Early Indian Religions
EARLY INDIAN RELIGIONS

P. BANERJEE

VIKAS PUBLISHING HOUSE PVT LTD
DELHI • BOMBAY • BANGALORE • KANPUR
The religious history of India is probably the most vital factor in determining the trends of history itself, particularly in the ancient period. The great vitality of the Vedic religion is such that it has survived through the ages upto the present day in one form or the other. The various sacrifices that were enjoined and in the performance of which even the kings of a later day took pride, have been significantly praised by *arthavādas* as Śāyaṇa would explain it. In refuting the objection that impossible statements occur in the *Veda*, as for instance, the animals performing sacrifice, the ready reply is that this is just an *arthavāda*. If even animals and reptiles could derive benefit from the performance of the sacrifices, how much more the humans. The Bhāraśivas, Vākāṭakas, Pallavas, long after the Śuṅgas, had performed various sacrifices like *ukthyā*, *shoḍaṣi*, *atirātra*, *vājapeya* and so on. This Vedic faith spread even in far off islands, and the Kutei inscriptions in Borneo mention *bahuṣuvāraṇa* sacrifice performed by Mūlavarman. Among the earliest Pāṇḍyas of about the beginning of the Christian era, one is named Palyākaśālai, who was mostly in the sacrificial hall. Kālidāsa mentions */dirghasattra* or a year-long sacrifice performed by even Varuṇa. Even in the epic period, the highest place was given to the *Veda* and the Brāhmaṇas who kept up the study of the *Veda*. That is why there is a story of a sage who demonstrated that his value was equal to a cow implying that the cow and the *rishī* were of the same importance. The *Mahābhārata* makes it clear in the verse, *brāhmaṇānām gavām chaiva kulam ekam avidhā kritam ekatra vedās tishṭhanti havir anyatra tishṭhati* (*Mahābhārata*). All the *sāṃskārās* are even today according to the Vedic
mantras. Daśapūrṇamāsa sacrifice and the annual sacrifices like paśubandha are not altogether given up even now. The Smritis, Grihyasūtras, Dharmaśāstras all ultimately proclaim their Vedic source and give the highest place to the Veda. Veda is considered a prabhu that commands as it gives directions. But strangely enough, even as a brahmachārī performs samidādhāna and the householder (grihastha) aupāsana, and even as a prāyaśchitta is done at last on the śrāddha days, repenting for the non-performance of the daily homas like aupāsana, there has been greater stress laid on the personal predilection for deities like Śiva, Skanda, Nārāyaṇa, Sūrya, Ambikā and Gaṇapati. But even this pañchāyatanapūja, that was given a definite shape by Śaṅkara, is only secondary to sandhyā and gāyatrī. In fact, the sculpture at Mahābalipuram shows the rishis in penance in the highest communion born of Upanishadic thought, but the Rishikumāras are engaged in sandhyā and gāyatrī, dikpradakshiṇa and looking at Sūrya through the aperture in the fingers in yamapāśamudrā. There are vratas, fasts, feasts and Vedic ceremonies all going together. Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa Vishṇu as Vāṣu-deva along with Saṅkarshaṇa and with the expanded Vyuha has so caught the popular imagination that while honouring jñānayoga, bhaktiyoga has practically drowned the masses in its depth. It is, therefore, nāmasanākīrtanas, bhajanas and such other modes of addressing a personal god in the shape of Kṛishṇa and Rāma that have come to stay, but along with Vedic practices that go hand in hand.

Jainism, with its great stress on ahimsā, has to a great extent in an unnoticed and even unobtrusive manner completely changed the ideology, outlook, and even the mode of life of at least portions of India by a total abhorrence of carnivorous food.

Buddhism has had the greatest influence in India for several centuries with people equally adoring the stūpa and the temple as recorded in an eleventh century inscription at Amarāvatī where Amareśvara and Buddha were equally adored by princesses. There was a strange but wonderful spirit of toleration where members of the same family could profess different religions and all of them respect the faith of the other. Prabhākara-vardhana was a Saura, Rājyavardhana a Saugata and Harshavardhana a Māheśvara. Even in the Vijayanagara period, sect-
arian quarrels were set at rest by the emperor who was impartial towards all faiths. Emperor Rājarāja’s sister, Kundavai, herself a great devotee of Śiva, built Jaina temples, and Rājarāja richly endowed the Buddhist monastery at Nāgapaṭṭīnām. Narasiṁha, the great devotee of Sūrya, who built the temple at Koṇārak is shown in a sculpture adoring Śiva, Jagannātha and Mahishamardini Durgā, for whom temples were constructed by his ancestors in Bhubanesvar, Purī and Jāipur respectively. The Kushāna kings issued coins with different deities imprinted like Vāyu, Chandra, Śiva, Buddha and so forth. Buddha himself was recognised as an avatāra of Vishṇu and Jayadeva sings of him as such. It is this spirit of assimilation that has given great vitality to the Brahmanical faith. Epigraphical, numismatic, literary, sculptural and pictorial evidences are quite abundant in India to illustrate the history of the growth and development of religious thought.

Dr Priyatosh Banerjee has given me the greatest joy as I read through his book. Dr Banerjee has dealt with the subject with an objective outlook, wonderfully marshalling facts, and differing from even the best known authors, and trying to maintain his position by cogent arguments, thoroughly documented with epigraphic, literary, numismatic and other evidences. The introductory chapter is, as it, were, the base on which the entire book rests, and Dr Banerjee has thoroughly discussed and shown how the Vedic thoughts and trends have not ceased to be by the end of the Vedic period, but have continued to exercise their influence even up to the present day, all the more in early India which is the period of his study. Śaivism, Bhāgavatism, the Nāga Cult, the survival of Vedic elements in Neo-Brāhmaṇism, and separate appraisals in Jainism and Buddhism and their reactions on Brāhmaṇism and vice versa are all studied, discussed and presented with a rare vitality that makes the book a most inviting one. I must congratulate Dr Banerjee, for whom I have always had a high regard as a scholar, on this brilliant performance.

*New Delhi*  
*January 1973*  

C. Sivaramamurti  
*Director, National Museum*
Preface

The book aims at presenting a historical account of some aspects of India's religious life of the post-Mauryan period, i.e. 185 B.C. to A.D. 300. Indian civilisation is of great antiquity and has a continuous development. Every religio-philosophic idea has a traceable history of several centuries. As such, while dealing with the religious history of the above period, I have found it necessary also to provide the genesis or the earlier phases or stages of developments of the religious cults discussed in this volume.

The chapters are based upon a comprehensive and critical study of contemporary archaeological, numismatic and epigraphic materials. Traditions and evidence of literature have been properly utilised to supplement the archaeological studies and link up the narrative as it was necessary.

The treatise is divided into seven chapters. The first or the introductory chapter is devoted mainly to the study of the origin, growth and nature of Neo-Brahmanism which is ordinarily known as Hinduism. Neo-Brahmanism is characterised by profound catholicity and receptivity. It is a synthesis of polygenous religious ideas, historical and popular, Vedic and non-Vedic, a compromise between the speculation of the intellectual and emotionalism of the masses. A clear-cut discussion of the theme in this chapter makes it easy to understand the multiform characters of Neo-Brahmanic cults. Further, this chapter sets the background for the rise and popularity of the dissenting faiths, such as Jainism and Buddhism.

Chapter II deals with the history of Śaivism. Śaivism is not a single cult but a bundle of cults, which is amply testified to by
the varied and manifold characteristics attributed to Rudra-Śiva in Vedic and post-Vedic literature.

A few other points of interest in this chapter are concerned with the discussion of (i) the historical development of the Rudra-Śiva cult, (ii) the wide popularity of this cult among all sections of people, native and foreign, and (iii) Liṅga-worship and its association with Śaivism, etc.

Chapters III and IV are devoted respectively to a detailed study of Bhāgavatism and Nāga worship during the period.

In Chapter V an attempt has been made to indicate that there was a continuity of orthodox practices in the framework of Neo-Brahmanism, notwithstanding the overwhelming popularity of the sectarian cults. The historic and popular forms of worship are so intimately mixed up that they can be separated only by an act of abstraction.

Chapters VI and VII describe the history of Jainism and Buddhism during the period. The popularity of these two religious sects is amply illustrated by a large number of contemporary inscriptions and architectural remains pointing to their activities throughout the length and breadth of the Indian subcontinent.

The religious history of India is a fascinating but complicated study and this has not received much attention by Indian scholars except a few. In these chapters I have made a humble attempt to present an exhaustive treatment of the topics on the basis of both literary and archaeological sources. In spite of this, it is quite possible that some points have been left unexplained or inadequately explained for which I crave the indulgence of the generous reader. I will, however, consider my labour amply rewarded if the book stimulates further studies in the field.

In the writing of the first six chapters of the book, I received generous guidance from the late Dr Subimal Chandra Sarkar, formerly Principal of the Patna College, Patna. I enormously benefited from his profound knowledge of Indian history and culture. I take this opportunity of paying my respectful homage to his sacred memory.

My sincere thanks are also due to Dr K. K. Datta, Retired Vice-Chancellor, Patna University, Patna, Shri A. Ghosh (Retired Director-General of Archaeology in India), and Shri C. Sivarama-
murti, Director, National Museum, New Delhi, who have taken a keen interest in my work and have helped me in various ways in the preparation of this book and have thus placed me under a deep debt of gratitude.

January 1973

P. Banerjee
1. **Introductory**  
Origin and nature of Neo-Brahmanism; its relation to older Brahmanism or Vedism; introductory remarks about Jainism and Buddhism.

26  

2. **Śaivism**  
Antiquity, nature and popularity of Śaivism: Śaivism in historical times and the Post-Mauryan period; Śaivic emblems like the bull, trident and Nandipada, etc.; Linga worship and its association with the Śiva-cult; anthropomorphic representations of Śiva; worship of Trimūrti and Ardhanārīśvara; Śiva sectaries, and the date of Lakulīśa.

50  

3. **Bhāgavatism**  
Antiquity of the Bhāgavata cult; extent and popularity of Bhāgavatism in the Post-Mauryan period; human origin of the cult; identification of Krishṇa-Vāsudeva with Vīshṇu; Vyūha worship.

94  

4. **Nāga Cult**  
Antiquity of the Nāga cult; its history in the Post-Mauryan period; its association with Bhāgavatism; Śaivism, Buddhism and Jainism, etc.; political history of the Nāga people.

117  

5. **Survival of Vedic Elements in Neo-Brahmanism**  
The continuity of Vedic rites and traditions; their
popularity in the Śuṅga, Kāṇva and Sātavāhana courts and in subsequent periods; Brahmanical finds from Besnagar and yūpas from different parts of India; synthesis or blending of the orthodox and popular forms of worship; and the attitude of Brahmanism towards the foreign settlers.

6. **Jainism**

Early history; Jainism in Kalinga, in Western India, in the South and in Mathura; Jaina Church organisation; Post-Mauryan Jaina inscriptions; schisms in the Jaina Church; Post-Mauryan Jain inscriptions; worship of images and stūpas, etc. by the Jainas.

7. **Buddhism**

Early history of Buddhism; the life and teachings of Buddha; subsequent history of Buddhism; Buddhist Councils; Buddhist Schools; the growth of Mahayana; Buddhist literature.

*Bibliography* 225

*Index* 235
Dedicated to the sacred memory of my father
1. Introductory

One of the main aspects of the religious history of the post-
Mauryan period is the gradual emergence of Neo-Brahmanism
more or less in the form in which we know it in later periods or
even now. Neo-Brahmanism, as we know, is a mass of beliefs,
opinions, usages, religious creeds and observances derived from
manifold sources, hieratic or popular, Vedic or non-Vedic,
native or foreign, Aryan or non-Aryan, orthodox or dissenting. In
short, it is a synthesis, the process of which stretches over a long
period, though it assumes a tangible shape in the epic literature.
Diversity is its very essence. One of its peculiar manifestations,
however, is the devotional monotheistic worship of personal gods
within various sectaries. This monotheistic form of worship is,
however, one of the diverse forms of worship prevailing in this
period. It is well known to the students of Indian mythology
that polytheism, pantheism, and theism mix and coexist through-
out in Indian religious thought. As early as the earlier Sarihita
period, side by side with external and polytheistic forms of
worship, there was the idea of a personal god, and also an
attempt towards reaching a unity of godhead. The idea of
grace, mercy, and intimate fellowship between god and the wor-
shipper which characterize the Bhakti movement of Krishnā-
Vāsudeva are present also in the cult of Varuṇa of the Rigveda.
Varuṇa is looked upon as an upholder of moral order and the
hymns addressed to him are ethical and devout in tone.1 While
he punishes those who transgress his ordinances, he is gracious to
the penitent as is apparent from the following Rigvedic verse.

1Rigveda, I. 25, 16 ff.
Oh thou strong and mighty god, through want of strength I went astray. Be gracious, mighty lord, have mercy. What- ever wrong we men commit against the heavenly host, O Varuṇa, whatever law of thine we break through thoughtless- ness, for that iniquity chastise us not, O god.

While belief in many gods existed, the practice of extolling one god as the greatest when he is the subject of adoration (called monotheism or kathenotheism by Max Müller) led to the idea that the functions of creation, preservation, and rulership of the world may be predicated of a single divinity giving rise to the conception of Prajāpati or Viśvakarman.

Further, some of the events and personages that are the subject of religious speculation in the epic literature also figure in and are coeval with the later Vedic period. Thus, Krishṇa-Vāsudeva himself is a scholar and follower of the Brahmanical theology as mentioned in the Chhândogya Upanishad. It may also be stated that the early Upanishads themselves reveal here and there the monotheistic, personal, and devotional attitude of some of the Upanishadic thinkers, though their theme was the rational idealism of the Ātman-Brahman doctrine. These arguments make it clear that personal deities and theistic forms of worship (whatever may be their origin) were quite well known to the intellectual classes in the Vedic and Upanishadic periods though they came to possess mass appeal through larger religious movements by popular leaders and preachers of subsequent times as revealed in the epic composition. Their prominence in our time may be due to the fact that the other forms of worship were either too archaic, esoteric, or too intellectual to appeal to any but few.

Though like the reform movement of Gautam Buddha, the origin of the sectarian monotheistic cults as revealed in the

---

*Ibid., VII. 89, 3; see also Hopkins, Religions of India (Boston, 1895), p. 17.

*Ibid., VII., 89, 5.


*III. 17,4.

epics may be due to the complex external ritualism and abstract speculations of the older Brahmanism; yet it is interesting to note that they did not so clearly break away from Brahmanism as Buddhism did. Almost all claim to be based upon the Vedas, though in fact there is not much in common between the Vedic literatures and their scriptures. To a certain extent, there is truth in their profession. They have always drawn from the old store of Vedic literature, borrowing in part their formula and usages and even doctrines, and assimilating them for their own purposes. The cults peculiar to them are quite distinct from the cults of old Brahmanism, yet the latter is not entirely cast aside. It is true that they had their own scriptures, yet they dwell on the excellence of the former when it is in their interest to do so. In the Bhagavadgītā, Krishna declares expressly that he regards every religious act which is done in faith as addressed to God.

The traditional, and to a certain extent mixed character of the majority of these religions may be accounted for by the fact that they were the results of the reconciliation between the older Brahmanic and the popular cults. Before we proceed, it is necessary therefore to discuss in brief the social and religious factors that led to and necessitated this synthesis.

The “record” of Brahmanism begins with the earlier Vedas, the earliest literary monument of the Indian people. They consist of hymns in honour of the divinities, namely, Indra, Rudra, Vishnu, Varuna and other personified forces of nature. The religion transmitted to us in these hymns is an adoration of physicality developing into anthropomorphism, polytheism, pantheism, theism, and monotheism according to the profundity of vision of the worshipper. The deities are conceived as capable of causing harm and conferring benefit and in order to please them they are invoked in sacrifices and addressed as friends, benefactors and guardians.

The Samhitās represent varied religious thought. The plurality of gods has led many readers to think that the religion

7On the scriptures of the Bhāgavatas and Pañcharātras, Pāṣupatas and Māheśvaras, see the Bhagavadgītā, the Nārāyanīya section of the Mahābhārata; H. T. Colebrooke, Essays on the Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus, pp. 261-69.

8Gītā, IX. 24, 25; VII. 20-23.
of the early Vedic people was entirely polytheistic. But on close
ingovation it appears that there was neither pure polytheism
nor pure monotheism in the *Vedas*. The fact is that while poly-
theism continued, there arose speculations tending towards
monotheism or unity of godhead. The mind of the Vedic people,
as we find in the hymns, was highly impressionable and fresh.
They extolled, unconsciously, any force of nature that proved
beneficent to them. The deity which moved the devotion or
admiration of the mind was the most supreme for the time being.
This peculiar trait of the mind has been described by Max
Müller as Henotheism or Kathenotheism—"a belief in single
gods, each in turn standing out as the highest." That is, either a
particular god is made to absorb all other gods who are declared
to be manifestations of him, or else he is given attributes which
in strict logic could only be given to a sole monotheistic deity.
Sometimes a solution of the difficulties of multiplicity was the
collective invocation of all gods as a sort of cooperative unit.
Whether we call it monotheism or simply an extravagant praise
of the powers of the deity in question, the tendency towards
extolling a god as the greatest and the highest, gradually brought
forth the conception of a supreme lord of beings and creation.
Different names were given to him—"the lord of creatures"
(Prajāpati), the "all-maker", "Viśvakarman" and the like. As
these names show, the new figure was no longer ritualistic but
abstract. This was an attempt at monotheism, but as stated
before it did not result in the establishment of a full-fledged
monotheistic religion all at once. Some centuries were to pass
before monotheism gained a strong foothold in India. As we
shall see, the later monotheistic religions owe their strength
largely to other elements of more popular origin than these
early suggestions.

Generally speaking, the religion of the *Rigveda* is the worship
of a body of great and powerful gods. By the most simple logic
it applies to the divine power the same principle which men
apply to each other. It seeks to propitiate them by gifts and

*Rigveda, X.121, 2; Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 118; Kaegi, *Rigveda*,
pp. 88 and 89.

10 Yo nah pitaḥ janitā yo vidhātā dhāmāṇi veda bhubanānivisvāḥ Yo devānāṁ
hāmadhā eka eva ta saripraśnaṁ bhubanāyaṁtyanyāṁ (Rigveda, X. 82,3.)
supplications. But when we pass from the Rigveda or from the Samhitas to the Brāhmaṇas we notice a distinct change in the spirit of worship. The Brāhmaṇas are ritual textbooks containing mainly practical directions regarding the performance of sacrifices. The priests were still powerful and they claimed to be seers though they made no new hymns. They engaged the attention of the people by elaborating on the technicalities of the sacrificial ceremony. These rituals, admixtures of magic and speculation,11 were the tools by which the priestly class exercised control. The performance of sacrifice became a matter of expert knowledge and it is clear that from this time the priesthood constituted a distinct profession which was to some extent hereditary.12 The old idea of working upon the goodwill of the gods disappeared, and in the theosophy of the Brāhmaṇas it is an accepted fact that the sacrifice has a magic power of its own which gave mastery even over the gods. In the philosophy of Pūrvamimāṁśā, which is the logical outcome of the Brāhmaṇas, the idea of gods is effectively disposed of. Briefly speaking, the Brāhmanic theology fastened itself upon the material foundation of an all-absorbing cult of sacrifice and the divine personalities were subordinated to it. Rituals then became more important than religion, and priests more important than gods.

As the formalism of the Brāhmanical rituals could not satisfy the keen religious feelings of the people, a reaction set in. The Brāhmaṇas tried to broach the problem by widening the scope of the Vedic pantheon with Prajāpati as its unchallenged head, but that did not satisfy the intellectuals. Dissatisfaction gradually grew and was openly expressed by those who were outside the orthodox pale. An attempt was however made in the Āranyakas to bring about a compromise by incorporating new ideas and giving a philosophical interpretation to sacrifice.

The development of thought from the Brāhmaṇas to the Āranyakas signified by the transference of values from an interest in the actual sacrifice to its symbolic meaning and medita-
tions which were regarded as capable of yielding various earthly benefits. It is here that we find that amongst a certain section of the people the ritualistic ideas were giving way and philosophic speculations about the nature of truth became gradually substituted in their place. In the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad\textsuperscript{13} we find, for example, that instead of horse sacrifice, the visible universe is to be conceived as a horse and meditated upon as such, the head of the sacrificial horse being the dawn, its eye the sun, its vital force the air, its open mouth the fire called Vaisvānāra, its ear the soul.

This indicates that religious speculations or meditation came to be regarded in course of time as more beneficial than complicated ceremonials. The growth of the idea that subjective speculation was capable of giving the highest good, lessened the importance of Vedic ritualism to a great extent and led to the establishment of the claims of philosophic meditation as the highest goal of life. The Āranyakas thus paved the way for the Upanishadic doctrines.

"The Upanishads are the earliest Brahmanical treatises, other than single hymns or brief passages, which deal professedly in the main with philosophical subjects." Though formally parts of the Veda-Brāhmaṇas, the religion they present is to some extent different from the practical, ritualistic side of the Brāhmaṇas. As a matter of fact, they are an intellectual revolt against the overdone Vedic ritualism. Their aim is not the attainment of earthly happiness and later bliss in the abode of Yama by offering sacrifices to the gods, but the release from mundane existence by the absorption of the individual soul through correct knowledge into the universal soul.

The Upanishads are, however, not systematic treatises. They are "tentative, fluid and one may say, unstable" as they present various currents of thoughts which are sometimes inconsistent with each other. There are over two hundred Upanishads in number and distributed over a long period. The earliest of them are about ten in number on which Śaṅkara commented. We cannot assign an exact date to them. Most of them are pre-

\textsuperscript{13}Uṣhā vā aśvasya medhyasya śirah| Sūrvaścakṣuhṣ]], Vātah prāgāḥ
yāttamagnīrvaisvānārḥ, saṁvatsaraḥ ātmāśvasya medhyasya | (Brihadā-
ranyaka Upanishad, 1.1.)
Buddhistic; a few may date after Buddha. The accepted dates of these early ones are 1000 B.C. to 300 B.C. They fall into two main groups. The oldest ones are in prose and non-sectarian. They are the Brihadāraṇyaka, Chhāndogya, Taittirīya, Aitareya, Kaushiṭakī, and Kena (a part of it is a later addition).\textsuperscript{14} The remaining ones are metrical and theistic in tone. These are Iṣa, Kaṭha, Muṇḍka, and Śvetāsvatara. The others belong to a much later period with which we are not directly concerned here.

The essential theme of the Upanishads, specially the older ones, is the conception of the Ātman and Brahman and their identity. "The universe is Brahman, but the Brahman is the Ātman." The etymology of the word Brahman is uncertain. According to some scholars, the Brahman is supposed to be "the will of man striving upwards to that which is sacred and divine." What, however, the word signifies is not certain. In the Rigveda it occurs several times in the sense of prayer or magic formula.\textsuperscript{15} It is during the period of the Brāhmaṇas that the conception of Brahman came to have an established significance as the supreme principle which is the moving force behind the gods.\textsuperscript{16} As an elaboration of the very same idea, we find the word Brahman in the Upanishads as signifying the holy principle which animates nature.

The etymology of Ātman is simpler. In the Rigveda it means breath or the vital essence.\textsuperscript{17} Gradually it acquired the meaning of soul or self. In one of the later books of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, this Ātman is invested with a high degree of abstraction and is said to pervade the universe.\textsuperscript{18}

It may, however, be noted that the Brahman-Ātman doctrine as found in the Upanishads seems to have originated much earlier than is supposed, for some of the older passages in Atharva-veda show a full acquaintance with what is claimed especially as

\textsuperscript{14}Deussen, The Religion and Philosophy of India, The Philosophy of the Upanishads, pp. 22 ff.
\textsuperscript{16}Eggeling’s translation of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa; Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XLIV, pp. 27, 28.
\textsuperscript{17}Rigveda, X. 16, 3.
\textsuperscript{18}Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, X. vi. 3.
Upanishadic (viz. the doctrine of Brahman and Ātman), and that the *Atharvaveda* regards this philosophy as having come down from a remote antiquity: "The Brahman that was first born of old (Purastāt—in the east ?), Vena hath widened from a well shining edge (sīmatas, horizon)".19 Further, in the *Atharvaveda* Skambha is the Ultimate Principle called indiscriminately Prajāpati, Purusha and Brahman. He includes all space and time, god and Vedas and the moral powers.20 Perhaps it would be scientific to regard the Rik, Yajus, Atharvan Brāhmaṇa, Āranyaka and *Upanishad* types of religious ideas as more or less contemporary or traditional, being almost equally ancient and prevailing in different social circles or different regions of ancient India. There is no improbability in the existence of nature worship, henotheism, pantheism, ritualism and magic, devotionalism and personal theism, and scientific and philosophical theism in a complex, vast and ancient civilization like India. And it is not necessary to interpret all these varieties as derived one from the other in chronological sequence, either by way of degeneration or by way of development, reform, or revolution.

The Ātman and Brahman are commonly treated as synonymous in the *Upanishads*. Strictly speaking, Brahman represents the cosmic principle which pervades the universe, Ātman the psychical, manifested in the individual, and they have become united in the philosophy of the *Upanishads*. Thus goes the famous doctrine of Śaṅḍilya postulating their identity:

This my Ātman in my inmost heart is smaller than a grain of rice, or a barley corn, or a mustard seed, or a millet grain.... This my Ātman in my inmost heart is greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than the heavens, greater than all spheres. In him are all actions, all wishes, all smells, all tastes; he holds this all enclosed within himself; he speaks not, he troubles about nothing: this my Ātman in my inmost heart is this Brahman. With him, when I depart out of this life shall I be united. For him to whom this knowledge has come, for him indeed exists no doubt. Thus speaks Śaṅḍilya, Yea, Śaṅḍilya.21

20 *Atharvaveda*, X. 7, 7; 13,17.
21 *Chhāndogya Upanishad*, III. 14.
This identity of the human soul or self with the absolute is expressed in clear terms in the following lines of the Chhāndogya and Brihadāranyaka: "That art thou." 22 "I am Brahman ....It (the universal Brahman) is thyself." 23

The main interest of the early Upanishads centres round Brahman which, as an absolute reality, has defied all positive definitions. Brahman is the "Infinite, Unchangeable, Eternal Absolute". It is Pure Being on which all that exists depends and from which it derives its reality. Yājñavalkya said, "He the Ātman is not this, nor that (neti neti). He is inconceivable for he cannot be conceived, unchangeable for he is not changed, untouched for nothing touches him". 24

The early Upanishadic thinkers appear to have little interest in the worship of the Vedic gods, and shaken themselves from popular religion as completely as from ordinary society. The Vedas and the Vedic sacrifices were declared useless to them. They no longer desired those things which were demanded from the gods in return for sacrifices. Although it is perfectly plain that they stood apart in supreme contempt or indifference, from ordinary society and its practices and scriptures, they did not proceed to build a religious or sectarian organization or church as a counter-blast to sacrificial and ritualistic Vedicism. As the idea of the impersonal Brahman is much too abstract and too speculative for average men to grasp, it hardly affected the religion of the ordinary people which centred round popular gods and ceremonies. On the other hand, there can also be no doubt that at many points the purely Upanishadic Brahman doctrine itself was profoundly modified by the popular religious tendencies, crystallizing later into sectarian doctrines which sought to conceive the unconditioned impersonal Brahman in more emotional and human terms.

The terms in which realization of Brahman is described in many of the Upanishadic passages of a theistic nature, indicate that Brahman was not only intellectually apprehended as a psychophysical principle but also directly realized cognitively

22Ibid., IV. 8, 7, etc.
23Brihadāranyaka Upanishad, I. 4, 10, etc.
24Sa esha neti netyātmā, agrihya na hi grihyate, aśīryo na hi śīryate asaṅgo nahi sajyate. (Brihadāranyaka Upanishad, III. 9, 26.)
and emotionally (covering mind and matter) more or less as a personal being. The well known description of the individual lord \( (\text{Antaryāmī}) \) in the \( \text{Brihadāraṇyakā Upanishad} \) or of the \( \text{Ātman} \) as the upholder of the sun, moon, heaven, earth and the entire universe in the same text affords appropriate instances\(^{25}\) in this regard. Like Krishna in the \( \text{Bhagavadgītā} \), Indra describes himself to be the true object of knowledge and meditation in \( \text{Kaushitakī Upanishad}.^{26} \) Although original idealism maintains itself, a similar attitude is noticeable also in the conception of \( \text{Ātman Vaiśvānara} \) as the \( \text{Vīraṭa Purusha} \) or world soul in a famous passage of the \( \text{Chhāndogya}.^{27} \) In all these passages the impersonal Brahman is spoken of no doubt, but it is spoken of in the most exalted, passionate terms; if it is not full-fledged theism or devotionalism, it is the first step towards this, and betrays the influence of popular beliefs. Perhaps the best way of interpreting the interrelation between Vedism, popular beliefs, and Upanishadism is that the last is on the one hand a philosophic rationalization of the first and an emotional sublimation of the second, emphasizing the \( \text{Jñāna} \) path and the \( \text{Bhakti} \) path almost equally while subordinating the Karmapath to both.

The early \( \text{Upanishads} \) are marked by two distinct currents of thought, viz. (1) the theory of \( \text{Ātman-Brahman}, \) and opposition to ritualistic religion, and (2) the attempt at describing Brahman in theistic terms. They seem to be contradictory; this is due to the fact that the \( \text{Upanishads} \) are not codified treatises—they are simply a collection of the speculations of different thinkers. Briefly speaking, they contain no system but give the start towards various systems. Later Indian thought utilized these starts and developed them into various religio-philosophical schools, affecting profoundly the course of Brahmanism.

Among the organized philosophical systems that arose with the wave of Upanishadic teachings, three are very important, viz. those of the Jainas, the Sāmkhyas and the Baudhās. The

\(^{25}\text{Vettha nu tvam kāpya tamantaryāmīnaḥ ya imah cha lokāḥ sarvāṇi cha bhūtāni yo' ntarayāmayaśī (Brihadāraṇyaka Upanishad, III, 7). E tasya va aksharasya prāṣatasane Gārgī śūryachandramasau vidhritau tīṣṭhataḥ (Ibid., III, 8,9).}

\(^{26}\text{III, 9... Sa hovācha praṇosmisprajñātmā tam māmāyuramritamrit-yupāsya.}

\(^{27}\text{Chhāndogya Upanishad, V, 11; Deussen, op. cit., p. 91.}\)
Sāmkhya, Buddhist and Jaina systems had one point in common with the Vedāntic doctrine (and other developments of Upanishadism)—the followers of all these four systems did not practise the worship of any god. Also, these three had one point in common which distinguished them from Vedāntism—only persons of the first three upper social classes could study the Vedānta, while the teachings and monastic orders of these three were open to all. The Sāmkhya remained within Brahmanism while the Jainas and the Buddhists separated as they refused to acknowledge even nominally the authority of the Vedas and the caste privileges of the Brāhmaṇas.

When Buddhism and Jainism were agitating the eastern part of India, great changes took place at the core of Brahmanism. The Brahmanic rituals were too technical and the Upanishadic Brahman was too abstract to affect the religious ideas and practices of the masses which centred round popular deities and ceremonies. Even in the Rigvedic times, the ritual was an elaborate and expensive affair in which the rich alone could engage. It was, therefore, not only a hieratic but an aristocratic cult. The real religion of the masses was different. We find it best portrayed in the Atharvaveda which is a collection of hymns and magic charms intended to accompany a mass of simpler rites and ceremonies which were not connected with the hieratic cult of the Rigveda. Almost every conceivable human need and aspiration is represented by those popular performances. It is, however, wrong to hold that the popular and hieratic cult remained altogether separate from each other. The fusion of several cultures and assimilation of polygenous ideas were a potent factor since the early Vedic times and as a result of this a reaction between the hieratic and popular religions took place tending towards an amalgamation. That is why we find that the Rigveda, which is primarily an orthodox and hieratic composition, contains reference to popular beliefs and customs, and the Atharvaveda, which purports to depict the religion of the masses, contains higher philosophic speculations of the Upanishadic type and also knows the hieratic gods and deities of the aristocratic classes and the priesthood dependent on them. While one deals with Indian thought and religion, 28

one finds it difficult to separate the two elements—the orthodox and popular, which jointly contributed to their growth and development. The fact is that when specializations and technicalities were attempted the gulf between the two was widened, but at other times they tended to coalesce with each other. The doctrines of the Brāhmaṇas and the Upanishads were those of specializations. So the religions they evolved were not acceptable to the great mass of Indians, which weakened the basic structure of Brahmanism. As people acknowledging it were varied, it could survive by adjustments and assimilations only. And we shall see presently that orthodox Brahmanism had to stoop to introduce and assimilate the local and popular elements for its sustenance, though deemed heretical from its standpoint.

Buddhism and Jainism developed, as we know, into mass movements in the lifetime of Gautama Buddhha and Mahāvīra. They threw their monastic orders open to all irrespective of caste and creed, while the Upanishadic or Vedāntic religion could be observed by the initiated only. Everything in Brahmanism was more or less impersonal, but the secret of the strength of the dissenting faiths, specially Buddhism, lies in the personal devotion shown to the founder. Though Buddhism repudiated the priest and priest-craft, and “recalled the mind of the worshipper to piety and good conduct from the barrenness of the rituals”, it set up in the teacher or Śākyamuni, a being infinitely gracious, whom one could love, admire and trust, even as one looked up to a personal deity. Its success was in a great measure due to the reverence Buddha inspired by the greatness of his personal character. Buddha came to be regarded as the ideal man, the perfection of humanity. His doctrines of universal charity, liberty, equality and fraternity were irresistibly attractive and drew adherents in great number. He became the real god of his faith. The personal element of Buddhism exercised a profound influence upon the fate and course of Brahmanism, inasmuch as it practically became a popular and theistic movement within a short time.

As Buddhism and Jainism were assailing the very core of Vedic religion, Brahmanism was faced with no less difficult a task of remodelling itself by recognizing and assimilating the

---

Macnicol, Indian Theism, p. 72.
current popular cults and creeds.\textsuperscript{30} The normal demand of the
masses is for a personal god whom we can love and trust, a
need which could not be well satisfied by the ritualistic or the
philosophical varieties of Brahmanism. A merely spiritual and
impersonal religion was not capable of taking hold of the mass
mind and satisfying their religious craving, and it was necessary
to provide them with a more acceptable cult. Brahmanism, to
survive, had to expand, or shrink and die. The only way in
which this change could be effected was by inventing personal,
quasi-human and human divinities, and a system of mythology
suited to the minds and requirements of the masses.

The earlier \textit{Upanishads}, we have seen, are not free from quasi-
personal touches, which is apparently by way of a concession
to the popular mentality. But the real theistic movement starts
with the younger \textit{Upanishads} (the \textit{Katha, Isa, Mundaka, Svetasvatara}
and a few others of the group) and the epics, the \textit{Rama}\textit{ya\=na}
and the \textit{Mah\=abh\=arata}. The marked features of these \textit{Upanishads}
are the doctrines of a personal god and along with it the idea of
predestination and grace in which we have a more or less per-
sonal divinity in place of the Absolute. Theoretically they aim
at the original doctrine of identity, but the individual \=Atman is
very often clearly distinguished from the Absolute \=Atman, as is
evident in the description of the supreme and the individual
self as light and shadow in \textit{Katha} (1.3.1) and in the imagery in the
\textit{Mundaka} (III, 1,1-3) of two birds dwelling in one tree, one
eating the sweet fruit and the other merely gazing on the scene,
thus fixing “in an almost deistic fashion the responsibility of
the enjoyment of fruits of an action on the individual self.”\textsuperscript{31}

Further, the doctrine of grace which is the main theme of the
\textit{Bhagavadg\=ita\=a}, seems to appear in \textit{Katha}, 1.2,23 which says:

This self is not to be gained by word of mouth, nor by intel-
llect, nor by the manifold scriptures. Only by the man whom

\textsuperscript{30}Hopkins, \textit{The Religions of India}, p. 349.
\textsuperscript{31}Sam\=ane vrikshe purusho nimagn\=o/ ni\=saya \=sochati muhyam\=ana\=h/
Jus\=htam yad\=a pa\=s\=yatvanyah\=ni\=s\=a—\=\=masya mahim\=anamiti vita\=s\=okah//
\textit{(Mundaka}, III, 1,2.).
Yad\=a pa\=s\=yah pa\=s\=yate ruk\=mav\=ar\=gam kart\=\=arami\=s\=a\=h purusha\=h Brah\=inaya-
o\=nim/ Tad\=a Vid\=v\=an pu\=nyap\=\=ape vidh\=\=uya nira\=\=jana\=h parama\=h sama\=yanup\=a\=iti//
\textit{(Ibid., III, 1-3.)}
He chooses is He apprehended; to him the Ātman reveals His own form.\footnote{Nāyamātmā pravachanena labhyo | na medhayā na bahunā śrutena/ Yamevaishva viniyute tena labhyah tasyaisha ātmā viniyute tanūṁ svām/}

The personal setting for the supreme godhead is clearly manifest in the Śvetāsvatara which equates Śiva with Brahman. It criticizes all the theories of creation and puts forth a fresh one:

Rudra alone who stands before everything at the time of destruction and creates the universe at the time of its origin can be recognized as the Creator of all things that exist. He is the supreme godhead to whose power is due the whirling round of the universes. He is the supreme cause, the lord of the souls, of him there is neither the generator nor the protector, he is the self-subsisting mover of the unmoving manifold and causes the one primal seed to sprout the infinite.\footnote{Ranade, A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy, p. 100 ff.}

The Śvetāsvatara puts the popular mythological gods in place of the supreme Brahman and initiates the process of amalgamating the cults of the average people to whom Śiva was long a favourite figure, with higher speculations of the Upanishads. This shows that during the time when the Śvetāsvatara was composed (c. 400 B.C. or earlier) the popular religions were coming to the forefront and began influencing the mind of the philosopher, or that these latter were recasting the popular cults in their own forms.

Thus the younger Upanishads did a great deal in bringing the Brahmanic religion in line with the popular which find their culmination in the epics the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, specially the latter, which is the most important source in regard to our enquiry into fresh additions to and adjustments in Brahmanism, giving it almost a new character designated by scholars
as Neo-Brahmanism (otherwise known by the name of Hinduism). The Rāmāyana, which depicts the life story of Rāma, is pre-Buddhistic in origin. According to Jacobi and Macdonell, the original portion of this epic, which is a homogeneous text by Vālmīki, corresponds to Books II to VI, and Books I and VII are undoubtedly later additions. The kernel of the Rāmāyana was composed before 500 B. C. as Macdonell thinks, and its recent portions were added sometime after the second century B. C.\(^{34}\) The Mahābhārata is an encyclopaedic work consisting of over 100,000 ślokas in its present form. It is a conglomerate of epic and didactic matter divided into eighteen books called Parvan, with a nineteenth, the Harivaṁśa, as a supplement. The epic nucleus has received and undergone tremendous additions. We find in Book I the statements that the poem at one time contained 24,000 ślokas before the episodes (Upākhyaṇas) were added, that it originally consisted of only 8,800 ślokas, and that it had three beginnings. These data render it probable that the epic has undergone three stages of development from the time it first assumed a definite shape. Its genuine portion is supposed to have come into being about the fifth century B.C. and it reached the present form by about 350 A.D. Farquhar observes that both the epics were recast under the influence of Brāhmaṇ supremacy during the Śuṅga rule, when the didactic and sectarian elements were introduced in them.\(^{35}\)

One of the important religious aspects of the epics is the exaltation of the gods Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva (practically the latter two) over others. The other gods including the chief Vedic deities, are acknowledged only formally. The deities have been adorned with a personal character with more or less fixed attributes and residences. Though possessed of godly supremacy they live like mortals with wives and children. The familiar characteristics and personalities of the deities made them attractive to the masses. As for the reasons why Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva became supreme it may be stated that Brahmā is the personified form of the Upanishadic Brahman, and could not be easily forgotten. Vishnu was treated as the personification of sacrifice since the Brāhmaṇa period and ultimately came to be

\(^{34}\)Macdonell, *The History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 308.

humanized as Rāma and Krishṇa, and Śiva with his dual character both as a malevolent and benevolent deity. The popular traits attributed to him have swayed the emotion of the Indian people since the earliest times. It may be mentioned here that Brahmā slipped out of the picture very soon and remained as a mere figurehead of the Indian triad Brahmā, Vishṇu, Śiva, in the role of the creator, preserver and destroyer respectively. The epic religion is to all intents and purposes divided between the worship of Śiva and Vishṇu who came to possess all the attributes of supreme godhead. As the Mahābhārata grew in bulk and content we find the tendency of society to divide into sectaries, each assigning to its own god the place of the supreme to the neglect of others, the leading two however being the Śaivas and Vaishṇavas. The epic commentator recognizes in the epithet “Pañchamāhakalpa” a reference to the scriptures, Āgamas, of five diverse sects, Sauras, Śāktas, Gāṇesas, Śaivas and Vaishṇavas.38

The epic in reality recognizes the Sauras, Śaivas and Vaishṇavas, for the Gāṇesas37 are unknown, and the mere allusion to “Shadow worship” (which the commentator explains as a left-hand rite) does not necessarily imply the existence of a body called Saktas.38 But the Śaivas are known as having a religion called Pāṣupata and the Sauras39 and the Vaishṇavas are referred to in the Mahābhārata vii, 82, 16, and xviii, 6,97 (Ashtādaśa Purāṇānāṁ Śravanād yat phalaṁ bhavet/tat phalaṁ samavāpnoti Vaishṇavo nātra saḥsayam!). In Śantiparva (Mahābhārata, xii, 349, 63ff) Vaisampayana refers to the current systems of religion or philosophy, viz. Śāmkhya, Yoga, Pañcharātra, Veda and Pāṣupata and asserts that Nārāyaṇa is

38Hopkins, The Great Epic of India, p. 115.
37The earliest sculptural representations of Gaṇapati figures are found in a Mathura frieze of Kushāṇa period, Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, 1937, p. 123
38Hopkins, The Great Epic of India, p. 115 f.
39A great part of the Bhavishyapurāṇa is specially consecrated to the sun. Traces of his worship are found on the coins of Kushāṇa kings who ruled over Northern India in the early christian centuries. For Śūrya images of ancient Indian type see Śūrya on Bodh-Gayā Art (Śunga period), Śūrya on Bhājīja sculpture, A.K. Coomaraswamy, History of Indian and Indonesian Art, figs. 24, 61, etc.
the chief object of devotion in all these diverse cults. These passages show beyond doubt the all inclusive and dominating nature of Vaishnava sectarianism.

Next to the Vaishnava, the strongest sectarian element in the epic is that of the Śaivas. Throughout the epic, Śiva appears as a popular deity with a vigorous and dashing brilliancy. He has been attributed 1008 names (which may be a copy of Vishnu’s). He is the Brahman of the Upanishads, the eternal, the supreme, the source of all gods, all beings (cf. Śvetāsvatara), as he is described in the didactic portion of the Mahābhārata.

The assignment of familiar and definite characters and attributes to the deities made the epic religion attractive and easily intelligible to the masses. But its overwhelming popularity and strength lie in providing mankind with human gods and with an easier way of salvation. It is clear that the editors of the epics felt that some popular heroes must be made the rallying centres to counteract the mighty influence of the heretical religions, and they performed this task by deifying Krishṇa-Vāsudeva and also Rāma, perhaps on the former’s model. Both Krishṇa and Rāma are evidently human heroes in the early stages of the epics. Rāma is recognized as an incarnation of Vishnu only in Book VII, which according to consensus of opinion is a later addition. Krishṇa, who was a local chieftain or the head of the Vṛṣṇi clan, appears as a supreme deity in the Bhagavadgītā. Indeed, he appears in human guise in the greater part of the Mahābhārata: In the Gītā he is still god and man, an incarnation of the deity in human form. In his divine character or as god, he has here all the attributes of a full-fledged personal monotheistic deity with love and friendliness towards his devotees and at the same time attributes of the Upanishadic Brahman. Krishṇa says to Arjuna:

40 Saṁkhyaṁ yogah pañccharātra vedāpāśupatam tathā/Jhāṇanyetāni rājarshe viddhi nānāmatāni vai/ v. 63.
Yathāgamaṁ yathā jhāṇaṁ nisīṭha Nārāyaṇaḥ prabhuh / na chainamevaṁ jhāṇanti tamabhūtā viśāmpate/ v. 68.
41 Neo-Brahmanism recognizes many gods but renders its best allegiance to Vishnu and Śiva. Sometimes one, sometimes the other, is taken as an all-god in the epic. At times they are compared and then each sect reduces the god of the other to an inferior position. Again, they are united and regarded as one.
Who sees me everywhere and everything in me, I am not lost to him nor is he lost to me. Who so intent on unity devoutly worships me, who dwell in every being, in whatsoever state he may abide, that ascetic abides in me. That brilliance in the moon and fire, know thou, is mine.... Entering the earth I uphold all beings with my strength, and becoming Soma... I nourish all herbs. The senseless think that I am the unmanifest that has came to manifestation, they do not know my higher being, immutable, supreme.

The above illustrations, the like of which are numerous in the Gītā, show that Krishṇa (who was a popular god) has been characterized as one who is all-pervading and all-inclusive, the unmanifest and at the same time the supreme creator and lord of that universe. He is Vishṇu, Vāsudeva, Brahman, Ātman, Purushottama. He combines in him the supreme Brahman of the Upanishad, a popular god Vāsudeva, and Vishṇu, the highest deity of Brahanical mythology.

Krishṇa became the centre and pioneer of the theistic Bhakti movement which has exercised the profoundest influence on the religious history of India. He embodies the synthesis of the higher and popular spheres of thought—a synthesis for which neo-Brahmanism stands so prominently. The Upanishadic philosophy was too speculative to appeal to any but a small fraction of the population. The great mass of mankind demanded a personal and human god whom one could trust, love and admire, to whom one can appeal for help and succour in times of distress and difficulties.

This could not be satisfied by the contemplation of a nameless soul, even if it be the Soul of the Universe. A more acceptable outlet must be provided for the religious feelings and sentiment of the masses. We have reasons to believe that the demand was met through Krishṇa. The Bhagavadgītā sets an

---

42Gītā, vi, 30, 31.
43Ibid., xv, 12, 13.
44Ibid., vii, 24.
45Ibid., x, 21, xi, 24, 30.
46Ibid., vii, 19, x, 31.
47Ibid., viii, 1, x, 15.
incarnation or a living personality of god,\textsuperscript{48} who appears on earth to extend his grace and love to his devotees, to save the righteous and punish the wicked, to remove the evils and establish righteousness.

For whencesoever right declines...and wrong uprises, then I create myself. To guard the good and destroy the wicked and to confirm the right I come into being in this age and that.\textsuperscript{49}

God condescends to become man himself for the benefit of mankind. This is a new note in Indian religious thought, a great assurance to humanity, the beginning, in the practical sense, of the doctrine of Avatāras, a great feature of and a source of strength for the Vaishnāvism of later days. The god of the Gītā is the embodiment of love and mercy. Krishṇa says: “Taking refuge in me, though ever performing all acts by My grace, a man wins to the realm eternal and immutable.\textsuperscript{50}... Fixing thy thought on me thou shalt surmount all difficulties.”\textsuperscript{51}

The religion of the Gītā, we have already seen, is a compromise between the speculation of the intellectual and the emotionalism of popular faith which best explains the synthetic character of Neo-Brahmanism. Krishṇa sets forth the notion of Bhakti or devotion without displacing the old intellectual theory of salvation by knowledge. The knowledge of Brahmān is hard to attain.\textsuperscript{52} The difficulties of the intellectual method are emphasized in the Gītā. Easier for mankind is a more emotional scheme of salvation. This is what the Gītā furnishes by its famous doctrine of Bhakti, “devotion or love of god”. Though not entirely unknown to the Upanishads, it appears elaborately in the Gītā first. Though Krishṇa admits the validity of other means of salvation, he regards the way of devotion as favourite to him. After the mystic revelation of his true form to Arjuna, he declares that such a revelation can come to man through no means other than devoted love—“But by devotion undivided,

\textsuperscript{48}\textit{Ibid.}, iv, 7.8.
\textsuperscript{49}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{50}\textit{Ibid.}, xviii, 56.
\textsuperscript{51}\textit{Machchittah sarvadurgāṇi matprasādāttarishyati (Gītā, xviii, 58)}.
\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Ibid.}, vii, 3.
Arjuna, in such a form can I be known and truly seen, and entered.” The mystic vison is granted by god as an act of grace. No amount of pious rites and performances can win it. It is granted only to the chosen of God, and we are told that Arjuna was the first of mankind:

Grace have I shown to thee, O Arjuna, revealing to thee by mine own power this my form supreme which none save thee has ever seen. Not by the Vedas, not by sacrifice, not by scripture-reading, alms or rites can I be seen in such a form by any but thee in the world of man.

The Gītā, in brief, can be called a layman’s or householder’s Upanishad. It promises salvation through the simple means of Bhakti to those who are unable to follow the way of knowledge and asceticism, the best required methods of gaining salvation in old thoughts. It has effected popular religious methods in the framework of higher thoughts, successfully.

It is scarcely possible to give any connected and comprehensive account of the popular beliefs and to describe their main features at length as we have no ancient records at our disposal in regard to them. The principal thing that can be said about them is that they are theistic and presumably tended towards monotheism of a more or less qualified sort. That is due to the fact that the local or tribal deities were worshipped in India, each being regarded as the chief or perhaps the sole god of his people or tribe, though the existence of other gods was not denied. These local gods were of different types and origins. Sometimes they may have been old gods of aboriginal, non-

53Ibid., xi, 54.
54Ibid., xi, 47.
55Towards the end of the Rigveda we find an attempt to arrive at unity of godhead which gave rise to the conception of Prajāpati-Viśvakarman in the Brāhmaṇas. Prajāpati is the unchallenged head of the gods but pantheistically conceived. In the Upanishads also, Brahma and Ātman are conceived as identical and plurality is denied. It is difficult to say how far these monotheistic trends contributed to the growth of Neo-Brahmanic monotheism. Perhaps the best interpretation must be that Neo-Brahmanism synthesized the highbrow monotheism of the Upanishads with the tribal and local monotheism of popular groups.
Aryan tribes, and sometimes they seem to have been the local heroes deified after death (as for instance, *Krishṇa-Vāsudeva*).

The Neo-Brahmanic sectarian gods are complex products of the orthodox and popular elements. The Neo-Brahmanic Vishṇu and Śiva have their Vedic counterparts in the Vedic Vishṇu and Rudra-Śiva, no doubt, but their character underwent a change in form and functions due to the popular elements being added to them. The strength of Neo-Brahmanism lies in its capacity to absorb. We have ample evidence to show that most of the sectarian religions and their systems were non-Brahmanic if not anti-Brahmanic in their origin, and their unorthodox traits could not be fully covered even after their ultimate absorption into Brahmanism. The earliest documents of the Vishṇu-ites are the *Nārāyaṇiya* section of the *Mahābhārata*, the *Pañcharātra* and the *Bhagavadgītā*. In the *Nārāyaṇiya* section (Mahābhārata, XII, 335-351) we are told that there were seven Chitra-Sikhaṇḍi-Rishis who proclaimed the Śāstra on par with the four Vedas (Mahābhārata, XII, 335. 27 ff) which (Śāstra) consisted of one lakh verses, and were meant for the populace (Mahābhārata, XII, 335, 39 etc). As it was to teach both pravṛtti and nivṛtti, it was made to conform to the Vedas. The very fact that the Śāstra, i.e. the Pañcharātra, was drawn up for the populace and was made consistent with the Vedas shows that the system was non-Vedic in origin. Further, we have direct statements in the *Mahābhārata* which regard the Pañcharātra and Pāśupata systems as differing from the Vedas (XII, 349, 1, 64).

There are certain passages in the *Gītā* which condemn the Vedic rituals and others which commend them. From this it may be inferred that the Bhagavatism of Krishṇa-Vāsudeva had a popular origin, though it was later reconciled with the Brahmanic system. There is evidence in the epic-Puranic literature of the anti-Vedism of Krishṇa-Vasudeva and his adherents and successors, and it is also known that anti-Vedism is reflected in various parts of the Vedic literature itself; in fact the anti-Vedic Buddhist and Jaina systems originated in the Vedic age. The reconciliation of diverse elements, popular

---

56 *Gītā*, ii, 42, 43.
and orthodox, Vedic and anti-Vedic, is the excellence of Neo-Brahmanism (a sort of a "federal" religion).\(^{58}\)

Like the Pañcharātra, the Pāṣupata system also has been classed as a non-Vedic system in the Mahābhārata, as we have seen. The irreverent character of early Śiva worship is brought out in a dialogue between Daksha and Śiva in the Mahābhārata, in which the latter says that he formulated in ancient times the Pāṣupata system which is opposed to duties laid down in respect of the four orders of men and four modes of life (Varnāśrama dharma) and agrees with those duties in only a few particulars.\(^{59}\)

The mixed character of all these sectarian religions show that they had a popular origin, but they became, in course of time, a part and parcel of Brahmanism in its new form called Neo-Brahmanic.

Neo-Brahmanism, which is the outcome of the hieratic and popular beliefs, is multiform in character. It arose out of many historical forces and consisted of different layers, superimposed one upon another in the course of ages. The most striking thing to notice is the steadfastness with which the forms and formulas of the old faith continue to survive in the epics and also in Buddhism. The Upanishad and the Buddhist and Jaina treatises do not ignore the existence of the Vedic deities, though they consider them inferior. In one epic passage we find, "Withered are the garlands of the gods and their glory is departed but they still receive the homage in the time of need."\(^{60}\) In this homage is to be seen the survival of the worship of the Veda. In the epic, the Vedic gods are still invoked, though they play an insignificant part in the religious life of the people.

The earlier Upanishads gave scant recognition to sacrificial rites, while Buddhism and Jainism ignored them completely. But with the growth of the influence of the heretical religions,

\(^{58}\)It is interesting to note that the political work of Krishṇa-Vāsudeva tended also towards federalism as between kingships and republics of various types, and as between diverse peoples of India.


\(^{60}\)Mahābhārata, 1.26, 32, Adiparva, ed. by Sukthankar.)
the later *Upanishads* were trying to bring back their pristine glory. The *Kaṭha Upanishad* (1.17) in a style quite opposed to the spirit of the Upanishadic teaching promises for fulfilment of certain ceremonials, "the overstepping of birth and death".\(^{61}\) Again in the same text (III, 2), the Nachiketa fire is explained as a bridge which leads the sacrificers to the supreme eternal Brahman, to the fearless shore. The reaction reaches its climax in the *Maitrī Upanishad* which explains at the very outset (1.1) that the fire-laying for ancestors is in truth a sacrifice to the Brahman.\(^{62}\) In the epic, despite the new faith, all depends on sacrifice as a matter of priestly and formal belief:

Law comes from usage, in law are the *Vedas* established, by means of the *Vedas* arise sacrifices, by sacrifices are gods established; according to the rule of the *Vedas* and usage sacrifices being performed support the divinities, just as the rules of Brihaspati and Uśanas support men.\(^{63}\)

This shows beyond doubt that the sacrifices had a lurking importance in the Neo-Brahmanic society. The Aśvamedha, Rājasūya and the like were the popular sacrifices of the time among the ruling classes as we find in the epic. Side by side with the growth of sectarian faiths, there were in our period, vigorous sacrificial activities. Pushyamitra Śunga performed two horse sacrifices; the Kāṇvas and the Śatavahanas and other princes also performed various sacrificial rites. The performance of the Aśvamedha by Pushyamitra has been regarded as the revival of Vedism by certain scholars, but viewed in the context of the religious development as a whole, it was nothing but a survival of Vedic sacrifices in Neo-Brahmanism.

\(^{61}\) *Trīṇāchiktāstrībhi Reyā saradhīntrikarmmākrittaraṇi Jannamrityu Brahmaṁyajīmāṁ devamīdyam vidītvā nichāyyemāṁ śāntimayyamantit†.*

\(^{62}\) "That which for the ancients was (merely) a building up (of sacrificial fires) was verily, a sacrifice to Brahman. Therefore with the building of these sacrificial fires the sacrificer should meditate upon the soul (Ātman) etc." *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads* (English Translation) by Hume, p. 412.

Pushyamitra may be regarded as a champion of Vedism but it is fallacious to call him a reviver of orthodox Brahmanism.

As time passed, the Vedic Aryans absorbed popular superstitions and beliefs as did Neo-Brahmanism to a remarkable degree. What is perhaps nearer the truth is that it showed more sympathy to popular beliefs and superstitions than did the older Brahmanism.

Among the various indigenous beliefs and practices that have entered into the Neo-Brahmanic faith are the worship of the Liṅga, the serpents, etc. Liṅga worship was a proto-historic practice in India (as the Mohenjodaro discoveries show) and it was affiliated to Brahmanism or Brahmanic Śaivism in epic times. Whatever might have been its original significance, Neo-Brahmanism (of the epic-Purānic tradition) has clothed it with sober and lofty ideas. In the epic-Purānic tradition, Liṅga is Purusha, while Yoṇi represents Prakriti (Devi), i.e. the male and female energies necessary for creation.⁶⁴

The students of mythology know that certain ideas were associated by people of antiquity with the serpent (Nāga) and that it was a favourite symbol of particular deities throughout the world. Many indeed believe that the snake-worship was the earliest religion prevalent among all men in all parts of the globe, its general diffusion being partially accounted for by the fact that serpents are indigenous in almost every region where civilizations arose, whether riparian, or maritime or submontane. In India it came to be associated with Vaishṇavism, Śaivism and many other cults, apart from its existence as an independent cult. We have ample literary and archaeological materials to show that Nāga worship was prevalent on a large scale in India during our period.

Tree and plant worship is as old as snake worship. Trees and plants are objects of invocation in the Rigveda,⁶⁵ and Brahmanic law enjoins the faithful to give offerings (bali) to

⁶⁴Just as the Liṅga is worshipped by the Śaivities, Śālagrāmaśilā is worshipped by the Vaishṇavites. What the Liṅga and Yoṇi are for Śiva and Pārvatī or Devi, the Śālagrāmaśilā and the Tulaśī are for Vishnū and Lakṣmī.

⁶⁵Rigveda, V, 41. 8.
the great gods, to the waters and to the trees. They were also objects of veneration among the Buddhists and Jains, as we have pointed out in the body of our text.

Besides Neo-Brahmanic religious cults, the two other creeds that enjoyed wide popularity in our period are Buddhism and Jainism. Though offshoots of Brahmanism, they separated from the parent religion early and maintained an independent existence more or less throughout their course. Jainism as a thought or church movement is much older than Mahāvīra's time. Mahāvīra was the last great, though not the very last, reformer of this group and not the founder of the Jaina system. His two predecessors, Arishtanemi and Pārśvanātha, were historical persons and their service towards the Jaina religion should be well known to the students of Jaina history and mythology. The period under review witnessed also the vigorous religious activities of the Buddhists, side by side with the other sectarian religious cults. An attempt has been made in the subsequent pages to describe in detail various cults and systems of India during the post-Mauryan period.

Śaivism is one of the chief religious cults of our period as we have noted in the previous chapter. This creed, which centres round the worship of Rudra-Śiva, is of great antiquity. Śiva is a complex product and Śaivism is not a single cult, but a bundle of cults. Śiva has his many early elements. One is the Mohenjodaro male god, recognized by archaeologists as Śiva-Paśupati. Others are the various Rudras of the Vedic and post-Vedic literature combined with the local and village deities of somewhat similar nature and popular origin. With regard to the Mohenjodaro male god, Marshall says:

The god who is three-faced is seated on a low Indian throne in a typical attitude of yoga...the lower limbs are bare and the phallus (ūrdhva-medhra)...seemingly exposed, but it is possible that what appears to be a phallus is in reality the end of the waist band....Crowning his head is a pair of horns meeting in a tall head-dress. On either side of the god are four animals, an elephant and a tiger on his proper right, and a rhinoceros and a buffalo on his left. Beneath the throne are two deer, standing with heads regardant, and horns turned to the centre.¹

The physical features and attributes of the deity connect him evidently with Śiva as represented in the epic-Puranic tradition. The deity (i.e. the Mohenjodaro male god) is three-faced and representations of Śiva with three faces are not unknown and

uncommon.² The deity has been depicted in a yogī's posture. Śiva is the best of the yogīs, and as such he is known under the appellations Yogendra, Yogēśvara, Mahātapāḥ, and Mahāyogī,³ etc. Besides being a yogin, Śiva is also known as the lord or protector of the animals, "pastor of the flock or herd" (paśupati), a title which has been attributed to Rudra-Śiva in Vedic and subsequent literature very often.⁴ All this shows that there is a good deal of pre-Aryan or non-Aryan element in the character of Rudra-Śiva.

Some of the other threads which wove the composite figure of Rudra-Śiva are to be found in Vedic and post-Vedic literature. In the Rigveda itself, Rudra has been represented as a complex figure and described by incompatible qualities, as both fierce and benevolent. He wields the lightning and thunderbolt,⁵ and is armed with a bow and arrows.⁶ His worshippers implore him not to injure them, their men, and cattle with his wrath; his malevolence may be diverted towards others.⁷ On the one hand his anger, ill-will, and destructive shafts are deprecated, on the other, he is described as benevolent, easily invoked, beneficient, and gracious and auspicious (Śiva).⁸ He is the protector of the creatures and lord of this vast world.⁹ He possesses healing remedies and is once described as the greatest of the physicians.¹⁰

In the Rigveda Rudra is closely associated with the Maruts whose father he is and who are known as Rudras or Rudriyas. This relationship brings him into affinity with Indra and Agni, for the Maruts are described in certain Vedic passages as wor-

---

⁴ This is a favourite idea with many religious systems, which have been embellished with various spiritual interpretations; as a parallel, one is at once reminded of Gopāla Krishna or Vrajaśvara Krishna, of Jesus the pastor, or Pan the shepherd, or Orpheus the charmer of animals. The Vedic Pūshan too is a pāśupati (Macdonell and Keith, *Vedic Index*, p. 35).
⁵ *Rigveda*, II. 3, 3.
⁸ *Ibid.*, I. 114, 9; II. 33, 5; II. 33, 7; X. 92, 9.
⁹ *Rigveda*, I. 129, 3; I. 114, 9; II. 33, 9.
¹⁰ *Rigveda*, I. 43, 4; I. 114, 5; II. 33, 2, 4, 7, 12, 13; V. 42, 11; VI. 74, 3; VII, 35, 6; 46, 3; VIII. 29, 5.
shippers of Agni and in others as followers of Indra whose associates they are. "They are furious like wild beasts, but playful like children or calves." They are the real storm gods as the sons and associates of Rudra and Indra, both representing the powerful aspects of storm, rain, thunder and lightning, etc. The affinities between Indra and Rudra can be traced not only through the Maruts, but also through elephant symbolism, fertility characteristics and sex symbolism. Besides his having affinities with Indra, Rudra is also regarded as a form of Agni. The term Rudra has been applied unequivocally to Agni in a hymn which has been exclusively dedicated to that divinity. All this would show that in the Rigveda itself Rudra was conceived under various forms and described as such.

Affinities between Agni and Rudra are remarkable. There took place a complete blending of the two in the Śatarudrīya as Professor Weber points out. The epithets of Rudra-Siva in the Śatarudrīya hymn fall into two distinct categories. The epithets Giriśa, Giriśaya, Giriśanta, Girītra (meaning dweller in the mountain) and Kapardin, Vyuptakesa, Ugra, Bhima, Bhishaj and Śiva, Sambhū, Śiva and Saṃkara take us to the storms and Nilagrīva, Sitikanṭha, Hiraṇyagarbha, Vilohita, Bhava, Sarva and Paśupati to fire or Agni. Again, the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa treats Rudra in various forms as the names of Agni: "Agni is a god. These are his names—Sarva as the eastern people call him, Bhava as the Bāhikas, Paśūnāṃpati, Rudra and Agni." A late part of the Vājasaneyī Sāhhitā enumerates as forms of one god Agni, Ašani, Paśupati, Bhava, Sarva, Mahādeva, Ugra-deva, and several others. In the epic-Puranic tradition, Skanda or Kārttikeya is regarded sometimes as the son of Rudra-Śiva, and sometimes as that of Agni;

---

11See Professor Wilson's Introduction to the first and second volumes of his English translation of the Rigveda; Barth, The Religions of India, pp. 12 ff; Rigveda, VIII. 65, 2; VIII. 7, 24, ii. 1. 6.

12Indische Studien, I, 19-22.

13Kapardin is an epithet of Rudra in the Rigveda also. (Rigveda, I, 114,1.) It is also a title of Pūshan, Rigveda, VI. 55, 2.

14Agnir vai sa devastasyaitāni nāmāni Sarva iti yathā prāchyā āchakshare, Bhava iti yathā Bāhikāḥ paśūnāṃpati Rudragnirīti (Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, I. 7. 3. 8).

15Vājasaneyī-Sāhhitā, XXXIX, 8.
this is due to the close affinities existing between these two gods since early Vedic times.

Further, in Vājasaneyī-Saṁhitā, Rudra is attributed the names Tryambaka and Śīva, two very important epithets of Rudra-Śīva in post-Vedic times. Further, he is called here Krittivāsa. Ambikā, who is called Śīva's wife in post-Vedic literature, is mentioned here for the first time as Rudra's sister.

The Śatarudrīya hymn of the Vājasaneyī-Saṁhitā (xvi, 1 ff.) throws abundant light on the character of Rudra-Śīva. Rudra appears here with all the characteristics of a deity of a purely popular origin in vital relation to all aspects of an advanced, settled, as well as a rough and troubled life. He is invoked as a patron of craftsmen, cartwrights, carpenters, smiths, potters, hunters, waterman and foresters. He is the leader of armies, lord of the regions and the beasts. He is the god of the brave, of footsoldiers, of those who fight in chariots and who earn their living by the bow and sword. He is called as one lying on the mountains. He is blue necked, and of a red countenance. His cry "echoes in the thick of the battle and his voice resounds in the war drum". He is the patron of thieves and freebooters. He is also the lord of the Vṛāyas. But he dwells in the forests, and is the lord of the open field and protector of cattle which roam there. He is invoked under the names of

16 iiii, 58, 63; the word Tryambaka seems to have been an epithet of Rudra in the Rigveda, vii, 59, 12 (Tryambakāṁ yajīmahe sugandhitām pushṭi vardhahanam, etc.). "Śiva" is applied to Rudra in the Rigveda euphemistically as noted above.

17 Vājasaneyī-Saṁhitā, iiii, 61.

18 Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, p. 74.

19 The drum seems to appear in the hands of Śiva on the coins of the Kushāṇa kings (Whitehead, Catalogue of Coins of the Punjab Museum, Vol. 1, pp. 187, 192, 203, etc.).

20 In the Mrichchhakatīkam, some burglars invoke Skanda, son of Śiva, as their patron deity. These characteristics of the god have been transferred to his consort Kālī (she is looked upon as the patron and guardian of thieves and robbers).

21 Bk. xx of the Atharvaveda is devoted to the glorification of the Vṛāya. Vṛāya, here, is the name of a band of wandering religious mendicants and their chief god is Ekavrāya. The various manifestations of this god are Mahādeva, Iśāna, Bhava, Sarva, Rudra, and so forth. It seems that the Vṛāyas were among the earliest devotees of Śiva.
Bhava and Sarva. When his wrath is appeased, he becomes Śiva, Śaṁkara and Śaṁbhū.

The Śatarudriya credits Rudra with activity in almost every aspect of nature (in the mountains, the woods and other places), and associates him with hunters, foresters, thieves, brigands, etc. who are beyond the pale of higher society. This association speaks of large non-Aryan, aboriginal, unorthodox, ungenteeel elements in Rudra-Śiva. As Rudra has been portrayed here, there appears an amalgamation with him of a forest or a mountain deity or some kindred god such as the vegetation spirit.

Rudra-Śiva is thus a remarkable conception. It is a reconciliation of irreconciliables. He is malevolent as well as benevolent at one and the same time. He has the power to destroy, and preserve or protect. The Śatarūḍriya associates him with all classes of people conceivable on earth. One can easily understand the popularity of spiritual worship and theistic devotion round Vishnu-cum-Krishna as the divinity here is one of light and love, who appears as a friend and saviour. But it is amazing in no small degree how the Indian mind could transform the strange character of Rudra-Śiva into an object of love and devotion and how out of the dry core of Śaivism could spring the gracious and majestic figure of Śiva who swayed the emotions of the people through the length and breadth of the land.

Now we may come to the Atharvaveda and other Vedic sources regarding our study of Rudra-Śiva. In the Atharvaveda also (as in the Rigveda) a reference is made to the therapeutic character of Rudra, and to the destructive arrows and lightning of Bhava and Sarva. Rudra is identified with Agni and also with Savitri. But it is interesting to note that Bhava and Sarva have been treated as deities distinct from Rudra.

23 Quite in keeping with this (i.e. Rudra's association with every aspect of nature) offerings are given in the rituals to Rudra in manifold places and on varied occasions (Keith, Religion and Philosophy of the Veda, Harvard Oriental Series, Lanman, Vol. 31, p. 145).
24Ibid., vii. 87, 1.
25Ibid., xiii. 4, 4.
26Bhava and Sarva, and again Bhava and Rudra have been spoken of in the dual in the Atharvaveda, x. 1, 23; xi. 2, 1; xi. 2, 14, 16; xi. 6, 9 xii. 4, 17.
Sarva is represented as an archer, and Bhava as king. They and Rudra are said to have poison and consumption at their command. The gods made Bhava the archer, the protector of the Vṛāyās in the intermediate space of the eastern region, Sarva of the southern region, Paśupati of the western region, Ugra of the northern region, Rudra of the lower region, and Iśāna of the intermediate region.

The Śatapatha and the Kaushitaki Brāhmaṇas add one more name, Aśani, to the above seven. In the Athārvaveda the seven names figure almost as seven distinct deities, but in the Brāhmaṇas, these seven and Aśani are the names of one and the same god, Rudra. Sarva, Ugra and Aśani represent the destructive side, whereas Bhava, Paśupati, Mahādeva and Iśāna are the benign aspects of Rudra. The darker side of Rudra was however, never forgotten. The Grihyasūtras mention a sacrifice called Śulagava in which a bull is sacrificed to appease Rudra.

In the Brāhmaṇas, Rudra appears as one of the foremost members of the Vedic pantheon. Even the gods are afraid lest they should be killed by him. In the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa we hear of the incest of Prajāpati and the determination of the gods to punish him, "which led to the decision to create from their most dreaded forms the figure of Bhūtapati, who pierced Prajāpati and for his act received the name of Paśupati." This shows that the period of the Brāhmaṇas was one when the old polytheism was in a state of decline and Śaivism was gaining ground. "It is impossible not to feel in the Brāhmaṇas that the figure of Rudra has a very different reality from that possessed by the more normal members of the pantheon and that he as the lord of creatures was successfully contending with Prajāpati as creator."

Rudra's glory was further enhanced in the Śvetāśvatara and

---

27 Ibid., iv. 93, 2.
28 Ibid., vi. 93; xi, 2, 26.
29 Ibid., xv. 5; 1-7.
30 Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, vi. 1. 3. 7; Kaushitaki Brāhmaṇa, vi. 1. 9; Sānkhyāyana Brāhmaṇa, vi, 1, 9; see also Veda-Brāhmaṇa by Keith, pp. 378-79.
31 Āśvalāyana Grihyasūtra, iv. 9.
32 Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, iii. 34.
Atharvaśītras Upanishads. The former, which is a theistic treatise,\textsuperscript{33} equates Rudra-Śiva with the supreme Brahman\textsuperscript{34} and declares, after criticising the various theories of creation, that "Rudra is one who rules the world by his powers, who stands before everything at the time of destruction, and creates the universe at the time of its origin, can be regarded as the creator of all things that exist. He is the supreme godhead, the lord of all souls. of him there is neither the generator nor protector. He is the 'self-subsisting mover of the unmoving manifold'."\textsuperscript{35} The Atharvaśītras Upanishad also speaks of Rudra’s superiority in more or less similar terms. It states: "The gods went to heaven. They asked Rudra, 'Who are thou?' He said, 'I was before all things, and I shall be. No other transcends me.'"\textsuperscript{36}

The cult of Rudra-Śiva or Śaivism as it is known in historical times, is found in an expanded form (or the form in which we know it even now) in the epics, the Ṛmāyāṇa and the Mahābhārata, specially the latter which is the chief source with regard to the study of Neo-Brahmanic religions. Neo-Brahmanism, as we have discussed earlier, is a synthesis of Vedic and popular ideas, its mains features being the monotheistic worship of personal gods, within various sectaries. Though Vedic and popular were admitted, the chief divinities of the epics are Viṣṇu and Śiva.

In the Ṛmāyāṇa, Śiva appears as a popular god not only of northern India, but also of the south. Here also (as in older texts) he has been offered various epithets, old and new. He is called Mahādeva, a great god with three eyes,\textsuperscript{37} Śambhu,\textsuperscript{38} Tryambaka,\textsuperscript{39} and Bhūtnātha.\textsuperscript{40} He took the world destroying

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{33}Śvetāśvatar Upanishad has been characterized by Deussen as a “monument of theism”; The Religion and Philosophy of India (Upanishads), p. 288 f.

\textsuperscript{34}While speaking of the highest self or the Highest Brahman, the Śvetāśvatara applies such names to him as Hara (1. 10), Rudra (iii. 2), Śiva (iii. 14), and Maheśvara (iv. 10).

\textsuperscript{35}Ranade, A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy, p. 100.

\textsuperscript{36}Atharvaśītras Upanishad—see the beginning.

\textsuperscript{37}Ṛmāyāṇa, VI, 120. 3.

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid., IV, 43, 59.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., II, 43, 6.

\textsuperscript{40}Ibid., VI, 59, 9.
poison, and destroyed Daksha’s sacrifice. It should be noted that the Rāmāyana, which as a whole is a Vishṇuite poem, gives Vishṇu a position superior to that of Śiva. To illustrate Vishṇu’s superiority it narrates a fight between these two gods in which Vishṇu came out victorious and was regarded by the gods as superior to Mahādeva.

The Rāmāyana, however, throws invaluable light on the extent of Śiva worship. It shows that Śiva was a favourite deity with the southern people including the people of Ceylon. Indrajit, we know, was favoured by Mahādeva, with a boon to kill the Vanaras. In a passage of Sundarakāṇḍa (Bk. V, Gorresio’s edition as noted by Muir) Vibhīshaṇa is represented as being received with favour by Mahādeva, after he has deserted his brother.

Now we may come to the great epic, Māhābhārata. It was a work of a long period, having undergone several stages of development. In the early portions of this epic, Śiva does not occupy any superior position. He seeks advice from Brahmā; the latter calls him Putraka or son, sets him a task and tells him not to kill. He drank poison at the instance of Brahmā and came to be known as Nilakantha. Mahādeva is regarded as a title of Vishṇu. The importance and popularity of the Śiva cult were spreading with the growth of the epic. In its later portions, there are innumerable references to Śiva’s exploits and achievements, and he is ranked equal to Vishṇu-cum-Krishṇa and sometimes superior to them. It is not necessary here to refer to all such passages. We shall rest content with some relevant facts only.

In the Drona-parva, Krishṇa and Arjuna are represented as going to Mahādeva with a view to securing the Pāśupata weapon to slay Jayadratha. They recited a hymn in honour of him in the course of which he (i.e. Śiva) was designated as the soul of all things (Viśvātmāne Viśvasrijie Viśvamāvriteya tishṭhate). He became pleased and conferred upon Arjuna his bow and arrow

41 Ibid., i, 66, 9.
42 Ibid., 1, 175.
44 Mahābhārata, i, 211, 4; vii, 52, 45; 54, 13.
45 Ibid., i, 18, 42.
46 Ibid., iii, 14, 147, etc.
(the Pāśupata weapon) with the power of fulfilling his engagement to kill Jayadratha. In various passages in the Anuśāsanaparva, Mahādeva is extolled as an “all god” with the attributes of the supreme Brahman. Asked by Yudhisthira to declare the names of the deity, Bīshma expressed his inability as Mahādeva is all-pervading but nowhere to be seen. He is the creator and the lord of Brahmā, Vishṇu, and Indra, whom the gods from Brahmā to piśāchas worship. He transcends material nature and is meditated upon by the rishis versed in contemplation. He is indestructible and supreme Brahman. He is both existent and non-existent. In the same Parva, Krishṇa is represented as going to the Himalayas to propitiate Śiva to have a son for Jāmbavatī, Upamanyu, devotee of Śiva, acquainted Krishṇa with Śiva’s exploits and said that Mahādeva was the only god whose phallus (a symbol) was worshipped by all, including the gods. Again, in the same Parva, we find that Krishṇa recited the Śatarudrīya to Yudhisthira and said that Sankara had created all things stationary and moving, and that there was nothing superior to Mahādeva.

The above discussion shows that Śiva-worship was widespread throughout the length and breadth of India from remote antiquity. It may be noted that in his character of both Rudra and Śiva, this god has enjoyed a cultus which probably goes further back than that of Vishṇu. From the Mohenjodaro civilization and after, the history of Rudra-Śiva has continued without any break or interruption. Of the two deities Vishṇu and Rudra-Śiva, the latter was the first to receive a special personal adoration and a cultus, though in subsequent times the worship of the former became far more generally extended. It is true that the worship of Vishṇu is mentioned in the Rigveda, but mostly as a special aspect of that of the sun. On the other hand Rudra appears quite early in the Rigveda with a well-recognized and well-marked personality of his own.

47 Arjuna received a Pāśupata weapon once earlier in the Vanaparva to kill the formidable enemies.
48 P. C. Roy’s English Translation of the Anuśāsanaparva, Section xiv, p. 49 ff., Mahābhārata, xiii, 14, 3 ff.
49 Ibid.
50 P. C. Roy, op. cit., p. 73, ff.
The wide popularity of Śiva worship in historical times is testified to by varied literary and archaeological sources. Megasthenes, who lived in India towards the close of the fourth century B.C., tells us quite a lot about the Indian representatives of Heracles (identified with Krishna-Vāsudeva) and Dionysus (identified with Śiva). Regarding the worship of the latter (i.e. Diynosus or Śiva), he says that it was specially popular in the hill regions where grew the vines.\textsuperscript{51} Kautilya, a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya and Megasthenes, refers in his \textit{Arthaśāstra}\textsuperscript{52} to the apartments of various gods, including Śiva, which should be made in the centre of the town. An image of Siva is mentioned also in \textit{Āpastamba Grihyasūtra}.\textsuperscript{53} It is interesting to note that Śaivic emblems like the bull and Nandipada occur very frequently on punch-marked coins,\textsuperscript{54} the earliest coinage of India (much of it going to as early as sixth-fifth century B.C.). All this would show that the Śiva cult was widely prevalent in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.\textsuperscript{55}

The \textit{Mahābhāshya} of Patañjali (second century B.C.) provides important data regarding Śiva worship during the post-Mauryan period. Commenting on the Pāṇini śūtra, v.3.99 (Jivikārthe cha-panye) Patañjali says:

\begin{quote}
apanyā ityuchyate tatredam na sidhyati/ Śivah Skandah, Visākhaiti// Kīmkāraṇam Mauryairhirayārthibhirerchāḥ prakalpitāḥ// Bhavettās nu syāt// Yāstvetāḥ sampratī pūjārthāstāsu bhavishyaṭi.\textsuperscript{56}
\end{quote}

This passage is highly important inasmuch as it shows that the images of Śiva, Skanda and Viśākha were made in his time for the purpose of worship. Further, we are told here that the

\textsuperscript{51}McCrimble, \textit{Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian}, pp. 34,35. Megasthenes compares the hunting expedition of the king (Chandragupta) with the procession of Dionysus (ibid., p. 71).
\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Arthaśāstra}, ed. by R. Shama Śastri, p. 55 ff.
\textsuperscript{53}\textit{Āpastamba Grihyasūtra} VII, 20,3.
\textsuperscript{55}Jayaswal described in the \textit{Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art}, Vol. II, p.1, a Hara-Parvāt gold plaque and ascribed it to the Maurya period. But opinions differ as to the date of this plaque.
\textsuperscript{56}Kielhorn, \textit{Vyākraṇa Mahābhāshya}, Vol. II, p. 429,
Mauryas sold the images with a view to earning money (cf the sale of Indra icons in Vedic days). Patañjali refers to a Śivabhāgavata\(^{57}\) (devotees of Śiva, bhāgavatoayamiti bhāgavataḥ, Śivasya bhāgavataḥ iti Śivabhāgavataḥ) in his commentary on the Paninian sūtra, V. 2.76. He mentions in the Mahābhāṣya different names of Rudra-Śiva, viz. Rudra, Śiva, Giriśa, Mahādeva, Tryambaka, Bhava and Sarva,\(^{58}\) etc., and used the word “Śaiva”\(^{59}\) the name under which the sectarian Śiva worshippers are generally known. All this shows that Śaivism was a popular cult in Patañjali’s time.

Besides Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya we have at our disposal plenty of archaeological materials regarding the wide diffusion of Śiva worship in India in this period. The frequent occurrence in the epigraphs of post-Mauryan India (c.200 B.C.—300 A.D.) of personal names such as Mahādeva, Rudra, Rudraghosa Rudradāsa, Śivadeva, Śivaghosa, Śivanandi, Śivasena, Śivaskanda Gupta, Śivaskandavarmā, Śivayaśā\(^{60}\) and similar others, prove beyond doubt that Śiva was worshipped as a popular deity throughout the length and breadth of India during the period under review. This is amply corroborated by a large number of coins, sculptures and seals of the period, containing Śiva’s symbols and images. Before we refer to the anthropomorphic representations of Śiva, we may notice some of the well-known symbols associated with his cult.

The bull is traditionally associated with Śiva as his Vāhana. “Vrisha-Vāhana” is one of his very common epithets in epic-Puranic literature. In the Mahābhārata, Śiva is described as the snake-wearer, and the club-bearer with many forms, who bears a trident in his hands and who has a bull\(^{61}\) as his ensign. The bull is a very common device on the coins of the indigenous and foreign rulers of our period. One very interesting instance of this device is the humped bull appearing on a unique gold coin of an uncertain Indo-Scythian king with the legends Taures and

\(^{57}\)Ibid., pp. 387-88.
\(^{58}\)Ibid.; p. 91. The names Bhava, Sarva, Rudra and Mrīḍa are found also in the aphorism of Pāṇini, iv, 1.49.
\(^{59}\)Kielhorn, op. cit., p.282.
\(^{60}\)Epigraphia Indica, Vol. X, Appendix, and Index of personal names occurring in Brāhmi inscriptions (Lüders’ list).
\(^{61}\)Mahābhārata, III, 167, 47 f; 173, 42 f.
SAIVISM

Ushabhe (vrishabha) in the Greek and Kharoshṭhī scripts. The different varieties of this device are found in the coins of Diomedes, Apollodotos, Philoxenos, Maues, Azes, Azilises and several others. This device occurs also on the indigenous coins of Mūladeva, Viśākhadeva, Śivadatta, Vijayamitra of Ayodhya, Brihaspatimitra II, Aśvaghosha, Agnimitra, Jeṭṭhamita of Kausambi, and also on those of Mālava, Arjunāyana, Andhra and some other kings of our period.

Apart from the bull, the coins bear two other very common Śāivic emblems, the trident and the Nandipada. A trident between two pillars is used on the reverse of the coins of the pañcchāla king Rudragupta. The close association of the name Rudragupta with the Śāivic emblem trident would tend to show that he had strong leanings towards Śaivism. On his other coins the object appears to be a star or a kind of double trident with prongs below as well as above. According to Cunningham, there is a trident on the base of a Buddhist railing on the reverse of a coin of the Pañcchāla king Dhruvamitra. In this connection, he observes that Dhruba is the name of the north pole star but it is the name of Śiva also, and this trident, he opines, belongs to Śiva. While writing on this device Allan remarks that the object on Dhruvamitra’s coin is not a trident as Cunningham thinks but a battle axe and on no. 55, pl. xxviii, A Catalogue of Indian Coins, Ancient India, the bend of the shaft is well marked.

J. N. Banerjea holds that even if the symbol is a battle-axe, it can very well be taken to be a Śāivic symbol. It may be noted that the trident with axe appears on the reverse of the coins of the Audumbara King Dharaghosha. That the com-

62Gardner, British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Scythic Kings of Bactria and India, pl. xxix, 15.
64Allan, op. cit., pl. xxvii. 2.
65Ibid., p. cxix.
66Cunningham, Coins of Ancient India, p. 81, p. VI, fig. 3.
67Allan, op. cit., pl. cxviii.
69Allan, op. cit., p. 124.
bined trident and battle-axe symbol has a Śaivic association is evident from its appearance on the obverse of the Kushan king Vima Kadphises coins, where the king, a Māheśvara by faith, puts offerings in honour of his deity on the sacrificial fire.\(^7\) The very same symbol (combined trident and battle-axe) is also seen on the obverse of Jayadaman's coins.\(^71\) On the obverse of some anonymous coins attributed to Kunindas there is the figure of Śiva holding a trident with axe and shaft in the right hand.\(^72\) Besides, it may be noted here that the trident with axe is the usual reverse type\(^73\) of the Audumbara kings, viz. Śivadāsa, Rudradāsa, Mahādeva, Dharaghosha and Rudravarmā. The trident behind a bull is found on the obverse of the coins of Dhanadeva, Agnimitra and Jetthamita of Kausambi (Allan, op. cit., pp. 153, 154). As the bull, the trident, and battle-axe symbols are numerous, only the important specimens have been referred to. Now we may turn to another very important Śaivic emblem, namely Nandipada. This symbol has been represented very widely on the coins of Northern India, and occasionally on South Indian coins too.

Nandipada occurs with tree, serpents and a few of other symbols on the reverse sides of Ayodhyā coins of that one of Mūladeva, Vāyudeva, and Viśākhadeva.\(^74\) It is to be noted that one of the obverse symbols appearing on most of these coins is the bull. These symbols taken together constitute distinct Śaivic associations and this group of Ayodhyā kings had perhaps strong leanings towards Śaivism.

An elaborate Nandipada has been inserted in the face of the reverse symbols of the Almora coins attributed to Śivadatta, Śivapālita and Haridatta,\(^75\) the obverse types including a bull before a tree and sometimes a snake-like object, suggesting Nāga-Śaiva associations. The reverse of Brahmathmitra's coins (Kanauj) has a Nandipada on a pillar within a railing on the left.\(^76\) The

\(^70\) J. N. Banerjea, op. cit., p. 129; Whitehead, op. cit., p. xvii, 37.
\(^71\) Rapson, op. cit., p. 76.
\(^72\) Allan, op. cit.; p. 167.
\(^73\) Ibid., pp. 122-26.
\(^74\) Ibid., pp. 130-32.
\(^75\) Ibid., pp. ixii and 120.
\(^76\) Ibid., pp. xciii and 147.
reverse type of Kausambi coins include very often a Nandipada and the obverse of them has the bull.\textsuperscript{77} It is to be noted that Nandipada is sometimes placed on the obverse of Kausambi coins with a bull by its side. The Nandipada symbol has been placed in some cases on a hill-like object and it may be noted that a similar symbol with a curved object, most probably a snake, appears also as the reverse type of the Kuninda coins.\textsuperscript{78} A Nandipada with a snake below is seen among other symbols, on the reverse of the coins of the Audumbara ruler, Amogha-bhūti.\textsuperscript{79}

Nandipada occurs also on the reverse of Yaudheya\textsuperscript{80} and Malava coins\textsuperscript{81} with the bull usually on the obverse. It is a common symbol on the obverse of some coins of Gautamiputra Viśvāyakura.\textsuperscript{82} It figures on the obverse of certain uninscribed coins of the period, while the reverse is occupied by a Nāga symbol.\textsuperscript{83}

From the wide distribution of these noted Śaivic emblems we may well conceive the extent of the popularity of Śiva worship during the period under review. To the devotees of Śiva, they are as deserving of veneration as his image or phallus.

One of the important aspects of the Śiva cult enjoying wide prevalence in our period is the worship of the Liṅga or phallus (the symbol of creation). Phallicism is one of the ancient forms of worship in India and the ancient world.\textsuperscript{84} The association of phallus worship with the cult of Śiva (who is often regarded as a god of generation\textsuperscript{85} in spite of the destructive function assig-
ned to him in the Hindu Trinity) played an important role in the religious life of the Neo-Brahmanic people. It is a matter of common knowledge that though Śiva was worshipped in various forms, his phallic form is most widely worshipped. The phallic rite in India is pre-Aryan in origin though it was foreign to the early Vedic people.

The Mohenjodaro male god depicted in a yogic posture with animals around him (and described as the pre-Aryan prototype of historic Śiva) has been represented with an Urdhvaśedeśa. Moreover, among the minor antiquities discovered in Mohenjodaro and Harappa, there are a large number of aniconic stones, representing phallic symbols. From this it is evident that phallus worship in India is as old as Mohenjodaro. Further evidence for the existence of this form of worship in protohistoric times is provided by the discovery of two stones, one a phallus and the other a Yoni at the chalcolithic sites of Mughal Ghundai and Periano Ihundai respectively.

The Rigveda, which deals with the orthodox and hieratic religion of the Aryans, contain incidental references to phallus worship as a non-Aryan religious belief. In the Rigveda (vii, 21 5,) Indra is implored not to allow the Śiśnadevas to approach the sacrifice. The Rigvedic verse (x, 99.3) describes the god as having slain the Śiśnadeva and having conquered by his craft, the riches of the city with a hundred gates. The word Śiśnadeva has been variously interpreted by scholars. In the opinion of some modern European and Indian scholars, the word refers to those who worship the phallus as their deity (Śiśnadvē ṣeva yeshām te). In following Yāṣka, Sāyaṇa takes the word to refer to those people who sport with śiśna (membrum virile), i.e. the unchaste men (śiśnena divyānti krīḍamata iti śiśnadevāḥ, abra-

---

86 Marshall (op. cit., p. 52) was in doubt as to the representation of the phallus and he remarked, "It is possible that what appears to be a phallus is in reality the end of the waistband." But on close examination the phallus can be seen clearly.

87 Ibid., p. 59 ff, pl. xiv, Nos. 2 and 4; Madhosarup Vats, Excavations at Harappa, Vol. 1, pp. 369-71.


89 Na Yāsaṁ Indra Sājuvurmo na / Vahatan Śavishtha vedyābhiḥ / Sa śardhādayo vishuṇasya Jāmptor mā / Śiśnadeva api gurīṭam naḥ, (Rigveda, vii, 21. 5.)
According to Durgāchārya, the commentator of the Nirukta, Śiśnadevaḥ are those who “dally carnally with prostitutes for asking Vedic sacrifices”. The Śiśnadevas are mentioned along with the Yātava in the Rigveda (vii, 21. 5). Further, in explaining the word śiśna in the Rigvedic passage x, 27, 19, Sāyaṇa takes it to refer to the Rākahhasas (rākhasādi vṛimdāṇi). It is quite possible that the śiśna of the passage x, 27.19 and the śiśnadevas of the passage x, 99.3 of the Rigveda denote the same people. In all probability they were a class of people who were beyond the pale of the Vedic society and the followers of phallic rites. That the Liṅga was not originally a Brahmanical object of worship is evident also from the fact that several places considered sacred as the peculiar residence of Jyoti Liṅgas are generally in the south and north-east of India at a great distance from the original settlements of the Brahmanical faith. In Marhatta country where Śaivities greatly prevail, the Brāhmaṇas do not officiate in the Liṅga temples. There is a caste separate for that known as Gurava, a distinct order of men being originally of Śūdra stock.

With the growth of Neo-Brahmanism the non-Aryan phallic rite came to be associated with the Aryan belief as an essential element of historic Śaivism. In the Anuśāsana Parva we are told that Krishṇa proceeded to the Himālayas to propitiate Śiva to have a son for Jāmbavatī through his (Śiva’s) grace. On his way Krishṇa met Upamanyu, an ardent devotee of Śiva, who aquainted him with the glories and attributes of the god (Śiva). To test his devotion Mahādeva appeared before Upamanyu in the guise of Indra and offered to grant him a boon of his choice. The devoted Upamanyu refused to accept a favour from any god other than Mahādeva and dwelt at length on the various attributes of Śiva and the reasons as to why he was

90There is an obscure indication in the Liṅga Purāṇa itself that the worship of Liṅga was introduced into the Brahmanical faith at a later period. It is the famous passage in the 17th Adhyāya where the fiery Liṅga is introduced as settling the dispute between Brahmā and Vishṇu for superiority (Liṅga Purāṇa, edited by Jivananda Vidyasagar). Brahmāand Vishṇu seem to have occupied the field between them till Śiva came to set aside the claims of both.
regarded as the supreme creator. The following lines from Upamanyu’s speech are very significant in this connection:

Is Iṣa (Mahādeva) the cause of causes for any other reasons? We have not heard that the Liṅga of any other person is worshipped by the gods.... He whose Liṅga Brahmā, Vishṇu, and thou (Indra), with the deities, continually worship is therefore the most eminent. Since children bear neither the mark of the lotus (Brahmā’s), nor of the discus (Vishṇu’s) nor of the thunderbolt (Indra’s), but are marked with the male and the female organs, therefore offspring are derived from Maheśvara. All women produced from the nature of Devī as their cause are marked with the female organ and all males are manifestly marked with the Liṅga of Hara.\textsuperscript{91}

From this passage it is clear that Liṅga worship was widely prevalent in Aryan society in the epic times.

References to Liṅga worship occur abundantly in Puranic literature as well. In the Liṅga Purāṇa an account is given of the fiery Liṅga of Mahādeva which sprang up before Brahmā and Vishṇu while they were fighting for supremacy. Both of them (i.e. Brahmā and Vishṇu) were put to shame, as after travelling for a thousand years in each direction neither could approach its termination. The sacred monosyllable “Om” visible on the Liṅga enlightened Brahmā and Vishṇu and they acknowledged and eulogised the superior might and glory of Śiva.\textsuperscript{92} Further, in the same text, the Liṅga is called the Pradhāna (nature) and Parameśvara is called Liṅgin\textsuperscript{93} (the sustainer of the

\textsuperscript{91}Mahābhārata, xiii, 14, 129 ff (Bombay Edition, Leaf No. 20). The Anuśāsana Parva contains many more interesting references to the Liṅga worship some of which may be noted here: “When his (Mahādeva’s) Liṅga remains constantly in a state of chastity, and people reverence it, this is agreeable to the great god. The constant worshipper of Liṅga who shall worship the image (vigraha) or the Liṅga of the great (god), enjoys great prosperity. It is the Liṅga raised up which the rishis, gods, gandharvas and Apsaras worship.” Muir, \\textit{op. cit.}, p. 144.

\textsuperscript{92}Liṅga Purāṇa (Edited by Jivananda Vidyasagar), Chapters xvii and xviii.

\textsuperscript{93}Pradhānam Liṅgamākhyaṭam Liṅgīcha Parameśvarah (Liṅga Purāṇa, xvii, 5, edited by Jivananda Vidyasagar).
Liṅga), the pedestal of the Liṅga is Mahādevi (Umā) and the Liṅga is the visible Maheśvara. The epic-Puranic tradition reveals that phallic worship came to be cloaked with a mystic and philosophical meaning and recognized as an inseparable part of the Śaivic cult in the Neo-Brahmanic society.

R. G. Bhandarkar held that Liṅga worship had not come into use at the time of Patañjali and it was unknown even in the time of Vima Kadphises. In support of his theory he remarked:

Patañjali, in his commentary on the Pāṇinian sūtra V. 3. 99, refers to the image of Śiva and not his Liṅga as an object of adoration. On the coins of Vima Kadphises who was a devout worshipper of Śiva, there is the anthropomorphic representation of Śiva either with the trident or the bull, but the phallus is conspicuous by its absence.

D. R. Bhandharkar also held more or less similar views. Further, in his lectures on “Ancient Indian Numismatics,” he assigned the Gudimallam Liṅga to the early fourth century A.D. and observed that it was in the beginning of the Gupta period that Liṅga worship was being foisted on the Śiva-cult.

The above theories cannot be accepted in the light of what has recently come to our knowledge. Even if the historical value of the Anuśāsana Parva as an evidence of the existence of the Liṅga worship in the period prior to the Christian era is questioned, there is an abundance of archaeological material to prove that Liṅga worship associated with the Śiva cult was widely prevalent in orthodox society from the second or probably the third century B.C.

Regarding the date of the Gudimallam Liṅga which bears a handsome Śiva figure, scholars hold different opinions. But the close similarity between the Śiva figure and the Sāñchi Yaksha

94 Liṅga vedī Mahādevī Lingam Śākshād Maheśvaram. (Ibid., chapter xviii).
96 Ibid.
97 D. R. Bhandarkar, Lectures on Ancient Indian Numismatics, pp. 19-20. Dr. Bhandarkar’s theory regarding the date of the Gudimallam Liṅga is open to controversy.
is obvious. Hence the Gudimallam Śiva can be dated to the second or first century B.C.

The Gudimallam Liṅga is one of the best sculptural specimens of the class. It shows not only that Liṅga worship was associated with the Neo-Brahmanic Śiva cult as early as the second-first century B.C., but also that Śaivism was a well-recognized cult in south India before the Christian era. It may be mentioned in passing that the Sātavāhanas were among the earliest benefactors of Śiva worship in south India. The Talagunda inscription of the time of Kadamba Śāntivarman, refers to an ancient Śiva temple as being worshipped by Śātakarni who was probably Śrīśātakarni (first century B.C.) of the Sātavāhana dynasty. That Śaivism was a popular cult in south India during the Sātavāhana times is proved also by the occurrence of such names as Bhūtapala, Mahā-devanaka, Śivadatta, Śivapālita and Bhavagopa in the south Indian inscriptions belonging to Sātavāna rulers and their contemporaries.

Reverting to the subject of Liṅga worship, we may refer now to another very important representation of the Liṅga belonging to the post-Mauryan period. This Liṅga was found at Bhita (Uttar Pradesh). R. D. Banerjee describes it as follows:

The top of the Liṅga is shaped as the bust of a male holding a vase in the left hand while the right hand is raised in the Abhayamudrā posture. Below the bust where the waist of the figure should have been, are four human heads, one at each corner...and the phallus is marked by deeply drawn lines.

---

98 Gudimallam is a village 6 miles to the north east of Renigunta Railway junction. See A. K. Coomaraswamy, History of Indian and Indonesian Art (1927), p. 27.

99 Grüwedel's Buddhist Art in India, Translated by Gibson and Burgess, p. 5.


101 The Talagunda Inscription of the time of Śāntivarman, (c. 455-70); Bühler, Indian Antiquary, xxv, p. 27 ff; Epigraphia Indica, Vol. VIII, p. 31 ff; Epigraphia Carnatica, viii, p. 200 ff; D. C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions, p. 450 ff.

102 D. R. Bhandarkar, Indian Antiquary, June 1919, p. 78.

R. D. Banerjee took the four faces on the corners as four female busts (evidently on the consideration of the mode of their hair dressing and large rings worn in the lobes of the ears); but on close examination they appear beyond doubt to be the representations of four male figures. Hence this sculpture can perhaps be regarded as one of the Mukalīṅga having five faces "corresponding to theĪśāna, Tatpurusha, Aghora, Vāmadeva, and Sadyojāta aspects of Śiva."\(^{104}\)

The above sculpture contains an inscription which has been read and translated by R. D. Banerjee thus:

\[\text{Kajahuśīputanāmī [m] go paśṭhāpita Vāseṭhiputena Nāgasirīṇā piyatā [m] d [e] vataā.} \text{The Liṅga of the son of Kajahuṭi, was dedicated by Nāga Sirī, the son of Vāseṭhi. May the deity be pleased.}\]

\(^{105}\)

This inscription, as Banerjee holds, can be assigned to the first century B. C. on palaeographical grounds.\(^{106}\)

Dr. Fürher, who discovered this sculpture, took it to be a column or capital.\(^{107}\) D. R. Bhandarkar has questioned the correctness of R. D. Banerjee’s reading and interpretation of the inscription.\(^{108}\) In following Bloch, he says that the word read as "Liṅga" by Banerjee is in fact "Lago" whatever it may mean, and he states further that the sculpture itself cannot be taken evidently to be one of the Liṅga. Regarding the script of the inscriptions he holds that they cannot be earlier than the time of Vāsudeva, the Kushāna king.

The above mentioned theories of D. R. Bhandarkar do not seem to be plausible. The sculpture, we have seen before, is perhaps a Liṅga as Banerjee held. The scripts of the inscription tally very closely with those of northern India about the first century B. C. In view of this, we feel justified in taking the Bhita Liṅga as a valuable piece of evidence with regard to

\(^{104}\)Gopinath Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol. ii, Part i, p. 64.
\(^{105}\)Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports, 1909-1910, p. 148.
\(^{106}\)Ibid., p. 147.
\(^{107}\)Ibid.
\(^{108}\)D. R. Bhandarkar, Charmichael Lectures on Ancient Indian Numismatics, 1919, pp. 20, 21.
Liṅga worship in the first century B. C. Several Śiva Liṅgas with the figures of Śiva, belonging to the Kushāṇa period have been found at Mathura.¹⁰⁹

Besides their sculptural representations the Liṅgas occur as coin devices in the centuries before the Christian era. Allan describes an uninscribed cast coin (third and second century B. C.)¹¹⁰ as follows:

Building (?) on the left, tree in centre, on right, female figure to left; Rev. tree in railing on left, Liṅga on square pedestal on right.¹¹¹

The symbols taken together would indicate Śaivīc associations. The building may stand for a Śiva sanctuary, the female figure a devotee, a tree in railing a sthala-vriksha, and Liṅga the cult object.

J. N. Banerjea is of the opinion that the representation of Liṅga may be seen on two sugare copper coins (third-second century B. C.) which may perhaps be attributed to Taxila.¹¹² The coins to which he refers are coin Nos. 154 and 154a, noted on p. 233 of the Catalogue of Coins, Ancient India by Allan. The pedestal on which the Liṅga stands has been summarily represented. Allan recognizes a Liṅga on a pedestal between two different trees in railing on Ujjayini coins¹¹³ (third-second century B. C.). It may be noted here that there is probably a Liṅga on a square pedestal in the centre of a punch-marked coin also.¹¹⁴

About the existence of Liṅga worship and its intimate association with the Śiva cult we have an incidental reference in Vākāṭake copper plates which deal with the rise of the Bhāraśivas. The copper plates say that the Rājavamsa of Bhāraśivas owes

¹¹⁰Allan, op. cit., p. LXXVII.
¹¹¹Ibid., p. 85, pl. XI, coin No. 2.
¹¹²J. N. Banerjee, op. cit., p. 126.
¹¹³Allan, op. cit., p. 243, No. 19, pl. xxxvi, No. 15.
¹¹⁴Ibid., pl. V., No. 21.
its origin to the satisfaction of Śiva inasmuch as they carried
on their shoulders "the load of his symbol"\(^{115}\) (i. e. Līṅga). The
rise of the Bhāraśivas has been placed by scholars somewhere
in the beginning of the third century A. D.\(^{116}\)

In view of the above discussion we may hold that (i) phallus
worship is pre-Aryan in origin; (ii) it has had inseparable con-
nections with the Śiva cult from the time of Mohenjodaro; (iii)
it was not prevalent among the early Vedic people but in the
post-Vedic period it formed an important religious element in
Aryan society, being connected with the Neo-Brahmanic Śiva
cult as early as the third-second century B.C.; and (iv) it is not
possible to subscribe to D. R. Bhandarkar’s theory that it was
foisted upon the Śiva cult in the beginning of the Gupta period
and not earlier.

The most conspicuous aspect of Śiva worship during the
period under review was the of Śiva worship in human form.
But his anthropomorphic representations on coins, seals and
sculptures are numerous. While discussing the growth of Śaivism
and phallic worship we referred to some of them. The others
may be studied now.

The human form of Śiva as a coin device seems to appear for
the first time on a number of Ujjayini coins (third-second cen-
tury B.C.). On some of them he is shown as a single standing
figure with a vase in the right hand, and a staff in the left and
a bull looking up at him.\(^{117}\) On others he is represented as a
three-headed figure with more or less similar attributes.\(^{118}\)
Cunningham described this latter figure as Śiva-Mahākāla.\(^{119}\)

\(^{115}\)Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. iii, pp. 236, 245. It may
be noted here that the Lingayats of South India actually wear the Līṅga
in a silver or metallic casket suspended round their necks with a cord like
necklace.

\(^{116}\)Of about the same period or the early Gupta period we have an
interesting specimen of Ekamukha Śiva Līṅga from Khoh (*Archaeological
Survey of India, Annual Reports*), 1904-5; pl. xxvi, figs. a-d). The lower part
is roughly chiselled; above it there is a plain cylinder which contains on one
side the bust of Śiva.

\(^{117}\)Alla, *op. cit.*, p. 249. Water-vessel and staff are among the attributes
of Śiva also on Kushāṇa coins, Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 75, 78, etc.

\(^{118}\)Ibid, p. 245.

\(^{119}\)Ibid, p. 97 ff, pl. X, figs. I-6.
On the obverse of a silver coin of the Audumbara prince Dharaghosha, there appears a figure with the Kharoshṭhī legend which reads as Viśvāmitra. The legend of Kharoshthi states, "Mahādevasa raṇa Dharaghoshasa Odubarisa." On the reverse are a trident with axe (or a combined battle axe) on the right and a tree within an enclosure on the left. Opinions differ regarding the identification of the figure in question. Cunningham interprets it as Śiva, while Allan describes it as that of Visvāmitra. The latter suggestion is more plausible in view of the fact that the legend Viśvāmitra is engraved around the body of the figure. The Śaivite leanings of some of the Audumbara chiefs can, however, be guessed from the presence of symbols like the trident and battle axe.

Further, some of the Kuninda coins (second century A.D.) have on their obverse, a standing figure of Śiva, with his right hand holding a battle-axe and the left hand placed on the hip. The legend in Brāhmī characters of the second century A.D. is "Bhagavata Chatresvara Mahātmanah", or "the worshipful one, the noble-souled lord of Chhatra." From the device and the legend it appears that Śiva was the tutelary deity of the Kunindas.

Śaivism seems to have been patronised and also adopted by several foreign rulers and chiefs during our period. On the billon coins of Gondophares there is a standing figure of Śiva with his left leg slightly forward, head a little towards the left, a long trident in his right hand and a palm branch in the left resting on his hip. Faint traces of jatā may be discovered on his head. The legend on the coins described Gondophares as Mahārāja rājarāja tratara devavratas Guduphara. The title "Devavrata" is interesting. It is possible that the word "Deva" here has been applied in its special sense meaning the god Śiva, and not in its general or usual sense meaning simply God.

---

121 Whitehead, op. cit., 151, pl. xv.
122 Ibid., p. 151, pl. xv, coin No 42.
123 One of the important causes of semantic changes in languages is the specialization of the general term and generalisation of the special term. Cf. the early and later meanings of the word "deer" in English and "Mriga" in Sanskrit.
It is well known that one of the important appellations of Śiva is Mahādeva (the great god). In the Aītareya Brāhmaṇa (ii, 34, 7), it is prescribed that a formula must be altered from the form in which it occurs in the Rigveda in order to avoid the direct mention of the name “Rudra” of the god.\textsuperscript{124} In another passage of the same text, it is interesting to note he is never named, but is referred to as “the god here”, and the same avoidance of the direct use of the name is also to be seen elsewhere.\textsuperscript{125} Thus it is evident that the word “Deva” while retaining its general sense, came to acquire a particular significance, i.e., “the god Śiva”. Hence the title “Devavrata” given to Gondophares may be construed as “Gondophares devoted to god Śiva” which is supported by the presence of the figure of the divinity.

The figure of Śiva seems to appear on certain coins of Mauces, one of the earliest Indo-Parthian rulers of India. Gardner describes the types as follow: “Male figure I..., Chalmys flying behind, holds club and trident.”\textsuperscript{126} The attributes are quite similar to those of the Śiva figure on the Sirkap seal.\textsuperscript{127} Hence it can be presumed that the figure on the coins of Mauces is one of Śiva.

Śiva appears in various forms and with various attributes on Kushāṇa coins. Vima Kadphises issued an extensive gold and copper coinage of beautiful workmanship. The obverse of these coins shows his life-like representation with a tall cap, a long open overcoat and long boots, and the reverse, without exception, is devoted to the worship of Śiva. On the obverse of the coins, his name occurs in Greek letters, while the legend on the reverse calls him Mahārājasa rajadirajasa, Sarvaloga īśvarasa Mahiśva-rasa Vima Kaṭhiphisasa tratarasa\textsuperscript{128} (coins of the great king, king of kings, lord of the world, the Mahiśvara). The word Mahiśvara or Maheśvara is the name of Śiva. Its occurrence on Vima’s coins shows that he was a follower of the Śaivic faith (Mahiśvara or Maheśvara can here be taken as an equivalent to Māheśvara, i.e. a devotee of Maheśvara).

\textsuperscript{124}Aītareya Brāhmaṇa (Bibliotheca Indica series), III, 34, 7.

\textsuperscript{125}Jbid., III, 33; 3rd Pañchika, pp. 149-59.

\textsuperscript{126}Gardner, op. cit., p. 71; pl. xviii, 3.

\textsuperscript{127}Konow, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. II, p. 102.

\textsuperscript{128}Smith, op. cit., pp. 68 and 69.
On the coins of Vima, Śiva occurs as a two-handed figure, leaning against a bull. In the right hand he usually carries a long trident and a battle-axe, and in the left a gourd, water-vessel or tiger-skin wrapping round the fore-arm. The skin upper garment is a feature of the Viśvāmitrā figure on Dhara-ghosha’s coin and of Herakles on those of Demetrius.

The reverse sides of the coins of Kaniska and Huvishka present a strange and extensive gallery of deities with Greek, Iranian and Indian names. Among the Indian deities Śiva and his associates occur more frequently than others.

On the coins of Kanishka and Huvishka, Śiva appears as both two-handed and four-handed, having various attributes. When two-handed he generally holds a trident in the right hand and a gourd in the left. When he is depicted four-handed, various sets of attributes occur: vajra (or small drum), water vessel, trident, antelope, elephant goad, horse, goat, club and wheel, etc., arranged in different combinations.

On a unique Kushāna coin preserved in the British Museum, Śiva (Oesha in the coin legend) is represented together with his consort Umā. Certain coins of Huvishka in the Lahore Museum collection also contain representations of Umā. Besides the image of Umā, the figures of Mahāsena, Skanda-Kumārā, Viśākhā (the son of Śiva) occur on the coins of Huvishka which show beyond doubt that the entire Śivā pantheon was held in high esteem in the period under consideration.

Vāsudev, the son and successor of Huvishka seems to have been a patron and follower of the Śiva cult. The reverse side of the coins bear very frequently the figure of the two-armed Śiva with a noose in the right hand, a long trident in the left, and a bull standing by the side. One of the coins of Vāsudeva

130Ibid.
131Ibid., p. 18 ff., 187 ff.
132Ibid., pp. 186 ff.; Smith, op. cit., p. 69 ff.
134Gardner, op. cit., pp. 138, 149, and 150. Patañjali also mentions the images of Skanda and Viśākhā being worshipped in his commentary on Pāñini śūtra V. 3, 99. The figure of Skanda-Kārtikeya occurs also on Yaudheya coins (Allan, op. cit., p. cxlix, cit).
in the British Museum collection shows the diety as five-headed. The latter Kushāṇa and Kushāṇo-Sasanian rulers also, like Kanishko, Vasu and Vasudeva, adopted the figures of Śiva and the bull as the reverse device of their coins.

From the above survey of Kushāṇa coins it is evident that Śaivism was a highly flourishing cult in India during the early centuries of the Christian era. Numismatic evidence is corroborated by certain archaeological finds in Mathura, (i) by the Śiva-Pārvatī in Dampatībhāva (Kushāṇa period); (ii) by the statuette of the Arddhanārīśvara form of Śiva in his Urdhavareta, aspect and standing against the bull Nandi (Kushāṇa period). This confirms the iconographic injunctions regarding the Arddhanārīśvara images (cf. Liṅgārdham Uṛddhvagam Kuryāṭ, Matsyapurāṇa, Ch. 260, Vangavasi Edition). (iii) The two-armed Śiva Arddhanārīśvara mūrti with the right half bearing the male and the left half female features, viz. breasts, extended hip, long dhoti and bracelet. Śiva is shown as Uṛddhavareta.

The worship of Śiva in his Arddhanārīśvara aspect seems to have been very popular in our time, as the above sculptures show. Further, this is corroborated also by a passage quoted from Bardsanes by Stobaeus. The passage in question gives the account of an Indian visiting Syria in the time of Antonius of Emesa (218-222 A. D.), and contains a striking reference to an image of the Arddhanārīśvara. Śiva, as depicted in the epic-Puranic tradition, is the impersonation of the eternal productive power, perpetually re-integrating after disintegration (whence his name Bhūtabhāvana). The Arddhanārīśvara aspect of Śiva symbolizes both the duality and unity of the generative act and the production of the universe from the union of two principles (Prakriti and Purusha, Māyā and Ātmā) according to the Śāṅkhya and Vedānta systems of philosophy.

Another interesting Śaivic antiquity to consider in this connection is the Trimūrti image in the Peshawar Museum. The

---

136 Whitehead, op. cit., p. 211.
137 V. S. Agrawala, Hand-Book to the Sculptures of Curzon Museum of Archaeology, Muttra, p. 44.
138 Ibid., No. 800. Apart from the above, the Mathura Museum contains several more images pertaining to Śiva-pantheon of this period.
140 Coomaraswamy, op. cit., p. 54.
141 Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1913-14, pp. 126 ff.
image in question was found in a small village mound called Akhaura Dehri of Charṣadda, the ancient Pushkalavati. The central figure in the sculpture is Śiva leaning against his vehicle, the bull, the head to the proper right is that of Viṣṇu and the corresponding one on the other side is that of Brahmā distinguished by his grisly beard. The sculpture has been assigned to the reign of the Kushāṇa king, Vāsudeva, who appears from his coins to be a devotee of Śiva. As the central figure is that of Śiva, it is probable the person who dedicated the image was a Śiva worshipper.

The Trimūrti in its Brahmanic conception is the manifestation of the supreme spirit in three forms, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. According to the original theory of Brahmanism no one of these three ought to take precedence over the other. They are equal and their functions are sometimes interchangeable, so that each may represent the supreme lord (Paramēśvara) and each may take the place of the other. In Kālidāsa’s Kumārasambhava and Raghuvanśa we have the following hymns on Trimūrti.

_Namastrimūrtaye tubhyāṁ Prāksrīṣteḥ kevalātmane/_
_Guṇatraya Vibhāgaṁ Paśchādbhedamupeyushe/_
_Namo viśvasriye pūrvam viśvaṁ tadānuśibhrate/_
_Atha viśvasya saṁhartre tubhyāṁ tredāsthītātmane/_.

The original idea of equality of these deities sometimes gave way to sectarian zeal and each sect assigned the central and supreme place to its own deity in preference to others.

In the early portions of the epics Brahmā is assigned the highest place. But Viṣṇu and Śiva come into prominence gradually. Though Brahmā has retained his nominal superiority throughout, the epics are devoted mostly to the praise of Viṣṇu and Śiva. As sectarian rivalries were very keen and strong between the followers of those deities, attempts were made to reconcile

143The older Brahmanical triad is that of Agni, Vāyu or Varuṇa and Surya. The Buddhist triad is represented by Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi.
143*Kumārasambhava*, II, 4.
144*Raghuvanśa*, X, 16.
their claims by declaring the essential oneness of the two. While
addressing a hymn to Mahādeva (in the Vanaparva) Arjuna says:
"Adoration be to Śiva in the form of Vishnu and Vishnu in
the form of Śiva, the destroyer of Dakhsha's sacrifice, to Hari-
Rudra..." The Śāntiparva narrates a furious fight between
Rudra and Nārāyaṇa. Brahmā came and dissuaded Rudra from
fighting and asked him to propitiate Nārāyaṇa. Being praised
by Rudra, Nārāyaṇa said to him "He who knows thee knows
me, he who follows thee loves me, there is no distinction be-
 tween us, do not entertain any other idea." This idea of
Hari-Hara finally developed into the Trimūrti conception as we
find it in the Harivamśa. The Harivamśa narrates a fight be-
tween Aniruddha, the son of Prdyumna, and Bāna, the Asura
king. Krishṇa took the side of Aniruddha and Śiva that of Bāna.
Brahmā came to him to aid of the earth and created peace between
these two gods by declaring them one with himself. The follow-
ing speech of Mārkaṇḍeya which dwells in this connection on
the oneness of Brahmā, Vishnu and Śiva is worth quoting.
Mārkaṇḍeya says:

I perceive no difference between Śiva who exists in the form
of Vishnu and Vishnu in the form of Śiva.... He who is Vishnu
is Rudra; he who is Rudra is Pitāmaha (Brahmā), the sub-
stance (Mūrti) is one, the gods are three: Rudra, Vishnu, Pitā-
maha.... I shall laud the gods Hari, and Hara associated with
Brahmā, and these two are the supreme deities, the originators
and destroyers of the world.

The main theme of the above passage is the reconciliation of
the rival claims of Vishnu (or Krishṇa) and Śiva by declaring
them as one and the same as Pitāmaha Brahmā, the highest mys-
teries of the world. The conception of Trimūrti thus envisaged
became instrumental in reconciling the sectarian difference of the

145Śivāya Vishnu-rūpāya, Vishnava Śiva-rūpine | Dakshayajña-Vināya
Hari-Rudraya vai namah // Quoted by Muir, op. cit., p. 195.
146Yastvāṃ vetti sa māṁ vetti, yastvāmanu sa māmanu | Nāvayor antaram
Kinchiḥ ma te bāḥ buddhiranyathā // (Quoted by Muir, op. cit., pp. 202-03).
147Muir, op. cit., p. 236.
148Ibid., pp. 236-38.
Neo-Brahmnic religions responsible for the creation of the liberal monotheistic viewpoint is characteristic of Indian religious thought.

The Trimûrti image of the Peshawar Museum shows that the conception of Trimûrti was well known as early as the second century A.D. and that the Gandhāra region, though predominantly a centre of Buddhist religion and art, was not free from Brahmanical influences.

It may be stated that Śaivism was popular with the Śaka Satraps as with some of the Kushāṇa princes. The names Rudradāman, Rudra Sīṁha, Rudrasena, and Śivasena Kṣatrapa, etc. (in the seal inscriptions of Taxila) show that most of the Satrap chiefs were thoroughly Indianized and devoted to Śaivism. This is corroborated by the frequent occurrence of Śaivic emblems, like the bull and Nandipada, etc. on the coins of the well known Satrap kings as noted before, and also on their seals, one being of Mahādevī Prabhudāmā, sister of Rudrasena, and daughter of Mahākāshatrapa, Rudra Sīṁha, found at Basarh. Further, the sealings found at Bhita show the popularity of Śaivism in the area during the Kushāṇa and Gupta times.

As is evident from the Gudimallam Liṅga, Śaivism was popular in South India as early as the second-first century B.C. Though not much authentic evidence on the early history of Śaivism in South India is available, it is sure that the cult subsequently continued to flourish in this region. One of the inscriptions of Nagārjunakonda refers to the construction of a temple of Śiva under the name of Pushpabhadrasvāmī during the sixteenth year of the reign of the Ḡūṣvāku king Ehuvala Chāntamula (Indian Archaeology, 1957-58, p. 54).

A few words may be said about the Śiva sectaries or those who were exclusively devoted to the worship of Śiva, and their practices. In most parts of the Mahābhārata (the chief source of our knowledge regarding Neo-Brahmanic religions) Śiva is seen being worshipped by all sections of the people including the Pāṇḍavas, Yādavas and others, but we have only meagre information about the sectarian aspect of his worship. Though it is difficult to say precisely as to how and when

Śiva was first converted into a sectarian deity, there is no doubt that the development of Śiva-sectarianism began much before the Christian era. Patañjali, it is well known, refers to a Śiva-Bhāgavata while commenting on and illustrating the Pāṇini sūtra, V. 2. 76, ayahsūla daṇḍajñābhyāṃ thakīthāṅau. This particular devotee, we are told by Patañjali, is to be called an ayahsūlīka inasmuch as he carried an iron lance and he sought to attain his object by violent means, "the fulfilment of which should be sought for by mild ways, i.e., kim yo yahsūlenānvichchati sa ayahsūlīkaḥ kim chātah Śiva-Bhāgavate prāpnoti...Yo mridunopāyenaśnaveśṭavyān arthān racitān anavahosanānvichchati sa ucyata ayahsūlikāh" (Kielhorn, Vyākarana Mahābhāṣṭya, Vol. II, p. 387-88). Three important facts emerge from the above passage: (i) that there was in Patañjali's time (c. 200 B. C.) a Śiva sect under the name of Śiva-Bhāgavatā; (ii) that the members of this sect carried an iron lance as their characteristic emblem, and (iii) that they resorted to various practices to attain their spiritual goals.

The other Śiva sectaries that deserve a special mention here are the Pāśupatas and the Māheśvaras. The Mahābhārata refers, as we know, to the Pāśupata doctrine as a contemporary religious system with the Sāmkhya, Yoga, Vedārṇyaka (or Veda) and Pañcarātra.151 As stated there, Kapila formulated the Sāmkhya, Hiranyagarbha the Yoga, Apāmtarātma was the teacher of the Veda, Śiva-Srīkaṇṭha declared the Pāśupata and Vishnū the Pañcarātra.

About the Pāśupata system which is the subject of our present enquiry, we derive more specific information from the Purāṇas. In the Vāyupurāṇa, Chapter 23, and Lingapurāṇa, Chapter 24, Śiva is represented as having told Brahmadeva:

During the 28th repetition of the Yugas when Vāsudeva would be born as the son of Vāsudeva at the time of Krishṇa Dvaipaśyana, I whose essence is yoga, will, by the magic power of yoga assume the form of a Brahmachāri and entering an unowned corpse thrown out into a cemetery, will live under the name of Lakulīn. At the time Kāyarohaṇa [ according to Vāyu ] and Kāyāvatārā [ according to Līṅga ] will become famous as a sacred place. And there will be born my sons

151 Mahābhārata, XII, 349, 63 ff.
[disciples] the ascetics, Kuśika, Garga, Mitra and Kaurushya; these Pāṣupatas, their bodies besmeared with ashes, having attained the Māheśvara Yoga, will depart to the world of Rudra, whence it is difficult to return.\(^{153}\)

From the above it is quite clear that the Pāṣupata doctrine, though it is said to have been formulated by Śiva himself in the Mahābhārata, originated with Lakulīśa, a human teacher, who was later on regarded as an incarnation of Śiva.

The Pauranic tradition regarding Lakulīśa has been preserved in a number of epigraphic records. The Chintrapraśasti of the time of Śāraṅgadeva (thirteenth century A.D.) says that the god Śiva descended on earth in the form of Bhaṭṭāraka Śrī-Lakulīśa and dwelt at Karohana. There appeared his four disciples, Kuśika, Garghya, Kaurusha and Maitreyā who performed the special Pāṣupata vows.\(^{154}\) The Ekalingaji temple inscription\(^{154}\) also refers to the incarnation of Śiva as Lakulīśa (a man with a club). Verse 13 of the same introduces his four disciples, i.e. Kuśika and the others who performed the Pāṣupata vows. This inscription belongs to 971-972 A.D. A still earlier epigraphic reference to Lakulīśa is to be found, as D.R. Bhandarkar informs us, in an inscription from Hemavati in Mysore.\(^{155}\) This record, which is dated 942 or 943 A.D., says that Lakulīśa, fearing that his name and doctrine might be forgotten, descended upon the earth born as the great saint Chilluka. This actually implies praise of the local saint Chilluka in a hyperbolical style, and not a second incarnation of Lakulīśa.

All the above epigraphic records belong to the mediaeval period and they do not help us in ascertaining the date of Lakulīśa. While writing on this subject in the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Vol. XXII 1905), Bhandarkar made some important observations regarding Lakulīśa’s date which may be summed up as follows.


Lakulīśa and his disciples are mentioned in the Vāyupurāṇa which, in its account of the great dynasties of India, mentions at the end the Guptas reigning over Saketa, Magadha, and along the Ganges as far as Prayaga. Applying to the early and imperial Gupta dynasty, this can only refer to the territories of Chandragupta I (c. 320-335 A. D.) before the expansion of the Gupta kingdom by Samudragupta. This shows that the Vāyu was completed shortly after the reign of Chandragupta I. Hence, the incarnation of Śiva as Lakulīśa, mentioned as an object of faith in the Vāyupurāṇa in the early fourth century A. D. must already have been known, probably not later than the first century A. D.

About 25 years after he published the above theory regarding Lakulīśa, Bhandarkar edited the Mathura Pillar Inscription of Chandragupta II, Gupta Era 61, in the Epigraphia Indica, XXI, and in the light of its contents156 fixed Lakulīśa’s date between 105-130 A. D. The epigraph in question credits Uditāchārya, a Māheśvara teacher, with the establishment in the teachers’ shrine, of two Liṅgas, “Upamiteśvara” and “Kapileśvara” named after his deceased preceptor and preceptor’s preceptor, Upamita and Kapila respectively. Uditāchārya as described in the epigraph is tenth in descent from Kuśika (and hence, eleventh from Lakulīśa). His own teacher was Upamita. The latter again was a pupil of Kapila, and Kapila, a pupil of Parāśara. “If we now allot,” observes Bhandarkar, “twenty five years to each generation, we have to assign Lakulī to A. D. 105-130. This agrees pretty closely with the view I expressed twenty five years ago (J. B. B.R.A.S., Vol. XXII, p. 151 ff.), that Lakulī has to be placed as early as the first century A. D. My conclusion was then based merely on the mention in the Vāyupurāṇa, of Lakulī as the first incarnation of Śiva. Evidence of this type will always remain of a somewhat conjectural nature. Epigraphic evidence, on the other hand, is more accurate. We may, therefore, take it now as

156I. L. 5...[bhajga [var-ku] šikād dasamena bhagavo–
L. 6. t-parāśarāch-chatur [the] [na] [bhagavata-ka] pila Vimala-śi
L. 7. Śiśya-śishyeṇa bhagavad [-upamita] Vimala-śishyeṇa
L.10. guru-āyatan guru...pratisṭhāpito (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. xxi, pp. 8-9).
well nigh proved that Lakulī flourished in the first quarter of the second century A. D., about half a century later than the time so long ascribed to him.\textsuperscript{157}

The date 105-130 A. D. assigned to Lakulī by Bhandarkar on the basis of his interpretation of the Mathura Pillar Inscription Gupta Era, 61, does not seem to be a satisfactory one for various reasons. The \textit{Mahābhārata (Śānti Parva)}, we have seen, regards the Pāṣupata, Sāmkhya and Pañcharātra, etc., as contemporary religions. The Puranic tradition asserts that the founder of the Pāṣupata system was Lakulīśa, who was an incarnation of Śiva and a contemporary of Krishṇa-Vāsudeva and Krishṇa-Dvaipāyana. Even if it is presumed that the Lakulīśa and the Pāṣupata systems cannot be given such an early date, yet they cannot be as late as 105-130 A. D. That the Pāṣupata system is older than the Christian era is evident from the points of close similarity between the Śiva-Bhāgavatas and the Pāṣupatas in respect of their doctrinal practices. The very characteristic reference in Patañjali's \textit{Mahābhāṣya} to the adoption of violent means by the Śiva-Bhāgavata reminds us distinctly, as J. N. Banerjea, points out,\textsuperscript{158} of the fourth Vidhi or means to which the Pāṣupatas resorted to reach their desired goal, i. e. Duḥkhhānta (termination of ills or final liberation). The fourth Vidhi of the Pāṣupatas, as Madhvāchārya tells us, includes certain extreme practices, like loud laughter, song, dance, muttering of \textit{aum} and pious ejaculations.\textsuperscript{159} "This led R. G. Bhandarkar to describe the Pāṣupata school or schools with two of its offshoots, the Kapāla and Kālamukha, as atimārgikā schools, that are away from the common path or go astray, and are spoken of by Śambhudeva as revealed by Rudra."\textsuperscript{160} These discussions show beyond doubt that the Śiva-Bhāgavatas and the Pāṣupatas were allied sects, some of the practices common to both were known to Patañjali and that they flourished earlier than his time, i. e. 200 B. C.

\textsuperscript{157}Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXI, p. 7.
\textsuperscript{158}Presidential Address by Dr. J. N. Banerjea at the Indian Historical Congress, 9th session (1946), Patna.
\textsuperscript{159}Sarvadarsa Sarīgraha of Mādhavāchārya, English translation by E. B. Cowell and A. E. Gough, pp. 103 ff.
\textsuperscript{160}Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 126.
Further, the Pāśupatas, who were also known as Māheśvaras, were an important sectarian organization in the middle of the first century A. D. Vima Kadphises, a celebrated Kushāṇa ruler of this time was an adherent of this sect as is evident from one of his appellations “Mahiśvra” on the reverse sides of his coins. The generally accepted date of Kanishka is 78 A. D. Hence Vima, who was his predecessor, must have belonged to the period between 50-77 A. D. Thus, the rise of the Lakulīśa and the Pāśupata sects must also be placed earlier than the first century A. D. If we accept Bhandarkar’s date of Lakuli, it is difficult to explain the presence of a Māheśvara or Pāśupata sect in Vima’s time.

Lastly, the words Kuśikāddasamena, etc. in the Mathura Pillar Inscription, Gupta Era 61, should be taken in the sense of a spiritual descent and not in that of a generation. The spiritual succession does not follow chronologically the generation. The allotment of 25 years to each spiritual generation is nothing but a conjecture and cannot lead us to any definite conclusion. The arguments put above tend to show that Lakulīśa and his doctrines are older than the time assigned to them by Bhandarkar.
3. Bhāgavatism

The Bhāgavata or the Krishna-Vāsudeva cult is the basis of the Bhagavadgītā (in the present from) and has proved to be the chief source of inspiration of modern Vaishnayism. Bhāgavatism is an old cult, certainly older than Pāṇini who mentions bhakti with reference to Vāsudeva (its founder and cult-god) in his Sūtra, iv, iii, 98. It is now a recognized fact that Krishṇa-Vāsudeva was a historical person who belonged to the Yādava Vrishṇi or Sāttvata tribe1 of the Kshatriyas, originally inhabiting Mathura, and who was the same as Krishṇa-Devakīputra mentioned as a disciple of Ghoṣa Āṅgiras in the Chhāndogya Upanishad (III, xvii, 6). It must, however, be made clear that we know very little about the religion orginally propounded by Vāsudeva. All that can be said about its early character from the epic-Puranic traditions is that it grew outside the pale of orthodox Brahmanism, and that it was strongly monotheistic, the object of worship being Bhagavat, the adorable one. It taught bhakti or single-minded devotion to the supreme one as the best means of salvation. It was at first confined to Krishṇa’s kinsmen, the Yādavas. Gradually, he was deified and indentified with Bhagavat or the supreme lord, and his cult spread to different parts of India. Its success was overwhelming insasmuch as its cult-god (Krishṇa-Vāsudeva) ultimately came to be recognized as the same as Vishnu and Nārāyana of the Brahmanic theology2 as is evident from the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas.

Bhāgavatism, we are aware, exercised a profound influence upon the domain of India religious thought. When Brahmanism

1Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri, The Early History of the Vaishnava Sect (Calcutta, 1936), Lectures i and ii.
was confronted with the dissenting movements of Gautama Buddha and Mahāvīra, and when it was found that the abstract and impersonal Absolute was more than the mind of the average people could grasp, Bhāgavatism offered a personal god in Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva, a god of love and grace and provided an easier means of salvation, salvation through Bhakti. Kṛṣṇaism permeates the whole of the Mahābhārata. It is true that the belief in the saving grace of god is found in the metrical Upanishads like the Kātha, Śvetāsvatara and Muṇḍaka, but in the epics it is asserted that the god whose grace saves is Krishna alone. Salvation, not through knowledge, even of god, not through grace of god, but through grace of the man-god, Kṛṣṇa, is the saving way.

We have made in the following pages an attempt to give the history of the Bhāgavata cult during the post-Mauryan period. For the study of the subject we have, fortunately, ample archaeological material at our disposal, besides the literary traditions.

One of the earliest and most important historical documents of the period relating to the Bhāgavata cult is the Garuḍa pillar inscription of Heliodoros at Besnagar. It records that the Garuḍa pillar (i.e. the column surmounted by Garuḍa) was erected in honour of Devadeva Vāsudeva, i.e. Vāsudeva, the god of gods, by Heliodoros, the son of Diya (Dion). The donor is described as Bhāgavata or the worshipper of Bhagavat (i.e. Vāsudeva) and a resident of Takshaśilā. He had come to Besnagar as an envoy from the great king Aṇṭalikata (Antialikidas) to the court of Kāśīputra Bhāgabhadra (two was a Śuṅga king), then in the fourteenth year of his reign. Antialikidas has been placed on numismatic grounds between 175-135 B. C. Hence the date of the

81.2. 30.
4iii, 20; vi, 21.
5iii, 2-3.
6Hopkins, The Great Epic of India, p. 188.
inscription could be somewhere near the middle of the second century B. C.  

From the inscription it is clear that the Bhāgavatas were the followers of Vāsudeva and that the deification of Vāsudeva (as the god of gods) was an established fact in the second century B. C. Regarding the antiquity of Bhāgavatas we derive some valuable information from Pāṇini’s grammar. Pāṇini, in his sūtra iv, iii, 95, says that an affix comes after a word in the first case in construction in the sense of “this is his object of bhakti”. As for example, one can say: Srughnabhaktirasya Sraughnāḥ. Further in the sūtra iv, iii, 98 (Vāsudevārjunābhyam vun) he says that the affix vun is added to the words Vāsudeva and Arjuna in the above sense. The words formed according to the sūtra would be Vāsudevaka and Arjunaka (not Arjunaka because of the prohibition of cha and an). Vāsudevaka would denote a person to whom Vāsudeva was an object of bhakti. Similarly, Arjunaka would refer to him to whom Arjuna was an object of bhakti. Without going into controversies regarding Pāṇini’s date, we can accept for him a central date in c. 500 B. C. and hold that Vāsudeva was regarded as divinity at least a century before Pāṇini’s time, i.e. c. 600 B. C. Umesh Chandra Bhattacharya is of the view that bhakti in the sūtras iv, iii, 95 ff can hardly denote religious bhakti as, according to the sūtra achidßādadesakālīgthak, it has been applied even to cakes (āpūka, etc.). According to him bhakti here stands for “fondness” simply. Jayaswal holds that Pāṇini used the term in the sense of “political or constitutional allegiance.” In support of his arguments he observes, “Take for instance the bhakti owed to the holders of the Janapadas in iv, iii, 100. The holders of the Janapadas were certainly not worshipped. Take again the preceding sūtra (iv, iii, 97) where bhakti to the Mahārāja is mentioned. Nobody would contend that the Mahārāja either as a man or a country was worshipped. Again, the scholars have taken note of Vāsudeva, while Arjuna, who is placed along with Vāsudeva in the same sūtra, has been ignored. There is no evidence that Arjuna was deified. Bhakti to these two Kshatriyas is the political bhakti.”

---

9Indian Historical Quarterly (1925), pp. 483-9.
We admit that bhakti referred to in the sūtras iv, iii, 95 ff has been used in a wide sense. But whatever may be the interpretation of this term with reference to Arjuna and Mahārāja etc., we have no doubt that bhakti applied to Vāsudeva in the sutra iv, iii, 98, cannot be taken in any sense other than that of religious adoration as shown below. In other words, Vāsudeva here is implied as a divinity and not in the sense of Vasudevaḍadapatyam as under the sutra Rishyandhakavrishṇikurubhyaścha, iv, i. 114. If Vāsudeva was regarded as a human being, then being a Kshatriya he could have been included under the sutra, iv, iii, 99, Gotrakshatriyākhyebhyo bahulam vun which also comes under the adhikāra of bhakti. Patañjali, while commenting on the sūtra iv, iii, 98, rightly raises the question as to why vun is used for Vāsudeva though the affix vun comes diversely after the words denoting Gotra and Kshatriya. He suggested that the sūtra iv, iii, 98 has been devised to show the Pūrvanipāta of Vāsudeva (i.e., to show that Vāsudeva being more revered should be placed before Arjuna in a compound though the latter begins with a vowel and has also fewer vowels than Vāsudeva) or Vāsudeva here is not the designation of a Kshatriya but a designation of Tatrabhagavat or Tatrabhavat.11 Kielhorn says that Tatrabhagavat is found only in the Benares edition of the Mahābhāṣya and it is a wrong reading. The actual word which Patañjali used is Tatrabhavat as found in a dozen other manuscripts.12

According to Kielhorn, the tatrabhavat by which saṁjñaishā is followed "does not in the least suggest that the personage denoted by the proper name is a divine being; the word indeed conveys an honorific sense, but it would be equally applicable to a human being."13 Though tatrabhavat is applicable both to a divine being and a human being, yet from the trend of his argument it appears that he is inclined to consider Vāsudeva as a human being rather than a divine one.

---

13Ibid.
The above theory of Kiellhorn has been controverted by Keith and Bhandarkar in whose opinion tatrabhavat as used by Patañjali in his commentary on the sūtra iv, iii, 98, has been used to signify Vāsudeva as a divinity and not as a human being.\(^\text{14}\) Further, Kiellhorn himself has pointed out that the precise phrase sanījaishā tatrabhavatāḥ which occurs with regard to Vāsudeva occurs also with regard to Ka (in the sense of Prajāpati and not Saravanāma) in the Mahābhāshya (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1908, p. 503). So his own views, i.e. the example of Ka as a tatrabhavat, go to prove that tatrabhavat refers to a divine being and not an ordinary mortal. Thus Kāyāṭa (though a later authority, c. 1300 A. D.), who describes Vāsudeva of the sūtra, iv, iii, 98, on the basis of Patañjali’s commentary as Nityaḥ paramātmadevatāvīṣesha tha Vāsudevo grihyate is precisely accurate in equating Paramātmadevatā with tatrabhavat when he finds Prajāpati also thus described.

Now we may refer in brief to the opinions of other grammarians on the point. The authors of Kāśikā (Jayāditya and Vāmna) lay down:

\[
\text{Vāsudevārjunāsabdābhyan vun pratyayo bhavati, so’ṣya bhaktirityetasmin vishaye chānorapavāda, Vāsudevo-bhaktirasya, Vāsudevakah, Arjunakah nanu Vāsudevasabdadgotra-Kshatriyakhyebhyaiti vūnastyeva.... Kimartham Vāsudevagrahāṇaṃ sanījaishā devatā vīṣeshaṃ, na kshatriyashya, alpāchtaramajā dyadantamīti, vā Arjunaśabdasya pūrvanipātamakurvan jñāpayatyaḥbharyaitam pūrvam nipatatī.}
\]

From this it is clear that Vāsudeva, if treated as a human being, could have come under the sūtra iv,3,99(gotrakshatriyākhyebhyo bahulam vun, as vun) makes no difference in the form or vowel of the word Vāsudeva. So the very fact that he has been included under sūtra iv, 3. 98 shows that he was regarded as a divinity in Pāṇini’s time. Again it is to be noted that Vāsudeva precedes Arjuna in the sūtra though according to grammatical rules, alpāchtaramajādyadantam, Arjuna should have come first. This also implies that Vāsudeva was more revered than Arjuna and consequently come to be placed first. Further, that Vāsu-

\(^\text{14}\text{Ibid., pp. 847-48; 1910, p. 168-70.}\)
deva was more revered than Arjuna just on the ground of his divinity and not any other reason (i.e. age or other considerations) has been fully brought out in Jinendra Buddhī’s Nyāsa (abhyaḥhitavāntu Vāsudevaśabāsya devatā-viseshatvā).

Bhaṭṭoji Dikshit, summing up the arguments of previous grammarians, says that from all points of grammatical considerations vun or vuṇ makes no difference in the case of Vāsudeva. He further observes that the maxim of abhyāḥhitavā is not strictly mentioned as we find such compounds as Svayuvamaggonām. He says that abhyāḥhitavā has been introduced by way of discussion. The real reason why Vāsudeva has been included in the sūtra iv, iii, 98, and placed before Arjuna is that Vāsudeva has been taken for a divinity and not as a human being. If he were taken as the latter, he could have been included in the next sūtra iv, iii, 99 (Gotrakhatriyākhyebhyobahulam). He places his reliance on Patañjali’s suggestion: “Sāmijñāishā bhagavataḥ iti” and explains the word Vāsudeva as:

sarvatrāśau samastāṁcha vasatyatreti vai yataḥ 
tato’ sau Vāsudeveti vidvadbhiḥ parigīyate //
iti smriteḥ paramātmā iha Vāsudevāḥ /
sarvatrāśau vasati sarvamatra vasatīti vā vyutpatyā
Vāsudevāḥ //
bahulakāduṇ Vasuṣchāsau
devaśceti vigrahāḥ /
tathā neyāṁ gotrākhyā nāpi kshatriyākhyeti yuktā eva
vunvidhiḥ //

It is thus clear that the authors of the Kāśikā, and Kaiyata, and Bhaṭṭoji Dikshit regarded Vāsudeva of the sūtra iv, iii, 98, as a divinity and leave no doubt as to the correctness of their interpretation, though they are much later in time. They have fully established the point that Pāṇini used and could have used the Vāsudeva of the sūtra iv, iii, 98, only in the sense of a divine being.

Regarding Arjuna one notices that from the very beginning he was regarded as an incarnation of Nara who is often mentioned in the Mahābhārata along with Nārāyaṇa as a double divi-
nity. In Book I of the epic it is said that Nārāyaṇa accompanied by Nāra took the nectar from the Dānavas and consequently there was an encounter between the gods and Dānavas for it. Nārāyaṇa came to the battlefield, with Nara possessed of a heavenly bow. Nara defeated the Asuras and he was entrusted with the nectar for its preservation. (In Book III Nara and Nārāyaṇa are represented as two divine sages in whose Āśrama at Badari the sons of Pāñḍu lived for some time). Vāsudeva has been identified with Nārāyaṇa and Arjuna is regarded as an incarnation of Nara in the epic. The association of Arjuna with Vāsudeva in the sūtra iv, iii, 98, may have a bearing on this fact, but we are not sure. To explain the significance of the sūtra it is not necessary either to attribute divinity to Arjuna as to Vāsudeva, though the former is regarded in the Mahābhārata as an incarnation of Nara and a constant associate of Nārāyaṇa. The grammarians, such as the authors of the Kāśika and others, consider Arjuna as a Kshatriya and offer very cogent reasons to account for his inclusion in the sūtra iv, iii, 98. They say that as a Kshatriya, Arjuna ought to have come under the sūtra iv, iii, 99 (gotrakshatriyākhyebhobahulariśiśi) but it has not been so because the addition of viṇa would have given rise to an undesirable form such as Ārjunaka (as viṇa is bound to cause vṛiddhi of the first vowel of the word Arjuna). Thus the Nyāsa on Kāśikā lays down—Nanu Arjunasabda Kshatriyākhyah / Tasmāduttarasūtra- pāṇiṣasypta viṇo’pavāda yuktahā.

15Obeisance is paid to Nara along with Nārāyaṇa in the opening stanzas of the Mahābhārata. The conception of the dual deities is very old and can be traced back to the Rgveda in a developed form, as for instance, Dyāvāprthi, Dyāvākshamā, Dyāvābhūmi. Besides these, Mitra and Varuṇa share 28 hymns as dual deities, Indra and Varuṇa 9, and Soma shares one hymn each with Pūshan, Rudra and Agni.

16In the Vana-parva (12, 46 and 47) Janārdana says to Arjuna, “O invincible one, thou art Nara and I am Hari-Nārāyaṇa, and we the sages (rishis) Nara-Nārāyaṇa have come to the world at the proper time; thou art no different from me, oh Pārtha, and I am not different from thee; it is not possible to know any different from us,” In the Udyoga Parva (49,19) it is said: “The two heroes Vāsudeva and Arjuna who are great warriors are the old gods Nara and Nārāyaṇa, this is the tradition.”

The cult of Arjuna seems to have been arrested in its growth due to the phenomenal rise to importance of Krishna-Vāsudeva who become identified with Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa of the Brahanical theology. The icono-
In summing up we may say, (i) if the word Vāsudeva is treated as a Kshatriya, there is no difficulty in including him in iv, 3,99, as Vāsudeva being already an ādyodātta word, the addition of vuñ would have made no difference in regard to its form or vowels. His inclusion in iv, 3, 98, shows that he was regarded by Pāṇini as a divinity as Patañjali supposes and other grammarians fully assert. (ii) Arjuna, though he is a Kshatriya as the Kāśika holds, cannot come under the sūtra iv, 3, 99, as the addition of vuñ would have given rise to the form Ārjunaka which is undesirable. (iii) Whether we regard Arjuna as a divine being or not, the Vāsudeva of the sūtra iv, 3, 98 can on no ground be regarded as one other than a divine being. In other words, while explaining the sūtra iv, 3, 98 it is not necessary to regard Arjuna also as a divinity (as in the case of Vāsudeva) though from other sources we know that Arjuna too was looked upon as a divine being. (iv) In view of the above we cannot agree with interpretations given of the sūtra iv, 3, 98 by Jayaswal and Umesh Chandra Bhattacharya and we hold that bhakti relating to Vāsudeva of sūtra, iv, 3, 98 implies religious adoration and not natural fondness or constitutional allegiance.

Bhāgavatism seems to have originated in Mathura. Its propounder Krishṇa Vāsudeva was a scion of the Sāttvata or Vrishṇi family of Mathura. That Krishṇa-Vāsudeva was a member of the Vrishṇi family had been declared by Krishṇa himself in the Bhagavadgītā which is one of the oldest sources of the Bhāgavata religion: Vrishṇīnāṁ Vāsudevo' smi. The Ghaṭajātaka27 also mentions him and the members of his family as belonging to a royal family of Mathura. The Mahābhārata knows of two contemporary Vāsudevas, the false one and the true one. The former was the king of the Pundras,18

---

graphic representation of Nara-Narāyaṇa is found in one of the side niches of the Daśāvata temple (Gupta period) at Deoghar, Jhansi, Madhya Pradesh. See Presidential Address of Dr. J. N. Banerjea at the Indian History Congress, Patna, 1946.


18The name of Paunḍra Vāsudeva is mentioned in the Sabhā-parava by Krishṇa, as an ally of Jarāsandha:

Jarāsandham gatastevā purāṇa mayā hataḥ | Purushottamavijñāto yo, sau Chēdisu durmatiḥ || Ātmānam pratijñānti lokesmin Purushottamam | ādatte satatam mohud yah sa chīnham cha māmakam || Vaṅga-Puṇḍra Kirā-
while the true Vāsudeva who first taught the Bhāgavata cult was
Krishṇa-Vāsudeva, the famous prince of the Yādava, Vrishṇi or
the Sāttvata family of Mathura. The Greek writers Megasthenes
and Arrian state that Herakles was held in special honour by the
“Sourasenoi”, an Indian tribe who possessed two large cities,
namely, Methora and Cleisobora. As Sir R. G. Bhandarkar
correctly points out, the “Sourasenoi” were the same as the
Sāttvatas and “Herakles” was the Greek hero-god closest to
the Indian hero-god Krishṇa-Vāsudeva. In the opinion of Lassen,
M’Crindle Hopkins, and several others, Methora and Cleisobora
clearly stand for Mathura and Krishṇapura respectively.

We hear very little about the Bhāgavatas in the third century
B. C. though we have ample archaeological evidence regarding
the condition of this sect in the second century B. C. H. C. Ray
Chaudhuri points out that the Bhāgavatas are “almost wholly
ignored” in the ancient Buddhist records, literary and epigraphic,
of Magadha and the neighbouring provinces. The Aṅguttara
Nikāya mentions various sects incuding the Ājīvikas, the Nigan-
thas, the Munḍa-sāvakas, the Jaṭilakas, the Paribbājakas, the
Aviruddhakas, the Gotamakas, the Devadharmikas and several
others but never the Vāsudevakas and Arjunakas. The Seventh
Pillar Edict of Aśoka refers to the Ājīvikas, the Niganṭhas and
the Samaṇas, etc. but not the Bhāgavatas. “There is a solitary
reference to Vāsudevavāṭikā and Baladevavāṭikā (signifying the
worship of Vāsudeva and Baladeva), in a passage found in the
Chulla Niddesa and Mahā-Niddesa.

In view of the above, Dr Ray Chaudhuri holds that the
omission of the Vāsudevakas in almost all the ancient Buddhist
records of Eastern India is due probably to the fact that “they
were as yet a local sect confined to the Yamuna valley included

\[ \text{tesu rājabala-samanvitah / Puṇḍrako Vāsudevo yo’sau loke bhiviśrutah/} \]

Purushottama is a well known epithet of Vāsudeva. The above passage
shows that in Bengal and the eastern provinces there was a powerful per-
sonage who adopted the titles of Vāsudeva and behaved like him,

19M, Crindle, Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian,
p. 206; Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, Collected Works, Vol. IV, Vaishnavism,
Satism and Minor Religious Sects, p. 17.
20Krishṇapura is equivalent to Vrindāvana, Vraja, etc. in the suburb
of Mathura.

21Ray Chaudhuri, op. cit., pp. 94-95.
among the Devadhammikas or some other sects and little known in Magadha and its neighbourhood."\textsuperscript{22}

It is a fact that the Bhāgavatas or Vāsudevakas find little mention in the Buddhist and also other literary records of eastern India in the third century B. C. or near about, but it is not safe to suggest on that negative evidence that the Bhāgavatas were as yet more or less a local sect confined to the Yamuna valley, little known in Magadha and eastern India. Further, the statement of Megasthenes that "Herakles" was held in special honour by the "Sourasenoi" cannot be taken to mean that the Bhāgavata activities were confined only to the limits of the Yamuna valley during his time. For throughout the ages, Krishṇa has been specially honoured in Mathura while Krishṇa and Balarāma worship and the type of Bhāgavatism or Vaishṇavism associated with them have been widely prevalent throughout India since early times. It seems from epic and Puranic accounts of Krishṇa’s career, that his religious leadership and his brand of Vaishṇavism came to be accepted in Magadha, Pundrā and Pragjyotisha, with his career of political conquests in those regions. Pundraka Vāsudeva claimed to be the real incarnation of Vāsudeva and assumed his insignia. At Nārada’s protest he invaded Dvārakā and was killed by Krishṇa. Śisupāla opposed Krishṇa’s claims as put by Bhīshma at the Rājasūya sacrifice of Yudhishthira. Here again Krishṇa established his divinity by killing the unbeliever. These and many other stories reveal that Vāsudevism spread and was widely known in different parts of India in Krishṇa’s lifetime in spite of strong opposition by some sections of the people. Hence, it may be suggested that the omission of the Vāsudevakas in the Āṅguttara Nikāya or in the Aśokan inscriptions (in which, however, they might have been included under the term Sarvapashaṇḍas) cannot be taken to prove that they were a local cult in Mathura only, up till the time of Megasthenes and also in the third century B. C. and that they were either little known or not at all known in eastern India in the early days of their history.

Whatever might have been the state of Bhāgavatism in the third century B. C. we have authentic materials to show that it

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
was gaining in popularity throughout India in the post-Mauryan period. During this time the centre of Bhāgavatism is usually taken to have shifted from Mathura to Central India which has yielded a number of valuable Bhāgavata records. But this may not be a real shifting, for in Krishṇa’s time the Vrīshni and other Yādavas attached to Vaishnavism occupied the whole region from the Yamuna valley to Surashtra which included Central India, Malwa, Rajputana, Gujarat, and Kathiwar while Mathura was abandoned by the Yādavas in Krishṇa’s lifetime.

The bulk of the Bhāgavata inscriptions and monuments belonging to our period come from Central India (Vidisa or Malwa region), specially from Besnagar. The most important Bhāgavata record of Besnagar, we know, is the inscribed Garuḍa column erected, as noted before, in honour of Vāsudeva by Heliodoros, a Greek ambassador to the court of the Śuṅga king, Kāśiputra Bhāgabhadra. This shows that Bhāgavatism was extensively popular during this period inasmuch as foreigners too were attracted by it. D. R. Bhandarkar has drawn our attention to a fragment of another Garuḍa column preserved in the Besnagar Museum.23 It contains a broken Brāhmī inscription24 which records that the column was erected for the Bhagavat by one Gautamīputra who was a follower of Bhāgavatism during the twelfth regnal year of Mahārāja Bhāgavata. Mahārāja Bhāgavata, according to Bhandarkar is the Śunga king25 of the same name mentioned in the Purāṇas. If so, he was perhaps the last but one in the list of the Śuṅga family and belonged to c. 100 B. C.

Besides these two Garuḍa columns, Bhandarkar noticed remains of another Vaishnavite archaeological evidence at Besnagar. These consist of a capital of a column, and a makara26 which might have originally surmounted the capitals. These were found lying a few yards of the Garuḍa column of Heliodoros. Taken

24 (i) Gotamīputena, (ii) bhāgavate na, (iii).................................
(iv) [Bhagaya] to prāśādota (v) masa Gauradhyaje (kārito), (vi) [dva]
dasa - vasabhi-sīte, (vii) ..................... Bhāgavate Mahārāje, Archaeological
26 Ibid., pp. 189-90.
together, the capital of the column and the makara would constitute what is known as Makaradhvaja. In the epic and Purāṇa literature, Pradyumna, son and deified spiritual successor of Krishna has been attributed the makara symbol. He is one of the four Vyūhas of the Pañcarātra or Bhagavata cult. On the basis of these facts, it is reasonable to suppose that there stood at Besnagar a shrine of Pradyumna.

Another important centre of the Bhagavata activities during this period was the Udaipur state, Rajputana, as is evident from the text of the Ghosundi and Hathibada inscription of the second century B.C. It records the erection of an enclosing wall round the stone object of worship called Nārāyaṇa Vāṭikā (compound) (Pūjā-śilā-prākāro-Nārāyaṇa vāṭikā) for the divinities Saṁkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva²⁷ (bhagava[d]bhyaṁ Saṁkarshaṇa Vāsudeva vaṁbhyām) by one Sarvatāta²⁸ who was a devotee of Bhagavat and had performed an Āśvamedha sacrifice. The Pūjā-śilā, as J.C. Ghosh points out, refers to Śālagrāmasīlā, a sacred stone typical of Vishu as the Līnga is of Maḥādeva.²⁹ Among the varieties of Śālarāma in the Purāṇas one variety is called Saṁkarshaṇa and another Ṭāsudeva.³⁰ Thus it appears that the Pūjasīlās here refers to Śālagrāmasīlās representing Saṁkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva. The wall which was constructed round their place of worship was in the compound called Nārāyaṇa Vāṭikā. The original site of this shrine was in Hathibada, half a mile east of the village Nagari in Udaipur state. As more than one copy of the text of the inscription is found, it appears the inscription was incised on several stones of the enclosure and as D.R. Bhandarkar points out, the inscribed stone of the Ghosundi well was in fact a part of the Nārāyaṇa Vāṭikā of Hathibada. That Hathibada was an important site of the Vaishnava religion is evident also from another short inscription on a stone wall of the Hathibada enclosure. This inscription is in the script of the seventh century A. D. and reads as Śrīvishṇu-pāḍābhyām.³¹

²⁷Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XVI, p. 27; Lüders List No. 6, Epigraphia Indica, XVII, p. 189 ff.
²⁸Sarvatāta has been regarded by D. R. Bhandarkar as a Kāṇva king, Epigraphia Indica, XXII, pp. 204-5.
²⁹Indian Historical Quarterly, IX, p. 796.
³⁰Ibid.
³¹Memoirs, Archaeological Survey of India, No. 4, p. 129,
The Ghosundi-Hathibada inscription which records the erection of a stone enclosure for the worship of Sankarshana and Vasudeva within the Narayana compound shows beyond doubt that the Bhagavatas accepted the identification of their cult-god Vasudeva with Narayana by the second century B.C.

The Bhagavata cult seems to have extended to north-west India also at a very early period; we have seen that it was the religion of the (Yona-Gandhara) ambassador Heliodoros of the second century B.C. His adoption of the Bhagavata religion shows that it was in vogue in the Punjab and the North West Frontier from some time before, because a religious cult or doctrine must necessarily be well-established on the native soil before it can attract the notice of foreign settlers. This seems to be corroborated by the statement of Q.Curtius that an image of "Herakles" was carried in front of the army of Porus as he advanced against Alexander. It is very consistent that Porus, as a Paurava prince, descended from the epic family of Arjuna, the incarnation of Nara and counterpart of Narayana-Krishna, should have carried before his war-chariots the image of Krishna-Vasudeva, the hero of Kurukshetra.

As it appears from Zenob's story of the Indians in Armenia, the Bhagavata cult travelled beyond the borders of India as early as the second century B.C. Two Indian chiefs, Zenob tells us, called Gisane (Kisane) and Demeter (Tmeter) fled westward with their clan and found shelter with Valarashak, or Valarsaces, the first Arsacide monarch of Armenia (c. 149-127 B.C.). Fifteen years later, the king of Armenia put Gisane and Demeter to death, but their sons and descendants continued to live there. They erected two temples to their gods Gisane and Demeter. St. Gregory (304 A.D.) invaded their temples and razed them to the ground. The Indians offered a stiff resistance, but were overpowered.

Demeter and Gisane are names common to men and gods. Kennedy thinks that Demeter must be some compound of Mitra, perhaps Devamitra, but about Demeter we have no details.

---

34 Ibid., p. 312.
Kisane, as Zenob informs us, was represented with long hair. His worshippers also wore it long. Lassen suggested long ago that Kisane might be Krishṇa.\textsuperscript{35}

During the post-Mauryan period, Mathura became a cosmopolitan centre of diverse contemporary religions—Buddhism, Jainism, Brahmanism, Śaivism and Bhāgavatism. The Indo-Scythic rulers of Mathura patronised all the Indian regions more or less with an equal interest.

Mathura has yielded several objects throwing light on the history of Bhāgavatism during the Śuṅga-Kāṇva and Kushāṇa periods. Noteworthy among them is a well-preserved standing image of two-armed Balarāma with a canopy of serpent-heads above the head and snake coils carved on the back and sides of the body. He has as usual, a club (muṣṭala) in the right hand and a plough (phala) in the left. The figure belongs to the second century B.C. Balarāma, as is well known, is the elder brother of Krishṇa-Vāsudeva, and one of the four Vyūhas (emanations) of the Bhāgavata cult.

The Bhāgavata records of Mathura in our period are the Mora Well inscription and the New Mathura inscriptions, both of the time of Soḍāsa, the son of Rājuvula. The Mora Well inscription of the time of Mahākṣatrapa Soḍāsa\textsuperscript{36} (the first century B.C.) refers to the enshrinement of the images of five heroes (Paṇcha Viṇas) of the Vrishṇis in a stone temple by a lady called Toshā. On the authority of the Jaina texts, the Antaṅga Daśāo, and Harivaṃśapurāṇa, etc. Vogel identified them with Balarāma, Akrūra, Anādhvīṣṭi, Sāraṇa and Viduratha.\textsuperscript{37}

The Jaina texts use, it should be noted, always the term Bala-deva-pamokha-panch-Mahāvīrā, thus mentioning specifically only one (i.e. Baladeva) of the five Vrishṇi heroes. J.N. Banerjea shows more convincingly that the five Vrishṇi heroes as known to the Purāṇas are Saṁkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Sāmba, and Aniruddha,\textsuperscript{38} four of whom, excepting Śāmba, constitute

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid. According to Kennedy, both Demeter and Gisane were probably forms of solar deities.

\textsuperscript{36}Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXIV, p. 194 ff.

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid.

the four Vyūhas of the Pañcharātra cult. The opening verses of Chapter 79, Vāyupurāṇa, read as follows:

Manushya-prakrītīn devān kīrtvāmānān nibodhata//
Saṃkar-shaṇo Vāsudevah Pradyumnah Śāmbara eva cha//
Anirudhseha pañchaite vamśavirāh prakrītītāh//

The New Mathura Inscription\(^{39}\) records the erection by one Vasu, of a quadrangle enclosed by four buildings, a gateway and a square terrace at the shrine of Bhagavat Vāsudeva, during the reign of the Mahākshatrapa Soḍāsa. The epigraph reads as follows:

L. 6 Vasunā bhagava [to Vāsude]
L. 7 vasya mahāsthāna [chatuḥśā]
L. 8 laṁ toraṇaṁ ve [dikāprati]
L. 9 śṭhūpito prītī bha [vatu Vāsu]
L. 10 deva-svāmisya [mahākshatra]
L. 11 pasya Soḍāsasya
L. 12 saṁvarṣeṣatām

From the above it appears that Soḍāsa was a patron, if not a follower of Bhāgavatism.

The Bhāgavata inscriptions of Mathura during our period are very few in number as compared with the enormous contemporary Buddhist and Jaina records. H.C. Ray Chaudhuri suggests that this paucity of the Bhāgvata inscriptions at Mathura is probably due to the fact that Bhāgavatism did not find much favour with the Śaka and Kushāṇa rulers of Mathura (first century B.C. to third century A.D.) who were mostly Buddhists or Śiva worshippers with a few exceptions, and probably not well disposed towards the religion of Vāsudeva.\(^{40}\) In this connection it may be suggested that there is no direct evidence to show that the Indo-Scythic rulers of Mathura were anti-Bhāga-
vata in their attitude. Whatever might have been the personal

creed of the Śaka and Kushāṇa rulers, from the coins and inscriptions of their time it appears that they were eclectic in their religious attitude.

The paucity of Bhāgavata records in Mathura during the Indo-Scythic rule seems to be merely accidental and cannot be taken in any way to imply an anti-Bhāgavata attitude of the Indo-Scythic rulers. Though the Bhāgavata records at Mathura of Indo-Scythic times are very few, we have a reasonably good number of Bhāgavata sculptures of Mathura assignable to c. 150 B.C. to 250 A.D. which would show that Bhāgavatism was in a flourishing condition there during the period under consideration. One of the most interesting Bhāgavata sculptures of Mathura belonging to our period is the Mathura Museum relief No. 1344 which represents Vāsudeva carrying his new-born babe Krishṇa to Gokula across the river Yamuna.\(^\text{41}\) The river is shown by means of waves with aquatic animals such as fish, tortoise and alligators, etc. This relief has been assigned on stylistic grounds to the Kushāṇa period. It is one of the earliest sculptural representations relating to the life of Krishṇa-Vāsudeva with whom originated the Bhāgavata cult. Besides this, the Mathura Museum contains a few more interesting Vaishṇava antiquities of the Kushāṇa period, viz. (i) the figure of Vishṇu with one hand in Abhayamudrā and the other having an amrita-ghaṭa with two additional hands holding a makara and chakra;\(^\text{42}\) (ii) four armed Vishṇu image with the typical drapery of the Kushāṇa period;\(^\text{43}\) (iii) eight armed Vishṇu figure probably in his Virāṭa form;\(^\text{44}\) and (iv) a Brahmanical relief containing among other Neo-Brahmanic deities a four-armed Vishṇu,\(^\text{45}\) etc. The Balarāma image of Mathura belonging to the Śuṅga-Kāṇva period has already been mentioned above.

From the study of the sculptures referred to above, it is quite evident that Bhāgavata traditions continued in Mathura uninter-

\(^{41}\) Hand-Book to the Sculptures in the Curzon Museum, of Archaeology, Mathura by V. S. Agrawala, p. 29; Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1925-26; p. 184f, pl. Lxvii, Fig. c.

\(^{42}\) V. S. Agrawala, op.cit., p. 44.

\(^{43}\) Ibid.

\(^{44}\) Ibid.

\(^{45}\) Ibid.
rupted even in the Indo-Scythic period and there is hardly any reason to believe that Bhāgavatism ceased to be a popular or influential religion in Mathura during the Indo-Scythic rule.

Being not far off from Mathura, the original home of Vaishnavaism, the Panchala region, it is natural, might have been affected by the movement quite early. Vāsudeva Vishnu seems to appear on one of the coins of Vishnimitra of Panchala (second century B.C.). On the basis of this it may reasonably be inferred that the family of Vishnimitra had leanings towards Vaishnavism. Bhita (an ancient site near Allahabad) provides a number of interesting seals supplying evidence of the prevalence of Vaishnavism during the early centuries of the Christian era. As is well known, the conch and the wheel, two important Vaishnava symbols, occur on a number of the Bhita seals, discovered in the course of excavations there in 1911-1912. One of the seals containing a symbol like the wheel, bears in northern script of the third-fourth century A.D. the legend: Namo-Bhagavate Vāṣu[devāya]. It is needless to say that the author of the seal was a staunch follower of Vaishnavism (Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, 1911-12).

Bihar, like the other parts of northern India, seems to have been influenced by the Bhāgavata or Vaishnava cult quite early in its history. The defeat of Jarāsandha at the hands of Bhīma helped by Krishṇa perhaps indicates a major step towards the introduction of Vāsudevism in Bihar. The Arthashastra of Kautilya and the Mahābhāshya of Patañjali, both of them closely associated with Bihar, refer to the prevalence of Vishnū and Krishṇa worship. In fact, the Mahābhāshya of Patañjali constitutes a valuable piece of evidence as to the different aspects of the Bhāgavata cult, as hinted above.

Again, the seals discovered at Basarh (Mazaffarpur district, Bihar) would show that Vaishnavism was in a flourishing condition in Bihar during the third-fourth century A.D. A large number of these seals bear the Vaishnavite symbols like the śaṅkha (conch) and chakra (wheel). Further, the names occurring on them include Hari, Harigupta, Varāha, Varāhadatta, Keśava, Keśavadatta, Krishṇadatta, Vāsudeva and several others,

46 Cunningham, Coins of Ancient India, p. 84, pl. VII, Fig. 21. Allan, Catalogue of Indian Coins (Ancient India), Introduction, p. CXIX.
indicating the Vaishn̄avite affiliations of the authors of the seals in question. One seal contains the legend: Śrī Vishnuyasavāmi Narāyaṇa (Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, 1903-1904).

An interesting Vaishn̄avite antiquity of the Kushāna period from Bihar is the Ekānaṁśā triad found in Devangarh, District Gaya. The triad consists of Balarāma, Ekānaṁśā and Vāsudeva, shown separately. On stylistic considerations they can be ascribed to the second century A. D. These sculptures are made of buff sandstone. All the three figures are standing and two-armed Balarāma is distinguished by the presence of a snake-hood behind his head. His right hand is raised in the abhaya pose, the left hand rests on the waist holding a Sirn̄ha-lāṅgala (plough with lion-faced share). He wears a head dress (turban) with a lateral knot on the left side. He wears a dhoti tied with knots on the two sides of the waist with one fold falling down between the legs. He is provided with a necklace and earrings.

Ekānaṁhaśā has her right hand in the abhaya pose, and the left hand rests on her waist, holding an unidentified object. She is provided with ornaments and wears a dhoti with one fold falling down between her legs and her other fold passing through her right hand falling down sideways.

Vāsudeva is four-armed. The back right and left hands hold a gadā and chakra respectively. The front right hand is raised in the abhaya pose, the left rests on the waist and holds a śaṅkha.

The Ekānaṁśā triads ascribable to the Kushāna period were found also in Mathura. All these reliefs carved on the slab are very mutilated (P. L. Gupta, Journal, Bihar Research Society, Vol. 7).

South and western India were also affected by the Bhāgavata movement during the period under review. It still exercises a very important religious influence with the people there. We do not know as to when exactly the Bhakti cult first penetrated into this region. We have, however, an important inscription belonging to the our period which shows that the Bhāgavata religion came to the West and the south at least two centuries before the Christian era. The epigraph in question is the Nanaghāt Cave inscription of Naganika of the second half of the first
century B. C. which opens with an invocation to a number of deities among whom occur the names of Vāsudeva and Saṅkarshaṇa: \textit{No Dharṇmasa namo Idasa Saṅkarṣaṇa-Vāsudevanām chaīḍa-Sūrānām.}

The Nasik inscription (A. D. 140-49) also contains the name of Balarāma and Kṛishṇa in the following passage: \textit{Ekadhanurasa ekasārīrasa ekabhornmaasa Rama-Keśavajuna-Bhīmasena tula parākramasa}. The names of Rāma and Keśava mentioned in the above passage are clearly the names of Balarāma and Kṛishṇa respectively. The epithet “Bhagvat” which is usually used before the names of Saṅkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva is conspicuous by its absence in this record. Here Saṅkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva have not been called Bhagavat but treated as great heroes. But we should remember that the Nasik inscription, as we know, is not a Bhāgavata record, and what has been stated in it is in keeping with the Buddhist tradition which considered Vāsudeva a historical prince and a member of the royal family of Mathūra. It may be stated here that the China inscription of Śrīyajña Śatākarnī opens, in the opinion of N. G. Majumdar, with an invocation to Vāsudeva. From the epigraphic evidence it is clear that Bhāgavatism was widely known in South India in our period.

Regarding the antiquity of Bhāgavatism or Vaishnivism in South India we have some valuable information in ancient South Indian literature. Some of the extant Sangam works which are not later than the first century B. C. reveal that among the religions prevalent in South India in the first century A. D., Vaishnivism was one of the most prominent. \textit{Tolkāpīpayam}, which is generally regarded as supplying the basic grammar for the works of the Sangam period in Tamil literature, and consequently the earliest Tamil work in existence, has a section devoted to Agattinai, or the grammar of subjective life with

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{47}Lüders, \textit{List of Brahmi Inscriptions}, 1123; Bühler, \textit{Archaeological Survey of Western India}, Vol. IV, p. 180 ff, No 18.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{48}Lüders, \textit{List of Brahmi Inscriptions}, No. 1112.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{49}The compound “Rāmakesāva” occurs also in a passage of Patañjali’s \textit{Mahābhāṣya}; Kielhorn, \textit{Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya}, Vol. I, p. 436.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{50}Ray Chaudhuri, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 163.}
special reference to love and happiness in the Tamil country; and we are told that one of the regional varieties of the Tamil country is Mullainilam or pastoral land of which the guardian deity is Vishnu."  

The Shilappathikaram and other ancient Tamil poems refer to the dedication of temples in the early centuries of the Christian era to Krishṇa and his brother at Madura, Kaviripattinam and other cities. Further, according to a description in the Silappadikaram the celebrated Tamil classic of the second century A. D., seven or nine cow-herdresses engage in a dance each joining her hands to that of another. This dance is originally said to have been danced by Krishṇa himself in the presence of Yashoda and subsequently brought into popular practice by the members of the cow-herd folk as a form of prayer to Krishṇa to avert impending calamities.

In Puram, Krishṇa and Balarāma are described as Mayon and Valiyon. Mayon was dark and Valiyon white. Mayon bears the discus and kite (Garuḍa) flag while Valiyon has the plough and palmyra as his symbols. The dwarf incarnation of Vishnu and the discomfiture of Bali are mentioned in the Manimekhalai (xix: 51-52) and Tirukkāl (61.10).  

The popularity of Vaishnivism in South India during the period under review is also attested by the discovery of the remains during the course of excavations at Nāgarjunakoṇḍa, of the brick temple of Ashṭabhujāsvāmin and a limestone slab with a large slit (for the insertion of the base of a wooden image) with an inscription further confirming this. The inscription refers to the consecration of Ashṭabhujāsvāmin (eight-armed Vishnu) made of Audumbara wood, a material described in all Āgama-literature as the most suitable for making images.

51"Kulasckhara Alvar and His Date," Indian Historical Quarterly, p. 644, 1931.
54Ibid., p. 141.
As noted before, the orthodox view regarding the origin of the Vāsudeva-cult (which is also known as Bhāgavata or Sāttvata or Paṃcharātra or Ekāntika religion\textsuperscript{55}) is that it was founded by the Kshatriya preacher Krishṇa-Vāsudeva, who was later identified with Bhagavat, the name under which the Bhāgavatas worshipped the Supreme Being. This view has been opposed by Keith and few others. "Referring to Patañjali's bhāshya on the Pāṇinian sūtra iii, i, 26, Keith writes, "The Mahābhāshya\textsuperscript{56} tells us that in the Kamśavadha the Granthikas divided themselves into two parties, one, the followers of Kamśa, the other, the followers of Krishṇa, and that the former were Kālamukha and the latter Raktamukha.\textsuperscript{57} Weber was puzzled to find that Krishṇa's friends were red in colour, but the whole thing explains itself when we regard the contest as one of the many old nature rituals where two parties join in a mimic strife, the one trying to rescue, the other to capture the sun. The supporters of Krishṇa as identified with the sun-Viṣṇu naturally wear the red colour of the luminary as an act of sympathetic magic." He further observes, "The mention of the colour of two parties is most significant; the red man slays the black man; the spirit of spring and summer prevails over the spirit of the dark winter."\textsuperscript{58}

Dr. Macnicol says:

There are...gods of spring and vegetation deities, whose mythology and the facts in nature to which it corresponds, suggest death and resurrection. Of this class were Dionysus and Demeter in Greece, Attis in Phrygia, and probably also Krishṇa in India.\textsuperscript{59}

With reference to the bhāshya of Patañjali on the Pāṇinian sūtra iii, 1. 26, R. P. Chanda\textsuperscript{60} has shown on the authority of

\textsuperscript{55}Mahābhārata, xii, 337.1, 335.19; 335, 24, 348 (Bombay Edition).
\textsuperscript{58}Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1911, p. 1008.
\textsuperscript{59}Macnicol, Indian Theism, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{60}R. P. Chanda, Indo-Aryan Races, p. 95:
Indian commentators like Helaraja and Haradatta that “it was not the Granthikas or narrators who divided themselves into the two parties, but the audience, some of whom sided with Karna and others with Krishṇa, the partisans of the former pale with grief and the partisans of the latter beaming red with joy on the triumph of their hero.” Even if we assume that the granthikas divide themselves into two parties, one for Karna, painted dark and the other for Krishṇa, painted red, the passage can be interpreted more reasonably than has been done by Keith, in a common sense way. Since Krishṇa was already deified and it was Krishṇa and his followers who gained a victory, the red colour suited their make-up best; while since Karna was acknowledged a dark oppressor, his was the defeated party, the black; it is to be noted that Krishṇa too has very often been associated with dark colour, equally with the red, yellow, green and blue colours. Hence, the interpretation of the passage in Patañjali’s Mahābhāshya as given by Keith on the basis of colour-scheme is difficult to accept.

The Mahābhārata, it may be stated, has given more than one etymological meaning of the word “Vāsudeva”. Though it is commonly regarded by it as a patronymic of Krishṇa, other derivations and meanings are not unknown:

Vasanāt sarvabhūtānām vasutvāddevayoniśitaḥ /
Vasudevastato vedyo brihatvād Vishṇuruchyataye //
Chādayāmi jagadvisvam bhūtvā Sūrya ivāṁśubhiḥ /
Sarvabhūtādivāsascha Vāsudevastato hyaham||

In the two above passages the name “Vāsudeva” has been explained figuratively and qualitatively. A. Govindacharyasvami holds that as the name “Vāsudeva” means one who permeates all, it cannot be said that the Bhāgavata Dharma originated with a human being. The argument of the above scholar ignores the fact that all ancient Indian (and also later Indian) personal names have a very good philosophical, religious or poetical significance and when the bearer of such a name comes to be the subject of honour, devotion, canonization or even

61Mahābhārata, V, 70, 3, XII, 341, 41 (Bombay Edition).
deification, the other meaning comes to be attached to the historical person. Several interpretations of the name Vāsudeva are quite natural in view of the fact that not only have we two Vāsudevas (the Pūndraka and Vṛishṇi), but also two brothers, Saṁkarashana and Krishṇa, both Vāsudevas, and Vāsudeva, the form of Vīṣṇu as popularized by Krishṇa and his contemporaries, Balarāma, Arjuna and the Pāṇḍavas, Akrūra, Uddhava, etc., and his successors Pradyumna and Aniruddha and probably also his predecessor (Satvant).

The epic and Puranic traditions are unanimous with regard to the Kshatriya origin of Krishṇa-Vāsudeva. The Buddhist and Jaina sources corroborate this fully. The Buddhist Ghatajātaka describes Krishṇa-Vāsudeva as a scion of the royal family of Mathura as we have seen. The Jain Uttarādhyayanasūtra also points to the same. Ray Chaudhuri points out that the name Sāttvata Dharma as applied to Bhāgavata Dharma shows that it originated with the Sāttvata prince Vāsudeva; rather, we should say that the Sāttvatas from Satvant onward (who was a younger contemporary of Rāma Dāsarathi), the predecessors of Krishṇa were all Vaishnavites, believing in Vīṣṇu worship characterized by love, devotion and service to a monotheistic divinity and that Krishṇa Vāsudeva developed this theism into a special cult later on known as Vāsudeva or Bhāgavata or Pañcharātha, but also called Sāttvata which was particularly associated with Mathura and the Yādavas, and adjacent regions and branch clans. In the inscriptions of this period Saṁkarshana and Vāsudeva have been mentioned together. Saṁkarshana has been traditionally described as a brother of Krishṇa as the latter is called Saṁkarshānūjya. The association of Vāsudeva with Saṁkarshana proves beyond doubt that the Bhāgavata religion had its founder in the Yādava prince Krishṇa-Vāsudeva and was not a pre-existing full-fledged one, independent of Krishṇa Vāsudeva. The Mora Well inscription refers to the enshrinement of five Vṛishṇi heroes who should be identified, as J. N. Banerjea has shown,
with Vāsudeva, Saṅkarśana, Pradyumna, Sāmba and Aniruddha.\(^{66}\) The Vāyu-purāṇa explicitly states that they were originally human beings later on raised to the position of divinities.\(^{67}\) Further, in the Chhāndogya Upanishad Krishṇa has been described as a disciple of Ghora Āṅgirasa and as Devakīputa, i.e., a son of Devakī.\(^{68}\) The above facts are sufficient to show that the Bhāgavata Dharma has been propounded by Krishṇa-Vāsudeva, the prince of Mathura.

The Gruḍa column of Besnagar and the Bhāgavata inscription of Hathibada and Ghosundi show that the Bhāgvatas accepted the indentification of Vāsudeva-Krishṇa with Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu by the second century B. C. Now the question arises as to when exactly and how the amalgamation of Nārayāna-Viṣṇu and Krishṇa Vāsudeva took place, as these deities were originally different from each other.

Viṣṇu is a Rigvedic god, and like most of them probably a nature god. He seems to have been a personification of the sun, and became important chiefly because of the three strides with which he is supposed to have strode over the universe.\(^{69}\) His greatness is inconceivable, and his highest place is the abode of the departed spirits where "he dwells inscrutable."

From the times of the later Saṅhitās and Brāhmaṇas, Viṣṇu increases in importance. In the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa he comes to be recognised as the personification of sacrifice.\(^{70}\) The fourteenth Kanda of the same Brāhmaṇa states that he came out triumphant in the contest among the gods and he was declared most eminent of them.\(^{71}\) The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa also

\(^{67}\) Ibid.
\(^{68}\) Chhāndogya Upanishad, iii, xvii, 6.
\(^{69}\) Itani Viṣṇur vichakrame trdehā nidadhe padarā (Rigveda, 1. 22. 17). According to Sākapuṣṭi the three steps of Viṣṇu are the triple manifestations of the god, in the form of fire on earth, of lightning in the atmosphere, of the solar light in the sky: "Tredhā-bhāvāya prithivyāṁ antarikshe, divi’ iti Sākapuṣṭih| (Nirukta. xii, 19). Aruṇavābha interprets the passage differently. He understands the three steps of Viṣṇu, not of fire, lightning, and solar light, but of the different positions of the sun at its rising, culmination, and its setting. Samārohaṇe Viṣṇu-pade, Gayāśirasu iti, Aruṇavabhaṇ (Nirukta. xii, 19).
\(^{70}\) Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, 1. 2. 5. 3.
\(^{71}\) Ibid., XIV, 1. 1. 1 ff.
assigns Vishnu the highest place among the gods.\textsuperscript{72} Though Vishnu came to the forefront in Brahmanical literature, some hold that his position as such did not acquire stability, for in the \textit{Aitareya Brāhmaṇa} he is called Devānāṁ Dvārapaḥ.\textsuperscript{73} The oldest \textit{Upanishads} have, of course, nothing to say about Vishnu, but in the theistic \textit{Upanishads} like \textit{Katha}, a philosophical significance is attached to his \textit{paramapada} as the end of the path, the final goal of existence.\textsuperscript{74}

Vishnu rose to the highest distinction in the epics. In fact the whole of the \textit{Mahābhārata} is permeated by Vishnu. The blessed lord is the all which is the base and crown of its speculation. In the \textit{Mahābhārata}, five current religio-philosophical systems are mentioned, viz. the Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Pāṅcharātra, Vedāranyaka (Vedāh) and Pāṣupata. In all these systems, Vishnu is declared to be the \textit{nīshṭā} or the chief object of worship.\textsuperscript{75} In the epic (\textit{Mahābhārata}), Vishnu is identified with many gods. He is Parameshṭhin, Svaṃabhū, Kāla, Dharma, Prajāpati, Varuṇa, Tvasṛti, Viśvakarmā, Agni, Vasu, Śiva, Vāchaspati, and the Jyotir-Āditya, etc.

As an all-god, Dyaus is his head, earth is his feet, water his sweat, and the stars are his hairpins.\textsuperscript{76} He looks after the gods and he is the Saviour. He is the ruler of all and creator of all and one who is eternal (bhagavānityaḥ).\textsuperscript{77}

The epic describes several incarnations of Vishnu. Krishṇa-Vāsudeva is one of them. It is as Krishṇa-Vāsudeva and Nāra-yaṇa that Vishnu commands supreme respect in the epic. It must be stated that Vishnuism\textsuperscript{78} as a sectarian doctrine is not found as an isolated and definite form as Narayanism, or

\textsuperscript{72}Agnir vai devānāṁ avamo|Vishnuḥ paramastadanantreṇa sarvā anyā devataḥ.
\textsuperscript{73}Max Müller, \textit{Ancient Sanskrit Literature}, p. 390.
\textsuperscript{74}\textit{Katha-Upanishad}, 1. 3. 9.
\textsuperscript{75}\textit{Mahābhārata}, xii, 350, vv. 63, 67; English Translation of the \textit{Mahābhārata (Sānti Parva)} by P. C. Roy, p. 859.
\textsuperscript{76}Hopkins, \textit{Epic Mythology}, p. 307.
\textsuperscript{77}\textit{Mahābhārata}, 3, 249, 26, 3, 103 (Bombay Edition).
\textsuperscript{78}\textit{Ibid.}, 5. 42, 21.
Bhagavatism. But the authors of the epic adapted themselves to the changing religious conditions of the times and elevated him (Vishṇu) to the supreme rank, the nisṭhā of all the five religious systems as mentioned above. But Vishnuism becomes infused with a new life only when it is definitely identified with Nārāyaṇism or Vāsudeivism. Though Vishṇu maintains also a separate and independent existence apart from Krīṣṇa, the most attractive and interesting feature about him is his transformation into the supreme personal god as Krīṣṇa-Vāsudeva. It is like the personal development of the Vedanta philosophy, only it is touched here by the personality of the man-god Krīṣṇa.

Regarding Nārāyaṇa, we know that he is not an ancient deity like Vishṇu. He is mentioned for the first time in the Brāhmaṇas. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa (xii, 3. 4.) calls him Purusha Nārāyaṇa who “at the instance of Prajāpati places all the world and all the gods in him and his own self in all the world and all the gods, thus becoming the power of sacrifice, the universe itself.” In the same book (xiii, 6. 1. 1.) it is further stated that to surpass all things he performed a Paṅcharātra sacrifice (lasting over five nights) and became supreme and omnipresent. In the Mahābhārata (Śānti Parva) he is indentified with Vishṇu and Vāsudeva and is described as all pervading, all generating and with the eternal characteristics of the supreme purusha.

In the epic, the identity of Vishṇu and Nārāyaṇa as the eternal Purusha is an acknowledged fact. In the fourth prapā-thaka of the Taittirīya Āraṇyaka mention is made of Nārāyaṇa in connection with Vishṇu and Vasudeva apparently as three phases of the same supreme spirit: Nārāyaṇa vidmahe, Vāsudevāya Dhīmahi tanno Vishṇu prachodayāt.

The sectarian term “Vaishṇava” as a worshipper of Vishṇu, is to be found nearly at the end in the latest portion of the epic, and that also three times only. In the Mahābhārata (xviii, 6.96) for instance, we are told ashtādaśa purāṇām śravaṇād yat phalaṁ bhavet[āt phalaṁ samavāpno tī Vaishṇavo nātra samāyaḥ].


The precise solution of the equation is not possible, but it may be said that Nārāyaṇa’s connection with sacrifice as Purusha-Nārāyaṇa probably helped his equalization with Vishṇu, the Brāhmaṇic personification of the sacrifice.
We have seen that the worship of Vishṇu began as early as Rigvedic times, but Krishṇa-Vāsudeva is a later divinity. The Vāsudeva cult cannot be definitely proved on any authentic ground much prior to Pāṇini’s time (c. 600 B. C.). The earliest source ascribing divinity to the human Vāsudeva is the Ashtādhyaīi sūtra (iv, 3, 98) and it is very difficult to say as to when first Krishṇa-Vāsudeva came to be identified with Vishṇu. Vāsudeva is the name given to Vishṇu in a passage of the tenth prapāṭhaka of the Taṅtiriya Āranyaka as noted before, but according to the consensus of opinion this work cannot be earlier than the beginning of the Christian era. In the Bodhāyana Dharmasūtra which is an orthodox treatise dating at least as far back as the third century B. C. we find that Garutman is the vehicle of Vishnu and Keśava is Vishṇu’s epithet. On the evidence of Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya (early second century B. C.), we shall presently see that Keśava was an appellation of Vāsudeva Krishṇa. This shows that the identity of Vāsudeva-Krishṇa with Vishṇu was an established fact by the third-second centuries B. C.

Now we may consider the viewpoints of the Mahābhārata and the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali. In the Mahābhārata which contains a vast collection of heterogeneous materials originating in different sects, Krishṇa has been represented diversely. Insofar as he is introduced as an actor of the main events of the poem he is made to play a human role and his divine character is not often disputed, while also where he appears as a divine being, indentified sometimes with Vishṇu and Nārāyaṇa, the supreme spirit of the Brahmanical theology. In the Sabhāparva Śisupāla contests his claims to divinity though Bhishma defends it. In the Vana and Anuśāsana parvas he is represented as paying homage to Mahādeva and receiving boons and blessings from him. In the Ādiparva he and his brother Balarāma are referred

82 It may be said that a divinity called Vāsudeva-Vishṇu might have existed before the man-Krishṇa while the patronymic Vāsudeva could be identified with Vishṇu.
84 Bodhāyana Dharmasūtra (11, 5, 24), Govt. Oriental Series, Mysore.
85 Ibid.
86 Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya on Pāṇini sūtra 11, 2.34.
to as being born from the two hairs of Hari-Nārāyaṇa. But there are many passages which assert his divinity in unambiguous terms. In the Udyogaparva (49-19) it is said that two heroes Vāsudeva and Arjuna who are great warriors, are the old gods Nara and Nārāyaṇa. Traditionally, as Nārāyaṇa, he lives through ages. Even while acting as the ally of the Pāṇḍavas he slays Śiśupāla supernaturally with the discus. In the Udyogaparva Saṅjaya describes before Dhritarāshtra the divine nature of Krishṇa and identifies him with Nārāyaṇa-Vishṇu thus:

The divine Keśava by his own abstraction makes the circles of time, of the ages (yugas) continually to revolve. This divine being alone is the lord of time, of death, and things moveable and immovable, this I tell thee as a truth...Keśava is immeasurable. He is to be known as Vāsudeva from his dwelling in all beings, from his issuing as a Vasu from a divine womb.... He is a called Vishṇu because of his pervading nature.... He is called Mādhava, O Bhārata, because of his practices as a muni, contemplation of mind on truth and Yoga absorption.... Born of the Sāttvata race he is called Krishṇa because he uniteth in himself what are implied by two words ‘Krishi’ which signifies what existeth and ‘na’ which signifies eternal peace.... He is called Nārāyaṇa from his being the refuge of all human beings.... Krishṇa is based upon truth (satya) and the truth, is based upon him, and from this truth Govinda is truth therefore he is called Satya. The god is called Vishṇu from striding (Vikramanāt), Jishṇu from conquering, Ananta from his eternity.  

Further in the Śāntiparva, Yudhisthira addresses a hymn to Krishṇa saying, "Glory be to thee, thou mover of all, the soul of all, the source of all, Vishṇu, Hari-Krishṇa, Vaikuṇṭha, Purushottama."  

87Muir, op. cit., Vol. 4, p. 221.
89Vīśvākaraṇa namaste 'stu viśvātman viśvasambhave Vishno Jishno Hare-krishṇa Vaikuṇṭhapurushottama|quoted in Muir’s Original Sanskrit Texts, Vol. VI, p. 223.
R. G. Bhandarkar⁹⁰ and a few others hold that Krishṇa’s identification with Viṣṇu is a post-Gītā element. In support of this, Bhandarkar says that when Krishṇa shows his Viṣvarūpa (Bhagavadgītā, ch. II) to Arjuna, he is twice addressed by the latter as Viṣṇu on account of his dazzling brilliance, but Viṣṇu here is regarded as the chief of the Ādityas and not as the Supreme Being. In the Anugītā portion of the Āśvamedhika Parva, it is related that while Krishṇa was returning to Dvāraka, he met on the way the famous contemporary sage Utanka of the Bhṛijgu family. The latter asked him whether he had reconciled the Kurus with the Pāṇḍavas. He replied that the Kurus had perished. This displeased the sage who was apparently a partisan of the Kauravas and he threatened Krishṇa with a curse. To pacify him Krishṇa agreed to explain to him the mystery of his own nature and showed him his universal form (virāṭa svarūpam). This svarūpa is similar to the Viṣvarūpa unfolded to Arjuna in the Gītā. In the Anugītā this is called Vaishṇavarūpa, the name which is conspicuous by its absence in the Bhagavadgītā. All this shows according to Bhandarkar that the identity of Krishṇa Vāsudeva with Viṣṇu was effected between the period of the Gītā and the Anugītā.⁹¹

With regard to Bhandarkar’s theory it may be stated that the Udyogaparva, which comes before the Anugītā and also the Bhagavadgītā in the epic arrangement, identifies Krishṇa-Vāsudeva with Viṣṇu in clear terms. This shows that the identification of Krishṇa-Vāsudeva with Viṣṇu took place much earlier than Bhandarkar supposes. Again, it is difficult to agree with Bhandarkar’s view that Viṣṇu as an epithet of Krishṇa in the Gītā (Chapter XI) is referred to as a god of dazzling light or splendour, i.e. as the chief of the Ādityas and not as a Supreme Being. It is to be remembered that the original conception of Viṣṇu is as an aspect of the sun-god. His solar attributes did not drop altogether even when he rose to the position of a monotheistic and supreme divinity. This is but in keeping with the idea of an all-god who is considered to be possessed of all kinds of attributes including those assigned to other deities,

⁹¹Ibid.
though on a particular occasion stress may be laid on a particular set of attributes of such a supreme divinity. Hence, even if Vishṇu is described in the Gītā with reference to his solar aspect there is no valid reason to hold he is alluded to in the above context as an Āditya only and not as a supreme deity. It is to be noted here that the identification of Krishṇa-Vāsudeva with Vishṇu is an accepted fact in the epic though it is difficult to say as to when first this amalgamation of the two deities took place, owing to the uncertainty of the date of the major portions of the epic. Anyhow, Vishṇu and Krishṇa-Vāsudeva were looked upon as one and the same deity in the second century B. C. and probably a few centuries earlier as is evident from the inscribed Garuḍa pillar of Heliodoros at Besnagar noticed before, and also from the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali (early second century B. C.) to which we shall refer now. Patañjali notices under Pāṇini (ii, 2. 34) a verse which states that the musical instruments were played in the temple of Dhanapati, Rāma and Keśava. Rāma and Keśava are the names of Balarāma and Krishṇa-Vāsudeva respectively. In Bodhāyāna Dharmasūrā, Keśava is an epithet of Vishṇu as noted before. In view of this it may be held that during Patañjali’s time Krishṇa-Vāsudeva came to be regarded as identical with Vishṇu. Further, in discussing evidence afforded by the Māhābhāṣya regarding the early existence of the drama, Weber notices therein two subjects of dramatic representations, one of the Balibandha and the other of Kamśavadha. As one of them, i. e. the Balibandha, has been derived from the Vishṇu legends, it is probably necessary to assume, as Weber points out, that Vishṇu and Krishṇa already stood in close relationship.\textsuperscript{92}

Garuḍa is a “sun-bird.” The Garuḍadhvaja of Besnagar, erected in honour of Vāsudeva as expressly stated in the inscription, suggests a close relationship between Vāsudevism and sun worship. The Vedic Vishṇu with whom Vāsudeva was identified in the epic times was, we know, a solar deity. In the Rigveda Vishṇu is mentioned along with the sun\textsuperscript{93} and is regarded as one of the Ādityas.\textsuperscript{94} Vishṇu’s three steps represent, according

\textsuperscript{93} Rigveda, 1.90, 9; VII, 39, 5; X.65, 1.
\textsuperscript{94} In fact, most of the important Vedic divinities were “Ādityas” or
to scholars, the sun's daily course, namely its rise, zenith and setting. Barnett points out that the three immortal steps, namely dama, tyāga and apramāda, mentioned in the Besnagar Garuḍa pillar inscriptions seem to be an attempt to moralise the old mythical feature of the three steps of Vishṇu. According to the Ghera Aṅgrasa and both the preceptor and disciple are said to have been worshippers of the sun. Grierson rightly holds that the legends dealing with the origin of the Bhāgavata religion are closely associated with sun worship. According to the Māhābhārata (Nārāyanīya section) the Bhāgavata religion was revealed by Bhagavat himself to Nārada and Nārada taught it to others including the sun, who in his turn communicated it to mankind; here "sun" evidently stands for the adherents of the solar cult or perhaps members of the "solar" or Mānava-Aikshväku ruling class. The most worshipped of the Bhāgavata or Vaishṇava incarnations is Rāmachandra who was a member of the solar clan in ancient India. Thus we find that the element of sun worship was common to the cults of Vishṇu, Vāsudeva, and Rāma. This might have offered a footing on which the first and second and the first and third, originally different deities and cults, could have been amalgamated into one. Vāsudeva's Garuḍa and Chakra are definitely "solar" symbols, and the Besnagar inscription is a living testimony to sun worship being a chief feature of Bhāga- vatism or Vaishṇavism.

It will not be out of place to say that one of the chief contributions of Bhāgavatism or Vaishṇavism is the reconciliation of two traditionally opposed ideological camps, the worshippers of the Nāgas and Garuḍa. To the Nāga worshippers, the earth itself is the divinity, the mysterious and fertile earth which is supported by Nāga Śesha and which draws its sustenance and fecundity from the waters of the ocean. The worshippers of

---

96 Barnett, Hindu Gods and Heroes, p. 89.
97 R. P. Chanda, The Indo-Aryan Races, pp. 102 and 103.
98 Indian Antiquary, 1908, pp. 253-4.
Garuda are evidently the worshippers of the sun shining high up in the sky. The difference is between the ethereal and the earthly. Vishnuism closes the difference as is evident from various mythological stories, one being that of the Ananta- sayana of Vishnu on the waters of the sea.

One of the chief features of the Bhagavata or the Pancharatra cult is the worship of the four Vyuhas,99 Vasudeva and his several forms, viz. Samkarshaña, Pradyumna and Aniruddha (elder brother, eldest son and eldest grandson respectively of Krishna-Vasudeva, according to the genealogies in the epics and the Puranas). It is taught in detail in the Narayanyiya section of the Mahabharata. It is somewhat difficult to set forth the dogma clearly from the rather incoherent and clumsy account in the epic with its complicated phraseology. The main outlines are as follows. Vasudeva who is Narayana or Vishnu, is identified with the supreme being described as Purusha, Parmatman, Isvara, or Kshetrajña. That Being, dividing himself, became four persons by successive production. From him who is the summit of all existence, sprang Samkarshaña from whom came Pradyumna from whom issued Aniruddha. Samkarshaña is identified with Jiva (the living soul), Pradyumna with Manas (intelligence) and Aniruddha with Ahaṅkara (egotism or consciousness). The Pancharatra teaches a chain of emanations as it were. Each emanation except the first became a flame proceeding from another flame.100

The date of the Narayanyiya section is uncertain. But from other literary and archaeological sources it appears that the Vyuh system was formulated earlier than the second century B.C. One of the earliest accounts of the above doctrine is to be found in the Brahmasutras101 (ii, 2. 42-45) as explained by Sankara and Ramanuja. It is difficult to ascertain the time when the Brahmasutras were written but it will not be far from

100 Schrader’s Introduction to the Pancharatra and Ahir Budhnya Samhitā, p. 35.
101 Utpatyasambhavät, nac̄ha kartuḥ karaṇam, viśuṇādibhāve va tatpratishtedhōh, vipratishtedhāchcha.
the truth to suppose that it was written somewhere near the second century B.C.  

102 Patanjali mentions not only Rāma-
Keśava but also “Janārdana” with himself as the fourth (Janar-
danastvatma chaturtha eva) which indicates probably the four mūrtis of Vāsudeva or Nārāyaṇa. The worship of Saṅkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva are referred to in the inscriptions noted above. D.R. Bhandarkar saw fragments of a column and a makara lying a few yards off the Garuḍa pillar of Heliodoros in Besnagar. The fragments might be parts of the Makaradhvaja as has been suggested by him. The makara is a symbol sacred to Pradyumna, the son of Krishna-Vāsudeva. As the Guruḍa column indicates the worship of Vāsudeva, so from the makara column the existence of a temple of Pradyumna can be reasonably inferred.

According to the Vyūha doctrines Saṅkarshaṇa has sprung from Vāsudeva and as such is mentioned after him. But it is to be noted that their position is reversed in the inscriptions noted above; Saṅkarshaṇa comes first and Vāsudeva next. This is to be expected as the inscriptions are historical documents and they could not take liberties with the genealogical tables of the Yādavas given in the epics and Purāṇas. This also indicates the fact that Saṅkarshaṇa was formerly a popular independent divinity. The religious leader Saṅkarshaṇa was, we know, looked up to for guidance and held in special honour by Duryodhana, while Krishna-Vāsudeva received the honour and devotion of the Pāṇḍavas. Kauṭilya’s Arthaśāstra speaks of people who were devotees of Saṅkarshaṇa. It says:

Spies disguised as ascetics with shaven head or braided hair and pretending to be the worshippers of Saṅkarshaṇa may mix their sacrificial beverage with the juice of the Madana plant (and give it to the cow-herds) and carry off their cattle.

These details would indicate that while Krishna reformed Vishnu-worship, Balarāma reformed Rudra-worship both taking in the elements of the ancient Nāga cult as well and that this

103 Ātmachaturthahasya iti, a bahuvrīhi compound. Kielhorn, Vyākaraṇa.
was at first (as in the earlier epic traditions) a source of the conflict between the two "Dharma-pravartaka" brothers, and their adherents among their kinsmen, the Yādavas as also amongst the allied Kauravas and Paṇḍavas. Thus it appears that side by side with the growth of the Pañcharātra cult, Saṁkarshaṇa and Vāsudeva were also in other circles looked upon as divine personalities of equal independent status, this latter phase in fact is the more natural, since the basic fact of the Bhāgavata religion is the hero worship of the brothers Saṁkarshaṇa and Krishṇa-Vāsudeva among the Vrishnis and Yādavas. The historical and older traditions lingered for some time even after the worship of Saṁkarshaṇa merged into the larger sphere of the Krishṇa-Vāsudeva worship and the Vyūha system describing Vāsudeva as the supreme self come into being.
4. The Nāga Cult

Neo-Brahmanism has absorbed many indigenous cults and beliefs of which the worship of the Nāga (serpent) deserves special mention.

Animal worship is very common in the religious history of the ancient world. One of the earliest stages of the growth of religious ideas and cults was the stage when human beings conceived of the animal world as superior to them. This was due to the obvious deficiency of human beings in the earliest stages of civilization. Men not equipped with scientific knowledge were weaker than the animal world and attributed the spirit of the divine to it, giving rise to various forms of animal worship. Of all the forms of animal worship the worship of serpents became most popular throughout the length and breadth of the ancient world. The wide diffusion of serpent worship or the Nāga cult is explicable by the fact that serpents occur in every part of the world, and are also the uncanniest of all animals. They naturally became the appropriate symbol for the early people to express their ideas of divinity. Fergusson, who has brought together in his *Tree and Serpent Worship* a large array of facts showing the extraordinary range of serpent worship, remarks:

There are few things which at first sight appear to us at the present day so strange or less easy to account for than the worship which was once so generally offered to the serpent god. If not the oldest, it ranks at least among the earliest forms through which the human intellect sought to propitiate the unknown powers. Traces of its existence are found not only in every country of the world, but before the new was discovered by us, the same strange idolatry had long prevailed
there, and even now the worship of the serpent is found lurking in out of the way corners of the globe.¹

So far as the early history of serpent worship in India is concerned, it may be said that it was prevalent originally perhaps among the pre-Aryan people of Indian and it came to be associated also with Aryanism as early as the Vedic *Samhitās*.

The earliest representation of the Nāga occurs on the faience seals of Mohenjodaro. It appears there in half-human and half-animal form as suppliants to a deity. In this connection, Marshall remarks that the cobra appears to be distinct from the kneeling supplicant, but the details being blurred, it may be that “the tail of the cobra is intended to be looped round and joined to the feet of the supplicant...and it seems probable that the supplicant in this case is meant to be a nāga”.² It may be true that the Mohenjodaro Nāga appears as a devotee and not as a deity. But the introduction of a Nāga in the role of a supplicant is in itself a significant fact. It shows that as early as the Mohenjodaro civilization snakes came to be associated with the religious beliefs of the people.

In the *Rigveda* *Samhitā* the serpent appears sometimes as a demoniacal creature and sometimes as a divine being. Ahi-Vritra was a powerful demon, the foe of Indra. Indra slew this demon and received the appellation of Vritrahan.³ The serpent, however, appears also in the role of a divine being as Ahibudhnya in the *Rigveda* *Samhitā*.⁴ The Ahibudhnya represents probably the beneficial side of the character of Ahi-Vritra. It can perhaps be concluded that the conflict between the original settlers of India,

¹Though the Nāga cult was diffused all over the world, in no other country, however, was it more widely distributed or developed in more varied and interesting forms than in India. It is even now prevalent in India. See Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship, Introduction*, p. 1; *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XI, pp.411-12; Crooke, *Popular Religion and Folklore in Northern India*, p. 11 ff; *Gazetteer of South Arcot District*, 1906, 1. 102.


³*Indra* prehi purastvam viśvasyesān ojasā Vitrāṇi Vritrahan jahi (*Rigveda*, 8. 17. 9).

⁴Hopkins, *The Religions of India*, p. 94; *Naighaṇṭuka*, 5.4; Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, p. 153.
whose religion was the worship of Nāgas, and the Aryans whose religious ideas and traditions were different from those of the former had been reconciled. The Ahi-Vritra is the Aryan attitude but the Ahibudhnya seems to have been the indigenous attitude and this was accepted by the Aryans as early as the Rigvedic times.

As Vogel and several other scholars have already pointed out, the Yajurveda the Atharvaveda, the Grihya-sūtras and the epics and the Purāṇas contain many passages paying homage to serpents.

The Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā (ii, 7. 15) states:

Homage be to the snakes which so ever move along the earth, which are in the sky and in heaven; homage be to those snakes which are the arrows of sorcerers and of tree-spirits which lie in holes; homage be to those snakes which are in the brightness of heaven, which are in the rays of the sun, which have made their abodes in the waters, homage be to those snakes.

The Atharva Veda (vi, 56. 1 ff.) says:

Let not the snakes, 0 gods, slay us with our offspring, with our men [purusha], what is shut together, may it not unclose; homage be to the god-people.... Homage be to Asita, homage to Tiraśchirāja, homage to Svaja [and] Babhrū, homage to the god-people.... I smite thy teeth together with tooth, thy [two] jaws together with jaw, thy tongue together with thy tongue, thy mouth, 0 snake, with mouth.  

In the above passages quoted from the Atharva Veda we find two different sentiments. Certain snakes have been addressed as


devajana which leaves hardly any doubt that they were looked upon as divine beings. On the other hand, the author of the hymn has expressed a desire for their destruction. The two aspects of propitiation and extermination were celebrated simultaneously. This provides us with a clue as to the origin of snake worship. Snake worship, as is well known, grew more from fear than any other cause.

The Atharva Veda (Chapter III, 27) associates the serpents with the Vedic divinities as the protectors of the quarters. The Buddhist text, the Lalitavistara, includes some well known Nāga kings among the Lokapālas.

Snake worship is varied and complicated in character. Barth observes:

...the serpent religions of India form a complex whole and as such is not accounted for viewing it as a simple worship of deprecation. We can distinguish in it: (i) the direct adoration of the animal, the most formidable and mysterious of all the enemies of men; (ii) worship of the deities of the waters, springs, and rivers, symbolized by the waving form of the serpent; (iii) conceptions of the same kind as that of Vedic Ahi and connected clearly with the great myth of the storm and the struggle of light with darkness.

The Grihya-sūtras prescribe many rites pertaining to snake worship. They have a two-fold purpose, i.e. honouring and warding off snakes. The Āśvalāyana Grihya-sūtra (II, 1. 9) states that the sacrificer should go out to the east, pour water in the ground on a clear spot and offer sacrifice with the formula:

To the divine hosts of the serpents, svāhā, the serpents which are terrestrial, which are aerial, which are celestial, which dwell in the direction [of the horizon], to them, I have brought

9Augustus Barth, Religions of India, p. 166 ff.
the bali [sacrificial offerings], to them I give over these bali.\textsuperscript{10}

Further, it is stated in II. 1.14 of\textsuperscript{6} the same text that the sacrificer should offer the bali to the serpents in the evening and in the morning till the pratyavarohana\textsuperscript{11} with the formula, "To the divine hosts of serpents, svāhā."\textsuperscript{12} The Āśvalāyana Grihya-sūtra (IV, 8.27) says that to gratify the snake the sacrificer should offer them the blood of the sacrificial animal with the formula: "Hissing ones, noisy ones, searching ones, serpents, what here belongs to you, take that."\textsuperscript{13} The Pāraskara Grihya-sūtra (II. 14. 9) prescribes sacrificial rites to the serpents.\textsuperscript{14} All this shows that Nāga worship became part and parcel of the Aryan religion during the Sūtra period (c. 600-400 B. C.).

The epics throw considerable light on the origin of the Nāgas,\textsuperscript{15} their physical features, magic power and sanctity. Both the aspects, viz. the dreadful nature and the divine origin of the Nāgas are emphasized there. Ordinarily, they are prone to anger and are venomous. But they are descibed also as guardians of riches, and the bestowers of health, longevity and offsprings. They are possessed of magic power and they can assume any form they like. Their general abode is in the waters or below the earth in the nether region.

Regarding the hostilities between the Nāga and others there are many stories in the epic-literature. It is well known how Parikshhit was killed by the Nāga Takshaka. Janamejaya, to avenge the death of his father, started the snake-killing sacrific. The Nāga race was saved only by the intervention of

\textsuperscript{11}The Pratyavarohana (i. e. the ceremony of redescent) is performed on the full moon of Mārg Śirsha, on the 14th tithi.
\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., Āśvalāyana Grihya-Sūtra.
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 257.
\textsuperscript{14}Pāraskara Grihya-Sūtra, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XXIX, p. 328.
\textsuperscript{15}In the epics, the snakes are described as of divine origin, Rāmāyaṇa, III, 14, 28, Mahābhārata, 1.66.70. The general abode of these divine serpents is below the earth, where usually is found Śesha, the Nāga of a thousand mouths who supports the earth from below (Mahābhārata, V, 103, 2 ff, VII, 94, 98). It is the endless serpent Ananta lying on the waters, a creation of Vishṇu’s illusion, Udakeṣaya (lying on the waters) like Vishṇu himself as Nārāyaṇa, Rāmāyaṇa, VII, 104, 5.
Āstīka, the son of sage Jaratkārau, sister of the Nāga king Vāsuki. It appears that there were long-continued hostilities between the Nāgas and the Pāndavas though in the Mahābhārata the latter are described as the grandsons of the grandson of the Nāga Āryaka. Krishna and Arjuna helped the fire god in destroying the Khāṇḍava forest, which was the abode of the Nāga Takshaka and his son, Āśvasena. It is quite possible that in having helped Agni in the work of destroying the Khāṇḍava forest Arjuna incurred the wrath of Takshaka and his son Āśvasena. In order to avenge Arjuna, Āśvasena magically entered the quiver of Karnā in the shape of an arrow and intended to kill Arjuna.  

This also explains why Takshaka, of all the Nāgas, offered to bite Parikshit to death to fulfil the curse of the Brahmin Śrīṅgin.

But not all the Nāgas were cruel and dangerous. Both in the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata, the sanctity of the Nāgas has been emphasized inasmuch as they are attributed a divine origin. This is in continuity of the tradition in the Athārva Veda which calls the Nagas “devajanās”.

Among the virtuous Nāgas, the names of Śesha, Padmanābha, and several others are prominent. Nāga Śesha, the eldest of the thousand sons of Kadru and Kāśyapa, separated from his brothers and practised self-control and austerities. Pleased with his piety, Brahmā granted him the boon that he would protect the earth from below. In Vaishnava mythology he is held in very high esteem. He is a creation of Vishṇu’s illusion, Udakeśaya lying on the water, like Vishṇu himself as Nārāyaṇa. There is no more common representation of Vishṇu than as reposing on the Śesha, the celestial seven-headed snake contemplating the creation of the world. It was by his assistance that the ocean was churned and amrita was produced. Balarāma, the elder brother of Krishṇa, is described as an incarnation of Nāga Śesha. Nāga Śesha is regarded as one of the Prajāpatis in the Rāmāyana. He is also called a deva with a thousand hands, who

---

16The Mahābhārata, Karṇaparva.
17Ibid., Adiparva, XXXVI.
18Rāmāyana, III, 14, 7.
encircles the world and eventually curls himself over Vishnu, one of the titles being Dadhikarna.\textsuperscript{19}

The story of Naga Padmanabha is highly interesting. As described in the \textit{Sh\=antiparva} of the \textit{Mah\=abha\=rata},\textsuperscript{20} he lived in the Naimisha forest in the bank of the river Gomati. He was fond of studies, accomplished on austerities and abstemiousness, of superior moral conduct, was pious in his sacrificial work, a master of liberality, forbearing, of excellent demeanour and good character, truthful, free from envy, gifted with complete self-control, subsisted on leavings, affable in speech, gracious, honest and of great eminence, mindful of benefits, not quarrelsome, rejoicing in the welfare of other beings, and born of a race as pure as the waves of the Ga\=ng\=a. He drew the one-wheeled chariot of the sun god. As the story goes, a Brahmin called Dharmanaraya, disgusted with worldly affairs, came to Padmanabha for wise counsel. The Naga dwelt on the virtues of asceticism which removed all doubts from the mind of the Brahmin. The association of Naga Sesa with Vishnu as Ananta\=sayana and of Padmanabha with the sun seems to be somewhat anachronistic in view of the fact that the vehicle of Vishnu is Garuda, the traditional enemy of the Naga and the charioteer of the sun is Aru\=pa, the deformed half-brother of Garuda.

This shows the synthesizing power of the Brahmanical cults. As we shall see later, Buddhism also absorbed the Naga cult. All this shows one interesting trend. In the early stage, the Naga cult was in opposition to other cults, but as a result of social changes the elements of the Naga cult were absorbed and introduced in other pantheons. In the \textit{Rigveda}, Ahi-Vritra was treated as an enemy of Indra, but gradually it was transformed into Ahibudhnya. The \textit{Mah\=abha\=rata} and the \textit{Pur\=\=anas} present a struggle between Krish\=na and K\=ali\=ya; K\=ali\=ya was subdued, and later on both Krish\=na and Balar\=ama were treated as Naga divinities (Ke\=sava Ananta\=sayana and Balar\=ama as an incarnation of Sesa).

The J\=atakas also refer to the prevalence of snake-worship among the people. In the Champeyya Jata\=ka we read that as the

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., IV. 40, 49.
Nāga king Champaka took up his abode on an anthill to keep his vows of the Sabbath day, the passers-by worshipped him and craved for sons through his aid. This practice survives still in many parts of our country. In the Tamil country the childless wives take a vow\(^{21}\) to install a serpent if they are blessed with offspring.

Apart from the indigenous literary sources, there are notices by foreign writers with regard to the prevalence of serpent worship in India. Aelian writers:

When Alexander was assaulting some of the cities in India and capturing others, he found in many of them, besides other animals, a snake which the Indians, regarding as sacred, kept in caves and worshipped with much devotion. The Indians accordingly, with every kind of entreaty, implored Alexander to let no one molest the animal and he consented to this.\(^{22}\)

The above passage is a very important testimony to the prevalence of Nāga worship in India in the fourth century B.C. The Nāga association during this period seems to have been popular also in folk art, as is evident from a number of terracotta figurines of the Mauryan period which are preserved in the Patna Museum, Patna.\(^{23}\) The figurines with Nāga hoods (which have been distinguishing features of Nāga divinities and chiefs and emblems of cult gods like Śiva and Viṣṇu) show that the Nāga cult must have been an important element in the

\(^{21}\) "The ceremony consists in having a figure of a serpent cut in a stone slab placing it in a well for six months, giving it life (prāṇapraśṭhā) by reciting mantras and performing other ceremonies over it and then setting it up under a pipal tree (Ficus Religiosa), which has been married to Mangosa (Melica Azadi-rachta). Worship consists mainly in going round the tree 108 times. It is then performed for the next forty-five days. Similar circumambulations will also bring good luck in a general way substantially." See the Gazetteer of South Arcot District, 1906, i. 102.

\(^{22}\) M’crindle, Aelian, Ch. XXI; Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature, p. 145 ff.

\(^{23}\) Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports, 1926-27, p. 139, pl. XXXI; Pathak Commemoration Volume, p. 255 ff.
religious history of the period. Further, it may be noted that the snake is a frequent device on punch-marked coins\(^24\) (600 B.C. to 300 B.C.).

There are tangible epigraphic records regarding serpent worship during the early historical period (185 B.C. to A.D. 319). Bühler describes a Kharoshthi inscription in the *Indian Antiquary* (Vol. XXV, pp. 141-2) which records\(^25\) that a tank was caused to be made for the worship of all the Nāgas in the year 113 in the bright half of the month of Śrāvaṇa by Thera Nora, son of Dati. The scripts of the inscription agree closely with those of the Taxila copper plate of Patika and of Soḍāsa's inscriptions on the Mathura Lion Capital. Hence the present inscription can be assigned on palaeographical grounds to the first century A.D. Thera Nora, as the name shows, must have been a Greek living in the Gandhāra region where the inscription has been found. The Gandhāra region was inhabited during the early centuries of the Christian era by a large number of Greeks and Bactrian Greeks, some of whom, we know, adopted and patronised Buddhism. The term “Thera” denotes perhaps “Sthavira,” a well known Buddhist title. If this is accepted we find here an important instance of the close association of Buddhism with the Nāga cult. Buddhism, as we shall see presently, borrowed from and absorbed many Nāga religious beliefs and as such it was very popular among those whose original cult was Nāga worship.

The Nāgas have been associated with water in various places in Indian literature and art. The Vedic Aḥībudhnya, as we have noted above, is the dragon of the “fathomless deep”. The Anantaśayana of Vishnu on the coils of the Nāga Ananta in the midst of water points perhaps to the same fact and is the continuation of the tradition of Vedic Aḥībudhnya. The association of Nāgas with water is so close that certain scholars have taken them to be water spirits. So the dedication of a tank for snake worship need not cause surprise to us. It is in keeping with the

\(^{24}\) Allan, *Catalogue of Indians Coins, Ancient India*, p. 299.


1. *Dati putreṇa Thai Norena puka-
L. 2. ra [ui?] Karavita savrasapanapuyae
L. 3. Vashra Icxili Śrāvaṇa s[u]dha.*
traditions regarding the habitations of the Nāgas in rivers, lakes and pools.\textsuperscript{26}

Mathura has been an important centre of the Nāga cult since early times. The victory of Krishṇa over Kāliya, the story of the incarnation of Śesha as Balarāma, elder brother of Krishṇa and the observance of Nāga rituals by certain prominent inhabitants of Mathura-Vrindavana region seem to bear testimony to the above fact.\textsuperscript{27}

Mathura has yielded a large number of Nāga inscriptions and sculptures which can be ascribed with certainty to the early centuries of the Christian era. One of the earliest Nāga inscriptions in this connection is that described by Y. R. Gupte.\textsuperscript{28} It is engraved on the lower end of a Nāga image discovered near the village of Bhadal, about six miles from Mathura. The author collects from local traditions that the spot was visited by barren women who made vows to the deities. When they got sons, they came to the place to perform the tonsuring ceremony. The Nāga is represented standing with two Nāgās (female serpents) on either side.

It has a canopy of seven hoods with forked tongues. On the pedestal there are twelve human figures, five males, five female and two boys. They are evidently worshippers. The inscription in question is dated in the year eight of the Kushāṇa era and it records the erection of a tank and a garden in honour of Svāmi Nāga.

\textsuperscript{26}Vogel, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 3 ff. As Bühler remarks, every tank in Kashmir is known by the name nāga, and every small one is called nāgi. The guardian deity of each tank is a nāga; the Vular lake is said to be the residence of the serpent Padma (\textit{Indian Antiquary}, Vol. XXV, p. 141 ff.). See also the Mathura inscriptions, \textit{Epigraphia Indica}, Vol. XVII, p. 10 ff. which records the dedication of a tank and garden in honour of Bhagavat Svāmi Nāga.

\textsuperscript{27}In the \textit{Harivāṁśa}, \textit{Adhyāya}, XI, XII, it is stated that Nāga Kāliya lived in a pool (lake Kālia) near the river Yamunā, and the neighbouring forests were infested by various nāgas. Kāliya poisoned the water of the pool and Krishṇa became determined to chastise the nāga who rendered the water of the pool undrinkable. Krishna entered into the pool, danced on the hoods of the Kāliyanāga and burst assunder the snake’s coils which fettered him. Kāliya, thus tamed, sought Krishṇa’s mercy. Krishṇa spared his life but banished him with his kinsmen from the lake.

\textsuperscript{28}\textit{Epigraphia Indica}, Vol. XVII, p. 10 ff.
Bühler has described in the *Epigraphia Indica* (Vol. I, p. 390), an important Nāga inscription which records that a stone slab was set up in the place sacred to the Lord of Nāgas, Dadhikarna, in the year 26 on the fifth day of the third month of the rainy season by the boys “chief among whom were Nandibala... the sons of the actors of Mathura, who are being praised as Chhandaka brothers”. In the inscription, Dadhikarna is called Nāgendra and Bhagavat (this title has been used also before the name of Svāmi Nāga noted before). The present inscription states clearly that Nāgendra Dadhikarna had a sanctuary set up for himself. The epigraph is written in the Brāhmī scripts of the Kushāṇa period and the slab on which it is recorded was found at the Jamalpur Mound, located about two miles south of the city of Mathura. This was the site where once stood, as Vogel remarks, the Vihāra of Huvishka.\(^{30}\)

In this connection there is another inscription engraved on a pillar base which might have belonged to Huvishka’s Vihāra noted above. It records the gift of one Devilla,\(^{31}\) the servant of the shrine of Dadhikarna. From this inscription it is also clear that there was a shrine or temple for the Nāga deity Dadhikarna in Mathura. That Dadhikarna was a very prominent Nāga is proved by his name being included in the list of the Nāgas in Hemachandra’s own commentary on the *Abhidhāna Chintamaṇi*.\(^{32}\) He is invoked in the snake spell, the daily prayer, recited by Baladeva and after him by Krishṇa.\(^{33}\) It appears that the worship of the Nāga was a part of the Bhāgavata ritual practised in Mathura.

Vogel has drawn attention to another very relevant story or instance of a close association between the Nāga and Bhāgavata cults. This is the Puranic story of Akrūra’s paying homage to the lord of the Nāgas (Ananta).\(^{34}\) Deputed by Kaṁśa, Akrūra came to collect from Vraja taxes due to him. Krishṇa and

\(^{29}\)Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1908-1909, p. 159.

\(^{30}\)Ibid., p. 160.


\(^{32}\)Ibid., 160.

\(^{33}\)Ibid.

\(^{34}\)Harivāṁśa, Adhyāyā, XXVII, 5, 36-61.
Baladeva accompanied Akrūra on his journey back to Mathura. On the way, Akrūra got down from the car to the pool of the river Yamunā to offer his worship to the lord of the Nāgas, thousand-headed Ananta having a plough in one hand and his frame supported by a mace. When he dived into the water he saw Krishṇa, dark like a thunder cloud and wearing a yellow robe, seated on the lap of Ananta. His (Krishṇa’s) breast was adorned with the Śrīvatsa. Akrūra raised his head and found Krishṇa and Baladeva seated on the chariot as before. He dived again and found them in their divine form.

Further, it is a well known story that when Vāsudeva was carrying the new-born Krishṇa to Gokula, it rained and thundered and Nāgaśesha helped Vasudeva to cross the river Yamunā by warding off the water with his hood.

The above legends may be regarded as containing reference to two significant facts: the one is that by this time the enmity between the Nāga and Bhāgavata worshippers as represented by Krishṇa’s fight with Kāliya was over, and the other is that certain elements of Nāga-worship were accepted by the Bhāgavatas inasmuch as Baladeva came to be regarded as an incarnation of Nāga Śesha. Again, Mathura has yielded another very interesting inscription engraved on a Nāga image of Huvishka’s time. The image in question was discovered at the village of Chhargaon, 5 miles south of Mathura. The Nāga is represented standing “with his right arm raised over his head as if ready to strike”. The left hand is damaged, which probably held a cup in front of the shoulder.

85Tasya madhye sahasrāsyam hentaḷochchhrita dhvajam/lāṅgala sakta- hastāgram mushlopaśritodaram/Harivamsa, XXVI, 5, 49. In sculptures Baladeva appears with a canopy of serpent hoods as a snake deity and he holds a club (mushala) in the right hand and plough in the left, A Short Guide Book to the Archaeological Section of the Provincial Museum, Lucknow, by V. S. Agrawala, p. 14; Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports, 1918-19, pl. xiii a.

86Vavarsha parjanya upaināru garjitaṁ Sesho navagādvāri nivāraṇaṁ phaṇāīh, Bhāgavata Purāṇa, X. 3. 49. Dayaram Sahni has recognized the representation of this legend in a Mathura sculpture of the first or second century A. D., Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports, 1925-26, pp. 183-4.

87Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports, 1908-1909, p. 160.

88Ibid.
is surrounded by a seven-headed snakehood. The inscription says that the image was set up at a water tank during the 40th year of the reign of Huvishka. It concluded with the prayer, "May the Nāga deity be pleased" (Priyyati Bhagavā Nāgo).

In the neighbourhood of Mathura have been discovered a few more Nāga images similar to that of the Chhargaoon one. Growse got one such in the Sadabad Tahsil, characterised by a canopy of seven hoods, each hood with a forked tongue.\(^{39}\) Not far from the village of Itauti, eight miles east from Mathura, Vogel discovered the upper portion of a Nāgī figure about four feet high. This image was known locally by the name of Bhai and placed in the tank of Bai-ka-pokhra. This is perhaps a part of the Nāga image with an inscription of the Kushāṇa period recording the dedication of tank and a garden to the holy Svāmī Nāga published by Y.R. Gupte (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. xvii) as noted before.

A few more relics of Nāga worship, though of a little later date, are also interesting. One is a sculptural fragment of the hind portion of a coiled-up snake.\(^{40}\) The missing portion, as Vogel states, must have been a human bust with a snake hood. The fragment in question contains a short inscription in Sanskrit "Srī Aśvadevasya Bhuvana-Tripavarakaputra-saya". The inscription on palaeographical grounds may be assigned to the fourth century A.D. Tripavarakaka is an orthodox Brahmanical designation. The gift of a Nāga image by one belonging to a Vedic Pravara denotes that Nāga worship was intimately associated with orthodox Brahmanism.

Another Nāga statue of the Gupta period is housed in the Lucknow Museum. The arms of the figure are broken, but it is, as usual, accompanied by seven snake hoods. There is a Nāgī on its right-hand side and on the left are two kneeling figures with hands joined in adoration. According to Vogel, it may represent the image of Dadhikarna.\(^{41}\)

\(^{39}\) Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1875, Vol. XLIV, pp. 214-15. According to Growse this figure represents Balarāma. Another image of the same type, but much defaced, was found in the village of Khanni, six miles west of Mathura on the way to Govardhana. Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports, 1908-1909, p. 161.

\(^{40}\) Ibid.

\(^{41}\) Ibid., p. 163.
Some of the ancient Nāga images are known at Mathura under the name Bai Dauji, i.e. Baladeva. From this it appears that the followers of the Bhāgavata cult tried to spread their religion among the Nāga worshippers, and this was done by the device of describing Baladeva, elder brother of Krishṇa, the founder of the Bhāgavata cult, as an incarnation of Šesha. The inscriptions discussed above prove the popularity of the Nāga cult in Mathura in the early centuries and subsequent times. Similarly, there is archaeological evidence of the popularity of the Nāga cult in other parts of India too. The excavations at Rajgir in the year 1935-36 brought to light some fragments of sculptured stones forming parts of the back portion of a sculpture with two Nāga figures which were unearthed in earlier years. Joined together, they constitute the following panels of sculptures.

(i) The lowest panel represents eight Nāga figures standing side by side with an indistinct inscription on the pedestal. (ii) Above it is a decorated surface with one niche on each of the two extremities, the left one containing a Nāgi sitting on a cushion in the Bhadrāsana, with her feet resting on a stone pedestal which bears an inscription reading 'Bhagini Sumāgadhi'. The figure in the right niche is broken and only the canopy of the serpent hood is visible. (iii) On the top of these there was another panel of standing figures, only the feet of which have now survived, with an inscription below which suggests that a certain king pleased Maṇi Nāga.42

These inscriptions belong to the Kushāna period and the sculptures are on Mathura sandstone. Two things are thus clear—firstly, the diffusion of Mathura sculptures to as far as Rajgir in the east, and secondly, the prevalence of Nāga worship in Rajgir, which is also corroborated by literary sources. Budhaghosha speaks of the existence of a beautiful and spacious Nāga world under the Vaibhara mountain. The Mahābhārata refers to the temples of two pannāgas or Nāgas, namely Maṇināga and Svastika in Girivraja (Sabhā-parva of the Mahābhārata, Ch.21, v.9). The Maniarmath is perhaps the site of the temple of Maṇināga mentioned in the epic.43

---

42 Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports, 1936-37, p. 46.
43 Maniarmath is perhaps the site of the temple of Maṇināga mentioned in the epic (Memoirs, Archaeological Survey of India, No. 58, pp. 33 ff.).
The Nāgas figure prominently also in Buddhist literature and art. In the Brahmanical legends and art of both pre-Buddhistic and post-Buddhistic periods the Nāgas have been treated as independent deities, while in the Buddhistic treatment they are semi-divine spirits or real human beings, who are shown no doubt, sometimes as fierce and rebellious, but who bow ultimately to the supreme, regulative, and persuasive power of Buddha. Vogel, in his *Serpent Lore in India* has drawn attention to most of the Nāga legends in Buddhist works and their representation in art.

One of the greatest miracles of Buddha was the subduing of the Nāga in the fire altar of the Kāśyapa (Jātila) brothers. The story goes that after preaching the first sermon at Sārnāth, Buddha came to Gayā (Uruvilā) and met the Kāśyapa brother, on whose fire altar was a Nāga divinity. As soon as Buddha entered the fire altar, the Nāga became furious and began to pour out venom. But Buddha subdued him by his own tejas.

Further, it may be stated that excavation exposed several brick altars or platforms round the main shrine of the Maniarmath. On and near one such altar were found scattered a large number of pottery jars, some of them being four feet in height. A peculiar feature of these jars is that they have struck on, or in some cases rivetted into their surfaces a large number of spouts some of which are curiously shaped as serpent hoods, goblins and animal figures. It is interesting to note that similar jars with spouts are still used in Bengal in the worship of serpents under the name Manasa. *A Guide to Rajgir* by H. Kuraishi and A. Ghosh, pp. 24 and 45 and pls. IV and V.

44The fire-cult is a very ancient institution and it has been put to different uses. Agni as the sacrificial altar is a link with all divinities. As subsequently various cults arose their divinities were sought to be identified with Agni. Since Nāgas are often as lustrous as fire, it is natural that they were associated with the fire cult.

45There is one trend here which is noticeable. In the early stage the Nāga cult was in opposition to other cults, but as a result of social changes it was introduced and absorbed in other religious pantheons. In the *Rigveda*, Ahi-Virra has been treated as an enemy of Indra but gradually it was transformed into Ahibuddhnya, and the *Puranas* and the *Mahābhārata* present a struggle between Krishṇa and Kāliya; but Kāliya was subdued and a compromise was effected between the Nāga and Bhāgavata cults later on, resulting in both Krishṇa and Balarāma being regarded as Nāga divinities (Kesava Ananta-śayana and Avatara of Śesanāga in Balarāma). Similarly the Nāgas were opposed at first to Buddha's teachings but after Buddha's victory over the Nāga of Uruvilva the Kāśyapa brothers were converted to Buddhism.
and put the Nāga in his alms bowl. This legend has found expression in the art of Sanchi, Amaravati and Gandhara. It is to be noted that since one branch of the Kāśyapas was Kādravas or Nāgas, Nāga worship was traditional with certain Kāśyapa Brāhmaṇas. The other branches of Kāśyapas, like the Mānavas or Īkṣvākus (to which group the Śākyas belong) were thus cognate to Kādrava Kāśyapas. This explains the readiness with which Buddhism approaches and absorbs the Nāga cult. In Sanchi, the Buddha’s presence has been indicated, as is usual with early art, by a stone seat in the altar hall. The five-headed hood of the Nāga can be seen clearly over the seat and the Jaṭilas with matted hair and vākala garment represent the three Kāśyapa brothers. In the Amaravati panel illustrating the story, the presence of Buddha is indicated by a pair of footprints in the fire-hut. In Ganda sculptures anthropomorphic figures of the Buddha have been introduced and he is shown in the midst of anchorites (Kāśyapa brothers). On one fragment (No. 2345) in the Lahore Museum he is shown offering the Nāga in the alms-bowl to the eldest Kāśyapa.

The Bhārhat sculptures contain representations of several Nāgarājas. Nāgarāja Erāpatra is shown as making his way to the Buddha, seated under one of the Śīrīsha trees together with his wife and daughter to pay their homage to the Buddha. The dragon chief raises his head over the water and his daughter is represented as singing and dancing in order to attract the notice of the visitors who might give information as to the whereabouts of the Master. There are two inscriptions, one recording the name of Erāptara and the other his action “Erāpatra the Dragon Chief” and “The Dragon Chief Erāpatra bows down to the divine Master.” On Bhārhat sculptures there is representation of another Nāgarāja, called Chakravāka. He is shown standing in human form with a cobra hood near a lake in an attitude of devotion.

46Fergusson, Tree and Serpent Worship (1868-1873 editions), pls. XXXII, LXX; Grünwedel, Buddhist Art in India, p. 61 ff., Fig. 35; Foucher Beginnings of Buddhist Art, pp. 97 ff., pl., IX, 1.
47B. M. Barua, Barhut, Books I & II, p. 61.
48Ibid., p. 62.
The taming and conversion of the Nāga King Apalāśla, who was a native of the Swat valley is a favourite theme with the Graeco-Buddhist and other artists of the early centuries of the Christian era. The sculptures depicting the story represent Buddha as turning towards the frightened Nāga accompanied by one or two Nāgīs. The Nāga is shown standing either at Buddha’s side or rising from the water of which he is the presiding deity.\textsuperscript{49}

The Nāgas are associated also with various events of Buddha’s life. When Bodhisattva Gautama was born in the Lumbini garden, two Nāgarājas, Nanda and Upānanda came and bathed him with two streams of hot and cold water. Another Nāga, Muchalinda, protected Buddha at Gaya by spreading his large hood over his head against cold winds and rains. The Nāgarāja Kālika foretold the approaching enlightenment of the Bodhisattva in a hymn of praise. Nāga Elāpatra came from Taxila to Sarnath to seek refuge with Buddha. The legend apparently records the amalgamation of the Taxila Nāga cult with the new movement, i.e. Buddhism. One of the best examples depicting the story is the panel which was excavated by Stein at Sahr-i-Bahlol and is now preserved in the Peshawar Museum. After the Nirvāṇa of the Buddha, a stūpa was built over his relics at Rāmgrāma and the stūpa was guarded by the Nāgas. In the Buddhist accounts we are told that the Devas and Nāgas also got a share of Buddha’s relics (i.e. the as yet unconverted Nāga worshippers and Deva-worshippers recognized the greatness of Buddhism). There are a few interesting sculptures representing the theme. All these and several other stories have been represented elaborately in the Buddhist art of early and later periods.\textsuperscript{50} The Nāga lore in Buddhist lore and art

\begin{footnotesize}

symbolize the great achievement of Buddha in conquering the hostilities of the ancient and primitive Nāga cult and in making the great mass of the Nāga worshipper and people faithful adherents of the reformed religion, i.e. Buddhism.

As in Buddhism and Brahmanical religion, the Nāgas play a prominent part also in Jainism. A striking instance of the Nāga element in the Jaina religion is the snake emblem of Pārśvanātha, the last but one Jaina prophet and also of Supārśva (the seventh Jaina Tīrthaṅkara). It may be stated here that the colossal Jain figure of Gomatesvara \(^{51}\) at Śrāvanabelgola in Mysore is represented as surrounded by ant hills from which snakes are found to emerge. An allusion is made to Pārśva’s association with the snakes. One day Pārśva saw Kaṭha (an ascetic) engaged in fire penance throwing a serpent into the fire-pan. Pārśva saved the snake and it was reborn as Dharana, the wealthy king of the Nāgas and Kaṭha as a result of his cruelty was born as Asura Megahmālin by name. One day while Pārśva was standing in the forest of Kuṣāmbi, the serpent king Dharana came in great haste to do honour to Pārśva and he spread an umbrella over his head to protect him from the sun.\(^ {52}\) Nāgas figure sometimes as attendants of Vardhamāna Mahāvīra\(^ {53}\) also. One such specimen is illustrated on a Mathura slab of the Kushāṇa period, containing the representation of Mahāvīra with lions on the pedestal. Vardhamāna is seated under a sacred tree with attendants, one of whom is a Nāga with a canopy of cobra hoods.\(^ {54}\) As in Buddhist sculptures, Nāgas are sometimes represented on Jaina

\(^{51}\) Edgar Thurston, *Omens and Superstitions of Southern India*, p. 135.


\(^{53}\) Smith, *Jain Stupas and Other Antiquities of Mathura*, pl. XCI, righthand figure.

\(^{54}\) *Ibid.* , pl. XCI.
sculptures as worshipping the stūpas. For example, there is a Mathura panel of the Kushāṇa period containing a stūpa and four worshippers one of whom is a Nāga miden.\(^{55}\)

The word “Nāga” has been used in Indian literature in more senses than one. Firstly, it refers to the ordinary and deified snakes; secondly, to the people who claimed their descent from Nāga parent or parents; and thirdly, to those who are associated with the Nāga cult. The Nāga people have played an important role in the political history of India as the Nāga cult in the religious history. The matrimonial alliances between the Nāga princesses and the members of the Aryan tribes are frequently referred to in the Brahmanical and Buddhist literature. The marriages between Arjuna and Ulūpi, between Jaratkāru the ascetic and Jaratkāru the Nāga maiden (the sister of Nāga Vāsuki) present apt instances in this regard. The five Pāṇḍava brothers are described in the Mahābhārata, as the grandsons of the Nāga named Āryaka. The Baradrathas and Śiśunāgas are also supposed to be Nāga rulers. Kalhana in his Rajatarangini describes the love between the Brahmin Viṣākha and Chandralekha, the fair daughter of the Nāga Susravas.\(^{56}\) The Bhuridatta Jātaka describes the marriage of the Prince of Vārānāsi with a Nāga maiden. The girl born of this marriage was married to the serpent king Dhritarāṣṭra.

According to the Rāyakota grant (ninth century A.D.) the Brahmin Aśvatthāmā (who founded the Pallava race) married a Nāga woman\(^{57}\) and by her a son called Skandishya was born. Tradition avers that the ruling line of the Kamboja country had its origin from the union of the Nāga princess Somā with the Brahmin Kauṇḍinya.\(^{58}\) Ceylon also seems to have been an important centre of the Nāga race and was known as Nāgadipa for a long time.\(^{59}\)

The word “Nāga” forms a part of various individuals mentioned in the inscriptions of the early centuries of the

\(^{55}\)Kalhana, Rajatarangini, I, pp. 201-73; Stein’s trans., Vol. I, pp. 34 ff.
\(^{57}\)Ibid., Vol. XV, p. 246.
\(^{58}\)B. R. Chatterjee, Indian Influence in Cambodia, pp. 3 ff.
Christian era. The names, like Jayanāga, Mahānāgā, Nāgabahutikiya, Nāgadatta, Nāgadina, Nāgavati, Nāgapiya, Nāgarakhita, Nāgasena, etc., are found in the Brāhmī inscriptions of the post-Mauryan period.\(^{60}\)

During the first to fourth centuries a large part of South India was under the influence of the Nāga cult. Ptolemy\(^{61}\) mentions the coast of Soringoi and Arouarnoi with their capitals at Orthoura and Malanga respectively. Orthoura, according to Ptolemy, was ruled over by Sornagos and Malanga by Basaronagos. D. C. Sircar holds that Soringoi represents the Chola Maṇḍala\(^{62}\) and its capital Orthoura is most probably identical with Uragapura or Uraiyr (Uragapura or Uralipur means etymologically the town of the Nāgas). Arouarnoi is supposed to be identical with Kanchimandala. Sornagos is something like Sūryanāga and Basaronagos is Vajra or Varshanāga.\(^{63}\) This perhaps shows the prevalence of the Nāga cult in South India during the second century A. D.

During the early centuries of the Christian era, there was a considerable Nāga influence in the Andhradeśa also. The Sātavāhanas and their successors, the Chuṭukula Śātakarnis seem to have belonged to Nāga stock. In this connection Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri observes:

There is reason to believe that the Andhrabhritya or Sātavāhana kings were Brāhmaṇas with a little admixture of Nāga blood. The Dwātriṃsaṃputtlikā represents Sālivāhana (Sātavāhana) as of mixed Brāhmaṇa and Nāga origin.\(^{64}\)

A chief, Śkandanāga by name, ruled in the Bellary District in the reign of Pulumāvi, the last king of the main Sātavāhana line. Nāga Mūlanikā is known to have made a gift of a Nāga, together with her son called Śivaskanda Nāgasri.\(^{65}\) Powerful Nāga

\(^{60}\)Epigraphia Indica, Vol. X, index of personal names in Lüders List.

\(^{61}\)M. Crindle, Ancient India as Described by Ptolemy, ed. by S. N. Majumdar Sastri, pp. 64-6, 184-5.

\(^{62}\)The Successors of the Sātavāhanas, op. cit., p. 148 ff.

\(^{63}\)Ibid.

\(^{64}\)Political History of Ancient India, 1st edition, p. 220.

\(^{65}\)The Successors of the Sātavāhanas, op. cit., p. 220.
rulers flourished in North India in the early centuries of the Christian era. The Bhāraśive Nāgas, the Nāgas of Mathura, Pdmmāvatī, and Vidīsa regions were powerful princes and issued coins in their names. The marriage alliance between the Bhāraśive Nāgās and the Vākāṭakas was considered so important that it was recorded in all the Vākāṭaka inscriptions. The passage in which this is recorded also tells that before the marriage, the Bhāraśivas performed ten Āsvamedhas on the bank of the Ganges. Bhavanāga, whose daughter was married to Rudrasena Vākāṭaka (c. A.D. 340-360) must have been a very powerful king, otherwise his name would not have occurred in Vākāṭaka inscriptions.

While studying a number of Nāga coins, Dr. Altekar holds that Bhavanāga whose daughter was married to Rudrasena Vākāṭaka and who has been described as a Bhāraśiva prince was a Nāga ruler of Pdmmāvatī.66

As far as we know, the Nāgas of Pdmmāvātī did not use Nāga symbols on their coins. It is probably due to the fact that with their rise to higher political power they thought it expedient not to confine themselves to the Nāga cult which concerns only a particular race. Moreover, Vaishṇavism and Śaivism had gained a wide popularity and prevalence by the time of the Bhāraśivas and Vākāṭakas, and Guptas. And we know that the Bhāraśivas and Vākāṭakas were ardent followers of Śaivism. Among the Nāga rulers who issued coins mention may be made of Skandanāga, Brihaspatināga, Devanāga, Prabhākaranāga and Gaṇapatināga, etc. Gaṇapatināga was a contemporary of Samudragupta. The symbols occurring on the coins are the bull, trident, wheel and peacock, etc., but the Nāga symbol noted above is conspicuous by its absence.

Now we may turn to the rulers who adopted Nāga devices on their coins. Snakes were commonly used on the reverse of the coins of Ayodhya rulers like Viśākhadeva, Dhanadeva and Naradatta67 (second century B.C.). It is interesting to note that one of the obverse symbols on these coins is a bull. The

---

bull occurs very frequently also on the coins of Nāga rulers referred to above. This indicates the close association between the Nāgas and Śaivism. Śaivic association with the Nāgas can be traced as early as 4,500 years back. Rai Bahadur R. P. Chanda has drawn our attention to an Indus copper seal with a deity, two devotees and two Nāgas. The deity is seated in a yogi’s posture and this is perhaps a figure of Śiva.\textsuperscript{68} In the \textit{Mahābhārata}, Śiva has the snake among other attributes. He is called a snake wearer and club bearer, etc. It to be noted that the Nāga symbol occurs on some of the Andhra coins of uncertain attribution.\textsuperscript{69} Certain coins of the above series bear a Nandipada on the obverse and a Nāga symbol on the reverse\textsuperscript{70} which bespeaks a close Nāga-Śaiva association.

One of the reasons for the association of serpents with Rudra-Śiva is their power of healing.\textsuperscript{71} Fergusson remarks, “When we first meet with serpent worship either in the wilderness of Sinai, the groves of Epidaurus, or in the Sarmatian huts the serpent is always the Agathodaemou, the bringer of health and good fortune.” That the idea of health was associated with the serpent is shown by “the crown formed of the asp of sacred Thermuthis, given particularly to Isis, a goddess of life and healing.”\textsuperscript{72} It is said that in return for the sweet sounding lyre, Apollo gave Hermes “the magical three-leaved rod of wealth and happiness.” This rod was sometimes entwined with serpents instead of fillets. In this rod we may recognize the phallic symbol of Śiva which is also found sometimes encircled by serpents. Thus, the serpent seems to be one of the most appropriate symbols of Rudra the “healer”.\textsuperscript{73} Further, snake symbols occur on the tribal coins of the Mālavas,

\textsuperscript{68}Modern Review, LII, p. 15 ff, pl. ii, Fig. a.
\textsuperscript{69}Rapson, Catalogue of Coins, Andhras, Western Kshatrapas, Traikutakas and Bodhi Dynasty, p. 53.
\textsuperscript{70}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{71}Śiva is regarded in Vedic literature as the best of physicians, as noted before.
\textsuperscript{72}Staniland Wake, Serpent Worship, p. 88,
\textsuperscript{73}Ibid.
Yaudheyas, Kaḍas and on those of Kausambi, and Taxila of the post-Mauryan period.

The above discussion shows that the Nāga race and the Nāga cult were widespread in India and had a great influence on the social and religious life of the people. The popularity of the Nāga cult has survived down the centuries, as is evident from the profuse representations of Nāgas and Nāgis and other Nāga, symbols occurring in the Gupta, Mediaeval and later art of India. Even now in different parts of India, the snake goddess Manasā, whose exploits are mentioned in the folk-literature of India, is worshipped with great reverence.

---

5. The Survival of Vedic Elements in Neo-Brahmanism

Neo-Brahmanism or Hinduism is, as already mentioned before, a multiform structure consisting of polygenous religious ideas. It is a synthesis or a combination of the Vedic and non-Vedic, hieratic and popular, native and foreign. The orthodox and popular elements are so intimately woven that we can only separate them by an act of abstraction. The process of synthesis of which Neo-Brahmanism is the result began very early, but it was intensified perhaps from c. 500 B.C. when dissenting religions like Jainism and Buddhism were spreading fast on Indian soil. Brahmanism showed a great alertness in adjusting itself to existing circumstances. Notwithstanding the zeal with which the Brahmanical teachers threw themselves into popular theosophy and devotional systems of worship, they were careful enough to preserve the old traditions and hieratic elements. It is true that as time passed, the sectarian and theistic forms of worship gained wider popularity, but the orthodox traditions and ceremonies continued (and in fact are still continuing) in the framework of expanded Brahmanism or Neo-Brahmanism, however limited their influence might have been. If the Epics and the Purānas were devoted mainly to popularizing the worship of personal gods and deities, the Dharmasūtras and Śāstrās were written to preserve the popularity of the Vedic practices. An attempt has been made here to show from relevant archaeological and other sources the continuity of hieratic elements in the framework of Neo-Brahmanism (the chief characteristics of which are however the worship of personal gods like Viṣṇu, Krishṇa, and Śiva) in the period between 200 B.C.-A.D. 300.
Among the patrons of old Brahmanic traditions in the period under review, the name of Pushyamitra Śuṅga\(^1\) (who was a Brahmin of the Bharadvāja gotra) deserves special mention as he is one of the early rulers known to have performed the Vedic sacrifice called the Aśvamedha. Pushyamitra was the Commander-in-Chief of the Mauryan army and he usurped the throne of Magadha by murdering the last Maurya monarch, Brihadratha\(^2\) in c. 185 B.C. India was full of political unrest when he came to the throne. From Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya and various other sources it appears that the Yavanas invaded India and penetrated into the heart of the country at this time. Patañjali alludes to their operations against Madhyamikā (Nagari near Chitor) and Saketa (Ayodhya) for he gives the following illustrations of the use of the imperfect tense (to denote an action which though not seen by a speaker was recent enough to have been seen by him): “arunad Yavano Madhyāmikām, arunad Yavanaḥ Sāketām”\(^3\). According to the Gārgī Samhita the Greeks reduced Mathura, the Panchala country, Saketa, and even reached Kusumadhvaja (Pataliputra). Pushyamitra stood firmly against the Greek menace and his army under the command of his grandson, Vasumitra, inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Greeks on the bank of the Sindhu.\(^4\)

Pushyamitra seems to have performed this sacrifice after his victorious wars with the Greeks, which is referred to in the Mālavikāgnimitram of Kālidāsa. Patañjali perhaps officiated as a priest in the sacrifice as would appear from the passage in the Mahābhāṣya : iha Pushyāmitrām Yājyāmah.\(^5\) The Ayodhya inscription of Dhanadeva informs us that Pushyamitra performed not only one but two horse sacrifices.\(^6\)

\(^1\)Pāṇini and Baudhāyana represent the Śuṅgas as Bharadvājas: Vikarṇa-Śuṅgachchagālagād Vaisā-Bharadvājā trishu (Pāṇini śūtra, IV. I. 117); see Baudhāyana-Śrutasūtra, edited by Caland, Vol. III, p. 429.

\(^2\)Pargiter, The Dynasties of the Kali Age, p. 31.

\(^3\)See Patañjali’s commentary on the śūtra: parokṣe cha lokā vijnāte prayoktārūḍaraṇa-viṣhayā (Kielhorn, Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya, Vol. II), p. 119.

\(^4\)Mālavikāgnimitram, Act V; V. A. Smith, Early History of India (1908), p. 198.

\(^5\)Indian Antiquary, 1872, p. 300.

to Jayaswal there is a reference to Pushyamitra's horse-sacrifice in the *Harivamśa*. In Book III Chapter II of this text, there is a significant dialogue between Janamejaya and Vyāsa on the future of the Aśvamedha sacrifice. On Janamejaya's enquiry Vyāsa told him that after his Aśvamedha the Kshatriyas would no longer perform it. Being distressed on hearing it Janamejaya anxiously enquired if there was any hope of its being performed in future by anybody else. In reply, Vyāsa observed that a certain Brahmin Senānī (Commander-in-chief) of the Kāśyapa family will suddenly rise to power and perform the horse-sacrifice in the Kali Age⁷ (*Audbhijjo—bhavitā Kaśchit Senānīḥ Kāśyapodvijahḥ Aśvamedham Kali-yuge punah pratyāharisharisyati*).

Jayaswal and R.P. Chanda think that the Audbhijja (upstart), Kāśyapadvijā (Kāśyapagotra Brahmin), Senānī (commander-in-chief) refers to none other than Pushyamitra.⁸ Pushyamitra was no doubt an upstart as he could not claim any royal descent or heritage. Regarding the title Senānī, we know that he is represented as such in the *Purāṇas*, in the *Mālavikāgnimitram* and in the Ayodhyā inscription of Dhanadeva. The difficulty, however, lies with the gotra name (Kāśyapa). Pushyamitra who was Śuṅga should have been described as a Bharadvāja and not as a Kāśyapa. Jayaswal thinks that he is wrongly represented as belonging to the Kāśyapa gotra in the *Harivamśa*. His original gotra seems to have been forgotten when the tradition of his horse-sacrifice was recorded therein.⁹

Jayaswal and many other scholars consider the horse-sacrifice of Pushyamitra as marking the revival of Brahmanism, which, as they hold, fell into disuse in the time of the Mauryas (who, in their opinion, were Śūdras), specially in the reign of Aśoka who put a stop to the animal sacrifices.¹⁰ This view, however, has no foundation in facts. It is true that Brahmanism

---

⁸Ibid.
⁹Ibid., p. 25.
¹⁰Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri holds that Pushyamitra and his descendants belonged to Kāśyapa-gotra and their correct family name was “Baimbika” rather than Śuṅga (*Indian Culture*, Vol. III, p. 739 ff.; Vol. IV, pp. 363 ff.).
did not find much royal support in the Mauryan age, as its rulers were followers of dissenting faiths, but that does not mean that Brahmanism was out of vogue during Mauryan times. Even in orthodox communities there arose, long before Ašoka, rational thinkers who decried the efficacy of sacrifices and recorded a strict injunction against animal slaughter. With the growth of Upanishadic thought the idea of the efficacy of elaborate ritualism was discarded and emphasis began to be laid on rational contemplation. The Brihadāranyaka Upanishad prescribes that instead of a horse-sacrifice the visible universe is to be conceived as a horse and meditated upon as such. Krishṇa, son of Devaki, was taught by his teacher Ghora Āṅgirasa that sacrifice may be performed without objectivc means; that generosity, kindness and other moral traits are the real signs of sacrifices. In the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, it is laid down that no animal should be sacrificed in the Krita age. Further, in the Nārāyanīya Section it is written that king Uparicara Vasu, a devotee of Nārāyana, arranged under the superintendence of Brihaspati an Āsvamedha sacrifice according to the rules of Arānyāka without animal sacrifices. There are references also in the Rāmāyaṇa regarding the observance of strict nonviolence in certain orthodox āśramas. We read in Aranyakaṇḍa that when Rāma proceeded from the āśrama of Śarabhaṅga to that of Sutikshṇa and expressed his desire to stay with the latter, the latter (i.e. Sutikshṇa) described his āśrama “as resorted to by the Rishi-saṅgha, who did not allow any animal to be slain there”. At this Rāma said that his habit of hunting would undoubtedly cause pain to Sutikshṇa and so he could not stay there for long. After a vegetarian meal Rāma proceeded next morning to other āśramas of the Daṇḍaka Rishis.

As already shown, the opinion against animal sacrifice grew with increasing emphasis on meditation and humanitarian

12Brihadāranyaka Upanishad, I, i.
works. This trend, which found a clear expression in the \textit{Bhagavadgītā} (Chapters IV, XVII and XVIII) and several other religious texts, became the chief source of attraction of the reformation movements, namely Jainism and Buddhism in the sixth century B. C.

Pushyamitra Śuṅga’s coup d’etat against Brihadratha Maurya is regarded by Jayaswal and several other scholars as a Brahmanical revolt against the Mauryas. In the opinion of these scholars, the Mauryas (who were followers of the dissentient faiths) were Śūdras in origin, and the introduction of \textit{daṇḍa-samātā} (equality in punishment), and prohibition of animal-sacrifices, etc., by Aśoka were anti-Brahmanical measures, (as already stated above) seeking to deprive the Brahmanical community of the privileges enjoyed by them from time immemorial, and this led to the great dissatisfaction of Brahmanical people, which culminated in the usurpation of the Magadhan throne by Pushyamitra, a Brāhmaṇa of the Bharadvāja gotra.\footnote{Journal, \textit{Bihar and Orissa Research Society}, Vol. IV, pp. 257-65; \textit{Manu and Yājñavalkya}, pp. 29-43.}

Jayaswal thinks that the \textit{Mānavadharmāsāstrā} is a product of the Śuṅga-Kāṇya regime, and the extreme hostility of this \textit{Dharmaśāstra} towards the Śūdras, specially Śūdras as rulers and high officials, is indicative of a strong reaction against the Maurya regime.\footnote{Ibid.} In support of his theory, Jayaswal refers to the high Brahmanical pretensions contained in the \textit{Mānava} code. According to his interpretation the \textit{Mānavadharmāsāstrā} (XII, 100), which states that it is the Brahmin (\textit{Vedaśastravid}) who deserves the leadership of the army (\textit{saināpatya}), sovereignty (\textit{rājya}), the chiefship of the executive (\textit{daṇḍanetritva}) and the overlordship of the whole people (\textit{sarvalokādhipatya}), refers to the achievements of the orthodox Brāhmaṇa hero, the Senāpati Pushyamitra who obtained sovereignty and followed a strong executive policy, while these and many other Brahmanical pretensions in the code were tolerated, for it was composed during the orthodox regime of the Śuṅgas and Kāṇyas.\footnote{Ibid.}

The view of Jayaswal and others, as stated above, does not seem to be tenable for more than one reason. The date of the
composition of the Mānavadharmaśāstra is uncertain, and whatever its date may be, there is hardly any justification for characterizing it as a Śuṅga code reflecting a Brahmanical reaction against the Maurya regime. Again, it is doubtful if the Mauryas were at all Śudras and if the introduction of danda-samātā and the prohibition of animal sacrifices by Aśoka can at all be interpreted as measures promulgated with a view to offending the sentiments of the Brahmanical community.

To interpret Pushyamitra’s military coup d’état against his master Brihadratha Maurya as a Brahmanical revolt against the heterodox Mauryan regime is to ignore in our opinion the antecedents of his career. His deeds and achievements would reveal that what he did was the successful consummation of the exploits of an ambitious general. He was, we know, a militant Brahmin and the commander-in-chief of the Mauryan army. He was the de facto if not the de jure ruler of the Maurya dominion in Brihadratha’s lifetime. Merutungā’s Therāvali relates that the Mauryas ruled for 108 years and Pushyamitra for 30 years. The Purāṇas, in general, accord 137 years for the total duration of the Maurya rule. The total of 137 years suits not only the Purānic but also the Buddhist traditions as recorded in the Mahāvamsa. So it appears that the Therāvali, which more or less concerns the genealogical succession of kings in Avanti (as the Purāṇas concern that of the Magadhan kings), has split the Mauryan rule into two parts and the last part of 30 years has been attributed to Pushyamitra. Thus it seems that Pushyamitra had exercised independent powers in the west during the lifetime of Brihadratha, perhaps acknowledging loyalty nominally to the latter during this period. This seems to be supported by the Vāyu Purāṇa which also assigns a rule of 60 years to Pushyamitra. Pushyamitra’s rule of 60 years is inconsistent with the general statement of the Purāṇas which accord only 110-112 years for the total duration of the Śuṅga rule. But this can be explained by supposing that though the duration of the Śuṅga rule was counted in most of the Purāṇas

19This explains why Agnimitra and Vasumitra were in Vidisa. They were ruling independently in Central India while Pushyamitra went afield for supremacy in Magadha.
from after the death of Brihadratha and the usurpation of the throne by Pushyamitra, the Vāyu has included in Pushyamitra’s rule also the years during which he ruled independently in the west in the lifetime of Brihadratha.

From the preceding it is clear that Pushyamitra had acquired considerable power before he seized the Mauryan throne, and that his final coup d’etat is the culmination of his ambitious design to bring the whole Mauryan dominion under his control. It seems to be unwarranted to characterize it purely as a Brahmanical revolt.

Again, as noted above, Pushyamitra, who was a Śuṅga, was of the Bharadvāja gotra. The Bharadvājas were a branch of the Āṅgirasa some of whom, according to the epic-Puranic traditions, were a mixed Kshatriya-Brāhmaṇa people or Brahma-Kshatriyas combining the functions of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas, and it is quite possible that Pushyamitra’s military profession was due to his family traditions, rather than to any extraordinary circumstances. In other words, it would appear that as Pushyamitra belonged to a Brāhmaṇa-Kshatriya or Brahma-Kshatriya family, the use of arms was quite natural on his part and was not forced upon him to meet a special circumstance.

It may not be out of place to say that the Purāṇas refer to several royal families as Brahmakshatra or Kshatriya-Brāhmaṇa families amongst which the Paurava family is the most noted. From the Paurava family emanated both Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas. The reasons why the Paurava line is called a Brahma-Kshatra family may be due to the fact that Bharadvāja,21 a descendant of Brihaspati, the Āṅgirasa rishi, was adopted by Bharata, son of Dushyanta, and the Paurava line was continued by the descendants of this Bharadvāja.


21 Bharadvāja begot a son Vitatha by name. Instead of ascending the throne, he consecrated his son Vitatha and then died or returned to the forest. The Paurava line was continued by Vitatha and the Bharatas (Bharadvājas) could assert either Kshatriya or Brāhmaṇa paternity or combine both. See Puranic texts on the point collected by Pargiter, Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, p. 159. See also Matsya Purāṇa, 49, 27-34; Vāyu, 99, 152-158 (Vangavasi edition).
As a result of this mixture, the Bharadvājas in question, as the *Vedārtha-dīpikā* tells us, could assert either Kshatriya or Brāhmaṇa paternity:

_Bharadvāja Bharadvājaputrā ityarthah...cha Brihspate pautrāḥ, Dushyanta nripa-putrasya Bharatasya vā pautrāḥ_*

Again, the *Matsya Purāṇa* says explicitly that from Bharadvāja were descended both Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas.

_Tasmādapi Bharadvājāt Brāhmaṇāḥ Kastriyāḥ bhuvī/ dvāmusyāyaṇa-kulānāḥ smritāste dvividhena cha//*

That the descendants of Bharadvāja, such as Suhotras, Sunahotras, Naras, Gargas and Rijiśvans could also optionally claim to be grandsons of Brihaspati or Bharata, is evident from the statement in the *Vedārthadīpikā* (on *Rigveda*, VI, 52) that they belonged to the Bṛhasptya gotra of Saṃyu, who is elsewhere said to be the son of Brihaspati. From the fact that they were born in the Paurva line and yet could claim Saṃyu’s gotra, it is amply clear that these Bharadvājas were a Kshatriya-Brāhmaṇa people.

Again, the *Purāṇas* declare in explicit terms the Urukshayas, Kapis, Gargyas, Kāṇvas, Priyamedhas, Maudgalyas, Viśnupridhas, Hāritas, Śaunakas, and several others as Kṣatropetādvijātyaḥ, who combined the traditions of both the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas. In view of all these, it is quite possible that

23*Matsyapurāṇa*, 196, 52 (Vangavasi edition). Pargiter, on the basis of his Puranic studies, thinks that Bharadvāja, son of Brihaspati, was of two generations earlier than Bharata, and the person who was adopted was not Bharadvāja-Vidathin, grandson or great-grandson of Bharadvāja, (Pargiter, op. cit., p. 163).
25Indian traditions record several other instances of this peculiar combination of Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas, besides those noted above. Richīka, the Bṛāgava Rishi and grandfather of Paraśurāma married Satyavatī, the daughter of Kṣatriya Gādhī (Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts*, vol. i, p. 349, and it is a well known fact that Paraśurāma himself was a Brāhmaṇa with the profession of Kṣatriya, i.e. warrior. Again, Nahusha’s son, Yati, relinqui-
Pusyamitra belonged to one such Brahmakshatra family, and as such was a Brähmaṇa with a Kshatriya tradition.  

In this connection it may also be noted that like the Śuṅgas, their contemporaries and successors, the Kāṇvas, Sātavāhanas, Vākāṭakas, Pallavas and Kadambas seem to have belonged to Brahma-Kshatriya or Kshatriya-Brähmaṇa families. The Kāṇvas, like their predecessors the Śuṅgas, were a branch of the Āṅgirasas, and an off-shoot from the Paurava line and as such can be described as Brahmakshtras. The Sātavāhanas also seem to have been a Brahmakshatra family as they were both Brahmans and warriors. The Vākāṭakas were of the Vishṇuvriddhha gotra. Viśṇu-vriddhha, we know, was a descendant of Māndhātā who was a Kshatriya-Brähmaṇa. The Pallavas and Kadambas were also Kshatriya-Brähmaṇa people as their gotras, surnames and military pursuits would indicate.  

All this would lend support to the Puranic tradition regarding the existence of Brähmaṇa-Kshatriya or Kshatriya-Brähmaṇa families in the early period of Indian history. The Brahmanical rulers of the post-Mauryan period, it would appear, were in actuality Brahma-Kshatriya families.  

As regards the tall claims of the Brähmaṇas advocated in the Mānava code (II, 135, VIII, 20; I, 100, etc.) it may be pointed out that almost all the Dharmaśūtras and other śāstras uphold

shed his kingdom to his brother Yayāti and became a Brähmaṇa muni, (Matsya, 24, 51, Vangvasi Edition). Viśvāmitra by virtue of his austerities became a Brahmarshi and founder of a Brahmin family. Māndhātri, Kāśya and Gritsamada were also Kshatriyas originally, and attained Brahminhood afterwards.  

26The Brahmakshatra status of the Śuṅgas is fully corroborated by what M. M. Pahdit Harprasada Sastri has adduced regarding their gotra and pravars. He writes, “The No. 25 of the Bibliotheca Sanskritica contains a series of works on the gotras and pravars of the Brähmaṇas with an introduction by the editor, P. Chentsal Rao. In leaf VII of the introduction we are told that pravārs nos. 4 and 5 are pronounced by persons who are born of Śuṅga, a descendant of Bharadvāja by a woman married in the family of Kata, a descendant of the Viśvāmitra” (Journal, Asiatic Society Bengal, 1912, p. 187). This also shows that the Śuṅgas had Brahmakshatra blood in them.  

the Brahmanic pretensions and contain harsh provisions against the non-Brāhmaṇas, specially the Śūdras. The Māṇava code is no exception in this respect. The law book of Vaśishṭha maintains an attitude very similar to that of the Māṇava code regarding the Śūdras, and in some respects the former is more class-conscious and pro-Brahmanic than the latter. Even a secular treatise like the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya shows certain pro-Brahmanic pretensions in the matter of punishment for crimes. Preferential claims for the Brāhmaṇas are met with also in the Atharvaveda. In view of this, it cannot be held that the Māṇava code, which contains some extravagant claims for the Brāhmaṇas, implies a special Brahmanical reaction against the Śūdras under the leadership of Pushyamitra.

Further, it is also not possible to accept Jayaswal’s interpretation of the Verse 100, Chapter XII of the Māṇava code (saināpatyam ca rājyam cha daṇḍa-netritvameva ca/Sarvaloka-dhitpatyam cha Vedaśāstra-vidarhati). Jayaswal takes the term “Vedaśāstravid” to mean a Brāhmaṇa and according to him the verse refers to the achievements of Pushyamitra Śunga who was a Brāhmaṇa, a senāni and king or the executive head of the state. Jayaswal seems to have missed the real import of the verse. The term “Vedaśāstravid” refers to anyone who studied the Vedas and there is no justification for applying this verse to denote a particular person. The main theme of the verse is to extol the excellence of Vedic studies, and in tone and spirit it is an imitation of the Atharvan hymn (XI, 5) dwelling on the temporal and spiritual utility of Vedic education. A few passages from the above-mentioned hymn serve to illustrate this point:

From him [the Vedic student] was born the Brahman, the chief Brahman...together with immortality.... The teacher [is] a Vedic student, the Vedic student [becomes] lord of men [Prajāpati], Prajāpati bears rule [vi-raj]; the viraj [ruler or king] becomes the controlling Indra.... By Vedic studentship,

28Vaśishṭha Dharma-śāstra, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XIV, Chapters XVII, XXIX, XXI.
by fervour a king defends his kingdom.... By Vedic studentship, a girl wins [vid] a young husband.  

The import of the passages quoted above is that Vedic studies impart efficiency both in the spiritual and material spheres of life. It is Vedic studies that make men successful as governors, rulers, etc. Kings qualify themselves for their position by virtue of their Vedic studies. With this we may compare Gautama’s Dharma-Sūtra (XI.3) which states that a king should have a good grounding in the Vedas and Ānvikshiki and that he has to rely on the Vedas and Dharmasātras, etc. for carrying out his duties. As the Atharvaveda extract tells us, even women had to qualify themselves for marriage by prosecuting a course of Vedic studies. In short, Vedic studentship according to this authority, was an indispensable prerequisite for success in every aspect of life.

Thus the meaning of the verse in question (Mānavadharma-śāstra, XIII. 100) is in substance the same as that of the Atharvan passages quoted above, and Jayaswal’s suggestion that the achievements mentioned therein refer to those of Brāhmaṇa Pushyamitra appears to be without any sound basis.

From the above it is clear that the prohibition of animal sacrifices or animal slaughter as introduced by Aśoka was in no way a novel measure. Hence it is not safe to suggest following Jayaswal and Haraprasad Shastri that Brahmanism fell into disuse in Mauryan times for Aśoka stopped animal sacrifices. The history of Brahmanism, though full of additions and omissions, is one of continuity. That Brahmanism, including its hieratic and orthodox aspect, was in vogue even during the reign of the Mauryas is evident from different sources. The Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya who is considered by many scholars to have been a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya refers to the Brahmanical deities and practices. The edicts of Aśoka show that there was an orthodox Brahmanical community in his time and he paid reverence to them as he did to the Buddhists, Nirgranthas, and Ājīvikas. The Mahābhāshya of Patañjali throws significant

---

30Atharva Veda (Whitney’s translation), Lanman, Volume 8, pp. 637, 639 ff.
light on the uninterrupted prevalence of Brahmanical rites on a very large scale in the society. Mention has been made by Patañjali in his *Mahābhāshya*, of various sacrifices including Rājasūya and Vājapeya. With regard to the *Pañchamahāyajñas* he states that they must be performed by every householder. That the observance of sacrificial rites was a usual and traditional affair on the part of the Brāhmaṇas in Patañjali’s society is evident from such instances in the *Mahābhāshya* as Gārgyo yajate, Vātsyo yajate, Dāksheḥ pītā yajate, etc. Patañjali refers to animal sacrifices in connection with the worship of Rudra (Pasunā Rudraṁ yajate). He explains “yūpa” as a wooden post for binding sacrificial animals and says that it should be made of Bilva or Khadira. He mentions both sacrificial lands and priests specially competent for conducting Vedic sacrifices. There is no doubt that he himself was a distinguished Brāhmaṇ and Vedic scholar. He refers also to the practice of drinking Soma which formed an important part of Vedic sacrifices.

All this would show that there were in Patañjali’s time many Brahmin orthodox families and Vedic scholars, Patañjali himself being one of them, and the orthodox rituals and practices were largely observed in society. This presupposes the existence of orthodox practices in preceding generations also. If orthodox Brahmanism fell into complete disuse in Mauryan times there would have been no Patañjali in the Śuṅga period. All that the horse-sacrifice of Pushyamitra shows is that he was champion or patron of Brahmanism and it will be erroneous to describe him as a reviver of Brahmanism when there is no ground to show that it was non-existent in any preceding generation.

Like the Śuṅgas, their successors the Kāṇvas and others observed orthodox rites and practices as prevailing in their time.

---

Pārāsārīputra Sarvatāta as already stated, performed a horse-sacrifice, though he is known also to have built a stone enclosure round the hall of worship of Vāsudeva and Saṅkarshana.

Among the followers of orthodox Brahmanical rites mention may be made here of one Vishṇudeva whose coins (first century B.C.) have been found at Kanauj. On the reverse of one of his silver coins there appears a horse before a sacrificial post or yūpa from which it can be reasonably inferred that he claimed to his credit the glory of having performed a horse-sacrifice. Not much is known about him. He can be placed, however, in the first century B.C. on the basis of the palaeography of his coinlegends. Before we proceed, it may be stated that one of the obverse types of early Yaudheyas coins (first century B.C. - first century A.D.) is a bull before a yūpa. This device can be explained as associated with the Śulagava sacrifice, i.e., the offering of a bull to Rudra, as mentioned in the Grihya-Sūtras. From this it is clear that some of the early Yaudheyas were performers of Brahmanical rites.

Next we may come to the Bhārasivas and the Vākāṭakas, who, though personally devoted to Śaivism, took keen interest in orthodox Brahmanical rites. The former, who flourished in about the third century A.D., are credited in the Vākāṭaka inscriptions with having performed ten Āsvamedhas and are said to have obtained sovereignty through the satisfaction of lord Śiva as they carried a Śiva Linga on their shoulders. The Vākāṭakas, we know, were staunch patrons of orthodox rites. King Pravarasena I who flourished in the latter part of the third century A.D. celebrated four Āsvamedhas and other Vedic sacrifices such as Agniśṭoma, Āptoryāma, Ukthya, Shoḍasīn, Atiratra, Vājapeya, Jyotishṭoma, and Brihaspatisava. The personal faith

37 Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXII, pp. 204-5.
38 Allan, Catalogue of Indian Coins (Ancient India), p. 147.
39 Ibid.
41 Agniśṭomāporyāmokthya - shoḍasyātīrātra Vājapeya-Brihaspaṭi-savā (Fleet, op. cit., p. 236 ff, No. 55).
of the Vākāṭakas seems to have been Śaivism as was the case with the Bhāraśivas. According to Jayaswal they (i.e. the Vākāṭakas) had Mahābhairava as the royal deity up to the time of Rudrasena I.⁴²

During the period under review, orthodox Brahmanical rites and practices were widely prevalent in southern India. The Sātavāhanas and their successors were patrons of Brahmanism like their northern contemporaries. In the Nasik inscription of Vāsishṭhiputra Pulamāvī,⁴³ Gautamiputra (Sātakarnī), the celebrated Sātavāhana ruler is described as a great warrior, equal in prowess to Rāma (Balarama), Keśava and Arjuna, and also as “Eka Bāmhaṇa”⁴⁴ (a unique Brāhmin) who stopped the intermixture of the four Varṇas and strictly observed Sastric rules. He was an “abode of traditional lore” (āgamānāmnilaya) and he properly devised his time and place for the pursuits of the triple object of human activity (suविभक्त trिवर्गa deśakāla).⁴⁵ This shows that Gautamiputra was a zealous Brahmanical ruler observing Sastric rules. The influence of Vedic Karmakāṇḍa in the early Sātavāhana period is abundantly proved by the Nānāghāt inscription⁴⁶ of Queen Nāganikā (first century B. C.) which refers to the performance in the Sātavāhana court of various sacrifices with lavish gifts such as Agnyādheya, Anārambhaṇīya, Bhagāla dāśarātra, Gargātirātra, Gavāmayana, Āptoryāma, Aṅgirasāmayana, Satātirātra, Saptadaśatrātra, Rājasūya, Aśvamedha (two Aśvamedhas) and Aṅgirasātirātra,⁴⁷ etc.

Next to the Sātavāhanas the other Brahmanical rulers of Southern India during the period under review were the Ikshvāku prince Vāsishṭhiputra Śrī Śāntamūla, the Pallavas and the Kadambas. In Prakrit inscriptions discovered at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa (Guntur district), Śrī Śāntamūla is described as

⁴⁵Epigraphia Indica, Vol. VIII, pp. 60 f.
⁴⁶Lüders List, No. 1112.
a performer of Vedic sacrifices such as the Agnihotra, Agnissţoma, Vājapeya, and Aśvamedha.\textsuperscript{48} Regarding the patronage of Brahmanism by the Pallavas we know that Śivaskanḍavaranma, one of the early rulers of his line, belonging to the first part of the fourth century A.D., celebrated the Agnissţoma, Vājapeya, and Aśvamedha sacrifices as we read in his inscriptions. The allegiance of the Pallavas to ancient Brahmanical rites is evident also from one of their official charters which describe them as “yathāvapathārit-āśvamedhānām
dallavānām.”\textsuperscript{49} As for the Kadambas it may be noted that they were a Brahmin family and their first ruler was Mayûraśarman. The Tālāgūnda inscription of the time of Śāntivarman informs us that the Kadambas kindled the sacred fire, performed manifold Vedic rites and drank Soma according to the prescribed rules, and Mayûraśarman himself was adorned with Vedic knowledge, right disposition, and purity.\textsuperscript{50} All this clearly testifies to the fact that the Kadambas were ardent followers and supporters of sacrificial Brahmanism.

The increasing popularity of the orthodox rites and practices during the period under review is further attested to by the discovery of the Brahmanical finds in Besnagar, and of several inscribed yūpas in the Mathura, Kusambī and Rajputana regions. While excavating a small mound in the close vicinity of the pathway leading from Udayagiri to Khambaba at Besnagar, Dr. Bhandarkar exposed two brick structures\textsuperscript{51} which in his opinion resemble the sacrificial Kuṇḍas of the Brāhmaṇas. “The resemblance,” observes Dr. Bhandarkar, “is observable not only in respect of the sloping sides but also in respect of the

\textsuperscript{48}Mahārājasa Virūpāksha-pati Mahāsena-parigahitasa, Agnihotāgīthoma-
Vājapeyāśamēdha-yājisa (Śrī Sātāmulaśa, Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XX, pp.
19 ff.

The Brahmakṣhata status of the Pallavas is indicated not only by their
gotra, i.e. Bharadvājagotra, but also by the facts of the Dārsī copper plates
where they are described as Brāhmaṇas who raised their position by the
powers of arms and attained the position of the Kṣhatriya (Epigraphia

\textsuperscript{50}Indian Antiquary, Vol. XXV, pp. 27 ff; Epigraphia Indica, Vol. VIII,
pp. 31 ff.

offsets which distinguish them." These offsets are a peculiar feature of Kuṇḍas, and are technically called Mekhalā. These structures, it may be presumed, represent the old sacrificial Kuṇḍas or pots.

Besides the above two, one more pit was found almost at the same level and according to Dr. Bhandarkar it represents a Yonikunḍa. At about the same level in which the kuṇḍas were exposed, a silver coin of Mahākshatrapa Iśvaradatta (early part of the third century A. D.) and some Nāga coins of which one belongs to Bīma Nāga, and three to Gaṇapati Nāga were found. From these considerations the kuṇḍas may be dated approximately in the early part of the fourth century A.D. or the middle of the third century A.D.

At about the same level of the kuṇḍas, Dr. Bhandarkar discovered also walls of two structures which are, according to him, remnants of a sacrificial hall to entertain guests and visitors at the sacrifices. Near the hall he found a seal recording the performance of a sacrifice by one Timitra with hotā, potā and mantrasajana, i. e.... hymn kismen.

These facts would show that Besnagar was an important stronghold of Vedic Brahmanism during the period under review. We may now discuss certain inscribed yūpas which, as noted above, were found mostly in Rajputana, Mathura and Kausambi.

Yūpas are sacrificial stakes to tie and immolate animals on the occasion of various Vedic sacrifices. The sacrifice of animals is a prominent feature of the Vedic sacrifices. Animal sacrifice is a prominent feature of the Vedic religion and has been alluded to in Vedic texts very frequently.

He who offers living victims will reside high in heaven....

The sacrificial fires long for the sacrificer’s flesh; he offers to them an animal to redeem himself. By an animal sacrifice

52 Ibid., p. 73.
53 Ibid., p. 74.
54 Ibid., pp. 75 ff.
55 Ibid., p. 77.
the sacrificer confers upon himself immortal life.\textsuperscript{58}

The \textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa} regards \textit{yūpa} as the “crestlock of the sacrifice personified” and contains an elaborate description about its preparation and the ceremonies connected with it.\textsuperscript{59} The animal sacrifice is offered to Agni and Soma, etc. but the \textit{yūpa} is said to belong to Vishnū.\textsuperscript{60} This is rather strange in view of the fact that no animal is sacrificed to Vishnū.\textsuperscript{61}

The \textit{yūpa}, according to sacred texts is to be made of wood. There is a well known grammatical example referring to this tradition, viz., \textit{yūpāya dāru}. It is to be noted, however, that only a few selected kinds of wood should be used in preparing the \textit{yūpas}. According to Āpastamba,\textsuperscript{62} the sacrificial post is to be made of Palāśa, Khadirā, Bilva or Rauhitaka trees according as one desires various results, but in Soma sacrifices preference is given to Khadirā.\textsuperscript{63} According to Patanjali, a \textit{yūpa} should be made of either Bilva or Khadirā. In the \textit{Rāmāyaṇa}, however, we have reference to some other woods also being used in making \textit{yūpas}. In connection with the Aśvamedha sacrifice of Daśaratha, 21 \textit{yūpas} were erected, of which six were of Bilva, six of Khadirā, six of Palāśa, one of Śleshmātaka, and two of Devādāru.\textsuperscript{64}

About the size of the \textit{yūpas} the texts vary and they prescribe different sizes for different purposes. The \textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa} says:

When he who is about to perform an animal sacrifice, makes a stake one cubit long, he thereby gains this world, and when he makes one three cubits long he thereby gains the heaven; and when he makes one four cubits long he thereby gains the regions.\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59}\textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa}, III, 6 4.1.
\textsuperscript{60}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{61}Archaeological Survey of India, \textit{Annual Reports, 1910-11}, p.45.
\textsuperscript{64}Rāmāyaṇa, 1.14. 22-25.
\textsuperscript{65}\textit{Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, Sacred Books of the East}, Vol. XLIV, p. 124,
According to Kātyāyana Śrauta-sūtra a yūpa may be made from 5 to 15 cubits in length (Saptadaśa Vājapeya) and in the Aśvamedha it would be 21 cubits (Ekaviṁśatirāśvamedhe).\(^{66}\) Regarding the shape of the yūpa the texts are more or less unanimous. It is laid down that the yūpa should be made eight-cornered like the thunderbolt of Indra, because a yūpa is a veritable thunderbolt.\(^{67}\) The Śatapaiha Brāhmaṇa says\(^{68}\) "It (the yūpa) is to be eight-cornered for eight syllables has the Gāyatṛī, and the Gāyatṛī is the forepart of the sacrifice, therefore it is eight-cornered."\(^{69}\) Regarding the other features it should be noted that the sacrificial stake should be "bent at the top and bent inwards in the middle."\(^{70}\) It must have a head-piece (chashāla) or top-ring at about eight inches from the top. The chasāla should also be octagonal\(^{71}\) in shape. A yūpa resembles in its external appearance a Brahmachārin, so it has a girdle at the centre and a triple upavīta across it.\(^{72}\) It (the girdle-rope) is perhaps "the same as the rope of Varuṇā (Varṇāya) raju, with the noose of the sacred order (ritaśya pāsa) by means of which the victim is to be bound to the yūpa."

Among the earliest of the yūpas discovered so far are the Iśāpur stone yūpas.\(^{73}\) These are octagonal except the lower portion which is square. They are are bent at the top but not in the middle, though according to sacred texts a sacrificial stake should be bent at the top and also inwards in the middle. Both the two Iśāpur yūpas possess the head-piece or the top-ring and the girdle rope (rasmā) with the noose (pāṣa) is exhibited on both of them and it is (rasāna) with the noose (earlier shown on the uninscribed pillar). The epigraph on the other pillar records that it was set up as a sacrificial post by one Droṇala, son of Rudrila, a Brahmana of Bharadvāj gotra, and chanter of holy

\(^{66}\)Kātyāyana-Śrauta-sūtra, VI.1.30, 31.
\(^{67}\)Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, (Bibliotheca Indian Series) Vol. 1, pp. 234 ff.
\(^{68}\)Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa III, 6.4.27; Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports, 1910-11, p. 45.
\(^{69}\)Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, XI, 7.3.3.
\(^{70}\)Kātyāyana-Śrauta-sūtra, VI. 1. 2 ff.
\(^{71}\)Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXII, p. 44.
\(^{72}\)Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1910-11, p. 48.
\(^{73}\)Ibid., p. 40 ff. Iśāpur is a suburb of the city of Mathura.
hymns on the occasion of the *Dvādaśa* sacrifice in the year 24 of the reign of Shahi Vāsishka. Dhādaśa is a sacrificial rite of 12 days. It is both an *Āhīna* and a *Sattra*. The main difference between an *Āhīna* and *Sattra* is that the *Sattra* can be performed by the Brāhmaṇas alone, and an *Āhīna* by any one of the first three *varṇas*. The performer of the *Dvādaśa* sacrifice mentioned in the present inscription was a Brāhmaṇa and hence the sacrifice in question could be the *Dvādaśa* of either type.

A *yūpa* has been discovered at Nandasa in Sāhārā district of of the Udayapur State. This *yūpa*, it should be noted, is entirely round, though according to the texts it should be made octagonal. There are two inscriptions engraved on the Nandsa *yūpa*, dated in the Krita year 282 (the Krita year is perhaps the same as the Vikrama era). The purport of the inscriptions does not seem to be identical. They refer, however, to the performance of an Ekashasṭhīrātra sacrifice by one Śakti-guṇaguru (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXIV, p. 247).

We have a group of four inscribed *yūpas* set up by the Kshatriya chiefs of Rajputāna. They come from Baḍvā, Kota state, Rajputana. The Baḍvā *yūpas* are octagonal besides the portion underground which is square, like the Isāpur and Bijyagaḍh *yūpas*. This departure from Sastric injunction is perhaps due to the architectural considerations. “A pillar octagonal above and square at the bottom is more graceful than the pillar octagonal throughout.” The architect of the Nandsa *yūpas*, it should be noted, totally disregarded the textual

---

74 Ibid., p. 41. Vāsishka is a Kushana prince who is believed to have ruled between Kanishka and Huvishka.

75 Kātyāyan Śrauta-sūtrā, 1.6.63. History of Dharmashastras by P. V. Kane, Vol. II, Part I, p. 153 and footnote. In the Sattras there are no separate priests since the yajamānas themselves are priests. According to Jaimini even the Brāhmaṇas of the Bhrigu, Sunaka and Vaśishṭha *gotras* are not entitled to perform the Sattras (P. V. Kane, op. cit., Vol. II, Part I, p. 482).

76 Indian Antiquary, Vol. LVII, p. 53.


78 Ibid., Vol. XXII, p. 44.

79 Fleet, op. cit., p. 253.

80 Indian Antiquary, Vol. LVIII, p. 53.
injunctions as he has made the *yūpas* entirely round or circular. The Badvā *yūpas* have no girdle in the middle, and like other *yūpas* referred to above they are not endowed with any *upavita*. The first three Badvā *yūpas* bear inscriptions in the Krita year 295 and record the erection of these *yūpas* one each by Balavardhana, Somadeva, and Balasimha in connection with the Trirātra sacrifice performed duly by them. Balavardhana Somadeva and Balasimha are sons of one Bala and they are described as Maukhari commander-in-chiefs.

The fourth *yūpa* from Kotah in Rajputana contains an inscription which, as its paleography shows, may be dated in the third century A. D. The object of the inscription is to record that the pillar was set up in connection with the Āptoryāma sacrifice performed by one Dhanutrāta, son of Hastin of the Maukhari clan. The names of Hastin and Dhanutrāta would suggest that they belonged to Kshatriya stock. The whole house of the Badvā Maukharīs, it seems, were zealous advocates of the Vedic practices.

We may now discuss the inscribed *yūpa* in the Allahabad Municipal Museum. The pillar has been sadly mutilated, and only one of its facets along with a small part of the adjoining one on its left has been recovered. To judge from the angles of the facets it is clear that the pillar was originally an octagonal one. The characters of the inscription engraved on this *yūpa* resemble the scripts of the inscriptions of Ushabhadāta and Rudradāman. Hence the *yūpa* can be attributed to the second century of the Christian era. This refers to the performance of seven *Soma* sacrifices (technically called *Saptasoma sansthā*). The

---

81 *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIII, p. 44.
82 *Ibid.*, p. 52
84 The present inscription does not bear any date, but its scripts agree very closely with those of the other three Badva *yūpa* inscriptions, *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIV, p. 255.
86 *Ibid.*, p. 245. It was found in the neighbourhood of Kosam, ancient Kausambi.
89 Seven *Soma* sacrifices constituting *Saptasoma sansthā* are Agnishṭoma, Atyagnishṭoma, Ukthya, Shoḍasīn, Vajpeya, Atirātra and Āptoryāma.
sacrificer was one Śivadatta who is called in the inscription a trusted minister of a king whose name is not extant.

Two yūpas with inscriptions were discovered at Barnal, a small village in Jaipur State, “belonging to the Thakursaheb Barnala about eight miles from Lalsote-Gangapur Fair Weather Road.” It is to be noted that the girdle, or the pāśa which is executed round the Isāpur pillars is absent in these and also the Baḍvā yūpas. The inscriptions on the Barnala yūpas bear the Krita years 284 and 335. The Barnala yūpa inscription “A” bearing the Krita year 284 records the erection of seven yūpas90 by a person whose gotra was sohartri and whose name ended in Vardhana.91 Dr. Altekar is of the opinion that the sacrificer was a king of the name ending with Vardhana.

The inscription on yūpa “B” refer to the performance of five Gārgātrirātra sacrifices performed by one Bhaṭṭa. The Gārgātrirātra sacrifice is an amalgam of Agnishṭoma, Ukthya and Atirāta. The inscription ends with the expression, “May (god) Vishṇu be pleased; may Dharma increase.” The name of the sacrificer is not preserved in the whole but his title Bhaṭṭa would show that he was a Brāhmaṇa.92

D. R. Bhandarkar discovered a fragment of a yūpa at Nagari.93 The pillar is broken at both ends and bears a mutilated inscription. The words extant in line two of the same read: sya yajña Vājapeye yūpo. This indicates that this yūpa was erected in connection with the performance of the Vājapeya sacrifice. The scripts of the inscription are of the fourth century A. D.

The yūpas referred to above are of stone, though according to sacred texts they should be made of wood. The stone yūpas were erected perhaps for a commemorative purpose in imitation of the Mauryan columns.94 It may be noted here that the orthodox Brahmanical practices spread to Further India also during the period under review. The Batavia Museum contains

90 Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXVI, pp. 119 and 120.
91 Ibid., p. 119.
92 Ibid., p. 122.
93 Memoir, Archaeological Survey of India, No. 4, p. 120.
94 Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXIII, p. 43.
a sacrificial post of stone from Moeara Kaman, Eastern Borneo. It contains an inscription of eight lines in Vengi characters, of king Mūlavarmaṇa\(^{95}\) (c. 400 A.D.) ending with: _yupo' yam sthāpito vipraiḥ._

The above mentioned facts would show that orthodox Vedic practices were widely prevalent in the society. But it should also be remembered that pure Vedism has no practical or independent existence. Brahmanism, as it developed, became a multiform religious system of which Vedism was one of the constituent factors, the others being its more popular elements, the various Brahmanical cults. The manner in which these elements were harmoniously blended with the normal life of the people is illustrated in certain epigraphic records of the normal life of our period. In the Ghoshundi and Hathibada inscriptions, Pāraśārīputra Sarvatāta is represented as an Aśvamedhayāji, performer of a horse sacrifice and also having constructed a stone enclosure for the place of worship called Nārāyaṇa vāṭa for Bhagavat Saṁkarśaṇa and Vāsudeva. Saṁkarśaṇa and Vāsudeva are deities of the Bhāgavata cult. A gift at their place of worship by Sarvatāta who performed the Vedic Brahmanical rites, i.e., the Aśvamedha, furnishes a striking instance of the harmonious blending of the orthodox and popular beliefs in the religious life of the people. Similar examples are afforded also by a few more contemporary records.

The Nanaghat cave inscription (first century B.C.) opens with an invocation to Vedic as well as sectarian deities, viz., Indra Dharma, Saṁkarśaṇa, Vāsudeva and the four _lokapālas_, Yama Kuvera, Varuṇa and Vāsava and records also the performance of several Vedic sacrifices as noted before. This shows how the same person offers prayer to the orthodox and also to the post-Vedic sectarian deities. The Bhāraśivas, Vākāṭakas, Pallavas and Kadambas had performed several Vedic sacrifices, though most of them were personally devoted to Śaivism.\(^{96}\) Similarly, the Ikshvāku prince Śriśantamūla was devoted to the cult of

\(^{95}\_Archaological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1910-11, p. 40, footnote; Dr R. C. Majumdar, _Svarṇadvīpa_, Part I, pp. 126 ff.

\(^{96}\_Fleet, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 238, 245; _Epigraphia Indica_, Vol. VIII, pp. 31 ff._
Mahāsena (Kārttikeya) as the epithet *Mahāsenaparigrihīta* shows, and he performed at the same time Vedic sacrifices like *Āśvamedha* and *Vājapeya*, etc. The Allahabad Municipal Museum *yūpa* inscription mentions one Śīvadatta, as we have seen before, as having performed seven *Soma* sacrifices and also made a donation to the temple of Śiva. The epigraph concludes with: *prītimīyān maheśvaram iti*.98

During the post-Mauryan period, there was a large increase in the foreign element in the Indian population, and it is interesting to know what the attitude of the Brahmanic society was towards the foreign people who settled in India. The ancient Indian society was elastic, expanding and accommodative. The social position was often determined by one’s own learning, good qualities and deeds and not by mere birth in a particular family. Further, the Brahmanic society was always eager to widen its bounds and incorporate those who originally professed other cults. Brahminism as a social organization was flexible and based upon the observance of certain rites as laid down in Vedic texts, some early, some late, or in following the precepts of *Śūtras* and *Śāstras* about *Dharma* (social custom) and anybody could be included who could follow some of the philosophical, theosophical or sociological beliefs. In short, birth, race or views were no barriers for entry into the Brahmanic society.100

97Ibid., Vol. XX, p. 21.
98Ibid., Vol. XXIV, p. 251.
99There was already a considerable foreign population in India since the sixth century B.C., either domiciled or in various degrees of intermixture with the local people or professedly alien.
100It is well known that Vyāsa was born of a Vāśishtha rishi (Parāśar) and Matsya-princes and Parāśara himself was the son of a woman belonging to a community outside the *Varna* system. Again, Viśvāmitra who was originally an "Aila" Kshatriya, became a rishi and founder of a Brāhmaṇa gotra. As a man could rise to a higher status by appropriate deeds and spiritual efforts, one could in the same way be degraded to a lower caste and position for his misbehaviour. The *Vishnū Purāṇa* tells us that Nabhāga, a scion of the illustrious Kshatriya line of Vaisali, became a Vaiśya and Prishadhra (also of the Ikshvāku Kshatriya group) was reduced to Sudrahood for offending the priesthood (*Vishnū Purāṇa*, Vol. IV, 1. 15 ff, edited by Jivandand Vidyasagar). Regarding the elasticity of the Brahmanic society, see D. R. Bhāndarkar, *Some Aspects of Indian Culture*, pp. 57 ff.
There is a passage in the *Santi Parva* of the *Mahābhārata*, Section 65, which explains very well the position of the different castes and races in the Brahmanic society. In this passage, Māndhāta asks Indra, “What duty should be performed by the Yavanas, the Kiratas, the Gandharas, the Chinas, the Sabaras, the Barbaras, the Śakas, the Tushāras, the Kankas, the Pallavas, the Andhras, the Madrakas, the Pundras, the Ramaṭhas, the Kambojas, the several castes that have sprung up from the Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Śudras that reside in the dominions of the Ārya kings. What are the duties again to the observance of which kings like ourselves should force these tribes that subsist by robbery? Indra answers, “All these tribes should serve their mothers, fathers, their preceptors and other seniors and recluses living in the woods. They should also serve their kings, and perform the duties and rites inculcated in the *Vedas*. They should perform sacrifices in honour of *pitrīs* (Manes) and make seasonable presents unto the Brāhmaṇas. They should also perform all kinds of *Pākayajñas* with costly presents of food and wealth.”

What follows from the above passage is that the foreigners and people of diverse cults could be admitted into the Brahmanic society provided they observed the Brahmanic *Dharma* (social constitution) as laid down in the sacred texts.

The literary traditions noted above (for earlier periods) are supported by archaeological evidences of our later period, thereby showing the continuity of the Brahmanical tradition of elasticity and expansion. We have a number of inscriptions which show that foreigners were easily incorporated into Brahmanic society. The most striking instance that we can refer to in this connection is that of Śaka Ushavadāta (Rishabhadatta). Rishabhadatta is a purely Indian name, (with a Jaina flavour) so also is that of his wife, namely Dakshamitrā (somewhat Śaivite). Apparently from the name itself Rishabhadatta cannot be recognized as a foreigner. Fortunately the inscriptions throw a good deal of light on the point.

102 Lüders list Nos. 1132 and 1134.
In the Nasik inscriptions\textsuperscript{108} and also in one of the Karle Buddhist epigraphs,\textsuperscript{104} Rishabhadatta has been described as the son of Dinika and son-in-law of Kahrata Kshatrapa Nahapāna. Dinika and Nahapāna are non-Indian names and Nahapāna was a well-known Śaka ruler of the Deccan and Gujarat. Besides the names of his father and father-in-law which suggest his foreign nationality, Rishabhadatta himself has been expressly described as a Śaka in an epigraph.\textsuperscript{105} He was devoted to Brahmanism. A Nasik inscription\textsuperscript{106} described him as a liberal and mighty donor to the Brāhmaṇas. He gave away three hundred thousand cows, made gifts of money, went on tīrthas on the river Prabhāsa and dedicated 16 villages to the gods and Brāhmaṇas. He fed annually one hundred thousand Brahmins and provided the Brāhmaṇas with eight wives each at the religious tīrtha of Prabhāsa (Prabhāsa Punyatirthe Brāhmaṇe-bhyah ashṭabhāryāprayadena). He gifted thirty-two thousand stems (plant) of cocoanut trees at the village Nanangola to the congregation of Charakas\textsuperscript{107} at Pimdita-Kavada, Govardhana, Suvarnamukha and Ramatirtha in Soparga.

These facts leave no doubt that Rishabhadatta was an ardent follower of Brahmanism and this is corroborated by a few other inscriptions of his. The Nasik inscription No. 12 records his

\textsuperscript{108}Ibid., Nos. 113 and 1133.

\textsuperscript{104}Ibid., No. 1135; Epigraphia Indica, Vol. VIII, p. 85.

\textsuperscript{105}Ibid., No. 1135; Epigraphia Indica, Vol. VIII, p. 85.

\textsuperscript{106}Epigraphia Indica, Vol. VIII, pp. 78, 79.

\textsuperscript{107}The communities of Charakas to whom the gift has been made seem to be indentical with those who are named in a stereotyped formula of the Buddhist (Mahāvastu, ii, 412; anyatirthakacharka parivyājaka) and Jaina texts, namely a certain special category of Brahmanical ascetics; to take "Charaka" for Brahmanical students would leave the gift too undetermined and if the Charaka samgha of the Yajurveda were meant, the expression would have been made more definite" (E. Senart, Epigraphia Indica, Vol. VIII, p. 79). Charaka is probably the same class of Brāhmaṇa teachers as the Yājñavālas to which Jaratkāru (a contemporary of Janamejaya Parikshita, 900 B. C.) belonged. It is possible that the medical treatises collected in the so called "Charaka" Samhita, belongs to this school of itinerant teachers. Charakas as wandering mendicants are mentioned in the Allahabad Municipal Museum Yāpa inscription, l. 15: agachchhadbhih Charakair-bhoktavamiti (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXIV, p. 251).
donation of 7,000 Kārshāpanas\textsuperscript{108} to the venerable gods and Brahmānas and his gifts to the Brahmānas on the river Branaśa and at Prabhasa have been referred to also in a Karle Buddhist cave inscription (Lüder’s \textit{List}, No. 1099).

Besides Śaka Ushabhadatta, there were many other foreigners who seemed to have been adopted into the Hindu fold. The Nasika Buddhist Cave inscription No. 18 refers to the dedication by Indrāganiḍattā of a cave\textsuperscript{109} in mount Tiranhu with a Chaitya-griha and cisterns to universal \textit{Sangha} of monks. Indragnidatta was the son of Dharmadeva, the Yavana. The names Indrāgniḍattā and Dharmadeva are definitely Brahmanical names. Again, Vīṣṇudattā a female Śaka and lay devotee of Buddhism, provided money, as is stated in a Nasik inscription,\textsuperscript{110} for the treatment of the sick of a local Buddhist sangha. Vīṣṇudattā was the mother of Gaṇapaka Viṣvavarman and daughter of Agnivarman, the Saka. The suffix Varman shows that Agnivarman and Viṣvanarman were looked upon as Kṣatriyas.

During the period under review there were certain foreigners who were devoted to Brahmanism though they did not lose their foreign identity. This shows that Brahmanism was growing in popularity even among unabsorbed foreigners, i.e. those who were either in the first stage of immigration into India, or were in the borderlands and beyond in the north and west. The best instance in this connection is exemplified in the Mathura inscription of the year 28, edited by Sten Konow in \textit{Epigraphia Indica}, Vol. XXI, p. 55 ff. This inscription is dated the first day of Gurppiya in the year 28 as noted above. Gurppiya, as Konow points, out is the Macedonian month Gorpapios, corresponding to the Indian Pṛoshṭhapāda.\textsuperscript{111}

The inscription records a permanent endowment of a sum of 1,000 \textit{purānas} with two guilds, by one who is designated as Kanasarukamānaputra Kharasalerapati Vakanapati. The object of the endowment was to feed daily a hundred Brahmānas by the interest realized from month to month, and also to keep

\textsuperscript{108}Epigraphia Indica, Vol. VIII, p. 82.
\textsuperscript{109}Ibid., p. 90.
\textsuperscript{110}Ibid., p. 88.
\textsuperscript{111}Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXI, p. 56.
some provisions daily for the hungry and the destitute.\textsuperscript{112} It is notable that the donor was a foreigner who came to Mathura to create an endowment for the welfare of the Brāhmaṇas and the benefit of the poor. The foreign origin of the donor is implied not only by his title Vakanapati, but also from the date of the record which is not the Indian but the Greek calendar month. It is to be noted that the gift was made during the rule of Huvishka, for the donor expressly wishes that whatever merit may accrue from his act may accrue to the Devaputra Shāhī Huvishka and also to those to whom the Devaputra is dear.

This patronage of the Brāhmaṇas by one who is of a purely foreign origin shows that Brahmanism was held in high esteem during the Kushāṇa period. This is corroborated by another Brahmanic record from Mathura. This was found engraved on the stone pedestal of an image of which the traces of the left foot alone survived.\textsuperscript{113} The pedestal comes from the neighbourhood of the village Mat about nine miles from the city of Mathura, the site from where the well-known statues of Kanishka and Vima Takshana were unearthed. The inscription is broken. However, we learn from it that “there was a devakula\textsuperscript{114} of...the grandfather of Devaputra Huvishka” and that this “Devakula” had fallen down. This was repaired by a certain official of Devaputra Huvishka, who, as stated in the inscription, held the title of “Vakanapati” and made provisions for the feeding of the daily guests and Brāhmaṇas.

Among the Satraps of Ujjayini, Rudradaman was the most prominent. His father was Jayadāman, and grandfather, Chashtana. As the names show, the Satraps of Ujjayini, though of a foreign origin, were gradually Hinduised from the time of Jayadaman. Certain distinctly Hindu names in Rudradāman’s line ending with Hindu suffixes are Rudrasinha, Rudrasena, Damasena, Vijayasena, Viśvasimha and others. Rudradāman was well-versed in Sanskrit grammar language, music, politics,
and logic, and he is one of these earlier rulers who took initiative in introducing Sanskrit in official records. Dr D.R. Bhandarkar remarks that so completely Hinduised were the Śaka Satrap families that the other Hindu royal families did not think it polluting or degrading to contract matrimonial alliances with them. A Kanheri cave inscription reveals that the Sātavāhana prince Vāsiṣṭhiputra Śri Sātakarṇi was married to the daughter of the Mahākshatrapa Rudra who is believed to be the same as Rudradāman of the Junagadh Rock Inscription.

Thus inscriptional evidence is abundant to show that the Brahmanical society during our period was elastic, including and absorbing foreign elements without much difficulty.

The Ābhiras, who, according to D.R. Bhandarkar were a foreign horde, were completely Indianised and adopted Śaivism as their personal creed. In the Vishnu Purāṇa and Maushala Parva of the Mahābhārata they have been described as Dasyus and Mlechhahās. According to the Purāṇas there were ten Ābhīra kings and they ruled for 67 years. An Ābhīra chief, Rudrabhūti by name, is said to have served as the general of a Śaka king of Ujjain. The Gundā inscription which is dated in the Śaka year 163 (A.D. 181), referring to the reign of Rudrasimha I speaks of a grant made by Rudrabhūti. The Śaka Satraps of western India were overshadowed for a time by an Ābhīra king named Māḍhariputa-Iśvarasena (third century A.D), son of Iśvaradatta, whose inscription has been discovered at Nasik. The names Rudrabhūti, Iśvaradatta, and Iśvarasena are Brahmanical (Śaivite) names.

According to D.R. Bhandarkar, the migration of the Ābhiras into India took place towards the beginning of the Christian

116D. R. Bhandarkar, Indian Antiquary, 1911, pp. 7 ff.
117Ibid.
118Vishnu Purāṇa, Bibliotheca Indica Series (Ed. by R. L. Mitra), chapter XLV, vv. 115, 126, Mahābhārata, Maushala Parva, xvi, 7, 223; 8, 270.
119Pargiter, The Dynasties of the Kali Age, p. 45.
121Ibid., Vol. VIII, p. 88.
The Ābhīras, in our opinion, seem to have settled in India much earlier than Bhandarkar supposes. In the *Mahābhārata* they are mentioned in the *Parvas*\(^{123}\) ii, iii, vi, vii, xiv and xvi. In the *Mushala Parva* (i.e. *Parva* xvi) we are told that when Arjuna, after the catastrophe at Dvāraka, was taking the Yādava women, children and old men to Indraprastha, they attacked him (i.e. Arjuna) on the way (in Pañchānada) and robbed most of the women. The Yādava re-exodus to Indraprastha under the leadership of Arjuna is a historical fact and forms a basic part of the *Mahābhārata* episode. The date of this event which took place shortly after the Bharata war would be before 1,000 B.C. if tradition is to be believed. Even if its date is fixed on the basis of the time of the *Mahābhārata* composition, it cannot be much later than the fourth-third century B.C. as the epic nucleus seems to have been complete by this time. The main story of the *Mushala Parva* describing the attack of the Ābhīras upon the Yādavas cannot be dismissed as an interpolation for it forms an integral part of the epic. In the light of this, we can hold that the Ābhīras lived in India several centuries before the Christian era. Our opinion seems to be corroborated by the *Mahābhāshya* of Patañjali who flourished in the early part of the second century B.C.

Patañjali mentions Ābhīras in his *Mahābhāshya* in the compound Śudrābhīram while commenting on and illustrating the grammatical aphorism *Sāmāyah viśesha vāchinoshchadvandābhavāt siddham*.\(^{124}\) The very fact that the Ābhīras were considered in Patañjali’s time as Śudras, one of the four varnas in Indian society, shows that they (i.e. the Ābhīras) settled and were domiciled in Indian soil at least some centuries before the second century B.C. It may be stated here that they are also


\(^{123}\)Sorensen, *Index of Names in the Mahābhārata*, p. 4.

called Śūdras in certain parts of the Mahābhārata. All this would tend to show that D.R. Bhandarkar may not be correct in bringing down the Ābhīra migration into India as late as the first century A.D.

125Sorensen, op. cit., p. 4.

Śiva-Paśupati, steatite seal, c.2500 B.C., Mohenjodaro (National Museum Collection, New Delhi).

Brahmā, metal, Gupta, 5th century A.D., Mirpurkhas, Sind.
(left) Vaikuṇṭha Viṣṇu, metal, Gandhara, 2nd century B.C., Indische Kunst, Berlin.

Naṭārāja, bronze, Chola, 10th century A.D., Tiruvanamalai, Tamil Nadu (National Museum Collection, New Delhi).


Birth of Buddha and the seven steps, lime stone, Ikṣvāku, 3rd century A.D., Nāgārjunakonda (National Museum Collection, New Delhi).
Nara-Nārāyaṇa, stone, Gupta, 5th century A.D., Deogarh.

Vishnu, stone, Gupta, 5th century A.D., Mathura (National Museum Collection, New Delhi).

Lakulisa, 8th century A.D., Cave 29, Ellora, Maharashtra.
(above) Śeshaśayi Vishnu, stone, Gupta, 5th century A.D., Deogarh.

(below) The Division of the Relics of Buddha, stone, Śuṅga, 2nd century B.C., Bharhut, Madhya Pradesh (National Museum Collection, New Delhi).

(extreme left) Bodhisattva Maitreya, stone, Kushâna, 2nd century A.D., Ahichchhatra, Uttar Pradesh (National Museum Collection, New Delhi).


(lower left) Buddha seated, in Abhayamudra, stone, Kushâna, 2nd century A.D. (Archaeological Museum Collection, Mathura).

Stûpa slab, lime stone, Ikshvâku, 3rd century A.D., Nâgârjunakoṇḍa (National Museum Collection, New Delhi).

Main Stûpa, 3rd to 1st century B.C., Sanchi.

Liṅga, stone, 2nd century B.C., Gudimallam, South India.

Kanishka's coin, showing on the reverse the figure of Buddha, with the legend "Boddo", gold, 2nd century A.D. (British Museum Collection).
6. Jainism

The Jainas claim high antiquity for their religion and enumerate twenty-four Jinas (a term from which the word Jaina has been derived) or Tirthaṅkaras, i.e., the expounders of dharma. Rishabha is the first and Vardhamāna is the last of these Tirthaṅkaras. Though nothing can be said definitely about the historicity of the early Tirthaṅkaras (as the age and stature assigned to them seem to be unbelievable), yet there can hardly be any doubt that Vardhamāna Mahāvīra’s two immediate predecessors (Arishṭanemi and Pārśvanātha) were historical persons. Vardhamāna was, in fact, a reformer and not the founder of the Jaina religion as some scholars think him to be.

Regarding Arishṭanemi, we know from Jaina literary tradition that he was born in the Yādava clan of Dvaraka and was a cousin of Krishṇa Vāsudeva and Baladeva (who were leaders of another group of philosophies or religious sects such as the Vaishṇavas). His father, Samudra Vijaya, was king of Dvaraka or Saurīpura and his mother was Śīvadevi. The race to which he belonged was called Harivaṁśa. His (i. e.

1A Jina or Tirthaṅkara, according to Jaina belief, is one who has attained omniscience and freedom not by the help of a teacher nor by the revelation of the Vedas but by his own power. He is also given many other epithets, like Mahāvīra, Sarvajna, Kevalin and Arhat, etc. indicating the ideas entertained about him by his votaries.

The twenty-four Jinas or Tirthaṅkaras are Rishabha, Ajīta, Sambhava, Abhinandana, Sumati, Padmaprabha, Supārśva, Chandraprabha, Pushpadanta or Suvidhi, Sītala, Sreyāṁśa, Vāsupūjya, Vimala, Ananta, Dharma, Śānti, Kunthu, Ara, Malli, Munisuvrata, Nimi, Nemi or Arishṭanemi, Pārśvanātha and Vardhamāna Mahāvīra.
Arishtanemis) parentage and family have thus a well-known historical background.²

Pārśvanātha is one of the most important Jainā Tīrthaṅkaras. Some regard him as the true founder of the Jaina faith.³ His father was Aśvasena, king of Benaras, and his mother queen Vāmādevī. He was probably born in about 817 B.C. and died about 717 B.C. He took to the life of an ascetic at the age of thirty. He obtained enlightenment at the foot of an Aśoka tree and preached for seventy years the doctrines of love and fraternity.⁴ According to the Uttarādhyayanasūtra,⁵ he enjoined upon his followers four vows: (i) not to injure life; (ii) to speak the truth; (iii) not to steal, and (iv) not to own property, while Mahāvīra added one more, namely, the vow of chastity. Pārśva allowed his disciples to wear a garment but Mahāvīra advocated complete nudity.⁶ Thus, Pārśva was a historical person and, as is known, his organization was led by Keśi in the days of Mahāvīra. That Jainism as a religious movement flourished before Mahāvīra’s time is proved by a few more facts. “Nirgrantha” or Niganṭha was the name by which the Jainas were originally known, though it was later on applied to denote Mahāvīra’s followers particularly. It may be noted here that the Pitakas mention very often the Nirgranthas as opponents or converts of Buddha and his disciples. As it is nowhere stated or implied that they were a newly founded sect we may hold that they existed a considerable time before the advent of Buddha and also of Mahāvīra.⁷ As Buddhaghosha informs us, Makkhali Gośāla, the founder of the Ājīvika sect, divided the contemporary population into six clans of which the Nirgranthas were one.⁸ All this would tend to show the great antiquity

²B. C. Bhattacharya, The Jaina Iconography, p. 81.
⁴M. Bloomfield, The Life and Stories of the Jaina Saviour, Parsvanatha.
⁶Uttarādhyayanasūtra, Lecture xxiii, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XLV.
⁷Ibid., pp. xxii, xxiii.
of this sect before Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, the twenty-fourth Tīrthaṅkara. Vardhamāna was a great preacher and he showed extraordinary genius in organizing the Jaina Sangha. He was born in Vaisali (modern Basarh) in the district of Muzaffarpur, Bihar. His father, Siddhārthā, was the head of the Kshatriya clan, the Nāṭas or Nāyas of Kollāga, the suburb of Vaisali. Hence Mahāvīra was known also as Vesāliya, i.e. of Vaisali. His mother’s name was Triśālā, a daughter of Chetaka, who was then the governing “Rajan” of the Republic of Vaisali. Mahāvīra who was born about 599 B.C. was therefore a highly connected personage. His parents died when he was thirty and he became a monk and took to a life of mortification lasting for twelve years, when he reached the state of omniscience. He died at Pava (Patna District) at the age of 72 in 527 B.C.

In Kollāga there was a religious establishment called the Dūipalāsa Chaitya for the accommodation of the monks of the order of Pārśvanātha to whom the Nāya clan (to which Vardhamāna belonged) professed allegiance. Mahāvīra, on adopting the monk’s vocation joined the order of Pārśvanātha. But the observances of that order do not seem to have satisfied his notions of stringency, including nudity. So after one year he separated and, discarding his clothes, wandered about the country of north and south Bihar.

The last 30 years of his life Mahāvīra passed in preaching his religious system and organizing his order of ascetics. His order was patronised chiefly by those princes with whom he was connected through his mother, the royal families of Videha, Magadha and Anga. He spent the major part of his life in the

10Belonging to the Nāṭa clan of Vaisali Vardhamāna is called a Nāṭaputta, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XXII, p. xvi.
12Ibid., p. 40.
13Ibid.
14Mahāvīra was thus not the propounder of the Jaina religion. He was a monk who espoused the Jaina creed and brought about a reformation in the Jaina church. He may be called in one sense the first schism-maker in the Jaina church inasmuch as he seceded from Pārśva’s order.
towns and villages of these regions\(^{15}\) though he perhaps extended his travels up to Sravasti in the north and Kalinga in the south-east. He won for himself numerous followers among the clergy and the lay clergy.\(^{16}\) After his death the Jaina order continued to flourish under the rule of the great ascetic’s disciple Sudharmā and his successors, as we learn from the study of the Jaina legends.

Mahāvīra and Gautama Buddha, because of their aristocratic descent, had easy access to the royal courts and made many converts from among the members of the royal houses. Mahāvīra met Bimbisāra and his son Ajātaśatru or Kuṇika and was treated by them as well as by others of the royal family with the utmost courtesy and respect. After Mahāvīra’s death, Jainism also continued to receive royal patronage as was the case with Buddhism after the death of Gautama Buddha. In fact, the success of both Jainism and Buddhism was largely due to royal support. According to Jain literary traditions, Ajātaśatru’s son and successor, Udayī, was a great patron and follower of the Jaina faith. The Āvaśyakasūtra\(^{17}\) and also Hemachandra’s Pariśishtaparva\(^{18}\) inform us that Udayaṇ caused to be built a splendid Jaina temple in the centre of his new capital, Pataliputra. That the Jainas had free access into his court is evident from the fact that he was murdered by one (whose father was dethroned by him) in the guise of a Jaina monk.

Jainism seems to have had abundant influence with the rulers of the Nanda dynasty. The Hathigumpha inscription tells us that the image of a Jina was taken away as a trophy to Magadha by a Nanda who was a Jaina and Jainism came to Kalinga at a very early date.\(^{19}\) This has also the support of the literary tradition that the Nanda dynasty has a line of Jaina ministers beginning with Kalpaka.\(^{20}\)

\(^{15}\)Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XXII, pp. xv-xvi ff; Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1890, 40 ff.

\(^{16}\)The present chapter contains a detailed description of Mahāvīra’s church-organisation.

\(^{17}\)Āvaśyakasūtra, p. 689.

\(^{18}\)Hemachandra’s Pariśishtaparva, Canto VI, v. 181. See also p. lxii.

\(^{19}\)See p. 153 of the present treatise.

\(^{20}\)Āvaśyakasūtra, p. 692.
The Mauryas succeeded the Nandas on the Magadhan throne. According to the Jain tradition, a great famine visited Magadha lasting twelve years, during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya. Bhadrabāhu, the leader of the Jain church, left Magadha with a number of his followers and settled in the Carnatic country. The Jains say that Chandragupta Maurya also followed Bhadrabāhu and starved himself to death at Sravana Belgola following the Jaina practice.

The Aśokan Edicts supply the earliest authentic information on the Jains. Aśoka not only interested himself in Buddhism which he professed in his later years but took care in a fatherly way of all other religions. In Pillar Edict VII he says:

Some [Mahāmātras] were ordered by me to busy themselves also with Brāhmaṇas [and] Ājīvikas; other were ordered by me to busy themselves also with the Nirgranthas.

The Nirgranthas, as already mentioned above, are the older name of the Jains and as they are mentioned here along with the other important sects of the land we may conclude that they were of no small importance during Aśoka’s time. Aśoka’s grandson, Samprati, was a staunch follower of the Jaina religions and showed great zeal in the propagation of this faith. Hemachandra credits him with the creation of a large number of Jaina temples all over Jambudvīpā and he led with great devotion religious festivals and processions in honour of the Arhats during the stay of Suhastin in Ujjayini. This devotion of Samprati was emulated not only by the chiefs subordinate to him but also by the kings of the adjacent kingdoms, with the result that the Jaina faith gained widespread popularity. Samprati’s missionary efforts spread to South India as well. Hemachandra tells us that he sent Jaina monks to preach in countries like those of the Andhras and Darmillas (Dravidian countries).

Of the archaeological remains of Jainism pertaining to the Maurya period, mention may be made of a nude torso of

---

polished Chunar stone, which may be described as a Tirthaṅkara figure in Kāyotsarga posture. Another torso of the same type, but belonging probably to the Śuṅga period, shows the continuance of Tirthaṅkara worship in Magadha. Both these torsos, found in Lohanipur near Patna town, are preserved in the Patna Museum, Patna. Some Jaina bronzes from Chausa in the Shababad district and those from Machuataand Aluara in Manhum district seem to show the popularity of Jainism in Bihar during the late Śuṅga and Kusāna period.

During the Śuṅga period, Jainism found strong support among the people of Kalinga. As Buddhism became the paramount religion of the Magadhan empire during the reign of Aśoka, so was Jainism in Kalinga during the reign of Khāravela. The text of the Hathigumpha cave inscription (deciphered by R. D. Banerjee and K. P. Jayaswal, Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XX, pp. 72 ff) shows that Khāravela, who flourished as the overlord of Kalinga in the early part of the second century B.C., was devoted to the Jaina creed. This record, which furnishes a description of the first thirteen years of Khārvela's reign, opens with an invocation to the Arhats and the Siddhas, two of the common appellations by which a Jaina Tirthaṅkara or a saint is described. It has to be mentioned that this invocation which quite agrees with the usual Jaina formula of Namaskāra, is met with also in Jaina inscriptions of

24 There is a good deal of difference of opinion among scholars regarding the date of Khāravela. Jayaswal assigns him to the first half of the second century B.C. and holds that he was a contemporary of Pushyamitra Śuṅga. (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. xx, pp. 75-6). According to H. C. Raychaudhury, Khāravela is to be assigned either to the third century B.C. or the first century B.C. and in no case could he be a contemporary of Pushyamitra Śuṅga (Political History of Ancient India, 4th Ed., pp. 314-15). In the opinion of Rapson, Khāravela belongs in any case to almost the middle of the second century B.C. (Cambridge History of India, Vol. I, p 535). These differences of opinion regarding the date of Khāravela would hardly affect our main conclusion as our task is to give the history of Jainism in Kalinga in the post-Mauryan period (c. 185 B.C.-300 A.D.)

25 Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XX, p. 79.

Mathura. Hence it is natural to suppose that Khāravela, who paid obeisance to the Arhats and the Siddhas, was an adherent of the Jaina faith.

If the invocation formula of the Hathigumpha inscription be indecisive as to whether Jainism was the personal faith of Khāravela or the person by whom the epigraph was composed for him, the contents of the epigraph when studied fully will leave no doubt with regard to Khāravela's allegiance to Jainism and its wide popularity in Kalinga.

In line 12 of the Hathigumpha cave inscription we are told that Khāravela in the twelfth year of his reign attacked Magadha, made its king Bahasatimitra (whose identity is a matter of great controversy among scholars) bow at his feet and he carried to and set up in Kalinga the image of Jina of Kalinga which was earlier taken away from Kalinga by king Nanda of Pataliputra (4th century B. C.).

The episode of the Jaina idol as narrated in line 12 of the Hathigumpha inscription offers some valuable information with regard to the history of Jainism. Firstly, it shows that Khāravela was an avowed champion of the Jaina faith which is supported by the other contents of the Hathigumpha inscription. Secondly, it tells us that Jainism prevailed in Kalinga as its national faith for some centuries even before Khāravela's time. Thirdly, it leads us to believe that the Nanda invader who carried away the Jina image was interested in the Jaina faith.

The antiquity and popularity of Jainism in Kalinga before Khāravela's time has the support of literary tradition. The Jaina Harivarśa Purāṇa states that Mahāvīra Vardhamāna

28M(āgaḍha) (m) cha rājāñāṁ Baha (sa) timitaṁ pādevamādāpa-yati Nandarājaṣītam cha Kā (li) rīga-Jinaṁ sarṇīve(sa) (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XX, p. 80). Dr Barua reads this portion thus: Mā (gadhaṁ) cha rājānam Baha (sa)timita (ṁ) pade va (m) dāpa(ya) ti, Nandarāja-Jita Kalinga-jano-saṁ (n) i(ye)sam. Khāravela, compelled Brihaspatimitra, the king of the Magadha people, to bow down at his feet (did something in connection with) the settlements of Kalinga people subjugated by king Nanda (Indian Historical Quarterly, XIV, p 480).
preached his religion in Kalinga. Another Jain work, Āvaśyakasūtra, says that Mahāvīra visited Kalinga, as the king of that country was a friend of his father. In view of this, there is nothing surprising about the fact that Kalinga had a Jina idol in the days of the Nandas (two centuries after Mahāvīra’s nirvāṇa). Since its introduction in Kalinga, Jainism seems to have enjoyed an uninterrupted popularity there. It may be pointed out that the Udayagiri and Khandagiri hills in Orissa are honeycombed with caves and cells which were in use by the Buddhist and Jaina monks from an early time. Though most of the caves were excavated during the second-first centuries B.C. there is no doubt that some of them are much older than Khāravela’s time. In this connection Ganguly observes:

We think we shall not be far from the truth in dating some of the caves even in the 4th or 5th century B.C.—that is, before the period of the Hathigumbha inscription, for the locality where the caves were excavated must have had some sort of previous sanctity preserved in the eyes of the coreligionists.

Further, it is stated in the District Gazetteer, Puri, that there settled in that district a large number of Jainas during the rule of Asoka. Some of the sandstone hills of Udayagiri and Khandagiri contain their hermitage caves with traces of inscriptions in Maurya Brāhmī characters. They all seem to have been excavated for the religious use of the Jaina monks and have been used by them for many a century. Again, the site of the Hathigumpha cave itself seems to bear evidence to the antiquity of Jainism in Kalinga. A royal edict, so that it may serve its purpose, is engraved at a place which is promi-

30 Āvaśyakasūtra, pp. 219-20.
31 B. M. Barua, Old Brāhmī Inscriptions in the Udayagiri and Khandagiri Caves, pp. 292 ff.
32 Manmohan Ganguly, Orissa and Her Remains—Ancient and Mediaeval, p. 32.
nent in the eye of the people for some reason or other. The
caves in ancient India were holy resorts of the monks and
saints. So it may be supposed that Khāravela, who was a
Jaina, chose to incise his record there on the obvious ground of
the religious sanctity attached to it, for the situation of the
Hathigumpha cave cannot be attributed importance of any
other kind, viz. commercial or strategic. We have epigraphic
evidence to show that the spot was visited by pilgrims as late
as eleventh century A.D. 34

It has already been pointed out that Mahāvīra preached his
religion in Kalinga. Jayaswal and R. D. Banerji think that
the Kumārī hill may be the site where he preached, as they are
inclined to believe that the expression Supavata-vijaya-chaka
kumārīpavate (on the Kumārī hill where the wheel of law had
been well revolved, i.e., the religion of Jina had been preached)
contains an allusion to that effect. 35 If Jayaswal and Banerji's
reading and translation are regarded as authentic, there is no
difficulty in accepting the literary tradition of the Jainas
regarding Mahāvīra's visits to and preaching in Kalinga.
Further, the Hathigumpha Cave inscription shows that there
were on the Udayagiri hills Kāya Nishīdis (the relic memorials)
as Jaina institutions, in existence from before Khāravela's
time. 36 Line 14 of the Hathigumpha inscription refers to the
Yāpa professors who were at Kāya Nishīdi (relic memorial) on
the Udayagiri hill. The word Nishīdi occurs in Pillar Edict VII
of Aṣoka and the Nagarjuni Hill cave inscription of his grand-
son Dasaratha as Niṃsiḍhiyā and Nishīdiyā respectively.
The Jainas employ this word in the sense of resting places.
The Jainas employ the word in a technical sense, i.e., in the
sense of a memorial tomb erected over the remains of a Jaina
ascetic. That the Nishīdis on the Kumārī hill were not merely

34 Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XX, p. 72. On the wall of the Hathigumpha
Cave there were a number of medieval records (10th-11th century) consist-
ting mostly of the proper names which shows that the pilgrims regarded
this place as a sacred spot as late as the 11th century A. D.
35 Ibid., Vol. XX, pp. 72, 80. Dr Burua translates this portion of the
text as "On the Kumari Hill in the well founded realm of victory" (Indian
36 Ibid., Vol. XX, LL. 14 and 15, p. 80.
ornamental tombs is evident from the qualifying word Kāya. This shows that the enshrinement of the corporeal relics of the saints was a practice prevalent among the Jainas from an early time as it was the case with the Buddhists. This seems to be also corroborated by the Jaina stūpas discovered at Mathura. All this tends to prove the settlement of the Jainas in Kalinga before Khāravela’s time.

Khāravela took a deep interest in Jaina religious doctrines. Line 14 of the Hathigumpha inscription says that in the thirteenth year of his reign he respectfully offered royal maintenance, China clothes (silk) and white clothes to the members of the Yāpaniya Saṃgha (Yāpa-ñavakehi) who “have extinguished the rounds of their lives” by means of austerities at the relic memorial (Kāya-Nashidi) on the Kumārī Hill. The Yāpana Saṃgha flourished in the south. They are mentioned often in Jaina literature and medieval inscriptions of South India. On the authority of the Bhadrabāhucharta, Jayaswal says that the Yāpana Saṃgha were among the numerous disciples of Bhadrabāhu who worshipped his bones, and then finally decided to remain without clothes.

Khāravela’s interest in the Jaina faith is indicated also by a few more facts. From the closing portion of line 14 of the Hathigumpha cave inscription as interpreted by Banerji and Jayaswal, we learn that Khāravela as a layman was devoted to worship and that he realized the nature of Jīva and Deha. Jīva, according to the Jainas, is the first category of the fundamental truth of their philosophy. They say that experience

37Terasame cha vase Supavata vijaya chaka Kumāripavate arahayate pa-khina-sam (si) tehi Kāyanisidlyāya Yāpañavakehi rājabhītini Chinavatāni va (sā) s (i) tāni (Ibid., Vol. XX, p. 80).
38Premi, Vidvatrainamālā, i. p. 132; Maliyapundi grant of Chalukya King Ammaraja II (Epigraphia Indica, vol. IX, p. 54; Indian Antiquary, Vol. XII, p 20). According to the inscriptive evidence the Yāpakas were a part of the pure Nandigachha community (Epigraphia Indica, vol. IX, p. 54).
shows that all things may be divided into the living (Jīva) and non-living (Ajīva), the principle of life is entirely distinct from the body and it is most erroneous to think that life is either the product or the property of the body. It is on account of this life principle that the body appears to be living. This principle is the soul.\textsuperscript{41}

The highest goal of a Jaina is Nirvāṇa. But only an ascetic who has renounced the world and has faithfully performed the duties and vows prescribed for him can attain it. Though a layman cannot attain Nirvāṇa, he can undertake duties and share the principles of the Jaina religion which enables him to treat the way which leads to it. From the Hathigumpha inscription it appears that Khāravela was a devoted lay worshipper and that he was able to realize the higher ideals of the Jaina philosophy.

Line 15 of the Hathigumpha inscription states that Khāravela convened a council of the wise ascetics and sages from all directions near the relic depository of the Arhats. The object of this assembly is referred to in line 16 which, according to Jayaswal, states that Khāravela caused to be compiled expeditiously the text of the seven-fold Āṅgas of the sixty-four letters.\textsuperscript{42}

According to the Jaina tradition the Jaina canon seems to have fallen into oblivion during the time of the famine which occurred in Magadha when Bhadrabāhu, a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya (fourth century B.C.) was the leader of the Jaina community. After the famine was over a council met at Pataliputra to collect the canonical scriptures under the leadership of Sthūlabhadra. The council collected the eleven Āṅgas but the 12th was missing. “This twelfth Anga contained fourteen pūrvas which Sthūlabhadra was able to supply.” During the famine period, Bhadrabāhu, as is well known, migrated to the South with a number of his disciples, leaving the leadership of the Jaina church in the hands of Sthūlabhadra. His party,

\textsuperscript{41}S. N. Das Gupta, \textit{History of Indian Philosophy}, Vol. I, p. 188.
\textsuperscript{42}Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XX, p. 79.
\textsuperscript{43}\textit{Ibid.}, Vol. XX, p. 77.
which came back after the famine was over, refused, however, to accept the text of the Pataliputra council and declared the Angas and pûrvas as lost.

From the above it appears that the Jaina canon established at Pataliputra was not an agreed religious canon of the Jainas consisting of two main groups—one represented by Sthûlabhadra and the other by Bhadrabâhu. That Khâravela undertook the compilation of the Jaina canon which is described by Fleet as being lost or scattered since the time of the Mauryas, indicates perhaps that according to the reading of Jayaswal and R.D. Banerji, the works “Angasatikâma turiyam” of Aṅgasstikaturiyam are qualified by the adjective “Choyaṭhi” meaning thereby “the seven-fold Aṅgas or Aṅgas in collection of 7 and 4 consisting of letters.” The term Choyaṭhi has been given a mysterious interpretation by the Jainas who hold that their sacred literature is made up by 64 letters. J.L. Jaina in his introduction to the Jîva-Khanda of the Gommatasâra observes:

The knowledge of Śruti, Śruta Jñâna may be of things which are contained in the Aṅgas (limbs of sacred books of the Jainas) or of things outside the Aṅgas. There are 64 simple letters of the alphabet; of these 33 are consonants, 27 vowels and 4 auxilliary (which help in formation of compound letters).

The above discussion shows that Khâravela was highly interested in his faith and displayed a good deal of enthusiasm to restore the Jaina scriptures.

Though Khâravela was a patron and follower of the Jaina faith, in his training and policy he did not differ much from other Indian princes. His coronation took place according to Brahmanical rites. He undertook military expeditions and guided himself by the ideals of Brahmancial sovereignty. The principles and methods which he followed in governing his kingdom were quite in accordance with those laid down in


\[45\] Barua, Old Brâhmi Inscriptions, etc., p. 263.
Brahmanical treatises on Hindu policy. He bestowed gifts on members of other sects as he did on the Jainas. The observance of some of the Brahmanical ideals by Khāravela who was a Jaina, rather puzzled Dr Barua who wrote that so far as this world was concerned Khāravela was a Hindu, and that so far as the other world was concerned, he was a pious Jaina.46

In this connection it may be suggested that the general tendency in India is to maintain the ancient rites and traditions. The ancient Vedic ceremonies should not be identified with one set of practices meant for a particular sect. The term Vedic has a wide significance and does not exclusively connote the Brahmanic, though the Brahmanical religion has retained more of the Vedic character than any other religion. The Vedic ceremonies are a mass of social traditions. The kings and princes, to whatever faith they might have belonged, tried to keep up the ancient practices which were embedded in the general structure of Indian culture. Further, it may be stated that the Buddhists and Jainas discarded the ancient or Vedic practices to the extent that they militated against the accepted philosophies. The social practices were left alone. In fact Buddhism and Jainism were more philosophies than religions until very late. Thus it is not necessary to consider Khāravela’s coronation ceremony or his gifts to the Brāhmaṇas as being inconsistent with his religious outlook even from the strict Jaina standpoint.

Jainism seems to have been the religious faith also of other members of Khāravela’s family, including his chief queen and his successors. The Svargapura Cave47 inscription records that the cave was dedicated to the Kalinga recluses of the Jaina faith by his chief queen who is described as the daughter of the high-souled king Lalārka Hasti Sāha or Hastisinratha.48 We have a number of Udayagiri Hill inscriptions of Khāravela’s successors recording their dedication of caves to the monks

46Barua, op. cit., p. 263.
47The upper story of the Manchapuri cave is popularly known as Svargapuri. It has been referred to by R. L. Mitra and Fergusson as Vaikunthapuri Cave.
48Barua, op. cit., p. 57, see also f. no. 1, p. 57.
The inscriptions which belong to 200 B.C. 100 A.D. do not specify as to which particular religious sects the monks receiving gifts belonged. But in view of the preponderance of the Jaina faith in Khāravela’s time it is quite natural to suppose that the recipients of gifts mentioned in these inscriptions were mostly of the Jaina faith.

Jainism in Western and Southern India

Western India is one of the early strongholds of the Jainas. Dvaraka is the birthplace as well as the main centre of the missionary activities of Arishṭanemi, the twenty-second Jaina Tīrthāṅkara. Samprati, a grandson of Aśoka, whose dominion included the Avanti region, was a devout follower and patron of the Jaina religion as noticed before. As the Kālakāchāryakathānaka and the Jaina recension of the Vikramacharita show, Jainism continued to flourish here during the post-Mauryan period too. According to the Kālakāchāryakathānaka the Jaina saint Kālaka came to Ujjayini with his followers to preach his doctrines. It so happened that Kālaka’s sister, Sarasavatī, also reached there after some days with a party of nuns. Gardabhilla, the king of Ujjayini, as the story tells us, was so infatuated with the beautiful Sarasavatī that he carried her off. When Kālaka failed to rescue his sister, he went to the land of the Śakas (where the princes are called Shāhīs and their overlord Shānana Shāhī) and persuaded 96 Śaka princes to invade Ujjayini. Gardabhilla was defeated in the encounter and Kālaka placed one of the Śaka princes on the throne. After a time, as we are told in the story, there arose a king of Mālava named Vikramāditya who overthrew the Śakas, ruled gloriously and established an era of his own. Subsequently, another Śaka king arose and overthrew the dynasty of Vikramāditya. When a hundred and thirty-five years of the Vikrama era had elapsed, this Śaka king started an era of his own.

56This title in its Greek and Indian form was adopted by the Śaka kings of the Punjab, Maues and his successors who belong to the first century B.C., and it appears in the form Shaonano Shao on the coins of Kushana rulers. This shows that the Kālaka story has a historical background.
According to certain eminent historians, Gardabhillā and Vikramāditya (who is in their opinion perhaps the founder of the Vikrama era of 57 B.C.) were actual historical persons reigning in the first century B.C. and the Kālaka story reflects the history of this period.\(^{61}\) If this is conceded, we can hold that there was a good deal of Jaina influence in western India in Gardabhillā’s time\(^{62}\) (i.e. early part of the first century B.C.). It may be noted that there were three saints of the name of Kālakācārya, and one was separated from another by an appreciable period of time. As is generally held, it was Kālaka II who was the uprooter of Gardabhilla. The year of Kālaka II is by all authorities said to be 453 B.C. of the Vīra era in which years it is stated in a stanza appended to several manuscripts of Dharmaprabhasūri’s version that he took (gāhiya) Sarasvatī.

Coming to Vikramāditya, the successor of Gardabhillā, we find that the Jainas claim him as one of the patrons and followers of their religion. The Jainistic recension of the Vikrama-\(\text{charita}\) represents Vikrama as listening to the instruction of the Jaina saint Siddhasena Divākara, with great interest.\(^{63}\) The Jainapattāvālis tell us that Siddhasena Divākara converted Vikrama to his faith in 470 Vīra era (i.e. 57 B.C.).\(^{64}\) As to the archaeological evidence of Jainism in this period, though not necessarily of western India, mention may be made of an interesting bronze image of Pārśvanātha standing in the Kāyotsarga posture. There are snake hoods over his head. The image is preserved in the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, Bombay. Though its findspot is not known, on a stylistic basis it can be attributed to the first century B.C.


\(^{62}\) The Purāṇas refer to the Gardabhillas and make them precede the Śakas, Pargiter, *Dynasties of Kali Age*, p. 45; N. Brown, *The Story of Kālaka*, p. 6.


According to Jaina Paṭṭāvalīs, there flourished in western India in the first century B.C. several Jaina saints besides Siddhasena Divākara, who were noted for their learning and missionary zeal. Among them mention may be made of Vriddhavādin, Vajra and Pādalipta. Vriddhavādin is regarded by the Jains as a saint of great repute and a Guru of Siddhasena. Vajra, who belonged to the Gautama gotra, was born in 496 Vīra era (31 B.C.). The name of his father was Dhanagiri and that of his mother Sunandā. He learnt the eleven Angas and went from Dasapura to Bhadragupta at Avanti to study the 12th, i.e. the Drishiṭiśadāṅga. He was the last Jaina saint to possess knowledge of the complete Pūrvas. He spread the Jaina religion in the South. Pādalipta was a contemporary of Vikrama Vriddhavādin and Siddhasena Divākara. Jaina traditions associate him with the foundation of Palitana city. According to Haribhadra Suri he spent most of his time in Manyakhetra in the south and did away with all the bad religions there.

Architectural remains would show that Jainism continued to flourish in Western India as a popular religion during the subsequent centuries. As scholars hold, some of the caves at Junagadh (Gujarat) were occupied by the Jaina...
Jainism seems to have been popular in the north-western parts of undivided India during the early century of the Christian era. According to Sir John Marshall, two of the stūpas at Sirkap, Taxila, were of the Jaina faith. Further, it may be mentioned here that Jaina traditions speak of a dharmachakra set up by Bahubali, son of Rishabhanātha, at Taxila.61

Jainism seems to have been a popular faith in the South also in our period. The *Samyaktvasaptati* states that there were many Jaina samghas in the South noted for their good qualities, during the first century B. C. when Pādalipta came to preach his doctrines in Manyakheta.62 Some of the Sravana Belgola inscriptions contain references to the Jaina hierarchy and succession of Jaina teacher in South India.63 The order generally followed is: Kuṇḍa Kuṇḍa (Kuṇḍa-Kuṇḍa), Umāsvāti, Balākapaiñcha, Samantabhadra, Śivakoṭi, Devanandi and others. Of these teachers, the following, viz. Kuṇḍa Kuṇḍa, Umāsvāti, Samantabhadra and Balākapaiñcha, seem to have lived during the post-Mauryan period.64

Kuṇḍa Kuṇḍa was a great Jaina preacher and is held in high esteem even now among the Jainas as is evidenced by the fact that at all meetings of Jaina savants in India a reading opens with the verse:

*Māṅgalam bhagavān viro māṅgalam Gautamo ganin*  
Māṅgalam Kuṇḍakuṇḍāryo, Jainadharmostu māṅgalam.

Kuṇḍa Kuṇḍa was a reputed author. He is said to have composed in Prakrit a large number of works including Pañchāstikāya, Pravachana-sāra, Samādhitantra, Jñāna-tattva Prajñāpana, 10 Bhaṭis, and 84 Pāhudas.65

There is a good deal of controversy regarding the date of Kuṇḍa Kuṇḍa. Some scholars place him in the sixth century

---

65*Epigraphia Carnatica*, 1923, pp. 85, 87.
A.D. while others take him back to as early as third century B.C. The views of these scholars are based upon insufficient data and cannot be accepted as reliable. It is to be mentioned here that a line of Digambara teachers constituting the Sarasvatī Gachchha or Nandigaṇa or Desigaṇa of the original church (mūla saṅgha) founded by Mahāvīra is constantly cited in the Mysore inscription as the Kunḍakunḍa anvaya.\(^67\) In the Paṭṭāvalīs of the Anvaya Kunḍa Kunḍa\(^68\) is mentioned as the third point of the line, with date corresponding to 8 B.C.-44 A.D. In view of this we may hold that Kunḍa Kunḍa flourished in the second part of the first century B.C. and the early half of the first century A.D.

Regarding Umāsvāti (who was also known as Gridhrapiṅcha) we have no tangible evidence to fix his date. As tradition regards him both as a contemporary of Kunḍa Kunḍa, he and his disciple and successor\(^69\) may be regarded as living in the first or second century A.D. He is credited with a learned work called Tattvārthasūtra. He wrote in Sanskrit whereas Kunḍa Kunḍa wrote in Prakrit.

Balakapiṅcha is said to be a direct disciple of Umāsvāti and as such he may be taken to have flourished somewhere in the second century A.D.\(^70\) Not much is known about him.\(^71\)

Samantabhadra, who is said to have flourished in the second century A.D., was a Digambara monk of considerable repute. A Sravana Belagola inscription tells us that he invited opponents to refute his views at Pataliputra, Malwa, Sindh, and Thakka, which shows that he travelled far and wide to preach the Jaina faith.\(^72\)

**Jainism in Mathura**

During the period under review, Mathura was a flourishing

---


\(^{67}\) *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Inscriptions of Sravana Belgola, Index.

\(^{68}\) Hoernle, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XX, pp. 341-61, XXI, pp. 57-84.


\(^{71}\) *Indian Culture*, Vol. VII, No. 1, p. 43.

\(^{72}\) H.L. Jain, *Jaina Śilālekhā Samgraha*, part 1, No. 54, p. 102.
centre of Jainism in northern India, as Kalinga was in the south east. Archaeological evidence of Mathura throws a flood of light on the history of the Jaina religion, community and organization for several centuries from before the Christian era down to the mediaeval period. To understand the importance of Mathura as a centre of Jaina religion, art, and iconography during the period under consideration, we may refer in brief to the results of archaeological excavations carried on at Kanka-litila and other Jaina mounds by Cunningham and Dr. Fürher.

Cunningham’s excavations at Kankalitila yielded important results. He found here a large number of broken statues of Jaina Tirthaṅkaras, crossbars of railings and pillars, mostly inscribed. Brick walls and and pavements also were discovered but unfortunately no plans or drawings of these are available now. On the basis of these discoveries Cunningham held that Kankalitila was the site of some important Jaina buildings which existed during the rule of the Indo-Scythians. This is supported by the fact that all the twelve inscriptions which he discovered belong to the Kushana rule from 5 A.D. in the reign of Kanishka to 98 A. D. in that of Vasudeva.

The last and most fruitful excavations at Kankali and its neighbourhood were carried out by Dr Fürher during the years 1889-91 and 1896. Dr Fürher’s discoveries are full of importance and interest inasmuch as they reveal the antiquity and wide popularity of Jainism in Mathura for several centuries before the Christian era and also throw abundant light on Jaina history during the Indo-Scythic and subsequent periods.

Amongst Fürher’s discoveries in 1889-89 as enumerated in the Lucknow Provincial Museum Report, ending 1 March 1889, mention may be made, so far as early pieces are concerned, of ten inscribed statues of several Svetāmbara Jinas of the Indo-Scythic period, thirty-four pieces of sculpture forming parts of a magnificent Svetāmbara Jaina temple of the time of the

75Vogel, Catalogue of the Archaeological Museum at Mathura, p. 11.
74Ibid.
76Ibid.
Kushana King Huvishka, six bases of Buddha statues inscribed and dated in the regnal years of the rulers, Kanishka, Huvishka, and Vasudeva, an inscribed statue of the Bodhisattva Amogha-Siddhārtha of the first century A.D., ten inscribed Buddhist statues of the Indo-Scythic period, a rich sculptured door-Jamb of a Buddha temple, twenty-four inscribed sculptured panels, some of which are inscribed in characters of the Indo-Scythian period, in addition to many cross-bars and railing pillars.

Fürher's work in 1889-90 exposed a Jaina stūpa and a Jaina temple belonging to the Digambara sect. In the course of this excavation were exhumed eight images of Tirthankaras, one hundred and twenty of stone railings, and many miscellaneous sculptures and and numerous inscriptions of which seventeen belong to the Indo-Scythian (Kushana period) from 5 A.D. to 86 A.D.77

Excavations in the winter of 1890-91 were highly successful and far surpassed the results of the two previous years. The Provincial Museum Report for 1890-91 shows the acquisition from the Kankali mound of 737 fine pieces of sculptures including well executed and beautifully finished panels, doorways, toraṇas, columns, and Tirthaṅkaras. Among the sculptures 62 bear inscriptions with dates varying from 150 B.C. to 1023 A.D. On a beautifully carved Toraṇa there is a short inscription which seems to be written in characters more archaic than those of Dhanabhūti's record on the Barhut gateway. Again, there is another inscription which is written in two lines on an oblong slab containing the name of the founder of one of the temples excavated during the year 1889-90. This record is in the scripts of the beginning of the Christian era. These two inscriptions considered together would show that there were two Jaina temples in Mathura, one dating back to the early part of the second century B.C. and the first century A.D.78 The existence of pre-Christian Jaina sanctuaries or establishments in Mathura is indicated by few more old inscriptions and several

76V.A. Smith, op. cit., p. 2.
77 Ibid., p. 3.
78 Ibid., pp. 2-4.
other facts. Among these old Jaina inscriptions the earliest is that of Uttaradāsaka recording his gift of an ornamental arch. This inscription is written in the early scripts and Prakrit of the pure Pali type. On palaeographical and linguistic grounds it can be attributed to the middle of the second century B.C. or earlier. The next inscriptions to be mentioned in this connection are the dedicatory records of Śivamitra and Āmohini. The epigraph of Śivamitra is written in archaic script and it may be attributed to a period earlier than Kanishka, though nothing can be said about its exact dating. Āmohini's inscription is dated in the year 42 of the reign of Mahākshatrapa Soḍsa who is believed to have reigned in the first century B.C.

All this would show the association of the Jainas with Mathura in centuries earlier than the Christian era. Further, Dr Fürher mentions in his Museum Report for 1890-91, a pilaster with an Indo-Scythic inscription which has been cut out of an ancient nude Jina statue. Further, there came to light a small Jaina statue which was carved out of the back of a sculptured panel with a rather archaic inscription on its obverse. Thus it is evident that the architects of this Jaina temple of the Indo-Scythic period made use of the materials of an older Jaina temple in Mathura, existence of which seems to be proved by the above evidence. The antiquity of Jainism in Mathura is further attested to by an inscription which Fürher found incised on the statue of a Tīrthaṅkara (Aranātha) set up in saṃvat 78 or 79 within the precincts of a stūpa which was believed to have been built by the gods when the inscription was engraved. The inscription reads thus:

(L.1.) Sam 79 var. 4 di=20 etasyan purvvaśyām Koṭṭiyegaṇe bājrayam sākhāyaṁ; (L. 2) Ko Aya Vṛidhahaṣṭi Arhato Nandi [ā] vartasa pratimāṁ nivartayati...B...bhāṛyyaye Śrāvikāya (dināye) dānāṁ pratimā vodve thūpe devanirmite pra......

---

80Ibid., Vol. II, p. 199.
81Ibid., Vol. II, p. 199.
82V.A. Smith, op. cit., p. 3.
83Ibid., p. 4.
84Epigraphia Indica, Vol. II, p. 204.
The inscription is written in the Kūṣhāṇa script and the date or the Samvat is 79. It is difficult to ascertain as to what era the year 79 refers to. It is, however, possible that the date belongs to the era used by the great Kūṣhāṇa kings to whose reign the inscription was executed in 157 A.D. if the year 79 is reckoned to be 78 A.D.

It is interesting to note that the Vodvā Stūpa is referred to in the inscription as having been built by the gods. This shows that in 157 A.D. (the time when the inscription was incised) the Vodvā stūpa was considered so ancient that it was regarded as the work of the gods, i.e. its origin was totally forgotten. The stūpa is therefore supposed to have been built several centuries before the Christian era. The Tīrthkaḷpa or Rājaprāśāda of Jināprāśāda throws ample light on the antiquity of the stūpa. This work, belonging to the fourteenth century A.D., is based upon ancient materials and traditions discovered by Bühler. According to this:

...the Stūpa was originally of gold adorned with precious stones and erected in honour of the 7th Jīna Supārśvanāthā by the goddess Kuverā at the desire of two ascetics, Dharmaruci and Dharmaghoṣha. During the time of the twenty-third Jīna, Pārśvanāthā, the golden Stūpa was encased in bricks and a stone temple was built outside.

The Tīrthkaḷpa further records that 1,300 years after “the Nirvāṇa of Māhāvīra the stūpa was repaired and dedicated in honour of Pārśvanāthā by a person called Bhaṭṭīṣūrī”. If the Nirvāṇa of Māhāvīra is assumed to have taken place about 527 B.C. the restoration of the stūpa would be in the seventh century A.D. and its original erection in the time of Pārśvanāthā would not be later than the seventh century B.C. If this tradition is believed, the Vodvā stūpa is perhaps the oldest known

85Ibid.
86A.A. Smith, op. cit., pp. 12-13. A legendary account of this stūpa is found also in the Yaṣṭiṭalaka Champa of Somadevasūrī, Vol. 11, p. 315, Jaina Antiquity, Vol. VIII.
87V.A. Smith, op. cit., p. 13.
stūpa so far. It reveals thereby the antiquity of Jainism in Mathura. 88

Dr Fürher’s Museum Report for the year ending 31 March 1896 furnishes further material with regard to the history of Jainism in Mathura. He observes:

The Archaeological Surveyor, Western Provinces and Oudh, forwarded 57 ornamental slabs of great finish and artistic merit and 15 uninscribed bases of Tīrthaṅkaras which formed part of an ancient Jaina Stūpa dating from the 2nd century B. C.

These sculptures came out in the course of excavations at the site adjoining the Kankali mound.

The Mathura sculptures and inscriptions referred to above fall into distinct groups, viz. those of the pre-Kushāna period and others of the Kushāna period. This shows beyond doubt that Jainism flourished in Mathura several centuries earlier than the Christian era and maintained its popularity there during the Indo-Scythic rule. We shall proceed now to discuss two important points in Jaina history, viz., the Jaina church organisation and schism in the Jaina church during the post-Mauryan period in the light of evidence afforded by the post-Mauryan Jaina inscriptions of Mathura.

**Jaina Community and Jaina Inscriptions of the Post-Mauryan Period**

Mahavira left behind him a well organized Jaina community consisting of monks, nuns, lay men and women. Among his followers there were fourteen thousand monks. He divided them into nine gaṇas or schools and placed a Gaṇadhara at the head of each school. Besides the monks, he had a large number of followers and according to the Jaina tradition about thirty-six thousand renounced their homes to take to a monastic life. At the head of the nuns was Chandanā, a cousin or aunt of

Mahāvīra. The third and fourth orders of Mahāvīra’s community consisted of lay men and women respectively.

Jainism is primarily a philosophical ethical system intended for ascetics. Ascetics alone can reach the highest ideal which according to Jainism is Nirvāṇa or Moksha, “the setting free” of the individual from Samsāra by observing the right faith, right knowledge and the right path. It should be noted that Mahāvīra provided a place for the laity also. Though they do not leave the world and dedicate their lives to the search of the truth which a Jaina teaches, yet they can undertake the duties that would ultimately lead to Nirvāṇa. The five great vows which an ascetic has to undertake are: Ahimsā Asatya-tyagā (vow against untruthfulness), Asteyavrata (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (chastity) and Aparigrahavrata (renunciation of all love for anything or any other person). Besides the above, a Jaina monk or Śramaṇa has got to observe various other rules of conduct to enable him to appreciate the three jewels—right knowledge, right faith, and right works. Mahāvīra prescribed twelve vows for lay worshippers which would suit household life and at the same time lead to the highest goal of an ascetic.

The vows narrated by Mahāvīra to his disciples are as follows: Prāṇatipāta Viramaṇavrata (never intentionally to destroy a Jīva that has more than one sense), Mrishāvāda Viramaṇavrata (vow against falsehood and exaggeration), Adattadāna Viramaṇavrata (vow against stealing or taking a thing which is not given), Maithuna Viramaṇavrata (vow of absolute chastity to one’s own wife), Parigraha Viramaṇavrata (vow of curbing the desires), Diśivrata parimāṇa (vow of setting bounds to one’s travels), Upabhogaparibhoga parimāṇa (setting a limit to the number of things one may use), Anarthadaṇḍavrata (guarding against unnecessary evils), Sāmayika (meditating every morning, afternoon, and evening), Deśāvakāśikavrata (not going beyond

88 Stevenson, Heart of Jainism, pp. 235 ff.
89 “Right knowledge is in fact knowledge of the Jaina creed” (Stevenson, Heart of Jainism, p. 245). “By right faith a Jaina understands the full surrender of himself to the teacher, the Jina, the firm conviction that he alone has found the way of salvation and only with him is the protection and refuge to be found.” Bühler, Indian Sects of the Jainas, p. 5.
81 Hoernle, Uḍāsago Dasā; Stevenson, Heart of Jainism, p. 25 ff.
the limit fixed in any of the four directions in mind or body), *Poshadhavrata* (spending by a lay man some of his time as a monk), *Atithisamvibhāgavrata* (supplying to a Nirgrantha any of the fourteen things which an ascetic is allowed to use—food, drink, fruits, betelnuts, clothes, pots, blankets, towels, and things which can be lent and returned, such as seats, benches, beds, quilts, etc., and medicine). Before a layman is fit to accept these vows he has got to renounce *Pañca Atichāra: Śankā* (doubts), *Kānkha* (the desire to belong to another faith), *Vītigichchā* (questioning about the reality of the fruits of Karma), *Parapā haṇḍa Parasamsā* (praising hypocrites) and *Parapākhaṇḍa santhana* (association with hypocrites). What has been advised by Mahāvira to Jaina monks and lay men apply *mutatis mutandis* to Jaina nuns and lay women respectively.

We have a large number of dedicatory inscriptions ranging from the year 5 to 98 of the era of the Indo-Scythic kings Kanishka, Huvishka, and Vāsudeva, which reveal the existence of a well organized Śvetāmbara community with its four-fold order inhabiting Mathura in the first-second centuries A.D. The inscriptions refer not only to the pious gifts of the donors but supply also the names of the monks or nuns at whose exhortation the gift was made. Further, it is usual with the dedicatory epigraphs of the Kushāna period to give the list of the teachers and the schools to which they belonged. They are described by their titles *Vāchaka* (reciter), and *Gaṇin* (head of a school), etc. The schools are called *gaṇa* (companies); the subdivision, *kula* (families) and *Śākhā* (branches). It is interesting to note that a large number of Gaṇas mentioned in the inscriptions are met with in the *Kalpasūtra* of the Śvetāmbaras, which maintains a list of the number of patriarchs and the schools they founded.

Some of the important *gaṇas* with their *kulas* and *śākhās* found in the inscriptions are Koṭṭiya (Koḍiya), Vāraṇa, Ārryau-dekiya, Veśavādiya, etc. The importance of these inscriptions lies particularly in the fact that they corroborate the literary traditions as given in the Śvetāmbara texts and they show that

---

the Śvetāmbara community which had an important stronghold in Mathura during the Indo-Scythic period had an independent organization prior to the Christian era.

It is interesting to note that the order of nuns of the Śvetāmbara Saṅgha was a very active organization in Mathura in this period. There can be no doubt, as Bühler shows, that Ārya-Samghamikā,94 and Āryavasula,95 Ārya Kumāramitā,96 Balavarmā, Nandā and Akakā,97 as well as Āryāsāmā98 were nuns who displayed considerable religious activities. In the inscriptions they are described by their title Āryā (venerable) and as disciples, Śīśī, either of a monk or of a nun who is in her turn a female disciple of some monk. Their main duties seem to have been to give religious instruction to the women and to persuade them to make or offer gifts of Tīrthaṅkaras, pillars and pedestals in the shrines.99 The inscriptions record various gifts which were made at their instance or request (Nirvartana).

As regards persons who are not monks but presumably lay men and women and ordinary followers, the specifications of their social position which is sometimes added in the inscriptions, possess some interest. The donors of the images, pillars and other things in the Jaina shrines and spots of Mathura belonged to various strata in social life including bankers,100 village

---

94Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I, No. II.
95Ibid., No. XI.
96Ibid., No. VI.
97Ibid., No. XI.
98Ibid., No. XIV.
99There is only one instance in Mathura in which a nun acts as a guide to a monk. In the inscription No. VII, Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I, pp. 385-6, we find that Kumāramitā induces her son Kumārabhaṭi to make a gift of the image of Vardhamāna. Kumārmitā seems to have become a nun after the death of her husband as she is shown as having a son. The existence of Jaina nuns and lay women in Mathura can be traced also from another Mathura inscription which Cunningham describes in the Archaeological Survey Reports, XX. p. 37, pl. V, No. 6. The inscription contains the expression Chaturvarna Saṅgha which implies the Chaturvidha Saṅgha of the Śvetāmbaras consisting of monks, nuns, lay men and lay women.
100Lüders List, Nos. 24, 41.
headmen, workers in metal, caravan leaders, perfumers, dyers and even courtesan. This shows that during the period under review Jainism was prevalent at every level of society. One of the important features of Jainism is its claim to universality, which it shares in common with Buddhism. It opens its arms to all irrespective of their social strata. “In the stereotyped introductions to the sermons of Jina it is always pointed out out that they are addressed to the Aryan and non-Aryan. Thus, in the Aupapātika-sūtra it run as follows:

Tesīṃ savvesim āriyamanāriyanam agiles dharmam āikhaī
(To all these, Aryans and non-Aryans, he [the Jina], taught the law untiringly.)

This principle of universality is fully justified by the epigraphic records and is in accordance with the principle, viz. the conversion of low castes, such as gardeners, etc. which is not uncommon even in the present day.

Schisms in the Jaina Church and Jaina Inscriptions of the Post-Mauryan Period

One of the remarkable events in the history of the Jaina church is the schisms which divided the Jainas into various sects and groups. The first great schism seems to have been led by Mahāvīra himself inasmuch as he separated from the order of Pārśvanātha and organized his own order of monks distinct from that of the former. This is evident also from the fact that even today there are Jainas who trace their spiritual descent from Pārśva and not Mahāvīra. The second blow to the Jaina church came when Jamāli, the son-in-law of Mahāvīra, left him with 500 monks and founded a new sect called Bahurayas. The next

101 Ibid., No. 48.
102 Ibid., Nos. 29, 53 and 54.
103 Ibid., No. 30.
104 Ibid., Nos. 39, 68, 76.
105 Ibid., No. 32.
106 Ibid., No. 102.
107 Dr Ernst Leuman, Das Aupapatikasūtra, p. 61.
108 Bhagavatisūtra, 9. 33, 383-7. Gosāla left Mahāvīra before he attained
epoch making division took place during the time of Bhadrabāhu who was a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya. According to Jain tradition there occurred during the leadership of Bhadrabāhu a famine of great severity, as noticed before. Seeing that the evil would provoke offences against “ecclesiastic rules”, Bhadrabāhu migrated into Karnāṭa country with a portion of his disciples. Over the other portion that remained in Magadha, Sthūlabhadra assumed the headship. On the return of peace and plenty, the emigrants came back to Magadha, though Bhadrabāhu remained back. The famine brought many changes in the manners and customs of the monks in Magadha. Those who went to the South maintained strict principles of monastic life while their brethren seemed to have undertaken white robes as their clothes and grown less vigilant in their monastic rules. The Jainas who came back from Karnāṭa branded their non-emigrant brethren as heretics.

During the time when the famine took place, the Jaina canon seemed to have fallen into oblivion. Towards the end of the famine the monks of Magadha assembled at Pataliputra during the absence of Bhadrabāhu and collected the Jaina scriptures consisting of Angas and Pūrvas. The monks who came back from the South refused to accept the newly established canon and declared the old scriptures as lost. This difference laid the foundation of disunity between the party of Sthūlabhadra and that of Bhadrabāhu, though it did not result in a definite schism at once.

Regarding the schism which brought about the division of the Jaina community into two sharp and distinct groups as Svetāmbaras and Digambaras, there are several conflicting Jaina traditions. According to the Digamba Āchārya Devasena, the Svetāmbara Samgha came into being in Vallabhipura in Saurashtra 136 years after the death of Vikrama. The origin of the Svetāmbaras is, in the opinion of Devasena, due to the wicked

Jinahood. Gosāla’s desertion cannot be called a schism strictly, though it shook to some extent the prestige and integrity of the Jaina Church for the time being.

and loose-charactered Jinasena who was a disciple of Āchārya Śānti. The Svetāmbaras attribute the origin of the Digambaras to one Śivabhūti, who was in the service of the king of Ratha Viharā, and became a Jaina ascetic and received on the day of his initiation a blanket from the king as a farewell present. He was so enamoured of it that he refused to discard it in spite of his preceptor’s instructions. The latter tore it to pieces one day in Śivabhūti’s absence. He was angered when he came to know of this, and broke away to form the Digambara sect. His first two disciples were Kauṇḍinya and Koṭṭavīrā. His sister Uṭtarā also wanted to follow him. Thinking that a woman should not go about naked, he dissuaded her saying that a woman “cannot obtain Moksha”.

The date of this schism according to the Svetāmbaras is 609 years after Mahāvīra, or 82 A.D., while the Digambaras place it 136 years after Vikrama, i.e., 79 A.D. (taking the difference of time between Mahāvīra’s Nirvāṇa and Vikrama as 470 years). Though both the Digambara and Svetāmbara traditions agree more or less on the date of this schism (the difference being only of three years) both Jinachanca and Śivabhūti seem to be fictitious persons as the annals of both sects disclaim the fact of any such person belonging to them.

The final schism took place, according to certain Digambara traditions, in the second council which was held in Vallabhi (in Gujarat) under the presidency of Devardhahanī. This council took place 980 (or 993) years after the death of Mahāvīra, probably in 454 or 467 A.D. The Digambaras attribute the origin of the whole Svetāmbara canon collectively known as sidhānta to this council of Vallabhi.

Whatever may be the date of the final schism the process of disintegration began a few centuries from before the Christian era and the division which took place in the time of Bhadrabāhu and that of Śivabhūti brought into being two main

---

111 Darsanasāra of Devasena (ed. by Premi), vv. 11. 13.
112 Āvaśyakasūtra, p. 324; Stevenson, Heart of Jainism, p. 79.
113 Āvaśyakasūtra, p. 323.
114 Hoernle, Uvasāga Dasāo, p. IX.
115 See Jacobi’s Introduction to the translation of the Āchāraṅga Sūtra, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XXII.
groups (the Digambara and the Svetâmbara) in the Jaina church with most of the peculiarities which serve the basis of demarcation between the two. Regarding the Svetâmbaras in the latter Indo-Scythic period, we have definite proof in numerous inscriptions discovered at Mathura. Most of them are engraved on the statues and pedestals of the Tîrthaṅkaras and are ascribed to the reign of Kanishka, Huvishka, and Vâsudeva. That the donors of these sculptures belonged to the Svetâmbara sect is evident from the fact that the inscriptions refer to the gânas or the list of teachers and pontiffs agreeing with that of the Stavarâvalî in the Kalpasûtra of the Svetâmbaras.

As an example, we may refer to an epigraph which is dated in the year 9 of the reign of Kaniskha. It states that the statue in question was dedicated by a Jaina lay woman, Vikaṭâ, at the instance of her religious guide, Nâganandin, who belonged to the Koṭṭiya gâna. The Koṭṭiya gâna, as mentioned in the Kalpa-sûtra, was founded by Sutthiya or Suthita, the eighth successor of Vardhamâna, who died in the year 313 after Mahâvîra, i.e. in 154 B.C. Further the Jaina inscriptions show the religious activities of the Jaina nuns. It is well known that only the Svetâmbaras admitted women into their order. The Digambaras refused to give them admission on the ground that they were incapable of obtaining Moksha. The existence of the Svetâmbaras as a distinct group can be inferred from the four-fold synod of Kâlaka II (contemporary of Gardabhilla) at Ujjayini, which consisted of monks, nuns, lay men and women.

The facts show that the Svetâmbaras had a distinct organization prior to the Christian era though their final separation from the Digambaras might have taken placed as late as the fifth century A.D. under Devardhigâni.

116 Lüders List, No. 22, Samvat 9
117 Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1, pp. 382 ff. It is not necessary to look upon the admission of nuns among the Svetâmbaras as an imitation of Buddhist teachings, for women were admitted into some of the Brahmanical orders also (Bühler, Indian Sect of the Jainas, p. 4). See also Sacred Books of the East, XXV, p. 317.
118 Stevenson, Heart of Jainism, p. 79; Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XXVII, p. 84.
The Svetāmbara group represents, in fact, the tradition of the Pārśvanātha school which was developed about 200 years before Mahāvīra and of which Kasi and Sametasikha (mount Pārśva-
nātha) in Magadha were the main centres. In a sense the schism between the Svetāmbara and Digambara commences from the reform of Mahāvīra himself in the sixth century B.C.

The Worship of Images in Jainism

The ideal of a Jaina ascetic is the attainment of Nirvāṇa. An ascetic, in his striving for Nirvāṇa, endeavours to suppress the natural desires of a man, and worship the higher powers. But it is not possible for a lay worshipper to cling to the ideal of an ascetic which requires stern and austere discipline. So the religious feelings of the Jaina laity, it is natural, centred round the founders of the religion (i.e. the Tīrthaṅkaras). This gave rise to the worship of the Jainas in Jainism and we know that the affections of the Buddhist laity were similarly directed (i.e. to the worship of religious heads and saints).

It is difficult to say when first the Jainas took to the practice of worshipping images. Stevenson states that an image of Mahāvīra was installed in Upakesapattana\textsuperscript{119} during the leadership of the Jaina leader Prabhave (fourth century B. C.). That image-worship was in prevalence among the Jainas about the same time is supported by archaeological evidence. The Hāthigumpha inscription of the Jaina king Khāravela records that he took back from Patliputra the Jaina idol which was carried off by one of the Nandarājas from Kalinga.\textsuperscript{120} This shows that the Nandas who ruled in the fourth century B.C. had predilections towards Jainism,\textsuperscript{121} that Kalinga was an ancient centre of Jaina faith, and Tīrthaṅkara images were made for worship as early as the days of the Nandas. It may be noted here that among the Patna Museum exhibits there are two nude mutilated statues\textsuperscript{122} found in Lohanipur, Patna.

\textsuperscript{119}Stevenson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 69.
\textsuperscript{120}\textit{Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society}, Vol. 11, part IV, p. 458.
\textsuperscript{121}C. J. Shah, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 129.
Town. One of them is polished in a manner characteristic of
the Mauryan age and can be roughly attributed to the third
century B.C. and the other, on stylistic grounds, to the second
century B.C. It is quite possible that they represent some
Tīrthaṅkara images of that period. The author of the
Arthasāstra seems to refer to the Jaina gods in Jayanta,
Vaijayanta and Sarvārthasiddhi.123

Most of the important caves, viz. Ananta, Rani and Ganeśa
Gumpha in Orissa were excavated in the second century B.C.
The Ananta Gumpha contains symbols like the Trisūla and
Svastika on its back wall. Moreover, the courtyard of the
cave possesses images of many Jaina deities and saints.124 The
Ranigumpha is elaborately decorated with scenes of human
activities some of which may represent Jaina religious festi-
vals.125 These facts would show that image worship was
popular among the Jainas several centuries before the Christian
era.

Mathura was a very important seat of the Jainas during the
period under review. The archaeological excavations126 have
laid bare the remains of a Jaina stūpa, temples and
sculptures ranging usually from the second century B.C. to the
third century A.D. The Mathura sculptures have placed at
our disposal immense and varied materials with regard to the
study of Jaina deities. They represent most of the Tīrthaṅkaras
including Rishabha, the earliest one, which shows that the
belief of the Jainas in all the 24 Tīrthaṅkaras was an estab-
lished fact during the period under review.

The Tīrthaṅkara images are purely Indian conceptions and
do not betray any foreign influence. One of the striking
features of the Jaina figures is their nudity which distinguishes
them from Buddha and Buddhist images. Nudity, however, is
ture only of the Digambara images, whereas the Śvetāmbaras
clothe their figures. The Jinas bear symbols not only on the
palms and soles but also in the centre of their breasts.

123Arthasāstra, Mysore Oriental Series, p. 61.
125Puri, Bengal District Gazetteer, p. 254.
126Vogel, op. cit., p. 11; V. A. Smith, op. cit., pp. 2-3.
The hair is usually arranged in short curls in the shape of spirals turned towards the right as also the case with most Buddha images. But in the earlier specimens we find sometimes a different treatment. The hair assumes the appearance of perwig or it hangs down on the shoulders in strange locks. In contradistinction with Buddha, the earlier Tīrthaṅkaras have neither Uṣṇīshas nor Urṇā but those of the latter part of the middle ages have a distinct excrescence on the top of the head.\(^{127}\)

A very interesting type of the Tīrthaṅkara images of our period in Mathura is that of the Jīna quadruple which is known in Jaina inscriptions and literature as Sarvato-bhadrikā pratimā. They consist of "a block square in section"\(^ {128}\) with a Tīrthaṅkara carved on each of the four faces. There is no injunction, however, as to the particular Tīrthaṅkaras to be figured there, but generally the most important ones are chosen. A quadruple image of an "unnamed Jīna perfectly nude" is represented on an inscribed sculptured panel found in Kankali mound in Mathura.\(^ {129}\) The epigraph records that it was the gift of Kumāramitā, the first wife of Śreshthin called Veṇī. The figure was made at the request of the venerable Vasulā, a female pupil of the venerable Saṅghamikā who was in turn a female pupil of the venerable monk Jayabhūti. The inscription has been assigned to the Kushāna Period on palaeographical grounds.\(^ {130}\) From the same site, the Kankali mound in Mathura, we have another very interesting representation of an inscribed Sarvato-bhadrikā pratimā of our period. The Jīna shown there is Pārśvanātha with traces of his snake canopy. The inscription states that this four fold image was dedicated by one Sthirā for the welfare and the happiness of all creatures. This inscription also belongs to the Kushāna period.\(^ {131}\)

We may refer now to a few early specimens of other types of sculptured representations of Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras in Mathura.

\(^{127}\) Vogel, op. cit., p. 42.
\(^{128}\) Ibid., pp. 42-3.
\(^{129}\) V. A. Smith, op. cit., p. 46; Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1, p. 382, No. 11.
\(^{130}\) V. A. Smith, op. cit., p. 46.
An elaborate sculpture containing the figure of a seated Jaina was found in the Kankali mound in February 1890. Unfortunately the head of the figure is missing. The Jina is shown with numerous attendant deities. On the pedestal are two lions and two bulls. From the presence of the bull it is evident that the Jina depicted here is Ādinātha or Rishabhadatta. The inscription (defaced) at the base seems to be in some early script.\(^{132}\)

Another specimen of an Ādinātha figure belonging to the Kushāna period is to be seen on the Mathura Museum Panel No. B 4. The inscription states that the figure was set up in a Jaina monastery by a lady in the year 84 of the reign of Shahi Vāsudeva,\(^{133}\) the Kushana king. The relief in front of the pedestal contains a Dharma Chakra on a pillar being worshipped by human devotees including the male and female as well.

A mutilated figure of Aranātha\(^ {134}\) is found represented on a sculptured panel found in the Kankali mound in the year 1890-91. It belongs to the Kushāna period. The Jina is shown standing by the side of a wheel placed on a Trīśūla with a piece of cloth in his left hand. Naminatha and Neminatha, the 21st and 22nd Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras seem to have been represented along with Pārśvanātha and Mahāvīra on a broken sculptured panel which might have formed part of the decoration of a Toraṅa Pillar\(^ {135}\) of a Jaina monastery in Mathura during our period. There is a fine specimen of a Neminātha figure\(^ {136}\) in the Mathura Museum which Vogel has described in his catalogue of the Mathura Museum antiquities; Neminātha is seated “cross-legged in the attitude of meditation” on the throne. The throne rests on two pillars and a pair of lions. Behind the pillars are two figures with hands joined in adoration. From the throne an ornamental cloth hangs down between the two lions. Below it there seems to be a wheel.

\(^{132}\) V. A. Smith, op. cit., p. 55, pl. cvxiii.

\(^{133}\) Vogel, op. cit., p. 67.

\(^{131}\) V. A. Smith, op. cit., pl. vi.

\(^{135}\) Ibid., pl. XVII.

\(^{136}\) Vogel, op. cit., pp. 77, 81.
There is a conch-shell (symbolic of Neminātha) on the plain rim of the pedestal.

The Jaina legends introduce very often the story of Krishṇa Vāsudeva and his family. In the Antagada Dasānī we are told that some members of Krishṇa’s family joined the Jaina Sangha at the instance of Arishtanemi, and Krishṇa also, as the legend goes, was proclaimed by him, that is Arishtanemi, to be the 12th among the Tīrthāṇkaraas who would arise in the Duṣṣhama Sushama age. There is a sculptured panel of Mathura which represents an ascetic receiving homage from the female devotees. The inscription records that the panel was a gift of the wife of a person called Dhanahastin. It bears the year 95 of the Kushāna king Vāsudeva’s reign probably. The word Kaṇha Śramaṇa occurs in bold type between the head of the ascetic and that of the lady devotee to the proper right. This Kaṇha may be the Krishṇa Vāsudeva of the Jaina legend.

Whether the Jaina viewpoint regarding Krishṇa Vāsudeva and his family is accepted or not, this much is true that Jainism and Vaishnavism came in close contact with each other during the time of Arishtanemi who was a cousin of Krishṇa and Baladeva. Because of the family relationship between Arishtanemi and Krishṇa Vāsudeva, Jainism was co-existent with Vaishnavism since Arishtanemi’s time in places like Dvaraka, Central India, and the Yamuna Valley, the sphere of Yādava influence. Arishtanemi’s emblem is a conch which may be reminiscent of his relationship with the Vaishnavite family of Krishṇa and Balarāma.

Pārśvanātha occurs very frequently in the Mathura art of our period. We have already referred to his representation as sarvatobhadrikā Pratimā. We shall consider some specimens of his figure belonging to our period. As already stated, the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, contains an early figure of Pārśvanātha with snake-hoods over the head. Though its findspot is not known, on a stylistic basis, it can be attributed to the first century B.C. The Mathura Museum Panel B. 70

---

137 Antagada Dasānī (Oriental Translation Fund), pp. 61-2.
139 Ibid., p. 24.
represents a stele\textsuperscript{140} with nude Jina figures standing one each on the four sides. Three of these figures have been provided with haloes; the fourth one is represented with a seven-headed Nāga hood.\textsuperscript{141} This fourth figure represents, no doubt, Pārśvanātha. The Mathura Museum Panel B. 71 also contains a representation of Pārśvanātha with a similar Nāga hood. Both these figures belong perhaps to the period under review.

Vardhamāṇa Mahāvīra is the most popular of all the Tīrthanākāras. There are innumerable sculptured representations of his figure in Mathura and other centres of Jaina faith. We shall, however, for our present purpose refer only to two Vardhamāṇa images found in the Kankali mound in Mathura which belong perhaps to early centuries of the Christian era. In one panel he is shown seated under his sacred tree\textsuperscript{142} with several attendant figures, one of whom is a Nāga with a canopy of cobra hoods. There is a defaced inscription on the pedestals of his image which begins with “Namo”\textsuperscript{143} in early script. The other image in question is seated under a small canopy with two attendants, one on either side.\textsuperscript{144} Both the Vardhamāṇa figures are seated in dhyānāsana posture, and have, besides the attendants, two lions on the pedestal and angels or Gandharvas hovering in the air and offering garlands.

The Jainas were primarily founder worshippers, but their mythology includes besides the 24 Tīrthanākāras a number of other deities. One of the most important deity of this class is Naigamesha who is represented on the obverse of a fragment of a Jaina sculpture discovered at Mathura.\textsuperscript{145} The inscription incised on the panel is written in scripts of the beginning of the Christian era. The deity (Naigamesha) is goat-headed and seated on a low seat in an easy attitude. He is shown with his face turned to the right, as if addressing another personage, but the whole image has been lost.\textsuperscript{146} To his right are three female

\textsuperscript{140}Vogel, \textit{op. cit.}, B. 70.
\textsuperscript{141}Ibid., B. 71.
\textsuperscript{142}V. A. Smith, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 49, pl. XCI, right hand figure.
\textsuperscript{143}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{144}Ibid., p. 49, pl. XCI, left hand figure.
\textsuperscript{145}Ibid., p. 25, pl. XVIII.
figures standing and an infant is shown close to the knee. The deity is called in the inscription “Bhagavat Nemeso.”

Nemeso of the present inscription is a variant of the name of the deity Harinegamasi in the Kalpasūtra, and Naigameshin in other works.147 In Jaina religious art he is depicted as a figure either with the head of a ram or antelope or a goat. In the Mathura sculpture which is the subject of discussion here he is found bearing a goat’s head. Cunningham discovered four mutilated figures of Naigamesha which he failed to identify and described them simply as deities with an ox’s head.148

According to Bühler the sculpture depicting Naigamesha with female figures and a small child refers most probably to the legend which narrates the exchange of the embryo of Devanandā and Trisalā.149 The legend in the Kalpasūtra in short is this. Māhāvīra took the form of an embryo in the Brāhmaṇi Devanandā’s body. Thinking that an Arhat ought not to be born in a low Brahmanical family, Indra directed Harinegameshi, the divine commander of infantry to transfer Māhāvīra from the body of Devanandā to Trisalā, a lady of the Kṣhatriya family who was also with a child. Harinegameshi carried out successfully Indra’s order.

In Jaina mythology Naigameshin is regarded also as a deity of procreation. The Antagada-Daso refers to the story of how lady Sulasā propitiated Naigameshin and conceived through his compassion.150 The ancient Jainas represented Naigameshin in both male and female forms as presiding over childbirth. The sculptures of the Mathura Museum, Nos. 2547 and E. I. represent the deity in his male aspect, and sculpture No. E 2 (of the same Museum) in her female aspect as the goat-headed goddess.151

The Jaina pantheon includes deities like Sarasvatī, Gaṇeśa, etc. which figure prominently in the Hindu pantheon also. We

146Ibid.
147Ibid.
148Archaeological Survey Reports, Vol. XX, p. 36, pl. IV, figs. 2-5.
150Antagada Dasão (Oriental Translation Fund), pp. 36 and 37.
have from the Jaina mound of Kankalitila two headless female statues. One of them has not been identified, the other is the figure of Sarasvati. The goddess is seated on a rectangular pedestal with her knees up. She has a manuscript in her left hand and the right hand, which was raised, is lost. There is a small attendant on either side. The inscription on the pedestal consists of seven lines in the Indo-Scythic script.

Besides the figures of Tirthaṅkaras and other deities of the Jaina pantheon, the Mathura sculptures of the Kankali mound bear isolated symbols and designs auspicious to the Jainas, such as the Svastika, Vajra, shell, bull, elephant, goose and antelope, etc. Svastika to the Jainas is the emblem of Supārśvanātha, the 7th Jina; the Vajra is that of Dharmanātha, the 15th Jina; the shell is the cognizance of Neminātha, the 22nd Jina; the elephant of Ajitanātha, the 2nd Jina; the goose of Sumatinātha the 5th Jina, the antelope of Šāntinātha, the 16th Jina, and the bull of Rishabhanātha, the 1st Jina; all these would show that the art of the Kankali mound was thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Jainism.

A dharmaḍakara and Kalpagriḵsha are among the Jaina antiquities found in Chausa (Shahabad District, Bihar) now preserved, as stated above, in the Patna Museum, Patna. The dharmaḍakara is supported by two nude female figures (Yakshiṇīs) similar in style to the Sanchi ones. They issue forth from the mouth of crocodiles with upturned fish tails.

The Kalpagriṅksha or the Aśoka tree is one with various branches and leaves. On its top is seated a female figure carrying a bowl in her hands. The association of a female figure with trees reminds us of the Śālābhānjikā or Vanadēvatā motifs of ancient India.

Both the dharmaḍakara and the Kalpagriṅksha, on stylistic grounds, may be ascribed to the second-first century B.C.

182V. A. Smith, op. cit., pl. X cix, left hand figure.
183Ibid., right hand figure.
184Ibid., p. 57.
185Ibid., pls. XXviii, LXXI, LXXII, LXXIV and LXXV.
187Ibid.
Along with the dharmachakra and the Kalpavriksha mentioned above were also found sixteen bronze images of Tīrthaṅkaras. Of them, ten are standing and six seated.

The standing Tīrthaṅkara images resemble in execution the corresponding ones of the Kushana period from Mathura. They are all nude, and stand in the Kāyotsarga posture. With the exception of one Pārśvanātha image, none of them bears any lāñchaṇa. Further, they are represented singly without the sāsanadevatās (i.e. the Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs) or Chauri-bearers which seem to have come into vogue in the Gupta period.

From the Gupta period onwards, we find that the Jaina sculptors have regularly appended the Yakasha and Yakshiṇī figures to the sculptures of the Tīrthaṅkaras. Thus it may be concluded that the lāñchaṇas as well as the Yaksha figure might have remained as isolated and in a germinal state and then actual association with the Jaina images did not take place in the Kushan age of India art.¹⁵⁸

The seated Tīrthaṅkara images from Chausa belong to the Gupta period. The wide popularity of Jainism in Bihar during the subsequent periods is attested also by the Jaina images found in Aluara (Manbhum District, Bihar). These bronzes are twenty-nine in number, twenty-eight of which are Tīrthaṅkara images, while the remaining one shows the goddess Ambikā

¹⁵⁸Ibid.
7. Buddhism

Buddhism, like Jainism, arose in the sixth century B.C. in the wake of Upanishadic speculations. This religion centres round the teachings of Gautama the Buddha, one of the greatest thinkers and reformers that the world has ever known.

The age (i.e. the sixth century B.C.) into which Gautama was born was one of religious ferment. He and his contemporaries, Vardhamāna Mahāvīra in India, Zoroaster in Persia, Socrates in Greece, and Confucius and Loa tse in China were the intellectual luminaries of the epoch, who by their sublime thoughts and teachings ushered in an era of critical understanding and spiritual enquiry.

As is well known, Gautama revolted against the existing orthodox Brahamanical system predominated by rituals and the ceremonies involving animal slaughter. He also deprecated the caste supremacy of the Brāhmaṇas. He was, however, not destructive in his outlook. Gifted with extraordinary intelligence and analytical powers, he accepted the best of the existing system and rejected what he did not consider useful or beneficial to a man to gain knowledge and emancipation. In formulating his religion, he was largely influenced by the liberal thinking of the Upanishadic sages, the prevailing idea of knowledge and Yoga practices (leading to mental concentration), the theory of Karma and the value of a mendicant life. At the

\[1\text{Karma}\] or one's own deeds influence the destiny of a being. All except those who have gained the highest spiritual knowledge, are subject to the effects of good and bad deeds. Almost all sections of people in India believe in the law of Karma.
same time he denied the authority of the *Vedas* and declared the Vedic sacrifices as useless. In short, he was a great reformer whose system brought ethical principles to the forefront, emphasising the value of morality, concentration, and wisdom. As he influenced very greatly the religious thought in India, his advent has been rightly considered an event of phenomenal importance. He discovered a way of life which can be followed "regardless of time, place and prevailing culture". He showed the path which leads to the cessation of suffering and attainment of knowledge and emancipation.\(^3\)

It was not some of the Brahmanic practices alone which were repugnant to Buddha, but he deprecated also the unethical thinking and theories of the non-Vedic teachers, mostly of Àṅga and Magadha of eastern India. The number of such teachers was quite numerous.\(^4\) Of them, the names of Purāṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambali, Pakudha Kachchhāyana, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta and Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta were the most famous.\(^5\)

Purāṇa Kassapa advocated the doctrine of Akriyāvāda (theory of non-action). According to him, no good or bad results accrue from pious or impious acts. In the *Majjhima-nikāya*, Purāṇa’s teachings have been condemned as leading to moral depravity.\(^6\)

Makkhali Gosāla, the founder of the Ājīvika sect, advocated fatalism. He held that everything was fixed and it was beyond man’s power to alter or improve his position by his own exertion. Emancipation is a natural process which comes after a series


\(^3\)The time of Gautama’s advent was suitable for carrying reforms. Within the Brahmanical framework itself, changes were taking place. Side by side with the followers of orthodox Brahmanism, there arose Upanishadic thinkers who advocated the value of simple rituals and meditation in the place of the complicated *Karmakāṇḍa* or ritualistic system of big sacrifices involving animal slaughter.

\(^4\)The Jaina texts put the number of such teachers as 363, but the Buddhist sources as 62 or 63.


of migrations from one existence to another. This doctrine is called ahetuka or akrīyādrishī in the Majjhima-nikāya. The Aṅguttara-nikāya considers this doctrine as opposed to Karma (deed), Kriyā (action) and Viśva (energy).  

Ajita Keśakambali taught the doctrine of annihilation at death. After death the body disintegrates and merges in the elements, viz., earth, water, air and fire of which it was formed, and the Indriyas, i.e. sense powers, pass into ākāśa, i.e. space. Thus, according to Ajita, there is no rebirth or transmigration. No acts, good or bad, produce any results. The Majjhima-nikāya declares Ajita's teachings as materialistic, leading to improper thoughts and actions. Sañjaya-Belaṭṭhiputta was an agnostic or sceptic and he was condemned as he refused to give definite answers to fundamental questions and even to those relating to moral responsibility.  

Pakudh Kacāyana holds the seven elements, such as earth, water, fire, air, pleasure (sukha), pain (duḥkha), and soul (jīva) as uncreated and permanent. Hence no action good or bad is effective. The doctrine of Pakudha has been described as Akrīyāvāda or Sāsvatavāda by the Buddhists.  

The doctrines of the Nigaṇṭhas have been referred to in the Buddhist texts as consisting of four restraints: to keep free from passion and desire, to keep aloof from all kinds of traffic, to get rid of all kinds of parigrahas (ideas of possession), and to remain absorbed in knowledge and meditation on self. Since the Nighaṇṭhas laid emphasis on extreme physical mortification, the Buddhists considered their own system to be better than the former.  

It is thus apparent that there were many religious thoughts and doctrines current during the Buddha’s time. While Brahmanism, though never completely free from ritualistic ceremonies, developed during this period the theory of Ātman and Brahman (relationship between the individual soul and universal soul) and their identity, the non-Vedic systems held

---

*N. Dutt, op. cit.*, pp. 40 ff.
various theories of non-action, fatalism, etc. Some ascribed everything to chance and denied causation.

Gautama found none of these systems satisfactory. Though he retained some of the accepted doctrines of his time, his main emphasis was on non-craving, good conduct, concentration, and wisdom. He held that in the phenomenal world everything is bound by a cause, and he preached the noble eightfold path or middle path which leads to the cessation of suffering and attainment of Nirvāṇa or knowledge. His teachings produced a deep impression on the minds of the people and spread not only throughout the length and breadth of India, but became popular in the neighbouring countries, like Afghanistan, Central Asia, China, Korea, Japan, Ceylon, Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Thailand, Viet Nam, Indonesia, etc.

The life of Buddha presents a fascinating story. The facts of his life are, however, to be gathered from various sources, as there is no connected account left in any particular place or text.

According to traditions preserved in various texts, Gautama Buddha was born in Lumbini, now in Nepalese territory. His father was Śuddhodana, one of the ruling chiefs of Kapilavastu. His mother was Māyā who died seven days after his birth. He was brought up by his stepmother Mahāprajāpati, who was his mother’s younger sister. His childhood name was Siddhārtha, Gautama being his family name. The learned Brahmins examined the signs on his body and predicted his future greatness as a perfectly accomplished Buddha or as a universal monarch.

As prophesied, Gautama became more and more contemplative and indifferent to worldly matters as he grew. Afraid of this, Śuddhodana married him at the age of sixteen to a beautiful girl called Yaśodharā in order to turn away his thoughts from renunciation, built beautiful palaces and gardens for him and provided him with all the other luxuries of life.

Gautama, according to legends, spent a life of worldly pleasures till a turning point came at the age of twenty-nine when on successive occasions, as he drove on his chariot through the pleasure garden, he saw an old person, a sick person, a dead body and a cheerful Sannyāsī. These encounters convinced him of the futility of living any longer a life of ease and comfort. He became determined to renounce the world and lead the life of an ascetic to escape from misery and old age. To add to the conflict within him a son was born to him. He considered the birth of a son as an additional bondage to life and called him Rāhula (an obstacle).

Seven days after Rāhula's birth, Gautama left home at the dead of night to find out the means of overcoming worldly miseries. Journeying from place to place, he reached Raja-griha, the capital of the Magadhan king Bimbisāra. From there he came to Āḷāra Kalāma and later Udrka Rāmaputra, two renowned philosophers of the time. In a short time he mastered all that they taught him regarding the different stages of meditation. But this did not satisfy him and he left them to find a path of deliverence through his own exertions. With this determination he came to Uruvela near Gaya and there selected a delightful spot near the river Neraṇjara for his meditation. There he practised severe austerities for six years and was reduced to a skeleton. Yet real knowledge eluded him. He then realized that the practice of austerities was not the way to achieve knowledge. He, therefore, began to partake of food for the sustenance of his body. Then as he sat having resolved to attain enlightenment, Māra, the enemy of liberation upset him in various ways. But Māra failed to distract his mind and fled away with his hosts. Bodhisattava Gautama then sank into deeper contemplation. "He acquired in the first watch of the night the knowledge of previous existences, in the middle hour of the night the divine vision, in the last part of the night the knowledge of causative process. Thus he attained omniscience."

On having attained knowledge, Gautama, now called Buddha, was in doubt whether he should preach the profound truth he

had discovered to anyone in this world steeped in darkness. Then Mahāsahampati Brahmā appeared and exhorted him to preach the doctrine to his erstwhile five companions who left him at Gaya to settle at Sarnath. He addressed these monks as follows:¹³

These two extremes, O Monks, are not to be practised by one who has gone forth from the world. What are the two? That conjoined with passion, low, vulgar, common, ignoble, and useless and that conjoined with self-torture, painful, ignoble and useless. Avoiding these two extremes, the Tathāgata has gained the knowledge of the Middle way, which gives insight, knowledge and tends to calm, to insight, enlightenment, Nirvāṇa.

Now this, O Monks, is the noble truth of pain: birth is painful, old age is painful, sickness is painful, death is painful. Contact with unpleasant things is painful, separation from pleasant things is painful, and not getting what one wishes is painful, in short the five Skandhas of grasping is painful.

Now this, O Monks, is the noble truth of the cause of pain, that craving, which leads to rebirth, combined with pleasure, and lust, finding pleasure here and there, namely the craving for passion, the craving for existence, the craving for non-existence.

Now this, O monks, is the noble truth of the cessation of pain, the cessation without a remainder of that craving, abandonment, forsaking, release, non-attachment.

Now this, O monks, is the noble truth of the way that leads to the cessation of pain: this is the noble eightfold path, namely, right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration (Dharmachaka - ppavattana - Sutta-Kathā, Mahāvāgga).

On hearing the sermon, the five monks, namely Koṇḍañña, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāman and Assaji attained the knowledge and received the ordination (Upasampadā).

¹³E. J. Thomas, op. cit., p. 87.
Buddha then gave to these monks a discourse on the “non-existence of soul”. On hearing the words of the Buddha, all five monks became free from āsavas, i.e. they attained full enlightenment as arhats.

With the first sermon delivered to the five monks at Sarnath known as the dharma-chakra pravartana i.e. setting in motion the wheel of law, started the missionary activities of Buddha, which lasted for forty-five years.

His wisdom and personality drew adherents from all sections of the people. He was received with the highest regard wherever he went. Among his followers were some of the prominent rulers of the time, such as king Bimbisāra of Magadha, and Prasenajit of Kosāla. Ajātaśatru (son of Bimbisāra) who was not well-disposed towards him in the beginning became repentant afterwards and adopted his teachings. The Bhārhat panels of the second century B. C. contain representations of Ajātaśatru and Prasenajit paying homage to Buddha indicated symbolically. The new faith acquired a wide popularity in the lifetime of the Master himself. As the textual and other traditions show, Buddhism gained a strong foothold in Kapilavastu, Magadha, Kasi, Kosla and Videha, in the countries of the Bhaggas and the Koliyas, in Anga, Champa, Kosambi, Mathura, Avanti and several other countries.

Gautama Buddha was no less an organizer than a preacher. He established the monastic order on a strong footing with a set of rules to be followed by his disciples. While the rules for

14"The body, monks, is soulless. If the body, monks, were the soul, this body would not be subject to sickness, and it should be possible in the case of the body to say, ‘Let my body be thus, let my body not be thus.’ Now, because the body is soulless, monks, therefore the body is subject to sickness and it is not possible in the case of the body to ‘Let my body be thus, let my body not be thus’.

‘Feeling is soulless...perception is soulless...the aggregates are soulless.’

‘Consciousness is soulless. For if consciousness were the soul, this consciousness will not be subject to sickness, and it would be possible for consciousness to say, ‘Let my consciousness be thus, let my consciousness not be thus...’

‘Thus perceiving, monks, the learned noble disciple feels loathing for the body, for feeling, for perception, for the aggregates, for consciousness.’ See Anattalakkhana-sutra, E. J. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 88-9, Buddha’s embodying sermon on the marks of non-soul.
the monks were difficult and many, those for the laymen were few, namely the pāñchaśīlas.

The life of Buddha, though otherwise peaceful, was disturbed by the mischievous activities of his cousin Devadatta. The latter attempted to take away the leadership of the church by killing Buddha with the help of Ajātaśatru, son of Bimbisāra. The plot of Devadatta failed. As stated above, Ajātaśatru became repentant and sought refuge in Buddha.

Several other events took place during the last days of Buddha. The Śākya clan of Kapilavastu to which Buddha belonged was exterminated by Viḍūḍabha, son of Prasenajit of Kośala. Ajātaśatru made preparations for the conquest of the Visalians. But the war was averted at Buddha’s instance. Shortly after these events, Buddha, who was then about seventy-nine years of age, left Rajagriha and came to Nalanda with a large retinue of monks. Thus began his last journey.

From Nalanda, he came to Pāṭaligrama, where he gave a discourse to the laity. From there he came to Koṭigrāma and then to Nadika. At all these places he delivered discourses on duty, self-transcendence and insight. From Nadika he came to Vaisali, where he lived in the mango grove of the well-known courtesan, Āmrapāli. At her request he took meals at her house and she made a gift of her mango grove to the order which was gladly accepted. From there the Blessed One came to Veluva where he had an attack of severe illness. Not wishing to die without leaving his words to guide the Bhikkus, he overcame his illness through his own powers.

He exhorted the monks of Vaisali saying: “Subject to decay are compound things, strive with earnestness. In no long time the Tathāgata will attain Nirvāṇa.”

Journeying from place to place Buddha came to Pava, where he was invited to a dinner by Chunda, a hereditary smith. Immediately afterwards he had an attack of dysentery. Buddha bore the pain with patience and came to Kusinara. On the way, he converted a young Mallian named Pukkusa who was formerly a disciple of Ajāra Kalāma. On reaching Kusinara he

---

15See the author’s anonymous work, The Way of the Buddha (Publications Division, Govt. of India), p. 304.
lay down on a couch spread between two śāla trees by Ananda. The trees burst into blossoms although it was not the flowering season and spirits hovered round the bed.

The last hours were spent in giving useful counsel and instructions to Ānanda who was weeping at the impending death of the Master. "Do not weep," he said to Ānanda. "Have I not told you before, monks, that this is in the the very nature of things near and dear to us that we must part from them. All that is born, brought into being, and put together carries within itself the seeds of dissolution. How then is it possible that such a being should not be dissolved. Be earnest in effort and you too shall be free from the great evils and from ignorance."

As the last watch of the night drew near, the Lord said to his brethren: "Subject to decay are all compound things; strive with earnestness." These were his last words. Then he passed through a series of trances and entered into Mahāparinirvāṇa, "the stage of the cessation of consciousness and feeling."

Very little is known of the history of Buddhism after the death of Buddha till the rise of Aśoka. According to tradition, however, a few weeks after the Buddha’s death, a council was held at Rajagriha under the presidency of Mahākāśyapa. The immediate object of this session seems to have been to rehearse the dharma and Vinaya rules to prevent arbitrary interpretation or misinterpretation of them by any unscrupulous monks like Subhadra and the like. Five hundred monks including Ānanda were admitted into the council, and as desired by Mahākāśyapa, Upāli narrated the Vinaya rules and Ānanda recited the dharma or Sūtras. Thus the first council seems to have determined in a systematic way the creed of the church after the passing of the Master.  

The expenditure for this council was provided by king Ajatasatru of Magadha.

The chief propagators of the faith during this time seem to have been Mahākāśyapa, Ānanda and Rāhula. As to Ānanda, Bustom17 writes that he entrusted his disciple to propagate the faith after his death. Further, he is said to have converted

---

16See 2500 Years of Buddhism (Publications Division, Govt. of India), p. 34 ff; N. Dutt, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 324 ff.
17See Obermiller’s translation of Bustom’s History of Buddhism, II, p. 88.
before his death 500 Brahmanical anchorites including Madhyāntika who preached the religion in Kashmir.\textsuperscript{18} Buddhism does not seem to have received much royal patronage during the rule of the next few monarchs of Magadha, namely, Udāyibhadda, Muṇḍa, Nāgadāsaka and Susunāga.\textsuperscript{19}

The next important event in the history of Buddhism is the second Buddhist council held during the rule of Kālāsoka, son and successor of Susunāga. This council was held as a protest against the unorthodox views of the Vaisali monks with regard to the ten points of discipline. The ten points of indulgence opposed to the Vinaya rules are: (1) Śīṅgiloṇa-Kappa (carrying of salt in a horn for future use); (2) Dvaṅgula-Kappa (taking food after midday); (3) Gāmantara-Kappa (the practice of going to a neighbouring village and taking a second meal there); (4) Āvāsa-Kappa (the observance of the Uposathas in the different places in the same parish); (5) Anumati-Kappa (asking for a post facto sanction of a deed); (6) Āchiṇa Kapp (the use of precedents as authority); (7) Amathita-Kappa (the drinking of buttermilk after meals); (8) Jalogiṁ pāṭum (the drinking of fermented palm-juice); (9) Adasakaṁ-Nisīdanam (using as a seat a rag which has no fringe); (10) Jātarūparajatam (the acceptance of gold and silver).\textsuperscript{20}

These rules are not in conformity with the Pātimokkha (monastic code) the monks are to follow strictly. So the laxity of the Vaisali monks was highly opposed by the orthodox group of the Church, especially by venerable Yaśa of Kausambi. When his appeal to the Vaijjan monks failed, he contacted through messengers the monks of Paṭṭheya and Avanti, and he came himself to discuss the matter with the venerable Sambhuta Sana-vasi at Ahogamga. In the meantime sixty Theras of Paṭṭheya and eighty Theras of Avanti also arrived in Ahogamga to discuss the questions. As the questions were hard and subtle, it was decided to elicit the opinion of the Saṅgha-Thera, Revanta

\textsuperscript{18}As to the condition of Buddhism during the period in question, see N. Dutt, \textit{op. cit.}, Vol. II, pp. 1-4.
\textsuperscript{19}N. Dutt, \textit{op. cit.}, Vol. II pp. 30 ff.
\textsuperscript{20}See 2500 \textit{Years of Buddhism} (Publications Division, Govt. of India), pp. 41 ff.
who used to reside in Soreyya. Both the rival groups of monks, i.e. Yasa and his party on one side and Vajjian monks on the other, met Revata at Sahajāti. But as the matter could not be settled there, a council was held at Vaisali. This council was attended by seven hundred monks. But a committee of eight members, four from the orthodox party of the west (i.e. Yasa’s party) and four from the unorthodox party of the east (i.e. the Vajjian monks) was formed to go into the dispute. The ten points were discussed and declared unlawful.

Thus the monks of the eastern party (i.e. Vaisali and Magadha) were excommunicated. But the members of this party were in majority and they held another council and supported the ten points. They were now called the Mahāsaṅghikas (the party of the great assembly) and the western party as Sthaviravādin. From this time Magadha was the centre of the Mahāsaṅghikas and Śrāvastī the centre of Sthaviravāda. The second council is said to have been held in 386 B.C.

Kāḷāsoka’s son and grandson, Surasena and Nanda, seem to have patronised Buddhism. Surasena supported the Bhikkus of different regions and offered gifts to the Chaityas. King Nanda also seems to have made lavish gifts to the Chaityas. According to the Mañju-śrī Mūlakalpa Nanda embraced Buddhism towards the end of his reign and died as a true Buddhist. 21

Nanda was dethroned by Chandragupta Maurya who started the celebrated Maurya dynasty. Chandragupta Maurya and his son Bindusāra do not seem to have had any special predilections towards Buddhism. The next ruler, the great Emperor Aśoka, became deeply interested in the religion and contributed much to its growth and diffusion. 22 Tradition avers that Aśoka was cruel and aggressive in his early days, but ultimately he took refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha. In fact, the reign of Aśoka was a landmark in the history of Buddhism. The patronage of so powerful a king who is said to have adopted Buddhism during his ninth regnal year after the Kaliṅga war (which involved a huge massacre and bloodshed) proved to be a great stimulus to the growth and spread of the faith.

22 D. R. Bhandarkar, Aśoka, pp. 68 ff.
As his incipitations would indicate beyond doubt, Aśoka paid visits and did honour to the places associated with the events of Buddha’s life. According to the Rock Edict VIII he repaired to Sambodhi (the place of Buddha’s enlightenment in Gaya) in the tenth year of his reign. He continued his dharma-yātrā (pious tour) also subsequently as is evident from the Nigliva and Rummindei pillar inscriptions in the Nepal terai. The Nigliva pillar inscription speaks of his visit in his fourteenth regnal year to Rummindei and the enlargement by him of the second stūpa of the Buddha Kanankamuni. The Rummindei pillar inscription informs us of his visit in the twentieth regnal year to the place of Buddha’s birth in Lumbini. On the occasion of this visit he granted exemption of the village from the payment of the religious cess. He also declared that this village was to pay one-eighth of the produce as land revenue instead of one-sixth according to the prevailing practice.

His deep interest in the religion is also revealed by the contents of the Minor Rock Edicts. The Minor Rock Edict No. 1 speaks not only of his intimate association (at the time of the issuing of this Edict) with the Buddhist Sangha, but also contains the text of his order for the expulsion of the heretical monks. The Minor Rock Edict III (The Calcutta Bariat Edict) speaks of his deep faith in the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha and refers to the sacred texts presented by him for the monks and nuns, lay men and women. The reading of these texts would elevate their mind and soul. Further, his edicts on pillars at Sarnath, Kausambi and Sanchi issue a stern warning to the monks who would cause dissension in the Church. “Whosoever breaks up the Church, be it monk or nun, shall be clad in white raiment and be compelled to live in what is not a residence [of the clergy]. Thus should this order be respectfully communicated to the congregation of the monks and the congregation of the nuns.”

Aśoka appointed special officers called Dharma-mahamatras who were to look after the spiritual well-being of the people. His message of concord, tolerance, piety and morality seems to

---

have been well received also in the dominions bordering his empire. His own son Mahendra went to Ceylon to preach the gospel of the Buddha. It is said that his daughter Sanghamitrā also joined her brother in missionary activities.

Aśoka is also credited with the erection of an enormous number of stūpas over the holy relics of the Buddha. That the Buddhist religion and its church engaged the close attention of Aśoka is also evident from the accounts of the third council held under his aegis at Pāṭaliputra. It appears that the points of disagreement over the interpretation of the Vinaya rules deepened further between the Māhasaṅghikas and the Thervadins in his time and he was anxious to maintain the integrity of the Saṅgha. We have already seen that the Mahāsaṅghikas emerged as a powerful body after the second Buddhist council, held in Vaisali during the time of Kālāsoka and as the time passed, their popularity seems to have extended towards the other regions of India. Gradually, their main centre of activities shifted to the Andhradeśa.

This council is mentioned only in the Aṭṭhakathās and the Ceylonese chronicles. Hence, according to certain scholars, this council seems to have been a sectarian affair only of the Thera-vādins. As the accounts go, Aśoka and his preceptor Mogga-liputta Tissa, in order to stop the growth of the schisms and heretical doctrines among the monks, convened an assembly of the bhikkhus of different groups. Those who set forth false doctrines, such as of the external soul, etc. were expelled, and those who held that the religion taught by Buddha was one of Vībhajjavāda were hailed to be followers of the true doctrine of Buddha. Thus, the Buddhist Church was purged of the heretical group of monks, and Tissa became the head of the the Theravāda community.

Moggaliputta Tissa then convened a council of a thousand Theravādi monks and compiled the Tripiṭaka with their help. The doctrines of the heretical monks were also discussed in this council and were declared unacceptable and discarded. Thus the Kathāvastu, refuting the heretical doctrines, was compiled.

25N. Dutt, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 264 ff; 2500 Years of Buddhism, pp. 45 ff.
26 Ibid., pp. 258-274.
An important outcome of this council was the despatch of missionaries to different countries for the propagation of Buddhism. As related in the *Mahāvamsa* (Ceylonese chronicle) Moggaliputta Tissa deputed for this purpose Majjhantika (or Madhyāndina) to Kashmir-Gandhāra; Mahādeva to Mahīśamaṇḍala (Mahishmati, south of Vindhyas); Rakkhita to Vana-vāsi (North Canara); Dhammarakkhita (a Yonaka) to Aparanta (i.e. Alor, Broach, and Sopara); Mahādhammarakkhita to Maharashtra; Mahārakkhita to Yona countries (foreign settlements in the North-Western Frontier province of undivided India); Majjhima to Himavanta; Sona with Uttar to Suvarnavīśīmī (probably a place in India); and Mahinda to Tambapaṇṇī (Ceylon).  

The story of the missionary activities of the above monks during Asoka's time seems to be by and large true. The discovery of a relic casket (second century B.C.) at Sanchi lends support to it inasmuch as the inscription on the casket refers to Majjhima and Kassapagotia as ācharyas or propagators of the faith in the Himalayan countries.

From the preceding it appears that the reign of Aśoka was a glorious epoch in the history of Buddhism. He was not only personally interested in Buddhism, but also did much for its propagation in India and outside. He supported the Theravāda doctrines and took measures preventing the Saṅghabheda or dissension in the church.

The sons and successors of Aśoka do not seem to have been much interested in Buddhism. The last of the Mauryan rulers was Brihadratha Maurya who was assassinated by his general, Pushyamitra Śunga, who seems to have championed the cause of Brahmanism. Certain Buddhist texts describe Pushyamitra as having destroyed many Buddhist stūpas and Viharas. Regarding the persecutions of the Buddhists traditions differ and it is not possible to determine to what extent Pushyamitra was respon-

---


sible. Whatever it may be, Buddhism does not seem to have experienced any great setback during this period inasmuch as it saw the erection of many stūpas in Bharhut, Bodhgaya and many other places. One of the stūpas at Sanchi excavated in the nineteenth century was found to contain the relics of two important disciples of Buddha, Sāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. The sculptured panels of Sanchi and Bharhut contain many representations of Jātaka stories, the previous lives of Buddha and scenes from Buddha's last life.

The Śuṅgas were succeeded in the north by the Kāṇvas who, like their predecessors, had no special predilection for Buddhism. But their contemporaries in the south, i.e. the Sātavāhanas, seem to have extended their support to and bestowed munificence on the Buddhist establishments in Amarāvati and the neighbouring regions.

Whatever may be the dynastic changes in India after the fall of the all-India empire of the Mauryas and whatever may be the personal faiths of the kings, Buddhism by this time was firmly established all over India (as is attested by the literary and archaeological sources) including the foreign dominions of the north and northwest.

As is well known, the Indo-Greek ruler, Menander (c.114 B.C.) was deeply influenced by Buddhist philosophy. Some scholars believe that he was converted to Buddhism by the venerable Nāgasena, a great Buddhist philosopher of the Sthāvira school. The famous Pali book Milindapañha, and the questions of Milinda, seem to lend support to this view. This book contains Milinda's (Menander's) questions and Nāgasena's answers to them.

Before we proceed, it may be of interest to recall the Tibetan historian Tāranāth's account of the spread of Buddhism in

30Menander was apparently a king of the Kabul valley. He, however, made his conquests into the heart of India as far as Ayodhya and Saketa. According to tradition, Nāgasena came to Sagala to meet Menander. See, Kern, op. cit., p. 118; R. C. Majumdar, H. C. Raychaudhuri and Kalikinkar Datta, An Advanced History of India (London, 1949), p. 114.
India during post-Mauryan India. Though Tāranāth’s account cannot be verified from any other source, yet there is nothing improbable in what he says. According to Tāranāth, Upagupta, the celebrated Buddhist monk of Asoka’s time, was ordained at Mathura by Dhitika who was a native of Ujjayini, Dhitika spread the religion far and wide. He converted the Tukhara king Minara and Buddhism was firmly established in Tukhara as a result of the missionary activities of the monks from Kashmir. These monks received support from Minara and his son Imhasa.

After the conversion of Minara, Dhitika, as Tāranāth continues, came to Kamarupa (Assam) and established the religion there. After this he came to preach Buddhism in Malava and Ujjayini in the West. Dhitika’s spiritual successor was Kala or Krishṇa and the latter’s disciple was Sudarsana. They preached Buddhism in Sindh and Kashmir. Krishṇa is also credited with the task of spreading the faith in south India, Ceylon and China. He was followed by Posadha.32

Reverting to historical discussions based mainly on epigraphical sources, it may may be pointed out that Buddhism continued to receive the attention of the people including the foreign population of north-west India during the period subsequent to Menander’s reign. The Swat Relic Vase Inscription records the establishment of the relics of the Lord Śākyamuni for the purpose of the security of many people (bahujaṇa-sthitaye) by Theodoros, the Meridarkh.33 This, according to the palaeography of the letters, is one of the oldest Kharoshṭhī inscriptions and can be safely placed in the first century B.C.

Meridarkh, as Konow has suggested, is a Greek title. So, it is apparent that Theodoros belonged to a period of Greek rulers preceding the Parthians and Śakas. He was probably a district officer in a region which included the Kabul territory or Arachosia or Gandhara.34

32Ibid.
34Ibid.
The Taxila copper plate inscription in Kharoshṭhī also mentions a person (name lost) with the title Meridarkh, who together with his wife founded a stūpa in honour of his mother and father for the presentation of respectful offering. Further, the Kharoshṭhī inscription of the Tirath Rock on the border of Swat Kohistan, ascribable to circa first century B.C. on palaeographic grounds, also points to the popularity of Buddhism in the realm of Greek supremacy.

It is interesting to note that the inscription in question occurs below a pair of footprints, which are of Buddha (Bodhasa Sakamunisa Padani). In his account of Udyana, Fa-hien refers to a spot where Buddha came and left the footprints “which are long and short according to the ideas of the beholder”. Hiuen Tsang also speaks of a large flat stone with Buddha’s footprints. He locates it on the north bank of the Swat river “thirty li to the south west of the spring of Naga Apalala, the reputed source of the river”.

Among the Sakas also, there were many who were devoted to Buddhism. The Taxila copper-plate of Patika would show that in the year 78, during the reign of the Great Moga, Patika, son of Kshaharāta, Liaka Kushulaka established in Taxila a relic of the lord Śākyamuni and a Saṅghārāma, through Rohinimitra, who was overseer for Saṅghārāma, for the worship of all Buddhas, for the increase of the life and power of the Kshatrāpa.

Liaka Kushulaka held sway in and near Taxila. He was a Śaka ruler while Moga was the Saka suzerain. Palaeographically, the inscription is to be attributed to the end of the second century B.C.

Again, it may be mentioned here that Ayasia Kamucā, the chief queen of the Mahākshatrāpa Rajuvula established the relic of Lord Śākyamuni, the Buddha, a stūpa and a Saṅghārāma for the order of the four quarters of the Sarvāstivādins. Palaeo-

---

35Ibid.
36Ibid., pp. 8 and 9.
37Ibid.
38Ibid., p. 23 ff.
39Ibid.
40Ibid., pp. 31-49.
graphically the inscription is to be attributed to c. 5-10 A.D. It is significant to note that the record ends with honour to all the Buddhas, the Law, the order and the Śakastāṇa.

The above records show beyond doubt the popularity of Buddhism, especially of the Sarvāstivādins, in the north-western region. In the interior of India, i.e. in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar as well as in the south, especially in the Andhra country, there grew up as already noted above, in the second-first century B.C. many Buddhist stūpas with railings and monasteries which show how deeply a large portion of the Indian population were interested in popularising the faith. In north India, the early centuries of the Christian era ushered in a new epoch in the history of Buddhism. This period, as a result of the patronage of the Kushanas witnessed the spread of the religion in Central Asia and China. Further, it saw also doctrinal developments leading to the emergence of the Mahāyāna Buddhism to be described later.

The greatest of the Kushana rulers was Kanishka. According to the numismatic evidence, he was eclectic in his religious outlook. Towards the end of his career he seems to have accepted Buddhism as his personal faith. Whatever it may be, his deep interest in the religion is indicated by various archaeological and literary sources including the testimony of the Chinese pilgrims. His services to Buddhism can to a very great extent be compared to those of Aśoka the Maurya who preceded him by about 300 years.

Kanishka ruled over a vast empire comprising Kabul, Gandhara, Sindh, North-Western India, Kashmir, and a part of Madhyadesha as far as Magadha. The Rājatāraṅgini, the Kalpanāmanditikā and the Chinese (later Han) annals seem to refer to Kanishka’s political sway in Khotan. Hiuen Tsang’s account also describes Kanishka as governing a territory even to the east of Tsung-ling mountains.41 Further, Hiuen Tsang refers to the Central Asian princes as being kept as hostages in Kanishka’s court.

41B. N. Puri, India Under the Kushanas (Bharatiya Vidyā Bhavan, Bombay, 1960), pp. 37 ff.
Kanishka built his capital in Peshawar which was an important centre of Buddhist art and religion. He erected there a large stūpa which has been described in glorious terms by the Chinese pilgrims. Cunningham and Foucher located the Kanishka Stūpa in the mounds of the Shah-ji-ki-Dheri outside the Ganj gate of Peshawar. Dr Spooner in the course of his excavations of the mound has confirmed this location of the stūpas as suggested by Cunningham and Foucher.  

The stūpa was destroyed and rebuilt several times. As found in the excavations, its base is square, measuring about 195 feet on each side, "with massive towers at the corners" and projections bearing stair-cases on each of the four faces. The sides of the stūpa were embellished with stucco sculptures. According to the Chinese pilgrims, the stūpa was surmounted by an iron-pillar with twenty-five gilded discs.

Dr Spooner who discovered the extensive ruins of the stūpa found in it a relic chamber containing an inscribed metal relic casket with sacred bones. The inscription states that the "casket was made for the acceptance of the teachers of the Sarvastivāda sect" and that "one Agisala was architect in Kanishka's Vihāra." Kanishka's allegiance to Buddhism is indicated also by the presence of the Buddha figure on some of his coins.

The greatest event of Buddhist interest during Kanishka's reign was the summoning of a Buddhist council under his patronage. This council, known as the Fourth Council in Buddhist tradition, was held to settle the doctrinal differences affecting the Buddhist Sanghas. The tradition of this council is preserved mainly in the account of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang.

It is said that in order to ascertain the true doctrine, Kanishka, at the instance of the venerable Pārśva, convoked a council attended by 500 monks representing various sects into which the Buddhists came to be divided this time. The venue of the council was either Jalandhar or Kashmīr. Kanishka built a

42Sten Konow, op. cit., p. 135 ff.
43Ibid.
44Ibid.
monastery for the monks and invited them to compose commentaries on the *Tripiṭakas*. The Council "composed 100,000 stanzas of *Upadeśa śāstras* explanatory of the canonical *sūtras*, 100,000 stanzas of *Vinaya-vibhāshā śāstras*, explanatory of the Vinaya, and 100,000 of *Abhidharma-Vibhāsā śāstras*, explanatory of the *Abhidharma*.... King Kanishka caused the treatises, when furnished, to be written out on copper plates and enclosed these in stone boxes which he deposited in a tope made for the purpose."\(^{45}\)

According to certain traditions, Aśvaghosa, the author of the *Buddhacharita*, the *Saundarananda*, and the *Sāripputrapakaraṇa* (the fragments of the *Sāripputrapakaraṇa* have been found in Central Asia) seems to have flourished in the court of Kanishka, in the first century A. D. His *Buddhacharita* (Doings of Buddha) written in ornate Kavya style describes the life of Buddha from his birth to enlightenment. The *Saundarananda* describes the conversion of his step brother, Nanda. The *Sāripputrapakaraṇa*, which has survived in incomplete form was a play or drama of nine acts, having the conversion of Sāriputra and Maudgalyāyana to Buddhism. The Chinese and Tibetan sources attribute a few more works, including the *Gāndīstotra* and *Vajrasūchī* to Aśvaghosa.\(^{46}\)

Kanishka was succeeded by his son Huvishka. The latter, like his father, was eclectic in his religious outlook, and Buddhism flourished side by side with other religions during his reign. A Buddhist pillar inscription ascribed to the year 47, records the gift of the monk Jīvaka (who was a native of Udiyana) to the Vihāra of Mahārāja Rājātirāja Devaputra Huvishka.\(^{47}\)

Huvishka's successor was Vāsudeva. Though he seems to have been completely Hinduised in his outlook, Buddhism and Jainism continued to enjoy popularity during his reign. Two records of Vāsudeva's reign are significant with regard to the history of Buddhism. One of them from Mathura dated in the year 67 of Vāsudeva's reign mentions the erection of an image


\(^{46}\)Ibid.

of Śākyamuni for the acceptance of the Mahāsaṅghika teachers. The other record of the year 77 records the gift of the monk Jivaka of Udiyana at the Vihāra of Devaputra Huviska. This monk seems to be the same as one who made a similar gift at Huviska’s monastery in the Kushana year 47.

The Kushana power began to decline during the rule of Vāsudeva as a result of the onslaught of the Sassanian Shahpur I. During the early centuries of the Christian era, Buddhist activity on a large scale was concentrated in the Andhradeśa. It coincided with the rise of Nāgārjuna, the propounder of the Mādhyaṃika school of philosophy. It is well known how the Mahāsaṅghika school came to be established in South India.

Nāgārjuna, considered to be the first man to have explained the Mahāyāna philosophy in a systematic manner in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, was born in Vidarbha or south Kosala towards the end of the second century A. D. He is credited with preaching Buddhism in Orissa and south India. According to Tāranāth he constructed monasteries in Orissa and other countries and was responsible for the erection of railings around the shrine of Dhamayakataa.

Professor R. Kimura summarizes the other facts about Nāgārjuna’s life from various sources as follows:

At last he came to Kosala, his native place and made that place the centre of his propagandism. At that time the king of Kosala was Sadavāhana or Satavāhana, who belonged to the Andhra dynasty. Hiuen Tsang tells us that Satavāhana greatly prized and esteemed Nāgārjuna when he was at the Saṅgharāmā built by Aśoka, king Satavāhana provided him with a city gate hut. For the sake of Nāgārjuna, the King is said to have tunnelled out the Brahmagiri Rock and built a

---

50Journal of the Department of Letters (University of Calcutta), Vol. I, 1920, pp. 27-8. The Sātavāhana King mentioned here may be Gautamiputra Yajñaśrī. The association of Nāgārjuna with the celebrated Buddhist site of Nāgārjuna-Koṇḍa during the second-third centuries A. D. has not been borne out by archaeological excavations.
big rock temple which was 300 li distant from the Brahmagiri Rock. He also wrote may Śāstras and commentaries. Under the patronage of Satavāhana he refuted all heretical doctrines and clarified the Mahāyāna system. Southern Kosala became the centre of Buddhism at that time and after Nāgārjuna, Kanadeva or Aryadeva, an eminent disciple of Nāgārjuna became a great teacher not at all inferior to his master.

Aryadeva, who also was a Brahmana of Southern India and flourished in the middle of the third century A.D. helped Nāgārjuna in the propagation of the Mādhyamika doctrine.

From archaeological and other sources it is evident that Buddhism was popular over an extensive region in Southern India during the period under review. The major Buddhist sites of the region include Bhaṭṭiprolu, Amaravati, Jaggayyapeta, Nāgārjunakonda, Goli,) Garikapadu, Guntapalli, Ghantasala Salihundam and several other places.51 Most of these places are situated in the Guntur and Krishna districts of the Andhra Pradesh. In the Repelle Taluk of the Guntur District, there was erected a Stūpa entirely of solid brick. During excavations in 1922 by A. Rca, many interesting objects including three inscribed votive caskets, each having a stone and crystal reliquary with relics and jewels were found. The Brāhmī scripts of the inscriptions on the caskets would attribute them to about the time of Aśoka.52

Amarāvati, also in the Guntur District, was a very important centre of Buddhism53 from the second century B. C. to the early third century A. D. The Mahāsaṅghikas seem to have migrated here soon after the second Buddhist Council of Vaisali. The famous Stūpa of Amarāvati called Mahāchetiya in inscriptions was first built about 200 B. C. Later it was enlarged till it was

completed about 250 A.D. It is held that a grand railing was added to it by Nāgārjuna’s endeavour about 150 A.D.

As in the case of the railings of Bharhut and Sanchi in northern India (second-first centuries B. C.) the railings of Amara-vati contain beautiful carvings depicting scenes from Buddha’s life.

The inscriptions on the Amaravati sculptures throw considerable light on the history of Buddhism. They mention monks (bhadatas), elders (theras), mendicants (pendapatikas), lay worshippers (Uvāsaka and Uvāsikās), disciples, male and female (antevāsika and anīhevāsikās), preachers of law (dhāmmikas) and various others as donors. Further, various schools of Buddhism are mentioned in these inscriptions. They are the Chetiyakas, Rajagirikas, Siddhathikas, Pubbaseliyas, and Avaraseliyas.54

Almost of the same period, i.e. the early phase of the Amaravati stūpa (i.e. the second century B. C.) is the stūpa of Jaggayapeta on the bank of the Krishna of which some sculptured fragments have survived. The style of these sculptures is similar to those of the early phase of Amaravati.

Excavations at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa have brought to light extensive ruins of structures, carvings and inscriptions of circa third and fourth centuries which throw considerable light on the history of Buddhism in South India. Apart from the secular and Brahmanical structures, more than thirty Buddhist establishments came into existence here during the rule of the Ikshvāku kings, Vāsishṭhiputra, Chāmtamūla in South India, Maṭhari-putra Viṇapurusadatta, Vasishṭhiputra Ehuvala Chāmtamūla, and Rudrapurusadatta.

All the datable Buddhist structures came into existence between the sixth and the eighteenth regnal year of Viṇapurusadatta. The Mahāchaitya of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa built in the sixth regnal year of Viṇapurusadatta received the patronage and munificence of the pious lady Chāmtaśrī, the sister of Vāsishṭhiputra Chāṃtāmulā.

The Mahāvihāra and the apsidal chaityagriha (stūpa shrine)55 meant for a much smaller stūpa, were set up respectively in

54C. Sivaramamurti, op. cit., p. 271.
the fifteenth and eighteenth regnal years of the same king for the Aparamahāvihāraseliya sect. Some structures nearby must have come into existence between the sixth and the fifteenth regnal years, for one Bodhisri, a lay worshipper from Govagama, donated an apsidal stūpa shrine in the fourteenth regnal year of Vīrapurushadatta to the Ceylonese monastery on the Chuladharāmagiri.

The inscriptions of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa mention at least five Buddhist sects: the Theravādins, Mahāvihāra-vāsins of Ceylon, the Mahīśāsakas, Bahuṣrutīyas and Aparamahāvihāraseliya. The existence of the Ceylonese Buddhist sects and monks in Nāgārjunakoṇḍa is proved beyond doubt by the inscriptions.

The Buddhist ruins of Goli, Ghantasala and Gummididuru, and several other remaining sites also speak of the wide popularity of Buddhism in Southern India during the second-third centuries A.D.

In Western India also, Buddhism was popular over a wide region as the various archaeological remains would support. At Ajanta, some of the caves, 9 and 10, were excavated during the second-first century B.C. A principal wall painting of the period is the Šaḍḍanta Jātaka in Cave 9. Some of the caves and sculptures of Pītālkhora, depicting Yaksha figures and scenes from Buddha’s life belong to the same period, i.e. the second century B.C. At Nasik there is a group of twenty-three caves ascribable from the second century B.C. to the second century A.D. 56

Kanheri was for a long time an important centre of Buddhism in Western India. Some of the Kanheri caves, as is evident from inscriptions, can be attributed to the reign of Gautamiputra Śātakarni about 180 A.D. 57 The Chaitya hall of Karle dates from the 1st century B.C. An ancient inscription found here describes it as the most excellent rock mansion in Jambudvīpa.

562500 Years of Buddhism, pp. 332 ff.
57Ibid., p. 334. That Aparaśaila monks lived here during the Sātvāhana period is proved by an epigraph occurring in one of its caves. Ajoy Mitra Shastri, op. cit., p. 97.
Karle seems to have been an important centre of the Mahāsaṅghikas in the second century A. D. as is indicated by two epigraphs of the cave temple here. One of these inscriptions records the gift of the village of Karajika by Gautamiputra Śātakaṁṇi to the monks of the Valuraka caves for the support of the school of the Mahāsaṅghikas. The other inscription of the time of Śrī Vāsishṭhiputra Śripulumāvi records the gift of a nine-celled hall to the school.58

Apart from the above, Bhaja, the earliest Chaitya hall, dating from the second century B. C., the caves at Kondane, slightly later in date than Bhaja, and those in Junagadh and other places59 speak of the continued popularity of Buddhism in Western India from the second century onward.

Buddhist Schools

It may be convenient here to describe in brief the chief Buddhist schools and sects.60 The Buddhist Saṅgha, as we know, was divided into eighteen schools or sects within a century and a half after Buddha's death. The names of all these schools are mentioned not only in certain Buddhist texts, but also in Śunga, Sātavāhana, Kushana and Ikshvāku inscriptions (second century B. C. to the second century A. D.).

As is well known, the second Buddhist council gave rise to two main schools, viz. the Sthaviravādins and the Mahāsaṅghikas. In course of time, differences arose within each school and more sects came into existence till the total number of such schools as recorded in Buddhist tradition was eighteen.

The Sthaviravādins maintained harmony among themselves for a long time, but dissension arose among them in the third century (after the death of Buddha) and they were in course of time divided into as many as eleven schools, namely the Sarvāstivāda,

58 Ajoy Mitra Shastri, op. cit., p. 89.
59 2500 Years of Buddhism, op. cit., p. 326 ff.
the Haimavata, the Vatsiputriya, the Dharmottariya, the Bhadrayaninya, the Sammitiya, the Channagarika, the Mahi
sasaka, the Dharmaguptika, the Kasyapiya and the Sautrantika.

During the second century, following the death of Buddha, dissension assailed the Mahasaṅghika school as well resulting in its division into schools such as the Ekavyavahārika, the Lokottaravāda, the Kaukkutika, the Chaityaśaila, the Aparaśaila, the Uttaraśaila, the Bahuśrutīya and the Prajñaptivāda.

The Sthaviravāda

This represents the orthodox school of Buddhism which accepted the canon compiled in the first council at Rajagriha. The followers of this school considered Buddha a human teacher though endowed with certain supreme qualities.

Its teachings exhort the people to abstain from evil deeds, and lay emphasis on śīla (good conduct), samādhi (meditation), and prajñā (wisdom). Good conduct purifies the mind; samādhi brings about its concentration and helps one to understand the real nature of things. On the attainment of prajñā (wisdom) we understand the significance of the four noble truths, and the law of dependent origination (the inter-relationship of one with another).

The main philosophy of this school is that all we find in this world is anitya (impermanence), duhkha (suffering) and anātmman (soul-less). All compounded things are composed of two elements, namely nāma and rūpa. They constitute what is called five skandhas, i. e. Rūpa, Vedanā, Saṃjñā, Saṃskāra and Viññāna.

The attainment of arhathood is the goal of this school. An arhat understands the true nature of things, and he follows the noble eight-fold path, i. e. the middle path, and strives for Nirvāna, the state of dispassionateness. From epigraphical records it would appear that during the third and second centuries B. C. this school had its strongholds in Sarnath and Sanchi. Its popularity extended also to the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa region (which was otherwise a main centre of the Śaila schools belonging to the Mahāsaṅghika school) in the third century A. D. The Nāgārjunakoṇḍa Apsidal Temple Inscription No F (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XX, pp. 166) refers to the Theravāda fraternities
of Ceylon who to their credit are said to have converted the people of Kasmīr, Gandhāra, China, Chīlata, (Kirata ?), Tosali, Aparānta, Vaṅga, Vanavāṣī. the Yavana countries, Drāviḍa, Pālaura and the island of Ceylon. Another Nāgārjunakoṇḍa inscription refers to the monastic establishments of the Theravādins, Vibhajjavādins, and Mahāvihāravāsins.61 Vibhjjavāda is another name of the Theravādins, while Mahāvihāra-vāsins were a sub-sect of the Theravādins in Ceylon.

The Mahīśāsakas

The Mahīśāsakas were of two groups, the earlier and later Mahīśāsakas. The earlier group held tenets closer to those of the Theravādins, while the later group to those of the Sarvāstivādins.

The earlier Mahīśāsakas seem to have been followers of Purāṇa of Dakkhinagiri (near Rajagriha). That he was a monk of high esteem and considerable importance is evident from the fact that his seven rules relating to food were incorporated in the Vinaya text. The Mahīśāsakas assert that after the deliberations of the first council were finished, the texts were once more recited for the approval of Purāṇa, who accepted the same after adding his seven rules.

According to the researches of Professor Przyluski, the expansion of this school took place ‘along the Kausambi-Bharukachcha axis’. It seems to have been particularly popular in Mahīśa-maṇḍala and Avanti and ultimately its activities spread to South India and Ceylon. The southward expansion of this school is attested by the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa Pillar inscription and the discovery of the Vinaya text of this school in Ceylon. The Nāgārjunakoṇḍa Pillar inscription in question records the gift of a monastery for the acceptance of the Mahīśāsaka teachers in the eleventh regnal year of Ehuvala by his sister Kodabalisiri, the queen of the Maharaja of Vanavāsa.

Regarding the philosophy of the Mahīśāsakas, only some of their tenets may be mentioned here. They rejected the sabbam atti (everything exists) of the Sarvāstivādins and held that the

present alone exists. According to the earlier Mahāśasakas, there is no antarābhava, i.e. interim existence between this life and the next one. The later Mahāśasakas, however, believed in the existence of the past and held that the skandhas, the āyatanas, and the dhātus always existed in the form of seeds.

The Sarvāstivādins

The Sarvāstivādins seem to have been one of the most popular of all Buddhist sects in ancient India. They also took an active part in preaching Buddhism in Central Asia and China.

The Sarvāstivāda school seems to have originated from the Mahāśasakas and not from the Theravādins as Vasumitra believes. The Sarvāstivādins are mentioned in a large number of inscriptions which, along with literary evidence, would indicate their range of influence in Mathura, Kashmir, Gandhāra and also at Tukhara.

The Mathura Lion capital inscription, attributed to circa 5-10 A.D. by Sten Konow records the establishment by the chief queen of Mahākshatrapa Rajuvula of the relics of the Śākyamuni Buddha, a stūpa and a Sanghārāma in the acceptance of the Sarvāstivāda teachers. Again, the Zedda inscription of the eleventh year of Kanishka records the digging of a well in honour of the Sarvāstivādins. The gift of the Bodhisattva images to the Sarvāstivādin teachers is also mentioned in the Kushana inscriptions from Sahet-Mahet (Śrāvasti) and Mathura. The Kaman Buddhist Image inscription refers to the installation of an image of Bhagavat Śākyamuni in the Mihira-vihāra as a gift of the monk Nandika for the acceptance of the Sarvāstivāda teachers. Again, the Kurram Relic casket inscription and certain potsherds from Tor Dheri refer to the Sarvāstivāda teachers. It is, however, interesting to note that the inscriptions from Nāgarjunakoṇḍa and Amaravati contain reference to this sect.

According to the Sarvāstivādins, all things exist (compare the expression sabbham atthi in the Saṁyutta-nikāya). Like the

---

Sthaviravādins they were realists, but the principal point of difference between the two schools is that the Sarvāstivādins maintain the existence of five dharmas in their subtlest forms at all times, whether in the past, present or future, while the Theravādins deny such existence.

The Sthaviravādins attribute a position of unsurpassed importance to the Arhats. But the Sarvāstivādins, like the Vātsiputriyas and the Sammitiyas, held that the Arhats “are subject to retrogression”. Further, they did not attribute any transcendental position to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as the Mahāsaṅghikas did.

The Haimavatas

The main centre of this school, as the very name would suggest, was the Himalayan region. According to Vasumitra, the Haimavatas branched off from the Sarvāstivādins, while Vinītadeva and Bhavya consider them as a branch of the Mahāsaṅghikas.

During the second century B.C., Sanchi seems to have been an important centre for the activities of this sect as is apparent from some relic casket inscriptions.

The inscription of the steatite Casket No. 1 from Stūpa No. II at Sanchi refers to Sapurisa Kassapagota, who is described as Sava-hemavatāchariyā, which according to N.G. Majumdar, means the teacher of the whole community of the Haimavatas. The his ciprion on the Relic casket found in Stūpa No. 2 at Sonari mentions Gotiputa, the heir of Dudubhisara, as a Hemavata, i.e., a member of the community of the Haimavata. A seal from Sankisa also refers to the Haimavata school.63

In common with the Sarvāstivādins, the Haimavatas did not attach any special importance to the Bodhisattvas and considered that “the gods were not capable of living a holy life of Brahmacharya and the heretics could not have miraculous powers”.

The Vātsiputriyas

The Vātsiputriyas, with whom the Sammitiyas were affiliated, were well known for their doctrine of *pudgala*. The main centre of the activities of the school during the early Gupta period seems to have been Sarnath as is attested by an inscription engraved on an Ashokan pillar there. The cardinal doctrine of this school is that besides the elements composing a being there is a *pudgala* (an individuality, a personality, a self) which is indefinable and which persists through all existences. Thus according to some thinkers, they should be treated as a heretical sect.

The Dharmaguptakas

The Dharmaguptakas seem to have branched from the Mahīśāsakas. Like the latter, they held that an Arhat was free from passions and that the heretics were not capable of gaining miraculous powers. Further, they considered a gift to Buddha as of special importance, and they believed in the worship of the stūpas of Buddha. The main centre of the Dharmaguptakas seems to have been in the north-west of the Indian and Pakistan sub-continent and from there the tenets of this school went to Iran, Central Asia and China. The Pratimoksha of the Dharmaguptakas was used as the disciplinary guide in all the convents of China.

The Kāśyapīyas

The Kāśyapīyas also known as Sthavirīyas, Saddharmavarsha- kas or Suvarshakas, held doctrines close to those of the Sthaviravādins. According to Tibetan tradition, its founder was one Kāśyapa. Some scholars find a reference to them in the Pabhosa inscription (*circa* first-second century B.C.) which refers to the dedication of a cave (*lena*) to the Kāśyapīya arhats by Āśādhhasena, son of Gopālīyā Vaihidārī and Rājan Bhāgavata and maternal uncle of the King Bahasati Mīta in the 10th year of Udāka. 64 They find mention also in the Bedadi Copper

Ladle Inscription and on the inscribed jars from Palatu Dheri as recipients of some gifts. Buhler considers Sovasaka of the Karle Inscription of the 24th regnal year of the Sātavāhana King Vāsishtiputra Pulumāvi as a Prakrit equivalent of Suvarskaka, another name of the Kāśyapiyās. But this view is not accepted by many scholars.

The Kāśyapiyās believed that "the past which has borne fruit ceases to exist, thus partially modifying the position of the Sarvāstivādins for whom the past also exists like the present."

The Sautrāntikas

They seem to have issued from the Kāśyapiya sect. Like the latter, they believed that the Pudgala or individuality passes from one life to another. Certain Sānchi inscriptions seem to refer to the teachers of this school as Sutātika and Sutātikini.

Dharmottariyās

They are a branch of the Sthaviravādins. The Dharmottariyās seem to have been mentioned in two Karle cave inscriptions of the second-century A.D., which record the erection of a pillar with relics by the Bhānaka Satimita (Svātimitra), son of Nanda and disciple of some Sthavira of the community of the Dharmottariyās from Soparaka, (Surparaka). A Junagadh cave inscription records endowments for Dharmottariyās.

Sammitīyas

The Sammitīyas were allied to Vātsiputriyās and they became popular during the reign of Harshavardhana. They trace their origin to Mahā-Kachchāyana of Avanti. A Kushāna inscription from Mathura refers to the installation of a Bodhisattva image

65 Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. II, p. CXXVII.
67 Ajoy Mitra Shastri, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

*Bhadrayāniyas*

The Bhadrayāniyas are mentioned in the Kanheri cave inscriptions of the time of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi and two epigraphs from Nasik. One of the Nasik epigraphs records the donation of a cave and a village, Pisājipadaka, on the south-west side of the mount Tīranhu (Trirasmi) by the queen Gotami Balaśrī, to the Sangha of the monks of the Community of the Bhadrayāniyas. The other inscription mentions the command of Vāsiṭhīputra Pulamāvi to his officer Śivakhaṇḍila to give the village of Samalipada to the monks of the Bhadrayāniya school in exchange of the village of Sudarsana.  

Very little is known of the doctrines of the Dhammotariyas, Bhadrayāniyas and Channagarika.

The Mahāsaṅghikas, as stated above, originated after the second Buddhist council. They were the first seceders from the parent Saṅga as they formed a separate group after being declared dissidents by the orthodox monks on account of their indulgence in ten points of Vinaya rules.

Because of their revolutionary outlook, they added some new rules to the existing Vinaya adopted in the first council. Again they introduced changes with regard to the arrangement and interpretation of the Sūtra and the Vinaya texts. They did not accept as Buddha’s sayings the Parivāra, the Abhidharma, the Paṭīsambhidā, the Niddesa and parts of the Jātākas as Buddha’s sayings. All these texts are excluded from the canonical texts of the Mahāsaṅghikas. They made a fresh compilation of the Dhamma and Vinaya and included those texts which were excluded in the first council. They also made some original compilation of which the Mahāvastu alone is known to us.

The wide popularity of the Mahāsaṅghikas is reflected in many inscriptions. The earliest epigraph in which the Mahāsaṅghikas are mentioned is the Mathura Lion capital inscription of the time of Mahākṣhatrapa Soḍāsa. According

---

to this epigraph, this sect had a strong opponent in Buddhila, who was an adherent of the Sarvāstivāda School. The Wardak (30 miles to the west of Kabul) Vase inscription of the time of Huvishka shows that Afghanistan was one of the centres of this sect, inasmuch as this epigraph records the enshrinement of a relic of Buddha at the Vagra-Magira Monastery by Kamaguliya, son of Vagra-Magira for the acceptance of the Sarvāstivāda teachers.69

On the west, Karla seems to have been an important seat of Mahāsaṅghika activities. The Karla cave inscription No. 19 tells us that King Vasiṣṭhiputa Pulamāvi asked his officer to donate the village of Karajika in the Mamala District with all the immunities belonging to the monk’s land for the support of the Mahāsaṅghikas. The Inscription No. 20 records the gift of a nine-celled hall to the same sect.70

The offshoots of this school, the Chaityakas and the Lokottaravādins, were firmly established in the South, i.e. Amaravati and Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. It is well known that some of the Amaravati Rail Pillar inscriptions mention Mahāvinayadharas and Vinayadharas (the monks and nuns expert in Vinaya rules). One Amaravati stone slab inscription refers to the term Samyutta-bhāṇaka. That all these canonical experts belong to the Mahāsaṅghika group is apparent from the fact that such titles as Dīgha-majhima-nikāya-dharasa, dīgha-majjhima-pañcha mātuka-osaka-vāchakānaṁ, dīgha-majjhima-pañcha-mātuka-desaṅkānaṁ, and dīgha-mangayaḍhāreṇa occur in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa inscriptions in reference to the monks of the Sāila school.71 This will confirm the tradition that the Mahāsaṅghikas had their own Vinaya, Nikāyas and Abhidhamma.

The offshoots of the Mahāsaṅghikas were the Bahusrutīyas, the Rāja-girinivasikas, the Siddhatthakas, the Chetiyakas the Pubba-seliyas, and the Aparamahāvanaseliyas. The Bahusrutīyas are mentioned in the Palatu-dheri jar inscriptions (first

71 Burgess and Jaggayapeta, Buddhist Stupas of Amaravati, pp. 91, 105 162 ff; Epigraphy Indica, Vol. XX. p. 17.
century A.D.) and also in one of the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa detached pillar inscription (No.G) which refers to the construction of a monastery for the Bahuśrutīya teachers by the mother of the King Sri Ehuvaḷa Chāṁtmūḷa.\textsuperscript{72}

The Chaityakas\textsuperscript{73} are mentioned in the Nasik Inscription No. 22, which records the gift of a lena or cave by Mugadāsa who was a lay worshipper of the Chaityaka sect. They are mentioned also in the inscriptions of the Junar and Ajanta Caves. An Amaravati Inscription of the time of Vāsiṭhiputta Pulmāvi mentions the gift of a Dharma-Chakra for the acceptance of the Nikāyas of the Chaityakas.\textsuperscript{74}

The Rājagriha-nivāsikas and Siddhatthakas are also mentioned in the Amaravati inscriptions.

**EARLY BUDDHISM AND THE GROWTH OF MAHAYANA**

The early or original Buddhism centres round Buddha's teachings, as maintained in the Pali canon. Śīla (good conduct), samādhi (concentration) and Prajnā (wisdom) form the core of Buddha's teachings. Buddha held that existence is suffering. Suffering has a cause. There is a way to overcome it and Buddha alone knows the way. The practice of the noble eightfold path leads to the cessation of suffering, and the attainment of Nirvāṇa or emancipation. Nirvāṇa is an indescribable state of bliss. The noble eightfold path is the middle path which avoids the two extremes, the one of extreme indulgence and the other of extreme self-mortification.

Buddha believed in *Karma* and rebirth with the majority of Hindu thinkers. He did not encourage the practice of miracles,


\textsuperscript{73}Lüders List No. 1130; Burgess, *Notes on Amaravati Stupas*, pp. 27, 41.

\textsuperscript{74}N. Dutt describes the special characteristics of Mahāyāna Buddhism as follows: (1) the conception of the Bodhisattva, (2) the practice of the Paramitās, (3) the development of Bodhichitta, (4) the ten stages (bhūmi) of spiritual development, (5) the goal of Buddhahood, (6) the conception of trikāya and (7) the conception of Dharmasunyatā or Dharmasamatā or Tathatā (*Aspects of Mahayana Buddhism and its Relation to Hinayana*, p. 34 ff).
nor was he interested in the origin and end of the universe. He did not consider these metaphysical questions of any relevance to gain knowledge or emancipation.

Buddha's philosophy can be summed up in what is known as anitya, anātman, and duḥkha. Everything we see is impermanent and soulless, and existence is suffering. Except Nirvāṇa, which is not made up of any constituents, everything is temporary, painful and devoid of any reay.

What we conveniently call a person or any individual consists of nothing else but name-nonmaterial part, and rūpa, material form, both of which are changing every moment. ...The cycle of worldly life is explained by the law of dependent origination—pratītya samuppāda.

The root of all evil is ignorance or avidyā.

From ignorance as cause arise the aggregates (sankhārā), from the aggregates as cause arise consciousness, from consciousness as cause arise name and form (mind and body), from name and form as a cause arise the sphere of the six (senses), from the sphere of the six as cause, contact, from the contact as cause sensation, from sensation as cause, craving, from craving as cause grasping, from grasping as cause becoming, from becoming as cause birth, from birth as cause arise old age, death, grief, lamentation, pain, dejection and despair. Even so is the origination of all mass of pain.76

As time passed, new thoughts arose and the religion underwent transformations. The new thinkers of whom Nāgarjuna was the most celebrated, laid emphasis on the supramundane character of Buddha and developed the concept of Bodhisattvas, who though fit to attain Nirvāṇa, refuse to do so till all sentient beings were delivered from suffering. With these new schools, not Arhathood but Buddhahood became the goal of the monks. With the deification of Buddha, new Buddhist deities, Avalokiteśvara and others were gradually introduced. The followers of the

BUDDHISM

new school called themselves Mahāyānists, i.e. the followers of the greater vehicle\(^{76}\) throwing open the possibilities of salvation and Buddhahood to all and designated the followers of the orthodox school as Hinayanists, i.e. the followers of a smaller vehicle, with whom self-realisation or individual arhathood was of primary concern.\(^{77}\)

Another aspect of Mahāyānism is the stress on devotion or Bhakti which brought it closer to other important creeds of India.

It is by that feeling of fervent devotion, combined with the preaching of active compassion that the creed has enlisted the sympathy of numerous millions of people, and has become a factor in the history of mankind of much greater importance than orthodox Buddhism.\(^{77}\)

It is by its more progressive spirit that it has succeeded finally in absorbing all the sects.

Mahāyāna Buddhism has two important schools of thought, the Mādhyamika and the Yogāchāra. The Mādhyamikas held the middle path or view. But this middle path was apparently different from the middle path preached by Buddha in Benaras. Buddha’s middle path (or pratiṣṭhāntarikā samyagdharma) had an ethical significance, whereas the middle path advocated by the Mahayananists is a theory of relativity. It advocates neither the theory of reality nor that of the unreality of the world, but merely of relativity.

The essence of the Māhāyāna philosophy is Śūnya or void. Śūnya however does not mean nothingness. It has two aspects, from the positive point of view it means the worldly phenomena as a result of dependent origination; from the negative point of view, it means the paramartha satya or the absolute reality without origination. Thus it avoids the two extremes of existence and non-existence.

The Mādhyamika school was founded by Nāgārjuna or Ārya Nāgārjuna (second century A.D.). The Yogāchāra school

\(^{76}\)Sir Charles Eliot, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 3-75.
\(^{77}\)H. Kern, op. cit., p. 124.
\(^{78}\)2500 Years of Buddhism, op. cit., pp. 121-24.
laid emphasis on Yoga as the most important method for attaining enlightenment. Bodhi can be attained after all the stages of spiritual progress have been gone through. This school was founded by Maitreya or Maitreyanāth (3rd century A.D.).

**BUDDHIST LITERATURE**

Before this chapter is closed a few words may be said about the Buddhist literature of the period under review. None of the Buddhist works belong to Buddha’s time. Further, all that we find in Buddhist collections were not words or sayings of Buddha only. Some were composed by his disciples.

The oldest of all the Buddhist literatures are the *Tripiṭaka* (Three Baskets). They are the collections of speeches, sayings, songs, narratives and rules of the order (Saṅgha).

The *Tripiṭaka* consists of the Vinayapiṭaka, the Suttapiṭaka and the Abhidhammapiṭaka. The Vinayapiṭaka contains the disciplinary rules to be followed by the monks and nuns of the Sangha. It includes the Suttavibhaṅga (consisting of the Mahāvibhaṅga and the Bhikkunivibhaṅga); the Khandhakas (consisting of the Mahāvagga and the Chullavagga); and the Parivāra.

The Suttapiṭaka consists of the followings nikāyas, or collections, namely, (a) Dīghanikāya, (b) Majjhimanikāya, (c) Samyuttanikāya, (d) Anguttaranikāya and (e) Khuddakanikāya.


The Abhidhammapiṭaka has seven books: the Dhammasaṅgaṇī (compendium of dhammas), Vibhaṅga (classification), Dhātukathā (discourse on the elements), Puggalapaññatti (description of human elements), Kathāvatthu (subjects of discourse), Yamaka and Patṭhāna.

The above texts comprise the Pāli scriptures representing the cannon of the Theravādins or Vibhījjavādins. In all probability

---

the Pāli cannon was substantially fixed in the time of Aśoka. Mahinda, brother of Aśoka, carried the canon to Ceylon, where the texts were written during the reign of Vatsagamini (first century B. C.)

The non-canonical Pāli literature includes, among others, the Milindapañha, the Nettipakaraṇa, Buddhodatta’s manuals, on Vinaya and Abhidhamma, commentaries on the Pāli Tripitaka texts including the Jataka ascribed to Buddhaghosha or Dhammadāpāla and the Ceylones works like the Dīpavaṃsa, Mahāvaṃsa, the Chūlavamsa, etc.

Now mention may be made of Buddhist literature in pure and mixed Sanskrit, representing the treatises of the other sects as the Pāli cannon does of the Theravāda.

The Mahāvastu, which belongs to the Hinayāna school, contains legends regarding Buddha’s life, Jatakas and other narratives. It is considered a book on Vinaya belonging to the Lokottaravādins of the Mahāsaṅghikas. Though the Mahāvastu is a Hinayāna text, it contained many of the features of the Mahāyanist.

The Lalitavistara in mixed Sanskrit deals with the life of Buddha from his birth till his first sermon. It is one of the most important sacred texts of the Mahāyanists and it calls itself a Vaipulya Sūtra.⁸⁰

Among the Buddhist Sanskrit texts, the works of Aśvaghosha occupy a unique position. As is well known, Aśvaghosha flourished in the reign of Kanishka. He laid stress on Buddha Bhakti which contributed largely to the growth of Buddhism.

Aśvaghosha’s works include the Budahacharita (the biography of Buddha), the Saundarananda (the story of the conversion of his step-brother, Nanda), both representing ornate poetry, and the Sārīputraprakaraṇa, a nine-act play, the fragments of which have been discovered in Central Asia, besides the Gaṅḍīstotra and Vajrasūchi. Another poet who flourished during Kanishka’s time was Mātricheṭṭha, whose Kanikalekha is a poem of eighty-five verses including some didactic narratives. His other famous hymns are the Chatuḥsataka stotra (a hymn of four hundred verses) and the Satapaṅchāṣati stotra (a hymn of one hundred

and fifty verses) fragments of both of which were discovered in Central Asia.\(^{81}\)

The principal Mahāyāna scriptures of our period include the Prajñāpāramitā, the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka, the Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, the Laṅkāvatāra, the Gaṇḍavyuha, the Tathāgataguhyaka, the Samādhīrāja, and the Daśabhūmiśvara, etc.

The Prajñāpāramitā contains sūtras on the doctrine of Śūnyatā. It is said that originally Buddha expounded the sūtras on the Vulture Beak in Rajagriha. In course of time, they are said to have been lost and rescued from the nether regions by Nāgārjuna. One of the Prajñāpāramitā treatises was translated into Chinese about 170 A.D.

The Saddharmapuṇḍarīka was composed perhaps in the second century A.D. It is said to contain the doctrine which Buddha delivered to an assembly of Bodhisattvas on the Vulture Peak. It represents developed Mahāyāna Buddhism “with Buddha worship, the cult of relics and image worship and the dedication of Buddhist stūpas and Vihāras.” It looks upon the Buddha as an eternal principle; “a god above all gods”. The doctrine of Śūnyatā, however, does not get much mention here.

The date of the other Mahāyāna scriptures cannot be fixed with certainty, though most were perhaps composed during this period. Of the Avadāna texts the Avadādaśatakā seems to be the earliest. It is said to have been translated into Chinese during the early part of the third century A.D. The Divyāvadāna seems to have been composed by different authors in different periods. The major portion of the work was perhaps composed in the second century A.D. The Avadānas introduce a multiplicity of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and represent Śākyamuni as a super-human worker of miracles.

\(^{81}\)Ibid., pp. 270 ff.
Select Bibliography

MODERN WORKS


B. M. Barua, *Old Brahmi Inscriptions in the Udayagiri and Khandagiri Caves*, University of Calcutta, 1928; *Pre-Buddhist Indian Philosophy; Barhuts*, Bks. I-III, Calcutta, 1934-37.


——— *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, Calcutta, 1926.


A. Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India*, 1891.


J. Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship* (1868 & 1873 editions), London.


A. Grunwedel, *Buddhist Art in India*, translated into English by Gibson, 1901.


——— *The Religions of India*, Boston, 1895.

——— *The Great Epic of India*, New York, 1901.


K. P. Jayaswal, *History of India* (150-550 A.D.), Lahore, 1933

——— *Hindu Polity*, Calcutta, 1924.


R.K. Mookerjee, *Chandragupta Maurya and His Times*, University of Madras, 1943.
Kanakasabhai Pillai, *The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago*, Madras, 1904.
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY


Sorensen, Index of Names in the Mahabharata.


Edger Thurston, Omens and Superstitions of Southern India, London, 1912.

Madhosarup Vats, Excavations at Harappa, 2 Vols., 1940.


Staniland Wake, Serpent Worship and Other Essays.


M. Winternitz, History of Indian Literature, Calcutta, 1927.

ANCIENT INDIAN TEXTS


Maitrayani Samhita, ed. by Dr. Leopold Von Schroeder, Leipzig, 1923.

Vajasaneyi Samhita, ed. by Satyavrata Sama Srami, 3 Vols., Sakabda 1796, Calcutta.


Taittiriya Aranyaka, Anandasrama Press, 1923.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Anandasrama Press, 1902.

Chhandogyopanishad, Anandasrama Press, 1901.

Aitareyopanishad, Anandasrama Press, 1911.

Kenopanishad, Anandasrama Press, 1913.

Mundopanishad, Anandasrama Press, 1901.

Kathakopanishad, Anandasrama Press, 1914.

Isavasyopanishad, Anandasrama Press, 1912.

The Thirteen Principal Upanishads, translated into English by R.E. Hume, London, 1921.


Srmdhbagavadgita, Gujarati Printing Press, Bombay, 1908.


Katyayana Srauta-Sutra, 2 Vols., ed. by Vyakaranacharya Pandit Madan Mohan Pathak, Benaras, 1904.

Baudhayana Srauta-Sutra, ed. by Dr. W. Caland, Calcutta, 1904.

Vashishtha Dharma-Sastra, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XIV,
Āpastamba Grihya-Sūtra, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XXX, 1892.
Mahābhārata, Bombay Edition.
Ādi Parva, ed. by V. Sukthankar, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1933.
Āraṇyaka Parva, ed. by V.S. Sukthankar, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1942.
Harivamśa, Bombay Edition.
Rāmāyana, 3 Vols., ed. by T. R. Krishnacharya, T. R. Vyasa-
charya and T. R. Srinivasacharya.
Mānavadharma-śāstra (The Code of Manu), ed. by J. Jolly, Lon-
don, 1887.
Vāyu purāṇa, ed. by Panchanana Tarkaratna (Vangavasi edition),
Calcutta.
Vishṇu Purāṇa, ed. by Jivananda Vidyasagar, Calcutta, 1882.
Liṅga Purāṇa, ed. by Panchanana Tarkaratna (Vangavasi Edi-
tion), Calcutta.
Liṅga Purāṇa, ed. by Jivananda Vidyasagar, Calcutta.
Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Gujarati Printing Press, Bombay, Sakābda,
1824.
Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, ed. by Shama Sastri, Mysore, 1909.
Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, English translation by Shama Sastri,
Mysore, 1929.
Āvaśyakasātra of Sudharmā, Agamodayasamiti, Bombay, 1916-
1917.
Sthāvīravālī Charita or Pariśīṣṭa Parva of Hemachandra, ed. by
H. Jacobi, Calcutta, 1932 Edición.
Vikrama's Adventure (Vikrama Charita), ed. by Edgerton
Paṭṭāvalīs of Kharatara-gachchha, Indian Antiquary, Vol. XI,
Gommatsāra (Jīvakhanda), ed. by Rai Bahadur J. L. Jaini, Lucknow, 1927.
The Pravachanasāra of Kuṇḍa Kuṇḍa Āchārya, ed. by B. Faddegon, 1935.
Pravachanasāra of Kuṇḍa Kuṇḍa, ed. by A. N. Upadhaya, Bombay, 1935.
Darsana Sāra of Devasena, ed. by Nathuram Premi, Bombay, 1918.
Uvāsagadāsā, ed. by A.F. Rudolf Hoernle, Calcutta, 1885.
Das Aupapātika Sūtra, ed. by Dr. Barnett, Oriental Translation Fund, 1907.
Yaṣṭilakachampū of Somadeva Sūri, Kavyamala Series, 2nd Vol., Bombay, 1903.
Vidvatratnamālā, ed. by Nathuram Premi, Bombay, 1912.
The Nighaṇṭu and Nirukta, ed. by Lakshman Sarup, University of Punjab, 1927.
Pāṇiniś Aṣṭiādhyāyī, ed. by Pandit Harishankar Pandeya, Patna, 1938.
Vyākaraṇa Mahābāḥṣhya of Patañjali, ed. by F. Kielhorn, 3
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Vols., Bombay, 1892-1909.
Kăśikā of Jayāditya and Vāmana, ed. by Pandit Bala Sastri, Banaras, 1898 edition.
Mālaviyāgīnimitram of Kālidāsa, ed. by M.R. Kale, Bombay, 1912.
Śūdraka’s Mrichchhakāṭikā, ed. by Jivanada Vidyasagar, Calcutta, 1891,
Aśvaghosha’s Buddhacharitam, Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XII.
Bāṇa’s Harshacharitam, translated by Cowell and Thomas, London, 1897.
Kalhaṇa’s Rājatarāṅgiṇī or Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir, Vol. I, ed. by M.A. Stein, Bombay, 1892 (Original text).
2500 years of Buddhism, Publications Division, Government of India.

JOURNALS, PROCEEDINGS, COMMEMORATION VOLUMES, ETC.

Annual Reports, Archaeological Survey of India
Archaeological Survey Reports by Cunningham
Archaeological Survey of India Memoirs
Asia Major
District and Imperial Gazetteers
Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics
Epigraphia Carnatica
Epigraphia Indica
Indian Culture
Indian Historical Quarterly
Indische Studien
Indo-Asian Culture
Jaina Antiquary
Journal of Indian Art and Industry, Vol. IV, 1891
Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society
Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
Journal of the Department of Letters, University of Calcutta
Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art
Journal of the Numismatic Society of India
Journal of the U.P. Historical Society
Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
Lüder's List
Modern Review
Numismatic Chronicles
Pathak Commemoration Volume
Proceedings of Indian History Congress
Index

Abhidhāna Chintāmaṇi, 104
Abhidharmapiṭaka, 222
Abhinandana, 147
Ādinātha, 180
Ādityas, 89
Aelian, 101
Afghanistan, 189, 218
Āgama literature, 79
Aghora, 45
Agni, 28, 30, 52, 84
Agnihotra, 131
Aganimitra, 37-38
Agnishtoma, 129, 131, 137
Agnyādheya, 130
Agrawala, V. S., 75, 105, 183
Ahibudhya, 95-96
Ahi-Vritra, 95-96
Ajanta caves, 219
Ājātaśatru, 150, 192-93
Ājita Kesakambali, 187
Ājitanātha, 184
Ājīvikas, 68, 148, 151
Ālāra Kalāma, 190, 193
Alexander, 72, 101
Allan, 37, 38, 46, 102, 114, 129
Amaravati, 109, 200, 207, 213, 218-19
Anādhṛishṭi, 73
Anantaśayana, 100
Anārāmbhaṇīya, 130
Anāgirasāmayana, 130
Anāgirasātirātra, 130
Anūttara Nikāya, 68-69, 188, 222
Aniruddha, 53, 73, 81, 82, 91
Antagaḍa Dasāo, 73, 181, 183
Anthropomorphism, 3
Apāṁśutarātmā, 55
Aparamahāvanaseliyas, 218
Āptoryāma, 129-30, 136
Aranātha, 167
Ardhanārīśvara, 51
Arjuna, 20, 82, 87-88
Arīṣṭanemi, 25, 147, 148, 181
Arrian, 68
Arthaśāstra, 35, 92, 178
Āryadeva, 207
Āsāni, 28, 31
Ashtabhujasvāmin, 79
Āśvaghosha (poet), 205, 223
Āśvamedha, 23, 119
Atimārgikas, 58
Atirātra, 129
Ātman-Brahman doctrine, 2
Ātman Vaiśvānara, 10
Atyagnishtoma, 136
Avadānas, 224
Avalokiteśvara, 52, 220
Aviruddhakas, 68

Bahurayas, 173
Bahuśruṭiyas, 209, 211, 218-19
Baladeva (see also Balarāma), 68, 104, 147, 181
Balākapīṇcha, 163-64
Balarāma, 73, 77-79, 82, 86, 92, 99, 181
Banerjea, J. N., 58, 72, 82
Banerji, R. D., 44, 154-55, 158
Barnett, 90
Barth, 28, 97
Barua, B. M., 109, 153-59, 187
Beal, 110
Besnagar, 61, 71, 83, 89, 131
Bhadrabáhu, 156-58, 174-75
Bhadra-yáñyas, 211, 217
Bhágabhadra, 161
Bhagála Dasaratára, 130
_Bhágavadvítā_ (see _Gítā_)
Bhágavatas, 3
Bhágavatism, 18, 21, 78, 85
Bhákti, 10, 18, 60, 77, 221
Bhandarker, 56-57, 88, 92, 196, 197
Bharhut, 109, 192, 200
Bháraśivas, 46, 114, 129
Bhattacharya, B. C., 148
Bhattacharya, Umesh Chandra, 67
Bhava, 28-31, 36
Bhavya, 214
Bhūtapatī, 31
Bloomfield, 111
Bodhichitta, 219
Bodhisattva, 110, 166, 213, 214, 216, 224
Brahmá, 15, 41, 42, 99
Bráhmadeva, 55
Brahmakshatra, 131
Brahman, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 17-18, 20, 23, 188
Brahmanas, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 83, 113, 186
Brahmanism, 3, 11, 12, 13, 14, 24, 25, 60, 106
_Brihadáryaka Upanishad_, 6-7, 9-10
Brihaspati, 23
Brihaspatisava, 129
Brown, N., 161
Buddha, 7, 61, 179, 187, 189, 193, 211, 215, 217-18, 220, 222
_Buddhacharita_, 110, 205, 223
Buddhist Councils, 194-204
Buddhist Schools, 210 ff
Bühler, 78, 102, 103, 130
Burgess, 111, 218
Chaityakas, 218, 219
Chakraváka, 109
Champeyya Játaka, 100
Chanda, R. P., 74, 80, 90
Chhánkogya _Upanishad_, 2, 7-10, 60, 83, 90
Chandrprabrha, 147
Chariyápiṭaka, 222
Chashála, 134
_Chatuhśataka Stotra_, 223
Chitra-sikharśi-Rishis, 21
Chinese pilgrims, 204
Chulavagga, 222
Chulvarśa, 223
Cleisobora, 68
Colebrooke, 3
Coomaraswamy, 16, 51
Crooke, 95
Curtius, Q., 72
Daksha, 22, 53
_Dasabdhámiśvara_, 224
Daśāvatāra temple, 67
Das Gupta, S. N., 157
Demeter, 72, 80
Demetrius, 50
Deussen, 7, 10
Devadharmacikas, 69
Devajana, 97
Devamitra, 72
Devaradhagani, 175-76
_Dhammasangani_, 222
Dhanurāta, 136
Dhānyakatakā, 206
Dharmaguptikas, 211, 215
Dharmaprabhasūri, 161
Dharmasūnyatā, 219
Dionysus, 35, 80
Dhītika, 201
Dharmottarīya, 211, 216, 217
Dutt, N., 187, 188, 194-96, 198, 200
Edgerton, 161
Eggeling, 7
Ekānomāsa, 77
Ekākṣhahāṣṭhirātra, 135
Eliot, Sir Charles, 187-89
Karle, 210
*Karma*, 186, 219
Kārttikeya, 28
Kassapagota, 214
*Khandhakas*, 222
*Khudda Nikāya*, 222
Konow, Sten, 49, 201, 204, 213
Krishṇa (and Krishṇa Vāsudeva)
  1, 3, 10, 16-19, 34-35, 41, 53, 58,
  79-82, 85, 77, 89-91
Krishṇa Dvaiḍāyaṇa, 58
Kṛttivaiḍa, 29
Kaśṭaṅga, 91
Kulasekhaṇḍa Alvar, 79
*Kumārasambhava*, 52
Kuṇḍa Kuṇḍa, 163, 164
Kunthu, 147
Kurram Relic Casket inscription,
  213
Lakṣmī, 24
Lakulīśa, 55-57
Lassen, 68
Leuman, Ernst, 173
Liṅga, Liṅga worship, 24, 39, 42-44
Lokapala, 97
Lokottara-vāda, 211, 218, 223
Mahāvīra (Vardhamāna), 12, 25,
  111, 147, 148, 150, 153, 168, 170,
  171, 173, 175, 177, 183
Mahāyāna Buddhism, 203, 206, 219
Maheśvara, 3, 49, 56, 59
Mahiṣāsakas, 211-13
Macdonell, 2, 4, 15, 27, 29, 95
Macnichol, 12, 80
Mādhyaṃkās, 206, 221
*Mahābhārata*, 3, 13-17, 21-22, 36,
  54, 84, 86, 89-91, 98
Mahādeva, 28, 31, 36, 38, 41, 42, 44,
  86
Mahākāśyapa, 194
Mahā-Niddesa, 68
Mahāsaṅghikas, 196, 206, 210, 211,
  214, 217, 218
Mahāvagga, 222
Majjhantika, 199
Majumdar, N.G., 78
Mājumdar, R.C., 200
Makkhanī Gosāla, 148, 173-74, 187
Malli, 147
*Manimekhalai*, 79
Mani Nāga, 107
Marshall, Sir John, 26, 40, 163, 214
Masuda Jiryo, 120
Mathura Pillar Inscription, 57
Mātriccheta, 223
Maudgalayāyana, 205
Muir, 5, 42, 53, 87, 90
Munḍasāvaka, 68
Munisuvrata, 147
Max Müller, 2, 4, 84
Mayon, 79
Nāga Ananta, 102
Nāgadīpa, 112
Nāga Sessa, 90
Nāgendra Dadhiṅkaraṇa, 104
Nara-Nārāyaṇa, 66
Narasimhachar, 151, 163
Nayas of Kollaga, 149
Nemi-nātha, 147, 180, 181
Neo-Brahmanism, 1, 17-18, 21, 23
  44, 94
Nigaṅṭha, 148, 188
Nimśiḍhyāya, 155
*Nirukta*, 4
*Nirvāṇa*, 189, 193, 219, 220
Ober Müller, 194
Pādalipta, 62
Pargiter, 123, 125
*Parivāra*, 217
Pārśvanātha, 25, 111, 147-48, 168,
  173, 179, 181, 182, 185
Paramārthṣa satya, 221
Pauḍa (Vasudeva), 67, 82
Pāśupat, 3, 16, 22, 55, 56, 84
Paśupati, 27, 28, 31
Paṭṭhāna, 222
*Petravatthu*, 222
Pitāmaha (Brahmā), 53
Polytheism, 1, 3, 4
Pradyumna, 82, 83, 91, 92
Prajāpati, 2, 4, 5, 8, 20, 31, 84, 99
Prajñāpāramitā, 206, 224
Prajñaptivāda, 221
Pratītyasamutpāda, 220, 221
Prātimoksha, 215
Pravachana-Sāra, 163
Pubbaseliyas, 218
Pudgala, 215
Pūjāsilā, 71
Pushpabhadrasvāmi, 54
Pushpadanta; 147
Pushrūsa, 8, 85, 91
Pushrūsa-Nārāyaṇa, 85
Pushrūshottama; 18
Puri, B. N., 203, 205

Radhakrishnan, 2
Raghuvarṣa, 52
Rakthamukha, 80
Rājangriha-nivāsikas, 218, 219
Rājapraśāda, 168
Rājasūya, 23, 128, 130
Rājatarangini, 112, 203
Rāma, 15-17, 90
Rāmakeśava, 78
Rudra-siva, 26, 34
Rūpa, 211, 220

Saddharmavarshakas, 215
Sadyojāta, 45
Śāla Schools, 211
Śākta, 16
Śālagrāmasilā, 24, 71
Samādhi, 211
Samantabhadra, 163
Sambhava, 147
Sambhū, 28, 30
Sāṅkara, 6
Sāṅkarshana, 83, 91-93, 129
Sāṅkhya, 4, 16, 51, 55, 84
Sammitiyas, 216-17
Sānjoya-Belaṭṭhiputta, 188
Sankalia, H. D., 163
Śāntinātha, 147, 184

Saptasoma, 136
Śāriputra, 200
Śarva, 28-29, 31
Śarvāstivādins, 202, 213-14, 228
Śatāruḍihāya, 30, 34
Śatāṁśikra, 28-30
Śatapāṭhā Sahasratika Stotra, 222
Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, 7, 28, 31, 85, 132-134
Saundarāṇanda, 223
Śīla, 211
Śīrha-laṅgala, 77
Śiśnadeva, 40-41
Śiva, 14, 22, 26 ff
Śiva-Mahākāla, 47
Śiva-Pārvati, 51
Śivaramamurti, 207
Śiva-Śrīkaṇṭha, 55
Śkanda, 28, 29, 35, 50
Śircar, D. C., 113
Śītalas, 147
Śittakaṇṭha, 28
Śvabhāgavata, 36, 55, 58
Smith, 35, 39, 49, 111, 166-68, 179-82, 184
Spooner, 204
Śreyāḥśa, 147
Srinivasan, K. R., 79
Stein, A., 26
Stevenson (Mrs.), 170, 176-77
St. Gregory, 72
Sthāviraśāda, 210-12, 214
Sthūlabhadra, 157, 174
Subrahmanyam, R., 207
Śūlagava, 31, 129
Śūnyatā, 224
Supārśvanātha, 147, 168, 184
Sutta-Piṭaka, 222
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇaprabhāṣa, 224
Suvarṇa-śatāmatkā, 171
Takshaka, 99

INDEX
Tāranātha, 200-201
Tathāgata, 193
Tathāgata-guhya, 224
Tattvāṭhasūtra, 164
Ten Aśvamedhas, 114
Theravadins, 198, 211-12, 214, 222
Thomas, E. J., 189-92, 220
Thurston, Edgar, 111
Trikāya, 219
Trimūrti, 51, 52
Triśalā, 149, 183
Tryambaka, 29, 36
Tvashṭrī, 84

Udakesa, 99
Udāna, 222
Uditāchārya, 57
Udraka Rāma putra, 190
Ugra, Ugradeva, 28, 31
Ukthya, 129, 137
Umā, 43, 50
Umāsvāti, 163-64
Upadeśa śāstras, 205
Upadhyaya, A. N., 163
Upamanyu, 41-42
Upamita, 57
Upamitesvara,
Upamīshads, 6-23, 60, 84
Urddhavaṃśhva, 26, 40
Uttanka, 88
Uttarasāila, 211

Vāchaspati, 84
Vaipulya-sūtra, 223
Vaishampāyana, 16
Vaisheshava, 16-17, 19 ff, 60 ff
Vaishnavism, 181
Vājapeya, 129, 134, 137
Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā, 28, 29
Vajjiai monks, 195-96
Vajraśūci, 205, 223
Vālmiki, 15
Varuṇa, 1, 52, 66, 84
Vasu, 84
Vibhajjavāda, 198
Vibhajjavādins, 210, 222,
Vibhanaga, 222
Vijñāna, 211
Vikrama (Vikramāditya), 160-61,
174-75
Vikramacharita, 160-61
Vilohipa, 28
Vimānavaṭṭha, 222
Vinaya-vibhāṣā śāstra, 205
Vinaya, Vinayapitaka, 194, 212,
217-218, 222-23
Vinītadeva, 214
Virāṭa purusha, 10
Vāsuki, 91
Vāsuvāji, 147
Vatsiputrayas, 211, 214-15
Vedas, 3, 4, 8, 20, 23-24, 86, 126-27
187
Vedantā, 211
Vedānta, 11
Vedaranyakasa, 55
Vena, 8
Vidvatratnamalā, 156
Vishnu, 15, 17, 21, 3, 18, 16, 45,
42, 52, 82, 84, 86, 88, 89, 90,
96
Viśvakarman, 2, 4, 84
Viśvāmitra, 48
Vodva Stūpa, 168
Vogel, 100, 178, 180, 182
Vṛatyas, 29, 31
Vritrahan, 95
Vṛūha, 71, 72, 91
Vyuptakesa, 28

Watters, T., 110
Weber, 28, 89
Whitehead, 29, 38, 48, 51
Whitney, 8, 11, 96
Wilson, 28

Yādavas, 60, 82, 90, 147, 181
Yājñavalkya, 9
Yāpana Saṁgha, 156
Yaśatīlaka champû, 168
Yaśodharā, 189
Yogāchāra, 221
Yogendra, 27
Yoni, 24

Yūpas, 129, 131-35
Zoroaster, 186
CATALOGUED.
Central Archaeological Library,
NEW DELHI.

Acc. No. 66045

Call No. 294.09/Ban

Author— Banerjee, P.

Title—Early Indian religions.

Borrower No. | Date of Issue | Date of Return

'A book that is shut is but a block'.

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIBRARY
GOVT. OF INDIA
Department of Archaeology
NEW DELHI

Please help us to keep the book clean and moving.