CHAPTER EIGHT

EASTERN INDIA IN THE SIXTH CENTURY A. D.

I. THE MAUKHARIS

The Maukharis (or Mokharis) are a very ancient family and were possibly known to Pāṇini and also to Patañjali.1 Their antiquity is also proved by the legend ‘Mokhalinam’ written in Mauryan Brāhmī characters on a clay seal found at Gayā.2 Three inscriptions found at Baḷḍvāh in the old Kotah State in Rājasthān refer to the Mokhari general Bala and his three sons. The latter erected three sacrificial pillars in the year 295 (A.D. 238).3 The Chandravalli inscription4 of the Kadamba king Mayūraśarman (c. A.D. 345-70) probably also refers to the Maukharis as one of the powers defeated by him. At a later period, when they became politically a great power, the Maukhari (called also Mukhara) princes claimed descent from the ‘hundred sons whom King Aśvapati got from Vaivasvata’, the reference being undoubtedl[y] to the story recorded in the Mahābhārata, that Sāvitri got a boon from Yama (Vaivasvata) to the effect that her father Aśvapati will have a hundred sons.5 As Aśvapati was king of Madra in the Central Panjāb, the family6 might have originated in that locality or had some tradition to that effect, but of this we cannot be certain.

It is not till the sixth century A.D. that we come across definite

1 EI, XIV, 111.
2 CII, III, Introduction, 14.
3 EI, XXIII, 42. (The epithet Mahāsenāpati, translated as general, probably refers to the three sons of Bala, rather than to the latter.) A fourth inscription in the same place refers to a sacrifice performed by Maukhari Dhanuttṛata, son of Hastin.
4 MAR, 1929, p. 50.
5 Pandit Hirananda Sastri took Vaivasvata to be the seventh Manu (EI, XIV, 111), but cf. PHAI, 510 and n. 2. The grammatical references, noted above, as well as the expression ‘line of Mukhara’ used by Bāna (HC, 128) seem to indicate that Mukhara was the eponymous ancestor of the family.
6 It has been suggested that the Maukharis were a clan and not a family and are represented by the Mauhari caste of Gayā (T. G. Aravamuthan, The Kavert, the Maukharis and the Sangam Age, 80).
evidence of the Maukhari as a ruling power. Three inscriptions engraved on the Barābar and Nāgarjunī hills, about 15 miles to the north-east of Gayā, refer to three generations of Maukharī kings. Yajña-varman, who probably founded this family, was succeeded by his son Sārdūla-varman and the latter again by his son Ananta-varman. All the three records belong to the reign of Ananta-varman. They give high-sounding praises to the rulers but do not throw any light on their history. Sārdūla-varman is described in one of the records as sāmanta-chūdāmanih (crest-jewel of the feudatory chiefs), and there can be hardly any doubt that he was feudatory to the Imperial Guptas. It is, however, noteworthy that none of the records refers to the paramount sovereigns. The records are not dated but have been referred to the sixth century A.D. on palaeographic grounds. It seems likely that Ananta-varman flourished at a time when the Gupta Empire had begun to decline. We may provisionally place him and his two predecessors in the first half of the sixth century A.D., probably even a little earlier.

Another branch of the Maukhari, who ultimately became more powerful, is known from several seals and inscriptions. The royal seals give us the following genealogy:

1. Mahārāja Hari-varman m. Jayasyāminī
2. Mahārāja Āditya-varman m. Harsha-guptā
3. Mahārāja Īśvara-varman m. Upa-gupta
4. Mahārājādhirāja Īśana-varman m. Lakshmīvatī
5. Mahārājādhirāja Sarva-varman m. Indra-bhaṭṭārikā
6. Mahārājādhirāja Avanti-varman
7. Mahārājādhirāja Su...

The distinction between the titles given to the first three kings and the rest leaves no doubt that the reign of Īśana-varman marked the rise of the family to power and prestige. As all the inscriptions of the

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7 Reference is made to a Maukharī king Kshatra-varman in HC in the long list of rulers who met their doom through the treachery of others. But although this king must have lived before, and may be long before, the seventh century A.D., we have no means to determine his age.

8 CII, III, nos. 48, 49, 50 (pp. 221-28).

9 N. G. Majumdar thinks that these inscriptions are considerably earlier than the Ilārāhā inscription (A.D. 554), while C. V. Vaidya thinks that they are later than Harsha's time (IA, XLVI, 127). N. Ray regards the Maukharī chiefs as governors of the Kanauj Maukharis, to be referred to later on (Cal. Rev., 1928, p. 210).

10 Āsirgadh seal of Sarva-varman (CII, III, 219). Two seals from Nālandā (EI, XXIV, 283). The son of Avanti-varman is mentioned in one of the Nālandā seals, but only the first letter of the name, su, is legible. The name may be restored as Surasena (cf. IHQ, XI, 320), but see later.
family, other than the small seals and coins, have been found within the limits of the modern State of U.P., we may roughly regard it as the seat of their power. Fortunately, we possess a date of Iśāna-varman, viz 611 which, referred to the Vikrama era, gives A.D. 554, as one of his regnal years. There can thus be hardly any doubt that the three predecessors of Iśāna-varman were feudatories of the Gupta Empire and flourished in the first half of the sixth century A.D., or even somewhat earlier. It would thus follow that two Maukharī families ruled as feudatory chiefs in S. Bihar and U.P. since the time of Budha-gupta.

There can be hardly any doubt that the decline of the power of the Imperial Guptas, early in the sixth century A.D., gave an opportunity to the Maukharis to assert their authority. The Jaunpur inscription of Iśvara-varman contains a great deal of information about a Maukharī king. But unfortunately, on account of the damaged nature of the stone, it is difficult to identify this king or to understand the real significance of the various military campaigns described in it. Mention is made of the Andhra king who, out of fear, took his abode in the Vindhya mountains, and also of the Andhra warriors; and it is probable, though by no means certain, that the Maukharī king had to fight with them. Disjointed reference to Raivataka and Himālaya mountains may also be taken to imply that the Maukharī king proceeded to these regions in the course of military campaigns, probably on behalf of his overlord. More doubtful is the reference to Dhārā, which has been taken as the name of the city which became famous in later days, but may be nothing more than the common word meaning ‘rim of a wheel’. It is further said that he allayed the troubles caused by the approach of cruel people and thereby effected the happiness of mankind. There is possibly a reference here to the Hūṇa invasion and the co-operation offered by the Maukharī king to the Gupta Emperor Narasimha-gupta in defeating Mihirakula. But these inferences are very vague and doubtful, we do not also know for certain the name of the Maukharī king concerned. The stone containing the inscription is broken, and ‘from thirty-eight to seventy-two letters—probably the larger number—are lost at the beginning of each line’. Although, therefore, King Iśvara-

11 The date has also been interpreted as 589, but the other view is more reasonable (cf. IA, XLVI, 25-26).
12 CII, III, 228.
13 The expression ‘Dhārā-mārgga-vinirgrat-āgni-kanika’ (I, 6) has been translated by Fleet as ‘a spark of fire that had come by the road from (the city of) Dhārā’ (CII, III, 230). But it may refer to the spark of fire issuing from wheels (dhārā) of the chariot. Basak takes dhārā as the edge of the sword ‘from which sparks of fire came out’ (HNI, 109).
varman is mentioned in line 4 of the inscription, Fleet very rightly
observers that 'the lacunae in the following lines are so extensive, that
it is impossible to say whether the historical information given in
them refers to Īśvara-varman, or to one of his descendants'.

The earliest Maukharī king about whom we possess some reliable
information is Īśāna-varman. He is said to have defeated the Andhras
and the Sūlikas and forced the Gauḍas to remain in their proper
realm. The Gauḍas were undoubtedly the people of Bengal. The ex-
pression referring to them is not easy to interpret. Basak translates
the passage as follows: '(He) made the Gauḍa people take shelter
towards the sea-shore, after causing their land territories to be de-
prived of their future prospects.' According to the translation of
Hirananda Sastri, 'He caused the Gauḍas, living on the sea-shore, in
future to remain within their proper realm.' The latter seems to be
preferable. By the Andhras probably the Vishnukundins are meant;
king Mādhava-varman of this family, who probably lived about this
time, is said to have 'crossed the river Godāvari with the desire to
conquer the eastern region'. It is probable that the fight with the
Andhra king took place in the Vindhya region as stated in the Jaun-
pur inscription.

The Sūlikas defeated by Īśāna-varman cannot be identified. It has
been suggested that they were probably the Chālukyas. In the
Brihat-Samhitā the Sūlikas are sometimes associated with Gandhāra
and Vokkāna (Wakhan). It is not unlikely that they were a branch
of the Hūnas who occupied these regions in the sixth century A.D.
Now, it is a well-known fact that Īśāna-varman issued coins in imita-
tion of Toramāṇa, the Hūna chief. These are close copies of the Im-
perial Gupta coins but distinguished by a date, which is 52 in the
coins of Toramāṇa, and 54, 55 etc. in the coins of Īśāna-varman.

14 CHI, III, 229. N. G. Majumdar (IA, XI,VI, 127), R. G. Basak (HNI, 109), and
R. S. Tripathi (History of Kanauj, 38) attribute the conquests to Īśvara-varman, D. C.
Sircar assigns the victories to Īśāna-varman or one of his successors (JIH, XLII, 127).
15 HNI, 131.
16 None of the interpretations is very satisfactory. Most probably the expression
read as chaṇḍatimochita in l. 13 is really chaṇḍratimochita. It would then simply mean
that the Gauḍas, unable to redeem (recover) their own country in the highlands, were
forced to take refuge in sea-side regions (cf. IC, XI, 123; JRASBL, XI, 69).
17 PHAI, 509; supra, p. 166.
18 PHAI, 509. The name Chālukya or Chalukya is written as Chalikya in the
Mahākūta Pillar Ins. (IA, XIX, 16). It appears as Solaki or Solaṇki in the records of
Gujarat.
19 These and other references to Sūlikas and Saulikas in Brihat-Samhitā are noticed
in PHAI, 509, n. 5.
20 These coins will be discussed later.
A study of these coins leaves no doubt that Ḫšāṇa-varman ruled over territories which were once wrested from the Guptas by Toramāṇa. That Ḫšāṇa-varman fought with the Hūṇas may also be inferred from a statement in the Aphṣad inscription of Ādityasena which will be presently discussed. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the Śūlikas represented a Hūṇa tribe by defeating whom Ḫšāṇa-varman conquered a part of the Gupta dominions which had been seized by Toramāṇa.

It would thus appear that Ḫšāṇa-varman fully deserved the title Mahārājādhirāja. He was the first in his family to assume this title and to issue coins, and his Hārāhā praśasti mentions no conquests of any of his predecessors.21 He was, most probably, the first Maukharī king to set up an independent kingdom and establish the power and prestige of the family. We know from the Hārāhā inscription that he was on the throne in a.d. 554. His reign, therefore, coincides with the fall of the Gupta Empire, and his activities and achievements must have had a close connection with it. The Hārāhā inscription says that the earth was like a sinking boat which Ḫšāṇa-varman held fast by means of ropes (v. 15)—an apt description of the political chaos out of which he salvaged an empire.

Unfortunately for Ḫšāṇa-varman, he was not the only one to take advantage of the disruption of the Gupta Empire. Another family, generally designated the Later Guptas, rose into prominence about the same time and challenged the Maukharīs' bold bid for imperial power. This led to a long and protracted war which lasted for more than half a century and resulted in the complete destruction of the house of the Maukharīs.

This war will be described in connection with the history of the Later Guptas. It will suffice to state here that Kumāra-gupta of this family claims to have defeated 'the army of the glorious Ḫšāṇa-varman, a very moon among kings'. Further, Kumāra-gupta's son Dāmodara-gupta 'broke up the proudly stepping array of mighty elephants belonging to the Maukharī which had thrown aloft in battle the troops of the Hūṇas'.22

It is thus quite clear that there was a protracted struggle between the two powers. As the Guptas claim success, while the Hārāhā inscription, which records the glorious military exploits of Ḫšāṇa-varman, is altogether silent about the fight with the Guptas, it is

21 The view that Ḫšāṇa-varman's campaigns 'preceded his sitting on his father's throne', i.e. that they were undertaken when his father was still ruling (IA, XLVI, 127; HNI, 111) is based on a very far-fetched interpretation of verse 13 of the Hārāhā Ins. and cannot be accepted without more positive evidence.

22 Aphṣad ins. CH, III, 206. The different interpretations of this passage will be discussed later.
reasonable to assume that the Maukharis were defeated by both Kumāra-gupta and his son Dāmodara-gupta. It is, however, just possible that the fight between Īśāna-varman and Kumāra-gupta took place after the Hārāhā inscription was engraved.

The way in which Īśāna-varman is referred to in the Gupta inscription is significant. It shows that the Maukharī king had already secured a pre-eminent position in Indian politics. More importance attaches to the statement that the Maukharī army had defeated the Hūnas. The credit is not specifically given to any particular Maukharī king. But the reference seems to be to Īśāna-varman himself. He is mentioned by name in connection with the previous conflict between the Maukharis and the Guptas, and if a separate king were intended in the next verse, he would probably have been specifically named. We may, therefore, take Īśāna-varman, rather than his successor, to be the adversary of Dāmodara-gupta. This does not necessarily mean that it was Īśāna-varman who defeated the Hūnas, for the credit is given to the Maukharī army which might have achieved this feat during the preceding reign. But all the circumstances taken together (pp. 183-84) point out to Īśāna-varman as the conqueror of the Hūnas. He might have done it, early in his career, on behalf of the Gupta Emperor, and then, like Yaśodharman, utilised his success to carve out an independent kingdom. It is also not unlikely that he fought with the successors of Mihirakula after he had set up as an independent king. As noted above, the Sūlikas conquered by Īśāna-varman, might also have been a branch of the Hūnas.

Īśāna-varman was succeeded by his son Sarva-varman. The one important thing we know of him is his possession of a part of Magadha. This follows from an inscription recording the grant of a village by Jivita-gupta, a king of the Later Gupta family in the eighth century A.D. The inscription incidentally refers to three past rulers, along with some details only partially preserved, which seem to indicate that the first certainly, and the second and third, also probably, were in possession of the same village. The first of these kings, Bālāditya, was undoubtedly the Gupta Emperor Narasiṃha-gupta, and the two others, Sarva-varman and Avanti-varman, can be easily identified with the two Maukharī kings that followed Īśāna-varman. The village granted is named Vāruṇika, which is evidently represented by modern Deo-Baranārk where the inscription was found. It is situated about 25 miles south-west of Arrah, the chief town of Shahabad district in Bihar. Thus some time after the reign of Narasiṃha-gupta Bālāditya, at least a part of Magadha, including the region

where Vārunikā was situated, probably passed into the hands of the Maukharis. If the Later Guptas had been in possession of Magadha in the time of Kumāra-gupta and Iśāna-varman, we can only presume that Sarva-varman was more successful in his fight with the Later Guptas. But the place where the Later Guptas ruled about this time is a debatable issue and will be discussed later.

Both Sarva-varman and his son and successor Avanti-varman are styled Mahārājādhirāja. Under them the Maukharis enjoyed high renown and prestige as a great power. We read in Bāṇabhaṭṭa’s Harsha-charita that king Prabhākara-vardhana of Kanauj gave his daughter Rājyaśrī in marriage to the son of Avanti-varman, because, as he told his queen, ‘at the head of all royal houses stood the Maukhari family and the pride of that family was Avanti-varman’. Even making due allowance for the context in which this eulogy is uttered, it shows that the Maukharis were highly esteemed towards the close of the sixth century A.D. This is confirmed by another flattering reference to the Maukharis in one of the introductory verses to the Kādambarī (v. 4).

Nothing of importance is known either of Sarva-varman or of Avanti-varman. But Avanti-varman’s eldest son Graha-varman figures prominently in Bāṇa’s Harsha-charita on account of his marriage with Rājyaśrī, the daughter of Prabhākara-vardhana. It is said that Graha-varman himself sought for the hand of the princess and sent an envoy extraordinary for the betrothal ceremony. As no reference is made to his father, either in these negotiations or in connection with the actual marriage ceremony, it is a reasonable presumption that Avanti-varman had died earlier. In any event, later references indicate that Graha-varman ascended the throne of his father. But this is hardly in keeping with the royal genealogy of the Maukharis known from their seals and inscriptions (supra, p. 181). It is unfortunate that the full name of the son and successor of Avanti-varman has not been preserved, but it begins with the letter Su followed by another letter which has been doubtfully read as va or cha. We cannot, therefore, take him to be Graha-varman, unless we assume that he had a second name. The most reasonable way of reconciling the known facts is to suppose that Graha-varman succeeded his father but, being killed without leaving any issue, was succeeded by his younger brother. This, however, raises other problems which, together with the subsequent fate of Graha-varman and his kingdom, will be

25 Graha-varman is referred to as Deva, which Cowell has rightly translated as ‘His Majesty’ (p. 173). The whole episode of Graha-varman, which will be discussed later on the authority of Bāṇa, shows that he was the ruling king.
discussed in connection with Harsha-vardhana. In conclusion, we must consider some general questions concerning the Maukhari.

A large number of the coins of Isāna-varman, Śarva-varman and Avanti-varman contain dates. Unfortunately these are very indistinct, and there is a wide divergence between the readings of different scholars. Curiously enough, the dates of each of the kings fall in two classes, one consisting of two and the other of three digits. To the first category, belong the dates variously read as 40, 54, 55, 60, 70, etc. for Isāna-varman, 58 for Śarva-varman, and 57, 71, etc. for Avanti-varman. Similarly in the second category we have 245 and 257 for the first king, 234 and 259 for the second, and 250 and 260 for the third. It will be seen that in both the categories, the dates of later kings, as read by some scholars, are earlier than those of their predecessors, as read by others. No reliance can, therefore, be placed on these dates. The dates in three digits must be referred to the Gupta Era, but the interpretation of those with two digits is more difficult. Some have referred them to the Maukharī era beginning from about A.D. 500 or 499, when Āryabhaṭa composed his great astronomical work, and exactly 3,000 years of the Kaliyuga had elapsed. But if the Maukharīs had really established an era of their own it is difficult to explain why only the Vikrama era was used in their official records, such as the Hārāhā inscription, and the Gupta Era on some of their coins. Most probably the dates in two digits are also to be referred to the Gupta Era with two hundreds omitted.

Thus the only fixed point in the chronology of the Maukhari rulers is the date for Isāna-varman furnished by Hārāhā inscription, viz A.D. 554. The reigns of his two successors probably covered the rest of the sixth century A.D., for, as we shall see later, Avanti-varman’s son Graha-varman was on the throne in A.D. 606. If we accept the dates on the coins as read by Dikshit, the latest scholar to give a consistent interpretation of the whole series, we get 245-57 for Isāna-varman, 258-59 for Śarva-varman and 260 for Avanti-varman. Referring these dates to the Gupta Era, and taking into consideration the Hārāhā inscription, we may provisionally accept the following chronological scheme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isāna-varman</td>
<td>c. 550-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śarva-varman</td>
<td>c. 576-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avanti-varman</td>
<td>c. 580-600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graha-varman</td>
<td>c. 600-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These four kings thus ruled for a little more than half a century. If

26 These have been discussed fully by Tripathi (THK, 55 ff.).
27 Burn in JRAS, 1906, p. 848.
we assign an equal period to the first four kings who preceded Isāna-varman, the beginning of the dynasty may be placed roughly at about A.D. 500.

The findspots of coins and inscriptions leave no doubt that, Uttara Pradesh or a major part of it constituted the nucleus of the Maukharī kingdom. As noted above, a portion of South Bihar, at least the Shahabad district, formed part of it during the reigns of Sarva-varman and Avanti-varman. How far, if at all, the Maukharī kingdom extended beyond these limits, it is difficult to determine. Some scholars have suggested 'that the fortress of Āsirgadh fell into the hands of the Maukharīs'. This view rests upon the belief that a seal of Sarva-varman was found at Āsirgadh (Nimar district, M.P.). The inference is unwarranted even if the belief were true, for even copper-plates, not to speak of smaller objects like seals which are easily portable, can be carried to places very remote from their origin. As a matter of fact, however, only an impression of the seal was found in A.D. 1805 or 1806 at Āsirgadh in a box containing property of the Mahārāja Sindhia. There is no record whether the original seal was ever found, and there is no real basis for the presumption that the fort of Āsirgadh in the Deccan formed a part of the Maukharī kingdom.

Equally untenable, though far less improbable, is the view that the Maukharī king Sarva-varman exercised sway in the Kangra district (Panjab). A copper-plate refers to lands in this region being formerly granted to a temple by Mahārāja Sarva-varman. But the identification of this king with the Maukharī Sarva-varman is very doubtful, particularly because the Maukharī king is designated Mahārājadhirāja in his official records. The copper-plate, however, belongs to a period when the Maukharīs probably ceased to exercise any authority they might have once possessed over this area, and so the discrepancy in the titles cannot be regarded as very material. It is also not unlikely that the fight against the Hūnas brought Sarva-varman as far as the upper Sutlej. But that would involve the assumption that the intervening region, e.g. Thāneśvar, also acknowledged the supremacy of the Maukharī king. Such important inferences, however, should not be drawn merely from the identity of names, and

28 THK, 52.
30 CII, III, 219.
31 Found at Nirmand on the right bank of the upper course of the Sutlej in the Kangra district (31° 25' N x 77° 38' E) (CII, III, 288).
32 For the contrary view, cf. J. N. Banerji in Calcutta Review, January 1950 and PAIOC, XII (Summary of Papers, p. 87).
we shall therefore hardly be justified in including Kangra within the dominions of the Maukharis.

It is generally assumed that Kānyakubja, modern Kanauj on the Ganga in Farrukhabad district, was the capital city of the Maukharis. This view mainly rests upon the statements of Bāṇa which will be discussed later. But these refer to the period of Avanti-varman and his son towards the end of the sixth century A.D., and need not necessarily apply to earlier times.33

Reference may be made in this connection to a passage in the Sirpur inscription34 of the Somavārīsi king Siva-gupta Bājanjuna. It tells us that the mother of this king was the daughter of Śūrya-varman who was 'born in the unblemished family of the Varmans, great on account of (their) supremacy over Magadha'. This Śūrya-varman has been identified with the son of Iśāna-varman bearing the same name, mentioned in the Harāhā inscription.35 If this identity be maintained, it may be argued, though it does not necessarily follow, that Magadha, and not U.P., was the chief centre of the Maukharis, at least up to the time of Śūrya-varman. This conclusion, it is claimed, is supported by the fact that a line of Maukhari rulers, as noted above (p. 185), actually ruled in Magadha.36 This view seems to be plausible, but is not free from doubts and difficulties. In the first place, the identification of king Śūrya-varman mentioned in the Sirpur inscription with the son of Iśāna-varman is doubtful. For the Sirpur inscription represents Śūrya-varman as a king (nripa), whereas it does not appear that the son of Iśāna-varman bearing that name ever ascended the throne.37 It has been urged that, excepting the Maukharis, no lords of Magadha, bearing the title Varman, are known. But this is by no means certain. For Hiuan Tsang refers to a king of Magadha, called Purña-varman, the last of the race of Aśoka,38 who was a contemporary of Śaśāṅka and therefore, also probably, of Graha-varman, son

33 For a full discussion with references, cf. THK, 32.
34 Sirpur Ins. v. 16; EI, XI, 195. Above, p. 152.
35 D. C. Sircar (IHQ, XIX, 277, n. 11 and JRASBL, XI, 72) maintains the identification on the authority of Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri who merely hints at the probability of the Śūrya-varman of the Sirpur ins. being 'identical with, or a descendant of, Śūrya-varman, the son of Iśāna-varman' (PHAI, 512, n. 1). A. Ghosh rejects the identification (EI, XXV, 268) on grounds which have been criticised by D. C. Sircar (loc. cit.).
36 D. C. Sircar, op. cit.
37 Sircar’s arguments against this objection are hardly convincing. The description in the Sirpur ins., read with the context, hardly leaves any doubt that Śūrya-varman was a king and not a mere ruler of a district under his father.
38 Rightly or wrongly Purña-varman was regarded by his contemporaries as belonging to the Maurya family; it is, therefore, difficult to accept Sircar’s suggestion that Purña-varman possibly belonged to the Maukhar family (IHQ, XIX, 277 n. 11).
of Avanti-varman. He could not possibly be a Maukhari, and yet his family might have been ruling in Magadha. Besides, there was the other Maukhari family. One scholar has argued that ‘it is unlikely that the line of Hari-varman was unrelated to the Maukharis of Gaya’, and that ‘there is absolutely no proof that Isana-varman had his capital in U.P. and not in Bihar’.39 This is indeed true, but there is also nothing to show that Isana-varman was the ruler of Magadha; on the other hand, both the inscriptions of the family and almost all the coins, including those of Isana-varman, have been found within the boundaries of U.P. and not in Magadha. The Maukharis seals found at Nalanda do not count for much in this context, for similar seals of even rulers of Kamrupa have been found there, and that merely proves the existence of communication between the kingdom and the famous religious and educational centre of the time. On the whole, therefore, it seems legitimate to conclude that Kanauj was most probably the capital city of the Maukharis from the very beginning, though we have no positive evidence of it for the earlier period.

II. THE LATER GUPTAS

The designation ‘Later Gupta’ has been given by modern historians to a royal family that rose to power about the same time as the Maukharis. The name, obviously intended to distinguish it from the Imperial Guptas, is neither accurate nor convenient. There is no evidence to show that this family was in any way connected by blood with the Imperial Guptas. The fact that no such claim is put forward in the inscriptions of the dynasty seems to be decisive on this point. For it is almost unthinkable that such an illustrious ancestry should not have been referred to by the court-poets of the Later Guptas if they had the least pretension to it. It is important to note that the family never calls itself by the name ‘Gupta’,40 and there is at least one ruler, whose name ends in ‘Sena’ and not Gupta. Besides, the name ‘Later Gupta’ is somewhat misleading as it might as well, and perhaps with greater propriety, be applied to the successors of Skanda-gupta or Budha-gupta, whom we now style as Later Imperial Guptas, though the epithet ‘Imperial’ is hardly applicable to many of them. Nevertheless, as the name has gained currency, we have to continue its use.

The history of the Later Guptas is similar in many respects to that

39 D. C. Sircar, JRASBL, XI, 72.
40 In the Aphsad inscriptions the family is simply referred to as sad-varsha ‘good lineage’. It has been suggested that ‘the Guptas and the Gupta Kulaputra mentioned in Bana’s Kadambari and Harsha-charita may refer to this family’ (PHAI, 507 n. 1). But this is uncertain.
of the Maukharis. They, too, were at first feudatory to the Impérial Guptas, and came into prominence and gained independence about the same time as the Maukharis. They established a powerful kingdom which lasted till about the middle of the eighth century A.D.

No record of the first seven kings of this family has yet come to light. All that we know of its early history is derived from a single inscription issued by the eighth king, Āditya-sena, who flourished in the second half of the seventh century. This inscription, which was found at Apsad, near Gayā, gives the following genealogy:

1. Krishna-gupta
2. Harsha-gupta
3. Jīvita-gupta
4. Kumāra-gupta
5. Dāmodara-gupta
6. Mahāsena-gupta
7. Mādhava-gupta
8. Āditya-sena.

No royal title is given to any of these, they being simply called Śrī. It is, however, known from other records\(^{41}\) that Āditya-sena assumed full imperial titles. No great importance need, therefore, be attached to the absence of royal titles in this particular record which, being composed throughout in verse, was less likely to contain them.\(^{42}\) It is, however, to be noted that Krishna-gupta is called a nripa (king), and similar epithets are applied to his successors. There is hardly any doubt that they were at first feudatories of the Guptas.

As Kumāra-gupta, the fourth king of this dynasty, is said to have defeated Iśāna-varman, the fourth king of the Maukharī line, it may be presumed that both the families came into prominence about the same time, i.e. about A.D. 500 or a little earlier. It has also been suggested that Harsha-guptā, the queen of the second Maukharī king, was a sister of Harsha-gupta,\(^{43}\) the second king of the Later Gupta

41 Mandar Hill Rock inscriptions, CII, III, 211.

42 It is to be noted, however, that the Shahpur Stone Image inscription (ibid., 208) also does not give any imperial title to Āditya-sena. More curious is the genealogical portion in the Deo-Baraṇgārk inscriptions of Jīvita-gupta II (ibid., 213) which gives the imperial titles to all the three successors of Āditya-sena, but calls him only Śrī, though his mother and queen are both called Parama-bhattānkā and rājī. These examples should serve as a caution against attaching undue importance to royal titles even in official genealogy.

43 PHAI, 511, where the further suggestions are made that Iśāna-varman’s mother Upa-guptā and Prabhākara-vardhana’s mother Mahāsena-guptā were Gupta princesses. Too much importance, however, should not be attached to similarity of names or name-endings. There was for example, one Harsha-gupta among the Somavāṇa rulers of South Kosala, whose father and son also bore names ending in Gupta.
family. We may presume that at first the relation between the two families was friendly, but the ambitious military enterprises of Iśāna-varman first brought about hostility between the two.

While there is no doubt that Iśāna-varman definitely threw off the allegiance of the Imperial Guptas, we do not know for certain who among the Later Guptas was the first to do so. The Aphsad inscription describes in very general and conventional terms the military achievements of the first three kings. It is said of the third king that his foes could not get rid of 'the very terrible scorching fever (of fear)' even though they stood on sea shores or the Himalaya mountain. This might be a mere poetic expression or indicate military campaigns in the north and south. But there is nothing to show whether these campaigns were undertaken by the Later Gupta rulers as feudatories on behalf of their suzerains or as independent chiefs. The former view appears to be the more probable.

More details are furnished about the next king Kumāra-gupta. He defeated the Maukhari king Iśāna-varman, who is described as 'a very moon among kings'. This defeat is compared to the churning of the ocean out of which arose Lakshmi. It is very likely that the poet deliberately used this simile in order to indicate that the defeat inflicted upon Iśāna-varman by Kumāra-gupta was the source of the latter's fortune or sovereignty. This appears probable even on general grounds. For the Harāhā inscription clearly indicates that Iśāna-varman had successfully challenged the supremacy of the Imperial Guptas some time before A.D. 554. The deferential manner in which he and his army are referred to in the record of his enemies, the Later Guptas, leaves no doubt that he had already established a position, if not of supremacy, at least of great authority.

Whether Kumāra-gupta fought with Iśāna-varman on behalf of the Gupta Emperor, or as an independent rival king eager to share the spoils of the Empire, cannot be definitely determined. But whatever that might have been, the great victory over the powerful Maukhari chief improved Kumāra-gupta's position to such an extent as to entitle him to rank virtually as an independent chief. We may reasonably look upon him as having laid the foundations of the greatness of the family, and its first independent ruler de facto, if not de jure. If we remember that no record of the Imperial Gupta family is known after A.D. 543, we may well believe that some time about A.D. 550 both Iśāna-varman and Kumāra-gupta formally assumed independence.

So far we are on tolerably sure ground. But the moment we try to locate the kingdom or sphere of influence of Kumāra-gupta we find ourselves in great difficulty. There is no doubt that later times his descendants ruled in Magadha, but some scholars hold the view that
the Later Guptas originally ruled in Malwa, and it was only after
the reign of Harsha-vardhana that they came into possession of
Magadha. No definite solution of this intriguing problem is possible
in the present state of our knowledge, and its discussion involves a
knowledge of the subsequent history of this family. We shall, there-
fore, reserve it for an appendix to this section. It will suffice to state
here that in the opinion of the present writer the Later Guptas were,
so to say, the residuary legatees of the Imperial Guptas; at least they
regarded themselves as such. They came into possession of Malwa,
Magadha, and North Bengal, and laid claim to those parts of the
empire which had recently seceded from it, such as the Maukhari
kingdom and Southern Bengal. Viewed in this light, the fight between
the Later Guptas and the Maukharis assumed the character of a
struggle, on the part of the former, to re-establish the supremacy of
the empire which they believed to have rightfully inherited. There
is no doubt that at first they gained great success. Kumāra-gupta is
said to have died at Prayāga after his victory over Isāna-varman. It
is evident that he advanced as far as Allahabad.

The struggle was continued or renewed in the reign of Dāmodara-
gupta, son of Kumāra-gupta. The name of his Maukhari adversary
is not mentioned, but we may reasonably presume that it was Isāna-
varman himself, for if there had been a new Maukhari king he would
probably have been named. This is not a very material point, but
what is more disconcerting is the vagueness of the language in which
the result of the battle is described. The passage, bereft of unneces-
sary details, may be rendered as follows:

'Having slain the enemies (i.e. the Maukharis) and breaking up the
array of their mighty elephants, he (Dāmodara-gupta) became un-
conscious (sāmmūrchchhita) and was revived by the touch of the
heavenly damsels (suravadhū).'

Fleet took this passage to mean that Dāmodara-gupta died in the
battle and went to heaven. This was further interpreted by others
to indicate that Dāmodara-gupta was defeated in the battle. On
the other hand, it has been pointed out that the record merely speaks
of the swoon (saīmūrchchhita) and of his subsequent awakening
(vibuddha), and not of death. According to this interpretation,
'Dāmodara-gupta was seriously wounded and fainted away, but
though his wound appeared to be very serious, he ultimately regained
consciousness.' The writer of the Praśasti poetically assumed that
the revival was due to the pleasing touch of the heavenly damsels
who had come to the battle-field to meet fallen warriors. The mean-

45 D. R. Bhandarkar Volumes, 180.
ing is not unreasonable, but cannot be regarded as certain. For it is equally possible to argue that it was a poetic fancy to describe death as swoon in order to emphasize the subsequent re-awakening in heaven. But whatever view we might take on this point, there ought not to be any doubt on the issue of the struggle. The poet clearly refers to the rout and discomfiture of the Maukhari army, and the victory of Dāmodara-gupta. Even assuming that he died in the battle, it does not necessarily imply a defeat, for apart from common sense, there are many historical instances where the victors died in the battlefield. So far, therefore, as the evidence of this inscription goes, we must assume that Dāmodara-gupta gained a great victory, though it must be an open question whether he survived it or not.

Dāmodara-gupta was succeeded by his son Mahāsena-gupta, probably in the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. The Apsahad inscription refers to his victory over Susthita-varman, and its fame being sung on the banks of the Brahmaputra. There is no doubt that this Susthita-varman was the father of king Bhāskara-varman of Kāmarūpa who is mentioned in Harsha-charita as an ally of Harsha-vardhana and is also known from two copper-plate grants. It is thus clear that Mahāsena-gupta successfully invaded the kingdom of Kāmarūpa and probably advanced as far as the Brahmaputra river. In view of the later alliance between Bhāskara-varman and Harsha, it is not unreasonable to assume that such an alliance between the kings of Kāmarūpa and the Maukharis had come into existence earlier. In that case the invasion of Kāmarūpa by Mahāsena-gupta may be regarded merely as an episode in the long-drawn struggle between the Later Guptas and the Maukharis.

But in spite of his initial success Mahāsena-gupta seems to have fared badly in the end. As already noted (p. 185), the Maukhari king Śarva-varman exercised sway over a part of Magadha. Supratishṭhita-varman, who succeeded his father Susthita-varman on the throne of Kāmarūpa, claims that he and his brother Bhāskara-varman defeated the forces of Gauḍa, after their father’s death, while they were still young.46 It appears that Mahāsena-gupta was simultaneously attacked by the Maukharis from the west and the king of Kāmarūpa in the east. He at first obtained some successes against the latter and advanced as far as the Brahmaputra, but then the success of the Maukharis in the west forced him to retreat or to divert his main attention to the west. The king of Kāmarūpa now reaped the full advantage of the situation and defeated the forces of Mahāsena-gupta who probably lost all the fruits of his victory. In the west the Maukharis

46 Cf. the Doobi C. P. grant of Bhāskara-varman, EI, XXX, 287.
achieved conspicuous success and conquered some territories in Western Magadha comprising at least a part of the Shahabad district.

The situation of Mahāsena-gupta was critical enough, but it was rendered desperate by internal discord. For there can be hardly any doubt that it was during his reign that Saśānka founded an independent kingdom in Gauḍa. As he is also known to have ruled over Magadha, it is likely that he usurped the power and authority of Mahāsena-gupta in his eastern territories.

The almost complete debacle of Mahāsena-gupta after his early victory might have also been due, at least partly, to foreign invasions. The Chālukya king Kīrtti-varman, who ruled from A.D. 587 to 597, is said to have defeated the kings of Aṅga, Vāṅga, and Magadha. How far it is a vain boast or a real claim based on facts, it is difficult to say. But if he really led an expedition to Eastern India, Mahāsena-gupta was most likely his adversary who suffered defeat and lost much of his power as a result.

According to Tibetan chronicles, Srong Tsan, the king of Tibet, who ruled between A.D. 581 and 600, led a victorious campaign to ‘Central India’, an expression which usually denotes Bihar, but is also sometimes applied to U.P. The adversary of the Tibetan king was therefore probably either Mahāsena-gupta or his rival, the Maukhari Avanti-varman. In case it was the latter, we get a satisfactory explanation of the triumph of Mahāsena-gupta which enabled him to carry his victorious arms as far as the Brahma-putra. But it is more likely that the adversary was Mahāsena-gupta whose defeat at the hands of the Tibetan king probably enabled the Maukhari Avanti-varman, and Supratishtiḥita-varman of Kāmarūpa to wrest from him the fruits of his earlier victory. The two foreign invasions supply a satisfactory explanation not only of the discomfiture of Mahāsena-gupta but also of the internal dissension or revolt in Magadha raised by Saśānka. After the loss of his eastern territories Mahāsena-gupta seems to have taken shelter in Malwa.

We learn from Bāṇabhaṭṭa’s Harsha-charita that one day king Prabhākara-vardhana of Thāneśvar addressed Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana as follows:

‘My dear sons, I have appointed to wait upon your highnesses the brothers Kumāra-gupta and Mādhava-gupta, sons of the Mālava king, inseparable as my arms from my side; they are men found by frequent trials untouched by any taint of vice, blameless, discreet, strong and comely. To them your highnesses also will show a consideration not enjoyed by the rest of your dependents.’

48 Tr. by Cowell, 119-20.
Later, Bāṇabhaṭṭa tells us that Kumāra-gupta, the elder brother, was about 18 years in age.

It is generally held that the two princes of Malwa were sons of Mahāśena-gupta. For the Aphsad inscription specifically associates Mādhava-gupta, son of Mahāśena-gupta, with Harsha. This identification raises several problems, the most important of which is the position of the two princes in the court of Thāneśvar. It has been suggested that Mahāśena-guptā, the mother of Prabhākara-vardhana, was a sister of Mahāśena-gupta, and after his death his sons deprived of their kingdom were protected by their relative, the king of Thāneśvar. Although the similarity of names is no evidence of relationship, such a presumption cannot be said to be altogether unwarranted. But the language used by Bāṇa shows a clear inferiority in the status of the two princes vis-à-vis the two sons of Prabhākara-vardhana, which would be more in keeping with a conquered or feudatory ruler than with a relation enjoying equal status. One can easily gather from the preliminary address put in the mouth of the king that he regarded the two princes as servants of his sons rather than as friends or relations. Later, when the two princes came to the royal presence, they ‘bowed from afar till their four limbs and heads touched the ground’, and on receiving instructions to wait upon Rājya-vardhana and Harsha, saluted them ‘by swaying their heads again and again to the earth’. Rājya-vardhana and Harsha, on their part, saluted their father’, or, in other words, did not return the salute of the two princes of Mālava. In spite of the affectionate or cordial treatment that they received, the Mālava princes were clearly dependents, though they were shown ‘a consideration not enjoyed by the other dependents’, as the king directed.

The fact that Kumāra-gupta and his brother are described as sons of the king of Mālava is the principal argument in favour of the view that the Later Guptas were rulers of Mālava, rather than of Magadha. But the history of Mahāśena-gupta, as reconstructed above, is also not in conflict with the epithet ‘King of Mālava’ applied to him. In either case it remains to be explained why his sons were forced to take shelter as humble refugees and dependents in the court of Thāneśvar. That their father was dead and Mālava was lost to them admits of no doubt, but we cannot trace the course of events that led to it. There are some grounds to believe that king Deva-gupta, of whom we shall hear a great deal more hereafter, was ruling in Mālava. It is not improbable that he belonged to the royal family and usurped the throne after the death of Mahāśena-gupta. But we

49 PHAI, 512. Basak does not accept this view (HNI, 124–25).
50 Hoernle in JRAS, 1903, p. 561; HNI, 125.
also know that Mālava had other enemies about this time. As we shall see later (Ch. VIII), the Maitraka king Śilāditya I of Valabhi, who ascended the throne in or not long after A.D. 590, conquered a considerable portion of Western Malwa, and Ujjayini, the capital of Mālava, was held by the Kalachuri king Saṅkaragaṇa in the year A.D. 595. It is not unlikely that the struggles with these powers were the main causes that led to the discomfiture of Mahāśeṇa-gupta in the east, and ultimately the loss of the whole of Mālava in the west.

Perhaps Prabhākara-vardhana himself took advantage of the confusion in the kingdom of Mālava to invade it. He is described in the Harsha-charita as an ‘axe to the creeper of Mālava’s glory’,⁵¹ and this evidently implies a victorious campaign against Mālava. Whether he went to help Mahāśeṇa-gupta (or his dethroned heir) against his internal and external enemies, or was urged by lust of conquest and gave the final death-blow to the power of the Later Guptas by conquering the last remnants of their kingdom and capturing the two young princes, it is difficult to say. The latter hypothesis would be in full accord with the status of the two Mālava princes in the Thāneśvar court. But there are two circumstances which support the former view. In the first place, the king Prabhākara-vardhana described the two princes as ‘inseparable as my arms from my side’, and also bestowed high encomiums on them while introducing them to his sons. Secondly, it has been casually mentioned in Harsha-charita that ‘Kumāra was anointed by Harsha.’⁵² This most probably refers to the consecration of Kumāra-gupta⁵³ as king by Harsha. This is hardly surprising, for we know from the Aphsad inscription that Mādhavagupta, the other brother, was certainly crowned as king, and the reference to Harsha in that record hardly leaves any doubt that he owed his position to the favour of that Emperor.

It is thus not an improbable assumption that when Mālava was invaded by foreign enemies, and also probably torn asunder by internal discord, Mahāśeṇa-gupta appealed for help to Prabhākara-vardhana, probably related to him by marriage. The latter advanced with his army and obtained some successes, but could not save either Mahāśeṇa-gupta or his kingdom. He, however, rescued the two sons of Mahāśeṇa-gupta and brought them with him. There they remained

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⁵¹ Tr. by Cowell, 101.
⁵² Ibid., p. 76.
⁵³ Kumāra was another name of Bhāskara-varman, but as he was already the king of Kāmarūpa, the question of his consecration does not arise. Kumāra may also refer to the son of Harsha-vardhana as is hinted at by the commentator Saṅkara. But this is not very likely as he is not known to have been succeeded by his son. Kumāra-gupta might have been consecrated to the throne of Mālava after the death of Deva-gupta or to the throne of Magadha after it was conquered by Harsha.
as attendants of Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana till the kingdom of Magadha or Mālava was restored to them.

Appendix to Section II (The Later Guptas)

The earliest inscription of this dynasty that we possess belongs to the reign of Āditya-sena. That he and his successors ruled in Magadha admits of no doubt, for their records have all been found in South and East Bihar. This does not necessarily mean that the seven kings that preceded Āditya-sena also ruled in the same region, though that would be the most natural presumption, not lightly to be set aside until positive evidence is found to the contrary. Some indirect evidence may also be cited in support of this natural presumption. We know that two kings of this dynasty fought with the Maukharis, and another had a prolonged struggle with the rulers of Kāmarūpa. The Later Guptas, therefore, most likely occupied the territory between the kingdom of the Maukharis and Kāmarūpa; in other words, they were rulers of Gauḍa and Magadha. This is supported by the fact that in the Doobi inscription the sons of Supratishtihiita-varman, who was defeated most probably by Mahāsena-gupta, are said to have defeated the forces of Gauḍa after their father's death. It may be presumed that they were dealing with the same enemy who defeated their father, and we may therefore conclude that Mahāsena-gupta was regarded by them as lord of Gauḍa or an ally of the latter. We know of at least two instances in which the ruler of Magadha and Gauḍa has been referred to as Lord of Gauḍa; one is Saśānka, and the other, the king of Gauḍa killed by Yaśo-varman. The reference to Gauḍa forces in the Doobi record may therefore imply that the king in question was the lord of both Gauḍa and Magadha, and this is applicable to Mahāsena-gupta. Thus, prima facie, there seem to be good grounds for the belief that the Later Guptas ruled in Magadha and the neighbouring region, at least from the time of Kumāra-gupta, the fourth king, and therefore also from the very beginning.

Two important considerations may, however, be urged against this view. In the first place we know that a small part of Magadha was in possession of the Maukhari kings Sarva-varman and Avanti-varman. This by itself does not prove much. For all we know, the Later Guptas might have been occupying the rest of the province. More important is the fact that we find Saśānka ruling over Magadha and Gauḍa, and later, Pūrṇa-varman is mentioned by Hiuan Tsang as the ruler of Magadha. Thus, for at least a quarter of a century, the Later Guptas do not seem to have had anything to do with Magadha.
Secondly, the two princes Kumāra-gupta and Mādhava-gupta are called by Bāṇa, sons of the king of Mālava. As noted above, this Mādhava-gupta is most likely to be identified with the Later Gupta king of that name, though scholars are not unanimous about it. But even if we accept this view, which appears to be quite a reasonable one, it merely proves that Mahāsena-gupta was regarded as a ruler of Mālava. It proves nothing about the habitat of his predecessors.

The history of the Later Guptas, as construed on pp. 194-97 supra, gives a reasonable explanation of Mahāsena-gupta’s being called the king of Mālava, even though he and his predecessors had their seat of authority in Magadha. We know definitely that he had carried his victorious arms as far as the Brahmaputra river. If, therefore, we believe that he ruled in Mālava, we have to presume that he conquered the Maukhari and the Gaudās, as otherwise he could not possibly have proceeded to the bank of the Brahmaputra river. Of these conquests there is not the least evidence. On the other hand, if we suppose that the Later Guptas, who inherited the dominions of the Imperial Guptas, had their centre of authority in Magadha and Gaudā, but also exercised suzerainty over Mālava, which was probably ruled by a collateral branch, we get a natural explanation of the known facts. Mahāsena-gupta fought with his two enemies on either side, viz the Maukhari on the west and the Varmans of Kāmarūpa on the east. Although he scored some initial successes against the latter, the simultaneous fight with the Maukhari, the defection of Saśānīka, and probably some foreign invasions, made his position untenable, and he had to take shelter in Mālava. There also fortune did not favour him. He probably met with an ignominious end, and his two sons had to seek the protection of the court of Thāneśvar. This reconstruction cannot be proved in all details, but seems to be a reasonable hypothesis. It also satisfactorily explains why Mādhava-gupta was placed by Harsha on the throne of Magadha, rather than that of Mālava, for naturally a dispossessed king is restored to his ancestral kingdom. It is also to be considered why Mādhava-gupta was the first king of his dynasty to rule Magadha, and all his predecessors had ruled in Mālava, not even the slightest reference to it should have been made in the Aphsad inscription, which gives the names of his six predecessors. It has been argued by H. C. Raychaudhuri that Hiuan Tsang mentions Pūrṇa-varman as the occupant of the throne of Magadha, but does not say a word about Mādhava-gupta or his father in connection with Magadha. But the same question may be asked even if we hold that the Later Guptas ruled in Malwa. For Hiuan Tsang does not refer to the Later Guptas in con-

54 IBORS, 1929, p. 652.
nection with any state in Malwa, although he mentions the conquest of W. Malwa by Śilāditya of Valabhi and refers to a number of States in E. Malwa ruled over by Brāhmaṇa rulers. Thus while no definite conclusion is possible in the present state of our knowledge, we must admit that there are no adequate grounds against the natural presumption that Magadha was the home of the Later Guptas.

III. BENGAL

We had occasional glimpses into the political condition of Bengal in connection with the history of the Guptas. Probably a part of Bengal was included within the original kingdom of the Guptas (p. 8), and it is almost certain that North and West Bengal formed an integral part of the Empire of Samudra-gupta. East and South Bengal, known as Samatata, was at first a feudatory frontier State (p. 43), but later formed an integral part of the Gupta Empire, as we find it in the time of Vainya-gupta (p. 87).

The difference in the political status of the two parts of Bengal was no mere accident. They really formed, not only about this time but also for many centuries later, two distinct political and geographical entities, known as Gaṇḍa and Vaṅga. It would be convenient, therefore, to describe the history of each separately.

1. Vaṅga

Vaṅga, as a geographical and tribal name, goes back to remote antiquity.\(^{55}\) Roughly speaking, it denoted the whole of Eastern and Southern Bengal, though occasionally its western boundary extended beyond the Hooghly or Bhāgirathī river. In the course of time we come across other geographical expressions such as Samatata and Harikel, which were sometimes used as synonyms of Vaṅga though often treated as distinct entities. The extent of each of these names, used in the restricted sense, varied in different ages. Generally speaking, Samatata denoted the Tippera and Noakhali districts; Harikel, the adjoining region to the north, and Vaṅga the rest of East and South Bengal. But later, we find a new name Vaṅgāla which was distinguished from Vaṅga and comprised a part or whole of South Bengal.\(^{56}\)

In the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudra-gupta, as well as in Huan Tsang’s account, we find the name Samatata and not Vaṅga, though the latter occurs in the Meharauli Pillar inscription of Chandra. As noted before (p. 43) Samatata is included among those frontier States whose rulers ‘paid taxes, obeyed orders and performed obeisance in person to the great Emperor’ Samudra-gupta. The exact boundary

\(^{55}\) HABM, 8, 25.

\(^{56}\) Ibíd., 10-12.
of Samataṭa in the Gupta Age is not known, but it would appear from the detailed description of Hsuan Tsang that in his time the kingdom included a part of Central Bengal, such as Backerganj and Faridpur in addition to Tippera and Noakhali districts. It is not unlikely, however, that Samataṭa denoted even a much wider area in the Gupta Age.

As in the days of the Delhi Sultanate, so also in the Gupta Age, East Bengal was the last to accept, and the first to rebel against, foreign domination. Although forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of Samudra-gupta, Samataṭa or Vaṅga perhaps made a bold bid for freedom in the next reign. For if we are right in identifying Chandra of the Meharauli Pillar inscription with Chandra-gupta II (p. 55), we must presume that the confederate hosts with whom he fought in Bengal represented the various petty States of Vaṅga combined in a last desperate effort to throw off the yoke of the Guptas. They failed, and their country was brought under the direct administration of the Gupta Emperors. This is proved by the Gunaighar grant of Vainya-gupta which shows that the administration of the Tippera district was being carried on in the name of Vainya-gupta in the year A.D. 506-7 (p. 87).

But Vainya-gupta was perhaps the last of the Gupta family to rule over this province. For ere long we find an independent kingdom established in Vaṅga. Five inscriptions57 discovered at or near Koṭāli-pāḍā in the Faridpur district, and one at Mallasārul58 in the Burdwan district, testify to the existence of this kingdom. They refer to three rulers named Gopachandra, Dharmāditya and Samāchārādeva, all of whom assumed the title Mahārājādhirāja. The last is also known from his gold coins59 and a seal found at Nālandā.60

Gopachandra was perhaps the earliest of these three rulers.61 He had under him a vassal chief named Mahārāja Vijayasena who issued the Mallasārul grant under his own seal. This chief is probably identical with Vijayasena, the Dūtaka of the Gunaighar grant, who is

57 These are: (1-2) Two grants of Dharmāditya, and (3) one grant of Gopachandra, all published in IA, XXXIX, 193-216, (4) one grant of Samāchārādeva (EI, XVIII, 74) —all found at Koṭāli-pāḍā, and (5) the unpublished grant of Samāchārādeva found at Kurpala. The views of R. D. Banerji (JPASB, VI, 429, VII, 289; X, 425) and Dr. Bloch (ASIAR, 1907-8, p. 256) that these grants are spurious are no longer maintained by any scholar.
58 EI, XXIII, 155.
59 JPASB, XIX, Num. Suppl., 54.
60 MASI, No. 66, p. 31.
61 Parājīṭa, who edited the Koṭāli-pāḍā plates, regarded Dharmāditya as earlier than Gopachandra. But the grounds urged by him are very weak, and he wrote before the discovery of the Mallasārul plate which supports the contrary view (cf. HABM, 42-44).
described as *Mahā-pratihāra* Mahā-pūlupati, Pañchādhikaraṇoparika and *Mahārāja Śrī Mahāsūmantā*. If this identification be accepted, we must presume that Vijayasena, who already held high offices under Vainya-gupta in A.D. 607, rose to still higher distinction under Gopachandra which enabled him to issue land-grants under his own seal though acknowledging the suzerainty of *Mahārājādhirāja* Gopachandra. We must also infer that there was no long interval of time between the two grants, and Gopachandra therefore must have come to the throne in the first quarter of the sixth century A.D. The contrast between his title *Mahārājādhirāja* and that of *Mahārāja* assigned to Vainya-gupta in the Gunaighar grant perhaps indicates the recent changes in the political status of Vaṅga.

Not much is known of either Gopachandra, or the two other rulers, Dharmāditya and Samāchāradeva. Their relationships, if any, and even the order of their succession remain obscure. That they belonged to the same family may be reasonably inferred from the employment of common officers and the close resemblance in the phrasology of the Koṭālipāḍā plates. Their independent status and great power are proved by their title *Mahārājādhirāja* and by the gold coins of Samāchāradeva. Those coins closely imitate the Gupta types and bear the legend *Narendrāditya*, evidently a title assumed by Samāchāradeva in imitation of the Gupta Emperors.62

The lands granted by the Koṭālipāḍā copper-plates were situated in the district (Vishaya) called Vārakahā-maṇḍala in Navyāvakāśikā, which was evidently the name of the bigger division, probably *bhukti*, though this term is not actually used. This division must have comprised a large part of the deltaic region including Faridpur district. The Mallasārul grant refers to Vardhamāna-*bhukti* and the villages granted by it have been located in the Burdwan district. The independent kingdom of Vaṅga comprised Southern and Central Bengal and a portion of Western Bengal extending to the border of Orissa.62a

The grants of Gopachandra, Dharmāditya, and Samāchāradeva bear respectively the dates 18,63 3, and 14. It is significant that they use the regnal years and not the Gupta Era. It may be held that the three kings ruled between A.D. 525 and 575.

It is probable, however, that there were a few other kings ruling after them. A large number of gold coins have been found in different parts of East Bengal, notably at Sabhar (Dacca district) and Koṭālipāḍā. These are rude and debased imitations of the Gupta coins and

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62 Ibid., 65, f.n. 32.
62a Ibid., 42-43.
63 The date was read as 19 by Pargiter who edited the plate. It is read as 18 by Basak (HNI, 191) and D. C. Sircar (SI, 357).
are rarely found outside East Bengal. The names of two kings, Prithuvira and Sudhanyāditya, have been read on these coins. These, and others whose names are not recorded on the gold coins, probably ruled in Vaṅga after the three kings mentioned above.64

How or when the kingdom of Vaṅga came to an end cannot be ascertained. The invasion of the Chālukya king Kīrtti-varman, referred to above (p. 195), might have had something to do with its downfall, but more probably it succumbed to the powerful kingdom of Gauda under Saśāṅka.

2. Gauḍa

The antiquity of Gauḍa, as the name of a city, can be traced back to the days of Pañini.65 As the name of a country it is referred to in Kauṭilya’s Arthaśāstra66 and Vātsyāyana’s Kama-sūtra.67 But we have no evidence that it came into political importance till the end of the Gupta period.

Reference to the Gauḍas as a political power is met with for the first time in the Hāraha inscription of Iśāna-varman (p. 183). In a passage, whose precise meaning is not easy to understand, the Maukhari king claims to have defeated the Gauḍas, who either lived on the sea-shore or were forced by this defeat to remove there. It is clear, therefore, that Gauḍa at this time extended up to the sea-coast or was not very far from it. As we shall see later, Gauḍa certainly comprised a part of West Bengal including Murshidabad district, early in the seventh century A.D. We may therefore hold that Gauḍa in the middle of the sixth century A.D. corresponded roughly to the present Burdwan division in West Bengal.

As we have seen above, Gopachandra ruled over at least a part of this region in the second or third decade of the sixth century A.D. It is not unlikely, therefore, that Iśāna-varman fought with him and forced him to fall back upon the deltaic region to the east of the Bhāgirathī. This is probably the basis of his claim that he forced the Gauḍas to the sea-shore. As already mentioned, the Later Gupta king Jīvita-gupta I is also said to have fought on the sea-shore. It is probable that he also fought against the independent kingdom of Vaṅga. As suggested above, it is probable that the Later Guptas and Maukhari both fought on behalf of the Gupta Emperor against the rulers of Vaṅga who had recently shaken off his suzerainty.

64 For these coins, cf. CCIM, I, 120, 122; CGD, cvi-cvii, 154. JPASB, XIX, Num. Suppl., 58; XXI, Num. Suppl., 1.
65 VI, 2, 99-100.
67 Benares Edn., 115, 294.
Gauḍa next comes to our view towards the close of the sixth century A.D. For, as mentioned above, Bhāskara-varman of Kāmarūpa is said to have repulsed the forces of Gauḍa. As has already been suggested (p. 194) the reference here is probably to the army of Mahāśēna-gupta. In that case, in the second half of the sixth century A.D. the Later Guptas must have ruled Gauḍa, which then included also North Bengal, known separately as Punḍra and Varendra.

Thus after the fall of the Gupta Empire, two independent kingdoms of Gauḍa and Vaṅga rose in Bengal, the former corresponding roughly to Northern and Western, and the latter to Southern and Eastern Bengal. The Later Guptas probably continued to rule over Gauḍa till the end of the reign of Mahāśēna-gupta whose tragic end has been described above (p. 197).

Shortly after this, Gauḍa became a very powerful kingdom under Śaśāṅka. Of his early life we know little that can be regarded as certain. A seal-matrix cut in the rock of Rohtasgarh records the name of ‘Śrī-Mahāśēmanṭa Śaśāṅka’, i.e. the illustrious great vassal-chief Śaśāṅka.68 If, as is generally held, this Śaśāṅka be the same person as the king of Gauḍa, we must presume that he was originally only a feudal chief.69 His suzerain was probably Mahāśēna-gupta who must have conquered this region, if he were not already in possession of it, in the course of his campaign against Kāmarūpa. But some scholars hold that he was a vassal of the Maukhari kings who, as we know, ruled over a portion of Magadha.70

Be that as it may, Śaśāṅka soon established an independent kingdom in Gauḍa with Karnāsuvarṇa as his capital,71 and rapidly extended his kingdom. He ruled over Magadha, conquered Orissa, and established his supremacy over the Sailodbhava dynasty of Koṅgoda in Ganjam district.72 The copper-plate grants show that at first both Daṇḍabhukti (Midnapore district) and Utkala (Orissa) were governed by Śaśāṅka’s officers. Later, both these provinces were ruled by a Sāmanṭa Mahārāja under Śaśāṅka’s suzerainty, as was Koṅgoda further south. Thus, for the first time in history, Gauḍa emerges as a powerful kingdom extending over Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. It is

68 CII, III, 284.
69 There are not adequate grounds for the belief, held by some, that Śaśāṅka was also known as Narendra-gupta and connected with the Guptas.
70 IHQ, XII, 457.
71 Hiuan Tsang has left a short account of the kingdom of Karnasuvarna ruled over by Śaśāṅka (HTB, I, 210; II, 201.) This place may be definitely located, in view of the recent archaeological excavations near Rangamati in Murshidabad district, West Bengal, EI, XXXVII, 27. For ex. ct location, cf. HABM, 7.
72 This is known from three copper-plate grants, two found in Midnapore district (JRASBL, XI, 1) and one in Ganjam (EI, VI, 143).
probable, though by no means certain, that Vaṅga also formed a part of Saśāṅka’s dominions.

It appears that along with the possession of the territory of the Later Guptas, their rivalry with the Maukhari also passed on to Saśāṅka. For we find him entering into an alliance with the king of Mālava and proceeding against Kanauj. The incidents of this campaign are referred to in Harsha-charita, but in a manner that is very vague and unsatisfactory. In broad outline it may be stated as follows:⁷³

The king of Mālava invaded the Maukharī kingdom, killed Graha-varman, seized Kanauj, and imprisoned queen Rājyaśrī, the daughter of king Prabhākara-vardhana of Thāneśvar. This is said to have taken place on the very day on which the death of Prabhākara-vardhana was rumoured at Kanauj. It is difficult to say whether this was a mere coincidence, or the invasion was deliberately planned by the king of Mālava on hearing of the serious illness of Prabhākara-vardhana. In any case his success was complete, and the Maukharī kingdom lay prostrate before him.

As soon as this news reached Thāneśvar, Rājya-vardhana, who had just ascended the throne on the death of his father, marched with a hastily collected army of 10,000 horse to the rescue of his sister. The king of Mālava also advanced against him, but was defeated and a large part of his army captured by Rājya-vardhana.

In the meantime Saśāṅka had arrived at Kanauj and thence presumably marched against Rājya-vardhana. For we are told that before Rājya-vardhana could reach Kānyakubja or established contact with his sister Rājyaśrī, he was killed by Saśāṅka.

Both Bānabhaṭṭa and Hiuan Tsang state that Rājya-vardhana was treacherously murdered by Saśāṅka. But they give very different accounts of the circumstances leading to the murder. Harshavar dhana’s own inscriptions merely say that Rājya-vardhana met with his death in the house of his enemy owing to his adherence to a promise (satyānurodhen).⁷⁴ This discrepancy raises grave suspicion about the charge of treachery brought against Saśāṅka by Bānabhaṭṭa and Hiuan Tsang, both of whom were highly prejudiced against him and refer to him in most opprobrious terms.

It may be presumed that neither Rājya-vardhana nor the king of Mālava knew at the time of their engagement in that deadly conflict that Saśāṅka was near at hand. For otherwise the king of Mālava would probably have delayed his operations till the arrival of the ally. Rājya-vardhana’s small army was already reduced by the cam-

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⁷³ HC, Tr., 173-78, 224, 250-51.
⁷⁴ EI, I, 67; IV, 210.
paign against the Mālava ruler. It is not unlikely, therefore, that Rājya-vardhana, surprised by Saśāṅka, was actually defeated by him or forced to capitulate in circumstances which ultimately led to his death. Such an event would naturally give rise to various conjectures about his death, specially among his partisans. An apt illustration is furnished by the various accounts of the manner in which the Roman Emperor Valerian became a captive of the Sassanian king Shapur in A.D. 260. In any case, while the death of Rājya-vardhana may be regarded as a fact, the circumstances leading to it cannot be ascertained, and the treachery imputed to Saśāṅka can by no means be regarded as historically correct.

The death of Rājya-vardhana took place in A.D. 606. The subsequent career of Saśāṅka is but imperfectly known. Epigraphic evidence shows that even in A.D. 619 he was acknowledged as suzerain by the Sailodbhavas of Koṅgoda (Ganjam district). It appears from the statements of Hiuan Tsang about the so-called atrocities of Saśāṅka in Magadha, that Koṅgoda formed a part of his dominions up to the time of his death, which probably took place not long before A.D. 637, the date of the Chinese pilgrim’s visit to this region.

Although Harsha-vardhana, who succeeded his brother Rājya-vardhana, made a grim resolve to punish Saśāṅka, there is no definite evidence of any trial of strength between the two. The only reference to a conflict, between them is contained in a passage in Mañjuśrī-mūla-kalpa, which possesses very little value as a source of historical information (p. 100). It is said that Harsha marched against Pundra, the capital of Saśāṅka, and defeated him, but returned, having (or not having, according to another interpretation) been honoured in that kingdom of the barbarians. This somewhat enigmatic passage shows that even if Harsha had led any campaign against Saśāṅka, he did not gain any conspicuous success. This is corroborated by the Ganjam inscription of Saśāṅka, dated A.D. 619 and the fact that Harsha did not conquer Magadha before A.D. 641.

75 Bhandi met Harsha with the Mālava king’s whole force and equipment and the huge booty taken from him by Rājya-vardhana (HC, Tr., 225). As Bhandi, and not the whole army, is mentioned as accompanying it, it appears that Bhandi was sent in advance with the captives and spoils of the war with the Mālava king. This would have still further reduced the army of Rājya-vardhana.

76 Cambridge Ancient History, XII, 135.
77 For a detailed discussion of this point, cf. HABM, 51-52, 58-63.
78 VV, 719-726. It is interesting to note that according to this passage Rājya-vardhana was killed by a king of the Nagna caste.
79 Pundra evidently stands for Pundravardhana, now represented by Mahāsthāngarh near Bogra (N. Bengal). But according to Hiuan Tsang Saśāṅka’s capital was Karna-

80 See Ch. X.
Hiuan Tsang has referred to many acts of intolerance and oppression against the Buddhists perpetrated by Saśānka, who was a Śaiva and evidently no patron of Buddhism. But it is difficult to accept as true all the accusations of the Chinese pilgrim, particularly as his accounts display throughout a strong bias against Saśānka, and his stories are full of supernatural and miraculous elements.

In spite of the declamations of Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Hiuan Tsang, we must regard Saśānka as a great figure in history. He was the first historical ruler of Bengal to establish an empire and carry his victorious arms as far as Kanauj, and even beyond. He finally liquidated the Maukharis who were age-long rivals of the Gauḍa, and paved the way for that political greatness of Bengal which reached its maturity in the age of the Pālas. He gave the stamp of international recognition and prestige to Gauḍa which came to be an honoured name for the whole of Bengal and a symbol of its unity and culture.

IV. KĀMARŪPA

The Upper Brahmaputra valley or Assam proper was known in ancient days as Kāmarūpa and Prāgjyotisha. The latter name occurs in both the epics, but its geographical situation does not always tally with Assam, it being placed in the western or northern part of India. There is no doubt, however, that Kāmarūpa and Prāgjyotisha became well known names of the Assam valley.

Little is known of the early history of Kāmarūpa. The inscriptions of the seventh century A.D. and later periods refer to three kings—Naraka, his son Bhagadatta, and the latter’s son Vajradatta, who figure prominently in the Mahābhārata and some Purāṇas. The first is a mythological hero, born of the god Nārāvana and the earth, while the other two fought with the Pāṇḍavas. It is said that after this dynasty had ruled for three thousand years Pushya-varman became king of Kāmarūpa.

As we get a regular list of succession from Pushya-varman, he may be regarded as the first historical king of Kāmarūpa. The genealogy of this family is given as follows:

82 Rām., IV, 30-32; Mahābhārata, Ch. 26, v. 9; Ásvamedha P. chs. 74-75.
83 Rāghuvaśīla (IV, 81, 83) refers to both the names. For full discussion of these points, cf. Barua in IQ, XXIII, 200 and B. C. Law in JUPH, XVIII, 43.
84 The story of Naraka is given in detail in the Kālīkā Purāṇa. It is generally held that the dynasty of Naraka represents a non-Aryan ruling family (Barua, loc. cit.).
85 The genealogy is given in the Nadhanpur grant of Bhāskara-varman (EI, XII, 79), Nālandā seal (MASI, No. 66, pp. 69-70), and partially in the Harsha-charita (Tr., p. 217). There are slight differences in the names of kings in the different sources, as shown within brackets and also significant differences in titles, as noted.
1. Pushya-varman  
2. Samudra-varman m. Dattadevi  
3. Bala-varman m. Ratnavati  
4. Kalyāṇa-varman m. Gandharvavati  
5. Gaṇapati-varman m. Yajñavati  
6. Mahendra-varman m. Suvarati  
7. Nārāyaṇa-varman m. Devavati  
8. Mahābhūta (or Bhūti)-varman m. Vijñānavati  
9. Chandramukha-varman m. Bhogavati  
10. Sthita (Sthiti or Sthira)-varman m. Nayanadevi  
11. Susthita (Susthira)-varman m. Śyāmādevi  
12. Supratishtubha-varman  

King Bāskara-varman, with whom the list ends, was a contemporary of Harsha-vardhana in the fourth decade of the seventh century A.D. The eighth king Mahābhūta-varman is known from an inscription to have flourished about the middle of the sixth century A.D. The accession of Pushya-varman, the first king, may thus be placed in the fourth century A.D. It is remarkable that the names of the second king and queen agree with the Gupta Emperor Samudra-gupta and Empress Dattadevi. Such coincidences are so rare in history that we may well believe that these names were adopted by way of homage to the great Gupta Emperor. As a matter of fact Kāmarūpa is included in the list of frontier tributary States of the Gupta Empire under Samudra-gupta (p. 48). It would not be unreasonable to conclude therefore that Pushya-varman owed his throne to the Imperial Guptas and named his son and daughter-in-law after the great Gupta Emperor and Empress as a mark of respect, reverence and submission.86

later. The Nālandā seal gives the names of the queens of Nos. 10 and 11 respectively as Nayanaśobhā and Dhruvalakshmi.

86 An analogous instance is furnished by the Gaṅga king Ayya-varman, a feudatory of the Pallava king Śiṅha-varman, who named his son Mādhava Śiṅha-varman.
On the other hand a royal seal of the dynasty, found at Nalanda,\textsuperscript{87} gives the title Mahārājādhirāja to the first four kings. But the remaining kings are merely given the epithet Śrī, without even any royal title, although two of them are said to have performed Aśvamedha sacrifices. It is difficult, therefore, to base any conclusion about the political status of the first four kings on the title Mahārājādhirāja, and we may reasonably regard some, if not all, of them as feudatories of the Gupta Empire. They seem to have been petty chiefs, as their dominions did not comprise even the whole of the Assam valley. For Davāka, which is mentioned as a separate tributary State in the Allahabad praśasti, has been located in the valley of the Kapili river in Nowgong district (p. 43). It has been inferred from a Chinese account that this kingdom existed in a.d. 428.\textsuperscript{88}

Kāmarūpa was thus a comparatively small kingdom owing allegiance to the Gupta Empire. Nothing is known of its first six rulers beyond the names. The seventh, Nārāyana-varman,\textsuperscript{89} is said to have performed two Aśvamedha sacrifices. This probably marks the formal renunciation of the yoke of the Imperial Guptas.\textsuperscript{90} The eighth king Bhūti-varman or Mahābhūta-varman is the earliest ruler of the family known from his own record—an inscription\textsuperscript{91} engraved on a rock in the Kapili valley, dated in the year 244 (or 234), evidently of the Gupta Era, and equivalent to a.d. 564 or 554, and mentioning his performance of an Aśvamedha sacrifice. Curiously enough, this Aśvamedha is not mentioned in the Nalanda seal, though two other kings of the family are credited with its performance. Bhūti-varman who flourished about a.d. 560 was not only master of the Kapili valley, representing the ancient Davāka kingdom, but extended his power further south over the whole of the Surma valley, for we know from a copper-plate grant of Bhāskara-varman that lands, situated in Sylhet,\textsuperscript{92} were originally granted to more than 200 Brāhmaṇas by Bhūti-varman, and as the charter was lost, these were re-granted by Bhāskara-varman. Bhūti-varman may thus be regarded as a very

\textsuperscript{87} See n. 4 above.
\textsuperscript{88} JRAS, 1920, p 227.
\textsuperscript{89} According to N. K. Bhattachari, it was his father Mahendra-varman who performed the sacrifices (IIHQ, XXI, 22, 145).
\textsuperscript{90} Bhattachari's suggestion (IIHQ, XXI, 24-25) that the kings of Kāmarūpa were the Pushyamitras (mentioned in the Bhutari ins, supra, p. 89) who brought about the downfall of the Gupta Empire does not deserve any serious consideration and has been ably refuted by D. C. Sircar (IIHQ, XXI, 143) and Jagannath (IIHQ, XXII, 112).
\textsuperscript{91} JARS, VIII, 33. Bhāratavarsha (Bengali monthly), 1348, n.s., p. 83, where the date has been read as 234. But D. C. Sircar reads the date as 244 (IIHQ, XXI, 143).
\textsuperscript{92} This is very likely but there is no definite evidence in support of it. Some have located the lands granted in North Bengal. Cf. The History and Culture of the Indian People, Vol. III, the Classical Age, 1962, p. 91, n. 3; JRASBL, I, 419.
powerful ruler who extended the boundaries of Kāmarūpa so as to include the present district of Sylhet in the south. The western boundary of his kingdom was probably the Karatoyā river which separated Kāmarūpa from Bengal in historical times.\textsuperscript{93}

It is related in the \textit{Iharsha-charita} that king Bhāskara-varman of Kāmarūpa sent an envoy to Harsha's court. The genealogy of the royal family, described by the envoy, after referring to the mythical kings Naraka etc., begins with Bhūti-varman.\textsuperscript{94} This also indicates that the greatness of the kingdom of Kāmarūpa began from his reign. His father had probably thrown off the yoke of the Guptas and, taking advantage of the political chaos caused by the invasion of Yaśodharman and the downfall of the Gupta Empire, Bhūti-varman set up a strong and powerful kingdom in the east.

Kāmarūpa evidently continued to retain this position, for the grandson of Bhūti-varman also performed two Aśvamedha sacrifices. The next king Susthita-varman is referred to in highly flattering terms in the \textit{Iharsha-charita}. He is given the title Mahārajādhirāja while even Bhūti-varman is just called a Mahārajā. Unfortunately the only fact known about him is his defeat at the hands of the Later Gupta king Mahāsen-gupta on the bank of the Lauhityā or the Brahmaputra (p. 194). It is probable that the Later Guptas regarded themselves as the legitimate heirs of the Gupta Empire and fought with both the Maukhāris and the kings of Kāmarūpa because these had revolted against that empire. It is also not unlikely that there was a diplomatic alliance between the Maukhāris and the kings of Kāmarūpa. But, as noted above (p. 194), Mahāsen-gupta's success was shortlived. For Susthita-varman's son Supratishṭhita-varman claims to have defeated the Gauda forces soon after the death of his father while he was still young.\textsuperscript{95} Supratishṭhita-varman was succeeded by his younger brother Bhāskara-varman whose history will be related in connection with Harsha-vardhana.

\textbf{V. NEPAL}

At the beginning of the fourth century A.D. the Licchhāvi dynasty was ruling in Nepal. A long list of kings of this dynasty is furnished by the \textit{Vamśāvalīs}, or local chronicles of Nepal,\textsuperscript{96} and a short account

\textsuperscript{93} According to \textit{Kālīkā Purāṇa} and \textit{Yogīnī-Tantra} the Karatoyā forms the western boundary of Prāgyotisha. The Chinese text \textit{Tang-Shu} mentions the river Ka-lo-tu as the boundary between Pundra-vardhana and Kāmarūpa. Watters (HTW, II, 187) identifies it with the Brahmaputra, but it clearly corresponds to the Karatoyā.

\textsuperscript{94} HC, Tr., 217.

\textsuperscript{95} Doobi copper-plate of Bhāskara-varman, JARS, XI, Nos. 3-4, p. 33.

\textsuperscript{96} These \textit{Vamśāvalīs} are modern compositions but are evidently based on ancient texts.
of the dynasty is given in the Paśupatināth Temple inscription⁹⁷ of the eighth century A.D. According to this record Supushpa, a remote descendant of Lichchhavī, the eponymous hero of the clan, was born at Pushpapura (i.e. Pātaliputra) and presumably ruled there. Twenty-three kings (whose names are not given) reigned after him, and then followed Jayadeva. After another interval, covering the reigns of eleven kings (also unnamed), flourished Vṛishadeva whose successors are regularly named.

The names of Vṛishadeva and his five successors, as given in this late inscription, are also found in the Vaiśāvalīs. Most of them are also known from contemporary records. They may, therefore, be regarded as historical personages, and the history of the Lichchhavī dynasty in Nepal may be said really to begin with them for all practical purposes.

An inscription engraved on a pillar in the Chaṅgu-Nārāyana Temple,⁹⁸ near Kathmandu, in the reign of Mānadeva, the great-grandson of Vṛishadeva, is dated in Samvat 386. Unfortunately, no specific era is mentioned, and different scholars have referred the year to the Vikrama Samvat,⁹⁹ Saka, or Gupta Era,¹⁰⁰ or even to a special Lichchhavī era commencing in A.D. 110.¹⁰¹ On palaeographic grounds the first half of the fourth century A.D. (the date of the record according to Vikrama Samvat) seems to be too early, and the beginning of the eighth century (according to Gupta Era) is undoubtedly too late and out of the question. The choice therefore lies between the Saka and the special era, according to which the date of the inscription will be either A.D. 464 or 496, and the former may be provisionally accepted.¹⁰² As we have another inscription of Mānadeva, dated Samvat 413 (A.D. 491),¹⁰³ his reign-period may be assumed to lie between A.D. 460 and 500.

Starting from this chronological datum, we may fix provisionally the date of the foundation of the Lichchhavī dynasty in Nepal. According to the Vaiśāvalīs nineteen kings preceded Mānadeva, and allotting an average reign of 20 years to each, the accession of the first king

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⁹⁷ Pandit Bhagawanlal Indraji and Dr. G. Bühler: ‘Inscriptions from Nepal’ (IA, IX, 163 ff.), No. XV.
⁹⁸ Lévi, Le Nepal, Vol. III. Ins. No. I. The text given by Indraji and relied on by Basak (HNI, 242) is incomplete.
⁹⁹ Indraji and Bühler, IA, xiii, 411.
¹⁰⁰ Fleet, CII, III, Introd., 177.
¹⁰¹ Lévi (op cit., III, 49, 73) propounds the theory of the special Lichchhavī era, and advocates Saka era as an alternative. Basak refers the early dates to Vikrama Samvat and the later ones to Gupta Era (HNI, 274).
¹⁰³ IA, IX, 167.
falls about A.D. 80. If we accept the different account given in the Paśupatināth Temple inscription, we may fix the reign of Jayadeva I on the same principle, at about A.D. 160. As the twenty-three unnamed kings who are said to have preceded him, as well as Supushpa, probably belong to the domain of mythology rather than history, we may regard Jayadeva I as the first historical king and the founder of the dynasty. We may therefore regard the Lichchhavi dynasty in Nepal as having been founded in the first or second century A.D.

A Lichchhavi dynasty must therefore have been ruling in Nepal at the time when the Gupta dynasty rose in power. As noted above, we hardly know anything of this dynasty till we come to the reign of Vṛṣhadēva, the great-grandfather of Mānadeva, whose reign may be placed in the second half of the fourth century A.D. Whether Kumārādevī, the queen of Chandra-gupta I belonged to the Lichchhavi dynasty of Nepal, or was connected with it in any way, we cannot say. It is very unlikely, because the Allahabad Prāśasti, which mentions with pride the Lichchhavi lineage of Samudra-gupta, also refers to Nepāla as one of the frontier States whose rulers rendered homage and paid taxes to the great Emperor (p. 43).

In accordance with the scheme of chronology adopted above, the ruler of Nepāla, who submitted to Samudra-gupta, may be taken to be Vṛṣhadēva or his predecessor. Of Vṛṣhadēva and his two successors we get some information from the Chaṅgu-Nārāyaṇa and Paśupati Temple inscriptions.

Vṛṣhadēva was a devoted Buddhist and built several vihāras. The Chaṅgu-Nārāyaṇa Temple inscription refers to his son and successor Saṁkaradeva as a great and prosperous king who won victories in many battles. According to the Vaiṣṇavālīs (or local chronicles), Saṁkaradeva made pious endowments to the Paśupati Temple and founded a monastery at Patan. His son and successor Dharmadeva is also described as a powerful king and, according to the chronicles, dedicated a large statue of Śiva's bull to the Paśupati Temple and founded Svayambhūnātha.

An element of human interest is added to the history of Nepal of this period by the Chaṅgu-Nārāyaṇa Temple inscription of Mānadeva, the son and successor of Dharmadeva. It describes graphically the situation following the death of Dharmadeva. The queen Rājya-vatī, bent upon following her husband on the funeral pyre, made a long farewell address to her son Mānadeva. The latter bowed down to his mother's feet and said with tears in his eyes: 'My life would not be worth living without you and so I shall die before you follow my father to heaven.' This dissuaded the queen from her pious

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104 This information is supplied by the late Paśupati Temple inscriptions.
resolve, and she and her son performed the funeral rites of the deceased king.

Mānadeva next asked for the consent of his mother for undertaking a military expedition in the east, in order to crush his foes and install chiefs who were subservient to him. He argued that it was by such military exploits and not by penances or austerities, that he could discharge his debt to his father. His mother granted permission. Mānadeva proceeded to the east and successfully carried out the two tasks. The whole account seems to convey the idea that Dharmadeva had died in the midst of a protracted struggle with refractory feudal chiefs in the east, and that Mānadeva completed the task left unfinished by his father. Mānadeva next proceeded on a victorious campaign in the west. Having heard of the wicked conduct (dushta-charitra) of a vassal chief, he addressed his maternal uncle as follows: 'If he does not voluntarily submit, he must be forced to do so. This very day you cross the river Gandakī and I shall follow your force with hundreds of horses and elephants.' He was as good as his word, and inflicted a heavy defeat upon the guilty Malla chief.

Apart from throwing interesting side-light on the personality of king Mānadeva, his inscription enables us to get an idea of the political status of the kingdom of Nepāla about this time. It is clear that although the Nepal valley proper, i.e. the narrow region round Kathmandu in the Bagmati valley, was the centre of the Lichchhavi kingdom, the kings had already begun the process of expansion, so familiar in later days, by subduing the wild hill tribes both in the east as well as in the west. These tribes, as ever, chafed at the yoke of the central authority, and it required constant vigilance and strong military expeditions to keep them under control. The kingdom of Nepal had already extended to the Sapta-Gaṇḍakī in the west and probably to the Sapta-Kuśi in the east, and though it had not reached its present limits, perhaps the vision of such a united kingdom of the hill tribes of the Himalayan region had already taken shape in the mind of its rulers.

The inscriptions of Mānadeva, the earliest epigraphic records so far discovered in Nepal, do not refer to, or contain any indication of, Gupta suzerainty. It is almost certain that either Mānadeva, or more probably one of his predecessors, had freed the country from the yoke of the Guptas. For, excepting the statement in the Allahabad Prāśasti, there is no other evidence that the Gupta Emperors had any hold over this almost inaccessible hilly region. Mānadeva's reign coincides with the period of the decline of the Gupta Empire, and his aggressive martial spirit may be, at least in part, a consequence of this change in the political condition of India. The dominance of
the Brahmanical religion and of the Sàskrit language which forms
the characteristic feature of the Gupta Age is noticeable also in Nepal
about this time.

Mànadeva was the first great king of Nepal. The royal palace
Mànagrìha, from which successive rulers of Nepal issued royal
charters, and the monastery called Màna-deva Vihàra or Màna-
vihàra in records of later times were possibly named after and con-
structed by him. The coins called Mànànìka and the cult of the god-
dess Mànìsvarì in Nepal are also associated with him by some
scholars. His name probably survives today in Nepal in the name
of a clan of the Thàkurìs called Mànà.

Nothing is known of Mahìdeva, the son and successor of Mànadeva.
We have an inscription, dated Samvat 435 (A.D. 513) of Vasan-
tasena,105 who is undoubtedly the same as Vasantadeva, the son and
successor of Mahìdeva. The inscription records a grant of land, but
does not contain any information of historical value.

The period following the death of Vasantadeva is very obscure.
Our two principal sources of information, viz the Vaisàvalis and
the Pàsupati Temple inscription, do not agree either with each other,
or with the other known epigraphic records. There seems to be some
truth in the account of one of the Vaisàvalis according to which
Nepal was conquered by the Ábhàras from the successor of Vasanta-
deva, and after three of their chieftains had ruled in succession, the
Lichehavi king Sivadeva drove away the invaders and regained the
ancestral kingdom.

We have a number of inscriptions of king Sivadeva106 who flour-
rished towards the close of the sixth and the beginning of the
seventh century A.D. Curiously enough, in all his records most
undue prominence is given to Mahàsàmanta Ámsù-varman, who is
described as 'one who has destroyed the power of all enemies by
his heroic majesty, obtained by victories in numerous great wars,
and whose brilliant fame, gained by the trouble he took in properly
protecting the subjects, pervades the circle of the quarters'.107 At
first the orders were issued by the king, at the instance, or on the
advice, of this great baron, and then by the latter with the approval
of the king. Still later Ámsù-varman, though called Mahàsàmanta,
himself issued orders from the Kailàsakûta palace without any re-
ference to Sivadeva who lived in the palace called Mànagrìha.

It is obvious that about the beginning of the seventh century A.D.
Nepal had something like a dyarchical form of government which

105 HNI, 245, gives the name as Vasantadeva.
106 HNI, 249 ff.
107 Indraji, No. V; HNI, 249.
prevailed there till very recent times. The legitimate king, who lived in Mānaagriha palace, enjoyed no real power or authority which was exercised by Aṁśu-varman who fixed his headquarters in a different palace.

We can even trace the broad stages which led to this state of things. It appears that Aṁśu-varman first distinguished himself in some military campaigns which protected the subjects and saved the State from a great peril, possibly caused by the Ābhīras who had conquered Nepal. Aṁśu-varman gained fame and popularity by expelling the hill tribes that had been in occupation of Nepal for three generations, and gradually established his supremacy in the kingdom. Though he thus overshadowed the king, at first, he tolerated Sivadeva’s nominal authority, but in the course of time he threw off the mask and stood forth as the real ruler in the kingdom. The king was suffered to live in his old palace and enjoy ceremonial honours, but he ceased to exert any power or prerogative.

VI. ORISSA

The history of Orissa during the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. is shrouded in mystery. It is no doubt very curious that no reference is made to Orissa in the Allahabad Prāśasti of Samudra-gupta. That great conqueror seems to have avoided it in his advance to the South, but there are good grounds to believe that it formed a part of the great Gupta Empire. But soon after the fall of that Empire, we find the Māna and Sālodbhava dynasties ruling respectively in the northern and southern part of Orissa.

1. The Mānas

The origin of a Māna ruling family is briefly referred to in an inscription engraved on a rock in the Hazaribagh district. Once upon a time, so runs the story, when Ādisiṅha was king of Magadha, the merchant Udayamāna and his two brothers, also merchants, went on business from Ayodhyā to Tāmralipta. Having made plenty of money they started home, and on their way stayed at a village (near the place where the inscription is engraved). While they were there, the king Ādisiṅha came to the forest near the village on a hunting expedition. He asked the people of the locality to give him an ‘avalagaka’ (or avalagana); the meaning of which is obscure. The villagers thereupon went to Udayamāna and requested him to satisfy the king. Udayamāna did send an avalagana to the king who was highly pleased and bestowed a diadem on him. The grateful villagers

108 Ante, Ch. V, Section 4. EI, XXVIII, 79.
109 EI, II, 843.
also requested him to become their rājā. With the king's approval he accepted their offer and long ruled the village happily and vigorously. At the request of two other neighbouring villages he sent his two brothers to rule over them, as his subordinates.

After narrating this incident the inscription tells us that the people of former days had this eulogy engraved in order to show the relationship between the chiefs of the three villages so that they might live in peace and harmony. The inscription is not dated but probably belongs to the eighth century A.D. The foundation of a kingdom in and around the Hazaribagh district by Udayamāna therefore goes back to a much earlier time, though it is not possible to assign any precise date.

In the latter part of the sixth century A.D. the greater part of Orissa was ruled by a Māna family. We learn from the Patiakella grant, dated 283,110 and the Soro plate, dated 260,111 that Saṁbhuyaśas was ruling over northern and southern Tosali, which comprised nearly the whole of Orissa from Balasore to Puri district. The first record explicitly refers to the sovereignty of the Mānas. Whether Saṁbhuyaśas was the suzerain ruler of the Māna family, or merely a subordinate ruler governing Orissa on behalf of the Mānas, cannot be definitely determined.112 But in any event, there is no doubt that the Mānas exercised suzerainty over Orissa in the year 283, and possibly also in the year 260, though the Mānas are not referred to in the inscription of that date. These two years should be referred to the Gupta Era, and Saṁbhuyaśas was therefore ruling between A.D. 580 and 603. As noted above, this region was conquered by Saśāṅka not long after the last mentioned date, and it is therefore probable that he seized it after defeating the Mānas.

We do not know whether this Māna family was descended from, or connected in any way with, Udayamāna, but this seems to be very probable. It is also likely that modern Mānbhum in Santal Parganas

110 EI, IX, 285.
111 EI, XXIII, 198.
112 The Patiakella grant begins by saying that Śrī-Saṁbhuyaśas was ruling in the year (two hundred) and eighty-three during the sovereignty of the Māna family. It then refers to Śivarāja, who issued the grant, as having obtained his present position through the favour of Parama-devatādhidaivata Śrī Parama-bhattāraka. Now these titles, indicating suzerainty, may refer to Saṁbhuyaśas or to some other ruler to whom Saṁbhuyaśas himself was also subordinate. In the Soro plate Saṁbhuyaśas is referred to as Parama-daivata-ca(ba)ppa-pādānudhyāta which has been translated as 'meditating on the feet of his father who was (to him) like a great divinity'. This shows that Saṁbhuyaśas inherited the position from his father. Most probably Saṁbhuyaśas was the suzerain ruler of the Māna family. He ruled directly over Uttara-Tosali i.e. northern part of Orissa (Soro grant) while South Tosali was governed by Śivarāja (Patiakella grant).
was named after the Mānas. Another royal family bearing the same name flourished in Magadha in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D.\textsuperscript{113} We have also reference to Sīnhamāna, probably a king, whose daughter was married by the Kara king Sāntikara II.\textsuperscript{114}

2. The Sailodbhavas

The Sailodbhavas\textsuperscript{115} ruled in Southern Orissa with Koṅgoda as their capital. They traced their origin to Lord Sailodbhava, who was created by Brahman, apparently out of a rock. In his family was born Ranabhīta, whose son Sainyabhīta was the lord of the earth.\textsuperscript{116} The Khurda\textsuperscript{117} and Ganjam\textsuperscript{118} copper plates give an account of three kings of this dynasty, viz Mādhavarāja Sainyabhīta I, his son Ayaśobhīta, and the latter's son Mādhavarāja Sainyabhīta II.\textsuperscript{119}

It may be easily inferred that Sainyabhīta Mādhavarāja I was the son of Ranabhīta, and laid the foundation of the greatness of the family. Nothing is, however, known of him and his son. Of Mādhavarāja Sainyabhīta II we have two records. The first, the Ganjam copper plate, is dated in the year A.D. 619 and refers to Mahārājādiṁhīrāja Saśāṅka as his overlord. In the second or the Khurda copper plate there is no reference to Saśāṅka. The king issues the grant from the jayaskandāhāra (camp of victory) of Koṅgoda and claims to exercise sovereignty over the whole of Kaliṅga. A comparison of these two plates, added to what has already been said above regarding Saśāṅka, enables us to reconstruct the history of the family somewhat as follows:

About the middle of the sixth century A.D. Ranabhīta founded a small principality in Southern Orissa. His task was probably facilitated by the political chaos that followed the downfall of the Gupta Empire. About the same time the Mānas also took advantage of the situation to conquer a large part of Orissa. At first the Mānas were more powerful and probably asserted their supremacy over the Sailodbhavas, for Saṁbhuyaśas ruled over South Tosali, which comprised the territory where Koṅgoda was situated. It is, of course, not unlikely that Saṁbhuyaśas ruled only over a part of South Tosali, and the Sailodbhavas, who ruled over the rest of it, were not subject to his authority. In any

\textsuperscript{113} EI, II, 332.
\textsuperscript{114} Talcher plate of Sivakaradeva, II, 18-19.
(B. Misra, Orissa under the Bhauaga kings, 44)
\textsuperscript{115} For a full discussion of the history of this dynasty, cf. JAHRS, X, 1 ff.
\textsuperscript{116} Cf. Buguda Pl., EI, III, 41.
\textsuperscript{117} JASB, LXXIII, Part I, 284.
\textsuperscript{118} EI, VI, 143.
\textsuperscript{119} There are slight discrepancies of names in the two plates, but we can safely establish the genealogy (JAHRS, X, 1).
event, both the Mānas and the Šailodbhavas had to submit to Šaśāṅka towards the beginning of the seventh century A.D. The Šailodbhava king Mādhavarāja Sainyabhīta II recognized the suzerainty of Šaśāṅka till at least A.D. 619 when the Ganjam plate was issued. But some time later, probably after the death of Šaśāṅka, he ruled as an independent king, and perhaps also conquered at least a part of Kaliṅga. It is, however, not at all likely that he got permanent possession of any considerable part of Kaliṅga proper. For the Gaṅgas who ruled over Kaliṅga at this time regularly called themselves lords of Kaliṅga, while the Šailodbhavas are usually styled lords of Koṅgoda.

The capital city of Koṅgoda was situated on the Salimā river which has been identified with the rivulet called Sali in ‘Banpur State’ (Purī district) which falls into the Chilka lake. The Koṅgoda-maṇḍala or the kingdom of the Šailodbhavas may be roughly defined as being bounded on the east by the Chilka lake and Bay of Bengal, on the south by the Mahendragiri mountain, and on the west by the hills which form the western boundary of the Kalahandi State. The northern boundary perhaps varied from time to time and probably stretched at times to the lower valley of the Mahanadi river.
Chapter Nine

Western India in the Sixth Century A.D.

I. MAITRAKAS OF VALABHI

The rise of the Maitraka dynasty was coeval with that of the Maukharis and the Later Guptas. Some scholars think that the name Maitraka is a Sanskritized form of Mehr or Mehar. Fleet¹ suggests that the original name was 'Mihira' which again is the Sanskritized form of the Persian Mihr, the Sun; that the Maitrakas were but an allied tribe, if not a branch, of the Hūnas, who were Sun-worshippers; and that both the Maitrakas and the Hūnas migrated to India about the same time in the middle of the fifth century A.D. In the opinion of Jackson,² Bhaṭārka, the founder of the Maitraka dynasty, belonged to the Gurjara tribe, and the modern Gujarāt had been known as such since its occupation by the Maitrakas. But all these views must be regarded as hypothetical.

Valabhi, modern Wala, eighteen miles north-west of Bhavnagar, Kāthiāwar, was the capital of the Maitrakas.³ It was situated in ancient Saurāshṭra.⁴ The kingdom of the Maitrakas, in their palmy days, included Ujjain, Mandasor, Rewakantha, Broach, Vadnagar, and Junāgaḍh. The king Dhruvabhaṭa of this family, according to Hūn Tsang, was a Kshatriya,⁵ which may be taken to be the caste of the Maitrakas.

Epigraphic records are unanimous in stating that Bhaṭārka was the founder of the Maitraka dynasty. The bards relate an interesting story in connection with the origin of this dynasty.⁶ A Gupta king sent his son Kumārapāl-gupta for the conquest of Saurāshṭra. After its

¹ IA, XV, 361.
² BG, I, Pt. I, 85, 87.
³ A large number of inscriptions of the Maitrakas were issued from Valabhi. Udayasundari-kathā (GOS, N. XI, 3) relates that Valabhi was the capital (rājadhānī) of (Maitraka) Sīlāditya.
⁴ An inscription, dated A.D. 1079, states that Valabhīpura was the capital of Saurāshṭra, EI, II, 222.
⁵ Life, 149; HTW, II, 246.
⁶ IA, II, 312.
conquest Chakrapañi, son of Prändat, one of the āmirs of the Guptas, was appointed its governor. Vāmanasthalī was the headquarter of this province. Kumārapāḷ-gupta's father lived for twenty-three years after the annexation of that province. Kumārapāḷ ruled for twenty years. His son and successor Skanda-gupta was of weak intellect. Skanda-gupta's senāpati was Bhaṭṭāraka of the Ghelotī race. Bhaṭṭāraka's forefathers, who were rulers of Ayodhyā Nagarī, were overthrown by the Guptas. Taking advantage of the weak rule of his master Bhaṭṭāraka proceeded to Saurāshtra, and established there a kingdom of his own. He founded the city of Valabhi, and asserted his supremacy over Kachchha, Lāṭa, and Mālava. At this time the Guptas were overthrown by the foreign invaders.

Kumārapāḷ-gupta, Chakrapañi, and Prändat of the bardic tale may be taken to correspond, respectively, to Kumāra-gupta I, Chakrapālīta, and Parnadatta of the Junāgaḍhī rock inscription7 of Skanda-gupta and Bhaṭṭāraka is undoubtedly Bhaṭṭāraka. How far the above story relating the early activities of Bhaṭṭāraka is true cannot be verified. It seems quite likely that Bhaṭṭāraka, originally a general of the Gupta Emperor, was appointed Governor of Gujarāt and made the office hereditary. His successors took advantage of the decline of the Gupta power to establish an independent kingdom. Though the Palitana plate of Dhruvasena,8 dated A.D. 525, relates that ‘Senāpati Bhaṭṭakka (Bhaṭṭāraka) obtained the glory of royalty by the strength of the array of devoted hereditary servants and friends’, it is significant that neither Bhaṭṭāraka nor his successor assumed royal titles.

Bhaṭṭāraka had four sons, Dharasena I, Dronasimha, Dhruvasena, and Dharapaṭṭa. Dharasena I, who succeeded his father, is designated in the inscriptions of his successors as Senāpati.9 Dhurasena’s successor Dronasimha was the first to assume the royal title. His own inscription, dated A.D. 502, states that the ‘king’ (Mahārāja) was devoted to Paramabhaṭṭāraka.10 A later inscription,11 dated A.D. 525, reports that ‘Dronasimha’s anointment to the kingdom was performed by the paramount sovereign (paramasvāminā) in person’. As noted above (p. 83) Dronasimha’s overlord was almost certainly the Gupta Emperor. It is clear, therefore, that the Maitrakas still acknowledged the imperial power of the Guptas.

Dronasimha was succeeded by his younger brother Mahāsāmanta

7 CII, III, 58.
8 EI, XI, 108.
10 -EI, XVI, 17.
Mahārāja Dhruvasena I. Dates of his inscriptions, almost all of which were issued from Valabhi, range between A.D. 525 and 545. They also refer to the overlord (Paramāḥaṭṭāraka) of the king. It cannot be said definitely whether Dharapāṭṭa, the youngest brother of Dhruvasena I, ruled at all. Dharapāṭṭa's son Guhasena claims to have succeeded to the throne of Dhruvasena I, but Guhasena's son Dharasena II mentions Dharapāṭṭa as a Mahārāja.

From the time of Guhasena we no longer find any reference to the overlord. Evidently, the Gupta Empire finally collapsed shortly after A.D. 545, and the Maitrakas henceforth ruled as independent sovereigns, both in name and in fact. Mahārāja Guhasena's inscriptions are dated A.D. 559 and 567, and those of his son, the Mahāsāmanta Mahārāja Dharasena II, contain dates ranging from A.D. 571 to 589. The Sorath plate12 of Guhasena, dated A.D. 559, mentions him as a devotee of both Siva and the Sun. But the Bhavnagar plate13, dated A.D. 567, calls him a Paramopāśuka, i.e. a lay disciple of the Buddha. Dharasena II is only referred to as a devotee of Siva in his inscription.14 Both the father and the son made donations for the maintenance of the Buddhist establishments.

The chiefs of the Gārulaka dynasty of Palitana, in Kāṭhiāwār, were vassals of Dharasena II and his predecessors. The earliest known chief of this family was the Senāpati Varāhadāsa I, who flourished in the early years of the sixth century A.D. He was succeeded by his son the Śāmanta Mahārāja Bhāṭṭīśūra, whose successor was his younger brother Varāhadāsa II. Varāhadāsa defeated the king of Dvārakā in battle. He was succeeded by the Śāmanta Mahārāja Simhāditva. A copper-plate inscription15 of this chief, found at Palitana, records that he granted some lands in A.D. 574.

I I. THE KALACHURIS

1. The Early Kalachuris

The Haihayas were an ancient race. They are mentioned in the Epics and the Purāṇas. The traditional capital of the Haihayas was Māhishmatī, generally identified with Mandhata on the Narmadā in the Nimar district, Madhya Pradesh, or with Maheshwar a little to the west of it. In the post-Christian era, the Haihayas also came to be known as the Kalachuris with other variant forms such as Katakachuris and Kalatsūris. An era, the initial year of which falls in A.D.

12 IA, VII, 66.
13 Ibid., VI, 207.
14 ABORI, IV, 38.
15 EI, XI, 16.
248-49, and which is definitely known to have been in use from the fifth century A.D., was known after the name of the Kalachuris. In later times the Kalachuris, ruling in the Madhya Pradesh and the Deccan, took pride in calling themselves ‘lords of Kalanjara’. But the period when the Kalachuris were in possession of that famous fortress cannot be determined. There were several branches of the Kalachuri dynasty, the earliest of whom ruled over Mālava, Southern Gujarat and Khāndesh.

Krishnarāja, the earliest known chief of this dynasty, was succeeded by his son Saṃkaraṇa, who issued a land-grant from his camp at Ujjayinī in A.D. 595. It cannot be definitely said whether Mālava was part of his ancestral dominions or whether he conquered it and seized its capital for a short period only. Another inscription, discovered at Sankhed in the former Baroda State, records the grant of lands in localities situated within 28 miles from Dabhoi.

Saṃkaraṇa was succeeded by his son Buddhāraja some time before A.D. 602. Two copper-plate inscriptions of Buddhāraja’s reign are known. One of them, issued from the camp of Vai(Vi)diśā (Bhilas) in A.D. 609, records that the king granted a village in the Vatangara-bhoga which is identified with Vadner in the Nasik district. The second inscription issued from the camp at Ānandapura (Vadnagar) in A.D. 610, records that the king granted a village in the Bharukachchha-vishaya (Broach). Buddhāraja’s kingdom thus comprised the whole of Mālava, central and southern Gujarat, Khāndesh and Nasik districts. Some time between A.D. 597 and 602 Buddhāraja suffered a defeat at the hands of the Chālukya Maṅgaleśa of Bādami. The Nerur grant mentions that Maṅgaleśa defeated Buddhāraja, who maintained elephant and cavalry forces and had a treasury, thus testifying to Buddhāraja’s military and financial resources.

The Harsha-charita of Bāṇa relates that Kumāra-gupta and Maḍhava-gupta, who were made associates of the princes Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana by the king Prabhākara-vardhana of Thāneśvar, were the sons of the king of Mālava. It is known from the Apsahd inscription that the father of Maḍhava-gupta was Mahāsena-gupta of the Later Gupta dynasty. It thus follows that Mahāsena-gupta was the king of Mālava, which, we know from various sources, included
Avanti. Bāna, in his Kādambarī, describes the women of Ujjayinī and Vidiśā as the women of Mālava. The Paramāras (c. A.D. 812-1305), whose capitals were at Ujjayinī and Dhārā, were known as the rulers of Mālava. Two well-known lexicographers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, viz. Yādavaparakāśa and Hemachandra, state that the term Mālava is synonymous with Avanti, in which was situated Ujjayinī.24 It is thus apparent that Mahāsena-gupta was the ruler of Avanti, if not of all the territories up to Vidiśā or Bhilsa. As the Kala-churi Śāṅkaragana was in possession of Ujjain in A.D. 595, he must have wrested it from Mahāsena-gupta. It is not unlikely that the Gupta king lost his life in the battle. This satisfactorily explains why the sons of Mahāsena-gupta accepted subordinate positions in the court of the Pushyabhūtis at Thānesvar. The Harsha-charita relates that after the death of Prabhākara-vardhana of Thānesvar (in c. A.D. 605) the king of Mālava killed the Maukharī Graha-varman, and threw the latter’s queen Rājyaśrī, the sister of Rājva-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana, into the prison of Kanauj. He then marched towards Thānesvar, but was on his way defeated by Rājva-vardhana. The inscriptions of Harsha-vardhana state that Rājva-vardhana defeated Deva-gupta and other kings. Some scholars think that this Deva-gupta is identical with the Mālava king, referred to in the Harsha-charita. But a careful analysis of the contemporary evidence seems to lead to a different conclusion. The inscriptions of Harsha make it clear that Deva-gupta was not the only adversary defeated by Rājva-vardhana in battle. The Harsha-charita discloses that, besides fighting the king of Mālava, Rājva-vardhana had also to fight with the Hūnas. So it is not absolutely certain that Deva-gupta and the Mālava king are identical. As the Kalachuri Buddhāraja was in possession of Mālava, Gujarāt, and Khāndesh during this period, he may very reasonably be identified with the Mālava king, who fought with the Maukharīs and the Pushyabhūtis.25

The last known date of Buddhāraja is A.D. 610. The Kalachuri kingdom did not long survive his reign. Some time before A.D. 616 the Maitrakas of Valabhī took possession of the central and southern Gujarāt, while Khāndesh passed into the hands of the Chāluṣya Pulakeśin II of Bādāmi.

III. THE HŪNAS

1. Early History

From time immemorial the migrations of the hordes of nomadic tribes in Central Asia have profoundly affected the history of the

24 IHO, XIX, 222.
25 JBORS, XIX, 399. For a different view, cf. Ch. VIII.
civilized nations of the West and South. The activities of these barbarians proved to be one of the decisive factors in the history of Rome during the last days of the Republic and the early centuries of the Empire, till the whole of the Western Empire passed into their hands and the Middle Ages in Europe began. In India the result of the migrations of two such tribes named the Yüe-chi and the Sakas has been discussed above. The H üung-nu, whose attack on the Yüe-chi first set them in motion, were now themselves on the move. Under the familiar name of 'Huns' we find them on the slopes of the Ural and in the valley of the Volga in the second half of the fourth century A.D. Some time before A.D. 375 they destroyed the Gothic kingdom on the shores of the Black Sea from the Danube to the Don and occupied its territory. About A.D. 434 or 435 Attila became the leader of the Huns and soon made himself master of all the barbarian tribes living beyond the frontiers of the Roman Empire. He levied tribute from Theodosius, the Roman Emperor of the East, and then marched against the Western Empire. Although defeated at the battle of Chalons in A.D. 451 by the Roman and Germanic troops led by Aetius, of barbarian descent, he invaded Italy early next year. The imperial forces were unable to arrest his progress and the Roman Emperor had to sue for peace offering an annual tribute. On his way back from Italy he died in A.D. 453.

Attila and the Huns made a deep impress on the imagination of the terrified peoples whom they had conquered. The Goths regarded these small, frail, frightful beings, who had nothing human but the faculty of speech, as offspring of impure spirits and witches. These nomadic peoples had no religion, and their only passion was massacre and plunder. The chronicles of the West have given a lurid account of their cruel and blood-thirsty deeds, which need not be repeated here.

The Huns who thus harried Europe with fire and sword represent only one section of these nomadic hordes who migrated west from the borders of China. Another section turned towards the Oxus and, though subject to the tribe called Joan-Joan for a time, became very powerful about the middle of the fifth century A.D., i.e. about the same time when Attila was knocking at the gates of Italy. This branch is referred to in the Greek accounts as White Huns, but is also called Ye-tha, Hephthalites or Ephthalites from the name of their ruler's family. From the bank of the Oxus these Huns invaded both Persia and India.26

26 The general account of the Hūnas is based on the following authorities: (1) Chavannes, Documents sur les Touktes Occidentaux, 223 ff; (2) Sir Aurel Stein, 'White Huns and Kindred Tribes in the History of the Indian North-Western Frontier' (IA,
THE HŪNAS IN INDIA

2. The Hūnas in India

Although the Hūnas carried on great depredations in India, and ultimately settled in this country in large numbers, it is not possible to present their history in the form of a connected narrative. We get isolated references to them which are mostly vague in character and do not enable us to trace their activities in a chronological order or even always associate them with definite localities.

The earliest reference to the invasion of the Hūnas occurs in connection with Skanda-gupta, as mentioned above (p. 72). The full significance of his great victory over the Hūnas can only be understood against the background of their activities and achievements in the Western Roman Empire almost about the same time. But for the success of Skanda-gupta, Northern India would perhaps have shared the same fate as befell Central Europe and Italy a few years before, and Persia a few years later.

We do not know where Skanda-gupta fought with the Hūnas and what became of them after their defeat. It is not unlikely that being checked in India they turned their attention towards Persia. For we know that their king Akhschounwar defeated and killed the Sassanian ruler of Persia in A.D. 484. This raised their power and prestige to such an extent that by the end of the fifth century they established a vast empire with their chief capital at Balkh.

This empire extended as far as the Indus, if not beyond it, even before the end of the fifth century A.D. This can be gathered from the accounts of Sung-yun²⁷ who visited the region corresponding to modern N. W. F. Province (now W. Pakistan) and A.D. 520 as an imperial ambassador from China. Referring to Gandhāra he says:

"This is the country which the Ye-thas destroyed and afterwards set up a tegin²⁸ (prince or member of the royal family) to be king over the country; since which events two generations have passed. The disposition of this king (or dynasty) was cruel and vindictive, and he practised the most barbarous atrocities. He did not believe the law of Buddha, but loved to worship demons. Entirely self-reliant on his own strength, he had entered on a war

1905, pp. 73 ff). For the Hūna activities in India reference may be made to The Hūnas in India by Dr. Upendra Thakur and the following articles, though many of the statements contained in them require modification or are palpably wrong: IA, XV, 245 ff; 346 ff; IHQ, III, 1 ff; NIA, IV, 36; V, 248. For Hūna coins cf. JRAVB, 1894, Part I, 191 ff and also Ch. XXX below. For the antiquity of the Hūnas and their activity in Iran cf. Bhandarkar Comm. Vol., 65 ff.

²⁷ HTB, I, xv ff, xci ff.

²⁸ Beal misunderstood this word, but the correct meaning was first pointed out by Marquart. Cf. Chavannes, op. cit.
with the country of Ki-pin (Kashmir), disputing the boundaries of their kingdom, and his troops had been already engaged in it for three years. The king has 700 war-elephants . . . The king continually abode with his troops on the frontier, and never returned to his kingdom.

Thus in spite of the victory of Skanda-gupta the Hūnas had fully established themselves in the north-west frontier of India in the last quarter of the fifth century A.D., if not earlier. It was inevitable that they would seize every opportunity to penetrate further into India, and such an opportunity probably offered itself after the death of Budha-gupta. For there are good grounds to believe that Toramāna, who conquered Mālava about the beginning of the sixth century A.D., was a leader of the Hūnas.

Both Toramāna and his son Mihirakula are known from their coins and inscriptions to have ruled over a considerable part of Western and Central India. The coins have been found in Kashmir, as well as in the Panjab, Central India and neighbouring regions.

The coins of Mihirakula bear the legend jayatu viśa (may the bull be victorious) testifying to his devotion to God Śiva, also referred to in the Mandalor inscription as above. The coins of Toramāna and Mihirakula bear out what we know of their dominions from other sources.

The Gupta type of coins issued by Toramāna has the date—year 52. There has been much speculation regarding the interpretation of this date. Fleet suggested that this was the regnal year of Toramāna who began his reign in the Panjab. Some scholars regard the date as equivalent to year 252 of the Gupta Era. But both these views seem to be negatived by the discovery of similar dates, 54, 55 etc., on the coins of the Maukharis, which otherwise also closely resemble the coins of Toramāna. Cunningham held that either the year should be referred to the Śaka era with suppressed hundreds or to a special Hūn era. None of these theories is free from difficulties and the question must for the present be left open.

As mentioned above Toramāna is referred to as Mahārājādhirāja in an inscription found at Eran (p. 89). Another inscription found at Kura (Salt range in the Panjab) mentions Rājādhirāja Mahārāja Toramāna-shāhi-Jaū(vla). Some scholars regard the two as identical,

29 For the coins cf. Fleet in IA, XVIII, 225; Cunningham in NC, 1894; V. A. Smith in JASB, LXIII, 185, CCIM, 235, 265.
30 Thakur (op. cit., p. 118) accepts this view and, following M. Drouin, places the beginning of the era in A.D. 448.
31 EI, I, 239; SI, 398.
but this is denied by others.\textsuperscript{32} Toramāṇa's son Mihirakula is known from an inscription found at Gwalior dated in the 15th year of his reign.\textsuperscript{33} None of these inscriptions calls Toramāṇa or Mihirakula a Hūṇa or by any tribal name. But Sten Konow has inferred from the titles 'Shāhī-jaivla' that Toramāṇa was probably a Hūṇa, for these titles are found on the coins of the Hephthalite kings. Toramāṇa's coins have also been taken to show that he was a Hūṇa, but this conclusion cannot be regarded as certain. For the coins which bear the name of Toramāṇa or a part of it, and can thus be definitely assigned to him, generally imitate the Gupta and Kushāṇa types, and only one type bears the Sassanian bust on the obverse. But though Toramāṇa was most probably a foreigner, he cannot be definitely regarded as a Hūṇa. For all we know he might be a Kushāṇa chief allied to the Hūṇas, and might be mistaken for a Hūṇa in India because the Hūṇas formed a considerable element in his forces.\textsuperscript{34}

There is no doubt, however, that the Hūṇas carved out a great empire in India. This is proved by the statement in the Mandasar inscription (No. 70), quoted above (p. 93), that Yaśodharman conquered territories which did not obey the commands of either the Guptas or the Hūṇas. This statement altogether loses its force if a considerable part of Northern India had not accepted the suzerainty of the Hūṇas before the time of Yaśodharman.\textsuperscript{35} Besides, Yaśodharman specifically states that the Hūṇas had conquered the Himalayan region, and that Mihirakula had submitted to him (lit. bowed to his feet). It is interesting to note that though the Mandasar inscription mentions both the Hūṇas and Mihirakula, it does not connect the two

\textsuperscript{32} Bühler held that they were different (\textit{EI}, I, 239) but Cunningham (op. cit.), V. A. Smith (op. cit.) and Sten Konow (\textit{IIIQ}, XII, 531) regard them as identical. Cf. \textit{SI}, IX, 398, n. 4.

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{CII}, III, 162; \textit{SI}, 400.

\textsuperscript{34} Sir Aurel Stein (op. cit.) and Jayaswal (\textit{JBO}, XVIII, 203) held that Toramāṇa was a Kushāṇa, and based this opinion on the title Shāhī-jaivla applied to him in the Kura inscription. Fleet also held the same view (\textit{IA}, XV, 245). But it has been pointed out by Sten Konow that the coins of some Hephthalite kings, described by Herzfeld, bear the legend \textit{Socho Zobil}. He admits that 'Shāhī' is of course the old title used by the Kushāṇas which had been adopted by the Hephthalites, and that it is possible and even probable that \textit{jaivla}, \textit{zawolo}, was also borrowed from elsewhere. 'But', he adds, 'the collocation of these two titles in Hephthalite legends and in the Kura inscription shows that our Toramāṇa was in all probability a Hūṇa, as has usually been assumed, and not a Kushāṇa' (\textit{IIIQ}, XII, 532). Recently, K. G. Sankara has discussed this question (\textit{NIA}, IV, 36); he contends that Toramāṇa was either a Kshatriya or a Parthian. His arguments have been ably controverted by Jagannath (\textit{NIA}, V, 249) and Upendra Thakur (op. cit., 95-107) who hold that Toramāṇa was a Hūṇa.

\textsuperscript{35} It is, however, difficult to accept the statement that 'Toramāṇa took Magadha, Banaras and Kausāmbī' (Upendra Thakur, op. cit., 112-25) which lacks evidence that may be regarded as even plausible.
in any manner, and might be even taken to imply a distinction between them. Be that as it may, this inscription definitely proves that the great period of the Hūṇa conquest was over, and the reign of Toramāṇa had ended and that of Mihirakula had at least begun, by the time that inscription was engraved, which could not have been far removed from A.D. 532-33 (p. 95).

The inscription also indirectly supports the general belief that Toramāṇa and Mihirakula were Hūṇa chiefs. Apart from their somewhat outlandish names, the real ground for this belief seems to be that while we have general references to Hūṇa conquests in India, we know of no other ruling chiefs in India in the first half of the sixth century A.D. who may be presumed to belong to a foreign and barbarous nationality. Although this is not a very convincing argument, still it has a great deal of force. Curious though it may be, the fact remains that on the one hand we possess very little definite information of the activities of the Hūṇas in India if we do not regard Toramāṇa and Mihirakula as their leaders, and, on the other, no great importance attaches to them without the Hūṇa invasion as the background of their history. For otherwise they might at best be regarded as rebellious chiefs or military adventurers who had a bright but short spell of success about the time of the Gupta decadence in the middle of the sixth century A.D.

A short account of Toramāṇa has been preserved in a Jaina work, the Kuvalayamālā, composed in 700 Śaka (A.D. 778). Toramāṇa (written as Torarāya in one manuscript) is said to have enjoyed the sovereignty of the world, or rather of Uttarāpatha and lived at Pavvaiyā on the bank of the Chandrabhāgā (Chenab river). His guru Hari-gupta, a scion of the Gupta family, had another pupil named Deva-gupta who is described as a great poet and a royal sage (rājarṣi) of the royal house of the Guptas. It appears from this account that Toramāṇa’s capital was at Pavvaiyā on the Chandrabhāgā river and he was a devoted Jaina. It is interesting to note that coins of a king Hari-gupta have been found at Ahichhatra and we have probably reference to a prince Deva in a Gupta record. It may also be noted in passing that the records of Harsha-vardhana refer to Deva-gupta as an adversary of Rājya-vardhana. This Deva-gupta is usually regarded as a king of Mālava who allied himself with Saśānka, and probably belonged to the Later Gupta dynasty.

The Rājatarangini refers to both Toramāṇa and Mihirakula.
Mihirakula is described in this work as one of the early kings of Kashmir. The only clue of his time is furnished by the fact that twelve kings intervened between the group of kings Hushka-Jushka— Kanishka and Mihirakula. This would place Mihirakula about three hundred years after Kanishka who is said to have reigned 150 years after Buddha’s nirvāṇa. Mihirakula is not described as a Hūṇa, but it is said that after Hiranyakula and his son Vasukula had reigned, the land was overrun by the Mlechchha hordes and then his (Vasukula’s) son Mihirakula of violent deeds, who was comparable to the god of destruction, became king. His kingdom included Gandhāra. He is said to have led an expedition to Ceylon and having defeated its king put a new ruler on the throne. On his way back he dispersed the rulers of Chola, Kanāṭa and Lāṭa. Most horrible tales of his cruelty are told at length and the poet, justly surprised that the king had not been assassinated by the people in an uprising, ascribes his safety to the special protection of the gods.

King Toramāṇa flourished long after, about eighteen kings having intervened between him and Mihirakula. It appears that Toramāṇa and his elder brother Hiranya ruled conjointly after the death of their father Sreshṭhasena, called also Pravarasena. But, ‘having forbidden the abundant coins struck by his brother, dinaras struck in his own name were put in circulation by Toramāṇa’. This enraged the elder brother who placed Toramāṇa in confinement. During his prolonged confinement his queen gave birth to a son at a potter’s house. This boy was called Pravarasena, and having grown up was preparing to incite an insurrection when his father Toramāṇa was released from imprisonment and died. Young Pravarasena then went abroad on pilgrimage. In the meantime his uncle Hiranya died, and Vikramādiya, the emperor of Ujjayini, nominated Māṭrī-gupta to be the king of Kashmir. The poet evidently implies that Kashmir was subordinate to Vikramādiya, but does not stop to explain how this came about. Having heard of this encroachment, the young Pravarasena hastily returned to Kashmir. In the meantime Vikramādiya having died, Māṭrī-gupta abdicated the throne of Kashmir and spent the rest of his life as a mendicant at Benares. Pravarasena ascended the throne and made victorious military campaigns from the Eastern to the Western Sea, and from the confluence of the Ganges to the Saurāśṭra country. ‘The lion-throne of his ancestors carried away by the enemy was then brought back by him from the city of Vikramādiya to his own city once more.’ Moreover, he ‘restored to his ancestral realm the son of Vikramādiya, Pratāpaśila (also known as Silādiya), who had been expelled by his enemies’.

It is unnecessary for our present purpose to recount the various
activities of Pravarasena whom the poet holds up before us as one of the best and bravest of kings. An idea of his date may be gathered from the fact that five kings, belonging to three generations, ruled between him and Durlabha-vardhana who was the king of Kashmir when Hsiuan Tsang visited the country (i.e. about A.D. 630). King Toramāṇa and his son may thus be placed in the first half of the sixth century A.D.

The account of the Rājataragini can hardly be made to fit in with what we know of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula from other sources. While the stories of Mihirakula agree generally with those narrated by Hsiuan Tsang, he is placed long before Toramāṇa, and his father’s name is different. On the other hand Toramāṇa and his son, according to the Rājataragini, flourished about the same time as the Hūna chief Toramāṇa and his son Mihirakula, but the Toramāṇa of the Rājataragini hardly ruled at all, and his son bore not only a different name but also an altogether different character. The coins also seem to indicate that Toramāṇa of Kashmir was different from the Hūna chief of Eran and Gwalior. The reference to Vikramāditya of Ujjaini no doubt reminds us of Yasodharman of Mandasor, and the victories of Pravarasena, those of Mihirakula, but it is impossible to make out a constructive picture which tallies with the known facts. On the whole, it appears that Kalhana had before him a mass of vague historical tales, but without sufficient data to weave them into a proper historical narrative. No useful inference can therefore be derived from the Rājataragini regarding the history of Toramāṇa or Mihirakula.

Hsiuan Tsang gives a long account of Mihirakula in connection with the old city of Sākala, which was his capital. Some centuries ago, we are told, ‘Mihirakula established his authority in this town and ruled over India. He subdued all the neighbouring provinces without exception.’ At first he took some interest in Buddhism and ordered that a Buddhist priest should meet him. The priests sent to him one who had been a servant in the king’s household. Feeling deeply insulted at this he ‘issued an edict to destroy all the priests through the five Indies, to overthrow the law of Buddha, and leave nothing

40 According to V. A. Smith (CCIM, I, 265) the Kashmir coins with the name of Toramāṇa, either in full or in an abbreviated form, were probably issued as early as the sixth century A.D., but continued in circulation until the fifteenth century, the pieces being struck not only by the king who bore this name but by a succession of rulers after him. Whether this king is identical with the chief whose coins have been found in Central India may be doubted. Cunningham (op. cit.) held that they were different.

41 Cf. Hoernle’s dissertation on the subject in JRAS, 1903, p. 555.

42 HTB, I, 167. It is to be noted however that Hsiuan Tsang gives the name as Mo-hi-lo-kiu-lo or Mihirakula (See Beal, I, 167 n. 6).
remaining. The subsequent career of Mihirakula, as told by Hiuan Tsang, has been described above (p. 90).

Some interesting account of the Hūna has been preserved by Cosmas, surnamed Indicopleustes (Indian navigator), an Alexandrine Greek, in his Christian Topography which was probably begun in 535 but not put in its final form till A.D. 547. In one place he says:

'Higher up in India, that is farther to the north, are the White Huns. The one called Gollas, when going to war, takes with him, it is said, no fewer than two thousand elephants and a great force of cavalry. He is the lord of India, and oppressing the people, forces them to pay tribute... The river Phison separates all the countries of India from the country of the Huns.'

Cosmas narrates some stories about Gollas and clearly says elsewhere that the Phison is the same as the river Indus. The date to which this account refers cannot be exactly determined, but may be placed between A.D. 525 and 535.

It is generally held that king Gollas in the above account refers to Mihirakula whose name is also written as Mihiragul. But although Gollas may be taken as equivalent to 'Gul', the last part of the name, there are difficulties in accepting this identification. For whereas according to Cosmas the Hūna king's chief seat of authority was to the west of the Indus, Mihirakula's capital was at Sākala (Sialkot) according to Hiuan Tsang. It is interesting to note that while according to both Sung-yun and Cosmas the chief seat of Hūna power was to the west of the Indus, according to Indian tradition, the capitals of both Toramāṇa and Mihirakula were in the Panjāb.

It would also appear from the accounts of both Sung-yun and Cosmas that the Hūna kingdom proper lay in Gandhāra beyond the Indus. The further statement of the latter that Gollas, the Hūna king, is the lord of India and, oppressing the people, forces them to pay tribute, probably means no more than this that by occasional raids, like those of the Marathas at a later date, he compelled even distant chiefs, not directly under his authority, to pay tribute. This is supported by Sung-yun's statement that 'the king continually abode with his troops on the frontier'. Perhaps the cruel devastations which marked the Hūna invasion compelled the terrified peoples to buy peace and security by offering these tributes as indemnities. This view seems to be supported by the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman in which he claims suzerainty over territories 'which were not enjoyed.

43 Tr. in English by J. W. McRindle (London 1897).
44 Ibid., 371-72.
(even) by the Gupta lords,⁴⁶ (and) which the command of the chiefs of the Hūnas, that established itself on the tiaras of many kings, failed to penetrate. The distinction in the phraseologies employed—enjoyment of territory in one case and issue of commands in the other—may have some real significance and point to the nature of supremacy in the two cases, as suggested above.

Even apart from the date of Cosmas's book, a comparison with Sung-yun's account leaves no doubt that Cosmas refers to a later state of things when the Hūna chief had become more powerful, and had spread his influence in India beyond the Indus. It is to be noted that according to Sung-yun the Hūna chief possessed only 700 elephants, while the number is raised to 2,000 by Cosmas. In A.D. 520, when Sung-yun visited the Hūna chief of Gandhāra, both Udyāna and Kashmir were independent of him, and it does not appear that he was a mighty lord of India.⁴⁷ The change which Cosmas notes must therefore have been accomplished between A.D. 520 and 535. This, then, must be regarded as the period of the great extension of the Hūna empire in India, and supplies an indirect evidence for the identification of Gollas and Miharakula, as the latter is known from Indian records to have flourished about this time.

3. General review

A careful analysis of the facts mentioned above enables us to divide the history of the Hūnas into a few broad stages. In the first period they advanced from the Oxus up to the Indus and probably crossed it, about the middle of the fifth century A.D. They were defeated by the Gupta Emperor Skanda-gupta, but established themselves in the territory between the Hindukush and the Indus. Although the gates of India proper were barred to them, or perhaps for that very reason, the Hūnas spread their ravages to Persia and other neighbouring lands. By the end of the fifth century A.D. they had established their authority over a vast region. The Hūna empire about A.D. 500 extended from Kotkan in the east to Persia in the west and comprised Tokharistan, Kabulistan and Zabilistan including the whole of the present N.W.F. Province.

⁴⁶ Fleet translates 'Gupta-nāthā' as the 'lords of the Guptas' (CII, III, 148), but 'Gupta lords' seems to be preferable.

⁴⁷ Sung-yun describes the vast extent of the Hūna empire and notes its boundaries. It extended from Kotkan in the east to Persia on the west. Beal's identification (p. xci) of the northern and southern boundaries with Mālava (or Valabhi) and Tirabhatkā is absolutely unfounded. Chavannes describes the extent of the Hūna empire in A.D. 500. It included Tokharistan, Kabulistan and Zabilistan, but no parts of India proper. Chavannes adds that, according to Chinese history (presumably the account of Sung-yun), the only Indian countries under the Hūnas were Gandhāra and Chitral (op. cit. 224-25). Evidently he disregarded Beal's fanciful identifications.
THE HŪNA KINGDOM IN INDIA

So long as the Gupta Empire remained strong the Hūnas probably did not invade India proper. But after the death of Budha-gupta, if not shortly before it, they renewed their depredations. Toramāna, who established his authority in the Panjab and then carried his victorious arms as far as Malwa, was most probably the Hūna leader who first established an extensive Hūna empire in India. His son and successor Mihirakula was also a great conqueror who imposed his suzerainty over a large part of India, extending at least as far as Gwalior in the east. As noted above (p. 90), according to a tradition preserved by Hsiuan Tsang, even the Gupta Emperor Bālāditya was forced to pay him tribute. Indirect tribute is paid to his power and fame even by his redoubtable adversary Yaśodharman.

In his Mandasor inscription Yaśodharman claims that respect was paid to his feet by even that (famous) king Mihirakula whose head had never (previously) been brought into the humility of obeisance to any other save (the god) sthānu (Siva), (and) embraced by whose arms the mountain of snow (i.e. Himālaya) falsely prides itself on being styled as inaccessible fortress. The reference to the mountain of snow probably indicates that Mihirakula was ruling over Kashmir and the adjoining regions. It may be remembered that Sung-yun also relates that the Hūna chief was fighting with Kashmir. It would appear that while Mihirakula was thus gaining territories and growing more and more powerful, Yaśodharman, an equally ambitious chief, had triumphed over the Gupta Emperor and carried his victorious arms far and wide. It was inevitable that two such military adventurers would come to a clash. Mihirakula was evidently defeated, but his kingdom or power was not destroyed. With the fall of Yaśodharman, which probably took place not long after, he again came to the forefront. But ere long he was again defeated and taken captive by Narasimha-gupta Bālāditya as has already been mentioned (p. 91). Although he was released, this defeat probably marked the end, not only of the triumphal career of Mihirakula, but also of the Hūna power in India.

As has been mentioned (p. 93), there is a great deal of probability that Yaśodharman and Narasimha-gupta Bālāditya made common cause against Mihirakula, and that their wars against Mihirakula were parts of the same campaign.

Hsiuan Tsang’s account of Mihirakula after his release from captivity has been summarized above (p. 91). But this cannot be regarded as


49 Thakur (op. cit., p. 171) thinks that there were two separate campaigns.
historical. For it would imply that Mihirakula obtained possession of Kashmir and Gandhāra towards the very end of his reign, after his discomfiture at the hands of Yaśodharman and Bālāditya. But, as noted above, there are good grounds to believe that both these kingdoms formed part of the empire of Mihirakula early in his career. It is just possible, however, that the rulers of these territories took advantage of his defeat to declare themselves independent and Mihirakula had to conquer them afresh.

The reigns of Toramāṇa and Mihirakula constitute the second broad stage and the most glorious period of Hūṇa power in India.

During the subsequent period, which forms the third stage, the Hūṇas occupied and wielded great authority in several regions in India, but they were no longer an important political factor, far less a dreaded power. The Hūṇa settlements in Uttarāpatha in the seventh century A.D. are referred to in Bāṇabhaṭṭa’s Harsha-charita, and Hūṇa rulers and territories bearing the name Hūṇa-mandala are mentioned in later records to which reference will be made in due course. The best evidence of the continuance of the Hūṇa power in India after the death of Mihirakula is furnished by coins. These prove that there were at least two Hūṇa families ruling respectively in the Eastern and Western Panjab. The latter consisted of a large number of rulers who probably ruled between A.D. 550 and 675.

Quite a large number of Hūṇa coins, mainly of copper, have been found in the plateau of Manāsawal, situated on the outer range of the Siwalik hills at an elevation of about two thousand feet, in the Hoshiarpur district, Panjab. The plateau is an extensive one, being about 10 miles in length and 6 by breadth, and the principal village Manasawal is 30 miles south-east of Hoshiarpur. Debased Indo-Sasanian pieces of silver, copied from the money of Firoz, are said to be ‘very plentiful’, in this region, and they are generally believed to have been struck by the White Huns. The copper coins found here were certainly issued by them. These were associated with the ordinary jayatu vrisha coins of Mihirakula, and probably belonged to the sixth century A.D., not far removed from the time of the great Hun leader.

50 Tr. by Cowell, p. 101. The passage has been discussed by Jagannath who locates the Hūṇas in Kashmir (NIA, V, 250).

51 Somadeva, in his Nītivākṣyāṃrita, refers to the conquest of Chitrakūṭa by the Hūṇa king (Bhandarkar Comm. Vol., 216). The author lived in the tenth century A.D. and it is therefore uncertain whether the conquest referred to by him took place before or after the death of Mihirakula. A Hūṇa king ruling in the ninth century A.D. is referred to in the Āṭpur inscription dated 977 (Bh., Ist. No., 85). Hūṇa royal families of the eleventh century are referred to in two inscriptions (ibid., Nos. 289, 1227).

52 For a detailed account of JRAS, 1907, p. 91.
The coins bear names of several chiefs among whom Mihiradatta, Prakāśāditya, Uditāditya, Jishṇu and Śri Valhā (?) may be regarded as fairly certain. Another name on these coins was originally read as Vyāghramusha but has been subsequently corrected to Vyāghramukha, and he has been identified with Vyāghramukha of the Chāpa dynasty referred to by the astronomer Brahmagupta as the king in whose reign he wrote his Brahma-sphuta-siddhānta in Śaka 550 (A.D. 628). It has further been suggested on the basis of this identification, that the Chāpas were allied to the Hūṇas. Such conclusions, must, however, be accepted with reserve, and the proposed identification makes it doubtful whether all the rulers named on the coins may be taken as Hūṇa rulers of the sixth century A.D. as suggested by V. A. Smith. The coins are of irregular shape, and their execution is extremely rude. This shows that the chiefs were not very powerful. But the abundance of coins of small value indicates that the site was an important Hūṇa locality.

The collapse of the Hūṇa political power in India was due not only to the defeat of their chiefs Toramāṇa and Mihrakula but also, and perhaps mainly, to the crushing blow given to their central authority on the Oxus by the combined forces of the Western Turks and the Persians some time between A.D. 563 and 567. Hūṇa power henceforth ceased to be a dreaded scourge in the East as it had been for nearly a century. But the Hūṇas continued as an important factor in Indian politics till at least the end of the tenth century A.D. The Pāla Emperor Devapāla curbed the pride of the Hūṇas in the first half of the ninth century A.D., as will be related in Ch. XXIII. An inscription, dated A.D. 899, refers to a Chāluksya feudatory chief of Kāthiāwār peninsula as 'having freed the earth from the Hūṇa race' by slaying Jajjapa and other kings. Whether he did this on his own behalf or as a follower of his liege lord, the Partihāra Emperor, it is difficult to say; nor do we know the particular locality where Jajjapa ruled. But the Hūṇas survived the onslaughts of the Pālas and the Partihāras. In the tenth century two Paramāra kings, Śiyaka II and Sindhurāja, claimed to have defeated Hūṇa kings. Towards the close of that century a Hūṇa king was a suitor for the hand of princess Durlabhadevi in a svayamvara ceremony and, having been rejected, is said to have fought with the Chāluksya king Durlabha who was fortunate in winning the hand of the princess. In medieval India the Hūṇas came to be regarded as one of the 36 Rājput clans.

53 For a detailed account of Chavannes, op. cit.
54 Una Pl. El. IX, 6.
55 DHNI, II, 850, 880.
56 Ibid., 945.
I V. T H E  G U R J A R A S

1. The Origin

Among the various States that arose in Northern India after the break-up of the Gupta Empire the one founded by Harichandra in the heart of Rajputana, within the boundaries of the former Jodhpur State, has a special importance. The royal family was called Pratihāra, and the region was known as Gurjaratrā, the old form of Gujarāt. From the use of the phrase Gurjara-Pratihāra,\(^{57}\) describing the family of a ruler in this region, it has been inferred that the Pratihāras formed a clan of the Gurjara tribe. It has accordingly been held by many scholars that Harichandra was a member of the Pratihāra clan of the Gurjara tribe, and the kingdom founded by him came to be known as Gurjaratrā after the tribal name. It has been pointed out that there were other localities with names which show clear associations with the Gurjaras, such as Gujrānwālā, Gujarāt and Gujar-khān in the Panjab, Gujarargh in the northern part of Gwalior State and lastly the province now known as Gujarāt, though not called by that name before the tenth century A.D. Further, the district of Saharanpur was also called Gujarāt in the eighteenth century.

These place-names have been taken to mark the different settlements of the Gurjara tribe or people in ancient times. This inference seems to be corroborated by the present distribution of the Gujars, who are undoubtably the modern representatives of the Gurjaras. They are widely spread over the whole of north-western India, being pretty numerous in the Western Himālayas, the Panjab, Uttar Pradesh, Western Rajputana and Gujarāt. They are found in the hilly country beyond the Indus but are not met with to the south of the Satpura Hills in the Deccan.

The ancient localities bearing names derived from Gurjara, and the distribution of the modern Gujars, have led many scholars to regard the Gurjaras as a foreign people who came to India, along with the Hūṇas, through the north-western passes and gradually spread towards the south and east—the stages of their advance being roughly marked by the localities named after them.\(^{58}\)

This view is not, however, shared by all. Some scholars maintain that Gurjara was primarily the name of a country, and not of a people.\(^{59}\) It has even been suggested that the various localities bearing

\(^{57}\) FI. III, 266.

\(^{58}\) 'Gurjara-Pratihāras' by R. C. Majumdar in JDL, X, 1 ff (to be hereinafter referred to as GP).

\(^{59}\) D. C. Ganguly in IHQ. X, 337, 613; XI, 167; JBORS, XXIV, 221; PIHC, III, 513. These views have been criticized in IC, I, 510; IV, 113; IHQ. XIII, 137. Ganguly's view has been elaborated in Ch. XXV of this volume.
names derived from the word Gurjara were originally parts of a large homogeneous country called Gurjaradeśa and now represent merely isolated fragments of it.  

This extreme view has not found favour with many. The theory that Gurjara was primarily the name of a country whose inhabitants were also called Gurjaras is also open to serious objections. In the first place, it should be remembered that there was no common geographical name for the wide area claimed for Gurjaradeśa, and there is nothing to distinguish it as a separate political, social, or geographical unit from the rest of Northern India. Secondly, the old literature of India contains distinct names such as Lāṭa, Surāṣṭra, Paṇḍhāla, Madra, etc. to denote various parts of the so-called Gurjaradeśa. Thirdly, Gurjara as the name of a country is conspicuous by its absence in ancient Indian literature. Fourthly, even in later times, the place-names are not Gurjara, pure and simple, but forms derived from it such as Gurjaratrā, Gurjarāśṭra, Gujarāt, Gujarānwāla, Gujar-khān which naturally mean lands of the Gurjaras.

We find an almost exact parallel case in Mālava. The settlements of the Mālava tribe in ancient times in the Panjab and Rajputana are known from their coins and from literature, both Greek and Indian.  

But today there is one big province called Mālava which, like Gujarāt, was not known by that name until comparatively later times. No scholar has ever doubted that Mālava was originally the name of a people whose various settlements in different times also came to be called by that name. It is most natural and reasonable to conclude that Gurjara was also originally the name of a people whose various settlements were called by names derived from that of the people.

But although Gurjara may be readily accepted as the name of a people, there is not equally convincing argument in favour of the view that they were foreigners who came to India along with the Hūnas. The fact that the Gurjaras suddenly rise into political importance shortly after the Hūna invasion, and seem to advance gradually from the Panjab towards the east, no doubt lends some support to it. But it is at best a probable theory. For the Mālavas also similarly advanced from the west, and many other peoples or tribes such as the Chālukyas and the Kalachuris suddenly emerge as important political powers about this time. But none of these is looked upon as foreign on that account. While therefore we may provisionally accept the Gurjaras as a people wandering in many parts of Western India, we should keep an open mind as to their original home.

60 Munshi, The Glory that Was Gurjaradeśa, 5-6.
61 Cf. the history of the Mālavas in Vol. II.
62 For an elaborate discussion of this view, cf. Ch. XXIV.
2. Gurjara Kingdom in Jodhpur

Harichandra, to whom reference has already been made, founded what may be regarded as the earliest Gurjara ruling family in India. The early history of this family is furnished by an inscription found at Jodhpur.\(^{63}\) It first traces the origin of the Pratihāra clan to the epic hero Lakshmana and then refers to an illustrious Brāhmaṇa named Harichandra Rohilladdhi who was well versed in the Vedas and other religious scriptures. He first married the daughter of a Brāhmaṇa, and took as a second wife a Kṣatriya lady named Bhadrā. The sons born of the former became Pratihāra Brāhmaṇas, while the sons of Bhadrā came to be known as Pratihāras. He had four sons by the latter, all fit to hold the earth, who conquered the fort of Māṇḍavyapura and erected there a high rampart. One of these sons was Rajjila whose grandson Nārābhāṭa fixed his permanent capital at the great city of Meḍantaka. The inscription then gives a brief history of the family up to Bāuka, eighth in descent from Nāgabhaṭa, and eleventh from Harichandra. It is dated, and the year is most probably 894 Samvat (A.D. 837). Kakkūka, the younger brother of Bāuka, has also left an inscription dated A.D. 861.\(^{64}\) As these two brothers represent the twelfth generation of kings, the foundation of the dynasty may be placed at about A.D. 550.

We may thus hold that Harichandra began his career as a learned Pandit but took advantage of the political condition caused by the downfall of the Gupta Empire to carve out a small principality for himself. There was nothing very unusual in a Brāhmaṇa exchanging śāstra (scripture) for the śāstra (sword). An analogous instance is furnished by Mayūraśarman who founded the Kadamba dynasty.

Māṇḍavyapura, the first fortified settlement of the family mentioned in the inscription, has been identified with Mandor five miles to the north of Jodhpur. Medantaka, the capital city of Nāgabhaṭa, is most probably to be identified with Merta 70 miles north-east of Jodhpur. The kingdom of Harichandra may thus be located in Jodhpur in the heart of what is now called Rajputana. This name was then unknown, but at least a part, if not the whole, of it soon came to be called Gurjaratā,\(^{65}\) evidently after the Gurjaras who under Harichandra had conquered the region. This Gurjara kingdom lasted for more than 300 years from the middle of the sixth to the middle of the ninth century A.D. The advance of the Gurjaras to this region evidently

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\(^{63}\) EI, XVIII, 87.
\(^{64}\) EI, IX, 277.
\(^{65}\) This name occurs in an inscription of Kakkūka (EI, IX, 280) and it comprised at least the districts of Didwana and Parbatsar (ibid., 278; JBBRAS, XXI, 414-15).
brought them into conflict with Prabhākara-vardhana, the ruler of Thāneśvar, to which reference will be made in due course.

3. Gurjaras of Lāṭa

The country known as Lāṭa was usually divided into three parts. Northern Lāṭa extended from Āṇandapura (Vaḍnagar in Gujarāt) to the Mahi river, Central Lāṭa comprised the land between this river and the Kim, while Southern Lāṭa stretched beyond this river as far as the Ambika. We possess some contemporary records about Central Lāṭa which give us a fair idea of its political condition in the sixth century A.D.

An inscription issued from Bhīrīgukachchha (Broach), and dated in A.D. 541, refers to Mahāśāmanīa Mahārāja Saṅgrāma Simha.66 As the village granted by him is also located in the Broach district there is no doubt that he ruled in Central Lāṭa. He makes no reference to any overlord but his titles seem to indicate that he paid at least nominal allegiance to a suzerain king. The identity of the latter cannot, however, be established.

As mentioned above, the Kalachuris ruled in this region towards the close of the sixth century A.D. But it is not unlikely that the Gurjaras had already established a small kingdom in Central Lāṭa. The first three kings of this dynasty were Dadda I, his son Vītarāga Jayabhaṭa I, and the latter’s son Dadda II Praśāntarāga. As the known dates of the last-named king are A.D. 629 and 641,67 Dadda I may be put in the last quarter of the sixth century A.D. He is said to have been born in the family of the Gurjara kings (Gurjara-nripati-vaiṁśa) and may therefore be identified with Dadda, one of the four sons of Harichandra who founded the Gurjara kingdom in Jodhpur.68 As

66 EI, X, 74.
68 Some scholars hold an altogether different view about the origin of the family as the following note of D. C. Ganguly will show:

‘The Nausari plate (IA, XII, 77) and the recently discovered Watson Museum inscription (EI, XXIII, 149) lay down that in the family of the Mahārāja Karna (Mahattī Mahārāja-Karnṇāṇiwaye), there lived, like a swan in a group of lotuses, the illustrious Dadda. This seems to indicate that among the predecessors of Dadda II there was a king of great note named Karna. Harichandra was the founder of the Pratihāra family, and no king of the name Karna is known to belong to it. Hence it is fairly certain that Dadda’s family had no connection with the Jodhpur branch of Pratihāras. Dadda’s relation with Pratihāra dynasty cannot be established even if one takes Karna of the Nausari grant as identical with the epic hero of the name. For this will be conflicting with the traditional belief of the Pratihāras that they were descendants of Lakshmaṇa, the younger brother of the hero of Rāmāyana. Karna, in my opinion, was the founder of the family, just as Guhila was the founder of the Guhila dynasty. Gurjara was the name of the country. The Hāṭhīm-
noted above, all the four sons are described in the Jodhpur inscription as fit to rule the earth. The probability, therefore, is that while one of them, Rajjila, ruled in Jodhpur the other brothers also ruled over separate kingdoms. Dadda may thus be regarded as a ruler of a small principality and this strengthens the identification proposed above. One Dadda is said to have 'uprooted the descendants of the hostile family of the Nāgas', but he is probably Dadda II. The inscriptions of Dadda II indicate that his kingdom extended from the Mahī in the north to the Kim in the south, and from the sea-coast on the west to the borders of Malwa and Khāndesh on the east. The city of Nāndipurī (Nandol in the old Rajpipla State) from which both his inscriptions were issued was presumably his capital.

As we shall see later, the locality defined above formed a part of the dominions of Kalachuri kings Buddhāraja and Sānkaraganā. If, therefore, the kingdom was originally founded by Dadda I, we must presume that he or his successors lost it for a time or became feudatories of the Kalachuris. But it is more likely that the kingdom of Dadda I was originally in southern Rajputana, not far from the parent Gurjara state in Jodhpur, and later, after the fall of the Kalachuris, its frontier was extended further south. In any event, there was a Gurjara kingdom in Broach in A.D. 629 and the probability is that it was an offshoot of the main Gurjara kingdom in Jodhpur.

V. THE HOUSE OF PUSHYABHŪTI

1. Origin

We learn from the Harsha-charita that a royal line was founded by one Pushyabhūti in a country known as Sthānviśvara, the modern Thāneśvar (Thaneser), in the Ambala district (Panjāb).

gumpha inscription (EI, XX, 79) tells us about the royal family of Kaliṅga. The Harsha-charita (p. 251) mentions the royal family of Mālava. A chief of Kalachuri dynasty is called an ornament of the royal family of Chedi country (IA, XVI, 22). The king Balavarman of Kāmarūpa is said to have been born in royal family of Prāgiyotisha (Kst, 71). Hence Gurjaraṛṣipati-vahsa may very well mean the royal family of the Gurjara country.

It is to be noted, however, that in all the above examples, the ruler is said to have belonged to the royal family of the country over which he actually ruled. But Dadda would belong to the royal family of a foreign country, viz Gurjara, as there is nothing to show that the region over which he ruled was called Gurjara at that time.

69 Bh. List, No. 1209-10.

70 The Pushyabhūtis are described as 'Vardhana' in some modern books on the ground that the names of the kings of the family end in 'vardhana'. This may be misleading. The names of the kings of the Śaila dynasty of the Vindhyā region also end in Vardhana (EI, IX, 41). The Harsha-charita mentions the family as 'Pushyabhūti-vahsa' (Führer ed.), HC, 206, 249, 267.
The royal seals\textsuperscript{71} of Harsha-vardhana, the last and most powerful member of this family, do not mention anything about Pushyabhūti and give the following genealogy:

\begin{center}
M. Nara-vardhana \textit{m.} Vajrīṇīdevī
M. Rājya-vardhana I \textit{m.} Apsarodevī
M. Āditya-vardhana \textit{m.} Mahāsenaguptā-devī
Mdh. Prabhākara-vardhana \textit{m.} Yaśomatīdevī
\end{center}


Nothing is known about the first three kings of this family except that the second and third were devotees of the Sun. But the clear contrast between their title \textit{mahārāja} and that of \textit{mahārājādhirāja} assumed by the next king leaves no doubt that they were not very powerful chiefs. As we know definitely that Prabhākara-vardhana died in A.D. 605 or early part of 606, the reign of the first three kings may be placed between A.D. 525 and 575. It may therefore be easily surmised that like the Maukharis, their immediate neighbours in the east, the Pushyabhūtis also took advantage of the fall of the Gupta Empire to found an independent principality.

Hsiian Tsang mentions Harsha-vardhana of this family as a Fei-she (Vaiśya).\textsuperscript{72} The \textit{Mañjuśrī-mulakalpa}\textsuperscript{73} states that a king, the initial letter of whose name was ‘Ha’, was a Vaiśya. As this king may be reasonably identified with Harsha-vardhana, the Pushyabhūtis may be taken to have belonged to the Vaiśya caste.

2. \textit{Prabhākara-vardhana}

A few details of Prabhākara-vardhana have been preserved in the \textit{Harsha-charita}. He bore a second name Pratāpāśīla and was a great general. The \textit{Harsha-charita} indirectly describes his military campaigns by reference to him as a ‘lion to the Hūṇa deer, a burning fever to the king of Sindh, a troubler of the sleep of Gurjara, a bilious plague to that scent-elephant the lord of Gandhāra, a looter to the lawlessness of Lāṭa, and an axe to the creeper of Mālava’s glory’.\textsuperscript{74} Reference has

\textsuperscript{71} \textit{CII, III}, 231; \textit{EI, XXI}, 75.
\textsuperscript{72} \textit{HTW, I}, 343.
\textsuperscript{73} \textit{HIIF}, 50.
\textsuperscript{74} Führer (ed.), \textit{HC}, 174; Tr., 101.
been made above to the Hūnas and Gurjaras and the political condition of Sindh and Gandhāra about this time will be described later (Ch. XIX); Mālava and Lāta were probably under the sway of the Kalachuri Śaṅkaragāna or his son Buddharāja and, as noted above, Prabhākara-vardhana probably led an expedition there in order to re-establish the sons of Mahāsena-gupta. But both the Harsha-charita and the Kalachuri records prove that Prabhākara-vardhana failed to secure his object. If we believe in the statement of the Harsha-charita about the victorious campaigns of Prabhākara-vardhana, he must be regarded as one of the most powerful kings of this age. Some coins bearing the legend Pratīpaśila, and found in the Fyzabad district, Uttar Pradesh, are usually assigned to Prabhākara-vardhana. The Harsha-charita relates that Prabhākara-vardhana was 'by natural proclivity a devotee of the Sun'. The seals of Harsha-vardhana also refer to Prabhākara-vardhana as a devotee of the Sun.

Prabhākara-vardhana’s queen Yaśomati or Yaśovatī was born of a noble family. She gave birth to two sons, Rājya-vardhana and Harshavardhana, and a daughter named Rājyaśrī. When Rājya-vardhana was nearing his sixth year, Harsha could just manage five or six paces with the support of his nurse’s finger, and was therefore about one year of age. The difference of age between Harsha and Rājyaśrī was about two years. About this time Yaśomati’s brother’s son Bhaṇḍi, who was then only eight years old, was engaged to serve the young princes. Subsequently Prabhākara-vardhana engaged Kumāra-gupta to wait upon Rājya-vardhana and Mādhava-gupta to wait upon Harshavardhana. Both Kumāra-gupta and Mādhava-gupta were sons of the king of Mālava, who is to be identified with Mahāsena-gupta of the Later Gupta dynasty. Kumāra-gupta was eighteen years old about this time. After the defeat of Mahāsena-gupta, probably at the hand of the Kalachuri Śaṅkaraganas, these two princes took shelter under their relation Prabhākara-vardhana. Prabhākara-vardhana chose Graha-varman, son of Avanti-varman of the Maukharī dynasty, as the bridegroom for Rājyaśrī, and celebrated the marriage ceremony with grandeur.

75 Cf. pp. 222, 229.
76 Ante, p. 197.
77 CHII, III, 291. Also cf. Ch. XXXII.
78 HC, Tr., 102, 153.
79 Ibid., 116.
80 Ibid., 119.
81 Ibid., 132, 135.
82 Ibid., 132.
83 Ibid., 122, 128.
Some time after Rājyaśrī's marriage Prabhākara-vardhana sent Rājya-vardhana, whose age then fitted him for wearing armour, to Uuttarāpatha at the head of a large army to crush the power of the Hūnas. Rājya-vardhana was accompanied by the old councillors (arātya) and the devoted feudatories (mahāsāmanta). Harsha also followed him several stages on the horse. When, however, Rājya-vardhana had entered the mountainous regions of Uttarāpatha, he spent several days away from camp on the outskirts of the snowy mountains. Harsha, who had been left behind, received the news that his father was down with violent fever. He forthwith returned and, riding continuously without food or rest, reached the capital at noon the next day, and met his ailing father. Yaśomati, knowing that her husband's death was fast approaching, threw herself into a funeral pyre and soon afterwards Prabhākara-vardhana died.

3. Rājya-vardhana

Shortly after the death of his father which took place about A.D. 605, Rājya-vardhana returned to the capital and ascended the throne. But he was so much overwhelmed with grief at the loss of his parents that he proposed to hand over the cares of sovereignty to Harsha, and himself adopt the life of a hermit. Harsha, however, declined the offer. At this time grave news came from Kanauj. Saṃvādaka, a servant of Rājyaśrī, came to Thānesvar and delivered the following message to Rājya-vardhana:

'On the very day on which the king's (Prabhākara-vardhana's) death was rumoured, His majesty Graha-varman was by the wicked lord of Mālava cut off from the living along with his noble deeds. Rājyaśrī also has been confined like a brigand's wife with a pair of iron fetters kissing her feet, and cast into prison at Kānyakubja. There is moreover a report that the villain, deeming the army leaderless, proposes to invade and seize this country as well.'

Rājya-vardhana and Harsha-vardhana were greatly shocked at this terrible news, but lost no time in idle grief. Leaving Harsha in charge of the administration, Rājya-vardhana, accompanied by Bhan, marched with ten thousand horse towards Kanauj. On the way he

84 Ibid., 132, 135.
85 Ibid., 133.
86 Ibid., 135.
87 Ibid., 154.
88 Ibid., 170.
89 Ibid., 178.
met the Mālava army, and defeated it and captured an enormous booty. It is generally assumed that the Mālava king who fought with the Maukharis and Rājya vardhana was no other than Deva-gupta, the only king referred to by name in the inscriptions of Harsha as being defeated by Rājya vardhana. But it is possible to hold a different view on the subject. As already mentioned (pp. 222-23), Mālava, or at least a part of it, was in the possession of Buddhārāja of the Kalachuri dynasty from A.D. 602 to at least up to A.D. 609. So it is not unlikely that the Mālava king, who was the adversary of Rājya vardhana, was this king of the Kalachuri dynasty.

According to Harsha’s inscriptions Rājya vardhana had to fight with some other kings besides Deva-gupta. Bāna mentions only Rājya vardhana’s victory over the Mālava king, possibly because the latter humiliated his patron’s sister, whereas Harsha’s inscriptions lay stress on Rājya vardhana’s victory over Deva-gupta probably because it secured for the Pushyabhūtis substantial political advantage. If Deva-gupta were not the king of Mālava his identity cannot be established.

After his victory over the Mālava king Rājya vardhana sent back Bhanḍī to Thāneśvar with the booty of the war and himself proceeded towards Kanauj, obviously to secure the release of his sister from prison. On his way he confronted Śaśāṅka, king of Gauḍa, and his army. It is difficult to assert positively that Śaśāṅka was an ally of the Mālava king, as has been suggested by some scholars. Bāna does not hold Śaśāṅka responsible for the death of Graha varman or for the imprisonment of Rājyaśrī. The same authority states that the Mālava king alone marched against Thāneśvar. Rājya vardhana apparently did not think of the possibility of another struggle with any other chief on his way to Kanauj. For had he known that the Mālava king had an ally in the neighbourhood, ready to fight with him, he would not have probably sent his veteran general Bhanḍī back to Thāneśvar. In view of all this Śaśāṅka and the Mālava king may be regarded as having acted independently of each other. All the available authorities declare that Rājya vardhana was killed by Śaśāṅka, though they differ in details. We learn from the Harsha-charita that Rājya vardhana had been allured to confidence by false civilities on the part of the king

90 Ibid., 175.
91 According to Harsha’s inscriptions Rājya vardhana defeated Deva-gupta and other kings (Śri Devaguptādāyakah). But the detailed account in the Harsha-charita of the very short period of his reign makes it impossible to believe that he fought with any king but Deva-gupta and Śaśāṅka. The ‘other kings’ can therefore be only the allies of these two who accompanied them (Ed.).
92 Ibid., 223.
of Gauḍa, and then weaponless, confiding, and alone, despatched in his own quarters.\textsuperscript{93}

A commentary on the \textit{Harsha-charita}, written by Saṅkara in the fourteenth century, relates that Saśāṅka allured Rājya-vardhana to his camp with a promise of giving his daughter in marriage to him. Rājya-vardhana, while enjoying a feast there along with his attendants, was murdered by Saśāṅka in disguise.

Hsiuan Tsang’s\textsuperscript{94} statement may be summed up as follows: (After the death of Prabhākara-vardhana) Rājya-vardhana came to the throne as the elder brother, and ruled with virtue. At this time the king of Karnasuvrana, a kingdom of Eastern India, whose name was Saśāṅka (She-shang-kia), frequently addressed his ministers in these words: “If a frontier country has a virtuous ruler this is the unhappiness of the (mother) kingdom.” On this they asked the king to a conference and murdered him. The Chinese pilgrim further relates that\textsuperscript{95} Harsha was told that “owing to the fault of his ministers, he (Rājya-vardhana) was led to subject his person to the hand of his enemy, and the kingdom has suffered a great affliction; but it is the fault of your ministers”.

According to the \textit{Mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa}\textsuperscript{96} the king with name beginning in Ra (Rājya-vardhana) was murdered, not by Soma (Saśāṅka), who was a Brāhmin, but by a king of low caste.

Harsha’s inscriptions\textsuperscript{97} narrate that Rājya-vardhana “after uprooting his enemies, after conquering the earth, and doing what was agreeable to his subjects, in consequence of his adherence to his promise gave up his life in the mansion of his foe.”

In spite of the differences among the authorities it is reasonable to accept the common element among them, viz the treacherous murder of Rājya-vardhana by Saśāṅka. But some scholars do not share this opinion and their views have been discussed above (pp. 205-6).

The statements of Bāna and Hsiuan Tsang and Harsha’s inscriptions may be taken to be complementary to one another. Saśāṅka probably designed to crush the power of Rājya-vardhana without confronting him in battle. He therefore proposed to enter into a friendly alliance with him, and expressed his desire to give him his daughter in marriage. Rājya-vardhana accepted Saśāṅka’s invitation

\textsuperscript{93} \textit{Ibid.}, 178.
\textsuperscript{94} \textit{HTB}, I, 210.
\textsuperscript{95} \textit{HTB}, I, 211.
\textsuperscript{96} \textit{Sāśanesmi tathā śakta somākhya sasamo nṛpa ||}
\textit{Sopi yūti tvāṃtena mārgajñi-nārīpa tu.} \textit{|| v. 720. IIII, 53.}
\textit{Somākhya devijāhcyo mahābhogy bhavehyasa || v.730}
\textsuperscript{97} \textit{EI}, IV, 210.
and went to his camp to discuss the proposal. He was not shrewd enough to see through the game. His ministers should have pointed out to him the danger of visiting the enemy's camp, but they did not do that. Rājya-vardhana, in accordance with his promise, and without making any arrangement for his safety, went to Saśānka's camp, and fell a victim to a treacherous attack by the latter. The motive which prompted Saśānka to take recourse to this unfair means is not far to seek. When he confronted Rājya-vardhana in battle he came to learn that a noble named Gupta took possession of Kanauj. This placed him in between two enemies, and he got out of this critical situation by treacherously murdering Rājya-vardhana.

Rājya-vardhana was a devotee of Sugata, i.e. Buddha. As the Harsha-charita informs us that on the eve of the Hūna war his age just fitted him to put on armour, he may be taken to have been twenty or twenty-one years of age at the time of his accession. His death must have followed in the course of a few days or months.

98 HC, Tr., 224.
99 EI, XXI, 75.