ing Vijaya and the early history of Ceylon as recorded in the *Mahāvaṃśa.*66 A princess of Vaṅga, too arrogant to accept a human husband, is married to a lion. She gave birth to a son Sihabāhu and a daughter Sihāsavali but remained unhappy and homesick. Ultimately she persuaded Sihabāhu to kill his father, the lion, whereupon the princess with her two children returned to her father's kingdom. But soon after this the children left her, wandered away to a distant place where they married each other, built themselves a city and established a kingdom. The marriage resulted in sixteen pairs of twin sons. Among these Vijaya was regarded as the eldest. He was however so evil that he had to be exiled but was permitted to take seven hundred attendants with him. He travelled at first to western India and finally arrived in Ceylon together with his attendants on the very day of Buddha's *nirvāṇa.* The island was inhabited only by *yakhas* and *yakhiniṣ* whom he subdued. He sent to India for wives for himself and his attendants and not only made the island fit for human habitation but became himself a virtuous king.

The myth seeks to introduce all the elements of the traditional origin myth of the Buddhist texts. There are also, underlying the story, many levels of assumptions. The geographical area of the story is very wide, starting with eastern India, moving to western India and from there to Ceylon. This is not the compact region of the earlier myths. At the time of the compilation of the text both eastern and western India were in close contact with Ceylon. The western contact is attested to linguistically, the Pāli of the Chronicles having an affinity with the western *prākṛt* of India. The eastern link may have been introduced to establish as close a connection as possible with the Buddhist homeland. The myth is replete with assumptions regarding the social order. Vijaya's unusual and supernatural origin is amply emphasized: he is the grandson of a lion, the son of an incestuous marriage and the eldest of sixteen pairs of twin brothers. Incest in this case again points to purity of descent: Uniqueness is further stressed by the sixteen pairs of twin brothers, although here the eldest stands out since
the context is monarchy and not oligarchy. His social status is indicated by his royal antecedents both in the animal world and in the human. Royal antecedents also provide him with the economic means to travel the long distance from Vaṅga to Ceylon together with his attendants. The story of the exile was necessary to explain why anyone would travel such a long distance to an island inhabited only by demons. It is appropriate that the man who founded the first human colony in Ceylon should arrive on the auspicious day of the Buddha’s parinirvāṇa. Such a connection would be virtually inevitable in the Mahāvamsa which after all was the Chronicle of the major Buddhist monastery of Ceylon, the Mahāvihāra. The etymological interest is also clear from the attempt to explain the derivation of the name of the island—Sinhala — associated with a lion. The earlier origin myths had by now almost become archetypes. The story of Vijaya does not occur at the start of the Mahāvamsa but in the sixth chapter. Nevertheless it marks the commencement of the narrative of the history of Ceylon. Earlier chapters relate the story of the Buddha’s visit to Ceylon and the conversion of Aśoka which prepares the ground for the arrival of Buddhism. This structure makes the narrative more purposive and strengthens the notion of the mission of Buddhism to Ceylon.

The social function of these origin myths in the context of the early Indian historical tradition appears to be fourfold: to establish kinship links, to emphasize the legitimacy of succession, to indicate the migration of important groups and to provide social status to those who had acquired political power. The recognition of kinship links among the kṣatriya families in the mid-first millennium B.C. was central to the question of rights of land-ownership and ultimately political authority. In the first millennium A.D., with new claimants to kṣatriya status and political power in the many dynasties of the period, the kinship links were revived through the search for actual or fabricated genealogical connections.67

The legitimacy of succession was implicit in the genealogical links requiring kṣatriya antecedents. In the mon-
archical system there was the additional need to stress primogeniture. That this was a real concern is evident from other literature which stresses not only the need for hereditary succession but also the rights of seniority within it.\textsuperscript{68} It is not surprising that this question crops up repeatedly in the literature of the mid-first millennium A.D. and later, where in plays such as the Devicandraguptam and in historical biographies such as the Harṣacarita and the Vikramāṅkadevacarita, there is an elaborate justification for the transgressing of the rule.\textsuperscript{69}

The theme of migration, often disguised as exile, sets the geographical dimensions of the social group and can be used to establish the rights and priority of a particular group over a particular region. This assumes significance in periods when new groups are moving in as entrepreneurs in either previously occupied areas or in newly opened up lands: the entrepreneurs in the mid-first millennium A.D. being the recipients of grants of land. Those who succeeded in establishing new dynasties would either have to link themselves genealogically with the descent groups, who were already associated with the area or else would have to introduce the idea of migration. The Sisodia Rajput link with the Sūryavaṃśi lineage and the migration of one of their ancestors from Lahore (associated with Lava the son of Rāma) to Rajasthan would form a case in point.\textsuperscript{70} Puranic sources refer to the dispersal of the Haihayas (a sub-lineage of the Yādavas). This provided a useful peg for many early medieval dynasties to hang their genealogies on, such as the Kalacuris of Tripuri\textsuperscript{71} and the Muṣakavamsa of Kerala.\textsuperscript{72} Exiled princes also provide one of the mechanisms by which local tradition can be hooked onto the ‘classical’ tradition and vice versa.

In both the itihāsa-purāṇa tradition and the Buddhist tradition, as far as origin myths are concerned, it is in the main the ksatriya status which is sought to be validated. The origin myths of the ksatriya tribes in Buddhist literature are attempts to provide status for those who played an important part in the events relating to the establishment of Buddhism, and are the counterparts to the lineage myths in the
Puranic tradition, both sets of myth endorsing the groups in political authority at the time. Nor is it coincidental that this search for validation through myth is systematized and recorded at the time when dynasties claiming ksatriya status rose to political control and, in the Buddhist case, sectarian institutions of the Buddhist Saṅgha were involved, albeit not always directly, in political authority.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

(I am grateful to my colleagues Dr. Satish Saberwal and Dr. B. D. Chattopadhyaya who read an earlier draft of this paper and discussed it with me).

6. C. Levi-Strauss, The Raw and the Cooked and From Honey to Ashes, being the first two volumes so far translated into English of a longer work, Mythologiques (Paris, 1964-72). The more successful applications of the structural analysis of myth have been in the myths of pre-literate societies. E. Leach (ed.), The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism (London, 1967), and T. A. Sebeok (ed.), Myth: A Symposium (Indiana, 1955). Changes introduced in myths over a period of time in literate societies could add a worthwhile dimension even to structural analysis.
8. Eliade has touched on this theme in many of his writings but more especially in The Myth of the Eternal Return, Myth and Reality, and in Patterns in Comparative Religion (New York, 1963).
10. Georges Dumézil's *Mythes et Épopées* in three volumes is not as yet available in an English translation but an attempt has been made to represent his ideas in C. Scott Littleton, *The New Comparative Mythology* (London, 1973). Dumézil uses the theory of the three functions (which can be approximately translated as sanctity, coercion and fecundity) as the basic pattern of Indo-European symbolism and myth. None of the functions are precisely defined and the overlapping makes for a rather ambiguous analysis at times. Also associated with these ideas are the writings of Stig Wikander, especially the paper entitled 'La Legende des Pandavas et la substructure mythique du Mahabharata' in Georges Dumézil, *Jupiter, Mars, Quirinus IV*.


13. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, IV.


15. This point came up in a discussion with Professor A. Kilmer.


19. *Ṛg Veda* X. 10.


22. The symbolism of the sun and the moon occurs frequently in Yoga and in Tantric texts although in these the sexual association is reversed: the moon is associated with the male and the sun with the female. M. Eliade, *Yoga* (Princeton, 1971), p. 239.


Investigations at Mohenjo-daro’, *Archaeology*, 1965, No. 18). The second would be that of the Ganga-Yamuna Doab and particularly Hastinapur in the early first millennium B.C. (B. B. Lal, ‘Excavations at Hastinapur’, *Ancient India*, 1954 and 1955, Nos. 10 and 11). The second is certainly too late in time to have been the original of such a myth. More than likely the myth was not referring to any particular flood but rather to the possibility of a flood as a cataclysmic point of time and change and this notion may have arisen from the observation of recurring floods in the area.

31. *Ṛg Veda*, X.95.
32. *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, XI.5.1.1 ff.
37. Ibid.
40. *Vedic Index*, II, pp. 11-12.
41. Ibid., p. 185.
42. Viṣṇu Purāṇa, I.13.
46. Ibid., IV.20.
47. *Ṛg Veda*, X.98; *Nirukta*, II.10; *Bṛhaddevata* VII.148 ff.
52. *Kuṇāla Jātaka*, No. 536.
62. Sally Falk Moore, op. cit.
64. *Manu*, X.22, does however refer to the Licchavis as vrātya kṣatriyas.
65. Aggaṇa Sutta in *Dīgha Nikāya*, III.93.
66. *Mahāvaṃśa VI*.
68. *Arthasāstra* I, 17.34; *Majjhima Nikāya*, II.83; *Manu*, IX.105-09.
69. The first of these texts justifies the succession of Candragupta II, who, owing to the cowardly act of his elder brother Rāmagupta, had finally (it would seem from other sources) to kill his elder brother and usurp the throne. Both biographies concern the succession of younger brothers and here again an elaborate argument is produced to prove the justification for the younger brother. In the *Harsacarita* the elder brother is killed by the enemy so that the justification is not so elaborate. In the *Vikramāṅkadevacarita* we are told that the god Śiva himself commanded the younger brother to usurp the throne for the sake of the well-being of the people and the prosperity of the kingdom.
Genealogy as a Source of Social History

Historical interest in the genealogical sources of the ancient period of Indian history became a serious concern with the publication in 1922 of what has since come to be regarded as the classic work of F. E. Pargiter, The Ancient Indian Historical Tradition. This was essentially an attempt to ascertain the chronology of the beginnings of Indian history by correlating the genealogical information from the vamsā-nucarita material from the various Purāṇas. Having worked out what he thought was the most acceptable chronological and genealogical reconstruction, Pargiter then tried to identify the various lineages with what were believed to be the predominant racial-linguistic groups of the time — the Aryans, Dravidians, Mundas, etc. Later work on the same subject has, on the whole, continued to emphasize chronological and dynastic reconstruction¹ which inevitably has led to a considerable juggling with the lists of descent groups and succession.

It is proposed in this paper to move away from chronological reconstruction, on the assumption that traditional genealogies are rarely faithful records of times past. Their primary function and purpose perhaps lies elsewhere. This is not to deny their chronological dimension for, obviously, in a measuring of generations, the element of time is important; but, rather, to suggest that genealogies provide elements of other facets of society as well² and these facets have often been ignored in the study of genealogical material


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from Indian sources. Genealogies relate to the past and claim to be records of succession, yet very often their preservation (or even their fabrication) is dependent on the social institutions of the period when they were put together and for which they provide legitimizing mechanisms. They are often encapsulations of the migration and movement of peoples in time and to that extent are associated with a geographical locale. However, the genealogical record is not based on a region but on the distribution of the lineage which may or may not coincide with geographical region.

As records of social relations, they were concerned only with particular social groups, namely, those who were members of the lineages and had access to political and social status. Lineages of those in authority even in tribal society had to be maintained with as much concern as those of kings. This was even more pertinent in conditions of frequent warfare or in new settlements of land where the genealogy became a reference point for legal rights and status. When other groups began to participate in social and political power, such as religious teachers and priests, then their genealogies had also to be maintained. Thus, lists of succession do not pertain only to dynastic descent of kings.

The keeping of genealogies becomes important with the emergence of property, for the right to ownership or participation in property can be proved by lineage links. In pre-agricultural food-gathering societies the right to ownership of property (other than personal) was, for a variety of reasons, faintly defined and flexible. The right to property was subordinate to the right to status. In agrarian societies, particularly with the emergence of ownership of land, whether group or individual, the notion of property became stronger. Whereas in non-agrarian or early agrarian societies it is largely the lineages of the clan chiefs which are remembered, in more developed agrarian societies other groups may also come to be recorded in lists of succession. The record of ownership and status can extend not only to rights over land and livestock but also rights to women in
the form of marriage alliances between lineages, and to other resources.

Succession is another form of the transfer of property and office from one person to the next and therefore involves a small segment of society through a hierarchy of restricted and inter-linked roles.\(^4\) What is recorded in the genealogy is the social system of succession, namely, the office to which succession is made, the relationship between the successive office holders, the procedure of selection, and the time when it occurs. The choice of the successor is often determined by the social system.

Since genealogies are arranged chronologically this provides the dimension of the measurement of time.\(^5\) This may be represented either by reference to cyclical occurrences or much more directly by reference to age groups, kinship (father-to-son or uncle-to-nephew) or by regnal years. Reckoning by generations also provides an approximate time scale. But regnal years and generations should not in every case be taken literally. Significant spans of time are usually demarcated by some important event and are pointers to the historian that the interrelationships recorded have undergone some fundamental change.

Most traditional genealogical records carry two types of information. The core of the genealogy consists of the succession lists or the lists of the descent groups and this has been called ‘the fixed tradition’. However even this is subject to considerable fluidity should the situation demand it. Interspersed with this is the narrative tradition which is added to and changed by the genealogist more freely. The ‘fixed tradition’ was perhaps less tampered with, although it was often ‘telescopied’ where only the essential names and events were memorized and other matter dropped as long as the genealogical record was an oral one.\(^6\) The narrative tradition, consisting of legends or the description of incidents, inevitably changed more easily when the social norms changed or when new requirements demanded fresh comment. Into the Puranic genealogies are interwoven such narratives. The inclusion of genealogies in a body of literature reflects both a desire to freeze the tradition on the
assumption that it will continue to serve a social purpose as well as the taking over of the tradition from professional memorizers by literate groups. It has also been suggested that where a number of genealogies are coalesced this indicates the collation of various literary traditions. That genealogies become a part of literature at some point is inevitable. The keepers of such records in the oral tradition were respected as sources of sanction for status. When the record was embodied in literature, not only this respect and power transferred to those who were keeping the written record but, by collating the different segments of the tradition, it facilitated the control over these records as well.

Keeping these aspects of genealogical records in mind, the ancient Indian tradition can be seen as a useful source of data. The earliest attempts at lineage records and succession lists are to be found in Vedic literature. Those relating to kings are almost incidental since they merely refer to connections of about two or three generations and that too not in any genealogical form. The two dominant tribes of the Rgvedic period — if we are to go by the mention of lineages — were the Bharatas and the Purus in whose families it is possible to trace minimal descent links. In later Vedic literature these two families are replaced by reference to the Kuru-Pancala descent groups and a more eastern centre of interest, Videha, is also introduced. These two regions, the Ganga-Yamuna Doab and its fringes and the middle Ganges plain, remain the focus of much of the earlier genealogical material of the Puranas as well. What are however referred to with greater interest in the later Vedic texts are the succession lists of Vedic teachers. The preservation of these lists was due to the need for the ritual to be handed down orally and the record of those connected with it in the past was maintained by recording the names of the teachers and the brāhmaṇ gotras. These succession lists were made a part of the sacrificial ritual to ensure that they would be memorised. It is significant that, whereas the succession lists of those in political power went almost unrecorded, there was a deliberate formulation of lists of
those who had status through ritual actions and the careful maintenance of such lists.

The proliferation of the ritual may also have required its demarcation by association with particular groups of teachers and priests. Further, the Vamśa or succession lists help to maintain a record of gotra and pravara relations and these were of fundamental importance to the brāhmans as an indication of social and ritual identity. The gotra, a patrilineal, exogamous, sibship whose members trace their descent to a common ancestor, was, to begin with, an institution recording kin and social relations only among the brāhmans. Later, it extended to other varṇas as well. The pravara, a stereotyped list of names of ancient gyas believed to be the remote founders of families, had a similar function. The gotra was crucial to marriage and property since members of the same gotra (sagotra) were not permitted to marry within the gotra but they could, in the absence of an heir, claim rights to the property owned by one of their fellow members. The lists of vamśas and gotras therefore served a distinct social function and underlined the status of the brāhmans and indicated that the knowledge of ritual was a crucial aspect of social status if not (indirectly) of property. By the period of the śrauta-sūtras there are systematic lists of gotras and pravaras, but sometimes subject to inconsistencies and contradictions. Notwithstanding the latter, it would seem that at the point where it became socially necessary there was probably a rush to systematize the lists and connections. For the brāhmans the maintenance of such a system was necessary when new members had to be recruited who were not from the old kinship groups. Thus tribal priests in new areas or the conference of brāhma status on the priests of cults assimilated into Vedic religion would require the records of such families of priests. Doubtless the gotra system was useful both to incorporate the new brāhmans into the varṇa and assist in their being absorbed into kinship groups where this was desired, or equally, the preservation of a subtle barrier between the new and the old if this was preferred.
The major texts for the recording of lineages were the Purāṇas with their vaṃśānucarita sections claiming to be authentic records of the kṣatriya vaṃśas. Not all the mahā purāṇas record the genealogies in detail. In most of the standard ones, such as the Viṣṇu, Brahmāṇḍa, Vāyu, Matsya and Bhāgavata, there is broad agreement in most sections of the genealogies. An attempt was evidently made to arrange and organize all the vaṃśas and janapadas which, as tribes and states, were known in northern India and provide them with a history via the genealogies. That the genealogies agree broadly suggests that it was a concerted effort. It is not unlikely that some sections of the lists were historical and others were added to fill out the genealogy and to cover the known geographical regions. Some were contemporary and others were given antecedents so as to introduce an order into the structure, which is in fact extremely orderly. That genealogical information was a well-known part of the tradition and that the genealogies at least were maintained in the fourth century B.C. if not the Purāṇas is evident from the statement of Megasthenes quoted by Pliny that the Indians count one hundred and fifty-four kings up to the time of Alexander.

The original oral tradition was kept by the bards and chroniclers, the sūtas and the māgadhās. There are various myths describing how Vyāsa taught the itihāsa-purāṇa tradition to his disciple, the bard Lomaharṣaṇa. The latter in turn taught it to his disciples who were brāhmaṇs. Does this perhaps indicate the taking over of the tradition by the brāhmaṇ authors of the Purāṇas? Originally the sūta and the māgadhā had a high social status and were seated in proximity to the king on ritual occasions. Curiously, with the incorporating of the genealogical records into the body of literature, the Purāṇas, in the early first millennium A.D., the social status of the original keepers of the tradition was lowered.

For a detailed analysis, the vaṃśānucarita section of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (Book IV) provides the necessary source material. The genealogy covers a long span of time, starting with Brahmā and continuing as far as the dynas-
ties of the early first millennium A.D. It appears however to be divisible into three distinct sections which seem to represent social and political changes (see Table at the end). The first is avowedly mythical and acts as a preface to the later sections. The details are not given in the genealogical section but are discussed in the earlier part of the text concerning primary and secondary creation (the sarga and pratisarga sections). Descent is traced from the gods, starting with Brahmā and continuing via Dakṣa, Aditi and Sūrya to Manu Vaivasvata. Earlier in the text we are told that there were six Manus prior to him, the earliest being Manu Svayambhu. In the Matsya Purāṇa the Great Flood occurs at the time of Manu Vaivasvata and Viṣṇu in the form of the Matsya incarnation saves Manu. The period of the Manus has no specific geographical location except that of Jambudvīpa in a general way and the time spans associated with the Manus are enormous. In all this there is a distinct echo of the Sumerian king-list. The pre-diluvian list is recognisable in that virtually no attempt is made to try and give it authenticity.

The children of Manu, born after the flood, initiate the second section (which is described in Viṣṇu Purāṇa IV. 1-22) which, whether historical or not, is clearly carefully constructed and probably represents the collation of many floating genealogical traditions as kept by the sūtas and māgadhas. It is concerned primarily with the distribution and descent of the Ikṣvāku and Aila lineage and terminates in the Mahābhārata war. The lineages descended from the other children of Manu are referred to but tend to be dismissed after a brief description. Ikṣvāku, a son of Manu, is the progenitor of the Sūryavamśa lineage in direct line of descent from Aditi and Sūrya. The Candravamśa lineage was descended from the daughter of Manu, Ilā. She was created from a sacrifice offered by Manu who desired a son, but owing to a mistake in the ritual a female child was born. The situation was somewhat ameliorated by her ability to change her sex on occasion and she is therefore referred to by the cognate Ilā-Ilā. Ilā gave birth to a son fathered by Budha the son of the moon deity, Soma. Thus
the lunar element in the name of the lineage is introduced. The second section covers a span of approximately ninety-six generations as computed by Pargiter. The Mahābhārata war at the end of this period is for genealogical purposes quite evidently a time-marker, virtually terminating the record of the descent of the two lineages. Almost all the lineages are involved in the war and the ultimate victory of the one is bitter in the light of the destruction of the many. In the second section of the genealogy, the lineages are not cordonned off into dynasties and are recorded merely as descent groups. The term used is ṛṣam rājyam where ṛṣa should be seen more appropriately as lineage rather than as dynasty or royal family or race. There is a reference in the opening section of the ṛṣamucarita to the members of the lineages being bhupālas or kings, but the term ṛṣa is used more frequently in other chapters of this section. The same term ṛṣa is used for lists of teachers and therefore it may be taken to mean a descent group or lineage not always related by blood. Thus the second section is a record of lineages, some of which may have been royal lineages, others those of the kṣatriyas in the sense of landowning clans. The definition which we are assuming for kṣatriya is the one given by Pāṇini as referring to the ruling clans both in monarchical and oligarchic systems. We hope to show that the structure of the ṛṣas as described in this section makes it apparent that it is politically important lineages which are being recorded and not dynasties.

In the third section of the genealogy (Viṣṇu Purāṇa IV.22-24) which follows the Mahābhārata war, dynasties are mentioned by name and their members are listed. The geographical focus shifts to Magadha. Regnal years are introduced for the successors of Vṛhadratha of Magadha in some of the Purāṇas and this is a new feature. The assassination of Riptuṣṇa by the minister Sunika terminates the lineage of Vṛhadratha and one suspects that the assassination was yet another, less dramatic time-marker. Sunika usurps the throne and there is a succession of dynas-
ties at Magadha, which are listed. Ultimately the genealogical record includes other dynasties of northern India.

There is of course a continuing debate on the historical authenticity and chronology of these genealogical sections. In this paper we are not primarily concerned with either. It is assumed that the genealogical section was constructed at the time of the compiling of the Vīṣṇu Purāṇa and it is this construction which needs to be analysed. It is not the veracity of the lineages which is being investigated but the social and political forms which they reflect. As regards chronology it can only be suggested that one may go from the known to the unknown. Of the dynasties, the Śiśunāgas are the earliest attested from other sources as well and date to circa fifth century B.C. They are preceded by approximately twenty kings which would give a rough date of the early part of the first millennium B.C. for the Mahābhārata war. (The regnal years given for the kings could well be arbitrary.) This is of course assuming that such a date was of any significance to the makers of the genealogy. The importance of the war seems more symbolic than chronological. The distance of a round sum of a hundred generations prior to the war would substantially relate to the second millennium B.C. and a little earlier. But the chronological reconstruction remains at best extremely tentative.

The three sections of the genealogy which we have described are of course not demarcated clearly in the text but seem to us to be implicit in the way in which the genealogy has been put together. Of these three sections, the first can be set aside as not providing any worthwhile evidence on the social background. But the second and third sections offer a series of contrasts and are suggestive of recording a major shift in emphasis through social and political change. The most obvious indication of this is in the form of the genealogical record itself. It claims to have been recorded immediately after the termination of the Mahābhārata war, during the reign of Parīkṣit. The references to descent groups prior to the war are in the past tense. Subsequent to this the record is in the form of a prophecy and therefore uses the future tense.
This grammatical change has a further interest. In the past tense the succession is listed in four different ways, thus:  

- B was the son of A  
- B was ‘of A’ (the use of the genitive)  
- B was ‘from’ or ‘after’ A (the use of ablative)  
- B was heir of A

In the first two cases it can be assumed that B was the child of A. The most commonly used phraseology runs thus,

*Turvasor-vahnir-ātmajo-vahner-gobhānu-śatca-traisamba-stasmāccakarandhama...*  
The son of Turvasu was Vahni, Vahni’s son was Gobhānu, his son was Traisamba, his son was Karandhama...

The second two cases are however ambiguous and leave the relationship in doubt; all that is certain is the succession of B after A. Such a form would be more appropriate to non-monarchical systems, where hereditary succession was not inevitable, or in tribal systems, where adoption is very often the only form of recruitment into the tribe.

After the Mahābhārata war the statements are made in the future tense, thus,

*ataḥ parambhaviṣyānahanabhupālān kirtavyāmi...*  
I will now enumerate the kings who will reign in future periods...

This enumeration takes a form such as,

*...tasyāpi-putro-bindusārobhaviṣyati-tasyāpyāśokavardhanastataḥ-suyaśas-tatśca-dosaratha...*  
...his son will be Bindusāra, his (son) will be Aśokavardhana, his (son) will be Suyaśas, his (son) will be Daśaratha...

The change to the future tense and the prophetic form points to a major event in time and the past being viewed as essentially the period before the Mahābhārata war. This might explain the attempts to shift the start of the Kaliyuga from the time of Manu Vaivasvata to the period after the Mahābhārata war. The inconsistency in the prophetic form is evident. All the mahāpurāṇas profess to be prophetic, yet their standpoint in time is not identical.  
The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* makes it clear that the genealogy is being
narrated by Pārāśara to Maitreya in the reign of Parīkṣit. But Pārāśara was the father of Vyāsa and was therefore dead long before the battle or the birth of Parīkṣit. The purpose of the prophetic form coming at this point was to draw attention to the Candravaṃśa lineages in their peak period of glory, prior to their supersession by the emergence of powerful dynasties. In the case of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa the attempt may also have been to highlight the role of Viṣṇu (as Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva) both at the battle and subsequently. The genealogy was in any case organized with a certain bias in favour of the Candravaṃśa lineage since the central event which separates the historically verifiable section with what came before is the war.

The second section of the genealogy records the distribution and descent of the Śūryavaṃśa and Candravaṃśa lineages, both ultimately claiming Manu as an ancestor. The choice of names is curious. Vedic literature refers to Ikṣvāku and to Ilā in separate contexts and the former is associated with a lineage. But the more commonly used terms, Śūryavaṃśa and Candravaṃśa, occur in the epics and the Purāṇas and appear to be later appellations, perhaps of the period when the genealogies were being collated. To name the lineages after the planets seems in no way peculiar and was probably an obvious choice. It may—however be mentioned in passing that the symbolism of the sun and the moon reaches across to a number of cults and groups of early Indian society. Its frequency in Tantric and Yogic texts, together with the reference to Agni which in the early medieval period was adopted as the appellation for another group of lineages, might suggest some connections in the symbolism. The sun and the moon are said to symbolize the two main nerve centres to the right and the left of the human body and their union is sought in certain yogic practices. The construction of the lineages is suggestive of this pattern. Might the inclusion of the ancestors for the Candravaṃśa also be attributed to similar influences? One of the characteristics of the Purāṇas was the assimilation of certain substratum cults.
The connection of the epics with the two major lineages is also of some interest. The Rāmāyaṇa focuses on the Sūryavaṃśa-Ikṣvāku lineage and the Mahābhārata on the Candravaṃśa-Aila lineage. The structure of the epics relates closely to the social formation suggested by the lineages. This would in part account for the popularity of the epics which would be associated with those who in later periods as well linked themselves to the earlier lineages. It is perhaps also worth keeping in mind that early epic literature, constructed out of the fragments of bardic traditions, is often the literature of the transitional phase of the declining of tribal society and the emergence of kingdoms.34

The most striking feature of the Sūryavaṃśa or the Aikṣvāku lineage is not only the fullness of the names where practically every generation is represented but also the relatively stable location for these lineages with little evidence of branches migrating in various directions. Ikṣvāku we are told had three sons Vikukṣi who established the kingdom at Ayodhya, Nimi who established the kingdom at Videha, and Daṇḍaka who migrated south to the Daṇḍa-kāraṇya. Daṇḍaka appears to have been a later addition and was probably included when some contact was established between the janapada of Kośala with the lands to its south-west. This may have originally been a migration from Kośala to what came to be called Dakṣiṇa Kośala.35 Basically the Ikṣvāku lineage consists of the ruling families of Kośala and Videha. These were contiguous regions perhaps settled at the same time by groups which had either travelled along the Himalayan foothills or up from the Ganges river along the northern tributaries of the Gandhak and the Gaghra. At one point, therefore, the families of Raghu and Janaka were seen as moieties. The Ikṣvāku lineage would conform to what has been called a linear descent group with descent going from father to eldest son. Younger sons are not mentioned, barring certain exceptional cases such as Purukutsa, the son of Mandhātri, the sons of Daśaratha or the mention of Kuśadhvaja, the brother of Sīradhvaja (Janaka) whose descendents are listed as the inheritors of that branch of the Sūryavaṃśa. Even in cases
where younger sons are mentioned it seems that they did not migrate to new areas but remained as junior members of the family in the two states. The emphasis therefore was on genealogical seniority where the first-borns of first-borns are given highest rank. In such a system the right to succession of the eldest son would be unchallenged and thus the events of the Rāmāyaṇa take on many different levels of meaning, even within the sphere of social and political life. Patrilineal descent would also be heavily underlined in such a system.

The Rāmāyaṇa preserves lengthier lists for the descendants of both Vikukṣi and Nimi as compared to the Viṣṇu Purāṇa. Clearly the latter has resorted to telescoping for the first few generations, whereas the Rāmāyaṇa tends to reduce the generations immediately preceding Daśaratha. The Puranic list also suggests a connection between Ayodhyā, Kāśi and the Narmadā region. Purukutsa, the younger son of Mandhātri marries Narmadā and the main lineage then descends through him. This is also the geographical locale of the epic. That the Puranic list may have been conflated is suggested by the repeated occurrence of some names, such as Yuvanaśva, and the use of other names such as Sindhudvīpa, Aśmaka, Ilavilā which do not inspire much confidence as the personal names of kṣatriyas. The need for conflating was probably to emphasize the stability of the lineage as well as to relate it chronologically to the other major lineage of the Candravaṃśa. The line of Nimi in the Purāṇa is very sparse as compared to the epic until the period of Janaka, after which the epic lineage stops but the Puranic continues. The lineage is traced through Kuśadhvaja ruling at Kāśi, thus suggesting a connection between Kāśi and Videha.

The linear descent of the Ikṣvāku lineage may indicate a stable political system probably based on a developed agrarian economy, the existence of the state and an established monarchical system. This is of course clearly reflected in the Rāmāyaṇa where the kingdoms of Ayodhyā and Videha stand in contrast to the Daṇḍakāranya, Citrakūta and Kiṣkindhā where the technology is relatively primitive.
The contrast may well have been motivated in part by poetical fancy but the consistency with which it is adhered to in the many versions of the story would suggest that it carried some implicit notions of a technically more advanced society being associated with the Sūryavamśa lineage. It is also strange that the Puranic genealogy eliminates totally any reference to the gana-saṅgha tribes and oligarchies in the regions adjoining Kośala and Videha and whose lineages are referred to at some length in Buddhist and Jaina sources. The only trace of any of these is the inclusion of the names Sākya, Sudodhana and Rāhula, towards the end of the Ikṣvāku lineage. Curiously the Videha lineage also seems to terminate with Siradhvaja (Janaka), after which the record of descent shifts to his brother Kuśadhvaja who is associated not with Videha but with Kāsi. Was this an indication that, after Siradhvaja, Videha also changed to a gana-saṅgha form of government? Buddhist literature mentions Videha as one of the two important principalities of the Vajjian confederacy. The connection between Videha and Kāsi is also referred to in the Jātaka literature. This would also point to the Purāṇa recording only those lineages in the middle Ganges valley which conformed to a monarchical system of government. The early termination of the lineage of Vaiśāli in the Purāṇa may reflect the change which occurred here from monarchy to oligarchy.

The Candravaṃśa lineage presents a different pattern of descent and has a wide geographical background. Unlike the Sūryavaṃśa it records the descent of all the sons and each forms a segment of the main lineage. The migrations of the various segments take them over a large geographical region including central, western and northern India. Of the sons of Purūravas the eldest, Ayus, inherits Pratiṣṭhāna (Prayāg) and two others rule from Kanyākubja and from Kāsi. The latter two gradually merge into the first. The main line goes from Ayus to his eldest son Nahuṣa and again to his eldest son Yayāti. At this point the listing by primogeniture is dropped and the segments are recorded. Yayāti has five sons of which the eldest Yadu and the
youngest Pūru are the most important. Their lineages are described at length and form the major part of the Candra-vamśa. Pūru inherits the madhya-deśa (the core and hence the most important part of the kingdom) from his father and since this is contrary to the rule of primogeniture a myth is invented to explain how this happened.42 The Yadus move to the south-west and from this point onwards there is a considerable migration of segments in various directions. One line of Yadus via Satvata, Andhaka and Vṛṣṇi migrate to Dvārkā in Kathiawar. Another line through the Haihayas (whose descendants included the five Tālajhanga lineages) settles along the Narmadā valley (with possible branches going up to Mālwā) and finally spreads through central India to the mid-Ganges valley where its advance is stopped by Sagara of the Śūryavamśa lineage. A third group taking the name of Cedi and Vidarbha migrate to those regions (Bundelkhand and Berar). The main line of the Pūrus were more sedentary and remained in madhya-deśa. There seems however to have been a break in the main line after Bharata who is said to have adopted the son of Bharadvāja.43 Was this perhaps a reference to the amalgamation of tribes in the formation of the Kuru-Pañcāla janapadas? The only migrations are to contiguous areas by the descendants of Hastin who founded the states of North Pañcāla and South Pañcāla. The main line rules at Hastināpur and after the Mahābhārata war and the flooding of the city moves south to Kauśāmbi.

Of the segments descended from the other sons of Yayāti, Anu and Druhyu move northwards, and the Turvaśa fairly soon merge with the Pūru line. The Druhyu are associated with Gandhāra and the line terminates within a few generations. The Anu continue for longer and divide in an interesting fashion. One branch, the Uśinara move to the Punjab and Sind and their descendants are the Yaudheyas, the Krimi, the Ambaṣṭha and the Śivi. The latter in turn give rise to the Sauvīras, Kekeyas and Madras. The other branch of the Anus descended from Titikṣu move into eastern India (carefully by-passing the middle Ganges valley) and are known as the Āṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Puṇḍra and
Suhma. The latter seems almost obviously an attempt on the part of the Puranic genealogists to fit eastern India into the main genealogical pattern, as indeed the distribution of the Haihaya lineages in central India seems to be motivated by the same concern.

The Candravamśa genealogy is less a listing of kings and more a description of tribes and clans. Many of the names are of tribes and were later bequeathed to the regions where the tribes settled. The Sūryavamśa list in comparison has far fewer tribal and place names. The Candravamśa therefore includes references to the migration of tribes. The major migrations are those of the Pauravas and Yādavas. There is mention of at least one conflict between them concerning the acquisition of Magadha where ultimately the descendant of the Paurava lineage succeeds with the establishment of Vṛhadratha as the founder of the kingdom of Magadha. On the whole however the areas settled by the two main lines are distinct and the conflicts among them are few.

The nuclear area is that of madhya-deśa. The expansion is along the rivers and more so in the fringe uplands along the Yamuna from where the migrations move out in widening circles to the north-west, the west and the south-west. The north-east remains walled off, presumably because the Ikṣvākus were settled in that area. The Haihayas, incorporating the Surasena, the Tālajhanga and the Cedi are ultimately associated with the Narmada region. The Mādhavas and the Satvatas span out into the Andhaka and the Vṛṣṇi who are finally based in Kathiawar. The Mahabhoja are also associated with the Andhaka but their location seems to have been a little closer to the Malwa region. In areas where cultivable land is not freely available (and this would be the case in elevated regions of low scrub) to those who could claim it by rights of lineage or kinship, there would either be a redistribution of land which may involve a conflict or else the need for junior segments to settle new lands. The central Indian region would tend to see quick migrations whereas the Doāb would encourage more sedentary groups with smaller geographi-
cal extensions. The Pūru lineage remains remarkably compact until the splitting off into the Ajāmīdhā, the Dvimīdhā and the two Pañcāla segments which seem to suggest a major change (perhaps technological) or a population pressure requiring expansion into contiguous areas. Elsewhere I have suggested that this may have coincided with the introduction of iron in the western Ganges valley. In the case of the Pūrus the area of migration is relatively limited and it is possible that the area was settled by branches of the main lineage. In the case of all those claiming (ultimately) Yādava descent, the distribution is so wide that one is led to believe that some of the central Indian lineages associated with the Haihayas were perhaps not actual segments of the Yādava lineage but were separate groups who were either conquered or else were later integrated into the Yādava lineage in a period when such integrations became a means of acquiring social status. This part of the Yādava lineage could then be seen as an attempt to include central India into the political geography of northern India. The segmentary lineage system would then apply more to the other lineages of Yādava descent than to those from the Haihayas.

A comparison of the Pūru lineage as given in the Purāṇa with those of the Mahābhārata again suggests that either the epic has telescoped the generations or else the Purāṇa has conflated them. The list from the Purāṇa is more detailed and carries a number of intermediate names. Telescoping would be expected in the literary text where the tendency would be to record only the important names. The order of names is also not identical. But the main discrepancy is a block of names which, as a group, occur earlier in the epic list. This again is not a major difference.

The Yādava-vamśa presents certain features of what has been called the segmentary lineage. This is essentially confined to societies at a tribal level for it is absent both in small bands as well as in a state system. Its main thrust is predatory organization in conflict with other tribes. It is most suited to tribes which are both pastoralists and agriculturalists but not advanced agriculturalists. The transi-
tion to the formation of a state and the decline of the tribal structure leads to the collapse of the system. Tribal segments such as those of the Haihaya and the Andhaka and Vṛṣṇi tend to be equal in status with political and economic autonomy. The legends interspersed in the genealogy suggest that leadership remained in the segment. Thus the authority of Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva is largely restricted to the segments relating to the Andhaka and Vṛṣṇi and does not effectively extend to those of the Haihayas. Relationships between the groups are very often determined by lineage links—as is evident from the story of the Syamantaka jewel. The Satvata segment is more closely related to the Vṛṣṇi both in the lineage and in the narrative and this permits of easier political consolidation and closer sociability. In situations of conflict segment alignments are carefully balanced and this is reflected in the participation of the lineage in the Mahābhārata war. The strength of the lineage depends on the number of segments identifying with it. The pattern of the segmentary lineage system is one of expansion outwards and the conquest and assimilation of other tribes which requires the continual adjustment of new tribes in the lineage. In theory therefore the lineage has a wide geographical reach. The conquests of the five Tālajhangha segments of the Haihayas, in the Narmada valley against the Nāgas, in central India and in the middle Ganges valley against the Sūryavarmśa, is eventually contained by Sagara of the latter lineage. One of the most remarkable features of the Yādava lineage is precisely its wide geographical reach, both in terms of segments distributed over northern India, which according to the Purāṇa are ultimately traced back to the Yādava ancestry, as well as the number of tribes and royal families in the peninsula which in the historical period claimed Yādava connections. Clearly many of these were tribes adopted into the Yādava lineage. As against this the Pūru lineage remains noticeably compact.

The distribution of the segments suggests a period prior to the emergence of stable kingdoms and the political forms would be more in the nature of chiefdoms. The economy
appears to have been pastoral-cum-agrarian with references to the tending of large herds of cattle. Both the search for fresh pasture lands as well as potentially cultivable lands would lead to migrations. It is perhaps worth noting that the distribution of the lineages follows river valleys and areas of optimum elevation and fertility for cultivation, such as the west bank of the Yamuna, the Malwa plateau, the Banas valley, Gujarat, Kathiawar and the Narmada valley. It reflects a period of intrusion into new areas, some of which may have already been inhabited although probably by people with a more primitive technology. Inter-segment conflict is therefore reduced since there is an outlet in migration. Political consolidation becomes possible through identity with a lineage without the need for an over-arched state.

With the increasing adoption of agriculture and the emergence of sedentary societies the rights over land assume greater proportions in social and political life. The records of status groups then primarily pertain to recording which families had rights over which land; the name of the land-owning clan and the geographical region of its ownership become the prerequisites of historical and legal records. This more or less conforms to the kind of evidence contained in what we have called the second section of the genealogy. In a society moving from a fairly flexible tribal organization to an agrarian structure incorporating caste, records of kinship would have to be kept since kinship relations among exogamous and endogamous groups would have to be known. Cutting across the kinship line was the notion of ritual ranking (varṇa). The sanctioning of the rank was dependent on proving a kinship connection. Thus the Puranic genealogies listing lineages came to be seen both as historical records preserving information on the continuity of succession, as well as socially necessary documents establishing a community’s roots in the past. More narrowly, they also become the basis for legal claims apart from providing status and antiquity to those seeking such status. The sanction of rank could always be drawn upon by new groups who had acquired political power but lacked the
appropriate social rank. Thus the genealogies were not limited to actual lineage relations of the past but also included the listing of those who had successfully 'latched onto' a lineage and thereby succeeded in claiming status and power.

It has also been suggested that the segmentary lineage system allows for the easy accumulation of cults and deities. The cult of every segment is sooner or later incorporated into the all-encompassing religion of the lineage. On an impressionistic view at least it would certainly seem that Bhāgavatism, so closely associated with the Yādavas, was an assimilative religion facilitating the process of absorbing cults and deities. Taking this argument a step further one might suggest that the epic of the Candravāṃśa, the Mahābhārata, in which the Yādavas play the role of one of the protagonists but at the wings, could perhaps be regarded as a compendium of the many bardic epics and fragments of the various Yādava segments, and other Candravāṃśa descent groups.

Since the movements of the lineages are recorded in the form of genealogies there is a time dimension as well. Pargiter has computed ninety-five generations from Manu to the Mahābhārata war. In the first decade of generations, Videha and Ayodhya are established, the sons of Yayāti are aligned in various directions and the Haihayas have branched off from the main Yādava line. The second decade sees their positions in the north-west and in eastern India. In the fourth decade the Kanyakubja line comes to an end. The Cedis break away from the Yādavas and the Druhyu and Turvaśa lines are terminated in the fifth decade. The Pauravas split into the Dvimidha, Ajāmīdha and the Pañcālas in the sixth decade. In the seventh decade the Cedi line comes to an end, the Andhaka and the Vṛṣṇi become prominent and the lineages of the north-western Ānavas are terminated. The next decade sees the establishment of Vṛhadratha at Magadha and the emergence of the Kurus in the Paurava lineage. In the last decade the major event is the war.
The Viṣṇu Purāṇa lists the lineages as vaṃśam rājñyānu but some of these are ranked as distinctly low in the smṛti literature. Thus the Andhras, the Satvatas and the Ambaśṭhas are placed by Manu in the category of Šūdras.\textsuperscript{51} The Andhras are particularly despicable even though they are a respected clan in the Purāṇa. Pāṇini refers to the Andhaka and the Vṛṣṇi as being of the kṣatriya gotra and having a saṅgha form of government.\textsuperscript{52} Other groups mentioned in this context include the Bharatas (although the Kurus are associated with a kingdom), the Yaudheyas, the Daśārha and the Satvata.\textsuperscript{53} The distribution is therefore in northern and western India and includes some of the segments of the Candravamśa. The Mahābhārata describes the Anus as the ancestors of the mlecchas and the Yavanas (who are, at the vrātya-kṣatriyas) as the descendents of the Turvaśa.\textsuperscript{54} It would seem that these groups ranked as sankīrṇa-jātis (mixed castes) in the dharma-śāstras were politically important and had been inducted into the jāti structure since their śūdra status indicates a varṇa ranking. A lineage system based on a segmentary structure would have facilitated this process. The genealogies therefore also reflect the transition from jana to jāti since the reference to them as kṣatriyas was a concession to their political power and the conference of legitimacy. Thus the spread of a social system was also being recorded. Assignment to a particular lineage would probably have depended on geographical proximity, the political authority and status of the new group and the loyalty and closeness to the group of the brāhman who was making the lineage link.

Not surprisingly therefore, this section of the genealogy also refers, although somewhat obliquely, to the distribution of priestly families and their links with the various segments. The most powerful of these families were the Bhṛgus and the Vasiṣṭhas.\textsuperscript{55} The relationship between the Haihayas and the Gujarat Bhṛgus for example, even if highly exaggerated, still suggests close ties. The genealogy therefore becomes a record of both the kṣatriya family, using kṣatriya in the sense of clans owning land and moving to-
wards the creation of states, and motivated brāhmaṇs involved in the acculturation of these clans.

The problem of legitimacy can be seen not only in the discrepancy between the Puranic lineage and the caste ranking of these in the dharma-śāstra literature, but in two other areas as well. One is the concern for primogeniture and the second is the almost inadvertent references to what appear to be non-patrilineal systems. Primogeniture refers both to the eldest son as well as to the rights of the seniormost descent group in a segmentary system. The right of succession to the eldest son is claimed in a variety of sources. It is applied relatively easily in the Sūryavarmśa. That there were some problems with primogeniture in the Candravarmśa is indicated by the legends interposed in the genealogies relating to the succession by the younger brother, where, in each case, elaborate justifications had to be invented for this seeming departure from the norm; as for example, in the story of Yayāti and the succession of his youngest son Pūru rather than the eldest Yadu, or the story of Devāpi and Šantana or indeed the central events in the two epics which revolve around the attempted supersession of the eldest son. Primogeniture is closely associated with societies where land rights have been established and ambiguities relating to this form of succession would suggest a flexible situation in relation to land rights. Primogeniture has also been seen as necessary in a situation where there is a divergent inheritance/descent system such as the establishment of a patrilineal system in a matrilineal region. In the matrilineal system, lateral succession would be acceptable and the ousting of the elder brother may carry a memory of such a succession.

It is perhaps worth noting that there appear to be traces of matrilineal, or at least non-patrilineal, elements in the Candravarmśa. Īlā, the ancestress of the lineage, was regarded as sufficiently unconventional for the Viṣṇu Purāṇa to have to provide an explanation. Was this a reflection of the integrating of a matrilineal descent system, where the original ancestress could not be replaced by a male ancestor, and had to be retained in the story and, there-
fore, an explanation was required for an audience more familiar with the patrilineal system? Incest prohibitions include the younger sister of the wife and this may in part explain the problem which Yayāti had with his wife Sarmiṣṭha when he begat children on Devayāni, although they were not actual sisters but had once been as close as sisters. The major evidence however which has been frequently cited is that of cross-cousin marriages among the lineages. These have recently been collated and discussed in detail. It has been argued that most of these references come from texts which have originated in south India or Ceylon or which were re-edited and compiled in the southern region. Therefore the incidence of cross-cousin marriage, which is characteristic of the Dravidian kinship system and therefore quite normal to these regions, was introduced into the texts. The frequency of this form of marriage in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa can be explained by the text having a southern location, and the references in Buddhist literature are due to its having been edited in Ceylon. Or, alternatively, mention is made of this form of marriage in relation to Gujarat and western India, which also subscribed to this custom, being included in the area of the Dravidian kinship system. In the dharma-śāstras cross-cousin marriage is prohibited except to the people of the south where it is recognized as customary practice and therefore legal. In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, the Vṛṣṇis are associated with cross-cousin marriage and this has been explained as due to their location in western India.

In the unexpurgated version of the Mahābhārata there is a reference to matrilineal succession in the land of the Āraṭṭas associated with the Vahikas on the north-western borders of the Indian sub-continent. This certainly would not come into the geographical area demarcated for the normal practice of cross-cousin marriage and matrilineal descent. There are two other practices which are sometimes suggestive of matrilineal societies and these are referred to fairly frequently in connection with the Candravaṃśa. One of these is bride-price which is essential to the Asura form of marriage (one of the eight forms recognized by the
dharma-śāstras) and the other is forceable abduction or the Rākṣas form of marriage. Of the bride-prices mentioned the most interesting was the demand from Ricika of a thousand white horses each with one black ear for the hand of Satyavati the daughter of Gadhī. The event is followed by the narration of a story involving Satyavati and her mother in which there is a veiled reference to the rivalry between the son and his mother's brother. Interestingly, Satyavati is the mother of Jamadagni and the grand-mother of Parśurāma. What is significant is that the Purāṇas generally associate the Yādava lineages with cross-cousin marriage (irrespective of the provenance of the text). Whereas there is no conclusive evidence on this point, it would certainly seem that the Yādava lineage retained some features of matrilineal descent.

The discussion on the possibility of matrilineal descent is often vitiated by the notion that there was an evolutionary development from matriliney to patriliney, or alternatively that there has been a consistent practice of either one or the other. That the two systems can be juxtaposed and maintain separate practices or can act on each other and can modify each other, is also a possibility. Perhaps the Yādava lineages retained matriliney for a longer period in western India than elsewhere and that both systems continued to exist at various levels in different parts of western India at this time, if the genealogical section of the Purāṇa is seen as a reflection of the social systems of the period. It may also be suggested that forms of descent may vary among different strata in the same society. Thus if some of the elite follow a patrilineal system but matriliney is common in the rest of society then there may well be traces of the latter in the former. The gradual erosion of cross-cousin marriage would be expected not merely because of the increasing influence of the patrilineal society but also because migrating groups require a wider network of kinship. Interestingly, the occurrence of cross-cousin marriage is most frequent in those Yādava segments which are located in Saurāṣṭra suggesting that this was the area of concentrated settlement. The system weakens as the seg
ments migrate away from it. If the geographically more distant segments were not originally of the lineage but were ‘latched on’ to the lineage then their social system would have currency. Saurāṣṭra may have retained the custom, whereas the assimilation of tribes to the east with the Yādava lineage would have brought in those who were not familiar with the custom. It is not surprising that the Vṛṣṇi and Andhaka arc referred to as vrātya in the Mahābhārata70 or that the inhabitants of Saurāṣṭra are described as sankūra-jātis.71 One of the features often associated with matrilineal descent is absent, namely, the use of matronymics. This is noticeable in view of the fact that the vaṃśas of the teachers in the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad list forty sages with matronymics.72 The association of matronymics with western India is however attested to in later historical sources with reference to the names of some of the kings of the Sātavāhana dynasty.73

The Sūryavamśa shows hardly any trace of such customs. Yet, the Buddhist literature of the post-Buddhist period when speaking of the origin of the tribes of the middle Ganges plain and the Himalayan foothills, has unmistakable references to the matrilineal system. We are told that many of these tribes, e.g. the Śākyas and Licchavis, originated from Ikṣvāku lineages (the term Sūryavamśa is not used), generally associated with Kāśi, and migrated north where they settled.74 The references to sibling incest among the ancestors of the tribe and the custom of cross-cousin marriage points to matrilineal influences. The Mahāvaṃśa version may well have been influenced by the prevailing social system in Ceylon. But the same features are to be found in the Chinese version of the rājavamśa, or the genealogy of the Śākyas.75 Later historical references to the genealogy of the Licchavis describes them as kṣatriyas of the vasiṣṭha gotra, as of the Sūryavamśa, and their descent is traced from the Puranic Ikṣvāku lineage—even though they are excluded from mention in the Purāṇas. The consistency with which matrilineal features are associated with these tribes in the Buddhist tradition suggests that their social organization may have had to do with a matri-
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lineal structure and that this cannot be explained only as due to the imposition of a southern social structure onto these texts. If this is so, then this may have been an additional reason for excluding these tribes from the Puranic genealogies. Their social structure and mythology, as evident from Buddhist texts, being so markedly non-patrilocal, it would not have been so easy to explain it away as in the relatively lighter traces of the same in the Candra-vamśa lineages. The Buddhist genealogies indicate an Ikṣvāku origin for these tribes but make no attempt to try and associate them with the Ikṣvāku lineages. This association, where it occurs, comes from the later non-Buddhist literature of Nepal, as in the case of the Licchavis.76

The termination of the second section of the genealogy revolves around the Mahābhārata war. This was inevitably a turning point in social and political life, for its immediate motivation is the claim to land rights, and not merely the claim to ownership of land but the right to rule. The monarchical system had by now come to stay and this was one of the crises in the system. Monarchy involved the right to enforce law and order and the right to collect revenue, as the many explanations on the origin of government indicate.77 It involved therefore much greater control over the economy and political authority. The law of primogeniture as applied to kinship was stressed in order to prevent frequent battles over succession. Legitimate succession was dependent on seniority of birth and purity of blood, a deviation from either having to be justified by a myth. That the reference to the war in the genealogical record has a strong symbolic content is suggested from the fact that the two contenders for the right to rule the kingdom, the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, are neither of them related by blood to the Pūru lineage. The lineage as a patriline ends with Bhīma. Both Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu are of lesser stock, claiming their connection with the Pūru lineage via their grandmother Satyavatī, who was associated with the fisherfolk. The legitimacy of their connection with the Pūru lineage is sometimes defended by reference to the custom of nīyoga: that Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana was a half-brother to
Vicitravirya. However it is significant that he was a half-brother on his mother’s side and could not be regarded as a sapinda.

The third section of the genealogy lays less emphasis on lineages (vamsa) and speaks more often of kings (bhupala). The centre of interest shifts to Magadha which by the middle of the first millennium B.C. was emerging as the pre-eminent kingdom of northern India. Doubtless, hindsight on the part of the authors of the Puranic genealogies must also have accounted for this shift in geographical area. Dynasties are mentioned by name, in many cases the kings of each dynasty are listed and in some Puranas (such as Vāyu and Matsya) the regnal years of individual kings are given. Clearly the interest is different from that of the earlier section. Regnal years and the timespan of individual dynasties gave the impression of greater precision (whether accurate or not) and provided better data for historical accounting. Many of the dynasties are historically authenticated. The dramatic use of changing from the past tense to the future provides an excellent device for indicating change on a bigger scale. However the prophetic form of the genealogy was not only to suggest a time-marker but also to bestow distinction on the authors and keepers of the tradition who could claim thereby that they could foresee the future.

The stability of the state as a form of political organization was well-established by the time of the Mauryas. Such states relied less on the charisma of ritual and traditional sanctions and more on the mechanics of administration and political organization. It was also a period which saw the ascendancies of the heterodoxies. Legitimacy was based on political strength and not on lineage connections or, as stated in the Purāṇa, property alone confers rank, the earth is venerated only for its mineral resources and the strongest rules.88 None of the major dynasties claimed to be ksatriyas and yet the legitimacy of their rule was not doubted. The Purāṇa when referring to these kings expresses what it regards as the decline of society by describing it as the coming of the Kali-yuga. The kings are of
śūdra origin as is clearly stated for the Nandas and implied for the Mauryas.\(^7\) Even the Śuṅga dynasty (elsewhere claiming to be of brāhman origin) introduces a name such as Pulindaka in its list of kings.\(^8\) The Andhras again are of low origin where the term Bhṛitya is literally taken to be a servant in the text.\(^9\) Brāhmans as kings seem to be disapproved of since this would be contrary to varṇa rules. The picture depicted in this section continues to get more and more depressing with various references to dynasties of śūdra, mleccha and other castes coming to power and ousting the āryas. There will be a widespread rejection of kṣatriya values by these kings we are told. Ultimately, however, the Kalkin avatāra of Viṣṇu will restore order and start a new kṛita-yuga.

The first millennium A.D. saw the increasing emergence of states in the form of kingdoms and the gradual decline and extinction of tribal groups. Many of the states emerged from erstwhile tribal areas and the ruling elite sought to strengthen its political authority by associating itself with the dominant cultural tradition as expressed in Sanskritic culture. One of the means of doing this would be the acquisition of a high status lineage. The dynasties in the third section of the genealogy being of low status would not have been very useful. Inevitably therefore the links were sought with the kṣatriya vamsās of the second section of the genealogy. This process was emphasized in the political decentralization of the post-Gupta period. The social insecurity of sāmanta families scrambling for independent status and the frontier psychology of those moving into new lands and claiming rights over these lands, gave rise to the need for the recording of genealogies, the validating of family connections and the legitimizing of new royalty. For all of this the second section of the genealogy came in very useful, particularly with Sanskritization emphasizing the varṇa system. The tradition was now recorded in the Purāṇas which facilitated its use. Since the lineage links were with the second section, the third section could not be updated. It was more appropriate for each family to maintain its individual vamsśavali, indicating its origins and including
the historically more authentic events since its rise to power. As semi-legal documents it was also necessary that separate and independent charters be maintained by each family. Furthermore, the Purāṇas were by now sacred texts and obvious interpolations could not therefore be permitted.

It may be suggested that the genealogies in the Purāṇas were constructed on a careful structural base in the period when the Purānic tradition was recorded in the form of the mahāpurāṇas, i.e., in about the mid-first millennium A.D. The concern at that time was not necessarily with the authenticity of the descent and the lists of succession in the various dynasties but with collating genealogical fragments which could be used for providing social status to those groups which had come into positions of authority by the early centuries A.D. In a society which had accepted the varṇa system, adequate social status meant kṣatriya status. The genealogies were therefore constructs providing kṣatriya status to a large number of tribes or castes who had produced ruling families. To that extent the genealogies represent the view of the dominant castes of the mid-first millennium A.D. looking back on what they came to believe was their social history. It was possible now for any ruling family to pick up a connection with this vast network of lineages covering virtually every area of the northern part of the sub-continent. The antecedents were now organized and functional. Within the construct of the genealogy the kinship relations may have been fictional but the incorporation of the lineages and their geographical location do appear to reflect some historical authenticity. Thus the genealogies should be seen as an attempt to plot the settling of lineages in various areas at a point in time when they were moving towards forming states. State-formation seems to be a concern of some significance to the genealogist (though perhaps subconsciously) as the identification of a lineage, and this is more apparent in the third section. Thus the Ābhīras are mentioned only when they establish a kingdom and their equally if not more prestigious contemporaries, the Mālavas and Arjunāyanas, are omitted. The pre-condi-
tion of monarchy for the use of such genealogies is self-evident. Families claiming royal status would be far more in need of genealogical validation than a politically more diffuse system such as government by an oligarchy or rudimentary republics.

We have attempted to suggest in this paper that three types of information can be gathered from the vanśānu-carita sections of the Purāṇas. There is first of all the geographical distribution of lineages. Some are relatively sedentary such as the Ikṣvāku in Kośala and Videha and the early Pūrus in the Doāb. Others tend to migrate and fan out as for example in the extensive network of the Yādava lineages in western and central India and the less extensive network of the Ānavas. One possible means of cross-checking these settlements would be to try and correlate them with the archaeological cultures of the area. Such an attempt has been made elsewhere, working on the hypothesis that the Late Harappan and Ochre Colour Pottery cultures may represent the early settlements of the Pūru lineage in the Doāb and the Indo-Gangetic divide and that the Painted Grey Ware culture represents the period after the emergence of the Kuru and Pañcāla lineages; the distribution of the Yādava lineages may be correlated with the Black and Red Ware cultures. Unfortunately no definite correlation can be worked out, partially because the chronology of the lineages is unclear from the texts. A convincing correlation would therefore be extremely useful in calculating the chronological bracket of the lineages.

The second type of information pertains to social structure. The early Pūru and Ikṣvāku lineages are of unilineal descent based on exogamous patrilineal. (Although the evidence from Buddhist sources may indicate the existence of other patterns in the region.) The Yādava lineages on the other hand appear to conform more to the segmentary lineage system and the segments associated with western India carry traces of matrilineal forms. The major problem in this investigation is whether the lineages were descent groups consanguinially related, or groups which had over the years been assimilated into earlier lineages. Where
otherwise low status groups are given kṣatriya status in the genealogy, it may be seen as a successful social improvement of such groups.

The third category of information concerns economic and political status. A distinction can be suggested between the pastoral-agricultural societies of western and central India and the more advanced agricultural societies of the Doāb and the middle Ganges valley. The latter suggests stable agriculture and the establishment of the state. The accounting of dynasties coincides with the rise of Magadha as an important state in northern India. The genealogies would appear to record the movement from tribal and oligarchic forms to the more complex monarchical states.

One of the problems which has confused the study of these genealogies has been the attempt to equate them with Aryans, Dravidians, Mudas and the like, on the assumption that the vaṇiṣas were distinct ethnic groups with primarily ethnic identities which were being recorded. It is essential to keep in mind that these genealogies were compiled many centuries after the events which they purport to have taken place and should therefore be seen as the historical appreciation of a later age of what it believed were its earlier antecedents.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. The most detailed of these was the study of S. N. Pradhan, Chronology of Ancient India, Calcutta 1927, until the very recent publication of R. Morton Smith, Dates and Dynasties in Earliest India. (Delhi, 1975) The latter had already published some of his results in the form of articles, in JAOS and other journals. One of the major drawbacks in attempting a chronological reconstruction is the absence of critical editions of the Purāṇas. Morton Smith has attempted such an exercise in his study but has limited it to collating and commenting on the variants in the genealogical material from the Purāṇas.

2. The general points discussed in the next few paragraphs relating to the use of genealogies are drawn mainly from anthropological work carried out in the last few decades on the function of genealogies in various cultures. In this connection mention may be made of the following studies, E. E. Evans Pritchard, The Nuer, (Oxford
First Section

Second Section

Haihayas
Five Tālajhangas
(Narmada, Malwa,
Central India
middle Ganges
valley)

Devavṛddha
(Banas valley)

Third Section

3. The term ‘lineage’ will occur frequently in this paper and therefore requires definition. Lineage is the unilinear descent, actual or fictional, claimed by a group. It consists of a group of unilinear kin, has a recognized system of authority, has rights and duties, carries a name and may be divided into segments, where each segment takes on the character of a lineage.


8. The Bharatas are referred to in Rg Veda III.53; III.33; VII.8; VII.33; VI.16; III.23. The Pūrus are mentioned in I.108; VII.18; VII.8; VII.96; I.59; I.131; I.174; IV.21; IV.38; VI.20; VII.5; VII.19.


10. As for example in the Brihadāranyaka Upaniṣad, II.6; IV.6; VI.5.


13. Pāṇini refers to kṣatriya gotras, II.4.58.

14. e.g. Aśvalāyana Śrauta-sūtra II.6.10.15, Āpastambha Śrauta-sūtra XXIV.5.10.

15. One of the most interesting legends suggestive of this process is the story of Śunaḥśeṣa Aitareya Brāhmaṇa VII.13.

16. It is useful to relate the Purānic genealogies with those occurring in the epics. The genealogies of the Ikṣvākus as given in the Rāmāyaṇa, I.69 and I.70 differ somewhat from those of the Purāṇas as also do the Aīla genealogies as given in the Ādi Parvan of the Mahābhārata.


18. Vāyu Purāṇa 42.137-48; Padma Purāṇa V.1.27.

19. Atharvaveda V.3.5.7; Satapatha Brāhmaṇa V.3.1.5; Kaṭhaka Upaniṣad XXVIII.3. Ta∩ttirīya Samhitā IV.5.2. grants inviolability to the sūta (nāma sūta ya ahantya ya.)
20. Vāyu I.31-32; Manu X.11. The term sūta came to mean a charioteer and his status was low.
21. III.1.
22. I.10-33 ff.
23. T. Jacobsen, The Sumerian King-List, (Chicago, 1939), p. 57 ff. The god Enki, the deity of the powerful city of Eridu, also takes the form of a fish to save mankind and, after the deluge, the list of kings commences. The syntactical and stylistic form of the ante-diluvian king list is different from the rest and therefore it has been suggested that this was a later addition. The astronomical figures for the regnal years of the earlier kings of the ante-diluvian period are in contrast to the more acceptable figures of later periods. The motivation for the Sumerian king-list may have been the political revival under Utu-hegal who was celebrating his victory in c.2400 B.C. The number of ante-diluvian kings varies from seven to ten. In the Purāṇas the genealogy is linked with the seventh Manu and we are told that there will be a total of fourteen Manavatāras. It is curious that in Indian mythology a deity in the form of a fish as a mythological symbol of significance occurs only in association with the Flood. It was not therefore a frequent item in the list of Indian religious symbols. Where it does occur frequently is in the Harappan pictograms, but in later iconography it is not so common. The Sumerian genealogies also inter-link descent groups with legends and narratives. There seems to be a deliberate attempt at organizing the material which may of course have stemmed from a common original. Similarities between the Sumerian and Indian material could be accidental, but the emphasis on the Flood and the difference between the ante-diluvian and post-diluvian records does suggest a nagging sense of connection.

31. Ibid., IV.24.28.
32. Pargiter, op. cit, p. 50 ff.
34. This has been effectively demonstrated for the Homeric epics

35. The geographical focus of the Ikṣvāku lineage is in the main confined to the middle Ganges valley. The extension goes to Daṇḍakāranya and no further. There is no trace of the exile of Rāma to the southern part of the sub-continent or any links with regions that far. It may therefore be said in passing that the genealogical evidence would tend to support those who argue that the events narrated in the *Rāmāyaṇa* probably took place in central India, at least when the story was first put together.

36. *Rāmāyaṇa* I.70-71, The Genealogies occur in Book I, the Bālakāṇḍa, which is believed to be a later addition.


39. *Majjhima Nīkāya* I.225. Dr. B. D. Chattopadhyaya has drawn my attention to this point.


41. Ibid., IV.1.18.

42. Ibid., IV.10.

43. Ibid., IV.19.

44. ‘Puranic Lineages and Archaeological Cultures’, *Puratattva*, No. 8, 1975, pp. 86-98. See also pp. 240-267 in this volume.

45. *Adi Parvan*, 90 ff.


48. According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (in what is obviously an anachronistic reference), Sagara is also said to have destroyed the Śakas, Yavanas, Kambojas, Paradas and Pahlavas, the foreign tribes who inhabited northern and western India. The location of these would be in accordance with the distribution of the Candravamśa lineage. Interestingly this event is also made the basis for explaining why these foreign tribes came to be regarded as vrāṭya-kṣatriyus.


52. II.2.95; VI.2.34.


54. *Adi Parvan*, 80.1 ff.


56. *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* V.4.2.8; XII.8.3.19, *Arthaśāstra* I.xvii.34.

60. Mahābhārata, Ādi Parvan, 70-79; D. Schneider and K. Gough, op. cit., p. 453.
62. Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra 1.5.11.2; I.1.2.2.2-3.
63. IV.16.38-40.
64. Trautmann, op. cit., p. 65.
66. Kane, History of Dharmasāstra, (Poona 1941), II.1, pp. 517, 519.
69. The continued existence of these two systems is reflected in the social structure of the Mers of Saurashtra (H. H. Trivedi, The Mers of Saurashtra, Baroda 1961, p. 38 ff). The existing cross-cousin marriage has been adopted even by those lineages which claim Rajput origin and status and who believe themselves to have arrived relatively recently in Saurashtra. The kinship terminology is consistent with bilateral cross-cousin marriage and even where this marriage is not possible the terminology remains.
70. VII.143.15.
71. Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra, I.1.32-33.
72. II.6; IV.6; VI.5.
77. Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, XI.1.6.24; Mahābhārata, Śānti Parvan. 59.14-27.
78. Viṣṇu Purāṇa, IV.24.74-93.
79. Ibid., V.20 ff.
80. Ibid., V.35-36.
81. Ibid., V.43.
82. 'Puranic Lineages and Archaeological Cultures', Puratattva, No. 8, 1975.
The Scope and Significance of Regional History

I am indeed extremely grateful to the Punjab History Conference for this great honour which has been done me in asking me to preside over this session. I am only too well aware of my inexperience in the study of regional history and my inadequacies. I assume therefore that the decision symbolizes a policy of encouraging those of lesser experience to participate in the responsibilities of the profession. I am therefore, doubly grateful for this gesture.

At a gathering such as this discussion naturally revolves around the study of regional history. I thought therefore that I would use this opportunity to place before you some of the problems which I have felt may have a relevance to this study. In many parts of the country regional history is being taught as an important segment of the history syllabus. As such, it merits the attention not only of the specialist in the region but also of historians working on other aspects of Indian history. I shall, in the course of what I have to say, refer to the history of the Punjab, not because of any expertise of my own on the subject but to derive the benefit of your expertise.

What I shall be saying is not out of any pretensions to specialization on the Punjab, but more in the spirit of placing before you the kinds of problems which I think we are now facing when we work on the history of a region. The substance of the problems would be the same for any region. Much of what I have to say is in the nature of hypotheses, initial to analyses. Perhaps in the working out of such hypo-

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theses we may arrive at a clearer comprehension of the region and its history.

The initial interest in India in regional history grew out of nationalist historical writing. It was motivated to some extent by a search for new source materials, a search which has resulted in an abundance of sources — archaeological, epigraphic, historical literature, religious literature, archival records and family papers — all of which have added to the body of information available on the history of many regions of the sub-continent. It is however at the interpretational level that the interest in regional history assumes greater historiographic potential, a potential with which we are perhaps as yet not altogether fully familiar.

The historical interest in regions such as south India, Bengal and Maharashtra, coincided with the new sources providing information particularly on what came to be regarded as the inter-empire periods of Indian history, or, alternatively, complementing the information available from records outside the region. It began to be seen that the supposed ‘dark ages’ stressed by the historiography of the nineteenth century were far from dark and that the lacunae could be eliminated by using local source material. Further, that it was in these inter-imperial periods that the nature of historical change at the regional level could be seen more clearly. Regional history thus became a corrective to the earlier tendency to generalize about the sub-continent from the perspective of the Ganges Valley.

The spread of nationalism into the various states increased the interest in regional history. This brought its own perspective with the emergent professional groups who participated in the national movement and at the same time sought for an identity from the past; a process which has continued into the post-independence period. It might be argued that historical writing often takes the form of a desire to establish an identity on the part of the social group to which the historian belongs. Thus, Ganesh Das writing his Char Bagh-i-Punjab in 1849, was, as a member of the social elite, projecting the known history of the khatris of the Punjab, a form of legitimization of the khatri status.
Groups in power, therefore, sometimes tend to see the history of their community as the history of the region or even of the nation. This is further emphasized in contemporary historical writing by the equating of the present-day state boundary as the boundary of the region; and this is held to be viable for all periods of history.

These trends are in many ways parallel to those of nationalist historical thinking in the early decades of this century. As such there are both the negative and the positive side of the impact of nationalist historical thought. Of the former, I would like to draw attention in particular to three trends. There is, firstly, the all-too-ready acceptance of the conventional periodization of Ancient, Medieval and Modern. Periodization does not merely imply time-brackets, it also involves historical assumptions (which is why the nomenclature at least was changed from the earlier Hindu, Muslim and British). The acceptance of this periodization imposes assumptions on the historical data from regional sources, and it seems to me that the evidence from the Punjab supports neither the assumptions nor the time-brackets. Admittedly there is a certain convenience in this periodization but a convenience should not be allowed to become an intellectual truth.

Secondly, certain theories current in earlier historical writing and believed to be almost axiomatic are endorsed even for regional history. For example, the theory of the Aryan origin of culture and of social stratification is projected even in those regions where it is obviously untenable. In the Punjab the social stratification based on the four-caste division presents its own problems. Brahmans rarely play a dominant role in the society of this region, the kṣatriyas fade out after a while and the khatris who claim to be kṣatriyas are invariably associated with professions more akin to the vaiśya. Clearly there is a deviation from the prescribed norm and this deviation can only be explained by investigating the actual caste stratification at various historical times.

Thirdly, there is the almost inevitable search for a golden age, often identified as the period to which the currently
dominant group traces its roots, and it is described in the glowing tints of cultural resurgence. The protagonists of this age became the heroes of history and act as eponymous ancestors to those in power. In ancient historiography the golden age was generally in the distant past, in the beginnings of time; so distant and so mythological that none could question the historicity of the age and it was imbued with whatever values the historian wished to propagate. Gradually the utopias were brought forward into historical times and eventually into recent periods, when the social and political function of history became more important. Golden ages have to shift as new social groups come to the fore and they have the disadvantage that they focus on a particular series of historical events often to the near exclusion of others of equal importance.

Enfolded in the writing of regional history is also the positive side. The earlier nationalist school, despite its weaknesses, succeeded in generating a debate on the historical assumptions of the historians of the nineteenth century concerning the nature of the Indian past: a debate which has opened up many new dimensions. Regional history in the context of Indian history could play a similar, catalytic role. This however does not mean the substituting of the concerns of Indian ideology by those of regional ideology. On the contrary it would require the analysis of the historical patterns of the region and the relating of these patterns to the generalizations of Indian history. Here again, I do not mean the acceptance of the theories of Indian history and their application to the region, but, rather, the juxtaposing and comparing of the analysis of the regional patterns which would indicate the generalizations required to be made at the wider level. The testing of these generalizations would involve the understanding of the patterns of historical change at the regional level.

I would like at this point to consider some of these patterns for they give rise to the problems which I spoke of earlier.

One might begin with the historical point at which the awareness of being a region, and having a history, is first
expressed. In the case of the Punjab it has been suggested as having evolved during the Mughal period. The historian's interest lies in analysing the roots of this consciousness — whether they result from an administrative or political coherence, or from linguistic or religious urges or a combination of many factors. In analysing this consciousness it is equally imperative to consider that which preceded it and that which came subsequently. In order to do this we arrive at the second important problem, namely, what were the geographical boundaries of the region.

The question of boundaries has its own complexities since man-made boundaries change frequently and rapidly with each political change. The only stable boundaries are geographical and even these are liable to be substantially modified by ecological changes. The definition of a region requires the correlation of many facets in the study of historical evolution, as is amply demonstrated in the Punjab.

On the face of it the Punjab is easy enough to define. It is the land of the five rivers and the inter-fluvial regions, the Doābs. Yet the coinciding of this geographical definition with a political and cultural entity has occurred only for a brief period of its history. Prior to that the area contained more than one geographical and social identity. What seems significant, therefore, is not just the brief period when the larger frontiers coincided but the investigation of the interaction and relationship between the sub-regions and this constitutes a major part of the history of this region.

The sub-regions within the larger area can be listed as follows: firstly, the Potwar plateau and the Salt Range constituting the northern part of the Sind-Sagar Doāb, the southern half being mainly desert; secondly, what I shall refer to as the Upper Doābs, those of the Chaj, Rachna, Bari and Bist, lying at an elevation of 200-500m and stretching into the sub-montane tracts and with which the Potwar area had close contacts; thirdly, the upper reaches of the rivers leading into the hill valleys at the forefront of the Himalayas; and fourthly, the Lower Doābs forming the hinterland of Multan. Both the plain of Peshawar and
the watershed of the Indo-Gangetic divide, although historically very significant, remain geographically marginal to the main area. Even though the sub-regions can be approximately demarcated, their historical interaction has been complex and any history of the Punjab will have to take both the interaction and the complexities into account. The pattern of relationships has not been consistent and similar through time. One of the more obvious reasons for these changes has been the extreme hydrographic disturbances, such as those involving the Sarasvati, the Beas and the Râvi. But the complexities are also due to other reasons.

Evidence of settlement in this area during the third and second millennia B.C. show a distribution of pre-Harappan and Harappan sites along the Indus (particularly the trans-Indus region) and along the Bari Doāb and Sutlej and Sarasvati valleys. Archaeological explorations in Pakistan and India point to a particularly heavy concentration of population at the confluence of the rivers, in the Bari and Bist Doābs and in the Sarasvati valley. It has been plausibly argued that there were major ecological changes in this area during the second millennium B.C. which appear to be accompanied by a decline in settlements in the Multan area and a concentration in the Indo-Gangetic divide. References to the occupation of the Upper Doābs, as for example the janapadas of the Kekeyas and the Madras, come from sources of the first millennium B.C. Was there a migration of people from the gradually desiccated Multan region to the Upper Doābs? A slow ecological change would encourage migration. If Harappan agriculture was based on inundation irrigation then hydrographic changes would virtually necessitate a migration. Or, were the new areas settled by fresh migrants from elsewhere? The distribution of the Painted Grey Ware culture suggests that the settlers, whether indigenous or alien, may have moved along the Sutlej and Sarasvati valleys. The further distribution of this culture extends from the Indo-Gangetic divide to the Ganges valley itself, the link between the two areas having been previously established through the Ochre-Colour Pottery Culture. In subsequent centuries the people of the
latter region regarded those of the Upper Doābs with some disdain. The Madras are accused not only of forsaking brahmanical rites but of unconventional behaviour and the breaking of social taboos. For the orthodox of the madhya-deśa this region was always on the brink of the social pale if not actually outside it. It is also worth remembering that two linguistic systems seem to have been in operation since Vedic Sanskrit carries evidence of the assimilation of Proto-Dravidian elements.

More precise information on the condition of the Punjab comes to us from the accounts of Alexander’s campaign in the late fourth century B.C. Alexander’s initial route was from the Peshawar plains across the Doāb—rich, fertile lands supporting monarchical kingdoms such as those of Ambhi, Puru and Saubhūti, and a relatively sophisticated culture. In contrast to this was the stark, primitive habitat of the Śibi in the Shorkot region. Further south in the Bari Doāb, the oligarchies of the Mālava and the Kṣudraka presented a more cheerful picture. It seems that the Lower Doābs were not as prosperous as the Upper Doābs, nevertheless, the agricultural base of the latter was not substantial enough to support a powerful state. That the desiccation in the Lower Doābs was spreading seems probable from the fact that by the first couple of centuries A.D. the Mālava (among others) had migrated to Rajasthan and Avanti.

For the Mauryas the significance of the Punjab seemed to focus on Taxila which became the administrative seat of the northern province. This, in a sense, introduces a new dimension to the patterns discussed so far. Taxila was the meeting point, on the one side, of the royal highway and the trade route running from the Ganges valley via the watershed and through the Upper Doābs and, on the other, the route from west Asia via the Khyber Pass. Mountain passes accentuate communication and the Khyber has always been the route of migration, trade and invasion, with cities such as Taxila and Bagram flanking either end of the pass and giving way in time to other cities (ultimately Peshawar and Kabul), but always in the same vicinity.
The role of invasions in the history of the Punjab is mentioned so often that it hardly bears repeating. But it might be as well to consider also some of the other factors contributing to the history of this region, as, for instance, trade. One easy index to the growth of trade is an increase in the number and size of towns. Sources such as Ptolemy list a large number of towns in the Upper Doābs, far exceeding those in the Lower Doābs. Can it be argued that the prosperity of the Upper Doābs was based primarily on trade rather than on agriculture? Is it possible that the peak periods of affluence coincided with the political control of this region extending its reach into Afghanistan and possibly Kashmir, since Kashmir also had links with central Asian trade routes? The earliest references to Taxila as a commercial and cosmopolitan centre relate to the period when Gandhāra was included as a satrapy in the Achaemenid empire. Post-Mauryan dynasties in this region frequently straddled the Khyber Pass and this period also saw a sharp rise in trading activities and commercial income. One has only to compare the Mauryan settlement of Bhir Mound at Taxila with the post-Mauryan city of Sirkap at the same place to see the difference. The political importance of Śākala during this period may also have been due to its location on the trade route. The attempt of empire builders from the Mauryas to the Mughals, who, if their empires included the Punjab, tried to annex eastern Afghanistan as well, may in part have been motivated by the wish to control not only the strategic entrances into the sub-continent, but also the trade routes.

Gupta rule appears to have made scant impression on the Punjab in spite of Samudragupta having ‘uprooted’ as he claims, the tribal republics of the Mālavas, Yaudheyas and Ārjunāyanas in Rajasthan and the watershed and the Mādrakas in the Upper Doābs. If the control of the trade route involved the conquest of the Potwar plateau and beyond and if the Upper Doābs were not agriculturally very developed, this might have acted as a disincentive to further conquest in the region. It would seem that effective Gupta control stopped at the watershed which in later
times, as Sirhind, was regarded as the frontier to the Ganges valley. The persistence of tribal republics in this region, despite the Mauryan and post-Mauryan conquests, suggests a relative autonomy from interference by strong political powers which interference would have been inevitable had it been a rich, agricultural region. Interestingly, some of these tribal states are said to have provided soldiers in lieu of revenue, in the true frontier tradition. The Indo-Gangetic divide seems more frequently to have been drawn into the vortex of the Ganges valley. Harṣavarṇdhana, although originating from Thanesar, moved the centre of his kingdom into the Ganges valley rather than up into the Punjab.

Hsüan Tsang, visiting India in the seventh century A.D., travelled from Taxila through the towns of the Upper Doābs to Thanesar and the Ganges valley. It is significant that when he visited Multan he approached it from Sind, suggesting that its accessibility and association with Sind was stronger. Multan itself was a commercial centre of great importance, but its hinterland to the north and to the east called for little attention. In his description of the Upper Doābs, Hsüan Tsang refers mainly to towns, some of which are surrounded by fertile country. But his more glowing references are to grain fields and fruit orchards in the sub-montane areas and the hill valleys spanning out along the mountain reaches of the rivers.

One of the most puzzling problems in the latter part of the first millennium A.D. is the surprising absence of land-grant inscriptions from the Punjab plains. If agriculture was of primary importance in this region, then there would have been some record either of the bringing of waste land under cultivation or of the granting of cultivated land to religious or secular grantees. The absence of these records would either suggest a low priority for agriculture or else an agrarian and administrative system which did not require the kind of changes taking place in neighbouring regions. Land-grant inscriptions are available from the hill areas, as for example from Kangra, as early as the seventh century and from Chamba a little later. The exten-
sion of agriculture into the hill valleys must have taken place in the latter half of the first millennium A.D. to allow of the granting of land during this period. Does this reflect a migration from the Upper Doābs into the hills and the creation of the hill states? Or was this due to a natural migration caused by shortage of land and an increasing population? The pressure of revenue collection was probably not a causal factor as this would have led to agrarian changes in the plains. If insecurity resulting from invasions was the cause, then the accusation of creating this insecurity would have to be levelled against the Hūnas rather than the Turks, since the migration to the hills predates the Turkish invasions by a few centuries. Alternatively, one may have to argue that, given the existing agricultural technology, cultivation was easier in the hill valleys. Access to these higher valleys also introduced new commodities and trade connections especially with the increasing use of mountain passes into Kashmir, Ladakh and Tibet. The proximity of the main trade route of the plains to the hill states doubtless facilitated these connections. Absence of evidence is not a conclusive argument but it is indeed strange that records of land grants should be a rarity in the Punjab plains when such records are available for many other regions of northern India. This would also imply a corresponding rarity of at least one aspect of such grants, the instituting of agrahāras and brahmanical settlements and endowments to temples. Hsüan Tsang refers to ‘deva’ temples in the cities of the Upper Doābs but none as spectacular as the one at Multan. There are few early temples in the Punjab plains and one wonders whether their lack of survival was due to insufficient endowments or to the conventional explanation of Muslim invasions destroying temples. The sub-montane and hill areas however, which were also at the receiving end of such invasions, although admittedly not on the direct route, do have surviving examples of early temples, many of which are well-endowed. The absence of land-grants would have further implications not only for the role of brahmanism in the religion of the area but also for the pattern of caste formation and caste
structure, given that the acculturating role of brahmanical settlements noticed in certain other parts of the subcontinent was absent. Brahmanism never seems to have had a deep social root in the plains. But in the hill states it had a firm foothold and the process of acculturation is more evident.

It has been suggested that, at the end of the first and in the early half of the second millennia A.D., there appears to have been a population movement with the Jats of Sind settling in the Punjab mainly in the area between the Chenab and Sutlej rivers, as also in the watershed and extending further into eastern Rajasthan and western Uttar Pradesh. This was not merely a population movement for the Jats were converted from pastoralism to agriculture; and crucial to the change was that they brought with them the technology of the Persian wheel. This resulted in a rapid extension of agriculture, particularly in the Upper Doåbs. The Ain-i-Akbari records the presence of Jat zamindär castes and well-irrigation in the Doåbs of the Punjab. Had there already been a large agricultural population in these areas such a movement would have created a massive unrest; but for this there is no evidence: unless one argues that the migration into the hill states had something to do with this movement. The Jat migration was probably a slow movement not causing much displacement. The hinterland of Multan was in any case sparsely populated. At most, the Jats may have pressurized the cultivators of the Upper Doåbs and the sub-montane area to move further up into the mountain valleys. By the time of Akbar, the Subah of Lahore is described as agriculturally very fertile and yielding a healthy revenue. One has the impression that agriculture was more in evidence now with possibly more land under cultivation than before, judging by the relatively infrequent references to agriculture in this region from pre-Mughal sources. The numerically larger zamindär castes included the Jats, Bhattis, Rajputs and various others.

The zamindär castes were however distinct from the trader and administrator caste, that of the khatris. The references to khatris associated with land are very few. The
post-Gupta period is seen as one of a decline in trade in northern India. However a modicum of commercial activity must have continued, as is suggested by the ninth century inscription from Pehoa, which refers to a body of horse-dealers coming from various places and agreeing to contribute to a donation to temples at Pehoa and Kannauj from every sale of their animals. The emergence of the khatris seems to coincide with the period of the Turkish invasions, perhaps because the invasions had the supplementary effect of opening up the trade routes to central Asia which were under the control of Mahmud of Ghazni. His armies certainly marched through the towns of the Upper Doābs, but his prize targets were cities elsewhere — Multan, Kannauj, Thanesar and Somanath.

Agricultural technology was perhaps to play a further role in historical change in the Punjab. It is somewhat startling to read in the Ain-i-Akbari that the Bet Jalandhar Doāb in the sarkar of Dipalpur yielded a very high revenue, until one remembers that Firuz Tughlaq built a canal in this region in 1354. The upper Bari Doāb becomes a key area of the Punjab from the seventeenth century. Was this also related to the canal built by the Mughal administration in this period? The Multan area was sought to be controlled by the administration of Ranjit Singh in the early nineteenth century through the building of inundation canals. The British policy of canal networks and canal colonies in the under-developed areas of the Lower Doābs had its antecedents. The extension of agriculture in the Punjab made it possible to extend the natural frontier northwards.

Whatever the reasons, involving agricultural technology, new commercial possibilities, invasions and migrations, there appears to be, in the Mughal period, a change in the relations between the sub-regions of the Punjab. The upper Doābs and the hill states impinge on each other to a greater degree than before. Lahore and Multan seem to be in closer contact, although not always well-disposed towards each other. The ambitions of the Governors of Lahore extended in their geographical reach to more distant areas such as
Kabul and Kashmir, doubtless motivated by the trading network.

Evidence of a more general economic stabilization, probably due to the extension of agriculture, is apparent from the appearance of land-grants and endowments to various religious sects. The sects are largely heterodox, irrespective of whether they conform to the Hindu or Islamic tradition. The core of the religious tradition comes from groups of renouncers, such as the Nathpanthis, Bairagis, Sufis. The earlier groups of renouncers, the Buddhists, had also once been important in this region. Although they had now disappeared, possibly some of the earlier social requirements which had led to the support of Buddhism may have been remanifested in the support for the renouncers of this later period. The creation and diffusion of the Punjabi language is also tied up with religious sects. They adopted the language of the towns-people and villagers in preference to that of the courtly elite, and gave both form and status to the language.

A variety of sects were recipients of land-grants. The Upper Bari Doab furnishes examples of such grants (as for instance, the Jogis of Jakhbar and the Vaishnavas of Pindori). They appear to have had fairly easy access to revenue-free land, exemption from irrigation cesses and a variety of perquisites. Their patrons changed over the centuries but the status of the patrons remained the same. They were all members of the ruling order — the Rajput rulers of the hill states who patronized the shrines, the Mughal emperors who endowed them with land, the governor of Lahore and later the Sikh rulers of the kingdom of Punjab and the British. In spite of the sharp differences in the religious persuasions of this cavalcade of rulers they were all making grants to these and similar sects. The documents of the Punjab kingdom refer to the grants as being in accordance with the practice of the times of the Mughal rulers: a strange continuity among those otherwise believed to be antagonistic to each other on religious grounds. Doubtless, most believed that they were acquiring religious merit by making these grants, but one wonders if other more mun-
dane reasons did not encroach upon the decision. Perhaps such endowments would help to stabilize the area politically since the sects would develop into centres of political loyalty as long as the grant was forthcoming. Some of the documents of the later period describe the location of the land granted and judging by the continuity of the villages it would seem that the Upper Bari Doāb was by now well populated. The continuity of the grants from the Mughal period by later rulers may also have been regarded as a status symbol. Many of these sects had a network of connections via itinerant members and monastic establishments over large geographical areas. The Nath sect was well distributed in northern India by now. These connections could also have served as trading networks, as they were known to do, for instance, with the Gosain sects of other parts of northern India. It is interesting that eventually market centres develop on some of the lands thus endowed. Gradually the religious institution evolved into a body of land-owners. Income from the endowments was spent on the maintenance of the institution and the order. Often this involved investing the income in land or commerce. Thus the renouncers came to perform administrative and entrepreneurial functions, assisted by secular agents. Perhaps the religious teaching of such sects did not remain unchanged and took on the nuances of their new role in society.

Did the acquisition of the new status breed political ambition among these religious groups? The hostility between them was not invariably over religious differences though this may have been presented as the apparent cause. Hostility could equally well arise from a competition for patronage or from the need to protect property which in part explains the organization of para-military sections among such sects.

Popular support for religious sects involves the question of the link between them and the various castes. This is crucial not merely to the history of a religious movement but also to the social pattern of the region. It is often said that the initial support for Guru Nanak came from the khatris but that gradually Sikhism drew greater support
from the Jats. This may suggest that the evolution of Sikhism be seen in two phases, since the social base would differ in each case. At the same time it would be relevant to examine why the initial khatris leadership gave way to the increasingly effective Jat participation. Urban groups may find universalistic teaching more acceptable. Peasant groups would require the assimilation of their own cults into the new religion. Would this in part explain Guru Govind Singh's tendency to use Hindu symbols, particularly those relating to the Sakti tradition? Does it also reflect political concerns, either hostile or friendly, between the Hinduized hill states and the Sikhism of the plains? It has been suggested that the Jats, as a low status group, were drawn to use this for improving their social status. Such a group would, on consolidating its position, tend to introduce a hierarchical separation between itself and others. Is it a coincidence that it was also at this time that the demarcation between the sardar and the mazhabi Sikhs enters the movement?

The emergence of the kingdom of the Punjab was not a sudden development of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It has, as I have tried to show, a long gestation period. It incorporates in its development the various connections which I have referred to: the changing links between the sub-regions where the changes are indirectly man-made or directly so; the two economic thrusts of agriculture and trade, technology as a factor in these; the emergence of caste relations; the growth of religious sects; and the crystallization of political identities. The contribution which regional history can make is in seeking to connect these elements at a more precise level. If the focus on the pattern of historical change in the region can be sharpened it contributes to the quality of generalizations at the broader level as well as makes for more valuable comparative studies with other regions. In terms of comparative studies mention is often made of the kingdoms of the Punjab and the Marathas. They are said to have been motivated by an anti-Muslim sentiment which helped them to be rid of central, imperial
authority. As a mono-causal explanation this can be traced to communal historiography where the tension between imperial authority and regional pressures was seen at the single plane of religious differences. A careful examination of the mainsprings of these developments however suggests a multitude of factors, not least of them the crisis within the Mughal empire itself. Comparative studies would suggest the similarities within the two regions, thereby enabling a wider generalization. Dissimilarities would indicate the particular regional factors and would lead to the modification of the broader generalization.

I began with the suggestion that there are three trends in regional history which need to be reconsidered. I have tried to show that the accepted periodization on the large scale seems to be inapplicable to the Punjab. Medievalism, with its attendant social and economic changes, would have to be placed later than is normally done. To date the modern period to the mid-eighteenth century would create its own problems in the history of the Punjab. The assumptions on which this periodization is based would in any case require serious reconsideration. Secondly, the deviation from the standard picture of caste society also needs careful investigation. With the third trend, the search for a golden age, one treads on soft ground, for this is also tied up with the attempt to suggest a regional periodization, but without changing the assumptions of the existing periodization. Thus the history of Maharashtra is equated with the rise of the Maratha kingdom, that of Rajasthan with the emergence of Mewar and Marwar, that of the Punjab with Sikhism and that of Tamil Nadu with Sangam culture. I have attempted to suggest that even a movement as powerful as that of Sikhism and the emergence of the kingdom of the Punjab can become a viable historical study only in the context of the totality of the history of the Punjab. Historical events are not isolated phenomena, suspended in space and time, and the historical matrix in which they are embodied is as important as the events.