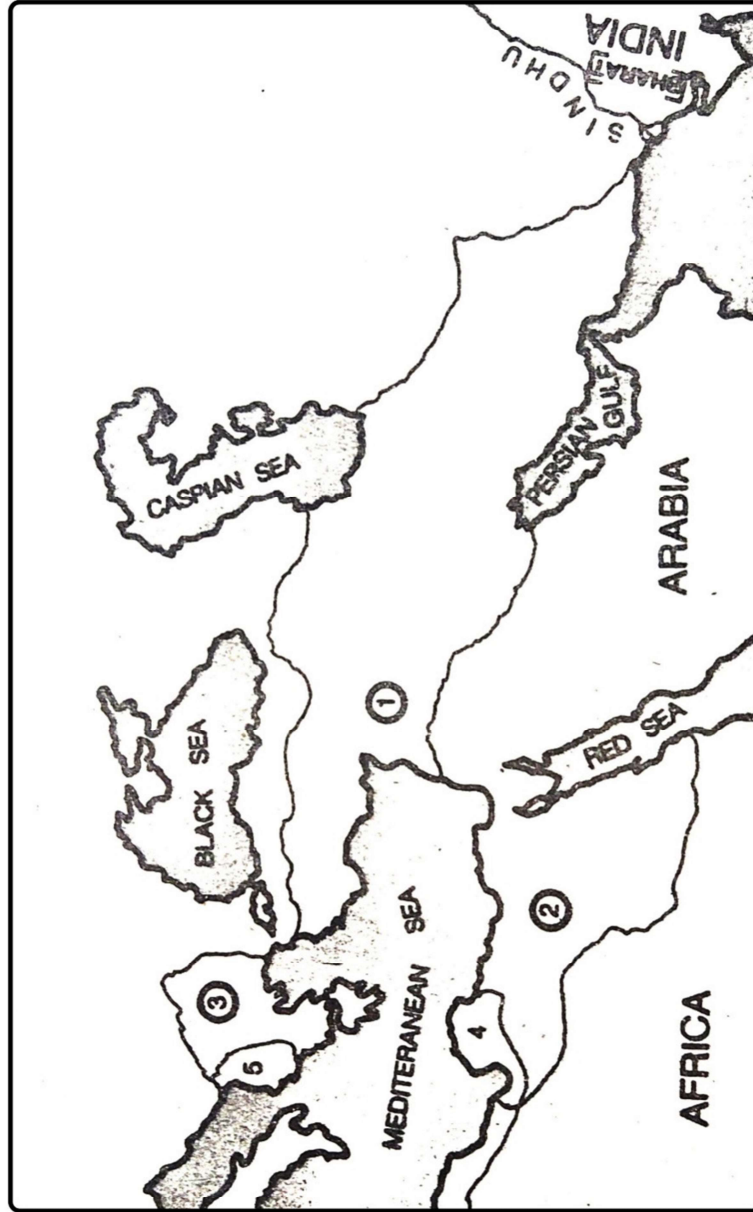
1. Tulamaya: Ptolemy II Philadelphos of Egypt (283-247 B.C.) (This is Turamaya in some edicts. Ptolemy cannot be Turamaya).
2. Antikina: Antigonus Gonates of Macedonia (276-239 B.C.) (How can Antikina be Antigonus? If Ashoka's epigraphists were able to write Antiyoka correctly why should they have written Antikini for Antigonus?)
3. Maka: Magas of Cyrene (300-250 B.C.) (This Cyrene was a Greek colony in Africa to the west of Lybia, a non-Greek territory, it was thousands of miles away from the frontiers of India. To identify Maka as Maga of Cyrene is, to say the least absurd.)
4. Alikashudara: Alexander of Epirus (272-255 B.C.) (In this case also, there is no phonetic similarity)

These identifications are *prima facie* incorrect as it was the duty of his "mahamatras" to supervise that his rescript on morality was being observed even in the regions known as Yonas. One cannot stretch one's imagination and say that these "*mahamatras*" were able- to cross all the intervening countries like Persia, Iraq, Iran, Lybia and Turkey, on their missions of moral teachings

to far off countries. It should be remembered that this identification would mean that the king had no influence in these intervening countries mentioned above, but had influence in the regions beyond these. A casual look at the map should convince anybody that it was not easy in those days to go to Egypt or Syria, not to speak of Greece (Macedonia) and Cyrene and Epirus, which are farther beyond Syria. Moreover, it was the experience of the kings then that as soon as their military vigil was weakened, the tribal kings like Shakas, Hunas, etc. were invading them and marauding their subjects and territories. It is, therefore, clear that when Ashoka was exhorting the borderchieftains to uphold the moral law and treat the subjects as one's own children, these chieftains were obeying his instructions more out of fear than out of love for him, or his Dharma. It is not possible that the independent kings from such far off places like Greece and beyond would listen to Ashoka unless they were subordinate to him, but we have no evidence of any sort in this respect from Greek literature.

The above identifications of the four kings are most arbitrary. Even Buhler objected to these. He says "Antikina or Antikine corresponds to the Greek Antegene" rather than Antigonus. To this the answer is "but as no king named Antegenes is known, Antikine has been identified with Antigonus Gonatus of Macedonia 276-239 B.C." Again as the edicts state, these kings are not on the borders of Ashoka's empire. Bhandarkar categorically states that these Yona provinces in the inscriptions "formed part of Ashoka's Empire and had therefore nothing to do with the dominions of his Greek neighbours. There was a Greek colony of the pre-Alexandrian period on the North-Western confines of India and it was established between the rivers Kopan and the Indus."

**Dominions of the five Western Kings named by Asoka**  
(Western scholars' view point)



- (1) Antiochus II-Theos of Syria 264-264B.C. (2) Ptolemy Philadelphos of Egypt 285-247 B.C.  
(3) Antigonos Gonatus of Macedonia 276-239 B.C. (4) Magas of Cyrene 300 B.C.-250 B.C.  
(5) Alexander of Epirus 277-235 B.C.

These identifications are therefore far from correct. Yet one thing is clear that this king had devoted himself to the spread of moral conduct not only amongst his subjects but also in the regions beyond his territory, the rulers of which may be accepting his suzerainty and had friendly relations with him. Above all, Antiyoka, Maka etc. do not appear to be the names of the kings. They are the names of Kingdoms. The actual words in the edicts are '*Yatra antiyoka nama yona raja*'.

This would mean '*Yatra antiyoko nama yavan — Rajyam*' Again, the next line is "*param ca tena antiyokena catvari rajyani*". It means the kingdoms adjoining the kingdom of Antiyoka. The kings cannot adjoin each other. Their regions can adjoin. This is in consonance with the other line, '*nic cola panda eva tambapaniya*' i.e. in the regions below i.e. to the South are the kingdoms of Cola, Pandya, Tamraparni. These Yonas on borders of Ashoka's empire are clubbed together with Gandhar and Kamboja regions. So these are all states just across his north-western borders.

K. Venkatachellam, identifies these as yona kingdoms of Abhisara, Uraga, Simhapura, Divyakataka and Uttar Jyotisha. But there is no phonetic similarity between these and the names of the kingdoms in the rock edicts. He takes 'Antiyoka' etc. to be the names of the kings ruling these kingdoms. However his observation only if we identify the Bharatiya Yavan states of the inscriptions, the length of the entire range of Buddhist religious influence on the north of Ashoka's Empire mentioned in the inscription will work out — from modern Afghanistan to the east coast of China nearly 800 yojanas as mentioned in Ashoka's inscriptions" appears to be correct.

K. Venkatachellam is also not correct in maintaining that Ashoka's missions were Buddhist, for this Ashoka had never embraced Buddhism. He further writes, "So Antiyoka was a Bharatiya Yavan prince not an Iono Greek or Greek Prince. He was the contemporary of Ashoka. His age was 1472-36 B.C."

Rhys Davids states "Maghasthenes, in his account of India has not said a word about Buddha or his system." She adds, "Ashoka's claim that he had persuaded a few Greek kings to embrace Buddhism is to say the least very tall and displays his egoistic nature. He had not sent any religious ambassador to Greek countries. The Greeks themselves were highly civilised. They would not embrace religions and welcome ethical teachings from an uncivilised and a barbarian king. This clearly raises a doubt that the names of foreigners in Ashoka's edicts refer not to any king from other countries."

She probably refers to Ashoka's early career as depicted in *Ashoka-vadana* — a Buddhist account of Ashoka who had embraced Buddhism. The

Ashoka of the edicts had not embraced Buddhism. In that Buddhist account Ashoka is said to have appointed one Gandhi Girik to murder cold bloodedly any passerby who would enter the beautiful palace erected specially for such an ugly purpose. We need not and do not agree with her remarks, about Ashoka but one important point emerges from them that the names of the kings or their kingdoms certainly do not refer to far off Greek kings but to some mleccha or Yavan kings on his border, who were influenced by his prowess.

Antiyoka in Sanskrit means 'one who lives on the border, So this inscription may mean — the kingdom where Antiyoka ruled or simply a border king. Maga can be identified with modern Baluchistan which was then called Maka Or Maga. Turamaya may be Turana, According to Max Muller. "Turan is Turvas and his descendants".

We know from *Rgveda* and the *Puranas* that *Yadu* was the son of *Yayati*. *Turvasu* is the name of the family which is always mentioned in *Rgveda* along with *Yadu* as *Yadu-Turvashu*. In *Rgveda* (1-53-10) there is the name of the other family '*Turvayana*'. This family was also a ruling one in Yona region beyond the Sindhu river. It would, therefore, be proper to identify *Turamaya* either with *Turana* or *Turvayana*.

Antikini may be the Anti Kinnare i.e. border kingdom of Kinnara a state near India's Tibetan borders-Nepal or Bhutan. The people of these kingdoms were called Yaksas or Kinnaras.

The last name '*Alik Shudala*' may be rendered in Sanskrit as *Alekhyia Sunder* i.e. a kingdom surpassing in beauty. It may point to Kashmira, which was then ruled by another Ashoka of the Kashmiri *Gonandiya* dynasty.

These identifications are more plausible than what has been done so far.

It is possible that Ashoka's instructions were being carried out faithfully by these border kings who may be subordinate to him or may be friendly with him.

Ashoka also asks his "mahamatras" to behave impartially with all sections of his people and to inspire confidence amongst the neighbours. He wants them to behave with a fatherly affection for all. He would try to see that all his subjects and the neighbours follow the moral path laid down by him. He wanted to achieve his objective not by force but by persuasion.

This king is aware of the human failings which give rise to envy, anger, cruelty, hate, laziness and fatigue (separate edict Dhauli, line-M).

He therefore exhorts his "*mahamatras*" (the commissioners) to avoid these vices in themselves and move about the regions under their command and strive to ensure that the judicial officers observe their duties faithfully.

Ashoka Maurya had not embraced Buddhism at all as would be clear from the account of the third type of edicts given here under-

**3. THE THIRD TYPE OF INSCRIPTIONS:** They are *minor pillar edicts*. These are located at (a) Sanchi, an ancient place near Bhilsa in Madhya Pradesh State, (b) Saranath near Varanasi, and the other two in Nepalese Tarai i.e., at (c) Rummindei or Lummini and (d) Nigali Sagar near Lummini.

These are very minor ones. The first one at Sanchi has only 5 lines and it contains exhortations to Buddhist monks and nuns to remain united. It obviously is by one who noticing the bickerings amongst these, enjoins on them to maintain the unity of the Sangha or else they are warned that they will be thrown out.

The second one at Saranath also contains this same exhortation and the warning to the monks and the nuns. In this inscription, we are told that some '*Devanam priya*' has stated as above. The lay-worshippers and the elders are instructed to follow the directions contained in the edict.

Saranath is a place where Buddha preached his first sermon. The seal with four lions and the exquisitely carved *Dharma-Chakra* are also found here. The Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsang, saw on the site of Migadaya (dear park) a stone pillar which stood in front of a stupa built by Ashokaraja. This pillar had a height of 70 ft. It has now disappeared due to ravages of time.

This Saranath pillar has also a short inscription by King *Ashwaghosha* and is engraved in continuation of the last line of the edict. These two i.e. the one at Sanchi and the other at Saranath, may be by this king *Ashwaghosha* who might have been a Buddhist. Incidentally Ashwaghosh is the name of a very highly reputed Buddhist philosopher.

These two minor edicts stand apart from the other two in Nepalese Tarai.

The Lummini and the Nigali Sagar edicts contain only three lines each, and the first one states that *Devanam Priya*, when he had completed twenty years from his coronation, paid a visit to Lummini the birth place of Buddha and erected this pillar and exempted this village from taxes. The second one states that this king had visited this place after he had completed 14 years from his coronation. He enlarged the stupa of Buddha Kanakmuni to double its original

size, and when he had completed twenty years from his coronation, he came here and erected this pillar.

The first two (Sanchi and Saranatha) therefore, contain something concerning the internal affairs of the Sangha and so must have been engraved by one who was very much concerned with the disaffection generated between the two Sanghas, one of the monks and the other of the nuns.

The second set of two edicts is by one who had paid a visit to these two well known places in his kingdom and so to commemorate these, he had caused these to be erected.

The mention of king Ashokaraja by the Chinese traveller in connection with Saranath pillar does not refer to Ashoka Maurya. Incidentally this pillar is not now available. Even supposing it was there it may refer to Ashwa-ghosha or some other Ashoka. We can identify this Ashokaraj to be Ashoka, the 48th king of the First Gonandiy Dynasty of Kashmira as listed in the *Raj-Tarangini*. This Kashmiri Ashoka who had embraced Buddhism is quite different from Ashoka Maurya.

**4. THE 4TH TYPE OF ROCK INSCRIPTIONS:** These are minor rock *inscriptions* nine in all and these are located at: 1. Rupanath, an out of the way place of pilgrimage on the line from Jabalpur to Katni in Madhya Pradesh State; 2. Sahasram, a town in Shahabad District of South Bihar, 3. Bairat, a tahsil town in Jaipur District in Rajasthan State, 4. Bhabru, a town in Bengal. This inscription is now in (Asiatic Society of Bengal Calcutta) 5. Maski, a village in Lingsur taluka of Raichur District in Karnatak State.

The text of these five inscriptions is more or less the same. The first two state that the '*devanam priya*' king has been a lay worshipper of Buddha for two and a half years. But he was not very zealous. He had spent 256 nights in prayer. After this he had ordered his conversion to Buddhism to be proclaimed to his subjects and he wanted this to be engraved in stone. These clearly are of Ashoka of the Gonandiy Dynasty of Kashmir. *Rajata-rangini* states that he had embraced Buddhism. We repeat: there is no record to show that Ashoka Maurya had ever embraced Buddhism.

The third one at Bairat is on the same lines as the first two.

The fourth one at Bhabru begins with the words '*priyadarsi raja magadhe sangham abhivade*'- meaning, 'the Priyadarshi — king salutes the Sangha in Magadha country.' He does not say that the king is from Maghadha as Hultzsch and others translate. They say that they get their authority from '*Magadho*



*setriyo bimbisaro'* in *Vinayapitaka*, '*raja magadho ajatasatru* in *Mahaparinibbanasutta*' and '*raja pasenaji kosalo*' in a Bharaut inscription. But this is incorrect in as much as the words '*magadho*', '*kosalo*' are in nominative singular, while '*magadhe*' is locative singular. So the words mean 'the king saluted the Sangha in Magadha'. The Sangha was first established by Buddha in Magadha. The kings Bimbisara and Ajat-shatru mentioned in *Vinayapitaka* and *Mahaparinibbanasutta*, are Buddha's contemporaries and both are from Shishunaga dynasty. They had not embraced Buddhism; in fact there is no evidence to suggest that Buddha himself was the founder of any religion in his name.

The fifth at maski, makes a mention of the king Ashoka and tells about his conversion to Buddhism, since about two and a half years and that he became zealous about a year or so. This clearly refers to Ashoka of Gonandiya dynasty of Kashmira.

The numbers VI, VII and VIII minor rock inscriptions are located in Karnataka State. These three are near Siddapur (Mysore) and are actually located at Brahmagiri, Siddapur and Jatinga — Rameshwara. All these are on hills of the same names.

The first two of these hill inscriptions, have more or less the same contents as the first two rock-inscriptions namely, Rupanath and Sahasram. The third is not well preserved, but contains texts similar to the other two.

There are further three small inscriptions at Barabar Hills. They are in caves, near Gaya in South Bihar.

The first one of these three states that the '*priyadarshi raja*' gave Banyan Cave to the Ajivakas after 24 years from the date of his coronation. The other two are of similar nature.

It will be seen from this brief survey of all the major and minor inscriptions that the name of the King noted is '*devanam priya priyadarsi*'. His real name or location is not mentioned in any of the major inscriptions. Only in rock edict No. V, we get the name of the city of Parliputra and in a minor rock inscription at Maski we get the name Ashoka.

From these minor and ambiguous references, the Indologists have built up a huge edifice proclaiming that the author of all these edicts is Ashoka Maurya and his grand father Chandragupta was a contemporary of Alexander, the Macedonian king, who had come to the border of India around 326 BC, and this date is the 'sheet anchor of Indian Chronology'.

Hultzsch is regarded as the standard bearer in this respect and hence his arguments in support of the contention that the author of the edicts was Ashoka Maurya have been critically appraised here. This leads us to the unmistakable conclusion that it was Chandragupta of Gupta dynasty who was Alexander's contemporary, and not Chandragupta Maurya. '*devanam priya priyadarsi* raja' is a general honorific term meaning 'beloved of the Gods, with amiable looks.' A similar epithet in Sanskrit is: *bhavan, dirghayuh, ayusman*. In Sana's *Harshacharita* this term is twice found to have been used as an honorific. It is frequently used in this sense in Jaina and Buddhist literature also.

In *Dipavamsa*, a Buddhist chronicle, this title is prefixed to Tissa, the King of Lanka. So this title cannot decide the issue of the authorship of these edicts, one way or the other. We shall have to glean some other evidence to determine this issue.

As we have stated earlier, these so called Ashoka edicts have to be grouped thus

**The major edicts:** 1. The seven rock edicts 2. The six pillar edicts.

**The minor edicts:**

1. The Sanchi and Saranath pillar inscriptions
2. The Rummindei and the Nigali Sagar pillar inscriptions.
3. The five minor rock-inscriptions at Rupanath, Sahasram, Bairat, Bhabru (Calcutta) and Maski.
4. The three hill-inscriptions near Siddapur (near Mysore)
5. The three Barabar hill cave donative inscriptions.

Of these, the five minor rock inscriptions (no. 3 above) and the three hill inscriptions near Siddapur (Mysore) (No. 4 above), belong to King Ashoka as stated in the Maski inscription in Kamataka State. The text of all these 8 inscriptions is more or less similar. These proclaim that the King Ashoka became a Buddhist for over two-and a half years before these were engraved. He was initially not very zealous, but became so since about a year, when he visited the Sangha. He had spent 256 nights in prayer.

Of the minor pillar inscriptions, only two, Sanchi and Saranath pillar inscriptions are concerning the King's instructions to the monks and the nuns to square up their differences or else face eviction from the Sangha. The Saranath inscription is by the King Ashwaghosha But the scholars have divided it into two, one of Ashoka and the other of Aswaghosha, though they are engraved continuously without any line of demarcation. No particular reason has been

assigned as to why there should be this demarcation. This split up of one single inscription is therefore unwarranted and should be treated as one piece, its author being Ashwaghosha.

The Rummindei and Nigali Sagar inscriptions, tell us of the King's visit to Lummini, the birth place of Buddha and to Nigali Sagar, another place where Kanakamuni Buddha's Stupa is located, 20 years after his coronation. This is a visit by the king of Magadha to two important places in his domains and there is nothing peculiar about it. When the Buddhist records state that Ashoka was converted to Buddhism in the fourth year after his Abhisheka, ordinarily one would expect that he would visit Buddha's birth place immediately after his conversion, more particularly when these places are located just adjacent to northern Bihar — the State which he directly ruled. He would not wait for twenty years. So, Ashoka Maurya appears to have carved these to commemorate his visit to such an important place in his kingdom.

According to the *Dipavamsa* (VI 1824) Ashoka became a Buddhist layworshipper in the fourth year after his *Abhisheka*. The other Buddhist works such as *Mahavamsa* (V 34) and *Samantapasadika* (P. 300) confirm this. He is stated to have built more than 84,000 *viharas* in many towns in about 3 more years i.e. he had completed these in sixth or seventh year of his reign. Fleet tells us "the Divyavadana relates that Ashoka died destitute of power and possessions, having given everything that he could give to the Buddhist Sangha". Hultzsch further notes, "As Asnoka is known to have reigned thirty seven years, Fleet who followed Buhler in assigning the Rupanath and cognate edicts (minor rock inscriptions) to the last years of the King's life, assumed that he abdicated before the end of it in order to turn a Buddhist monk"

This gives rise to contradiction between the statements found in the Buddhist literature (that he embraced Buddhism in the fourth year after his coronation,) and the conclusion drawn by western scholars that he became Buddhist at the fag end of his life.

The major rock and pillar edicts do not record Ashoka's conversion to Buddhism at all. They give the regnal years of the major events in the king's life. These are:-

1. He won the Kalinga war 8 years after his coronation (rock edict XIII)
2. He paid a visit to Buddha Gaya 1.0 years after his coronation (rock-edict VIII).
3. He ordered his commissioners and other officers to tour the regions under them every five years to see that all his subjects, behave morally and

with due moderation, 12 years after his coronation (rock edict III). Certain other instructions have also been given in this edict.

4. He appointed high commissioners 13 years after His coronation to supervise the work done by the subordinates in promotion of morality and welfare amongst his subjects, (rock edict V).
5. He enlarged the stupa of Kanakamuni Buddha at Nigali Sagar pillar, 14 years after his coronation.
6. He created a shelter at Barabar Hill cave 1.9 years after his coronation.
7. He visited Buddha's birth place Lummini and Kanakamuni Buddha's stupa, 20 years after his coronation.
8. The pillar edicts Nos. I, IV, V & VI with rescripts on morality were issued. 26 years after his coronation.
9. Likewise the pillar edict VII was issued 27 years after his coronation.

These details show that one need not have to be a Buddhist to issue these major and a few minor edicts. Buhler, therefore, concluded that the 5 minor rock inscriptions and the three hill inscriptions near Siddapur (Karnatak state) which show that the king Ashoka who caused these to be engraved, must have been issued by Ashoka at the far end of his life, after he was converted to Buddhism. For this, he found support in the word '*Adhatiyani*' (two and half years) in line B of Rupanath. (minor rock inscription in MP) Buhler read it as *Adhattisani* (thirty-two and a half years). As Ashoka is stated to have ruled 36 years according to the Puranas and about 37 years according to Buddhist literature, Buhler had assumed that the statements in the inscription regarding the date of Ashoka's conversion to Buddhism agreed with those of the Buddhist tradition (*Epigraphica India* 3-137). But Oldenberg had shown that '*Adhattisani*' is a misreading for *Adhatiyani*, and Buhler's assumption was proved incorrect. (Hultzsch X/IV),

Hultzsch, therefore, revised his stand on the chronology of these inscriptions. He suggests that the Rupanath and Sahasram edicts be considered the earliest of all. His reasons are: "1. they speak of inscriptions on rocks and pillars as a task which it was intended to carry out 2. they and the three Mysore records, contain the first elements of Ashoka's Dharma which we find more fully developed in his rock and pillar edicts".

It would be seen from these statements of Hultzsch that he now admits that the character and the tone of the 8 minor rock inscriptions are different from the major rock and pillar edicts. The minor ones contain first elements while the major ones are 'more fully developed'. He has, therefore, suggested a radical change in Buhler's and Fleet's chronology of these edicts. It would be noticed that Buhler proposed his chronology as he believed that it was more in

consonance with the Buddhist traditions. In fact it was not even according to the Buddhist traditions.

The Buddhist tradition shows that Ashoka was converted to Buddhism in the fourth year from his *Abhishek*, while Buhler concluded that his conversion took place at a later stage in his life and that the Rupanath and the other allied minor rock inscriptions were issued shortly before his death. This, in his opinion, agreed with the Buddhist tradition, for it showed that the Kalinga war was the turning point as far as his views on religion were concerned. The enormous loss of life in that war made him repent for his conquest and so there after he decided to follow the path of "conquest by morality".

Mahavamsa V-189 outlines the change in his approach to the state policy to be followed as a King, thus:

"Before, he had been known as Chandashoka — the fierce Ashoka, on account of his evil deeds; afterwards he became known as Dharmashoka the pious Ashoka because of his virtuous deeds".

The notable point here, is that the Buddhist tradition, does not refer to Kalinga war as Fleet and Buhler had assumed.

This again was in conflict with the Buddhist tradition which stated that Ashoka was converted to the Buddha's religion in the 4th year after his coronation. And the Kalinga war was fought 8 years after his coronation. So Buhler concluded that the epigraphical accounts cannot be reconciled with the tradition.

Hultzsch on the other hand finds that Buhler's position untenable in as much as the text of the line B in Rupanath minor inscription shows that Ashoka was converted two and a half years or a little more after his Abhisheka as the Buddhist tradition tells us, and not thirty-two and a half years as Buhler interpreted. So Hultzsch concludes that this Rupanath inscription is the earlier in his career. But he could not adduce any positive evidence to show, that it was engraved in the 4th year after his abhisheka as the rock edict XIII tells us that the king who engraved it fought and won the Kalinga war 8 years after his coronation. As this war was the turning point in his career. Hultzsch comes to the conclusion that Ashoka was converted to Buddhism probably in the 12th year after his coronation and Rupanath and other allied inscriptions were engraved immediately thereafter. As a natural corollary the major inscriptions were carved later in his life.

These conclusions have no foundation at all as the epigraphic evidence itself goes counter to his position. The rock edict IV line-K states "This was

caused to be written by King '*Devanam*' '*priyadarshi*' when he had been anointed twelve years". If Hultzsch's conclusion that Rupanath minor inscriptions was engraved in the 12<sup>th</sup> year, is accepted, then it would mean that Rock edict IV was also carved out in the same year. This would conflict with another of his conclusions that the Rupanath and the allied inscriptions were carved in the early stages of his life and they were the 'first elements' and the rock edicts were carved in later stages of his life and were 'fully developed'.

But the strangest of all, is the statement of Hultzsch: "from Buddhist literature we learn that Ashoka adopted religion of Jina '(i.e. Buddha)' and built many stupas". And in support of this, he quotes verse 1-102 of *Rajatarangni*.

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***"Prapautrah śakuneh tasya bhūpateh prapitrvyajah, athāvahat  
ashokā khyo satyasaṁdh vasuṁdharām, yaḥ śāntavrttino rājā  
prapanno jinaśāsanam, sūskaietra vitastātrau tastāra  
stupamaṇḍalaiḥ. Rajatarangini — 1.101—102.***

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Ashoka succeeded Sachinar as the king of Kashmira. He was the great grandson of Shakuni the paternal uncle of Sachinar. He was a truth seeker and was peace lover. He embraced Buddhism and built many stupas at Shushkalettra on the banks of Vitasta — (the river Zelum)."

Ashoka, of whom Kalhana talks of, is not from Maurya Dynasty, but from Gonandiya Dynasty of Kashmira. This Kashmiri Ashoka had embraced Buddhism and had constructed many Viharas. as referred to in the Buddhist literature.

According to Rajatarangini of Kalhana, the king Suvama, the 45<sup>th</sup> in line of the Gonandiya Dynasty, was ruling over Kashmir from 1557 — 1528 B.C. His son Janaka then succeeded him and continued upto 1479 B.C. When he died and his son Shachinara ascended the Kashmira throne. Shachinara was issueless and so after his death his uncle Shakuni's grand son Ashoka succeeded him. He was 48<sup>th</sup> in line of the Gonandiya Dynasty of Kashmira. He was coronated king of Kashmira in 1448 B.C.

Hultzsch refers to the information in I-102 and conveniently forgets the king's genealogy as given in I-101. The strangest feat thus has been accomplished ever by a research scholar; Rajatarangini tells us that Ashoka came under the spell of Buddha-priests who praised him as 'Buddha-incarnate'. It further states that he built the city of Shrinagar resplendent with beautiful

houses. He had also built the two Shiva-temples named Vijayeshwar and Ashokeshwar. He was called *Dharmashoka*. But he lost his kingdom to the raids by the Mlecchas and Ashoka, for his pacifism, had to abdicate his throne and flee to the forest for his life.

He then worshipped God Shiva-Bhuteshwar and through His blessings got a son who was named Jalouka. This young king defeated the Mlecchas and regained his Kingdom. His preceptor Avadhuta defeated the Baudha Bhikkus in seminars arranged by this King. He built a temple named *Jyeshtheshwar*. He was also a great administrator and appointed 18 ministers to look after the different departments established for the purpose of securing welfare of his subjects.

Such is the information we get about this Dharmashoka from Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*. This more or less tallies with the information of this king as obtained from the Buddhist literature as noted above. A.O. Sen also quotes: "The *Rajatarangini* gives 'Shantavasada - one whose lethargy has been controlled' — as one of his names, probably due to his untiring exertions in the service of Dharma and public welfare." It is clear that Sen also takes *Rajatarangini's* Ashoka to be Ashoka Maurya. This Kashmiri Ashoka is quite different from Ashoka Maurya who is the son of Bindusara and the grandson of Chandragupta Maurya who ascended the throne of Magadha with its capital at Pataliputra around 324 B.C.

### **The Piyadasi Inscription:**

The inscriptions prove that Ashoka Maurya had never embraced Buddhism.

There are two sets:

1. The principal rock edicts, two separate Kalinga edicts, seven pillar inscriptions and the Queen's edict
2. Minor rock edicts, minor pillar inscriptions and the Barabar cave inscriptions.

The first group is entirely non-Buddhist and positively general in character. The second unmistakably Buddhist, except the two minor pillar inscriptions as noted earlier. Otherwise these two sets have no connection with each other.

Even the scholars agree that the inscriptions do not prove that Maurya Ashoka had embraced Buddhism.

"We shall not treat of his public religion which he sought to present before his people negatively. We may say that it was to be identified with all of the

then prevailing faiths of country. It was certainly not Buddhism, his own religion".

"We here from him nothing concerning the deeper ideas or fundamental tenets of that faith, the chain of causation, the supernatural quality of Buddha, the world and the idea of difference which occupied several sects, are like-wise ignored."

"As also pointed out by Vincent Smith the zeal of Ashoka for Buddhism is proved, not by his presentation of Dharma, but by his reference to the Canon, by the cast of his language, by his Pilgrimages to Buddhist holy places and by his active control of Church i.e. by what does not appear in the principal edicts".

So if the principal edicts are not ascribed to Ashoka the Buddhist, there is nothing that is violated. Ashoka was a staunch missionary, as we get this image from Buddhist records. But he did not say a word about Buddhism in his major edicts. This is very strange indeed! There is not even a remote suggestion in these edicts that they are of Ashoka the Buddhist. One fails to understand as to why he did not use these public proclamations for a purpose so dear his heart?

Mankad has rightly observed, "Ashoka is known, from traditions, to have sent out missions to different countries for the propagation of Buddhism. Is it then believable that such a staunch Buddhist, who had been an active controller of his Church and an active missionary of his religion, should in the general broadcast (by means of these inscriptions) to his subjects and others, studiously avoid all references to Buddhism? To believe this is too great a strain on one's credulity."

Chandragupta Maurya had subjugated all regions upto Mysore. Ashoka had only added Kalinga to his empire. Kalinga was a small country. And yet it is stated in the edicts that in this war one lac men were killed, one and a half lacs were taken prisoners and many more had perished.

According to Ceylonese traditions, he had sent out missions to the following countries.

"Kashmir and Gandhar, Mahismandala (Mysore) Vanavasi (North Canara) Aparanta (North Bombay Coast) Maharatta (West Central India) Yona region (North-west provinces) Himavanta (Himalaya region) Suvar-nabhumi and Lanka (Ceylon)"

While XIII rock edict mentions the following regions to which such missions were sent.



"Yavana, Kamboja, Nabhaka Nabhampati, Bhoja, Pitnika, Andhra and Pulinda". North to his dominions are mentioned Antiochus and four Yavan -kings and to the south Pandya, Chola, Tamraparni. Here the location of the five Yavana kingdoms given is North, while, the Hellenist kings identified by the indologists are to the West of India.

This shows that the traditional list omits Antiochus and Hellenistic kings and Tamil Kingdoms while the edicts omit Himavanta, Suvarnabhumi and Lanka.

Rhys Davids, expresses the opinion "The story of the spread of Buddhism in Ashoka's time is better preserved in the Sinhalese Chronicles than in his edicts. They make no mention of any such missions to the Greek Kingdoms of the West.

V. Smith explains the absence of Hellenistic kings from the traditional list.

"The exclusion of the Hellenistic kingdoms from the Ceylon list is easily explained, when we remember that those kingdoms had ceased to exist centuries before that list was compiled". This is a very strange explanation coming from such an eminent historian. If the tradition has been handed down and noted in the list, how such an important omission can occur?

Again in the Ceylonese list of two thousand or more years ago Tamil kingdoms, are not noted. Smith explains it in a very funny manner. "The omission of the Tamil countries of the southern India may be ascribed to the secular hostility between the Sinhalese and the Tamils of the mainland, which naturally would indispose the oppressed Sinhalese to recognise the ancestors of their oppressors as having been brothers in faith". Here we have noted that the Ceylonese list gives us the tradition as handed down from generation to generation. Again this tradition is coming from many centuries before the recent hostilities between the Tamil and Sinhalese had begun. How could recent hostilities persuade the priests two thousand years ago to retaliate against their brothers in faith in this strange manner? This is to say the least the travesty of truth. The explanation is most irrational. The Puranas give the further information that this Candragupta Maurya helped by the Brahmin Kautilya, defeated the last of the Nandas and ruled Magadha for about 34 years. His regnal period given is 1534 B.C-1.500 B.C.

*"Candragupta nrpaṁ rājye kautilyah sthāpayisyati catustriṁśat samāh  
raja cahdragupto bhavisyati— Vayupuran 3-11-33.*

His son Bindusara would rule for 28 years, and Asoka, Bindusara's son will rule for 26 years. These three kings have ruled Magadha for 88 years (34 + 28 + 26) Some *Puranas* give the regnal periods of these three kings as 88 years

(24 + 28 + 36). Asoka is stated to have ruled for 36 years instead of 26 years and Chandragupta for 24 instead of 34 years, the total period remaining the same. These latter periods are acceptable to Huitzsch too. So the periods of these three Maurya kings would work out to:

1534 — 1510 B.C. — Chandragupta maurya

1510 — 1482 B C — Bindusara

1482 — 1446 B.C. — Ashoka

So almost at the end of Maurya Ashoka's regnal period, Kashmiri Ashoka's period began in 1448 B.C.

This Ashoka who embraced Buddhism appears to have engraved the Rupanath and the other allied minor rock inscriptions, the author of the major rock and pillar edicts being Ashoka of the Maurya Dynasty which ruled Magadha some 1500 years before Christ.

Because of the mistaken identity of Ashoka of Gonanda Dynasty of Kashmir with that of Maurya Ashoka that this big difference in Indian chronology has been caused by these Indologists. It is really very surprising that this vital point has been overlooked by these scholars. Asoka Maurya had waged war against the Kalingas. He was a very ambitious and powergulf king of Magadha and was the son of Bindusara and grandson of Cahdra-gupta of the Maurya Dynasty. Being moved by the massacre of great many innocent people during the Kalinga-war (the figure running into about 3 lacs or more), Ashoka decided to follow the path of peace and of winning others over to his side by morality. There was no question of his embracing Buddhism.

Kashmiri Ashoka on the other hand was a peaceful ruler and has embraced Buddhism during the fourth year of his reign. He had not fought any wars. On the other hand he had lost his kingdom, because of his innate pacifism. Can such king issue edicts to foreign kings hundreds of miles away from his borders to behave properly and treat his subjects with fatherly affection? Can anybody believe that a destitute king with no shelter for himself, issue such pontifical edicts? Would such an exhortation have any effect on the listeners? When he had no kingdom of his own could he appoint High Commissioners and direct them to supervise the execution of his commands by all of his officers in letter and spirit?

The Buddhist records are unreliable, because they had heard of Ashoka the son of Bindusanra the grandson of Chandragupta Maurya as a very powerful king, who had carved out rescripts on morality, and was talking of winning over

his subjects, by love rather than by his prowess. They took him to be a Buddhist. By doing so they became totally oblivious of the fact that there was another king Ashoka by name who was a Buddhist and that he was a Kashmiri.

The story about Ashoka in the earlier years being cruel and later on becoming pious is also the figment of imagination of these Buddhist chroniclers. We briefly note the account about this transformation from *Ashokavadan* — Story of Ashoka in Buddhist literature.

In *Ashokavadan*, there is a story of Canda Girika. 'He is specially selected by Ashoka to kill hundreds of innocent persons just for his sadistic pleasure. At the behest of this Girika, Ashoka erects a very beautiful palace of carnage. From its ornamental structure, a passerby was sure to be attracted towards it and enter it. Immediately on his entry, Girika would behead him. This way hundreds were killed everyday.

The editor of *Ashokavadan* is therefore constrained to conclude:

"This story must be read as a story and not as history - it is the tone of religious propaganda. Even the most cruel man in the world can be changed into a great compassionate one by the influence of Buddhism".

But this does not wash. For later on we are told that Ashoka after he was converted to Buddhism, ordered the killings of thousands of Ajiwakas (followers of Mahavira) for the simple reason that in one of the pictures displayed by the Ajiwakas, Buddha was shown as prostrating before his elder contemporary Mahavira. And this was not an isolated incident.

Again this chronicle (*Ashokavadana*) which is part of *Divyavadana* (a voluminous work on the life of Buddha) gives the genealogy of Ashoka thus: Ashoka will be born in Pataliputra 100 years after Buddha's nirvana. In Rajagriha, there will be Bimbisara — Ajatashatru — Udayi Munda — Kakavarni — Sahali — Kulkushi — Mahamandal — Prasenjita — Nanda — Bindusara — Susim — another, son was born to Bindusara from his brahmin queen and he was named Ashoka.

This genealogy is just a bunch of names taken from different dynasties. In this, Chandragupta Maurya is not shown at all. The Indologists accept Puranic genealogy as more or less correct. In it we get Bimbisar — Udayana — Nandiwardhana — Mahanandi — Mahapadma Nanda — his eight successors — Chandragupta — Bindusara-Ashoka.

It will be seen that there is no rhyme or reason in naming some kings as Ashoka's predecessors, in the Buddhist Chronicle.

Again this chronicle states '*yada pusyamitra raja praghatitastada mauryavamsah samuchinnah* — when the king Pushyamitra was killed, Maurya dynasty came to an end. Here Pushyamitra of Shunga dynasty is shown as the last of the Maurya. The *Puranas* state that this Pushyamitra was the commander of the last Maurya king who was weak and was given to wine and women. Pushyamitra therefore killed the last Maurya King and himself ascended the imperial throne.

This story does not mention Kalinga war at all.

*Mahavamsa* (VI-24) states that when Ashoka was just 25 years old, he embraced Buddhism, while (VII-27) at another place it is stated Ashoka was crowned king when he was 54 years old. It would mean that he became king 29 years after he had embraced Buddhism.

*Dipavamsa* deals with the theme of the conquest of Lanka both politically and culturally by the Buddhists. Law says "This chronicle, however, contains germs of historical truth buried deep under a mesh of absurd fables and marvellous tales".

It is stated in *Dipavamsa* (VI-1) that Ashoka was crowned king 218 years after Buddha's Nirvana. We have seen earlier that *Ashokavadana* tells us that this event took place 100 years after Buddha's Nirvana. So also according to this chronicle, Ashoka embraced Buddhism three years after his coronation. It also records that Ashoka killed his 100 brothers and became king. There are many absurdities such as his son being 14 years of age when Ashoka became ruler at his age of 20.

From such an unreliable chronicle the Indologists deduce that from distant Ceylon, the chroniclers had heard of the contemporaries of the exalted Buddha and of King Ashoka who had embraced Buddhism. Not knowing that this Ashoka was from Kashmira, they have given the genealogy of Ashoka Maurya in the Imperial line of the kings of Bharata who ruled from Magandha. And this also is done in a slipshod manner without mentioning Chandragupta the founder of the Maurya Dynasty.

No Buddhist chronicle says one word about Kalinga war or Ashoka's repentance. Yet it is blindly asserted that Ashoka was very cruel first and remained cruel even after embracing Buddhism.

It was the king Maurya Chandragupta, who had followed a moral path and was very well disposed to his subjects. His son Bindusara and the grandson Ashoka had expanded their domains and had run the Empire efficiently, and had

followed the lead given by the founder of the Maurya Dynasty. This was not the case with Chandragupta, the founder of the Gupta Dynasty.

### **1.6 Who was this Sandrocottus:**

The Greek historians talk of Sandrocottus and his connection with Alexander. From the accounts of Sandrocottus given by the Greek historians, it becomes obvious that Chandragupta the founder of the Gupta Dynasty, has been referred to as Sandrocottus. We shall briefly advert to his account.

This Chandragupta was the commander of the army of the Andhra king Chandrashri Shatakami. It is also stated that he was the brother-in-law of the king (*rastriya śālaka*). This king's minor son Puloma III was under the care of this Chandragupta who under some pretext and with the connivance of the king's wife (Chandragupta's sister-in-law) had got rid of the king Chandrasri and installed the king's son Puloma III — a minor, on the throne of Magadha.

Chandragupta later on got rid of this minor son also and proclaimed himself the king of Magadha in 327 B.C. and shifted the capital of his empire from Girivarja to Pataliputra. As Chandragupta-I was the usurper of the throne of his Andhra master, he became very unpopular and the Empire became fragmented and he could not establish his sway over large parts of the original Empire. He was controlling Pataliputra and the areas around and was constantly engaged in warfare to establish his suzerainty over the parts of the Andhra (Indian) Empire. He assumed the title of Maharajadhiraj and also styled himself Vijayaditya. His son Samudragupta proved to be very valorous and brought the whole of Bharat under his control.

In the Allahabad pillar edict, Samundragupta's minister Harisen describes him as '*Parākramārik*'— the valour incarnate'. He had subjugated the countries of Koslamahakantar ..... (wild tracts of Madhya Pradesh including portion of Ganjam and Vishakhapattanam in the modern Andhra Pradesh).

He had conquered Mantaraja of Kerala, Mahendra of Pishtapur i.e. Kalinga, Swamidatta of Kottura, Damana of Brandpalle, Vishnugopa of Kanchipura. He had also brought under his control Devarashtra in Maharashtra and in fact the whole of Dakshinapatha. He had overthrown Devaputras, Shahi, Shahanushahis, Shakas, Marundas, Yavanas and the people of Simhala and all other dwellers in the islands.

Except Nepal, he was the overlord of the whole of India including the eastern regions of Kamarupa. V. A. Smith, describes him as 'Indian Napoleon'. — He writes "By a strange irony of fate this great king — warrior, poet and musician - who conquered nearly all India and whose alliance extended from the Oxus to Ceylon, was unknown even by name to the historians of India. His lost fame has been slowly recovered by the minute and laborious study of inscriptions and coins during the last 70 years, and the fact that it is now possible to write a long narrative of the events of his memorable reign is perhaps the most conspicuous illustration of the success gained by patent archaeological research in piecing together the fragments from which alone the chart of the authentic early history of India can be constructed".

V. A. Smith's statement is not entirely true. *Kali-yuga Rājavrttānta* — Dynasties of Kaliyuga is just a part of a Purana. It gives this account about Samudragupta.

Such is the historical tradition handed down to us by the *Puranas* and the *Itihasas*. This same historian, at other place — the Early History of India — has this to say about the authority of our Puranas:

"The most systematic record of Indian Historical tradition is that preserved in the dynastic lists of the Puranas, five out of the eighteen works of this class, namely the Vayu, Matsya, Vishnu, Brahmanda and Bhagavata contain such lists".

But he complains. "Modern European writers have been inclined to disparage unduly the authority of the puranic lists, but closer study finds in them much genuine and venerable, inexhaustible historical tradition".

As noted earlier, the author of Arthashastra is Kautilya or Arya Chanakya who was instrumental in toppling the Nandas and installing Chandragupta Maurya in their place. According to the Puranas this event took place in 336 B.C. But the Western Indologists have declared this Maurya as contemporary of Alexander and thus advanced his date to about 326 B.C. from 336 B.C. This is done, on the assumption that out of 'Xandramas, Sandracottus, and Sandrocyptus', the three successive kings mentioned by the Greek historians who accompanied Alexander, Sandracottus was 'Chandragupta Maurya'.

It was William Jones, the father of Indology who first made this identification. He just found that the two words make similar sounds, and so declared as such. It will be seen that this identification had no basis in fact. The name Xandramas, can by no means square up with Chandragupta Maurya's father — Dhanananda who was also called Mahapadmananda or Sandrocyptus with his son Bindusara. But Xandramas and Gupta Chandragupta's king and brother-in-

law Chandrabija or Chandrashri have similar sounds, In the same way 'Sandrocyptus and Samudragupta' make similar sounds. So this should have been the natural identification. But Max Muller later on in 1859 boldly concluded that Sandrocottus and Sandrocyptus refer to one and the same king and that king is Chandragupta Maurya. He was well aware that this identification was opposed to all Hindu, Buddhistic and Jaina traditions and authorities. He says, "Every attempt to go beyond and to bring the chronology of the Buddhists and Brahmanas into harmony has proved a failure"

He was aware that this identification was unwarranted by any Buddhist or Puranic account. He notes, "although other scholars, and particularly M. Troyer, in his edition of Rajatarangini, have raised objections, we shall see that the evidence in favour of the identity of Chandragupta and Sandrocyptus is such as to admit of no reasonable doubt".

He knew full well that Xandramas cannot be Nanda — the father of Chandragupta Maurya nor can Sandrocyptus be Bindusar the son of Chandragupta Maurya, yet he ignored these difficulties and boldly pronounced the contemporaneity of Alexander with Chandragupta Maurya and held it as 'the sheet anchor of Indian Chronology'.

In this attempt he even ignored the fact that there were, two kings 'Sandrocottus' and 'Sandrocyptus' mentioned by the Greek historians. He just stated that 'Sandrocottus is Chandragupta Maurya' and did not give any explanation for ignoring 'Sandrocyptus' the other king. It is noteworthy that the Greek account does not mention Kautilya who managed to install Chandragupta Maurya on the Imperial throne of Magadha. It is possible to settle this issue on the basis of Greek and Puranic evidence about Sandrocottus, Chandragupta Maurya and the Guptas. Determination of the date of Gautama Buddha is also a crucial factor in this respect.

## **1.7 Date of Buddha:**

For determining the date of Buddha, we shall have to refer to the genealogical lists of the kings of different dynasties as given in the Puranas. We have already seen that the date of Bharata War is 8th October 3139 B.C. and Yudhishthira was crowned king at Hastinapura on 17<sup>th</sup> December 3139 B.C. For the sake of convenience of calculations we take 3138 B.C. as the year of Mahabharata war and the year of coronation of Yudhishthira, the year which immediately succeeded the actual dates of these important events in the history

of Ancient India. After the coronation of Yudhishtira, just in a matter of a few days the year 3138 B.C. has been ushered in and so this year has been considered as the basis for the purpose of calculation of the years of later kings of different dynasties.

After Yudhishtira gave up his throne in the year 3101 B.C. (the exact date may be just after 20<sup>th</sup> Feb. 3102 the date on which the Kaliyuga was ushered in.) Parikshita the grandson of Arjuna, the Pandava-hero, was crowned king. He ruled for 60 years and after his death, his son Janmejaya succeeded him. This dynasty is known as the Paurava dynasty, from Pururava the son of Ila - the daughter of Manu - the first postglacial - epoch-king of Bharata.

There were three well-known dynasties ruling in the North India then. The first is Suryavamshi dynasty of Ikshwaku, also a son of Manu. The capital of this dynasty was Ayodhya. The second is Paurava dynasty noted above. The third is Kashi-dynasty, a branch of Paurava dynasty, separated from its main stock after Nahusha (the third king from Pururava.) This third dynasty assumed great importance in post Mahabharata-era. It was having its Capital at Kashi (Varanasi) but this capital was shifted to Girivraj in the province of Magadh? — modern Bihar, by Shishunaga, founder of the dynasty of the same name.

The following are the genealogical lists of the kings of these three dynasties, as given, in the *Matsya purana*. These lists are more or less common to *Vayu*, *Matsya*, *Bhagawata*, *Brahmanda*, *Vishnu* and *Bhavishya Puranas*. These lists have now been recognised as valid (especially after Pargiter). Jayaswal one of the prominent Indologists has also taken great pains to collect these lists.

## 1.8 Paurava Dynasty:

*Vishnu purana* states that Parikshita is the present ruler. After Parikshita, his son Janmejaya came to the throne of Hastinapura. Thereafter came Shatanik Ashwamedha Datta, Adhisimkrishna and Nichakshu, in that order. In Nichakshu's time Hastinapura was ravaged by heavy floods of the river Ganga. This king shifted his capital from Hastinapura to Kaushambi. As Nichakshu is 6th in the line, these floods must have occurred around 2800 B.C. i.e. after about three hundred years from the coronation of Parikshita in the year 3101 B.C. This period has been exactly worked out later.

It was during Parikshita's reign that the compilation of the *Puranas* seems to have started. *Vayupurana* states that the present ruler is Adhisimkrishna.



The compilation of the *Vayu Purana* appears to have been started in this King's reign.

After Nichakshu, came — Bhuri — Chitraratha — Shuchidratha — Vra-shnimana — Sushena — Sunitha — Rucha — Nrichaksu — Sukhibala — Pariplava — Sunaya — Medhavi — Nripanjaya — Durva — Tigmatma — Brihadratha — Vasudana — Shatanika — Udayana.

This Udayana is the hero around whom many stories are woven. Kalidasa the poet laureate in his famous poetical work *Meghaduta* notes that even today the elderly tell their grand children the romantic stories of this very brave king, as if his rule had just ended. He appears to be the contemporary of Pradyota, about whom mention will be made under the list of kings from Magadha.

After Udayana came Vahinara — Dandapani — Niramitra and the last was Kshemaka.

After the last king Kshemaka, this dynasty came to a close. Probably its kingdom of Kaushmabi was merged thereafter in the more famous dynasty ruling at Girivaraja in Magadh.

In all 24 kings after Parikshita are listed under this dyansty.

### **1.9 Suryavamshi Dynasty of Ikshwaku:**

After Brihatabal the king who was killed in the Bharata war, came Brihatkshaya — Urikshaya — Vatsa Vyuha — Prativyoma — Diwakara. This last named was the king during whose regime *Vayu-Purana* is stated to have been compiled. He appears to be the contemporary of Adhisim-Krishna of the Paurava dynasty.

Thereafter came Sahadeva—Brihadashwa—Bhanuratha—Pratitashwa—Supratika — Marudeo — Sunakshatra — Kinnarashwa — Antariksha — Sushena — Sumitra — Brihadbhraj — Dharmi — Kritanjaya — Rananjaya — Sanjaya — Shakya — Shudhodana — Siddhartha — Rahuf — Prasenjita — Kshudraka — Kulaka — Suratha — Sumitra.

This dynasty also comes to an end with Sumitra — In all 30 kings of this dyansty ruled from Ayodhya — 24th king of this dyansty was Siddharatha — the *Buddha Gautama*. But actually he was not crowned king as he went into voluntary exile and subsequently came to be known as Bhagawana Buddha—the enlightened one.

### 1.10 Magadha Emperors:

Before turning to the point of Buddha's date, let us note the list of Magadha kings who were King Emperors of India for about 2000 years i.e. from around 2100 B.C. to 82 B.C.

The first dynasty of these Magadha-kings is known as Bārhadratha dynasty named after a famous king of Magadha a few centuries before the Bharata war. He was the son of Uparichar Vasu.

Sahadeo, the son of Jarasandha, the tormentor of Mathura was killed in Bharata war. He is also known as Brihadratha-II (He ruled for 58 yrs). After him, came Somadhi with his capital at Girivaraja. He ruled for 58 years. The regnal periods of these kings are given in *Vayu purana* thus: 1. Somadhi — 58, (2) Shrutashrava — 64, (3) Ayutayu — (he is called Apratip in *Matsya purana* the, regnal period given is 36 years) 36, (4) Naramitra, 40 (5) Sukshetra 58, (6) Brihatkarma 23 and (7) Senajita 50.

It is stated that during the reign of Senajita, *Vayu purana* was being compiled. So this king's coronation took place 279 years ( $58 + 64 + 36 + 40 + 58 + 23 = 279$  years) after the Bharata war i.e. in 2859 B.C. (3138 -279). He appears to be the contemporary of Adhisima-Krishna, - the Paurya king ruling from Hastinapura.

After Senajita, came Shrutanjaya (40) (in bracket are given the regnal years of each king according to Vayu purana) Vibhu (35), Shuchi (58), Kshema (83), Vishwajita (35) Ripunjaya (50)

All the *puranas* concur that in all 22 kings of this dynasty have ruled over Magadha for about 1000 years. This is a round figure. If we take the correct readings, from different *puranas* it works out to 1006 years. This first dynasty after the Bharata war thus ended in 2132 B.C. (3138 — 1006)

After the eclipse of the influence of the Paurava and the Ikshawaku dynasties, this Magadha dynasty became all powerful and Magadha kings came to be recognised as the Emperors of Bharata-Varsha.

*Vishnu —Purana* notes:

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**"Yah ayam ripunjayo nama barhadratho antyah tasya amatyah  
sunikahnama bhavisyati**

**saca eva svaminam hatva svaputram pradyota-hamanam  
abhiseksyati**

**— (4.24-1-2).**

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— Sunika was the minister of this last of the Bahradrathas, by name Ripunjaya. This minister killed the king and coronated his son Pradyota as the king of Magadha with its capital at Girivraja". This Pradyota proved to be a very powerful king and subdued the other kings. The *Puranas* state that at Avanti (Ujjain) there was another well known dynasty known as Vitihotras. That was also subjugated by Pradyota. The kings after him are known as the kings of Pradyota dynasty. They are Pradyota, Palaka, Vishakhayupa, Suryaka, Nandi Vardhana. This dynasty ruled Magadha for 138 years, i.e. upto 1994 B.C. (21.32-1.38)

During the overlordship of the Magadha Emperor, Nandivardhana the last king of the Pradyota dynasty, Shishunaga was the governor of Kashi, one of the provinces of the Empire. Seeing turmoil in the capital at Girivraja, Shishunaga rushed to it with his army, removed the Emperor and installed himself in his place and appointed his son as Governor of Kashi, *Matsya Purana* tells us:

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***"Hatva tesam yasah krtsnam sisunago bhavisyati Varanasyam  
sutam sthapyasrayisyati girivrajam"***

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— After degrading the valour of the last king of the dynasty, Shishunaga will come on the scene and place his son at Varanasi and himself assume charge of Girivraja". This dynasty is known as Shishunga. (In the *purana* it is usual to narrate past events in the future tense).

After Shishunaga comes Kakavama — Kshemadharma — Kshatroja — Bimbisara — Ajatashatru — Darshaka — Udayan — Nandivardhana — Mahanandi. These ten kings of Shishunga dynasty ruled for 360 years according to *Vayu* and *Vishnu Puranas*.

It is stated that the king Udayan of this dynasty will establish a magnificent city named Kusumpura on the south bank of the river Ganga in the fourth year of his reign. This city known as Pataliputra is modern Patna.

Some Puranas give the name of Bimbisara as Vidhisara.

This dynasty thus ended in 1634 B.C. (1994-360). This is also directly confirmed by a statement in *Vishnu Purana* that from the birth of king Parikshita to the date of coronation of the king Nanda of the same dynasty, next after the Shishunaga 1500 years have elapsed.

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***"Yavat parikshito janma yavat nandabhisecanam  
etad varsa-sahasram tu jneyam pancasatottaram"***  
**4-24-104**

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Pargiter reads *pancasatottaram*, in preference to '*pancasatottaram*' which gives the figure of 1050 years instead of 1500 years if former reading is preferred. In an obvious attempt to cut down the Indian Chronology by about 500 years, Pargiter has just changed 'a' in the word *panca* to 'ā'. This is unwarranted. Moreover, even according to the individual regnal years, of different kings as well as the number of years of each dynasty, the figure works out to 1,500 and not to 1050. So the Shishunaga dynasty ended in 1638 B.C. (3138 - 1500). The figure 1500 is just a round figure and hence the difference of 4 years i.e. 1638 instead of the actual figure of 1634.

From the list of *Ikshwaku* dynasty it is seen that Siddhartha who became Buddha later on, was the 24th in line from Brihatbala the king of this dynasty, who was killed in Bharata war. The Buddhist scriptures also confirm that Buddha was the son of Shuddhodana, the 23rd king in line of this dynasty.

When the world honoured Shakyā muni was about to attain perfect wisdom, the Devas sang in the sky. "The son of Shuddhodana having quitted his family and studied the path (of wisdom) will now in seven days become Buddha. The Pratyeka Buddha heard their words and immediately attained Nirvana". This shows that the path-of-pacifism preached by Buddha was - a time honoured path of India since time immemorial. But when the religion in the name of Buddha was established by his followers, a separate identity was bestowed upon this (pacifism) as if it was preached by Gautama Buddha for the first time in India. So the earlier preachers of this line, were called pratyeka (every) Buddha and when these earlier ones found that another enlightened one has descended to this earth to perpetuate their preachings in a more systematic, rigorous and sustained way, they attained peace .i.e. Nirvana. This is what is meant by "Pratyeka Buddha attained nirvana".

So Buddha the enlightened one is the son of Shud dhodana the 23rd king of the Ikshvaku dynasty, Rahul the 25th in the line of that dynasty is the son of this Buddha.

We further know from Buddhist accounts that "When Ajatashtru came to the throne (of Magadha) Gautama (Buddha) was seventy two years old, but his genius still shone bright and clear".

We have seen earlier that Ajatashatru is the son of Bimbisara and grandson of Kshatroja (Kshemajita in some *puranas*) the fourth in line of the Shishunga dynasty. Shishunaga came to the throne of Magadha in 1994 B.C., wiping out the glory of his master Mahanandi. The years of this dynasty are as follows:

(1) Shishunaga — 40 years, (2) Kakavama — 36 years, (3) Kshemadharman — 26 years. (4) Kshatroja or Kshemajita — 40 years (5) Bimbisara — 38 years, (6) Ajatashatru — 27 years, (7) Darshaka — 35 years. (8) Udayana - 33 years (9) Nandivardhana — 42 years, (10) Mahanandi — 43 years.

This total works out to 360 years. Some puranas give the total period of this dynasty, as 362 years, but they do not give separate regnal years of different kings of this dynasty. Following the majority of the *puranas* which give the total of 360 years for this dynasty, the regnal years of different kings have been worked out by adopting such figures from the *puranas* which give this total of 360 years.

One has to follow some such line as the manuscripts of the *puranas* have come down to us from about 5000 years i.e. from the beginning of the Kali-era. Additions have been made to these from time to time when the Puranas were revised under different dynasties that ruled Bharata since the advent of the Kali-era. Moreover, as these were hand-written and were copied later on, scribal errors have also crept in them. What is important is that, inspite of all these difficulties there is a unique consistency amongst them. The names of kings and their dynasties and their regnal years remarkably agree with a few exceptions here and there. These discrepancies are also minor and can easily be ascribed to the copyists.

### **Conclusion about the Date of Buddha**

We have now the clear information that when Ajatashatru, 6th in line from Shishunaga who founded the dynasty, was crowned king, Buddha was seventy two years old. Before Ajatashatru, the five kings of this dynasty had together ruled for 180 years. This dynasty was founded in 1994 B.C. 1814 B.C. (1994-180) was therefore the last year of Bimbisara's rule and his son *Ajastashatru* was coronated in 1813 B.C. Buddha was 72 years old then. The year of his birth thus works out to 1885 B.C. (1813 + 72). The Buddhist works also say that he lived for 80 years. The date of his Nirvana would, therefore, work out to 1805 B.C (1885-80). Some scholars give this date as 1887-1807

B.C. This is due to a discrepancy of 2 years in calculating this dynasty's total regnal years at 362 instead of 360.

When this is the clear and conclusive testimony of the *Puranas* about Buddha's date, Indologists have confused the issue beyond all imagination by rejecting this unimpeachable evidence. The unanimity of all the *Puranas* on this issue has been sacrificed at the altar of whims and fancies, conjectures and hallucinations of these Indologists. The date of Buddha is thus clearly and conclusively established.

### 1.11 Nanda Dynasty:

The chronology of the other dynasties succeeding the Shishunaga, may now be traced

The *Vishnu Purana* says:

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***Mahānandīnah tatah śudragarthodbhavo atilubdhō atibalo***

***Mahāpadmo naṇḍa namā paraśurāmah iva aparāḥ  
akhilakṣaṭṭantakari bhaviṣyati (4-24-20)***

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— Mahapadma Nanda the son of Mahanadi-the last king of the Shishunaga dynasty-from his shudra wife will succeed him (his father). He will be very avaricious, mighty, and like Parashurama will wipe out all the Kshatriyas from the land".

The other *Puranas* repeat this story in more or less the same strain. The *Puranas* state that he and his eight sons were the rulers of this land for 100 years.

So this Nanda dynasty's rule was from 1634 B.C. to 1534 B.C. *Vishnu-Purana* continues the further account thus:

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**"Mahāpadmah tatputraḥ ca ekaṃ varṣaśataṃ avanipatayah**

**Bhavisyaṃti**

**Tataśca nava etān naṇḍān kautityo brāhmanah samuddharisyati**  
**(4-24-26)**

**Kautilyah eva Caṇdraguptm utpannam rājye abhiṣecyati**  
**(4-24-28)**

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— *Mahāpadma (his regnal years are stated to be 58 years by Vayu and Bhagawata puranas) and his eight sons will be the rulers of this land for 100 years. A brahmin by name Kautilya will topple these nine Nandas and in their place he will coronate Chandragupta". Shridhar Swami, a commentator gives his connotation of the word "utpannam, as Nandasya evabharyāyām murā-saṅjāyām saṅjātam iti.*

—This Chandragupta is born to Mura the wife of Mahapadma-Nanda. It is not stated that she is a *shudra*. But the king Chandragupta and his successors are called Mauryas to distinguish them from the eight Nanda kings who were also the sons of Mahapadma-Nanda, but were apparently from his other wife or wives.

It has to be pointed out here that Mura was not a maid or a shudra woman. From the above quotation, it is clear that she was a Kshatriya and a lawfully wedded wife of the king Mahapadmananda.

### **1.12 Maurya Dynasty:**

There appears to be some confusion regarding the number of kings of the Maurya dynasty and their regnal years. But the majority of the *Puranas* state that 12 kings of this dynasty ruled for 137 years. But this figure of 137 does not tally with the total of actual regnal years allotted separately for each king.

For example, *Vayu Parana* mentions that 9 kings of this dynasty ruled for 137 years. But according to another version of the same *Purana* the number of kings and their regnal periods given for each king are as follows:

(1) Chandragupta — 24 years, (2) Nandasara (some other puranas give this name as Bhadrasara, few others give this name as Bindusara) 28 years.

(3) Ashoka — 36 years, (4) Kulal or Kunal (or Suparshva or Suyasha) 8 years, (5) Bandhupalita (or Dasharatha) 18 years, (6) Dashona 7 years, (7) Dasharatha 8 years, (8) Samprati 9 years (9) Shalishuka 13 years, (10) Devadharma 7 years, (11) Shatadharma 8 years, (12) Brihadratha 70 years.

These 12 kings have ruled for 226 years according to the version of *Vayupurana* as given in *Prachina Maharastra*.

But the name Dashona is not found in any other Purana. The actual words are '*daśonah sapta varṣāṇi*'. The other version of this *Vayupurana* gives the reading '*daśamān indrapālitaḥ*', i.e. Indrapālita, ten years. Yet another version states '*daśasapteṇḍrapalitah*' Indrapālita for 70 years.

Similarly this version notes:—

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**"*Candraguptam nrpṁ rājye Kautilyah sthāpayiṣyati caturviṁśat samāh rājā Caṇdragupta bhaviṣyati*"**

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— Kautilya will enthrone Chandragupta who will rule for 24 years" Here '*caturviṁśat*' is not a correct reading, it would either be '*caturvimsatih*' or '*catuṣṭriṁśat*'. The latter would correctly fit in the metre of the verse. Chandragupta appears to have actually ruled for 34 years instead of 24 years, as stated in the above quotation.

Thus the names and regnal periods of the Maurya dynasty would be as follows:

(1) Chandragupta — 34 years, (2) Bindusara — 28 years, according to *Mahavamsha*, *Matsya Purana* etc), (3) Ashoka — 36 years, (4) Suyasha 8 years, (5) Dashratha or Bandhupalita 8 years, (6) Indrapalita 70 years — (according to *Mastya*, *Brahmanda Puranas*), (7) Harsha 8 years, (8) Sangati or Samprati 9 years, (9) Shalishuka 13 years, (1.0) Somasharma or Devadharma 7 years, (11) Shatadhanva 8 years (12) Brihddratha 87 years (according to *Brahmanda*, *Vayu puranas*).

The total works out to 316 years. So this dynasty ruled Magadha Empire from 1534 — 1218 B.C. for 316 years.

Miss C. Mabel Duff in her table of the Maurya Dynasty appended to her chronology of India refers to one version of *Brahmanda purana*, which gives the regnal years of each of these kings as noted above, except that it omits Indrapalita altogether and gives 24 years to Chandragupta and 25 years to Bindusara.



This chronology has been followed in '*History of Sanskrit Literature*' by M. Krishnamachari.

*Vishnupurana* says:

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***Teṣāṃ ante pṛthivīm daśa suṅgāḥ bhoksyanti (4-24-33).  
pusyamitraḥ senāpātiḥ svamināṃ hatvā rājyaṃ kariṣyati  
(4-24-34)  
tasya ātmajāḥ agnimitraḥ.***

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— Ten kings of Shunga dynasty will rule the land after the Mauryas.

Pushyamitra the commander-in-chief of the last of the Mauryas will kill his master and will assume kingship. His son Agnimitra will reign after him".

This *Parana* gives the names of the kings thereafter as — Sujyestha, Vasumitra, Udanka, Pulindaka, Ghoshavas, Vajramitra, Bhagavata, Devabhuti. This list requires a minor correction. Kalidasa-the *court-poet* of Agnimitra mentions Vasumitra as the son of Agnimitra. Whereas, the list gives the name Sujyestha as Vasumitra's predecessor. The names in the other *Puranas* are also a little different. In the place of Udanka we get Bhadraka or Andhraka. There are also similar other differences in the particulars of this dynasty which ruled Magadha.

*Vishnu Purana* along with a few other *Puranas* gives the total of regnal years of this dynasty as 137 years. But *Matsya Purana*, the list in which is incomplete gives 300 years as this total. It notes —

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***"Daśaite kṣudrārajāno bhoksyanti imāṃ vasuṇḍharām śatam  
purṇaṃśate dveṇa tataḥ suṅgan gamiṣyati  
(270—32)"***

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— Obviously, 'ksudrārajānaḥ' is a mistake for Śuṅgarājānaḥ'. Similarly, instead of 'Suṅgan' the word should be 'Kaṇvān'. For the next verse notes —

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***"Amātyo Vāsudevastu prasahya hi avaniṃ nṛpāḥ.  
Devabhumim atha utsāḍya Kaṇva tu bhavitā dvyah  
(270-33)***

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— the minister Vāsudeo who was a brahmin of Kanva gotra removed the king Devabhumi and installed himself as the King of this land".

This way the earlier verse notes that the Shunga dyansty ruled for the total of 300 years.

On a careful scrutiny of the Puranas the individual regnal periods can be ascertained as under:

(1) The old and decrepit king Brihadratha, the last of the Mauryas was removed by his commander-in-chief Pushyamitra who proclaimed himself as king of Magadha. Pushyamitra performed Ashwamedha sacrifices. He ruled for 60 years. (2) Agnimitra who succeeded him ruled for 50 years. (3) Vasumitra, his brave son ruled for 36 years. (4) Suhyashtha 17 years, (5) Bhadraka 30 years, (6) Pulindaka 33 years, (7) Ghoshavasu 3 years, (8) Vajramitra 29 years, (9) Bhagavata 32 years, (10) Devabhuti or Devabhumi 10 years.

The total regnal years of this dynasty thus work out to 300 years. This dynasty's rule started in 1218 B.C. and came to an end 300 years later i.e. in 918 B.C.

The last king Devabhumi of the Shunga dynasty, was given to wine and women since his boyhood and as stated earlier was removed by his minister Vasudeo, a Kanva Brahmin. The Shungas were also brahmins. They belonged to Samaveda school.

### 1.13 Kanva Dynasty:

*Vishnu-Purana* tells us that there were four kings of this Kanva dynasty. They are: (1) Vasudeo (2) Bhumi mitra, (3) Narayana (4) Susharma. The total of regnal years of this dynasty is given as 45 —

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***"Kanvayanaḥ catvāraḥ pañcatvarīṃśat varṣāṇi bhupatayah bhaviṣyanti" (4-24-42)***

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But there is yet another version of this:

"ete catvāriṃśat Kaṇvāyanaḥ catvāraḥ pañcatvarīṃśat varsani bhaviṣyanti".

Miss C. Mabel Duff takes this reading and states that this dynasty ruled for 40 years. She altogether ignores Pañcatvāriṃśat' i.e. 45 years. What this verse means is that this dyansty ruled for 85 years (40 + 45).

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***Bhagāwata Purāṇa which follows Vishnu, has this verse:***

***"kaṇvāyanaḥ ime bhūmīm catvārīṃśat ca pañca ca śatani triṇi Bhokṣyānti varṣāṇām ca kalau yuge" (1-1-21).***

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There is some mistake here. The second line would mean that the Kanva dynasty will rule for 345 years 45 + 300. This is absurd. *Padaratnavali* a commentary on the *Bhagawata Purana* therefore omits the second line and substitutes the following:

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***"catvārīṃśat ca bhokṣyānti varṣāṇām ca kalau yuge—***

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and would further rule this land in Kaliyuga, for another forty years". This would show that *Bhagawata Purana* gives this dynasty 85 (45 + 40) years of regnal period. The second line mentioning 300 years appears to be misplaced here. This 300 years of regnal period is obviously that of the predecessor dynasty of the Shungas.

*Matsya Purana* gives the total period of the reigns of the kings of this dynasty as 85 years and further eulogises their virtuosity. They were respected

by the neighbouring kings. After them came the Andhras to rule this land. The verse in *Matsya Purana* which records this runs thus:

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***"ete pranata sāmāntāḥ bhaviṣyanti sudhārmikāḥ  
Teṣāṃ paryāya kāle tu bhūmiḥ Aṇḍhrān gamisyati"***

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The regnal periods of the different kings of this dynasty are: (1) Vasudeo 39 years, (2) Bhumimitra 24 years, (3) Narayana 1.2 years and (4) Susharma 1.0 years.

The *Kaliyuga Raja Vrittanta* (KRV) gives separate regnal periods of these 4 kings and further states that, the commander-in-chief of Susharma the Kanva king, kills his master and coronates himself. He is of the Shatavahana dynasty, named Simhaka or Shimuka Svatikami. The Shungas were also having sway elsewhere, while Kanvas were ruling Magadh. After overpowering these Shungas, Shimuka joins that kingdom also to his Magadh Empire. So the Kanvas ruled from 918 BC to 833 BC.

This KRV, a short Purana stated to be a part of *Bhavishyottara purana*, is a very useful reference book, reconciling as it does the varying versions in different *puranas* and evolving a consistent account of all the kings from the end of the Bharata war. This is based on the maximum measure of agreement in the different *puranas*.

## Is KRV genuine?

Before however, we detail here the dynastic lists of the Andhras and their successors - the Andhra - Bhrityas alias Guptas. we shall refer here to a controversy about the genuineness of this KRV.

R.C. Mazumdar, dubs KRV as a forged document, on the ground of fullness of details and the very close agreement many of them have with the data furnished by the coins and inscriptions of the Guptas such as we do not find in the *Puranas* with regard to any other dynasty. On the face of it this ground is untenable in as much as the Puranic account or the accounts in KRV are expected to tally with the inscriptional or numismatic accounts. The source of both is the same, namely the court records of particular kings. We have seen earlier that every king used to maintain one special officer for recording the details of his regime.

In fact, if these two versions do not tally, then alone, the question would arise, as to which account is at great variance with that in KRV? If these two cannot be easily reconciled, then we would be within our rights to say that KRV does not appear to be a genuine one and may be a forged one. We shall then have to investigate who forged it and what was the purpose of such a forgery?

We have already seen that different puranic accounts have to be reconciled and great research has to be made before a mutually consistent account from these different versions of different *puranas* can be collected. Differences have to be explained, and contradictions reconciled in order to evolve a consistent account of our ancient history based on a maximum measure of agreement amongst them all. This is what the author of KRV has done. While reading the different *puranas*, he must have also been faced with the different and mutually inconsistent readings and scribal errors or omissions. After delving deep into different versions of different *Puranas* the author brought out his research-work entitled KRV.

It does not behove a scholar of such eminence as R.C. Mazumdar to doubt such a genuine document as, a modern forgery on the ground that it goes counter to the theories these scholars accept and propound. As K. Venkatachellam has pointed out, fresh numismatic evidence found after its first publication, has proved the genuineness of KRV.

K. Venkatachellam has quoted the following verse from KRV.

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***"Aṣṭaviṃśati varṣāni Sakaseno bhaviṣyati yamāhuḥ  
Mādhariputraṁ sivasvātīm mahājanāḥ.***

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- He who was known as 'Shivaswati' or 'Madhariputra' to the learned people was 'Shakasena'. This Shakasena ruled for 28 years".

In 1940 A.D., V.V. Mirashi of Nagpur University states "that there was an alternative name 'Shri Śaka Sātakarni', for king (of the name) 'Siva-Swati' was not known to us, till the discovery of this treasure trove" (1525 coins of the Satavahana kings discovered in the Akola district-Maharashtra). He further observes, "The name 'Saka-Satakarni' is not found in any of the puranas. In the Kaliyuga Rāja Vrittānta published by Shri T.S. Narayana Shastry more than 25 years before the discovery of this treasure trove, we find the two other names of 'Siva-Swāti' namely, 'ŚakaSena' and 'Mādhari-putra'. So the KRV published by T.S. Narayana Shastry could not be a fabrication. He must be in possession of the very ancient treatise", (p. 85 of Part II of the Journal of Numismatic Society of India)

Mirashi describes the coins thus: "on these seals we find 'saka' or (Sakas) Saatakanisa'. We have to examine the relation between these seals and the seals bearing the names, 'Mādhari-putra', 'Śivalakura'. On the seals 'saka Sātakarni" we find the figure of the elephant usually found on the Satavahana seals"

A line 'Mādhari-putra' 'Śirivīra', 'Purisadata' is also found in the stone inscription 1202-4 Luder's list. A seal bearing the device 'Madhariputra Sivalakura has also been discovered. On this device, the device of 'Goutamiputra' is also found. So, according to both Luder's list and KRV. The names 'Sivasatakarni — Sakasatakarni — Madhariputra' are the other names of Shivaswati. And Goutamiputra was his son and successor.

According to Mazumdar the following are the obvious inaccuracies in the KRV:

(1) It regards Samudragupta as a parricide, although we learn from the Allahabad Pillar Inscription that he was selected as king by his father.

Here one point is worth noting. If it is a modern forgery, the forger would not make such an outrageous statement which is poles apart from the contemporary records. So this is not a forgery. The author of KRV, on the other hand, would not make such an uncomplimentary remark about a king such as Samudragupta whom he praises sky high by noting that he was respected by not only the kings of this land, but also by the foreigners. He was the patron of music, literature and fine arts. It, therefore, appears that the author of KRV had before him sufficient evidence to make such an assertion. It is now lost. Alberuni in his *India* has noted that the "Guptas were a strong and wicked people".

The inscription, therefore, puts a gloss over such an infamous act by noting that he came to the throne during the lifetime of his father or may be immediately after him, according to the dictates of his father when his father had earlier denied him the right to it.

Even in edicts — Samudragupta exhorts his subjects to show respect to the elders. He specifically wanted to impress upon the people this historical and cultural tradition of India. It may be that he had to follow a different course in superseding the claim of his elder brother to the throne for he was found to be weak in governance.

(2) "The authentic puranas such as *Matsya*, *Vayu* etc. mention Shri Parvatiya Andhras but regard them as different, from the Guptas. Shri Parvata is mentioned in the puranas and is the name of a lofty rock which overhangs the river Krishna." With this statement Mazumdar suggests that the Shri Parvatiya Andhras are the local Andhra kings and not the Emperors ruling from Magadha. They are the Andhra—Bhrityas i.e. subordinate to the Andhra Emperors and that this Shri Parvata is Shri Shaila mountain in Andhra Pradesh. So the Andhra Bhrityas cannot be the Guptas, as KRV Notes.

Mazumdar is aware that *Agnipurana* also mentions Shri Parvata on the river Kaveri. But its situation in the Andhra country makes Mazumdar to assume that Shri Parvatiya Andhras are the Andhra-Bhrityas and their home is the region of Andhra proper. The Andhra Bhrityas cannot be equated with the Guptas. So runs his argument.

The confusion has arisen, because the Andhra Bhrityas i.e. the Guptas were also called Shri Parvatiyas of Nepal. There is also a mountain in Nepal, called Shri Parvata.

The inferences of Mazumdar are unwarranted by facts. The *puranas* and KRV have added Satavahana and Satakami to the names of the Andhra dynasty ruling from Magadha as Emperors of India. But the Indologists were not accepting that these kings ever existed. Afterwards when some of their coins and inscriptions were discovered, they had to believe the Puranic statements. So, as it can not be said that in this case the Puranas and KRV came after the discoveries of the inscriptions and coins, similarly it cannot be said in the present case too that KRV account has been concocted after mastering the details as collected from the inscriptions and coins.

*Matsya Parana* speaks of a royal dynasty coming immediately after the Andhra imperial dynasty.

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***"Āndhrānām samsthitā rājye taseāmbhrtyanvaye nṛpāḥ  
saptaivāndhrah bhavisyanti daśabhirāḥ tatha nṛpāḥ (273-17)***

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—After the Andhra Satavanana dynasty, their servants — the Andhra Bhrityas seven in number will rule the land. Similarly ten Abhir kings will rule in their Abhir kingdom."

*Vishnu Purana* also makes the same statement:

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***"Āndhrabhṛtyah sapta abhiraprabhṛatayaḥ daśa***

---

After the Andhras seven Andhra-Bhrityas and ten Abhir kings will rule

*Matsya Purana* further notes in verse 273-23.

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***Āndhrāḥ śrīparvatiyaḥ sate dve ca śatam samāḥ***

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The Shri Parvatiya Andhras will rule for 300 years in Andhra desh." So these Parvatiya Andhras are different from the Andhra Bhrityas. For the latter have stepped in the shoes of Andhra-Satavahana dynasty which was ruling at Magadha as Emperors of Bharata, while the former i.e. Shri Parvatiya Andhras were ruling in Andhra-desh proper. So the distinction between Shri Parvatiya Andhras and Andhra-Bhrityas has to be noted. The latter are the Guptas but they were ruling over Magadha. They are also called Shri Parvatiyas, for they hail from Shri Parvata in Nepal. But these Shri Parvatiya Guptas are not the same as Shri Parvatiya Andhras.

Under the Andhra-Satavahana Emperors ruling from Magadha, the Shri Parvatiya Andhras were ruling over Andhra-desh as their vassals.

It is thus clear that the Puranas make distinction between the Andhra-Bhrityas who ruled from Magadha and the Shri Parvatiya Andhras who ruled from Pratishthana now in Maharashtra. Of course the Puranas do not directly identify the Andhra Bhrityas with the Guptas, but they assume it unquestioningly. This is clear from the reference of Wilson in his introduction to the Vishnu-purana. He says, "Inscriptions on columns of stones, on rocks, deciphered only of late years — have verified the names of races and titles of princes — the Guptas and the Andhra Rajas mentioned in the Puranas". This is a clear reference to the inscriptions of Samudragupta and his successors, so the question arises as to whether Wilson had the copy of KRV which clearly identifies the Guptas with Andhra Bhrityas. It says:



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***"Ete pranata Sāmañtān śrīmadgupiakulodbhavāh  
śrīparvatiyāndhrabhṛtyā - nāmānah cakravartinah***

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— these Gupta kings respected by the other kings and known as Shri Parvatiya Andhra Bhṛityas were Emperors of Bharata." It further states that they ruled for 245 years. These Guptas hailed originally from Shri Parvata in Nepal so they are different from the Shri Parvatiya Andhras in Andhra desh. This distinction between Shri Parvatiya Andhras and Shri Parvatiya Andhra Bhṛityas i.e. the Guptas requires to be clearly noted.

The current editions of the Puranas do not give the names of the Gupta and the Andhra kings in detail. Moreover the note of Gupta kings in the Puranas is just casual — Gupta-vamshajah — and further they are the kings of small regions around Prayaga and coastal areas around the river Ganga. So it is clear that Wilson's reference to the names of the Gupta kings shows his acquaintance with the copy of the KRV.

There is a reason why references about the Guptas in the Puranas are scanty. Almost all the Puranas had their last recensions completed immediately after the departure of Adi Sankara i.e. immediately after 477-76 B.C. the date of Nirvana of Adi Sankara. Sankara had paved the way for the adoption of Buddha as the Avatara of Vishnu, the Godhead responsible for the maintenance of the world in good order. India's age old Vedic religion and culture was thus re-established on a firm footing and so the authors of the *Puranas* appear to have felt that there was not much left to add to these works which were meant purely to interpret the Vedic teachings for the benefit of the common man in the language he understood. The task of writing political history was left to the officers of the courts to which they were accredited. Nothing much was left for the authors of the puranas in this field. Even so Guptas being an important dynasty just before Shakari Vikrama-ditya, reference to them occurs in the Puranas.

(3) "The occurrence of the name of Sthiragupta in KRV leaves no doubt that it is a modern forgery."

That it is a cheap jibe at T.S. Narayan Shastry who was the first to print it as an appendix to his '*Age of Sankara*' published in 1915. is clear from the tone of Mazumdar's above unfounded assertion. The late V.V. Mirashi had given his considered opinion that it is a genuine document as far as back as in 1944. But Mazumdar has not referred to it. This is rather strange.

Let us now examine his charge.

KRV gives the genealogy of the Guptas as follows:

(1) Shri Gupta, (2) Ghatokacha. (3) Chandragupta-I, he assumed the title of Vijayaditya. He ruled for seven years from 328 - 321 B.C., (4) Samudragupta was the next. He assumed the title of Ashokaditya and ruled for 51 years (321-269 B.C.). He performed horse (Ashwamedha) sacrifice and declared himself king Emperor of Bharata. He was a very enlightened king, even though in the initial stages, he was stated to be a ruthless monarch. He was patron of arts and loved music. (5) Next after him was Chandragupta II who had assumed the title of Vikramaditya. He was a very powerful monarch and had conquered Balhika next to Gandhara (the modern Afghanistan). He ruled for 36 years (269-233 B.C.). (6) Then came Kumargupta, who had assumed the title of Mahendraditya and ruled for 42 years (233-191 B.C.). (7) Skandagupta, another very powerful ruler came next and assumed the title of Parakramaditya. He had subjugated the Hunas and had ruled for 25 years (191-166 B.C.), (8) Skandagupta had no son. He adopted Nrisimha Gupta the son of Sthiragupta his step brother. Nrisimhagupta adopted the title of Baladitya and ruled for 40 years (166-126 B.C.). (9) The last in the Imperial line of the Guptas was Kumargupta II. He had assumed the title of Kramaditya and had ruled for 44 years (126-82 B.C.).

This is the connected history of the 7 Gupta kings from Chandragupta I. as given in the *Puranas* and the KRV. These Guptas ruled for 245 years. The first two, Shri Gupta and Ghatotkacha are ignored here, as they were not rulers on the Magadha throne.

Mazumdar's charge is that this connected story given in KRV has become possible only after the inscriptional evidence discovered in late nineteenth century.

This charge has no leg to stand upon. We have seen that KRV is a genuine document. It states that the Guptas were the Andhra-Bhrityas (which Mazumdar does not accept) and that Samudragupta came to the throne by removing his father Chandragupta I and his incompetent elder brother Kacha (this also Mazumdar does not accept).

But the most important charge of Mazumdar against KRV is that according to the coins and inscriptions, it is proved that the name of the father of Nrisimhagupta (Sr. No. 8 above) was Purugupta and not Sthiragupta as had previously been adopted by the scholars by incorrect reading of the coins. From 1893 to 1903 the scholars had adopted Sthiragupta as the correct reading of the name of the King. So Mazumdar assumes that KRV must have been compiled

between 1893 to 1903, when the name Sthiragupta was current amongst the scholars.

Let us now see the story of this name Sthiragupta, as conceived by the scholars.

V.A. Smith in his article on Gupta coinage observes that Buhler read the name as Sthiragupta on Bhitari seal and A. Cunningham was inclined to accept this reading. Hoernle read for the first time that the name on the seal was Purugupta. Subsequently the reading Purugupta was generally adopted and Smith accepted this form of the name in his *'Early History of India'* (published in 1904). The recently discovered Nalanda seals show that the name is really Purugupta and not Sthiragupta as was originally assumed.

This is the story of the name 'Sthiragupta' as given by Mazumdar. But the full facts have not been stated by him here. As mentioned by KRV, Skandagupta the son of Kumaragupta I was the ruler. As he had no issue he adopted Nrisimhagupta, the son of his half brother Sthiragupta. This Nrisimhagupta adopted the title of Baladitya and became Emperor at Pataliputra even during the lifetime of his father Sthiragupta. So both the father and the son ruled the Empire and Sthiragupta adopted the title of Prakashaditya.

Skandagupta's mother was Anantadevi and Sthiragupta's mother's name was Anandadevi. As was the custom in the Imperial household, this Sthiragupta was made the vassal king and his other name was Purugupta. Kumaragupta had another son Budhagupta who also became the vassal of the Imperial Guptas after his father's death.

The Puranas state that there were only 7 Andhra -Bhrityas. After them the Empire was disintegrated. KRV, following the line of the Puranas omits to mention Budhagupta the vassal king.

But it is curious to note that no seal or coin tells us that Sthiragupta had assumed the title Prakashaditya. It is found only in KRV. Let us quote Mazumdar himself. He says, "As regards Sthiragupta's title, Prakashaditya, Hoernle was the first to suggest (in JASB 1889 part I page 93) that this probably belonged to 'Purugupta'. Other scholars have accepted this suggestion as reasonable, though definite evidence is lacking, but 'Allan' regarded it as highly improbable in his catalogue of Gupta coins published in 1913."

The point here is, how could Hoernle get this information, unless he had copied it from KRV?

K. Venkatachellam observes "An attempt was made centuries back in our country to study critically the accounts of the dynasties of the kings of Kali given

in our Puranas, to detect and amend the errors due to ignorant scribes and misreadings and misinterpretations by malicious and biased interpreters, and to evolve a valid and authoritative account of the dynasties of the kings of Kali based on the maximum agreement among the varying texts of the different Puranas. The result of this exhaustive and critical enquiry was published in the Sanskrit language in the form of a treatise entitled — *Kaliyuga Raja Vrittanta*. In this treatise a connected and consistent account of the history of our country down to the eight century after Christ has been given in detail based upon our Puranas and in agreement with the references in them to the movement of the Great Bear (Saptarshi Mandala)."

Such a book as KRV cannot be dubbed as a modern forgery.

Having disposed of the arguments of B.C. Mazumdar against the authenticity of KRV, we can now resume our narration of the Chronological details of the Andhra dynasty.

### **Andhra-Satavahana Dynasty:**

We have seen earlier that *Shimuka* the Commander-in-chief in the service of Susharma the last king Emperor of the Kanva Dynasty had removed Susharma and had himself assumed that title. He also brought under his control whatsoever kings were ruling the remnants of the Shungas of the previous dynasty.

These Andhra Emperors of Magadha are described as Satavahana and Satakarni in the puranas. In the Inscriptions discovered also the same titles are found confirming the Purana version. Saata means a lion. So Saatavahana means; one with the lion for his conveyance. This is the emblem of their flags also.

The names of the kings with their regnal periods are given below:

(1) Shimuka 23 years, (2) Krishna — the younger brother of Shimukha. He was also known as Kanha 18 years, (3) Shrimalla 10 years, (4) Pumsanga 18 years — he appears to be the contemporary of Kharavela of the Kalinga dynasty, (5) Shri Shatakami 56 years, (6) Skanda Stambhina 18 years, (7) Lambodara 18 years, (8) Apitaka 12 years, (9) Meghaswati 18 years, (10) Shataswati 18 years, (11) Slandaswatikarni 7 years, (12) Mrigendrswatikarni 3 years, (13) Kuntala swatikarni 8 years, (14) Saumya Swati-karna 12 years, (15) Shataswatikarni 1 year, (16) Puloma - I 36 years, (17) Megha 38 years, (18) Arishta 25 years, (19) Hala 5 years, (20) Mandalaka 5 years, (21) Purindrasena 21 years, (22) Sundara 1 year, (23) Chakore 6 months, (24)

Mahendra 6 months, (25) Shiva 28 years, (26) Gautamiputra 25 years, (27) Puloma II-Vasishthiputra 32 years, (28) Shiva 7 years, (29) Shivaskanda 7 years, (30) Yajñashri 19 years, (31) Vijayashri 6 years, (32) Chandrashri 3 years, (33) Puloma III 7 years.

From Megha (17) in the list everyone had the title 'Shatakarni'. The nineteenth king — Emperor Hala was contemporary of Adi Sankara.

There is some difference in names and the regnal periods in different puranas. But they all enumerate between 19 to 32 kings and give the total of their regnal periods at 465 to 506 years. KRV gives the total of 500 years, but it appears to be a round figure for the total of regnal years noted against the names of different kings works out to 506 years.

The Matsya purana actually enumerates 31 kings omitting the name of Megha. It also does not give the regnal years of Soumya. The total of regnal years of the 30 kings works out 493 years. But while summing up it mentions, 19 kings will rule for 460 years'. Obviously there is some scribal error.

*Brahmanda Purana* notes 19 kings with the total of regnal years as 362 while summing up the same Purana notes 30 kings with 456 years. Vayupurana notes 20 kings with 374 years but like Brahmanda while summing up it notes 30 kings with 456 years.

**Vishnu Purana States:**


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***"Evamete trimsacchatvari abdasatani sat pancasat abdashikani  
prthivim bhoksyanti***

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— Thus 30 kings will rule for 456 years." This is also the version of Bhagawata Purana. But the commentator of Bhagawata Purana Shri Vir Raghavacharya and Shri Shukadeva interpret it to mean 486 years.

Thus KRV's figure of 506 years for 32 kings of this dynasty, appears to be in consonance with the figures in the different Puranas.

Shri Mukha (Shimuka or Sindhuka) became emperor in 833 B.C. — as noted earlier. This dynasty's rule thus came to an end in (833 B.C. - 506) 328-7 B.C., when Charidragupta I of the Imperial Gupta Dynasty coronated himself at Pataliputra.

He is thus the contemporary of Alexander the Greek Adventurer.

Let us now sum up the position of the number of kings dynasty-wise with their regnal periods:

After Bharata war:

Name	No. of kings	Regnal years
1. Barhadrita dynasty	22	1006
2. Pradyota -do-	5	138
3. Shishunaga -do-	10	360
4. Nanda -do-	9	100
	<b>46</b>	<b>1604</b>

*Visnu Purana* sums up the position thus:

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***"Yāvat parikṣito janma yāvannaṇḍābhisecanam  
etat varsahasraṁ tu jñeyanī pañcaśatottaram  
(4-24-104)***

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1500 years have elapsed between the birth of Parikṣita (the end of Bharata war) and the date of coronation of the Nandas."

The actual figure however works out to 1504:

Let us continue further:

	46	1604
5. Maurya - dynasty:	12	316
6. Shunga - dynasty:	10	300
7. Kanva - dynasty:	5	85
8. Andhra - dynasty:	33	506
	<hr/> 106	<hr/> 2811
9. Andhra Bhṛitya dynasty:	7	245
	<hr/> 113	<hr/> 3056

*Matsya Purana* further confirms the total of the regnal periods from Nandas to the Andhras thus:

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***"Paulomāstu, tathāndhrastu mahapadmāntare punah  
Anaṇṭaram satanyastau sattrimśattu samāstathā (27-1-39)***

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— Andhras who are also called Poulamas came eight hundred and thirtysix years after Mahapadma Nanda."

The actual total works out to — Nandas 100; Mouryas 316; Shungas 300, Kanvas 85 = 801 years. The KRV sums up this period thus:

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**"Āndhrā rājyopakramāt tu yāvannaṁdabhisecanam  
Āntaram tat Śatānyastau pramāṇajñāih samāh smrtā**

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— Those versed in these calculations state that eight hundred years elapsed between the coronation of the Nandas and the beginning of the Andhra dynasty." We actually get 801 years from the coronation of Nanda King to the beginning of Andhra dynasty.

*Matsya Purana* figure of 836 years may be due to some mixing up of figures from the earlier Shishunaga dynasty. Mahapadma Nanda is the son of the last of the kings of the Shishunaga dynasty-Mahanandi from his shudra wife. He ruled for 43 years. This Mahanandas regnal years appear to have been mixed up in calculating these 836 years. It is certainly a scribal error, when the totals of the different dynastic periods from Mahapadma Nanda to the Andhras, even according to *Matsya Purana* works out to : Nandas 100; "Mouryas 316; Shungas 300; Kanvas 85 = 801 years.

It will, therefore, be seen that from 3138 BC to 82 B.C. a total of 9 dynasties ruled Bharata as Emperors and we have details of kings and their regnal periods. The average of regnal years per king works out of 27.04.

In 82 B.C. *Shakari Vikramaditya* ascended the throne at Ujjain after the eclipse of the Gupta imperial line.

The Greek account on the basis of which the westerners fix the contemporaneity of Alexander with Sandrocottus, has to be examined now.

**Greek evidence:**

Megasthenes had written his impressions of India. Now only fragments of these are available, under the title *Indica*. These are translated by MacCrindle. Megasthenes says:

"From the days of Bacchus to Alexander the great, their kings are reckoned at 154, whose reign extended over 6451 years and three months."

The other historian Solinus has said the same thing. Arrian (2nd century AD) says. "From the time of Dionysos to Sandracottus the Indians counted 153 kings and period of 6042 years, but among these a republic was thrice established and another 300 years and 120 years."

These quotations give, 'the same information, namely that Alexander was the contemporary of Sandrocottus, the Indian king and 153 or 154 kings ruled India as Emperors from Dionysos or Bacchus. Perhaps these latter two names refer to one and the same person.



The *Puranas* start with Manu-Vaivaswata and branch into two: Solar and Lunar lines. The Ikshwakus noted earlier were of the solar line and Pouravas of the lunar line.

From the Bharata war, one line namely the Magadha ruled continuously from 3138 BC to 82BC i.e. till the end of the Imperial Guptas.

Sandrocottus mentioned by the Greek historians is a Magadha king. Pargiter - the then Allahabad High Court judge - has studied the *puranas* to collate the genealogies of the Indian kings from ancient times. In his *Indian Historical Tradition* he says: The position now is this:- "there is a strong presumption in favour of tradition; if any one contests tradition, the burden lies on him to show that it is wrong and till he does that the tradition holds good." Very few historians, however adhere to this sound logic. Most of them discard tradition on very flimsy grounds.

According to Indologists there were about 48 kings before the Bharata war. So from Magasthenes's statement 106 (154-48) kings ruled Bharata from Bharata war to Sandrocottus. Our calculations above show that there were exactly 106 kings before Sandrocottus. This way also KRV appears to note correct tradition. Pargiter works out this figure at 100 and other scholars at 104.

Let us again see who this Sandrocottus is from the actual account of him, as given by the Greek historians.

MacCrindle in his book "*The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*," gives the following quotations from Greek writers.

"Alexander had obtained from Phegus a description of the country beyond Indus: First came a desert which it would take 12 days to traverse. Beyond this was the river called the Ganges which had a width of thirty two stadia and a greater depth than any other Indian river. Beyond this again were situated the dominions of the nation of the Pratsoi and the Gandaridoi; whose king Xandramas had an army of 20,000 horses, 200,000 infantry, 2,000 chariots and 4,000 elephants trained and equipped for war. Alexander distrusting these statements sent for Poros and questioned him as to their accuracy. Poros assured him of the correctness of the information but added that the king of the Gandaridoi was a man of quite worthless character and held in no respect, as he was thought to be son of a barber. This man, the king's father - was a comely person and of him the queen had become enamoured. The old king having been treacherously murdered by his wife, the succession had devolved on him who now reigned."

Quintus Curtius Rufus (40 AD) repeats the above information but gives name as Agrammas instead of Xandramas and adds:

"The present king was not merely a man originally of no distinction but even of the very meanest condition. His father was in fact a barber scarcely staying off hunger by his daily earnings but whom from his being not uncomely in person, had gained the affection of the queen and was by her influence advanced too near a place in the confidence of the reigning monarch. Afterwards, however, he treacherously murdered his sovereign and then, under pretence of acting as guardian to the royal children, usurped the supreme authority and having put the young princes to death, begot the present king who was detested and held cheap by his subjects, as he rather took after his father than conduct himself as the occupant of the throne."

Plutarch (50 AD) gives the same information as about army and adds, "Nor was this exaggeration for not long afterwards Androkottos presented with 500 elephants and overran and subdued the whole of India with an army of 600,000 men ... Androkottus himself, who was then but a youth, saw Alexander and afterwards used to declare that Alexander could easily have taken possession of the whole country since the king was hated and despised by his subjects for the wickedness of his disposition and meanness of his origin."

Arrian does not mention Xandramas or Sandrocottus by name.

Justin (2nd century AD) writes:

"... Seleucus Nicator waged many wars in the east after the partition of Alexander's empire among his generals. He first took Babylon, and then with his forces augmented by victory subjugated the Bactrians. He then passed over to India, which after Alexander's death as if the yoke of servitude had been shaken off from its neck had put his people to death. Sandrocottus was the leader who achieved this freedom, but after his victory, he forfeited by his tyranny all title to the name of liberator, for the oppressed with servitude very people whom he had liberated from foreign thralldom. He was born in humble life, but was prompted to aspire to royalty by an omen significant of an august destiny. For when by his insolent behaviour he had offended Alexander and was ordered by that king to be put to death, he sought safety by a speedy flight, when he lay down overcome with fatigue and had fallen into deep sleep, a lion of enormous size approaching the slumberer licked with its tongue sweat which oozed profusely from his body, and when he awoke, quietly took to departure. It was this prodigy which inspired him with hope of winning the throne and so having collected a band of robbers, he instigated the Indians to overthrow the existing Government. When he was, therefore, preparing to attack Alexander's prefects,

a wild elephant of monstrous size approached him and kneeling submissively like a tame elephant received him on to its neck and fought vigorously in front of the army. Sandrocottus having thus won the throne was reigning over India when Seleucus was laying the foundation of his future greatness. Seleucus having made a treaty with him and otherwise settled his affairs in the east, returned home to prosecute the war with Antigonus."(BK. XV. Ch. IV, P.326).

Arrian speaking of Seleucus says, "And having crossed the Indus, he warred with Androcottus, the king of the Indians who dwelt about the river until he entered into an alliance and a marriage affinity with him."

Strabo — (1st century BC 11-119-408) says, "Both of these men were sent to Pilimbothra, Magasthenese to Sandrocottus and Demochos to Amittrochades, his son."

It appears that Alexander on his invasions, was accompanied by some Greek writers whose job was to eulogise Alexander sky high and even to proclaim his defeats as his victories. In his preface to translation of Arrian's "*History of Alexander's Expedition*" (1814) Rookes has expressed such a view. This view can be summarised thus:

Alexander's advance had been checked even in Kafiristan (modern Afghanistan) by Samudragupta and Alexander had to flee with the surviving remnant of his army. On his way home at Babylonia, he died of a broken heart, unable to bear the disgrace of defeat. Alexander was not at all able to cross the Indus and get a toehold to the East.

At that time in India the king Ambhi was ruling at Taxashila and Porus was the king of the region around the river Chenab. These two kings were at loggerheads with each other. So Ambhi helped Alexander against Porus. But Arrian writes that the son of Porus defeated Alexander and killed his horse named 'Bucephalus'. Justin writes that Porus waged a fierce war against Alexander when his efforts to avoid bloodshed in war failed. Porus challenged Alexander to a duel, which the latter refused and started the war. But Alexander himself was gravely wounded. He was quickly removed from the battlefield and so was saved.

But in order to turn this defeat into success, the Greek writers gave a turn to the events and stated that the elephants of Porus got stuck into mud and the king Porus was wounded and fell into the hands of Alexander. But the latter impressed by the valour of Porus, treated him with generosity and released him. Alexander then ordered his army to return home.

All this is incorrect. Alexander who was very cruel in war, would not have released Porus had he fallen into his hands. He would have beheaded him. Jawaharlal Nehru writes that Alexander was egoist, cruel and indulged in avoidable bloodshed. He considered himself as the incarnation of God and killed mercilessly and without cause, the sons of his friends and destroyed cities after cities.

It is to be remembered that Gandhara (modern Afghanistan), Yon and Kamboja and Bahlik (Bactria) were parts of India then, and so the invasion of these regions has been wrongly described as the invasion of modern India-Pakistan.

Again let us note that no inscription, coin or any other evidence is available to mark the invasion of Alexander or his connection with Chandragupta Maurya.

Max Muller while evaluating the Greek evidence says, "We learn from classical writers Justin, Arrian, Diodorus, Strabo, Quintus Curtius and Plutarch, that in Alexander's time, there was on the Ganges a powerful king of the name of Xandramas, and that soon after Alexander's invasion, a new empire was founded there by Sandrocottus or Sandrocypus." And this Sandracottus according to him was Maurya Chandragupta.

In view of this assertion by Max Muller, it can be said that Chandragupta of Gupta dynasty had not been noticed by him.

William Jones to reduce the antiquity of Bharata first hit upon the idea that this Sandrocottus is Chandragupta Maurya and Xandramas is his father Mahapadmananda. There is no phonetical resemblance between Xandramas and Mahapadmananda at all.

Moreover, Chandragupta Maurya is a legitimate son of the last of the Nandas — Mahapadmananda had been installed by Arya Chanakya deposing the very cruel and oppressive Nandas. So, the Empire of Magadha was inherited by Chandragupta Maurya and was run efficiently by him and his son Bindusara. Ashoka the son of Bindusara fought with the Kalinga king who had raised the banner of revolt against the Emperor Ashoka and was subdued by him. Here there is no question of warfare with the Greeks at all.

The Greek evidence noted above can be summarised thus:

When Alexander was somewhere in Afghanistan, there was a powerful king Xandramas or Agramas in Magadha. This Emperor's wife had illicit relations with some handsome person of low origin. This person with the connivance of the queen murdered the king Emperor and put up his minor son on the

throne. This latter king was also subsequently murdered and this queen's confident usurped the throne. He was unpopular. Once Sandrocottus or Sandrocyptus had met Alexander. But he was to be put to death on the orders of Alexander who was enraged at his insolent behaviour. This young man Sandrocyptus ran for safety and fell asleep through fatigue. A lion licked his sweat and when he was awakened the lion ran away. Thereafter this young man mustered courage and collected an army and attacked Greek strongholds on the other side of the Indus. While doing so, he was lifted up by a huge wild elephant which put him on his back. This young man became victorious against the Greek commander Seleucus who made peace with him and offered his daughter in marriage to him.

This Sandrocyptus attacked the emperor of Bharata and installed himself in his place. Then he brought the whole of India under his sway.

This Greek account tallies in major details with the rise and success of Samudragupta, the valiant son of Chandragupta of the Guptas. The Indian account given by KRV tells us that this Chandragupta had married Lichavi princes from Nepal and was the Commander-in-chief of the Andhra Dynasty emperor Chandrashri or Chandrabija Shatakami. He was also Emperor's brother-in-law. This Chandragupta was the son of Ghatotkacha Gupta. This name seems odd amongst the high born Kshatriyas, and so it appears that the Greek writers carried the impression that Chandragupta was of low origin.

This Chandragupta was a very handsome and valorous man and was already controlling the Empire and Chandrasri was only nominally in charge. The Queen who was also Chandragupta's sister-in-law appears to have been enamoured of him. They together installed Puloma III, the minor son of the Emperor on the throne. Later on this king was also removed and Chandragupta the Commander-in-Chief became king emperor himself.

He was naturally unpopular. Samundragupta, his son had won him many battles and also had subjugated the Greek who had entrenched themselves on the Western bank of the river Sindhu. But Chandragupta was not fond of him and had made another of his son Kacha as his heir-apparent.

Samudragupta being the eldest (Kacha was his half brother) had a rightful claim to the throne. Moreover, he was the architect of his father's empire. So he attacked his treacherous father and imprisoned him and proclaimed himself king Emperor from 321 B.C. His was a long and the most glorious period of Indian History. He reigned for 51 years from 321 B.C. to 269 B.C. He was succeeded by his equally brave son Chandragupta II.

Let us now identify the four kings, Xandramas or Agramas, Sandrocottus, Sandrocyptus and Amitrochades the son of Sandrocyptus.

It now appears clear that Xandramas is Chandrashri or Chandramas or Chandrabij, the Emperor who was murdered by Chandragupta his Commander-in-Chief. Even Rapson says "Chandramas would be equivalent of the Greek appellation Xandramas." Chandragupta the successor to the throne of Chandrashri is Sandracottus. Sandrocyptus had met Alexander and was a young man of undoubted valour. He appears to be Samudragupta and Amitrochades literally meaning the 'Destroyer of the enemies' must be Chandragupta II who had earned this title because of his victories over Huna-Raiders and other hostile elements.

Even remotely, Chandragupta Maurya cannot be Sandrocottus of the Greek historians. Let us note that Chandragupta Maurya is the son of Mahapadmananda the founder of Nanda dynasty. He was succeeded by his eight sons one after the other. Chandragupta the ninth son of his, came after the death of the eighth. Here there is no question of illicit connection of this Chandragupta with the Queen of the eighth or his predecessor. Moreover this Chandragupta is a legitimate son of his father who is Mahapadmananda. These two cannot therefore, be either Xandramas or Sandrocottus of the Greek writers. Similarly Chandragupta's son Bindusara cannot be Sandrocyptus nor can Bindusara's son Ashoka be Amitrochades of the Greek writers.

This way the Greek account tallies in material particulars with the Indian account of the Guptas. The Greek writers stating Ghatotkacha, the father of Chandragupta as a barber, appear to have allowed their imagination to run amuck or some such stories may have been circulating about Chandragupta's origin or it may be a story fabricated by these Greek writers to glorify their masters and to vilify their Indian counterparts.

So Sandrocyptus is neither Chandragupta Maurya nor Chandragupta of the Gupta dynasty. He is Samudragupta of the Gupta dynasty. He and his father Chandragupta I had defeated the Greek commanders. Samudragupta appears to have married the daughter of Seleucus. This is also confirmed by the Allahabad Pillar inscription.

But doubt is cast in this narration, by parading the evidence of the Ashoka's edicts. We have seen that the evidence of these edicts does not support the theory of Alexander, Maurya synchronism. Yet another argument based on the later origin of Aramaic script is advanced. Let us examine it-

## Inscription of Ashoka in Aramaic Script:

Besides the edicts of Emperor Ashoka found in Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts, a few of them in Afghanistan in Aramaic script have been discovered.

It is stated that Aramaic and Greek scripts had their origin in the Phoenician script some-where near the eighth century B.C. The chronological order of the development of scripts given by the scholars is as follows:

Name of script	Approximate date of origin and commencement
1. Picture script (Egypt)	3500 B.C.
2. Sinitic	1500-1800 B.C.
3. Canaanite	About-1400 B.C.
4. Phoenician	About-1100 B.C.
5. Aramaic	About 800 B.C.

These dates have been determined on the basis of the strata of excavation and earthenware etc. found there.

If the Aramaic script has originated only in 800 B.C., it goes counter to our assertion that Asoka Maurya belonged to the period around 1472 B.C.

But it has to be noted here that this dating of the origin of different scripts ignores many salient aspects which one should consider while determining these different dates.

The basic questions here are: what is a script? And what are the criteria to determine its origin? Script is a specific symbol for a specific sound. Western scholars believe that script first originated in the form of pictures. Man, when he wanted to convey his ideas to others, he may have used the things around him as objects with which to compare what he has in his mind. Initially, he may have depicted these in a crude form which was subsequently refined. The pictures found in the inscriptions, therefore, would have to be taken as the developed form of the picture-script. For such a development cannot take place overnight. It must have been the culmination of a continuous process of several centuries.

But the western writer on the subject, sees a particular inscription, reads it and dates it according to certain norms and assigns to it a certain date. The same date is assigned by him to the origin of the script of the inscription. This is totally an unsound method of determination of the date of the origin of any script. Again apart from the script in which the inscription is found, the date of the inscription is fixed according to some vague evidence. For example. Chandragupta Maurya's date is determined at 326 B.C. according to the Western

scholar's particular prejudices and preconceived notions in the matter. So the date of the edict of Asoka Maurya found in aramaic script in Afghanistan would be around 272 B.C., the date determined by them for Asoka. If as we have determined the date Asoka is 1472 B.C., the date of this edict in aramaic script would be around 1472 B.C. The point is that the date determined by the western scholars for the origin of the aramaic script at 800 B.C. is not so sacrosanct as to be inviolable.

All this determination of dates for the origin of the different script is purely conjectural. The argument that because a particular inscription is dated for the first time, it can not mean that, the script was first brought in use at that time. It may have been in use since a long time before but the permanent inscriptions in that particular script, may not have been available for the earlier time. Moreover the *argumentum ex-silentio* can not negate the positive literary record.

It is also not certain that the picture script was the first to appear and others came subsequently in the order in which the westerners want us to believe.

Existence of script in India is known from time immemorial 'Adarsanam lopah-a letter is not seen' is one of the aphorisms of Panini, the greatest of the Indian grammarians. This proves beyond a shadow of doubt that the art of writing with letters was known in Panini's days. This distinction between visible language and audible language is also known to the Vedas. It is this visible language i.e. the script which distinguishes the civilised man from his uncivilised ancestor. The art of speech has come up with the man and this is the distinguishing mark between him and the animal. But the development of script is the finest fruit of human endeavour. Other inventions pale into insignificance as compared to this glorious invention of the script. In fact, man's history commenced with his earliest written documents, his all other activities, prior to that belong to the realm of prehistory.

The people in India knew the art of writing right from the Rgvedic times. Thus to declare that the Indians were totally ignorant of the art of writing in the pre-Buddhist era, is to totally ignore the Indian tradition. The argument that the Pre-Buddhist India does not possess any literary or epigraphic evidence about the existence of the art of writing, even assuming it to be so, is an *argumentum ex-silentio*, which is lame and so can not prove the existence or otherwise of the art of writing. If, The Sarasvati-Sindhu civilisation is just a continuation of the Vedic. It still survives, in many fields of the composite Indian culture of today. When it is so, it would not be illogical to assume the possibility as well as the probability of the survival of the Indus script also, in one form or the other, even after the disappearance of the magnificent cities of its origin. We



may have to assume this particularly when we remember that India had no other script to oust the Indus script in the post Indus age.

Panini speaks of 'Yavanani lipi — Yavan-script'. This is a clear reference to 'Aramaic and Kharosthi scripts'. Their origin is in Semitic scripts like the Canaanite, the Phoenician or Sinitic. These Semitic scripts were prevalent in different regions under different names like Phoenician, Canaanite, Aramaic or the Kharosthi. They were all contemporary, It is not that one has replaced the other. So even though the actual inscriptions in Aramaic may have been available from 800 B.C. we can take it for granted that this script being in use at Asoka's time, may have its origin even prior to 1500 B.C.

There is also astronomical evidence to corroborate the chronological details given earlier.

## 1.14 The astronomical evidence:

**Vishnu Purana states:**

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***"Tena saptarṣayo yuktāstiṣṭhaṅti abdaśatam nṛnām te tu  
parikṣite kālemaghāsu āsan dvijottama (4-2-106)***

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— the Great Bear (the seven sages) remain in one constellation for hundred years. At the time when Parikshita was ruling, they were in Magha constellation".

The Matsya Purana has the following to say about the position of this constellation.

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***"Saptarṣayah tadā prāhuh pradiptenagninā samāh  
saptaviṃśatih bhāvyānām Andhrānām tu yathā punaḥ—***

**271 — 41**

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— The Great bear was in the constellation Krittika (at the time of birth of parikshita) the presiding deity of which is brilliant Agni. (This is the opinion of some sages like Varaha-mihir. The method of calculation is different but the

result is the same.) Again they will be in the same constellation during the period of the kings of the Andhra dynasty." This means that the Saptarshi remain hundred *years* in one constellation. Therefore to complete the whole cycle of 27 constellation, 2700 years are required. This period appears to have elapsed from the birth of Parikshita to Andhra kings i.e. 3138-2700 = 438 B.C. Andhra dynasty kings were ruling at this time.

We shall now explain how Saptarshis are said to be in Magha by one school of astronomers and in Krittika at the same time by another school.

The reckoning of the Puranas and Vriddha Garga is as follows:

"As the two stars in the east of the Great Bear (saptarshis) — Kratu and Pulaha rise at midnight, if a straight line is drawn through the pole star and the two stars due south, the star in the Zodiac lying on the line, is the star in which the Great bear is said to be located (this star is Magha). There in that star, the Great Bear remains for 100 years."

Here we have to bear in mind that what is 'Magha' according to Vriddha Garg and Puranas is 'Krittika' according to some others and Varahamihira. After all Varahamihira is the follower of Vriddha Garga. If the line is drawn from the other stars in Great Bear, it will be seen to be located in Krittika.

Here we shall quote from Louise Jacoliot's "*Bible de-Indi*". "The Rev, Fathers, Jesuits, Fransiscans, Stranger missions and other corporations unite with touching harmony in India to accomplish a work of vandalism, which it is right to denounce as well to the teamed world as to the orientalist. Every manuscript, every Sanskrit work that falls into their hands is immediately condemned and consigned to flames. Needless to say that the choice of these gentlemen always falls from preference upon those of highest antiquity and whose authenticity may appear incontestable — Every new arrival receives a formal order, so to dispose of all that may fall into his hands. Happily, happily the Brahmins do not open to them the secret stores of their literary wealth, philosophic and religious".

This will show that most of the Christian Indologists tried their best to distort Indian History and Chronology in order to show the superiority of the Christians and their religion. They believed that besides their Bible, there cannot be any literature claiming antiquity over it.

According to *Puranas*, the Great Bear will be again in Magha constellation during the period of the Andhra Dynasty kings. The KRV has the same verse as above from *Matsya Purana*. Again KRV has another verse based on Purana

calculations taking the Great Bear to be in Magha constellation at the time of the birth of the king Parikshita. It says:

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***"Saptarṣayah maghāyuktah kāle yudhiṣṭhire satām  
śravane te bhaviṣyānti kāle nandasya bhūpateh***

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- During the period when the king Yudhishtira was ruling, the Great Bear was in Magha constellation. It will be in the constellation of Shravana during the period of the king Nanda".

Now Shravana is the 15th constellation from Magha in the reverse gear because that is the way movements of constellations are seen from the earth. This means that after about 1500 years from the birth of Parikshita the Nanda dynasty would rule. The birth of Parikshita is in the year 3138 B.C, so deducting therefrom 1500 we get 1638 B.C. The actual period of different dynasties which ruled India from 3138 B.C. to the date of coronation of the Nanda king works out to 1504 years. So the Nandas ruled from 1634 to 1534 B.C.

Thus astronomically also, the Puranic chronology tallies with the calculation of the actual regnal periods.

For determining the date of Buddha, Chandragupta Maurya and Samudragupta we had to traverse the whole ground from Bharata war to 321 B.C. for which the Puranas prove to be of great help.

After determining these dates, the determination of date of another great savant of Ancient India, Bhagawana Mahavira becomes easy.

### 1.15 Date of Mahavira

A Jaina tradition holds that Mahavira left this world 15 years after the death of Bhagawana Buddha, which took place in 1805 B.C. Therefore, Mahavira's end came fifteen years later i.e. in 1790 B.C. It is agreed on all hands that his life span was of 72 years. So Mahavira's period works out to 1862 B.C. to — 1790 B.C. But as usual, instead of accepting the Puranic chronology, the Indologist have preferred to probe deeply into some stray statements in the Jaina literature which do not agree in themselves. Another tradition states that Mahavira's death took place some 155 years before Chandragupta Maurya. According to these calculations, it works out to 1689 B.C. (1534 + 155 B.C) while according to the Puranas this date is 1790 B.C. The third Jaina tradition gives this date as 605 years before the crowning of Shaka king. The Shaka king Kanishka was coronated in 1294 B.C. in Kashmira. Thus the date of Mahavira Nirvana would be 1899 B.C. (1294 B.C. + 605) Both these traditions are somewhat nearer to Puranic chronology which gives the period of Mahavira as 1862 B.C.-1790 B.C.

An important Jaina work *Tithogoli Pennaya* has the following verse which throws light on Mahavira's end:

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***"Jam rayinam siddhamjao araha tirhanikaro Mahavira  
tam rayinam avantia abhisatto palayo raya***

---

on the day on which Mahavira breathed his last, the king Palaka was coronated in the city of Avanti".

From the Sanskrit play *Mritchakatika* it is gathered that Palaka was regarded by the Jainas as one of their own followers. The author of this play, therefore, did not think that the city had become orphan because of the passing away of Mahavira. In other words, Palaka replaced Mahavira as it were.

The king Palaka was the second king in the Pradyot dynasty. According to the Puranas, his date is 2131 B.C. Although it is doubtful whether the playwright had Palaka from Pradyota dynasty or some other king of the same name in his mind, in all probability, he was writing about Palaka of Magadha for he was one of the greatest kings of his time. This way the period of Mahavira would work out to 2203 to 2131 B.C. (2131 + 72) Here we have to remember that this Palaka of Magadha was ruling from Girivraja. So this Jaina work must be confusing this Palaka ruling from Girivraj with another Palaka ruling from Avanti. Or in the time of this Jaina work Avanti may be famous. So he appears to bind together two famous names in his time.

But the Indologists have different ideas. They presume that Mahavira Nirvana date is 605 years before the Shalivahana Shaka and not the Shaka king Kanishka. This would give us Mahaviranirvana date as 527 B.C. (605-78). The life span of Mahavira was 72 years. Therefore, Mahavira was taken to have been born in 599 B.C. (527 + 72). Western scholars are inclined to accept this date i.e. 599 B.C. to 527 B.C. Prima facie this date goes against the tradition that Mahavira was the Junior contemporary of Buddha. For the Western scholars take Buddhas' period as 543 B.C. to 463 B.C. According to these dates of Buddha, Mahavira's date would be 528 B.C. (543-15) and the date of his Nirvana would be 456 B.C. (528-72). But as stated earlier, the traditional period of Mahavira according to the Puranas is 1862 B.C.-1790 B.C. and this appears to be the correct period of Mahavira. The break-up of 605 years referred to above is given in that Jaina work as under:

Palaka 60 years, Nandas 150 years, Maurya 160 years, Pushyamitra 35 years, Balmitra-Bhanumitra 60 years, Nahasena 40 years and Gardabhillia 100 years. The total comes to 605 years.

The above regnal periods of the various kings are in utter conflict with their counterparts in Purana works. These are also not according to any chronological reckoning. The kings from different dynasties are strung together with their regnal periods put down arbitrarily to make up the total of 605 years. It is indeed strange that Palaka who heads this list is 605 years earlier to the successor of Gardabhillia. The successor's name is not given. But it is further presumed that the Shaka king mentioned therein was Shalivahana the founder of shaka era in 78 A.D. Mahavira's nirvana year has been ascertained with reference to such an unbelievable presumption. (605 — 78 A.D. - 527 B.C.) We now know that Shalivahana was not a king belonging to the Shaka clan.

Obviously, the Jaina tradition refers to some other great personality amongst the Jainas and not to that great man Bhagawana Mahavira. As we have remarked earlier, Buddha and Jaina thought is one of the traditional body of Hindu thought and these great men were not the founders of separate Bauddha and Jaina faiths.

In this connection, it is necessary to note the following story of an ambitious and intrigue loving Jaina saint Kalakacharya.

Kalakacharya was a saint and a yogi who lived in Ujjain with his sister Saraswati. The king Darpana of Gardabhillia dynasty reigned there. The king forcibly brought Sarasvati and confined her to a cell in the palace. The king refused to release her inspite of appeals to him by Kalakacharya and others.

The brother, therefore, got angry and took a vow to eliminate the king. He left Ujjain and rushed to Balamitra-Bhanumitra, a son of his second sister at Broach in modern Gujarat. But Balmitra expressed his inability to join him in his campaign against this king who had a powerful army.

Kalakacharya then approached 96 nobles of a kingdom called Hindu-gadesh (probably Hindukush — desh i.e. region overshadowed by Hindukush mountains) which was comprised of Afghanistan and Iran. The Acharya enjoyed the hospitality of the chief of the nobles and won his favour by his power of tantric art and knowledge of astrology and medicine. At this time, the nobles were under threat of attack by the king of Iran, (most probably Darius of about 550 B.C.). On the advice of Kalakacharya, they left their province and migrated to Sindhu and Peshavara and firmly settled there. Kalakacharya took them then to Saurashtra where they were assisted by Balmitra of Broach. They then attacked the king Darpan, defeated him and became masters of Avanti. They secured the release of Kalaka's sister and later embraced Jainism at the instance of Kalakacharya.

The Jaina works have the following information about another king Nahasen referred to above:

There was a king called Nahasen (519 B.C) who was defeated by Andhra king Arishta Shatakarni who was contemporary of Darius of Iran. This Nanapan (and Nanasen appear to be one and the same person) had minted his own coins which indicate 46th year of his regime. It is likely that this Nahapan had embraced Jainism and was therefore extolled in the Jaina works. His date seems to be around 550 B.C. and he might have accompanied Kalakacharya to the east of Sindhu region. From the above, it appears that Balmitra, Gardabhilla-Darpan, Nahasen and Kalakacharya all belong to a period around 550 B.C.

Jaina works cannot be considered as accurate so far as chronology is concerned. The period of 605 years referred to above has been connected with Shalivahana shaka in yet another Jaina work *Shrivirat*. There is no connection whatsoever, between the Mahanirvana of Mahavira on the one hand and the king Palak and Shalivahana shaka on the other. In all probability the writers have confused Veera-nirvana with Mahavir-nirvana. The year 527 B.C. seems to be the year in which Kalakacharya (the Veer) attained Maha-vir-pada (i.e. Mahavira Nirvan). If this is granted, only then the chronological information about Balmitra, Garbhilla, Darpan, Nahasena and Kalakacharya tallies. Herodotus, the contemporary of Darius (550 B.C.) of Iran has mentioned that India was ruled by Shaka-kings at the time of the said Iran king. The king who established Shaka supremacy in India was perhaps Nahasen (or Nahapan) and he was induced to come to India by Kalakacharya. The Jaina works declare with

pride that it was Kalakacharya who was instrumental in bringing Shakas to India. Kalakacharya has been referred to as Gardabhiliochedaka (eliminator of Gardabhillas). He is also said to have acted as teacher of the Shaka kings. This Nahapen seems to be the Shaka-king who was induced by Kalakacharya to embrace Jainism.

The Shakaraja who assumed the throne of Avanti in about 527 B.C. was a Jain. After Kalakacharya, this Shakaraja appears to have been converted to Vedic religion by Kumarila-bhatta who was probably under this Jain Guru. This Shaka king of Ujjain appears to have been referred to in the story of Chandra-sharma who later on became well known as Govindayati, the Guru of Adi Shankara. He was, per chance married and had four wives. From his Brahmin wife he got Bhartrihari and from his Kshatriya wife he had Harsha. From this account it will be clear that the person who was known as Mahavira in the year 527, was not Bhagwana Mahavira. This Shaka king was succeeded by Bhartrihari and then by his brother Shriharsha. He later on defeated the Shakas who had again invaded the kingdom and founded Shri Harsha Vikramaditya era in 457 B.C. A reference to this event is to be found in *Indica* of Alberuni, to which a reference has already been made.

## **Date of Kumarila Bhatta**

Closely connected with this Veera Kalakacharya, is Kumarila Bhatta as he is reverentially called. He was the leader of the Mimamsa-school. He was the upholder of the Vedic Karmakanda and was an able organiser. He collected around him a band of active workers whom he trained into the Vedic lore. He carried a great debate with the Bauddhas and Jainas. He found them to be superficial in their approach to the problems of life. These Yatis were following an ascetic way of life and using the names Bhagawana Buddha and Bhagawana Mahavira who were held in high esteem by the Indian masses. As we have noted earlier, these great sons of India were the followers of the Vedic Sanatana Dharma and were social reformers. But some strong-willed persons amongst their followers established different faiths in their names and were propagating them. These Yatis succeeded in attracting the attention of the then Royalty.

Bhattapada, was not a little puzzled by their success. He was an erudite scholar of the Vedas and found that these Yatis also had not much different to preach from what the Vedas did. He, therefore, decided to find out the secret of their success. He assumed the role of a Jain disciple and approached this Yati Kalakacharya and requested him to initiate him (Bhattapada) into this new faith. The yati finding him to be a great scholar, initiated him and admitted him into

the order of the Shramanas (the Jaina Sannyasins). Bhattapada soon rose high up in the ladder of Jaina Sannyasins and became Yati's chief disciple. The others, naturally developed jealousy for him.

But before proceeding further with the life story of this great mīmāṃsaka, let us see what his birth place, parentage and other details are.

The Jina-Vijaya (see Sanskrit Chandrika 5-2 page 6) gives the date of birth of Bhattapada thus:

---

***"Rṣirvārah tathā pūmarri martyāksau vāmamelanāt,***

***Ekikṛitya labhetarikah krodhi syāt tatra vatsarah***

***Bhattācarya kumārasya karmakāndaikavadīnah***

***Jñeyah prādurbhavastasminā varṣe Yaudhiṣṭhire śake***

---

Rishi = 7, Wara = 7, Purna = 0, martyakshav = 2 i.e. 2077 Yudhishtira shaka year is the birth year of Kumarila Bhatta, the protagonist of Vaidic Karmakanda".

The Jainas take 2634 B.C. as the start of the Yudhishtira saka so the birth year of Bhattapada works out to 2634-2077 = 557 B.C.

In the same volume, we get the information that Bhattapada was born in the village Jayamangala on the bank of the river Mahanādi, on the border of the Andhra and Utkal countries. He was the resident of Andhra Pradesh and his parents were Yajñeshwara and Chandraguna - a pious Brahmin couple. His father was known as a skilled debater and staunch adherent of the Vedas.

It is further stated that this Bhattapada was admitted to the fold of the Jaina-faith, but bore a terrible hatred for that heretic faith. The other Jaina disciples soon discovered this. They decided to put an end to him. They were waiting for an opportunity for his discomfiture in the eyes of the Yati. It appears that they could not get this opportunity till Kalakscharya was alive. This Veera who was their Guru attained his Nirvana in the year 527 B.C. and another Guru succeeded him. He was not favourably inclined to Bhattapada. One day, while the Guru and the disciples including Bhattapada were enjoying the cool-moonshine on the seventh story of their villa, the disciples started showering abuse on the Vedas very vehemently. Bhattapada was pained at this. In spite of great control he exercised over his mind, tears rolled down his cheeks. The disciples and the guru felt that this was the opportunity for them to throw him down the villa. He was luckily saved and made good for the court of Sudhanva the king of Dwaraka on the west coast of India.



This incident in Bhattapada's life is described gleefully in the same Jine-vijaya thus:

---

***"Nandah purnam bhuh ca netre manujanam ca vamatah  
melane vatsaro dhata yudhsthira sakasya vai  
Bhattacharya Kumarasya karmakandaika vadinah  
Jatah parabhavastasmin vijneyo vatsare subhe***

---

- Nandas – 9, Purna = 0, Bhumi = t, netra = 2 i.e. 2109<sup>th</sup> Yudhshithira shaka year named Dhata. It was in that auspicious year that Kumarila Bhat-tacharya met with his fall".

This year when converted to Christian Era, would be 2634-2109 = 525 B.C.

This Jina-vijaya gives the date of the meeting between Kumarita Bhatta and Sankara as:

---

***"pascadpancadase varse Sankarasya gate sati  
Bhattacharya Kumarasya darsanam krtvan Sivah***

---

- When Sankara was fifteen years old, he met Kumarila. Adi Sankara's year of birth is given as 509 B.C. In this book, (*Sanskrit chandrika*) This would mean that Sankara's meeting with Bhattapada took place in the year 509-15=494 B.C. This also is the year of immolation of Bhattapada.

## **Date Of Kalkasa**

We have seen Kumarilabhatta has been placed at 557 B.C. — 494 B.C. He has cited the verse "satam hi sandeha padesu vastusu" whose author is Kalidasa. It is thus clear that Kalidasa preceded Kumarila. Let us, now determine his date. It appears that there were three Kalidasas, all equally famous.

The verse by Rajasekhara as it appears in Suktimuktavali states:

---

***"eko'pi jiyāte hanta kālidāso na kenacita  
Srngare lalitodgāre kalidasatrayi kimu***

---

- The three Kalidasas who are all masters of the delineation of the art of Love and of graceful and charming expressions, are all great poets. Not even one of them has been excelled by any other poet so far (Rajasekhara flourished in 8th century A.D.) Then what to talk of the three together!"

According to Rajasekhara, it is difficult to surpass the skill and excellence, of three Kalidasas as poets.

T. S. Narayanasastri of Madras in his Age of Sankara agrees with this view. So does Krishnamacariar, the author of 'History of Sanskrit Literature' (pp—112—113).

But T.G. Mainkar (Kalidasa — His Art and Thought — 1962 — p1— S.R. Deshmukh) has a different opinion. While agreeing that evidence either way is not very convincing' interprets the expression 'Kalidasa trayi' in the above verse to mean that the three excellent dramas and three poetic compositions of Kalidasa and does not accept the straight meaning that there were three Kalidasas who flourished at different times. It is the prejudice of such authors which compels them to interpret the verse otherwise than in the straight way. There is no warrant for such a view, particularly in view of our conclusion that Chandragupta Maurya was not the contemporary of Alexander, the Greek invader.

Again it is not true that Kalidasa has only three poetical compositions to his credit. All the scholars agree that atleast four if not more are from his pen. They are Rtusamhāra, Kumārasambhava, Raghuvansha and Meghadūta. So Mainkar's interpretation suffers from this lapse also. There are about thirty to thirty five works attributed to Kalidasa. Mirashi, besides the usual seven: the three dramas — Malavikagnimitra, Vikramorvasiya and Sakuntala and the four poetical compositions noted above, states that the drama 'Kuntala'svara dautya' is also from Kalidasa's pen. Mainkar believes that Isvarakrsna the author of Samkhyakarika, is also none else than this famous Kalidasa. It is not our purpose here to go into these details. Suffice it to say that the tradition has it, that there were three Kalidasas and not one as it is assumed.

By tradition, it is held that there were three different Kalidasas 1. Chronologically ancient among the three was the author of Shakuntala, Malavikagnimitra and Vikramorvasiya (plays) and Meghaduta, Kumarasambhava (epics), 2. The next was Kalidasa, the author of Raghuvamsha Jyotirvidabharana. He was in the court of Vikramaditya, the founder of era in 57 B.C. and 3. The last was in the court of the king Bhoja.

Western as well as Indian Indologists have, however, unnecessarily landed themselves in a quagmire of confusion either by regarding the existence

of one Kalidasa alone or by placing him in one or the other era. The reason for their confusion is that they have paired him invariably with Vikramaditya just as they have paired Chandragupta Maurya with Alexander.

The senior most Kalidasa, known the world over was in the court of Agnimitra. The following lines from his *Malavikagnimitra* may be noted:

---

**"Āśāsyamiti nigamaprabhrti prajānām  
Sampatsyate na khalu goptari agnimitre**

---

Agnimitra is the protector of people. If so, is it possible that the blessing "let people be free from trouble" would prove to be a hopeless dream? (i. e. the said blessing ought to be fruitful. It can not be otherwise). This is the Bharata Vākya (last benedictory verse) of the play 'Malavika Agnimitra'.

This is a straight-forward quotation suggesting that Kalidasa was in the court of the king Agnimitra. But scholars do not accept it, According to our chronology the dynasty of Chandragupta Maurya (324 B.C) was followed by that of the Sunga dynasty founded by 'Pushyamitra Sunga'. He assumed the throne around 187 B.C. Agnimitra the son of Pushyamitra was crowned king around 187-147 = 172 B.C. This is, therefore, the period of first Kalidasa.

Kalidasa has mentioned the names Vikramaditya (son of Mahendra) and his contemporary king Udayana. But this in itself is no conclusive proof to regard him as their contemporary. Modern scholars do not place Udayana beyond 8th century B.C. In *Vikramorvashiya*, Kalidasa the senior has showered praise on Vikramaditya (son of Mahendra) and that is why scholars think that he was in the court of Vikramaditya, the belief that has caused the whole confusion. Kalidasa has not done this in any of his other works. On the contrary in *Malavikagnimitra*, he has praised Agnimitra to an extent that Agnimitra stands before us as a hero with a cluster of virtues and valour incarnate. The reason seems to be that he wanted to impress upon Agnimitra's subject the greatness of their king. All the historical references found in this play (Pushyamitra shunga, Bahadratha, Agnimitra as a governor of Ujjain, Agnimitra's son Vasumitra gaining victory etc) appear to be generally true. Secondly, the plot of the play is not very conducive to being chosen for his first play by a playwright of the eminence of Kalidasa. The reason why he chose it is that he wanted to express his gratitude towards his patron-king. Thirdly, Kalidasa the senior has used many pre-Panini words & puranas in his works (e.g. Rajanya in *Meghaduta*.) This indicates his pre-Paninian date.

The second Kalidasa was in the court of Shakari Vikramaditya. He is the author of *Jyotirvidabharana*. He himself has mentioned his only other work *Raghuvamsha*. None of the other works usually credited to Kalidasa have been mentioned by him. This lends support to the fact that the author of *Shakuntla* must have preceded Kumarila bhatta (i.e. must have lived before 557 B.C.). Kumarilabhattacharya himself has quoted a line from *Shakuntala* in his *Tantravartika* (the line is: *Satam hi sahdehapades vastusu pramāṇam antaḥkaraṇapravṛttayah*). It is thus obvious that Kalidasa, the author of *JyotirVidabharana* was different from Kalidasa, the author of *Shakuntala*.

The second Kalidasa was one of the nine jewels in the court of Sakari Vikramaditya who founded an era, in his name in 57 B.C. This Emperor hailed from the Parmara dynasty. Shalivahana was yet another famous emperor. King Bhoja was tenth in line after Shalivahana. Shalivahana ruled for 60 years. Nine kings after him ruled for 556 years together. Therefore Bhoja can be assigned to about 694 A.D. (78 A.D. + 556). He was also a great king who had secured subjugation of Afghanistan. The third Kalidasa was in the court of this king.

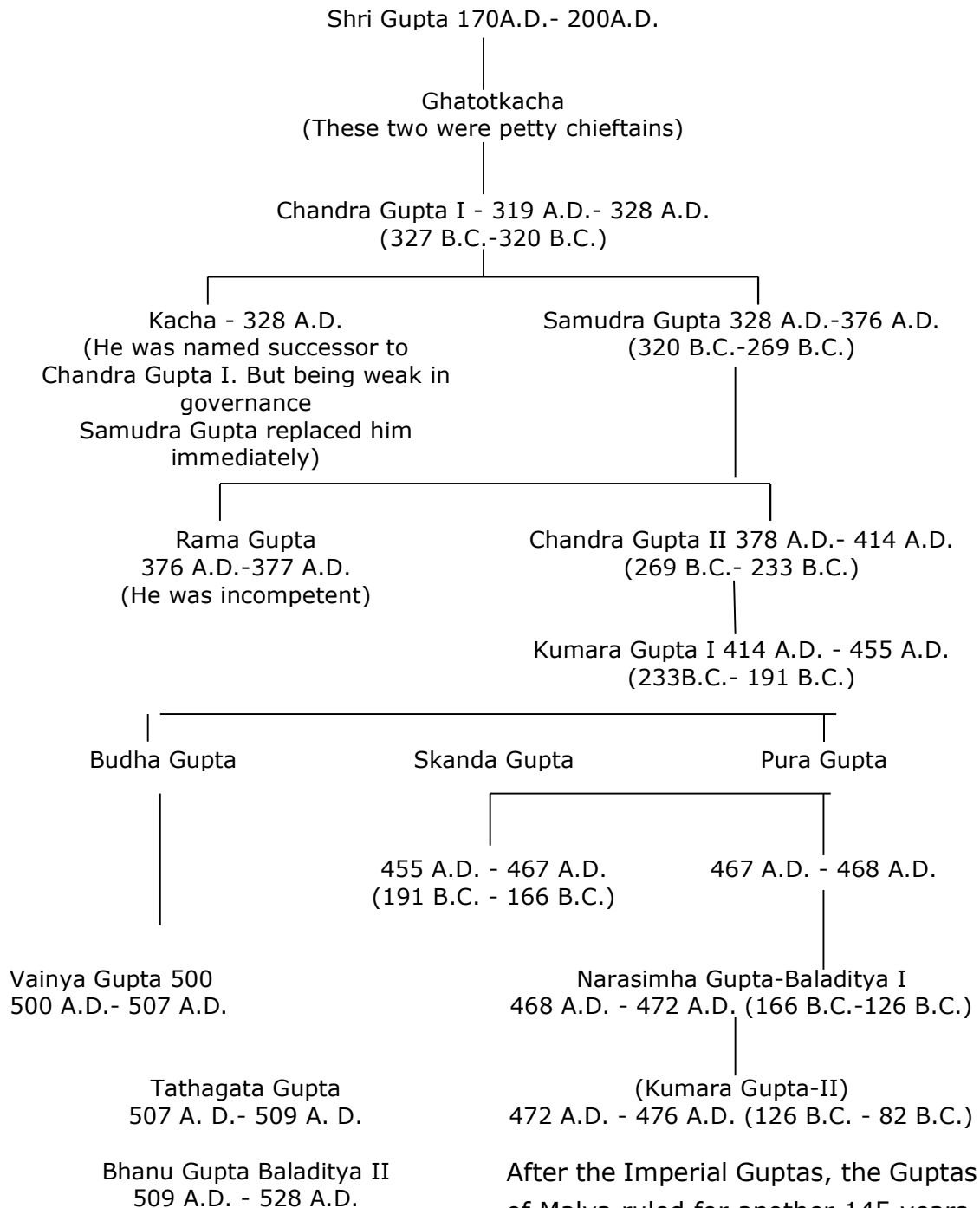
So, with this there is nothing against determining the date of Sankara at 509 B.C.

**Having thus determined the Chronology of the period from Bharata war (i.e. from 3138 B.C.) settled the date of Chandragupta Maurya at 1534 B.C. and that of Chandragupta of the Gupta dynasty at 328 B.C. the path of scholars working on Indian history has now become easy.** The framework of Indian Chronology from 3138 B.C. to 78 A.D. has been laid down. The historicity of Shakari Vikramaditya and Shalivahana the founders of our current eras has been clearly established. It is believed that the evidence in support of our Chronology is varied and unimpeachable.

### 1.16 Gupta Chronology

From the foregoing discussion on Gupta inscriptions, it will be obvious to any one that although the genealogy is the same the date for Chandragupta-I fixed currently at 319 AD is totally absurd. The kings and their regnal periods as currently accepted are noted here under. (PURANIC Chronology is given in brackets.)

(See next page)



After the Imperial Guptas, the Guptas of Malva ruled for another 145 years. Then again the Imperial Guptas headed by Adityasena ruled for another 96 years and the Guptas finally left the Indian scene in 319

A.D. Jivita Gupta II was the last of the Guptas. (This table about current Gupta chronology is based on the table on pp 204-20 of the book '*A History of the Guptas* by R.N. Dandekar)

According to Puranic Chronology the Imperial Gupta dynasty ruled for 245 years from 327 B.C.- 82 B.C. While according to the currently accepted chronology the regnal period of this dynasty is 209 years from 319 A.D. - 528 A.D.

The currently accepted chronology is based on Fleet's interpretation of Gupta Inscriptions edited by him.

### **Gupta Period According to Fleet**

We have conclusively shown that Imperial Gupta dynasty ruled from Pataliputra-Magadha from 327 B.C. - 82 B.C. We have also seen that the Greek evidence supports this view.

However Fleet has determined 319 A.D. as the starting year of the Imperial Gupta Dynasty on the basis of the Gupta-Inscriptions. Fleet's interpretations of these, are far from satisfactory. Yet to remove all reasonable doubts about the dates of the Gupta-Kings as we have determined, we shall examine the current dates fixed for these kings and show that these do not square with any historical events taken as the basis for determining these.

To start with, Fleet notes: "The fact remains, therefore, that in no early record can we find any indication that the era was founded by the Guptas."

He prefaces his volume with the remark ".... the all important question of the exact historical period to which Early Gupta Dynasty must be referred would probably still be left undecided, save by historical and other references and arguments which might at any future time be proved by further discoveries to be unsound and erroneous. "

In spite of these difficulties, Fleet states, "It is necessary, however, in order to avoid paraphrasing to have some convenient name for the era, and,

therefore, as a simple matter of convenience. I follow the custom of the last forty years and speak of it's as The Gupta era".

Fleet further states that the eras of Bharata war and Kaliyuga have been abandoned because of the very large numbers involved in them? So a mere matter of convenience in the hands of these European Indologists has become an established historical fact of the existence of the 'Gupta era'.

Then again, see the historicity of the date of this 'Gupta era.' Fleet quotes Alberuni the Arab traveller who has written an account of what he came to know of India while he was here from 30th April to 30th September 1030 A.D., thus : "As regards the Guptakala, people say that the Guptas were very wicked and powerful people and when they ceased to exist, this date was used as the epoch of an era. It seems that Balaba was the last of them, because the epoch of the era of the Guptas falls like that of the Balaba era 241 years later than the Shakakala." This is Sachau's translation. But M. Rainaud's French translation is more explicit. "...we understand by the word Gupta, certain people who it is said, were wicked and powerful, the era which bears their name is the epoch of their extermination."

From these quotations from Alberuni's India, it is clear that the end of the Guptas came in the year 241 years after the Shakakala. The last of the Guptas was one Balaba. The Balaba era started from Shakakala 319 A.D. (78 + 241). This was also the year of the end of the last of the Guptas.

By no stretch of imagination, therefore, can 319 A.D. be taken as the beginning of the Guptas. But strange to note, Fleet takes 319 A.D. as the starting year of the Imperial Guptas and states: "The Guptas had been so powerful that even when they were dead and gone, people used, their era to date."

Alberuni's statement that the year 319 A.D. is the year of the extinction of the Guptas, would indicate that after the Imperial line ended in 82 B.C. with the demise of Kumara Gupta in that year, some remnants of the Gupta power continued for another 323 years (82 B.C. + 241 A.D.) and finally the Guptas were no more heard after 319 A.D. (78 A.D. + 241)

## **Fleet On Gupta - Kal**

We have seen that the contemporary of Alexander is not Chandragupta Maurya but he is Chandragupta of the Imperial Guptas.

Fleet candidly admits that the versions of the inscriptions he has 'given here (in his volume on 'Corpus Inscriptions Indicarum') may possibly be wrong and that in previously published versions of these inscriptions some different readings were given. He says, "I offer my present versions of the Texts not as absolutely final ones "throughout, but as the most reliable ones that have as yet been produced."

He is however, sure that the Mandasor inscriptions No. 18 which gives the date in Malavagana shaka 493 - refers to Vikram Samvat.

*"Mālavānaṁ ganasthityā yate śata catuṣṭaye*

*Trinavati adhike abdānām ṛtusevyaghaswane*

when by the reckoning from the tribal constitution of the Malavas four centuries of years, increased by ninety three had elapsed; in that season when the low thunder of the muttering of clouds is to be welcomed."

Let us note the gist of this inscription here, as Fleet feels that this is the key to the opening of the secret door to the era of the Guptas.

From the region of Lata — from southern Gujarat, a band of silk weavers migrated to Mandasor then known as Dashapur. By their craft and hard work, they became rich and formed a guild. Some of them took to the profession of warriors. They became famous in the city when Kumargupta was reigning, as an Emperor. His deputy in the city was one Vishwavarman. His son Bandhu Varman succeeded him. During his time a very big temple of the Sun was built in the year 493 of the Malava - Gana - Shaka.

Fleet takes this Malava Gana Shaka as starting from 57 B.C. So 493 means 436 A.D. (493 -57)

Further in line 20 of the inscription, we get the information:

---

***"bahunā samatitena kālen anyaisca pārthivaiḥ***

***Vyaśiryata ekadeśo asya bhawanasya tato adhunā."***

---

"When long time had elapsed since it was built and when several kings had ruled over the city — part of this temple fell into disrepair." This part was repaired by this munificent corporation "when five centuries of years, increased by twenty and nine years had elapsed." The clear meaning is that 529 years had elapsed after the temple was built when some portion of it gave way. But Fleet would not agree with this simple statement. He would again take it as from 57 B.C. and work out at 472 A.D. (529-57). Now, how could such a magnificent temple become dilapidated in just 36 years (i.e. 472 - 436). This question does



not worry him nor the others who follow him. Again the inscription clearly states, "when several kings had ruled this region during these years." We know as a fact that during these 36 years there were not several kings who had ruled over this region. How is it possible that during such a short period several kings would rule and how could such a magnificent strongly built temple would require major repairs in such a short period? But these Indologists have to arrive at such impossible conclusions only because they do not want to accept the historicity of Shakari Vikramaditya and his grandson Shalivahana.

Under the command of this Silk-merchants' guild Vatsabhatti had composed this above referred to eulogy.

The information we get from this narration is this:

(1) When Kumargupta was the emperor and Bandhu Varman was his Governor of the city of Dashpur, the silk-weavers guild built a very huge and grand temple, the chief deity being the Sun. The construction was completed in 436 A.D. according to Fleet and the deity was consecrated with due ceremonies on 13th day of the autumnal month of the Malava Gana -Shaka 493. (i. e. 436 A.D. according to Fleet).

(2) Thereafter, when 529 years had elapsed and when several kings had ruled Dashpur, one part of this magnificent building gave way and fell into disrepair and the guild repaired it.

The shaka year or the name of the Emperor or the name of the Governor, is not given, when this temple was repaired.

But Fleet regards it as the most important clue to determine the Gupta Era. He takes Malava Gana Shaka as the Samvat started by Shakari Vikramaditya in 57 B.C. He knows full well that no Emperor would start an Era in the name of the region or province to which he belongs. So he takes Vikramaditya and Shalivahan to be mythical personages and ascribes the Era established by the former in 57 B.C. and which is current even now, to the 'tribal constitution of Malavas established in 57 B.C. If for the sake of argument we accept Fleet's statement that Shakari Vikramaditya and Shalivana are mythical persons then by the same token, we shall have to take his invention of 'Malava Gana Shaka in 57 B.C.; as nothing but a flight of his imagination. For no record written or otherwise is available to warrant his version about Malava Gana Shaka.

## Historicity of Shakari Vikramaditya:

On the other hand, *Bhavishya Parana*, gives details of the life of Vikramaditya, "*Purne triṃśat śate varse kaiau prāpte bhayaṅkare (3-1-7-14). Jātah śivājñayā sa api kailasād guhyakālayāt - 3-1-7-15 Vikramāditya Namanam pita kṛtva mumoda ha, sa bālopi mahāprajñah pitrmātrpṛiyam-karah, (16) and so on .....* when thirty hundred years of the terrible Kaliyuga had been completed a divine person from the abode of the Gubyakas on the mountain Kailas (Guhyaka — an order of the supernatural beings), took birth in human form at the command of the God Shiva for destroying the Shakas and for increasing the glory of the Arya religion. His father *Gandharva-Sena* (vide verse 10 in the same Chapter) was very much delighted and he named him Vikramaditya. While as a boy, he was very wise and was liked by his parents. When he was only five years old he went to forest and practised penance for twelve years. (His father was in the forest when he was born. That time his other son *Shamkha* was ruling). Then (after the death of his brother, father and mother) he returned, to *Ambavati* (Ujjain) with all the glory and power earned through austerities and was crowned king on the celebrated golden throne decorated with 32 golden images."

This *Purana* gives the date of his birth as around 101 B.C. and the date of his coronation as 82 B.C

This *Purana* further gives the information that this *Vikramaditya* was the king Emperor of Bharatavarsha the boundaries of which have been given thus:

---

***"Paścime sindhunadyante setubandhe hi daksine,  
uttare badaristhāne purve ca kapilāntaka (1-3-20-10)***

---

On her west side is the river Sindhu and on southern end is SETU Bandha Rameshwar. On the north is Badaristhan and on her East is the region of Kapila."

Further in the beginning of his commentary on Shatapatha Brahmana Hariswami has indicated his time thus:

---

***"Yadabdānām kalerjagmuh sapta triṃsat śatāni  
catvāriṃsatsaṃāscan yastadā bhasyamidam krtam vai***

---

This *commentary* was written when Kali had completed 3047 years (7 + 3000 + 40)". He further observes:

---

***"śrimato avantināthasya vikramārkasya-bhupateḥ  
dharmādhyakso hariswāmi vyākhyāchātapathim śrutim ||***

---

— This commentary on Shatapatha Brahmana has been written by Hariswami, the head of the ecclesiastical department of Vikramaditya the king of Ujjaina."

Some scholars read 'Sapta Trimsatsatam' as one word and calculate the number of years as 3740 (3700 + 40) after Kali. This would be equivalent to 638 A.D. (3740-3102). But in the year 638 A.D., there is no Avantinatha Vikramarka— Vikramaditya the king of Ujjaina. And so this reading does not square with facts.

This Kali year is therefore 55 B.C. (3102 B.C. - 3047 B.C.) the time when Vikramaditya founded the era in his own name in the year 57 B.C. This Hariswami had made a reference to Prabhakara, the author of Bṛhati, a commentary on the Sabara bhasya on mimāṃsa. In 'sarvasiddhāntarahasya' by Sesa, we find the teacher-pupil relationship between this Prabhakara and Kumarilabhatta, the senior contemporary of Adi Saiikara.

The date of 3044 Kali Era or 57 B.C. as the start of Vikram Era is confirmed by another way too. Varahamihira and Kalidasa are said to be among the 'nine gems' who adorned the court of Vikrama. This is crosschecked by *Kutuhala - manjari* which says that Varaha-mihira was born in the year 3042 of the Yudhisthira Era. This is also counter-checked by Kalidasa's Sloka in the colophon of his work 'Jyotirvidābharana' which says that he completed the book in the year 3042 of Yudhisthira Saka which falls in the year 24 of Vikrama Samvat or 33 B.C.

## **Historicity of Shalivahana:**

On his (Shakari Vikramaditya's) death in about 18 A.D. his Empire disintegrated and the Shakas began pillaging and looting the land. Then came:

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***"etasminantare tatra Śālivāhanabhūpatih / Bhavishya 3-32-17(2nd pada)***

***Vikramaditya pautrah ca pitrrajya grahitavan***

***Jitvā śakān durdharsān cinataittiridesajan - 18 /***

***Bahlikān kāmārupāṁśca romajān khurājanscatān***

***Tesām kośam grihitvā ca dandayogyānakārayat // – 19***

***Sthāpita tena maryadā mlechāryānām prthakprthak***

***Sindhustnānamiti jneyam rāstramāryasya ca uttamam // 11-20***

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the Emperor Shalivahan - the grandson of Vikramaditya re-established his sway over, the ancestral Empire. He conquered the mighty Shakas who came from China, Mangolia, Bahlika, Assam, Romakes (and of Khorasan) Iran etc. seized their treasuries and subjugated them. He then laid down the boundaries of the shakas and the Aryas. The name of the Arya-country is Sindhusthan."

According to *Siddhanta Shiromani* of Bhaskaracharya the era of Shalivahana begins: "*nandadrindugunan ca Vikramasyante kaleh vatsare Nanda* = 9, Adri = 7 indu = 1 and Gunas = 3. So 3179 years expired (of Kaliyuga) and the end of Vikrama-era established in 57 B.C. i.e. 3179-3101 (Kali years) = 78 A.D.

These details have been confirmed by the references in the following books:

1. *Jyotirvidābharana* of Kālidasa.
2. *Nepal Rajya Vamshavati*
3. *Jyotishphalaratnamala* of Shri Krishna Mishra.
4. *Rajatarangni* of Kalhana.
5. The texts of various commentaries on the *Shatapatha Brahmana*.
6. Marts *Vamsha* — A Budhist chronicle.
7. *Ancient India of Ptolemy* — Mac Crindle.
8. *Alberuni's India*.

Besides these the yearly Almanacs of different parts of Bharata even today begin their calculations from either the Vikramaditya or Shalivahana eras.

To say that these two great emperors are mythical persons in spite of this strong literary and inscriptional evidence, is the travesty of truth. The Indian tradition unequivocally endorses the fact that these two Emperors are real

persons who established the eras in their own names to mark their momentous victories over the Shaka invaders.

These details conclusively prove that the Era current in India since 57 B.C. is Vikrama Era established by Vikramaditya the great and it cannot by any stretch of imagination be the "reckoning of the tribal constitution of the Malavas" as Fleet parades it as the complete and established truth in the history of India.

Moreover, note here the anxiety of the English Pandit to label the Indians as primitive tribal peoples. He translates 'mālavānām ganasthityā' as 'the reckoning from the establishment of the tribal constitution of the Malavas If at all, the correct translation should have been "the reckoning from the republican constitution of the Malvas."

## What is Malava Gana?

This expression again occurs in No. 35 Mandasor Stone inscription. There in line 21 — we get:

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***Pañcasu śatesu śaradāṃ yateśu ekonayati  
sahitesu / malavaganashitivaśat-kalajnanaya likhitṣu //***

---

Fleet translates "Five hundred autumns, together with ninety less by one, having elapsed from (the establishment of) the supremacy of the tribal constitution of the Malavas, (and) being written down in order to determine the (present) time,"

In this inscription one Yashodharman, a tribal ruler is noted as having suffered some wounds at the hands of his enemies. Again Vishnu-varadhan a great King, who is Rajadhiraj Parameshwara king of kings and supreme lord, is mentioned. The date given is 589 of Malava Gana Shaka.

It appears that Vishnuvardhan is the king and Yashodharman is the Governor appointed by him. One Shashthidarta appears to be the purohita of the king. The son of this purohita is Varahadasa whose son is Ravikirti. His wife was Bhanugupta who gave birth to Bhagavaddosha, Abhayadatta, and Doshakumbha. Daksha was the son of Doshakumbha. He constructed a large well in memory of Abhayadatta who was the king's officer — Rajasthaniya.

"The above verse literary means "589 years have elapsed since the fixed reference time written for the purpose of knowledge of the particular time, the

reference being to the establishment of Malava Gana Shaka." In other words, it simply means that the current time is Malava Gana Shaka 589 expired.

It appears that Malavas were independence loving people and strongly resented the efforts of the others to establish their suzerainty over them. This is what C. Payne says "In Indian manuscripts we find Malava noticed as a separate province eight hundred and fifty years before the Christian Era. When Dhunji, to whom a Divine origin is attributed, is said to have established the power of the Brahmins and to have been the founder of the powerful dynasty."

"The family of Dhunji is said to have reigned three hundred eighty seven years when Putraj, the fifth in descent, dying without issue, Adab Panwar a prince of Rajput clan still numerous in Malwa ascended the throne, establishing the Panwar dynasty which continued to hold sway for upward of one thousand and fifty eight years."

"During the period that Dhunji's family held Malava, we find no particular mention of them until about seven hundred and thirty years before Christ, when Dhunji's successor is said to have shaken off his dependence on the Sovereign of Delhi (i.e. Magadha Emperors). From this time we lose all trace of kingdom of Malava until near our own era when Vikramaditya a Prince whom all Hindu authors agree in describing, as the encourager of learning and the arts, obtained the sovereignty."

So there was no king ruling over Malava, from about 730 B.C. Malava people appear to have began counting their Era from this period. We can allow about 5 years for the people to establish this era and take its start as from 725 B.C. Before the establishment of the Eras by Vikramaditya and Shalivahan, this Malava Gana Era of 725 B.C. and Shri Harsha Era 457 B.C. (as recorded by Alberuni) were in use, in the region of Malava and around.

So one thing is atleast clear that Malva Gana Shaka which is not in the name of any sovereign, cannot be the Vikram Samvat of 57 B.C. established by Shakari Vikramaditya. It is "the reckoning from the establishment of independence, started by the Malava people." The year is likely to have been around 725 B.C. a conclusion possible from the happenings in Malava around that time. This appears to give us the correct dates of Mandasor inscription No. 18. The year of 493 there, would mean 232 B.C (725-493). According to the chronolgy determined by us earilier, at this time Kumar-gupta was the Magadha emperor. This also gives the confirmation to the statement in the inscription itself.

Fleet would not agree to this obvious conclusion and would stick to his version that Malava Gana is Vikram era started from 57 B.C.

## Acrobatics

Fleet has many such surprises up his sleeve. He says "----- the first time, by visiting Ujjain, I became aware of the almost equally important inscription of Yashodharman and Vishnuvardhan. No. 35 page 150 which gave the key to the whole history of the period, by supplying a definite date for Yashodharman, who was known from the Mandasor inscriptions (No. 33 page 142) discovered under my direction in March 1884 to have overthrown the Well known foreign invader and conqueror, Mihirkula who, again, I had previously determined, must have affected the final downfall of the Early Gupta Dynasty. Without "these discoveries, the period of the Early Gupta supremacy would have still remained the subject of argument and doubt where as with them, I have been able now to set this question at rest, and thus to establish a starting point from which we can work back in developing the Indo Scythian history, and also through fixing, for the first time, the date of Mihirkula — who as we learn from the writings of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang, played a most leading, and important part in the early Indian History to furnish the means of adjusting the chronology before and after him, of the early history of Kashmira, as recorded in the *Rajatarangini* and also of testing the accuracy of the Chinese accounts of the same early period."

Here, it is clearly evident that Fleet's imagination has run amuck. From the details given in this inscription No. 35 he makes the following claims: 1. He has been able to fix the period of the Early Gupta supremacy beyond all reasonable doubt. 2. Mihirkula is a foreign invader and conqueror, 3. Yashodharman was a very powerful king who overthrew Mihirkula, 4. he has got the master-key to fix the chronology of the early history of Kashmira, 5. Chinese pilgrim's accounts are accurate.

In his introductory remarks noted earlier we found that Fleet was not confident of his readings of these inscriptions or the conclusions. Now he writes as if he is quite sure of what he writes.

Let us examine these inscriptions on which. Fleet founds his claims.

It is a set of three inscriptions, No, 33, 34 and 35. Of these three, No. 35 is the important one. We have seen earlier that it refers to Vishnuvardhan as Rajadhiraj Parameshwara, the king of kings and the supreme lord and Yashodharman as a tribal ruler subordinate to Vishnuvardhan.

Fleet admits in note 3 that *Rajadhiraj* is a title which denotes paramount sovereignty. One has also to note that in the skirmishes with enemies Yashodharman had suffered many wounds.

Now let us turn to No.33, The king Yashodharman's exploits are noted here. It is stated that he did accomplish what the powerful Guptas could not do. He made the mighty foreign conqueror the chief to the Hunas to bend before him and touch his feet. He brought under his command the whole of Bharata.

No. 34 is just a duplicate of this. Moreover it is fragmented and as No. 33 is complete, it is enough if we consider No. 33 alone.

The date of this inscription is not noted here, but we can easily infer it from No. 35. In that inscription the year noted is Malava Gana Shaka 589. It has been shown above that this Shaka is not Vikrama Samvat but had been established by the people of Malava. Let us however, assume it to be the start of Malava era of 57 B.C. as Fleet has done. The year 589 would, therefore, be 532 A.D. Around this time, according to No. 35 Yashodharman was a feudatory King under Vishnuvardhan. So the date of this No. 33 must be later than No. 35 as in it the name of the sovereign Vishnuvardhan has not been noted but only the exploits of Yashodharman befitting Samudragupta's have been detailed.

It would, therefore, appear that this Yashodharman performed this great feat of subjugating this terrible Huna Mihirkula when Vishnuvardhan was no longer there. But as Vishnuvardhan has been described as the Emperor, he (Vishnuvardhan) must have come, immediately after the Early Guptas and established his sway over the whole of Bharata. Yashodharman was the Governor of this Emperor, but when he defeated Mihirkula, Vishnuvardhan was also not around. The defeat of Mihirkula is extolled as very very significant feat on the part of Yashodharman as even the Guptas were not able to defeat him. And as this Yashodharman performed this marvel, it is clear that even Vishnuvardhan when he was the Emperor, could not achieve this feat. If Vishnuvardhan has come immediately after the Guptas he must be the cause of the downfall of the Guptas. Then how can Fleet give this credit to Mihirkula? Again when this inscription No. 33 has been engraved by Govinda the person who has also engraved the other two namely No. 34 and 35, is it not curious that Yashodharman is not given the title of Rajadhiraj, the king Emperor? It is stated that this inscription has been engraved under the direction of Yashodharman, then how can he fail to note this important fact?

It appears that this inscription No. 33 is a spurious one. Many inscriptions have been shown by Fleet himself to be spurious ones.

No record of any kind anywhere is available to show that Yashodharman ever existed. If he was such a brave and valorous Emperor, like Samudragupta how can *Bhavishya Puranas*, which notes even Akbar and queen Victoria, fail to note him. Moreover, *Rajatarangini* a history by Kashmiri Pandit, the son of



minister puts Mihirkula in 704 B.C. and notes him as the king of the dynasty of Gonanda III. If Yashodharman had defeated this tyrant in 532 A.D. how can Kalhan fail to notice him. Again Miharkula is not a foreign invader or a Hun for that matter. He is a Kshatriya of the dynasty of Gonanda III.

There is yet another inscription of Mihirkula No. 37, Gwalior Stone inscription. In this inscription, Matricheta is stated to have built a sun temple during the reign of Mihirkula who is described as a son of Toramana, a Vaishnavite. Then what happens to Fleet's thesis that Mihirkula was a Hun not belonging to Vaishnavite sect but a foreign invader?

This Toraman is described as Maharajadhiraj in Inscription No. 36 and it is stated that he came after Budhagupta, the last of the Early Imperial Guptas. According to Dr. Fleet, Vishnuvardhan and Yashodharman succeeded the last of the Imperial (Early) Guptas. While here (p 150) he states that Toramana succeeded, the last of the Early Guptas. At any rate he puts together all these three great conquerors in a short span of a year or two. They appear on the scene in or about 532 A.D. and just vanish away as meteors by about the same year 532 A.D.

Fleet states that shortly after Skandagupta, Budhagupta with date A.D. 484 and Bhanugupta with date A.D. 510, appear on the scene (p. 7 Introduction). According to him Bhanugupta's reign continued upto A.D. 528. He then avers that the great king Mihirkula accomplished the final extinction of the Guptas around this time. But Toramana his father was also the king Emperor. Inscription No.36 tells us that. Fleet further tells us that Mihirkula exterminated the Guptas around 533 A.D. (P. 10 Introduction) And further on Page 11 Fleet further tells us that Yashadharman defeated Mihirkula in 533-34 A.D. and from Inscription No. 37, we get the information that in Mihirkula's time a sun temple was built. So if around 533 A.D. he exterminated the Guptas, we have to believe that in the same year he himself as is stated in the inscription itself was defeated by Yashodharman. Then, how can Sun-temple be built in Mihirkula's fifteenth year of reign? Again Mihirkula's father Toramana and Yashodharman's Emperor Vishnuvardhan both of these heroes have to be crammed in around A.D. 532. And this is what Dr. Fleet does, and we have to believe all this because he says so. A saying goes that two swords cannot be put together but this impossible feat Fleet achieves.

In *Rajatarangini* Toramana is mentioned as the younger brother of Hiranya who belonged to the Andha Yudhisntira dynasty of Kashmira. Hiranya's regnal period is 16 B.C. to 14 A.D. Toramana was imprisoned by Hiranya. For Toramana while he was Yuvaraja-the prince, he struck coins in his own name. He died in captivity.

It we get some coins of Toramana, it is because of his having done so without authority.

It is therefore clear that some of the inscriptions from the set of inscriptions No. 33, 34, 36 are spurious. For in the whole literature of India or elsewhere we do not find any confirmation for these. The information they give is also so fantastic as to be unbelievable. For Rajatarangini tells us that Toramana came 7 centuries later than Mihirkula, while the inscriptions show that Mihirkula is a Huna and is son of Toramana. Vishnuvardhan, Yashodharman, Toramana and his son Mihirkala were all king Emprors more or "less in the same year that is 532 A.D. according to these inscriptions. We have therefore to reject some of these as faked ones. Fleet tells us this set of inscriptions is the latest discovery of his.

We have in Fleet's volume, one inscription No. 59 wherein Vishnuvardhan's name appears. He is described as a king and son of one Yashovardhan. The genealogy is given as Vyaghrarata — Yashorata-Yashovardhana — Vishnuvardhana. The last named king has set up a sacrificial post on the completion of the ceremony of Pundarika sacrifice.

If we connect this inscriptional evidence (No. 59) with the above set of inscriptions, (33 to 39) perhaps the mystery will be solved.

As seen from note 2 (on P. 145) Fleet himself is not sure whether the rendering of the name Yashodharman is correct. He says "these might be corrected to Yashovardhan for 'Varman' occurs frequently as the termination of proper names and Vardhan is a rarity. It is however, very small step from 'dharman' to 'Vardhan' so in this set 33, 34, 35 the name may well be Yashovardhan instead of Yashodharman. In No. 35 this, Yashodharman is the - feudatory of Vishnuvardhan but the reading would be correct if the roles in 35 are reversed and brought on par with no. 59. In that case No. 33. (34 is just a duplicate and fragmented) alone may be suprious.

About No. 36 and 37 the only thing one can say is that they do not refer to Toramana who is 18th king after Mihirkula and mentioned as the borther of Hiranya in Rajatarangini. There may be some other petty chiefains in eastern Malava by name Toramana and Mihirkula. Again in line 2 of inscription No. 37 — the name of the father of Mihirkula is given aShri Toram, while, Fleet is reading it as Toramana. Mihirkula and Toramana are connected with the history of Kashmira and not with that of East Malva. So the inscriptions as they are, require to be read properly and not as Fleet has done. They are his brand new discoveries and if read property, they would not give the meaning which he has tried to derive from them.

In the first place Mihir or Toramana are not Huna names as Fleet erroneously supposes. They are respectable Brahmin and Kshatriya names as the name of Varahimhir the famous astronomer suggests. Fleet is however sure that in the Meherauli inscription No. 32 (p.139), the place name is an evident corruption of Mihirapuri, Mihira being the clan name among the Hunas. The curious fact is that Fleet takes Chandra the king in No. 32 as the brother of Mihirakula who was defeated by Baladitya of Magadha.

Thus there are two kings Yashodharman and Baladitya who have defeated that terrible Mihirakula who according to Fleet overpowered the early Guptas. The date of Yashodharman is 532 A.D. and that of Baladitya is 672 A.D. Baladityadeva came after Jivitaguptadeva who is 4th in line after Adityasen. It clearly shows that Mihirakula can not be assigned to 532 A.D. as Fleet has done. He has not given any explanation for this apparent mistake.

Fleet states that the name of Mihirakula's brother is Chandra of inscription No. 32. Chandra is obviously from the exploits noted in Chandragupta II of the Imperial Gupta dynasty. (378 A.D. - 414 A.D. even according to Fleet)

Chandra is certainly not a Huna name and yet he is stated, to be the brother of Mihirakula-a Huna. There is an obvious inconsistency in the statements of Fleet.

No. 60 is stated to be a spurious inscription by Fleet on the ground of incorrect-use of Sanskrit Vibhaktis. (cases in grammar). It purports to be a grant of the village of Revalika in the Gaya district, by Samudragupta. So if on the wrong use of a case in Sanskrit grammar, No. 60 can be spurious then for so many inconsistencies No. 33- the new found discovery of Fleet, has to be taken as spurious. There is also direct epigraphic evidence as regards Gupta-Kala'. Let us examine it.

## Epigraphic evidence

The 'Epigraphica Indica' contains a reference to the '*Aguptayika*' era. This epigraphical reference is in Gokak plates of Dejjā Maharaja of the Rashtrakuta family. The relevant lines of the grant by the Maharaja read as follows:

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***"Ih = asyām = avasarpinyān = Tirthankarānāma  
caturvimsātītamasya sanmateh śrī vardhamānasya  
vardhamānāyām tirtha santatāu = Aguptāyikānām rājñam =  
ashtāsu varsha - śateshu pañca —catvāriṃśad — agreṣhu  
gateshu".***

---

N.L Rao the editor of the grant Plate has rendered the above lines into English as:

"When forty five after eight hundred of the years of the Aguptayika kings in (i.e. belonging to) this ever flowing and prosperous spiritual lineage of the wise Vardhamana, the twenty fourth of the tirthankaras had elapsed-".

Palaeographically the document may be ascribed to about the 6th or 7th century of the Christian era. N.L. Rao, therefore, opines that the commencement of the reign of Chandragupta Maurya in B.C. 312-13 may be the starting point of the Aguptayika era. So the date of Dejjā Maharaja would be about  $312 + 845$  or  $845 - 312 = 533$  A.D. According to D.C. Sircar, this Aguptayikanam may be a fabrication by the astronomer at Dejjā Maharaja's court. He speculates that Dejjā may have ruled Belgaum region during the interregnum which ensued after the death of Pulakesin II in 642 A.D. and before the accession of Vikramaditya in 655 A.D. He therefore takes the date of Āguptāyikānām era as  $845 - 642 = 203$  B.C. But at about this time as there was no Gupta king who could have started such an era, he takes it as a fabrication. He assigns no reason whatsoever as to why the astronomer should fabricate such a story.

According to K.V. Ramesh, "Dejjā was one of the victims of Pulkesi I" and this he says "will mean that the Aguptayika era could as well have commenced in the second half of the 4th century B.C. in which case it could very well have been started by or reckoned after Chandragupta Maurya,"

The Mauryas are not known as Guptas and they could not have started any such era as Gupta-era. The astronomer in Dejjā's court certainly refers to the Gupta kings whose reign has commenced from 327 B.C. as we have shown earlier. The date of the inscription is therefore  $845 - 327 = 518$  A.D., when Dejjā Maharaja was ruling at Belgaum in present Karnataka State of India.

S.P. Tiwari agrees with the view that 'Āguptāyikānām rājñām' means 'kings who came to be known after Gupta'. He therefore takes it as denoting reckoning 'belonging to the kings of the Gupta era' commenced from 319 A.D. He takes the date of Dejjā Maharaja as  $319 + 845 = 1164$  A.D. But at this period there is no Dejjā Maharaja of the Rashtrakuta family and so he would arrive at  $845 - 319 = 526$  A.D. as K.V. Ramesh has done. For this he gives some elaborate rules of grammar and states that A in Aguptayikanam means 'exclusive'. This is curious indeed! The meaning of 'Ā' is 'An maryadabhidhyoh = inclusion, the limit inceptive'. (Panini II-1-13). A is, limit from- To use, it in the other perverted way is absurd. These scholars have to resort to some such acrobatics, only because they are prisoners of their own misconception that the contemporary of Alexander is Chandragupta Maurya, when the Indian historians

and scholars of bygone days have invariably placed Chandragupta of the Gupta dynasty in 327 B.C. This latter is the contemporary Alexander the Greek adventurer.

Tewari places Dejja of the Rashtrakutas in 526 A.D. and states that the Chalukyas patronised the Saka era started in 78 A.D. and so their adversaries the Rashtrakutas avoided any reference to this era and followed some local era linking it with that of the Gupta era which may not have been as popular as the Saka era, still it may have been known to the astronomers.

Moreover the Guptas are not linked with Vardhamana the Jaina Tirthankara in this epigraph as the scholars suppose. This link as Tewari points out is with the donee in this grant, namely Aryanandācārya. The text in this respect is : *Jalāra-grāme Jambukhaṇḍa ganasthāya jnāna —darśana — tapas — sampannāya Aryanandyacharyaya kshetram dattavan* (lines 8 — 9 — 10) In the village of Jalara, grant of land has been given to Aryanandacārya by one Indrananda belonging to the line of wise Vardhamana." This direct epigraphic evidence supports the theory that the Guptas ruled as Emperors of India from 327 B.C.

## **UNIT – 2 : POST-BHARATA-WAR DYNASTIES**

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The Bharata-war was fought for 18 days and Yudhishtira the victor was coronated early in 3138 B.C. These dates according to the Gregorian Calendar are worked out thus: 8<sup>th</sup> October 3139 B.C. as the date of the start of the Bharata war. And Yudhishtira was coronated as Emperor of Bharata and installed on the throne of Hastinapura on 17<sup>th</sup> December 3139 B. C. Kaliyuga was ushered in on 20<sup>th</sup> February 3102 B.C.

After the victorious Yudhishtira was crowned emperor, he sent his brothers to the vassal states and placed the sons of the nearest heirs of the dead kings on the thrones.

### **2.1 Paurava Line :**

The dynasty which had Yudhishtira at its head is called Paurava. This is also the continuation of the pre-Bharata war Lunar or Kuru-line. 29 kings of this dynasty ruled one after the other for 1504 years- from 3138 B.C. to 1634 B.C. The last king was Kshemaka. He was dethroned by Mahapadma Nanda who was then the most powerful king Emperor.

Yudhishtira performed Ashwmedha Yajna two years after his coronation. His uncle, Vidura the great, was his Prime Minister.

Dhritarashtra, his uncle and Duryodhana's father, left for Vanaprastha 15 years after Yudhishtira's coronation. Sutanu the daughter of Yudhishtira was married to Ashva, the son of Krishna (the lord) and his wife Satyabhama. This couple's son was named Vajra.

Yudhishtira was followed by Parikshita the grandson of Arjuna, the Pandava hero. Parikshita's father Abhimanyu was, killed in the Bharata-war Yudhishtira also nicknamed Dharmaraja had abdicated in favour of Parikshita in 3101 B.C. when he heard that Lord Krishna had left his mortal coil at Prabhasa-pattana in Saurashtra. Dharmaraja along with his wife Draupadi and his other brothers, left for the Himalayas. After a stay of about 25 years there, they left their material bodies and went to heaven. The year was 3076 B.C. This year is the beginning of Saptarshi era or Laukika era which was till recently in vogue in Kashmir. Kaliyuga start is taken as the year of the death of Lord Krishna 3101 B.C. The year of coronation of Dharmaraja, namely 3138 B.C. (3139 December) is also known as the start of the Yudhishtira era or shaka. Some calculate this era from 3101 the year in which he abdicated in favour of Parikshita.

Parikshita ruled for 60 years. He was succeeded by Janamejaya in 3041 B.C. He performed that great Sarpa sacrifice (snakes were offered as libation to the fire). His father Parikshita had died of snake-bite. He had therefore performed this Yajna to avenge the death of his father. The history of Bharata war was compiled during his time. Later on it was transformed into an epic of one lac verses.

Janamejaya had changed his priest. So there was a scuffle between him and some Brahmanas. As a result he had proceeded to Vanaprastha.

Janamejaya was succeeded by Shatanika his eldest son. His son and successor was Ashvamedha-datta. During his time the Puranas were being rewritten. They were given final shape by the disciples of Bhagvan Vedavyasa who had redrafted and reshaped them into 18 Mahapuranas from the original one with about 4 lacs of verses.

He was succeeded by his son Adhisima Krishna followed by latter's son Nichakshu. During the reign of this King Nichakshu, Hastinapur was ravaged by the big floods of the river Ganga. The King had to shift his capital to Kaushambi from Hastinapur. During Adhisimakrishna's time the Puranas in the present form were completed.

Nichakshu was the seventh in the line. He was succeeded by Ushna (some Puranas give the name Bhuri), Chitraratha-Shuchidratha, Vrishnimana-Sushana-Sunitha-Nichakshu II-Sukhabala, Pariplava-Sunaya-Medhavi-Ripunjaya-Durva-Tigmata-Brihadratha-Kasudana-Shatanika-Udayana-Vashinara-Dandapani-Niramitra and the last was Kshemaka. They succeeded one after the other, father to son.

Udayana noted above has been the hero around whom many stories are woven by wellknown Sanskrit poets like Bana, Gunadhya and Bhasa. Kautilya and Shri Harsha also have showered praise on him. Kalidasa the great has in his Meghduta, poetical composition of high value, noted that this king was very valorous and chivalrous and was a talk of many legendary and romantic stories every day sung by the young and old alike. He appears to be the contemporary of the king Pradyota. He is different from Udayi or Udayan of the Shishunaga dynasty. Yougandharayana was Udayana's Prime Minister. He was very loyal and clever. Udayan had developed expertise in capturing elephants. He played on his Veena (a musical instrument) in such a way that the elephant, hearing the music of Veena played by him, would run to him. Once while in the Naga garden around Yamuna, Udayan who was also known as Vatsaraja (a boy-king during his father's days) was busy in his games. The minister Shalankayan secretly despatched by the Prime Minister Bharata-rohaka of the king Chanda

Mahasena of Ujjayani, managed to capture Vatsaraja through a well-laid-out plot. Mahasena and his queen Angaravati treated him well. Seeing Udayan's mastery over veena, they appointed him teacher of their daughter Vasavadatta. They fell in love with each other. Till then Udayan had remained unmarried.

Yougandharayana when he heard of his king's capture by Mahasena by a strategy, effected the escape of both Udayana and Vasavadatta.

Udayana's marriage with Vasavadatta was performed with fanfare at Kaushambi, his capital. Mahasen Pradyota (Chanda Mahasena was also known as Pradyota) had agreed to the marriage and sent presents to his son-in-law and daughter through his son Gopalaka.

Yougandharayana seeing that Pradyota had come to recognise Kaushambi's strength, he then laid out another plot. By this he got Udayana married to Padmavati the beautiful daughter of the king Darshaka, the Magadha Emperor. Thereafter Udayana recaptured a small part of his kingdom lost to the Panchal king. He remained a very powerful emperor and a great lover of art, music and literature.

After the last king Kshemaka, the Paurava dynasty came to a close. In all 29 kings are noted as belonging to this dynasty. They reigned for 1504 years from 3138 B.C. to 1634 B.C.

## **2.2 Solar line**

In the Bharata war, the last king of the Solar line, Brihadbala was killed by Abhimanyu. His son Brihatkshana was crowned as king at Ayodhya after the war.

This line had 30 kings, the last being Sumitra who died childless. Mahapadma Nanda took over the kingdom in 1634 B.C. The king's names one after the other were: 1) Bhrihatkshana, 2) Uruyaksha, 3) Vatsavyuha, 4) Prativyoma, 5) Divakara, 6) Sahadeva, 7) Brihadaswa, 8) Bhanuratha, 9) Pratitasva, 10) Supratika, 11) Marudeva, 12) Sunakshatra, 13) Kinnara, 14) Antariksha, 15) Suparna, 16) Amitrajit, 17) Brihatbhraja, 18) Dharmi, 19) Krutanjaya, 20) Rananjaya, 21) Sanjaya, 22) Sakya, 23) Suddodana, 24) Siddhartha, 25) Rahula, 26) Prasenajit, 27) Khudraka, 28) Kundaka, 29) Suradha, 30) Sumitra.

These thirty kings reigned for 1504 years from the Mahabharata war and the dynasty ends with 30th king Sumitra in 1468 Kali (or 1634 B.C.)

From this list we find Siddhartha was the 24th of the solar line of kings, Later he abdicated the throne in favour of his son Rahula and took to Sannyasa, After



severe austerities he attained Buddhahood-enlightenment, and became the world famous Gautama, the Buddha.

The Westerners have rejected the Puranas and so determined Buddha's date on conjectural basis. We have done it now on the basis of the authentic details culled from the Puranas. The kings of Magadha are held as Emperors of India by the Puranas. Their regnal periods are given. In the post-Bharata-war dynasties, though the Paurava line is important, it lost its position after the last king Sumitra. The Magadha kings took the centre stage after that dynasty lost its position. The first such dynasty is Barhadratha.

We shall now see the kings of Magadha and their regnal periods, as these are available from the Puranas.

**This dynasty was founded in 4159 B.C. Their names and regnal periods are given below:**

Sr.No.	Name of the king	Regnal period	Before Christ
1.	Samvarana	88	4159-4071
2.	Kuru	72	4071-3991
3.	Sudhanva I	80	3999-3919
4.	Suhotra	93	3919-3826
5.	Chyavana	38	3826-3788
6.	Krimi or Kirti	37	3788-3751
7.	Uparichara Vasu also known as Pratipa or Chaidya	42	3751-3709
8.	Brahadratha	72	3709-3637
(Founder of Magadha kingdom with Girivraja as capital)			
9.	Kushagra	70	3637-3567
10.	Rishabha	70	3567-3697
11.	Satyahita	60	3497-3437
12.	Punya or Pushpavanta	43	3437-3394
13.	Satyadhruti	43	3394-3351

14.	Sudhanva II	43	3351-3308
15.	Sarva	43	3308-3265
16.	Sambhava	43	3265-3222
17.	Jarasandha	42	3222-3180
18.	Sahadeva	42	3180-3138
(He was killed in Bharata war).			

The names of the first two kings are not exactly known. Samvarana and Kuru are the founders of this dynasty. It is possible that a few names of kings in this list may have been omitted in Puranas while compiling the dynastic details.

The names of the post-Bharata war-Kings are by and large correct and complete.

1.	Somadhi or Marjari or Somapi	58	3138-3080
2.	Shrutashrava	64	3080-3016
3.	Apratipa	36	3016-2980
4.	Niramitra	40	2980-2940
5.	Sukritta	58	2940-2882
6.	Brihatkarman	23	2882-2859
7.	Senajit	50	2859-2809
8.	Shrutanjaya	40	2809-2769
9.	Mahabala	35	2769-2734
10.	Shuchi	58	2734-2676
11.	Kshema	28	2676-2648
12.	Anuvrata	64	2648-2584
13.	Dharmanetra	35	2584-2549
14.	Nirvrati	58	2549-2491
15.	Suvrata	38	2491-2453

16.	Dridhasena	58	2453-2395
17.	Sumati	33	2395-2362
18.	Suchala	22	2362-2340
19.	Sunetra	40	2340-2300
20.	Satyajit	83	2300-2217
21.	Veerajit	35	2217-2182
22.	Ripunjaya	50	2182-2132
		<hr/>	
		1006	

The Puranas state that 22 kings of the Barhadratha dynasty ruled over Magadha for 1000 years from Bharata war.

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"द्वाविंशतिः नृपाह्वेते भवितारो बृहद्रथा । पूर्णं वर्षसहस्रं वै तेषां राज्यं भविष्यति ॥

*ब्रह्मांड पुराण III Upodghata-pada, Chapter LXXIV-121.*

*इत्येते बार्हद्रथा भूपतयो वर्षसहस्र मेकं भविष्यन्ति ॥*

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*(Vishnu Purana Amsha 4-Ch-XXIII-12).*

Actually the total number of years is a little over 1000 years or exactly it is 1006. Pulaka or Shunaka the minister of Ripunjaya the last king of the Barhadratha dyansty, killed the king treacherously but did not crown himself as the king. By a clever move he got his son Pradyota married to the only daughter of the last-named king Ripunjaya in the year 2132 B.C. just 1006 years after the Bharata war. The Puranas state:

“बृहद्रथेष्वतीतेषु वीतिहोत्रेष्वन्तिषु ।

पुलकः स्वामिनं हत्वा स्वपुत्रमभिषेक्ष्यति ॥”

The minister was so clever and able that not only did he do away with his own king, but could conquer even the Vitihotras of the Avanti (Ujjain Kingdom) and annex that kingdom to his empire. He installed Pradyota his son as the emperor of Magadha.

### Kings of Pradyota Dyanasty

		Regnal Years	B.C. years
1. 2109	Pradyota	23	2132-
2. 2085	Palaka or Darshaka	24	2109-
3. 2035	Vishakha-yupa	50	2085-
4. 2014	Jananka	21	2035-
5. 1994	Nandivardhan	20	2014-
		138 Regnal years	

This dynasty of five kings ruled Magadha from 2132 B.C. to 1994 B.C.

The majority of the Puranas agree on this figure of 138 years as the total regnal period of the five kings of this dynasty.

“नन्दिर्वर्धनस्तत्पुत्रः पञ्चप्रद्योतना इमे । अष्टत्रिंशोत्तरशतं भोक्ष्यन्ति पृथिवीं नृपाः ॥ स्कंद - XII-ch-II

These five Pradyotas, the last being Nandivardhan will be the Emperors here for hundred and thirtyeight years".

### 2.3 Shishunaga Dynasty :

Shishunaga or Shishunabha was the king of Kashi. He was very ambitious. He invaded the kingdom of Magadha and secured the throne. He coronated himself as the king-Emperor in 1994 B.C. and ruled for forty years. He placed his son on the throne at Kashi.

#### The kings of Shishunaga dynasty:

Sr.No years	Name	Regnal years	B.C.
1. 1954	Shishunaga	40	1994-
2. 1918	Kakavarna or Shakavarna	36	1954-
3. 1892	Kshemadharma	26	1918-
4. 1852	Kshatrauja	40	1892-
5. 1814	Vidhisara or Vimbisara or Bimbisara	38	1852-
6. 1787	Ajatashatru	27	1814-
7. 1752	Darbhka Or Darshaka	35	1787-
8. 1719	Uday	33	1752-
9. 1677	Nanlivardhan	42	1719-
10. 1634	Mahanand	43	1677-
		360	

Bimbisara came to the throne in the year 1852 B.C. He ruled upto (1852-38) 1814 BC

The Mahavamsa and Ashokavadana, the Buddhist chronicles, call him as Bimbisara. Hemachandra calls him Shrenika. All these Buddhist works state that Gautama the Buddha was five years junior to this Bimbisara. Buddha is stated to have attained his Nirvana in the eighth year of the reign of his successor Ajatashatru. These works also are agreed on the point that Gautama Buddha became an ascetic in his 29<sup>th</sup> year.

Vincent Smith calls him as Bimbisara and adds that this king had built the capital town Rajagraha and that he was the contemporary of Gautama the Buddha.

Bimbisara had attacked Anga-South Bihar-and annexed it to his kingdom.

His son Ajatashatru succeeded him in 1814 B.C. and ruled for 27 years. During the eighth year of his reign, the Buddha had attained Nirvana i.e. in 1814-8 1806 B.C. When the Buddha attained his Nirvana he was 80 years old. Thus the Buddha's birth year works to 1886 B.C. and that of his Nirvana as 1806 B.C. If there is some difference in the regnal periods of these Shishunaga dynasty, this period may change, a little here or there. K.Venkatachellam works it out at 1887 -1807 B.C.

We have seen that Siddhartha Gautama was the 24th king of the Solar line. That line came to end in 1634 B.C. with the last and 30th king Sumitra having to quit the throne in that year.

## 2.4 Nanda Dynasty:

Nanda Dynasty: This year 1634 BC. is a great divide in the history of the ruling dynasties of the post-Bharata-war period. For the first time an illegitimate son of the last king Mahanandi of the Shishunaga dynasty came to the throne of Magadha after the demise of that Emperor. Vishnu Purana says: (IV-XXIV-21)

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*"महानान्दिनस्ततः शूद्रीगर्भोद्भवो बली अतिलुब्धो अतिबलो ।*

*महापद्मो नंदनामा परशुराम इव अपर अखिलक्षत्रांतकारी भविष्यति ॥*

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Mahapadma-Nanda the son of Mahanandi, was born of his Shudra wife. This Mahapadma was too avaricious and very mighty. He proved to be the exterminator of all the Kshatriya kings just like Parashurama the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu." He ruled as Emperor of India for 88 years 1634 B.C. to 1546 B.C. His son Sumalya along with his seven brothers all born of Mahapadma ruled for another 12 years. The total regnal period of this Nanda Dynasty therefore works out to 100 years ie: from 1634 B.C. to 1534 B.C.

These 9 Nanda kings were the mightiest and the most powerful in the land and had under their direct sway the whole of Aryavarta (North India) as well as South India. Because of their misrule they had become very unpopular and consequently Arya Chanakya (nicknamed Kautilya - his gotra name was Kutala) alias Vishnusharma put them to death by rousing the people against him and placed on the throne, Chandragupta the son of Mahapadma from his other wife Mura. Chandragupta then assumed the family name of Mura, as Maurya.

Even Buddhist chronicles give the same account. According to Buddhistic accounts, Mahapadma is known as Dhana-Nanda, in consequence of his avaricious habits in hoarding up wealth. It is said that levying taxes on skins, gums, trees, stones etc. he hoarded up money to the extent of eighty crores and buried up the treasure in the bed of the Ganga. Diverting the main stream for a time by an anicut dam thrown across the Ganga, and making a large hole in a rock in the bed of the river sufficient to contain the money, he deposited his wealth in the rock, and sealed it up with molten lead. The river was then restored to its natural course and his treasure was secured thus in a very strong place. During his life time, he continued to hoard up and to deposit the collection from time to time, under the bed of the river. He and his eight sons all known as the nine Nandas died one after the other, the tash having been put to death by the Chanakya, who hated them for their maladministration, and who took possession of the wealth buried in the bed of the Ganga.

All the Hindu accounts are unanimous in giving to these nine Nandas a total period of 100 years for their reign.

This Chandragupta then did away with the minor king Puloma III, and became king himself. He shifted his capital from Girivraj to Pataliputra or Kusumpur and crowned himself as king in the place of Puloma III. Samudragupta was a mighty warrior. He checked the advance of Alexander and annihilated the Greek army.

Suffice it for the time being to say that the Nandas or Mauryas or Chanakya have nothing to do with Alexander or any other Greek, invader or adventurer.

With this background information let us proceed with the account of Nandas and their successors.

From Mahabodhi Vansha the names of the nine Nandas are: (1) Mahapadma or Ugrasena, (2) Panduka, (3) Pandugati, (4) Bhutapal, (5) Rashtrapal, (6) Govishanaka, (7) Dashasiddhaka, (8) Kaivarta and (9) Dhanananda. In Kaliyug Raja-Vrittanta, Mahapadma is called Dhanananda. The Puranas give the name of the son of Nand as Sumalya or Sukalpa. The names of the others are not

available. It appears as Mahapadma ruled for 88 years and Sumalya the least for about 12 years, the other seven sons of Mahapadma may have shared power with their father leaving Sumalya as the sole heir to the throne.

According to the Puranas the eight sons of Mahapadma shared power for 12 years. But this was a period of confusion as disturbances were caused by the rebellious activities of Chandragupta Maurya guided by Arya Chanakya. Their wealth amounted to *नवनवतिशतद्रव्यकोटीश्वर*, according to the Drama Mudra Rakshasa.

According to the Bhagavata Purana:

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*“स एकच्छत्रां पृथिवीं अनुल्लांघितशासनः। शासिष्यति महापद्मो द्वितीय इव भार्गवः ॥ (12-1-10)*

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"He brought under his domination the whole of the earth. His rule cannot be disobeyed. He would rule as if he were Parshuram the second."

Mahapadma or Dhanananda is stated to have ruled for 88 years. Thereafter his eight sons led by Sumalya would rule for 12 years.

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*कौटिल्यश्चंद्रगुप्तं स ततो राज्येऽभिषेच्यति*

*भुक्त्वा मही वर्षशतं ततो मौर्यान् गमिष्यति। मत्स्य - 273-23*

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The rule of these Nine Nandas will be thrown away by Kautilya, who will put Chandragupta on the throne of Nandas.

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*महापद्मस्य पर्यायि भविष्यन्ति नृपाः क्रमात् ।*

*उद्धरिष्यति कौटिल्यः समैर्द्वादशभिस्तु तान् ॥ 22*

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After Mahapadma his sons will become rulers one after the other. Kautilya will take 12 years to put them down."

### **Why did Kautilya vow to extirpate the Nandas?**

Arya Chanakya was a native of Patliputra, the Capital town of the Nandies He had witnessed the unrighteous rule of the first Nanda, Mahapadma or Dhanananda. We had noted a little earlier the way this Dhanananda had hoarded



his wealth under the bed of the river Ganga. In the history of South India p.80 by Nilakantha Shastri, we have a very curious reference. The enormous wealth accumulated by the Nandas was well-known to the ancient Tamils and became proverbial. One of the poets of the Sangam Age, puts these words in the mouth of a lovelorn lady: "What is it that has affected my lover more than my charms and kept him away from me so long? Can't it be the treasure accumulated in the prosperous Pataliputra and hidden in the waters of the Ganga by the great Nanda victorious in war?"

This extraordinary covetousness in an Indian Kshatriya king in those days was unthinkable. The Brahmanas and Kshatriyas were supposed to be above avariciousness. A little greed in a Vaishya or a Shudra was tolerated under the Varna system of social organisation. But it was considered almost a sin amongst the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas to be greedy and avaricious. Nandas were Shudras, but after they had become kings, they were Kshatriyas under the Varna System and yet did not shed off their cupidity.

Kautilya saw in this behaviour on the part of Dhanananda the continued flouting of the Kshatriya order under the influence of the Jaina Kshapanakas. Kalpaka, a Jain, was a minister in the confidence of Dhanananda. After Kalpaka, the other Jains like Shakatal, Sthulabhadra and Shriyaka became his advisors one after the other. The Kshatriya nobles resented this attitude of the king- the partiality for the Jains.

Arya Chanakya's father had suffered from such a partiality. He was a Brahmana and a very learned one at that. Yet his life was made impossible in Pataliputra by the king and his Jaina officers. Arya Chanakya had left Pataliputra for Taxila and joined the Gurukul there as a teacher in Political Economy. He had returned to his motherland to test his luck. He was exasperated to see the decline of the Vedic institutions of learning and the discomfiture from which the Kshatriya nobility suffered.

Because of the learning possessed by Arya Chanakya he was made the chairman of the Vidvat Sabha of Pataliputra. The Prime Minister of Dhanananda, Amatya Rakshasa was a Brahmana. But he could not put a check on the waywardness of the king Dhanananda. Amatya looked with favour the efforts of Chanakya who was his old classmate at Pataliputra Gurukul. Arya Chanakya's efforts in that direction came to naught. Dhanananda's greed and indulgence in sensual pleasures was intense. He could not be deviated from his path. Chanakya could not persuade the king to increase the grants for education and subsidies to the poor artisans. Due to Chanakya's open support for these measures the matters reached Dhanananda's ears that discontent had been arising in certain sections

of the populace against his misrule. Dhanananda openly insulted Chanakya and removed him from his position. He planned to arrest him. But through the efforts of his friends amongst the Ministers in the Government he could escape.

Mahavamsatika a Buddhist Chronicle notes that seeing Chanakya seated on the seat reserved for learned Brahmana, Dhanananda asked him to vacate it and drove him out. Chanakya had by then been convinced that the way Dhanananda was conducting his administration was neither good for him, nor for the good of his subjects. He decided to pull him down.

Dhanananda because of his death must have been succeeded by his sons Sumalya and others. But matters did not improve.

Chanakya wanted now to organise a revolt against the king. He began on the look out to create a centre for the Kshatriya power to assemble under. He chose Chandragupta Maurya the son of the Nanda to be that leader of that centre.

### **Chandragupta:**

The Vedic culture had its origin and development in the vast region from Eastern -Turkey and covering all the regions from Caucasus mountains, Caspian Sea to the Ganga-Yamuna Doab in North-South directions, and the river Nile to the river Sir-Darya in the East-West directions. After the Dasharajnya War, Indian sub-continent was developed by the efforts of the sages like Agastya and the prowess of Lord Rama. By the time of the Bharata-war, the Indian political horizon actually covered the Eastern - Iran and Afghanistan and this position continued till the defeat of the Shahi king Anangpal at the hands of Mahmud of Ghazni.

It is undisputed that the Maurya Empire had under its suzerainty the vast regions covering the whole of modern India and extending its Eastern Iran and Afghanistan. Even Aurangzeb or later on the British had not sway over their political hegemony over such a vast region. The period of the Mauryas is from 324 B.C. to 185 B.C., the total regnal period working out to 139 years. During this period 12 kings of the dynasty ruled from Pataliputra, modern Patna in Bihar. Bihar was then known as Magadha.

According to Brihat Katha, Chandragupta was Nanda's son from his wife Mura- perhaps a woman of low origin. To distinguish his regime from that of his predecessors, the Nandas, he is called Maurya, of Mura.

During the rule of the Nandas this son Chandragupta from Mura must have been expelled from the palace. He was brought up under the care of some Kshatriya noble, his relation, by his mother. When Arya Chanakya in about (1534 +12) 1546 B.C. decided to pull down the Nanda rule, his eyes fell on this young boy, the son of the Nandas but neglected and disfavoured by the palace

According to Brahmanda Purana his regnal period is 1534 B.C. to 1510 B.C. Kaliyug-raj-vrittanta-the dynastic information of the kings of the Kali-age-his regnal period is shown as 1534B.C. to 1500B.C.

## UNIT 3 : ARYA CHANAKYA

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Chandragupta ruled ideally according to the precepts laid down by his teacher and later a minister named Kautilya. Vishnusharma was his original name. As his father's name was Chanaka, he has been given the name Chanakya-the son of the sage Chanaka. The other name Kautilya is gotra-name Kuta means jar and the suffix 'ila' has the sense of possessive. So kutila is one who has a large store of grain. This gotra name Kautilya is thus derived from Kutila. Kutila has another sense. It is 'curved' or 'crooked'. Because Chanakya has taught in his Arthashastra, the science of political administration, Political administration involves often diplomatic game of winning over internal adversaries or making them ineffective, use of some crooked means some times becomes necessary. Its author Arya Chanakya is sometimes described as 'Kautilya' the author advocating crooked means to gain certain political objectives.

As we shall see later Kautilya is not the appellation attached to Arya Chanakya for his advocacy of employing the Machiavellian tactics in politics.

### 3.1 Arya Chaṅakya the Great:

The author of Tantrakhyayikā (Kathamukha verse 2) starts his treatise on political science with salutation to Arya Chanakya. He says:

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*"मनवे वाचस्पतये शुक्राय पराशराय च ससुताय ।*

*चाणक्याय च महते नमो अस्तु नृपशास्त्रकर्तृभ्यः ॥*

---

The authors of the science of the Kings (Polity) namely Manu, Vachaspati, Sukra, Parashara with his son (Vedavyasa) and Chanakya, deserve our bows".

This shows in what illustrious company is our author of polity, Chanakya, is placed. That Chanakya's Arthashastra is the science of polity, the ancient authors on this science have no doubt. This much is clear from this verse in the Tantrakhyayikā, Kamandaka that famous author of Nitisara (Rajaniti-science of the conduct of the kings' policies) in his opening chapter pays homage Vishnugupta (Chanakya) in these clear words

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*"नीतिशास्त्रामृतं श्रीमानर्थशास्त्रमहोदधेः ।*

*य उदधे नमस्तस्मै विष्णुगुप्ताय वेधसे । नीतीसार*

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"Bow to that expert Vishnugupta who brought out the nectar of Nitishastra from the ocean of Arthashastra." In earlier times this science was called Dandaniti- the science of the administration of justice :-

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*"दण्डयेन् नीयते चेयं दंडं नयति चाप्युत ।*

*दंडनीतिरिति प्रोक्ता त्रील्लोकाननुवर्तते ॥ Mbh-12,59,78*

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The science of administration of justice protects this world. This science is the guide of Kings. This science is called Dandaniti and is followed in the three worlds (ie. man's life here and hereafter)."

### **Who is the author of Arthashastra ?**

There are some who hold that this treatise on Rajaniti has been composed by some one else than Kautilya. For in this treatise name of Kautilya often occurs, e.g. इतिकौटिल्यः thus says Kautilya. But this is only his style. It is amply borne by later authors who refer to this volume. The poet Dandin in his Dashakumarcarita VIII clearly notes :- इयमिदानीमाचार्य विष्णुगुप्तेन मौयार्थे षड्भिः श्लोकसहस्रैः संक्षिप्तं " This treatise has been composed in brief by the teacher Vishnugupta for the guidance of the Maurya kings".

In the Arthashastra itself such a statement has been made.

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*"सर्वशास्त्राण्यनुक्रम्य प्रयोगमुपलभ्यच*

*कौटिल्येन नरेन्द्रार्थे शासनस्य विधिः कृतः 112-1063*

---

Kautilya himself has composed this law for the guidance of the administration after consulting all the treatises on this science as well as after paying due attention to its practical application".

Kautilya further asserts in the chapter 15-1-73 that this science has been composed by him who through haughtiness and anger brought down the Nanda kings under whose control this science, the weapons and the land had been languishing in stupor.

### **How did Chandragupta attract Chanakya's notice:**

Chandragupta as he had been driven out of the palaces by the Nanda brothers after Dhanananda's demise, his mother Mura brought him up in exile

somewhere on the outskirts of Pataliputra. When Chanakya left Pataliputra under the guise of a Jaina Kshapanaka, he happened to see one bright boy playing a role of a king making his playmates as his followers. Chanakya took him under his care and brought him up as leader of the revolutionary forces.

Chandragupta had married Durdhara the daughter of his maternal uncle.

The real history as to how Chanakya organised the revolt and brought about the downfall of the Nanda dynasty is shrouded in mystery. When Chandragupta attacked Pataliputra, then obviously he had not to face Dhanananda his father, but some brother who was then actually on the throne of Magadha.

Kautilya's task had become easy after the death of Dhanananda who was that great architect of founding his empire. At the end of the rule of that king, Kautilya had left Pataliputra with a vow to bring about the downfall of the Nandas. Already the people had been disgusted by the atrocious rule of the Nanda and his successor sons. When, therefore, Chanakya could win to his side, many of the Nanda officers Shakatal and others by painting the dark deeds of that dynasty, the only task left to him was to give the ruler the final body blow. There is a reference

चाणक्यो नक्तमुपयान्नंदक्रीडा गृहं यथा Chanakya had one night entered the stadium of the Nanda king and assassinated the ruler named Yogananda and then Chandragupta the son of the earlier Nanda (Purvananda) was installed as the king on the vacant throne.

According to Brihatkatha, 'Chanakya then stayed secretly at the house of Shakatala, and employed his plotters to kill the king along with his sons. Then the son of earlier Nanda, Chandragupta, was made the king by the great prowess of Chanakya.' Yogananda appears to be the last of the Nandas who had been actually occupying the throne at the time when Chandragupta had won the last victory.

Mudrarakshasa the famous drama by the poet Vishakhadatta of the seventh century A.D. takes it for granted that Chandragupta was the son of the earlier Nanda.

Shakatal was the minister of the last of the Nandas. He had two sons. Sthulabhadra and Shriyaka. Vararuchi a grammarian notes in his work :

"The king Nanda does not know what his minister is upto. He would kill him and put his son Shriyaka in his place". This would show that during the last days of

the Nanda Dynasty, Chanakya had almost succeeded in winning over the important ministers of Nanda to his side. Shriyaka was made the minister and not the king. Rakshasa-his name was Vakranasa was however a loyal and steadfast Prime Minister of the King Nanda.

The drama Mudra-Rakshasa has the plot of Chanakya's efforts to persuade the former Prime Minister Vakranasa to accept the same position under Chandragupta. After all Chanakya was not after power. His sole aim was to make his country Bharata a great country. He had the confidence in the ability and loyalty of the former Prime Minister. For obvious reasons the Prime Minister was unable to accept the offer of Chanakya, for he had proved incapable of protecting his king Yogananda from being murdered in his palace inspite of his great efforts. He was no match for Chanakya in organising counter revolt and foil Chanakya's plot.

In Mudrarakshasa we get many references to Chandragupta described as belonging to Nanda family – नंदान्वय एवायमिती (4-7) He is from the family of Nanda. Again in 5-5 it is stated *Nandanvayalambina* - नंदान्वयलम्बिना मौर्येण By Maurya belonging to the family of the Nanda. In Mudrarakshasa, the king Malayaketu tells the Prime Minister Rakshasa. मौर्योऽसौ स्वामिपुत्रः Though Maurya, he is after all the son of your former master.

Mudrarakshasa also states in unequivocal terms that Chandragupta was the son of Mura a Shudra woman and wife of King Nanda. He is described there as प्रियदर्शी -handsome-looking. In Nitivakyāmrita 10-4, it is observed, "it is heard-even though not legitimate, through the grace of Vishnugupta, Chandragupta could be elevated to the Emperor-ship."

Pandit Bhagavaddatta notes that Maurya was name of a caste making idols. It is a mixture of Shudra and Kshatriya. Chandragupta was hardly twenty years old when he was crowned king. It is said that in Shudraka's Mritcchakatika, Kautilya is mentioned as Acharya. Chandragupta died of food-poisoning according to Manjushree Mulakalpa (441, 442). He appointed his son Bindusara as his successor while yet a child.

### **Chandragupta's domains:**

The Nandas had sway over whole of India extending upto Mysore in the South. In the victory of Chandragupta, the King Parvataka or Porus of the Punjab had a big role. He was promised half the share in his acquisitions. Surprisingly, however, as soon as Chandragupta won against the Nanda's army, this Parvataka also died. It is stated that the Parvataka was lured into bed by a

young damsel whose body was poisonproof-Vishakanya. As soon as he embraced her, he fell down dead. So without much efforts, Chandragupta could annex that part of the kingdom of his ally, to his own kingdom. In Mudrarakshasa we have the statement:- 'क्षपणको जीवसिद्धिः विषकन्यया पर्वतेश्वर घातितवान्' The Jain Saint Jivasiddhi did away with the lord Parvata (ally of Chandragupta) through the Vishakanya - a girl with the cultivated poisonous body). This Jivasiddhih was the spy of Chanakya. As soon as Parvataka died his son Malayaketu ran away for fear of his life. His brother Vairochaka was however there in Pataliputra at that time. He managed to win over some of the palace workers. One Daruvarma (a carpenter) was given the task of erecting a canopy at the entrance door. The plan was as soon as Chandragupta seated on a well decorated elephant enters, that spot under the canopy, that huge structure would fall down with thud sound on the head of Chandragupta who would die on the spot. Daruvarma did the job earlier than expected. Chanakya became suspicious. He complimented Daruvarma on excellent work accomplished in record time. He said, "अचिरादेव अस्य दाक्षस्य अनुरूपं फलं अभिगममिष्यसि दारुवर्मन् - Oh Daruvarma, you would soon get a prize for this excellent work done." He said in such a manner as would not rouse the suspicion of Daruvarma.

Chanakya won over Vairochaka the brother of Malayaketu and promised him half the kingdom of his father. He was gullible. Chanakya persuaded him and made him agree to enter through that canopy first, before even Chandragupta would do. He was thereafter well dressed and put on a well-decorated elephant. He was taken in procession to the entrance. Nobody had seen Chandragupta before. Even the elephant rider Barbarak was won over by anti-Chandragupta faction and was promised huge bribe, provided he would kill Chandragupta in the confusion caused by the fall of the canopy.

However Barbarak showed impatience. As soon as that elephant came under canopy, he took out his small sword and tried to stab Vairochaka. But the elephant was instead stabbed. It began to run. At that moment Daruvarma brought the canopy down, under which Barbarak was killed. In the confusion, Daruvarma feeling that Chandragupta would escape unhurt, stabbed Vairochaka, thinking him to be Chandragupta. The plot was thus foiled and Daruvarma was ordered to be killed by crushing him with stones.

All the internal obstacles in the way of Chandragupta's entry were thus removed. Even the former physicians and other servants in the private apartments of the king were well-tested and posted.



No Maurya king had ever embraced Buddhism. It did not mean they were enemies of Buddhism. Hindus, as ever, tolerated these internal cultural differences. Chanakya was easily able to win over the Jain sadhus like Jivasiddhi and his devotees like Shakatal and Shriyaka to his side.

After Chanakya achieved his objective, he persuaded' Amatya Rakshasa the former Prime-Minister of the Nandas to accept the same post under Chandragupta when at last Amatya Rakshasa accepted the post under Chandragupta. Chanakya relinquished the Prime-Minister-ship and resumed his role as a teacher of political science. His thoughts are embodied in his Arthashastra.

Let us now turn to this great work of his on polity. It gives a fair idea of the character of administration the kings followed in India since the days of the Vedas.

### 3.2 Arthashastra :

It is defined as the science of acquiring and protecting the earth 'पृथिव्या लाभे पालने' prathivya läbhe palane ca. It is a science of politics. Man gets his sustenance from the land he lives on. The main concern of this science is, therefore, how to acquire this land which gives man his अर्थ or wealth and how to protect it

How kingship came into being?

In Shantiparva of Mahabharata we have a statement about the way the people had organised their political affairs. It is stated:

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*"न वै राज्यं न राजा आसीत् न च दंडो न दांडिकः*

*धर्मेणैव प्रजाः सर्वाः रक्षन्ति स्म परस्परम् ॥*

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In the beginning, there was no political unit as such, nor was there any king. There was no instrument of punishment nor was there any administrator to award punishments. All the people protected each other under the impulse of Dharma the desire to live virtuously."

Kautilya gives a glimpse of the conditions when the people forgot to protect one another through virtuous conduct and began behaving following the law-might is right. He states "मत्स्यन्यायाभिभूताः प्रजा मनुं वैवस्वतं राजानं चक्रिरे 1-13-5 "people overwhelmed with fear because of the law of fishes i.e. the bigger one eats the smaller one made Manu the son of Vivasvan, their king." This is the origin of kingship. When people saw that ordinarily each one wanted to live in peace, yet there were certain elements with muscle power to brow-beat the others and appropriate to them a larger size of the cake, they decided to have a leader who would protect them all and create an atmosphere of peace. In such an atmosphere alone, one pursues his avocations without fear or favour and develop one's personality to its fullest potential.

The people then decided to allot to the king sixth of the produce and one tenth of the other commodities and money (i.e. gold and silver) as his share (1-13-6). Thus secured of his own maintenance, the king looks after the well-being and protection of those under his charge. It is the duty of everybody to pay these taxes and also pay fines for actions against the rules laid down by him.

It is also the duty of the king to award adequate punishment to the guilty and adequate protection to the rithteous i.e. who obey his laws. Says,

"The king commits sin in punishing the non-guilty. He commits equal sin in not punishing the guilty. The king, therefore, should award punishments according to law. This way the king earns merit."

In order that the king should perform his part according to the law, even foresters pay their share of taxes to the king.

The king has to possess the knowledge of the Vedas along with the subsidiary sciences. He should be an intelligent and alert person. He should love hard and righteous work. His mind should be worshipful and should ever be of obliging disposition.

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*"वेदवेदांगवित् प्राज्ञः सुतपस्वी नृपो भवेत् ।*

*दानशीलश्च सततं यज्ञशीलश्च भारत । शांतिपर्व 69-31*

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As the wisdom in organising our society, displayed by our seers, points out there are always a very few persons who have the capacity to master the different arts and sciences and who are capable of providing the leadership to the masses. The Vedas (R.V.X 173-174) have laid down certain norms for the

selection of the king. The above verse from Mahabharata shows that he should be a person with profound knowledge of the different arts and sciences. In addition he should possess courage, self-confidence and qualities of leadership. It is wrong to suppose that all the power was concentrated in the person of the king. He was always aided and advised by his ministers, though the final decision vested in him. But that is the position even today. The Prime Minister today takes that decision after weighing the pros and cons of the advice given to him by his other colleagues.

Kautilya further likens the king with Indra and Yama, the heavenly gods the dispensers of true justice and punishment respectively. Of course he is not a whimsical god. The Hindu gods always act according to the rules laid down for the good of the mankind. In Manu 7-3-8 the origin of the king-ship is traced to the necessity of establishing order and rule of law amongst his subjects who otherwise would be plagued by chaos and confusion. The king is said to be a great goddess in the form of man - *Mahāti devatā hyeṣah nararupenatiṣṭhaṭi* 7-3-8' But this is not similar to the 'divine right theory of kings as developed by the Western Scholars. For God is never jealous here in Indian context. He is after the welfare of his subjects. He is also there to punish the wrong-doer. In Indian parlance every animal has a divine origin, for in his heart dwells that immortal Being.

The King according to Kautilya is he who himself acts according to the Dharma and promulgates it amongst his subjects. Dharma is the king supreme. It is the ruler of men and matters. Dharma is righteousness (3-1-38). The king who behaves this way, goes to heaven (3-1-4). His duty is to protect (raksana) his subjects as well as to help them to bring about their welfare (palana). The subjects are to be protected from anti-social elements like deceitful artisans and traders, thieves, dacoits and murderers, as well as from natural calamities such as fire, floods and quakes, etc. To ward off external dangers or aggression and protect his subjects is the foremost duty of a king.

### **3.3 King's responsibilities:**

King has always to be active. His activity constitutes vigilance about what is happening in his state as well as on the borders of his state. If he is not careful about the welfare of his subjects, they may be dissatisfied and overthrow his rule. If he is not vigilant about the borders of his state, the enemies will be active and attack him, and as a result end his rule.

For this purpose he had to divide his day and night into eight parts. During the first eighth part of the day, he should listen to measures taken for defence and accounts of income and expenditure. During the second, he should look into the affairs of the citizens and the country people. During the third, he should take his bath and meals and devote himself to study. During the fourth, he should receive revenue in cash and assign tasks to heads of departments. During the fifth, he should consult the council of his ministers, send letters to whomsoever he finds it necessary and acquaint himself with secret information brought in by spies. During the sixth, he should engage in recreation at his pleasure or hold consultations. During the seventh, he should review elephants, horses, chariots and troops. During the eighth, he should deliberate on military plans with commander-in-chief. When the day is ended, he should worship the evening twilight, and offer prayers. Thus ends the King's day.

During the first part of the night, he should interview secret agents. During the second, he should take a bath and meal and engage in study. During the third, he should go to bed to the strains of musical instruments and sleep during the fourth and the fifth (parts). During the sixth, he should awaken to the sound of musical instruments and ponder over the teachings of the science of politics as well as over the work to be done. During the seventh, he should sit in consultation with councillors and despatch secret agents. During the eighth, he should receive blessings from priests, preceptors and chaplain, and see his physician, chief cook and astrologer. And after going round a cow with her calf and a bull, he should proceed to the assembly hall.

Or, he should divide the day and night into (different) parts in conformity with his capacity and carry out his tasks.

After arriving at the assembly hall, he should allow unrestricted entrance to those wishing to see him in connection with their affairs. For, a king difficult of access is made to do the reverse of what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, by those near him. In consequence of that, he may have to face an insurrection of the subjects or subjugation by the enemy. Therefore, he should look into the affairs of temple deities, hermitages, heretics, Brahmins learned in the Vedas, cattle and holy places, of minors, the aged, the sick, the distressed and the helpless and of women in this order, or, in accordance with the importance of the matter or its urgency.

These classes should always receive the King's attention on priority basis.

The people love the king who pays attention to their good...

He should hear at once every urgent matter, and not put it off. An affair postponed becomes difficult or even impossible to settle. He should look into the affairs of persons learned in the Vedas and of ascetics after going to the fire sanctuary and in the company of his chaplain and preceptor, after getting up from his seat and saluting those suitors.

But he should decide the affairs of ascetics and of persons versed in the practice of magic, in consultation with persons learned in the three Vedas, not by himself alone, for the reason that they might be roused to anger.

For the king, the sacrificial vow is activity, looking after administration of his affairs is sacrifice, impartiality of behaviour is his fee and sacrificial initiation for him is the coronation.

In the happiness of the subjects lies the happiness of the king and in what is beneficial to the subjects, his own benefit. What is dear to himself is not beneficial to the king, but what is dear to subject is beneficial to him.

Therefore, being ever active, the king should carry out the management of material well-being of his subjects. The root of material well-being is activity, of material disaster is its reverse. In the absence of activity, there is certain destruction of what is obtained and of what is not yet received. By activity reward is obtained, and one also secures abundance of riches.

It will be observed from these duties laid down for the king, that the king is a very overburdened person. But only a person with necessary capacity, knowledge and aptitude is chosen as a king. The king is supposed to take sleep only for three hours. The rest of the time, he has to judiciously use it for the affairs of the State. If we remember that Kautilya was a very scrupulous and practical administrator, whatever he has reduced to writing as the duties of the King were meant to be actually observed in practice.

### **Royal Residence :.**

On a site recommended by experts in building, he should cause the royal residence to be built, with a rampart, a moat and gates and provided with many halls. The palace should have its own temple. It should have many subterranean passages to move out in case of serious danger. Care should also be taken to protect it from fire, poison and serpents. Then there are many very minute regulations to protect himself from the suspicious queens and other male or female members of his household.

### **Yogakshema of his subjects:**

It has been emphasised by Kautilya that the well-being of his subjects is the king's first charge – प्रजानां योगक्षेमः. Yoga is successful achievement of an object and Kṣema is peaceful and undisturbed enjoyment of that object. The king has to see that his subjects become prosperous and happy.

For this purpose the ruler has to undertake the activity of settlement of agriculturists on virgin land or building dams, (tanks, and other irrigational works. He should also provide land for pastures for cattle or roads for trading and other activities. He should also maintain mines and see to the safety of the miners.

He has to provide arable lands for life to tax-payers. It was the rule that unarable lands were not to be taken away from those who are making them arable. Those who did not cultivate were to be dispossessed of the lands allotted to them. Where necessary he had to provide his subjects with grains, cattle and money. He had to act like a father to his subjects.

Kautilya asked the king to ensure welfare state in his domains. He should set going work in mines, factories, forests, elephant-forests, cattle-herds and trade-routes and establish water -routes, lands-routes and ports. He should cause irrigation works to be built with natural water sources or with water to be brought in from elsewhere. Or, to others who are building these he should render aid with land, road, trees and implements, and to the building of holy places and parks. If one walks out of the joint building of an irrigation work, his labourers and bullocks should be made to do his share of the work. And he should be a sharer in the expenses and yet should receive no portion of the benefits derived. The ownership of the fish, ducks, and green vegetables in the irrigation works should go to the king.

And the king should maintain children, aged persons and persons in distress when these are helpless, as also the woman who has borne no child and is unsupported by her other family members i.e. a destitute and barren woman. The elders of the village should augment the property of a minor till he comes of age, and also the property of a temple.

If a person with means does not maintain his children and wife, his father and mother, his brothers who have not come of age, and his unmarried and widowed sisters, a fine of twelve panas shall be imposed except when these have become outcasts, with the exception of the mother. Even an outcast mother is required to be supported by her sons.

The king should exempt from taxes a region laid waste by the army of an enemy or by foresters, or affected by disease or famine, and he should prohibit expensive sports.

He should protect agriculture that is oppressed by the troubles of labourers, and herds of cattle oppressed by thieves, wild animals, poison and crocodiles as well as by diseases. He should keep clear trade-routes. He should see that his favourites, works-officers, robbers and frontier-chiefs or herds of cattle do not put obstructions in the flow of traffic.

Thus the king should protect forest-produce, elephant-forests, irrigation works and mines that were made in ancient times and should start new ones.

### **Protector of the social order:**

It was considered necessary to uphold the social order founded on the Varnas and Ashramas. Varna is not caste. Varna is based on the aptitude of a person as well as the profession one followed. As it catered to the welfare of all the constituent units of the society, it was considered the king's duty to foster it.

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*'चतुर्वर्णाश्रमो लोको राजा दंडेन पालितः ।*

*स्वधर्मकर्माभिरतो वर्तते स्वेषु वर्त्मसु ॥ 1-4'*

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The king thus assures the welfare of all his subjects by well-laid down administrative apparatus. It is called Dandaniti, the science of administration. It is the coercive apparatus of the State. And it is absolutely necessary that this power of the State should be very judiciously used. The king should not cause disaffection amongst his subjects. The physician, after reporting to the section officer and the ward officer, a person who has made him treat a wound secretly should be protected. The king's officers should apprehend the culprit. It is the duty of every member of the society to report to the king the acts of all the persons who are likely to cause harm to the people in general.

### **Welfare of the people, the sole criterion :**

Kautilya has a Book No.8 which deals with the calamities that may fall on a king or kingship. In this treatise the rule by an installed king is described. It is possible that the king may have to face a revolt from his people or there may be invasion from outside its borders. The internal trouble is always more dangerous, for it may be led by some of his ministers or by some of the

disaffected elements in the state. Kautilya, therefore, advises the king to always keep the control over the treasury and the army in his own hands.

When there is some internal disturbance or disaffection, Kautilya does not see any harm to the subjects if there is a joint rule by the ruler and his son or by two brothers. He has considered the merits and demerits of Dvairajya the rule by two, and Vairajya- the rule by a foreigner who has ousted the legitimate ruler. He prefers Dvairajya to the Vairajya. For he fears that the foreign ruler, having no interest in the welfare of the conquered people, is likely to take away its resources and thus impoverish the state or if disgusted with the people, he would leave them to their fate by squandering its resources to the utmost.

We had such an experience of the British rule. They had no interest in the welfare of our people. They looted us and left. Kautilya is firmly of opinion that even the only son of a king if undisciplined should not be installed on the throne (1-17-51).

He wants the king to follow the rules laid down by the Science of polity. If a king deviates from these, even his blind relation should be installed as a king. for he can be made to follow the rules by a good minister (8-2-11).

He also prefers a sick king to a new, as the sick king would carry on the administration in the old way. The new king who has won the kingdom by force would behave without restraint (8-2-16).

Between a weak king of noble birth and the one strong but not so noble, the subjects prefer the noble one, says Kautilya (8-2-23). Kautilya had before him the example of the Nandas, with low origin. They were wicked and avaricious.

The only good feature of the Nanda's rule was his able Prime Minister, Amatya Rakshasa who was not indifferent to the welfare of his subjects.

Kautilya enumerates these details to show the preference the subjects should exercise between the two types enumerated above. This would indicate that the people are required to be vigilant about the type of rule they are under. They would not tolerate a rule which is indifferent to their welfare.

### **Kula Sangha :**

In 1-17-53, Kautilya notes the rule of Kula (family). He observes that such a family rule is difficult to conquer. For it is well knit by family ties. It can continue to rule for long.



Besides monarchy there were two type of oligarchies or ruling systems in vogue in those far off days. They were (1) Shastropajivi group i.e., those making a living by wielding weapons and turning it into a profession. and (2) Rajasabdopajivi - those using the word Raja and constituting a ruling group. In the first there were Kamboja, Surashtra etc. In the second there were Licchivika, Vrijika, Mallaka, Madraka, Kukuru, Kuru, Pancala and others. This type of rule had been in vogue in some regions in India in the ancient times. Kautilya mentions them as well-knit units unassailable by enemies. Except Licchvis who had continued upto the Gupta period, others had ceased to exist after the Maurya period. We need not discuss here the methods to win them over suggested by Kautilya, for they ceased to have much political influence after the Maurya period. Kautilya prefers a monarchy headed by a noble Kshatriya.

### **Constituent elements of a state:**

The king, the minister, the country, the fortified cities, the treasure, the army and the ally are the constituent elements (of the state) called the Prakritis.

Among the excellences of the king are: Born in a high family, endowed with good fortune, intelligence and spirit, given to seeing elders, pious, truthful in speech, not breaking his promise, grateful, liberal, of great energy, not dilatory with weak neighbouring princes, resolute, not having his council of ministers backed with ignoble qualities, and always desirous of learning - these are the qualities of one easily approachable. A good king would always keep his border kings weak.

Desire to learn, listening, learning, thorough understanding, reflection, rejecting false views and insistence on truth-these are the qualities of intellect.

Bravery, resentment, quickness and dexterity these are the qualities of energy. Eloquent, bold, endowed with memory, intellect and strength, exalted, easy to manage, trained in arts, free from vices, able to lead the army, able to requite obligations and injury in the prescribed manner, possessed of a sense of shame, glance able to take suitable action in calamities and in normal conditions, seeing long and far, attaching prominence to keeping time and with appropriate human endeavour, able to discriminate between peace and fighting, giving and withholding, and observance of condition and striking at the enemy's weak points, well-guarded, not laughing in an undignified manner, with a which is straight and without a frown, devoid of passion, anger, greed, stiffness,

fickleness, speaking with a smile and with dignity, with conduct conforming to the advice of elders-these are personal excellences.

It would be seen from the detailed enumeration of these qualities, the king and his ministers are supposed to possess, that the king must try to cultivate these qualities in himself and in his ministers, officers and men of his army, and the citizens in general. What allround development of one and all was aimed at by our ancient leaders!

These are the basic units of any State and to keep all these in good condition is the prime necessity of any leader of any State. History shows many examples of kings who were deeply learned. Referring to some Upanishadic kings Hillebrandt says: the emphasis on the necessity of philosophical study is no theoretical requirement of the text books. We must free ourselves from the idea that the destiny of India lay only in the hands of voluptuous and indolent tyrants and substitute for it a picture derived from historical examples that the rulers of India stood on a higher rung of contemporary culture".

Kautilya states-If the king is particular about his duties, his servants follow him. If he is corrupt and inefficient, the servants become so, his good intentions do not work. His servants nullify them. His enemies rise. It is therefore absolutely necessary to be alert about his duties and be always active.

The treasury was not the personal property of king. It was the property of the State. The king in the Indian polity is always the selfless head of the family having perfect control on the waywardness of his senses.

### **The three powers:**

The *saāstra* or a science of Polity refers to three śaktis or powers that operate in the state. They are *utsāhaśakti*, the personal energy and drive of the ruler himself, *prabhāvaśakti*, the power of the army and treasury, and *mantraśakti* the power of counsel and diplomacy. These powers are thought of in connection with a State's relations with other States and have no bearing on the internal structure of a State's organisation. That is why Kautilya in his own words maintains as against the opinion of the earlier teachers, that *prabhavasakti* is more important than *utsāhaśakti* and that *mantraśakti* is more important than both. With wise counsel and clever diplomacy a king can easily overcome 38 energetic or mighty rivals (9.12.16.).<sup>38</sup>

In the course of the discussion on the relative importance of the king and the minister, Kautilya refers to duties which devolve on the king himself. He is the one who appoints or removes ministers, who assigns tasks to them, who sees

to it that none of the prakrities suffers from a drawback or defect and who honours and punishes according to deserts. It is the king who sets the tone to the whole administration. For he is the head of the State (8.1.13.18) The supremacy of the ruler is brought out in the clearest possible terms.

### **Minister:**

The king has to secure the willing co-operation of his 'ministers, the other important element of the State. Rulership can be successfully carried out only with the help of the associates. One wheel alone does not turn. Therefore, he should appoint ministers and listen to their opinion. Arya Chanakya is a practical administrator. He points out from his daily observation that one wheel alone does not turn चक्रं एकं न वर्तते. Chakram ekam na vartate. There were several ministers. The term Amatya - minister stands for high officers of the state. Their functions are *mantra* - tendering appropriate advice, *Karmānusthana* - implementation of the decisions of the king, *dandapranayan* - awarding punishments, *sunyoniveśopacayan* - settlement and development of territories, *dandakarānugraha* - recovery of fines and taxes and so on. All these officers work under the direction of the Chief Minister.

The king is advised to have 3 to 4 ministers - sort of inner council of advisors. Kautilya says, one minister would be difficult to control, two might quarrel and ruin the state by conspiring against the king. Similarly a large number may affect the secrecy of the council.

### **Purohita:**

The king appoints his Purohita - the priest. He is not only proficient in religious rituals, but is also a master of the Vedas and all other arts and sciences. He is also an expert in the science of politics. He should also be proficient in Atharvan remedies i.e. tantra - vidya, the knowledge of magical formulae for use in warding off the calamities. "The political power of the Purohita was purely individual and had its source wholly and solely in the personal influence which he obtained over the king through his function at sacrifices and as a magician "

The king is advised to follow him as a pupil does his teacher, a son his father or a servant his master, Kshatriya power is made to prosper by the Brahmin chaplain, and further sanctified by the council of ministers And possessed of system of weapons brought up to date by the experts in that science, and further

accompanied by the art of political manoeuvres the Kshatriya power ever remains unconquerable.

But if the priest is found overbearing and haughty, the king has the power to dismiss him (10.2). In any Purohita was no representative of any organised church, claiming an authority superior to that of the secular power. There was in India little scope for a clash between the church and the state such as is found in the history of the West. For both the Purohita and the king worked under the authority of the Dharma, a body of rules sanctified by age - old usage ruling over them both with supreme authority. There was no organised Church in India in the past and this position continues even today.

### **Secret tests:**

The ministers and other high officers are to be tested for their (1) piety (2) incorruptibility (3) lustfulness and (4) fear of the king. Kautilya advises that for testing the probity of his ministers, he himself personally or his high queen should not be made the target. For example, he should not allow secret agents to instigate the minister telling that this king is impious; well, let us set up another king. This should not be done. He should not make the uncorrupt corrupted as of water by poison. This king should use some outsider, outside his family members, the object of reference for the fourfold tests and thus through the secret agents test the probity or otherwise of his ministers.

### **What is mantra - counsel?**

A *mantra* is said to be *pancanga*, i.e., it discusses an undertaking in its five - fold aspect: (1) ways and means of starting an undertaking, (2) resources in men and material necessary for it, (3) place and time of its execution, (4) forestalling obstacles, and (5) its successful accomplishment (1.15.42).

Apart from the three or four ministers, there is to be a mantripariṣad, which according to the earlier schools, is to have twelve, sixteen and twenty members but which in the opinion of Kautilya, should have no fixed number. That, he says, should depend on the size and power of the state (1.15.47-50). The functions of parishad are declared to be: (1) starting work on a new undertaking, (2) continuing an undertaking already begun, (3) improving a work, and (4) implementation of orders issued (1.15.52). This implies that the mantripariṣad is a council of heads of departments concerned with the execution of decisions made by the king. The mantri parishad it seems is also expected to keep a watch on those who may not be loyal to the king (1-15-57). It is added that in urgent matters both the mantris as well as the Mantri Parishad should

be summoned for consultation. In connection with this meeting, it is stated that the king should follow the course of conduct that is recommended by the majority or that is capable of leading to the achievement of the object (1,15.58.59)

The four inner councillors or ministers do not constitute a cabinet in the modern concept of the term. Nor should he seek in the majority advice the meaning that the king is supposed to follow the modern concept of constitutional monarchy. It should never be forgotten that the king is the father of his subjects. He is guided by Dharma. The whole kingdom is to be treated as one family. But as the father would always act in the interests of his family members, so would the king in respect of his subjects. Of course if the father is a wayward or whimsical person, his advice no member of the family would follow. In the case of the king, the subjects would see that a wayward or tyrannical king would be brought down.

### **Pauras and Janapadas :**

Paura is a city-dweller and Janapada is a resident of the countryside. The question is: had they any voice in the running of the administration of the state? While describing the excellences of a minister, Kautilya considers his residence in the country side, as one of the foremost qualities. Even though he is a resident of a countryside, he should be from a noble family. The officers are advised to be alert in carrying out welfare schemes for the city-dwellers (Pauras) as well as for Janapadas (villagers) The king himself has to set apart an hour and a half to meet them and listen their grievances. Kautilya recognises that amongst the citydwellers and the villagers some men are capable and vociferous and some ordinary. Even though there appears to be no Sabha assembly, or Samiti, council of the citizens, envisaged in Kautilya's Arthashastra, the king being always responsive to the public opinion must have some instrument like assemblies of elders in the cities and villages to gauge the public opinion.

Though there is no direct constitutional check on the use of the absolute powers of the monarch, there is no doubt that the entire training of the king particularly in Dandaniti acted as an indirect check on him. The fact that he would be brought up to regard the Vedic way of life as sacred and the performances of his own duties in accordance with that scheme of life as a means of achieving spiritual ends would also serve to make him behave with moderation. The purohita would constantly be reminding him of this duty and that would be a sort of a check, though the purohita has no power to enforce his will on the ruler. It is stated in the text that the ruler should set up preceptors or ministers who are well versed in all the arts and sciences and who are held in high esteem among the people.

They should be charged with the duty to closely watch the king's conduct and that they should restrain him when he is engaged in something harmful and should remind him of his duties when he is going astray (1.7.8.).

### **Hereditary Rulership:**

Kautilya is for hereditary rulership. Ordinarily the eldest son is to succeed his father. An unworthy son is not allowed to be installed as king as the king he guard against internal as well as external dangers.

All attempts to oust the ruler, whether by conspiring officers or by the subjects rising in rebellion against oppression, imply only the substitution of one ruler by another, and at most a change of dynasty. The form of government would remain the same even after the attempt has succeeded. Sovereignty is not intended to be transferred to council of noblemen in a sort of aristocracy of representatives of the people in a sort of democracy.

### **3.4 Social life:**

Society and social life is organised on the Varna and Ashrama systems. It is axiomatically assumed as beneficial, as this has been laid down by the Vedas and found to be efficacious by the passage of time.

Kautilya appears to favour an army composed mostly of Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra troops. For an army of Brahmanas can be won over by the enemy by falling prostrate at the feet of its commander (9-23). The army of Brahmanas is not prohibited. It is likely to be soft and may fall a prey to the machinations of a wily foe.

A Shudra is an Arya. Those outside the Varna system may sell or pledge their children. But an Arya including a Shudra shall not be made a slave – न त्वेवार्यस्य दासभावः (3.13-14).

Brahmanas had a monopoly of imparting education. They had also a monopoly of priest-craft. With these two professions under their control, the Brahmanas had a pre-eminent position in the social life. But this did not amount to misuse of his social status for self-aggrandisement, just as the king could not use his powers absolutely according to his own whims and fancies. Similarly a Brahmana has to be content himself with his social status, which does not enable him to amass wealth. That is the privilege of the Vaishyas and the Shudras.

Special privilege is however reserved for the Shrotriya - a very learned Brahmana. The land granted to him is free from taxes and fines (2.1.7).

Agricultural profession, though reserved for the Vaishyas, was also followed by the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas in their spare time.

Punishment for offences like abuse, defamation, assault, etc. is on an ascending scale in accordance with the Varna of a person, the lowest fine being reserved for the Brahmana. While for offence of selling or pledging a minor, the scale is reversed, the highest fine being for a Brahmana offender (3.13.1.). It was expected that a brahmana by training would rarely be provoked to use abusive language or defame or assault the others.

In the matter of oath to be administered to witnesses different words are used. Brahmana is addressed to by a judge and is asked to speak truth'. To the Kshatriya and Vaishya he asks: 'Let there be not fruit of sacrificial or charitable deeds for you if you speak the untruth'. To the Shudra he says: 'whatever the reward of your merit, it shall go to the king and the king's sin come to you, in case you depose falsely. It is only a matter of form perhaps depending on the way one is brought up (3.11,34-37). In the matter of residential areas also, the different Varna groups stay in different areas.

Kautilya's Arthashastra is not a treatise on social organisation. Whatever was the actual position of different Varna group is described therein. It is however remarkable that untouchability is not mentioned. Chandalas are mentioned in 1.14.10. By way of illustration, it is stated that the well used by a Chandala was of use only for the Chandalas. In the Vedic literature the king Trishanku is the only Chandala. He is a person outside the Arya society, a sort of untouchable. The Aryas then came into contact with many foreign groups. But they were assimilated into different Varnas. Those who did not follow the rules of Varnashrama system were termed as Mlecchas-the foreigners. But they were also as time passed by absorbed into the Varna-ashrama system of the Aryas. In 3-18-7, there is a class antāvāṣayin mentioned in connection with the offence of defamation. Antāvāṣayin is one who stays at the end of the village or near the cremation ground. These residents were Chandalas and Pakhandas (heretical sects) (2-4-23). Perhaps these were declared to be untouchables when Buddhism became widespread, just before the Mauryas came into power. Pakhandas were also accommodated inside the city (3-16.32-33).

In Kautilya's time though jatis (caste-groups) based on birth were known, yet they crystallised later.

D. A. Suleikin has expressed the view that castes became firmly formalised in India only in the period from the fourth to the ninth century A.D.

Apart from these settled communities in towns and villages, the text refers to forest tribes, called Atavi or Atavika. It is stated that they are entrenched in jungle fastnesses and can be a source of great danger to the State. They are said to be well-organised and brave, practically autonomous and without any scruples in the matter of looting and killing (8.4.43).

Then there was another group in the society. It was called 'bahirika'. It appears to be some type of a nomadic tribe leading a wandering unsettled life. These tribes are stated to be harmful to the State as well as to the society. Their entry into the city is prohibited. If they enter the city, some tax is collected from them at the gate (2-6-2).

This picture of society as revealed in this sastra is more or less the same which continued fairly till we come to the modern times. As Hillebrandt says: "The fact that a reasonable writer like Kautilya finds himself in agreement with the law-books and the epics and in the whole section (on the duties of varnas etc.) shows no contrary views, proves the firmness of the lines that cut through Indian society." 41

The society though organised on Varnas and Castes, there was no basic antagonism between these groups. They lived in amity and had loyalty to the king and his administration. Even when a king who was victorious conqueror, he behaved in conformity with the pattern of behaviour, dress, conquered ones (13.5.7). Moreover the king's minister from these new territories also came from this new region to reassure them that their welfare was the King's primary concern.

### **Marriages:**

Marriage is the pivotal institution of the Hindu family system. Arya Chanakya begins the chapter on the description of the marriage system, with the words: All transactions begin with marriage (3-2-1) विवाहपूर्वो व्यवहारः। The most important stage in life-Ashrama-is the Grihastha - rooted in the home of a married person or the stage of a house-holder. This civil life begins with the marriage of the bride and bridegroom, who set up their house as a sequel to the marriage.

The forms of marriages are eight:- (1) ब्राह्म Brahma where the daughter duly decorated with ornaments is given in marriage to the bridegroom by the parents. (2) प्रजापत्य - Prājāpatya, this form is solemnised when the bride and



the bridegroom take the vow together to lead life according to Dharma rules of righteous conduct. (3) आर्ष Arsha - the parents receive a pair of cattle from the bridegroom, who is then allowed to take their daughter as the bride. (4) दैव Daiva - in which daughter is given to the officiating priest inside a sacrificial altar. (5) गान्धर्व Gandharva - when the lovers come together and take secretly a vow to lead a married life. (6) असुर Asura- wherein the parents take a dowry and give their daughter in marriage to the bridegroom. (7) राक्षस Rakshasa-where a maiden is seized forcibly and taken away. (8) पैशाच Paishacha-In this form a maiden in sleep or in an intoxicated state is seized and taken away:

The first four are considered to be sacramental marriages. In them also some dowry is involved. It is the property of the married woman. It can be revoked before the actual ceremony of Pani-grahana-clasping of the hands in marriage, in the case of the first three Varnas and before consumation in the case of the Shudras. In the first four forms of marriages dissolution is allowed only in extreme cases. In the case of the next four, this can be dissolved if the husband and wife hate each other.

A bride 12 years of age and the bridegroom 16 years of age are eligible for marriage. There are detailed rules for maintenance of the married women and their rights.

### **Inheritance:**

During the life time of the parents, the sons have no rights in the property of heir father. It is however left to the father to divide it, if he so desires. But the vision should show no special favour to any one. Similarly, he cannot exclude any one from his share, unless there are special reasons to do.

If any one dies sonless, his full brothers and daughters have a share in his property. Uterine brothers born of more than one father, they get inheritance from their respective fathers.

When there is no property, the eldest shall support the younger ones. For unmarried brothers their marriage expenses are to be from the common property of their father. Similarly the daughter gets an amount for bestowal in marriage. The eldest son is given a special share to discharge his duty of offering oblations to the manes.

### **Parivrājaka:**

The wandering monks or Sannyasins form an institution by itself. Nobody can ordinarily take to Sannyasa unless one has made sufficient provision for his family. Even then one has to take the permission of the law-givers, to take to Sannyasa. A woman is not to be induced to be a Sannyasini. These provisions appear to put a check on the tendency to take recourse to Sannyasa on the slightest pretext as was done in Buddha's time. The king has particularly to discourage monkhood and encourage the Vanaprastha-stage of life.

The followers of non-Vedic or heretical sects are called वृषलसं *Vrashalas* or पाषंडसं *pashandas*. They are named as Shakyas the followers of the Buddha, and the wakas the sect founded by Goshala Makkhali-putra- a contemporary of Mahavira. They were allowed to stay in the city and were free to follow their way of life. They were shown due courtesy. They owned some property. If member of such sects committed any offence, the fines for such offences were recovered from the property held by their order. If there was no property such offender was to undergo fasts and observe vows-vratas according to his own religion to atone for the sin. The king is allowed to confiscate the property of such order even by force, in the times of financial stringency (5-2-37)

### **Vedic way fostered:**

The king of course fostered the Vedic way of life, for it was considered for the good of the society. The king has to observe the vedic sacraments and maintain an agnyagāra-fire place and perform vedic sacrifices - Rajasuya sacrifices were performed.

Temples to different gods were common. The idols were installed and were worshipped. The priests performed puja or worship with the sixteen steps procedure prescribed (षोडशोपचार पूजा). For the common visitors to the temples, the worship of the deities consisted of 'pranipāta prostration before the image (9-7-83) and offering gifts, specially flowers fruits and incense (7-17-44). There were many types of deities i.e. different images of different gods.

The king should cause to be built in the centre of the city shrines for Aparajita, Apratihata, Jayanta and Vijayanta as well as temples of Siva, Vaisravana, Asvins, Śri and Madira. He should install the presiding deities of the respective regions. The city gates should be presided over by Brahman, Indra, Yama and Senapati. Outside the city at a distance of one hundred dhanusas from the moat,

sanctuaries, holy places, groves and water-works be made and the deities of the quarters in the respective quarters, be installed.

Different deities in different regions were also conceived then and worshipped (13-2-15) There were also temples for city. The king had his own temple in his palace. He installed in it a deity of his own choice. Offerings before the temple deities in cash and kind formed the income of the temples. This income was considerable. As a consequence the temples owned large properties. They included cattle, images, lands, buildings, cash, gold, jewels and grain.

For stealing the property of the temple, heavy fine and in grave cases even death penalty has been prescribed.

### **Devatadhyaksha :**

There was a state officer designated as Devatadhyaksha who was in charge of overseeing that the temple-trusts are managing the properties of the temples properly. If however in the interests of the State, the property of the temples was required to be appropriated, this officer used every stratagem to so acquire. In times of emergencies the State used to collect money by playing upon the susceptibilities of the gullible people. Even the Prince in disfavour is allowed to appropriate temple property for collecting funds for his insurrection against an unjust king (1-18-9)

The temples are the cultural centres, where fairs and festivals are held on the occasion of special worship of the deities. Kautilya also advises the king to exploit the faith of the people to replenish his empty treasury. He would set up some deity somewhere and make propaganda that the deity has emerged at the place miraculously. A fair would then be held and the offerings in cash and kind would be collected by the king's officers and appropriated for the purposes of the State. (5-2-39). When we know that Arthashastra belongs to such an early period as 1534 B.C. we can be sure that this institution of temples has been there since ages past and has continued to this day, more or less in the same form. This proves the thesis of this series, that India's culture has an unbroken continuity.

### **Divine calamities:**

It is King's duty to protect his subjects from eight great calamities of divine origin (1) Fire, (2) floods, (3) disease, (4) famine, (5) rats, (6) wild animals, (7) serpents and (8) evil spirits (4-3-1).

Precautions are to be taken to prevent fires, by asking the subjects to cook in the open in summer days. In case there is a big fire, fire-fighting equipments are to be used. Similar is the precaution to be taken in rainy days. The people - should be advised to stay away from river banks. Further wooden planks, bamboos and boats etc are to be kept ready for use in emergencies.

Kautilya details the remedies to fight these calamities. Medicine men and adequate stock of medicines are to be provided to fight the epidemics. To fight famines adequate central food stocks are to be built. Similarly for other pestilences remedies are provided in detail

### **Magical rites:**

In addition, Kautilya advocates propitiation of evil spirits due to the wrath of which the calamities may have descended on the population. He says: "In case of danger from evil spirits, experts in the Atharvaveda lore or experts in the practice of magic should perform rites for destroying evil *spirits* And - parvan days, king should order worship of *caitya* trees with offering of raised platforms, umbrellas, food, small flags and goats. Therefore, experts in the practice of magic, and holy ascetics, capable of counteracting divine calamities should live in the kingdom, honoured by the king. It is clear that there was widespread belief in such type of remedies. These beliefs are exploited by Kautilya for the good of the State. Chapter 14 deals with the secret practices against the unrighteous for the sake of protecting the four *varnas*.

Kautilya himself does not apparently believe in these. For he clearly exhorts the people to avoid passion, and avoid anger, nervousness, pity, shyness, ignobleness, haughtiness, and develop a sympathetic nature, regard for the other world, piousness. The people should shun illiberality, abjectness, jealousy, contempt for what is in the hand, wickedness, lack of trust, fear. He puts the blame for failure on one's inability to counteract, inability to endure cold, heat and rain, and fondness for auspicious days and constellations. The object slips away from the foolish person, who continuously consults the stars. He rhetorically asks: what will the evil stars do?

Men, without wealth, do not attain their objects even with hundreds of efforts, objects are secured through objects, as elephants are through elephants set to catch them. He is for manly efforts to achieve the objective one has set before him.

At the same time he advocates the appointment of the fortuneteller, the soothsayer, and the astrologer. There has been widespread belief since ages in

the predictions of the astrologers. Even today these are being consulted. The belief in the efficacy of mantras and incantations of particular God's names or sacrificial form of worship to obtain desired results has been there since ages.

### **3.5 Regulated City-life:**

The cities were well-planned, particularly the capital city was well-fortified and well-regulated with broad roads and a royal highway. The royal palace is to be erected in the ninth part to the north of the heart of the residential area. It should face either the east or the north. The residence of the preceptor and the chaplain, the places for sacrifices and for water as well as councillors should occupy its north-by-east part, the kitchen, the elephant stables and the magazine should be in the south-by-east part. Beyond that, dealers in perfumes, flowers and liquids, makers of articles of toilet and Ksatriyas should live in the eastern quarter.

The store-house for goods, the records and audit office, and workmen's quarters should occupy the east-by-south part, the storehouse for forest produce and the armoury should be in the west-by-south part. Beyond that grain-dealers of the city, factory officers and army officers, dealers in cooked food, wine and moat, courtesans, dance and Vaishyas should live in the southern quarter.

Stables for donkeys and camels and the workshop should occupy the south-by-west part, stable for carriages and chariots the north-by-west part. Beyond that, workers in wool, yarn, bamboo, leather, armours, weapons and shields should live in the western quarter.

The room for wares and medicines should occupy the west-by-north part, the treasury and cattle and horses the east-by-north part. Beyond that the tutelary deities of the city, and the king, and workers in metals and jewels and Brahmins should live in the northern quarter.

In enclosures in the non-residential areas, quarters for guilds, and foreign merchants should be situated (2-4, 8-15)

Kautilya gives detailed directions on every aspect of administration. Full details of each house-hold in the city were recorded in the city administration office. All arrivals and departures are reported to it by the citizens; movements during night are allowed only under authorisation. In all towns roads are to be broad, and the houses are to be so planned that no encroachment on the neighbour's property or any sort of nuisance is to be caused to him. Putting up a fence

around one's house and arrangements for the disposal of rubbish, waste water etc. are required to be made. Further details provide for arrangements for grinding and pounding, for cattle and carriage sheds, for channels for letting out rain water, for lanes between neighbour's houses and windows inside walls and so on (3-8,8-23). The houses were let out to tenants on annual rent-basis.

There were big buildings with number of occupants' families. In such places, court-yards, pounding sheds, latrines etc. were to be used in common.

This is the picture of town planning in India 3500 years ago. And this had continued in India for several hundreds if not for several thousands earlier. In the Saraswati-Sindhu civilisation, we also find the well-regulated layout of towns. That civilisation was at least 3000 years prior to Kautilya's times.

### **Sale of meat:**

The cow-slaughter was prohibited. The traders were to sell meat without bones. It should be of freshly killed animals.

Birds, deers, beasts or fish from animal parks or sanctuaries are not to be killed. Sea fish having the form of an elephant or a horse, or a man, or a bull or donkey or those from lakes, rivers, tanks or canals were protected. Other birds like swan, raddy goo, pheasant, bhrungarap, matta kokila, parrot and madanasarika, which are birds for sport and are suspicious, also other creators whether birds or deer, should be protected from all dangers of injury (2-326-9). It is clear from these details, meat sale was regulated and no animal other than those sanctioned or licensed was to be killed for meat.

### **Wine-trade**

There is no general prohibition. However trade in wines was well controlled. Particular persons at particular places have to manufacture or sell wine. There was a prohibition to take wine out of the village where it manufactured or sold. For the manufacture and sale of different types of intoxicants, drinks, such as medaka, prasanna, asava, arishta and madhu detailed regulations are laid down.

House-holders were also free to manufacture white liquor on festive occasions. Asavas and arishtas for medicinal use, could also be prepared by them. On festive occasions, gatherings and fairs, permission on a liberal scale to persons to manufacture and sell liquors for four days was granted (2-25,16-36).

There were ale-houses built with many rooms, and provided with separate beds and seats, and drinking bars provided with perfumes, flowers and water, and pleasant in all seasons (2-25-11).

Secret agents, placed there, should ascertain the normal and occasional expenditure of customers and get information about strangers. They should make a note of the ornaments, clothes and cash of customers who are intoxicated or sleeping. In case of loss of these, the traders have to pay the same and a fine of equal amount. Traders, on their part, should find out through their own female slaves of beautiful appearance, the intentions of strangers and natives, who have the outward appearance of Aryas, when they are intoxicated or in sleep in secluded part of the rooms.

### **Fabrics:**

Many varieties of woollen, silk and cotton fabrics were manufactured. These were of variegated colours. The woollen fabrics from Nepal and silk cloth from China, are mentioned. Peculiarities of fabrics from different regions of Bharata are noted. The trees favoured by silk-worms are noted as, naga-tree, the likucha, the bakula and banyan.

### **Jewellery :**

The use of jewellery and gold and silver ornaments of various kinds is implicit in the description of pearls, diamonds, rubies and other precious stones (2,11). Besides, we find a description of the manufacture of various kinds of gold and silver ornaments (2,13 and 2,14). The use of perfumes and garlands of flowers is referred to, so also that of fragrant powder and unguents during and after bath (1-21,13-14). Sandalwood and aloe wood of which a large variety is mentioned (2-11,43-72) were apparently used in some of these preparations.

### **Entertainments:**

The shows are put up separately by men and women. The joint shows were not common. These shows were put on the stage. The artists made this type of being, their profession. There were artists like actor (nata), dancer (nartaka) singer (gayaka), player on musical instruments (vadaka), story-tellers and bards (Yāgjivan) actors proficient in different arts, (kushilava), rope-dancers (plivaka) showman, a juggler, a clown, (saubhikas) wandering minstrels who put up different shows by their woman artists (charana and strivyavahārin) (2-27-25)

When a show is put up at any place, all the house-holders there have to make a contribution, so that all the members of that household can witness it. One who does not contribute for such a stage-show is not entitled to witness it (03-10-37-38)

In the villages, there should be no permanent structures for recreation hall. These would cause obstruction in the work of the people in the fields and other places of work (2-1-33,34). On occasions of festivals and fairs such improvised stage structures can be put up.

There is yet another type of artist noted. He is called **adhitikaushika**. Some mendicants like **Vaghya-muralis** a dancing couple with the image of a goddess on the head of the female dancer, move about inviting attention of the villages by their dance and gimmickry. Their importunities for alms become irresistible for you. Aditi Kaushika may also be a mendicant going by the name Vasudeo, who adorns his head with peacock feathers and dresses like a noble man and sings and dances in the streets with the sound of bells in his hands.

The social conditions depicted above appear to be the true picture of those days. The surprising aspect is that these are the conditions of the present day Indian society too. In state-craft, these types of dancers were used as spies. The use of spies in the present day is rather different than what has been described about the dancer class by Kautilya. We shall dwell upon that aspect, under the section 'spies' which follows.

### **Spies:**

The institution of spies is a very important arm of state administration. According to Kautilya, there are to be two branches of this institution:(1) Sansthā - establishment stationed at the head quarters and (2) Samchāra those who move from place to place according to certain schedules i.e. as and when their services are required.

### **Sanstha: The Establishment:**

The secret service of the first type is constituted of five limbs, viz **(1) The Kapatika** - a very alert and sharp papil or an assistant. The minister-incharge directs him. "Regarding the king and me as your authority, report to us at once any evil of any person with suspicious movements which you may notice ."

**(2) The udasthita** - An apostate monk. One who has relinquished the life of a wandering monk, and is endowed with intelligence and honesty, is the apostate monk. Equipped with plenty of money and assistants, he should get work done



in a place assigned to him. He is the central figure directing the net work of intelligence agents disguised as monks.

**(3) Gṛhapatika:** A house-holder one who is endowed with intelligence and honesty. He should under the guise of a cultivator work at a place assigned to him for agriculture work and direct the net-work of intelligence agents placed under his charge.

**(4) A trader** - Vaidehaka, similarly endowed with intelligence and honesty and provided with ample funds directs the net-work of intelligence agents under him, from a place assigned to him.

**(5) Tāpasa** an ascetic should also act in a similar way. The other intelligence workers should announce:- This holy man is able to secure prosperity for any one. Secret servants and agents should cause that prophecy of his to be fulfilled.

And favoured by the king with money and honour, they should ascertain the integrity of the king's servants (1-11-2-20)

#### **Sanchāra: The Rover:**

There are four types of Sancharas: (1) The **sattrin**, the secret agent par excellence, who is apparently an orphan specially trained by the State for the work, (2) The **tiksna**, the desperado or brave, who is useful for secretly liquidating enemies of the State; (3) the *rasada*, the giver of poison; these two administer what is called *upāmsudaṇḍa* 'secret punishment' or '*tuṣṇimdaṇḍa*' silent punishment and (4) the **bhiksuki** or *parivrājikā*, a brahmin nun who does the work of spying in the houses of high officers where she finds easy access because of the honour shown to her in the palace. Heretical nuns can also be similarly employed (1-12-1-5)

These are to be set upon the king's high officers. The king should employ these with a credible disguise as regards country, dress, profession, language and birth, to spy, in conformity with their loyalty and capability, on the councillor, the chaplain, the commander-in-chief, the crown-prince, the chief palace usher, the chief of the palace guards, the director, the administrator, the director of stores, the magistrate, the commandant, the city-judge, the director of factories, the council of ministers, the superintendents, the chief of the army staff, the commandant of the fort, the commandant of the frontier fort and the forest chieftain, in his own territory. Then there are detailed instruction the minister in charge is to employ these and get work done through the secret agents.

The artists mentioned in the preceding section are also to be employed secret agents if they are found intelligent enough and honest. Courtesans are particularly employed by the king for spying on his officers as well as on foreign princes and political agents of the foreign state.

There is yet another very highly intelligent and thoroughly honest type of agent. He is called *Ubhaya Vetana* - in the pay of both. He is in the service of one State but is posted as agent in a foreign State. This agent secures a service under that State and gets important information of that country and passes it on to his native State. To ensure that such an agent does not doublecross his native State, his wife and children are held as hostages (1-12-17-19)

Kautilya unhesitatingly advocates seemingly unethical practices is eliminating elements harmful to the interests of the State. Of course he lays in down the dictum that these methods are to be used only against the treasonable and unrighteous elements and never against others. He enjoins on the king to take only the fruits as they ripen in the garden. He should avoid unripe fruits as it would cause an uprising against him and it would cause his own destruction (5-2-69-70)

### **3.6 Was he Machiavellian?**

Kautilya is often compared with the Italian thinker Machiavelli, the author of 'The Prince.' Before the discovery of Arthashastra, C. Formichi another thinker on political science, had compared Kamandaka the author of Nitisara (the Essence of Political Ethics) with Machiavelli and Habbis. B.K. Sarkar quoted by Kangle says: "Denuded of all extraneous particulars, Machiavellism may be boiled down to two cardinal dicta: (1) The enemy, actual or potential, must be crushed at all costs. And here end justifies the means. (2) The manner in which a person behaves as the servant of a group, party or state must be different from that in which he appears as an individual in regard to other individuals."

When however Kautilya is stated to be Indian Machiavelli, it is assumed that the former was as unscrupulous and crooked as the latter. From what we have seen about Kautilya so far, we find him scrupulously honest to himself and to his king. There is no remotest touch of thought of his personal selfishness. He was a teacher and after securing the kingdom for his pupil Chandragupta, he resigned his Prime-Ministership and again resumed his duties as a teacher. He also impressed on the king to take only three hours sleep and look to the welfare of his subjects as a father would do for his children. He exhorted the king not

to be avaricious or greedy and never employ tortuous methods to secure their allegiance to him. Such a man, when he advocates apparently unethical means in the interests of the State, It is because that particular action appears to him to be the quickest and surest remedy for correcting the political evil afflicting the state i.e. the interest of the people of the state. Lord Krishna in Gita is seen advocating an apparent falsehood to kill that teacher turned warrior, Go Drona the teacher of the Pandavas. The Pandava hero Dhrishtadyumna beheaded his Guru Drona when the latter had been meditating to find the truths of the statement - 'Ashwathma has been killed' uttered by Dharmaraja the eldest the Pandavas. Lord Krishna had found that Guru Drona was otherwise invulnerable and would have caused utter destruction of the Pandava army. The Pandavas were fighting for their legitimate right to the throne of Hastinapur. Duryodhana, the Kaurava hero had been unlawfully holding in his grip Dharmaraja's kingdom and wanted to retain his grip over it. In such circumstances Lord Krishna advocated the use of falsehood by Dharmaraj, so that Guru Drona would lay down his arms. Dhrishtadyumna the commander of the Pandava Army, to behead Guru Drona and remove that great hurdle in the way of Pandava's victory. Kautilya does the same to save the trouble and expenditure to the king, and advocates the elimination of the State enemies apparently by unfair means. What one has to note here is that unfair means are employed against those who employ unfair means to gain power and self.

Machiavelli is no different from Kautilya. From his experience he had found that political science was not a treatise on ethics and so a distinction between them requires to be made. B. Russell notes that Machiavelli regards independence of the State, its security and well-ordered constitution as the unexceptional ends which a State must set itself to achieve. Machiavelli holds really religious persons and literary men to be great in their fields. In politics however, he advocates the doctrine that ends justify the means. The means employed may be apparently immoral or unethical. But these he advocates in the interests of the State. The principles of conduct between individuals are different as they are required to be governed by morality. Even a politician cannot identify himself to be the State and try to eliminate his political rival. When in the larger interests of the State, unscrupulous means are to be employed, they are justified - this is the conclusion that both Kautilya and Machiavelli arrive at. The enemy of the State is to be destroyed by any means fair or foul.

This cannot justify murderous attacks on rivals in politics, by political leaders of the day. These methods are reprehensible and required to be condemned in the strongest terms.

It is worthy of note that in Europe, the Jesuits were the persons who raised a hue and cry against Machiavelli and burnt his effigy and put his book 'The Prince' in the list of banned books. These Jesuits perpetrated inhuman crimes in the name of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

The OATH these enemies of humanity took to spread the message of Christ. It is horrible to read. And these religions minions were actually murdering or torturing innocent human beings for no fault of theirs. St. Xavier the author of the oath, was instrumental in forging that machine, Inquisition, commit unbelievable crimes in the name of religion. These Christian missionaries who condemned Machiavelli were the worst hypocrites in the history of mankind.

Machiavelli's dictum is "That war is just which is necessary, and arms are hallowed, when there is no other hope in them." Kautilya would certainly endorse it. But Kautilya had no foreign state in view. For Chandragupta Maurya had not to fight any foreign enemy on his borders. Alexander the Greek Adventurer was the contemporary of Chandragupta of the Imperial Gupta dynasty and not of Maurya Chandragupta. Kautilya's teaching is almost certainly derived from earlier teachers, and there is no awareness in it of the danger of invasions by foreigners such as the Persians or the Greeks, much less of any burning desire to free the country from the yoke of such foreigners. The reason for this difference between Kautilya and Machiavelli is that the latter had constantly before his mind's eye the specific historical situation in Italy at the time, while Kautilya's work is unconcerned with any particular historical situation.

The Christian Indologists. A.B. Keith has commented: "It is a very misplaced patriotism which asks us to admire the Arthashastra as representing the fine flower of Indian political thought. It would, indeed, be melancholy if this were the best that India could show as against the Republic of Plato or the Politics of Aristotle.

This is unfounded criticism. Plato's search is for an ideal state. Kautilya's anxiety is to eliminate enemies of an ideal Indian State. Plato's Republic is an attempt by an idealist to formulate ideal political philosophy. Kautilya's attempt is at building a political science for a king who wants to be just an ideal father to his sons both well - trained and well - behaved. Kautilya had also to deal with those who turned crooked.

Kautilya need not be compared with Aristotle. Kautilya is for the establishment of an ideal welfare state.

All the Varnas are to be well looked after. In this kingdom there is no slave. Even those who were not assimilated in the Varna system, were allowed to follow their own customs, traditions and laws. On the other hand Aristotle has defended slavery for a section of the populace of the State. "In Athens, according to Barker, the number of citizens was 50,000, while that of slaves, who were mostly public slaves and whose labour sustained practically its entire economy, was 100000. The citizens could participate in the exercise of sovereignty and cultivate a life of virtue because they were freed from the necessity of labour on account of the slaves. Though Aristotle's defence of slavery is thus explicable in the light of the conditions obtaining in Greece at the time, it can hardly be maintained that the defence of such a system does him credit.

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