HISTORY FROM THE PURĀNAS

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.H.I. — Ancient Historians of India—V. S. Pathak.
A.I. — Ancient India—R. C. Majumdar.
A.I.G. — Age of Imperial Guptas—R. D. Bannerji.
A.I.H.T. — Ancient Indian Historical Tradition—Pargiter.
A.H.T. — Age of Imperial Kanauj
(Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan)
A.S. — Arthaśāstra—Kauṭilya.
Bhag — Bhāgavata Purāṇa.
C.C.G.D. — Catalogue of Coins in British Museum of the
Gupta Dynasty—John Allan.
C.H.I. — Cambridge History of Ancient India.
C.C.I.M. — Catalogue of Coins in Indian Museum, Vol. I,
Smith.
C.M.I. — Coins of Medieval India—Cunningham.
Ch. — Chapter.
Ch. — Charita (e.g. Navasāhasāṅka Ch.).
Ch. Eeu. — Chambers Encyclopaedia.
C.I.I. — Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.
Cl. A. — Classical Age (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan).
Cl. A. — Classical Accounts of India—Majumdar.
D.K.A. — Dynasties of the Kali Age—Pargiter.
D.K.M. — Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha—Sinha.
D.M. —
E.H.I. — Early History of India—V. Smith.
E.I. — Epigraphic Indica.
Ep. Ind. —
Elph.H.I. — Elphinston—History of India.
G.P. — Gupta Polity—Dikshitar.
G.I.G.D. — Glory that was Gurjara Deśa—Munshi.
G.O.S. — Gaekwad Oriental Series.
H.B. — History of Bengal, R. C. Majumdar.
H.C. — Harṣa-Carita.
H.M.H.I. — History of Medieval Hindu India—Vaidya.
H.N.E.I. — History of North Eastern India—Basak.
H.N.E. —
H.P. — Hindu Polity—Jaiswal.
I.H.I. — Imperial History of India—Jaiswal.
I.H.Q. — Indian Historical Quarterly.
Ind. Ant. — Indian Antiquary.
Ins. — Inscription.
K.M. — Kāvyamāṁsa.
K.S.S. — Kathā Sarita Sāgara.
Med. Ind. — History of Medieval India—Ishwari Prasad.
M.M.K. — Ārya Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa.
M.R. — Mudrā Rākṣasa.
M.S.E.D. — Monier Williams, Sanskrit English Dictionary.
N.S. — New Series.
N.S.C. — Nava Sāhasāṅka Carita.
P. — Purāṇa (with the name of a Purāṇa).
— Parva (in connection with the Mahābhārata).
p. — page.
Pt. — Part.
P.R.H.R.C. — Purānic Records on the Hindu Rites and Customs—Hazra.
Prab. K. — Prabandha Kośa ( Jain work ).
P.V. — Purāṇa Vimarśa.
Prabh. Carit — Prabhāvaka Carīṭa.
R.E. — Rock Edicts.
R.N.W.I. — Memoirs of Races of North-West Province of India, by Elliot.
R.T. — Rājatarāṅginī.
S. Ins. — Select Inscriptions—D. C. Sircar.
Sk. — Skanda Purāṇa.
Str. E. — Struggle For Empire (Bharatiya Vidyā Bhavan).
St. Ind. Ant. — Studies in Indian Antiquities
               —H. C. Ray Chaudhury.
St. Ind. Hist. — Studies in Indian History and Culture
               —U. N. Ghoshal
St. Sk. — Studies in Skanda Purāṇa, Part One.—Awasthi
St. Sk. P. —
TCNWPO — Tribes and Castes of North-West Province and Oudh by Elliot.
T.Y. — Travels of Yuan Chwang—Watters.
U.R.C. — Uttara Rāma Carita—Bhavabhūti.
PREFACE

HISTORY FROM THE PURĀNAS

Political history of ancient India contained in the Purāṇas is in the form of genealogical lists of royal dynasties from the earliest times down to the beginning of the Vākāṭaka-Gupta period. For the early history of India before the Mahābhārata war the Purāṇas constitute the main source of information. Scholars like Keith and Macdonell are sceptical about the historical value of the Purāṇas. They doubt the historicity of any event which is not explicitly mentioned in the Rgveda and condemn the Purānic account as "inaccurate."1 But Rgveda and other works of the Vedic literature do not actually deal with history; they contain only religious prayers and philosophical aspirations of ancient India and their historical account consists of merely a few stray references to certain rulers or events. The Purāṇas alone give something like a continuous historical narrative. That is why Pargiter gives more weight to the Purānic tradition than to the evidence of the Vedic literature.

Many genuine historical traditions of great antiquity are embodied in the royal genealogies of the Purāṇas and many historical facts of great importance can be detected in the figurative and allegorical descriptions and mythological stories contained in them. Thus, it is true, as Dr. Pusalkar asserts, that "the evidence of the Purāṇas, on the other hand, cannot be ruled out altogether, because despite a good deal of what is untrustworthy

in them, they alone contain something like a continuous historical narrative, and it is absurd to suppose that the elaborate royal genealogies were all merely figments of imagination or a tissue of falsehoods.”

Vincent A. Smith

While discussing the sources of the early history of India V. Smith observes: “The most systematic record of Indian historical tradition is that preserved in the dynastic lists of the Purāṇas. Five out of the eighteen works of this class namely Vāyu, Matsya, Viṣṇu, Brahmāṇḍa and Bhāgavata contain such lists. The Brahmāṇḍa and the Vāyu, as well as the Matsya, which has large later additions, appear to be the earliest and most authoritative. Theory required that a Purāṇa should deal with five topics of primary creation, secondary creation, genealogies of gods and patriarchs, reigns of various Manus, and the histories of the old dynasties of kings. The last named of the five topics is the only one which concerns the historian. Modern European writers have been inclined to disparage unduly the authority of the Purānic lists, but closer study finds in them much genuine and valuable historical tradition.”

F. E. Pargiter

Pargiter utilised the Purāṇas and his valuable researches are embodied in his works viz., ‘Ancient Indian Historical Tradition’ and ‘The Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age’. He holds that the Bhāviṣya Purāṇa in its early form was the original from which the Matsya, Vāyu, and Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas derived their dynastic lists. “Mr. Pargiter holds that the first compilation of historical matter may have been made in the reign of the Āndhra king, Yajñāstrī, about the end of the second century after Christ; that the first certain compilation was made in original Bhāviṣya Purāṇa about A. D. 260; that the Bhāviṣya account was revised about A. D. 315–20 and the same account was again revised a few years later, about A. D. 325–30……” Thus it goes

1. Vedic Age, p. 305.
2. E. H. I., pp. 11-12.
to the credit of Pargiter to discuss the historical value of the Purāṇas. In his Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, Pargiter has discussed the different genealogical lists. The Purāṇa text of the Dynasties of Kali Age discussed the historical dynasties that ruled over different parts of the country from 600 B.C. to about the beginning of the fourth century A.D.

E. J. Rapson

Prof. Rapson (C.H.I., Vol. I) also discussed the historical tradition embodied in the Purāṇas with the help of Buddhist and Jain sources.¹

Dr. A. D. Pusalkar also discussed the Purāṇic genealogies in the work, styled Vedic Age², where he has discussed the comparative value of the Purāṇas as sources of traditional history³.

The works of V. R. R. Dikshitār ²(Some Aspects of the Vāyu Purāṇa and the Matsya Purāṇa, as well as Purāṇa Index—3 Volumes) and R. C. Hazra (Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs, Studies in the Upa-Purāṇas—2 Vols.) are important and valuable. But the political history is totally neglected there. Dr. Hazra’s Studies in the Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs is ‘devoted mainly to determine the chronology of the Purāṇic chapters……’. It consists of two parts. Part I deals with the chronology of the Purāṇic chapters and Part II discusses the “Hindu Society before 200 A. D. and from 3rd. to the 6th. century A.D”. He has referred to the appearance of Muhammadans⁴ in the above mentioned work; but he is not concerned⁵ with the impact of these foreigners on the history, politics and society of the early medieval India. Hazra holds even the Maurya monarchs to be Sūdras.⁶ It is untenable.

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3. Ibid., pp. 304-311.
5. Ibid., p. 218.
6. Ibid., p. 245.
The works of D. R. Patil (Cultural History from the Vāyu Purāṇa) and S. G. Kantawala (Cultural History from the Matsya Purāṇa) as well as the works of V. S. Agrawal (Matsya Purāṇa A Study, Vāmana Purāṇa A Study, Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa Eka Adhayayana), S. D. Gyanı (Agni Purāṇa A Study), S. N. Roy (Paurāṇic Dharma evarī Samāja) and Pathaka (Viṣṇu Purāṇa Kā Bhārata) throw much light on the cultural history of ancient India. I tried to discuss the historical importance of the Skanda Purāṇa as a valuable source of North Indian History as well as for the history of the Pallavas, Colas and Pāṇḍyas in ‘the Studies in the Skanda Purāṇa (Part I)’. Historical genealogies were also discussed in my Garuḍa Purāṇa (Eka Adhyayayana).

However, the work done so far on the Purānic studies is very scanty and requires more attention of the scholars towards it. There are still some Purāṇas which have not been studied at all or have been studied only superficially. As such, even the Varāha Purāṇa, which is believed to be a manual of religious prayers by Wilson, Winternitz and Hazra contains valuable historical information.1

The dynastic lists and historical facts regarding the royal dynasties after the Mahābhārata war preserved in the Purāṇas are corroborated by the epigraphic, numismatic and literary sources—foreign and indigenous. The historical facts occurring in the Buddhist and Jain literature and accounts of Greek and Chinese literature bear testimony to the historicity of the Purānic genealogies. Epigraphic records, coins and seals of many kings of the Purānic lists, after the Mahābhārata war, have been unearthed during the last three centuries. Thus the historical traditions preserved in the Purāṇas are not altogether without foundation. In fact much of the Purānic account “is a genuine chronicle of persons if not of occurrences”.2

Paṇḍita Baladeva Upādhyāya has also discussed Paurānic

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2. Wilson, Vishṇu P. Preface, p. LXIV.
genealogies in his work, Purāṇa Vimarśa.¹

Dr. P. L. Bhargava has also discussed the Purāṇic genealogies² and has proved therein that the genealogical account preserved in the Purāṇas agrees in every way with the evidence supplied by the Vedic literature.³³

Dr. R. Morton Smith has developed the work of Pargiter in his work—Dates and Dynasties in Earliest India’. Thus the importance of the Purāṇas for the study of Ancient Indian History is evident. Dr. Smith has utilised the archaeological data to substantiate the Purāṇic statements.

The accounts relating to the historical dynasties viz., Śaśi-
nāgas, Nandas, Mauryas, Śuṅgas, Kāṇvāyanas, Andhras and various local dynasties take the thread of history upto the early fourth century of the Christian era i.e. upto the reign of the Candragupta I of the Gupta dynasty. Dr. Smith has discussed the dates upto the rulers of the Andhra dynasty. Most of the dates assigned to the rulers of these historical dynasties are already known from the works of V. A. Smith, D. R. Bhandarkar, H. C. Raychaudhuri, Rapson, Rhys Davids, and others.

At present, we are concerned here only with the PostGupta history of ancient India.

Pargiter held that the Bhaviṣya was the first Purāṇa to give an account of the dynasties of the Kali age, and the Matsya, Vāyu, Brahmāṇḍa got their accounts from it .......... Such accounts were composed in or near Magadha more particularly, which was one of the chief centres of political life and thought during those times about seven centuries B. C. after writing was introduced into India.⁴ Pargiter holds, like other western scholars, that art of writing was introduced into India about 7th century B. C. and repeatedly Pargiter refers to the Hindus’ lack of the historical sense.⁵

1. PV., pp. 351-397.
2. India in the Vedic Age, Chapter IV.
3. Ibid., p. 88.
5. A.I.H.T., pp. 67, 74, 96, etc.
Dr. Morton Smith devoted about 338 pages of his valuable book (Dates and Dynasties in Earliest India) to the traditional history and about 48 pages to the historical dynasties.

As regards the chronology of the historical dynasties, Dr. Smith did not study the historical gleanings from the Skanda Purāṇa where I had discussed the dates of Vikramāditya, Śūdraka, Nandarājya and Budha (Gupta).

It is not fair to say that in the past Brāhmaṇas or Hindus lacked historical sense. We lack it today, most of the Indian scholars rely upon Pargiter and they have not cared to assess the ‘Itihāsa-samuccayaḥ’ given in the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa. Its text is faulty and corrupt; but it exhibits its historical interest in describing the old dynasties which ruled in the different parts of the country. It tells us that Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and even Śūdras had been ruling over the different parts of the country. It refers to Śiśunāga, Kākavarna, Kṣattraujas, Vedamśra (=Bimbisāra), Ajātariṇu (=Ajātaśatrū), Darbhaka (Darśaka), Udayāśva (Udāya), Nandavardhana, Nandasuta, Priyānanda, Devānanda, Yajñābhaṅga, Mauryaṇanda, Mahīnanda, Gautama-Śākyamuni (founder of Buddhism), Śuddhodana, Śākyasimha, Buddhāsimha, Candragupta, Bindusāra, and Aśoka. Then the thread of history takes us to Kānyaṅubha and then to the four Rāja-pūta dynasties of Paramāra (Prāmarā), Capahāni (Cāhamāna), Parihāra (Pratihāra) and the fourth dynasty of Cālukya (which is not mentioned here). It refers to the destruction of Buddhists. Thus we get an outline of history and references to historical and cultural events like the decline of Buddhism in the so-called Rāja-pūta Period. But the historians of Ancient India, particularly those who have devoted themselves to the Purānic studies, did not care to unravel history from this corrupt text.

The Skanda Purāṇa, an important work in its class, has been
totally neglected because of its voluminous size. It throws valuable light not only on the history of the Nandas, and the Guptás, but it also throws valuable light on the history of Madhya-deśa after the reign of the Kushāṇa king Vāsudeva, the so called one of the darkest periods of her history, to the rise of the Imperial Guptás.

Some misconceptions have taken deep roots in the minds of the Purāṇic investigators who hold that account of the future kings seem to stop with the Imperial Guptas and their contemporaries. This notion still persists that no important dynasty or monarch of India has been mentioned in the Purāṇas. Hence I felt an urge to explore the Purāṇārṇava and the following pages reveal the results of my venture.

History of Śaśāṅka particularly the coins of Śaśāṅka with Soma and Someśvara—Vṛśāsanah—depicting Jayābhiṣeka have been discussed here for the first time.

While dealing with Sanskrit literature Dr. Brough observes: "The old epics and Purāṇic legends grew up in part at the courts of kings, where they were recited by professional bards or minstrels known as Sūtas. But it is also clear that they were never wholly divorced from the popular audiences of the villages, who have always listened with eager attention while the wandering story-teller or one of their own learned elders recited the old tales". "The present form of the Purāṇas, and still more the Upapurāṇas, probably represents the work of temple-priests eager to glorify the god whom they served, and to attract worshippers to his shrine". "The Vāyu and Padma Purāṇas tell us how ancient genealogies, tales and ballads were preserved by the sūtas and they describe the Sūta's duty......The Vāyu (I. 31-2) says—"The sūta's special duty as perceived by goodmen of old was to preserve the genealogies of gods, rṣhis and most glorious kings, and the traditions of greatmen...... The Padma (V. I. 27-8) says....."This is the sūta's duty from primaeval time......to compose

2. Ibid., Vol. XI. p. 378.
the genealogies of gods, ṛṣhis and most glorious kings and the
eulogies of greatmen.......

Maḥabhārata also refers to the appointment of Sūta as a minister
well-versed in the Purāṇas and gifted with the eight virtues. He
was a member of the royal cabinet comprising eight ministers.
Thus the references to glorious kings (rājām chāmita tejasām, Vāyu. I. 31; rājām amita tejasām, Padma, V. 1. 27) like Śaśāṅka, Vikramaśila, Āma (Nāgabhata II). Bhoja and Kāśirāja
Chandradeva, reflects the redaction of the Purāṇas by Sūtas in
the royal courts to which they were attached. Hence the Purāṇas
did not cease their interest in the post-Gupta history of Ancient India.
The Sūtas were anxious to find out the causes of the Turkish
occupation of the country.

Viṣṇudharmottara (Khaṇḍ I, Chap. 74) gives us an analysis
of our national decay by describing the condition of Bhāratavarṣa
in the ‘Kṣiṇa-yuga’. It refers to struggle between kṣatriyas and
Brahmaṇas. The letter were assisted by Vaiṣṭyas and Śūdras in
their struggle against the former. It is here in this context that
the Viṣṇudharmottara refers to ‘Śaśāṅkaṁ dvijeṣaṁ Somaṁ’ or
Rāja Soma, who is the same as Saśāṅka, the celebrated king of
Gauḍa. We also find here references to Śūra and Pramiti, the
defender of faith in the Madhyadeśa. The former seems to be the
founder or Śūra-Vaṁśa. Pramiti, an important ruler of Ancient
India, is mentioned in the Vāyu, Matsya, Brahmaṇa, Mārkaṇḍeya, Skanda and Viṣṇudharmottara. His account could not
escape the notice of the eminent Indologist, Dr. V. S. Agrawal,
who identified Pramiti with Candragupta II Vikramaditya.
Present studies prove that the Purāṇas took keen interest in the
history of the Hindu Medieval India.

1. A.H.T., p. 15.
2. Śānti P., LXXXV. 9(i): अच्छामिष्यशुद्धिकृत्व सूत्र पौराणिकम् तथा।
3. Ibid., LXXXV. 11.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Collapse of the Gupta Empire was followed by the rapid disintegration of the entire political system. The vast well-knit empire was turned into the forces of disintegrating units—the petty warring states. It led to the epoch of anarchy marked by the conflicts between Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas. The Mahābhārata asserts that friendship between Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas leads to the happiness of the subjects. If they do not respect each other, destruction would befall the people.

To justify the truth of this statement, an old story about the discourse between Aila’s son and Kaśyapa is recited. Aila’s son exclaimed: “When the Brāhmaṇa forsakes the Kṣatriya or the Kṣatriya forsakes the Brāhmaṇa, who amongst them should be considered superior, and upon whom would the other orders depend and maintain themselves? Kaśyapa replied:—

“Ruin befalls the kingdom of the Kṣatriya when the Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya fight against each other. The robbers attack that kingdom in which anarchy reigns and all goodmen regard the king as a Mleccha. Mutual rivalry between Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas causes unbearable distress to the people.

The Brāhmaṇa contributes to the advancement of the Kṣatriyas, and the Kṣatriya leads to that of the Brāhmaṇas.

1. Śānti P., LXXIII. 4 (ii) : ब्रह्माक्षरस्य सम्मानाद्र प्रजा दुःखमवाच्यावात्
2. Ibid., LXXIII. 5 (i) : बिमाननाद्द तयोरेव प्रजा गसयेिुरेव हि
3. Ibid., LXXIII. 7-8.

M. N. Dutt, (Śānti Parva, English Translation, LXXIII. 8) refers to Mleccha.
4. Śānti P., LXXIII. 28 (i-ii) : नियोजिताद्र ब्रह्मणक्षत्रिवाणाः प्रजा दु:खः कु:सहं चाभिशन्ति।
5. Ibid. LXXIII. 32 (i) : ब्रह्मा वर्धनति धात्र सत्तो ब्रह्मा वर्धिते।
The next chapter (Śānti Parva, LXXIV) comprising a discourse between Mucukunda and Vaiśravaṇa also upholds the importance of concord and co-operation among the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas. It asserts: "If their energies are exercised separately, they would never be able to keep up the world."

These ideals of unity were upheld in the Gupta age. Samudrāgupta was asked to protect the entire earth (pāhyevam-urvīm-iti). He became a 'prasara-dharaṇi-bandhaḥ', as well as Dharma-prācira-bandhaḥ.

After conquering this earth, he strove to conquer the 'Indraloka' or Svarga by his virtuous deeds. These ideals of the Gupta kingship were predominant throughout the golden period of the Gupta age and even after it. The inscriptions and coins present some close parallelism with this epic-ideal of an exalted sovereignty based on the following points:—

(i) Ideal of the conquests of two worlds—here and beyond:
   मुनिकुक्त्वो विजये मात् पृथिवी पृथिवीपति:
   विजयास्मात् स्ववितम्यवायुकाळिरपिष्ट। II Śānti P., LXXIV. 4.

(ii) Ideal of an all-India Government:—
   प्रवीङ्द्रहृत्तनां महात्माक्षिलामिमाम्। Śānti P., LXXIV. 17 (i).

(iii) Attainment of sovereignty by means of valbur:—
   वाहुपीयविजित राज्यं। Śānti P., LXXIV. 18.

(iv) Attainment of fame and glory based on the conquest of the earth which was unconquered before and it was based on the king's devotion to (sva) dharma (i.e.) kṣatra-dharma, (cf. Śānti Parva, LXXIV. 19) as well as to Brāhmaṇas:—

1. Śānti Parva., LXXIV. 13.
2. Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta, line 8.
3. Ibid., line 24.
4. Ibid., line 15.
5. Ibid., lines 29-30,
   cf, the Coin-legends on the obverse sides of Kāca type, Standard type, Archer type, & Aśvamedha type etc,
Brahmanism had ceased to be predominant religion after the fall of the Śuṅgas. But "with the consolidation of the power of the Imperial Guptas in Northern India the situation changes at once. The majority of records discovered upto date are Brahmanical and not Jain or Buddhist. It cannot be denied for a moment that State patronage went to Brāhmaṇas only, though there is no direct evidence to prove this statement. The indirect evidence is to be found in the five Damodarpur and the four Faridpur plates, all of which refer to the settlements of land on Hindu Gods or Brāhmaṇas"1.

Fa-hien also noticed the decline of Buddhism and the rise of flourishing nature of Brahmanism2. Despite their leanings towards Brahmanism, Gupta rulers were tolerant towards Buddhism and Jainism. Prof. R. D. Banerji observes that "They are clearly different from the Vardhanas of Thanesar in this respect"3. While commenting on the religious Assembly at Kanauj organised by Harṣa, Dr. Mookerji observes: "It was also on that occasion that Harṣa unfortunately exhibited some amount of bigotry and intolerance not in keeping with the general tenor of his policy and administration, or the wide-hearted charity that distinguished him as a man. At that Assembly, as we have already seen, the emperor cast a slur on the Brahminical religion in many ways....The king's intolerant attitude at the Assembly was answered by a plot on his own life designed by Brahmins who were in revolt...."4. Similarly his contemporary ruler of East India, Śašānka is known as 'the enemy and oppressor of Buddhism'5. Thus we notice the social and religious tension based on mutual rivalry.

5. Watters 'On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (1961), II, p. 115
The Viṣṇudharmottaram, which represents this epoch of Indian history, also refers to fierce fight between Kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas which led to decline and disaster in Bhāratavarṣa¹. Dr. Ishvari Prasada asserts that “The remarks of Alberuni about the high character of the Hindus are corroborated by an other Arab traveller, Al-Idrisi............. But India immersed in philosophy and bent upon a separatist policy was sure to fall an easy prey to foreign invaders........”². Different attempts were made to establish unity in the country. The thinkers suggested different remedies to cure the nation suffering from the political, social and religious ills. But before the emergence of the national forces of integration, the Turkish avalanche engulfed the sacred country. Pratiharas and Candellas made a bold bid to present a concerted and stable state to avert the national calamity. But time and fate had their way through the faults of the nation. It is aptly portrayed by the Hindu thinkers as Kali-age. Aho! kālasya citrātā.

The Gupta empire during the closing years of the reign of Kumāragupta I fell on evil days and his death sounded the death-knell of the dynasty, though Skandagupta saved it awhile from disruption and extinction. The internal disension and external invasions sapped the vitality of the Gupta Empire. There seems to be a war of succession among the Gupta princes after the death of Kumāragupta I (cf. vyapetya sarvāṇ manujendra-putrān lakṣmī svayam yam varayāūcakāra, Junagarh Rock Inscription, verse 5).

The Skanda Purāṇa refers to a Magadhan ruler Budha, whose epoch comes to 493 A.D. He is stated to be an incarnation of Viṣṇu, the defender of faith (dharma-pātā). He is credited to have accomplished notable deeds. One of such great achievements was his victory over violent and fierce people styled Jyotirbindumukhās, who caused terror in Magadha. They were the Hūnas, who are mentioned in the Junagarh Rock Inscription of Skandagupta as Mlecchas. Mleccha-mukha is a synonym of copper. Hence Jyotirbindu-mukhas or the coppery-faces resembling the lustrous spark of the Sun or fire (jyotirbindu) corresponds to

1. Viṣṇudharmottaram I, Chap., LXXIV.
Hūnas. Toramāṇa, the Hūna ruler, is equated to the Sun resembling the colour of gold purified by fire.

We also know that the Gupta empire was devastated by the Hūnas after the death of Skandagupta. Budhagupta, again, appeared like Viṣṇu to save the country. Maṇjuśri Mūlakalpa also seems to recognise the exalted sovereignty of Budhagupta. Dr. Jayaswal holds that “Budhagupta’s reign closes about 500 A.D. The disruption of the Gupta Empire follows his death”. The Eran Pillar Inscription of Budhagupta (165 G.E. = dated 484-85 A.D.) shows the hold of the Guptas in that region about this time. Eran Inscription of Bhānugupta and Goparāja (191 G.E. = 510 A.D.) probably refers to Hūna war in this region. Eran Stone Boar Inscription of Toramāṇa dated in the regnal year one of Toramāṇa shows that Airikīna Viṣṇaya had now passed into the hands of the Hūnas. Taking these three inscriptions in view, we learn that in this region Gupta rulers had to measure swords with the violent Hūnas, who were vanquished by Budha (Gupta) about 498 A.D.

Budhagupta was succeeded by Bhānugupta, whose inscription had been found at Eran. After the death of Budhagupta, Toramāṇa defeated and forced Dhanyakīna to acknowledge his suzerainty. Hence Bhānugupta rushed to Eran with his feudatory Goparāja to its rescue. Goparāja died in the lap of victory. It is evident that Mahārāja Bhānugupta was victorious against the Hūna leader.

The Eran Pillar Inscription of Bhānugupta and Goparāja proclaims the heroic character and the valour deeds of Bhānu-

2. Gwalior Stone Inscription of Mihirakula of year 15, verse 2.
3. I.H.I., pp. 38-39; Dr. Jayaswal observes that “The MMK gives him the popular and well-known (viśruta) name ‘U’. Prakāśāditya’s coins bear the initial U. below the king’s picture. Thus the MMK’s king ‘His Majesty’ (Śrīmān) U. is the Prakāśāditya of the coin”.
4. Ibid., p. 39.
gupta. Dr. R. C. Majumdar holds, that "The small pillar now worshipped as a Śiva-linga on which the record is engraved may thus be regarded as a memorial Saṭī-pillar (V.G.A., p. 175)". But it seems to be a victory-pillar (jayastambha), which should proclaim the deeds of victors. Such pillars of victory commemorating the glorious achievements of the conquerors were set up in the battle-field. Thus the Eran pillar of Bhānugupta marks the battle-field upholding the glorious traditions of victory associated with the great Gupta rulers. But it marks the close of an epoch characterised by 'Prasara-dharaṇi-bandhaḥ' (i.e. the age of unity).

The epoch of Kali—the age of conflicts, disunion, disruption and disorganisation—begins. Kings of Kāmarūpa threw off the yoke of the Guptas. They fought with their neighbours, the Gaṇḍas who were enemies of the Maukhariṣ. Gaṇḍas had friendly relations with the Later Guptas. Vardhanas and Maukhariṣ became friends. Kāmarūpa ruler sought alliance with Harṣa. The friendship between Harṣa and Bhāskaravarma ultimately resulted in the suppression of the Gaṇḍas. Thus the political system of the post-Gupta period was marked by factious politics, which led to internecine warfare. It all happened when the Arab invaders were knocking at the door.

The Viṣṇudharmottaram, too, like the other texts of the class, sketches the age of decline (styled Kali-age) in Bhāratavarṣa. It refers to fierce fight between Kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas, which led to crisis (Viṣṇudharmottaram, Khaṇḍa I, Chap. LXXIV). Brāhmaṇas defeated by the Kṣatriyas went to Saśāṅka, champion of the Brāhmaṇas. There are references to Śūra and Pramiti, who stood as the champions of Āryāvarta (Viṣṇudha. I. ch. 74.). The "Viṣṇudharmottaram according to several eminent authorities originally formed a portion of the Garuḍa Purāṇa".

1. Skanda, I. ii. 35.2-3
Yugadharmanas with allusions to struggle between Kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas. It also refers to Śūra. Modern scholars took no notice of such glorious kings, whose accounts have been furnished by the Śūtas attached to the royal courts. The accounts of Śaśānka and Pramiti found in the different Purānic texts are based on the reliable historical traditions followed by the Śūtas.¹

Thus an attempt has been made here to focus important light on the post-Gupta history based on the Purānic studies.

In addition to the varmśānucarita (account of the royal dynasties of the past) which is one of the five characteristic features (Paścā-lakṣaṇas) of the Purāṇas, we also find that the Purāṇas deal with the glorification of the pious rulers of great celebrity:

देवानां च मुनीनां च भूपानां महात्मनाम् ||
महिमा भूलते लोकं पुराणेषु सहलस्य: ||²

As such, it is not surprising to find the accounts of glorious kings like Śaśānka (Soma), Vikramaśīla (Dharmapāla), Āma (Nāgabhata II), Mihira-Bhoja, Pramiti (Dhaṅga) and kāśīrāja Candradeve. The Purāṇas also throw valuable light on the Turkish conquest of India.³

1. A.H.I., pp. 16-17.
   Dr. V. S. Pathak discusses, here, the legacy of the Śūtas in the development of the historical traditions. He holds that the Śūta was one of the most important court-officials credited with the composition and preservation of royal genealogies.

2. Skanda, II. vii. 19. 70 (ii)—71 (i)

CHAPTER II

PURĀṆAS AS THE SOURCE OF POST-GUPTA HISTORY

While dealing with the chronology of the Purānic chapters, Dr. Hazra discusses the constitution of the Skanda Purāṇa divided into different khaṇḍas (sections) and upa-khaṇḍas (sub-sections). He concludes: “The above information regarding the different khaṇḍas of the present Skanda show that at least some of these khaṇḍas contain Smṛti-chapters which are fairly old. For instance, the Puruṣottama-kṣetra-māhātmya contains chapters which must be dated earlier than 1300 A.D.; Kāśi-khaṇḍa has chapters (especially 1, 4, 35 & 38) which are older than 1300 A.D.; the Revā-khaṇḍa contains chapters (especially Chap. 159) which are earlier than 1300 A.D.; the Nāgara-khaṇḍa contains chapters (especially chaps. 177, 178, 215-222 and 266) which are earlier than 1200 A.D.; and the Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa has chapters of which some (especially chaps. 19, 205-207 & 336 of Prabhāsa-kh. i.) are earlier than 1050 A.D.”

“As to the upper limit of the date of the present Skanda, it can be said that there seems to be little in it which can be dated earlier than 700 A.D. At least, the frequent Tāntric traces tend to create such an impression”. Dr. Hazra concludes his observations on the chronology of the Skanda Purāṇa with the remarks: “Though the present Skanda is merely a part of the bigger one, it is by no means a small work. So, for want of sufficient space a detailed analysis of its contents has not been attempted here”. This oceanic text of the Skanda Purāṇa gives very important information relating to the different epochs of Ancient Indian History. The Skanda Purāṇa makes valuable contribution to the political system, and social organisation of the early medieval India.

1. PRHRC., pp. 163-66.
Study of the Skanda Purāṇa belies the statement that the custom of recording new dynastic history ceased with the early Guptas, after whom no important dynasty or monarch of India has been mentioned or described in the Purāṇas. This proves that from the Gupta period the Purānic tradition took, in practice, a new trend which culminated in turning the Purāṇas into books of myths and legends and Smṛti topics with highly imperfect and sometimes forged, genealogical lists”\(^1\). It was pointed out, as early as 1929, by Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri that the Vastrāpatha-kṣetra Māhātmya refers to the abdication of Bhoja\(^2\), and it engaged the attention of Dr. R. S. Tripathi\(^3\) and Dr. B. N. Puri\(^4\) who further discussed the point. It is surprising that the scholars failed to take notice of Bhoja, one of the most remarkable personality of the early medieval India. Skanda also refers to Kāśīrāja Candra-deva who is none else than the Gahaḥawāla ruler of Kanauj. Similarly the Magadhan ruler named Budha, who is stated to be the saviour of Madhyadeśa against the onslaughts of the ‘Jyotirbindumukhas’ (= Mlecchas), seems to be the Gupta emperor, Budhagupta\(^5\). Pramiti is eulogised, in almost identical tone, as the saviour of Madhyadeśa, in different Purānic works viz., Matsya, Vāyu, Brahmāṇḍa, Skanda, as well as in the Viṣṇudharmottaraś. Dr. V. S. Agrawal discussed, at length, the personality of Pramiti identifying him with Candragupta II. Skanda also mentions Āma, as a ruler of Kanauj. He has been identified with Yaśo-varman or his son by some and with Nāgabhaṭa II by others. In addition to these well-known monarchs of Ancient Indian annals, we get a reference to king (rājā) Rājavarman (or Rājavar-dhana) devoted to the worship of the Sun (Sk., I.ii.43.14). We know that Rājavarman, son of Naravardhana, was a great devotee of the Sun (parmādityabhaktamahārāja Śrī Rājavar-

4. T.H.K., pp.245-246.
It seems that the two rulers mentioned in the Skanda Purāṇa and the Banskhera Copper Plate Inscription are identical. It was the exalted character of the king's devotion to the Sun, which led the Skanda Purāṇa to uphold the 'Sūrya-bhakti' of Rājavadhana (= Rajyavadhana). The Mārkanṭeya Purāṇa also refers to him.

The Chapter 74 of the Viṣṇudharmottaram (Khaṇḍa I) is also very important for the reconstruction of Indian history. While mentioning some of the most striking points relating to Chap. 74 of the Viṣṇudharmottaram, Dr. Hazra says: "Chap. 74—condition of Bhāratavarṣa at the end of each Yuga; and Viṣṇu’s appearance in human forms (such as those of Pramiti, Bhīmaratha, Vāsudeva and Arjuna and Kalkin) for relieving the earth of her burden. This chapter gives us information regarding the literary activity of Vālmīki and Vyāsa..."18. The said chapter specifically, refers to the 'avasthā' (critical state)3 of Bhāratavarṣa in its age of decline and decay (Bhāratevarṣe parikṣiṇe yuge).4 Mārkanṭeya, the celebrated sage, ascribes the social degeneration to the (mutual) wars. At the end of the Kṛta yuga there arose a fierce fight between Kṣatriyas as well as Brāhmaṇas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras; and the three varṇas were vanquished by the Kṣatriyas in the battle. The Brāhmaṇas asked the Kṣatriyas, as to, how the latter despite their small numbers, defeated the former.5 The Kṣatriyas replied that they were led by a single commander of the army, well-versed in all the śastras and astras (weapons of war).

1. Banskhera Copper Plate Inscription of Harṣa, line 1.
3. Apte, Sanskrit-English Dictionary, (Delhi, 1959), p.62. Avasthā in its general sense does mean state or condition. But in the context of the parikṣiṇa Yuga, its meaning as critical state seems to be most appropriate.
4. V. Dh., I. 74.2.
5. Ibid., I.74.3 : युगे सुगे परिवृत्तेऽक्ष यादव भारते ।
 संप्राप्तेऽविवर्तति प्रायो वर्णोऽत्मा जना: ॥
6. Ibid., I. 74.5-7.
with firm faith in his leadership. On the other hand the Brāhmaṇas met the disaster at every step due to their differences of thought, though they swelled in numbers. The Brāhmaṇas, then, went to the refuge of Śaṅkha styled ‘dvijēśa’ and ‘Soma’:

The pious king named Soma directed the Brāhmaṇas to go to Prayāga where lived a Bhārgava-Brāhmaṇa famous for his learning and conduct. His son named Pramati was skilled in all the śāstras with proficiency in the Dhanurveda representing the Lord Viṣṇu. They were to appoint him their leader, who would accomplish their task by destroying, in battle, all the Kṣatriyas engaged in transgressing the law. Thus Pramati is aptly styled the most exalted supporter of Dharma. The account further takes us from this stage to the end of the Kali-age, when Kalki is stated to be the destroyer of the Mlecchas.

The whole account throws very important light on the political and cultural history of ancient India, with special reference to the following points:

1. Y. Dh., I. 74.8: एकोयस्मांक विजयेच्छेन्द्रनारिरति विवृत:।
   सर्वशास्त्राङ्कुशालो वर्य तत्स्य मले स्खिता:॥
2. Ibid., I. 74.9: भवतां बहुविचित्वाध्य तत्स्मात्तपे पदे इंहामो विपुलं सौयं नातं कार्यं विषारणा॥
3. Ibid., I. 74.10.
4. Ibid., I. 74.11-14: स तान्वात्र धर्मो द्विको राजो द्विजोत्तमानं।
   प्रयापो भार्गवो विज्ञानाध्यायसंभित ग्रंथ:॥ ११ ॥
   शूर इत्येव विध्याती नित्यं वसति धार्मिक:।
   प्रमतिनाम तत्स्यारित पुत्रो धर्मवृक्त: वर:॥ १२ ॥
   सर्वशास्त्रांश्चकुशालो धर्मवृक्ष परामण:।
   विज्ञानाध्यायिनां युग्मकार्यरिविज्ञाने॥ १३ ॥
   कुला सेना प्रजेतारं तं तु कुलाज्ञानवर्जन:।
   निमर्यादायेण सवान्तिरांस्तित्वविज्ञाय॥ १४ ॥
5. Ibid., I. 74.15-40.
(i) Śaśānka as the champion of the Brāhmaṇas and Brahmancial culture.

(ii) Personality and achievements of Pramati—the hero of Madhyadeśa.


(iv) Lastly, the nature of the Kali-age—the deluge.
Chapter III

RĀJYAVARDHANA

Though the Skanda Purāṇa does not contain dynastic lists of the ancient kings, yet it makes stray and incidental references to a few important kings of ancient India. King Rājyavardhana is stated to be a great devotee of the Sun\(^1\). We know that Rājyavardhana (I), son of Naravardhana (and grandfather of Prabhākaravardhana) was also an exalted devotee of the Sun (Paramāditya-bhaktō mahārāja Śrī Rājyavardhanas\(^3\)). It seems that the two royal devotees of the Sun are one and the same. It was the celebrity of the king’s devotion to the Bhagavān Bhānu that led the Purānic writers to uphold the ‘Sūrya-bhakti’ of the king Rājyavardhana (= Rājyavardhana).

The Mārkaṇḍeṣṭya Purāṇa\(^8\), however, gives an elaborate account of the reign of Rājyavardhana, a pious ruler and a devout worshipper of the Sun.

While glorifying the Sun, the Mārkaṇḍeṣṭya Purāṇa refers to king Rājyavardhana. He was a famous ruler who was devoted to the protection of his country and his people. No pestent visited them, nor sickness, nor the fear that comes from serpents, nor was there fear of drought there, while Rājyavardhana was king. He offered up great sacrifices, and gave gifts to those who asked. He was a learned king who had studied all the Vedas. Thus he was an exalted king devoted to piety and protection of his country\(^4\).

With the advent of the old age, he felt the urge of Kāla (Death). Hence he wanted to abdicate the throne in favour of

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   cf. Mārkaṇḍeṣṭya (Jivanand Edn., Calcutta, 1889),
   CX : 36 (i).

2. Banskhera Copper Plate Inscription of Harṣa, line 1.
   Madhuban Copper Plate Ins. of Harṣa, i. i

3. Mārkaṇḍeṣṭya, (S. V. Press, Bombay Edn.), Ch. CV

his son for retiring to the forest in his old age. But his people and subordinate princes requested the king Rājyavardhana not to resort to the forest, as it would cause suffering to the whole people. Thus the citizens and his feudatory kings dissuaded him not to abdicate. The people and ministers appealed to him, and appealed again and again, but all in vain. Rājyavardhana did not give up his determination to take up his abode in the forest.

Then, all the people—his dependants and the citizens—propitiating the Sun by performing many religious rites in the forest of Kāmarūpa, which had the beautiful shrine of the Sun. King Rājyavardhana’s subjects besought of the Sun that the king might reign ten thousand years more, and the Sun granted it. But the king was distressed to know that he would live alone, but not his subjects. Hence the king also went to Kāmarūpa and there, in that Siddhakṣetra, he worshipped the Sun, who was pleased to grant a boon according to his desire. On gaining the boon, the king went back to his capital and ruled his kingdom protecting his people righteously.

A Bhārgava named Pramiti is mentioned to have sung this song with astonishment:

“Lo, the power of faith in the Sun, in that king Rājyavardhana has been born for the increase of life of his own people as well as of himself”:

भानुकर्त्तराशक्तिवदः राज्यवर्धनः: 1
ब्राह्मणशीतां जाति: स्वजनस्य तथा तत्वात्मम: 113

It is to be noted that Rājyavardhana is merely styled ‘rāja’ here. Thus we see that the account of Rājyvardhana’s life and achieve-

1. Markaṇḍeya CVI. 23.
2. Ibid., CVI. 24-46.
3. Ibid., CVI. 47-58.
4. Ibid., CVI. 58-59 ; Kāmarūpa was a famous Bhāskara-kṣetra cf. Skanda, I.ii.45.133; I.ii.64.142, 159-160; VII.i.139.22.
5. Markaṇḍeya, CVII. 3-5
6. Ibid., CVII. 27-34
7. Ibid., CVII. 35
8. Ibid., CVII. 36
ments is mixed up with the mythological account of the royal dynasties of the past (Vamśānucaritam\(^1\) or Vamśānukramaṇa\(^3\)).

The inscriptions of Harṣa mention only the name of Rājayavardhana I styled 'Parmādityabhaktah (Mahāraja Śri Rājayavardhanas)\(^2\). We do not find details about the career and achievements of Rājayavardhana I elsewhere. Bāṇa is not interested in him. But he was a famous ruler and this is proved by a tradition recorded in the Skanda Purāṇa. Like the Mārkaṇḍeeya Purāṇa, Skanda also glorifies the Sun and his worship at Kāmarūpa. It observes:

\[\text{तत्स्तः कामल्ये या कला नाथ बर्तते।} \]
\[\text{राजवर्धनराज्ञा मातसाधिता च जनः:} \]
\[\text{गुरा।} \]
\[\text{तत्र च कलया मानो सदास स्वातमहुर्मिति।} \]
\[\text{ततस्तथेति देवेन श्रोणे तुट्टेन भारत।} \]

This reference to the propitiation of the Sun at Kāmarūpa by king Rājayardhana I and his people is fully corroborated by the account of Rājayavardhana I found in the Mārkaṇḍeeya Purāṇa. Both the Purāṇic texts maintain the celebrity of Kāmarūpa as a Raviṅṣtera.

The glory of king Rājayavardhana I was well-set in the subsequent period of history, as Pramiti sang this 'gāthā' relating to the Rājayavardhana-carita. Pramiti was himself a great ruler of the early medieval India.

Probably it was this association of Rājayavardhana I with Kāmarūpa that inspired the ruler of Kāmarupa—Kumāra, Lord of Prāgjyotiśa—to extend his hand of friendship towards Harṣa.\(^4\)

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1. cf., Mārkaṇḍeeya, Chapters CVIII–CXII
2. Banskhera Copper-plate Inscription of Harṣa, line 1.
4. Harṣacarita, VII, pp. 288-289
CHAPTER IV

ŚASAŃKA AND HIS TIMES

The history of ancient India from the six century B.C. to about 320 A.D. which marks the dawn of Candra (Gupta I) is the story of religious conflicts between Brahmanism and Buddhism. The animosity between these two religious sects was aggravated when Aśoka banned the performance of sacrifices! The Mauryas witnessed Brahmanical revival—revival of the Vedic sacrifices during the age of Śuṅga-Satavāhana kings. The age of Kaniṣka, again, was marked by the growth of Buddhism and the Sanskrit Buddhist texts—Divyāvadāna (cf., Śārdula-karṇāvadāna), Lalitaśistara, Mahāvastu, Avadānaśataka etc.—deprecate Brāhmaṇas and Brahmanical mode of life and thought. It led to a reaction and revolt against the ‘Nagnas’ i.e. Buddhists and Jains.

Thus these sectarian rivalries marred the political and cultural life of Ancient India before the rise of the Gupta empire. The dawn of the Gupta Age marks the rise of ‘vikaitavo-dharmah’ based on truth and piety i.e. Bhāgavatism. It recognised the Buddha as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. Thus a glorious epoch of samavāya was established by the enlightened rulers—Samudragupta, and Candragupta II. It laid the foundation of the Golden era of culture and art. But the fall of the Gupta empire witnessed an age of disintegration. It had been aptly styled Kali Age which engulfed the whole country. Kali means conflict and, as such, political strife and religious conflicts raised their monstrous heads to devour the strength and stability of Bhārati-śakti. The Purāṇas

    Awasthi, Rājapūta Rājavarman, pp, 13-16.
which contain significant allusions to Soma-rāja or Śaśāṅka explicitly tell us that the important limbs of Hindu polity viz, Brahma and Kaśatra were at war. It led to the age of decline styled Kaśṭa-yuga marked by darkness (lokeṇdhakārīkṛte)². The rise of Prabhākara (Sun or Prabhākaravardhana) strengthened the social institutions or Varṇāśrama-vyavasthā³. But the coming of Parama-saugata Rājayavardhana seems to have reversed the religious policy of his ancestors who were devout worshippers of the Sun⁴. Parama-saugata Rājayavardhana seems to have fought against the king Soma⁵, champion of Brāhmaṇas. Buddhists took keen interest in placing Harṣa on the throne;⁶ for Harṣa was asked by them to revive the glory of Buddhism⁷. Thus the age of Harṣa and Śaśāṅka also marks an era of conflict among the champions of Buddhism and Brahmanism. Māheśvaras were hostile to Buddhists, as observes Dr. B. N. Srivastava⁸.

Prof. C. D. Chatterjee observes that, “The history of Śaśāṅka forms an interesting study by itself. Like a comet he flashes through the political firmament and eventually fades away, leaving nothing but a trail of glory behind”⁹. But his heroic character

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1. cf. Śānti Parva, L.X.XIII. 5, 12, 28.
2. Harha Stone Ins. of Iśānavarman, line 14.
3. Banskhera Copper Plate Ins. of Harṣavardhana, line 3:
   वर्षाचिन्मिव्यवस्थापत्तप्रवृततिः
4. Ibid., line 5.
5. Ibid., lines 1-4.
6. M.M.K., pp. 634/14-16: भविष्यति च तदा काले मध्यवेशे नृपो बर:।
   रक्षारघीतत्तत्तमा वैश्ववृत्तिमन्वयतः।
   शासनेषु तथा शक सोमायां स समी नृप।।

Here Rājayavardhana is mentioned as equal in strength to Soma (Śaśāṅka).
9. Prof., C. D. Chatterjee, Foreword, Śaśāṅka, King of Gauḍa, by Dr. B. N. Srivastava.
and glimpses of his glorious deeds are preserved in the Purāṇas. Śaśānka was a great ruler who championed the cause of Brāhmaṇas and Brahmanical culture. His court witnessed the redaction of many Purāṇas which have preserved the relics of his glorious achievements. But his name, Soma, is mixed with his namesake, Soma (or Cāndra).

His original name was Soma as we know from the Ārya Mañjuśri Mūlakalpa, as well as from the Purāṇas—the Skanda, the Garuḍa, the Varāha, and from the Viṣṇudharmottaram.

The Purāṇas have preserved a few details about the personality of this great ruler who launched a vigorous and aggressive policy for the supremacy of Madhyadeśa, though he failed in his venture.¹

**PURĀṆAS AND SOMA**

Purāṇas, as the sources for the history of Śaśānka², have not been considered so far by any scholar. So far only Buddhist writers—the Chinese Pilgrim, Yuan-chwang (Hiuen Tsiang) and the author of Ārya Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa—and Bāṇa, the biographer of Harṣa as well as inscriptions and coins have been studied for the history of this great ruler. Bāṇa as well as the Buddhist writers are biased and prejudiced against Soma (Śaśānka) who had to suffer from the terrible ills of life in hell for the hostile acts against Buddhism as we know from the Ārya Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa³. The Purāṇas also shower encomium on the personality

1. MMK., p. 634.
3. B. N. Srivastava, Śaśānka, pp. 27-28; the pages are numbered according to J.U.P.H.S. (N.S.), 1962, Vol. X, Parts I-II, pp. 27 ff. The article is published in the from of a book with the foreword of Prof. C. D. Chatterjee without changing the numbers of pages as are given in the Journal.
of Soma styled Dvijarāja who was crowned as a great ruler after the performance of Rājasūya sacrifice.

VIṢṆUDHARMOTTARAM

The importance of the Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa as a source of history has not been properly assessed. Chap. 74 of the Viṣṇudharmottaram (khaṇḍa I) makes very important allusions to Śaśāṅka, or Rāja Soma, who represents the celebrated Gauḍādhīpa of Harṣacarita of Bāṇa. It also refers to Śūra and Pramiti, the two notable rulers of the post-Gupta era.

The importance of the entire chapter of the Viṣṇudharmottaram (chap. 74, khaṇḍa I) supplemented with that of the Gauḍā Purāṇa (Section I, chapter 215), the former being an elaborate version of the latter, presents the picture of the age of Śaśāṅka.

We give the Gauḍā-version below:

प्रलयं जगती वक्ष्ये तत्सवं श्रृणु शौचक् I
चन्द्रपुरम् सहस्लं उपयक्ष्य कस्तुस्तम् ॥ I. 215. 4
देवतादाापरादिद युगायस्तम्या निबोधः मे ॥
कुते धर्मवंशवाभावं सत्यं दानं तपो दया ॥ I. 215. 5
धर्मपालद हृदिष्णैति सन्तुष्टा शानिनो नरः I
चन्द्रपुरं सहस्लं नरा जीवतिः वें तदा ॥ I. 215. 6
कुतान्ते काविप्रेमिन्न्या विषूर्णार्शः जितांतः ॥
शुरुवालिति वलो विष्णू रक्षांसि च जमान हूँ ॥ I. 215. 7
वेतायुने विपादः सत्यवानविरात्मकः ॥
नरा वजप्रारतस्मिन्तत्या कुशतो उचप संगह ॥ I. 215. 8
रक्षी हृदिनाः: पूज्यो नरा वजप्रारुधः ॥
तत्व विज्ञुप्रभीमर्म: क्षिपितसता राक्षसानहृः ॥ I. 215. 9

Viṣṇu-dharmottara version runs thus:

अस्मितस भारते ववं परिशीणे दूषे तथा ॥
अवस्तमा यह्वेद्वायुस्तम्ये व्यव्यायुपहृतम् ॥ I. 74. 2

माहांस्येऽवाच—दूषे दूषे परिशीणे ववं यादव भारते ॥
संग्रामं विनस्त्रिता प्रारं सर्वार्तमी जनाः ॥ I. 74. 3

वववाच—
अस्मात् ववंयुगादुग्राह्यवद्वद्वद्वितीयं युगवादम् ॥
तेव्रस्यं श्रृणुमित्रश्चामि संग्रामं भृगुवादम् ॥ I. 74. 4
Thus by comparing the two Purānic versions quoted above we notice that the verses 2-4 of the Viṣṇudharmottarām run like prologue to the drama of strife (saṁgrāmam), which led to the national calamity in ancient India; verse 7 of the Garuḍa-Purāṇa
has been elaborately explained so as to introduce the personality of Śaśānka. While doing so the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ discusses the causes that led to the defeat of the Brāhmaṇas at the hands of the Kṣatriyas. The former suffered from their inconsistency of thought; and their leadership, too, was defective. Thus moved by the Kṣatriyas, Brāhmaṇas approached Śaśānka and probably persuaded him to assume their leadership. Śaśānka, however, declined, but he sent them to Śūra living at Prayāga. The ‘Śūraścāṭibalo Viṣṇu’ of the Garuḍa Purāṇa has been translated by Mr. M. N. Dutt as ‘the valarous Viṣṇu of mighty prowess’. The celebrated translator, or even the history itself, then did not know about the historical personality of Śūra, which is upheld by the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ. He is specifically mentioned to be a Bhārgava Brāhmaṇa, and Viṣṇu-incarnate according to the Garuḍa Purāṇa. Śūra is known to be the founder of the Śūra dynasty. Between Śūra and Bhīmaratha, the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ has again inserted the name of Pramīti, the exalted supporter of Dharma. The manner in which Śaśānka, coupled with his epithets ‘dvijēśa’ and Soma, is mentioned and the complimentary title of ‘dharmaṁśa’ against the derogatory epithets of ‘durmedhaḥ’ and ‘duṣṭakarmānucārinam’ used for him in the Buddhist text reveal the repugnant mind of the Buddhists. On the other hand the Purāṇakāra was zealous enough in upholding the magnanimous character of Śaśānka, whose character has been tarnished by the Buddhist bias of Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa as well as by Bāna due to his partisanship for his patron, Harṣa, the adversary of Śaśānka. It is surprising that Dr. Hazra failed to take notice of Śaśānka, Śūra, Bhīmaratha and Pramīti.

The subsequent portions of the Garuḍa Purāṇa as well as the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ are associated with the ancient learning and literature. Hence, it is evident that the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ has modified the contents. It follows Garuḍa in giving an account of the literary activities of Vyāsa as far as Vedas and the Mahābhārata are concerned. It does not contain the list of the Purāṇas and the Upa-purāṇas found in the Garuḍa (I. 215.11-20). On

2. M.M.K., p. 634, lines 8, 10.
the other hand the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ glorifies the Mahābhārata as well as Rāmākhyāna ( Viṣṇudha. I. 74. 21-31 ) followed by the enumeration of the fourteen Vidyās ( Viṣṇudha. I. 74. 32 ) as well as the philosophical systems of Śāṅkhya, Yoga, Pañcarātra, Śaiva-Paśupata and 'Kṛṣṇa-paścaka' ( Viṣṇudha. I. 74. 45 ). Garuḍa enumerates 18 Vidyās ( I. 215. 21 ).

The discourse on the Vidyās is followed by the picture of the Kali-age. Garuḍa account ( I. 215. 23-37 ) does not deal with the achievements of Kalki, the annihilator of the Mlecchas ( Viṣṇudha., I. 74. 40-43 ).

Chapter 74 of the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ (I) comes to an end with the account addressed to Narendra-Candra ( I. 74. 75 ) which we often find occurring in the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ in the vocative case. Śaṅkha was also known by the name of Narendra. Thus Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ takes special cognizance of Śaṅkha while discussing the age of the crisis and catastrophe in Indian history. At the end of the Golden Age there ensued fierce fighting among the Kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas assisted by the Vaiṣyas.

The subsequent period of Indian history is marked by mutual fighting among the rulers of the country. Embossed in Kali ( strife ), they lost sense of unity which was essential for the preservation of Dharma, threatened by the Mlecchas. To my mind, the entire Chapter 74 of the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ seems to discuss the question as to "how this ( sacred ) country has been filled with the Mlecchas". The Skanda Purāṇa does not discuss the question, which seems to be explained by Mārkaṇḍeya in the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ.

The whole chapter is very important for the study of Indian history from 7th to 12th century A. D. We propose to discuss the following points:

1. Sk., V. iii. 5. 14 :

   कथं मद्देवं समाजीणों देवोवं दिःशत्म ।
   एतदाचक्ष्रं मां प्राप्तृ मार्कण्डयेव महामाले ॥

St. Sk. Pt. I, pp 220-231
(1) Śāṣāṅka the patron of Brāhmaṇas and himself a Brāhmaṇa.
(2) Śūra-dynasty.
(3) Pramiti—his historical personality.
(4) Nature of the Kali-age.
(5) Rāma-cult and the glory of the Rāmakṛṣṇa.

Śāṣāṅka—Rājā Soma—the Dvījā

Śāṣāṅka, or Rājā Soma, styled ‘dvijēśa’, who attracted the afflicted Brāhmaṇas to his refuge, must have attained to great celebrity by way of his heroic achievements. Though the Purāṇa does not refer to his capital or country, yet it seems to be situated at a sufficient distance from Prayāga, where the Brāhmaṇas were to seek the shelter of Śūra. Thus this allusion to ‘Śāṣāṅkaṁ dvijēśam somaṁ’ corresponds to the great ‘Gauḍādhipa’ of the same name.

The Ārya Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa, the celebrated Buddhist text, also refers to king Soma as a champion of Brāhmaṇas, who was himself a Brāhmaṇa:

सोमाभ्यो हिंजाभ्यो महामोगी भवे हसो।
भोगान् हिंजातिषु वसता वेण राज्यं कथा ते तद्व ॥१॥

Again, the Buddhist treatise refers to king Soma, the unique hero, ruling over the countries situated on the banks of the Ganges, extending even upto Vārāṇasi:

सोमाभ्योषि लतो राजा एकवीरोभिष्यति।
गंगातीर्यकवल्ल बाराणस्यामेत: परम् ॥२॥

King Soma (Rājā Somākhyo) corresponding to Śaṅka, is identical with Śaṅka, and Rājā Soma of the Viṣṇudharmottarām, which unlike the Harṣacarita employing puns or some ‘veiled’ statements relating to Gauḍādhipa, explicitly refers to Śaṅka, alias Rājā Soma, the Dvijēśa, i.e. the lord (or the champion) of the Brāhmaṇas. It was certainly the heroic character (ekaviratā) that drew the hordes of the Brāhmaṇas to him for help. It justi-

2. Ibid, p. 634.
3. V. Dh., I, 74. 10.
fies the epithets of ‘dvijeśaḥ’ or ‘dvijāhvayo’ associated with rāja Soma.

NARENDRA GUPTA, NARENDRĀDITYA, NARENDRA CANDRA

Dr. Buhler mentioned (in the Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I, p. 70) that in one manuscript of Harṣacarita the name of the Gaṇḍakī king is stated as Narendragupta (or Narendṛāditya). Dr. Basāka suggests that “the compound word ‘durnarendrābhībhavaroṣitaḥ’ meaning ‘enraged by the humiliation offered by that wicked Narendra, used by Bāṇa as an adjective to Harṣavardhana, refers under the garb of a pun to Śaśānka.”

The Viṣṇudharmottaram is stated to be recited by Mārkandeya in the court of Vajra, styled Vajravāṃśa-Candra. The Purāṇa repeatedly addresses the king as Narendra-Candra as well as Narendra, Narendra-dvijendra and Narendrendra. In addition to Chapter 74 (of Khaṇḍa I) where we find specific reference to Śaśānka or Soma rāja, elsewhere too, we find allusions to Śaśānka (Śaśānkasya mahātmnaḥ) as well as its synonyms viz., Candraḥ, Somaḥ and Śaśānko.” Here Narendra-dvijendra deserves particular notice. Chapter 132 of Khaṇḍa I, dealing with the account of the rise of Moon (Candraodaya), showers much encomium on Śaśānka, the dispeller of darkness (Kali-timira). The Chapter concludes with the observations:

2. Ibid., p. 138.
3. V. Dh. III. 221. 110.
4. Ibid., I. 144.23; I. 250.36; III. 18.63; III. 25.75; III. 93.47.
5. Ibid., I. 125.29.
6. Ibid., III. 196.1.
7. Ibid., I. 249.18.
8. Ibid., I. 71.8.
9. Ibid., III. 8.20 (ii).
10. Ibid., I. 132.78.
11. Ibid., I. 132.30-34 cf. undated Udayagiri Ins. of Candra Gupta II, V. I, which refers to Candra Gupta (II) as a wonderful light which shines like the Sun, radiant with internal light upon the earth, day and night.
These scattered references to the glory and greatness of Sañjña-Candra exhibit the knowledge of the Viṣṇudharmottaram relating to the rise of Sañjña.

The Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa as well as the Viṣṇudharmottaram give a vivid picture of northern India just before the rise of Sañjña. According to the Buddhist text, “There was a civil war amongst them, greedy for the kingdom. It ended by the installation of ‘S’. (Sakārākhyā), the youngster who became a mere symbol. The Brahmin leaders who had done this became disunited amongst themselves. Reaching the province of Magadha in the city called Udumbara the leading Brahmin crowned two boys. Then he retired to the East, and arriving in the province of Gauḍa, they (? or one of them ?) become(s) rivalless. The two boy-chiefs were killed by the wicked one in Kālionγa, and owing to his bad guide he committed many murders: he killed all those Gauḍas who had been honoured by the kings who had fostered civil war.”

While commenting on this passage Dr. Jayaswal observes that “The account is somewhat confused. It is not clear whether the chief Brahmin minister went to Gauḍa and punished the Gauḍas who had taken part in the family feud, or whether one of the two boys—called bālamukhyā (?)—evidently only one is meant from several adjectives—did this. This feud and oppression of Bengal led to the rise of Sañjña.” According to the text itself we get that the following events marked the age before the rise of Sañjña probably during the reign of Samacaradeva (sakārākhyā), the predecessor of Sañjña:—

1. V. Dh., I. 132.35.
3. Imperial History, p. 49.
(i) Great fighting due to mutual envy spurred by the greed for the kingdom (or political power).  

(ii) In this conflict 'dvijati-mukhyas' i.e. Brāhmaṇa-leaders also took an active part.  

(iii) King Soma (Saśāṅka) exerted his influence (as far west) as Vāraṇasi on the Ganges, and  

(iv) Then, Soma, an unparalleled hero, will become king upto the banks of the Ganges, upto Vāraṇasi and beyond. He, of wicked intellect, will destroy the beautiful image of the Buddha. He, of wicked intellect, enamoured of the words of the Tirthikas, will burn that great bridge of religion (Dharma), (as) prophesied by the former Jinas (Buddhas). Then that angry and greedy evil-doer of false notions and bad opinion will fell down all the monasteries, gardens, and chaityas; and the establishments of the Nirgranthas (Jainas)"; (Imperial History, pp. 49-50).  

(v) The renowned king Soma (nṛpatim Somaviśrutam), who was equal to Rājyavardhana in power, the latter of Vaiśya vr̥ti, ruled over Madhyadeśa. Thus Sāśāṅka and Rājyavardhana were rivals. The latter is associated with the Nagna-jāti. According to Dr. Jayaswal, "He (Rājyavardhana) also ends at the hand of a king of the Nagna caste (Imp. Hist., p. 50). His younger brother, named Harṣavardhana (hakārākhyah), an unique hero, possessing great army marched against the famous king named Soma. Harṣavardhana, the powerful Vaiśya king, following kṣatrapa-dharma invaded Puṇḍrapura, the capital of Soma, who was defeated. Sāśāṅka was confined with-

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1. M. M. K., p. 633, lines 19-20  
2. Ibid., p. 633, lines 23, 25.  
3. Ibid., p. 634, lines 6-12.  
4. Ibid., p. 634, lines 14-17.
in his own kingdom.¹ Harṣa returned to his own kingdom, having been honoured in the kingdom of the Mlecchas (Mleccha-rajye mapūjitaḥ).²

(vi) Soma was a Brāhmaṇa, devoted to the good of the Brāhmaṇas.³

Now we see, clearly, by taking together the information obtained from the Viṣṇudharmottaram and Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa that there was rivalry among Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas. The latter are represented as the champions of Buddhism. It is for this reason that the Buddhist text applies many derogatory terms—‘durmēdayah’, ‘dusṭakarmānucāriṇaḥ somākhyam’ to Saśānka whereas the Viṣṇudharmottaram hails Saśānka as the defender of Dharma (Brahmanism). The Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa gives us the detailed history of the times, whereas the Viṣṇudharmottaram gives us some information about Saśānka, only by coincidence, in connection with the account of India in the ‘Kṣīṇa-yuga’⁴ marked by the social, religious and political crisis leading to ‘saṁgrāmarah’.⁵ This spirit of narrow outlook is exhibited even by the literature, particularly the two texts under review. The Viṣṇudharmottaram showers encomium on the personality of Saśānka, whose conduct is censured by Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa. Yuan Chhwang also supports the Buddhist text in branding Saśānka as “a wicked king of Karnasuvrana in East India, a persecutor of Buddhism”.⁶ Thus taking all these statements in view we realise that the collapse of the Gupta empire left a void in Madhyadesa and the petty rulers as well as feudatories entered into contest of political supremacy in Northern India. It marks the beginning of Decadent India.

“Two powerful states situated side by side were regarded by ancient Indian politicians as natural or potential enemies, while

2. Ibid., p. 635, lines 1-2.
3. Ibid., p. 635, lines 11-12
4. V. Dh., I. 74.45 (i)
5. Ibid., I. 74·3.
an other powerful state situated on the further side of the neighbourly enemy state was called a natural and potential friend.....
...
Such natural enmity existed between Gauḍa and Kāmarūpa in the second half of the sixth and the first half of the seventh century, although it was a legacy of the past......... About the middle of the sixth century, there were, besides Kāmarūpa three other powerful states carved out on the ruins of the Gupta empire. These were the kingdoms of the Gauḍas comprising parts of Bengal and Behar, that of the Maukharis including parts of Behar and the Uttar Pradesh, and that of the so called Later Guptas of Mālavā (East Malwa)".1

"The Gauḍas were also the enemies of their western neighbours, the Maukharis, while they were friends of the Later Guptas ruling on the further side of the Maukhari kingdom. Thus the political system of Northern India was marked by the factious struggle for supremacy, aggravated by the caste-conflicts and narrow outlook (cf. Studies in Skanda Purāṇa-Part One, pp. 227-228).

Bāṇa makes an allusion to the gradual rise into eminence of king Śaśāṅka's maṇḍala (or circle of political jurisdiction). Nowhere in the whole of this book has Bāṇa made a clear mention of the name of the Gauḍādhira, .......... except in the following sentence where, like the rise of the moon, the rise into political prominence of Śaśāṅka, the king of Gauḍa, has been noted, though in a veiled manner, in a few words involved in puns. The passage runs thus :—

प्रकट कलपाभिमानानम्...........अकाशताकाष्ठी शशांकांमण्डलम्¹

"The rising political circle or sphere of (king) Śaśāṅka was attaining prominence in the political horizon (of India), but with its infamy manifested (before the world)". Bāṇa emphatically, but in a covert way, gives the cause of the unsteady nature of Śaśāṅka’s royalty, which, according to him was “not to last in its

2. H. C., VI, pp. 245-246.
perfect fullness for more than two days like the beauty of the moon in the sky. He says:—

Like Bāṇa, the Viṣṇudharmottaram, as has been stated above, gives a graphic account of Candrodaya (Viṣṇudha, I, Chap. 132).

"But we must remember that at first Saṃkha was a feudal chief having the use of the title Mahāsāmanta only ...... as is evidenced by the inscription cut in reverse, found at the hill-fort of Rohtasgarh in the Shahabad district". But, who was the lord whom he owed his allegiance as a Mahāsāmanta? There are different views expressed by the different scholars. Dr. B. N. Srivastava observes that, "It is, however, difficult to say with any amount of certainty whose vassal chief he was. The presumption is that he might have been a feudatory chief of the highest order of the Maukhari king Avantivarman, whose contemporary undoubtedly he was. The Avantivarman had exercised political supremacy over a considerable portion of Magadha, is evident from the Deo-Baranark Inscription of Jivitagupta II, wherein it has been specifically mentioned that the Maukhari king in question had made some land-grant in favour of the god Varuṇasvāmin and confirmed the same by issuing a royal Charter (C. I. I., III, p. 218). Unless he had been actually ruling over Magadha, it would not have been possible for him to exercise his royal prerogative in that manner". Dr. B. P. Sinha holds that "Saṃkha was appointed the governor or high feudatory of Magadha by Jayanāga. Rohtasgarh, on the Son, may have been chosen as the seat of the new government as it was strategically near the frontiers of the Maukhari kingdom in U. P., presided over by Graharvarman. Ganguli thought that Saṃkha was a feudatory of Avantivarman and for sometime of Graharvarman, as well and so he was not a national hero of Bengal but rather a successful conqueror. But there is no

1. H. N. E., pp. 136-137.
2. H. C., VI, p 260
proof that Grahavarman was ever a ruler of Magadha. The coins of Śaśāṅka are very similar to those of Jayanāga. The latter is referred to as 'Gauḍarāja', in the M. M. K. (I. H. I., text, p. 55, V. No. 750). Śaśāṅka was certainly a native of Bengal, who became governor of Magadha. According to Majumdar, Śaśāṅka began his life as a 'Mahāsāmanta' under Mahasenagupta,........
(Dr. R. C. Majumdar, History of Bengal, Vol. I p. 56). But this contingency, necessitating reconquest of Magadha from the Maukhariis by Mahāsenagupta, is hardly possible........ Naturally therefore, Śaśāṅka could neither be a feudatory of a Maukhari king nor of Mahāsenagupta. He was a Gauḍa and his rise began under the Gauḍa king Jayanāga. Neither the Maukharis nor the Guptas could trust him with the high office in view of their past hostility with the Gauḍas. The upshot of the entire discussion is that the Gauḍas under Jayanāga took advantage of the trouble in the Maukhari family over the question of Magadha. Śaśāṅka was chosen as the leader of the campaign against Magadha, and after the successful expulsion of the Maukharis from the country he became the high feudatory under the Gauḍa king Jayanāga. Thus the rise of Śaśāṅka practically began with the disruption in the Maukhari family on the issue of Magadha. Our theory is singularly corroborated by the M. M. K., wherein it is clearly stated that there will be mutual disunion in the Magadha monarchy in east at the time of Soma (Śaśāṅka) (I. H. I., p. 65, Sec. 51, text, p. 58, verse 780)".

Thus Dr. Sinha, after discussing all the theories regarding the feudal character of Śaśāṅka has tried to prove with labour that Śaśāṅka was the successor of Jayanāga. There are some serious difficulties in accepting the theory of Dr. Sinha. Firstly Manjuśrī Mūlakalpa explicitly places Jayanāga after the death of king Soma, when his son Mānavava will come to power for a short period of eight months or so. Hence it has been held by Majumdar and

1. Decline of Magadha, pp. 222-224
2. M. M. K., p. 636
I. H. I., pp. 50-51
others that Jayanāga followed Saśānka.1 The evidence to show that the first historical king of the Gauḍas was Jayanāga, though much laboured, is not conclusive. Secondly Jayanāga is specifically stated to be a Nāgarāja—a fact corroborated by the second part of his name. “Near him will be Brahmins and other Vaiśyas by caste; the Nāgas will be surrounded by Vaiśyas and will themselves be Vaiśyas”.2 Dr. Jayaswal further suggests that “The Tibetan text in place of the first line seems to read that the Nāgas were of the lowest Brahmin class, originally and later on their status was that of the Vaiśyas”.3 It has been pointed out above that Rājyavardhana, a Vaiśya, is stated to be a powerful rival of Soma and the former ended his life at the hands of a king of ‘Nagna-jāti’:

भविष्यते च तथा काले मध्यवेशे नृपि वर:
रक्षारक्षोत पुरातमा, वैश्यवृत्तिमार्गनाथः ||
शासनेवादना तथा शक्ति सोमाश्वयमानी नृपः ||
तोषिपि याति तवात्तेन सम्भवाति नृपेण ्तु ||

Thus, it is evident that a king of ‘Nagna-jāti’, probably the same as Nāga-rāja was an ally of king Soma employed by the latter to kill Rājyavardhana. This Nāgarāja, an accomplice of Saśānka, was none else than Jayanāga who followed Saśānka as a ruler of Gauḍa.

It should be borne in mind that the Buddhist text as well as the Viṣṇudharmottaram specifically acclaim Saśānka-Soma as a dvija (= Brāhmaṇa),5 who supported Brāhmaṇas in their struggle against the Kṣatriyas. As such, Saśānka cannot be associated with

7. Dr. B. N. Srivastava, it is surprising, has not considered the Brāhmaṇa lineage of Saśānka (J. U. P. H. S., Vol. X, N. S., pp. 28-35), as it was already pointed out by Dr. K. P. Jayaswal (I. H. I., p. 51).
Nāgarāja, Jayanāga, in the family-ties. Śaṅkā is hailed as pious (dharmaśāma Soma-raja)\(^1\) and dvijēśa,\(^2\) whereas ‘Nagnakāh,’ same as the scions of Nagnajāti, are styled Mlecchas i. e. vicious people, probably because of their fondness for killing the living-beings and ‘gavāśana’ and they were settled in the south-east (agnau Nagnakaḥ pāpa)\(^3\). The Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa ascribes to them the Vipra-Vaiśya lineage.

The Viṣṇudharmottaram in an unveiled manner ascribes the country’s decline and degeneration to mutual fighting among Kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas, the latter were assisted by the Vaiśyas and Śūdras against the former. Despite their large numbers the Brāhmaṇas were defeated due to their dissensions and defective leadership. Vanquished by the Kṣatriyas they approached Śaṅkā for assuming their leadership. But Śaṅkā directed them to a Bhārgava Brāhmaṇa named Śūra, who lived at Prayāga. Śaṅkā asked the Brāhmaṇas that Pramiti, son of Śūra, representing Viṣṇu in human form would bring them success by destroying the Kṣatriyas opposed to law in battle.\(^4\)

Here we should note that Rāja Soma, who was himself deemed fit to help the Brāhmaṇas, sent them to the refuge of Śūra and his son Pramiti. Thus it is evident that Śaṅkā, despite his power and position, was subordinate and subservient to Pramiti (?) whom Śaṅkā owed his vassalage.

But who was Pramiti? History is silent, though the Purāṇas are permeated with the heroic role of Pramiti as the saviour of Madhyaadeśa. Attention is focussed to the war-standard of Pramiti styled ‘Kṛṣṇājina-dhvajam’ which symbolises the glory of Madhyaadeśa.

There is evidence to show that Śūra dynasty ruled in the Madhyaadeśa around Prayāga as we know from the Viṣṇudharmottaram.

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1. Viṣṇudha., I. 74. 11 (i).
2. Ibid., I. 74. 10
3. Padma-Purāṇa, V. 44.72.
4. V. Dh., I. 74. 2-15.
Śūra Dynasty

Benaras Plates of Harirāja¹ throw light on the history of Śūra dynasty. The Copper Plate Inscription records the grant of a portion of land in Ambrakā Nagara belonging to the Chief-queen of Harirāja to a Brāhmaṇa, Somasvāmin of Kaņḍinya gotra. “King Harirāja is credited with qualities and prowess equal to that of Hari i.e. Viṣṇu and is referred to the Śūra dynasty”. It is believed to be the first epigraphic record of the Śūra dynasty.² Śūra of the Viṣṇudharmottaraṁ seems to be the founder of Śūra Vamśa. Harirāja, equal to Viṣṇu in virtue and prowess, was victor of many battles.³ "One point of importance in the inscription is that the charter is issued by a ‘gaṇa’ of Mahāmātras, which seems to have been vested with the authority in certain executive functions............Members of the gaṇa are individually named in the inscription purposely but the singular use of ‘asmābhiḥ mahāmātragaṇena’ indicates their collective responsibility".⁴ The names of Mahāmātras are—Gonna, Govinda Nārāyaṇa, Māṭrsvatsa, Gaṇavatsa, Nāgakumāra, Dāmuka, Skanda, Kokkatika, Saṅkha, Viṣṇudeva, Prabhākara and others of the council of Mahāmātras.

Saṅkha as well as Prabhākara are stated to be the members of Mahāmātra-gaṇa. Both of them seem to have asserted their independence—one in the east and the other in the west. Prof. Bhattacharyya observes: “It is not improbable that the territories of the king extended far towards the north and reached the outskirts of Benares and the extent of the kingdom justified the appointment of viceroys .........”⁵ Thus we hold that Saṅkha was a viceroy (mahāsāmanta) of the Śūra dynasty and later on he asserted his independence.

Pramiti, stated to be son of Śūra (?) seems to be inserted by mistake between Śūra and Rājā Bhimāratha. Bhimāratha, the Viṣṇu-incarnate, may be identified with the Bhimasen II of

2. Ibid., p. 169.
3. Benaras Copper Plate Ins. of Harirāja, line 1.
5. Ibid., p. 170.
the Śūra-Vaiśā, who ruled about the beginning of the 7th century A. D.¹ Bhimaratha-Viśṇu, probably the same as Bhimasena, was also known by another name of Harirāja, as we know from his Benaras Copper Plates. To him (Bhimaratha–Bhimasena alias Harirāja) Saśānka owed his power and position as a member of the Mahāmātragaṇa.

Thus the chapter (74 of the Viśṇudharmottaraṁ, I) is an important source of the history of Saśānka, one of the most remarkable personality of the early medieval India. Harṣacaritā contains only veiled references to Gauḍādhiṇa with pun on the word Saśānka believed to represent the former. The Ārya Maṇjuśrī Mūla Kalpa refers to him by the name of Soma. Yuan Chhwang, undoubtedly, refers to him by the name of Saśānka. The Viśṇudharmottaraṁ on the other hand makes specific references to Saśānka-Soma, the illustrious ‘dvijēśa’ styled ‘dharmātma rājā’. It exhibits the narrow outlook and partisan spirit of the Buddhist historian (Maṇjuśrī Mūlkalpa) and the court-poet (Bāṇa), who employ derogatory terms for the great hero of the Āryāvarta—a position recognised by the Maṇjuśrī Mūlkalpa, which hails him as ‘ekavīra’, the unique hero.

The unique character of his heroic ascendency to the position of sovereignty is exhibited by his loyalty to his master. We see that the defeated Brāhmaṇas approached him for accepting their leadership; as they met their disaster in the battle-field for not having an effective leader. Kṣatriyas, as is noted above, confessed that their success was due to the prowess and proficiency of their

¹ R. C. Majumdar, Ancient India, Banaras, 1952, p. 407:

"While dealing with history of the dynasty of Śūra, ruling in South Kosala, Dr. Majumdar observes that "Its king Mahendra was defeated by Samudragupta, and it remained a part of the Gupta empire till the latter part, of the 5th century A. D., when a new dynasty was founded by Śūra in the Raipur District. He was followed by his five successors, the last of whom Bhimasena II ruled about the beginning of 7th century A. D. ......."
senāni, an exalted Brāhmaṇa, in whom Kṣatriyas had reposed their full confidence:

एकोपलमक हिजiscrimination गेल्सेनानीरिति विषुलः।
सर्वस्थान्ति कुलिनो वर्य तस्य मले सिखलः॥

Viṣṇudha., I. 74.8.

This senāni, renowned (viṣrutaḥ) for his valourous deeds and the most excellent Brāhmaṇa (dvijaśreṣṭhaḥ) skilled in all the weapons of war (sarvaśastrāstra-kuśalo) was, most probably, the dvijeśa-Ṣaśāṅka, whom the Brāhmaṇas wanted to win over to their own side.

But the Kṣatriya king is also not mentioned in the Viṣṇudhar-mottaram. Hence there is still uncertainty about the identity of Ṣaśāṅka's sovereign lord. Fortunately we know from the Benaras Copper Plates of Harirāja, a powerful and victorious ruler of Śūra-Vamśa, that his 'Mahāmātragaṇa' consisted of such illustrious persons as Ṣaśāṅka and Prabhākara. Emperor Harirāja of Śūra dynasty probably ruling at Prayāga had extensive kingdom with many provinces governed by the Mahāmātras. Even in the age of Aśoka, Mahāmātras or Provincial Governors, were given independent charge of their provinces. Ṣaśāṅka and Prabhākara, the two ambitious Mahāmātras succeeded at some suitable time to assume their independent status. Prabhākara (Vardhana) was the first to assume the title of Mahārājādhirāja, where as his ancestors were only the Mahārājas.

The political situation in the country after the fall of the Gupta empire was ripe for the genius of such ambitious persons of power and political wisdom. But the struggle for political supremacy of Northern India was also stimulated by social and religious conflicts — conflicts among Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas, as well as among the Buddhists and Brāhmaṇas.

The Benares Copper Plates Inscription associates Ṣaśāṅka with the region around Benares or Vārāṇasī, where king Soma had set up a Śiva-liṅga called Candreśa named after him.

1. I. V. Dh., I. 74. 8:
(Soma is also called Candra). While dealing with the glorification of Candreśa, the Skanda Purāṇa gives some important details about the achievements of Śaśāṅka. We quote the original text for the perusal of the scholars:

शिवथिर्मोन्निवास्यपृथ्वयजस्थितम्।
अह्नायार्यी बहुश: सम् साबृहम्यमन्।। सचतः, ४.१.१४.१३।
चमनन्तयचमनन्तय कोषों लोकों हरेररणो।
प्रवचन शिवश्रमं तो प्रोज्जइतं च तो ब्रजं।।

गणानूष्ठु: शिवश्रमेन महाभाष्य लोक पुष्कर कलानिष्ठः।
पीतवर्तिनिर्विश्व करौराप्रायं तातु।। १४।
पिता सोमस्य भो चिन्त जकेशतिमयाभाबः।
व्रह्णो मानसाखो महासर्वं व्रजाभिस्मात्।। १६।
ब्रह्मान्त्र: नाम तथा वन तथा जः तवसुर।
स्विनि वर्षसहस्त्राणि दिव्यानीतीह नौ बुद्धम्।। १७।
कृष्ट्वाचकर्मे तस्य रेतं सोमेन्द्रसमन्दा।
नेत्रायणं तुच्छ सुखाय दानाय बोधयिणा।। १८।
तं गर्भे विद्विदिनानविद्वाहासदेवोद्धुस्तः।
समेतं धार्यामामुतं ताः समवासुन्त।। १९।
यदा न धारणे शक्तसततेऽर्थ गर्भस्वतार्थः।
कर्मसाधनं: सजः सोमो निपपात बसुधराम्।। २०।
विति सोमसालोकय ब्रह्मा लोकपितामहः।
रक्षमारोपयामास लोकां हितकाम्याः।। २१।
स देन रथमुखेन सागरं तां बसुधराम्।
श्यं: सन्तकल्यो दुहितहर्षकरार्यं प्रदक्षिणम्।। २२।
लस्य यल्लभिन्तं शेषं प्रविष्टिविमन्नयत।
तदन्तः समुद्रदृश्य: वाभिः संधायंते वजः।। २३।
स लम्बशेत्जा भगवान्महाराणविधितः सत्यम्।
तपस्योपहाराणा पधारानां दशातीदश॥ २४।
अविवृत्तं समासह कोणं परम पावनम्।
संत्वाय वितकसुतं चन्द्रशेखरं स्वनामत॥ २५।
श्रीजीयधीनां तोयानां राजाभूमद्रज्ञन्तां॥
प्रसादाप्रेवबेदस्य विषबेदस्य पिनाकिनः॥ २६
तव कृप्य विद्वानेकमुद्योविनितमुत्सूतम्।
यथवानुपाननानाभ्यां नरोज्ञानात्ममुच्यते॥ २७
लुष्टेन देवदेवैन स्वमौली यो घृङ्गः स्वयम्।
ब्राह्मण तां कलामेका जगतसंजीवनी प्राप्तः॥ २८
पवचालकेषं ज्वालोपि मासोनेकस्यमाप्य च।
बाप्यायत्तेसो कलवा पुनरेव तथा शाशि॥ २९
स तत्त्वाप्य महाराज्यं सोमं सोमवतां वरः॥
राजसूयं समाज्ञे सहस्तवदविश्चिन्मु॥ ३०
दक्षिणामददल्लोमस्तील्लोकार्गिति सो भूतम्।
हेष्यो ब्रह्मधिमुनयेर्व: सद्येप्यवशेष्य भो द्रिजः॥ ३१
उमयानाहितं संत्यधिवरकर्मणा॥
प्राप सोम इति व्याति दशतं सोमेन संभुला॥ ३४
स्तविन तप्तवानस्मोस्तप: परमवुककरम्।
स्तविन राजसूयं च च चं
Thus, evidently, it is an important ākhyānam which was not to be recited to an atheist (abhaktāya ca nāstikāya) opposed to the Vedas (Śruti-druhe)\textsuperscript{1} i.e. those who deprecated and denounced the Vedas\textsuperscript{8}. They were, undoubtedly, Buddhists living at Sarnath near Vārānasī. Hence it was in the fitness of things that Dvijarāja Soma performed penances and austerities to propitiate Maheśa\textsuperscript{3}.

From the text quoted above we get the following information relating to the history of Śaśānka :

(i) Śaśānka was also known by the names of Candra\textsuperscript{3} and Soma, who was a devout worshipper of Śiva.

(ii) The rise of Candra marked the dawn of an age of prosperity in the country which caused happiness to all (āhlādayantīṁ bahuṣaḥ, cf. verse 13) : ‘jagat-tavodayāṁ prāpya bhaviṣyaṁ sukhostavam\textsuperscript{4} (v. 38).

It seems that after the death of Prabhākaravardhana, Śaśānka rose to the pinnacle of glory. “In describing the setting of the sun and the rising of the moon on that terrible day on which......Rājya met his younger brother Harṣa......and learnt of the untimely death of the monarch and their mother, Bāṇa

1. Skanda, IV. i. 14. 47(i) ; for text, cf. v. 47(i) above.
2. Ibid., IV. i. 14. 40(ii).
3. There were many kings, in the past, known by the name of Candra, (Skanda, P.,VII. i. 19. 43 :

        अस्कृतेष्याश्रयस्मयम् संभवते चुँ: पुनः पुनः च

cf. Candra of the Mehrauli Pillar Ins-line 5 (बल्लभेन) cf. Harha Ins. of Īśānavarman, where Ādityavarman (line 5), and Īśānavarman (l. 11) are called Candra. Īśānavarman is again, styled Candra in the Apsadb Stone Ins. of Ādityasena (l. 7). Candrabṛtya of the Candella records and Candradevakaśirāja, the Gahaḍawāla ruler, were other rulers known as Candra.

makes an allusion to the gradual rise into eminence of king Śaśānka's maṇḍala (or circle of political jurisdiction). Nowhere in the whole of this book has Bāṇa made a clear mention of the name of the Gauḍādhipa,......except in the following sentence where, like the rise of the moon, the rise into political prominence of Śaśānka, the king of Gauḍa, has been noted, though in a veiled manner, in a few words involved in puns. The passage runs thus :

"प्रफटकलक्ष्मुद्यमालम्" अकाशताकाषी श्रामक्षुमडलम्।
But unlike the veiled references of the Harsacarita, the Skanda Purāṇa makes explicit references to the dawn of Candra-
candrika (v. 13) which dazzled the eyes of all (v. 14, camatkrtya camatkrtya ko'yaṁ). He was 'kalānidhiḥ', source of piyūṣa to all (v. 15).

(iii) He was the son of Atri, the celebrated sage² whose lustre he represented on the earth (vv. 6-23).
(iv) He was, thus, evidently a Brāhmaṇa and an exalted king of Brāhmaṇas (rājabhūdāgrajanmanāṁ) by the blessings of Deva-deva Viśveśa (v. 26) i.e. Śiva.
(vi) He performed the Rājasūya-sacrifice at Vārāṇasi near Candreśvara where the Brāhmaṇas selected (or elected) him as their king :

तत्रैव तप्तान्तोम्मलयः परममुक्तरम्।
तत्रैव राजसूयः ज च करे चंद्रेश्वरप्रतः॥
तत्रैव ब्राह्मणं प्रीतिरिन्धुक्ततोसः कलानिधिः॥
तोमोजनांकं ब्राह्मणानं राजा शेतोक्षयदक्षिणः॥³

Thus he was crowned as a king (cf. his coins)⁴ raised to the imperial status.

2. cf., Khajuraho Stone (Ins. of Candella Yaśovarman, v. 7).
Khajuraho Stone Ins. of Dhaṅgadeva renewed by Jayavarmadeva, v. 9.
3. Skanda, IV. i. 14. 35-36,
4. On the reverse side of the gold coins of Śaśānka, we find Padmā-śrī who is being bathed by elephants. It represents the ceremony of Somābhīṣeka. We will discuss it further.
(v) The Dvijarāja (Candra) worshipped Śiva who bestowed upon him the title of Soma (prāpa soma iti khyātām dattām somena Sambhunā, v. 34), and as a special favour the Lord Śiva placed him on his head.1

(vii) He had a large empire (sa tat prāpya mahārājyaṁ somaḥ, v. 30) extending from Vārāṇasi to Pundravardhana and Gauḍa in the east.

All these facts mentioned in the above story relating to the glorification of Candreśa (quoted above in original) are corroborated by the gleanings from the inscriptions, and coins. It is also supported by Harṣacarita and the Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa.

He is called ‘eka-vīra’2 i.e. a unique hero in the Ārya Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa which also asserts that he was himself a dvija whose patronage was enjoyed by Brāhmaṇas.3 He was a great conqueror whose sway extended up to Vārāṇasi:

गोमाण्डोद्रि तलो राजा एकबरीरो भविष्यति।
गंगालीरयान्ति सराणिस्माते फरम् ॥४

Thus Vārāṇasi on the Ganges also formed a part of his empire5 — a fact of great historical significance.

1. Skanda, IV i. 14. 28 :

तुलेन्द्र देवदेवेन स्मृती यो गृहत: स्मयम् ॥
भाद्राय तां कलागेकं जगस्तुसंतीवमण्यं परम् ॥

Viśākhadatta glorifies the Śaśikāla which is placed on the head of Śiva (Mudrā Rākṣasa, I. 1) and it represents Indu or Bhagavān Candra (M. R., Act I, before I. 6). But it was Mauryenidu (Candragupta Maurya) whom Kauṭilya, supporter of Brāhmaṇism, placed on the throne vacated by the Nandas.

3. Ibid., III, p. 635.
4. Ibid., III, p. 634.
5. H. N. E. I., p. 156; Cl. A., p. 79; D. M., pp. 243, 345.

It is evident that Śaśāṅka arose on the political firmament of Northern India when Ādityas (the Gupta rulers) had disappeared and the sun-set was followed by the dark night of Kali which led to the decline of the country. The Brāhmaṇism and Brāhmaṇaṇas were threatened by Nagnas and Nāstikas who deprecated Brāhmaṇical deities (deva-druhah)\(^1\) and those who denounced the Vedas (Śrutī-druhah).\(^2\) Thus Brāhmaṇaṇas found a suitable person like Śaśāṅka whom they chose their king.

**Śaśāṅka (Somasya-Lāńchanaṁ)**

Though the Moon (Soma or Śaśāṅka) was wicked and defiled,\(^3\) yet like, thousands of siddhas favoured by Śiva, Soma was also patronised by the Lord Śiva who adorned his head by placing Candra\(^4\) there. Thus the deity became known by the epithet of Śaśibhūṣaṇa.\(^5\) Candra is also known as one of the jewels which sprang from ocean.\(^6\) The Candra was a celebrated devotee of Śiva and the coins of Śaśāṅka portray both Śaśi and Śaśibhūṣaṇa or Soma and Someśvara on the obverse. Thus the blot and blemish on the character of Candra had been turned into glory that is known to history as Śaśāṅka or Saśa-lāńchana.

Despite the merits of Soma and his association with Śiva, the character of Candra, who was the source of joy and happiness to

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1. Skanda, IV. i. 14. 5 (i);
3. Šiva P., IV. 14. 24(ii) : चन्द्रस्तु सर्वदा दृष्टो...।
4. Skanda, VII. i. 18. 10.
5. Ibid., VII. i. 18. 14-115.
6. Ibid., VII. i. 18. 17(i).

\(^{1}\) Brāhmaṇical deities like Śakra and Brahmā were represented as the attendants of the Buddha (Mookerji, Harsha, p. 76).

\(^{2}\) Many vicious acts had been committed by the wicked Moon who had abducted Tārā, the wife of Brāhaspati.

\(^{3}\) Šaśikāla represents the Parā-Māyā or Śakti of Devadeva (Śiva) cf., Skanda, VII. i. 19. 23-25.
all, had been tarnished (śakalaṅko’yār̥ī). It was, his special liking for Rohinī that he neglected his other wives. He did not heed the warning of Dakṣa. Hence he was cursed by him. Soma suffered from the disease of yakṣmā. Skanda observes:

Thus it explains the ‘lānchana’ associated with candra, and we are reminded of the observations of Saint Tulasī-dāsa. Soma was really deified like the other deities. He is equated with the God Nārāyaṇa. The Varāha Purāṇa also mentions Soma-rāja as dvija-rāja. Ārya Mañjuśrī Mūlakaṇḍa also calls king Soma as dvijēśa. But the Brāhmaṇical poet Bāṇa does not refer to Soma’s Brāhmaṇical lineage. He uses the name Śaṣāṅka in the derogatory sense and Yuan-Chwang follows him.

Thus the ‘Gauḍādhipa’ Śaṣāṅka was a ruler of great celebrity who championed the cause of Brāhmaṇas.

1. Skanda, VII. i. 19. 29—32.
2. Ibid., VII. i. 19. 35—40.
3. Ibid., VII. i. 19. 41.
4. Rāmacarita Mānasā, I. 3(ii) :

   व्यायामित्रो हि ब्राह्मणिं चन्द्रः सर्वत्र वन्यते।

5. Varāha P., Chapter 57 deals with Kānti-vratarāṇ based on the worship of Soma (Varāha P., 57. 5—12).
6. Ibid., 57. 13.
7. Ibid., 57, 16—17(i).
Himself a Brāhmaṇa, he is styled ‘dvijeśa’, dvija-pati or the king of Brāhmaṇas. Under his patronage the Purāṇas were redacted and it is for this reason that the Purāṇas shower much encomium on the personality of Soma.

The sage Atri and his wife named Bhadrā gave birth to famous son named Soma (bhadrāyāṁ janayāṁsa somam putram yaśasvinam)\(^1\). Soma-deva son of the sage Atri, was an illustrious ruler crowned as a king for the well-being of the whole world. He fostered the entire country which was free from the darkness dispelled by the lustre of the illustrious Soma\(^2\). He established a large empire and performed the Rājasūya sacrifice, and thus he attained the status of Adhirāja—the imperial dignity—recognised by the Brāhmaṇas.\(^3\) Soma was asked to honour the Brāhmaṇas who were the mainstay of the state and its stability depended on the goodwill of the learned Brāhmaṇas.\(^4\)

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1. Skanda, VII. i. 20. 44(i).
2. Ibid., VII. i. 20. 70—71(i) ; Harivamśa, Harivamśa P., XXV. 20—21.
3. Skanda., VII. i. 20. 74—77:

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Harivamśa, Harivamśa Parva, XXV. 33—26.

4. Skanda, VII. i. 22. 62—103.
SĀŚĀNKA AND HIS COINS

The gold-coins issued by Sāśānka are the valuable source of his history. A few veiled references found in the Harṣacarita of Bāṇa or the observations of the Chinese pilgrim, Yuan-Chhwang are inadequate. The former, a court-poet, is interested only in censuring the character of Sāśānka — the arch enemy of his patron. The latter, too, condemns the character of Sāśānka as a zealous enemy of Buddhism. Thus the statements of Bāṇa and Yuan-Chhwang, the biased and prejudiced as they are, are too meagre to help in the reconstruction of the History of Sāśānka. Ārya Mañjuśrī Mūla Kalpa, a Buddhist text, undoubtedly gives valuable information relating to following facts:

(i) Rājā Soma—an exalted hero and adherent to Brāhmaṇas (tīrthikasya vace rataḥ):

It clearly shows that Rājā Soma had become a celebrated hero (ekavīro) in the Madhyadeśa or Dharmadeśa where he tried to reestablish the glory of Brāhmaṇism by exterminating Pāśaṇḍas — Buddhists and Jains. The region around Vārāṇasī on the Ganges was under his suzerainty.

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1. MMK., p. 634.
2. Garuḍa P., II. 2. 9(2) :

cf. Ibid., I. 93. 3—4.
Thus, when Šaśānka was trying to revive the glory of Brāhmaṇism in the Madhyadeśa, there appeared on the scene another king, Rakarādya or Rājayavardhana. The Ārya Mañjuśrī Mūlakalpa tells us about Rājayavardhana:

रकाराष्ट्रबूटाताम | वैश्यवृत्तिविच्छेदः।
शान्तेनिन्नः तथा शान्ति | सोभायवस्तो नूपः।
सोप्रप वाहि तवाल्पन | नमस्तातिवैपुषण हृ।।

(ii) Rājayavardhana, a religious-minded man (yuktātmā, acaṅcalaḥ) was equal to Soma (saktā somākhya samo nṛpaḥ). He had an ally, a king of Nagnajātī. It is to be noted that Rājayavardhana is not styled ekavīra as was the case with Soma-rājā or Harṣa (Hakārākhya ekavīra). It shows that Rājayavardhana was no match to Soma rājā. Rājayavardhana was a Buddhist styled Parama-saugata (Sugata iva)². His ally, Nagna-jāti-nṛpaḥ, was also a Buddhist, and a zealous champion of Buddhism:

नागराजा तत: | श्रीमानु धर्मविश्वस:।
वेनास्व कारित वैल | शास्त्रविभच्छ मनोरमः।
विहारी कारितवाच्चाल | संप्रदयां तदाय पूर्वे।।

Rājayavardhana as well as Harṣa were ruling over the country of Śrīkanṭha:

तत: परेण पूर्वलो जातानां | मनुजेश्वरव:।
वप्तमन्त्रयाताः | श्रीकपालवासितस्तवा।
आदिल्य नामा वैश्याल्यो स्वामीवच्छवातितव:।
भविष्यति न सर्वेद्व अन्ये सर्वत्र भूपति:।
हृष्काराष्ट्रो नामत: | श्रीको सावभुमिनरक्षिष:।।

Thus there was struggle for the supremacy of Madhyadeśa where Rājā Soma had gained celebrity. This struggle was further aggravated by the religious fervour among the champions of

1. MMK., p. 634.
2. Banskhera Copper Plate Ins., line 5.
4. Ibid., p. 626.
Brāhmaṇanism and Buddhism. The coins of Šaśāṅka "have supplied certain interesting facts about the history of his reign,"\(^1\) corroborated by the Purānic gleanings.

**COINS OF ŠAŚĀṄKA**

Šaśāṅka, as a crowned king, issued gold coins, which bear on the reverse his name 'Śri-Šaśāṅkaḥ'. As an abhiṣikta ruler he had assumed the imperialistic title of 'Māhārājādhirāja', (Śri Šaśāṅkarāja).\(^2\) It has been stated above that he had performed the Rājasūya sacrifice and, thus, he was an 'adhirāja' — an independent ruler—a status which is proved by his coinage.

Šaśāṅka was undoubtedly a devout Śaiva ruler as we know from the Purāṇas. His coins also depict on the obverse Šaśāṅka (Moon or Candra), Śiva and Vṛṣa (Nandī).\(^3\)

**JAYĀBHIṢEKĀ-TYPE**

**Obverse—**

Śiva, nimbate, is seated on Vṛṣa (Vṛṣāsanaḥ) which is also seated.\(^4\) Both Śiva and Nandī are facing left where we find full moon. The left hand of Śiva is uplifted.

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2. Ganjām Plates of the reign of Šaśāṅka, I. 3.
3. DKM., p. 258: "This is confirmed by the account of Yuan Chwang, where we are told that Šaśāṅka wanted to remove the image of the Buddha and replace it by that of Śiva in the temple east of the Bodhi tree.
4. Dr. B. N. Śrivastava (Šaśāṅka, Appendix) observes that Śiva stands reclining on his bull. But both Śiva and the bull are seated. The bull is clearly depicted as seated in his own photograph as well as in those of Allan (CCGD., Plate XXIII, figs., 14-16). Śiva is also seated on his vāhana. Allan takes Śiva as reclining. Smith (C.C.A.I., Vol. I, p. 121) refers to bull, 'couchant and in his photograph (Pl. XVI, 12) Śiva is clearly represented as seated or reclining on the bull with his face turned to right. It depicts Vṛṣāsanaḥ Śivah present before (pratyakṣaḥ) Šaśāṅka — represented as Moon in the coin.
It has legends: Śrīśa jaya (Śrī-Iśa=Śrīśa jaya) i.e. victory to Śrī Iśa (Siva).

**Revers—**

Goddess Lākṣmī nimbate, facing is seated on lotus. She is holding lotus in her left hand. On either side she is bathed by an elephant.

Legend — Śrī Saśāṅkaḥ.

What has been depicted on the obverse and on the reverse sides of the gold coins of Saśāṅka is to be viewed in the light of the Purānic gleanings. As stated above Soma-rājā worshipped Siva who was pleased to recognise blotted Moon as a representation of Siva himself:

विष्णुसांकिर्ष्यमप्यत सदैव निवसाममहस्म ।
विशेषतत्त्वदिनेविनिनिर्मलय प्रभृति गोपणे ।
महेश्वराय परा मूलितर्तू शराक न संस्य: ||

Thus the moon represented on the obverse represents, Soma-rājā, who had performed great penances to propitiate Śiva.² Pleased by his devotion (tus' to Maheśvaraḥ) appeared before him:

प्रत्यक्षः श्रोमराजस्य वृत्तान्तम उपायति: ||

Umāpati seated on his bull appeared in the sight of Soma-rājā. The coin has faithfully translated the scene portrayed on the obverse of his coins. When Śiva appeared before Soma-rājā who had performed severe penances, the latter began to recite the prayer in the honour of his master bowing low to him:

प्रत्यक्षः: सोमराजस्य वृत्तान्तम उपायति: ।
साह्यं प्रियतं योनिच्छेदव शंभो नमोऽस्तु ते ॥ 17
जय शंकर पापह्राव नमो जय ईश्वरे ते जगदीश नमः ॥
जय वासुकिस्न्यवनारे नमो जय शुलकापलब्राय नमः ॥ 18
जय बांधिरतावर्तनत नमो जय शंकर विकर्षीश भज ॥

2. Skanda, V. iii. 85. 16.
3. Ibid., V. iii. 85. 17(i).
4. Ibid., V. iii. 85. 17—20.
Thus we can interpret the legend on the obverse — श्री जय or 'श्री ईश जय' as representing the prayer of Soma-raja to Vṛṣañjana-Umāpati. By the grace of Śiva, Soma-raja regained his lost lustre (prabhaya pūrṇaḥ) and thus he became priyadarśanaḥ.

What is the significance of the uplifted hand of Śiva? In the Junagarh Rock Inscription of Rudradāmana I we are told that the Śaka Mahākṣatrapa (Rudradāmana I) had earned the affection of Dharma by raising his hand.

Thus the raised hand of Śiva exhibits his attachment and devotion to Dharma.

Vṛṣa

But the historians have taken no cognisance of the bull or Nandi which represents Dharma. The bull is styled mahāvṛṣa or Dharma.

Thus the obverse-features of the gold coins of Śaṅkha Viz., Soma and Someśvara seated on vṛṣa with his raised hand exhibit their attachment to Dharma which found a saviour in the person of Śaṅkha.

Reverse—

Goddess Lākṣmī nimbate seated facing on lotus, holding lotus in her left hand and with outstretched right hand empty; above, on either side, an elephant sprinkling water over her (abhiṣeka) legend — Śrī Śaṅkhaḥ.

The reverse side of the gold coin of Śaṅkha represents Somābhiṣeka at Vārānasī (the city of Kāśirāja, Śiva, represented on the obverse) where he had performed Rājasūya sacrifice. In the Śrūtis there are three ceremonies for consecrating heads of

1. Skanda, V. iii. 190. 2, 3.
2. Ibid., V. iii. 190. 16.
3. Ibid., V. iii. 190. 19.
4. Junagarh Rock Inscription of Rudradamana I, lines 12—13: हृदेश्वराविशेषतः धर्मंतुरागेन ।
5. V. Dh., III. 49. 18(ii).
6. Ibid I. 28. 13(ii);
7. Allan, CCGD., p. 147 ; Plate XXIII, figs. 14—16.
society. There is the first and foremost, the Rājasūya or the
inauguration of a king,........The normal ceremony of coronation,
however, is the Rājasūya:

राज्य एवं राजसूयम । राजा वै राजसूयेकालार्थि ।

"To the king doubtless belongs the Rājasūya, for by offering
the Rājasūya he becomes king." Dr. Jayaswal observes:

The Rājasūya is comprised of three distinct parts; the first is
a series of preliminary sacrifices, the second is the Abhiṣecaniya,
‘the sprinkling’ or the anointing, the third is a number of post-
anointing ceremonies. Out of the three the Abhiṣecaniya is the
most important; and, perhaps, in practice the rites and formulae
of it alone were considered indispensable at normal coronations
........It is only after the sprinkling stage that he is called
‘king’........before that he is an ordinary citizen." All the
people, now, recognised him their ruler. Thus the Mahāśāmanta
Śaśāṅkadeva was crowned as the rājarāja (adhirāja) being sprinkled
by elephants:

नागास्तवामधविधियम्भि । राजराजेश्वर पारिवः ।

It marked the victorious career of a sovereign ruler. At the end
of the ceremony he was blessed by the people:

एतेवथोक्तर्तोषु राजराजेश्वर दत्ताशिषेकः गृहिष्ठो समप्रामः ।
ससागरः पुंशस्व च जीव धम्मः च ते हुद्रिस्तु भास्तु ॥

Thus Śaśāṅka, crowned as a king, was asked to protect Dharma
dharme ca te buddhi-ratīva-cāstu).

JAYĀBHIŚEKA

The Liṅga Purāṇa describes the rite of Jayābhiśeka which
was formerly recounted by Īśa to Manu, for the welfare of kings.7

   cf. Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, V. i. 1. 12.
3. V. Dh., II. 21. 24, Chapters 21 and 22 describe in detail, the
   performance of Rājasūyābhiśeka-vidhi.
4. Ibid., II. 22. 98.
5. Ibid., II. 22. 117(ii).
6. Ibid., II. 22. 185.
7. Liṅga P., II. 27. 2 :

जयाबशिषे ईशेष कपिलो मनवे पुरा ।
हिताय भैरविभैर शक्तिवाणि लिङ्गलिङ्गा ॥
It is mentioned to be conducive to the victory over enemies. This rite was to be performed just before the march of a king's army for the conquest of different countries.\footnote{1} While performing this ablution rite, sacred water was sprinkled over the lord and then he went to the battle-field.\footnote{2} The ceremony consisted of the worship of Śiva and sixteen Śaktis. These Śaktis were to be two armed holding the lotus and the conch, wearing red garlands, clothes, ornaments and jewels.\footnote{8}

King the favourite devotee of Śiva, also performed Homa (juhuyād agnau bhūpatiḥ Śiva-vatsalaḥ) with his salutations to the Lord:

świad: सर्वभिविधानाभीवर: सर्वपूर्तानां बह्याविविधित्रिश्रुत्योहितपिश्रुतिः।

At the end of the ceremony the king was sprinkled with the water from the Śiva-kumbha.\footnote{8} This rite of Jayābhīṣeka leads to the attainment of the status of a sovereign ruler.\footnote{5} Thus the gold coins of Śaṅkha with Soma-Śomeśvara and Mahāvrṣa on the obverse and the depiction of Gajalakṣmī on the reverse represent the performance of the rite of Jayābhīṣekaṁ or Jayasecanāṁ the performance of which had brought Śakravam to Indra. By performing this rite Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Ambikā, Sāvitrī and Lākṣmī, too, had attained the positions of supremacy.\footnote{5} Wonderful indeed is the glory of this Abhīṣeka whereby a king is liberated from sins and from ailments. He becomes victorious always. He

\footnote{1} Linga P., II. 27. 10—11:

जयाभिषेकमविषयविकलमवदवनमवस्वयः।

\footnote{2} Śūri Bhagavānubhāṣa—Jayābhīṣakaṁ vahyāmi nūpānaṁ hūlakāmayya।

\footnote{3} Linga P., II. 27. 229—231.

\footnote{4} Ibid., II. 27. 256.

\footnote{5} Ibid., II. 27. 264.

\footnote{6} Ibid., II. 27. 272.

\footnote{7} Ibid., II. 27. 272—280.
is richly endowed with the love of the people like another Indra. From the Harṣacarita of Bāṇa we know that Harṣa also performed such ceremony before he set out for his conquests:

अष्ट मयौलेषु च कपूरचिद्रवसेषु च चतुर्गमनानि परिवार विनयस्य दशरथदर्शने सतीलोकस्वामिनि: शारदेय शारदेयमभृत्याः—शाश्वेतश्चुनेष्वरी: सनात्नविवर्तय वर्षया भस्कया महंतो नीलस्रृष्टियोगीमन्त्रवैभव हरसाह……

Some days having passed, on a day was fixed an hour of marching suitable for the subjugation of all the four quarters. The king had bathed in gold and silver vessels, like autumn clouds which were skilled in pouring water; had with deep devotion offered worship to the adorable Nilalohita, fed the up-flaming fire, sat upon a throne duly anointed. After being sprinkled on the head with a spray of lustral water scattered by the hand of the highly honoured and delighted Purohitā. Finally amid a clamourous cry of victory from delighted people he issued forth from his house……

Thus it is evident that the rite of Jayābhiṣeka was in vogue in the age, when Śaśāṅka was duly anointed by Brāhmaṇas as their lord who appeared as the champion of Dharma. The Lakṣmī on the reverse represents Rāja-lakṣmī.

1. Liṅga P., II. 27. 281—283.
3. Harṣacarita, Translation (Cowell and Thomas, 1897).
   Chapter VII, PP. 196—197.
4. Devi Bhāg., IX. 39. 18(i).
CHAPTER V

KING ĀMA (NĀGABHĀṬA II)
OF KĀNYAKUBJA-DEŚA

When a strong power from centre is withdrawn, disintegration and anarchy follows. It happened after the death of Yaśovarman, the great ruler of Kānyakubja-deśa. While dealing with the successors of Yaśovarman Dr. Tripathi observes: "We are left to grope in the dark after Yaśovarman except for the uncertain light thrown by Jain sources which allege that he was succeeded by his son Āma. Āma was succeeded by his son, the immoral Dunduka, who was murdered by his son Bhoja. After this event we have no information whatsoever. We cannot give much credence to these tales based on tradition and more concerned with religious edification than with the narration of sober facts of history with some respect for chronology. But as there is nothing to contradict them, we may with S. P. Pandit say for the present that 'all the credit that the Jain stories have a right to claim is that king Āma was perhaps the son of Yaśoarman, that Dunduka was Āma’s son, and that Bhoja was the son of Dunduka.'"¹

Dr. Tripathi concludes that "one of them achieved anything of note, and one was even prematurely murdered. We may, therefore, well believe that if they really had historical existence, their combined reigns must have been of extremely short duration — say between 15 and 20 years."² These observations of Dr. Tripathi are based on the Jain stories summarised by S. P. Pandit in his introduction to Gauḍavāho or on the assessment of the Bappabhaṭṭicarita by Dr. Krisnaswami Aiyangar.³ He himself did not care to read the Jain stories in original, as the gleanings

¹. T. H. K., pp. 211—212
². T. H. K., p. 212.
from these stories would show that king Āma was a great conqueror, an ideal ruler and a good administrator.

Dr. Tripathi did not consider the evidence of the Rājatarāṅgiṇī which clearly tells us that Lalitāditya had uprooted Yaśovarman entirely (Yaśovarman-nṛpati tām ca saṁuḷaḥudapāṭayat). The victorious armies went triumphantly across the realm of Kānya- Kubja ruled by Yaśovarman (Kānyaubjorvi...yaśovar māṇam uḷaṅghya) towards Eastern Sea.²

Rājatarāṅgiṇī tells us that the “land of Kānyaubja with its villages” (sagṛāmāṁ Kānyaubjorvīṁ) was granted by the king Lalitāditya to the shrine of Āditya which he erected at Lalitapura³. Thus this crushing defeat inflicted upon Yaśovarman, king of Kanauj between 736 and 747 A.D. shows that Yaśovarman’s “power was utterly broken by Lalitāditya, and he fades out of history.”⁴

Thus the death of Yaśovarman marks the political disintegration of Kanauj, and according to Rājatarāṅgiṇī Jayāpiṇa, the grandson of Yaśovarman defeated the king of Kānyaubja in battle and carried off his throne the ensign of royal power.⁵ Kalhaṇa has not named the defeated king of Kānyaubja. It shows the period of distress and darkness in the political history of Kanauj after the death of Yaśovarman. According to Smith “The occupant of the throne of Kanauj apparently was Vajrayudha, who like his predecessor, suffered the fate of defeat

1. R. T. IV. 140.
2. Ibid., IV. 145—146; Cl. A., p. 131.
3. Ibid., IV. 187.
4. The reference to ‘sagṛāmāṁ Kānyaubjorvīṁ is very important; as it refers to the country of Kānyaubja comprising 36 lakhs of villages (Skanda, I. ii. 39. 129b).
7. R. T., IV. 471:

विहासानं जितादाजो कान्यकुब्ज महीमुखः ||
स राज्यकुकुटरा जागा जहारोदासपौर्णः ||

1. R. T. IV. 140.
2. Ibid., IV. 145—146; Cl. A., p. 131.
3. Ibid., IV. 187.
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7. R. T., IV. 471:

विहासानं जितादाजो कान्यकुब्ज महीमुखः ||
स राज्यकुकुटरा जागा जहारोदासपौर्णः ||
and dethronement by Jayāpiḍa. According to Dr. D. C. Ganguli this king of Kānyakubja defeated by Jayāpiḍa was Indrarāja. Dr. Tripathi following the track laid by Smith holds: “We further learn on the authority of Kalhana that Jayāpiḍa Vinayāditya (779-810 A. D.).......after defeating the king of Kānyakubja in battle carried off his throne the ensign of royal power. Evidently we have an allusion to the defeat and dethronement of a king of Kanauj, and and he is perhaps to be identified with Vajrāyudha, assuming that the attack on Kanauj took place soon after Jayāpiḍa became king of Kashmir. But if it occurred later in his career, the vanquished Kanauj monarch must have been Indrāyudha.” But Dr. Tripathi, who holds that Āma was the successor of Yaśovarman and the former was succeeded by Dunduka, does not consider the claims of Āma and Dunduka to suffer the defeat at the hands of Kashmirian king Jayāpiḍa. The youngest grandson of Lalitāditya, Jayāpiḍa became ruler only after about twelve years and seven months. Thus Āma and Dunduka, if they were really the son and grandson respectively of Yaśovarman, should have been considered by Tripathi. The Jain sources and the Skanda Purāṇa maintain that the king Āma

1. Smith, E. H. I., p. 392, and also note 4 there.
2. A. I. K., p. 115.
3. Pires, (The Mankharis, p. 146) also holds the same view. He observes that, It is impossible to place vajrāyudha anywhere except between Yaśovarman and Indrāyudha (the Mankharis, P. 149, note 3).
5. R. T., IV. 359.
6. Ibid., IV. 392—402
Kuvalayāpiḍa ruled for one and half year, (R. T., IV. 392) ; Vajrāditya was on the throne for 7 years (R. T., IV. 398) ; Prthvīpiḍ ruled for 4 years and one month (R. T., IV. 399). and Saṅgrāmāpiḍa (I) was king for only 7 days.
of Kanauj was a great ruler. Hence he cannot be accepted as the son and successor of Yasovarman.

Āma — the Great Ruler of Kānyakubja-deśa

While describing the evils of Kali-age, the Skanda Purāṇa refers to a powerful ruler of Kānyakubja (deśa) named Āma (Kānyakubjadhipo bali rājyaṁ prakurute tatra Āmo namā hi bhūtale)¹. King Āma (Āmo nāmā mahipatiḥ) is also deprecated as sinful ruler (rājānam pāpa-kāriṇam) ;² though he was a pious king (dharmiṣṭha) in the beginning. It was due to change in his religious policy. At first, in the early part of his reign, he was the follower of Trayī-dharma. But later on under the influence of a Jain ascetic (kṣaṇaṅka) he embraced Jainism after abandoning Viṣṇu-dharma. The royal court of Kānyakubja was dominated by Jains. It antagonised Brāhmaṇas. Thus once again after the death of Śājāṅka, Kānyakubja witnessed sectarian rivalry, at a time when the Mlecchas, Asuras, Tājikas and Turuṣkas threatened the country and its culture.

The Skanda Purāṇa, however, does not refer to the dynasty or family to which Āma belonged. It mentions his son-in-law named Kumārapāla who was zealous champion of Jainism. He was a ruler of Dharmāraṇya situated to the west of Mahisāgara (Gulf of Cambay) in Western India.

While describing the achievements of Nāgabhaṭa II, the Pratihāra ruler, K. M. Munshi observes that, “Various legends concerning Nāgabhaṭa show that during his reign the whole of northern Gujarat up to Kaira was an integral part of the Pratihāra empire. According to a Brāhmaṇical tradition, Āma, the ruler of Kanauj, who lived at Gwalior, drove out the king of Kheṭaka-pura, then the capital of north Gujarat, and occupied his land. From Prabhāvakacarita, a Jain work, we learn that Nāgabhaṭa of Kanauj, the grandfather of Bhoja, was known as Āma and that he visited Prabhāsa to worship the god Someśvara............”³

1. Skanda P., III. ii. 36. 34.
2. Ibid., III. ii, 37. 11.
Munshi has not mentioned the Brähmanical tradition\(^2\) cited above. Prabhāvakacakarita does not refer to Āma as Nāgabhata. On the other hand, the Jain work refers to Āma, as the son and successor of Yaśovarman of Kanauj—the view accepted by Dr. R. S. Tripathi.\(^2\) Dr. A. D. Pusalkar identified Āma with Vatsarāja, the Pratihāra ruler.\(^3\) Thus the identity of Āma is shrouded in mystery.

**ĀMA AND BAPPABHAṬTI-CARITA**

The biography of a famous Jain ācārya and ascetic named Bappabhaṭti Sūri called Bappabhaṭti Sūri-carita is found in the Prabandhakośa\(^4\) of Rājaśekhara Sūri (cf. Prabandha IX, pp. 46-54) and in the Prabhāvaka-Carita (XI). The Bappabhaṭti-Sūri-Carita throws important light on the history of Kanauj from the reign of Yaśovarman to that of Bhoja. During this period Yaśovarman, his son Āma, Dunduka, son of Āma, and Bhoja the son of Dunduka ruled over Kānyakubja-deśa, history of which is also associated with the history of Gauḍa ruled by king Dharma.

Bappabhaṭṭi, who was born in Pañcāla-deśa,\(^5\) was initiated into Jainism in 807 V.E.\(^6\) (Vikrama Era, = 751 A.D.) He happened to meet, by coincidence, Āma who was the son of king Yaśovarman of Kānyakubja born of his queen named Suryaśādevī at Gopālagiri (Gwalior). There are two versions in this story as to how Āma had to leave his ancestral capital:

\(^1\) Gl. G. D., pp, 203, 211.
\(^2\) THK., p. 212.
\(^3\) AIK., p. 289 ; Vatsarāja (or Āma, as he is called in Jain Prabandhas)..........”
\(^4\) Prabandhakośa, Śīṅghi Jain Jñānapīṭha, Viśvabhārati, Sāntiniketana, 1935.
\(^6\) Ibid., IX. p. 27, 62 :

\[\text{शताष्ट्रके बस्तराणां गते विनिमयकालं} \]
\[\text{सप्ताहिके राधपुस्त तूनियाबिवसे गुरुरी} \]
\[\text{दीर्घा दता वर्णभवम्} \]

(i) According to the first version, Āma himself told Bappabhaṭṭi:

असी जगाद—भगवन्! कन्यकुमारे श्रीपालदेविर्युणगमरे यशोवर्मनूपते: सुयशावेरीकुक्कुलिकन्मा नन्दनोऽहम्। योवने च निर्मलं धन लीलया ब्यवहः पिला कुमितेन शिक्षित—वर्तम धनानाजंक्यै जनह्रेष्ठानव्ययी पुजो न वैष्ठि तातस्य। मित्वयो भव। ततोऽहम कोपादिहागमम्। गुढाजमूक्त—किते नाम? केते बटंक्या भुवि लिखिला वारितम्—‘आम’ हृति।

According to this version Āma left Kanauj in the prime of his youth, when he was advised by Yaśovarman not to be extravagant.

(ii) According to the second version Suyaśādevī, mother of Āma, told the Jain ascetic that her character was tarnished by the connivance of the co-wife of Yaśovarman who turned her out of his home, when Āma was lying in her womb; consequently she was living on the products of forest along with her son (Āma), roaming in forests:

अहूँ राजपुत्री कन्यकुमारे यशोवर्मपती सुयशा नाम। अहूः सिन्हः समस्ते सति। कुःवर्य सप्तस्वा मिथ्या परपुक्तारीण्य गृहमित्रिकांसता।।।।।।।।।।। रमतीह समावता कन्यकुमा जीववाह बास च पालयाम।

The second version seems to be based on the story of Uttara Rāmacaritra where Bhavabhūti portrays the life of Sītā exiled by Rāma. There is contradiction in the Jain versions itself. According to the first version Āma passed his early life of boyhood in the royal palace which he left in his youth. Further, we are told that the queen resided in the Jain monastery at Moḍhera in Gujarat. Later on she was recalled to Kanauj; and Āma was crowned as a king by Yaśovarman who instructed him on the art of government.

1. Prab. K., IX. 62, p. 27.
2. Prabhāvaka Carita, p. 81. XI. 47:
4. Prabandha K., IX. 63—65.

Prabhāvaka Carita, XI. 56—57, 76—77.
tradition recorded here Yaśovarman himself was a Jain and gave up his life in accordance with the tenets of Jainism:

एतत्र यशोवर्म वहन्तम् लिङ्ग शुद्धपा बरण भयन् दान गतः।

ĀMA AND THE JAINISM

Soon after, King Āma appointed Bappabhaṭṭī as the royal preceptor (Sūri or guru) about 811 V. E. (= 754 A. D.). Directed by Bappabhaṭṭī Sūri Āma caused to be built a magnificent Jain temple at Gopagiri (Gwalior) where the king had been going to pay his respects to the chaitya. Thus the growing influence of Jain ascetics in the court of king Āma estranged Brāhmaṇas who exclaimed:

तदृस्त्वा विग्रहः कुष्ठं ज्वलितपूर्वो विहस्त: देव! प्रेताम्बरा अभी कुष्ठा:।
एभ्य: सिहासनं किम्।

It enraged the Jain Sūri styled Surīndra, probably Indra-Sūri of the Skanda purāṇa.

From the Skanda purāṇa also we learn that king Āma renounced Vaishnavism and accepted the teachings of Jain Dharma. Consequently his people also embraced Jainism. A Jain ascetic Indra Sūri came to his court from some other country (probably from Gujarat) and under his influence Āma married his daughter, Ratnagāmā, to Kumārapāla (Kumbhīpāla) of Dharmāraṇya. Kumārapāla was a staunch supporter of Jainism. He denounced Brāhmaṇas and Brāhmanism (Vedic Dharma) based on the sacrifices. He deprecated Brāhmanical deities. Thus Brāhmaṇas, estranged by Kumārapāla and King Āma, sought the divine help of

2. prabandha K., IX. 67. 7:

एकादशिकै तद्र जाते वर्ज्जताभ्ये।
विक्रमास्तोआद्वृत्तुरुरि: कृष्णप्रब्ध्याभ्यमी दिने।

3. Ibid., IX. 68. p. 29.
4. Ibid., IX. 68, line 26:

प्रत्यूचे नुरिन्द्रेण तदृस्त्रवा राज्योज्ज्बे पतितम्।
Rāmacandra and Hanumān. They succeeded in gaining the favour of the latter

The Skanda Purāṇa tells us that the Brāhmaṇas entreated King Āma not to follow the heretics, but all in vain. They went to Rāmasetu. In the way, they met Hanumān who consoled them. Hanumān also gave them two small packets.

When the Brāhmaṇas returned to Kānyakubja, they again asked the king to respect the Brāhmaṇas and the charters granted to them by Rāmacandra. But the king jeered at them. Then, the Brāhmaṇas threw one of the two packets given by Hanumān to them. It caused terrible fire which brought the king to his senses. The Jain ascetics fled in terror. The king fell on the feet of the Brāhmaṇas who regained their power and privileges. The king reposed his faith in the Brāhmaṇas and, once again, he became a devotee of Rāma. Thus the Viṣṇu-dharma (Rāma-bhakti) triumphed in the court of King Āma of Kānyakubja.¹

Whatever be the merits of the story, there is some truth in it and that is the sectarian rivalry between Brāhmaṇism and the heretic faiths of Jainism and Buddhism. Kumārapāla praised the tenets of Jainism based on non-violence and deprecated the Brāhmaṇas devoted to Yajña-dharma based on animal-slaughter.² The Brāhmaṇas commended the principle of ahimsā but they denied the principle of hirāṁśa involved in the performance of the

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2. Ibid., III. ii. 62—64:

ल्यज्ञामि ब्राह्मणायां एषुहिस्त्वासपराणान्त
तस्माद्ब हिस्ताकालां दुः ने भक्तिमूः।
अहिस्ता परमो धर्मोऽहिस्ता च परं तयः।
अहिस्ता परमं शान्तिः अहिस्ता परमं फलम्।

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Vedic rituals with the observation—‘Vaidikī hiṁsā hiṁsā na bhavati’—the doctrine preached by Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. Thus the Skanda Purāṇa supports the account of Bappabhaṭṭi Sūri Carita relating to the activities of Jain and Buddhist philosophers in the court of Āma.

**Personality and Character of Āma-rāja**

According to the Jain writers Āma Rāja was a great ruler, who had learnt seventytwo arts (kalāḥ). These are: Likhitam (writing), Gaṇitam (mathematics), Gitām (vocal music, i.e. singing), Nrtyam (dancing), Paṭhitaṁ (reading), Vādyam (instrumental music), Vyākaraṇam (grammar), Chanda (prosody), Jyotiṣa (astronomy), Śikṣā (one of the six Vedāṅgas), Niruktam (etymology), Kātyāyanaṁ (grammar of Kātyāyana), Nighañṭu (glossary of words), Patracchedyam (leaf-cutting, a kind of sport), Nakha-chedyam, Ratna-parikṣā (testing of jewels), Āyudhyābhyāsa (training in the use of weapons Gajārohaṇam (elephant-riding), Turagārohaṇam (horse-riding), tayoḥ Śikṣā (knowledge of elephants and horses relating to their breed etc., viz., Gajaśāstra and Gajāyurveda as well as Asvaśāstra and Hayāyurveda, Mantravāda, Yantravāda, Rasavāda, Khanyavāda, Rasāyanam (chemistry), Vijñānaṁ, Tarkavāda (logic), Siddhānta, Viśavāda, Gāruḍam, Sākunam, Vaidyakam, Ācārya-Vidyā, Āgama, Prāśada-lakṣaṇaṁ (architecture), Śāmudrikam (science of palmistry), Smṛti, Purāṇam, Itihāsa, Veda, Vidhi (Law and administration).

1. Skanda p., III. iii. 36. 68—73(i) :

   अहिस्ता परमो धर्म: सत्यमेतस्वयोधितम् ।
   परं तथापि धर्मोजस्ति भूणृवैकारायमानसः ।
   या बेदमीहिता हिसा ता न हिसीति निर्णयः ।
   शस्त्रिणाहुर्यते यन्ति पीडा जंतुच मचयते इ
   स एवधर्म एवासि लोके धर्मविवां बर ।
   वेदमीहिताः बिना शस्त्रम जंतयः ।
   जंतुपीडकर नैव सा हिसा सुहस्वामिनी ।
   परोपकारः पुष्पाय पापाय परोहनम् ।
   बेदोदितां विधानापि हिसायापैरः लिप्तते ।
Vidyānuvāda, Darśana-saṁśkāra, Khecari-kalā, Amarikalā,
Indrajāla, Pātālasiddhi, Dhūrtaśambalam, Gandhavāda, Vṛkṣa-
cikitsā, Kṛtrima-manikarma, Sarvakarṇi, Vāsyakarma, Paṇakarma,
Citrakarma, Kāṭhaghaṭanām (wooden architecture), Pāṣāṇa-
karma (stone-architecture), Lepakarma (plastering), Charma-
karma, Yantraka-rasavati, Kāvyam (poetry), Alamkāra, Hasitäm,
Samśkritam, Prākṛtam, Paśācikara, Apabhramśam, Kapaṭam,
Deśabhāsa, Dhātu-karma, Prayogopāyaḥ (prayogāṇām upāyaḥ)
and Kevali-vidhiḥ.

Āma is stated to have learnt all these (seventytwo) arts. He
was, thus, an enlightened ruler devoted to various modes of life
and thought. As such he got a suitable associate in the person
of Bappabhaṭṭi.

एता: सकला: कला: विकलितवादः। लक्षणसंकल्प-प्रत्यात् परिचितवान्।
बण्मम्यन्ता साक्षरसिद्धान्तमयावेग शीति वदवान्।¹

He enjoyed the company of learned men.² It is evident that
Āma had learnt different branches of learning. Khāravela,
Rudradāmana I, Samudragupta, Harṣa and other great rulers of
ancient India were great patrons of learning and were themselves
learned rulers. Āma, too, was such a great ruler.

ĀMA — A GREAT RULER

Thus Āma Rāja, like the other enlightened kings of ancient
India, was a great ruler, both as a man and as a heroic warrior
(Āma-nāmā nṛpaḥ Śrīmān atimāna-vikramaḥ).³

A Large Army.

He had a large army consisting of 2 lakhs of horses, 1400
elephants, 1400 chariots, and one crore of foot-soldiers (infantry).
Such was the mighty force of king Āma, who had been equated

1. Prabandha Kosā, IX. 63, p. 28.
2. Prabhāvaka Carita, XI. 61—74:

एवंविद्यालालोḥ द्वासप्तिमहीतवान्।
अन्यप्रकृतिः कौशिकानां सर्वबंधोऽक्षमवत्।

3. Ibid., XI. 79, p. 82, 1—19.
with the royal splendour of Rāma (evaṁ rājyaśrī Śrī Āṁśya nyāya-Rāmasya). Verily, he was Rāma of his own age. Thus King Āma, cannot be regarded as weakling who succeeded Yaśovarman.

BAPPABHAṬṬI AND KING DHARMA OF GAUḌA

From the Jain works under review, we learn that king Āma of Kanauj and the Buddhist king Dharma (evidently Dharmapāla) of Gauḍa were contemporaneous rulers.

The dominance of Jainism in the court of king Āma and the exaltation of Bappabhaṭṭi Śūri as the royal preceptor led to disrespectful attitude of the king towards Brāhmaṇas. Brāhmaṇas openly warned the king in the court not to shower excessive favour on heretics:

प्रात्नर्यो मौलमनह्य वः सिद्धासन गौरवे निवेशायपति।
तद् वृद्ध्वा विनः
कुम्धा ज्वलितेऽमुपि विगप्त्—देव। श्रेताम्बरा अभो शुद्धा। एष्यः सिद्धासन किम्।
अवास्तां तत्व। परं हस्तीपि भवतु।
मुद्द्रमूहस्तोलिनस्य विद्वान्वय कदवर्धमानः: पाणिवो मौलमन्यते धर्माण कार्यिववाचायालब्धाश्रुतप्रतिष्ठानेत्रो सूरीत्रेण तदू दृष्ट्वा शब्देनव राजसीध्रे प्रविगल्   

It led to the alienation of Bappabhaṭṭi who left the court of king Āma in disgust. He went to Gauḍa, where he graced the court of king Dharma in the city of Lakṣaṇāvatī. Here he met Vākpatirāja (Kavirāja). King Dharma extended his patronage to Bappabhaṭṭi who was introduced to royal court by Vākpatirāja. Dharma, the king of Gauḍa, paid great respect to Bappabhaṭṭi, the ācārya of Āmarāja.

1. Prabandha Kośa, IX. 65, p. 28, ll. 26—27.
2. Ibid., IX. 106, p. 36. I. 26 :

स्मयेष्युद्योगवानपूर्व तत्तत्व: (रामतुल्य:) |

Prabhāvaka Carita, XI. 142—146.

4. Prabandha Kośa, IX. 71—74
Prabhāvaka Carita XI. 160—161.

Prabhāvaka Carita, XI. 181—186.
Äamarāja and Dharma (King of Gauḍa)

Bappabhaṭṭi’s departure from Kānyakubja to the capital of Gauḍa led to struggle between Äamarāja and Dharma. Both of them were hostile to each other.1 Äma is mentioned to have gone to Lakṣaṇāvatī.2

BAPPABHAṬṬI AND A BUDDHIST LOGICIAN

In the court of King Dharma, there was a debate between a Buddhist philosopher named Vardhana-kunjāra and the Jain acārya, Bappabhaṭṭi. The former was defeated and according to the terms and conditions of the debate King Dharma had to surrender his kingdom to Äma (Dharmenā saptaṅgam rājyam Ämāya dattam). But at the instance of Bappabhaṭṭi, Äma returned it to Dharma.3 The presence of a Buddhist philosopher in the court of King Dharma leads to the identification of Gauḍa-monarch to his namesake, Dharmapāla, who was a great Buddhist ruler. Dr. Tripathi or others who take Äma to be the son and successor of Yaśovarman have not considered the contemporaneity of Äma with king Dharma or Dharmapāla. We know that Dharmapāla had to fight against Nagabhaṭṭa II and his grandson Bhoja I of the Pratihāra dynasty. Thus Bhoja of Bappabhaṭṭi-Sūri-Carita cannot be taken to be the last ruler of Yaśovarman’s family about whom we know nothing.

The accounts of Yaśovarman, and Äma are much confused. Yaśovarman, and Vākpatirāja are stated to be contemporaries of Dharma. Yaśovarman is mentioned to have invaded Gauḍādesa, a fact which is corroborated by the Gauḍavāho of Vākpatirāja. But Vākpatirāja had not named the ruler of Gauḍādesa defeated by Yaśovarman. On the other hand, according to the Bappabhaṭṭi-Sūri-Carita Yaśovarman defeated Dharma of Gauḍa. Yaśovarman’s court-poet Vākpatirāja is stated to be the

1. Prabhāvaka Carita, XI. 168 :
बे मेज्यामाराजेत दुष्प्रभिः विस्रामप्रभिः।
2. Prabandha Kośa, IX. 76—96.
3. Ibid., IX. 76. p. 30. ll. 30—31.
Prabhāvaka Carita XI. 186—188.
contemporary of Āma and Dharma also. Thus the chronological position of the different personalities is very much confused in these Jain works.

Vākapatirāja is mentioned to be the Paramāra ruler of the same:

धर्मवूपति: परमारवंशः नरेश्वर महाकाबि वाकपतिनामानि स्वस्वेवकं सहाययत समावयो।

Vākapatirāja is also mentioned as a feudatory (Vākapatirāja-sāmantam).

Āma, Dunduka and Bhoja

An other episode mentioned in the Bappabhaṭṭi-carīta relates the story of the conquest of Rājakacarī-fort occupied by Samudra-sena. Āma laid siege to this fort, but failed in his venture. After 12 years his grandson Bhoja, who was son of Dunduka, succeeded in conquering Rājakacarī.

End of Āma-Nāgāvalokā

Placing his son Dunduka on the throne about six months after the capture of Rājakacarī, Āma-rāja gave up his life following the path of Anāśana according to the principles of Jain-dharma in the year 890 V. S. (=833 A. D.). He was also called Nāgāvaloka (Śrīmān Nāgāvalokākhya rāja).

2. Prabhāvaka Carīta XI. 567(ii).
3. Ibid., XI. 661—675.
4. Ibid., XI. 719—721:

viśvamati varṇah ūryaṃ gandhastē  sūryatī ca bhirapade
gurudhi tiṣṭapatam vhyā ca brahmānādibhutasye
tulārāṣṭrī tamāṣapraśāṣtēṣu prārdeśitaṁ
dharmamāṇi bhūtaḥ panchapramāṇamahābhavām

Prabandha Kośa, IX. 132. p. 48, ll. 7—10:
sahū nūśirāna nāvarāhśāhdo gandhastirīrthere tirē iñādgh gataḥ:

sambaramsaṁ bivdān abhānam prāskṛtaḥ  sāmāvīśayā: śriśvāmakaśāḥ abhāntavasrāgu

nābāvarāhē pāhdy eḥubāpamāyaṁ pañcānupāntitam: śmarātu rājaśā dharmabhadātu.
Thus came to an end the long and chequered life of Āma styled Nāgāvaloka:

Gaṅgā toyāgnimadhye tridivam upāgato yatra Nāgāvalokah.¹
He left behind him his people to lament the loss of a great ruler:

¹Śūryasthātva kṣirah ēhantu: nā labhate labhantah—hā kṣariyagātānādāvajjukma! hā rajāsthāpataiṣāvādare! hā abhavamana! hā sātvāvas sūrya! hā hūm-
brahmane! hā mānąjñagīne! hā sūryātthasaṃpratē! hā anudānāvaprajaṃvīditya!
ḥa ārā içchāsaśātāvahūn! abhitaṃ vihaya kā vatoṣita?
³

Thus Āma styled rājendra,³ is compared to such great rulers as Rāma-Dāsarathī, Nala, Yudhiṣṭhīra, Karṇa, Śreṇīka (Bimbisāra), Samprati (grandson of Aśoka), Vikramāditya, and Śatavāhana. Hence he was undoubtedly an illustrious ruler who was also known by the name of Nāgāvaloka.

**Empire of Āma-Nāgāvaloka**

Āma had a large empire comprising Kānyakubja-deśa which seems to have included Gopagiri⁴ (Gwalior) Kālīfījara,⁵ Mathurā,⁶ Gurjara,⁷ and Surāṭra⁸ which included the famous sacred spots of Raivataka-giri and Prabhāṣa. Some parts of Magadha viz. Magadha-tīrtha⁹ on the Ganges where he performed the rite of

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1. Prabhāvaka Carita X. 724.
3. Ibid., IX. 131. p. 42. 1, 24: Āmarājānītṛa
4. Prabandha Kośa IX. 62. 36, p. 27. II. 16—17:
   कन्यकुµ्भदेशगोपालगिरिशुङ्गस्थिति ।
5. Ibid., IX. 126. 47, p. 40. 1, 25:
   तं कलिफःज्ञर्गिरिश्वतीरे शालनामातपस्त्यिः
7. Ibid., IX. 132. p. 43, ll. 4—5:
   आमस्यन्यङ्गुर्जराविवेशास्स्तद्
8. Ibid., IX. 131. 51, p. 42. ll. 9—29.
9. Ibid., IX. 130. p. 43. ll. 7—8
anaśana and the fort of Rājagiri were also included in the empire of King Āma-Nāgāvaloka.

NĀGĀVALOKA-NĀGABHAṬA II

"The life of Bappabhaṭṭi contains details of an historical nature which engaged the attention of some scholars who have drawn freely from that work. The work identifies Nāgāvaloka with king Āma of Kanauj...." Dr. Puri adds that "the evidence adduced by this biography of Bappabhaṭṭi-Carita seems fairly reliable. According to the Buchkala inscription, Nāgabhaṭa II was ruling in V. S. 872 and he also possessed the title of Nāgāvaloka, as is evident from the Pathari pillar inscription of Parabala, and the Haras inscription of Cāhamāna Vigrahārāja. The reference to the animosity between this ruler of Kanauj and king Dharma of Bengal is in conformity with evidence available from inscriptions. Further, both the rulers had a grandson named Bhoja..."

The account of King Āma found in the Skanda Purāṇa fully supports the identification of Āma-Nāgāvaloka with Nāgabhaṭa II.

ĀMA IN THE SKANDA PURĀṆA

Like the Jain works cited above the Skanda Purāṇa also maintains that Āma, who was ruling at Kānyakubja (Kānyakubja-dhīpo), was a powerful (bali) monarch. He was an illustrious ruler devoted to Dharma and Niti. He was a pious, polite, restrained,

1. Prabandha Kośa IX. 128. 50, p. 41. II. 15—22.
4. Ibid., p. 48.
5. Skanda, III. ii. 36. 34.
6. Ibid., III. ii. 36. 34(i) ; III. ii. 38. 3(ii).
resolute, calm and truthful king\(^1\) devoted to the protection of his people. He is also stated to have attained the status of a paramount ruler (sārvabhaumatvam āpannah)\(^2\). He had a strong army consisting of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry,\(^3\) as is also stated by the Jain writers. He had an extensive empire which extended up to Western Sea, as Dharmārāṇya was under his suzerainty. Thus Āma, the powerful and paramount sovereign who had to protect the country and its people, was undoubtedly Nāgāvaloka or Nāgabhaṭa II.

**Indrasūri**

According to the Skanda Purāṇa King Āma was converted to Jainism by a Jain philosopher named Indrasūri,\(^4\) who is also styled ‘Jivika’.\(^5\) Bappabhaṭṭi Śuri Prabandha refers to Bappabhaṭṭi as Sūrīndra\(^6\) and Śuriśakra\(^7\). Indrasūri of the Skanda Purāṇa and Sūrīndra or Śuriśakra of the Bappabhaṭṭi Prabandha seem to be identical epithets of Bappabhaṭṭi Śuri.

After the death of Yaśovarman, Kanauj had no ruler worthy of name. India threatened by the Arabs needed a saviour. It was found in the person of Āma-Nāgāvaloka or Nāgabhaṭa II, who stands on a lofty pedestal in the hall of Kānyakubja as a champion of dharā and dharma.

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1. Skanda P., III. ii. 36. 12—13(i):

इदारीं च कलो श्राव्य भारो नाम्या ब्रह्मा ।
काव्यकुञ्जाधिपि: श्रीमान्यमहो नीतित्तपूरः ॥

शालो कांत: सुभीलक्ष सत्यम परायणः ॥

2. Ibid., III. ii. 36. 34—35(i):

एवतन्त्र त्वा मुदौरेव काव्यकुञ्जाधिपो बली ।
राज्य प्रकुम्भते तत्र भारो नामम धि भूतले ॥

सार्वभौमानायः प्रजापलस्तपर: ॥

3. Ibid., III. ii. 38. 6(i), 20(i), 21(i), 43(i)
4. Ibid., III. ii. 36. 40(i), 54(ii).
5. Ibid., III. ii. 36. 41(i).
6. Prahandha Kośa, IX. 68, p. 29.1. 26; IX. 94, p. 32, l. 20; IX. 132, p. 43, l. 8.
7. Ibid., IX. 101, p. 34 l.19; IX. 125, p. 40, l. 21.
In the Rājasamśad of Kānyakubja he was highly eulogised for his merits as a great ruler. Vākpatirāja Observes:

पृष्ठशिल गुरुः कीर्त्य रामो नसो भरतो भवान्
महति समरे शतुभन्सस्य सदैव युधिष्ठिरः।
इति गुणरितः स्यति विप्रधिरन्तनगृहस्तां
कश्मसि न मान्याता देवसिवाभोकविजयस्यपि। २

Like the age of Harṣa and Saśānka, Northern India, just before the advent of King Āma (Nāgabhaṭa II), was suffering from the evils of the Kali Age. Society was torn asunder by the sectarian rivalry. The royal court of Āma witnessed the tussle among the Brāhmaṇas and heretics viz., Buddhists, Jains and other Pāṇḍavas. It created confusion in the court and in the country. While dealing with the evils of the Kali Age, the Skanda Purāṇa rings the alarm-bell:

क्षत्रियाः राज्याहिनास्तः मलेच्छो राजां भविष्यति। ३

The rulers like Nāgabhaṭa I, Nāgabhaṭa II, and Bhoja I tried to protect the country and its culture from the impending danger.

1. Prabhāvaka Carita, XI. 465.
2. Ibid., XI. 468.
3. Skanda, III. ii. 36. 31(ii).
Chapter VI

KING VIKRAMAŚILA (DHARMAPALĀ)

It is in the fitness of things that the Skanda Purāṇa which has preserved the relics of Pratihāra empire represented by Āma (Nāgabhaṭa II) and Bhoja I⁴ should also uphold the glories of the Pāla empire, as Rāmacarita of Abhinanda also refers to Pratihāra-Pāla³ epoch. The Vastrāpatha Kṣetra Māhātmya, seems to be recited by the sage Sārasvatī to Bhoja, whose zeal for pilgrimage had been stimulated by the stories relating to his past births.

It is in this context that Skanda, while enumerating the sacred spots of Vastrāpatha Mahākṣetra, refers to Revatikūḍa, situated on the Raivata hill. Revati (the 27th constellation) was cursed by a sage to fall on the hill-top. She was brought up there by Rājarṣi Pramūnica who sought some suitable person for her husband.³ A powerful king named Durdama son of Vikramaśila and Kālindī was found fit for her husband and he is associated with the celebrated Kṣatriya dynasty of Priyavrata. Durdama is mentioned as a mighty ruler (mahābala-parākramaḥ)⁴ styled ‘rājendra’⁵ and a noble king,⁶ whose reign was marked by happiness and prosperity based on the well-being of the entire State—its capital, people, treasury, army, ministers, servants and

2. Rāmacarita, 27. 73 ; 38. 17.
3. Skanda VII. ii. 17. 131-150.
4. Ibid., VII. ii. 17. 154-155.
5. Ibid., VII. ii. 17. 162(i).
6. Ibid., VII. ii. 17. 158(i)
allies. Durdama and Revati begot a son named Manu-Raivata, who was probably also called Mahipāla.

Of these names of the ruling personalities — Vikramaśīla, Durdama and Mahipāla — Vikramaśīla is a noted figure in the history of early medieval India, as it represents the second name of Dharmapāla or Devapāla, the great Pāla rulers. Rāmacarita of the poet Abhinanda refers to a king Hāravarṣa as ‘Yuvarāja-devaḥ’ belonging to the family of Śrī Dharmapāla:

śrīधर्मपालकुलहरिकाननेन्द्रू राजा विलासहरितिकविनीविवस्वान।
सवारिचाररुग्यमन्रयंश्रीकृष्णनदनो विजयं मुखराजदेवः॥ ॥

1. Skanda, VII. ii. 17. 162—163.

Mārkaṇḍeeya Purāṇa (Chap. LXXV, Jivanand Edn., Calcutta, 1879), also mentions this story in connection with the account of the fifth Manu named Raivata. But it does not refer to Mahipāla. The Mārkaṇḍeeya Purāṇa refers to this story as that of the fifth Manu. The Skanda Purāṇa gives it in connection with the glorification of Revati- Kuṇḍa.

2. Ibid., VII. ii. 17. 184—185:

भविष्यति महीपाली महावल्परारूः।
रेवती रेवतीकुष्ठे लाल्स्वा पुजेय जनिष्यति॥

The entire text of the story found in the Skanda Purāṇa (VII. ii. 17. 116—185) is almost the same as we have in the Mārkaṇḍeeya P. (LXXII. 1—68) with a few variant readings. Skanda adds a few verses (VII. ii. 17. 138—134, 136(i), 139) dealing with the glory of Revati-Kuṇḍa, placed on the Raivataka hill in the province of Surāśṭra.

Similarly the above noted verse is not found in the Mārkaṇḍeeya version of the story. It seems to be added deliberately by the Purāṇakāra. Probably Mahipāla, a king, seems to be name of the son of Durdama.


Yuvārajadeva was ruling over the country during the time of Abhinanda (kulendau pāḷānām avati yuvāraje vasumatim). He was a conqueror and a Dharma-vijayī styled Janēśvara worthy of respect. Thus rightly Yuvārajadeva-Hāravarṣa does not represent a heir, but a ruler of great celebrity marked by his glorious achievements (vikramāvadānān). Yuvarāja has been identified with Devapāla and Hāravarṣa may have been an other epithet of Devapāla.

Rāmacarita refers to Yuvarāja Hāravarṣa as ‘Vikramāśilānandanaḥ’ and Vikramāśilā-janmā, who is also styled pṛthvīpatiḥ (pṛthvīpatir jayati Virkramāśilā-janmā).

“So Hāravarṣa was a son of Vikramāśila. The colophon of the Śragadharā-stotraṭikā mentions Jinarakṣita of Vikramāśila-deva-mahāvihāra. It appears that the founder of the Vikramāśila-monastery was also known as Vikramāśiladeva. Dharmapāla is credited with the foundation of this monastery. Therefore Hāravarṣa son of Vikramāśila was a son of Dharmapāla and should be identified with Devapāla”. Hāravarṣa, an other name of Devapāla, is stated to be based on the liberality and generosity of Devapāla.

“It may also be pointed out that in one verse in the Rāmacarita, Hāravarṣa is mentioned as ‘pṛthvīpāla’. If the latter is a proper name, then Hāravarṣa is certainly, a different person from Devapāla”. But pṛthvīpāla seems to be a mere royal epithet like pṛthvīpati given to him.

1. R. C., p. 18.
2. Ibid., p. 113.
3. Ibid., p. 63:
   पालान्यामुवाजरनिक विरोजनाय तस्मी नामोत्तु युवराजनेवव्राय।
4. Ibid., VI. 4.
5. Ibid., Introduction, pp. XVI—XXII.
7. Ibid., p. 262, at the end of Sarga XXX.
10. Ibid., p. 384.
11. R. C., p. 262, at the end of Sarga XXX.
Thus Vikramaśīla, father of Durdama, may be identified with Dharmapāla of the Pāla dynasty. Durdama, like Hāravṛṣa, represents the other epithet of Devapāla, based on his 'mahābala-parākrama', which is also described by Abhinanda in his Rāmacarita. Our identification of Durdama with Devapāla is further supported by the fact that Mahīpāla is stated to be a son of Durdama as well as that of Devapāla. Thus Vikramaśīla, Durdama and Mahīpāla mentioned in the Skanda Purāṇa appear to be rulers of the Pāla dynasty named Dharmapāla, Devapāla and Mahīpāla respectively.

In view of the wide range of conquests achieved by Devapāla in the different directions, it is not surprising if the celebrated Pāla ruler reached the Raivata hill in the course of hunting excursion. Thus the Skanda Purāṇa throws interesting light on the history of the Pālas.

**DHARMAPĀLA AND THE YAVANAS**

Dvārakā Māhātmya section of the Skanda Purāṇa (VII. iv), which describes the importance of Viṣṇu-bhakti, also glorifies notable cultural belts of Bhārata viz., Brahmāvartha, Madhyadeśa, and Āryadeśa. It denounces Mlecchadeśa which was to be deserted. It exhibits Āryāvarta-consciousness, that spurred the Pālas and the Prāthāras to set up ārasa-dharanī-bandha against the attacks of Mleccha hordes.

The Arab principality of Sind was named Yavana-deśa and the Garuḍa Purāṇa specifically refers to the Mlecchas and

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1. D. M., p. 384, Foot-note 3: "According to Bu-son (p. 157) one Mahīpāla was a son of Devapāla".
2. Ibid., pp. 369–375.
3. Sk., VII. ii. 17. 156.
4. Ibid., VII. iv. 38. 17.
5. Ibid., VII. iv. 39. 92–93.
Yavanas of Sind (saindhavā nāstikā mlecchāḥ Yavanāḥ tathā).  

Ānartta (North Gujarat with Dvārakā as its capital) was turned into Daitya-bhūmi dominated by the Mlecchas, who terrorised Brāhmaṇas. The Vedas, Śastrās, tīrthas and gods (shrines) were threatened by them. Dharmapāla (Defender of Faith), as the very name suggests, seems to have championed the cause of Dharma.

The Skanda Purāṇa continues that in the country of Ānartta styled Daityabhūmi, the famous sage named Durvāsā happened to come to take bath at Cakra-tīrtha marked by the confluence of the Gomati and the sea. Durvāsā was noticed by Daityas and Mlecchas who wanted to kill him, as no body, not even a Brāhmaṇa, was allowed to take bath there. His clothes were thrown away and similarly the kuśa-grass (an essential requisite for the performance of ablutions) was scattered there in the water. Demon Ruru caught hold of the sage and he was driven out of that country. Such was the reign of terror.

Durvāsā thought that Cakradhara-Viṣṇu alone was the saviour. While meditating upon Him, the sage found the Lord standing in front of him. He consoled the sage with his observations:

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2. Skanda, VII. iv. 18. 18—19:

अनर्ततैविष्यं प्राप्य दैत्यमूम्बितविभेदः ह ||
नित्स्वाध्यायवप्पकारं बदवनविनविजिताम् ||
कुशेन दैत्यराजेन वेदितां नालितां तथा ||
बहुःलक्षसमकारिणामध्यमोपार्जीतेः । ||

There is epigraphic evidence to show that this part of the country had to face furious fire at the hands of Tājikas (अश्वेलोकसंतापकलापः ताजिकान्तः) as we know from the Nava-sari Plates of Avanijanāśraya. The Tājikas (Arabs) had conquered Saindhava, Kacchella, Saurāṣṭra, Cāvoṭaka, Maurya, Gurjara and other kings, cf. C. I. I., Vol. IV. pp. 105, 109.

3. Skanda, VII. iv. 18. 25(i).
Viṣṇu, devoted to the protection of Brāhmaṇas (Brahmaṇya) is styled Dharmapāla.

This mythological story describes the persecution of Brāhmaṇas at the hands of Daityas, Dānavas, Asuras and Mlecchas in the region around Dvārakā. It also tells us that the God Viṣṇu came to their rescue.

The mention of Dharmapāla as the saviour of Brāhmaṇas is significant; for we know that “by a Gujarati poet in the eleventh century A. D. Dharmapāla is referred to as the Lord of Nothern India (Uttarāpatha-svāmi). From the Khalimpur Copper-Plate inscription of Dharmapāla we learn that the great Pāla conqueror was recognised as the emperor by the kings of Bhoja, Mātṛya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gandhāra and Kīra. Yadus or Yādavas had their settlement at Dvārakā in Ānarta. Bhojas were also the members of Vṛṣṇyandhaka Samgha of Kathiawar. “The Yavanas must be taken to refer to a Muslim principality in the Sindhu Valley.” The Daityas, Asuras and Mlecchas of the Skanda Purāṇa were the Yavanas or the Arabs.

According to the Udaya Sundari Kathā the king Dharmapāla belonged to the family of Māndhātā and he was the Lord of Uttarāpatha, who justified his name by giving protection to Dharma:

1. Skanda, VII. iv. 18. 45.
2. Ibid., VII. iv. 18. 38(i).
3. Ibid., VII. iv, Chapter 18.
4. A. I. K., p. 46, vide Udayasundari Kathā of Soḍḍhala
   (G. O. S. Edn.) pp. 4-6,
5. Khalimpur Copper Plate Ins. of Dharmapāla, 1. 21
   A. I. K., p. 46 ; D. M. p. 341.
6. A. I. K., p. 46,
7. U. S. K., p. 4:
Thus the personality of Dharmapāla sketched in the story of Dvārakā Māhātmya of the Skanda Purāṇa as the saviour of Brāhmaṇas and Dharma is mirrored in the work of a Gujarati poet, Soḍḍhala. The personality and the heroic character of Dharmapāla was worthy of note sung by the sages (Sri Dharmapālaḥ sujana stūyamāṅgadalāḥ) who held him as the sole supreme lord of kings and ruler of the whole earth (svāmī bhūmipatīnām akhila vasumatī maṇḍalām śāsadekah). He is stated to have relieved the earth of heavy burden with the help of Cakra. In him alone were to be seen the combined virtues of ancient kings viz., Pṛthu, Rāma-Rāghava and Nala. Such was the great ruler styled Dharmapāla in the Kali age.

Thus it is evident that the Kali age characterised by the dominance of adharma found a worthy ruler who gave protection to Dharma and dharā thereby justifying his name, Dharmapāla. The reference to Cakra as a companion of Dharmapāla (cakra-sāhāiyakārthāṃ) leaves no doubt about the divine personality of Dharmapāla like that of Viṣṇu known as Cakradhara. Attention is drawn here towards Cakrahasta-Viṣṇu, regarded as the only saviour, mentioned in the Skanda Purāṇa as well as Dharmapāla with Cakrasāhāyakam mentioned in his Khalimpur Copper Plate inscription.

The Junagarh inscription of Skandagupta eulogises Cakrabhṛt, who carries cakra for the destruction of enemies. The Asirgarh Seal of Sarvavarman portrays Dharma (Bull decorated with a garland) protected by Cakradhara.
CHAPTER VI

BHOJA-THE GREAT

Bhoja, son of the Dharma-rakṣaka (trāṭa dharmasya) aptly styled Rāma (Rāmabhadra), was himself the exalted defender of Āryāvarta at a time when the monstrous Kali — the internal strife (political and religious) as well as the external danger caused by the invasions of Mlecchas—threatened the very foundations of Vedic culture. Bhoja is styled the conqueror of Kali and the lord of the Fame (adharita kaleḥ kīrtter bharttuh). Hence the age of Bhoja is aptly described as the Purṇya-yuga (Sat yuga) when the renowned (viśrutaḥ) and pious (dharmyaḥ) king Bhoja was ruling over the sacred country of Kānyakubja in conformity with the dictates of Prajā-dharma:

कान्यकुबजे महासेते राजा भोजेति विश्रूतः ।
पुराण पुर्वसुरेष्व धम्मः प्रजाधर्मः वासति ॥

It has been well-said, and said by the Hindu political thinkers that a king is the maker of his age (rājā kālasya kāraṇam). The Mahābhārata tells us that by adhering entirely to the principles of Daṇḍaniti, in letter and spirit, a king brings to his people a golden age of peace and piety. It is true that Bhoja I of the Pratihāra dynasty turned his age into Kṛtyayuga by adherence to the Rājadharma which is the same as the Prajādharma. Thus

2. Ibid., l. 9.
3. Kali also denotes Mleccha.
5. Skanda, VII. ii. 6. 20.
7. Ibid., LXIX. 80:

दशभीत्यं यदा राजा सम्यक्क कालप्रेथेय वर्तते ।
तदा कृत्ययुगं नाम कालपूर्वं प्रवर्तते ॥
dharmaṃ rāja Bhoja i.e. king Bhoja consistent with his duty of giving protection to country, its people and culture ruled in accordance with the royal duties towards its people. Prajādharma also reflects upon the paternal principle of administration. It is supported by the Gwalior Praśasti of Bhoja as well as by Rājaśekhara who upholds the concept of Prajāpati based on the good of the people (prajāsu hitakāmyayā prajāpatiḥ).  

BHOJA-THE PRAJĀPATI

Rāmabhadra had no son, who could shoulder the responsibility of his country and its government. Hence he performed religious rites. He propitiated the Sun to have a son who could perform the functions of the Prajāpati (prajāpatitvam viniyoktu kāmaḥ).

MHIIRA

The son, so born to him, by the blessings of the Sūrya was named Mihira:

Jagaditvam: sa bhūvavatvam praṇāpatilvam vinayoktukāma:  

"A pure soul, averse from the world, he obtained a son named Mihira, by (the favour of) the Sun, propitiated by mysterious rites, in order to dispose of the lordship over his subjects."

Now the question arises as to why the newly born babe was named Mihira? There are other names of the Sun, one of which could have been conferred upon him. There is a specific reason for which he was named Mihira. From the Skanda Purāṇa we know that there was a celebrated solar shrine at Kāanyakubja dedicated to Mihira (Mihirāṁ Kāanyakubje). It was, here, in this temple of Mihira at Kāanyakubja that Rāmabhadra performed religious rites to propitiate the god Mihira, who was pleased to bestow upon his devotee the favour of having a son and the son so

2. Gwalior Stone Inscription of Bhoja, v. 15(b).  
3. Ibid., v. 15.  
4. Ibid., English translation.  
5. Skanda P., VII. i. 139. 22(ii).  
6. cf Varāha P. CLVII. 39—44. Here we are told that Vāsudeva-Devakīputra and Sāntanu obtained sons by worshipping the Sun.
born was consequently named Mihira.

BHOJA

Mihira was also called Bhoja as we know from the Gwalior Praśasti which tells us:

उत्तरोत्तरकृतविविधानुसारस्यः
भक्तान् भूतानि भोजां ये प्रभृतिमहस्ति उपरामुिः।

“The lord (prabhuḥ) who ruled over many kings (bhūbṛt) after having overcome them and (being therefore) known as Bhoja, shone more gloriously than Agastya who merely checked the rise of (a single bhūbṛt i.e. mountain) Vindhya through favour (and not by his prowess).”

But the epigraphic passage — sa prabhuḥ ākramya bhūbṛtyānām bhoktā — reflects upon the overlordship (prabhutvam) of Bhoja over the kings beyond the Vindhya range. Bhoja crossed the Vindhya Hill and after attacking kings (ākramya) forced them to pay taxes (bhoga), thereby making them his tributaries (karadikṛta).

Hence this ‘bhoktā’ (king), who assumed his lordship over the kings beyond the Vindhyan range, was styled Bhoja. Thus Mihira was called Bhoja and he is generally known as Mihira Bhoja.

PRABHĀṢA

According to Dr. Tripathi “In the Daulatapur inscription, however, he is given the title of Prabhāṣa, which means splendour, and perhaps refers to the name Mihira (the sun).” But the two

1. Gwalior Stone Ins. of Bhoja, v. 16.
2. Ibid., its English translation, v. 16.
3. The epigraph here refers to an analogy between Agastya and Bhoja. Agastya had asked the Vindhya mountain to bow down in order to give him way to the South. Thus Agastya had gone to South India by requesting the bhūbṛta (mountain) beyond it; while Bhoja had besieged the bhūbṛtas (kings) ruling over the Vindhyan region) to bow low and pay taxes to Bhoja.
names Prabhāsa and Mihira are not identical as Tripathi thinks, though both the terms (Mihira and Prabhāsa) represent the Sun. Their sphere of influence was different. While Mihira represented the overlordship of Kānyakubja-mahākṣetra, the Prabhāsa seems to represent his lordship of Saurāśtra which was an important country of Bhārata, and Prabhāsa was the most sacred region there.¹

The epithet Prabhāsa, assumed by Mihira Bhoja represents the divine splendour of Śiva which had permeated the whole region.² The gods also regained their splendour here in this region. It was here that the unique splendour of the Sun made itself felt by the people for the first time. It was also here that Soma cursed by Dakṣa regained his prabhā. Here was to be the reverberating sound of Brāhmaṇi Bhāratī uttered by Brāhmaṇas. Washed by the ocean this sacred region was always served by Bhāskara. Thus these various etymological meanings of Prabhāsa³ are attributed to Mahārāja Śri Bhojadeva styled

1. Skanda, VII. i. 11. 37–44.
2. Ibid., VII. i. 11. 44.
3. Ibid., VII. i. 11. 39–54.
Prabhāṣa, which exhibits like the Sun, (saurMr̥ tejaḥ) his unassailable power.

The Yavanas, Daityas and Asuras who had caused a reign of terror here in this region (cf. the Chapter VI. Dharmapāla and the Yavanas) were suppressed by this great ruler who is mentioned as ‘the greatest foe to the Mohammedan faith’.

It should be pointed out here that Prabhāṣa was an ancient sacred spot of great sanctity where Kṛṣṇa (Vāsudeva) gave up his life after deserting Dwārakā. It was the age of Bhoja styled Prabhāṣa that during this period Prabhāṣa Khaṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa was composed and added to this oceanic text. In the very beginning, this section tells us that the Lord who assumed the form of Varāha gave up his life at Prabhāṣa:

स कर्ष प्रभवति प्राप प्रभासे पार्वतीपते।
य: पुराणे पुराणाल्मा वाराह वधुराशित॥
उद्धार महीं कःतनां साधृविभन्कान्तानाम॥
स कर्ष त्यवेनामान्त्य प्रभासे पापनाशरे। ॥

It is possible that like his grand-father, Nāgabhaṭa II, Bhoja or Prabhāṣa gave up his life at Prabhāṣa.

Ādīvarāha

“An other title assumed by him in the Gwalior Caturbhuj epigraph and in certain coins of base silver was that of Ādīvarāha, showing that he posed to identify himself with the Boar-incarnation of Viṣṇu.” Munshi observes: “Āryāvarta was a pyramid of culture. At its apex stood Viṣṇu himself, the upholder of a well-ordered realm, the protector of happy and well-ordered governace.

1. Skanda, VII. i. 13. 21:
   यस्मादक्रम्य तेजोभिमासितं मम तद्गृहन्तं।
   तस्माद्भासस्माते कल्पितसम्प्रतिधितं प्रिये॥
2. Agni p., 226. 17(i):
   तेजसा दुनिरीव्यं हि राजा भास्करवतं तत:॥
3. Skanda, VII. i. 9. 28—28.
That is why Bhoja acquired the epithet of Ādi Varāha.”¹ The silver coins of Mihira Bhoja of the Ādi Varāha type have on the obverse the figure of the God Ādi Varāha with the legend ‘Śrī-madgādivarāha’ on the reverse. The solar disc shown in front of the Varāha-mūrti represents Mihira (the Sun).²

The figure of Varāha with all its limbs represents the different items, aspects and equipments of sacrifice. Hence Varāha is styled Yajñāṅga.

It shows the revival of Trayī Dharma by Ādi Varāha who also rescued the country (earth) from being submerged in Tuṣa-ka-samudra by destroying the enemies. The Varāha Purāṇa offers its salutations to such saviour³ who is urged to destroy the enemies (nudatu mama ripūn ādidevo Varāhah)⁴. Thus it is evident that the various epithets and names borne by Bhoja viz., Mihira, Bhoja, Prabhāsa and Ādi Varāha throw a flood of light on the personality and achievements of Mihira-Bhoja.

HISTORY OF BHOJA (Bhojavṛttānta)

Munshi, the Gurjara-historian, observed, that, “Vandalism has destroyed the monuments of Bhoja’s greatness. Until a few years ago he was quite unknown to Indian history. Further research is certain to establish what has already been foreshadowed by the evidence available at present.”⁵

The greatness of Bhoja is also preserved in the ‘Bhoja-vṛttānta’ (Story of Bhoja) of the Skanda Purāṇa. Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri drew the attention of the scholars to a ‘legend’ mentioned in the Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa, which describes the following story :—

2. Ibid., Appendix VI, pp. 215—216.
4. Ibid., I. 2.
"In the days of yore there lived in Kānyakubja (Kanauj) a king named Bhoja. Once upon a time there came to him a Vanapāla (Warden of the Forest) who said, "Sire (deva) I have seen a woman with the face of a doe roaming with a herd of deer in the forests at Raivataka." The king's curiosity was roused. Collecting his troops he marched towards Raivataka and encircled the hill with a net. The deer-maiden was captured by the Balādhyakṣa (general), and was taken by the king to Kānyakubja, where she recounted the story of her previous births, and spoke about the spiritual efficacy of the holy waters of the Suvarṇarekha. The king was much impressed with what he heard about Surāśṭra and its holy spots from the maiden and a Brāhmaṇa from Kuru-κṣetra, and expressed his resolve to abdicate in favour of his son, so that he might be free to undertake a pilgrimage to those sacred spots."¹ Dr. Raychaudhuri observes that, "There are details in this, as in other priestly legends, which belong to the domain of fairy tales, and are absolutely unworthy of serious consideration. But there are three points which deserve examination. These are (1) the mention of a king Bhoja who reigned at kanauj, (2) the connection of that king with Surāśṭra as evidenced by the appointment of a Vanapāla and despatch of an army, and (3) his abdication in favour of his son."²

He further adds that "Regarding point (3), viz., that relating to the alleged abdication of Bhoja........The possibility that Bhoja actually abdicated temporarily about A. D. 893 cannot be entirely excluded in view of the king's resolve alluded to in the Skanda Purāṇa".³ Relating the story in the words of Raychaudhuri, Dr. R. S. Tripathi observes that, "Much of the story is no doubt absolutely unworthy of credence, but the connection of Bhoja of Kanauj with Saurāśṭra as evidenced by the appointment of a Vanapāla and sending of an army appears to be the substratum of truth. Dr. Raychaudhuri even accepts the story of Bhoja's abdication, and finds confirmation for it in the Ahar stone inscrip-

2. Ibid., pp. 151-152.
tion, ........ But I venture to differ from the views of the learned Professor on this point........”¹ Though the learned historian differs from the views of Dr. Raychandhuri, yet he did not care to examine the story in original.

**Bhoja and Vastrāpatra Māhātmya**

While discussing the conquests of Bhoja, Dr. B. N. Puri observes: “Sometime back Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri (I. H. Q., Vol. V., pp. 129-135) referred to a passage from the Vastrāpatha-māhātmya, a section of the Prabhāsa-Khaṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa dealing with the sacred sites of Girnar, tending to show that Bhoja’s authority extended up to Saurāṣṭra or Kathiawar. It is needless to go into the story centring round a woman with the face of a doe accompanying a herd of deer in the forests at Raivatakā, her capture by Balādhyakṣa, and her revelations at Kānyakubja referring to the waters of the Suvarṇarekhā. The story is incredible, but it adduces the following points which deserve consideration. Firstly it refers to Bhoja’s connection with Saurāṣṭra where he appointed a Vanapāla, and despatched his army (VI. 25 f). Secondly, Bhoja is mentioned as the emperor of Kanauj.......Lastly, this king is supposed to have abdicated, though temporarily, in favour of his son.”²

“Thus the data presented by the Vastrāpatha-māhātmya, seem to be in conformity with facts known from other sources, and its evidentiary value as a corroborative piece of evidence be accepted with reference to the facts stated above”.³ While discussing the abdication of Bhoja, Dr. Puri hesitates in “accepting the data from a late work”.⁴ Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri realised the historical importance of the legend as an important source of

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1. T. H. K., pp. 245-246.

Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa (Chap. 71, S. V. Press Edn.) also contains a similar story of king Svarāṣṭra and a mṛgī.
4. Ibid., p. 65.
post-Gupta history. But the proper assessment of the story as a source of Bhoja’s reign has not been done. It throws important light on the following points:

(i) Personality of Bhoja — his physical and intellectual attainments as well as his piety and prowess

(ii) Extent of Kānyakubja empire (Kānyakubja-mahādeśa)

(iii) Principles of administration (Prajā-dharma)

(iv) Army

(v) Public-services

(vi) Abdication of Bhoja

Thus we see that ‘Bhoja-vṛttānta-varṇanam’ — account of events and incidents associated with the life of Bhoja-rāja found in the Vastrāpatha-Māhātmya is an important source of the history of early medieval India. The subsequent chapters represent a discourse between Rāja Bhoja and his preceptor Sārasvata, which comes to close in the chapter 19, the last chapter of this sub-section. Many stories and narratives are mentioned in the course of his speech. One such narrative centres round the person of Nārada, who was distressed to find an era of peace devoid of ‘Kali’ or ‘Kalaha’ i. e. strife, when only one ‘protector of the earth’ was ruling over the country. There was no fight between the gods and the demons, there was no rivalry (caused by the different wives); there was no fight between the lion and the elephants (i. e. between Kṣatriyas and Mlecchas, cf. A. B. L. Awasthi, Indian Nationalism, Vol. I, Appendix III, Gaja-Śārdūla, pp. 240-246). There was an era of friendship. We know that the reign of Bhoja was marked by the struggle between the different Kṣatriya dynasties as well as between Kṣatriyas and the Mlecchas. Bhoja himself had to fight against the Asuras (Arabs), who were taught a good lesson by means of his arms. The account only shows the might of Bhoja who established peace and security

2. It is called :

   “वस्त्रापथ्यक्षेत्रमाहात्म्यपारस्तरस्तरस्तरं जोशत्वाय वस्त्रापथ्यक्षेत्रमाहात्म्यपारस्तरस्तरस्तरं जोशत्वाय.”


in the Madhyadesa. "He had inherited a crippled kingdom in an adverse situation, but his strong hand steered him clear of difficult situation in a record rule of over a half a century. At his death he left a consolidated and organised empire for his son and successor Mahendrapāla. The Arab storm had lulled and the tide had turned........" Thus Bhoja brought stability to the political system of the Āryāvarta by imbuing a new spirit of vigorous policy against the enemies, and that of tolerance and liberality to his people and allies.

**Bhoja the Great (Sa Bhoja Nṛpasattamaḥ)**

The personality of the exalted king named Bhoja is marked by the indelible impressions left on the track of history of the country. The Vastrāpatha Kṣetra Māhātya contains some important events of his life. This account is called Bhoja-Vṛttānta the study of which throws important light on the history of Bhoja, his life and times. He was the greatest ruler of Kānya- kubja which attained the status of a mahādeśa (a great prosperous country) and a mahākṣetra (the land of great sanctity). The accounts of his past life narrated by his queen also throw important light on social and political life of that age. His campaign to Surāṣṭra gives an idea of his army and victorious campaigns he led to the different parts of the country specially beyond the Vindhya-hills — a fact which gave him the title of Bhoja.

The Bhoja-vṛttānta also contains a brief account of thirty-six virtues of kingship which led to stability of the state. It is a short political treatise recommended for the rulers of Hindu, medieval India which was threatened by Turuṅkas. India in the times of Bhoja was still strong and stable maintaining its political and cultural contacts with the Dvīpāntara, which is mentioned by Rājaśekhara as an inseparable limb of Bhāratavarṣa.

**Personality of Bhoja**

The personality of a ruler — his form and features as well as merits and demerits — have a great bearing on his people and his government. Bhoja’s might and majesty were based on the grace

and charm of his person blessed with large eyes, and long arms. He was wise and learned as well as eloquent and affable in address. He possessed all the features (of royalty) with special liking for seeing curious things and wonders.¹

To my mind, the account of the previous births of Bhoja and his newly wedded wife (deer-maiden) traces the development of the personality of Bhoja, an whose person was based the entire structure of the state (ätmani......yatra sarvam pratiśṭhitam).²

We learn from the account of his previous births that the neglect of the Vedic and canonic studies was deemed to be a disqualification for a king; cruelty, greed, pride, and anger are also mentioned to be vices; lack of compassion as well as respect for the gods, preceptor and Brähmanaś were the principal vices, which antagonised the people. The peoples' opposition led to a king's fall. Running away from the battlefield opposed to kṣatra dharma was deemed to be a great sin.⁴ Skanda asserts that the aggressive policy based on the well-equipped army against an enemy leads to the conquest of a Kṣatriya.⁵

Similarly this very section contains a discourse between Bali and Nārada. The former asked the latter to tell him the virtues which led to a king's success in the administration of his state. Nārada told Bali that a king gifted with 36 virtues succeeds in his administration.⁶ This discourse has been taken from the Mahābhārata.⁷

SAT-TRIMŚATGUṆAS

Kings must possess these thirty-six virtues for the stability of

1. Skanda VII. ii. 6. 21 :

विशालतासे शीर्षवाहुविद्वानत्वान्नमीनवंशः ।
सर्वलक्षणसंपूर्णः ब्रह्मावचयं विलोक्कः ॥

2. Ibid., VII. ii. 17. 162 :

प्रस्तुतं प्राधं राजेन्त्रं नुपः कुषलं पुरे ।
लघुपलावः महाभारतः यत्र सर्व प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

3. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 82-85.
4. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 86.
5. Ibid., VII. ii. 17. 81.
6. Ibid., VII. ii. 17. 84.
7. St. Sk. Part I, pp. 242-244.
their State, as was told by Bhisma to Yudhishthira, who asked the former as to how happiness here and hereafter may be achieved:

युधिष्ठिर उवाच—कैन वृत्तन वृत्ता वर्तमानो महीपति:।
शुभेनाः श्रुतीन श्रवणकालिनन्त्र प्रेतव चानुयायत॥
भीष्म उवाच—नर गुणानो वर्तिष्ठवर्तिष्ठकृत्तु सुयुष्मनंसंयुत:।
वान् गुणांस्तु गुणोपेत: कुल्लु गुणमवानुयायत॥
वरेदुध्मनिनिवुको मुझेतु स्तेषु न चार्टीत:।
अनुसारनिचर्विचय: चरेतु काममुद्यत॥

Śānti P., LXX. 3

प्रियं बुधवकुपन: शुरः स्वाभविकल्पन:।
दत्ता नागपञ्चवी स्वातु प्रगाह: स्वाध्विदयु:।
वानसदु न चानारा कृत्तू स्तूपयोगीस्व वन्धुभि:।
नामकरं बारसेन्चारं कुवलं कार्यमयीवत्या।
इबिद. LXX. 4.
अर्थ बुधवकुपन: स्वातु गुणानु बुधवकुपनं सात्य:।
आद्वकार च साधारभय नास्तु कुर्मावलेवित॥
इबिद. LXX. 6.

नारायण समुद्र ब्रह्म न च मन्व प्रकार्तिवतु॥
विकृतेऽव्या लुक्कथा विश्वेश्वरापकारितु॥
इबिद. LXX. 7.
अनीरुपौलविदव: स्वार्तकोष: स्वाऍञ्जुरूः नृपः।
सिंह: शेषेतु नारायणं सूर्यभुजनीत! नास्तित्वम्॥
इबिद. LXX. 8.

अस्तम्भ: बृजबलामालानु गुरुनु चेवदयाया।
वाचोऽवेवानसम्भवं गृहपितोऽविश्वामिष्ठविविविवितस्थाम्॥
इबिद. LXX. 9.

सेवेतु प्रणवं हंस्वा दक्ष: स्वाण्न तस्वानालबितु।
सात्वर्ष च मोक्षार्थ अनुगृह्वान्य चानीयते।
इबिद. LXX. 10.
प्रहृश्न्त तत् विवाहं हंस्वा श्रवणु न शोचनेतु।
कोषं कुर्मीन चाक्ष्यामुख्यात्: स्वात्माकारितु॥
इबिद. LXX. 11.

एवं चरस्व राज्यस्यो यदि श्रेयं दोहेष्ठति।
अतोधययाः नरपिन्थं सुत्त्वन्तुभूगलामम॥
इबिद. LXX. 12.

इति सर्वत्र गुणागतेतु स्योधोत्तरं योजयत्तर्ते।
अनुपुष्पेन भ्रात्स्य श्रेष्ठ स्वर्ग महीपते॥
इबिद. LXX. 13.

1. Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva, Ch. 70 (Gita Press Edn.).
2. Ibid., LXX. 1-2.
We give the translation of the entire passage (Chap. LXX, Śāntiparva, translated by Shri M. N. Dutt Shastri, Calcutta 1903, p. 106). Yudhīṣṭhira asked:

"By following what conduct, 'O' you who are a master of every kind of behaviour, can a king succeed in easily acquiring, both in this world and in the next, objects which yield happiness in the end?"

Bhīṣma replied:

2. "There are thirty-six virtues which a king should practise ......... A virtuous person following these virtues, can certainly acquire great merit".

3. "The king should follow his duties without his malice. He should not cast off mercy. He should have faith. He should earn wealth without persecution and cruelty. He should seek pleasure without attachment".

4. "He should cheerfully speak out what is pleasant, and be brave without brag. He should be liberal, but should not make gifts to unworthy persons. He should exercise power without cruelty".

5. "He should make alliances, but not with the wicked. He should not act inimically towards his friends. He should never employ persons who are not devoted to him as his spies and secret emissaries. He should never accomplish his works by oppression".

6. "He should never give out his purposes before the wicked. He should speak of the merits of others, but never his own. He should take money from his subjects but never from those who are good. He should never take the assistance of wicked persons".

7. "He should never inflict punishment without making careful enquiry. He should never give out his counsels. He should never give out his counsels. He should distribute money, but not amongst covetous persons. He should place confidence in others, but never in those who have injured him".

8. "He should not entertain malice. He should protect his married wives. He should be pure and should not always be exercised by compassion. He should not seek too much female
companionship. He should take wholesome food and never that is bad”.

9. “He should without pride pay respect to worthy persons, and serve his preceptors and seniors with sincerity. He should seek prosperity, but never do anything that brings calumny.”

10. “He should serve his elders with humility. He should be clever in business, but should always wait for the opportune moment. He should solace men and never send them away with empty words. Having favoured a person, he should not cast him off.”

11. “He should never strike in ignorance. Having killed his enemy he should never be sorry. He should display anger, but should never do so, when there is no occasion. He should be mild, but never to the offenders.

12. “Behave thus while ruling your kingdom if you wish to enjoy prosperity. The king that behaves otherwise is visited by great calamities”.

13. “The king, who observes all these virtues that I have mentioned, enjoys many blessings on earth and great rewards in heaven”.

Bhoja’s preceptor, Muni Śārasvata, like Bhīṣma, felt an urge to stimulate the sense of ‘svadharma’ in the mind of Bhoja who wanted to abdicate. His abdication i.e. withdrawal of a strong power, should have hastened the collapse of an empire, which stood as the guardian of Madhyadeśa. It is for this reason that the old stimulus of the epic age is served to Bhoja with new vigour and vitality needed to rejuvenate the political system of Bhoja.

Bhoja was, by nature, a man of martial character (dirgha-bāhuḥ). But in the heart of Bhoja, the pious (dharmyaḥ), the religious fervour was further kindled by the character of Doe, who related the stories of her past births. We know that Aśoka in the past felt great remorse after the conquest of Kaliṅga.1 Similarly Yudhiṣṭhira had also suffered from the pangs of agony within and

1. cf. Aśoka’s R. E. XIII.
he wanted to retire into forest. But he was dissuaded in his ascetic venture; for the salvation of a Kṣatriya ruler lies in his adherence to Rājadharma or Kṣātradharma.

The Skanda Purāṇa presents this list with some changes dictated by urgency of the times. Undoubtedly a period of over half a century when Bhoja ruled was full of turmoils, difficulties and conquests in all directions. The success of Bhoja as a ruler in such an era of crisis lay in his person gifted with all the virtues and qualifications (sarvalakṣaṇa-sampūrṇo), which are enumerated by the Skanda Purāṇa in the tone of Bhiṣma. Nārada warned Bali about the coming distress and decline to his sovereignty and state. Bali asked the sage to tell him the virtues which bring success to a king and his state:—

वैरूपेन: कुश्ले राज्यं राजा तान्वद्मे विभो

Sk., VII. ii. 17. 83(i)

Nārada upheld the importance of 36 virtues for the prosperity of the State:—

पञ्चत्रिशाषुकुषाणसप्प्रभो राजा राज्यं करोति च।
स राज्यपलमामोति ब्रूणु तलकष्माम्हम्॥

Ibid., VII. ii. 17. 84.

Kauṭilya and Kāmandaka have classified qualities of a king under three categories viz., ‘dhiṅgaṇa’, ‘utsāha’ and ‘ābhigāmik’. But here we find no classification of the kingly qualities which may be described under the following heads:

1. Dharmācaraṇa—A king should perform his duties or practise his dharmas without showing any bitterness.

2. Āstikyaṃ—A king should have faith in the Vedas and gods without having any attachment with the atheists.

1. Mbh., Śānti Parva, Chapters VII ; IX ; XVII ; XIX.
2. Ibid., XII. 33; XIV. 38(ii); XXII. 2-3; XXIII.46; XXV. 35; XXXII. 2.
4. पञ्चत्रिशाषु गुण is a mistake for ‘पञ्चत्रिशाषुगुण’
3. Artha-saṅgraha—King should acquire wealth without any harshness or cruelty.

4. Kāma—King should enjoy pleasures; but he should not be arrogant.

It should be noted that the above mentioned four qualities are associated with the attainment of 'trivarga'.

5. Sweet-speech—A king should be gentle in his speech, but without showing any sign of lowliness.

6. Heroism—A king should be valorous but free from boasts.

7. Charity—A king should be liberal, but he should not abandon the state revenues.

8. Pragālbhātā (boldness, courage)—A king should be brave and courageous, but without being cruel.

These four qualities, 5 to 8, remind us of the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta. This epigraph (line 30) concludes by attributing the three qualities of 'pradāna' (liberality), 'bhujavikrama' (prowess of arms) and 'praśama-sāstra-vākyodaya' (the excellence of speech based on the study of scriptures) which were the bases of the fame of the great Gupta ruler.

9. No evil company—A king should not have friendship and company with ignoble persons.

10. No quarrel with allies—A king should not quarrel with his brothers, friends and allies.

11. No service through disloyals—A king should not employ to his service, particularly, as spies or emissaries, the persons who are wanting in the loyalty and devotion or those who are ignobles and incredulous.

12. Non-injury—A king should not injure or do harm to anybody in the course of his actions leading to the fulfilment of his desires.

13. Secrecy—A king should not disclose his secrets or policies in the times of distress.


15. Avirodha—A king should not quarrel with the noble and saintly persons by seizing their wealth.

16. No support to the wicked—A king should not depend upon the wicked.
17. **Proper exercise of dāṇḍa**—A king should not award punishment (dāṇḍa) without proper investigation.

18. Secrecy of counsel (mantra).

19. No charity towards greedy and covetous persons.

20. No reliance upon enemies and offenders.

21. **'Dāra-gupti'**—Women (of the palace) should be well-protected and watched through reliable persons.

22. Protection to other virtuous kings.

23. No excessive indulgence in women.

24. Purified and agreeable diet free from harm.

25. Respect to venerables without any selfish motive.

26. Service to teachers with devotion and respect.

27. Worship of the gods without religious hypocrisy.

28. Aspiration for splendour and unabused wealth.

29. Service to the goddess of wealth without attachment.

30. **'Dakṣatka'**—He should be clever, not unmindful of the times.

31. Conciliatory speech.

32. Favour without abuse.

33. Immunity of Brāhmaṇas from punishment.

34. Complete annihilation of enemies.

Here we find a change in the policy. According to Śānti-Parva (LXX. 11a) a king should not repent after destroying the enemies. But Skanda advocates the complete destruction of enemies.

35. No frequent outbursts of anger.

36. No mercy towards enemies.

If the Skanda Purāṇa is to be relied upon — there is no reason to doubt its authenticity — Bhoja-ṛāja possessed all these virtues following relentless policy towards his enemies. In the assessment of the personality of Rāmabhadra, the information derived from the Gwalior Stone Inscription of Bhoja has not been viewed in the context of the Pratihāra political system.
“Northern and western India assumed a new significance during this period in view of the continuous threat of the Muslim invasion. That threat became a material factor in Indian history with the Arab occupation of Sind and reached a further stage with the Turkish occupation of the Punjab. Geography made the Rājpūts the Pratihāras or door-keepers of India”.¹ Gurjara-Pratihāras were the saviours of the Āryāvarta and its culture against the surging tides of the ‘world-conquerors’.

The origin of the Pratihāras has been discussed by different distinguished scholars. “The earliest inscription referring to the origin of the dynasty is undated Gwālior (Sagar-Tal) stone inscription of Bhōja I, according to which the ancestor of the family was Saumitri or Lākṣmaṇa, the younger brother of the Epic hero Rāma, who was the ‘door-keeper’ (pratihāra), since he repelled (the enemies) in battle against Meghanāda. Moreover Vatsarāja is described as foremost among the most distinguished Kṣatriyas and as one who stamped the noble race of Ikṣvāku with his own name by virtue of his blameless conduct”.² Thus the dynasty of Pratihāras justified its origin and existence to the duty of door-keepers or ‘pratiharaṇāvīdhi’ (pratiharaṇa vidher yaḥ pratihāra āsit).³ Dantidurga performed Hiranyagarbha ceremony at Ujjainī in which kings such as the Gurjara lord and others were made door-keepers”. This incident represents the appointment of Gurjaras and others as door-keepers of the country. Can it be believed that the Kṣatriyas or Rājpūts, however subordinate and subservient be their status, would like to act as door-keepers? Gurjara Kṣatriyas accepted, with willingness, the task of guarding the national frontiers.

Purāṇas refer to a Kṣatriya king Pratihāra and his family:

परमेष्ठी तत्तत्त्वमात्र प्रतीहारस्तद्वयः ।
प्रतीहारारात्रू प्रतिहति प्रतिहर्पुरुप्वस्यस्तः ॥

Agni P., CXVII. 14.

1. Dr. A. C. Banerjee, Lectures on Rajput History, pp. 1-2.
2. Ibid., p. 4
Thus the name Pratihara tracing its origin and antiquity to the old Kšatriya stock was deemed most appropriate for the defenders of the country’s doors against the Arab invaders. Almost all the rulers of this dynasty stood firm on their post as Pratihāras. Nāgabhaṭa I destroyed the armies of mighty Mlecchas. Vatsarāja too vanquished (wild) and intoxicated elephants (= Mlecchas, cf. my Indian Nationalism, Vol. I. Appendix III); by doing so Vatsarāja raised his family to fame and justified the title of ‘Kšatriya-puṅgava’. Nāgabhaṭa II also defeated Saindhavas (Arabs) and Turaṅkas. Rāma (Bhadra), his son achieved fame in the battle-field by fighting against the valiant, vicious and violent people:

It shows that the short reign of Rāmabhadrā was occupied by his war against the Mlecchas and it was this pre-occupation in the western part of his empire, that some internal troubles occurred causing loss of some territories. Besides Arabs, Pālas and Rāṣṭra-kūṭas were the traditional enemies of the Pratiḥāras. He was defender of Dharma and he seems to have died in the battle-field. Bhoja inherited, thus, from his father an empire which was in trouble. His enemies—internal and external—could only be crushed by Bhoja gifted with ‘sarva-lakṣaṇas’ viz., 36 kingly qualities. Of all these qualities the policy of blood and iron towards the enemies deserves attention. Sulaiman observes that ‘He is unfriendly to the Arabs……….Among the princes of India, there is no greater

2. Ibid., vv. 6-7.
3. Ibid., v. 8.
4. Ibid., v. 11.
5. Ibid., v. 12.
foe of Muhammadan faith than he...........". Gwalior Stone Inscription also upholds the chastisement of the Asuras (= Mlecchas) at the hands of Bhoja I:

य: शहास असुरानुे योरानुे ......||

He dealt with his enemies according to the principles of Polity by his courage and valour. Gwalior Stone Inscription (verse 7) also showers encomium on the personality of Bhoja:

यशस्वी शान्तात्मा जगद्धृतविश्वेदरिवृणा;
परिश्रव्ती लहःया न मदकल्लेकन कलित:।
बधुवृ श्रेमाद्रो गुपिस्वु विभव: सूतत मिरा–
मसी रामो बाये स्वकृति गणनायामिहुः विज्ञे ||

Bhoja had high respect for priest-preceptor, vipras, ācāryas, daivajñas, mantrajñas, bhisajas, and tāntrikas, all of whom were Brāhmaṇas, who advised the king on the important problems of the state and government. They were all summoned to the royal court, when the Vanapāla came to Bhoja from Saurāṭra with the news about the maiden. It is also proved by the sense of respect and devotion Bhoja had for his preceptor, Sārasvata. These sages also respected the majesty of Bhoja, whom they addressed ‘deva’. He was righteous ruler (dharmyaḥ), knowing well his duty to people. Hence he was styled ‘janesvara’, ‘narendra’, and ‘mahārāja’.

The various characteristic features associated with the sacred name of Prabhāsa, may be attributed to Mihiṣa (Bhoja) who

1. Elliot and Dowson, History of India Vol. I, p. 4.
2. Gwalior Stone Inscription, verse 22, last line.
3. Ibid., verse 19, line 2.
4. Ibid., vv. 21-22.
5. Ibid., verse 17.
6. Skanda, VII. ii. 6. 51.
7. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 47-48.
8. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 57-58.
9. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 55(i).
10. Ibid., VII. ii. 10. 5.
11. Ibid., VII. ii. 10. 18; VII. ii. 12. 11; VII. ii. 13. 32(i).
12. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 61.
13. Ibid., VII. i. 11. 44-50.
dispelled the dense darkness and distress. Glory of Prabhāsa Mahākṣetra is symbolised in the person of Prabhāsa (Bhoja). The entire 'Prabhāsika-khaṇḍa (VII) of the Skanda Purāṇa seems to have been redacted in his court. He was a great military leader. It was this exalted majesty of Bhoja's personality, which is presented in the veiled form (as it is here ascribed to Bali):

एकात्यतः पृथिवीं बुधूजा स नराधिकः ।
वैलोकनाते क्षणमात्रं संप्रभाविष्या कुशलेति नित्यम् ।
वैलोक्यकल्याणेन कृपाकृमके तं संस्तूपते चारण बन्दिबृङ्गः ॥

Sk., VII. ii. 14. 41

The mighty monarch is portrayed as seated on the horse-back (aśvādhirūḍho balavān Bhojārājo).¹

**EXTENT OF THE EMPIRE**

Thus Skanda upholds the supremacy of Bhoja's sovereignty which was based on the extent of his empire. "The city of Kānya-kubja was raised to the dignity of an imperial capital by Harṣavardhana. But, though his empire collapsed with his death, the glamour of Kanauj was revived by Yāśovarman".² It was turned into a vast empire styled 'mahādeśa' ruled by Bhoja:

कान्यकुब्जे महाबेसे राजा भोजेति विश्वुतः ॥

The extensive nature of Kānya-kubja-Mahādeśa is also supported by the number of villages viz., 36 lakhs which it comprised.³ This large number of villages also reflects the prosperity of the Kānya-kubja-deśa based on the state-revenue, basis of which was a village.

According to the Skanda Purāṇa the status of Kānya-kubja deśa was already raised to a place of glory during the reign of

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1. Skanda, VII. ii. 6. 29(ii).
2. A. I. K., Preface, p. xxxiii ;
3. Skanda, VII. ii. 6. 141(ii).
4. Ibid., I. ii. 39. 129(ii)

Aparājita-Prccchā, XXXVIII. 3(i) :

कान्यकुब्जे ग्राम संबंधा वट्टविशलककाणि च
Āma (= Nāgabhaṭa II) who is stated to have attained the status of a paramount ruler.¹

The story of Bhoja and ‘Mr̥gānanā’ woman found in the Vastrāpātha Māhātmya shows that not only Saurāṣṭra and Kathiawar formed part of the empire of Bhoja, but it also comprised Kurukṣetra and the neighbouring region extending up to the river Sarasvati.² There lived the sage Sarasvata, the preceptor of Bhoja, who himself visited his hermitage taking bath in the vāgurā river Sarasvati.³

BHOJA AND GUHILAS

The army of Bhoja also comprised ‘Vāguras’ of many types (Vāgurānāṁ tvanekadhā)⁴ who had accompanied Bhoja with their traps. The Mr̥ga-vakrā lady (the woman with the face of a doe) had fallen in their trap (nipatitā vāgurāyāṁ).⁵ Thus the term Vāgurika meaning a fowler or a hunter is based on the word i.e. a trap.

Kauṭilya in his Arthaśāstra observes that, “The interior of the kingdom shall be watched by trap-keepers (vāgurika), archers (sābara) hunters (pulinda), caṇḍālas and wild tribes (aranya-carā)”⁶.

Thus like Sabaras and Pulindas, the Vāgurikas — the wild tribal people — belonged to a particular territory called Vāgurideśa which comprised 80 thousand villages.⁷

This is placed near Mewar and it was known by the name of Bāgari, Bāgaḍa or Vāgaḍa (modern Dungarpur District in Rajas-

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1. Skanda, III. ii. 36. 34-35 ; (cf. chap. V)
2. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 55
3. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 56-57 ; cf. Pṛthūdaka Ins. of Bhojadeva ; T.H.K., p. 244).
4. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 26(i).
5. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 33.
6. Arthaśāstra (English translation, Shamasāstry) Book II, p. 45. Ibid., (text) II. i. 19 : वागुरिकस्वयंपुलिन्दचलार्थशतकरा रश्येणः
7. Skanda, I. ii. 39. 140.
than). 1 According to Dr. G. H. Ojha the whole area now occupied by Dungarpur and Banswara is known as Vāgaḍā. 2

Thus the inclusion of Vāgūrikas or the wild people (śāraṇyakas) of Vāguri-deśa in the army of Bhoja shows his hold over the country which was a part of Mewar and where Guhilar had been ruling. From the Gatū inscription of Bālāditya we learn that Harṣarāja Guhila was a feudatory of Bhoja. 3

"Again, the Partabgarh inscription of the Pratihāra Mahendrapāla II, shows that in V. S. 999 (c. 942 A. D.) the Medapāta Guhila Bhartṛpaṭṭa II, son of Khommāṇa III, still acknowledged the sovereignty of the Kanauj emperor". 4 Dr. H. C. Ray concludes: "There is no doubt therefore that from about the middle of the 9th to the middle of the 10th century the Guhilas occupied the position of feudatories of the powerful Pratihāra empire." 5

ABDICATION OF BHOJA

The abdication of Bhoja, on the basis of Vastrāpatha Kṣetra Māhātmya has been discussed by Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri, Dr. R. S. Tripathi, Dr. B. N. Puri, and by the author 6 of these pages himself. It has been shown there that the discussion is irrelevant. 7 Bhoja did not abdicate, even temporarily as the story mentioned in the Vastrāpatha Kṣetra Māhātmya tells us. It was only a resolve, which did not materialise. In view of the crisis caused by the internal and external dangers to the stability of the state, it was not deemed desirable that the empire, which he himself had consolidated, should suffer. Hence rightly his preceptor asked not to venture on such hasty step. Moved by the emotions and religious fervour stimulated by the sanctity of the Raivataka hill, a celebrated abode of Bhava (Śiva), Gauri, Skanda, Gaṇeśvara and Viṣṇu, 8 Bhoja thought —

2. Rājapūtānā Kā Itihāsa, p. 453.
7. Ibid., p. 195.
8. Skanda, VII. ii. 10. 11-14.
BHOJA-THE GREAT

राजवंश राज्यं प्रवीणद्रास्त्रकस्वरस्यसुन्तम्यरामवः।
पूवं राज्यं प्रवीणद्रास्त्रकस्वरस्य निरस्तरं मया।।
तीर्थ्याना विवाहानेन भवो वस्त्रापेन हृदि ॥

cs. v. 10

But Bhoja became very sad and dejected to hear such disheartening words from his preceptor, who further dealt with ‘tīrtha-yātrā-vidhi’ at the request of the emperor.²

Sārasvata emphasised the religious importance of pilgrimage in the company of wife, friends, sons, brothers and relatives.³ The subsequent chapters of Vastrāpatha Māhātmya mention different stories dealing with important episodes only to console and convince Bhoja. Ultimately Bhoja, satisfied by the counsel of Sārasvata, went on pilgrimage to Vastrāpatha Kṣetra along with the members of his family. In the end he attained the highest place of bliss (by adhering to his dharma).⁴ Thus evidently Bhoja did not leave his throne and kingdom. On the other hand it upholds the importance of Rājadharma as compared to that of renunciation. Similar crisis occurred in the life of Yudhiṣṭhira, who also wanted to retire. But his brothers, Bhiṣma, Kṛṣṇa and others prevailed upon Dharmarāja to protect the hard-won empire.⁵

2. Ibid., VII. ii. 11, 1-4.
3. Ibid., VII. ii. 12, 4.
4. Ibid., VII. ii. 19, 33-34 :
   इति सारस्वत वचः प्रत्या मभाजः स भूपति ।
   नमस्त्वल्ल मुनिकोष्ठः गुजयामासे सरिषि ॥
   लयोऽयोऽयो बिधिषा स भूजोऽनुमन्तः ।
   बत्त्वापृश्येत् बालासं परिवारवर जनः भुर ॥
   कृत्वा कुत्तायं प्राप्तः जगामारे परं पदम ॥

5. Mbh., Śānti Parva, Chap. XXXIII.
The Mahābhārata asserts that “Having performed all his duties and having protected the earth and having also protected the cities, a king enjoys great happiness in heaven. Of what use are penances to that king, what need has of sacrifices, who protects his people properly”.\(^1\) Hence Bhoja was like Yudhiṣṭhira asked by his preceptor to adhere to his duty of giving protection to the people, which leads to attainment of the heaven.\(^2\) Thus the alleged abdication of Bhoja was not desirable in the age of crisis. Kūrma Purāṇa also asserts the importance of ‘svadharma’, which is not to be neglected. One, who goes on pilgrimage deserting his duties, does not obtain the merits of his devotional service to the sacred spots:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{y: स्वधर्माः परिलक्ष्य शीर्षस्वायं करोति हि} \\
\text{न तस्य कल्याणः शीर्षमिह लोकेण परत्र च} \\
\end{align*}\]

Kūrma P., II. 43, 20

Thus it was the only right course of action for Bhoja to submit to the dictates of the times. His preceptor and the Śāstras also stimulated his sense of duty. Hence, it is true, the abdication of Bhoja never materialised.

The Skanda Purāṇa, itself, does not commend pilgrimage at the cost of royal duties. It asserts that the sages have prescribed only one royal duty for kings and that is the dharma of giving protection to his people. It was more important than the performance of sacrificial rituals and pilgrimage:—

\[\begin{align*}
\text{राजा भूतक्रियांभोगसि तीथेःध्येयसि समाहः} \\
\text{प्रजा पालनमेतेको धर्मं: प्रोक्तो मनीषिनिभि:} \\
\end{align*}\]

Skanda, IV. ii. 52.58.

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1. Mbh. Śānti p. LXIX. 72-73:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{कुत्या स्ववर्ज्या कायर्च्छि सम्प्रूच समाच्छ मेदिनीम्} \\
\text{पालयित्वा तथा पौराणू परल गुखे मघे} \\
\text{कि तपस्ता राजः कि च तस्यायनरैपि} \\
\text{सुपालितप्रजा य: स्वातः सर्वधर्मंविवें सः} \\
\end{align*}\]

4. Ibid., LXIX. 105:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{तत्त्वात् कौरवमः धर्मं प्रजा: पालय नीतिमान्} \\
\text{एवं कृत: प्रजारक्षात् स्वर्ग स्वतांसि दूर्जयम्} \\
\end{align*}\]
Administration

Vastrāpatha-Kṣetra Māhātmya throws important and interesting light on the administrative ideals and institutions on which was based the powerful kingdom of Bhoja. The personality of a ruler—his merits and demerits—have a great bearing on his government and people.

Skanda portrays Bhoja, like the other sources of the great Pratihāra ruler, as a mighty king fully harnessed with the requisites of a military leader seated on horsback (aśvādhīrūḍho balavān Bhojarājo). He himself commanded his forces. He had full confidence in his strength, which was based on the well-organised army.

His government was based on the views of the people as well as on the dictates of the śāstras, which guided the royal councillors in their deliberations on the business of the state.

Dharma was the basis of Bhoja’s administration and Bhoja adhered to his dharma towards his people (rājā Bhojeti śāstraḥ dharmyaḥ prajā dharmena śāsati). Protection of the people is held to be the sacred duty of Kṣatriya kings. Thus the dharma upheld here as the foundation of Bhoja’s government corresponds to Rājadharm, which is the supreme duty of kings (rājñīm vai paramo dharma).


dharmo rājadharmān prāhāna:
dharmam tālamānā bhavati.
svāsthayāno rājadharmān Ṛjaḥ—
svāsthayā dharmaḥ chaḥuraṁ purāṇaḥ. 7

1. Skanda, VII. ii. 6. 29
2. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 52(ii)
3. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 52-54.
4. Sk., VII. ii. 6. 20.
5. Mbh., Śāti Parva (Gita Press Edn.), XXIII. 46(i).
6. Ibid., LVI. 2(i).
7. Ibid., LXIV. 27.
Bhoja stimulated by ‘tyāga-dharma’ wanted to retire placing his kingdom and army under the care of his son. But the exigencies of the Rājadharma dissuaded him to stay at the home. The king accepted the advice of Sārasvata, his conscientious preceptor, (cf., the case of Yudhiṣṭhira who, too, wanted to retire. But his brothers, Bhīṣma and Kṛṣṇa etc. told him the importance of Rājadharma. (cf. Śānti Parva, Chaps. VII to XXXIII). Like the epic thinkers, Bhoja was also told not to abdicate, as all the religious merits can be realised by adhering to Prajādharma.  

The success of Bhoja’s administration is reflected by his age styled ‘Puṇyayuga’²⁸, where was Skanda refers to the time of Āma (Nāgabhaṭṭa II) as Kali-age characterised by religious conflicts between Brāhmaṇas as well as Buddhists and Jains.³ Bhoja’s reign was marked by the policy of religious tolerance.

Probably there were many queens in the palace.⁴ The chief queen was styled ‘paṭṭa-mahiṣī’.⁵

Purodhā (guru), the royal preceptor,⁶ held high office in the state.

SENĀDHYAṆA OR BALĀDHYAṆA

The army of Bhoja was well-organised and fully equipped as we know from the account of his army sent to besiege the Raivataka hill.⁷ SenādhyaṆa⁸ or BalādhyaṆa⁹ represents “the superintendent or commander of an army, a general, or minister of war”.¹⁰ SenādhyaṆa or BalādhyaṆa seems to be the commander-in-chief who was the head of the military department of the state.

2. Skanda, VII. ii. 6. 20.
5. Skanda, VII. ii. 7. 81 ; cf. T. H. K., p. 338.
6. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 47, 50 ; cf. T. H. K., p. 341.
7. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 25-39.
8. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 25, 29.
9. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 34.
10. M. S. E. D., p. 723.
He played an important part in an efficient organisation of the army. He was subordinate only to king, whom he accompanied in the military campaigns. He was also called Senāpati.

Bhoja's army (sainyam) comprised of infantry (pattayo), cavalry (aśva), elephants and chariots (ratha)–the traditional four wings of the army (chaturāṅgabala). The mainstay of Bhoja's army was the cavalry. Ten thousand horse-men were ordered to proceed to Raivataka. The army also comprised vāguras of many types (vāgurānāṁ tu anekadhā). Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya refers to Vāgurikas (trap-keepers). It was well-equipped with weapons of war (śastrāstra).

VANAPĀLA

He was a forest-officer of high status reflected by the reward he received from Bhoja viz.,—

(i) four horses (chaturāṁ turagaṁ)
(ii) fine robes (divya vāsaśi) and
(iii) golden ornaments (svaṁa-bhūṣaṇaṁ).

PRATIHĀRA

Pratihāra or door-keeper is also mentioned to be an official of Bhoja.

1. Skanda, VII. ii. 6. 25.
2. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 39(ii).
3. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 28, 39.
4. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 26.
5. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 45, 46.
6. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 45, 46.
7. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 45.
8. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 26.
10. Skanda, VII. ii. 6. 28.
11. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 22, 28, 31.
12. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 25(i).
13. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 47, 48.
Daivajñas (astrologers),¹ Mantrajñas (counsellors), Bhiṣajas² (physicians), and Tāntrikas³ (persons well-versed in the Tantras as well as in Tāntrik rites) held important office in the royal court.

There are also references to ‘Mahadāśacarya-bhāṣakas’⁴ (curio-commentators) and ‘Saṅjñā-saṅketa-bhāṣakas’.⁵ Thus we see that the administration of Bhoja was so well-organised that the people living in the provinces (janapada janāḥ)⁶ as well as those who lived in the cities (nāgarāḥ)⁷ were happy and prosperous.

His Gwalior Stone Inscription (v. 26) aptly hails the reign of Bhoja for ever:

यावनमः सुरसरित्वसरोतरीयं
यावतभूविसर तप्यः प्रभवः प्रभाबःः
सत्यमच्यावतपरिस्थिः (श) मयात्येषां
ताबत्तुषुतातु अगतीमन्त्रायायकीतिःः

2. Ibid., p. 342, (g).
3. Skanda, VII. ii. 6. 47(ii)-48(i).
4. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 38.
5. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 30(i).
6. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 37(i).
7. Ibid., VII. ii. 6. 38(i).
CHAPTER VIII

UPENDRA-RĀJA

The political and cultural history of the early Medieval India runs like a commentary on the incarnatory maxim which holds that whenever there is decline of dharma, and adharma is ascendant, I (God) appear in the world. For the protection of the virtuous and for the destruction of evil-doers, and for establishing Dharma on a firm footing I am born from age to age:—

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्यानिनिर्विविधतं भारत ।
अभ्युत्भावनमधर्मस्य तवार्तमां सूक्ष्मार्थस्य ॥
परिहारायम् साधुनां विनाशाय च हुक्तान्तम् ॥
धर्मं संस्कारानाय संभवामि गृहेण्युगे ॥

The dominance of Asuras and Mlecchas led to the defeat of the gods and to the destruction of Dharma:

योजतो महाबलो दैवतो हिरण्यकार इति स्मृतः ॥
दुर्स्तभावसमायनो देषवान्यानानि ॥
जित्वा च सकलादेरानसम्यमेवाचिनितपूर्वः ॥
स्वरूपराक्षकेः सवं भ्रष्टराज्यं परारजितः ॥
विचारं यथा महास्वतं देवगण भूति ॥
स्वाधाराय व्यक्तकारः स्वाहाकारा न दृष्टवित्तः ॥
देवधूमन्त्रं नासित ब्राह्मणानां विशेषः ॥
नैव तीमस्य प्रकाशैत पुष्पवायुत्तानानि ॥
अत्रमेघून्त सवं भूषयं वर्णिणां च महास्मात्मामुः ॥
ज्ञात्वतः स प्रकृतियुं हुरस्तदेव्याः प्रहारितः ॥
वर्णाधिकारां धर्मं: स्वीरां चैव मुसीत्तवः ॥
उपलोकाः हि तव जातस्यस्मिनाश्च दुरुस्थमनि ॥
दुरुस्थारा दुरुस्थानानि भाविनु वहुमानिति ॥
पाखांडिनो दिवाराकंतां सवं धर्मवस्त्रिमुः ॥

Thus Ādivarāha (Bhoja) had rescued the dharā and dharma by destroying the demons (hatāste dānavaḥ sarve) in many battles. The achievements of Ādivarāha-Bhoja have been discussed in the last chapter. Paramāras followed the same policy in giving protection to country and to its culture.

Avanti before the advent of Ādivarāha (Bhoja) had suffered at the hands of heretics during the reign of Āma (Nāgabhaṭa II). Ujjayini had also been besieged by the Arabs. The Āvantya Khāṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa not only deals with the glorification of the sacred spots of Avanti but also it reflects the age of Devāsura war i.e. the struggle between the Kṣatriya rulers and the alien invaders.

While describing the shrine of Lumbpeśvara set up by Lumpa or Lumpādhipa i.e. the king of Lumpa or Lampāka (Lamghan region), the Skanda Purāṇa mentions him to be accompanied by Tuṣāras (people of Tokharistan), Barbaras (or Daradas), Lumpas (people of Lampāka or Lamghan), Pahlavas (probably Persians) and Śvagaṇas (the people of Sogdenia). These people are styled Mlechas. This is a clear reference to the Turkish invasion, which caused havoc to hermitages, sages and cow. Thus Avanti

1. Skanda, V. i. 52. 31-42.
2. In the Navasāhasānka Carita, Sindhurāja (Navasāhasānka) is mentioned to have rescued the earth like Varāha (NSC., I. 60)
3. Skanda, V. i. 52. 48-49.
4. Ibid., V. ii. 41. 2.
5. Ibid., V. ii. 41. 6.
6. Ibid., V. ii. 41. 11-12.
had to face alien invasions which led to the age of crisis and catastrophe in the history of Mālavā. The Skanda Purāṇa aptly explains the name of Mālavā by saying that the region took the name of Mālavā due to the abundance of impurity (malasya bahu sambhūtyā Mālaveti prakīrtitā). It indicates the dominance of Mlechchas who defiled sanctity of the region. Hence the God himself had to rush to the rescue of Dharā and Dharma. He appeared in the form of Upendra.

“The first historical person in the line of Paramāra appears to have been Upendrarāja. This name is given by Padmagupta and the Udaipur Praśasti. But the land-grants of the family often trace the genealogy to one Kṛṣṇarāja. The identification of these two princes is generally accepted...........Padmagupta mentions Upendra as the first king of the line, and tells us that he performed numerous Vedic sacrifices. The same author related that a poetess named Sītā wrote a prāśasti on his exploits........The Udaipur prāśasti the only other record which mentions Upendra, confirms Padmagupta’s statements. The composer of this eulogy tells us that the fame of this prince was proclaimed by the immortals, satisfied by the multitude of all sacrifices, — who was a jewel among the twice-born (dvija-varga-ratna) and gained high honour of kingship (tuṅga nṛpatva-mānaḥ) by his valour”. Both Navasāhasānka Carita and the Udaipur Praśasti uphold the greatness of Upendrarājā as a great conqueror. In valour he resembled Prθhu (Prθhupratāpo) and as a king he was like the Sun and the Moon (Upendra iti saṁjñajñī rājā sūryendusannibbha). He decorated the earth with sacrificial pillars made of gold (akāri yajjvanā yena hema-yūpāṅkitā maḥī) and he had defeated his enemies. The Udaipur Praśasti also eulogises Upendrarāja as

1. Skanda, I. i. 17. 276.
3. NSC., XI. 75-79:

बंशः प्रवृत्ते तस्माददिराजामन्नोरिष ||
नीतिः सुवृत्तिः सूर्यंक्षाकलिशय || 75
तस्मनु सूर्यप्रतापार्थिव निर्वीरित महीततः ||
उपेत्रेः इति सभलस्य राजा सूर्यंक्षसनिम || 76
अभारण्य गण्यता येन हेमयूपणिनिवं मही || 78
अवक्ष्यंक्षशोभयुक्तवेदवेल्खातरिस्तिनशां || 79
दीर्घ्यंक्षशारिरारोणं निःशाशिखारशारितम || 79
a jewel among the ‘dvijas’, who was a champion of Trayā dhāma performing all the sacrifices and as a hero who had occupied the exalted office of kingship earned by means of his valour. Paramāra, ādirāja of the Paramāra dynasty, is mentioned to have been born at Arbuda and Upendrarāja is mentioned to have been born in the family of Paramāra. This shows that Upendrarāja annihilated demoniac people and extended his sway from Arbuda to Avanti. The Avanti Khaṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa also contains a prāṣasti sung in the name of Upendra styled rājā.

NIRMARYĀDAṂ JAGAT (Lawlessness)

The Skanda Purāṇa portrays an age of crisis characterised by wars between gods and demons. This led to lawlessness. Brahma meditated upon the Lord Viṣṇu who appeared before him for the protection of the world (jagatāṃ pātum). Brahma began to recite prayers in the honour of the Lord:

देव देव जगतां जगतम् स्थितमिदं श्वया ।
खृते श्वया जगदिर्घो नैवास्त्रियामहृति ॥
शास्त्र तद्वस्त्र विश्वव्यव विशुद्धव्य च नापरः ।
स्तर्त्तोत्सवी यज्ञपरेः तस्मात्यमनुशासय ॥

1. Udaipur Praṣasti, v. 7.
2. Ibid., vv. 5-6.
3. Skanda, V. i. 41. 2-5 :

4. Ibid., V. i. 41. 6 :

एवम्योगमयोश्च निर्मयाविमिदं जगत् ।
दृष्टौ निर्मयस्य कार्यार्थो विष्णुविशेषवर्जयः ॥

5. Ibid., V. i. 41. 7-9.
Thus like Udayapura Praśasti and Navasāhasāṅka Carita or like that of one composed by the poetess Śitā the Skanda Purāṇa also eulogises Viṣṇu, the saviour, who assumed different names associated with his different deeds. Thus Upendra was his name for supporting the whole universe (tvayā dhṛtam sarvam idam jagad vai yatas tatosi tvam upendra saṁjñāḥ). He was also called rāja. He was a great commander of army (viśvasenaḥ) called Kṛṣṇa. He was a great conqueror called jiṣṇu. He was Ādirāja.

The Skanda Purāṇa further describes as to how Upendra-Viṣṇu founded Kuṣasthali, by spreading the kuśa grass over that sacred land. Here ruled the Lord of universe — the unique leader. Thus it is evident that this divine being who founded Kuṣasthali (one of the seven names of Ujjjayini) was none else than the great hero of the Paramāra dynasty called Upendra-rāja.

1. Skanda, V. i. 41. 12-20.
2. Ibid., V. i. 41. 16(i).
3. Ibid., V. i. 41. 17(ii).
4. Ibid., V. i. 41. 18.
5. Ibid., V. i. 41. 19(i).
6. Ibid., V. i. 41. 20(i).
7. Ibid., V. i. 41. 26-30.
8. Ibid., V. i. 41. 31.
Pramiti is one of the most remarkable rulers of Ancient India, who appeared as the saviour of country and culture in the Kali-age, the age of national catastrophe. The Viṣṇudharmottaram as has been stated above, mentions Pramiti as a son of Bhārgava Āśūra who was contemporaneous with Saṅgāka, the famous ruler of Gauḍa. But the account of Pramiti is invariably associated with the Kali-age, and so the Viṣṇudharmottaram also showers encomium on the personality and achievements of Pramiti. The Matsya Purāṇa too portrays the character of Pramiti in course of description of Kali-dharmas, ‘a common motif portrayed in the Purāṇas’. The Matsya Purāṇa Chap. CXLIII (Jivananda Ed., Calcutta, 1876) runs thus:

1 V. Dh., I. 74. 12-14.
While commenting on the above account of Pramiti, Dr. V. S. Agrawala has identified Pramiti with Candragupta II. The learned Professor observes:—

"Pramiti, son of Candramasaka, organised an extensive military campaign for the re-establishment of Dharma. He conquered the kings of the north (udicya), east (pracya), west (praticya), of the Vindhya region (Vindhya-pritha), of Konna (Aparantaka), of the mountainous region (Parvaliya), of Madhyadesa and the south (daksinatya). These were the seven divisions of India which the sovereign king Pramiti brought under his control. His sphere of conquest (cakra) included the kings of Dravidas, Sinhalas, Gandhara, Parda, Pahlava, Yavana, Sakas, Tushara, Barbaras, Daradas, Khasas, Lampaka, Sveta-Halika (probably White Hepthalites, M. 144. 55-58). It appears that this is a reference to the achievements of Candragupta well-known in history for the consolidation of the empire through conquests (Dharnibandha). The description agrees with Candragupta for several reasons:—

1. His personal name was Deva...........

2. His reigning period is mentioned as 32 years...........which was exactly that of Candragupta Vikramaditya (380-412)............. Thus the extent of his reign as 32 years agrees in the Purana and inscriptions.
(3) It is stated that he was engaged in his military conquest for 20 years........... Historians also hold that the military operations of Candragupta had ended by 400 A. D.

(4) He was an incarnation of Viṣṇu which points to his being a Parama-Bhāgavata, as shown by his coins and inscriptions.

(5) He had carried out a gigantic programme of conquest including specially the kings of the north-west as Gāndhāra, Pārada, Pahlava, Yavana, Śaka, etc. This is a reference to the conquest of Candragupta upto Bāhlika as stated in the Mehrauli Pillar Inscription, and upto river Vaṅkṣu or the Oxus as described by Kālidāsa for Raghu.

(6) He was a king who set in motion the idea of Cakra (pravṛtta cakrāḥ...........) i.e. the political cakra on the one hand and Viṣṇu’s Cakra-Puruṣa on the other as shown by the Cakra-Vikrama coin of Candragupta Vikramāditya.

(7) He is specially mentioned as the exterminator of Śūdra kings (Śūḍrāṇāṁ antakṛtā), which seems to be a reference to the uprooting of the Śakas of Western India.

(8) It is also stated that his vast army strong in cavalry (sasādhana) achieved its successful purpose in the country between Gaṅgā and Yamunā which is a reference to Madhyadeśa as the home-land of the Gupta empire (Gaṅgāyamunyāmasye śīṅgā prāptā samādhana, M. 144-63).

(9) He was the son of Candramasa (पुत्र: सच्चव चन्द्रमस:). We know from history that Candramāśa was the name of endearment for Samudragupta (R. K. Mookerji, The Gupta Empire, p. 17, चन्द्रप्रकाशो युवा).

(10) He was of the Candra Gotra (गोल्क्रेण दै चन्द्रमस:), a reference to the family of Candragupta I by which each king was a ‘Gupta’...........

(11) In this significant inset of fourteen ślokas, a powerful and historically true description of the achievements of Candragupta Vikramāditya is given in the ringing tones of the Mehrauli inscription style. It is stated that for full 30 years the king was
marching in all directions of the earth with his four-fold army and was himself carrying arms (शस्त्रकर्म). There is also a veiled reference which calls for attention. It is said that hundreds and thousands of Brāhmaṇas took up arms and joined his army:—

प्रगृहीतायुधैर्जित्रेण मतलोभं सहस्यम्। स तद्वा ते: परिवृत: ॥  

M. 144. 53.

This appears to be a reference to the Licchavi contingent in Gupta army...........The Licchavis...........may be called Kṣatras-Brāhmaṇas.............¹

Before we discuss the identification of Pramiti, we propose to give below the extracts from the different Purānic works dealing with the account of Pramiti. The Vāyu Purāṇa also mentions Pramiti as a mighty ruler of Kali-age. While describing the Yugadharmas, the Vāyu Purāṇa refers to great agitation (sāmkṣobha) caused by Kali.² It led to the decline of the country (desotsādaḥ) and dark night of distress³ an age of transition marked by distress and disturbances:—

एवं सर्वायंकेः काले सम्प्राप्ते तु मुगातिके ।  

Vāyu. P., I. 58. 75.

नोहेण वै चन्द्रमतो नामना प्रमितिहृदये।  

Ibid., I. 58. 76.

माधवस्य तु सोऽजेन पूर्व स्वायम्भूवेज्जते ॥  

Ibid., I. 58. 77.

प्रगृहीतायुधैर्जित्रेण मतलोभं सहस्यम्।  

Ibid., I. 58. 78.

स हुवा सर्वषाखस्व राजस्तानु शूद्दोखिनानु ।  

Ibid., I. 58. 79.

2. Vayu., I. 58. 36.
3. Ibid., I. 58. 68.
This account of Pramiti found in the Vāyu Purāṇa fully agrees with that of Matsya. The Brahmāṇḍa (I. ii. 31. 75-89) also gives the traditional account of Pramiti almost in the same terms and tone.

The Vāyu Purāṇa, gives, again, a similar account of Pramiti in a chapter dealing with the Viṣṇu-māhātmya (Chap. 36, Uttarārdha):—
The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa also exhibits its knowledge of Bhārgava Pramiti (Pramitir nāma Bhārgavaḥ),¹ who was surprised by the ‘Bhānubhakti’ of Rājyavardhana:—

The narrative of Mārkaṇḍeya in the Purāṇa is as follows:

¹ Mārkaṇḍeya P., (Jivananda Ed., Calcutta); CXIV. 31, 35; CXV. 1, 6.
According to the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Pramiti of the Bhārgava family was son of Cyavana and he had married a princess. But here we do not find the traditional account of Pramiti, as noticed elsewhere. But Matsya (CXLIII. 5), and the Viṣṇudharmottaram also hail Pramiti as a scion of the Bhrigu-family.

The Skanda Purāṇa also contains the traditional history of Pramiti:

कर्तृत्व धर्मशीत्वानविश्वाकृतिः 
पूर्ववल्क्ष्यः स प्रसुतिमान्तः शिशुवान्

Sk. VII. i. 19. 79

गोकृणः वै चन्द्रमसः संध्यामिषे भविष्यति
कठिकविश्वुज्यशानम् पाराशयः प्रतापतान्

Ibid., VII. i. 19. 80.

दशमो भायःसंभूतो याज्ञवल्क्यपुरोऽशः
अनुसुक्ष्मः वै सेनां हस्तविश्वरस्तःकुलाम्

Ibid., VII. i. 19. 81.

प्रपूर्वीतत्तमानोप्रियस्मृतिः
गोकृणशेषत्तांत्स्वदा स तु करित्वति

Ibid., VII. i. 19. 82.

पारद्वान्तन्त्रांशक्तांशवः दशूक्षितः सहस्रः
नात्यथं धारितं ये च क्रान्तं श्रास्त्रियं स्वरूपम्

Ibid., VII. i. 19. 83.

प्रवृत्तज्ञानः बलवान्तराणांत्मकः बलिः
अनुयथं सर्वंसूतानं धर्मिनीं विधिर्विषयति

Ibid., VII. i. 19. 84

मानवव्य तु सोङ्गेने देयस्य भूतत्व वै प्रमुः
कषयित्वा तु तात्स्वायमा भविनाधः सोवितान्
संगास्मून्योऽधिये निष्ठा पाप्यति सानुः

Ibid., VII. i. 19. 85—

Thus we get here a historically true description of Pramiti. But his identity is shrouded in mystery. He seems to be a leader of the Brāhmaṇas like Śaśānka and many Brāhmaṇas fought under his leadership. Gupta age was marked by the religious tolerance and social harmony. There was no bitter crisis during this epoch in the Antarvedi and Dharma was not imperilled. Hence Pramiti despite close parallelism can not be identified with Candragupta II Vikramāditya. The account of Pramiti found, elsewhere, in the Skanda Purāṇa also does not lend support to the identification of Pramiti with Candragupta II.

The description of life in the four age-cycles styled Cāturyugīvyavasthā is an important document of Hindu historiography, which also throws important light on ancient Indian chronology. Hence we quote the entire extract in original:

अष्टाविषो कली यश्न भावि तत्वं निबोधेः मै ।

Sk., I. ii. 40. 248(ii).

स्थिरवर्ष सहस्रेष्ठ कलिकात्ये शायुक्तः।

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 249.

विश्वायु दशनूनेनेवश्वरो भूतविभिष्यति ॥

शूद्रको नाम वीराणामधिपः सिद्धिमय सः।

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 250.

विबिधं नन्दरायं च चाणस्यो यान्हंनिशयति ॥

तत्स्थितं सहस्रेष्ठः दशाधिक वातावरी।

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 251.

भविष्यं नन्दरायं च चाणस्यो यान्हंनिशयति ॥

शुक्लतीयं सर्वपापनिमुक्तं भोजनमिलयति।

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 252.

तत्स्थितं सहस्रेष्ठं विनंता च चाधिकेषु ॥

भविष्यं विभ्रमाविवराजसोवः प्रलयस्यं।

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 253.

ततः सहस्रेष्ठं श्रवयाविविभिषः ॥

शको नाम भविष्यस्तं मोहिदुर्विद्यारकः ॥

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 254.
तत्स्तित्वं सहस्त्रेषु पटलसूदसिद्धकेषु च।
मागधे हृमसदनार्दजन् च प्रभविवैधयति॥

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 255.

विष्णूरंशो दर्मणाता बुध: साक्षात्स्वयं प्रभु:।
तत्वं कर्माणि भविष्यंति महात्रमन:॥

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 256.

योग्येत्रिविद्युच्चानुवाच हुनिष्यतः कोटिश:।
भुत्योष्ठिः स वर्षाणि भुज्वा दीपार्जि सप्त: च॥

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 257.

भलेव्यमः स्वयो मुक्त्वा विवश पश्चात्स्वामिष्यति।
सर्वेऽत्र चावताराणाः गुणः: समधिको वतः॥

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 258.

तत्रो वस्त्र्यति तं भल्या सर्वपापहरं बुधमू।
भज्जुः च सहस्त्रेषु शतेष्वर्चि भज्जुः च॥

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 259.

शार्डामेऽ महाध्राजा प्रमिति: (पौर प्रमित:) प्रभविवैधयति
गोतेश्वु वै चन्द्रसो बहुसेनापतिसेली॥

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 260.

म्बछानमुः कोटियो हुल्वा पार्वेनानि च सर्वेऽ।
वैविक्षिन केवल्य शुद्धं सदभं वर्तियन्याति॥

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 261.

संगमायुनिमष्ठो निमोऽ वास्त्विति पारिं:॥

Ibid., I. ii. 40. 262(i).

Here are references to Śūdraka, Nanda-rājya, Vikramādityarājya, Śaka, Magadhan king Budha, and Pramiti, whose epochs are discussed with approximate limits.\(^1\) King Budha of Magadha is stated to have destroyed violent Jyotirbindumukhas, who may be identified with the Hūnas. Hūnas, we know, are called Mlecchas in the Junagarh Rock Inscription of Skandagupta (verse 4). Mlecchamukha is a synonym of copper:—

तांस्त्रोदास्वरं शुल्वं विद्याम्लेष।मुखं तथा:॥

Thus Mleccha-mukha represents the coppery or reddish face of the Hūpas and the same idea is indicated by the term ‘Jyotir-bindumukhas’.

The epoch of Magadhan king Budha described in the above verses is 3600 B.C. e.i. Kali Era) — (3600 = 3102) = 498 A.D., which synchronised with the age of the Gupta ruler Budhagupta.¹

Thus the reign of king Pramiti is to be placed after the fall of the Imperial Guptas and the epoch assigned to Pramiti by the Skanda Purāṇa falls in the age of Āryāvarta-crisis. During this period characterised by horrors, there appeared, in the country, a great king named Pramiti (mahān rājā Pramitiḥ) of Candramasa gotra. He destroyed crores of Mlecchas as well as other heretics and, thus, he established Vaidik Dharma in the Antarvedi. He is stated to have flourished about 4400 K. E. i. c.²

4000–3102=1298 A. D. (चतुर्थूँ च सहस्रेष्ठ शतेष्वापि चतुर्थूँ च)

It falls in the reign of Alā-ud-din Khalji,³ when we can not place a strong ruler associated with the heroic achievements ascribed to Pramiti. Hence, if we take 4104 K. E. instead of 4400 K. E. (caturṣu ca sahasresu śatesvapi caturṣu ca sādhikeṣu) for Mahān-rājā Pramiti⁴ of Candramas gotra, we arrive at about (4104 K. E.–3102=) 1002 A. D. The beginning of the eleventh century A. D. marks the dawn of a new era—an era of crisis and catastrophe—caused by the Ghaznavide invasions.

चतुर्थूँ च सहस्रेष्ठ शतेष्वापि चतुर्थूँ च ॥ २९१ ॥
साधिकेषु महानागरा प्रभृति: प्रभविभूति।
मोक्षेषु वै चन्द्रमसी बहुस्यनपति बली ॥ २६५ ॥
स्म्भव्यस्त्र कोटिप्रे हुता पारिपालित च सर्वशः ॥
बैदिकं केवलं शुद्धं सदर्म्म वर्तादिभ्यंति ॥ २६६ ॥
गंगायुम्भयां। कृष्णमयेनिष्ठां गह्यपति पाथियः ॥
तत्र: प्रजापति कालेन केनापि बुधपीठला ॥ २६८ ॥

2. Skanda, I. ii. 40. 259(ii)-262
The decline of the Pratiharas created a void in the Madhyadesa. The closing period of the 10th century A.D. and the beginning of the 11th century witnessed the rise of Gaznavids under the leadership of Subuktigin and Mahmud of Gazna, who fell upon Antarvedi with all his force, fire and fury. Mahmud refused to spare Thanesar (Thanesvara), as he wanted to root out the worship of the idols from the face of all India. "This answer was communicated to the Rajas of Dehli, who resolving to oppose the invaders, sent messengers through out Hindustan to acquaint the other Rajas that Mahmud, was marching with a vast army to destroy Thanesar........He observed that if a barrier was not expeditiously raised against the roaring torrent, the country of Hindustan would be soon overwhelmed and every state small and great, would be entirely subverted. It, therefore, behoved them to unite their forces at Thanesar, to avert the impending calamity".1

Pramiti of Candramasa-gotra was himself Candra (svataha sa vai candramasa).2 Skanda refers to many Candas of the past; and one associated with Dattatreya was ruling then, in the age of the Skanda Purana. Rohininatha (Candra), contemporaneous with the epoch of the Skanda Purana, represented Vishnu incarnate, whose earlier incarnations are stated to be Mandhata, Jamadagnya (Parasurama), Rama (Dakarathi), Vyasa, Vasudeva (Krshna), Pramiti and Kalki. Pramiti came to defend Dharma threatened by asuras in the Garhant valley. He exterminated Mlecchas, Dasyus and 'Pakaqandas' (Pasanadas) who were hostile to Brahma and BrAhmanas.3 History also knows of many rulers named Candra viz., Candra of Mehrauli Pillar Inscription. SaSaanka-Gaudadhipa was also called Soma (Candra). In the Gahaqavala dynasty, too, there were many rulers styled Candra4 and they also belonged to

1. Elliot and Dowson, Hist. Ind. Vol. II. Appendix, Note D, pp. 453-454.
3. Skanda, VII. i. 19. 83.
4. Chandravati Plate of Candradeva, lines 7, Saranath Inscription of Kumarddevi, lines, 5-6, 16, Kamouli Copper Plate of Govinda Candra, lines 2,
Candramasa gotra.\textsuperscript{1} But none of these rulers can be placed about 1002 A. D.

"The Candellas\ldots trace their descent from the Moon, in which respect the inscriptions of the dynasty as well as current traditions are almost unanimous. Candrātreya has been adopted as the clan-name of the sage Candrātreya, who has been claimed to be the progenitor of the family\ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots"

The date 1002 A. D. falls in the reign of the Candella ruler, Dhaṅga, who is "said to have obtained the empire after defeating the Kānyakubja king, which means that he gave up even the formal acknowledgement of the Pratihāra suzerainty. By the year 954 A. D. his kingdom extended upto Yamunā in the north, Gwalior in the north-west, and Bhilsa in the south-west\ldots\ldots. In course of his long reign, extending over the latter half of the tenth century A. D., Dhaṅga made further encroachments upon the territory of the Pratihāras, and seems to have extended his kingdom far to the north of the Yamunā and as far as Banaras in the east".

"Dhaṅga also directed his arms against the Pālas and invaded Aṅga (Bhagalpur). He then proceeded to Rāḍha (West Bengal) and South Kośala, and also came into conflict with the kings of Āndhra and Kuntala. He also claims to have defeated the kings of Krathā, Siṃhala and Kānci\ldots\ldots."

"Dhaṅga's known dates are 954 and 1002 A. D. He was the first independent Candella king and assumed the title Mahārāja-dhirāja. According to Firishta, the Rājā of Kāliṇījara joined the confederacy of Indian chiefs organised by Jayapāla against Subuktīgan. "He must be identified with Dhaṅga\ldots\ldots"\textsuperscript{2} Thus Dhaṅga attained the status of a great ruler among the leading contemporary powers. He had established his firm hold on the Gaṅgā-Yamunā Doab upto confluence of the two rivers, where he ended his life voluntarily\ldots\ldots. That Banaras was included in Dhaṅga's dominions is indicated by the Nanyaúrā Plate of V. S.

\textsuperscript{1} Kamouli Copper Plate of Govindacandra l. 6
\textsuperscript{2} Mitra, S. K., E. R. Kh., p. 12.
\textsuperscript{3} Majumdar R. C., A. I., pp. 307-308.
1055 (A. D. 998)............Dhaṅga, like his father, undertook expeditions in South India, as well as in Eastern India.

"A fragmentary inscription discovered at Mahoba throws an interesting light on the achievements of Dhaṅga—verse 17 of the record reads as follows:—

निमित्तार्थिंधर्मिः: भी धंगः: इवविनिमंगलमाधिवितानि
सारेण यः: स्वव्रञ्जौनमाृनातिभारिः हवीरसम्पतितवःतुलयम् चकारः

"There appeared a blessing for the earth called Dhaṅga, who by the strength of his arms equalled even the powerful Harāvīra, who had proved a heavy burden for the earth".1 Harāvīra or Hammira denotes some Muslim ruler. "Yamini Sultans, themselves used the honorific Amira. Harāvīra must refer either to Subuktagin or his illustrious son, Mahmud of Ghazna. Hultzsch identifies Harāvīra of the] Mahoba Record with Sabuktagin".2 There is close semblance between this record and the Purāṇic accounts of Kali age associated with Pramiti in the statements that the earth was greatly distressed and the kings appeared in the form of Viṣṇu to relieve it of the burden. Pramiti, too, appeared to re-establish Dharma by destroying Asuras': —

कठूँधर्मविवस्थनमवर्तकेण प्रवाशित:।
पूर्णदमनि विधुः स प्रमितिनाम वीरविनामृ॥

Sk., VII. i. 19. 79.

The struggle between 'Devendra-danti'3 and 'Mattaadvipendra'4 had begun even in the days of Yaśovarman. The former represent 'āśā-karindras', 'diggajas'. or the defenders of the country; whereas the latter represent the Mātaṅgas or the Muslim invaders.5 Rājaśekhara has also distinguished these two types of the elephants.6

1. E. I., i, p. 221 v. 17.
4. Ibid., v. 28, line 1.
5. Awasthi, A. B. L., Prācīna Bhārata-kā-Bhaugolika Svarūpa, pp. 103-104.
But the wild elephants (Turks) were vanquished by Yaśovarman like a lion.¹ Sri Dhaṅga was born to him like the moon issuing from the ocean to give pleasure to the people:—

श्री श्री: स्वरूप व्रतसाधितमहीनिव्यावराज्यस्थिति—
स्वश्वासाद महोदयेरिव विधु: सूर्यज्ञानन्द हृत ॥ ५

Verily, he (Dhaṅga) was Kṛṣṇa of the Vṛṣṇi-kula.³ He is stated to have conquered Kośala, Kratha, Sinhala, Kuntala, Kaṅcī Āndhra, Rādhā, Aṅga, as well as Lokāloka-hill.⁴ It reflects his conquests in the different parts of the country viz., North, South and East. He is also stated to have founded the colonies of Brāhmaṇas and this settlement of the Brāhmaṇas looked like a second Kalāpagrāma.⁵ Kalāpagrāma, situated beyond the Himālayas,⁶ was a very sacred place, where lived eighty-four thousand Brāhmaṇas, well-versed in various branches of Vedic learning and thought.⁷ It shows how great was Dhaṅga as a patron of Brāhmaṇas like his own father Yaśovarman Deva.⁸

In the end, after living a life of more than a hundred years, king Dhaṅga gave up his life at Prayāga, the sacred confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā, while meditating on Rudra and muttering his name in his heart. Thereby he attained Nirvāṇa (mokṣa).⁹ Dhaṅga, thus achieved Siddhi (in his mission).

1. Khajuraho Stone Inscription of Candella Yaśovarman, v. 30, line 2:

2. Ibid., v. 44, ll. 1-2.


4. Ibid., vv. 45-47.

5. Ibid., vv. 53-54.

6. Skanda, I. ii. 5. 1 ; I. ii. 5. 31-34 ; I. ii. 6. 30-31

7. Skanda, I. ii. 5. 40.


9. Ibid., v. 55.
Our arguments for identifying Prāmiti with Dhaṅga are the following:

(i) their dates synchronise with 1002 A. D.;
(ii) both of them were great conquerors;
(iii) both of them were patrons of Brāhmaṇas and Brāhmaṇical culture;
(iv) both of them are stated to have attained Siddhi in Madhyadeśa;
(v) both were the defenders of the country against the dreaded Mlecchas; and
(vi) both of them gave up their lives at Prayāga. In the Matsya Purāṇa we get:

संरिष्टता सह सायासे सेना प्रमतिना सह।
गंगायमूर्तयांतर्ते सिंधु प्राप्ता समाधिना।

Dr. Agrawal read 'sasādhanā' in place of samādhiṇā. But latter reading i.e. 'samādhiṇā' is preferable. We know that Dhaṅga with his closed eyes meditating on and muttering the name of Rudra gave up his life at Prayāga and by so doing i.e. 'samādhiṇā', he attained Siddhi.

**Samādhi-Siddhi**

Dhaṅga achieved Mokṣa by his Prāṇa-tyāga, which was one of the popular faiths of this epoch. According to the Mahābhārata 'Śarīra-utsarjanam' or 'anaśakam' (anaśaman) performed according to its 'vidhi' leads to the attainment of Siddhi. According to the Skanda Purāṇa, Dehatyāga was a popular means of realising salvation. Skanda also describes its Vidhi or Vidhāna which comprised many religious rites leading to samādi. The inscriptive passage fully conforms to Samādi-siddhi:

1. Matsya P., CXLIII. 64.
3. Anuśāsana P., XXV. 63-64.
4. Skanda, V. iii. 4. 37 ; V. iii. 196. 5 ; V. iii. 217. 3.
5. Ibid., V. iii. 28. 121-126.
Thus Pramiti or Dhaṅga, an exalted ruler of the Candraṭreya or Candella family (Candramasa gotra) lived for a hundred years and in the end he abandoned the body in the waters of the Ganges and the Yamunā in accordance with rites of Prāṇa-tyāga. Thus he fully realised the fruits of human life viz., abhyudaya and niḥṣreyasa. His reign was a long and distinguished one marked by his resistance to Turks and by his patronage to Brāhmanas, Brāhmanical culture and. The temples of khajurah bear evidence to his glorious epoch.

CHAPTER X

GĀHADAVĀLAS

The history of the Gāhadavālas has unique significance in the history of the Āryadeśa or Āryavarta which they were called by the Providence to protect. This dynasty also produced such conquerors as Candradeva (cf., Candradeva vijayi, Candravati Plate of Candradeva, l. 7), and Govindacandra who was called upon to defend the sacred city of Vārāṇasi against the attacks of the wild Turuṣkas:

वाराणसी भूवनरक्षाद्वैको हुसूदुदुहकसमादवित्तु हुरेन।
उत्तो हरिस्त नुरण बभूव तस्माद् गोविन्दचन्द्र इति प्रतिप्रतिज्ञानः।

The Purāṇas also throw valuable light on the history of this dynasty as is evident from the gleanings from the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa and the Skanda Purāṇa.

BHAVIṢYA PURĀṆA AND THE GĀHAḌAVĀLAS

While describing the advent of Kali and Mlecchas, the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa refers to the Mohammedan invasion of Sind and other countries of Western India Guhilas defended the country defeating the Mlecchas.² Prajaya, son of Rāṣṭrapāla, a scion of the Guhila dynasty, is mentioned to have founded the city of Kānyakubja with the divine help of the Goddess Śāradā. Prajaya seems to be an adventurous conqueror and a good horse-man who was also known as Jayapāla. His son was called Veṇuka-Mahipāla.³

Veṇu begot a son named Yaśovigraha through his wife Viravatī. He was a pious and powerful ruler of Āryavarta.⁴

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1. Sarnath Ins. of Kumāradevi, v. 16.
3. Ibid., IV. 3, 43–53.
4. Ibid., IV. 3, 61: 
   नृपाणिं वीरवत्यं ज यशोविग्रहु आलम्जः।
   बभूव बलवाश्यभी चार्यदेशपति: स्वयम्।
The above account contains some grains of historical information. The Navasari grant of the Cālukya prince Pulakesin Avanijanāśraya informs us that sometime before 739 A. D, an army of Arabs (Tājikas) advanced as far south as Navasārika in Gujaratt after destroying on its way Saindhava, Kacchella, Saurāṣṭra, Cāvoṭaka, Maurya and Gurjara princes.¹ Bappa, the great Guhila is known to have saved the country and culture against the iconoclastic fury and fire of the Tājikas.

The Guhilas were the feudatories of the Pratihāras. When king Bhoja had departed to heaven.........Candradeva appeared as the protector of the Āryāvarta, as we know from the Basahi Plate Inscription.²

Origin of the Gāhaḍavālas

“The Gāhaḍvālas emerge into the light of history so suddenly that it is difficult to clear away the obscurity hanging over their origin”.³ Dr. Tripathi refers to the different theories relating to the origin of the Gāhaḍavālas:

(i) The numerous charters call them Kṣatriyas connected with the line of Yayāti.⁴

(ii) “The Paurāṇik texts, at any rate, refer to a people called Gahvara or Gīrīgahvara’, who are described as dwellers in jungles and caves,⁵ and since ‘Gahvara’ might conceivably correspond in meaning to the Prakrit ‘Gāhaḍa’ (both words being derived from the same root), it may indeed be tempting to conjecture that the term ‘Gāhaḍavāla’ is equivalent to ‘Gahvaravāsi’”.

(iii) “Pandit Bisheswar Nath Reu has, however, another theory to offer. He thinks that Gāhaḍavāla is used in the sense

2. I. A., XIV, p. 103, l. 3.
4. Ibid., p. 296
5. Ibid., pp. 296-297
of 'balavān' and that they were so called because they conquered the most important kingdom of the times”.

(iv) “Mr. C. V. Vaidya derives it………..from some place Gāhaḍa in the Deccan”.

“Dr. R. C. Majumdar suggests that the Gāhaḍavālas were perhaps of Karanāṭaka origin (I. H. Q., VII, 1931, p. 634 note 1; T.H.K., p. 297, note 4).

(v) “But some scholars affirm that the Gāhaḍavālas were a branch of the famous Rāṣṭrakūṭas or Rathors………..”¹

Dr. Tripathi does not accept the Rāṣṭrakūṭa origin of the Gāhaḍavālas.² He is, however, inclined to identify the Gāhaḍavālas with Gahvaras or Girigahvaras.³ All the above views and theories have been mentioned by Dr. Roma Niyogi in her History of the Gāhaḍavāla Dynasty.⁴

Dr. Roma Niyogi also maintains that “The Gāhaḍavālas could not have belonged to the Rāṣṭrakūṭa clan”.⁵ Dr. Niyogi further thinks: It is possible, as some scholars have suggested, that there is some geographical significance behind this name, but the inscriptions themselves point not to South India but to the newly conquered regions of the Gāhaḍavāla dominion, Paṇcāladesa”.⁶

Dr. Niyogi observes that “Curiously enough the kings of this dynasty trace their origin, not from the sun or moon or any famous mythical personage, like most of the contemporay kings, but from a modest person, Yaśovigraha by name, who did not even assume a royal epithet”.⁷

The Bhaviṣya Purāṇa refers to the foundation of the city of Kānyakubja by Prajaya (Jayapāla) whose son Veṇuka is

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1. T.H.K., pp. 296–299.
2. Ibid., pp. 298–300.
3. Ibid., p. 297.
5. Ibid., p. 32; cf. pp. 29–35.
6. Ibid., pp. 35–36.
7. Ibid., p. 28.
stated to be the father of Yaśovigraha. Prajaya was the son of Rāṣṭrapāla who was himself the son of Guhila. Guhila is the same as Guhadatta, founder of the dynasty of the Guhila-Putras. Kālabhoja was known by the title of of Bappa. Thus it is evident that Yaśovigraha, the first member of the Gāḥaḍavāla dynasty, was a scion of the Guhila family. As such, it is true, as Dr. Tripathi contended, that “Gāḥaḍavāla is equivalent to Gahvaravāni.”

“Crooke suggests that, the word (Gāḥaḍavāla) may have been derived from the Sanskrit word ‘gahvara’ or ‘girigahvara’ which was the name of a Purāṇic people who used to live in the caves.” The Mahābhārata and the Padma Purāṇa mention the people known as Giri-Gahvaras as one of the tribes of Kṛṣṭa family. The Guhilas were associated with the Bhils of Iḍar. One of the adventurer of this stock moved from Chittor in Mewar to Kanauj which needed such a person. Thus it is not surprising if the Gaharwaras and Guhilas are yoked together.

**YAŚOVIGRAHA**

Dr. Tripathi observes that “According to the testimony of the inscriptions Gāḥaḍavāla dynasty was founded by one Yaśovigraha ‘after the lines of the protectors of the earth born in the Solar race had gone to heaven’, but it is not clear where he and his successor Mahicandra.....ruled at first. In fact, the absence of royal titles

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2. Ibid., IV. 3. 38–39.
4. Ibid., pp. 1158–1159.
7. Mbh., Bhīṣma P., IX. 68 (i).
   Padma P., I. 6. 63.
8. Ibid., I. 6. 64(i) ; Mbh. Bhīṣma P., IX. 69(i).
in case of both, has sometime been taken to indicate that they were not even royal personages, although in records the former is called a noble (personage)......(who) by his plentiful splendour (was) as it were the sun incarnate”

But “the Chandravati inscriptions of V. S. 1150 and 1156 further detail that the Kṣātra dynasty in which Yaśovigraha was born forcibly occupied Kānyakubja after the destruction of the descendants of king Devapāla......the Pratihāra king”.3 “Another śloka in these Chandravati grants states that Yaśovigraha seized the earth and made her fond of the sceptre of the king (cf. tasmin varāse samutpanne Yaśovigraha samjñākaḥ vigrahya medini yena daṇḍa-praṇayini kṛtā)4. Despite such references relating to the glorious achievements of Yaśovigraha, Dr. Roma Niyogi following Dr. Tripathi observes that “He may have ruled over a small territory; he, however, appears to have been a subordinate chief, as the absence of any royal epithet before his name indicates”.4 This is speculative. The Bhaviṣya Purāṇa clearly mentions Yaśovigraha as a powerful ruler of Āryadeśa:

Nṛpād vai Viravatyaṁ ca Yaśovigraha atmajaḥ.
Babhūva balavān dharmi ca Āryadeśapatiḥ svayam.

Āryadeśa represents Madhyadeśa here, in its narrow sense. He ruled for twenty years (vīṁśad varṣam kṛtaṁ rājyaṁ tena rājini mahitale).4

MAHĪCANDRA

Yaśovigraha was succeeded by his son Mahīcandra who was like his father (a powerful king) of Āryadeśa with his capital at Kānyakubja (Mahīchandrās tasya sutaḥ pītus tulyaṁ kṛtāṁ

1. T.H.K., p. 300
Ind. Ant., XV, p. 7, v. 2:

3. Ibid., p. 40
4. Ibid., p. 41
5. Bhaviṣya P., Pratisarga, IV. 3. 61
6. Ibid., IV. 3. 62(i).
padam). He is highly praised in most of the Gahaḍaṇḍala inscriptions. His fame spread to the other side of ocean. Such a conqueror, howsoever be vague the praises, cannot be believed to be a feudatory chief.

CANDRADEVA

Candra deva was a worthy son of Mahicandra and he ruled like his father over the country of Kanyakubja which he raised to the status of an empire.

Withdrawal of a strong power from the centre of Antarvedi—the puṇya-bhūmi—viz., Kanyakubja led to the influx of ‘roaring elephants’ (Garjanaka gajendras) or Mātaṅgas who were intoxicated (matto yāti iti mātaṅgaḥ) with power and faith to destroy the roots and relics of Hindu culture and with it they aimed at the destruction of temples which were the nurseries of Hindu culture and thought. It was this aim which spurred Turtuṣkas and Mleccha-hordes (Tuṣāras, Barbars, Lumphas or Lampākas, Khasas, Daradas and Śvaganas) to invade the Gaṅga-Yamunā-Doab. As long as Nāgabhaṭa II, Bhoja I and Mahendrapāla stood as the sentinels of Madhyadeśa, Āryan life and culture was secure. But after their death Pratihāras ceased to be the doorkeepers of the Antarvedi. Kanyakubja and Kāśi were sacked by the Ghaznavide forces. Kṣatriya rulers or the defenders of the country and its culture fled in terror leaving the country, its capital and temples at the mercy of the invader. Such cowardly rulers who could not give protection to the country, its people and the culture were styled Vṛṣalas i.e. degraded Kṣatriyas. History

3. Bhaviṣya P., Pratisarga, IV. 3. 63:

चन्द्रदेवस्वतः सुतो राज्यं तेन पितूः समं हस्तं

4. Chandravati Plate Ins. of Candra deva, ll. 6-7:

परमभूटानमहाराजाधिराज परमेश्वर

निजधु कोपालने यो कन्यकुलाधिपत्यस्व चन्द्रदेवो विजयी

Ibid., ll. 4-6;

Kamouli Copper Plate Ins. of Govindacandra, ll. 4-5, 11-12.
knows that Rajyapala, the scion of the Pratihara dynasty, was murdered by the Candella ruler. It exhibits the national feeling of indignation towards one who evaded svadharma (cf. Bhagavadgita, III. 35: svadharman nidhanam shreyas) towards the country.

Thus it is evident that with the decline of the Pratiharas Madhyadesha or Antarvedi needed a strong ruler to check the surging tides of Mlecchas. Candellas, Kalacuris and Paramaras were engaged in consolidation of their power in their respective zones viz., Bundelkhanda, Dakshina Kosala and Malava respectively. In trying to get their hold on Kanyakubja they fought among themselves. This mutual warfare among the defenders of the country sapped the vitality of our national forces and their federal outlook.

It was in this era of crisis that Candradeva appeared as the saviour of the people, who by his noble prowess suppressed all the troubles of his subjects (yenodaratara-pratapa-samita-seva-prajopadrama). He destroyed the enemies and dispelled the darkness. He established his sovereignty over the kingdom of Kanyakubja which comprised the tirthas of Kas, Kusika (Kanauj) and Ayodhya (Uttara-Kosalendra sthaniyakani). Thus in the personality of Candradeva, Antarvedi with all its sacred institutions

1. Chandravati Plate of Candradeva, ll. 3-5:

As regards the names of tirthas, Drs. Trpathi, Roma Niyogi and others take Indrasthana as the name of Indraprastha or modern Delhi. But it appears to be Uttara-Kosalendra sthaniyaka i.e. the capital of the lord of Uttara-Kosalara or the city of Rama (Uttara-Kosalendra).

cf. Struggle For Empire, p. 52; History of the Gahaavadala Dynasty, p. 46.
of history and polity (kṣatradharma) was safe and secure. The Basahi inscription (V. S. 1161=1104 A. D.) clearly tells us that after the death of Bhoja and the destruction of Karṇa’s fame, when the earth became distressed, king Candradeva acted as the saviour:

वाये श्री भोजपूपे विवृष्णवृहस्तः मार्गमतिपदम्
श्रीकां काौँ कृतिताक्षर गतवति च नृपे हमात्वये।
भरतायं यं धरिली विगतिविशुद्धिः श्रीतियोगायुः पैते।
ताता विश्वसशूर्वम् सममस्विद्ध स हमात्विश्वभान्देशः।

This Bhoja is to be identified with Bhoja-Ādivarāha the saviour of Āryāvarta. Like Bhoja, Candradeva wrg born to champion the cause of Vedic culture.

Kāśirāja Candradeva

The Skanda Purāṇa refers to Kāśirāja Candradeva along with the other great rulers of ancient India named Mucukunda (rājarṣi), Sagara, Vasuṣena, Kakutstha and Aila who had set up their Lingas. Though the name of the dynasty of Candradeva is not mentioned here, yet the epithet Kāśirāja added to Candradeva leaves no doubt about his identification with the great Gahaḍavāla ruler of the same name.

MANDAPĀLA

According to the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa Candradeva was succeeded by his son named Mandaṇapāla, who is to be identified with Madanaṇapāla or Madai acandra of the inscriptions.

The age of Mandapāla witnessed the rising tides of Muslim

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1. Banaras Copper Pls e Grant of Govindacandra, ll. 2–3.
2. Skanda, VI. 106. 6(ii).
3. Ibid., VI. 106. 5–6.
4. Bhaviṣya P., Pratisa ga, IV. 3. 63 :

चंद्रदेवस्तव गुलो राज्यं तेन पितुं समस्म।
कृष्टं तस्मातृतो मन्दपालो महीपतिः।

cf. T.H.K., p. 305 a nd Note 5, Sometimes called Madanaṇadeva (Ind. Ant., XVIII, pp. 12, 14) or Madanaṇacandra (Ep. Ind., IX, pp. 324, 327, V. 15).
invasions which were prelude to the coming deluge—the Turkish conquest of India.

The reign of Mandapāla (or Madanacandra) was the beginning of the era of ‘bhayānaka Mleccha-rājya’ when the Turkish arms penetrated the heart of Āryāvarta and the Gāhaḍavāla ruler submitted to pay taxes to the Turkish ruler. The history of the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty from Mandapāla to Jaicandra described in the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, is a little confused in its details.

There are no references to Govindacandra and Vijayapāla (or Vijayacandra), son and successor of Govindacandra in the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa.

JAYACANDRA

Like the Banaras Copper Plate Inscription of Govindacandra the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa also tells us that after the death of Bhoja (same as Bhoja I of the Pratiḥāra dynasty) there was no power strong enough to give protection to the country. There were many rulers (bahu-bhūpavatī bhūmis). It was this age of decline during which Jayacandra had to rule over Antarvedī with Kānya-kubja as his capital.

According to the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa Jayacandra was the son of Devapāla through his wife Cand rakānti, eldest daughter of Anaṅgapāla. We are told that Vijayacandra was succeeded by his son Jayacandra whose mother was queen Candralekhā according to the Rambhāmaṇjari. Cand rakānti of the Bhaviṣya P. and Candralekhā of Rambhāmaṇjari are identical. Similarly, Devapāla of the Bhaviṣya P. and Vijayacandra appear to be identical names of the father of Jayacandra.

On the other hand, from the Jain work Prabandhakośa we learn that Jayantacandra (same as Jayacandra) was the son of

2. Bhaviṣya Purāṇa, Pratisarga, III. 4. 1–2(i)
3. Ibid., III. 4. 4(ii) :

अस्तवेऽवा काप्युकः जयजन्मोमहिपति:।

4. Ibid., III. 5. 1–6
5. THK., p. 320.
Govindacandra, king of Kañi, who gave up his life according to the yogic way of Prāṇa-tyāga. After the death of Govindacandra, he was succeeded by Jayacandra.¹

The entire account of the achievements of Vijayacandra given by Dr. Tripathi is based on Pṛthvīrāja-Rāso, and it seems to be doubtful.

The last inscription of Govindacandra was dated in V.S. 1211/1154 A.D. and the first inscription of his son and successor Vijayacandra, in V.S. 1224/1168 A.D. ....Vijayacandra's reign began c1155 A.D. He may have ruled for about fifteen years...... So far four inscriptions, dated during Vijayacandra's reign have been discovered. Of these, one was by a private individual and another by ......feudatory of Vijayacandra ; the other two inscriptions were issued in the name of the king but the grants embodied therein were actually made by Mahārajanaputra Yuvarāja Jayacandradeva. No inscription, recording the grant by the king himself, has been found. It is to be noted that these two official inscriptions are dated in the last two years of Vijayacandra's reign and the two unofficial inscriptions also are dated in his last year. Thus there is a period of thirteen years intervening between the date of the first inscription of this reign. The absence of any Gāhaḍavāla record relating to the period between 1154 A.D. and 1168 A.D. is rather unusual for the dynasty...and may indicate the possibility of an internal feud. It has already been noticed that Yuvarāja Ṭrshoṭacandradeva and Mahārajanaputra Rajyapāladeva, two of the sons of Govindacandra, issued land-grants, one after another during the reign of their father, whose successor, however, was a third son Vijayacandra. This may point to fratricidal struggle ......”²

1. Prabandhakośa, XI, Harṣakavi-prabandha 64 (p. 54) :

पूर्वस्यां वारणस्यां पुरि गोविष्ठचन्द्रो नाम राजा ।
तत्पुरुषो जयतन्त्रः । तस्मै राज्यं दशवा
पिता गोम्य ग्राम वर्लोकसाधयत् ।

Ibid., XX, 106, p. 88 :

वारणस्यां गोविष्ठचन्द्राय जयतन्त्रोऽस्मात् राजा ।

This crisis in the history of the Gāhaḍavālas, whether it was due to fratricidal feud or due to Muslim invasions, clearly reflects upon the personality of Vijayacandra as a nonentity, as is evident from the observations of the Jain writer who omits the name of Vijayacandra and makes Jayacandra son and successor of Govindacandra.

As pointed out above Vijayacandra is the same as Devapāla of the Bhaviśya Purāṇa which mentions him as the father of Jayacandra.

But according to the Bhaviśya Purāṇa Devapāla of Raṭhra-pālānvaya (same as Raṭhor family) was the son of Mandapāla or Madanapāla. But we know that son of Madanapāla was Govindacandra.

JAYACANDRA—A GREAT CONQUEROR

Jayacandra, the famous king of Kānyakubja-deśa or Antarvedi was a powerful ruler (Jayacandra iti khyāto bāhusāli jitendriyaḥ), who conquered Gauḍa-Vaṅga and Marudeśa. Harṣakavi-prabandha of Rājaśekhara also tells us that Jayantacandra conquered the earth as far as 700 Yojanas, as a result of which he was known as the ‘king of 700 yojanas’ of land (saptasatayojanabhūnātho Jayantacandro). He is also mentioned to have besieged and conquered the capital of Gauḍa named Lakṣaṇavati ruled by Lakṣāṇasena (same as Lakṣamaṇasena of the Sena dynasty). Thus undoubtedly Jayacandra was a powerful ruler, a great conqueror and patron of poets like Harṣa author of Naiṣadhiya Mahākāvya.

JAYACANDRA—PRTHVIRĀJA STRUGGLE

The presence of two strong rulers viz, Jayacandra and Prthvīrāja led to disunity and dissension among the two great rulers of

1. Bhaviśya P., Pratisarga III. 5. 6(i)
2. Ibid., III. 5. 7.
3. Prabandhakośa, XI, Harṣakaviprabandha, p. 64:

   जयन्तचन्द्र: सप्तयोजनशतमानं पृथ्वीं विजय ।

   cf. T.H.K., p. 322, note 3
4. Prabandhakośa, XXIV, Vastupāla-prabandha, 142, p. 117
5. Ibid., XX, pp. 88–90
6. Ibid., XI, p. 55
Āryadeśa. Anāṅgapāla, king of Indraprastha, had two daughters named Candrakānti and Kirtimālinī who were married respectively to Devapāla of Kānyakubja and Someśvara, the Cāhamāna ruler of Ajmer.3

Someśvara and Kirtimālinī begot three sons viz., Dhundhukāra, Kṛṣṇakumāraka, and Pṛthivirāja. Anāṅgapāla is stated to have abdicated in favour of his grandsons. He gave Indraprastha to Pṛthivirāja; Dhundhukāra got Mathura and Kṛṣṇakumāraka got the possession of Ajmer.3 Whatever may be the truth in these statements, but the possession of Dehali (or Indraprastha) created the seeds of hostility among the two great rulers that led to the fall of the Rajputs.4

Sāṁyogitā-Svayambara

The Bhaviṣya Puraṇa gives a detailed account of the svayamvara of Sāṁyogitā, daughter of Jayacandra at Kānyakubjapura where Pṛthivirāja was not invited (Bhaviṣya P., Pratisarga, III. Chap. 6). The fight which took place between the forces of these two defenders of Āryadeśa further antagonised Jayacandra and Pṛthivirāja. Their conflict on the eve of the Muslim conquest of India hastened the collapse of Hindu power which led to the foundation of ‘bhayānaka rājya’ or the rule of terror. Vastupāla-prabandha tells us:

सुपरशतयोजनपूर्वानी जयलचन्द्रोपी कष्ट नीतिः।
विनशस्वयमवल्लाहविश्वदीनसुरस्त्राणमोक्ता पुष्पिविराजोपि बहः।5

1. Bhaviṣya P., Pratisarga III. 5. 1-4
2. Ibid., III. 5. 10-12
3. Ibid., III. 5. 17-19, 28-35
4. Ibid., III. 5. 36-38:

इति शास्त्रां तत्वोग्रं बौद्ध चातीर्महीते।
भूमिराजश्च बलवान्यायंच भयाविति।
अय्यस्नायस्च वल्लाहविविराजोपीस्य।
अय्यस्नायस्नाये विविराजोपीस्य राजांमानवत।
पुष्पिविराजश्च एवातो तद्वर्धः राजांमानवत्।
एवं जातं तयोर्वर्मनवंवर्णार्थानाम।

5. Prabandha Kosa, XXIV, 142, p. 117.
CHAPTER XI

TURKISH CONQUEST OF INDIA
AND ITS CAUSES

The rise of Islam in Arabia had far-reaching influence on the history of the neighbouring countries. India and Arabia had close commercial and cultural contacts even before this event. "The conversion of Arabs......and their religious spirit being now thoroughly aroused, every feeling of their enthusiastic nature was turned into that one channel, to conquer in the cause of God, or to die in asserting his unity and greatness, was the longing wish of every Mussulmān; the love of power or spoil, the thirst of glory, and even the hopes of Paradise, only contributed to swell the tide of this absorbing passion". Elphinstone further adds: "The circumstances, both political and religious, of the neighbouring countries were such as to encourage the warmest hopes of these fanatical adventurers".

The western sea-coast near Thānā (Mahārāṣṭra) was invaded about 636 A. D. (A. H. 15 or 16), when Pulakeśin II, the Chalukyan emperor was ruling over Deccan. But the invaders failed to get a foothold there. Again, the two successive discomfitures of the Muslim arms on the north-western gates of Sindh did not deter or disuage the invaders who under the youthful vigour of Mohammad-bin-Qasim succeeded in the conquest of Sindh.

This collapse of the Indian powers is ascribed to the 'unpatriotic character of the Buddhists'. Thus the apathy of the ruler and the ruled ruined the country.

2. Ibid. p. 295.
4. Classical Age, p. 175.
“The Mahometan writers assert that Casim had begun to plan march to Canouj (Kanaouj) on the Ganges, and an almost contemporary historian states that he had reached a place that seems to mean Oudipur (Udaipur)1......”. Elphinstone thinks that “It is inconceivable that he should have projected such an expedition .......”2 But we have the unimpeachable evidence of inscriptions that the army of the Tājikas (Arabs) desired to enter Dākshīnāpatha (South India), after destroying the countries of Saindhava (Sindh). Kacchella (Cutch), Saurāṣṭra, Cāvoṭaka (Cāpas), Maurya (Moris of Ajmer) and Gurgara3, But they were badly defeated by Pulakesin-Avanijanāśraya4. Nāga Bhaṭṭa I destroyed the armies of the Mleccha King5, who was none else than the Arab invader or the Tājika governor of Sindh mentioned above. Nāga Bhaṭṭa II is also stated to have conquered Sindh6 ruled by Turuṣka7; and again we are told that Rāma (Rāmahadra) destroyed the armies of violent, terrible and merciless people devoted to sinful acts, and thus he proved to be the defender of the faith (trātā dharmasya)8. Bhoja, the greatest foe of the

2. Ibid., p. 303.
4. Ibid., p. 138.
5. H.M.H.I., Vol. II. p. 304

Gwalior Praśasti of Bhoja, verse 4 :

देवो नागभृत पुरातनमुनि तिर्थमुनि मुनि दृष्टि !
बेनासो सुकुलप्राप्तविविकलमन्दिराधिकाकोहिष्णु: ।

6. Ibid., Verse 8 :

आक नागभृत पुरातनमुनि स्मृतके तिर्थमाधाराजतास एव किल नागभृतवसायः ।
यहात्रहरस्वितविविकलमन्दिराधिकाकोहिष्णु: । कौमार्कामिति पति मिरणार्धि ॥

7. Ibid., Verse 11 : निजिस्य...

आनामालविकिरातुगन्वकरस्य ॥

8. Ibid., Verse 12 : राम मामा...प्रसभमधियतीलागुलालस् सत्याम् ।

पावाचारारात्यप्रमुन्निः सर्वं कौमारिः—
स्वाता घर्मस्य...॥
Mlecchas, also taught a good lesson with his weapons; to the Asuras\(^1\). Thus we see that there was a continuous, uninterrupted, stiff, as well as successful, resistance to the armies of the Tājikas, Turuṣkas and Mlecchas. The terror of Arab conquest stirred the country and hence, the forces of national integration overpowered those of disruption and disintegration. However, it was due to the political consciousness and love of the country (svadeśarāga)\(^2\) with devotion to Dharma, that the world-conquerors failed and the conquest of Sindh proved to be a mere episode in the history of India.

Now came the turn of Kabul and Kāśmīra to face the Turkish avalanche, but Kāśmirian politics, with the treachery of ministers and feudatories, caused havoc. Some of the women, who entered the palaces, must have belonged to the neighbouring tribes of Khasas and Daradas, converted to Islam. Rājatarṅginis of Kalhaṇa, Jonarāja and Śrīvara Paṇḍita etc. assert that the political anarchy, along with ‘bhiṣu-viplava’ went a great way in the fall of the frontiers. Śāhī rulers did fight with utmost valour, but despite all their sacrifices and combinations and confederations, they failed in their struggle against the Muslims. The great writers of Kāśmīra did their best to arouse the spirit of patriotism and unity in the minds of people, but in vain. The clouds of terror and tyranny gathered so dense that it appeared, verily, a dark night of distress (rajani parābhavām)\(^3\). The north-western India was then occupied by the Ghazanavides and Ghoris. Bhārateśvara Prthvirāja Cauhān (III), who had taken a vow to destroy the Mlecchas, failed, due to the short-sightedness of his minister, who checked the Chāhamāna current of vigour from joining the Chālukyan channel, against the ‘lobhāndha’ Ghorī. His failure led to the foundation of Muslim rule in India. The revolts and resistance continued, but the collapse of Ancient India was complete.

1. Ibid. verse 23 :
2. SK. P.; III. ii. 76.47; K. S. S., LVII. 189.
3. Prthvirāja Vijaya, II. 17.
Dr. R. C. Majumdar, the distinguished historian, discussed the Turkish conquest of India. He says:— “The astounding rapidity of the Turkish conquest constitutes an important problem for the students of Indian history. It is puzzling, nay almost baffling, to explain the almost complete collapse of northern India, within an incredibly short time, before the onslaught of invaders whose power and resources were hardly equal to those of some of the bigger states......It is natural that men should seek to solve the mystery and find out the real causes that lay behind the great political catastrophe, that overwhelmed India. History would be meaningless if facts of such outstanding importance cannot be viewed in their proper perspective against a proper background. It is no wonder, therefore, that various speculations have been made and diverse solutions offered to the problem.”

The problem has been discussed by R. C. Dutta, R. C. Majumdar, K. M. Panikkar, A. L. Srivastava, Dasharatha Sharma and others. R. C. Majumdar and U. N. Ghoshal have removed much of the mist and haze that gathered round the fall of the Hindu power. But, so far, no attempt has been made to examine the problem in the light of information gleaned from indigenous literature—the original sources.

The Skanda Purāṇa seems to be the most important source, as it discusses, or aims to discuss, the problem with the seriousness of a modern Parliament. The sages, assembled in a sabhā were very keen to find out the causes that led to the occupation of the country by the Mleccha.

Though we do not find an answer to it at this place, yet the Skanda evinces a great interest into the enquiry of the causes that led to the foundation of Muslim rule in India. It asserts that the internecine warfare among the Kṣatriya rulers of the age proved to be the main factor which led to the collapse of Hindu power.

There were many causes responsible for the internecine.

1. Majumdar, R. C.; Struggle For Empire, p. 125.
2. Sk., IV. iii. 5. 14.
3. Ibid., VII. iii. II. 22:

तत्त्र अन्यौन्यं महीपाला युधुभूर्मुखात्मे॥
warfare, viz. :

(i) Kṣātra dharma—Kṣatriya's principal duty was to fight and they stuck to it.

(ii) They also fought for political supremacy (rājyārthe). The Rājput rulers inspired by the Kṣatradharma aspired for political supremacy, and this ideal of 'digvijaya' went a great way in causing perpetual wars among the Hindu rulers of early medieval India.

It is true that they realised the importance of one sole monarch as the ruler of the entire country (Sārvabhaumo mahāpatiḥ). The ideal of 'Sārvabhauma rājya was an old one, which inspired the Kṣatriya rulers to strive for the attainment of the status of a sovereign (cakravartī). The political thinkers of the age also asserted that a sārvabhauma ruler controls the entire country, and thereby directs the destiny of the people to fulfil their aspirations. Thus, the aspirations of the Kṣatriya rulers for the attainment of 'Cakravartī-pada' also resulted in perpetual warfare from the very dawn of our history. We hold that "the old imperial ideal was still such a living force as to prompt the leading Indian rulers frequently to make a bold bid for empire in the traditional fashion. The political history of the period, accordingly, is one of almost unceasing struggle between a few powerful states for supremacy". Māñjuśrī Mūla Kalpa, a Buddhist text of mediaeval times, also asserts the warring nature of Hindu monarchy.

1. Sk., III. iii. 17. 11: स्वाधर्मस्त सदाम ।
   Ibid., V. iii. 53. 5: स्वाधर्मनिररूपतेव युद्धलिखित प्र्य: सदाम ।
   स्वाधर्मस्त समाधिरत्त भोगातुप्रेते स कामत: इ।
2. Ibid., III. i. 31. 4: राज्यार्कालः जाते इ।
3. Ibid., V. i. 35. 6.
4. Ibid., II. ii. 40. 22.
5. Ibid., II. ii. 44. 35.
7. M. M. K., p. 275: सब नृपन्यात्मक परस्पर विशेष: इ।
   संबंधान्वितव: सब्ब भवन्ते नात्त सङ्गव: इ।
III. Feudalism.

"The real weakness of the Indian administration lay in the influence of the great feudatory families whose power and ambition constituted a perpetual threat to the stability of the central government"⁴. Feudalism had always been a threat to monarchy both in India and outside. European annals also portray it as a gigantic monster waiting in ambush for the decline of the central power. The political system of the early Medieval India was marked by the development of two main ideas, and these are clearly noticed in the Skanda Purāṇa. The first was the feudal idea which pervaded the whole political firmament of the age under review. The other was the conception of Imperialism.

Sāmanta played an important part in the court and kingdom, along with the other state functionaries, viz., Amātya, etc⁵. The kingdoms were divided into provinces called deśas⁶, or maṇḍalas⁶, ruled by Maṇḍalikas⁶, who styled themselves 'Rājas'. They were also known as governors (gopta), or Daṇḍanāyaka⁶ (military governor). These Maṇḍaleśvaras were also helped in their administration by the ministers, for a king summoned to court maṇḍaleśvaras along with their ministers (sāmātyān maṇḍaleśvarān)⁷.

These feudatories were tributary kings (karadikṛta-pārthivāḥ) who would not pay even their tributes without fighting⁸. Thus they could be kept under control only through the force of arms. They were always on the look-out for the weaknesses of the central authority. The decline of the Pratihāras was hastened by the rise of Candellas and other feudal powers.

2. Sk., II. ii. 11. 77.
3. S. Ins., p. 301 (Junagarh Rock Inscription of Skanda Gupta).
4. Sk., III. ii. 33. 38.
5. Ibid., III. ii. 31. 52; III. ii. 33. 38; V. iii. 53. 9; VI. 271. 451.
6. Ibid., IV. i. 32. 64.
7. Ibid., IV. ii. 58. 4.
8. Ibid., VI. 48. 43 : सबेस्त्राणायते यक्ष: पाणियिः : करवीरिः :।
युद्ध बिना करे हेडिः न जन्तुणाय यतो विभो।
The Skanda Purāṇa mentions several instances of feudal lords trying to assert their independence. In one case a Sāmanta usurped his empire. Similarly taking advantage of the weak king deprived of treasury, his capital was besieged by the hostile kings, who thought it the most opportune time for the conquest of his kingdom. They defeated him. There is another story which tells us that when king Satyartha of Vidarbha was engaged in Śiva-worship in a temple of the capital, he heard a great noise in the city. He left the temple and went out for the security of the capital. In the meanwhile his valorous minister had brought the enemy, who had invaded the capital, in chains. The king ordered the hostile feudatories to be beheaded. Thus, we see that there were different forces which induced the ambitious feudatories to get rid of the Imperial control. Particularly when a minor king came to govern the destiny of the country and people, there began a harvest of upheavals for 'rājya-viplava'. The history of Mūlarāja II Chālukya furnishes an interesting example, for we find that the feudatories and hostile relations, taking advantage of the minority of the ruler, created troubles in his kingdom. Paramāras, too, attacked the kingdom when Mohammad Ghoori was planning an invasion of the Chālukyan dominion. Again the number of these subordinate rulers was also large and consequently unmanageable.

IV. Political Rituals.

We also learn from the Skanda Purāṇa that the performance of

1. Sk. VII. i. 166. 26. अर्थेष्य बालपुजः राज्यं सामन्तेन हूँत।
2. Ibid., II. vii. 15. 7-8: बलहितं नूपं जात्वा कोशराष्ट्रविविजितम्।
   तं जे तुमेष समय निश्चितमालस:।
   भाजरमु: शतश्व भूता रिपवस्तय भूमते।
   जिज्ञयुष्ट्रेन तं भूमि...।
3. Ibid., III. iii. 6. 63-66.
4. Ibid., VI. 46. 9.
5. Sk., V. ii. 22. 6: नूपो नूपसहस्रेण (राजित:)
   Ibid. VII. iv. 10. 5: अनेक शतासहस्रा भूमिपर भि तद्वमान।
such political rituals as 'Rājasūya, 'Aṣvamedha and Vājapeya, which were in vogue from the earliest times of our political evolution, also caused wars of aggrandisement. The great epic war ensued from the jealousy of Duryodhana who envied the imperial status of Yudhishṭhira. Moreover, Rājasūya or Aṣvamedha presupposed 'World-conquest' (digvijaya). The very idea of war shook the spirit of the pacifist Yudhishṭhira who was inspired by his advisers like Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma and Arjuna to strive for the attainment of the imperial status. Skanda refers to an instance when a ruler who aspired to perform Rājasūya was dissuaded by his ministers and allies to drop the idea, as the performance of the Yajña depended on the help of the tributary kings. The entire enterprise entailed fighting, hence the well-wishers asked the king to desist from such a policy which was, as is now apparent, suicidal to the king and the country alike.

"The Rāṣō alleges that after the conclusion of his conquests Jayacandra prepared to celebrate the Rājasūya Yajña as a mark of universal monarchy, which was to culminate in the Svayaṁvara of Samyogitā. Invitations were sent to all the princes to attend the ceremony, but Pṛthivirāja Gauhaṇa and Samarasimha of Mewar refused to come. Jayacandra caused effigies of them to be made of gold, and in order to humiliate them placed these representaions in a position that indicated low rank. Pṛthivirāja took the insult to heart; he suddenly attacked Kanauj and carried away the not-unwilling princess. Canda holds that this friction between Jayacandra and Pṛthivirāja was the cause that led to Śihābuddin Ghori's invasion resulting in the fall of both. Skanda's statements recorded above tend to

1. Mbh., Sabhā P., Chaps., XIV, XV, XVI.
2. Sk., VI. 48. 42: राजसूयंकरणस्मासं सवा बुधः प्रवर्तये II
   निकृष्णवत्ति मां सवं प्रतिप: मित्रस्व तुहूदस्तया II
3. Ibid., VI. 48. 43(i).
4. Ibid. VI. 48. 44: तद्व युद्धाभिनं मां ते वारंभमि द्रिश्येण: II
5. Tripathi, History of Kanauj, pp. 325-326.
support indirectly the account of Rāso with emphasis on the
defects of such political rituals.

Skanda fully supports Canda when it asserts that truly rājya
(yuktametat yadasmākam rājyam) has been occupied by the
asuras (gṛihyat cāsuraṁ)\textsuperscript{1} because of our vicious conduct
(durāchārān), suicidal wars (ātmadroha parāyaṇān), and stupi-
dity (mauḍhyam)\textsuperscript{2}. Skanda asserts that our collapse came because
of our animal passion (paśubuddhi)\textsuperscript{3} and so stupefied and agitat-
ed by the amorous nature (vibhrāmitā mūḍhā) they came to
svayāṁvara (samāyāṁśa svayāṁvaram)\textsuperscript{4}.

Dr. Dasharath Sharma asserts, “We, of course, have every
right to examine the truth of an old tradition......There is nothing
illogical or irrational about it. Nor does it go against any known
historical facts”\textsuperscript{5}. Moreover, we know that the performance of
Āsvamedha depended solely on the conquest of the four quarters.
Hence the contemporary thinkers did not approve it, because it
was a cause of ‘anyonya vairā’, ‘kalaha’ and ‘vivāda’\textsuperscript{6}.

V. Narrow outlook

It is evident that there were many states in the country
fighting among themselves\textsuperscript{7}. This plurality of states created a
narrow outlook in the minds of the rulers who consequently over-
looked their main responsibility—the defence of dharā and
dharma. It was further aggravated by a large number of reli-
gious sects, none of which rose equal to the occasion by consoli-

\textsuperscript{1} Sk., I. ii. 25. 117.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid., I. ii. 25. 116.
\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., I. ii. 25. 118 : वेशामेव विद्या बुद्धिरस्माभि: कि क्षतर्विदम् ॥
\textsuperscript{4} अथ वा नो दोषोपितः प्रवरो हि यथ ततः ॥
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., I. ii. 25. 120.
\textsuperscript{6} Early Chauhāna Dynasties (Delhi, 1959), p. 99.
\textsuperscript{7} Sk., I. ii. 29. 206, 207.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., VII. iii. 10. 22(i) : तत्र अन्योन्यं महोपकाला यथयुद्धुति गाते ॥
ing and stabilising the country, so weak and divided. This political catastrophe (राज्य-विप्लव) caused by ‘कलाह’ led to the weakening of the country. It was largely due to the inherent weakness of the political system then in vogue in the country. The well-being of a country and its people depended upon the conduct of a ruler. The political thinkers of that age were themselves not unaware of the coming deluge. It became apparent that the Mlecchas could not be checked by the Hindu powers (मल्लक्षास्तस्य अतिद्विग्यम्). It was felt, that it was very difficult to overpower the Mlecha (दुर्निवार्य) because of our carelessness (अतंतानि). The imminent advent of the Muslim rule was prophesied. This was an alarm bell. Thus Skanda shows that the country did not lack political consciousness.

Skanda Purāṇa, further, tells us that in the country, then full of Mlecchas, Lumpsāhipa, the ruler of Lumpa (Lumpāka or Lamghana), equal to Mahendra in valour, had become the king. He had, in his army, thousands of Mlecchas, Tuṣāras (Tukhāras, the Tocharians), Barbaras or Daradas (the wild people of

1. Sk., II. ii. 47. 6 : दर्षकेवपथ गहनं संकीर्णं बहुशासने।
   तत्र भाषार्य नास्ति क्षम: कोपपिद्धितत्तम:॥
   Buddhist apathy for Brāhmaṇa ruler of Sind led to the conquest of that country by the Arabs. Hence Kumārila launched a violent attack on Buddhism. But Śaṅkara synthesised it with the other shades of Hindu thought.
2. Ibid., VI. 46. 9.
3. Ibid. III. i. 31. 10.
4. Ibid., VI. 46. 9 :
   राज्य विन्याशमक्षस्तु हृतं हरार्थैर्भुयिष्ठानं समुपविश्वतम् ॥
5. Ibid., V. ii. 23. 2 : राजामूला महादेविः योगमयः सुखस्थयः ॥
6. Ibid., V. iii. 97. 22 : प्रजाश्रय आच्याश्रयविस्मरण च मनाति ॥
7. Ibid., V. iii. 28. 69 : स्वेत्चो हुनिवार्यों हुनेति: ॥
8. Ibid., VII. iv. 4. 46 : स्वेत्चाप्रायस्य शुष्कता मेध्यता च ॥
9. Ibid., V. ii. 41. 2 : देवो स्वेत्चाप्रायकारीं ब्रह्मच जगतीपितः।
   लल्पाधिक इति व्याहतो महुद्रक्षस्माविकम् ॥
Dardistan), Lumpas (the inhabitants of Lampāka-Lamghana) Pahlavas (Pahlavas, Persians-Pāradas), and Śvagānas, (Sogdian), etc. Though Lumpādhipa’s identity is concealed in the mythological lore, yet we can surmise that he represents either Mahmud of Ghazni or Mohammad of Ghor, both of whom were the ‘lords of the region’ around Lamghan inhabited by the martial tribes mentioned above. “The Sultani-Ghāzi (Mohammad Ghorī) was the Haider of the time and a second Rustam according to Ṭabkate-Nasiri”9. Thus he seems to be identical with Lumpāhipa styled ‘Mahendra-sama-vikramah’.

Skanda Purāṇa gives us a reliable account of the Turkish conquest of India. The Hindu powers had collapsed, but they were not reconciled to alien domination and an era of prolonged resistance commences. It shows the spirit of patriotism (svadeśa-rāga)8 i.e. the love of one’s own country. The Kathāsaratīsaṅgara asserts that one’s native land is exceedingly dear to living beings, even though it may be an inferior place6.

The love of the country made it imperative to our thinkers to discuss the national problem. Skanda Purāṇa asserts that ‘the wise people should deliberate upon the problem, for it leads to knowledge which brings about deliverance6. It is for this reason that ‘praṇā’ and ‘udyama’ or ‘upāya’, were acknowledged as the

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1. Sk., V. ii. 41. 2: तत् स प्रसिद्धतो राजा ग्रेश्चे: साधै सहस्त्रः: ||
   तुषारी: बबेरी: (दरहि: ) लूर: पहावें: तयश्च: ||
3. Sk., IV. ii. 76. 47.
4. K.S.S., LII. 189: प्राणिनां हि निकृष्टापि जम्भूवः: परापिः: ||
5. Sk., I. i. 9. 44: तस्माहू:विस्मयं: कर्तव्यं: पुनर्वेण विनिविचरतम: ||
   बिम्बजानायस्ते साधै नानामोक्षो भविष्यति:||

Here vimārśa, jñāna and mokṣa should not be interpreted in the sense of religious bliss. Indra lost his kingdom to Indrasena who conquered him by force of arms. It is thus in this context that Mokṣa or deliverance indicates the recovery of kingdom and freedom from political bondage, so lost by Indra, the king of the Suras (gods).
most important and effective weapons which could bring freedom to the country. With this faith, Skanda Purāṇa discusses as to how this sacred country had been occupied by the Muslims. This question was discussed in an assembly of sages presided over by Mārkaṇḍeya. The Purāṇa asserts that the internecine warfare, caused by the different forces mentioned above, proved to be the greatest defect in the political system of the country and for which it had to pay dearly. It further asserts that the disputes among the Kṣatriyas were definitely unprofitable (vigraho hi nirarthakaḥ) and reminds them of ancient times when all the Kṣatriyas, after having elected one sole monarch, enjoyed the blessings of the earth by faithfully following his directions with devotion and duty. Thus Skanda Purāṇa evinces the existence of political consciousness and patriotism which gave stimulus to the foundation of a strong and a united state in the country. This measure alone could have saved the country from the collapse. We know that the confederacies were formed, but the chief leader of the union was not obeyed and respected by the confederating units with loyalty and devotion.

Thus, it is evident that mutual quarrels and jealousy were the main factors which brought about the collapse of Indian powers (vairam desopaghātakāṁ); but women (nārī caritra viplava) or lust (kāmarāga) and bad policy and counsel (durmantra) also contributed to it. Political thinkers of the age, like faithful rāṣṭra-vaidyas, diagnosed the body-politic and suggested various remedies for the recovery of the nation. The first and the foremost

1. Sk., V. iii. 5. 14 : कथं स्मेच्छ समार्कीर्यं देशोपविं हितसतम ||
   एतदाचरणं मां भ्रमान् मार्कण्डेय महामते ||

2. Ibid., I. i. 9. 42.
3. Ibid., VI. 24. 24 : क्षत्रियावचारये भूपालमेवा क्रत्वा चुम्मितत् ||
   तदाविश्वाय प्रमुख्यति महैं धर्मेन निरयश: ||

4. R. T.; VII. 401.
5. Ibid., VII. 425 to 430, 1145, 1146.
6. Ibid., VIII. 3018.
7. Ibid., VIII. 2067.
desideratum was, as stated above, the political unity among the Kṣatriya rulers.

These thinkers also suggested vital changes in domestic and foreign policies. They advised the authorities to rule over their people with self-control, without causing harassment and persecution to them through taxation or punishment. Special stress was laid on the policy of liberalism and toleration; but the enemies were to be dealt with a strong iron hand. They were to be completely destroyed without showing any leniency or mercy to them. It is true that no one can rest in peace in the face of powerful hostile powers. If he is so negligent towards them, his fate is doomed. Bhāratēśvara Pṛthivirāja III, himself, stands charged with this negligence:

वैरिणा सह सम्भाय विशवस्ती यदि तिष्ठति।
स वृक्षाश्रे प्रभुत्वो हि पतितः प्रतिवुदयेत॥

He, who rests confident after having made a reconciliation with his enemy, is sure to fall one day like a man who sleeps on a tree-top. Pṛthivirāja III did the same thing after making treaty with Mohammad Ghoiri. Hence his fall was inevitable. His fall marked the end of the Hindu sovereignty and thus began an era of terror caused by the Mlecchas (mleccha-rājye bhayānake).

1. Skanda Purāṇa gives us a list of 36 duties of kings as given in the Mahābhārata but with a great change dictated by the exigencies and urgencies of the age. (Skanda Purāṇa VII. iv. 17. 80 to 94; Mahābhārata, Śānti Parva, Chap. 70, Gita Presss Edn.).

2. Sk., VII. iv. 17. 83 to 92.

3. Sk., VII. iv. 17. 93, 94: प्रहृदेष्टः च विद्वायु हर्षा शाकुलः श्रेष्ठैरयेत्।
कौशिक कृत्वा चाकक्षामाग्रुः स्वाज्जापापार्क।
एवर राज्य निरर्म स्मयं यदि देवं इत्युच्छिसि॥

4. Śiśupālavadha, II. 42: विद्वायु वैरं सामर्थं नरोदरं य उदास्ते।
प्रक्षिप्योवचिं कसो श्रेर्ते हेषभिमात्मर्॥


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