Mathurā standing Buddha Image showing halo decorated with elaborated lotus and geese, and stylised drapery of Gandhāra design, and, on the pedestal, a Sanskrit inscription in Gupta script of 6th Century A. D., recording that it was the religious gift of a Śākya-Bhikshu named Yaśadīnna.
THE GUPTA EMPIRE

BY

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To My Grandsons

Krisna Kumud
and
Pradipata Kumud
This work was written in the last days of my teaching at the Lucknow University and suggested by its needs. Its title indicates its scope and limits. It deals only with imperial Gupta history, and not with that of the later Guptas. It seeks to bring together in a concise and condensed form all the facts and data which are derivable from different sources, literary, epigraphic or numismatic, but are treated in separate specialised works. It will thus be found useful to both students and teachers of its subject, who will find in one handy volume all its materials collected and utilised. A special feature of the work is its account of the moral and material progress of the country achieved in the spacious times of the Gupta Emperors, and of the various institutions, social, economic, and administrative in which that progress was embodied. It gives a picture of India's civilization in some of her best days, the days of national freedom and planning, of the beginnings of her expansion, and intercourse with Indonesia and China. It is hoped that it will thus have a larger and more general appeal beyond the narrow circle of academic students of history. Another special feature of the work is its illustrations, some of which, especially those of coins, are based on line-drawings to bring out more clearly their details which are somewhat obscure or defaced in the originals. The illustrations will thus serve as useful aids to the study of the coins. Some of the line-drawings I owe to the distinguished Artists, Messrs. Nanda Lal Bose, Asit Kumar Haldar, and P. Neogy, to whom I am grateful. There have been at places repetitions of the same material where it had to be presented from different points of view, and in its various aspects. Such repetitions have not been ruled out.

The method of transliteration adopted in the work is shown in the following examples: Krishna, Vamśa, Liebchhavi.

The publication has been delayed by the prevailing difficulties of printing, and by my deputation by Government to an FAO Conference at Washington (U.S.A.) in October 1946.

I owe acknowledgements to my following pupils who helped me in copying out my MS for the press: Abinas Srivastava, M.A., M. C. Joshi, M.A., Dina Nath Tandon, M.A., and B. Subba Rao, M.A. My thanks are due to Mr. Raja Ram Jayaswal, M.A., for the Index.
I am grateful to my friend, Dr. Benjamin Schwartz, Ph.D., of the Indic Section of the Library of Congress at Washington, D.C., U.S.A., for his kind help in correcting the final proofs of the work at Washington.

June, 1947.

RADHA RUMUD MOOKERJI

* 

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

It is gratifying to the Author to find that a work which is somewhat technical in its character with its necessary documentation, literary, epigraphic and numismatic, should call for a second edition in such a short time. Some necessary additions have been made on the basis of new numismatic material derived from the Bayana hoard of Imperial Gupta gold coins recently found in Bharatpur State.

The Author is greatly indebted to the line drawings and other suggestions made by Sri Sivaramamurti, M.A., Superintendent of Archaeology, Indian Museum, Calcutta, in the preparation of the addendum.

The Author records his deep sorrow at the sad and untimely death of his old pupil Sri Raja Ram Jayaswal, M.A., who prepared the Index which remains unchanged in the Second Edition.

39 Ekdalia Road, Calcutta, April, 1952.

RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJI (Member of Parliament)

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION

That a third edition of the work has been called for is gratifying to the author. My thanks are due to the Publishers for their readiness to meet the demand and for the improved get-up which will now make the book more attractive to its readers.

39 Ekdalia Road, Calcutta 19; July 1959

RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJI
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CHAPTER I

BEGINNINGS

Sources. The sources of imperial Gupta history are of four classes: literary works, inscriptions, coins and monuments.

The literary works include: (1) the Purāṇas; (2) the play called Kaumudī-Mahotsava composed by a lady called Vijjākā; (3) the play called Devī-Chandraguptam composed by Viśākhadatta (probably same as author of Mudrārākshasa), but traced only in citations contained in the rhetorical work Nātya-Darpana, the hero of the play being Chandra Gupta II; (4) Bāna's Harshacharita; (5) the Mahāyāna Buddhist chronicle, Ārya-Mahājñānī Mālakalpa, dealing with imperial dynasties from 700 B.C. to A.D. 750. To these may be added the records of travel of the two Chinese pilgrims, Fa-Hien and Hiuen-Tsang who visited India in the fifth and seventh century A.D. respectively.

The inscriptions are sources of much important and reliable history for the Guptas. They are incised on stone, and metal, as in the case of copper-plates, or in that of the Meherauli Iron Pillar inscription. Some inscriptions are chronicles of events, as is the Allahabād Pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta or the Mandasor Pillar inscription of Yasodharman. Others are records of religious endowments or secular donations. The donative inscriptions are more in number.

The Gupta coins throw light on both general and numismatic history. They present a wide variety of types as shown in their legends, symbols, standard or weight, and fabric. They show the progressive evolution of indigenous Indian coinage and of its emancipation from the prevailing foreign and Kushān models.

Monuments are also a source of both artistic and religious history. They illustrate different schools of art and architecture. Three different Schools of Art are distinguished as (1) Mathurā, (2) Vārānāsī, and (3) Nālandā. As in the case of coinage, Gupta art set the standard for Indian art free of foreign influences which are seen in Gandhāra and Kushān art. The image of the seated Buddha at Sarnath Museum is taken as the masterpiece of Indian art, and of its Vārānāsī School, though by origin it is descended from the images of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva fashioned by the earlier Mathurā School. Examples of what may be called the Nālandā School of Art are seen at their best at Nālandā and at Kurkihar from which typical specimens are gathered at the Patna Museum. As regards architecture, evolution of its different styles is seen in the various temples of the times.
These temples throw light on religious history. They represent the main religions of the times and their deities of worship—Vishnu, Siva, Durga, Buddha or Bodhisattva, and Jain Tirthankaras. The worship of Vishnu is seen in the temples at Udayagiri in Gwalior and at Pathari. An Udayagiri temple is dated as early as A.D. 401 and shows the emergence of Ganga and Yamuna as goddesses. The famous temple at Deogarh in Jhansi district is dedicated to the worship of both Siva and Vishnu or Krsna. It is of the sixth century A.D. We may next note the Durga temple at Aihole of the fifth century and the fine sculptures of the Badami caves.

Background. We may briefly consider the political environment in which the Guptas emerged into power and prominence and became a new factor in Indian history.

History after the Mauryas. The imperial tradition of the Mauryas did not long survive them. They were able to achieve the Vedic political ideal as defined in the Aitareya Brhmana that a king should make himself the king of kings and establish his authority as the sole sovereign (Ekarat) of the entire country up to the seas.' It was, however, difficult to organize the whole of India as a political unit. The country is much too large for that. The unity of the history of India as a whole has been very often lost in the diversity of separate provincial and local histories. The Maurya Empire which had ruled over a Greater India extending approximately from Persia to Mysore was split up soon after Asoka, after a period of about 100 years, into a number of small States or kingdoms. The frontier provinces had already become a separate political entity under king Sophagasenus (Saubhagyasena) before 206 B.C. if we may believe in Polybius. He as ‘King of the Indians’ confronted Antiochus III of Syria when the latter ‘descended into India’ but had to ‘renew his friendship’ with him. According to the Kashmir tradition, Asoka’s own son named Jalauka set up an independent kingdom in Kashmir and even extended its territory by conquests. In the interior, the Mauryas were succeeded about 185 B.C. by the Sugas (of Bainbika family, according to Kalidasa in his drama Malavikagnimitram), and, later, by the Kaivas. The Kavas ruled for 45 years, and were overthrown in about 28 B.C. by a king of the Satavahanas dynasty known as the Andhra dynasty. Kalinga also which was annexed to the Maurya Empire by Asoka became now a powerful kingdom under the Chetas whose heroic king Kharavela was a menace to Magadha, to the Satavahanas and even to the South. India was thus in a state of great political unrest marked by struggles between different States and Powers for supremacy.

Foreign Invasions: Greek. In the North-West, the situation was beyond control. It invited foreign invasions. The first of these
invaders were the Bactrian Greeks led by Demetrius and Menander (king Milinda of the Buddhist work Milinda-Pañho) who, according to Patañjali, besieged Madhyamikā (near Chitor) and Sāketa (Oudh) and, according to the Gārgi Saṁhitā, occupied Pañchāla and Mathurā, and even menaced Kusumadhāvaja or Pātaliputra. The tide of this invasion was for a time stemmed by the Śuṅga emperor Pushyamitra whose grandson Vasumitra defeated the Yavanas on the south bank of the Sindhu (Indus?), as related by Kālidāsa in his Mālavikāgni-
imtrāya. But this reverse did not prevent the Greek conquest of the Punjab where Menander began to rule, with his capital at Sākala (Sialkot). The extent of Greek authority and influence in India is indicated by the fact that the coins of Apollodotus and Menander were in circulation in the bazaars of Barygaza (Broach) in the first century A.D., as stated in the Periplus. The Greek power in India, however, did not make much headway, as it was handicapped by factions led by the two rival Houses of Eukratides and Euthydemos. Of the former House, the king named Antialkidas has some Indian interest. He deputed from his capital at Taxila his ambassador named Heliodorus to the Indian king Kāśiputra Bhāgabhadrā of Vidišā (Bhilsa) where Helio-
dorus as a ‘Bhāgavata’ erected a Garuda pillar in honour of god Vāsudeva, as recorded in his inscription on the pillar at Besnagar. King Bhāgabhadrā may be taken to be the fifth Śuṅga king named Bhāga in the Purāṇas. To the House of Euthydemos belonged Apollodotus and Menander.

Śaka-Pahlava. Both the Greek Houses were overwhelmed by Śaka-Pahlava irruptions in the first century B.C. There were in those days extensive race-movements from Central Asia. The Huung-nu drove before them the Yueh-chis who in their turn drove the Śakas (Scythians) out of Bactria and other settlements. The displaced Śakas and their kinsmen, the Pahlavas (Parthians), found their way into India through the lower Indus valley from their settlements in Gedrosia, Arachosia, Seistan and Bactria. Thus Greek rule in India was supplanted by Śaka-Pahlava rule represented by some powerful kings like Maues, Vonones and Gondophernes.

Kushān. By the first century A.D., the Śakas and Pahlavas had in their turn to give way to the Yueh-chis led by the section called Kushāns who under their leaders Kadphises I (called Kujala on his coins) and Kadphises II (called Vima on his coins) established the Kushān Empire which was further consolidated by Kanishka I about A.D. 78, the commencement of the Śaka era. His empire in India included Kāpiśa, Gandhāra and Kāśīmāra and extended in the east up to Vārāṇasi and beyond. The eastern part was governed in the year 3 = A.D. 81 by his satraps, Mahā-Kshatrāpa Kharapallāna.
and Kshatrapa Vanashpara [E.I. VIII, 176, 179] and the northern by his general Lala, and satraps Vespasi and Liaka. The great Kushâns are taken to be (1) Kanishka I with his Viceroy Vâsishka; (2) Huvishka (c. A.D. 106-138) who had as his Viceroy Kanishka II; and (3) Vâsudeva I (c. A.D. 152-176). After Vâsudeva I, the Kushân Empire broke up into a number of small States whose rulers imitated the coins of Kanishka I and Vâsudeva I, and reigned in the third and fourth century A.D. and gradually disappeared before the advance of the Sassanians in the west and north, and of the Guptas in India.

**Little Kushâns.** The Kushân Empire was already shrinking in the time of Vâsudeva whose inscriptions are all found in the Mathurâ region, showing that his hold on the west was weakening. In the third century A.D., we know of four small Kushân States ruling in (1) Ta-hia (Oxus region), (2) Ki-pin (Kâpâsa), (3) Kabul, and (4) the Indian borderland. The Sassanian king Varhân II (A.D. 276-293) conquered Sakasthâna and parts of north-west India. A Kushân king gave his daughter in marriage to his Sassanian overlord, Hormisdas (or Hoizmiz) II (A.D. 301-309), while the Sassanian Shâpâr II, when besieging Amida in A.D. 356, made use of Indian elephants given to him by his Kushân feudatories. Very soon, this Sassanian supremacy was replaced by that of the Guptas, as will be seen later. The Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta refers to the precious presents sent to him in recognition of his suzerainty by these Kushân kings who are aptly described by the title, Daivaputra Shâhâ Shâbânshâhâ. We also know from their coins that in the fifth century Kushân kings known as Kidâra Kushâns were ruling in Gandhâra and Kâsâmira.

Just as the Punjab and the North-West were the scene of so many political vicissitudes through these centuries, the rest of India fared no better for want of a political equilibrium.

**Śaka Satrapies.** While the Śakas and Pahlavas were swept away by the Kushâns, the dynasties of their satraps survived them at Mathurâ and in the Western India. The Mathurâ Lion-capital is covered with inscriptions giving the genealogy of the satraps of Mathurâ among whom may be mentioned as more famous Râjûla (whose coins call him Râjûla and Rañjuvula) and his son Sôsâsa

1. The name Vanashpara suggests its connexion with the Banaphar Rajputs of the third century A.D. whose home is located by Sir George Grierson in eastern India at Buxar x Baghaa x Vyâghrasara [J.B.O.R., 1920, p. 150]. Visvasphâni of this family is stated in the Purâñas to have established by his prowess (mabâ-svâryab, his supremacy in Magadha and status as an emperor by overthrowing the older Kshatriya ruling families, posting his own followers as kings in different regions (sthâpayishyatir râjâna nînâ destshuk, and inaugurating a new Kshatriya order. The rise of this family is to be traced to its early patronage by emperor Kanishka I.
who was at first a mere Kshatrapa under Patika Kusuluka of Taxila as the Mahā-Kshatrapa, but himself became a Mahā-Kshatrapa in the year 72.

**Kshaharātas.** In Western India, these satraps established two independent ruling families, one of which had more than 500 years of history which was ended by the Gupta emperor Chandra Gupta II, as we shall see later. The other family had a much shorter history. Its founder was Bhūmaka who issued coins on the model of those of Mauces, Azes, and Spalirises, by keeping on their reverse the arrow, the thunderbolt and discus. He was succeeded by his son Nahapāṇa in the first century A.D. He also showed loyalty to Śaka traditions by having his bust on the obverse of his coins after the coins of Strato I. Their family name is Kshaharāta which itself is derived from the Chhaharas and Chukshas mentioned in the Patika inscription of Liaka Kusulaka, their chief of Taxila. Nahapāṇa had a daughter of Indian name, Dakshamitrā, who was married to Ushavadāta (Rishabhadatta) known from his charities recorded in his inscriptions at Nasik. One of these relates his victory achieved with his allies, the Uttamabhadras, over the Mālavas, and another shows that Nahapāṇa ruled over an extensive territory around the Gulf of Cambay, some of which was acquired from the Andhres. This led to Andhra-Kshaharāta conflict which ended in the extermination of this Śaka power by the Andhras whose king Gautamiputra states in his inscription to have destroyed the Śakas, Yavanas and Pahlavas, and, more precisely, ‘exterminated the race of Kshaharātas.’ The inscriptions of Ushavadāta are dated to years 41-46 of an era which may be taken to be Śaka era, in which case A.D. 124 would be a date in Nahapāṇa’s reign. The *Periplus* of the first century A.D. calls Nahapāṇa as Mambanos and his capital as Minnagara—Minopolis of Isidore of Charax, which is not identified but probably corresponded to an old form of Junnar near the coast.

The Kshaharāta conquest of Andhra territory was thus short-lived. Nahapāṇa lost it as early as the year 18 of the reign of the Andhra king Gautamiputra Śrī Śatakaṛṇi. This is the date of his Nasik inscription which he issued from his victorious camp at Vejayanti (=Banavāśi) and addressed to his Amātya ruling at Govardhana (Nasik). As Nahapāṇa had reigned up to at least A.D. 124, the eighteenth year of Gautamiputra’s reign should be earlier than A.D. 124, so that he reigned from A.D. 106. The later Nasik inscription issued by his mother Bālaśrī in the nineteenth year of her grandson Pulumāvi (Vāsishṭhiputra Śrī-Pulumāvi) fully details the conquests of her son, which in their turn were again lost by the Andhras to Rudradāman I, the western Kshatrapa king. Gautamiputra’s overthrow of Nahapāṇa is further proved by coins. A hoard of over 13,000 silver coins was found at Jogaltembhi in
Nasik district, of which 4,000 were of Nahapâna and the remainder restruct by his conqueror, Gautamiputra, who called in the local currency and countermarked it with his own types. His son Pulumâyi was probably the Śatakarni whom the Kanheri inscription mentions as the son-in-law of ‘Mahâkshatrapa Ru’ (dra)=Rudradâman. That is why his life was spared by Rudradâman who ‘twice in fair fight completely defeated him’ and regained much of the land conquered by Gautamiputra.

Śaka Kingdom of Ujjain. The end of the Kshaharâta dynasty did not mean the end of the Śaka satraps. Their other family, as already stated, had a more successful career. It was founded at Ujjain by Châshâna whose time is supposed to be A.D. 78-110.1 His son Jayadâman (c. A.D. 110-120) calls himself only a Kshatrapa, as the Āndhras must have diminished his dominion. Tables were, however, turned by his successor Rudradâman by his victories over the Āndhras. In his Girinagara (Girnar) inscription dated 72=A.D. 150, Rudradâman speaks of his victories over the Yaudheyas of the north, Śatakarni ‘Dakshina-patba-pati’ (lord of Deccan), who married his son to Rudradâman’s daughter, and of his ruling over Cutch and Kâthiâwar, Sind, eastern and western Malwa, and portions of Rajputana.2 In his province of Surâshatra, he appointed as his Amâtya or Governor a Pahlava named Suvishâkha, son of Kulaipa. He was succeeded by his son Dâmaghsâda=Dâmajada who was succeeded by Jivadâman. Their later history for about 200 years is not known. Châshâna’s line came to an end with the death of Viśvasena, son of Bhartridâman in A.D. 304. Rudrasimha II and Rudrasimha III were the last of the dynasty, though not in its direct line. The latter’s coins are dated 512=A.D. 390. He was killed by Chandra Gupta II during his conquest of western India.

Nâgas. We shall now follow the fortunes of other powers

1. The Āndhau inscriptions of the year 52=A.D. 130 refer to ‘king Rudradâman, son of Jayadâman, son of king Châshâna, son of Yâmotika’. Though it is not expressly stated, king Rudradâman may be taken to be the grandson of Châshâna.

2. The places mentioned in the inscription are: (1) Åkara=eastern Mâlvâ (capital Vidiśa); (2) Avanti=western Mâlvâ (capital Ujjain); (3) Anupa-nivrit (region)=Valley of Upper Narmadâ with its capital Mâhishmati=ândhâtra or Mahâsvara in Nimad district; (4) Anarta=north Kathiawad with its capital Ånartapura=Ånandapura=modern Vadnagar in Baroda State (or capital Dvârakâ?); (5) Surâshâtra=south Kathiawad (capital Girinagara); (6) Śvabhrama, the tract on the Śvabhramati=Sâbarmati; (7) Maru (Marwar); (8) Kachchha=Cutch; (9) Sindhu=west of Lower Indus; (10) Sauvira=west of Lower Indus; (11) Kukura (between Sind and Pâriyâtra or Aravalli mountain as stated in the Bhārat Sûkhaâ); (12) Aparânta=north Konkâna with capital Sûrâpâra; (13) Nishâda, between Vinasâna and Pâriyâtra=western Vindhya and Aravalli.
before the rise of the Guptas. The Andhra dynasty of 30 kings ruled for about 460 years and came to an end after the third century A.D. Meanwhile, in the north, the place of the Kushans at Mathurā and other adjoining regions was taken over by a new people known as the Nāgas who, according to the Purāṇas, ruled in the third and fourth century A.D. King Mahēśvara Nāga, son of Nāgabhaṭṭa, is mentioned in a Lahore Copper Seal inscription of the fourth century A.D. [Fleet, EI, Vol. III, p. 283].

Bhāraśivas. Several Vākāṭaka inscriptions mention Bhavānāga, sovereign of the dynasty known as the Bhāraśivas who were so powerful that they had to their credit the performance of as many as ten Āśvamedha sacrifices following their conquests ‘along the Bhāgirathī (Ganges)’. According to the Purāṇas, these Nāgas had several centres of their authority such as Vidiśā, Padmāvatī, Kāntipuri and Mathurā and counted another powerful king named Chandrāśāna who is taken by some to be king Chandra named in the Delhi Iron Pillar inscription. The political status attained by the Nāgas will be evident from the fact that the Gupta emperor Chandra Gupta II married a Nāga princess by way of an alliance, while a Nāga governor was ruling in the Gangetic Doab even in the time of Skanda Gupta.

Vākāṭakas. With the Nāgas and Bhāraśivas are to be counted the Vākāṭakas as their rivals for supremacy in northern India. The Purāṇas tell of their first kings, Vindhyaśakti and Pravīra = Pravarasena I succeeded by his grandson Rudrasena I followed by his son Prīthivisheṇa I whose son Rudrasena II was a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II. The Bhāraśiva king Mahārāja Bhavānāga had his daughter married to Gautamiputra, a son of Pravarasena I, just as Chandra Gupta II had his daughter Prabhāvariguptā married to Rudrasena II. Vākāṭaka power was at its zenith in the time of Prīthivisheṇa I whose authority was acknowledged in the territory extending from Nachne-kī-talāt and Gānj in Bundelkhand up to Kuntal or Kanarese country of which he is described as the lord in an Ajaṇṭā inscription. The tracts in Bundelkhand were directly ruled by his vassal Vyāghra-deva. After Prīthivisheṇa, Vākāṭaka supremacy in Central India was replaced by Gupta under Samudra Gupta and Chandra Gupta II. Western Deccan was ruled by Prīthivisheṇa I, but eastern Deccan which, was under his vassal Vyāghra was conquered by Samudra Gupta, as stated in his Eran inscription, while his Allahabad Pillar inscription states that he ‘uprooted’ the rule of Vyāghra-rāja whom it is reasonable to identify with the Vākāṭaka feudatory Vyāghra. The Vākāṭakas now took their place as a southern Power.

Maukhari. We may also note here the supposed connexion
with Magadha of certain other peoples. A clay seal bearing the legend *Mokhañam* points to Maukharī rule in the Gaya region. Maukharī power is also testified to by three inscriptions discovered at Beśvā in the Kotah State [EI. XXIII] recording erection of sacrificial pillars by Maukharī *Mabūzenāpatīs* in the third century A.D. The *Kamundī-Mabotsava* mentions the Magadha king Sundaravarman defending Pātaliputra against the Lichchhavis in the time of the Bhāraśivas. This Sundaravarman is taken by Pires to be a Maukharī. To this is to be added the evidence of the Chandravalli inscription of Mayūraśarman indicating that the Maukharīs were ruling in Magadha in the time of the early Kadambas, i.e., about the fourth century A.D.

**Lichchhavis.** There is again some evidence of Lichchhavi rule in Magadha. According to the Nepal inscription of Jayadeva II Lichchhavi, his ancestor Supushpa was born at Pātaliputra about the first century A.D. The Lichchhavis might have been ruling in Magadha since then and acknowledged Kushān suzerainty when Kanishka’s minister Vanashpara marched against Magadha.

Lichchhavi power in Magadha may explain the alliance of Chandra Gupta I with the Lichchhavis.

We have now set the stage for the emergence of the Gupta power in Indian history.
NOTE TO CHAPTER I

Along with the Bhārāsivas, Nāgas or Vākāṭakas, the Purānas mention another people named Devarakshitas as one of the ruling powers at the time of the rise of the Guptas. Their territories included Pañcāra (northern Bengal?), Kośala (Oudh), Odra (Orissa) and Tāmralipta up to the sea (Tāmraliptān sasāgarān). As they thus had their sway in eastern India and Bengal, they may be connected with king Chandra of Meherauli Pillar inscription with its reference to his victory against a coalition of the Bengal powers (Vaṅgas) and with the other king named Chandravarmā of Susunia Rock inscription describing him as ruler of Pushkaraṇā (=village Pushkaraṇā near Susunia hill in Bankura district). The Susunia inscription describes Chandravarmā as son of Siṃhavarmā. The Māṇḍapā inscription of Mālava year 461 = A.D. 404 also mentions Siṃhavarmā, son of Jayavarmā, and father of Naravarmā. The Gaṅghāṛā inscription of Mālava year 480 = A.D. 423 mentions Viśavarmā as son of Naravarmā. The Māṇḍapā inscription of Mālava year 493 = A.D. 436 and 529 = A.D. 472 refers to Gopā Viśavarmā Nṛīpa, and his son Nṛīpa Bandhuvarmā, as feudatories at Daśapura under emperor Kumāra Gupta I. Thus these three inscriptions testify to the following line of Malwa kings: Siṃhavarmā—Nara- varmā (A.D. 404)—Viśavarmā (A.D. 423)—Bandhuvarmā (A.D. 426). The Siṃhavarmā of this list is counted by H. P. Sastri as identical with Siṃhavarmā, with his son Chandravarmā, as mentioned in the Susunia inscription, in which case Chandravarmā becomes a brother of Naravarmā.

H. P. Sastri sought support for his theory in the curious geographical fact that there is a place called Pokhraṇ in the Jodhpur State in Rajputana, with which he identified the Pishkaraṇā of which Chandravarmā was the king according to the Susunia inscription. Sastri advances his theory further by supposing that this Chandravarmā from distant Rajputana came on a conquering career as far as Bankura in Western Bengal and may be taken as identical with king Chandra of Meherauli inscription recording his conquests in Vaṅga and treating the Susunia inscription as another record of his conquest. The further history to which he is led is that this Chandravarmā was the same king who was expelled from Āryāvarta by Samudra Gupta after which he or his brother Nara- varmā must have migrated to Malwa.

This theory is, however, now proved to be totally untenable. Pushkaraṇā is now identified with a place nearer home at Bankura and one need not go as far as Jodhpur to find its equivalent. Besides,
the other inscriptions mentioned above do not at all refer Chandra-
varmā in their list of kings. His place in that list is only inferred
from the name Sinhavarmā in that list, who was quite a different
person whose son is mentioned as Naravarmā and not Chandra-
varmā, as mentioned in the Susunia inscription. Thus Sastri’s fallacy
lay in fastening upon Sinhavarmā as the connecting link between
the Susunia and the Malwa inscriptions.

The difficulty now remains as to the identity of king Chandra-
varmā and of king Chandra of Meherauli inscription, who was
defeated by Samudra Gupta. A plausible theory is to treat Chandra
the conqueror of Bengal as a king of the Devarakshitās who ruled
in Bengal about this time. After his death, king Chandravarmā of
Pushkaraṇā emerged into prominence till he was disposed of by
Samudra Gupta.

It is not also possible to equate king Chandra of Meherauli
inscription with emperor Chandra Gupta I as has been done by some.
King Chandra is given a long reign in the inscription (suchirān) with
which Chandra Gupta I is not credited, while his dominion extended
from Magadha along the course of the Ganges up to Prayāga and
Sāketa without including any part of Vaṅga. It is Samudra Gupta
whose dominion counted as its subjects the kingdoms of Samatāṭa
(lower and eastern Bengal) and Ḍavāka (probably northern Bengal
or Tipperah district). But it is not clear how and by whom Bengal
proper was annexed to the Gupta Empire. This question is discuss-
ed later [Some of these suggestions I owe to Dr. B. C. Sen’s com-
prehensive treatise, Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of
Bengal, Calcutta University.]
CHAPTER II

ŚRĪ GUPTA (C. A.D. 240-280) AND GHAṬOTKACHA (C. A.D. 280-319)

Origin: Śrī Gupta (c. A.D. 240-280). Like all things great, the Gupta Empire grew out of small beginnings which are shrouded in obscurity. The first evidence of Gupta connexion with Magadha comes from a foreign source. The Chinese traveller I-tsing, who came to India in A.D. 672 heard of 'Mahārāja Śrī-Gupta (Che-Ji-ki-to) who built a temple near Mṛgasikhāvana for Chinese pilgrims and endowed it with 24 villages'. This was done '500 years before.' I-tsing stated this in A.D. 690 and so Śrī-Gupta must have ruled about A.D. 190. But the time of an event reported 500 years later cannot be strictly accurate. Some margin of error may be allowed. We find that the Gupta inscriptions mention 'Mahārāja Śrī-Gupta' as the founder of the dynasty who is also aptly called Adirāja in the Poona plates of Prabhāvatigupta Vākātaka [El. XV, No. 4, p. 43] and he may be identified with the Gupta king mentioned by I-tsing who gives him the same name and title. We may further note that Mṛgasikhāvana along with the villages granted to its monastery were all situated within Magadha and Gupta territory. I-tsing informs us that the aforesaid park was 'about 50 stages east of Nālandā down the Ganges', while Nālandā was '7 stages to the north-east of Mahābodhi'. This shows that I-tsing's 'stage' was about 5 or 6 miles. On the basis of this calculation, the territory of Gupta will have to be extended up to the Murshidabad district at a distance of 250 miles from Nālandā in Bihar Sharif. Now as to the probable date of Śrī-Gupta, considering the dates of his successors, we may take it to be A.D. 240-280, giving to his son Ghaṭotkacha the period A.D. 280-319 for his reign. Thus there is a difference of only about 50 years from I-tsing's computation which was given as a mere guess and not the result of any precise calculation.

We may further note that the name of this king is to be taken as 'Gupta' and the prefix 'Śrī' as an honorific, as is shown in all the names of the Gupta emperors mentioned in their inscriptions. Where Śrī is a part of the name as in Śrīmatt in inscription No. 46 of Fleet, the prefix Śrī will still be added in the case of royalty, whence Śrī-Śrīmatt [Ibid]. Nor is the name Gupta by itself objectionable. We have analogous names like Datta or Rakshita in olden times, or such abbreviated names as Devaka for Devadattaka [Kātyāyana's Vārttika on Pāṇini, VII, 3, 45] or Harsha for Harsha-Vardhana.
Gupta figures in the inscription as a ‘great king’, Mahārāja. This points to earlier origins of his family but these are not traceable.

The Gupta kings were of the gotra known as Dhārana, as is stated in the Poona Copper-plate inscription of Prabhāvatīguptā, the Vākāṭaka queen, who was a daughter of Chandra Gupta II and his wife Kuberañāgā born of the Nāga family [EI, XV, 41f].

Ghaṭotkacha (c. A.D. 280-319). The inscriptions name Mahārāja Ghaṭotkacha as the successor of Gupta. He should not be confused with Ghaṭotkachagupta named on some seals found at Vaiśāli which was not part of the Gupta kingdom in his time. Ghaṭotkachagupta issued those seals in his capacity as the chief officer of the province (Blīkṣī) whose headquarters were at Vaiśāli in the Empire of Chandra Gupta II. He might have been a scion of the royal family, as indicated in the prefix Śrī added to his name, but he is not called Mahārāja. He is called on the seals a Kumārāmātya, a Minister in attendance on the Prince who was ‘Mahārāja Govinda Gupta’, a son of emperor Chandra Gupta II by his queen ‘Mahādevi Dhruvasvāmini’, and serving as Viceroy at Vaiśāli but did not succeed his father on the Gupta imperial throne. It is possible that he may have been the same person mentioned as Governor of Eran in the Tumain inscription in Madhya Pradesh of the year 116 (=A.D. 435) [M.B. Garde in IA, 1920, p. 114].
CHAPTER III

CHANDRA GUPTA I

(c. A.D. 319-335 ?)

His Conquests. While his two ancestors are each given the title of Mahārāja, Chandra Gupta I is described in the inscriptions as Mahārājadhīrāja, ‘King of Kings’ or Emperor. He is thus taken to be the founder of the Gupta Empire. The title of ‘King of Kings’ must have been acquired by his conquests by which he was able to rule over an extensive territory. Unfortunately, there is not much known about his conquests and the exact extent of his territory. According to the Purāṇas, ‘the kings born of the Gupta family will rule over the territories (Janapadas) situated along the Ganges (anu-Gangā) such as Prayāga, Sāketa (Oudh), and Magadha.’ This description of Gupta dominion applies to what it was before Samudra Gupta had achieved his extensive conquests which made him the paramount sovereign over a large part of India. Therefore, the passage from the Purāṇas may be taken to describe the extent of Gupta territory under Chandra Gupta I.

Prayāga. We have no details preserved as to his conquest of Prayāga or Sāketa. Certain inscriptions discovered at Bhitā bring to light three kings associated with Prayāga, viz., Mahārāja Gautamiputra Śrī-Sivamegha, Rājan Vāshishthiputra Bhimasena whom Sir John Marshall assigns to the second or third century A.D., and Mahārāja Gautamiputra Vrishadhvaja of the third or fourth century A.D.

Vaiśālī. As regards Magadha which may be taken to be South Bihar, it does not seem to include Vaiśālī as a part of the kingdom of Chandra Gupta I. But it may be noted that in the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta, Nepal is mentioned as a State on the frontiers of his dominion, while what are known as ‘Chandra Gupta Coins’ associate the Lichchhavis with his sovereignty as the result of his marriage with their princess named ‘Queen (Mahādevī) Kumārādevi’ in the inscriptions and ‘Śrī Kumārādevi’ on the aforesaid coins.

Magadha. Some light is thrown on Chandra Gupta’s conquest of Magadha by literary texts but it is a doubtful light, because the texts are much later than the events.

Evidence of ‘Kaumudi-Mahotsava’. According to the Kaumudi-Mahotsava, Magadha was then held by the dynasty (Magadbakula) of Sundaravarman (supposed to be a Maukhari) who died in the defence of Pātaliputra (Kusumapura) against the attack launched by his adopted son Chaṇḍāsenā helped by the Lichchhavis whose
princess he had married. Chañḍasena as king of Magadha had to leave Pāṭaliputra to quell a revolt of his governors among the Sabaras and Pulindas on the frontiers of Magadha. Advantage was taken of his absence from the capital by a conspiracy which called back to the throne the last king’s son Kalyāṇavarman whose power was strengthened by his marriage with a daughter of Kṛttisheṇa, the Yaḍava king of Mathurā. He celebrated his restoration to the throne of Magadha by the festival of Kaumudi-Mahotsava, the subject of the drama. The drama condemns the Lichchhavīs as Mlecchas and Chañḍasena as a Kāraskara. Perhaps the Guptas might have been Kāraskara Jāyas and were settled somewhere on the borders of Magadha under Bhārāśīva suzerainty.

It has been suggested that Chañḍasena of the play may be identified with Chandra Gupta I whose marriage with the Lichchhavi princess had helped him to the throne of Magadha. The Lichchhavi alliance is the link of connexion between the drama and the inscriptions. Other stories of the drama, however, have no historical value. It condemns Chañḍasena as a usurper and of low caste whom the citizens of Magadha could not tolerate and drove him to die as an exile. Such a story does not support the identification of Chañḍasena with Chandra Gupta I.

Another suggestion in support of the historical value of the drama is that the Koṭa-Kula mentioned in the Allahabad Pillar inscription may be taken to be Magadha-Kula of the drama and that Koṭa-Kula of the inscription is no other than Kalyāṇavarman whose defeat by Samudra Gupta must have been recorded in certain missing syllables of line 13 of the inscription, while the inscription definitely tells that Samudra Gupta defeated Nāgasena, King of Mathurā, who was the brother-in-law of Kalyāṇavarman in the drama. Nāgasena is taken to be the son of King Kṛttisheṇa of Mathurā, the father-in-law of Kalyāṇavarman.

This agreement is somewhat far-fetched. The outstanding fact of the drama is against history and cannot be explained away. It is the extermination of the entire family of Chañḍasena (Vamśānu-
bandhaḥ nibitaḥ Chañḍasenagbātakaḥ).

Evidence of Coins. We may take it for granted that in achieving his conquests and position as Emperor, Chandra Gupta I was materially helped by his Lichchhavi alliance of which even his illustrious progeny were so proud, and constantly making mention in their inscriptions. Samudra Gupta first proudly declares himself as a Lichchhavidanahita in his inscription, and not a Gupta-patra, although it is more usual to trace one’s lineage on the father’s side. The importance of the alliance thus affirmed in the inscriptions is also celebrated by the issue by Samudra Gupta of special coins com-
memorating the event. These coins (which were found in Burdwan, Gayā, and Ayodhyā) portray the marriage, some showing the husband offering with right hand a ring to his wife. They also bear the legends, Chandra or Chandra Gupta on obverse, and Kumůradevī or Śrī Kumůradevī on reverse, and on left: while on reverse, and on right, there is the significant legend, Lichchhavayāḥ, the Lichchhavis as a people to whom belonged the princess, and the Gupta Empire at its foundation owed so much. The conjecture may be hazard ed that these coins were in circulation in Lichchhavi territory which now passed into the possession of Chandra Gupta I as one of the results of his Lichchhavi alliance.

The date of this matrimonial alliance may be roughly taken to be A.D. 308, if Chandra Gupta's son Samudra Gupta is taken to be his eldest son, and to have succeeded him on the throne in A.D. 355, when he should have been at least 25 years old for purposes of efficient kingship. Hindu legal texts point to the age of 25 years for kingship.

Gupta Era. According to Fleet, Chandra Gupta I marked his accession to the throne of Magadha by founding an era of which the first year was A.D. 319-320. Fleet also states that this era was also that of the Lichchhavis of Nepal from whom it was taken over by Chandra Gupta I who was so intimately connected with them. The time of Jayadeva I of Nepal approximates closely to A.D. 320. The Valabhi era is also identified with the Gupta era. The Valabhī kings, as feudatories of the Guptas, introduced the era of their overlords in their own dominion of Sutāśtra. We find that a son of the founder of the Valabhi dynasty uses the date 207 for one of his grants, showing that there was no independent era marking its foundation. The first year of the Gupta era as fixed by Fleet has been the subject of some controversy. But the controversy may be settled in the light of the following facts and considerations. The dates of the Saka satraps of Ujjain support Fleet's conclusion, if it is taken for granted that they are in the Saka era. It is an established fact that Saka power was extinguished by Chandra Gupta II who issued his silver coins in imitation of those of the satraps. Now the last date of Chandra Gupta is 93, while that of the Saka dynasty is 304. It is only by taking the Gupta era to begin in A.D. 319 and Saka era in A.D. 78 that these two phases of Gupta and Saka history can be reconciled and brought together in time. The basis of fixing

1. The recently discovered hoards of coins of Śvāmī Rudra Śimha III at Uparkot and Sarvana show that his coinage ended in the Saka year 274=A.D. 352, the time of Samudra Gupta who, accordingly, is supposed to have been the conqueror of Ksatrapa Kingdom (Jayachandra Vidyālaṅkār in J. Gujarat R. S., No. 2, pp. 109-11).
the Gupta era is of course the statement of Alberuni that the Gupta era was separated from the Saka era by an interval of 241 years. According to Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, 'the evidence in favour of Alberuni's initial date for the Gupta era appears to be simply overwhelming'. We may conclude by citing certain other pieces of epigraphic evidence on the subject: the Mandasar inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman dated ME 493 and the Ganjam plates of Śaśānka dated GE 300. We may also add to this the evidence derived from a different locality and history. It is the rock inscription at Tezpur of Harjavarman, the Kāmarūpa king, of the year GE 510. Now Harjavarman is ninth in descent from Śālastambha whose date is ascertained from other sources to have been c. A.D. 650, whence the date of Harjavarman should be somewhere near the date A.D. 829 arrived at by taking the Gupta era to begin in A.D. 319.
CHAPTER IV

SAMUDRA GUPTA PARAKRĀMAṆKA

(*. A.D. 335-380)

Date. His time is ascertained by his synchronism with king Meghavarna of Ceylon (A.D. 351-379) who sent him an embassy after his conquests were achieved, as indicated by the reference to Ceylon in his Allahabad Pillar inscription. If the Nalanda spurious plate inscription is to be believed, he came to the throne before G.E. 5 = A.D. 325, while the spurious Gayā copper plate record supposes him to reign in A.D. 328.

Name. The name Samudra Gupta is to be taken as a title which he had acquired by his conquests. The title means that he was ‘protected by the sea’ up to which his dominion was extended. The Mathura inscription of Chandra Gupta II actually states that ‘the fame of his conquests extended up to the four oceans’ (Chaturbadisalāsvādityakato). He must have had a personal name which is supposed to have been Kācha who issued coins describing himself as Sarvarājocchhettā (the exterminator of all kings), an epithet applicable fully only to Samudra Gupta among all Gupta kings. A personal name in addition to what may be called the official name was not unusual in those days, e.g., Virasena, Minister of Chandra Gupta II, who had a personal name Sāba (No. 6 of Fleet), or the personal name Vyāghra of Rudrasena (No. 15 of Fleet). That the name Kācha was also not unusual is shown in an Ajanta Cave inscription which refers to two chiefs named Kācha I and Kācha II. Vāmana in his Kāvyālakśāra (iii, 2, 2) refers to Chandrakrāsya as the son of Chandra Gupta and so it may be another name of Samudra Gupta. Even as regards the name which is usually taken as one word Samudragupta, it should be split up into two parts, viz., Samudra as a personal name, and Gupta as his surname. This assumption is suggested by the fact that the obverse of his earliest coins of standard type bears the legend Samudra on some specimens, while the reverse bears in common the legend Parākramah as his title. Similarly, the name Samudra is also seen on some specimens of other types of coins, such as the Archer type and Battle-Axe type.

Succession. In the Allahabad Pillar inscription it is stated that Samudra Gupta was selected for the throne by his father who considered him to be fully worthy of it as an ārya, ‘with an eye to truth, right, and justice’ (tattvaksinā chaikshubā), without being swayed by any other consideration, and declared his decision publicly.
before his Council (Sabbā) by telling the Prince: ‘Protect ye this earth!’ This decision was, however, not quite palatable to his kinsmen of equal birth (mlyakula) whose faces became pale (mlāna) with disappointment. His Council, however, were exultant (suhsvasita) over the decision.

There is an assumption that the discontent of his brothers at this supersession led to a revolt headed by his eldest brother who is supposed to be no other than Kācha of the coins. It is pointed out that the inscription goes out of the way in referring to their resentment which is supposed to have led to a war of succession to which a reference is sought to be found in the gaps shown in its stanzas 5 and 6. The incomplete sentence ‘conquered some by his arms in battle’ is taken to refer to the battle among the brothers for the throne; and further below there occurs the expression ‘pride had changed into repentance’, which is also taken to refer to the discomfiture of his brothers. Those who support this theory suppose that some time must have elapsed between Chandra Gupta’s selection of Samudra Gupta as his successor and his actual accession to the throne, and that this time was utilized by his jealous brothers to strike for the throne. It is further supposed that his eldest brother Kācha was able to seize the throne for a while during which he struck his coins. These coins show their gold to be of inferior quality indicative of political unrest. From this point of view, Kācha was a usurper and this explains why his name is not mentioned in the genealogical list of the inscriptions which also do not generally mention the name of a king who does not come in the direct line of succession.

It may be noted that the reference to Chandra Gupta’s selection of Samudra Gupta as his successor in preference to his other brothers is also indicated in the Riddhapura inscription in the expression satpāda-parigvibha.

Allahabad Pillar Inscription. The main source of Samudra Gupta’s history is this inscription which is engraved on one of the stone pillars set up at Kausāmbī by Asoka who had used it for his own inscription; but, though appearing on the same pillar, the two inscriptions of the two kings are poles apart in the character of their contents. Samudra Gupta’s inscription details his conquests achieved by force which Asoka had abjured. But for this inscription Samudra Gupta would have remained unknown to history except for what could be gathered from his coins. Unfortunately, the inscription is not dated, and so it is taken by some to be posthumous. But this supposition has been disposed of by Bühler who pointed out that it must have been issued before Samudra Gupta had performed the Asvamedha. Otherwise it would have mentioned such an important
event. The posthumous character of the inscription is inferred from its line 31 where there is a reference to Samudra Gupta’s name (kārti) which, resulting from his world-conquest (Sarvarprthi ti-vijnayānuitinotodya), had spread over the whole universe (Vjāpta-nikhila-vantałam) and even went up to heaven (Tridāpatibhavannagamanāvāpta). But the fame of a man on earth may go up to heaven without the man himself going up to heaven. The inscription is not posthumous for another reason above stated—that it does not mention the Āsvamedha which was performed later by the king on completion of all his conquests and their consolidation. The inscription is valuable not only for Samudra Gupta’s history but also for the political geography of India which it indicates, mentioning the different kings and peoples of India in the first half of the fourth century A.D.

Harishena. The inscription states that it is the poetical composition (Kāyya) of Harishena who combined in himself the important offices of the Khādaṇapākhika, (Officer controlling the Superintendents of the Royal Kitchen), the Sāndhvigrabika (Minister for Peace and War), Kumārāmātya (Minister in attendance on the Prince) and Mahādanaṇāyaka (the Chief of the Police and Criminal Judge). It is also stated that one of his offices was hereditary, as his father Dhruvabhāti was also a Mahādanaṇāyaka.

The inscription is stated to have been executed (amushhita) by another Mahādanaṇāyaka named Tilabhātaka. As a responsible officer of the State, Harishena was in a position to give an account of his master’s exploits with which he was in direct touch as his Minister for War. Thus his inscription may be taken to be a faithful record of the events it narrates, and also of the order of their happenings. The order in which these are mentioned in the inscriptions is important for the history it records.

Campaigns and Conquests. These are detailed in the inscription which also classifies the conquests with reference to the different degrees in which they were achieved.

First Campaign in Āryāvarta. Some States were completely ‘uprooted’ (umulita). The kingdoms of Achyuta and Nāgasena suffered this fate.

Achyuta was the ruler of Ahichchhatra, the capital of ancient northern Pañchala (modern Ramnagar in Bareilly district). Copper coins bearing the legend Achyuta found in this locality may be attributed to him.

Nāgasena was one of the Nāga kings who, according to the Purāṇas, were ruling at the two centres, Champavati (same as Padmāvatī near Narwar), and Mathurā. Nāgasena was of Padmāvatī where Nāga coins have been found. Nāgasena has been men-
tioned by Bāna in his Harsabharīta which states: 'At Padaññāvatī occurred (āsīt) the doom of Nāgasena, born of the Nāga family (nāgakulajannamah), who was foolish enough to have the secrets of his policy discussed in the presence of the Śārikā bird which declared them aloud.'

At the same time, a king of the Koṭa dynasty (Koṭa-kula) was 'captured' by Samudra Gupta's army (daṇḍagrāha yataina) while he was playing (krīḍā) at the city of Pushpa (==Pushpapura== Pātaliputra). There are found some Koṭa coins which resemble the Sruta coins of a ruler of Śrāvastī and the Koṭa kings might have been ruling in that region.

Samudra Gupta thus began his reign by overthrowing his immediate neighbours. If the war of succession was a fact, then these three princes might have joined hands and tried to take advantage of Samudra Gupta's domestic troubles. Thus they became the first victims of his conquest by which Gupta dominion was extended far beyond Prayāga and Sāketa over regions round Mathurā and Padaññāvatī. It is also ingeniously supposed that this battle against these treacherous princes was fought at Kauśāmbi where the Aśoka pillar was utilized as pillar of victory by Samudra Gupta.

**Campaign in Dakshinapatha.** If we may believe in the order of events recorded by Harishaṇa, Samudra Gupta, having consolidated his kingdom and the centre, opened the second phase of his activities by engaging on campaigns in the distant South. It is stated that he was able to inflict defeat upon all the kings of the South (Sarva-Dakshinapatharājā).

His conquests in the South (Dakshināpatha) are marked by three features: (1) Grābhāṇa (capture of the enemy), (2) Moksha (liberating him), and (3) Amgrāha (favouring him by reinstating him in his kingdom). This policy may be taken to be the only policy that the conqueror could pursue in the distant South where he was only anxious that his position as the paramount sovereign of India should be recognized.

**Kosala.** The route of his march to the South may be traced in the light of the order in which his campaigns are referred to in his inscription. Leaving the Jumna valley, Samudra Gupta must have marched through the modern Rewa State and Jubbulpore district and come up against his first object of attack, the kingdom of Kosala, which is Southern Kosala with its capital Śrīpura, modern Sirpur in M.P., and included the eastern and southern parts of M.P., the modern districts of Bilaspur, Raipur and Sambalpur and also parts of Ganjam district.

The king of this Kosala was Mahendra.

**Mahākāntāra.** Next, Samudra Gupta found himself in the
Vindhyan wilderness, the eastern Gondavana, aptly called Mahākāntāra, whose chief is more aptly called the ‘tiger’ of the forest, Vyağhrāja, already mentioned as a feudatory of the Vakṣṭakas. It may be noted that he had a son named Jayanātha of Uchchakalpa dynasty, whose date is 174 Kalachuri era, which shows that he was a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II, and so his father Vyağhra was a contemporary of Samudra Gupta.

Probably Sambalpur on the Mahānadī was its capital.

Kaurāla. As he emerged victorious from the forest-States, he came into the east coast and its first kingdom, that of Manṭarāja of Kaurāla. Kaurāla is severally identified with (1) Colair lake, (2) Sonpur district of M.P., of which the capital was known as Yayātīnagara on the Mahānadī, as stated in the Pavanadūtam of the poet Dhyoyi who refers to Keralānām city named above; (3) Korāda in South India.

B. V. Krishna Rao (Early Dynasties of Andhradesa, p. 366) proposes a new identification of Kaurāla. He thinks it should not be identified with the region of Kolleru lake, because it is very near Vengipura which Danṭin also describes as Andhranagarī on a lake. Samudra Gupta could not have advanced so far from the last stage of his campaign. Kaurāla may, therefore, be identified with the kingdom known as Kulāta (modern Chanda district of M.P.). It is mentioned in the Mahendragiri Pillar inscription of Velanauti Rājendra Chola I (S II, V. No. 135). Thus the last three places conquered by Samudra Gupta were all located in north-easterm Deccan.

Pishtapura. The next objective of Samudra Gupta’s campaigns was the Kingdom of Pishtapura, modern Pithāputram in Gōḍāvari district, then under its king, Mahendragiri.

Kottūra. After Pishtapura came the turn of Kottūra under its king Svāmīdatta. Kottūra is identified with modern Kothoor in Gajamar district or with a place called Kottūra at the foot of the hills in the Vizagapatam district (District Gazetteer I, 137).

Erandapalla. The next king subdued was Damana of Erândapalla. This place is identified with (1) Erandol in Khandesh, (2) Erandapalli, which is a town near Chicacole in Vizagapatam district, (3) Yendipalli in Vizagapatam district, and (4) Endapilli in Ellore raluq.

Kāṇchi. There is a long interval of space leading to the next conquest. It was that of Kāṇchi or modern Conjeevaram under its king named Vishnugopa.

Avamukta. The next conquest of Samudra Gupta was the kingdom of Avamukta under its king called Nilarāja. It must have been a small kingdom in the neighbourhood of Kāṇchi and Vengi. Nilarāja may be connected with Nilapallin in Gōḍāvari district. He
was also another member of the Pallava Confederation fought by Samudra Gupta. The kingdom of Kāñchī in those days embraced the whole territory from the mouth of the Krīshṇa to the south of the river Palar and sometimes even Kāverī. To the east of this territory lay the kingdoms of Vengi, Palakka and Avamukta.

Vengī. The next conquest is that of Vengī under its king Hastivarman. It is to be noted that in proceeding against Kāñchī Samudra Gupta could not have left in his rear the king of Vengī. Very probably he had to give battle to a coalition of Pallava kings headed by Vishnugopa and Hastivarman. Hastivarman is supposed to have belonged to Sālāṅkāyana dynasty (Pṛḍāvegī plates of Nandivarman II).

Palakka. Samudra Gupta next proceeded against Ugrasena of Palakka. Palakka is supposed to be a place in Nellore district. There is a place called Palakkḍa which was the seat of a Pallava Viceroyalty and so may be the same as Palakka.

Devarāṣṭra. The next kingdom that came on his way was Devarāṣṭra under its king Kubera. A copper-plate grant of the eastern Chālukya king, Bhima I, mentions a village in Elamaṅchī Kalṅgadesa which was part of the province called Devarāṣṭra. Elamaṅchī, capital of Kalṅgadesa, is identified with modern Yellamaṅchili in Vizagapatam district. Therefore, Devarāṣṭra is to be located in this district. This location has been further confirmed by an inscription stating that Pishṭapura formed part of the kingdom of Devarāṣṭra ruled in its time by king Guṅavarman (El. XXIII, 57).

Kusthalapura. The last kingdom mentioned in the list of Samudra Gupta’s conquest in the South is Kusthalapura under its king Dhanaṅjaya. This place may be located in the tract round about the river Kusāsthali, in which case it must have been conquered by Samudra Gupta on his return march. The place has also been identified with Kuttalur near Pollur in North Arcot district.

Route in the South. Some of the above identifications of the places mentioned in the inscription go against the theory held by Fleet and since strongly supported by several scholars, that Samudra Gupta, on his return march, conquered some of the kingdoms on the western coast. Kaurāla of the inscription was identified with Keralaputra (Madurā) or the Chera kingdom of Southern India. Similarly, Koṭṭāra was identified with a place called Koṭṭura-pollachi in the Coimbatore district, and Palakka with Pālaghāt on the Malabar coast. Erāṇḍapalla was identified with Erandol in the Khandesh district of Bombay as already stated, and Devarāṣṭra was equated with Mahārāṣṭra. Apart from the more satisfactory identifications which have been given above and which go against this
theory, the theory is rendered untenable on another very decisive
ground. If the inscription is to be taken as mentioning the conquests
of Samudra Gupta in the order in which they had actually followed
one another, Eranalapalla and Devarashta should have been men-
tioned after the southernmost kingdoms of Vengi and Kañchi. It
cannot be supposed that Samudra Gupta returned to the south after
first conquering these kingdoms of Western India.

Second Campaign in Āryāvarta. Having now felt his power
and measured his strength (praṅāpa) by his campaigns in the South,
he returned to his kingdom and found that it was surrounded by a
belt of hostile States which were potential sources of danger to his
sovereignty. He, therefore, resolved to make himself the king of
these kings by a ‘war of extermination’ against them (prasabhodha-
rama). It was a violent and bloody war waged against the remaining
kings of Āryāvarta who were not conquered in the first campaign.

Rudradeva. The first of these kings was Rudradeva who is
identified with Rudrasena I Vakāśaka (A.D. 344-48) and who must
have been deprived of the eastern part of his territory between
Jumna and Vidiśā, i.e., Bundelkhand. Samudra Gupta did not carry
his campaigns into the central and western parts of the Deccan which
were left alone as a result of a possible alliance between him and
Rudrasena’s son PrithivishENA I (A.D. 348-375) who must have
acknowledged his suzerainty. Prithivishena’s inscriptions show that
his territory included the country from the south of the Jumna to
the south-west of the Vindhayas. The Eran inscription of Samudra
Gupta points to a part of Malwa being in his dominion, what is called
Airikina-pradesa (now a village in Saigor district in M.P.), which
he must have annexed by defeating Rudradeva—Rudrasena I
Vakāśaka.

Ātavika (Forest) Kingdoms. The conquest of Āryāvarta was
followed by the establishment of suitable relations with other States
far and near. The inscription states that Samudra Gupta reduced
to complete subjection (parichārakāyita, ‘made servants of’) the kings
of ‘all’ the forest-States. Eighteen such States are mentioned in the
copper-plate inscription of Parivrajaka king Basti and the Dabhāla
kingdom (Jubulpore) is one of them.

Frontier States. This succession of conquests made Samudra
Gupta so powerful that the States on the frontiers of his empire,
whether kingdoms (Pratyantyapatiñīthā) or republics, were anxious
to enter into friendly relations with him by rendering satisfaction
(paritoshā) of the demands of his imperial administration (pra-
chandaśāsana) in the shape of payment of all taxes (sarvakaradāna),
obeying his decrees (ājīna-karana), and attending his imperial
darbars to tender homage to him in person (prāṇāmāgamana).
Among the frontier kingdoms are mentioned five of eastern India.

Samatata. The first is Samatata which the Brāhmasūkhyā places in the eastern division of India. Hiuen-Tsang placed it to the east of Tamralipti country and bordering on the sea. Its capital was Karmmanta which is supposed to be modern Kamta in Comilla district by N. K. Bhattacharji (Iconography, pp. 4f).

Davāka. According to Mr. N. K. Bhattacharji, the chief city of Davāka is to be identified with modern Dabok in the Nowgong district of Assam. Davāka then corresponds to the valley of the Kapili-Yamunā-Kolong rivers of Assam.

Kāmarūpa. It may be taken to be the Gauhati District of Assam.

Nepal. The then king of Nepal was Jayadeva I, the new Lichchhāvi king, who was a relation of Samudra Gupta on his mother's side. The submission of such a hilly kingdom to the suzerainty of Samudra Gupta is a great triumph for him and a proof of his invincible power.

Karttripura. This is another Himalayan State, the territory of Katuriya or Katyur kingdom of Kumaun, Garhwal, and Rohilkhand (JR.AS, 1898, pp. 198-9).

The location of these frontier States shows that Bengal proper, excluding its part named Samatata, was already a part of the Gupta empire under Samudra Gupta, while in the time of his successor Chandra Gupta II, northern Bengal figures as a regular province of the empire under the name Pundravardhana. It may, therefore, be assumed that the conquest of Bengal proper was the work of Samudra Gupta's father, Chandra Gupta I, and this assumption will support the view that Chandra Gupta I may be equated with Chandra of the Delhi Pillar inscription which refers to Chandra's victory over a coalition of Bengal chiefs (śatān sametāgaṇa vaṅgaśha). With Bengal conquered and his rear thus secured, Chandra Gupta I was able to push his conquests farther along the course of the Ganges up to Prayāga and then beyond it up to Śāketa or Oudh, as stated in the Purānic passage whose meaning may be now correctly understood. There is, however, another view of the matter, which will be discussed later.

The Republican Peoples: Mālavas. These republican States were on the frontiers of Samudra Gupta's empire on its western and south-western side. Of these, the Mālavas have several centuries of history from the time of Pāṇini (c. 500 B.C.) and of Alexander's invasion (326 B.C.) which they had resisted. They are also known to the Mahābhārata (II. 32; 52). They came into conflict with Nāhapaśa's son-in-law Ushavadāta who subdued them with the help of
PLATE I
COINS OF SAMUDRA GUPTA

1. Standard Type

2. Kācha Type

3. Tiger Type
PLATE II
COINS OF SAMUDRA GUPTA
(Continued)

4. Chandra Gupta Type

5. Battle-axe Type

6. Ásvamedha Type

[From Line-Drawing by Śrī Nanda Lal Bose]
his allies, the Uttama-bhadras, as already stated. The Mālava copper coins are found all over the wide area from the Sutlej to the Narmadā and have an equally wide range in time from 250 B.C. to A.D. 350, as shown by Cunningham. Their coins are not found after A.D. 350 when they ceased to be independent and submitted to Samudra Gupta. Their influence in the Mandasor region is proved by the fact that they were able to impose their tribal era beginning from 58 B.C. upon the Mandasor princes.

Ārjunāyana. The Bṛihatsambhitā places them in the northern division of India. Ptolemy knows of a people in the Punjab whom he calls the Pandoonoi—Pāṇḍavas with whom the Ārjunāyana (called after Arjuna) may be connected. Ārjunāyana coins are found in the Mathurā region and they may be assigned with probability to the region lying west of Agra and Mathurā, equivalent, roughly speaking, to the Bharatpur and Alwar States’ (V. A. Smith’s Catalogue, p. 160).

Yaudheya. They are as old as Pāṇini who knows of them as a military clan (āyudhaśātri svāngsa) who lived by the profession of arms. They are also known to the Mahābhārata (II. 52; VII, 9). The Girnār inscription of Rudradāman (A.D. 150) mentions his victory over the Yaudheya ‘proud of their heroism’. The Bijayagadh inscription (No. 58 of Fleet) connects them with the Bharatpur State. In the Ludhiana district have been unearthed their votive tablets. Yaudheya coins have been found all over the area from Saharanpur to Multan. A rich find of their coin-moulds was recently brought to light by Dr. B. Sahni at Khokrakot near Rohtak where there seems to have existed a regular mint. In Samudra Gupta’s time, they seem to have occupied northern Rajputana and south-east Punjab, and their territory extended up to the confines of the Bhawalpur State where their name survives in the name of the tract called Jōhiyāwār.

Madraśa. The Madradasa is as old as the Upanishads which have immortalized its philosopher named Patañjalā Kāpya to whom scholars from eastern India flocked for advanced knowledge. They are also known to Pāṇini (IV. 2, 121) and to the Mahābhārata (II, 52; VI, 61). They lived in the country between the Rāvi and the Chenab with their capital at Sākala (Sīalkot). Their territory on the eve of Samudra Gupta’s conquest seems to have been situated to the north of the Yaudheya.

Ābhirasa. They are known to the Mahābhārata which locates them near the Sarasvatī and Vinasāna in western Rajputana (IX. 37. 1.). The Peripius calls their country Abitria. They are also mentioned in the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali (1. 2, 3) in association with the Śādars, the Sodrai of Alexander’s time who lived in north-
ern Sind. Ābhīra generals served in the armies of Saka satraps of western India in the second century A.D. as known from their inscriptions. An Ābhīra chief named Iśvaradatta attained to the position of a Mahākṣatrapa. But the most famous Ābhīra was Iśvarasena (=Iśvaradatta?), son of Śiva Datta and Mādha, who is believed to have defeated the Sātavāhanas and annexed their province of Mahāśēṭra in A.D. 248 from which also begins the era of the people known as the Traikūṭakas who were rulers of the Aparānta or Konkan and identified by some scholars with the dynasty of Ābhīra Iśvarasena. The Traikūṭaka kings known from their coins and inscriptions in the Gupta period are (1) Indradatta, (2) his son Dahrasena (A.D. 455), (3) his son Vyāghrasena (A.D. 480). Dahrasena performed an āśvamedha. The dynasty seems to have succumbed to the Vākāṭaka King Harisena. Some Ābhīras settled in Central India where the tract named Ahirivāra between Jhansi and Bhilsa may have been called after them.

Prājunas. These are supposed by V. A. Smith to have belonged to the Narasimhapur district of M. P. Kauṭilya knows of a people called Prājānākas.

Sanakānikas. These are mentioned in one of the Udayagiri inscriptions of Chandra Gupta II (Fleet, No. 3). Their seat of power seems to have been near Bhilsa.

Kākas. They are mentioned in the Mahābharata (VI. 9, 64). V. A. Smith connects them with Kākanāda (Sanchi). Hence they may have been neighbours of the Sanakānikas.

Kharaparakas. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar takes them to be the Kharaparas mentioned in the Batihāgadh inscription (EI, XII, 46) of the Damoh district of MP. (IHQ., I, p. 258).

Foreign States. Beyond the frontier States described above lay the foreign States towards the north-west, in Western India, and also in the distant south, Simhala and all other islands overseas, which were also ready to acknowledge the suzerainty of Samudra Gupta by rendering to him all kinds of service (sevā). These services are distinguished in their inscriptions as comprising (1) Ātma-śivedanam (offering their own persons for service to the emperor), (2) Kanyakopana (gifts of maidens), (3) Dāna (presents) and (4), application (yāchana) for charters bearing the imperial Gupta Garuḍa seal (Garutmadanika) by which they would be left undisturbed by the emperor in the enjoyment (bhūkṣa) and administration (śāsana) of their respective territories (svavishaya). The foreign and overseas States thus entered into what may be regarded as Treaties of Alliance and Service so that they might be spared an invasion by the ‘all-powerful emperor who brought the whole of India under his sway by the prowess of his arms’ (bāhuvra-
prasaradharanibandhasya: svabhujabala parakramaikabandhab 
parakramanikasya). These foreign States are enumerated below.

Daiwputra-Shahi-Shahanshahi. These three titles were first used by the Great Kushan emperors. In the inscription of the year 8 found at Mathura, Kanishka I uses the title Shahi. In several other inscriptions, he uses the title Devagupta which has also been used by Huvishka and also by Vasudeva I (EI. XVII, 11; I, 381; IX, 240; VIII, 182; IX, 242). The title Devagupta is of Chinese origin. The title Shahanshahi is derived from Iranian or Persian Shahanshah. It corresponds to the legend Shaonono appearing on the coins of Vasdeva whom the legend calls Bazodeo Kshana. The later Kidara Kushans assumed for themselves the title Shahi. The later Kushan king whom Samudra Gupta has in view may have been Grumbates who helped his Sassanian overlord Shahpur II with a contingent of Indian elephants about A.D. 350. His Iranian title shows that he was not ruling in India proper. The later Kushan kings were ruling on Indian borderland and in the Kabul valley in the third and fourth centuries A.D., as already related, and were issuing coins modelled on those of the imperial Kushans, Kanishka I, and Vasudova I (Smith's Catalogue of Coins of Indian Museum, p. 91.)

Sakas. The Sakas in India in the fourth century A.D. must be the Sakas of Western India with their capital at Ujjain and belonging to the satrapal family of Chastrana and Rudradaman. In the time of Samudra Gupta, the Sakas ruler was Rudrasimha II whose successor, Rudrasimha, whose coins come up to A.D. 390 was killed by Chandra Gupta II. A Sanchi inscription testifies to the existence of another Sakas principality under its chief named Mahadanda Nayaka Shridharaeman, son of Nandi, who was ruling in about A.D. 319. His title seems to show that his position was that of a feudatory. That there were a number of such petty Sakas chiefs in the region of the Vindhyas is indicated by the discovery of what are called 'Puri Kushan' coins in this locality.

It may be noted that the Sakas homage to Samudra Gupta was not at all sincere and reliable since it was not tendered to his successor.

There is a view that the context of the inscriptions shows that these Sakas, instead of being the Western Kshattrapas, should be taken as the Sakas of the north whose coins were imitated by Samudra Gupta. These coins corresponded to Kushan types marked by Ardochsho reverse, and the title Saka added to the initials of the individual rulers concerned, written in Brami script. These coins of the Sakas (Kushan) kings of the Punjab are distinct from the coins of the Kushan kings of Kabul, which are marked by the
Oesha, reverse, and did not influence Samudra Gupta’s coinage in any way.

**Murundas.** Murunda is a Śaka word for Svāmī or chief. The title Svāmī was used by the Kshatrapas of Surāśṭra and Ujjain. In the Gitar inscription of Rudradāman his grandfather is called Svāmī Chashṭana. But the people called here as the Murundas are to be distinguished from the Śakas and may be identified with the Kushāns, as Sten Konow suggests (EI. XIV, 292).

There is a view that the expression ‘Daivaputra—Shāhi—Shāhānushāhi’ should be taken to indicate three different peoples. The Daivaputras were in possession of the Central Punjab, while the Shāhis and Shāhānushāhis were ruling beyond the Punjab and the frontiers in the region corresponding to modern Afghanistan. It is also to be noted that Samudra Gupta’s coins copy Śaka and Kushān coins, proving his conquest of the Śaka and Kushān territories where these coins were in circulation. The parallel case is that of Gupta silver coinage which was inaugurated on the occasion of Gupta conquest of the kingdom of the Western satraps whose coinage had to be imitated by its new rulers.

**Simhala.** The epigraphic statement that Simhala and all other neighbouring islands brought presents to Samudra Gupta is supported by literary evidence. The Chinese author, Wang Hiu-en-tse, relates that the king of Ceylon named Chi-mi-kia-po-mo (=Śrī Megha-Varman or -Varna, whose time is A.D. 350-380) sent to Samudra Gupta an embassy and gifts coupled with a request that he might be permitted to build at Bodh-Gayā a monastery for the use of Ceylonese pilgrims.

The inscription, however, does not confine the imperial Gupta influence to Ceylon. It mentions ‘all other islands’ to which it was extended, but does not name which islands these were. This influence laid the foundation of Greater India consisting of those islands which were presumably the islands of the Indian Archipelago like Java, to which the name Indonesia is applied.

**Mattila.** Mattila is supposed to be Mattila of a clay seal found in Bulandshahr but the seal appears to be that of a private person and not a prince in the absence of the honorific Śrī in the name.

**Nāga Kings.** Nāgadatta, Gaṇapati-Nāga, and Nāgasena, are presumbably kings of the Nāga dynasty at its different centres already related. Gaṇapati-Nāga is stated to be Dhārādāsa, Lord of Dhārā [K. P. Jayaswal in Cat. of Mithilā MSS. II. 105; also Bhāvaśataka I. 4. 800 (Kāvyamālā Text)]. Gaṇapati is further known from his coins found at Narwar and Besnagar. Nāgasena may be dubbed Nāgasena II or may have been of another branch of the wide-spread
Nāga family to distinguish him from the Nāgasena who was extirpated in the first campaign in Ārāvyarta.

**Chandavarman.** He may be identified with Chandavarman mentioned in an inscription on Susunia hill near Bankura as son of Sīnāhuvarman and king of Pushkaraṇa, modern Pokharan, about 25 miles from Susunia hill. There is another view that Pushkaraṇa is modern Pokran or Pokurna in Marwar and that Chandavarman is to be taken as the son of Sīnāhuvarman mentioned in a second Mandasor inscription (*AI*, 1913, 217-19). This inscription mentions Narāvarman as son of Sīnāhuvarman and brother of Chandavarman and so both the Susunia and Mandasor inscriptions mention a common fact that Shāhavarmā was the father of Chandavarman.

**Achyuta.** Achyuta may be taken to be another king of Ahichchhatra to distinguish him from the first Achyuta already dispossessed of his kingdom. But repetition of these names of kings already defeated may be made for emphasis as a renewed declaration of his conquests.

**Nandi.** Nothing is known about Nandi, unless he is taken to be Śivanandi, a Nāga king (*ASR*, 1913). The Purāṇas mention Śisu Nandi and Nandiyasas as Nāga kings of Central India.

**Balavarman.** Balavarman is also an unknown name. He cannot be taken to be a king of Assam on the ground of the mere suffix -Varman, for Assam figures as a frontier State separate from Ārāvyarta in the inscription.

A suggestion has been made by Rapson that these nine kings of Ārāvyarta may be taken to be the nine Nāga kings referred to in the Purāṇas. In that case, Garuḍa is a very apt emblem of the Gupta dynasty which exterminated the Nāga dynasty, like Garuḍa eating up the Nāgas or serpents.

It is to be noted that this part of the inscription ends with the statement that besides these nine kings who were exterminated by Samudra Gupta, there were many other kings of Ārāvyarta (*Anekārāvyartarājaprasabhoddharaṇa*) whose territories were annexed by him. Thus, as a result of his two campaigns, Samudra Gupta made a clean sweep of all the petty kingdoms of Ārāvyarta the whole of which was now brought under his authority as its paramount sovereign. The political unification of Ārāvyarta which was split up into so many small States was one of the great achievements of Samudra Gupta who thus built up the Gupta Empire. The geographical name Ārāvyarta may be taken in the sense in which it is taken in the standard legal work *Manu-Smṛti* where it denotes the land between the Himalayas and the Vindhya and between the western and eastern seas (*Manu, II, 22*).
Asvamedha. Samudra Gupta fittingly celebrated his digujaya by celebrating the horse-sacrifice which had long fallen into desuetude. Therefore, his successors hail him as one who ‘revived the horse-sacrifice after such a long time’ (Chirotsamnāsvamedhābhartā). The Allahabad Prakasti is silent about it, because the ceremony was performed after it was incised, and all the conquests were achieved. But his coins make up for this epigraphic deficiency. These may be dubbed as Asvamedha coins, portraying, as they do, horse before vāpa, and on Rev. the queen (whose presence was required for the ceremony) and the definite legend Asvamedha-parākramaḥ. The legend on the Obv. in its full form reads as follows: Rājādhirājaḥ prithivānātavā ṛavaḥ jayati aprativāyavāyeh; “the king of kings, having conquered the earth, now conquers heaven with invincible valour.” This legend makes it quite clear that the Asvamedha had followed his conquests. Heaven can be conquered only by dharma, by the performance of a religious ceremony like Asvamedha, by ‘good deeds,’ (suhartaiḥ, as stated in the inscription or Karma-bhīḥ uttamaḥ, as stated on his coins).

A possible allusion to the horse-sacrifice may be found in the expression Suvarnānā, ‘distribution of gold’, occurring in the Eran stone inscription, or in the expression aneka-go-biranyakoti-pradaya, ‘the giver of many cows and crores of gold coins’ occurring in Fleet’s inscription No. 4. In the Poona plate of Prabhavatigupta, his grand-daughter, Samudra Gupta is described as ‘one who performed many horse-sacrifices’ (anekāsvamedhāyāṭi) (EI, XV, 41).

Lastly, the ceremony may also be indicated in the inscription ‘daguttaśa deyadhamma’ occurring on the figure of a horse on view at the Lucknow Provincial Museum and also in a seal showing the figure of a horse with the legend parākrama (JRAS, 1901, 102).

Coins. Samudra Gupta issued coins of as many as eight different types, all of pure gold. It was his conquests which brought to him the gold utilized in his coinage and also the knowledge of its technique acquired from his acquaintance with Kushān (eastern Punjab) coins. His earliest coins began as imitations of these Kushān coins, and of their foreign features which were gradually replaced by Indian features in his later coins. Thus Samudra Gupta both inaugurated and Indianized Gupta coinage. The degree of Indianization of the Gupta coins is a key to their chronology. From this point of view, what are known as ‘Chandra Gupta coins’ already described cannot be attributed to Chandra Gupta I because, as will be shown below, they show a degree of independence of Kushān models which makes them later than several other types of coins issued even by his successor, Samudra Gupta. They can-
not by any means be considered as the earliest Gupta coins from the point of view of technique.

The foreign Kushān name of dināra suggested by the Roman denarius aureus was also applied to Gupta coinage (Nos. 5-9, 62, 64 of Fleet’s Inscriptions). In inscription No. 64, the foreign name is coupled with the Hindu name Swarna of which the standard was 146.4 grains, to which only the later Gupta coins of the east correspond.

**Standard Type.** This is the commonest type of Samudra Gupta’s coins, the closest copy of Kushān coins, and, therefore, the earliest type of Gupta coins.

Its Obrv. shows ‘King standing 1. nimbate (i.e. with halo round head), wearing close-fitting cap, coat, and trousers, ear-rings and necklace, holding in l. hand standard bound with fillet, dropping incense on Altar, with his r. hand; on l., behind Altar, is a Standard, bound with fillet, surmounted by a Garuḍa. Some specimens show the king wearing shorts and full socks. The Altar may also be taken to be Tulasīvindāvana, a completely Indian feature’.

Beneath the king’s l. arm is written vertically the name Samudra or in some varieties Samudra Gupta.

The Obrv. also bears the legend which in complete form reads: ‘Samaraśatamatiyajya jītāṃ tva rājā jayati; the conqueror of unconquered fortresses of his enemies, whose victory was spread in hundreds of battles, conquers heaven.’

The Rev. depicts ‘Goddess (Lakṣmī) seated, facing, on throne, nimbate, wearing loose robe, necklace, and armlets, holding fillet in outstretched r. hand and cornucopia in l. arm; her feet rest on lotus; traces of back of throne on r. on most specimens; border of dots.’ The cornucopias (cornucopia) is the horn of plenty, the horn of the goat Amalthea by which Zeus was suckled. The horn is represented in art as overflowing with flowers, fruit, and corn. Thus, it is a pre-eminently foreign feature on these coins.

On r. is written the legend: Parākramaḥ.

A comparison of the features of the Obrv. with those of the Obrv. of later Kushān coins will show that they agree except in regard to the following: (1) the Gupta king wears a close-fitting cap, instead of the peaked head-dress of the Kushān kings; (2) the Garuḍa standard in place of the Kushān trident; (3) the jewellery worn by the king is Indian. But the following Kushān features still remain: (1) the Gupta king is given Kushān dress; (2) his name is written vertically; (3) the standard is bound with a fillet, as on the Kushān coins; (4) the altar and sprinkling of incense are Kushān and found on Kanishka’s coins; (5) the halo round the king’s head is also Kushān, as well as the crescent to its l. According to Allan (Gupta
(Coins, p. 1, XX), the crescent is reminiscent of the Greek Ω.

The Rev. is a downright copy of the late Kushān Ardochsho Rev. Ardochsho is seen seated, facing, on a high-backed throne, holding cornucopia in l. arm and fillet in outstretched r. hand. This Ardochsho Rev. doe: not occur on early Kushān (Kanishka, Huvishka or Vāsudeva) coins. The back of the throne conveyed no meaning to the Kushān engravers or their Gupta copyists who, however, kept it up by giving only its r. side.

Another irrelevant Kushān feature slavishly copied on Gupta coins is the symbol or monogram appearing on the l. and probably treated as an ornament balancing the portion of the back of the throne on the r.

As has been already stated, the gradual elimination of these foreign features and elements which lost their meaning for the Indian public supplies the test by which Gupta numismatic chronology may be determined. It may also be noted that the Standard indicates the conquered territories where the flag of victory was planted. It is also appropriately associated with the legend Parākramaḥ.

**Chandra Gupta Coins.** Judged by the above criterion, the type of coins known as Chandra Gupta coinage cannot be attributed to Chandra Gupta I. If Chandra Gupta I had issued any coins, they should have been, as the earliest Gupta coins, of the Standard type as being the closest copy of the Kushān original. No such coins of Chandra Gupta I have been discovered. On the other hand, the Chandra Gupta type is more Indianized than the Standard type of Samudra Gupta, as shown (1) in the figure of the queen added on the Obv. and (2) in the lion taking the place of the throne, though its dependence on Kushān technique is seen in traces of the back of the meaningless throne being still kept up.

Further, the goddess seated on a lion first appears on the reverse of the Lion-slayer type of Chandra Gupta II coinage. Therefore, Chandra Gupta I type should be considered as the immediate predecessor of this type of coins of Chandra Gupta II.

It may be noted in this connexion that Gupta coins which bear most the traces of the Kushān throne are to be taken as both earlier and of the north where the Kushān prototype was more known. This applies to the Standard and Archer types. But the types like Chandra Gupta I and Battle-axe which show the throne the least must have been issued in the more southerly regions, in the original Gupta territory where Ardochsho did not penetrate. Some of the foreign elements such as the cornucopia of the throne Rev. also thus persist late in the north, even up to the time of Kumāra Gupta I. Of these Chandra Gupta coins, the Obv. shows 'Chandra Gupta I
PLATE II
COINS OF SAMUDRA GUPTA
(Continued)

7. Lyrist Type
[From Line-Drawing by A. K. Haldar]
standing to l., wearing close-fitting coat, trousers, and head-dress, ear-rings and armlets, holding in l. hand a crescent-topped standard bound with fillet, and with r. hand offering an object, which on some coins is clearly a ring, to Kumārādevī who stands on l. to r., wearing loose robe, ear-rings, necklace and armlets, and tight-fitting headdress; both nimbate. 'On r. on either side of the standard, the legend Chandra, or Chandragupta; on l. the legend Kumārādevī, or Sri-Kumārādevī or Kumārādevī Srih.'

The Rev. shows 'Goddess seated, facing, on lion couchant to r. or l., holding fillet in outstretched r. hand and cornucopia in l. arm; her feet rest on lotus; behind her on l. are the traces of the back of a throne on most specimens; border of dots; symbol on l. On r. the legend Lichchhavīyātī.'

The significance of this legend may be understood in the light of the appellation assumed by Samudra Gupta in the inscriptions as a Lichchhavi-danhitra, showing how he took pride in his pedigree on his mother's side and in the indebtedness of the Gupta Empire to the Lichchhavi connexion is thus declared on these coins.

The goddess on lion must be Durgā Simhavahana whose might and majesty (māhātmya) are described graphically in the sacred work called Čhandā (a part of the Markandeya-Purāṇa) and who was worshipped according to popular tradition by Rāma on the eve of his encounter with Rāvana. Thus Samudra Gupta became a devotee of Durgā for the success of his military missions.

Archery Type. The Obv. shows 'King standing l., nimbate, dressed as in Standard type, holding bow in l. hand, while the r. holds arrow, the head of which rests on ground; Garuḍa standard on l.; bearing legend Samudra beneath l. arm; also the legend “Aparratiratha viṣṭiyā kṣibiṣyā suḥcaritaś (or avamipatiś) divam jayati” (“Unopposed by hostile chariots, conquering the earth, he conquers heaven by his good deeds.”).'

The Rev. shows 'Laksmi seated as on Standard type; symbol on l.; and legend Apratirathā.'

Battle-axe Type. The Obv. exhibits 'King standing l., nimbate, wearing close-fitting cap, coat and trousers, ear-rings and necklace, and sword, holding battle-axe (parasā) in l. hand, while r. hand rests on r. hip; on l. boy or dwarf to r., behind whom is a crescent-topped standard; beneath l. arm, the legend (a) Samudra or (b) Kṛi or Kṛitānta or (c) Samudragupta; and “Kṛitāntaparāśu jayatiya-jītarāja-gitājītātāḥ.”' ['"the holder of the battle-axe, the weapon of the invincible god of death (Yama), the unconquered conqueror of unconquered kings, achieves victory"].

The Rev. shows 'Goddess Laksmi, nimbate, seated on throne with lotus footstool or lotus, facing, as on Standard type (but in
some varieties, holding lotus in place of cornucopia); border of dots; symbol on l; on r. the legend Kriticantaparauṣṭa.

On some varieties, the king on Obv. does not wear sword, while on Rev. the goddess is seated not on throne but on lotus (padmāsanā), a definitely Indian feature. The goddess is also unmistakably Lakṣmī. On some coins, she is seated on throne without back (thus shedding a Kushān feature) and holds lotus.

The dwarf on some coins holds up an object, possibly an umbrella. The king’s menial staff traditionally included personal attendants marked by physical deformities, such as the Kuhja (hunchback), Vāmana (dwarf), Kirāta (αlpatamu, ‘of small body’), Mūka (dumb), Badlira (deaf), Jāda (idiot), and even Andha (blind) [see my Chandragupta Māurya and His Times, p. 106].

Both the Archer and the Battle-axe types mark an advance in their process of Indianization. The unmeaning standard copied from the later Kushān coins is replaced in these types by more understandable and appropriate objects like the bow, the battle-axe, or a crescent-topped standard, and the arrow takes the place of the altar. The bow and arrow recall Vishnu Śaṅgi.

The Battle-axe type of coins was issued by Samudra Gupta to celebrate his conquests in different directions, proving the invincible might of his arm and justifying his title as Kriticantaparauṣṭa. These should therefore belong to the later part of his reign.

Kācha Type. The Obv. shows ‘King standing to l., dressed as in preceding types, holding standard surmounted by wheel (Chakra) in l. hand and sprinkling incense on altar with r. hand; legend Kācha beneath l. arm and “Kācha gām avajitā divam karmabhir uttamānir jayati” (“Kacha, after conquering the earth, conquers heaven by means of good deeds”).

The Rev. shows ‘Goddess (Lakṣmī) standing to l., wearing loose robe, holding flower in r. hand and cornucopia in l. arm; border of dots; symbol on l.; or. the legend “Sarvarājocchhettā”, (“the exterminator of all kings”).

Some varieties show Lakṣmī standing on lotus. Her husband, the god Vishnu, is recalled by Chakra on Obv.

Tiger Type. The Obv. shows ‘King standing l., wearing turban, waist-cloth, necklace, ear-rings and armlets, trampling on a tiger which falls backwards as he shoots it with bow in r. hand, l. hand drawing bow back behind ear; on l. behind tiger, crescent-topped standard as on Battle-axe type; legend “Vyūghraparākramaḥ”.

The Rev. shows Goddess (Gaṅgā) standing l. on Mūkara, nude to waist, wearing ear-rings, necklace, anklets and armlets, holding lotus in l. hand and r. hand outstretched empty; on l. crescent-topped
standard bound with fillet; no symbol; legend "Rājā Samudra-guptah".

This is a rare type, of which only four examples are so far known. The goddess Gaṅgā is introduced to indicate Samudra Gupta's conquests in the valley of the Ganges, with its swampy and forested regions which were the abode of the royal Bengal tiger, and gave scope to the king's big game hunting. Thus the goddess Gaṅgā and the tiger are aptly associated on these coins.

**Lyrist Type.** The Obv. shows 'King seated, nimbate, cross-legged to l., wearing waist-cloth, close-fitting cap, necklace, ear-rings and armlets on high-backed couch, playing on lyre or lute (Vinā) which lies on his knees; beneath couch is a pedestal or foot-stool inscribed Si; legend "Mahārajaśhāja-Sri-Samudraguptah"'.

The Rev. shows 'Goddess nimbate, seated to l. on a wicker stool, wearing loose robe, close-fitting cap, and jewellery, holding fillet in outstretched r. hand and cornucopia in l. arm; border of dots; no symbol; on r. legend "Samudraguptah"'. The Vinā or lyre on the Obv. suggests that the goddess on Rev. is to be taken as Sarasvatī associated with Vinā as the Goddess of Music.

Both the Tiger and the Lyrist types are the most Indian of Samudra Gupta's coinage. The king's attitude and dress are perfectly Indian, free from all traces of Kushān influence. On some varieties of the Lyrist type, the king appears even bare-headed. The goddess on Rev. also sits on the Indian wicker-stool, marking an original deviation from the Ardochasā type. She may be taken more appropriately as Sarasvatī associated with Music and Vinā (as Vināpānī) than Lakṣmī in the absence of lotus on the coin.

The inscription Si on footstool may be a part of the slogan Siddhaṃ.

**Asvamedha Type.** The Obv. shows 'Horse standing l. before a sacrificial post (yūpta), from which pennons fly over its back; on some specimens a low pedestal below; beneath horse the letter Si; legend: "Rājādhirāja prathivām avītā divam jayatya prativārya-vāryah" ("the king of kings, having gained the earth, conquers heaven, with his irresistible heroism"). On one specimen the reading is 'Prathivām vijitya' and on another 'prathivām vijitya divam jayatyābhirā vājmedah' (D. C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions, p. 268).

The Rev. presents 'the chief-queen (Mahīshī) standing l. wearing loose robe and jewellery, holding chowrie over r. shoulder in r. hand, l. hanging by her side; on l. is a sacrificial spear bound with fillet; around her feet a chain (?) extending round spear and on some specimens gourd (?) at feet; no symbol; legend "Asvamedhakparākramah"'. The queen figured here must be Queen Dattā= Dattadevi, mother of Chandra Gupta II, as mentioned in his Eran Stone Pillar
inscription (No. 4 of Fleet) and also other inscriptions such as (1) Bilsa δ Stone Pillar inscription of Kumāra Gupta I of the year 96 = A.D. 415; (2) Bhitarī Stone Pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta; (3) Bihār Stone Pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta; (4) Bhitarī Seal inscription of Kumāra Gupta III; and (5) Nālandā Seal inscription of Budha Gupta.

We may trace, in conclusion, the progressive Indianization of the coinage of Śamudra Gupta by its relevant features and marks (technically called lakṣhanas) as given below:

1. The king’s head-dress which from the start was a close-fitting cap in place of the Kushān peaked or conical head-dress. In the most Indian of the coins such as the Tiger type, the king wears the Indian turban and on some varieties is even bare-headed.

2. The jewellery worn by the king or queen or the goddess is Indian, such as ear-ring, necklace, armlet, or anklet (worn by goddess on Tiger type).

3. The king wears the Indian dhoti or waist-cloth on both Tiger- and Lyrist-types.

4. Introduction, in place of Ardoshoro, of Indian goddess:
   (i) Lakṣmī marked by her favourite flower, lotus (a) which she holds in hand (as on Battle-Axe type) in place of the Greek and foreign object, the cornucopia; (b) which is used as a foot-stool (as on Battle-Axe type); (c) on which she is seated (as on some varieties of the Battle-Axe type). Lakṣmī on some coins is seated on the Indian mabdā or wicker stool (as on Lyrist type?), or on throne without the Kushān back (as on some varieties of the Battle-Axe type).

   (ii) Goddess on lion who is Durgā-simbhavāhanā with her feet resting on lotus (as on Chandra Gupta I coins).

   (iii) Goddess Gaṅgā on Makara (as on Tiger type).

   (iv) Goddess Sarasvatī on the Lyrist type, seated on Mabdā (as on some varieties of the Battle-Axe type).

5. Introduction of the queen on certain coins (the Chandra Gupta I and Āsvamedha coins).


7. The Indian weapons of war and hunting such as Bow and Arrow (on Archer type), Sword and Battle-Axe (on Battle-Axe type) which take the place of the Kushān standard, the arrow taking the place of Kushān altar.

8. The Dwarf who had a traditional place in the Indian royal household (as seen on Battle-Axe type).

9. The Āsvamedha type inspired by a specifically Indian conception and institution.

It is interesting to note that there is a design behind this variety
in types of Samudra Gupta’s coinage. The figure of Garuḍa introduced for the first time on the Obv. of Standard type, being the vehicle of Vishnū, suggests Lakshmi as the appropriate goddess on the Rev. The legend describing Samudra Gupta as the hero of hundreds of battles on the Obv. suggests the title of Parākramah on the Rev, for it is to his parākrama or prowess that he owed his victories. Similarly, on Archer type, both Garuḍa and Lakshmi go together as associates of Vishnū while the word of its legend Apratīrthabha is picked up and carried forward to the Rev. as the royal title by itself. On the Chandra Gupta coins, as has been already noticed, the figure of Kumārdevi on the Obv. calls for the legend Libhībhavayāh, with whom she is connected, to appear on the Rev. Its meaning may be further understood in the light of the appellation applied to Samudra Gupta in some of the inscriptions, viz., Libhībhavindāktra. The Gupta emperors took pride in their maternal pedigree to which they owed so much. On the Battle-Axe type, the term Kṛitāntaparasu of the Obv. legend is adopted as a new royal title on the Rev. On the Tiger type, as already pointed out, the tiger as the denizen of the forests of the Gangetic valley directly suggests the allied figure of Gaiśag Mahāravābanā on the Rev. and the appropriate royal title, Vyāghraparākramaḥ. On the same principle, on Lyrist type, the Vīṇā on Obv. points to Goddess Sarasvati on Rev. and not to Lakshmi as taken by Allan. There is, accordingly, no trace of lotus to point to Lakshmi on the Rev. Lastly, on the Asvamedha type, the ceremony of horse-sacrifice depicted on Obv. inevitably requires its association with the Queen or Mahistrī whose figure is, accordingly, brought up on the Rev. to complete the picture. The legend on the coin is inspired by the subject it depicts. Its key-word is Apratītyavāryāḥ denoting the unopposed career of the conqueror who is appropriately designated as Asvamedhaparākramaḥ.

A recent find of 21 Gupta gold coins in the Holkar State includes a coin of Samudra Gupta’s Standard type bearing on Rev. the singular legend: Śrī Viśrakramaḥ (Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, v. 136).

The Emperor. Glimpses of the many-sided genius and character of Samudra Gupta are given both by his inscriptions and coins.

Ruler. As a ruler, he was known for his vigorous and resolute government aptly described as prabhoṅga-bāṣana in the inscription.

Conqueror. As a conqueror, he was not moved by a lust for conquest or annexation for its own sake. He was at once a Dignvijaya and a Dharmanvijaya in accordance with circumstances. He could not tolerate the independence of his neighbouring States, the many petty kingdoms which threatened the unity and peace of the
country, his first concern and consideration. He consecrated his military power to the supreme mission of unifying the country (bāhūvyāprasara-dharaṇī-bandhavya). Therefore, the petty States of Aryāvarta were annexed by him, as we have already seen. But he had a different policy in respect of other States which were not such sources of trouble, the States on the frontiers of his dominion or situated at a distance. Some of these he conquered only to liberate on terms of peaceful neighbourliness and acknowledgement of his paramount sovereignty. He worked for an international system of brotherhood and peace replacing that of violence, war, and aggression. That is why his reputation spread abroad as one who vanquished kings whom he reinstated in their kingdoms in a new order of peaceful partnership. The expression used in the inscription is very appropriate and forceful: Anakabbhrasya-rāja-utsannarāja- varṇīka-pratishtāpana, 'restoring many a kingdom that was destroyed (bhrasya) and dynasty that was exterminated (utsanna)'; recalling the earlier expression bhrasya-rāja-pratishtāpanaka applied to Rudradāman I in the Girnar inscription of A.D. 150; corresponding to the poet Kālidāsa's description of the Dharmavijaya: 'Griśita-pratimukhasa sa dharmavijaya nivāpā', suggesting the words of the inscription grahaṇa-mokṣaṇa-amgraha. It is further stated that Samudrā Gupta restored to many (aneka) vanquished (vijita) kings not merely their liberties but also their properties (vibhava-pratyaśpaṇa) and kept his officers (Yukta-prasusha) constantly employed (niśva-vyā śrīta) on this difficult work of restitution.

Warrior. All his conquests the king achieved by his personal prowess and fighting in the front-line as a soldier (saṅgrāmesha svabhava-vijītaḥ). He was a fearless fighter, possessed of 'the dash and drive of a tiger' (vyāgra-parākramak), the hero of a hundred battles (samaratata) which left on his body their scars (vana) as marks of decoration (bōbī) and beauty (kānti), scars of various kinds caused by different weapons of war (prabaraṇa), such as paraśu (battle-axe), šāra (arrow), śaṅkhu (spear), śakti (spike), prāṣa (barbed dart), asa (sword), tomarā (iron club), bhinḍipāla (javelin for throwing arrows of iron), nārācha (iron arrow) and vaitastika (scimitar). The king depended, indeed, on his personal heroism as his only ally (svabhāvasa-pratikramakam-bhandak). Unable to stand his might (vāryottamāḥ), Kings offered him submission (śaṅkramanupāgatāh). His might knew no bounds (udvīlosita-bābhuvya). The Eran stone inscription describes him as 'possessed of prowess which was invincible' (aprati-vāryaviryaḥ). This epithet is repeated on his Aśva-medha coins, as noted above.

Philanthropist. Yet under his iron coat of mail was always beating a soft heart (mrudubrādaya), full of compassion (anukampā)
for those who deserved it by their humility (avānati), and regard for him (bhakti), for the lowly (kripana), the poor (dīna), the destitute (anātha), and the afflicted (ātura), for the relief (udhāranā) of whom he constantly worried himself (mantradikshādī-upagatamanaṣaḥ). He is a shining (samāddha) image (vigrabavān) of philanthropy (lokānugraha) which showed itself in his vast charities, such as ‘gifts of hundreds of thousands of cows’. These charities came out of his wealth which was lawfully acquired (nyāyāgata in No. 4 of Fleet) and not ill-gotten, the product of plunder.

Superman. His many actions were, indeed, those of a superman, and not of an ordinary mortal (amanuja-sadāvika), of a god among men who is beyond comprehension (acchintyapurusha), one who is only a man (mānusha) by form in having to act according to the customs and conventions governing this life (lokasamaya-kriyānvidbānamātramānusha). Otherwise, he is the equal of the gods: Kubera in wealth; Varuṇa in justice; Indra by power; invincible like Antaka (Yama); a Bhīṣṇapati in sharp and penetrating intellect (nītātavad-gdbhamātik); the hope (udaya) of the good (ṣādan), and the destruction (pralaya) of the wicked (asādhu).

Poet. Harishena also extols the virtues of his chief as a man of letters, and as a poet. With a mind full of bliss (sukhāmānaḥ), he was fit for the company of the sages (prajñānushaṅgocita), a master of the inner meaning (tattvān) of the Śāstras. He gathered at his court the literary masters (budhayānita) by whose judgements (gūmājña) he was able to check (ābata) those compositions which were against viruddha the spirit (ārya) of true poetry (sākhyā). He himself composed a large volume of poetry (bhāvakaviḥ) which appealed to all for its clear (sphuta) meaning and brought him fame (ārτti). He ruled in the realm of letters (vidvālloke) as in that of politics, enjoying another kingdom of fame (kārtirājya). He revived the extinct title of Kavirāja, ‘the prince of poets’, by his many poetical works (anekākhyākriyābhiḥ) which might serve even as sources of livelihood to learned men by virtue of their quality and popularity (vidvāj-janopajīya).

He was also the refuge of religion (dharma-prachārabandha) into the deepest truths of which his learning penetrated (vaidusyam tattvabhed).

The Maṇju-Sri-Maṇalakalpa characterizes Samudra Gupta as ‘a superman, ever vigilant, unmindful about himself, unmindful about the hereafter’.

Lastly, we may note that Samudra Gupta’s achievements and character, his work and worth, are very well summed up in the Bilsad Stone Pillar inscription of his son’s successor, Kumāra Gupta I, as follows: Sarva-rājochabhettuḥ Prithivyāmapratiṣṭhāya chaturuda-
This characterization of Samudra Gupta was standardized and is also repeated in several later inscriptions such as Bhirati and Bihar Stone Pillar inscriptions of Skanda Gupta and partly in the Bhirati Seal inscription of Kumara Gupta III.

In conclusion, we may bring together the many epithets applied to him in inscriptions on coins which aptly point to the many sides of his complex character and personality. Some of these have been already noticed. The epigraphic epithets are: Atyya, Amanuja, Achintya-puruṣa, Sukhamanaḥ, Sucharita, Kavirāja, Pritibhavāni apratirathāḥ and Parākramānka. The numismatic appellations suggested by the legends are: Apratiratha, Kritāntaparāśa, Sarvārājashebhetā, Vyāghraparākrama, Asvamedhāparākrama, Aprativārya-vārya, Parākramānka, Samarasaratvatavijaya, Jitāripura, Ajita, Ajitarājajetājitāḥ ("the unconquered conqueror of unconquered kings"), Rāja, Rājādhirāja and Malārājādhirāja-Srī.
A NOTE ON VĀKĀṬAKA HISTORY

Vākāṭaka history has been recently placed on a satisfactory footing by Principal V. V. Mirashi in Hyderabad Archaeological Memoir No. 14 on the basis of a re-reading of the Vākāṭaka inscription in Cave XVI at Ajanṭā in the light of the new data furnished in the newly-discovered Bāsim copper-plate grant which was issued by the Vākāṭaka king Vindhyāśakti II (=Vindhyasena) at his capital called Vatagulma (=modern Bāsim, the headquarters of a taluk in Akolā district).

These inscriptions contain many names of Vākāṭaka kings whose relationships in their genealogical lists have been the source of much confusion and controversy. Principal Mirashi has sought to solve the difficulties by suggesting that Vākāṭaka history had split up into two branches with separate histories, the mixing up of which has created confusion. The separation seems to have taken place after Pravarasena I, the son and successor of the founder of the dynasty, Vindhyāśakti I.

As the Purāṇas tell us, Pravarasena I had four sons who, after his death, divided his vast kingdom among themselves. The eldest son Gautamiputra predeceased his father because in none of the copper-plate charters mentioning his name is the usual epithet Vākāṭakānāṁ Mabārājā applied to him. His son, Rudrasena I, therefore, succeeded Pravarasena I, and founded the northern branch of the dynasty ruling over northern Berar and the western districts of M.P. where are found their inscriptions. For instance, an inscription of Rudrasena I has been found at Deotek in the Chandā district of M.P., while copper-plates of his great-grandson, Pravarasena II, record gifts of land in the districts of Amraoti, Wardha, Nagpur, Betul, Bhanḍārā and Bāḷāghāt. At first, the capital of this branch was Nandivardhana as mentioned in the Poona plates of Prabhāvatiguptā (EI. XV. 39 f.) and the Belorā (EI. XXIV, 260 f.) and Kothāraka (EI) grants of her son Pravarasena II. Pravarasena II changed the capital to the city founded by him and called Pravarapura.
The genealogy of this northern branch of the Vākāṭaka dynasty may be thus presented:

Vindhyāsaṅkti I
- Son Pravarasena I
  - (Son Gautamiputra)
  - Son Rudrasena I
  - Son Prithivisheṇa I
    - Son Rudrasena II (married to Prabhāvatiguptā, daughter of emperor Chandra Gupta II)
    - Son Pravarasheṇa II
    - Son Narendrasena
    - Son Prithivisheṇa II

The genealogy of the other branch of the dynasty which may be called the Vatsagulma branch will be as follows:

Vindhyāsaṅkti I
- Son Pravarasena I
  - Son Sarvasena
  - Son Vindhyasena (= Vindhyāsaṅkti II)
  - Son Pravarasena II
  - Son (whose name is lost)
  - Son Devasena
  - Son Harisheṇa

It is to be noted that the name Sarvasena has been taken from the Bāsim plate which mentions him as a son and successor of Pravarasena I. The name cannot be traced in the Ajaṅṭā record but has been restored by Principal Mirashi on the ground that it is
A NOTE ON VĀKĀṬAKA HISTORY

suggested by the phrases Jīta-Sarvasenaḥ in accordance with the epigraphist’s use of yamakas.

So far, only five inscriptions of this family have been known: (1) Bāsim plates of Vindhyaśakti II; (2) a fragmentary copper-plate inscription of Devasena; (3) inscription in Ajanṭā Cave XVI of his minister Varāhadeva; and (5) inscription of Varāhadeva in Ghaṭotkacha Cave near Ajanṭā.

The date of Rudrasena II as the son-in-law of Chandra Gupta II gives a clue to the Vākāṭaka chronology. Vindhyaśakti II and Pravarasena II may be taken to be contemporaries of Prithivisheṇa I and Rudrasena II of the other branch. Thus the reign of Vindhyaśakti II may be taken to have closed by A.D. 400. His predecessors are given abnormally long reigns by the Purāṇās, while the Bāsim plates mention the 37th year of the reign of Vindhyaśakti II. Thus we may assume a period of 150 years at the least for the reigns of the four kings from Vindhyaśakti I to Vindhyaśakti II and the date A.D. 250 for the foundation of Vākāṭaka I dynasty by Vindhyaśakti I. Granting 100 years for the four successors of Vindhyaśakti II, the last of the dynasty, Harisheṇa, may be taken to have ruled between A.D. 475 and 500. It may be noted that, on architectural grounds, Cave XVI of Ajanṭā is also assigned to A.D. 500 by Fergusson and Burgess.

The inscription of this Cave mentions among the conquests of Harisheṇa the following countries: Kuntala, between the Bhīmā and Vedavāṭ, comprising the Kanarese districts of Bombay and Madras Presidencies and of Mysore state, and also perhaps a part of Mahārāṣṭra with Vidarbha, with its capital at Pratishṭhāna (Paiṭhan in Nizam’s Dominion) on the Godāvari (page 9, footnotes, of Principal Mirashi’s Memoir); Avanti, western Malwa, with its capital Ujjain; Kaliṅga, between the Mahānādī and Godāvari on the east coast; Kośala or Dakhṣiṇa Kośala, corresponding to modern Chhatisgarh and adjoining parts of the Eastern State Agency; Trīkūṭa, located in Aparānta or North Koṅkan and comprising the country to the west of Naṣik (ibid, p. 10); Lāṭa, between the Māhta and Tāpti, comprising central and southern Gujerat; and Andhra to the south, of the Godāvari.
CHAPTER V

CHANDRA GUPTA II VIKRĀMADITYA

(f. A.D 375-414)

Date. His dates may be deduced from a number of dated inscriptions discovered for his reign. The first of these is the Mathurā Pillar inscription of G.E. 61 = A.D. 380 (II. XXI). The inscription has some significant words read by Dr. D. C. Sircar (Select Inscriptions, I. 270) as ‘Mahārājā-Rājādhirāja—Śrī—Chandraguptasya vijaya-rājya-samvatsare-paśchame’, showing that his inscription dated G.E. 61 (samvatsare ekasanskhe) was issued in the fifth year of the reign of Chandra Gupta II. His reign, therefore, commenced in G.E. 61—5 = G.E. 56 = A.D. 375. This inscription is important as mentioning the earliest date of the Gupta era which may be taken to be as defined by Alberuni in his statement that ‘the epoch of the Guptas falls 241 years later than Śaka-kāla’, i.e., in A.D. 78 + 241 = 319 (Sachau, Alberuni, India, II. 7).

The second dated inscription of his reign is the Udayagiri Cave inscription of Gupta year 82 = A.D. 401, which was issued by his feudatory belonging to the Sanakānika family.

The third is the Sāṅchī Stone inscription of Gupta year 93 = A.D. 412 issued by Amarakārdava who seems to have been a Minister of Chandra Gupta II ‘to whose favour (prasāda) he owes the fulfilment of the object of his life (āpyāyita-jīvita-sādhanā), and who was the hero of many a battle’. (Fleet No. 6).

The fourth inscription is the Gadhwa Stone inscription of Gupta year 88 = A.D. 407. Parts of the inscription are lost including Chandra Gupta’s name, but that it belonged to his reign may be taken for granted both from the date and his titles, Paramabhūgavata and Mahārājādhirāja still preserved.

The date of Chandra Gupta II may also be inferred from that of his silver coins which he had issued after his conquests of Surāśhṭra and modelled on the coins of its previous rulers, the Kshatrapas. It will appear that the latest coins of the western Kshatrapas, those of Rudra Simha III, are of the Śaka year 310 = A.D. 388. The earliest date of the Kshatrapa coins as restruck by Chandra Gupta II is 90 + X (Gupta Era) = A.D. 409 (410).

Name. Chandra Gupta II appears to have several names. The name Devarāja is given to him in Sāṅchī inscription (Fleet, No. 5). A Vākṣṭaka inscription mentions Prabhāvatiguptā as the daughter of Devagupta and Kuberanāgā and describes Devagupta as Mahārājādhirāja, while the Riddhapura grants of Queen Prabhāvatiguptā
PLATE IV
COINS OF CHANDRA GUPTA II

1. Couch Type

2. Archer Type

3. King as Bowman (a variety of Archer Type)
[From Line-Drawing by P. Neogy of Scindia Public School, Gwalior]
PLATE V
COINS OF CHANDRA GUPTA II
(Continued)

4. Chhatra Type

5. Lion-Slayer Type
mention her father’s name as Chandra Gupta II. This shows that
Devagupta is another name of Chandra Gupta. The grant of
Vākāyaka king Pravarasena II also mentions his maternal grand-
father as Chandra Gupta II and Devagupta. It also appears that
Chandra Gupta had a third name, Deva-Sri, as used on his Archer-
and Couch-type of coins.

Nomination. The Eran Stone inscription of Samudra Gupta
(Fleet, No. 2) refers to the ‘many sons and grandsons’ of Samudra
Gupta, while the Mathurā Stone inscription of Chandra Gupta II
(Fleet, No. 4) states that he was chosen for the throne out of all his
sons (tāt-parigrijātena) by Samudra Gupta. The same fact is repeat-
ed in the Bihar and Bhitari Stone Pillar inscriptions of Skanda Gupta
(Fleet, Nos. 12 and 13), where the phrase tāt-parigrijāta is used in
respect of Chandra Gupta II. Chandra Gupta II has also been de-
scribed as the sat-putra of his father in the Mathurā Pillar inscription
of year 61. The repetition of this fact of Chandra Gupta II being
deliberately preferred for the throne to all his sons by Samudra Gupta
shows that it was an outstanding fact in Gupta history, and should,
therefore, dispose of the theory based on certain later texts and tradi-
tions that the immediate successor of Samudra Gupta was another
son of his, known as Rāma Gupta. The inscriptions shut out the
supposition that there was another Gupta king between Samudra
Gupta and Chandra Gupta II. Samudra Gupta in fact pays to his
son the same compliment as was paid to him by his father who ac-
claimed him before all his kinsmen (tulayakulāja) as the fittest to
succeed him on the throne. These references rule out room for any
other king lacking his predecessor’s nomination for the throne.

Family. His mother, the wife of Samudra Gupta, is called
Dattā in the Eran inscription and Dattadevi in the Mathurā Stone
inscription, as also Bilsad Stone Pillar inscription of Kumāra Gupta I,
Bihar and Bhitari Stone Pillar inscriptions of Skanda Gupta, with
the title Mahādevī.

Chandra Gupta had at least two wives, named Dhruvadevi and
Kuberaṇāgā. Dhruvadevi is mentioned in three Gupta inscriptions
(Nos. 10, 12 and 13 of Fleet) in which she is described as Mahādevi
and as the mother of Prince Kumāra Gupta I. One of the seals found
at Vaisālī describes it to be of ‘Mahādevī Dhruvasvāmini, queen of
Mahārājādhirāja Chandra Gupta II, and mother of Mahārājā Govinda
Gupta’. Dhruvasvāmini of this seal is no other than Dhruvadevi of
other inscriptions. As already stated, Queen kuberaṇāgā is known
as the mother of Chandra Gupta’s daughter, Prabhāvatigupta, and
as born of Nāga family (Nāgā-Kulasambhūtā) in the Poona Copper-
plate inscription of Prabhāvatigupta (EI, XV, p. 41 f).

This Vākāyaka matrimonial alliance brought to the Gupta
family several offshoots and extended political influence. This will be clear from Vākṣṭaka history.

Samudra Gupta, as already stated, had defeated the Vākṣṭaka king Rudradeva, i.e., Rudrasena I (A.D. 344-48) who had to cede to him the eastern part of Vākṣṭaka territory (Bundelkhand), leaving room for its expansion towards the west. Vākṣṭaka power was very much extended by the next king Prithivisheṇa I by his conquests in Central India and the Deccan including Kuntala. This increase of Vākṣṭaka power led Chandra Gupta to seek its alliance by marrying his daughter Prabhavatiguptā to Rudrasena II, son of Prithivisheṇa I. The result was that Vākṣṭaka politics came under the influence of the Gupta empire. The change is indicated in certain literary texts and inscriptions. Prithivisheṇa I had a long reign (up to c. A.D. 373). But Prithivisheṇa's son, Rudrasena II, the son-in-law of Chandra Gupta, had a short one followed by the regency of his daughter and its control by himself. As stated by the commentator of the Prākritā Kāvyā, Setubandha, Chandra Gupta's grandson, Pravarasena II, was in his court, and composed a work which underwent revision at the hands of Kālidāsa at the instance of Vikramāditya. This tradition makes Chandra Gupta II Vikramāditya, Kālidāsa, and Pravarasena II Vākṣṭaka, contemporaries. Again, Bhoja, in his Śrīnāraprakāśa, has a verse which is ascribed to Kālidāsa who is said to have made a report to the Gupta emperor on the luxurious life at the court of the Lord of Kuntala who must have been his grandson Pravarasena II. The embassy of Kālidāsa to the Kuntala court is also referred to as Kuntaleśvara-dautya in Kshemendra's Auchiṭya-Vichāra. The Pattan plates of Pravarasena II also mention a Kālidāsa as the writer of that record. These references do not, however, settle the point whether the Kālidāsa they mention was the great poet, but they establish Gupta contact with Kuntala, which was brought on by the regency administration of Queen Prabhavatiguptā seeking her father's intervention which was further increased under the inefficient rule of her son given to a life of luxury and poetical pre-occupation.

Gupta contact with Kuntala is further attested by the Tālgunda Pillar inscription which states that a Kadamba king of Vaijayanti in Kuntala (Kanarese country) gave his daughters in marriage to Gupta and other kings. It seems that the Kadamba king Kākusthavarman married his daughter to Kumāra Gupta (or to his son). Some mediæval chiefs of Kuntala trace their lineage to Chandra Gupta. Several grants of the Western Gaṅgas indicate that Kākusthavarman is to be assigned to A.D. 435-475 (Dandekar, History of the Guptas, pp. 87-91; Raychaudhuri, Political History, p. 475, notes).

Events. The most important event of his reign is his conquest
of Western Malwa and Saurāśṭra (Kathiawad) which were under the rule of Śaka satraps. It would appear from the Eran stone inscription of Samudra Gupta that Eastern Malwa had already passed under the rule of the Guptas. Airikīnā (Eran) was the city situated in a sub-division of modern Saugor district of M.P. and is described in the inscription as the city of Samudra Gupta’s own enjoyment (svabhoganagara). Eastern Malwa must have been the base of Chandra Gupta’s operations against the Śaka Kingdom in Western India. The Udayagiri Cave inscription of Chandra Gupta II which is not dated like the other inscriptions in the same cave describes how the king came to that place in Eastern Malwa in person in pursuit of his programme of world conquest (kṛitvā-prithivijñayārthena) and with him came his Minister (sāchiva) named Virasena Śaka hailing from the city of Pātaliputra. It is also stated that Chandra Gupta II who is described as the royal sage (rājasūrya) appointed Virasena as his Minister for Peace and War. The other Udayagiri Cave inscription (Fleet, No. 3) of Gupta year 82 = A.D. 401 indicates how the chief of Sanakānīka tribe (near Bhilsa) was acknowledging Chandra Gupta II as his liege-lord (Chandragupta-pādāṁdhyāya). The Sānci inscription (Fleet, No. 5) of Gupta year 93 = A.D. 412 also shows how Chandra Gupta’s authority was very well established in that region, administered by his officer called Āmrakārddava known for his ‘victories in many battles’. These inscriptions show the successive steps in the advance of Gupta power towards the west. This advance was materially aided by Chandra Gupta’s alliance with the Vākšṭaka king whose geographical position could affect movements to its north against the Śaka Satrapies of Gujarāt and Surāśṭra.

The actual conquest of these Śaka territories is proved by his coins. As has been already stated, the latest coins of the western Kshatrapas are not later than A.D. 388, while the earliest coins of Chandra Gupta II in this region are not earlier than A.D. 409. It was thus by a protracted war of about twenty years that Gupta power was extended up to the western sea. Although Chandra Gupta II modelled his coinage, which was in silver, on that of the Kshatrapas, he was careful to impress upon it marks of his conquest. The Óbv. of the coins does not show any change. It still shows the king’s head with traces of Greek inscription appearing as before with date behind, but on the Rev. the place of the Chaitya is taken by the specific Gupta emblem of Garuḍa along with the Gupta legend, Paramabhāgavata.

There is also a piece of literary evidence pointing to the victory of Chandra Gupta II against the Śaka king in Bāna’s Harshacharita, where it is stated how Chandra Gupta ‘in the disguise of a woman
coveted by the lustful Saka king, had killed him on the spot at his own capital'.

Ministers. Chandra Gupta had a number of able Ministers who are thus mentioned in his inscriptions:

(1) A chief (Mahārāja) of the Sanakānika family who served (pādānudhyāta) Chandra Gupta as his overlord (Mahārajādhirāja) as stated in the Udayagiri Vaishnava Cave inscription of year 82. He must have been one of the Governors in charge of parts of eastern Malwa conquered by Samudra Gupta, and visited by Chandra Gupta as the place of preparation for his expedition towards the west.

(2) Amakārdadava, hailing from Sukulī-desa and associated with the Mahāvihāra of Kākanāda-boṭa (old name of Sāñcī) to which he gave an endowment out of his abundance which he owed to the patronage (prārāda) of the king whom he loyally served by fighting and winning his many battles, as stated in the Sāñcī Stone inscription of year 93.

(3) Śāba Virasena, hailing from Pātaliputra, who was Chandra Gupta's Minister for Peace and War (sandhi-vigraha) by hereditary right (anuvyuprāpta-sāchitvya), and thus accompanied the king on his far-reaching military expeditions, as stated in a second Udayagiri Śaiva Cave inscription.

(4) Sikharavāma, who is described as a Councillor (Mantri) of Mahārajādhirāja Chandra Gupta II, with the title of Kumārāmātya, in an inscription on a stone līnga found at Kārmapāla in the Fyzabad district, of the Gupta year 117 = A.D. 436 and belonging to the reign of Kumāra Gupta I (EL. X, 71-72).

(5) Mahārāja Śri Govinda Gupta, a son of emperor Chandra Gupta II, who appears to have been the Governor of the province called Tīra-bhukti with its headquarters at Vaiśāli, from the seal issued by him and discovered by Bloch at Basār (ASR, 1903-4, pp. 101-20). It appears that Govinda Gupta is also mentioned in the newly discovered Mandasor inscription of the Mālama-Vikrama year 524 (ASR, Annual Report, 1922-23, p 187; EL. XIX, App. No. 7).

Administrative Offices. The excavations carried out at Basār (ancient Vaiśāli) by Bloch brought to light numerous clay seals which were issued by Prince Govinda Gupta, the various officials of his administration, and the prominent citizens and communities of his Province. They mention the following offices or officials:

(1) Kumārāmātyādbikarana, office of the Prince's Ministers. The officer Kumārāmātya is given the curious title of Yuvarāja, a title that is repeated on another seal and coupled with another significant title, Bhṛṭāraka, as the chief of the Prince's Ministers;

(2) Bakādbikarana, office of the Head of the Army, who also bears the title of Yuvarāja and Bhṛṭāraka;
3. Ranaähändādibikaraṇa; the Military Exchequer;
4. Daṇḍapāśādibikaraṇa, office of the Chief of the Police;
5. Vinayaśāra, Chief Censor;
6. Mahāpratibhāra, Chief Chamberlain;
7. Talavara, (uncertain);
8. Mahādaṇḍanayāka, Chief Justice;
9. Vinayasthitī-Śtāpaka, Minister for Law and Order;
10. Bhaṭāśvapati, Head of the Infantry and Cavalry;
11. Uparīka, Governor of the Province, as in Tirabhukti-eparīka-adhikaraṇā.

It may be noted that the terms Śrī-paramabhaṭāraka-pādiya and Yuvārāja-pādiya as used on these seals for the officer called Kumārāmiṭayya indicate the Chief Minister in waiting on the King and the Crown Prince respectively.

The office of the District Officer of Vaiśālī is called Vaiśāk-adbhisthābāna-adhikaraṇa. The City of Udānākāpa was governed by the Committee or Municipality called Parishad. The monastery (Vibhāra) of Kākanādabota was governed by the Ārya-Saṅgha and also an Assembly of Five called Paṇcha-Maṇḍali (Fleet, No. 5).

Guilds. A large number of these seals was issued by the Nigamas or guilds of different classes of economic interest. These were of Bankers (Śrēṣṭhis, modern Sēths), Traders (Śārībhavāhas) and Craftsmen (Kulikas). These Guilds functioned like Chambers of Commerce of modern times. Many seals were issued jointly by these three classes of guilds as shown in their legend Śrēṣṭhi-Śārībhavāha-Kulika-Nigama, or by two, as in the legend Śrēṣṭhi-Kulika-Nigama. The Artisans’ guilds bear an appropriate symbol, a money-chest [See my Local Government in Ancient India (Oxford) pp. 111-5].

Some of these Corporations operated as Banks of those days. The Ārya-Saṅgha in charge of the Śrī-Mahāvibhāra of Kākanādabota receives a donation in cash of 25 dināras to be kept in permanent deposit with the Saṅgha with the stipulation that the money will be held by it as a trust-fund, out of the interest of which provision will be made for feeding daily five bhikshus and for burning a lamp in the Ratnagiri (probably the Stūpa as the abode of the three Ratnas or jewels, viz., the Buddha, the Dharma and the Saṅgha) in the great Vibhāra, ‘as long as the moon and the sun exist’ (Fleet, No. 5). The Saṅgha is here thus functioning as a bank of deposit and also as a trustee, holding in safe custody, and in perpetuity, a fund in aid of the beneficiaries fixed by the donor, while keeping the corpus of the donation intact. A similar transaction is indicated in the Gadhwa Stone inscription of Gupta year 88 (Fleet, No. 7).

Administrative Divisions. The empire was divided into convenient administrative units. The largest unit was the Province
called Deśa; e.g. Šukuli-Deśa (Fleet No. 5). The Province was also called a Bhūkāti, e.g. Tira-Bhūkāti in a Basāph Seal inscription. A Province again was made up of divisions which were called Pradešas or Vishayas, e.g., Airikīna-Pradeśa (Fleet, No. 2).

Religion. The Gupta empire treated all religions equally. The principal religions of the times were Vaishnavism, Saivism and Buddhism. Permanent benefactions in support of each of these religions were encouraged by the State. The Gupta emperors themselves were orthodox Hindus. Chandra Gupta II takes the title of Paramabhūgavata which is a Vaishnava title (Fleet, No. 4). No. 5 of Fleet refers to the grant by a prominent Minister of Chandra Gupta II of a village, or an allotment of land, called Īśvaravāsaka, and a sum of money to the Community of Buddhist Monks called Ārya-Saṅgha belonging to the great Viśūdra at Kākanādabotā (Sānchī). As the donor was a Buddhist, he does not apply to Chandra Gupta his usual epithet of ‘Paramabhūgavata’, ‘the sincerest devotee of Viṣṇu’. One of the Udayagiri Caves bears an inscription of another Minister of Chandra Gupta II who was a devoted Śaiva. It records that the cave was excavated as a temple of the god Śambhu or Śiva (Fleet No. 6). It also naturally omits as irrelevant the mention of the king as a Paramabhūgavata. The other Udayagiri Cave which bears the dated inscription of Gupta year 82 appears to be a Vaishnava Cave (Fleet, p. 23) from its sculptures representing the figures of (1) the four-armed Viṣṇu with his two wives and (2) a twelve-armed goddess who might be Lakṣmī. The Gadhwa Stone inscription of Gupta year 88 repeats the title of Paramabhūgavata for Chandra Gupta II, because it is a Brahminical inscription. The inscription is very much mutilated, but the fragments that remain record two gifts of 10 dināras each as contributions in aid of a Brahminical institution, a perpetual alms-house or a charitable hall (Sadā-sattra) for its Brahmin residents. This gift shows that the religious sense of the people encouraged endowments of social service as a form of worshipping God through service of man.

The Mathurā Pillar inscription of A.D. 380 testifies to an offshoot of Śaivism, the Sect of Māheśvaras, flourishing at Mathurā under the teacher named Uditāchārya. In the inscription, he mentions as his preceding teachers Kapila-vimala, Upamita-vimala, and Parāśara from whom he is thus fourth in descent (Bhagavat-Parāśarāt chatur-thena). He also describes himself as being tenth in descent from Bhagavat-Kuśika, who was thus the founder of this particular Śaiva sect, that of the Māheśvaras. It will appear that this Kuśika is mentioned in the Vāyu- and Linga-Purāṇas as the first disciple of the great Lakuli described as the last incarnation of Śiva Māheśvara.
Lakult had four disciples each of whom was the founder of a Pāsu-pata sect.

The inscription further states that Āchārya Udita, for the sake of addition to his own religious merit (sva-punya-āopyāyananimitatam), and also for the glory (ākṛiti) of his teachers (Guru), set up in the 'Shrine of Teachers' (Gurū-āyatana) what are called Upamītēśvara and Kapileśvara. The term Īvara as used here is taken to indicate that what were installed (pratishthāpita) were Līngas, together with the images or statues of the teachers. A Līnga was set up in the name of each teacher and the fact that it was set up in the Gurū-āyatana shows that the Līngas were accompanied by the statues. Bhāsa's drama called Pratīmā-Nātaka mentions a royal gallery of portrait-statues called Deva-kula, and this Gurū-āyatana was perhaps also planned as a pratīmā-grihabha, a house of teachers' statues. The inscription reads: 'Upamītēśvara-Kapileśvara Gurūvāyātana guru......' The missing words after guru, showing space for at least five letters, may be taken to be (guru) pratīmāyan, as suggested by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar (El., XXI, p. 5). Āchārya Udita repeats that this monument is not meant for his own fame (naitat-kyātyāram) but for the attention (vijñapti) of the Māheśvaras, and the admonition of the āchāryas that they should consider it as their own property (āchāryānam parigrāham) and, without any reservation (vishākham), worship it with offerings (pājā-pusārakānam) and maintain it with gifts (parigriha-pāripūryam). It may be noted that the expression 'Deva-kula-sabdhā-vibhāra' occurs in the Mandasor Stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta and Bandhuvarman (No. 18 of Fleet).

Apart from the inscriptions, the coins of Chandra Gupta II indicate his personal religion of Vaishnavism. It is indicated by the legend Paramabhāgavata appearing on his gold coins of the Horseman type. The same title also appears on his silver coins which were meant for circulation in his newly conquered territory which was under the rule of the Western Kshatrapas, and were modelled on their coins. As conqueror, he had to observe as far as possible the manners and customs of the conquered country, and especially the characteristics of the currency to which it was used. Thus, on the Obv. of his new-struck coins, he kept up the conventional head which had done duty for centuries as a portrait of the reigning satrap, but their Rev. he utilized to indicate his conquest and the change in its sovereignty. Even on the Obv. Gupta conquest is indicated by replacing the Śaka era by the Gupta era. The Rev., however, introduces a specific feature of Gupta coinage. Garuda, the bird of Vishnu, the deity of Chandra Gupta II, takes the place of the Kshatrapa Chaitya.
The copper coins of Chandra Gupta II declare his religion of Vaishnavism in the figure of Gauranga on the Rev.

Centres. The capital of the empire was Pataliputra called Pushpa in the Allahabad Pillar inscription. His campaigns and conquests show that Chandra Gupta II was also associated with the city of eastern Malwa, Vidiśa, while, as we have seen, some of the chiefs of the Kanarese country claiming connexion with him describe him as 'the Lord of Ujjayini, the foremost of cities' (Ujjayini-pravarādbhūtu) as well as of Pataliputra. His association with Ujjayini also follows from his supposed identification with the Śakrī Vikramāditya of tradition. We have already seen how Vaišāli was also an important city of the empire.

Coins. Like his father, Chandra Gupta II issued various types of coins in accordance with the needs of a large empire. They were (1) Archer, (2) Couch, (3) Chhatra, (4) Lion-Slayer, and (5) Horseman. All these types also show varieties in features.

Archer Type. This type is the commonest of his coins and shows great variety. The first variety is that of the Rev. showing either throne or lotus as the seat of the goddess, while within each class there are minor varieties depending on the position of bow and of the name Chandra on the Obv.

Throne Reverse: This variety shows on Obv. 'King standing l., nimbat[e], as on Archer type of Samudra Gupta, holding bow in l. hand and arrow in r.; Gauranga standard bound with fillet on l.; Chandra under l. arm; around the legend Deva-Śrī-Mabārājādhirāja-Śrī Chandraguptakān'.

It shows on Rev. 'Lakṣmī seated facing, nimbat[e], on throne with high back, as on similar coins of Samudra Gupta, holding corno[copia] in l. hand and fillet in r.; her feet rest on lotus; border of dots; on r. Śrī-Vikramāt'. There is a variety showing goddess seated on the throne without back and holding lotus in l. hand, instead of cornucopia, and is thus more Indianized.

Lotus Reverse: This variety shows on Obv. 'the king drawing an arrow from a quiver standing at his feet on l.' and on Rev. 'Goddess, nimbat[e], seated facing on lotus, holding lotus and fillet in out-stretched l. and r. hands respectively'.

Other varieties of this class show (1) 'King l. holding arrow in r. hand', as in Throne Rev. class; Crescent above standard on Obv.; (3) Wheel (Viṣṇu's chakrā) above standard on Obv., (4) 'King standing r. wearing waist-cloth and ornaments only, holding bow in l. hand and arrow in r. hand; (5) 'King standing to l. with bow in r. hand but leaning his l. arm on his hip without holding an arrow', a very rare variety.

It is to be noted that varieties (2) and (3) are marked by heavy
weight and debased metal, while variety (4) drops the conventional Kushān dress in favour of Indian waist-cloth with sash.

Very probably the Throne class, by its features, was more in vogue in the northern, and the Lotus class in the central and eastern provinces, where foreign features were not suitable.

The design determining the variety of types may be noted. Garuḍa on Obv. prepares the way for goddess Lakṣmī to appear on Rev., for both are linked together with Viṣṇu. The wheel on the Obv. of some specimens similarly recalls Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī, like Garuḍa.

**Couch Type.** The Obv. shows ‘King wearing waist-cloth and jewellery, seated, head to l. on high-backed couch, holding flower in uplifted r. hand, and resting l. hand on edge of couch; legend Deva-Srī-Mahārājādvirāja-Srī-Chandraguptasya’. The Rev. shows ‘Goddess (Lakṣmī) seated facing on throne without back, holding lotus in uplifted l. hand, resting feet on lotus’ as on some specimens of Archer type; ‘on r. the legend Srī-Vikramaḥ’. On the specimen at the Indian Museum, the legend on the Obv. contains the additional word Vikramādityasya and, beneath couch, the word Rapākṛiti. The expression evidently refers to his physical and cultural qualifications. It may be noted that the Couch type depicts on Obv. the king in the enjoyment of his success and prosperity which he owes to goddess Lakṣmī appropriately represented on the Rev. This type is rarely found and was issued early in the king’s reign, as indicated by the throne Rev.

**Chhattr Type.** There are two main varieties of this type marked by a variety in the Obv. legend. The first shows on Obv. ‘King standing l., nimbate, casting incense on altar on l. with r. hand, while l. hand rests on sword-hilt; behind him a dwarf attendant holds chhattr (parasol) over him; legend Mahārājādvirāja-Srī-Chandraguptaḥ’ as against the legend Kṣitimaṇḍavya suharitair divāṁ jayati Vikramādityah occurring on the Obv. of the other variety. The Rev. shows ‘Goddess (Lakṣmī) nimbate, standing l. on lotus, holding fillet in r. and lotus in l. hand, and legend Vikramādityah. In the other variety, the goddess appears to rise from lotus (as padmasambhava). It also shows specimens containing representations of the goddess in different positions or postures.

The meaning of the Obv. legend is that ‘Vikramāditya, having conquered the earth, conquers heaven by his good deeds’.

The design of this type may be noted. The Obv. shows the umbrella of royal authority won by the favour of the Goddess of Fortune appropriately depicted on the Rev. Equally appropriate is the figure of the dwarf as the bearer of the umbrella on Obv. as well as the royal title Vikramāditya on Rev.
Lion-Slayer Type. This type is represented in a large variety of specimens showing on Obv. 'the king hunting down lion in different positions and on Rev. the appropriate goddess Durgā Simha-vābanā seated on lion in different positions.'

Class I shows on Obv. 'King standing r. or l., wearing waistcloth with sash which floats behind him, turban or ornamental headdress, and jewellery, shooting with bow at lion which falls backwards and trampling on lion with one foot.'

The Rev. shows 'Goddess seated, nimbate, facing, on lion couchant to l. or r., holding fillet in outstretched r. hand and cornucopia in l. on certain varieties; lotus on other varieties, border of dots; symbol on l.'

The hunting scene on Obv. is portrayed on coins in the following different ways:

1. King to l. shooting lion as described above but not trampling on it.
2. King shooting lion which falls back from its spring.
3. King with l. foot on back of lion which retreats with head turned back, shooting at it with bow in l. hand.
4. Lion on l. retreating.
5. King standing r. with l. foot on lion which retreats with head turned, snapping at the king as he strikes at it with sword in uplifted r. hand.

Vincent Smith described these varieties as Lion-trampler, Combatant Lion and Retreating Lion types.

The Rev. portrayal of the goddess also shows some differences among coins, e.g. (1) Goddess seated facing on lion which is walking to r.; (2) Goddess seated to l. astride of lion, with her l. hand resting on lion’s haunch; (3) Goddess seated facing on lion couchant l., with head turned back.

Now as to legends, that on class I on Obv. reads in its full form as follows:

Narendrasandhrah prathitaatrīyē divām |
jayatājeyo bhūvi Simhavikramah ||

"The moon among kings, with established fame, invincible on earth, conquers heaven, with the valour of a lion."

On class II, the Obv. has a different legend which may be constructed as follows: Narendrasimha-Chandraguptaḥ prthivīn jitvā divām jayati: ‘Chandra Gupta, the lion among kings, having conquered the earth, conquers heaven.’

On the Rev. the legend is generally Śrī-Simhavikramaḥ. On one variety it is Simha-chandrah.

We thus see that the sport of lion-hunting captured the king’s imagination which suggested a variety of designs in its treatment
by the craftsmen who were set to reproduce all possible positions in which the royal hunter and his big game found themselves on different occasions of hunting. It is to be noted that, while Samudra Gupta was thinking of the tiger as his game, his son was more obsessed by the lion. There seems to be a deep reason for this difference between the father and son as to big game hunting by each. As has been already stated, the Tiger type of coins celebrates Samudra Gupta’s conquests of the Gangetic valley abounding to this day in forests breeding the royal Bengal tiger. The Lion-type of coins issued by Chandra Gupta II has a similar regional significance and celebrates his conquest of regions which are the habitat of the lion. It celebrates his conquest of the region of western Malwa and Surāśṭra or modern Kathiawad which is still the abode of lions to this day in India. Further, like the tiger and goddess Gaṅgā linked together, the lion on the Obv. has very naturally suggested for the Rev. the goddess Durgā with whom it is associated as her sacred seat, and vāhana or vehicle. She rides on the lion as the picture of Śakti, Invincible Might, invoked by Chandra Gupta II in his arduous adventure for the conquest of the Śaka satrapy of Surāśṭra. There is thus an underlying design and purpose shaping Gupta coinage, giving to it a profound historical and territorial significance.

The Obv. shows ‘King riding on fully caparisoned horse to r. or l.; his dress includes waist-cloth with long sashes which fly behind him, and jewellery (ear-rings, armlets, necklaces, etc.): on some specimens he has a bow in l. hand, on others he has sword at l. side.’

The Rev. portrays ‘Goddess seated to l. on wicker stool, holding fillet in outstretched r. hand and lotus with leaves and roots behind her in l.; border of dots.’ This design marks its purely Indian character and its complete divergence from the Ardoshoho coinage.

The legend on the Obv. is Paramabhağavata-mahārájādhirāja-Śri-Chandraguptah or Bhāgavata and on the Rev. Ajitavikramah.

The use of the new title Bhāgavata shows that the king is no longer the worshipper of Śakti, for he has already accomplished his programme of conquests. He can now devote himself to the tasks of peace and leave the sword for the flute as worshipper of Viṣṇu and his consort, Lakṣmī, appropriately figured on Rev. as the goddess of peace and plenty, consecrating himself as a Bhāgavata to the cult of non-violence.

Silver Coins. While the above types of coins were in gold, Chandra Gupta II, after his conquest of the western Kshatrapa kingdom, had to keep up its silver coinage, stamping on it some Gupta features. The Obv. of these restruck silver coins shows the king’s bust to r., as on Kshatrapa coins, with traces of Greek letters, and on l., the word va (ṛṣhe) and date, in Brāhma numerals, in the
Gupta in place of the Šaka era. The Rev. shows a completely Gupta
design, the figure of Vishnu's bird Garuda, standing, facing with
outspread wings, and the corresponding legend describing the
king as a devotee of Vishnu: Parama-bbbingavata-Mahāraja-bhirāja-Śri
Chandragupta - Vikramāditya - Vikramāditya. Another variety shows
the legend: Śri-Gupta-kaṇṭasya Mahāraja-bhirāja-Śri-Chandragupta-
Vikramāditya.

Copper Coins. Chandra Gupta II was also the first to issue
copper coins of which the general type shows king on Obv. and
Garuda on Rev. with variations in the figuring of both. There is a
bust, three quarters, or half-length of the king, with flower in r. hand?
while Garuda is seen nimbate, standing facing with outspread wings,
or with or without human arms, or standing on an altar, or holding
a snake in his mouth, or merely holding it. There is also a Chhatra
type of these copper coins, showing king at altar, with dwarf attend-
ant holding chhatra over him. There are also types omitting the
king but keeping up the Garuda, with the Obv. legend Śri-chandra
completed by the legend Guptab on the Rev., or simply the name of
Chandra by itself, without the suffix Gupta, on some examples. On
some specimens there is a variety replacing Garuda by a flower-vase,
with flowers hanging down its sides.

Thus Chandra Gupta's numismatic innovations comprise the
figures of Couch, Chhatra, Lion, Horse, and Garuda and of goddess
Lakshmi on lotus in place of the throned goddess (Ardochsho), and
also silver and copper coinage.

Titles. His coins give Chandra Gupta II the following titles:
Rūpākrīti, Vikramāditya, Vikramānka, Siṁbavikrama, Narendra-
chandra, and Paramabhīgavata (which is also mentioned in his
inscriptions). The Bilsad Pillar inscription of his son applies to
Chandra Gupta II the epithet—svayampratiratha.

Condition of the Country as seen by Fa-Hien. It would
appear that Chandra Gupta ruled over an empire which extended from
the peninsula of Kāthiawad in the west to eastern Bengal, and from
the Himalayas to the Narmada. The efficiency of Gupta administra-
tion was demonstrated by the material and moral progress of the
people, of which glimpses are given in the record of the travel under-
taken in the country by the Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien, between the
years A.D. 399 and 414, i.e. in the time of Chandra Gupta II, whose
name, however, is not mentioned by him.

Fa-Hien, however, was not the sole and solitary instance of this
cultural intercourse between India and China. India for long had
been looked up to by China as the seat of saving knowledge and the
highest wisdom which were eagerly and devoutly sought after by
her best minds. These were found in Buddhism of which India was
the cradle. Buddhism became known in China as early as the third century B.C. Since then it created a stir in Chinese religious circles and a movement towards India for drinking in her wisdom at its very sources.

Fa-Hien very keenly felt that the Buddhist 'Disciplines' were very imperfectly known in China. In A.D. 399 he organized a joint mission with several Chinese scholars, Hui-Ching, Tao-Cheng, Hui-Ying and Hui-Wei, to travel together to India to get at these 'Rules', in the face of the risks to which such overland journey to India was exposed in those days. On the way, this band of missionaries met others who had preceded them on the same errand. They were Chih-Yen, Hui-Chien, Song-Shao, Pao-Yun, Seng-Ching, and others.

The first country where they saw Buddhism being followed was Shan-Shan. Here were 'some 4000 and more priests, all belonging to the lesser vehicle (Hinayana)'. 'The common people of these countries, as well as the Shamans, practise the religion of India', states Fa-Hien.

Next, the party passed through several Tartar countries where also they found 'all those who have "left the family" (priests and novices), study Indian books and the Indian spoken language.'

In the country of Kara-shahr, the Buddhist Hinayana monks numbered 'over 4000'.

After undergoing 'hardships beyond all comparison' on their journey through uninhabited tracts, and across difficult rivers, the party came to the hospitable country of Khotan where the monks were mostly Mahayana and numbered 'several tens of thousands'. They were accommodated in a Monastery known by the Indian name of Gomati, where, 'at the sound of a gong, 3000 monks assembled to eat.' There were 14 such large monasteries in Khotan.

There was in the neighbourhood another Monastery which was '250 feet high', overlaid with gold and silver, 'and took 80 years to build and the reigns of three kings.'

The next seat of Buddhism was Kashgar where the pilgrims found the king 'holding the pāñcha-parisadh' for purposes of making offerings including 'all kinds of jewels, such as Shamans require.' There were here 1000 Hinayana monks, along with some sacred relics, the Buddha's spittoon and tooth.

From Kashgar, after crossing snowy ranges, the travellers came to northern India and to a place called Darel where there were many Hinayana monks.

Next, they had to negotiate 'a difficult, precipitous and dangerous road', with the Indus flowing along the deepest gorge. Coming down 700 rock-steps, they crossed the Indus by 'a suspension bridge of ropes' and met monks who anxiously asked Fa-Hien
‘if he knew when Buddhism first went eastward,’ to which Fa-Hien answered: ‘Shamans from India began to bring the Sūtras and Disciplines across this river from the date of setting up the image of Maitreya Bodhisattva 300 years after Nirvāṇa.’

After crossing the Indus, the pilgrims came to the country called Udyāna where Buddhism was ‘extremely flourishing’ and the language used was that of ‘Central India or Middle Kingdom’.

The next stage reached was Gāndhāra followed by Takshasila and Peshawar where king Kanishka ‘built a pagoda over 400 feet high with which no other could compare in grandeur and dignity’.

This whole region was studded with monuments enshrining the relics of the Buddha or incidents of his life: his foot-prints, the stone on which he dried his clothes, his alms-bowl; the spot where he cut off his flesh to ransom a dove, or his eyes, or his head, for a fellow-creature, or gave his body to feed a hungry tiger.

From here Fa-Hien was left with only two companions, Huiching and Tao-cheng; the rest all went back to China.

Fa-Hien next reached the country of Nagarabhāra, with a shrine containing Buddha’s skull-bone to which kings of neighbouring countries ‘regularly send envoys to make offerings.’ At the capital of Nagarabhāra was a Buddha-tooth pagoda, as also a shrine holding Buddha’s pewter-topped staff, and another shrine containing one of Buddha’s robes; there was also the cave of Buddha’s shadow, and yet another pagoda 80 feet high at the spot where the Buddha shaved his head and his nails.

Fa-Hien and his two companions now crossed the little snowy Mountain (Sufed Koh) where Hui-Ching died of cold, saying to Fa-Hien: ‘I cannot recover; you had better go on while you can; do not let us all pass away here.’ Gently stroking the corpse, Fa-Hien cried out in lamentation: ‘It is destiny: what is there to be done?’

Crossing the range, the pilgrims arrived at the country of Afghanistan and found there about 3000 monks of both Hinayāna and Mahāyāna Schools.

A similar number of monks they also found at Falona or Bannu whence, travelling eastwards, they again crossed the Indus and came to a country called Bhida in the Punjab where Buddhism was very flourishing.

Passing through the Punjab with its ‘many monasteries containing in all nearly 10,000 monks’, the pilgrims came to Mandor or Muttra and found about ‘20 monasteries with some 3000 monks’ along the banks of the Jumna.

To the south of Muttra is ‘the country called the Middle Kingdom (of the Brāhmaṇas), where the people are prosperous and
happy, without registration or official restrictions. Only those who
till the king’s land have to pay so much on the profit they make.
Those who want to go away, may go; those who want to stop, may
stop. The king in his administration uses no corporal punishments;
criminals are merely fined according to the gravity of their offences.
Even for a second attempt at rebellion, the punishment is only the
loss of the right hand. The men of the king’s body-guard have all
fixed salaries. Throughout the whole country no one kills any liv-
ing thing, nor drinks wine, nor eats onions or garlic; but Chāṇḍālas
are segregated. Chāṇḍāla is their name for foul men (lepers).

In this country they do not keep pigs or fowls, there are no
dealings in cattle, no butcher’s shops or distilleries in their market-
places. As a medium of exchange, they use cowries. Only the
Chāṇḍālas go hunting and deal in fish.

Since the time of the Buddha, ‘the kings, elders, and gentry,
built shrines and gave land, houses, gardens, with men and bullocks
for cultivation. Binding title-deeds were written out, which subse-
quent kings did not dare disregard.’

‘Rooms, with beds and mattresses, food, and clothes, are pro-
vided for resident and travelling monks without fail; and this is
the same in all places.’

‘Pagodas are built in honour of Sāriputta, Mucalinda, and
Ananda, and also in honour of the Abluitions, the Vinaya and the
Sūtras.’

‘Pious families organize subscriptions to make offerings to
monks, various articles of clothing and things they need, after the
annual Retreat.’

It may be noted that the Middle Kingdom was the stronghold
of Brahmanism and heart of the Gupta Empire, where India’s Civiliza-
tion was seen at its best. The observations of Fa-Hien show
how the people were allowed by government considerable indi-
vidual freedom not subject to vexatious interference from its Officers
in the shape of registration, or other restrictions; economic liberty
with unfettered mobility of labour, so that agriculturists were not
tied to holdings like serfs; and humane criminal law. The moral
progress and public spirit of the people are shown in their liberal
endowments of religious and educational institutions. These en-
dowments took the form of permanent grants of lands, with full
apparatus necessary for their cultivation by men and bullocks. This
shows that these cultural institutions had to maintain efficient agri-
cultural departments to make out of their landed properties, cultivated
fields as well as gardens or orchards, enough income to meet their
expenditure. Monetary grants to aid of schools and colleges were
unknown in those days. The ways of life were based on the cult
of non-violence, with vegetarian diet, ruling out heating spices like onion or garlic, also distilleries, piggeries and butcheries.

Fa-Hien now visited the sacred places of Buddhism: Sankisa (Kapitha) where Asoka built a shrine and a pillar 60 feet high with a lion-capital; with about 1000 monks, and another six or seven hundred in a neighbouring monastery; Sravasti with its many monuments of Buddhism.

Here Fa-Hien arrived with his only companion Tao-Cheng. The monks asked Fa-Hien: ‘From what country do you come?’ And when he replied, ‘From China’, the monks sighed and said, ‘Good indeed! Is it possible that foreigners can come so far as this in search of the Faith? Ever since the Faith has been transmitted by us monks from generation to generation, no Chinese adherents of our Doctrine have been known to arrive here.’

Fa-Hien saw at Sravasti the famous Jetavana Vihara which he calls the Shrine of the Garden of Gold built by ‘Sudatta who spread out gold money to buy the ground.’

He saw ‘all those spots where men of later ages have set up marks of remembrance.’

‘In this country there are 96 Schools of Heretics (non-Buddhists), each with its own disciples, who also beg their food but do not carry alms-bowls.

‘They further seek salvation by building alongside of out-of-the-way roads, Homes of Charity where shelter, with bed and food and drink, is offered to travellers and to wandering monks passing to and fro; but the time allowed for remaining is different in each case.’

This is remarkable testimony to public philanthropy inspired by the spirit of social service, the religion which inculcated worship of God as embodied in humanity, Nara-Narayana, and expressed itself in the establishment of Dharmaśālaś open to all without distinction of caste or creed, to Hindus of all sects as well as to Buddhists, though the people were predominantly followers of Brāhmaṇical religions. It is also interesting to note that these ancient Dharmaśālaś anticipate the rules of residence obtaining in their modern substitutes limiting residence to short periods.

Fa-Hien still found places associated with Devadatta, and previous Buddhas such as Kasyapa, Krakuchchhanda, or Kanakamuni.

He found Kapilavastu a wilderness, with its many Buddhist monuments ‘still in existence’. ‘On the roads wild elephants and lions are to be feared.’ He also visited Lumbini and Rāmagrama, and Vaisali, and crossing the Ganges, came to Pataliputra in Magadha.

At Pataliputra, ‘formerly ruled by King Asoka’, ‘the king’s palace, with its various halls, all built by spirits who piled up stones,
constructed walls and gates, carved designs, engraved and inlaid, after no human fashion, is still in existence.'

These remarks rather suggest that Pātaliputra did not occupy the same position of importance in the Gupta empire that it had in the Maurya empire.

Up to Pātaliputra, Fa-Hien was accompanied by his companion, Tao-Cheng, but now he too was to part from him. Tao-Cheng was so much impressed by the spirituality of the Shramans of Central India that he prayed that 'from this time forth until I become a Buddha, may I never live again in an outer land.' He, therefore, remained and did not go back; but Fa-Hien's object being to diffuse a knowledge of the Discipline throughout the land of China, he ultimately went back alone.

F-Hien found at Pātaliputra one Mahāyāna and another Hinayāna monastery. The former had a Brāhmaṇa Buddhist teacher named Raivata, 'a strikingly enlightened man of much wisdom, there being nothing which he did not understand. All the country looked up to him and relied upon this one man to diffuse widely the Faith in Buddha.' It also had as its resident another famous Brāhmaṇa teacher named Mañjuśrī who was 'very much looked up to by the leading Shramans and religious mendicants throughout the kingdom.'

Fa-Hien has some interesting observations on the country of Magadha and its civilization. 'Of all the countries of Central India, this has the largest cities and towns. Its people are rich and thriving and emulate one another in practising charity of heart and duty to one's neighbour.'

At their festivals such as procession of images 'in four-wheeled cars of five storeys', 'the Brahmans come to invite the Buddhas', and were thus quite catholic in their religious outlook.

As regards public philanthropy endowing social service, Fa-Hien says: 'The elders and gentry of the countries have instituted in their capitals free hospitals, and hither come all poor or helpless patients, orphans, widowers, and cripples. They are well taken care of, a doctor attends them, food and medicine being supplied according to their needs. They are all made quite comfortable, and when they are cured, they go away.'

Fa-Hien found an Asoka pillar bearing an inscription near his pagoda (sālāna) at Pātaliputra and another in its neighbourhood with a lion-capital and inscription.

He next passed through Nālandā 'where Sāriputra was born' and where was a pagoda of old still existing, and Rājagriha where he visited the numerous sacred spots of Buddhism including the
Vulture Mountain where Fa-Hien’s ‘feelings overcame him,’ but he restrained his tears and said, ‘Buddha formerly lived here and delivered the Saragama Sūtra. I, Fa-Hien, born at a time too late to meet the Buddha, can only gaze upon his traces and his dwelling-place.’

He next proceeded to Gayā and Bodh-Gayā, seeing all the Buddhist sacred places and monuments, and then retraced his steps towards Pāṭaliputra and arrived at Benares and its deer-forest where he found two monasteries with resident monks.

Now, he commenced his return journey home, coming back to Pāṭaliputra and ‘following the course of the Ganges down stream’ came to Champā, whence, proceeding farther, he arrived at the country of Tamluk, ‘where there is a sea-port.’ He saw here 24 monasteries and stayed for 2 years, ‘copying out Sūtras, drawing pictures of images,’ and then ‘set sail on a large merchant-vessel,’ reaching Ceylon after 14 days. He remained in Ceylon for 2 years and obtained copies of some sacred works in Sanskrit, copies of Discipline, Agamas, and selections from the Canon. Then he ‘took passage on board a large merchant-vessel on which there were over 200 souls, and astern of which there was a smaller vessel in tow, in case of accident at sea and destruction of the big vessel.’ Such an accident did happen. After two days, they encountered a heavy gale which blew on for 13 days and nights, and the vessel sprang a leak which was stopped up when they arrived alongside of an island. The passengers had to throw their bulky goods into the sea and Fa-Hien fervently prayed that the books and images he was carrying to China might be spared and the labour of his life not lost.

They ‘went on for more than 90 days until they reached a country named Jāvā where heresies and Brāhmaṇism were flourishing, while the faith of the Buddha was in a very unsatisfactory condition.’

Fa-Hien remained in Jāvā ‘for 5 months or so and again shipped on board another large merchant-vessel which also carried over 200 persons. They took with them provisions for 50 days.’

They again encountered a heavy gale. The Brāhmaṇa passengers complained: ‘Having this Shaman on board has been our undoing. We should leave him on an island. It is not right to endanger all our lives for one man.’ The bold attitude taken by another passenger in support of Fa-Hien silenced them. In the meanwhile, the captain of the vessel lost his reckoning. ‘So they went on for 70 days until the provisions and water were nearly exhausted, and they had to use sea-water for cooking, dividing the fresh water so that each man got about 2 pints.’ Then changing direction, they reached land after 12 days’ sailing. The Prefect of the place, who was a Buddhist, on hearing that ‘a Shaman had
arrived who had brought Sacred Books and Images with him in a
ship immediately proceeded with his retinue to the seashore to re-
ceive him.'

Thus was completed Fa-Hien’s journey on which he thus com-
mented: 'Looking back upon what I went through, my heart throbs,
involuntarily, and sweat pours down. That in the dangers I en-
countered I did not spare my body was because I kept my object
steadily in view.'

It may be recalled that Fa-Hien practically walked all the way
from Central China across the desert of Gobi, over the Hindu Kush,
and through India down to the mouth of the Hooghly, where he took
ship and returned to China by sea, after so many hair-breadth
escapes, passing through nearly 30 different countries, spending 6
years on mere travelling, and another 6 years on stay and study in
India.

The main object of his mission which was to get copies of sacred
works and images was hard to fulfil under the system of education
in India where study and teaching were carried on by the oral
method and not on the basis of written literature which could be
copied and carried in MSS. The subjects of study were not reduced
to writing and instruction had to be received directly from the lips
of the teacher uttering the words that had to be ‘heard, pondered
over, and contemplated’ as Sruti. All lessons and literature had
to be heard. Thus Fa-Hien states that ‘in the various countries of
North India, the sacred works were handed down orally from one
Patriarch to another, there being no written volume which he could
copy.’ It was only at one place that he found a copy of the Disci-
pline, ‘a further transcript of same running to 7,000 stanzas as used
by the Sarvástiyāda School, which also have been handed down
orally from Patriarch to Patriarch without being committed to writ-
ing, extracts from the Abhidharma in about 6,000 stanzas, and a
complete copy of a Sūtra in 2,500 stanzas, as well as a roll of the
Vaipulya Parinirvāṇa Sūtra in 5,000 stanzas. Therefore, Fa-Hien
stopped here for 3 years, learning to write and speak Sanskrit (and
Pali?) and copying out the Disciplines.'
A NOTE ON RAMA GUPTA

A Supposed Successor of Samudra Gupta

According to contemporary epigraphic evidence set forth above, the immediate successor of Samudra Gupta was his worthy son (Sātputra in Mathurā Pillar inscription of Chandra Gupta II) Chandra Gupta II. But of late, much has been made of evidence derived from later literary works to prove that there was an elder brother of Chandra Gupta II, Rāma (Sarma?) Guptā by name, who succeeded his father before him. This literary evidence may be set forth here.

The earliest evidence invoked on the subject is a passage of Bāna’s Harṣabhaṛita (c. A.D. 620) stating merely that ‘Chandra Guptā, in the guise of a female, killed the Saka king possessed of lust for another’s wife at the very city of the enemy (āripūre).’

Next, a work of dramaturgy named Nātyadarpāṇa written by Rāmacandra and Gūnacandra makes citations from a dramatic work named Devīchandrāguptam based on the following story: ‘Rāmā Guptā, an impotent (kīka) king, for the sake of his subjects, was bent upon surrendering his queen, Dhruvadevi, to the Saka chief invading his kingdom. Then, his younger brother, Prince Chandra Guptā, resolved to save the situation, went to the camp of the Saka chief disguised as the queen, and killed him, as he came up to him. Chandra Guptā then killed his cowardly brother, and married his widow, Dhruvadevi.’ The author of the play is Viśākhadatta who may be identified with the author of the drama Mudrārākṣasā of about 6th or 7th century A.D. As Sylvain Levi points out, these later historical dramas cannot be considered as trustworthy sources of the history they make for purposes of the drama. Mudrārākṣasā is not considered as a reliable source of Maurya history.

There are, however, late epigraphic records supposed to refer to the story of Devīchandrāguptam somewhat vaguely. In the Sanjan plates of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Amoghavarsha I of A.D. 781, it is stated: ‘That donor, in the Kaliyuga, who was of Gupta lineage, having killed his brother, we are told, seized his kingdom and wife.’ This passage omits the main point of the story of Devīchandrāguptam concerning the assassination of the Saka king by Chandra Guptā and also the name of the fratricide whom Bhandarkar even identifies with Skanda Guptā.

Again, a similar story is referred to in the Cambay (A.D. 930) and Sangli (A.D. 933) plates of Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Govinda IV. These mention the murder of his elder brother by a king named Sāhasāṅka,
and his marrying his brother's widow. It is supposed that Sāhasānaka may be taken to be Chandra Gupta II who assumes on his coins the title Vikramānaka. Besides, Rājaśekhara in his Kāvyamāṁśā (IX 47) (of c. A.D. 900) also mentions a Sāhasānaka as a patron of learning, and in that respect he is sought to be identified with Chandra Gupta II.

It is thus clear that the original story mentioned by Bāna received additions and embellishments later texts, literary and epigraphic.

A good deal is also made of the story of Rawwal and Barkamaris as related in an Arabic work translated into Persian by Abul Hasan Ali (A.D. 1026) (Eliot and Dawson, History of India, I, 110-111). In the story, the two are brothers, and princes. The elder brother Rawwal, the king, proposed to escape from an invader of his kingdom by offering to surrender his queen to him. His brother, Barkamaris, then saved the situation by approaching the enemy in the dress of the queen and killing him. Later, he killed his cowardly brother and married the widowed queen. Rawwal here is taken to be Rāma and Barkamaris, Chandra Gupta, while Safar named as the Prime Minister of Rawwal is taken to be Śikharasvāmī, the Minister of Chandra Gupta II mentioned in the Karamadāndā inscription of A.D. 436.
A NOTE ON KING CHANDRA OF MEHARAUHIL
PILLAR INSCRIPTION

It is to be noted at the outset that this iron pillar was not originally located at its present site, the village called Mihirapuri, about 9 miles south of Delhi. It was brought to this place from its original location on a hill near the Beas by a ruler of Delhi who seems to have been fired by the same enthusiasm which led Feruz Shah Taghlak to remove to Delhi the two pillars of Asoka.

The question of the identification of king Chandra of this inscription is one of the puzzling problems of Gupta history. It is best approached by the inductive method, and objective analysis of the contents of this inscription.

The inscription credits king Chandra with the following achievements: (1) Conquest of the Vaṅga countries (Vaṅgeshu) by his battling alone against a confederacy or enemies united against him (Satrūn-sametāyatā); (2) Conquest of the Vāhlikas in a running fight across the seven mouths of the river Sindhu; (3) Spread of his fame as a conqueror up to the southern seas; (4) Achievement of sole supreme sovereignty in the world (aikādibhirājya) by the prowess of his arms.

The inscription then relates how the king celebrated his conquests by setting up his pillar in honour of Lord Vishnu on the hill known as Vīṣṇupada.

It will thus appear from this description of king Chandra’s conquests that they covered a wide range of territory, of which the inscription indicates only the extreme limits. The northern limit was the Vāhlika country, the southern limit was the ocean (dakshina-jalānidi), the western limit was the mouths of the Indus, and the eastern limit was Vaṅga.

With all this remarkable achievement to his credit, king Chandra remains an isolated figure in Indian history in which it is difficult to assign his proper place. Accordingly, there have been many guesses and theories as to his identification. These have to be considered on their merits so as to pave the way to a conclusion if possible, for it may be a conclusion in which nothing may be concluded.

Firstly, he is sought to be identified with king Chandravarman who is mentioned in an inscription on Susunia Hill near Bankura in Bengal as son of Simhavarman and king of Pushkarāṇa, modern Pokharan, about 25 miles from Susunia Hill. This inscription makes out the king to be a Vaishnava, as it refers to a pillar set up by him in honour of god Chakrasvām. This fact is supposed to
connect Chandravarman with king Chandra who is also a Vaishnava.

There is another view that Pushkaraṇa is modern Pokran or Pokutna in Marwar and that Chandravarman is to be taken as the son of Simhavarman mentioned in a second Mandasor inscription (I.A., 1913, 217-19). This inscription mentions Naravarman as son of Simhavarman and brother of Chandravarman and so both the Susunia and Mandasor inscriptions mention a common fact that Simhavarman was the father of Chandravarman.

The weak point of this theory is that these two inscriptions say nothing about any conquest achieved by Chandravarman. On the contrary, the Mandasor inscription makes him out to be a mere local chief to whom the panegyric of the Iron Pillar inscription cannot even remotely apply.

The next theory is that king Chandra may be taken to be the Gupta emperor, Chandra Gupta I. This theory is tenable if it can be shown that Chandra Gupta I was able to conquer Bengal, as stated in the Iron Pillar inscription. It is, however, difficult to settle this point. The record of Samudra Gupta’s conquests gives him credit for conquering certain remote parts of Bengal, which are named Samatata which was probably to the east of Tāmralipi and bordered on the sea, as stated by Huien Tsang; and Davaka which is located in Assam, as already explained. The other conquest of Samudra Gupta in eastern India is stated to be Kamarupa or Assam. It may thus be inferred that the conquest of Bengal proper, of its central parts, was the work of his father, while his own work was the completion of his father’s work by conquering the outlying parts of Bengal. In this view, as has been stated above, ‘with the conquest of Bengal, and his rear thus secured, Chandra Gupta I was able to push his conquests farther up to Prayaga and then beyond it up to Sāketa or Oudh, as stated in the passage from the Purāṇa with reference to Chandra Gupta’s dominion, which may be correctly understood in the light of this theory.’ One has to admit the fact that Bengal formed a part of the Gupta empire under Chandra Gupta II, because under his son, Kumara Gupta I, its northern part figured as a province of the Gupta empire and was known as Purāravardhana-Bhukti. One has also to find out which Gupta emperor was the conqueror of Bengal. The difficulty of this view is that by no stretch of imagination can Chandra Gupta I figure as a conqueror of territories in the Punjab and North-West which Samudra Gupta was the first of the Gupta kings to deal with. As regards annexation of Bengal to the Gupta empire, it may have been the work of either Chandra Gupta I or Chandra Gupta II in the absence of any definite evidence on the subject.

There is the last theory that the conqueror of Bengal was
Chandra Gupta II himself, who may be thus indentified with king Chandra, the record of whose conquests applies very well to him.

On paleographical grounds, the pillar inscription presents a script which is similar to that of the Allahabad Pillar inscription, Brāhmī of the northern class of the fifth century A.D.

The grounds of identification of Chandra Gupta II with king Chandra appear to be deeper historical grounds. The recently discovered Mathurā inscription of Chandra Gupta II as the first Gupta emperor whose inscription has been discovered in that city shows that the last outpost and stronghold of Śaka-Kushān power at Mathurā succumbed to the onrush of Gupta expansion. The full details of the struggle between the Gupta empire and the Śaka power have not been fully and critically studied. The Gupta conquest of the Śaka Kshatrapa kingdom of Surīśṭra and Khaṭiawad in western India does not admit of any doubt on account of the unimpeachable evidence furnished by the coins of his Śaka predecessors, as has already been stated. But it appears that this conquest was the culmination of his previous conquest of Śaka territory in other parts of northern India. He undertook an expedition against the Vāhlikas by getting across the seven mouths of the Sindhu. He thus followed in the wake of his father’s conquests of the territories of the Devaputras, Shāhis and Shāhānushāhis, who represented the remnants of the retreating Kushān power in the north-west up to Balkh but perhaps his conquest remained to be completed by his son.

There seems to have been a recrudescence of Śaka power under Rudrasena II whose coins date from A.D. 348 to 378 and give him the title of Mahākṣhtrapa which was for a long time in abeyance (from A.D. 305 to 348). As shown by Rapson, in the first part of this period there were two Kṣhtrapas and in the latter part there was no issue of their coins at all. It was probably due to the unrest created by invasions launched by Pravarasena I Vākāṭaka, and followed by Samudra Gupta. Under the next Vākāṭaka king, Prithivisena, I, there was further expansion of Vākāṭaka power resulting in a corresponding decline of Kṣhtrapa power, so much so that some coins of the Kṣhtrapa Rudrasena are, according to Scott, ‘in mint condition, and, therefore, unworn,’ probably showing that these coins were ‘secreted and hidden away,’ owing to political unrest. After Prithivisena II, i.e. after A.D. 375 there seems to have been a recovery of Kṣhtrapa power under Rudrasena II and Rudrasena III and also his successor Mahākṣhtrapa Śvāma Śīhāvēna who was his sister’s son. This expansion of Kṣhtrapa power became thus a menace to the Gupta empire and had to be dealt with by Chandra Gupta II. The Śaka king who was killed by Chandra Gupta II according to Bāna must have been this Śīhāvēna.
As has been already stated, the destruction of Śaka power in western India was a long process, a war of about twenty years, from A.D. 388.

This view of Chandra Gupta's conquests in northern India by which Gupta power was consolidated and attained its acme seems to be supported by the history which may be gathered from Meharauli Pillar inscription regarding the exploits of king Chandra who was in that case no other than Chandra Gupta II. It is also to be noted that of the nine types of copper coins attributed to Chandra Gupta II, type VIII has on its Obv. the legend Śri Chandra followed by the suffix Gupta on the Rev., but on type IX occurs on the Obv. simply the name Chandra. This point removes an objection to the identification of the name Chandra with Chandra Gupta II. We may also note in this connexion that some varieties of Lion-Slayer type of coins bear the king's title Narendra-Chandra or Simha-Chandra which may be taken to indicate that the king's personal name was Chandra, while Gupta was added to it as his surname.
CHAPTER VI

KUMĀRA GUPTA I MAHENDRĀDITYA

(C. A.D. 414-455)

Date. His earliest date is Gupta year 96 = A.D. 415 as stated in the Bilsad inscription (No. 10 of Fleet) found in Etta district. It refers to the reign of ‘ever-extending victory’ (abhivarddhamāna-vijaya-rājya) of the new king, ‘the son of Mahādevi Dharmadevi.’ An inscription on liṅgām found at Karamdāpū in the Fyzabad district and now kept at Lucknow Museum mentions the date 117 of Gupta era = A.D. 436, ‘the fame of Kumāra Gupta being tasted by the waters of the four oceans’ (Chaturuddadi-salilāsvādita-jāto), and a minister of Kumāra Gupta I whose father was also a minister of the king’s father. The long Mandasor Stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman refers to the Mālava year 493 = A.D. 436 and the time when Kumāra Gupta ‘was regning over the whole earth’ (Kumāragupta prthivinā prabhāsati). The earth or Mother India under Kumāra Gupta I was an extensive empire. Mother India is described as having ‘her swinging mekhala formed by the rolling four oceans’ and ‘breasts by the mountains Sumeru and Kailāśa. This means that Sumeru and Kailāśa formed the northern boundaries of the empire, the Vindhyan forests (Vanānta) its southern boundaries, and the seas those on the other two sides. Thus Kumāra Gupta I was at the zenith of his power and Gupta empire had its largest extent in A.D. 436.

The inscription bears another date, Mālava year 529 (Vatsara-sateshna pāicheśu vīmātyadvibhikṣehu navasu chābdeshbhu) = A.D. 472 which falls within the reign of the later King Pāru Gupta.

The main facts recorded by the inscription are: (1) A temple of the Sun (diptasaṃśi) was constructed by silk-cloth weavers (paṭavāyaśa) organised as a guild (vraṇabhataśa) at the city called Daśapura (modern Mandasor, the chief town of the Mandasor district of Gwalior State in the western Malwa division of Central India) to which they emigrated from the Lāśa Vishaya (west of west Mālava, with Navasāri or Nausāri as one of its chief cities), in spite of the discomforts (asukham) of the journey, being attracted by the virtues of the kings of the country (deśa-pāṭibhan-gmāpahiyatā). These local kings are mentioned as (i) Viśvavarmmā, Nṛṣipā and Goptā, and (ii) his son Bhandhuvarmmā Nṛṣipā who was then the governor (pālayati) of Daśapura. The construction of the Sun-temple is stated to have taken place in the year 493 of Mālava-Gana-Sthiti. The Mālava year 493 = A.D. 436. The Mālava era is also known as Kṛita era but it
was known as Vikrama era and connected with Vikramaditya about 8th century A.D. It is curious that the year 103 mentioned in the inscription of Gondophernes on Takti-i-Bahil Stone appears to be a year in the Krita (or Krita=Krta) era from the king's known date in the first century A.D. The inscription rightly records that in A.D. 436 it was Kumara Gupta I who was ruling over the Gupta empire.

(2) In the course (samasttena) of a long time (habumā kālena), under other local kings of this region (anyaitaḥ pārthivinaḥ) part of this temple fell into disrepair. And now (adhunā), the whole of this noble (udārā) temple of the Sun (Rāma-nāma grihavak) was once again (bhūyaḥ) reconstructed (sāṁskārito) by the same philanthropic (udāra) guild (śreṣṭha). And so once again the whole of this noble city (purām akhilaṃ, udāram) was decorated (alankārito) with this best of buildings (bhāvana-varena), as the cloudless sky (nabho vimalam) is decorated with the Moon or god Śaṅgī's breast with Kausubha jewel. As stated above, the reconstruction of the temple took place after a long interval from the time of its first construction in A.D. 436. The reconstruction took place in the Mālava year 529 = A.D. 472 in the time of 'other kings' who are called pārthivanas or local kings of this region. Thus, while the first date refers itself to the time of Kumara Gupta I, and of his feudatories, the second date is later and belongs to other kings.

Another inscription, the Gangdhar inscription of Visavaranman (No. 17 of Fleet) bears an earlier date, Mālava year 480 = A.D. 423. The inscription states that in the time of Visavaranmā, son of Naravaranmā, 'that bravest of kings ruling the earth' (Tasmin prabhavati - maham nitisatipravirṇ), his minister (Sahīvu), who was 'the third eye of the king' (Rājyā-sāhīvaṃ-ya ca bhakṣuh), caused to be built (1) a temple of Vishnu (Viṣṇoḥ Svētān) by his worthy sons (Śrī-Vallabhaḥ), Vishnuśṛuta, and Haribhaṭa (2) a temple of the Divine Mothers full of female ghouls (dakini-samprakārṇam) and (3) a large well of drinking water.

Another date of Kumara Gupta is the year 129 = A.D. 488 given in the Mankuwar (Allahabad district) Stone Image inscription which curiously calls Kumara Gupta not Mahārajaśrī but only Mahāraja-Śrī. It may be explained as the error of the scribe, or as indicating deterioration in the status of Kumara Gupta during the later years of his reign troubled by the invasions of enemies, as alluded in the Bhitari inscription of Skanda Gupta (Fleet No. 13). But the latter supposition is unlikely against the evidence of three inscriptions of the same time, viz., two Damodarpur Copper-plate inscriptions of the year 124 = A.D. 443, 128 = A.D. 447, and the Bāgrām plate inscription of the same year 128. All these inscriptions show that the authority of Kumara Gupta I as paramount sovereign
was fully recognized in eastern India which was administered under the Gupta emperor by his Governors ruling over its different provinces like Puṇḍravardhana-bhūkti. At least for 4 years, G.E. 124-128, the Governor of North Bengal under Kumāra Gupta I continued to be Uparika Chirātadatta, while Kumārāmāya Vetravarman ruled over Kośīvartsha as its Vishyapati or District Magistrate. Another inscription dated 120 = A.D. 439 has been recently discovered at Kalaikuri in Bogra district of north Bengal.

The latest known date of Kumāra Gupta I occurs on an inscription on one of his silver coins and is read as G.E. 136 = A.D. 445 (J.A.S.B., 1894, P. 175).

Family. The only queen of Kumāra Gupta I mentioned in the extant inscriptions is Anantadevi. The Bhitaī Seal inscription of Kumāra Gupta III mentions Anantadevi as Mahādevī, or Chief Queen, who is also described as the mother of Mahārājadhīraja Pura Gupta. Kumāra Gupta I had another son who immediately succeeded him, viz. Skanda Gupta, as is stated in the Bihar and Bhitaī Stone Pillar inscriptions (Fleet, Nos. 12 and 13). But the name of the mother of Skanda Gupta is not mentioned in the inscriptions unless it is taken to be Devaki mentioned in the Bhitaī Pillar inscription. The inscription mentions Devaki as the mother of Krīshna but mentions Skanda Gupta’s mother as a weeping widow to whom Skanda Gupta brings the glad tidings of the victory won by him against his enemies, just as Krīshna rushed to his mother Devaki after his enemies were slain. As Krīshna’s mother was not a widow, there is no point in bringing together in this reference the two Devakis except on the basis that Skanda Gupta’s mother happened to have the same name as Krīshna’s mother.

According to Dr. R. N. Dandekar (History of the Guptas, p. 102), Queen Anantadevi, mother of Pura Gupta, was a Kadamba princess. The Talgunda Pillar inscription of Kadamba king Kākusthavarmā refers to his matrimonial connexion with the Guptas. Kākusthavarmā and Kumāra Gupta I were contemporaries. This is shown by some Western Gaṅga records according to which Krīshna-varman, the second son of Kākusthavarmā, whose sister was married to the Gaṅga king Mādhava III, belonged to the period A.D. 475-500 and therefore his father must have lived earlier, c. A.D. 435-475. The Bihar Stone Pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta is supposed to mention another wife of Kumāra Gupta, the sister of some minister of his.

Budha Gupta is taken to be another son of Kumāra Gupta I. This is suggested by Yuan Chhwang calling Budha Gupta a son of Saktāditya, Śakra may be equated with Mahendra and Saktāditya
with Mahendrāditya, the title assumed by Kumāra Gupta I on his coins.

Another son of Kumāra Gupta I may be taken to be Ghaṭotkacha Gupta mentioned as Śri Ghaṭotkacha Gupta in an inscription on a Vaiśāli seal. It may be noted that another Vaiśāli seal mentions Mahārāja Śri Govinda Gupta as a son of Chandra Gupta II who was his Viceroy at that place. Perhaps Ghaṭotkacha Gupta who was a Prince (as indicated by the prefix Śri added to his name), was a Viceroy under Kumāra Gupta I. A Ghaṭotkacha Gupta is also mentioned in the Tumain fragmentary inscription of Gupta year 116 = A.D. 435 found at the place it calls Tumbavana, a village in the Esagarih district of Gwalior State near Eran. This inscription throws new light on Gupta history in its locality. Its line I refers to Samudra Gupta and eulogizes Chandra Gupta II who conquered the earth as far as the ocean. Line 2 mentions his son Kumāra Gupta I as protecting the earth as a chaste and devoted wife, showing that there was no diminution in the extent of the empire under him nor in his authority which was strengthened by his popularity. Line 3 contains the significant reference to Ghaṭotkacha Gupta as having won by his arms the great fame achieved by his ancestors. Line 4 gives the date of the inscription and also states that Kumāra Gupta was then ruling over the earth. Thus this Ghaṭotkacha Gupta of the inscription may be identified with Śri Ghaṭotkacha Gupta of the seal, but the difficulty is that it is a far cry from Vaiśāli to Airikna of which apparently Ghaṭotkacha Gupta was the provincial Governor under his father Kumāra Gupta I. Only the dates of the seal and the inscription really. There is another piece of evidence regarding Ghaṭotkacha Gupta on a coin noticed by Allan (Gupta Coins, pp. liv and 149.) The coin has on Obv. the legend Ghaṭo below (ga) pta (h). If these three Ghaṭotkacha Gupta are one and the same person, it is to be assumed that his original status at Vaiśāli where he served under the Crown Prince Mahārāja Govinda Gupta as its Governor was now improved by his transfer under Kumāra Gupta I as his Governor in East Malwa (M.B. Garde in I.A., 1920, pp. 114, 115; EI, XXVI, p. 117). It appears from the Mandasor record of the Mālava year 524 = A.D. 467 issued by Dattabhaṭa, son of Govinda Gupta’s general Vāyunakshita, that he was also the Viceroy in Malwa under his brother Kumāra Gupta I (Bhandarkar’s List, No. 7).

Events. We have already seen that the Gupta empire did not suffer any diminution of its extent and authority under Kumāra Gupta up to the date of the Damodarput Copper-plate and Baigrama plate inscriptions of A.D. 443 and 448. The vastness of his dominion is also reflected not merely in the wide distribution of his inscriptions but also of his coinage. For instance, the find-spots of his silver
coinage with the figure of Garuḍa stamped on the Rev. indicate that he was able to retain intact his father's conquests in western India. The other class of silver coins with the Peacock Rev. points by its provenance to his hold on the central parts of the empire, the valley of the Ganges.

Allan considers that some of the coins of western India which show some variations from Kshatrapa coins were in circulation in districts outside Kshatrapa dominion. Similarly, there is another class of silver coins which are more allied to the coins of Traikutaka dynasty and were probably in circulation in southern Gujarāt. And, again, there is a numerous series of silver-plated coins with a copper core found only around the site of ancient Valabhī, where, accordingly, they were in circulation. It may also be noted that the other find-spots of the coins of Kumāra Gupta I in western India are Ahmedabad, Satara, the States of Bhavnagar and Nawanagar, and Ellichpur. These western issues were carried far and wide by merchants, as they have been most commonly found at places like Benaras, Ayodhya, Mathura, Kanouj, Harimpur, Saharanpur, Buriya on the Jumna, etc. (Allan, p. cxxx).

It may be thus surmised on the basis of all this epigraphic and numismatic evidence that Kumāra Gupta I may be credited not merely with the negative and static work of maintaining in toto his imperial inheritance, but also with some positive and bold exploits in adding to the extent of that inheritance by some new conquests and records. The fact of these conquests achieved by him is indicated by his issue of the significant Āśvamedha type of gold coinage bearing on Obv. the legend Jayati divam Kumārah (Kumāra conquers heaven) and, on Rev. Śrī Āśvamedhamahendrak. The celebration of horse-sacrifice is a sure proof of some considerable conquests achieved by the king.

If the legends on coins are any indications of history, the power and glory of the Gupta empire seem to be at their height under Kumāra Gupta I. We may instance the following legends: (1) Vijitāvonir āvanipath, 'the Lord of the earth who has conquered the earth'; (2) Mahīṭalamjayati, 'who conquers the whole earth'; (3) Khīṣiptirajito Vījayī Mahendrasimhbo divam jayati, 'the Lord of the earth, the unconquered conqueror, Mahendrasimha, conquers heaven'; (4) Śāksbādiwa Narasimhbo Simbha-Mahendro, 'like another Narasimha avatāra or incarnation of Vishnu is Simha-Mahendra'; (5) Yudhi Simbha-Vikramah, 'with the valour of a lion in war'; (6) Vijyārābala-parākrama, 'possessed of the strength and prowess of the tiger'; (7) Guptakula-Vyomāṭasī, 'the Moon in the firmament of the Gupta dynasty'; and (8) Gupta-Kulāmalacbandro, 'the Moon without spots in the Gupta dynasty'. Some of these legends which
endow Kumāra Gupta I with some singular epithets describing him as the glory of the Gupta family upon which he shed lustre like the Moon, attributing to him the invincible valour of both the lion and the tiger, and comparing him to that embodiment of supreme power, Vishnu as Narasimha, must have been inspired by an adequate record of military achievements.

But this Moon among the Guptas seems to have suffered an eclipse in later years. There was a set-back in Gupta imperial history, as is indicated in an inscription belonging to the reign of his son and successor, Skanda Gupta, the Bhitari Stone Pillar inscription. The inscription refers to "enemies prepared for conquests (svabhīmata-vijigatā-pradvyotānāṁ Pareshām); the fortune of the family (kula-Lakshmi) rendered unsteady (vīchālātā); to the efforts of the Crown Prince Skanda Gupta towards making it firm and steady (stambhanāya udvata); to Skanda Gupta being reduced to such straits in making these efforts for the restoration of the fallen fortunes of the family that he had to spend a whole night sleeping on bare earth in the battle-field. The task of this restoration was not an easy one for him. The enemies of the empire for a time succeeded in overwhelming its fortunes (vīphutām veṁśa-Lakshmi). These enemies are specified as Pushyamitras who had their resources of man-power and wealth fully mobilized (saṁvīdātakahala-kosān) to try conclusions with the Gupta empire whose yoke they were preparing to throw off as its feudatories. Skanda Gupta, as Crown Prince, was given the necessary training (saṁvidānapadesa) to be applied for subduing these enemies (pareshāṁ prampīte). These Pushyamitras may be identified with those who are associated in the Vishnu Purāṇa with the allied peoples called Patumitras, Durmitras, and others of the region known as Mekala of the Narmadā valley.

It may be noted that Mekala supplies a point of contact between Gupta and Vākāṭaka history. In the Balghat copper-plates of the Vākāṭaka king Prithivisheṇa II, the sovereignty of his father Narendrasena (A.D. 435-470) is started to have embraced Kośala, Mekala, and Malwa. Narendrasena appears as the paramount sovereign of the entire Vindhyan region including the Berar-Maratha Country, Konkan, Kuntala, Western Malwa, Gujarāt, Kośala, Mekala, and Andhra, as also Kuntala of the Kadamba kingdom in the south. Thus he was contesting Gupta overlordship in parts of western India and was coming into conflict with Skanda Gupta whose defeat of the peoples of Mekala gave a set-back to his aggression. That is why Narendrasena's son Prithivisheṇa II found his family to be 'sunken' and had to undertake the task of 'raising and restoring it', as stated in the inscription. Thus the enemies whom Skanda Gupta
had to deal with included the Vâkâṭakas, along with the Pushyamitrastras and other peoples of Mekala. After Skanda Gupta, the Vâkâṭakas recovered their lost ground and glory by the conquests of Prithivishêna II who was able to assume the title: 'Kośala-Mekalâ—Mâla-vâdhipatyabhyaarchitaśâsana,' 'Lord of Kośala, Mekala, and Mâlava'. The time of Prithivishêna II is c. A.D. 470-485.

The defeat of the Pushyamitrastras by Skanda Gupta was complete. The panegurist says that he was able to 'place his left foot on their king as his footstool' (kshtita-charanâ-pîthâ).

'The unsullied fame (amala-kârî) of this exploit, the purity of his character (subhram charitam), are sung with great gratification (paritushî) in all quarters (diî diî) by all down to children (âkumâram manusyaîî).'

But the full programme of subjugation of the enemies of the empire was not accomplished by Skanda Gupta in his father's lifetime. It was after his father's death (pitârî divamupetê) that he was able 'to subdue all his enemies by the prowess of his arms' and 'to rehabilitate once again (pratishtîbîya bhâyâ) the submerged (vipîlata) fortune of his family'. He brought the glad tidings of his complete victory (jitamîtî), in the absence of his deceased father, to the widowed Queen, his mother, and 'filled her eyes with tears of joy'. He firmly established (pratishtîbîya) the power of his family and empire which was shaken by its enemies and tottering to its fall (parichalitam manâtam).

Religious and Charitable Endowments. These endowments represent the principal religions of the country. The Bilsaâ inscription refers to a temple of god Śvâmi-Mahâsaṇa (Kârtikeya). The Mankuwar Buddha Image inscription refers to the construction of an image (pratimâ) of Buddha Bhagavân, the perfectly enlightened One (Samyak Saṁbuddha) and unrefuted doctrine (Saṁvatâvirddha) by Bhikshu Buddhahmitra in Gupt year 129 = A.D. 448 who may be identified from this date with Buddhahmitra, the teacher of Vasisbandhu, i.A, 1912, p. 244). The Sââchi Stone inscription of 131 = A.D. 450 records the gift of (1) 12 dinâras for feeding daily out of the interest of the amount one new recruit of a Bhikshu (Saṁghâmadhya-praśisbâka), (2) 3 dinâras and (3) 1 dinâra for provision, out of the interest of the fund, for permanent lighting of lamps before the images of the Buddha. These gifts were made by Upâśika Harisvâmîni, wife of Sanasiddha, for the sake of her parents (probably out of her Strî-dhana) to the Ārya Saṁgha of Kâkanâdabota-Sri-Mahâvihâra who were to hold them as permanent trust-fund (aksaya-nâm), keeping its corpus intact and spending only the income of the endowments in aid of its beneficiaries (Fleet, No. 62).
The Karamadaṇḍā Stone Linga inscription of the year 117 = A.D. 436 invokes Mahādeva and records the gift made by a Minister of Kumāra Gupta I, Prithivisṛṇa by name, for the worship, with proper and righteous offerings, of Prithivāvara (Mahādeva), probably the linga on which the inscription is incised. The genealogy of Prithivisṛṇa is interesting from the social point of view. He belonged to a Brāhmaṇa family, the son of Chandra Gupta's Kumāra-mātya Śikharavāmin, who was the son of Vishnupālitaḥ, son of Kurumāravyabhaṭṭa, of the Chhāndogas, whose gotras were Āśva and Vāja. The donor also are stated to have been Brāhmaṇas from Ayodhyā, who were living in the vicinity of Mahādeva Saileśvara, belonged to various gotras and charanās, and were proficient in tapa and svādhyāya, ascetic practices and Vedic study, in Mantra, Sutra, Bhāṣya, and Pravachana. There is also a reference to the festival called Devadroni, a procession of images (of Śiva) or idols.

The construction of a temple for worship of the Sun is the subject of the Mandasor inscription already noticed.

The Udayagiri Cave inscription of the year 106 = A.D. 425 'in the prosperous reign of the best of Gupta kings' refers to the construction of an image (ākṛiti) of Jina vara Pārśava at the mouth of a cave (gulā mukha) by Śāṅkara who hailed from a region of the north like Uttarakurru (Fleet, No. 51).

Another inscription records the installation of a Jaina image at Mathurā in the year 113 = A.D. 432 (EI, II, 210).

Among charitable endowments may be mentioned that of a Sattrā (alms-house) with 10 dināras and another with 3 dināras at Gadhwa (No. 8 of Fleet).

Another Gadhwa inscription (Fleet, No. 9) refers to a gift of 12 dināras for the perpetual maintenance of a charitable hall or alms-house (sādā-sattrā).

We have already seen how the Gaṅgadhar inscription refers to the construction of temples of Viṣṇu, Śakti (the Divine Mother), and also the construction of a large well of drinking water. This inscription shows how in the same family worship was offered equally to the two seemingly opposed cults of Viṣṇavism and Tāntrikism and how father and son could be votaries of different cults.

The Dhānāidāha Copper-plate inscription records a gift of land made by a government servant (āyukta) to a Sāmavedin Brāhmaṇa (EI, XVII, op. 345). The Damodarpur Copper-plate grant of A.D. 443 records the sale of land by government to a Brāhmaṇa to help him in the performance of his agni-botra rites. The second Damodarpur grant of A.D. 447 records another sale by government of land to a Brāhmaṇa for the maintenance of his five daily sacrifices (pañcha-
mahāyajñās). The Baigram Copper-plate grant of the same date records gift of land to the temple of Govinda-Svāmī.

The Kalaikuri Copper-plate inscription of c. 120—A.D. 439 records the gift of land made by a group of traders, writers, and record-keepers to three learned Brahmins to finance their daily performance of Pañcha-Mahāyajñas.

Thus the religious endowments of the times represented the different religions then prevailing in the country such as Buddhism and Jainism and those centering round the Brahminical dieties, Vishṇu, Śiva, Kārttikeya, Śakti, and Śūtya. These religions also inspired social service as a form of worship of God embodied in humanity, of Nara-Nārāyana.

Architecture. Some examples of architecture are mentioned in the inscriptions. The Gaṅgādhar Stone inscription mentions Viśvavarma equipping his city, built on the bank of the Gargas, with wells for irrigation, (vāpi), tanks (tadgā), temples and halls of gods (surasadmasabhā), drinking-wells (nāhpāna), parks (upavana) of various kinds, causeways (saṅkrama) and reservoirs of water (dirghikā).

The Mandasor Stone inscription refers to the district of Lāt̮a adorned with temples (Deva-kulā) and Assembly-halls of the gods (Deva-sabhā), and Viśhāras. It also describes the city of Daśapura ‘embraced by two charming rivers’, ‘decorated with rows of storeyed mansions (prāśāda-mālā) like rows of aerial chariots (vimāna-mālā), and with paintings (citra-karmacā). The houses were very high (adhihkomata), ‘resembling the peaks of white clouds lit up with forked lighting’ or the lofty peaks of Mount Kailasa. In the city was built a temple of the Sun with broad and lofty spires (nīrūmna-tūga-sikharan) resembling a mountain. The temple had later to be thoroughly repaired and then it became ‘one of the beauties of this beautiful city, like the Moon shining in cloudless sky or the Kaustubha blazing on the breast of Śārūgīn’.

The Bilsād inscription refers to the construction of a gateway with a flight of steps (pratoli) at the temple of god Svāmī-Mahāsena.

Administration. The empire is called Prithivi (Mandasor inscription). The emperor is given the titles of Parama-daivata, Parama-bhūyāraka, and Mahārājādhīrāja (as in Damodarpur Copper-plates). Below the emperor was the feudatory or the local king called severally Nyipa, Nyipati, Pārthiva or Gopā (Mandasor inscription). The local kingdom was called a Dea, e.g., Deapārthiva (ibid.).

The empire was divided for administrative purposes into Provinces. A Province was called a Bhukti. A Province was subdivided into Districts called Vishayas. Under Kumāra Gupta I, Pundravaradhana-bhukti looms large in several inscriptions.
show that for 4 years, G.R. 124-128=A.D. 443-447, the Bhukti was ruled by Governor Chiratadatta. The title of provincial Governor was Uparika-Mahārāja. Under him was Visyapati or the District Magistrate. Thus Vetravarna was the Visyapati of Kotivarsha. The term Adbhishāma was applied to the headquarters of the District. The District Office was called Visyayadbikarna (Damodarpur Copper-plates, 1 and 2). The Dhānuśāha (Rajshahi district grant of year 128 mentions another District or Vishaya called Khāḍā (tā) pāra which might have been also a Vishaya of Pundravardhana-bhukti, but the name of the Bhukti cannot be clearly traced. The Baigram (Charter of year 128=A.D. 447 was issued from a District Office, Vishyayadbikarna, located at the town called Panchanagati. The District Officer is also named. He was Kulavriddhi, and had the title Kumāramatiya. The Mandaśor inscription gives a glowing account of the prosperity of a District of Western India, viz., Lāṭa-Vishaya. A District had its Sub-Division called Vīthī. The officer in charge of the Sub-division is called Añukta in the Kalayakuri inscription.

We have already seen that some of the Princes served as provincial Governors. Prince Govinda Gupta was the Governor of Tirabhukti under Chandra Gupta II, while Prince Ghatotkacha Gupta was Governor of Airikina-pradeśa (another term for Province). Earlier, he perhaps served under Prince Govinda Gupta in a high and responsible office so as to issue seals in his name. Both his seals and those of Govinda Gupta were found together at Vaiśāli (Basarh), as already stated.

The Baigram Charter indicates an interesting administrative practice. The Visyapati Kulavriddhi is mentioned as directly paying his homage to the emperor, as indicated by the expression Bhāṭāraka-pādamudiyata, and not tendering that homage to his immediate superior, the provincial chief. It was because the appointment of the Visyapatis or District Magistrates was made by the emperor himself who entered into direct relations with such responsible officers. The Damodarpur Plates, on the other hand, definitely state that the Visyapati was appointed by the Uparika or Governor of the Province (Maññiyukta). The two statements may be reconciled by the consideration that the appointment of the District Officer by the Governor was subject to formal sanction by the king to whom the homage of both was due.

Besides these Provincial Governors and District Officers, there were Ministers in attendance on the emperor at the headquarters of government. One such Minister is named Prithivivēśa who came to his exalted office by heredity. At first he started as a Mañtri with the title Kumāramatiya but was later promoted to the higher
office of Mubābalādbikrita as the executive head of both civil and military administration (Karamāḍa inscription). The term for a Minister was Suchiva (Mandasor inscription).

The Damodarpur Copper-plates give some interesting details of local administration. The district headquarters were called Adbishbānas where were located the District Offices and Courts called Adbikaranas. The District Magistrate was associated in his administration (puroge sanvayabharati) with an Advisory Council of non-officials representing the different interests of the locality, viz., (1) Nagara-Śreshṭha, President of the Town Corporation (Mayor), (2) Sārthavāha, representative of the Guild of Merchants, (3) Prathuma-kulika, Chief of the Guild of Artisans, and (4) Prathama-kāyasta, Chief of the Union of Writers or Scribes, Chief Secretary.

The Kalaikuri inscription gives some details of administration of the Sub-division of a District called Vīthi, as stated above. It mentions the Śrīngavera Vīthi, and the office (adbirdarana) of the Sub-division located at its headquarters or civil station, the town named Pānākāśāla. The Sub-divisional Officer, like the District Officer, was associated in his administration with a Council of non-official members called Vīthi-Mabattaras or the Elders of the locality, and Kusumbins or representative householders. The staff of the Sub-divisional Office included the Keepers of Records called Pustapālas, clerks or scribes called Kāyasthas, and Kulikas or representative craftsmen to deal with the interests of local handicrafts.

Transactions relating to land formed an important part of the functions of the District Magistrate, Vishayapati. Government gave facilities to private donors intending to make gifts of land for a religious or a charitable purpose. Such gifts were facilitated by a prescribed procedure. Ordinarily, land could not be transferred or alienated without the permission of government. Its tenure was regulated by what is called Nivā-dharma or Apradākshaya-Nivā. Pradā means gift and so Apradā means land that is not settled away or transferable. The Nivā-dharma meant that the nivā or principal or mūladhana was to be kept intact as akshaya-nivā, while its interest alone could be spent on the purposes of the endowment. When the State sanctioned the grant of land, it was on the basis of Nivā-dharma, i.e., the condition that the public purpose, charitable or religious, for which the grant was sanctioned was to be permanently promoted out of the income from the land granted, so that the land could not be transferred or alienated in any way for profit and should not change hands as private property. Thus sale or transfer of land was subject to sanction of government. That sanction was given on the report of its officers called Pustapālas, the Record-Keepers,
to whom the petition for purchase of land had to be submitted in the first instance (eṣat viśāpam upalabhya). The Record-Keepers, who generally formed a body of three, placed the matter before (1) the elders of the village concerned, who were called Mahattaras; (2) the officers of the village called Asīkakuladikaranasa, i.e., officers in charge of groups of eight households; (3) officers called Grāmikas or village chiefs; and (4) representative householders (Kutumbinab). These, in their turn, notified the petition (viśāpam) to the leading Brāhmaṇas, the prominent citizens, and householders of the village. The land in question was then inspected (pratyauksiyam) by the said Mahattaras and other officers (Mahattaradikaranasa) and householders, and finally referred to the Pustapāla for report. Sale was sanctioned if the Pustapāla reported to the following effect: (1) ‘Land may thus be given’ (evam diyatam); or (2) ‘The application is a proper one (yuktam). This is a case which conforms to the customary rule of sale (vikrayamaryādā-prasajigah).’ The petitioner had to state in his petition the conditions on which the land is transferred, viz., (1) that it was according to Nīr-dharmā by which it was assured that the land thus transferred was to be a permanent gift for the purposes stated, such as ‘facilities for performing agniṣṭro rites’ (agniṣṭropayogam), or for instituting the pañcambalāyajnas (2) that the land was ‘khila, as yet unploughed, and not already given to anyone’ (apradā-prabata-keśila-kshetra) and free of revenue (samudayabaliyapada-keśila-kshetra); (3) that the price to be paid was according to the rate prevailing in the village (grāmamukrāma-vikraya-maryādā). Lastly, the transfer was effected by suspending the condition as to non-transferability (ananyita-apradakshyayam). At the concluding stage of the transaction, the Mahattaras and others were empowered to take measurement of the land by 8 × 9 reeds and then separate it from other plots (apaviśbhya). The sale price of land is also indicated. It was at the rate of 3 dināras for 1 kulyavāpa. The word kulya may be connected with kula which, according to Kullūka (on Manu VII, 119), means that amount of land which can be ploughed by two ploughs. Vāpu means the area which is sown. According to Sanskrit lexicons, 1 kulya=8 dronas. In Damodarpur Copper-plate No. 2, the land bought was 3 dronas=2/3 Kulyavāpa, 1 Kulyavāpa being=8 dronavāpas. [Dhānāidhaha Copper-plate inscription of the year 113 (EI, XVII, p. 343); Damodarpur Copper-plate inscriptions, No. 1 of year 124; No. 2 of year 129; and some data cited for comparison from No. 3 undated (EI, XV. pp. 113 f)].

An inscription on a Copper-plate of Gupta year 120=A.D. 439 and thus belonging to the reign of Kumāra Gupta I has been recently discovered at a village called Kalaiyur in Bogra District of north
Bengal which has contributed so much to Gupta History by its other inscriptions found in the Bogra, Rajshahi, and Dinajpur Districts such as the five Damodarpur inscriptions and those of Bāgram, Paharpur, or Dhānāidaha. The inscription has been edited and published by Dr. D. C. Sircar (I.H.Q., XIX). It is noteworthy for some of its concrete touches and details and new data of local administration. It mentions the city of Pundravardhana (identified with modern Mahāsthān) as the capital of the Bimbukti or Province of that name. Śrīṅgavera is identified with modern Singra Police station in the Natore Sub-division of Rajshahi district. The Record also mentions the individual names of all the officers and parties concerned in its transaction, names of Knikas, Kāyasthas, Pustapālas, the Vīthi-Mahattaras, and also of the Kṣṇumbins who are quite numerous. The three Brahmin beneficiaries are also named and described as being proficient in the four Vedas and belonging to the Vājasaneyya-Charaṇa.

The inscription mentions the usual conditions for the validity of an application for land, viz. (1) that the land applied for must be fallow and not settled so that its transfer was not subject to compensation payable to the dispossessed proprietor (apratikara); (2) that it should be given in perpetuity and remain as Aksbyamivi; (3) that it should be given for a public or religious purpose (such as performance of the five daily sacrifices in the present case); and (4) that it be paid for at the customary rate of the locality (mardā). The application is then referred, as usual, to the Pustapālas for report. In the present case, they reported that it was in order, in accordance with (anavyutta) the customs of the Vīthi, and did not militate in any way against the interests of the State (Nāsti virodhah kāśchit).

The inscription also shows that it was not always possible to find the required land situated in one area. In the present case, the application was for 9 kalyāṇāpas of land, out of which eight had to be found out of 3 villages and the remaining one in a fourth village. Even of the strips of land situated in the same village, their revenues (prāveṣyā) were payable to different owners or landlords. These facts indicate that there was considerable progress achieved in these parts of rural Bengal in intensive cultivation and farming coupled with the creation of small holdings under the laws of inheritance leading to their fragmentation.

Another interesting inscription to be noted in this connexion is the Bāgram (Bogra district) Copper-plate inscription dated Gupta year 128 = A.D. 447-8 and thus belonging to the time of Kumāra Gupta I. The emperor is not named but is referred to in the expression Bhaṭṭārakapāda.
The inscription gives some interesting administrative data, some of which are repeated in the Damodarpur inscriptions discussed above. The repetition is useful as pointing to established administrative traditions, practices and institutions.

Two householders of the locality (vastavya-kumbara) named Bhyolila and Bhaskara, brothers, wanted to make a gift of land to the temple (Devakula) of Govindasavami which was founded by their father but was poorly endowed (alpa-vritika). They wanted to create provision for repair (pratisamshakara) of the breaches (khanja) and cracks (phoena-sphoena) of the temple and also for supply of requisites of worship such as scents (gandha), incense (ablupa), light (dipa) and flowers. They apply for land to the district officer named Kulavriddhi and described as Kumaramatiya, as already noticed. The district office is called Vishayadbikaranya and is located at Panchanagar which was apparently the headquarters of the district.

The application was made for purchase of 3 kulyavapas of kbi (fallow) land which was (1) not paying any rent or revenue to the State (samudayabahiya), (2) devoid of vegetation (astamba) and hence uncultivated waste, and (3) not liable for paying compensation to any dispossessed proprietor (akichitpratikara=apratiikara). In addition, Bhyolila applied for 1 droyavapa of sthala-vastu or homestead land which he required for the construction of talavaka, trenches, and garden. Bhaskara also applied for the same. Thus these lands were unsettled government lands.

As shown in the Damodarpur inscriptions, the first stage in the transaction is the report, on the application, of the government Record-Keepers (Pustapalas) who were two in this case. They recommended the sale of government lands to private persons on the following grounds:

1. that the lands are astamba (devoid of vegetation) and kbi (fallow);
2. that they are incapable of yielding revenue to the king (samudaya-bahiya);
3. that there can be no objection to such sale on the ground of any financial loss to the king (na ksaichidravjarshavirodha) from sale of lands which did not yield any revenue (apratiikara);
4. that there is, on the contrary, some material gain (upacha) to accrue to the king from its sale, as well as spiritual gain in the shape of Dharma;
5. that they are located in areas which will not affect the cultivation of the settled land (svakarsbhavirodhistbana).

Thus the sale is approved and effected on the basis of the prevailing price being paid. The price paid was 6 divaras for 3 kulyavapas of kbi land and 8 silver coins (rupakas) for
2 dronavāpas of vāstu land. These prices show that, while the rate of fallow land was 2 dīnuaras for 1 kulyavāpa, that for a dwelling site was 4 silver coins for 1 dronavāpa. Taking the area of 1 kulyavāpa = 8 dronavāpas, 1 dronavāpa of vāstu land = \( \frac{1}{8} \) of kulyavāpa = 4 rūpakas in value. If we assume the same rate of khila and vāstu land, 1 dīnuara = 16 rūpakas on the basis that 1 kulyavāpa of khila land is valued at 2 dīnuaras. But the assumption that the price of both the khila and vāstu land is the same is not tenable. While khila land is sold in larger quantities on the basis of kulyavāpa as a unit, building sites are sold on the basis of a smaller unit of land viz., dronavāpa, because a building site is more valuable and costly than fallow land and is required in smaller quantity. It is fortunate that a proof of this difference in the rates of fallow and building land is given in one of the Damodarpur Copper-plate inscriptions of the time of Budha Gupta stating that 1 kulyavāpa of vāstu land = 3 dīnuaras as against 2 dīnuaras for a kulyavāpa of khila land, as stated in this inscription.

Coins. As has been already stated, Kumāra Gupta I is noted for the large number of his coins and the variety of their types, pointing to the vast extent of the territories within which the various types of coins were in circulation.


Archer type. It has varieties which are varieties of legends. The following legends appear on their Obv. (1) Vijitāsvamiravāpatiḥ. Kumāragupta divāni jayati; (2) jayati mbātalani on r. and ending with (Kumāragu) ptaḥ on l.; (3) jayati mbātalani on r. with (Kr) māraguṭa on l.; (4) Parama-rājādirāja-Sṛi-Kumāraguṭaḥ; (5) Kumāra and Mahārājādirāja Sṛi-Kumāraguṭaḥ; (6) Ganeśo mābātalani jayati Kumārāḥ.

The Rev. bears the single legend Sṛi-Mahendrabh.

Swordsman type. This type is an innovation of Kumāra Gupta. The Obv. shows ‘king standing l., nimbate, wearing waist-cloth and jewellery, casting incense with r. hand on altar on l., while l. hand rests on hilt of sword at his side; Garuḍa standard on l.’ The king’s dress does not show the Kushān features noticeable on the Archer type.

The Rev. shows ‘Goddess (Lakṣmī), nimbate, seated facing on lotus, holding fillet in outstretched r. hand and lotus in l., which rests on hip’. The Garuḍa, as usual, is linked with Lakṣmī on Rev.

The legend on Obv. is Gāṇa avajītya svarītāḥ Kumāraguṭa divāni jayati and that on Rev. is Sṛi-Kumāraguṭaḥ.
Asvamedha type. Its Obv. shows 'Horse standing r., wearing breast band and saddle, before sacrificial pole (yūpa) on altar, the pennons from which fly over its back.' On Samudra Gupta's type, the horse is not saddled. The Rev. represents 'Queen (Mahishā Anantadevi) standing l., mimbate, holding chowrie over r. shoulder and uncertain object in l. hand, wearing ear-rings, necklace, armlets, and anklets. On l. is a sacrificial spear bound with fillets.'

The Obv. bears the legend Jayati divāṃ Kumārāḥ and between legs of horse, śvamedha. On one specimen the legend reads: Jayatadvā Kumāra=Jayati divāṃ Kumāraguptaysā. On the Rev. is the legend Śrī Asvamedhamahendrāḥ.

The figure of Queen on Rev. appears as a religious necessity. The legend Jayati divāṃ Kumārāḥ indicates that by his conquest of heaven the king achieves the status of god Indra or Mahendra and assumes the appropriate new title, Śrī-Asvamedha-Mahendrāḥ.

Horsemall type. This type shows six varieties in their legends. The Obv. shows the standard figure of 'King riding to r. on fully caparisoned horse,' and the Rev. 'Goddess (Lakshmi) seated to l. on wicker stool, holding lotus with long stalk and leaves in outstretched r. hand, while l. rests by her side.' There is a variety showing the king 'wearing long sash, the ends of which fly behind' and Goddess 'offering fruit to peacock'. Another variety shows very distinctly Goddess 'with r. hand feeding peacock from bunch of fruit.' The Goddess is to be identified as Durgā, the Goddess of War, feeding Her vāhana Mayūra, on the basis of a passage in Śrī-Chandā [Uttara-Charittra, VIII. 17] which is a part of Mārkandeya Purāṇa. The passage describes Goddess Kaumārī Ambikā as Mayūra-Vara-Vābana and Guharūpini (resembling Kārtikeya in appearance) like the Brahmanī on Hanśa and Māheśvari on Vṛisha. Another passage [XI. 15] describes the Goddess as surrounded by peacocks and calls Her Nārāyaṇī.

The type is marked by the following variety of legends on Obv.: (1) Prithivivātāṃ divāṃ jayatyajītaḥ, (2) Kṣhitipitrājīto vijayi Mahendrasimhā divāṃ jayati, (3) Kṣhitipitrājīto vijayi Kumāraguptā divāṃ jayati, (4) Guptakulavoyāmasā śayatyajīja Mahendrāḥ, (5) Guptakulāmala-chandro Mahendrakarmajīto jayati. The legend on Rev. is uniformly Ajitamahendrāḥ.

Lion-slayer type. Its Obv. shows 'King standing r., wearing waist-cloth with sash floating behind and jewellery, shooting lion, which falls backward on r. from leap, with bow in l. hand, r. drawn behind head.' The Rev. shows 'Goddess nimbate, seated facing on lion couchant r., holding fillet in outstretched r. hand and lotus in l. hand or lotus only.' The goddess, as usual, is Durgā Simhavāhanā.
Varieties of this type are mainly those of legends which are:
(1) Sākshād iva (Narasimha) Simha-Mahendro jayatyanīsām, ‘Like God Narasimha in flesh and blood, King Simha-Mahendra is ever-victorious;’ (2) Kṣitipatirajitamahendra-Kumāragupta divam jayati; (3) Kumāragupta vijaya Simha-Mahendro divam jayati; (4) Kumāragupta yudhi Simha-vikramah.

The legend on the Rev. is Śrī-Mahendrasimhaḥ or Simha-
mahendraḥ.

Tiger-slayer type. Its Obv. shows ‘King to l., wearing waist-
cloth, jewellery, and head-dress, shooting tiger which falls back-
wards on l., with bow held in r. hand, l. hand drawing string of bow; 
his r. foot tramples on tiger; crescent-topped standard bound with 
fillet on l.’ On Rev. is shown ‘Goddess standing l. in lotus plant (?), 
holding lotus with long stalk behind her in l. hand and feeding peac-
cock with fruit in r. hand.’

The legend on Obv. is Śrīmān Vyaṅgrabudalaparākramah and on 

The goddess feeding peacock is to be taken as goddess Durgā, 
as explained above. The peacock introduced on coinage for the first 
time directly suggests the regular Peacock type of coinage.

Peacock type. The Obv. shows ‘King, nimbathe, standing l. 
wearig waist-cloth with long sashes and jewellery, feeding peacock 
from bunch of fruit held in r. hand, l. hand behind him.’ The Rev. 
show ‘Kārtikeya, nimbathe, three-quarters to l., riding on his peacock 
Paravāṇi, holding spear in l. hand over shoulder (śakti-dhara), with 
r. hand sprinkling incense on altar on r. (?) the peacock on a kind 
of platform.’

The legend on Obv. is Jayati svabhūmava guṇarāśi, followed by 
five more characters on r., and ends Mahendra-Kumāraḥ on l. The 
legend on Rev. is Mahendra-Kumāraḥ.

Pratāpa type. The Obv. shows ‘Male figure, wearing long loose 
robe, with arms on breast in (jñānamudrā attitude) standing facing; 
on his l. female figure to r., wearing long loose robe and helmet, with 
shield on l. arm, and holding out r. hand (closely resembling 
Minerva); on his r. a female figure wearing long loose robe, standing 
l., holding out r. hand and resting l. on hip; the two latter appear to 
be addressing the central figure; Garuḍa standard behind central 
figure.’ The Rev. shows ‘Goddess seated facing on lotus, holding 
lotus in uplifted r. hand and resting l. on knee.’

The legend on Obv. is Kumāraguptaḥ on either side of the 
central figure. There is a long inscription on the margin, of which 
only the lower parts of the letters remain on the plan. On the Rev. 
is the legend Śrī-Pratāpaḥ after which the type is named. This title
may be taken to indicate restoration of his pratāpa or power by the
victories of his Crown-Prince, Skanda Gupta, over the Hūṇas and
the Mlechchha peoples.

The Obv. type is unique. ‘It seems to be restruck on another,
perhaps non-Indian coin. The central figure is Indian in style, while
the two others are quite foreign.’ These probably came from the
conquered foreign peoples. Kings by tradition had female-attend-
ants in their menial service.

Elephant-rider type. The Obv. shows ‘King holding goad in r.
hand, seated on elephant which advances l.; behind him is seated
an attendant holding ebhātra over him.’ The Rev. shows ‘Lakṣmī
standing facing on lotus flower, grasping stalk of lotus growing
beside her in her r. hand and holding lotus flower in l. arm.’ There
is no clue to connect this coinage with Kumāra Gupta. The elephant
is associated with Lakṣmī on whose head it pours water according
to tradition.

Silver Coins. It is to be recalled that the first Gupta silver
coinage was inaugurated by Chandra Gupta II as the result of his
conquests of the western Kṣatrapa territories in which he had to
keep in circulation the old familiar coins of the displaced rulers,
with some modifications indicative of the new regime. But this
conquest took place in the later period of his reign and so his silver
issues are not known for their number or variety. His son, Kumāra
Gupta I, however, had a longer control of these territories and more
opportunities for issuing his silver coins in greater abundance and
variety.

They fall broadly under four classes with some varieties in
each.

Class I most closely resembles the coins of Chandra Gupta II
and may be regarded as their immediate successors whose features
they continue such as the Kṣatrapa bust on the obverse, traces of
varṣha and corrupt Greek letters and well-executed Garuḍa on Rev.
with 7 stars above it, and also the same legend: Paramabhāgavata
Mahārājādhirāja-Sri-Kumārajā Gupta-Mahendrādityah.

It is to be noted that even Skanda Gupta also struck coins of
this type, proving that they belonged to a particular locality in
western India, perhaps Surāśṭra, where Chandra Gupta II first had
to strike these coins.

Class II does not copy so closely the features of the Kṣatrapa
coins. It omits the Greek letters on Obv. on which the bust
also is nominally kept up, as well as the figure of Garuḍa on Rev.
which drops the seven fillets. Thus these coins belonged to a
locality in western India where Kṣatrapa coins were not so known.
Class III, however, returns to Kshatrapa features, carefully executed bust and Greek letters on obverse, but rudely treated Garuda, which is all body and no neck but with prominent wings, on Rev. Their small thick fabric points to their similarity to the coins of the Traikutaka dynasty meant for southern Gujarat.

The legend on Class II is Paramabhadgavata-Rajjajahiraja-Sri-Kumaragupta-Mahendradityaḥ, but on some specimens the first word is Bhagavata and not Paramabhadgavata.

The legend on Class III is Paramabhadgavata-Maharajajahiraja-Sri-Kumaragupta-Mahendradityaḥ.

The first three classes of silver coins were meant for circulation in the western Provinces.

Class IV comprises silver coinage which was introduced by Kumara Gupta I for the first time to the central parts of the Gupta empire, in the Ganges valley. As it is far removed from western India, it also eliminates most of the Kshatrapa features. For instance, the bust on Obv. shows more of portraiture. Greek letters are replaced by a date in Brāhmi. On Rev. again, the degraded Garuda is discarded in favour of a peacock standing facing with outspread wings and tail. The peacock here appears as the vehicle (Paravinta) of god Kārtikeya who is also called Kumāra, of whom Kumāra Gupta was a devotee, as his father was a devotee of Viṣṇu.

These coins also discard the Vaisnava legends and bear a legend inspired by the military spirit: vijitāvānāravaniyapatih Kumāragupta divam jayati.

The Obv. bears in numerals the date 100+20+4=Gupta year 124=A.D. 443. Other specimens of this variety bear the dates 118, 119 and 122 of the Gupta year (D.C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions p. 208).

Class V comprises coins which are silver-plated and have a core of copper, showing debased issue of the silver coins called for by financial stringency. These coins have been found only in particular locality, though in large numbers, round the ancient city of Valabhi.

Their Obv. shows head r. with traces of Greek letters, and the Rev. Garuda crudely executed.

The legend is Paramabhadgavata-Rajjajahiraja-Sri-Kumaragupta-Mahendradityaḥ.

Copper Coins. Only two specimens of the copper coins of Kumara Gupta I are known so far, and they present two types. Type I shows on Obv. king standing r. wearing waist-cloth and
jewellery, l. hand on hip, apparently throwing incense on altar with r. hand. The Rev. shows Garuḍa with outstretched wings standing facing and the legend Kumāraguptaḥ.

The Type II specimen shows on Obv. an altar with the legend Śrī-Ku below it. Its Rev. shows goddess (Lakṣmī) seated on lion couchant r., facing, holding cornucopia in r. arm., and lotus in r. hand.
CHAPTER VII
SKANDA GUPTA VIKRAMĀDITYA
(f. A.D. 455-467)

Dates. The date A.D. 455 for Skanda Gupta’s accession to
sovereignty may be taken from the fact that he was the immediate
successor of his father Kumāra Gupta I on the Gupta throne. This
fact we know from the definite statement contained in the Bhatari
Stone Pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta to the effect that he suc-
cceeded him as his son (sutta) on the ground of both his fidelity to his
father (‘adhering to the feet of his father like the bee to the lotus’),
and his superior military qualifications as ‘the only hero of the Gupta
family’ (Guptavamsaikavira) who had even as Crown-Prince, as we
shall see, to fight his father’s battles against the many enemies of
the Gupta empire and had to continue that fight after he became
emperor. Thus his succession to his father’s throne was immediate
and did not permit any interval or delay. The earliest inscrip-
tion of Skanda Gupta, that of Junāgadh Rock, also furnishes three dates
of his reign, the years 136, 137 and 138. This inscription also shows
that the Gupta hold on Surāshtra and Kathiawar was quite strong
in the time of Skanda Gupta, showing also that he was the imme-
diate successor of his father. The next dated inscription of his reign
is the Kahaum Stone Pillar inscription of the year 141=A.D. 460,
found in a village in the Gorakhpur district. The third dated in-
scription of his reign is that of the copper-plate found at Indrapura
in the Vīshāya or Province of Antaravedi. It bears the date 146=
A.D. 465. The last dated inscription of his reign is the Gadhwa Stone
inscription (Fleet No. 66) of the year 148=A.D. 467, which does not
mention that it was issued in the reign of Skanda Gupta, but this may
be taken as proved from the fact that the exact words used in the
Indor Copper-plate inscription in relation to the reign of Skanda
Gupta are also used here (pravardhamānāvijaya-rājya). In this
connexion, mention may also be made of another inscription found
at Kosam (Kausāmbi) on the pedestal of a sculpture showing Śiva
and Pārvatī standing, and bearing the date 139 which falls within
the chronological limits of Skanda Gupta’s reign. It is stated to
have been issued by Mahārāja Bhīmavarman who may be taken to
have been a local chief owning allegiance to Skanda Gupta, ‘Mahā-
rājādhirāja,’ as the paramount sovereign.

Lastly, his silver coins also bear dates which have been read
by Vincent Smith as 144, 145 and 148=A.D. 467 (I.A. 1902 f. 266).
Thus his reign may be dated A.D. 455-467.
Succession. The epigraphic evidence as to succession has been already mentioned above. We may add to it the evidence of the Junāgadh Rock inscription stating that Lakṣhmī, the Goddess of Fortune, ‘after examining by turns with due deliberation and seriously reflecting on the roots of all his virtues and foibles, fixed Her choice upon him and rejected all other sons of the sovereign.’ This shows that, in accordance with the previous practice, the succession to the Gupta throne was regulated by merit rather than birth, the father choosing the best of his sons to succeed him. The epigraphic evidence is corroborated by a piece of literary evidence indicated in a verse contained in the work Ārya-Mañju-Sīr-Mūlakalpa giving the following succession list of kings, viz., Samudra, Vikrama, Mahendra, and Devarāja, corresponding to the kings Samudra Gupta, Chandra Gupta II Vikramāditya, Kumāra Gupta Mahendrāditya, and Skanda Gupta. Skanda Gupta is described in this passage as sakrādīya, i.e., as one whose name begins with ‘sa’, but is also given a new name not mentioned in the inscriptions, viz., the name Devarāja. As we know, the name Devarāja was also assumed by his grandfather Chandra Gupta II whose title Vikramāditya is also assumed by Skanda Gupta. It may be further noted that Devarāja is the name of god Indra whose other name, Mahendra, is assumed by his father, Kumāra Gupta I. The comparison of these Gupta kings to Indra is first made in the case of Samudra Gupta whom the Allahabad Pillar inscription describes as the equal of Indra among other gods, while the Kahaum Stone inscription of ?f. 460 describes Skanda Gupta himself as resembling god Śakra (Śakrapama). It is no wonder that Kumāra Gupta, the father of Śakrapama Skanda Gupta is called Śakrādīya, by Yuan-Chwang on the basis of this epigraphic tradition, instead of the numismatic designation of Mahendrāditya.

History. There is an important document for the history of Skanda Gupta’s reign, the Bhitāri inscription (Fleet No. 13). This inscription records the career of Skanda Gupta both as Crown Prince and as king.

As Crown Prince, he was deputed as ‘the sole hero of the Gupta dynasty (guptavairāikaśira) to deal with the enemies bent on conquest (vijigisbā-prodyatānāṁ paresbāṁ), the Pushyamitras, who had gathered all their strength and resources (samudditabalakoshāṁ). These he subdued (jitra) and was then trying (udyatena) to reinstate the Goddess of Fortune of his dynasty shaken by them (vichiśalita kula-Lakṣhmī).

As king, after his father had died (pitāri divamupetṛ), when Gupta fortune was overwhelmed (viplutāṁ), he restored it by his own conquests which he reported to his mother who listened with
tears of joy in her eyes, as Krishṇa reported his victories to his mother Devakī.

Besides restoring the former Gupta power, he increased it by fresh conquests of the earth and showed mercy to the vanquished in distress (avasthit vijitāḥ and jītavārdeṣhū kriṇītā dayām).

He shook the earth (dharā kampitā) in subduing the mighty Hūnas with whom he came into close conflict (Hūnāīryasya samāgatasya samare).

His history is also related in another inscription, Junāgadh Rock inscription of A.D. 455 (Fleet No. 14) which gives it as follows: He set against the hostile kings who were like "so many serpents, lifting up their hoods in pride and arrogance, the authority of his local representatives like so many Garuḍas" (narapatībhujagāṇānāṁ mānadar-potphamāṇānāṁ pratikṛiti Garuḍājīīāṁ nirvishā bhāvakartā). "When his father had died (pitarī surasakabiivam prāptavat) he, by his own prowess (ātmāsakhyā), humbled his enemies (avatārīrā) and made subject to himself the earth bounded by the four oceans and flourishing countries (ebhunrdadbi jālāntām sādhta paryanta devaṁ avamān).

"Nest, he also (apiccha) destroyed at its roots the pride of his enemies (ānūlabbhagnadarpā) in the Melechha countries and made them announce that ‘victory has been achieved by him (jitaṁva).’

Hence he was selected for the throne, discarding (upapetya) all other princes, after fully weighing the grounds of their virtues and failings, by the Goddess of Fortune.

"Having thus conquered the whole earth and the pride of his enemies, he set about organizing his empire by appointing Governors in all the Provinces (sārveshū devēśaḥ niṣṭhāya gopāraṁ) and had to spend much thought (saśchintayāmāsa bahu-prakāram) to find out among his Officers (Provincial Governors) (sārveshū bhīrīyēśu samābhateshū) the most competent of them who could shoulder the burden (bhārasya utakbhāma samarthab) of administering the whole of the Suraśṭrā countries newly acquired (praśishtyām nibhīlān Suraśṭrān).

"Many a day and night did the king spend on this thought till he appointed Parśadatta to rule over the Suraśṭrā region. Posting Parśadatta on the west quarter, the king was easy at heart, just as the gods were by appointing Varuṇa as the guardian of the western quarter."

These epigraphic data help us to construct the political history of the times. It is evident that, during the later days of Kumaṇa Gupta, I, the Gupta empire had to face a number of enemies, among whom are mentioned the Pushyamitra. It had, in fact, to face a coalition of enemies pooling all their resources. These Skanda Gupta, as Crown Prince, was able to subdue, but, unfortunately, his
PLATE VIII
COINS OF SKANDA GUPTA

1. Bow and Arrow Type

2. King and Lakshmi Type

3. Silver Coin
father died before the fallen fortune of the family was restored by him by his conquests. Kumāra Gupta saw kula-Lakṣmī both shaken (śicālita) and overwhelmed (vipālita).

Skanda Gupta did not stop by merely conquering his enemies. His military spirit thus roused drove him towards dīgvijaya. But it was also a dharma-vijaya, for he showed mercy to the vanquished by reinstating them in their kingdoms.

In the course of his conquests, he had also to subdue the Hūṇas, and also the Mlechchha countries.

The result of these conquests was that he extended the territory of the Gupta empire up to the limits of the four oceans and annexed to it many flourishing countries.

His conquest in different directions was complete, for he is said to have destroyed the very roots of the power of his enemies who themselves announced that victory was his. In the Kahaum Stone Pillar inscription (Fleet No. 15), 'the result of his conquests is described by the heads of hundred kings falling at his feet in tendering their homage at his Darbar-hall (Upaśṭhāna). It also describes Skanda Gupta as the Lord of Hundred Kings (kṣiti-paśaṭapatīḥ), as the equal of Indra (śakrapaṇa), and as one whose reign was tranquil (śānta), being free from all troubles.

His conquests were also consolidated by his administration. He was quite a realist in politics and perceived how the Gupta empire was encircled by a ring of enemies in its outlying parts, who were ready to rise against it at the slightest opportunity. Therefore, he appointed efficient local governors who, like so many Garuḍas, might eat up the serpents as they lifted their hoods for attack. A fruitful and constant source of trouble was the old Śaka kingdom of Surāśṭra newly annexed to the Gupta empire. There he appointed as Governor (Gopī) the best of his provincial governors, Parṇadatta by name. While he was the Governor of the Province, his son, Chakrapālīta, was placed in charge of its capital named Girinagara.

There is a theory that the enemies mentioned in these inscriptions were his brothers whom Skanda Gupta fought for the throne, but the theory seems untenable on several grounds. The many enemies that Skanda Gupta had to conquer are clearly described in the inscriptions not as the internal but as the external enemies of the Gupta dynasty. They made its fortune totter. Such a description cannot apply to its scions.

The inscriptions also do not make room for any internal fratricidal war for the throne. The process of defeating the enemies of the Gupta empire is described as a continuous and prolonged process in which Skanda Gupta was engaged as Crown Prince by
his father. He had to continue it even as king. Over and above this, the significant term amalātmā, ‘of soul pure and unsullied,’ as applied to him in the inscription, should rule out the supposition that he could shed the blood of his brothers for the sake of the throne.

It is also urged that Skanda Gupta was not the immediate or legitimate heir to the throne on the ground that his mother is not mentioned in the Bihar and Bhitari Stone Pillar inscriptions, while the mother of his brother, Pura Gupta, is mentioned in the Bhitari Seal inscription (J.A.S.B, 1889, pp. 84-103) as Mahādevi Anantadevi. But the epigraphic practice on the point is not uniform or conclusive.

Administration. The inscriptions of the time of Skanda Gupta give some interesting details regarding administration. The empire was made up of provinces under governors. The term for a Province is Deva. There are also other terms used such as Avanī and Vishaya. The Governor is called Gopālī and district officer Vishayapati. Parnādatta is called the Gopāl of Surāshtra Avanī. Śarvanāga is mentioned as the District Magistrate of Antaravedī Vishaya. A feudatory was also sometimes appointed as the Governor of a Province, e.g. Mahārāja Bhīmavarman of Kosam (Kauśāmbi), as is mentioned in the Stone Image inscription of that place of A.D. 458.

The administration of a Vishya or District was carried on by officers put in charge of different departments. Some of these are mentioned in the Bihar Stone Pillar inscription (Fleet No. 12), such as Agrabharika, Salkika (in charge of collections of toll or customs), Ganimika (in charge of forests).

The cities were placed in charge of executive officers. Thus, Chakrapālī was the Mayor (Nagārunakshaka) of the city called Girinagara which was the provincial capital of Saurāshtra. Āja is the name of a paura or city in another Vishaya (Fleet No. 12). Similarly, Kakubha is the name of what is called a jewel of a village, famous (khyāta) as being hallowed (pūta) by its association with saints (jādburāmsarga). Indrapura is a city in the Vishaya of Antaravedi (Fleet No. 16).

The administration of the difficult city of Girinagara, the capital of the country of the Surāshtras, has been described in detail in the inscription (Fleet No. 14). The province itself was also a difficult charge. Its governance was a problem for the emperor who exercised his mind on it for ‘many days and nights’ till he thought of Parnādatta as the only man (ekāh) who was able to shoulder the burden (bhārasya-udvahane) of that administration (prasishyāt). But Parnādatta was himself so modest (vītā), upright (satya), straightforward (ārjāvā) and above all temptations (vīsūdhā), that the king was able to make him accept that exalted
office only after a good deal of entreaties and persuasion. By appointing him to the charge of the western regions, the king was easy of heart, like the gods securing Varuṇa as the guardian of the western quarter.

Parṇadatta on his part was hard put to it to find a fit administrator for the capital of that troubled province. He selected his son Chakrapālita after testing (parikṣaṇa) in person his qualities before appointing him Mayor of the city which he administered better than his predecessors. By his benign administration of the city, Chakrapālita made all people feel quite at ease, but at the same time kept under control its mischievous characters. The inscription singles out some of the administrative qualities which make a successful Mayor of a city. He must be free from debts (anṛṇyaṁ), so that he may be above the financial temptations of his office, above bribery and corruption. He must be possessed of eloquence (vākya), so that he may be able to carry with him the votes of the Municipal Council. He must be civil in manners (dākṣinyaṁ), smiling and cheerful at speaking (pūrvasmiṭābhāṣana), and possessed of charity (dāna). He must show honour (māna), where it is due. Mayor Chakrapālita was futher possessed of the very useful habit of making social calls on his fellow citizens by paying visits to their houses (grihapravēda) in a free and unceremonious manner (niryantraṁ), while he further added to his popularity (saṅvardhibhāṣa-prati) by holding receptions at his own residence (grihapacekaraṁ).

The efficiency of Chakrapālita’s municipal administration was soon put to a severe strain and test. Owing to excessive rains, the lake Sudarśana which served the city suddenly burst (vibheda) in Gupta year 136= A.D. 453, with the result that all the rivers like Paḷāśini, and Suvarnasikā which took their rise from the neighbouring hills such as Ēṛjaya or Raivataka, and were received into the lake within which they remained confined (cīravandhana-ubhāraḥ), found their way into the ocean (saṃudra). The lake Sudarśana, which was like a veritable ocean (nimhitulya), drained of its waters, became Durdarśana, belying its name. The citizens in despair (vibhāda), were unable to decide what they should do when Chakrapālita came to their rescue in a true civic spirit, full of regard for the welfare of his city (bitārtham-nagarasacha) and for his king, had the breach repaired and the embankment renewed by an unlimited expenditure of wealth which he found out of his privy purse within the short period of two months. The embankment was 100 cubits long, 68 broad and of 7 men’s height, a great masonry work (samyaκ-ghoṣita-upalena), so that the reservoir (taฑa) might last for all time (śāsvat-kalpaka-kālan). Thus was brought about the renovation (samśkāra) of lake (taṇḍa) Sudarśana.
Chakrapālita crowned his public work by the construction of the temple of god, Chakrabhīrī, consecrating his life to the sacred feet of Lord Govinda and the lotus feet of Vishnu carrying the discus (chakrā).

**Religion.** Skanda Gupta was known for his policy of religious toleration which gave free scope to private philanthropy creating endowments in favour of different religions then prevailing in the country. Chakrapālita's endowment of a temple has been mentioned above. The Kahaum Stone Pillar inscription records an endowment in favour of Jainism, the fashioning of five stone images of Ādikārtīṣ or Tirthahāṅkaras (Ādinātha, Sāntinātha, Neminātha, Pārśva, and Mahāvīra) in the niches of a pillar of stone (śailastāmbha) looking like the summit of a hill, and planted in the ground. The Indore Copper-plate inscription (Fleet No. 16) records a gift in aid of a temple of the Sun (Savita). The temple was established by two Khatttiyas named Achalavarman and Bhrukunṭhasimha, who are also described as following the unusual occupation of merchants (vamike). For this temple, the provision for a lamp was made by a Brāhmaṇa named Devavishṇu, a Chatuvṛddhi Brahmin (of Rāṇāyaṇīya śākha and Varshagaṇa gotra). The Bihar Stone Pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta describes the erection of a yūpa or pillar and the construction of a group of temples (devaniketanāmandalam) dedicated to gods headed by god Skanda (Skandrāpradśānāṇī) and also to the Divine Mothers (Mātṛbhiṣṭha). The Divine Mothers were thus listed:

Brāhmaṇa Māheśvarī chaiva Kaunāri Vaiśṇavī tathā
Maṇḍekrī chaiva Vārāhi Chāmūṇḍā saptamātaraḥ

There is another list of eight Mothers.

Brāhmaṇa Māheśvarī Chandra Vārāhi Vaiśṇavī tathā
Kaunāri chaiva Chāmūṇḍā Charechikṣetrayaśāhmataraḥ

The village where these works were constructed is called Skanda-Gupta-baṭa named after either the god Skanda or the emperor Skanda Gupta. Besides these Divine Mothers, the inscription also mentions goddess Bhadraṇīya, also named Bhadrikā, who may be taken to be Pārvati (Āryā =, wife of Bhadra = Śiva) [D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, I. 317-19].

**Economic Conditions:** Glimpses of economic life and organization of the times are given in some inscriptions. We have already seen that the engineers of the Gupta empire were able enough to construct a reservoir of the magnitude of lake Sudaśāna by damming up rivers by means of embankments of solid masonry work. Industry seems to have been organized under Śrenīs or
Guilds, of the working of which some details are given in the Indor Copper-plate inscription of G.R. 146=A.D. 465. It states that the city called Indrapura was the abode (nivāsā) of a Tailika-Śrenī, a Guild of Oilmen. The foreman of the Guild (Pravara) is named Śruta. A Brahmin makes over to the Guild a donation of money (mālya) to be held by it in perpetuity (ājāstikām). Out of this fund and its interest was to be provided a quantity of oil, two palas by weight (tāryaṇeṣa), to be applied to the maintenance of a lamp (dīopolyaham). The supply of this quantity of oil was not to be interrupted (abhagnayogam). The fund was also to be kept intact by the Guild without any diminution from its original value (prathamaṇihāvachdhihinnavanastham). That the guild was well-organized and prosperous as a corporation is shown by the fact that it was trusted with a permanent fund although it might change its place, provided such a change of place did not affect its stability (yatāsthibṛāyayā). The guild also acted like a Bank in receiving a deposit to be held in perpetuity for a purpose prescribed by the donor. It was to maintain intact the corpus of the donation which the Bank could invest for profit which would enable it to pay the cost of oil required to feed a lamp to light a temple. The donor of the deposit and the bank were bound by a regular contract which was registered (dāyamimāṁ nibaddham). The violation (vyakramana) of this stipulation was condemned as the greatest of sins (mahāpāta). Thus the Guild acted as a Bank in receiving a deposit on stipulated terms. It could also like a Bank invest the deposit and earn an income from the investment. Like a Bank, it also paid interest on the deposit out of the profit earned on it. But in this case, the interest was to be paid to the beneficiary to whom it was assigned by the donor. The beneficiary in this transaction was a temple. Thus this particular obligation agreed to by the Bank was very helpful in stimulating public benefactions. A philanthropist was not at pains to find out how he could best dispose of his charities so that they might be permanently secured against loss. Gifts are not forthcoming where their security, amount, and purpose are not guaranteed. This local Bank of a Guild by acting as an administrator of trust-properties contributed very largely to the cultural life of the community by taking charge of donations for its purposes. The Bihar Stone Pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta also records the gift of a permanent religious endowment aptly called akshayanāti created in the town of Ajapuraka, but the name of the corporation to whom the donation is entrusted is not traceable in the inscription.

Coins. Skanda Gupta's gold coins are not marked by the variety of types issued by his predecessors. His gold coinage shows only two or probably three types as described below:

G.R.—7
I. **Gold**: (r) **Archer type**: *Obv.* shows king holding bow and arrow with *garudadvajā* to his r.; legend: *Skanda* and ‘*Jayati mahistalam*’ and ‘*Jayati divam Śrī Kramādītyaḥ*’ and the interesting epithet *Sudbhumī*, skilled bowman.

*Rev.* shows ‘*Śrī Skandaguptaḥ*’ or *Kramādītyaḥ* with Lakṣmi on lotus.

(2) **King and Lakṣmi type**: *Obv.* shows king with bow and arrow, and a female not to be taken as the queen but Lakṣmi, and Garuḍa between them.

*Rev.* shows a female with lotus in r. hand (to be taken as Lakṣmi); in celebration of Lakṣmi invoked in the Inscript. No. 14 (Junāgadh). The prominence given in this type to Lakṣmi is due to the king’s gratitude to his tutelary deity or *Kula-Lakṣmi* in helping him to restore the fallen fourtunes of his family.

The majority of the gold coins of Skanda Gupta are of the Archer type but this type divides itself into two very distinct classes by weight and also by legends. Thus the first class was struck on a standard of about 132 grains of good gold. They must have been struck earlier in his reign, as they correspond in weight to his predecessor’s coins.

The second class under the Archer type comprises coins which are struck on a standard of 144.6 grains. This higher weight is coupled with a baser metal. The majority of these coins came from the Kalighat hoard and might have been in circulation in the eastern parts of the empire, and in the later years of his reign.

The difference in legends is pointed out above.

With regard to the ‘King and Lakṣmi’ type, some numismatists call it ‘King and Queen’ type on the ground of its resemblance to the Chandra Gupta I type of Samudra Gupta. But the resemblance is superficial. As has been noted above, the king on the *Obv.* does not wear the Kushān dress shown on the Archer type but wears only waist-cloth and jewellery, nor is he nimbate, while there is a Garuḍa standard in front of him. On the right is a standing female figure supposed to be Skanda Gupta’s queen. But this supposition is unlikely. The lotus flower in her l. hand, with the plant shooting up behind her rather makes her out to be goddess Lakṣmi. She also resembles the Lakṣmi on the reverse of some specimens of Chandra Gupta II’s Chhatra type. A queen is appropriate on the Aśvamedha type for the part she has to take in the sacrifice and is marked out by the regal *chowrie* which is not found here. The coin also gives expression to what Skanda Gupta owes to goddess Lakṣmi in retrieving the lost glory of his family, as stated in the Junāgadh inscription.

(3) **Horseman type**: Only one specimen of this type is known
and kept in the Bodleian collection. Its weight of 140.5 grains connects it with Skanda Gupta, as well as its Rev. legend, ‘Kramādityaḥ’.

I. Silver: Skanda Gupta’s silver coins were issued both in the western and central provinces of the empire and thus fall naturally into two classes.

Western Issues: These present three Rev. types, viz., Garuḍa, Bull (Nandi) and Altar. The Obv. has the king’s bust in common. The Garuḍa type shows on Rev. Garuḍa standing with outstretched wings and legend ‘Paramabhūgavata Mahārājā- dhīrāja Śri Skandagupta-Kramādityaḥ’.

The Bull type is represented by a small series of coins of very base metal.

The Altar types shows on Rev. burning altar in centre with legend ‘Paramabhūgavata Śri Vikramādityaḥ Skandaguptaḥ’ or ‘Kramādityaḥ’, or without Aditya title.

It is to be noted that the Garuḍa type is comparatively scarce and does not also show variety of fabric, as compared with Kumāra Gupta’s Garuḍa type. These facts suggest the conclusion that Skanda Gupta’s hold on western territories was lost later, and that he probably did not hold the district where Kumāra Gupta’s coins show such a variety of fabric.

As regards the Bull type, its specimens were found in Kathiawar, pointing to Gupta dominion in Valabhi whose Senāpatis adopted the badge of a Bull.

The Altar Type is the commonest, mis-shapen, and of rude fabric, in circulation in Cutch where the coins were found. They show different legends, viz., ‘Vikramāditya’ or absence of ‘Āditya’ title.

Central Provinces Issues: These coins do not show any alteration from those of Kumāra Gupta. They show two classes bearing the two following legends:

1. Vijitāvanir avanipatir jayati divam Skandaguptyam.
2. Vijitāvanir avanipatih Śri-Skandagupto divam jayati.

Extent of the Empire. It will thus appear on the basis of both epigraphic and numismatic evidence that at the zenith of his power Skanda Gupta ruled over an extensive empire which included practically the whole of northern India from Kathiawad in the west to Bengal in the east. Towards the west, the empire included regions like Surāṣṭra, districts of Cambay, and the contiguous parts of Gujarāt and Malwa. The Junagadh inscription proves his hold on Surāṣṭra and his Bull type of coins over the Cambay coast, as the Altar type points to his hold over Cutch. It also appears that Bhaṭṭārka, the founder of the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhi, was
originally a Senāpati who must have helped Skanda Gupta in his administration in Kathiawad. The third Maitraka ruler is Drona Simha who lived about A.D. 502, the year 183 mentioned in his Bhamodra Mohotta Copper-plate inscription. In that inscription, he still acknowledges his loyalty to a paramount sovereign referred to as Paramabhaṭṭāraka-pādānudhyāta. In another inscription, Drona Simha refers to his paramount sovereign who personally attended and accomplished his coronation. The inscription states that the supreme (Paramasvāmi) and sole (Ekasvāmi) lord of the entire territory himself personally attended and had the ceremony of his consecration properly executed (svayamupabita rājyābhi-
shukāh). If the date of Drona Simha is A.D. 502, the date of his grandfather Bhaṭṭārka must be about 40 or 50 years earlier, so as to belong to the reign of Skanda Gupta. Bhaṭṭārka must have materially helped Skanda Gupta in maintaining his sway over these remote western regions, which were not even then free from troubles evidently caused by the Hānas against whom the defence of Surāśṭra was a matter of great concern to the Gupta emperor who, as stated in the Junagadh inscription, had to spend several anxious days and nights to find out a proper governor for the province till his choice fell upon Parṇadatta. It will appear that Parṇadatta and Bhaṭṭārka were contemporaries and probably divided between them the civil and military administration of the province. That is why Bhaṭṭārka is called a Senāpati of his paramount sovereign. Later on, probably after Parṇadatta, the military as usual got the better of the civil administration, so that ultimately Bhaṭṭārka became both the civil and military governor of Surāśṭra. This change is indicated in one of his Valabhī Copper-plates, using the expression Maulibhratamitra-srenibhalavāpta-rājyārtha, `equipped with the military strength derived from an army recruited from various classes called Maula, Bhṛita, Mitra and Sreni, and also with the glory of kingship’. This clearly shows the union of both civil (rājya) and military (bala) functions in the provincial governor. As the higher offices in the Gupta administration were hereditary, Bhaṭṭārka was succeeded in his position in Surāśṭra by his son, Dharasena I, followed by his grandson Drona Simha. The inscriptions show that while Bhaṭṭārka and Dharasena I had each the title of Senāpati, Drona Simha assumed the title of Mahārāja, although he still acknowledged his loyalty to the Gupta overlord. But who exactly was this Gupta overlord in A.D. 502, it is difficult to ascertain.

There were other able governors of Skanda Gupta to help him to maintain his imperial sovereignty of northern India, such as Sar-
vanāga, who was in charge of the territory between the Kālindī and Narmadā, and Bhīmavarman in charge of the Kauśāmbī region.
CHAPTER VIII

PŪRU GUPTA VIKRAMA-PRAKĀŚĀDITYA

(C. A.D. 467-469)

Succession. The immediate successor of Skanda Gupta seems to have been Pāru Gupta who was his brother. This we know from the Bhitarī Seal inscription of Kumāra Gupta (III) which states that 'Mahārājādhirāja Śri Pāru Gupta was the son (putra) of Mahā- rājādhirāja Śri Kumāra Gupta by his wife and queen Mahādevi,' and 'one who was meditating on the feet of his father in devoted loyalty to him (tat pādāṇudhyāta).

It will be noticed that this inscription mentions Pāru Gupta immediately after Kumāra Gupta and does not mention Skanda Gupta. This had led some scholars to suppose that Pāru Gupta was not the successor of Skanda Gupta but his rival who was not on friendly terms with him. But the epigraphic practice on the point does not warrant this supposition. 'The name of Pulakesin II is omitted in an inscription of his brother and Yuvāraja, Vishnuvardhana (Satara grant, Ind. Ant. 1890, pp. 22 f.). The name of Bhoja II of the Imperial Prathāra dynasty is not mentioned in the Partabgarh inscription of his nephew Mahendrapāla II, but it is mentioned in an inscription of his brother, Vināyakapāla, the father of Mahendrapāla. Besides, there was no custom prohibiting the mention of the name of a rival uncle or brother. Mangalesa and Govinda II are mentioned in the inscriptions of their rivals and their descendants. On the other hand, even an ancestor of a reigning king was sometimes omitted, e.g., Rudrasena II is omitted in one Ajanṭā inscription, Dharapaṭṭa is omitted in his son's inscription (Kielhorn N. Ins., No. 464).'

The mention in the inscription of Pāru Gupta immediately after Kumāra Gupta and his description as tat-pādāṇudhyāta are taken by some scholars to prove that Pāru Gupta was the immediate successor of his father. But on this point again epigraphic practice is not conclusive. There are several inscriptions where the omission of an immediate successor of his father is made. For instance, the term Śri Rānapāla-Deva-pādāṇudhyāta is applied to Madanapāla in the Manahali grant, although he was not the immediate successor of his father, being preceded by his elder brother Kumārapāla Again, in Kielhorn's Northern inscription No. 39, the son Vijayapāla

1. H. C. Raychaudhuri, Political History of Ancient India, p. 496, footnote 2.
is described as the successor of his father, though his immediate successor was his brother Devapāla (Ib. 495).

Indeed, considering both the epigraphic and numismatic evidence as to the extent of Skanda Gupta’s empire, the possibility is shut out of there being any rival ruler of his in any part of northern India including its eastern parts like Bihar and Bengal where his gold coins of depreciated metal were current, as stated above, e.g. at places like Gayā, Hugli, Midnapur (King and Lakshmī type), Faridpur and Jessore.

It will also appear that as Skanda Gupta lived long, his brother and successor, Pūru Gupta, came to the throne as an old man. Thus he did not reign long and died before A.D. 473 when his son Kumāra Gupta was ruling. In A.D. 455 Skanda Gupta was a full grown adult and quite mature in years to be able to carry on an arduous and protracted war against the many enemies of the Gupta empire and bring it to a triumphant conclusion.

History. We have already seen that numismatic evidence points to the position that Skanda Gupta’s hold on the Western Provinces of the empire was not very secure. The absence of silver coins of his successors points to the fact that theirs was a more restricted dominion which did not include Western India at all. In fact, the decline and fall of the Gupta empire may be taken to date from the end of Skanda Gupta’s reign, though the process was checked for a time by Budha Gupta. There is a scarcity of gold coins issued by his successors, coupled with their lack of variety, which cannot but indicate that their dominion was limited in extent, and that Gupta Imperial power, which held sway all over India, was now on the wane. There is an important literary source regarding Pūru Gupta. Paramārtha in his Life of Vasubandhu relates that a king named Vikramāditya whose capital was Ayodhyā became a patron of Buddhism through the influence of Vasubandhu whom he also appointed as the tutor of his Queen and the Crown Prince who is named Bālāditya. He further states that when Bālāditya became king, he invited Vasubandhu to come to Ayodhyā. Paramārtha’s statement is corroborated by the evidence of coins from which we learn that Pūru Gupta’s son Narasimha Gupta calls himself Bālāditya on these coins. We also learn from the coins of Pūru Gupta that he assumed the title of Śrī Vikrama, which suggests the full title of Vikramāditya on the analogy that King Chandra Gupta II calls himself Śrī Vikramaḥ on his Archer type of coins and Vikramādityaḥ on his Chhatra type.

On the basis of this finding, it may be assumed that the successors of Chandra Gupta II set up their capital at Ayodhyā. It
also appears from the Sarnath Stone inscription of Prakāśāditya (Fleet, No. 79) that they had another capital at Kāśi.

**Coins.** Puru Gupta’s gold coins are all of the Archer type and correspond very closely in style to Skanda Gupta’s heavier issues, weighing 142.7 and 141.4 grs. There are two varieties of this type: one with name Pura in field on Obv. coupled with the legend Śrī Vikramaḥ, on Rev.; the second variety is without Pura. But on some specimens the legend Pura is read as Budha by S. K. Sarasvati (I.C., April, 1935). In that case, those may have been the coins of Budha Gupta.

There are some interesting coins which on Rev. name a king called Śrī Prakāśāditya and on Obv. bear the legend ‘Vijjitya vasūdhāśīn divam jayati’. These coins are of the Horseman type and show on Obv. ‘king to right on horseback, slaying with sword in r. hand lion which leaps at him; bow round his body, with string over l. shoulder. Garuḍa standard on r.’ Allan conjectures that this Prakāśāditya may have been another name of Puru Gupta. According to the Bhūtari Seal inscription of Kumāra Gupta III, Puru Gupta’s queen was Mahādevī Śrī Chandradevī.
CHAPTER IX

SUCCESSORS OF PŪRU GUPTA

A new light is thrown on the vexed problem of the kings coming after Pūru Gupta by inscriptions on seals of Vishṇu Gupta and Budha Gupta recently discovered at Nālandā. The Vishṇu Gupta seal traces the genealogy of the Gupta kings as follows:

Pūru Gupta

| son Narasiṃha Gupta
| son Kumāra Gupta
| son Vishṇu Gupta

According to the reading of the inscription borne by the seal of Budha Gupta, the Gupta genealogy is as follows:

Mahārāja Śrī Gupta

| son Mahārāja Śrī Ghaṭotkacha

son Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Chandra Gupta I

m. Mahādevī Kumāradevi

son Lichchhavī-dauhitra Mahārājādhirāja Samudra Gupta m. Dattadevi

Apratiratha—Paramabhāgavata—
Mahārājādhirāja—Śrī—Chandra Gupta II

m. Mahādevī Dhruvadevi

son Mahārājādhirāja—Śrī—Kumāra Gupta (I)

m. Mahādevī Anantadevi

son Mahārājādhirāja—Śrī—Pūru Gupta

m. Mahādevī Chandradevi

son Paramabhāgavata Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Budha Gupta

The only point to be settled about this genealogy is the succession after Budha Gupta. It may be solved by a study of three relevant inscriptions, viz., those on the Sarnath Buddha Stone Image
of A.D. 473 and the inscriptions on the Bhitarî and Nālanḍā seals. It is possible to take the Kumāra Gupta of the Sarnath inscription to be different from the Kumāra Gupta of the seal without any violence to history or chronology, and to treat the Kumāra Gupta of the seal to be Kumāra Gupta III. In that case, the genealogy will stand as follows:

Pūru Gupta m. Queen Chandradevi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kumāra Gupta II (Sarnath inscr., (A.D. 473)</th>
<th>Budha Gupta a.d. (476-95)</th>
<th>Narasimha Gupta</th>
<th>Kumāra Gupta III</th>
<th>Vishnu Gupta (Bhitarî and Nālanḍā seals)</th>
</tr>
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</table>

The Nālanḍā seal of Budha Gupta makes him definitely the son of Pūru Gupta, while that of Narasimha Gupta also makes him a son of Pūru Gupta and of queen Chandradevi.

There is again a seal of Kumāra Gupta III who is the son of Nālanḍā seal of Kumāra Gupta III who is the son of Narasimha Gupta and of Mahādevi-Śri-Mitradevi.

The genealogy as suggested above obviates the location of too many kings between the year A.D. 467, the last known date of Skanda Gupta and 476, the earliest known date of Budha Gupta. According to the prevailing view, Pūru Gupta, Narasimha Gupta, Kumāra Gupta II and Vishnu Gupta, came one after the other within the short space of 9 years. The year A.D. 476, must have seen Vishnu Gupta too young to be king. He must have been then only a child. The point may be argued thus: Skanda Gupta who became king in A.D. 455 had to fight many a battle against powerful enemies and could not have been very old at the time. If we take him then to be 55, he should have been born in A.D. 400 and Pūru Gupta born a little later, say, A.D. 403. Vishnu Gupta, as his great grandson, could not have been born earlier than A.D. 475 and was, therefore, too young for the throne when it fell vacant after Kumāra Gupta II. For this reason the succession should be taken as given above so as to make the Kumāra Gupta, of Sarnath inscription as Kumāra Gupta II and succeeding Pūru Gupta in A.D. 475, while he in turn was succeeded by his brother, Budha Gupta, who reigned between A.D. 476 and 495. If Narasimha Gupta came after Budha Gupta, he would be placed in time for contact and conflict with the Hūnas, as stated by Yuan-chwang.

The Nālanḍā seal, besides helping towards the identification of Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya of the inscriptions and coins with king Bālāditya mentioned by Yuan-chwang, also helps us towards the
historicity of another king mentioned by him as the last of the series, viz., Vaiṣra. He may be identified with king Vainya Gupta mentioned in the inscription on a seal found at Nālandā and also on a copper-plate found at Gunaighar in the district of Tipperah. The inscription on the seal describes him as Śrī-Paramabha-gavato-Mahāraja-dhirāja-Śrī-Vainya Gupta, while that on the copper-plate mentions the year 188 = A.D. 508 as a date of his reign. The date helps his location in Gupta history. It was a time when northern India and the Gupta empire were fighting the aggression of the Hūṇas until they were overcome by Yaśodharman of Malwa. The fact probably was that Gupta supremacy was gradually retreating from the west towards eastern India held by the Gupta kings of Magadha and of Bengal as separate ruling families. Mahāraja-dhirāja Vainya Gupta must have been an independent Gupta king of Bengal.

The identification of Vainya with Vaiṣra is supported by deriving the word Vainya from Vena. Vainya is a patronymic from Vena which is a name of Indra who is also known for his Vaiṣra or thunderbolt. Therefore, Vaiṣra may be taken to be the same as Vainya.

**Summary.** To sum up the position regarding the perplexing problem of succession after Pūru Gupta: the succession is differently stated in different inscriptions. Thus Pūru Gupta is succeeded by (1) Narasimha Gupta according to Bhārata Seal inscription of Kumāra Gupta III and the Nālandā Seal inscription of Vishṇu Gupta; (2) Budha Gupta according to Nālandā Seal inscription and (3) Kumāra Gupta II on the basis of his date of A.D. 473 as given in the Sarnath Buddha Stone Image inscription. These differences among the inscriptions are due to the fact that they only mention the successor but not the immediate successor of the previous king. The differences may be reconciled and the true genealogy constructed in the light of the data given in two dated inscriptions, viz., the Sarnath Buddha Stone Image inscriptions of Kumāra Gupta and of Budha Gupta. The first mentions A.D. 473 as the date of Kumāra Gupta who must, therefore, be taken as Kumāra Gupta II and the second mentions A.D. 476 as the date of Budha Gupta. These two dates thus point to the irresistible conclusion that Pūru Gupta was immediately succeeded in A.D. 473 by Kumāra Gupta II after a short reign of 4 years from A.D. 467, the last date of his immediate predecessor, Skanda Gupta, while Kumāra Gupta II in his turn was immediately succeeded after a shorter reign of only 3 years by Budha Gupta in A.D. 476.¹

¹ I owe the genealogy and succession presented here to the suggestions first made by Mr. A. Ghosh, M.A. of the Archaeological Department in the *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XIX, pp. 119-125.
CHAPTER X

KUMĀRA GUPTA II KRAMĀDITYA

(c. A.D. 473-476)

Kumāra Gupta II. As has been indicated above, Kumāra Gupta II was the immediate successor of Pūru Gupta. The date of his accession is given in the Sarnath Buddha Stone Image inscription which records the date, Gupta year 154 (Varshaśate Guptānāṁ saṃvattuḥ pañcabāduttare), 'when Kumāra Gupta was protecting the earth (bhūminī rakṣati Kumāraguṇe).

Inscription. This inscription records the only event known in the reign of Kumāra Gupta II. It records that the Buddhist ascetic (yati) named Abhayamitra prompted by a mind disciplined (āvarjīta) by devotion caused to be constructed an image (pratimā), showing unparalleled workmanship (aparā), of the teacher (āstā) of whom there is no equal in merits (gnaṁ apratimūrya), for purposes of worship pūjārthavāṁ). 'Let this donor who is the abode of virtue (satvakaśya), by this religious merit thus acquired, obtain, along with his mother, father, preceptor, and ancestors, release from earthly desire and existence, "a consummation devoutly to be wished for" (abhinātām).

The appreciation of the artistic quality attributed to the sculptor in the inscription is amply borne out by a sight of the sculpture showing one of the best portraits of the Buddha in stone. The location of the sculpture is also very appropriate at a place like Sarnath as a centre of Buddhism.

Coins. The other point to be noticed about Kumāra Gupta II is his coinage. Some eighteen gold coins of his are in the British Museum and two in the Indian Museum. The coins are of the Archer type showing on Obv. 'King nimbate, standing 1., holding bow in l. hand and arrow in r. Garuḍa standard on 1., Ḫu with crescent above beneath l. arm;' and on Rev. 'Goddess (Lakshmi), nimbate, seated facing on lotus, holding fillet in r. hand and lotus in l., symbol on l.'

On r. occurs the legend Kramādityaḥ.

There are some coins of ruder fabric, showing on Obv. the word go or the word jā between king's feet and the legend around to the following effect: Mahārājāūbhīra jihadistsīrī-Kumāraguṇa-Kramādityaḥ.

The Rev. bears the legend Śrī-Kramādityaḥ.

These coin-legends testify to the status of Kumāra Gupta II as a regular emperor of the Gupta dynasty.
Imperial Status. His imperial status is further borne out by the Khoh Copper-plate inscription of Parivrajaka Mahârâja Hastin issued in the Gupta year 156 (śatpanchāsottarabādase) = A.D. 475 which belongs to the reign of Kumâra Gupta II, the time when, as stated in the inscription, 'the Gupta kings were in the enjoyment of sovereignty' (Gupta-mriga-râjya-bhûuktam). This expression shows that Hastin was his feudatory. Indeed, he was one of his most important feudatories who 'gave away thousands of cows, elephants, horses, and gold coins, and also many lands, as a religious devotee (bhâkta) and achieved victories in many hundreds of battles.'

Grant of Land. The inscription records the gift of a village named Vasunatarāshājika made to a Brahmin named Gopasvâmin of Vâjasaneyâ-Mâdhyandina Sâkhâ and Kautsa Gotra and to a few others named with him. The village had its boundaries fixed by trenches dug on all sides (samanâd garttâ) and the gift carried with it the incomes derived from taxes known as udrainga, the share of the produce due to the State, and uparikara, tax levied on cultivators who do not own the land they cultivate, together with the privilege that it should not be visited by the irregular or regular troops so as to be free from their exactions (a-châsa-bhâta-prâveṣya). These exactions proved to be burdensome taxation on the villagers in the form of forced contributions of money or provisions for the troops on march through the villages. Such inroads of the military on the rural civil population of the countryside with the financial levies they meant were thus not permitted in a village dedicated to a religious purpose. The village was also protected against disturbances (pyâghâta) from the royal family and its dependents (pâdapindopajivin). The grant, however, did not carry with it the income derived from fines imposed on thieves (chora-varjam = chora-danga-varjam occurring in the Khoh grant of Mahârâja Jayañâtha of the year 177). The chowkidâri tax or police cess was an integral part of the revenue-resources of the entire kingdom whose main function was the maintenance of its Law and Order and so the revenue derived from crimes could not be alienated.

The inscription describes Hastin himself as a sovereign who had feudatories of his own (pâda-pinâpajjivinah), 'subsisting on homage to the royal feet.'

Officers. The inscription further mentions the interesting detail that this grant or charter (kâsana) was written or engraved (lihita) by Sûryadatta, a descendant of an amâtya or counsellor, and of a Bhogika, the officer in charge of a division of a province or bhukti. It also mentions an officer called Dûtaka whose duty was that of a messenger to carry the king's sanction and order to the local
officials who would then have the grant or charter drawn up and delivered to the grantee.

**Mandasor Inscription.** Another event of the reign of Kumāra Gupta II is indicated in the Mandasor inscription (No. 18 of Fleet) stating, as already noticed, how a Sun-temple which was built by a guild of silk-weavers, who were immigrants from Lāṭa Vishaya, at the city of Daśapura under the popular rule of Bandhuvarman in Mālava year 493 = A.D. 436, was renovated by the same guild in the year 529 = A.D. 472. The repair of the temple thus took place in the reign of Kumāra Gupta II. As stated in the inscription, it was the time ‘when Kumāra Gupta was ruling over the earth’ (*Kumāragupte prithivīṁ prasāsati*).

The inscription thus also testifies to the imperial status of Kumāra Gupta II whose paramount sovereignty was recognized in Malwa and whose court was adorned by the great poet, Vatsabhaṭṭi, the author of this inscription which is a masterpiece of literary composition.
CHAPTER XI

BUDHA GUPTA

(c. A.D 476-495)

Budha Gupta. There are several inscriptions which are valuable sources of the history of Budha Gupta's reign.

Sarnath Inscriptions. Two inscriptions appear with practically the same text on two images in stone of the Buddha found at Sārnāth. The first bears the date Gupta year 154=A.D. 473 and mentions Kumāra Gupta (II) as then reigning (bhūmi rakshati Kumāragupte), while the latter mentions the date Gupta year 157 (Guptānāṁ sama-tikkrānte sapta-pañcbāsaduttare tate, 'when of the Guptas, 100 years increased by 57 had passed away') and Budha Gupta as 'ruling the earth, (prīthivīṁ Budhagupte pratāsati). The Gupta year 157=A.D. 476.

Images of the Buddha. The first of these images is that of standing Buddha with two attendant chauri-bearing figures (probably Bodhisattvas), placed on pedestal bearing the inscription, and two kneeling figures, one of which is that of a monk and the other holds a censer.

The second image is that of the Buddha seated in abhayamudrā.

Both the images show fine workmanship and justify their description in the text of the inscription stating that the Sākya-bhikṣu Abhayamitra had caused to be made this divine (divya) image (pratimā) of the Buddha, 'with the gods as his disciples or sons' (Devaputraśāsane), with uplifted hand (uddhasta) (as a symbol of abhayamudrā), with umbrella (saḫbatra), and seated cross-legged in contemplation (padmāsana), and 'decorated with all the art of the sculptor.' The gift of this statue, and also of the earlier one bearing the inscription of the time of previous king, Kumāra Gupta II, was made by the Buddhist monk named Abhayamitra who records his noble prayer that whatever religious merit (pāmya) he may have earned (bhūrītam) by this sacred undertaking is offered by him to his mother, father, preceptor, ancestors (pūrṇaṁ) and all his fellowmen (lokasya), as an aid to their attainment of final beatitude (sāmānyama) (Arch. S. Report, 1914-15, pp. 99, 125).

It will thus appear from these inscribed statues that Sarnath or Benares continued to be an important place in the Gupta empire under Budha Gupta, as it was in the reign of his predecessor.

Damodarapur No. 2 Copper-Plate Inscription. The next inscription of the time of Budha Gupta is that found on a copper-plate at Damodarapur, a village in Dinajpur district, and dated in the Gupta
year 163 = A.D. 482 when “Paramadaivata (‘of resplendent glory’), Paramabhayaśraka (‘His Most Worshipful Majesty’), Mahārajādbhi-
rāja (‘the Lord of Lords’), Śrī (‘His Majesty of abounding wealth
and prosperity’) Budhagupta was the ruler of the earth (prithivi-
pati).”

Administrative Details. This inscription, like the inscriptions
on the other two Damodarpur Copper-plates of the time of Kumāra
Gupta I, records a grant of land, and repeats most of the details and
words of the first two plates.

As has been already noticed, these inscriptions throw great light
upon the system of local government in the Gupta empire. They
show how the district magistrate (Vishyapati) was helped in his
administration (saityavaharatati) by an Advisory Council of four
members representative of the different interests of the locality,
viz., (1) Nagarabha, ‘the President of the Chambers of Com-
erce or Bankers in the city’, whose name was Dhritipāla; (2)
Prathama-kulika, ‘the foreman of the Guild of Artisans’, who is
named Dhritimitra; (3) Sārthavāba, who represented the merchants
of the city and is named Bandhumitra; and (4) Prathama-kāyastha
who was the chief secretary to the administrative council, whose
name in the present case is Sāmpapāla.

As has been already stated, these inscriptions are especially
concerned with the administrative machinery and procedure pres-
cribed for grants of land for public purposes, charitable or religious.
The machinery is first set in motion by the application of a private
person for grant of such land; but the alienation of such land by the
State should not mean any loss of revenue to it. Accordingly, such
land is required to be (a) aprada, that which is not yet settled, (b)
aprabhata, that which is not yet ploughed or cultivated, and (c) kbi-la-
kshetra which is uncultivated land. It may be noted that in the
Rigveda separate plots are called kshestras and they are separated
from one another by what are called kbiyas or khilas. The kbiла
was no man’s land, the grass-land, separating one plot from another,
and used as village common for purposes of pasture for cattle.

In the present case, the applicant for the grant of land was a
Brahmin named Kārpaṭika, and the public purpose for which he
wanted the grant is stated to be facilities for the performance of
the agnihotra rites (agnihotrapayogāya).

It may be noted that though the land to be granted was not
cultivated land yielding income, but uncultivated waste land, yet
the State insisted on a price being paid for it. The customary price
stated in the inscription is at the rate of 3 dināras for each kulyavāpa.
The term kulyavāpa means that amount of land on which one kula
of seeds could be sown, one kula weighing 8 dromas.
Lastly, the grant by government of land thus applied for depended upon the recommendation of the local record-keepers called Pushtapālas. These formed a Committee of three who are named Rishidatta, Jayanandin, and Vibhudatta. Perhaps to prevent corruption, one record-keeper was not depended upon for such transactions.

The purpose of the grant of land in the inscription on Plate 2 is stated to be the performance of the five daily sacrifices (Pañchamābāya-pārvartana).

**Damodarpur No. 3 Copper-Plate Inscription.** In the Budha Gupta inscription on Plate 3 which is dated Gupta year 163 = A.D. 482, some additional details of administration are given.

Brahmadatta is named as emperor Budha Gupta’s Provincial Governor called Uparika-mahārāja.

It also refers to the Council of non-officials associated with local administration, made up of four classes of members: (1) the village elders called Mahattaras; (2) the Ashabhikaranas who were officers in charge of groups of eight households in the locality; (3) the heads of villages (Grāmikas); and (4) the householder (Kumumbinaḥ).

In the case of this inscription, the application for grant of land is made by a person named Nābhaka belonging to the village called Chaṇḍagrāma. The purpose stated in the application is that he wished to settle in the village some good Brahmins (ārya) for the punya of his parents. On the receipt of this application, the local Advisory Council sent it on from its official headquarters named Palāśavindaka, which was the centre of a Union of villages, for its consideration by the leading men of the village among its Brahmins, citizens (aksbudda-prakṛiti, lit., important subjects) and householders. These then asked the record-keeper named Patradāsa to report on the application. On Patradāsa reporting that the application was a proper one (yuktaḥ) and conformed to the prevailing conditions and customs relating to sale (vikrāya-maryāda), the land was inspected (pratyaveksyā) by the above village Council who then got it severed (apaviṇchhyā) or separated from other plots by the measurement of 8×9 reeds (asūkka-naśaka-nalābhyām).

**Damodarpur No. 4 Copper-Plate Inscription.** There is another inscription found on Plate No. 4 at Damodarpur which is not dated but is referred to the reign of Budha Gupta. It states that the Provincial Governor of Pundravardhana-bhukti under Budha Gupta was the Uparika-Mahārāja Jayadatta. Jayadatta appointed Śanḍaka as the officer in charge of the district (Vīśya) named Koṭīvarsha,
the District Office being called Adhishthāna. The Advisory Council for the district then included (1) Ribhupālā as Nagarārāshṭra, (2) Vasumitra as Sārthavābha, (3) Varadatta as Prathama-kuśika, and (4) Viprapālā as Prathama-kāyastha.

The inscription locates village Doṇagrāma where lands were granted on Himavachchhikara i.e. 'on Himalayan Peaks'. The same village Doṇagrāma is also mentioned in the earlier Damodarpur record of year 124 = A.D. 443 of the time of Kumāra Gupta I.

Again, the later Damodarpur record of year 224 = A.D. 543 refers to the temple (Devakula) of God Śvetavarāhasvāmi as located in a forest (arānya) and calling for repairs for which it records provision made by a further grant of land and also for worship of the Deity by supply of its materials such as flowers, incense, lamp, and oblations.

The difficulty arises as to the exact location of these Temples. The lands that were granted for them may be taken to have been situated in the neighbourhood of Damodarpur, a village in the Balurghat Sub-division of Dinajpur district. But the Temples concerned are stated to be on the Himalayas.

The Brahma Purāṇa (Ch. 219, 229) mentions Kokāmukha-Tīrtha, the river Kokā, and the Varāha-Vishnu Temple, as being located on the Himalayas, without mentioning the exact place of their location.

The Varāha Purāṇa (Ch. 140) mentions Kokāmukha-Tīrtha and its 20 sacred spots and their association with the two rivers, Kokā and Kauśikī, and their confluence. Kauśikī may be taken to be modern Kuśi flowing from Nepal through Purma district. A Varāha (or Kokāmukha)-Kṣetra is a known place of pilgrimage in Nepal, together with the rivers, Sun, Kuśi, and Kokā-Kola (from Kūhā, a small stream).

The holy places of Nepal have always attracted pilgrims from Bihar and Bengal. At the time of Budha Gupta, pilgrims from North Bengal used to visit the Varāha (Kokāmukha) Kṣetra of Nepal. One such pilgrim was Ribhupālā who carried home his devotion to God Kokāmukha Varāha by constructing at his native place near Damodarpur two Temples where were installed the images of Gods Śvetavarāha and Kokāmukha in imitation of their original (ādyā) shrines in distant Nepal. Thus Ribhupālā was able to provide for worship at these Temples by his gift of lands for it, while, about half a century later, one Amritadeva added to the endowment of the Śvetavarāha Temple by making further grants of land to it. It may be noted that the last epigraphic record locates the Temple in a forest (arānya) of the District (Vishaya) of Koṭivarsha, and not on the Himalayas.
It is on the basis of the above assumptions that we can correctly locate the Temples at a place close to the lands granted to them for their maintenance [Dr. D. C. Sircar in IHQ, XXI, 56].

**Procedure for Land-Grant.** In the present case, the applicant for grant of land is Ribhupāla himself. He states in his application: 'In Dongā-grāma in Himavachchikara (lit. the summit of the Himalaya), 4 kulyavāpas of apradā land were formerly given by me to Kokāmukha-svāmin and 7 kulyavāpas to Śvetavarāha-svāmin, in the hope of benefit to myself (and) for the sake of increasing religious merit. Now in the neighbourhood of these cultivated lands, I wish to build two temples and their two store-rooms for those supreme gods Kokāmukha-svāmin and Śvetavarāha-svāmin (and?) one Nāmulīgarin (?)'.

As usual, the application was referred for report to a Committee of three Pustapālas named Vishṇudatta, Vijayanandin, and Sthānandin, who thus reported: 'It is a fact that by him were given in Himavachchikara 11 kulyavāpas of apradā lands to Kokāmukha-svāmin and Śvetavarāha-svāmin, and so the application has been properly made (by him) for vāstu land to be given to him in the neighbourhood of those cultivated lands for the purpose of building temples and store-rooms.'

It may be noticed that this inscription gives a new detail. It records an application not merely for land for cultivation but also land for building (vāstu).

**Paharpur Copper-Plate Inscription.** Another inscription of the time of Budha Gupta is the Paharpur Copper-Plate inscription dated G.E. 159 = A.D. 479. It may be noted that Paharpur is situated in the eastern part of the Province of Pūdravardhana and thus shows the eastern limits of the Gupta empire.

**A Brahmin’s Gift to a Jaina Vihāra.** The Government order for grant of land was issued by the Āyuktakes of Pūdravardhana jointly with the city Municipal Council (Adhishyāna-adhikaraṇa) headed by (puroga) the Mayor of the city (Ārya-nagarasresṭhibhi).

This inscription brings to light new units of settlement and administration, arranged in the following ascending order: (1) Grāma, (2) Pārśva, (3) Manḍala and (4) Vīthi (part of a district or Vishaya).

The proprietary right to a village is indicated by the technical term Prāveśya (right to revenue).

The government order on the subject is communicated as usual to the Village Council consisting of the elders among Brahmins (Brāhmanottaras), leading villagers (Mahattaras), and householders (Kuṭumbinah).

The applicants for land were husband and wife, and Brahmins.
They make the donation in favour of a Jaina Vihāra belonging to the Pañchastūpa Sect (Nikāya) founded by the Nigrantha Śrāmanāśchārya Guhanandi of Benares. This shows the religious toleration of the times. The gift was made for provision of scent, incense, flowers, and light for worship of the divine Arhats. This indicates that this Jaina sect might have been the Śvetāmbaras, and not the Digambaras who do not permit worship with flowers bringing in insects which may be killed.

Procedure. The inscription describes the usual procedure laid down for such land-transactions. The application is made to both the district officers and city Municipal Council who refer it to the Board of Pustpālas or record-keepers consisting of one head record-keeper (Prathama Pustapāla) and at least five others named.

It will appear that the Faridpur and Damodarpur grants also mention more than one but less than five record-keepers. The record-keepers, after making necessary inquiries, recommend the transaction as bringing some revenue to the State (arthopachaya).

Akhshaya-Nivi-dharma. The administrative authorities then sanction (avadhāraṇa) the transfer of land and ask the elders of the respective villages to make out the (apavīnebhyā) boundaries of the lands thus granted. The gift was to conform to the Code called Akshaya-nivi-dharma, implying that the land given was to be inalienable and irrevocable.

The applicants wanted \( \frac{1}{2} \) kalyavāpas of land distributed among four villages for the double purpose of the provision of aforesaid worship and construction of a resting-place for the Vihāra (tālavātaka).

Khila- and Vāstu-Lands. This inscription does not differentiate between the rates for two classes of land, khila and vāstu. But the land required for vāstu or building was naturally less in quantity, viz., only \( \frac{1}{3} \) dronavāpas in the present case. More land was needed if it was for cultivation the produce from which was to meet the cost of worship. A larger area of land was required for cultivation than for building.

The total quantity of \( \frac{1}{2} \) kalyavāpas of land was made up of the four following plots located at four villages, viz., \( \frac{1}{2} \) dronavāpas of vāstu land + 4 dronavāpas in one village + 4 dronavāpas in another village + 2 \( \frac{1}{2} \) dronavāpas in the fourth village = total 12 dronavāpas computed in the inscription with \( \frac{1}{2} \) kalyavāpas as stated above. This shows that quantitatively 1 kalyavāpa = 8 dronavāpas.

The price paid for the total \( \frac{1}{2} \) kalyavāpas = 3 dināras at the rate of 2 dināras for 1 kalyavāpa.

Their Prices. Grants of land are described in detail in most
of the Bengal Copper-plate inscriptions such as those of Dhānāi-
daha, Damodarpur, Faridpur or Ghugrahāṣī. The rate of land is 3
dināras per kulyavāpa in Damodarpur and 4 in Faridpur as against
2 of the present grant. No. 2 Damodarpur, for instance, mentions
2 dināras being paid for 3 dronavāpas—roughly 2/3 kulyavāpa, so
that the rate is 3 dināras for a kulyavāpa. Apparently, land was
cheaper at Paharpur.

**Eran Inscription.** To the reign of Budha Gupta also belongs
an inscription on Eran Stone Pillar bearing the date G.E. 165 = A.D.
484. This inscription refers to Mahārāja Suraśīṅchandra as the
feudatory of Budha Gupta and administering (pālayati) the country
lying between the river Kālindī or Jumna and the Narmādā. It
records the erection of a pillar called a dhwaja-stambha or flag-staff
of God Vishṇu under the name Janārdana by a Mahārāja named
Māti Vishṇu and his younger brother, Dhanya Vishṇu.

**Nandapur Copper-Plate Inscription.** Another inscription of
the time of Budha Gupta is that of Nandapur Copper-plate dated
Gupta year 169 = A.D. 488. Nandapur is a village in the district of
Monghyr. Unfortunately, the inscription does not make any re-
ference to the Gupta emperor of the time. The seal attached to the
plate might have borne the name which, however, is worn out. Its
script, and its contents and wording establish its affinity with the
other inscriptions associated with northern Bengal.

**Details of Land-transaction.** The details and data which the
inscription records regarding the land-transactions of the time are
worth noting, although they repeat most of those given in other
inscriptions of North Bengal.

A district officer (Vishayapati) here applies to his fellow-officers
(Ayuktakas) for land. The Ayuktakas then intimate and write
(bodhayanti likbanti cha) to the District Office (Adhikarana) as well
as to the Brahmins, the chief officers and others (uttarāṇasaṁyayā-
vahāryādi) and also householders, to that effect. The applicant
wants to buy 4 kulyavāpas of fallow land (khila-kshetra) and give it
to a Brahmin/belonging to an Agrābāra of Nanda-viṭha (sub-division
of a district) to enable him to perform the five Great Sacrifices
(Bali, Charu, Vaiśvadeva, Agnibhota, and Atithi) (pañca-Mahāyaṇa-
pravarttanāya).

The sale was effected according to the established system of
the district (Vishaya) by which land that was lying fallow (khila),
devoid of vegetation (astamba), and not yielding any revenue to
the State (sāṃrdayabāhya), might be sold provided it was for pur-
poses of a permanent endowment (aksheya-niyāh), and the cus-
tomary price was paid at the rate of 2 dināras for, kulyavāpa of
such land.
The local Board of Record-keepers (Pustapālas) was then to ascertain (avadbhītam) by enquiry (avadbhārāṇā) that the transaction conformed to the above conditions.

And then the last consideration was that there would be no loss of revenue to the Crown from the sale of such revenue-free (uprati-kara) fallow land but, on the contrary, some gain to the king in the shape of dharma.

Therefore the order was : Tad-diyatāmīti.

The order ran thus: 'You should give away the plot situated in an area where it may not affect the cultivation of settled peasants (krambimāḥ karsanāvirodhi-sthāne), after measuring it by the standard unit of 8×8 reeds (nala), and then demarcate (apavin-chabhyā) it by permanent marks of ash, charcoal, etc. (tushāṅgārādikabhnath).

Thus the last condition of the grant was that it should not cause loss to the local agriculturists by effecting any change in the areas of the plots settled on them. The land granted must be in an isolated area of waste-land in the village, and must not be made up by piecing together slices taken from the settled lands already under cultivation.

Feudatories. There are some inscriptions issued by the feudatories of emperor Budha Gupta. The Parivrājaka Mahārāja Hastin, for instance, issued two inscriptions on copper-plates found at a village Khoh in modern Nagod State and dated G.E. 156=A.D. 476 and G.E. 163=A.D. 482. Of these, the first may be dated to A.D. 475, in which case it belongs to the reign of the previous king, Kumāra Gupta II. Both these inscriptions refer to the enjoyment of sovereignty by the Gupta kings (Gupta-nripa-rājyabhaktan). They both refer to the high status of Hastin who was practically the ruler of his territory, described as the victor in many hundreds of battles, and the giver of thousands of cows, elephants, horses, and gold pieces, and also of many lands.

The second inscription records a grant made by him of an agrābāra situated in a patta with the usual immunities from the taxes udraṇga and uparikara, and freedom from molestation by the military.

The inscription is interesting for its social data showing the strength of Brahmanism in those days. The following Brahmin gotras are mentioned: Bharadvāja, Kuṃsa, Bhārgava, Vāsula; and the following Vedic Śakās, Vājasaṃyāya and Kaṭha.

Political History. These inscriptions also throw light upon the political history of the reign of Budha Gupta. They point to the indisputable fact that Pundravardhana or northern Bengal was an integral part of the Gupta empire under Budha Gupta. Budha Gupta’s authority was also acknowledged in the region of Benares,
as proved by the Sārnāth Buddha Image inscriptions. The Eran Stone Pillar inscription shows that the empire included the kingdom of Malwa or rather the extensive tract of land between the Kālindi and the Narmādā. It may be assumed that the position of Mahārāja Suraśmichandra, as the Governor of this region, was similar to that of the Uparika-Mahārājas, Brahmadatta, and Jayadatta, the Governors of the province of Pundravardhana, while the position of the Äyuketakya Sandaka, in charge of the district or Vishaya of Kośīvarsha, is comparable to that of Mahārāja Mātrī Vishṇu as Vishayapati under the provincial Governor Suraśmichandra. This fact is further borne out by the Eran Stone Boar inscription of Toramāna’s time (No. 36 of Fleet) stating that in the first year of that Hūṇa chief’s rule in the portion of Āryavārta (Malwa), Dhanya Vishṇu, younger brother of Mātrī Vishṇu, who was then not living (śvaragata), built a temple in which was enshrined the Boar-incarnation of Vishṇu, ‘in his own Vishaya of Airikini’. It thus stands to reason that Dhanya Vishṇu’s elder brother Mātrī Vishṇu was the officer-in-charge of the Vishaya of Airikini when Suraśmichandra was Budha Gupta’s Governor in Malwa and the adjoining tracts. From these facts it is thus clear that the Gupta empire under Budha Gupta did not at all shrink in size, but extended from Malwa to northern Bengal, from the Kālindi to the Gaṅgā.

It will thus appear that the empire under Budha Gupta recovered its position and prestige after the dark days following the death of Skanda Gupta.

Budha Gupta issued silver coinage of the Central India type on which his own name has been inscribed together with his title Avanipati. The Bharsar hoard of coins points to a king called Prakāśāditya coming after Skanda Gupta. The Maṅju-Srī-Mala-Kalpa states that Śrīman U succeeded Kumāra Gupta II. It is interesting to note that the same letter U is to be found below the king’s image on the coins of Prakāśāditya. Therefore, it may be concluded that Śrīman U, Prakāśāditya, and Budha Gupta are one and the same person.

It is also to be noted that of the three specimens of Budha Gupta’s coins of the Central India type kept at the British Museum, one bears the date G.E. 175 = A.D. 494, the last known date of Budha Gupta.
CHAPTER XII

NARASIMHA GUPTA BĀLĀDITYA

Narasimha Gupta. As has been already shown, the Bhitari and Nālandā Seal inscriptions of Kumāra Gupta III make it quite clear that Narasimha Gupta must be taken as the successor of Budha Gupta. That he had from his predecessor the legacy of a large empire and paramount sovereignty is indicated in the literary text, Ārya-Mañju-Sri-Mula-Kalpa. It describes the empire of Bālāditya as nissapatnam and akasţakam, an empire free from rivals and enemies. The larger number and heavier types of gold coins prove the truth of this statement.

His Coins. All his coins are of the Archer type. The obverse shows: ‘King nimbate, standing l., wearing waist-cloth with long sash and jewellery, holding bow in l., and arrow in r. hand. Garuda standard on l.’ It also shows the word Nara beneath left arm and an incomplete legend ending with jayati Narasimhaguptah.

The Rev. shows: ‘Goddess (Lakshmi) nimbate, seated facing on lotus, holding fillet and lotus.’ It also bears the legend ‘Bālāditya’. 

Hūna Invasions. It was not, however, for long that his empire remained akasţaka. Very soon it had a difficult kantaka or thorn on its side. He was not fated to have any smooth sailing in the troublous waters created by the successive waves of Hūnā onslaught on the empire. It may be useful at this stage to sum up the available evidence in regard to this fateful struggle between the Gupta empire and the Hūnas. We have already seen from the first Eran Pillar inscription of Budha Gupta dated A.D. 484 that the region of eastern Malwa was under the suzerainty of Budha Gupta who had, as his feudatories, the two brothers, Mātri Vishṇu and Dhanya Vishṇu. There is a second inscription of Eran which records the building of a temple enshrining the Varāha (Boar) incarnation of Vishṇu. The figure of the Boar is decorated with sculptures representing rishi and saints clinging to its mane and bristles, and the Earth as a woman hanging on to its right tusk. The breast of the Boar bears an inscription stating that the temple was constructed by Dhanya Vishṇu (brother of the deceased Mātri Vishṇu of the first inscription) in the first year of the reign of Toramāna.

Bhānu Gupta. Over and above this, we have to consider the light thrown upon the events of the times by the Eran Stone Pillar inscription of A.D. 510. It mentions a king named Bhānu Gupta, ‘the bravest on earth (jayati pravāro), a mighty king (rājā mahān), the equal of Pārtha (Pārtha-samo), who was followed by a valiant chief
named Goparāja who fell fighting in a very famous battle (yuddhān samahat prakāsan) and was followed to death by his devoted wife.

His Status. It is to be noted that this inscription calls Bhānu Gupta merely as a Rājā and does not apply to him even the title Mahārāja, nor the higher imperial title of Mahārājadhīrāja, and the like. Therefore, it stands to reason that the proper way to locate Bhānu Gupta in Gupta history would be to treat him as the Governor of Malwa under emperor Narasiṃha Gupta in my scheme of Gupta genealogy. The position, therefore, would be that it was left to the ruler (Rājā) of Malwa as the western outpost of the Gupta empire to defend it against the incursions of the Hūnas, the brunt of whose attack fell upon it. In that defence, Bhānu Gupta’s military lieutenant, Goparāja, famous for his prowess (vikhyāta-paurusha) fell fighting, leaving the way clear for the further advance of the Hūnas towards Magadha. Bhānu Gupta is not heard of after he lost this fateful battle.

Toramāṇa. It will thus appear that Toramāṇa was leading the Hūnas and achieved victory over the provincial Gupta Chief, Bhānu Gupta, and his feudatory, Goparāja, in the battle of Eran in A.D. 510, after which year dates Toramāṇa’s supremacy in Malwa. Thus the Gupta empire lost Malwa after Budha Gupta. Therefore, the Eran Boar Image inscription dated in the first year of Toramāṇa must be later than A.D. 510.

Literary Evidence. Some light is thrown on the turmoil of the times by the literary work named Maṇja-Sri-Mala-Kalpa. It states that ‘after the death of Budha Gupta, two kings in the Gupta line were crowned, one in Magadha and another in Gauḍa.’ The Gupta king crowned in Magadha must refer to Narasiṃha Gupta Bālāditya. The work further states that after Bhānu Gupta had lost Malwa, Toramāṇa carried on his expedition up to Magadha and compelled Bālāditya to retreat to Bengal. He also crowned one Prakāṣāditya as king at Benares in place of the absconding Gupta emperor. Toramāṇa, however, died at Benares while returning westward. This Prakāṣāditya is also stated to have been a son of Bālāditya. This shows that the power of Narasiṃha Gupta was still felt in that region and was not completely extinguished and so it was able to assert itself again.

Mihirakula. After Toramāṇa, the Hūnas were led by his worthy son Mihirakula whose inscription at Gwalior dated year 15 of his reign, which may be taken to be A.D. 528 (on the assumption that Toramāṇa died in A.D. 513) records that on a hill called Gopa a Sun Temple was constructed by one Mātrīcheṭa. Gopa is a hill in Malwa and so this inscription shows that Mihirakula ruled in Malwa up to at least A.D. 528.
Yaśodharman Vishnuvardhana. About this time, we have to consider the evidence of two important inscriptions, the Mandasor Stone Pillar inscription of Yaśodharman and another Mandasor inscription associated with two kings, Yaśodharman and Vishnuvardhana. The first inscription, which is not dated, attributes to Yaśodharman conquest of countries which ‘not even the Guptas or Hūṇas could ever conquer, and to whose feet homage was paid even by Mihirakula.’ Though not dated, the inscription definitely establishes the fact that it was left to Yaśodharman to achieve the credit of conquering the Hūṇas and winning an empire ‘from the Brahma-putra to the Western Ocean and from Himālayas to Mahendragiri.’ The second Mandasor inscription which is dated A.D. 532 (M.E. 589) describes Yaśodharman as janendra, the ‘Lord of his people’, and also refers to another king (mārādhipati) named Vishuvardhana to whom are applied the titles Rājādhirāja and Paramēśvara. The context of the inscription seems to indicate, as supposed by Fleet, that, in spite of his imperial titles, he seems to have acknowledged to some extent the supremacy of Yaśodharman. Yaśodharman is once again described in this inscription as ‘achieving victory’ (jaya), ‘plunging into the army of his enemies (sahū-pajya), bending down the fame of all heroes (vīra-kirti-vināmya), with his body decorated all over with battle-scars’. It is possible that the two Yaśodharmanas of these two inscriptions are one and the same person. The two inscriptions record almost the same exploits. They both repeat the sovereignty of the king over prāchī (‘eastern India’) and north (Kashmīr). Yaśodharman and Vishnuvardhana may also be taken to be identical from the words, ‘sa-evā’, used in the second inscription to introduce Vishnuvardhana. This inscription also records the construction of a large well by a person named Daksha, a younger brother of Dharmadosha, a Minister of Vishnuvardhana. This shows that Malwa and western India were placed under the governorship of Dharmadosha by his paramount sovereign Yaśodharman Vishnuvardhana. It may be noted that this inscription gives an interesting genealogy of this family of Ministers and mentions Bhānu Guptā, the wife of Daksha’s grandfather, Raviśtri. The name Bhānu Guptā points to some connexion between her and king Bhānu Gupta from whom she was removed by one generation, Daksha coming one generation after Bhānu Gupta.
CHAPTER XIII

VAINYA GUPTA

Vainya Gupta. We have thus seen that Imperial Gupta history after Budha Gupta is somewhat uncertain, obscure, and confused. It can be traced only in fragments through names of certain kings associated with it in some of the records of the times. Kings like Bhanu Gupta and Yasodharman-Vishnuvardhana and Kumara Gupta III have to be assigned their places in that history. We have also to add to these names one more name, that of Vainya Gupta. This name is brought to light in the Gunaiagar Copper-plate inscription found in Comilla in eastern Bengal. This inscription records that Vainya Gupta granted from his victorious camp at Kripura to his feudatory, Maharaja Rudradatta, some lands in a village in Uttaramanpala for maintaining a Buddhist Vihara. The reference to a feudatory indicates his somewhat independent status. The inscription further mentions the fact that Vijayasena was his Governor of the Bhukti of Uttaramanpala situated in Samatasa. It also mentions a number of Kumaramatyas serving as his Vishayapatis. The inscription is dated G.E. 188 = A.D. 507. This inscription throws light on what was happening in eastern India just as the Eran inscriptions do for western India.

His Coins. To add to this epigraphic evidence, there is some amount of numismatic evidence supposed to have a bearing on Vainya Gupta. Three gold coins of the Archer type have been discovered bearing a name read by Allan as Chandra but by others as Vainya and also the Aditya-title Dwaddasadiya. The name Chandra would need the addition of Chandra Gupta III to the list of Gupta kings, a name not known from any other source, whereas the name Vainya is attested by epigraphic evidence.

It is, however, doubtful how far Vainya Gupta, who is associated with eastern Bengal, can be rightly regarded as belonging to the direct line of the imperial Guptas.

His Gunaiagar Inscription. We may now consider in detail the interesting contents of an inscription on a copper-plate found at the aforesaid Gunaiagar. The village is named in the inscription as Gunakragabara. To the copper-plate is soldered the royal seal bearing the legend ‘Maharaja Sri Vainya Gupta.’

The date of the inscription is given both in numerals and words (Vartamanaśthātyuttara-saka sañvatsara) i.e., current (vartamana) Gupta year 188 = A.D. 507. Vainya Gupta thus lived in the time of Baliaditya, the Gupta emperor. The inscription refers to Vainya Gupta’s camp of victory described in the usual terms: ‘The camp full of big ships (mahān), elephants, and horses, located at Kripura.’
Unlike the Gupta emperors who were worshippers of Vishnu, Vainya Gupta is described as a worshipper of Mahadeva or Siva.

It records the gift of 5 plots of land in a village in Uttaramanadala, apparently a province ruled by a Governor, Maharaja Rudradatta, who is described as a padadasa or a vassal of Maharaja Vainya Gupta. At the request of Rudradatta, the royal gift was made in the form of an agravara in absolute possession (sarvato bhogena). It was made in favour of a particular samgha of Mahayana Buddhist monks (Saky-Bhidhshu). This Samgha was originally established by the great Mahayana teacher, Acharya Sانتideva, and housed in a monastery called Aarama-vibara which was consecrated to Avalokitesvara. This Vibara was thus an earlier establishment in that locality. The inscription states that an earlier gift was made by the same Rudradatta to provide the Samgha with its necessaries in the shape of clothing (civa), food (pinjapata), beds (sayana), seats (asa) and medicines for the sick, and the like, and also the means of its maintenance by repairing all breaches (kha) and cracks (puna) in the Vibara.

The inscription also mentions the king's messenger (Dutaka) who was the great frontier king, Mahasamanta Maharaja Sri Vijayasena. Vijayasena combined in himself several offices such as those of the High Chamberlain (Mahaprattibara), the Commander of Elephant-Forces (Maha-pulpati), President of the Board of Five Adhikaranas (the chief of five officers of the district) and President of the Board of City-Mayors (Purapala-Uparika).

The Dutaka communicated the royal gift to three Kumaramatyas concerned, showing that his official position was superior to that of the Kumaramatya.

The inscription also gives a high status to its scribe called Karana Kayastra Naradatta who also held the office of the Minister for Peace and War.

The inscription gives a concrete detail regarding the gift of land. It was divided into 5 plots measuring a total of 11 patakas of uncultivated (khila) lands. It also gives the areas of the plots in terms of dronas, on the basis of which we arrive at the equation, 1 pataka = 40 dronavapas.

The inscription is the earliest record of a Hindu king making a gift to a Buddhist monastery.

Vainya Gupta a king in Eastern Bengal. The inscription is significant as showing the part of Bengal where Vainya Gupta held sway as sovereign. His headquarters were located in South Tippera, and Uttaramanadala must have formed the northern limit of his kingdom. Thus the sphere of his authority lay in remote eastern Bengal away from Pundravardhana and Magadha as parts of the Central Gupta empire.
CHAPTER XIV

KUMÄRA GUPTA III

Kumära Gupta III. The Damodarpur No. 5 Copper-plate inscription bears the date Gupta year 214=A.D. 533. It is also read as 224=A.D. 543. A seal is soldered to it and bears the inscription 'Kośivaraśādhisādhyānādhyā (karna) sva', 'of the office or court of the adhisādhyāna (headquarters) of Kośivaraśa.'

The inscription mentions the Gupta emperor of the time, to whom it applies the following epithet: Paramāddisvata Paramabhaṭṭiyāraka-Mahārājādhirāja, but, unfortunately, only the second part of his name 'Gupta' is legible in the inscription, and not its first or personal part. Only one of its letters is traced and read as 'Ka', which is taken to indicate Kumära Gupta. From the date of the inscription, this Kumära Gupta is to be taken as Kumära Gupta III who must then figure as the last of the imperial Guptas. The emperor is described as Prthibhi-pati, 'Ruler of the Earth', indicating that there is no diminution in the extent of the Gupta empire at that time. But this description is merely conventional, and need not be taken literally.

An interesting fact stated in the inscription is that the Governor of the Bhūkti of Puṇḍravardhana was a son of the emperor, Rājaputra-Deva-Bhayāraka, bearing the title Uparika-Mahārāja and 'tendering his homage to the king.'

It also states that the province was very prosperous under the rule of the royal Viceroy with 'an adequate military force of elephants, cavalry and infantry.'

It mentions a particular district or Vishaya of the province named Kośivaraśa. The district magistrate (Vishayapati) is named Svayamabhūdeva.

There was an Advisory Council associated with the District Magistrate in his administration of the district. The district office is called adhisādhyānādhibhikaṇaṇa.

The Advisory Council of the District was constituted by four members representing its different interests, viz., (1) The Mayor of the city (Nagara-āraśkha); (2) Representative of Trade-Guilds (Sārthavāha); (3) President of Craft-Guilds (Prathama Kulika); (4) President of the Writers' Union (Prathama Kāyaśtha), who must have been an expert in dealing with documents and conveyancing.

An application for a grant of land was made to the district officer by a nobleman who belonged to Ayodhyā. This shows that the Gupta empire then included both Ayodhyā and Puṇḍravardhana.

The purpose of the grant was to make provision for the repairs of the temple of God Śvetavarāhasvāmi, of its breaches (khanda)
and cracks (phutta), and also for the offering of Bali, Charu, Satra, supply of cow’s milk (gavya), incense (dhupa), flowers (pushpa), madhuparka, lamp (dipa), etc., required for worship.

The land that was needed for this provision measured 3 kulyavāpas of kūla (fallow) along with vāstu (homestead) land. The land was not found within one village. It was made up of portions derived from four or five villages named. This was because it was difficult to find a large plot of unsettled or surplus land in one village. All available land in every village was under the plough and intensive cultivation.

The condition on which land was to be granted by government to a private person was that it should be by way of a permanent and inalienable gift (Apradādharmena). The State could only encourage the permanent charities of private persons.

The application was then referred to a Board of three Record-keepers (Pustapālas) under a Chief (Prathama) who had to ascertain ( navadbārana) if it was in order (yukta), or if there was any objection (virodha) to it.

The transaction was effected after the applicant’s payment of the price of the land at the customary rate which is stated to be 3 dinaras for 1 kulyavāpa of uncultivated (aprahata, ‘whose sods were not turned up by the plough’), waste (kūla) land (kṣibeta); which was thus not productive of any revenue or income (samudaya-bāhya) to the State.

The deed for the transaction was in the form of a copper-plate upon which the order for the grant of land was inscribed.
CHAPTER XV

LOCAL KINGS

Local Kings of Eastern India: Gopachandra. The Arya-Mañju-Sri-Mūla-Kalpa refers to the rule of a king called 'Va' and of his successor called 'Dha'. 'Va' may be taken to point to Vainya Gupta and 'Dha' to Dharmāditya. This work also mentions Gopa as a king of the east.

Faridpur Copper-Plate Inscription of the year 18. The Gopa of this literary text may be taken to be king Gopachandra mentioned in this inscription. He carved out an independent kingdom in Bengal after the downfall of the imperial Guptas. It included a wide area comprising the Faridpur district in eastern Bengal and Burdwan in western Bengal.

It also repeats the name of the District Office (Vishayādbhikaraṇa) of Vārakamāṇḍala.

It describes Gopachandra as Mahārājādhīraja, Apratiratha, and as Bhayāraka. At that time, Nāgadeva was administering the province of Navyāvakaśika and held several offices as Mahāpratibhāra, Kumārapādīya, Amātya, and Uparīka. He appointed under him Vatsapāla as the Magistrate of the district Vārakamāṇḍala.

Mallasarul Copper-Plate Inscription. This inscription was found in a village near Galsi in Burdwan district. To its plate is soldered a seal bearing the figure of a standing Deity with a chakra (wheel of Law) behind. Below the figure is the legend Mahārāja Vijayasya.

Though it is not dated, palaeographically its script resembles that of the Faridpur plates of Dharmāditya and Gopachandra assigned to the sixth century A.D.

The inscription invokes God Lokanātha, and the Buddhist saints (santāb).

It mentions the time of Mahārājādhīraja Gopachandra (Gopachandrate prasāsati).

It also mentions Vardhamāna Bhūkṣi and its officers, viz., (1) Kārttikākritika, Head of Executive; (2) Kumārāmātya, Minister in attendance on the Prince; (3) Chaurodhāraya, Chief of Police; (4) Uparīka, Governor; (5) Audrāgīka, Collector of Udārīga Tax; (6) Agrabārika, Superintendent of Agrabāras; (7) Aurnāstbānika, Superintendent of Silk Factories; (8) Bhogapati, Officer-in-charge of a Bhoga or a Division; (9) Vishayapati, District Magistrate; (10) Taddynājakaka, Treasury Officer; (11) Hiraṇyaśasāmudāyika, Currency Officer; (12) Pattalaka, Officer in charge of a Pattala; (13) Avasathikaka, Superintendent of Dharmasālās. Next follows a list of the village
elders (Mahattaras) and other important persons concerned with the land transaction. Some of these are described as Agrobārins, Bhattas, Khādgis, and Vāhanāyakas.

The inscription records a gift of land to a Brahmin for performing the Five Great Sacrifices. It measured 8 kuṇyavāpas. It is situated in a Grāma registered as belonging to a Vīṭhī, in the Bhukti of Vardhamāna.

The plot is marked out by pegs (kālaka) bearing the device of a string of lotus seeds (kamalākhamāla).

As usual, Vijayasena applied for the land to the elders and other leaders of the villages concerned and also in the district office (vīṭhā-adhikarana or collectorate). These held their enquiry into the matter and signified their approval. Then the applicant paid the price of land in dināras to the Collectorate. Then the sale-proceeds of the land were distributed among the different villages and credited to the account of each by the Vāra officers, (Vārakṛitiḥ, officers appointed by turn or in a place called Vāra). This class of officers is supposed to carry out the apportionment of the price paid for the total land purchased at the Vīṭhī office among the villages concerned.

A new condition for the sale is mentioned, viz., that the usual dues in respect of the land to be sold would be borne by the buyer and credited to the revenues of the Vīṭhī (Vīṭhī-samudaya-eva prāṇāyya). Thus the land that is sold in the present case yielded revenue and was not khila or waste land. Having in this manner obtained the right of ownership of the land, he transferred it to the Brāhmaṇa Vatsasvāmin by executing a copper-plate charter (tāmrapattra). The attending Pustapāla had the copper-plate heated (tāpita).

Vijayasena. The historical value of the inscription may now be noted. Gopachandra may be identified with Gopachandra of Faridpur copper-plates and Vijayasena who is mentioned as his vassal is to be identified with Vijayasena of the Guṇaigārh Plate inscription of Vainya Gupta of A.D. 507. In Vainya Gupta’s inscription, the status of Vijayasena was lower, that of a mere Dūtaka. In the present inscription, Vijayasena issues a charter under his own seal showing that he was in a position of greater dignity and authority. Therefore, this inscription may be considered to be later than that of Vainya Gupta.

It is also to be noted that Vainya Gupta in the Guṇaigārh inscription is not called Mahārājādhirāja but only a Mahārāja. Probably he was a local chief posted in eastern Bengal by his paramount sovereign Gopachandra. It seems that King Gopachandra was ruling over a large part of Bengal, western and eastern, when it
included Vardhamāna Bhukti, the present Burdwan division. The fact seems to be that Bengal, by the middle of the sixth century, was lost to the Guptas of Magadha and was ruled by the local princes in different tracts, until it was absorbed in the empire of Harsha.

Dharmāditya. Besides Dharmāditya of Faridpur plates and Gopachandra of this plate, another Faridpur plate (the Ghugrāhāti plate) mentions a third independent ruler of Bengal named Śamāchārādeva.

Faridpur Copper-Plate Inscription of Dharmāditya. A seal joined to the plate bears the legend ‘Vārakamandala Visbayādhīkaranasya’ = from the office of the Visbaya or district called Vārakamandala (in modern Goalunda and Gopalagunj sub-divisions of Faridpur district).

The inscription refers to Dharmāditya as the invincible Ruler of the Earth (Pṛthivyānapratirāthab) who had as his vassal (Taitprarśādalabhāspada) Mahārāja Śtaṁśudatta in charge (adhyāsana) of a province. He appointed (śadviniyuktaka) Jajāva as the Visbayapati of Vārakamandala. Śṭaṁśudatta was apparently Dharmāditya’s Viceroy of the province called Navyāvakāśika.

The inscription refers to an officer named Śādhanika who had something to do with the realization of debts and fines (śādbana), and hence was a judicial officer.

As the land concerned in the transaction recorded here bordered on the sea, it followed the custom of that region aptly called Prāksamudra-maryādā, i.e., custom prevailing in the countries bordering the eastern sea (Bay of Bengal). Here the price of 1 kulavāpa = 4 dināras. But it was not kālā or aprabata but cultivated land (vāpa kṣhetra). Hence it price is higher. The separated plot is called a khaṇḍala marked out by boundaries (kṛita-kalana = kṛita-chihnaṇaka, also called Śimāliṅgāni), which were visible at first sight (dviśīhīmātra prabandhena).

Another Faridpur Copper-Plate Inscription of Dharmāditya. This inscription also mentions Dharmāditya as Mābārajadbirāja and Bhūṭṭāraka, and his Uparika or Viceroy posted in the region called Navyāvakāśika. The name suggests its derivation from a canal (=avakāśa or opening). Nāgadeva who bears the title of Mabāpratihāra and Uparika appoints under his administration (adhyāsana) Gopālasvāmi in charge of the district (Visbaya) named Vārakamandala.
CHAPTER XVI

MATERIAL AND MORAL PROGRESS

Political Achievement. Much of the material and moral progress of the country was ultimately the outcome of its stabilized political conditions. The Gupta Empire was a well-organized State which achieved the political unification of a large part of India under the umbrella of its paramount sovereignty, establishing a sphere of influence which was much wider than that of its direct dominion and administration. Samudra Gupta was the first to set before himself the imperial ideal as stated in the expression dharani-bandha used in his Allahabad Pillar inscription. It indicates his programme of digvijaya, of conquests in different directions, by which the dharani or India could be bound (bandha) together as a unit.

Greater India. The empire’s sphere of influence is indicated in the Allahabad Pillar inscription, as we have already seen. It contains the earliest reference to the overseas relations cultivated by Samudra Gupta. It states how he cultivated these relations with ‘Simhala and other islands’ that were bound to him in ties of friendly political relationship ‘by offering him various gifts, applying to him for charters recognizing their sovereignty and, finally, by rendering their personal loyalty (atma-nivedanam).’ This reference in the inscription gives the earliest inkling into the beginnings of India’s expansion beyond her borders so as to form a sort of Greater India as an empire of Indian thought. Another piece of evidence of India’s overseas intercourse is furnished by the account of the despatch by king Meghavarsha of Ceylon (A.D. 350-380) to Emperor Samudra Gupta of an Embassy with gifts and a request to him for permission to build a Vibhara at Bodh-Gaya for the benefit of the pilgrims from Ceylon to that holy place. Such international outlook, and colonial activities are the product of a condition of equilibrium whereby the Mother Country, enjoying peace at home and the blessings of an ordered government, not troubled by political unrest or unsettlement, became a live self-conscious unit, expressing itself in a variety of political and creative movements, economic and cultural.

Evidence of Fa-Hien. We find that Greater India had already made a good start from the evidence of Fa-Hien, that cultured Chinese pilgrim who has left us such a detached and valuable view of India’s civilization as he saw it in the time of Chandra Gupta II. We see from his record how centres and outposts of Indian culture had already sprung up in several countries outside the northern boundaries of the country.

G.E.-9
Foreign Centres of Indian Culture. The first of these centres seen by Fa-Hien was Shan-shan where he saw, as already stated, more than 4,000 Hinayana Buddhist monks, while its common people also ‘practised the religion of India.’ In several Tartar countries he found many ascetics who studied ‘Indian books and the Indian spoken language.’ In the country of Kara-shahr, he found Buddhist Hinayana monks numbering over 4,000. In Khotan, he found several tens of thousands of Mahayana Buddhists and a monastery known by the name of Gomati where, at the sound of a gong 3,000 Buddhist monks ‘assembled to eat’. Khotan had 14 such large monasteries. In the neighbourhood, he found another monastery ‘which was 250 feet high, overlaid with gold and silver, and took 20 years to build and the reigns of three kings’. In Kashgar, he found 1,000 Hinayana monks, and its king was a Buddhist. In Darel was another centre of Hinayana Buddhism.

Religion. This spread of Indian culture to foreign countries testifies to its high degree of development in the Mother Country. It was marked by a revival of Brahmanical religion or Hinduism. Ample evidence of this has been already cited in connexion with the reign of each Gupta emperor. We may sum up here some of the facts of this religious revival.

Vedic Religion. It was represented in its Sacrifices. The great Vedic imperial Sacrifice known as Asvamedha was revived by Samudra Gupta and Kumara Gupta I. The Poona Copper-plate inscription of Prabhavatigupta describes Samudra Gupta as ‘a performer of many a horse-sacrifice’. A minister of Kumara Gupta I set up a yupa or sacrificial pillar at Bihar (No. 12). Similarly, Maharaja Vishnu Vardhana, a local king, erected a yupa after performing the Pundarika sacrifice (No. 59). This sacrifice was undertaken to obtain, in terms of Vedic vocabulary, religious objectives like Sri-Yajña-Dharma-Sreya-Abhyudaya-Yasa-Kula-Vama-Bhaga-Bhoga. Some Vakataka kings are stated in their inscriptions (Nos. 55 and 56) to have performed four and ten horse-sacrifices, as well as several other sacrifices named Agnishoma, Aptryoma, Ukthya, Shojastra, Atiratra, Vajapeya, Brihaspati, and Sadyakra, and are also described as the devotees of Siva, Maheshvara (Sambhu), or Svami Mahabhairava. These inscriptions also refer to the gift of a village to a community of 1,000 Brahmans of various gotras and charanas named. The inscriptions also refer to the performance of other Vedic sacrifices like Agnibhota and the Pañcha-mahayajnas (Nos. 16, 21, 29, 40 and 80).

Vaishnavism. Most of the Gupta emperors and the local kings of the times called themselves Parama-bhagavatas, i.e., worshippers of Bhagavata or Vasudeva. An inscription of Parivraja-Maharaja, Samkshobha, opens with the prayer: ‘Om Namo Bhagavate
Vásudevāya’ (No. 25). As worshippers of Vishnu, the Gupta emperors introduced His Vāhana, Garuḍa, on the obverse of their coins and goddess Lakṣmi, His Consort, on the reverse and also Chakrā, Vishnu’s Wheel.

God Vishnu is worshipped under various names: Atmabhū (No. 51), Chakrāvit (No. 14), Chakrādhara (Nos. 17 and 47), Gadādhara (No. 17), Chakrāpāṇi (No. 55), Chitrakūṭasvāmin (No. 66), Govinda (No. 15), Janārdana (No. 19), Murudvish (No. 79), Madhava (No. 42), Madhūsūdana (No. 17), Nārāyaṇa (No. 36), Varāhāvatāra (No. 36), Śvetavarāhasvāmin, Dāmodara (No. 42), Śrīgopāṇi (No. 33), and Vāsudeva (No. 25).

A temple of Vishnu is called a Vishnu-sthāna (No. 17). Skanda Gupta’s officer Chakrāpāli, as a devotee of God Govinda and Chakrādhara, constructed a temple of Chakrāhīṛī. Bhāgavata temples are referred to in inscriptions numbered 27 and 28. Those numbered 25, 29, and 31 refer to a Deity called Pishṭapuri or Pishṭapurikādevī, probably another name of Lakṣmi. Sometimes, a flagstaff or dhvaja-stambha was erected as a symbol of worship (No. 19). The famous Iron Pillar inscription at Mehrauli calls the pillar as a Vishnu-dhvaja. A Vaishnava cave was constructed at Udayagiri in A.D. 401 by a Sanakānika chief who also had it decorated with sculptures showing four-armed Vishnu and twelve-armed Lakṣmi. Skanda Gupta’s special devotion to Lakṣmi is expressed in his coins of the ‘King and Lakṣmi type’ and in his inscriptions mentioning Kula-Lakṣmī as the tutelary Deity of the Gupta family. Inscription No. 66 found on a Daśāvatāra temple names Vishnu and Anantasvāmi and Chitrakūṭasvāmi. A Dāmodarpur inscription refers to the temple of Vishnu named Śvetavarāhāsvāmi. Nos. 3 and 17 refer to the Vaishnava festival of Sayana-vākādaśī.

Saivism. The prevalence of worship of Śiva is testified to in many inscriptions referring to His worship under various names indicative of the different aspects of His divinity installed in appropriate shrines. Probably, the earliest Śiva-Līṅga is that bearing an inscription dated A.D. 436, and found at Karamadāṇḍa in Fyzabad. The God Śiva was also taken out in a procession called Devarāṇī in this inscription. It is curious that two Ministers of the Vaishnava emperor, Chandra Gupta II, were worshippers of Śiva named Sambhu and Mahādeva-Prithivīśvara-Sailēśvarasvāmi, the former constructing a cave (No. 6) and the latter granting land for His worship. The inscriptions mention the worship of Śiva under the following names: Iśa (No. 18), Mahābhūtārava (Nos. 55, and 57), Bhūtārava (No. 49), Harā (No. 49), Iśvara (No. 39), Jayesvara (No. 39), Kapāléśvara (No. 80), Kokūmkhāsvarā, Mahādeva (No. 39),
Mahaśvarā (Nos. 38, 39, 46 and 55), Mihireśvara (No. 80), Paśupati (No. 39), Prithivīśvara, Pīnākin (No. 35), Sambhu (Nos. 6, 35, 53 and 56), Sarva (No. 37), Śiva (Nos. 55 and 56), Śaileśvara, Sīvānu (No. 34), Sālapāni (Nos. 33, 34 and 79), Śrīrabhodeśvara (No. 39), Tripurāntaka (No. 80), Ardhanārīśvara (No. 49), and Bhavastīj (No. 35). Mahārāja Hastin was a Śaiva (Nos. 21-23). So also was another feudatory chief, Mahārāja Bhīmavarman, who had inscribed his name on a pedestal bearing standing figures of Śiva-Pārvati. The inscription was found at Kosam and is dated G.E. 139 = A.D. 458, the time of Skanda Gupta. The emperor Skanda Gupta restruck the silver coins of the previous rulers, which were in circulation in western and central provinces of the empire, and these western issues show on Rev. the figure of a Bull which must have been Śiva’s bull, Nandī. This Bull-type of coins is attributed to the Valabhī Senāpati or rulers whose emblem was the Bull. The Śaiva sect of Mahaśvarās was flourishing in Mathurā in the time of Chandra Gupta II, as stated in an inscription already cited.

Worship of Śakti. Śaktī also is worshiped under different names as Bhagavati (Nos. 25, 29, 31), Bhavāni (No. 50), Devi (Nos. 49 and 50), Gaurī (No. 79), Kātyāyanī (No. 50), Pārvati (No. 33). Inscription No. 17 records how a Minister of a local king named Visvavarman, a feudatory of Kumāra Gupta I, constructed a temple for the worship of the Divine Mothers (Mātrīs), ‘a very terrible abode, filled full of Dākinīs or ghosts who utter loud and tremendous shouts in joy and stir up the very oceans with the mighty winds rising from the performance of tāṅtrika rites.’ Along with the images of the Seven Mothers, the temple also bears an image of Śaktī as Mahishamardini. The Bihar Stone Pillar inscription of Skanda Gupta also refers to the construction of a group of temples (Devaniketanamāṇḍalam) dedicated to the Divine Mothers including goddess Bhadrārjā, also named Bhadrārjavā, who may be taken to be Pārvatī (Ārjā), wife of Bhadra (Śiva).

Some of the Gupta imperial coins show on Rev. goddess Durgā as Sīṁhavahānā, seated on lion, as on Chandra Gupta I coins, or Lion-slayer type of coins of Chandra Gupta II.

The Tiger-type of coins of Samudra Gupta introduces goddess Gāṅgā as Makara-vāhanā, on Rev., and the Lyrist-type, goddess Sarasvatī as Goddess of Music associated with the śīnā shown on Obv.

Several other goddesses are also mentioned in the inscriptions as being worshipped in those days, e.g.: Devātī (No. 13); Jāṁnavi (Nos. 38, 39); Jāṁhavati (No. 67); Lakṣmī (Nos. 14 and 79); Vaishnavi (No. 40); Paulomi (No. 49); Śachi (No. 49); and Sarasvatī (No. 42).
Kārtikeya. The worship of Kārtikeya, the God of War, is mentioned in several inscriptions. The Bilsad inscription of the time of Kumara Gupta I [A.D. 415, (No. 10)] refers to a temple (āyatana) for worship of Śvēmā-Mahāśena also named god Brahmānya, in honour of whose worship the temple was equipped by a devotee named Dhruvaśarman with (1) a pratoli or gateway with a flight of steps to reach up to its height; (2) a muni-vasati, ‘rest-house for saints’; (3) a dharma-sattra, or free feeding or alms-house; and (4) a lofty pillar (stambha). The flight of steps is called svargasopāna, ‘steps leading to heaven’, showing that the temple was very high, and its way marked by an equally high pillar. Dhruvaśarman for his piety was honoured by the Committee of the temple (pārshadāmānita).

Sūrya. Worship of the Sun was also popular. It was left to a Guild of Silk-Weavers to construct at Daśapura a temple of the Sun, Dīpta-raśmi, and to carry out its repairs on a magnificent scale, so that the griha of Bhānumān was rendered the best of the city’s buildings (bhavana-vara), as is stated in inscription No. 18. In the time of Skanda Gupta, a temple of god Savitā was founded by two Kṣatriya merchants in Antarvedi-Vishaya (No. 16). Inscription No. 28 of A.D. 512 records the grant made by Mahārāja Śarvanātha of Uchchakalpa for the repairs of a shrine for the worship of god Aditya-Bhaṭṭāraka.

Other Deities. Most of the deities of the Hindu Pantheon were known and find mention in the Gupta inscriptions. These are: the God of Wealth called Kubera (Nos. 1 and 2) or Dhanada (Nos. 1, 3, 4 etc.); or Dhanaśa (Nos. 38 and 39); Varuṇa, God of Justice (Nos. 1, 4, 10-13, etc.); Indra God of Gods (No. 1) or Sakra (No. 15); Yama, the God Invincible, or Antaka (Nos. 1, 3, 4 etc.) or Kṛishñā (Nos. 4, 10, 12 etc.); Hanumat (No. 42); Rāma (No. 17); Kāmadeva (Nos. 18, 35); Lokapāla (Nos. 19, 37); Meghavān (No. 35); Bhāsapati, God of Wisdom (No. 1); Vidyādharā (Nos. 17, 18 and 42); Nāra (No. 18); Kinnara (No. 18); Gandharva (No. 18); Mahīśāsura (No. 50); and Nandi (No. 33), as demi-gods.

Buddhism. Although the Gupta emperors were orthodox Hindus or followers of Brahminical religion, they were catholic enough not to have enforced their personal religion as the official religion of the empire. They encouraged equally the promotion of all religions, including Buddhism and Jainism. Sānchi continued to be a great centre of Buddhism. An inscription (No. 5) dated G.E. 92=A.D. 412 records the gift of a village to the Āryasamgha of Kākanādabōṭa-vibhāra (Sānchi), governed by its Pañchamandaḥ, and also of 25 dvārāras, the interest of which was to feed five Bhikshus and a lamp. This Mahāvibhāra is described as the ‘abode’ (āvasāthā) of the most
pious Śramaṇas. No. 11 of the year 129=AD. 448 of the time of Kumāra Gupta I records the installation of the image (pratimā) of the Perfectly Enlightened One of irrefutable doctrines, Buddha Bhagavān (samyak-sambuddha). No. 62 of the year 131=AD. 450 of the time of Kumāra Gupta I records the grant by a lady, possibly out of her own strīdāna, of certain sums of money to the Ārya-saṅgha at the Mahāvihāra of Kākanādabota for the spiritual merit of her own parents. It also refers to four images of the Buddha previously installed in the Vibhāra. Like Sāñchi, Sārnāth was another centre of Buddhism and noted for the two famous images of the Buddha bearing inscriptions of the time of Kumāra Gupta II and Budha Gupta. The Buddha is here called Śattā. He is called Su-gata in No. 52.

Jainism. The Udayagiri Cave inscription of the year 126=AD. 445 and hence of the reign of Kumāra Gupta I mentions the construction of an image (ākṣiti) of Jainara Pārśeva. Another inscription records the installation of a Jain image at Mathura in the year AD. 423. The Kahāum Stone Pillar inscription of the time of Skanda Gupta records an endowment in favour of Jainism, the fashioning of five stone-images of Ādikarīṣṭa or Tirthaṅkaras in the niches of a pillar of stone 'as high as a hill'.

Thus the Buddhist and Jain Vibhāras were as familiar as the Brahminical Deva-kula and Deva-sabhā (No. 18).

Worship of Teachers and Texts. Along with the worship of deities, there was also a custom of offering worship to the teachers and founders of religions whose images and statues were installed in shrines (garvayatanas), as stated in the Mathurā Pillar inscription of the time of Chandra Gupta II. Fa-Hien also noted how Buddhist teachers and sacred Buddhist texts were worshipped in shrines specially constructed for the purpose.

Endowments. All these religions were promoted by public benefactions which usually took the form of gifts made in both cash and kind. The gifts of cash were not usually spent, but kept as a permanent fund (aksbaya-mūrī), the interest of which only was to be spent on their purposes, as stated in No. 62. Gifts in kind were generally grants of land in the shape of an agrābōra or village to learned Brahmins in furtherance of their religious pursuits. These endowments were also made for the supply of requisites of worship such as scent, incense, flowers, or oil for lights, besides construction of alms-houses (sattas or vibhāras). The Guṇaigart inscription of Vainya Gupta records the gift to a Mahāyāna Saṅgha of Sākyabhikshus for provision for their Chiva (clothing), pīṇḍapāta (food), sayana (bedding), ārana (seating) and medicines. It was followed by another gift of an Agrābōra to the same Saṅgha then housed in
a Vibāra called Āśrama-vibāra which was consecrated to Avalokiteśvara.

Social Service. There were also endowments of social service and works of public utility. Fa-Hiien saw more of these specially in what he calls the Middle Kingdom. Rest-houses were constructed with ‘supply of beds and mattresses, food and clothes’. While travelling through the U.P., Fa-Hiien noticed, built along even ‘out of the way roads, houses of charity providing for shelter with beds, food and drink’, though one could not stay there indefinitely. Fa-Hiien further reports how these endowments were made in the shape of gifts of ‘lands, houses, and gardens, with men and bullocks for cultivation, on the basis of binding title-deeds which were written out and which no subsequent kings dared disregard.’ Educational benefactions of those days were made in the form of grants of lands which could be profitably cultivated to produce the income required to maintain them. This meant that these schools were equipped with efficient agricultural departments and staffs to look after their landed estates, their villages, their paddy fields, orchards, and also dairy-farms, as testified to by the later Chinese pilgrims, Yuan Chwang, and I-Tsing in respect of Nālandā University. Fa-Hiien also refers to public benefactions endowing free hospitals for poor patients, ‘orphans, widowers, and cripples.’ ‘They are well taken care of under an attending physician and are given their prescribed food and medicine and are discharged when they are cured.’

Education and Learning. This religious and cultural revival points to a sound system of education and adequate progress of learning. Teachers are mentioned in inscriptions by the titles of Ācārya and Upādhyāya and the pupils were called Śishyas. The Upādhyāya is a sub-teacher who is well up only in a part of the Veda or in grammar and in the other Vedāṅgas (see Nos. 36, 61, 71). Besides Śishyas, disciples were also called Brahmachāris (Nos. 22, 23, 39 and 60).

Learned Brahmīn teachers were honoured by the title of Bhattas (Nos. 12, 39 and 81). Villages consecrated to the use of religious students (Brahmachāris) were called Agrabāras (No. 60). Religious students were grouped under Sākhās and Čaranaṇas (No. 55). These were names of Vedic Schools following a particular recension of one of the Vedas. In the inscriptions, the following Vedic recensions are mentioned, namely, Aṣṭamasya (No. 41), Bahuvrīha (Nos. 40 and 60), Chhandoga-Kaṇṭhuma (No. 23), Katha (No. 22), Maitrāyaṇīya (Nos. 19 and 36), Nārāyaṇa (No. 16), Taṅgiriya (No. 56), Vājasaneyā-Mādhyaṇīna (Nos. 21, 26 and 81) and Vājasaney-Kaṇva (No. 38).
The three Vedas are called Trayi (No. 39). There is a reference to Paramarshi Veda-Vyāsa as the arranger of the Vedas (No. 21).

A Brahmin acquainted with all the four Vedas is called a Chaṭurvedin (Nos. 16, 39 and 55). There were also Brahmans who specialized in one Veda, e.g., Sāmavedi Brahmin. Vedas are not mentioned individually in the inscriptions except Atharva Veda (No. 80).

The interpreter of Vedic quotations and words is called Nāgama (No. 35).

As regards the subjects of study other than the Vedas, we have reference to the 14 Viḍyās (No. 25) comprising 4 Vedas, 6 Vedāṅgas, the Purāṇas, Mīmāṁsā, Nyāya and Dharma or Law; to Sanskrit and Prākṛti poets (No. 33); to the grammar of Pāṇini called Śālāturiya (No. 39); to Atharva Veda in which there was specialized study (No. 80); to Vyāsa, the arranger of the Vedas, and son of Parāśara (No. 31); to the Mahābhārata (Nos. 26, 27, 28 and 31) and to its Sātasahasrahambīta (edition of 100,000 slakas) [ibid].

Some of the characters of the Mahābhārata are also referred to as being popularly known, viz., Yudhishtīrā (No. 38) called Dharmarāja, Vidura (No. 33), Vainya famous for hereditary virtue (abhijñā-śycena) (No. 17), Uddhava (No. 35), Sagara, whose 60,000 sons dug out the bed of the ocean (ibid), Bhagiratha (No. 17), Prīthu (No. 2), Rāghava (ibid), Pārtha (Nos. 18 and 20), Māndhātā (No. 33), Manu, Bharata and Alarka (ibid), and Anu son of Yayati (No. 49).

**Method of learning.** All this learning was imparted orally by the teacher to his pupil. The subjects of study were not reduced to writing, and instruction had to be received by the pupil directly from the lips of the teacher uttering its words. There was hardly available in the country any written literature which could be copied and conserved and carried in manuscripts. As Fa-Hien states on the basis of his personal observation, the teacher’s words had to be ‘heard, pondered over, and contemplated’ (as śruti) by his pupils. In fact, lessons and literature had all to be heard. He further states that in the various countries of northern India through which he travelled, he always found that sacred works were handed down orally from one teacher to another, so that he could hardly find any written volume which he could copy. He found an exception only at one place, at the Mahāyāna monastery at Pāṭāliputra, where he found a copy of the ‘Disciplines’, some extracts from the Abhidhamma and complete copies of two Sūtras. To copy out these works, Fa-Hien was compelled to stay here for 3 years in having to learn to write and to speak Sanskrit. There were thus no libraries in those days where knowledge could be stored up in MSS. The teachers were themselves the living and walking libraries, and custodians of the nation’s heritage and stock of learning.
Popularity of Sanskrit. The medium of higher instruction and the language of the cultured classes must have been Sanskrit in those days. All the Gupta inscriptions are written in Sanskrit, replacing Prākrit or Pāli of the earlier inscriptions. Very probably, while in the earlier times the inscriptions were written in Prākrit which was then read by the people at large, Sanskrit, in the time of the Gupta emperors, displaced Prākrit as the popular language, for it may be assumed that epigraphic records are meant to be read by the public.

Its Cultivation by Kings. The spread of Sanskrit learning was mainly due to its patronage by the kings some of whom became known as distinguished Sanskritists themselves. For instance, Samudra Gupta was himself a poet, the author of a large volume of poetry (bala-kavita), upon whom is bestowed the extinct title of Kavi-rāja, ‘the prince of poets’, by Harishenā. His poetical output was known both for its quantity (aṅka-kavya-kriyābhīsa) and quality. Many a poet could have earned his living from poetry like his (vidvajjanopajīva). For his poetry was not obscure but clear (sphuta) in its meaning and hence was popular, and won him much fame (kirti).

But he was not merely a poet. He was well-versed in the Vedas and Śāstras whose inner meaning (tattva) he understood and upheld (bhartā). He was a ‘path-finder’, a pioneer, in the study of the sacred Rigvedic hymns (sukta-mārgaḥ). By his versatile learning, he ruled in the realm of letters (vidvaloke), as he ruled in the realm of politics, and won for himself a new kingdom of fame (kirti-rājya). He was the protector of religion whose limits (prādāra) he would not permit anyone to transgress. His learning penetrated into the deepest truth of religion (vaidushyam tattvabhed). By his spirituality, he was worthy of the company of the sages.

Literary Conferences. He made another contribution to learning by upholding its standard. He used to convene Conferences of literary critics (budha-gupta) to judge of true poetry (satkāvya) and weed out (ābata) that which would violate (vṛuddha) its dignity (śri).

Samudra Gupta as a Musician. Samudra Gupta was also a devotee of other fine arts besides poetry. He was like a Nārada and Tumburu in choral skill and musical accomplishments (gandharva-lalita). He Lyrist-type of coinage celebrates his skill in instrumental music and playing on the vīnā.

Śāba Vira-sena. Among other learned noblemen is mentioned Śāba Vira-sena, the Minister (Sadhiva) of that saintly emperor, Rājā-dbhirājarshi Chandra Gupta II. He is described as a poet (kavi) who was also proficient in other scientific subjects like Etymology (Śabdārtha), Logic (Nyāya), and State-craft (Lokajñā) (No. 6).
Skanda Gupta. No 13 describes the accomplishments of emperor Skanda Gupta "of spotless soul" (amanātmā), who was well-versed in the knowledge of different tunes (tāna) of music.

Learned Chiefs. Māṛi Vishṇu was a local chief who was a Rishi of a Brahmin (Viprasrshi) who completed his Vedic study, and was given to the performance of Vedic sacrifices (Kratu-yājī) (No. 19).

The local chief Visvavaran is described as the equal of Śakra and Brīhaspati (No. 18).

Learning among Silk-Weavers. This inscription also describes how even the members of an industrial guild, a Guild of Silk-weavers (Paṭavāya Sreni), showed great aptitude for general cultural subjects, along with technical topics. Some acquired proficiency in Military Science (Dhanurvidyā), some in Stories (Kathāvidī), and some in Astrology (Jyotisha).

Literary Value of Inscriptions. The Allahabad Pravasti as a literary composition is creditable to its author, Harishaṇa. The Meharauli inscription is also a good piece of poetry. The Mandasor Stone inscription of Kumāra Gupta I and Bandhuvarman is the composition of the poet, Vatsabhaṭṭi.

Centres of Learning. We owe to Fa-Hien an account of the residential colleges or Vibhāras of those days.

Udyāna. When he first crossed over to India he saw in the country called Udyāna Buddhism very flourishing and Sanskrit as the language of the country.

Gandhāra. His next move was towards Gandhāra and its cities of Takshasila and Peshāwar, all full of monuments enshrining the relics of the Buddha or incidents of his life.

Punjab. In passing through the Punjab, he saw many monasteries accommodating in all 10,000 monks.

Mathurā. Next, he came to Mathurā where he found 20 monasteries with some 3,000 monks, along the banks of the Jumna.

Middle Kingdom. South of the Jumna began the Middle Kingdom, the region of Brahminism, with its high standard of culture and refinement. ‘Throughout the country, no one kills any living thing, nor drinks, wine, nor eats onions or garlic. The people do not keep pigs or fowls. There are no dealings in cattle, no butchers’ shops, or distilleries in the market-places.’

This Middle Kingdom was the heart of the Gupta empire, and its Brahminical culture based upon non-violence, refined manners, customs, and dietary, must have greatly impressed the Buddhist pilgrim.

Sankśī. At Sankśī, he saw a Vibhāra of 1,000 monks.

Sravasti. Sravasti was a famous centre of Buddhism, full of its antiquities and remains. It was also a strong centre of Brahma-
nical culture. Fa-Hien saw this region intellectually very active. There were as many as 96 Schools of Brahminical Doctrine and Philosophy, each with its own ascetic followers who begged their food, but did not carry alms-bowls like the Buddhist monks.

**Pātaliputra.** The next important centre of culture was Pātaliputra where Fa-Hien saw Aśoka’s palace ‘still in existence’, but the manner of his reference shows that Pātaliputra did not occupy the same position in the Gupta empire as it did in the Maurya empire.

**Its Learned Teacher.** Fa-Hien found at Pātaliputra one Mahāyāna and another Hinayāna monastery. The former monastery was noted for a prodigy of learning, the Brahmin Buddhist teacher named Raivata to whom the whole country looked up as the highest authority in Mahāyāna. He had as his associate another Brahmin teacher named Mañju Śrī who was equally learned.

**Magadha.** The civilization of Magadha impressed Fa-Hien very much, with its large cities, rich and prosperous people, who vied with one another in practising charity of heart and duty to one’s neighbour. At their religious processions of images carried in ‘four-wheeled cars of five storeys’, the Brahmins ‘come to invite the Buddha’, showing their complete catholicity.

**Tāmluk.** In the country of Tāmluk, there were 24 monasteries in one of which he stayed for 2 years, ‘copying out Sūtras and drawing pictures of images’.

**Art of Coinage.** A good deal of the artistic achievements of the age is exhibited in the delicate workmanship of Gupta coinage in its various types. The variety of designs shown in the types of coinage gave great scope to art. The general scheme followed in the fashioning of this coinage is to exhibit on the Obverse the portrait of the king concerned and on the Reverse an appropriate goddess together with the corresponding accompaniments of associated symbols.

The king is shown in a variety of positions, shooting a tiger or a lion, playing on lyre, seated on high-backed couch, riding a horse or an elephant, feeding a peacock, holding a standard, or bow and arrow, or battle-axe. Among the accompaniments are well-executed figures of Altar or Tulasī plant, Garuḍa, or Dwarf.

The Reverse is reserved generally for the figure of the goddess, the deity worshipped by the king. Lakṣmī in most cases, or Gaṅgā-makara-vābanā, to go with the Tiger on Obverse as symbolizing the conquest of the forested regions of which the Tiger is a native; or Durgā-simha-vābanā, Śakti, to whose blessings the king owed his conquests; or Kula-Lakṣmī, the tutelary deity, the Goddess of Fortune to favour the royal family; or Sarasvatī, as the Goddess of the softer arts of Peace going with the Viṇā on Obverse.
There are departures from this general design in some coin-types. The Aśvamedha types of both Samudra Gupt and Kumāra Gupt I omit the king on Obverse but insert in his place the figure of the doomed horse standing before and tied to the yūpa, with a brick shown to symbolize the altar, while the Reverse brings forward the Queen who is indispensable for the sacrifice, as well as the ceremonial spear. The Chandra Gupt I type shows a variety, the figures of both King and Queen on Obverse. The Kācha type introduces a new element on Obverse, the standrad surmounted by the wheel or chakra of Vishnu. The Chhatra type of Chandra Gupt II introduces on the Obverse the typical symbol of royal authority, the umbrella which is appropriately held on his head by the dwarf. Specimens of his Lion-slayer type show a great variety in depicting the king hunting down the lion in all possible positions. One shows him striking at the heart with the sword at close quarters. His Horseman type declares his paramount sovereignty symbolized by the victorious career and return of the horse, an embodiment of ajitavikrama. His silver coins for western provinces are adapted to the local conditions of newly-conquered territories. They show on Obverse the bust of the king and not his full length, but on Reverse the Garuḍa as token of Gupt sovereignty and not the usual goddess of Śaka coins. The craftsmen were quite good at executing these adaptations. These coins introduce for the first time the royal titles of Vikramāditya and Vikramāsya earned by the king at the zenith of his conquering career as a Śakāri, the conqueror of the Śakas, pushing the limits of his empire up to the western seas. His copper coins show two new features: Garuḍa eating up snake, and flower-vase (kalaśa) on Reverse. The Horseman type of Kumāra Gupt I has a variety in its legend, Ajita-Mahendrā, but the word ajita is retained as going with the invincible prowess symbolized by the horse. Kumāra Gupt I as the ruler of both western and eastern India issued both the Lion and the Tiger types of coinage recalling those two regions. His Peacock type is an innovation. Its Reverse represents a God and not a Goddess, the God of War, Kārtikeya as Śakti-dhara and Mayūra-vāhana, with the appropriate legend Mahendra-kumāraḥ expressive of the king’s devotion to both these gods. His Pratāpa type is unique in that it brings on the Obverse three figures, two females with the king between, and legend Śri-Pratāpaḥ on Reverse. His silver coins for the western provinces declare in their legend the king’s religion more emphatically before the conquered Śakas than the coins of his predecessor, though they agree on Garuḍa as its symbol on Reverse. The leged uses with vengeance the expression Parama-bhāgavata while it replaces Vikramāditya by Mahendrāditya. The silver issued for the central pro-
vinces have the figure of peacock on Reverse, as the copper coins show Garaṇa. Skanda Gupta’s Archer type introduces the appropriate legend Sudhama, ‘the skilled bowman’, on Obverse. His King-and-Lakshmi type is singular. It brings on Obverse both king, and the deity he worships, Lakshmi, whose figure is reproduced on Reverse, too, to emphasize his devotion to Her as Kula-Lakshmi to Whom he owes the restoration of the fallen fortunes of his family. His silver western issues continue the legend of his predecessor on Obverse, and on Reverse Garaṇa with outspread wings. They introduce two innovations, the figures of Bull and Altar on Reverse, and the titles Vikramādiya and Kramādiya on the Reverse of the Altar type.

The execution of all this numismatic variety in designs and devices shows the originality, resourcefulness, and adapting capacity of the craftsmen concerned in translating thought in terms of metal.

Sculptures and Structures. Besides Coins, Gupta Art receives adequate expression in Monuments and Sculptures. These are all connected with one or other of the different religions them prevailing in the country and are meant to serve their interests. Only their most typical examples may be considered here.

Śaiva Sculptures. The temple of Bhitargaon in the Kanpur district is profusely decorated with carved brick-work, and brilliant terra-cotta panels, illustrating Śaiva themes. The structure is of the sixth century A.D. Of the same time is the famous temple at Deogarh in the Lalitpur sub-division of the Jhansi district, which is decorated with sculptures and panels showing a high standard of art. One of these, representing Śiva as a yogi, is one of the masterpieces of Indian Art in the opinion of V.A. Smith. In Kosam in the Allahabad district has been found a very artistic sculpture of Śiva and Pārvati with an inscription dated 458 A.D. Some Śaiva images have been found at Kaman in Ajmer, e.g., the linga bearing faces of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Sūrya, and a sculpture depicting the marriage of Śiva and Pārvati. Eka-mukha lingas have been discovered at Khoh and Bhumra. The Khoh specimen is a masterpiece of art.

Krishṇa Sculptures. The worship of Viṣṇu is also represented in many a monument. One of the cave-temples in the Udayagiri Hills, bearing an inscription of A.D. 401, has some fine sculptures representing the incarnation of Viṣṇu as Varāha and also the goddesses Gange and Yamuna, standing respectively on makara and kachchhapa. In the same neighbourhood, at a place called Pathari, is found a temple containing a massive relief on the nativity of Krishṇa, showing how the new-born babe lies by the side of the Mother, watched by five attendants. It has been considered as the
finest and largest piece of Indian sculpture by Beglar. The Deogarh temple also has a panel representing Vishnu reclining on Ananta, the Serpent, the symbol of eternity. At Mandor near Jodhpur have been found fragmentary sculptures of the fourth century A.D., depicting beautiful Krishṇa-scenes including the raising of Mount Govardhana.

Sūrya Sculptures. The Bhūmra temple shows an image of Sūrya dressed like the famous Kanishka statue at Mathurā Museum. He is not shown with his horses. But seven horses appear in the sculpture of Kaman (Ajmer).

Buddhist Sculptures. Buddhism has inspired some of the best examples of Gupta Art in the form of images. The Mankuurār Stone Image of the Buddha bearing an inscription dated A.D. 448 is supposed to be an example of Kushan Art, but is of the Gupta age. The Mathurā Jain Image, which is dated 113 = A.D. 432 in its inscription, also corresponds to the Kushān type. These examples show how cultural history outlives political history.

Some of the best examples of Gupta Art are found at Sārnāth. In these images Gupta Art has achieved its complete emancipation from foreign influence, and a synthesis of different artistic elements and traditions. As pointed out by Dr. Vogel, the Buddha Image of the period exhibits a new and purely national development, and, indeed, represents a new type which in artistic merit is infinitely superior to its predecessor (the Kushān Image). Some of the Buddha statues of this period, by their wonderful expression of calm repose and mild serenity, give a beautiful rendering of the Buddhist ideal. The indications of the drapery having been almost wholly discarded, the monastic robes are merely marked in outlines. On the contrary, the halo encircling the head of the Master becomes lavishly decorated with floral and foliated ornament. Evidently the real significance of this ‘Circle of Light’ (prabhāmandala) was completely forgotten. The Gupta sculptors thus succeeded in their effort to eliminate or modify those features which in the Kushan period still indicated the foreign origin of the Buddha image (Sārnāth Museum Catalogue).

The Sārnāth seated image of the Buddha in the act of preaching the first sermon is considered as one of the masterpieces of Indian Art, and of its Gupta style marked by its symbolism. Thus the wheel and the two deer carved on its pedestal indicate respectively the Dharm Chakra, and the Myigadāva, where the wheel was first turned. His hands are shown in the position known as Dharm Chakra-pravartana-mudrā. Indeed, there was a great development in the mudrās in the Buddhist Iconography of the time.

We also see in these Gupta Buddhist sculptures more importance being given to the figure of the Buddha, as compared with other
figures which, though associated with Him in life, are now much reduced in size, and subordinated in position.

While early Buddhism banned the direct portraiture of the Buddha, Gupta Art was not tramelled by such restrictions and was free to fashion His figure in large numbers and in a variety of forms. Images of the Buddha were installed in the monasteries in their cells, in their special chapels and temples, and even in their outer niches and relic-towers.

Another marked feature of the Gupta Buddhist sculpture is that it is dominated by the cult of the Bodhisattvas, which is now very pronounced.

We have many an image not merely of Maitreya, but also, and in particular, of Avalokiteśvara.

The Sārnāth excavations have also brought to light certain other features of Indian Art of the times. There is introduced into Buddhist Art the figuring of numerous deities derived from the Brahminical pantheon, such as Vaiśravana, the God of Wealth, the Goddess of Fertility, Vasudhārā, the Goddess of Plenty, Tārā, Marīchi and the like.

The expansion of the Buddhist pantheon and multiplication of images of new deities naturally resulted in a decrease in the production of sculptures directly bearing on the life of the Buddha. In this respect, Gupta Art differentiates itself from the Graeco-Buddhist Art of Gandhāra which addressed itself so much to the task of representing in stone and sculptures every possible incident in the life of the Buddha. For the same reason it is seen that while the earlier Art of Bharhut and Sāñchī was so much inspired by the Jātakas, Gupta Art has drawn upon other sources such as Brahminical.

Schools of Art. It will thus be seen that the Art of the Gupta Age is represented in the main by two Schools, those of Mathurā and of Benares. Mathurā was the older School which continued the traditions of Kushan-Gandhāra Art and penetrated into distant parts where its products were in request. That is why its product like the Buddha Stone Image is found so far from Mathurā at Mankuwar in Karchana in Allahabad district. Mathurā work is known from its material of mottled red stone quarried at Karri in Mathurā district, and also by its foreign features. The product of the Benares School is also declared by its material of Chunār sandstone, and its artistic features which are free of foreign influence. It also produced a new type of Buddhist stelae which are used to depict in the old Gandhāra style the incidents in the Buddha's life, typical eight or four incidents, and, in some cases, even one incident elaborated in detail.

Metal Images: Pāṭaliputra School. Gupta Art is also seen in some singular metal images of which the best examples are the
Buddha Image found at Nalanda and the colossal Buddha Image found at Sultanganj in Bhagalpur district. These examples are taken to point to a third School of Gupta Art, called by R. D. Banerji the Pataliputra School, which culminated in a separate Eastern India School with its own style and technique.

Other Centres. Besides these centres, there are other minor centres of Gupta Art at places like Udayagiri, Bhilā, Eran, Deogārh, Daśapura or Mandasor. For instance, we have already seen how at Deogārh, Brahminical subjects are introduced for the first time into reliefs.

National Awakening. Post-Maurya and pre-Gupta Art of northern India was shaped to a great extent by Hellenic influence and Mahāyāna Buddhism. As we have seen, Gupta Art has been mainly influenced by Brahminical religion or Hinduism, the popular religion of the country. The political conditions of the Gupta empire were favourable for creative cultural movements. The whole country was politically unified and felt the stirrings of a new life. A newly roused national spirit expressed itself in different spheres of thought and action. Its effects were seen in the field of Art and Architecture. Art acquired a new structural procedure. From imitative, Art became creative, abandoning the servile copyings, of meaningless foreign forms, and reaching out to more rational principles of architectural composition.

The First Temple. The outstanding innovation introduced in the field of Architecture was the use for the first time of dressed stone-masonry as an important step taken in the technique of building construction. Architecture, composed of stone-masonry, was first seen in the emergence of the Hindu temple.

In this connexion, it may be useful to note that Brahminical thought did not for long favour an elaborate architecture. For instance, the Satapatha Brahmaṇa describes a Hindu shrine consisting of two sheds, 'formed of pots and beams, and covered with reeds and mats'. This kind of simple construction is seen in the bas-reliefs of Bharhut and Sāñchi, showing fire-altars and shrines which were practically unroofed, so that religious service and rituals were performed in the open air. Perhaps the earliest example of a Brahminical stone-structure is the Vishnu shrine at Besnagar near the Heliodorus Pillar, and hence of the second century B.C. Brahminical religion insisted on the contemplation of the Formless, in which Art could not originate. For the object of Art is to render and present the Infinite and Formless in terms of the Finite and Form. Art arose from the irresistible popular craving for worship of God in a visible form. So the deity had to be enshrined, and structural shrines came into being.
Growth of Temple Architecture. We may trace the evolution of the structure of the Hindu temple in its different stages: (1) a leafy bower, (2) a hut of reed, (3) a cella of wood and bricks. Eventually emerged in the Gupta period the sanctum of stone: the garbha-griha, a small cell with only one door-way so as not to intrude upon the inner darkness conducive to contemplation. Within was enshrined the effigy of the deity. The walls of the interior were naturally devoid of ornament but not so was the exterior of the temple. The outer side of the door-way came to be richly carved, and to the door was added a porch for shelter, which appeared as a pillared portico in the later Gupta examples.

These smaller Hindu sanctuaries were not yet glorified into regular temples. They were only shrines or chapels. Along with these stone-built structures there appeared excavated chambers, with attached structural porticos as seen in the Udayagiri caves.

Scope for Elaboration. The evolution of Gupta temple-architecture had these small beginnings marked by a flat roof and pillared portico. They gave room for artistic elaboration in regard to the following features, viz. (1) the shape of the pillar and its capital, (2) the treatment of inter-columniation, (3) the continuation of the architecture as a string-course round the entire building, (4) the design of the door-way.

Examples. The elaboration of these features may be seen in the following typical examples: (1) The temple at Tigawa in Jabalpur district, (2) The Narasimgha and other shrines at Eran, northeast of Bhilsă, (3) A temple at Sāñchi, (4) The famous temple at Bhūmara in Nagod State, (5) A temple at Nachna in the Ajaigarh State, (6) A group of rock-out sanctuaries at Udayagiri near Sāñchi.

Tigawa Temple. Of these examples, the most typical is the Vishnu temple at Tigawa. It keeps up the small size of the sanctum and the cella. The arrangement of the portico-pillars and the inter-columniation leaves a wider interval in the middle than on either side. The design of the pillar is typically and strictly Gupta. It consists of the following parts: (1) a massive abacus surmounted by a device of lions; (2) a capital resembling a vase or kalaśa (or inverted lotus); (3) a short shaft of many sides; (4) a plain square pedestal.

The design of the pillar takes after the famous Garuḍābavaja of Besnagar, while the lion is a link with the Aśokan capital.

The other new feature of Tigawa temple is the shape and decoration of its door-way. The upper angle of the door-way departs from the older Buddhist device of a dryad embracing a tree or a Yakṣī. Instead, it shows on one side Yamuna on tortoise and on the other side Ganges on crocodile. This feature becomes very pro-
minent on the door-ways of later Gupta temples, and is carved on the base of the door-post.

The most important feature of the Gupta capital is the Pūrṇa-kalasa, 'the Bowl of Plenty', typifying a renewed faith, suggesting the 'vase-and-flower' motif, one of the most graceful forms in the whole range of Indian Architecture.

**Temples at Bhūmara and Nachna.** The Siva temple at Bhūmara and the Parvati temple at Nachna, which are probably to be dated earlier than A.D. 500, add a new feature, a processional path which is open in one case and roofed in the other. In each case, the door-ways show typical Gupta design, with their over-hanging lintels, figure-panels in the upper corner, and general ornate treatment. The spirited floral scrolls and crisp modelling, the chiselled patterns on lintels, recall the brush forms of the Ajantā frescoes in their artistic workmanship. The Bhūmara temple, indeed, is noted for its ornamental sculptures, decorated gateways, fine arabesque medallions, Kārtimukhas, and ceiling decorated with figures of foliage, creepers, and breakers. It has also fine Chaitya-windows with medallions bearing the figures of Gaṇeśa, Brahmā, Yama, Kubera, Kārtikeya, Siva dancing on Bull, Sūrya, Kāma, and Mahishāsura-mardīnī.

**Deogarh Temple.** The Deogarh temple adds a pyramidal tower over the sanctum (the first appearance of the sikharā), and also four porticos supported on a row of four pillars to each of the four sides of the temple. The door-way is also charged with abundance of decorative additions.

**Pillars.** Besides these temples, Gupta Art is also represented in several free-standing pillars such as the Budha Gupta Monolithic Pillar at Eran dated A.D. 484, and the earlier more famous Iron Pillar at Delhi. The shaft of the former is surmounted by a lion-abacus. It supports at the top a statuette of good Vishṇu. The pillar is 43 feet high. The Iron Pillar at Delhi was removed to its present site from its original site at Mathurā or a hill near the Beas. It was presumably fashioned to the order of emperor Kumāra Gupta I about A.D. 415, because the inscription it bears describes the exploits of his father Chandra Gupta II. Its height is 23 feet and 8 inches. It is composed of pure malleable iron and is over six tons in weight. It is a remarkable testimony to metallurgical skill and to the capacity of the foundry to have forged such a piece of iron.

The temples of the times were constituted into Corporations which issued their own Seals. Such Seals have been discovered at places like Gayā, Vaiśāli and Bhitā. One bears the legend 'Śrī-Viṣhṇupūḍa-Svami-Nārāyaṇa' and was issued by the Viṣhṇupūḍa temple at Gayā.
The upper part of the seal bears figures of Vishnu's symbols such as mace, conch, and wheel, together with symbols of Siva, Surya, and Chandra. A Vaisali seal bears the legend 'Bhagavato Adityasya', and was issued by the temple of the Sun. Its upper part bears the figure of an altar as symbol of the Sun. Some seals figuring the fire-altar have also been found at Bhutā.

Varnāśrama-dharma. Social life was based upon the orthodox Hindu system designated as Varnāśrama-dharma, the system marked by division of society into Varnas or Castes and of life into graduated stages known as Āstras. It was the duty of the sovereign to uphold the social order and prevent confusion and unlawful mixture of castes. Abhayadatta, Governor (Rajasthānya) of a Province, is described as 'the protector of castes' (varṇāh) and his successor Dharmadosha as preventing the mixture of castes (Varna-sāṅkara) (No. 35).

The Brahmans as the highest caste represented the highest standard of intellectual and moral life to merit social respect. They produced Yogis intent on concentrated contemplation (dhyāna-akāraapara) for achievement of siddhi (self-fulfilment) and moksha (salvation), and also Munis who with devotion (bhakti) gave themselves up to total and extreme (tīrta) penance as their only concern in life (tipodhāna) (No. 18). In the Karamadāṇḍā inscription of the reign of Kumāra Gupta I (EI, X, 72), the Brahmans are noted for their penance (tapah), Vedic study (svādhyāya), and proficiency in the Mantras, Sūtras, Bhāṣyās, and Pravachanas. They won the respect of the King. Mahārāja Hastin is described as 'extremely (atyanta) devoted to gods and Brahmaṇas' (No. 21). As we have seen, the inscriptions are full of grants of lands and agrahāras to Brahmans to help them in their life of learning and religion and performance of expensive Vedic ceremonies like Agnīhotra and Pateṣvara-mālayaṇas. Brahmans were respected for their piety by followers of all religions. For instance, a village is described as a holy place for its association with saints (sādhu-saṁsarga-pūta), while a Jain nobleman named Madra takes credit to himself in his inscription (No. 15) for his attachment (pṛti) to dviṣa-guru-yati, 'Brahmins, religious preceptors, and ascetics.' A royal family had its own preceptor or āchārya. Queen Prabhāvaṣṭi Guptā made a gift of a village to her family-guru, Āchārya Chaṇḍāla Svāmī, a member of a Brahm colony (agrahāra) of Chāṇakya-vaidyas (those who are learned in the four vidyās) [EI, XV. 39]. A city is spoken of as being purged of its sins and infirmities by the singing of prayers by hundreds of Brahmans engaged for the purpose by its Mayor (No. 14). Mātri Vishnu is a rare example of a Brahm king who was like a Rishi (viprashti), devoted to the duties of his order (svakarmābhirata),
and performance of Vedic Sacrifices (Kratu-yājī), well-read in the Sāstras and Vedas' (No. 19).

A Brahmin was assigned to the Gotra or lineage by which he was known. The inscriptions tell of the following Gotras as being then prevalent: Ārṣeya (No. 56); Aṣṭāmānyava (No. 23); Bhāravāja (Nos. 56, 60, 81); Bhārgava (No. 22); Gautama (No. 26); Gotama (No. 67); Kānya (No. 20); Kūṭyapa (No. 56); Kārnidīna (Nos. 41, 51, 56); Kautsa (Nos. 6, 21, 22); Mahāyana (No. 56); Pārāśarya (Ibid); Śāndilya (Ibid); Śarkaraksha (No. 39); Śāskatane (No. 27); Śāgyāyana (No. 56); Varshagaṇa (No. 16); Vāsula (No. 22); Vatsa (Nos. 38 and 41); Vātisyā (No. 56); Vishnu-vriddha (Nos. 35 and 56); Āśva and Vaiṣṇ. Brahmins were also known by the Vedas they followed, e.g., Śamavedi Brahmins.

Though castes were ordinarily confined to the pursuit of their prescribed crafts, the inscriptions record some exceptions, as we have already seen. Minister Mayūra-rakshaka was a Brahmin and so also was the chief Mātri Vishnu. Minister Śikhaṛavāmī was also a Brahmin of the class called Chhāndogas whose Gotras were Āśva and Vaiṣṇ (Karamadāṇḍā inscription). Kshatriyas also figure as traders (No. 16).

There are also on record cases of inter-caste marriage. Brahmin Ravikirti is married to a Kshatriya named Bhānu-gupta (No. 35).

Kings were given to polygamy, e.g., Chandra Gupta II, and Kumāra Gupta I, as already shown. But the chief Queen was possessed of a high constitutional status so as to figure on coins as participating in the King’s aśvamedha. A woman had her stridhana out of which she makes a charitable grant (No. 62). Sāti was known (No. 20).

Economic Conditions. The facts and data of economic life and organization have been already dealt with in the account of the reign of each particular king. We may here give a general view and summary of these.

The outstanding fact of the economy of those times is the organization of industry or handicrafts under Guilds called Śrenīs. Their corporate character is brought out by the seals which were issued by them. The abundance of seals found at only one city like Vaiśālī shows to what extent these Guilds played their part in the economic life of the country. These Vaiśālī (Bṛārḥ) seals bring to light the Guilds (nigamas) of Bankers (śreṣṭhyās), Traders (sārthavābas) and Artisans (kulikas). Sometimes these Guilds federated themselves into a larger Corporation, as in the legend 'Śreṣṭhyā-Kulika-Nigama', i.e., the Corporation of Bankers and Artisans. There are again many seals testifying to the corpora-
tion formed by the federation of the three Guilds of Bankers, Traders
and Artisans. One seal also has the legend Pratihama-kulika showing
that he was the President of the Guild of Artisans. As Dr. T. Bloch
who discovered these Vaisālī seals points out: 'It looks as if during
those days, something like a modern Chamber of Commerce existed
in Upper India at some big trading centre, perhaps at Pāṭaliputra'
(Archeological Survey, Annual Report, 1903-4, p. 104). It will be
apparent from these numerous seals that Vaisālī in those days was a
very flourishing centre of trade, banking and business.

Some of the inscriptions of the time of the Gupta emperors, as
we have seen, bear sufficient testimony to the growth of these Guilds
for which the established technical term is Śrenī. The Indore Copper-
plate inscription of A.D. 465 mentions a Tailika-śrenī, Guild of Oilmen;
of which the President (Pravarā) is named Jivanta. This Oilmen's
Guild was trusted even by a Brahmin with the custody of his dona-
tion to be held by it in perpetuity (ājāsrīkām) under a contract which
was registered (nibaddha). The Bihar Stone Pillar inscription of
Skanda Gupta also records the creation of a permanent endowment
aptly called aksayānīvī in favour of a guild of the town of Ajapuraka.

The Mandasor inscription of the reign of Kumāra Gupta II
(No. 18) mentions a Guild of Silk-Weavers (Paṭharāṭvya-śrenī) and
its prosperous finances as shown by its construction of an unequaled
temple of the Sun.

These Banking functions were sometimes undertaken by other
bodies than these Śrenīs. For instance, the governing body of the
Mahāvibhāra at Kākanādabota (Śāñchi), the Arya Sāṅgha with its
Executive called the Pañcamaṇḍali, received a permanent donation
for the benefit of its monks (No. 62). Similarly, the Temple Com-
mittees also received permanent gifts of cash or kind for perpetual
supply of some of the requisites of worship such as scents, incense,
flowers, or lights, as shown above.

The main point of banking involved in these transactions is that
these Corporations gave facilities to private philanthropists by taking
permanent custody of their gifts, the corpus of which they held in-
tact as trust-property (aksayānīvī). They also allowed payment
of interest on these permanent deposits and agreed to spend this in-
come on the objects mentioned by the donors. That they were
paying interest on their deposits shows that they were investing to
profit these deposits on their own account. The rate of the profit
must have been greater than the rate of interest paid out. Thus
these Guilds, acting as Trustees, gave great stimulus to private cha-
rities by guaranteeing their security against loss, embezzlement, or
misappropriation.

The Gupta empire was based upon a money-economy, as is
shown by the abundance and variety of types of coinage in gold, silver, and copper in circulation in all its parts.

A reference may also be made in this connexion to the construction of Public Works of Utility in those days. Glimpses of some of these are given in the inscriptions. The largest of such works is the tatāka or the reservoir named Sudanāna which was originally constructed in the time of the Maurya emperor, Chandra Gupta, about 750 years back, by damming up the courses of the rivers rising from the hills near Girnar (Girinagara) by means of a rocky embankment; but this embankment, in the time of Skanda Gupta, burst as a result of continuous rain creating a breach in it. The engineers of those days were, however, efficient enough to repair the breach within two months, and by executing proper masonry work (samyak-ghaṭita-upalena) reconstructed the embankment, with a length of 100 cubits, breadth of 68 cubits and 7 men’s height—about 40 feet.

The second reference to these engineering works occurs, as already stated, in the Gangdhar Stone inscription of Viśavavarman who endowed his city built on the bank of the Gargarā with wells for irrigation (vāpi), tanks (tadāga), temples and halls of gods (surasadma-sabhā), drinking-wells (udapāna), parks (upavana) of various kinds, causeways (samikrama) and reservoirs of water (dīrghikā).

Similarly, the Mandasor Stone inscription describes how Lātu-Vishṭoyya was adorned with temples (deva-śāla), assembly halls of gods (deva-sabhā) and vihāras, with rows of storeyed mansions (prāṇāda-mālā) like rows of aerial chariots (vimāna-mālā) which were as high as the hills.

Political Conditions: Royal Succession. The Gupta emperors generally nominated their successors on the throne. Chandra Gupta I announced his nomination of Samudra Gupta as his successor before his Council or Sabha. The Riddhapura inscription also hints at such nomination in the expression tatpāda-parigribhata. In the case of Chandra Gupta II, his nomination by his father is indicated in the expression tat-parigribhata (No. 4), an expression repeated in Nos 12 and 13. Inscription No. 61 prepares the way by describing him as the satpura of his father.

Imperial Titles. The inscriptions already dealt with mention the following titles usual for the emperor: Paramādaiva, Paramabhāṭakara, Mahāraśādiraja and Prihiśvāpa (Damodarpur Copper-plate inscriptions); Paramāvara (No. 36), Samrāj (No. 33), Ekādbhiraja (No. 32), and Chakravartin (No. 39). The king received the homage of his subjects in the Upāsibāna or Darbar-Hall (No. 15).

Local Kings. These are called in the inscriptions Nripa, Nripat
or Pārthiva or Mabārāja (No. 18), or a Mahāsāmanta, a feudatory (No. 80).

The king was assisted in his administration by a Chief Minister called Sāchiva described as 'his third eye' (rājñāh śṛṣṭyamēva chakṣubhū) (No. 17).

There were also other officers attached to the royal household such as the Mahāpratibhāra (the Chief Usher of the palace), the Vinayāsāra (whose function seems to have been to announce and conduct visitors to the king), the Sthapati-Samrāj (probably superintendent of the attendants of the woman's departments) (No. 26), and the Pratinartaka (who was the Official Chronicler or Minstrel) (No. 39).

His Chief Secretary who was of the rank of a provincial governor is described on a Vaisālī seal as Śrī-Paramabhaṣārakapāḍiya.

An important officer of the Palace staff was the Superintendent of the royal kitchen called Khaḍyatopākika.

The king as a conqueror employed special officers (yuktapuruśas) to administer the difficult charge of restoring to the vanquished the properties seized by him (vibhava-pratyarpana) (No. 1).

Administrative Divisions. The inscriptions indicate a hierarchy of administrative divisions from top to bottom. The empire is called a rājya (No. 55), a rāṣṭra, desa or maṇḍala. The word prithivi (Damodarpur) is also used along with the word avani. Instances of these are Sukuli-desa (No. 5), Dabhāla-desa (No. 19), Suśrūṣṭra-avani (No. 14).

The empire or kingdom was divided into provinces. A province is called a Bhukti such as Pundravardhana-bhukti (Damodarpur), Tira-bhukti (Bāsārī seal), Nagara-bhukti (No. 46), and Uttaramāṇḍala bhukti (Gunaigarh inscription of Vainya Gupta). A province is also called a Pradeśa, such as Airikina-pradeśa. It is also sometimes called a Bhoga, and its Governor a Bhogika (Nos. 21, 23, 26, 27, 29 and 30). Below the province, and a part of it was the Vishaya or district. We have references in the inscriptions to the following Vishayas: Kośivarsa (Damodarpur), Khādāpāra (Damodarpur 1, 2 and Dhanādaha), Paṇča-nagari (Bāigrama Charter), Lāya (No. 18), Vaisālī (seal), and Antaravedi (No. 14). A part of a district is called a Viśālī in some inscriptions (e.g. Pāharpur). The Viśālī is connected with the series: Viśālī-Maṇḍala-Pābhaka-Graha (ib.). A Faridpur grant of Dharmāditya mentions the Vishayapati of Vāraka-maṇḍala. No. 39 of Fleet gives the series: Dārā-Paṭhaka-Graha. A Union of Villages is called a Paṭbaka (No. 25) and Santaka (No. 26). Smaller units or divisions of a village are called Paśa and Agrabhāra (No. 22).

Provincial Administration. The Head of the Province is called
Uparika-Mahārāja in the Damodarpur Copper-plate inscriptions. He is also called Goptā (No. 14), Bhogika, and Bhogapati. No. 35 employs a new term Rājanabhānya. The term is thus explained by Kshemendra in his Lokaprapakṣa: Prājñā-pālaṇārtham-nīvabhātirakṣayati cha sa rājanabhānyah, i.e., ‘the officer who shoulders the burden of protecting and promoting the welfare of the subjects’; but the term is used for lower officials in Nos. 38 and 46.

Sometimes, the Governor may be the king’s son (Rājaputra Devabhāṭāraka in Damodarpur Copper-plate 5). The Minister in attendance on the royal governor is called Kumārāmātya.

The Head of the Province was attended by a staff of private secretaries to act as intermediaries between him and the administration, and communicate his orders to them. These are called in the inscriptions Dūtas, Dūtakas, or Ajūḍā-dāpaka (No. 22). Thus these offices involved great trust and responsibility and were given only to the higher officers of the rank of a Rājanabhānya and a Uparika, as the mouthpiece of the sovereign or the Head of the administration. For instance, a great frontier king (Mahāsāmanta) figures as a Dūtaka who communicates the royal gift to the Kumārāmātyas concerned, showing that his official position was superior to that of the Kumārāmātya. It appears that the officer complementary to the Dūtakas was the scribe called Karana-Rāyantha who put into writing the royal order and held the high office of the king’s Minister for Peace and War (Sāndbhīvigrakhika) (Gunaigārh inscription of Vainya Gupta).

The provincial administration included the following staff as Heads of Departments as mentioned in the Vaiśālī Seal inscriptions: (1) Balādhihikarani, the holder of the office of the head of the army or the military; (2) Dandapāṇādhihikarani, the Chief of the Police, (3) Raṇabandhāraka, the Chancellor of the military exchequer, (4) Mahādānābhānya, Chief-Justice, (5) Vinaya-sthitir-sāpaka, Minister for Law and Order, (6) Bhaṭāsvapati, Commandant of infantry and cavalry. The Commandant of the elephant-force is called Mahāpālupati in Gunaigārh inscription of Vainya Gupta. It also testifies to another officer who controlled five district offices, like a modern Divisional Commissioner. A Faridpur inscription of Dharmāditya mentions an officer called Sādhanika who had to deal with debts and fines (sādhana) and was hence a judicial officer.

The Allahabad Pillar inscription adds the office of Senāpati or Commander-in-chief.

The Mallasarul Copper-plate inscription of king Gopachandra mentions the following additional provincial officers: (1) Karṇātakārītika (Head of the executive); (2) Bhogapati (officer-in-charge of a bhoga or division); (3) Tādāyuktaka (Treasury officer); (4) Hiranya-sāmundāyika (Currency officer); (5) Amṛtā-sthānīka (Superin-
District Administration. The Head of the District is called Vishayapatī. The civil station or the headquarters of the district bore the name of Adbishāna. The office is called Adhikarana. The City-Magistrate is also called Drāṅgika (No. 38). Thus a Vaiśāli seal contains an inscription 'Vaiśāli-adbishāna-adhikarana'. The executive officers of the district are called by the generic names of Sambyavahāri (Baigram and Nandapur Copper-plate inscriptions) and Avukta (Nandapur Copper-plate inscription). The District Magistrate was helped in his administration by a representative body of officers mentioned as follows: (1) Mahattarasa (Village Elders) (2) Aṣṭakunāḍhikaranikasa (probably officers in charge of groups of 3 kulas or families in the local area) (3) Gramika (Village Headman) (4) Saunika (Collector of customs and tolls) (5) Gaṅmikasa (in charge of forests and forts) (6) Agrābārika (in charge of the agrābāras, settlements dedicated to gods or Brahmins) [No. 12] (7) Dharmāḍhikaranikasa (in charge of land revenue) (No. 38) (8) Bhānugārāḍhikrita (Treasurer) [EI, XII, 75] (9) Talavāika (Village Accountant) [No. 46] (10) Utkhetwajita (Collector of Taxes) [EI, XII, 75] and (11) Pustapāla (the Notary and Keeper of Records).

The District Records Office is called Aksapata (under the departmental Head called the Malākshapaṭalika (Nos. 39 and 60). The Department of Records comprised clerks who had to write and copy out records and documents. These writers are called Diviras (No. 27) and Lekabaka (No. 80), while the documents are called Karanas (No. 56) and were kept in the custody of the Registrar called Karanikasa. The officer drafting the document is called Karttri or Sāsayāṣi (EI, XII, 75).

Besides these officers with specified functions, there were also employed in the district office what may be called general superintendents designated as Sarvādhyaśobhas (No. 33) under whom were employed men who were of noble lineage and called Kulapītras, to guard against corruption.

City Administration. The Mayor of the city is called Purapāla (Gunaigarh inscription), or Nagarā-Rakshaka (No. 14). There was also a Super-Mayor who controlled the Mayors of different cities, Purapāla-Uparika (Gunaigarh inscription). The Mayor of Daśapura is called Daśapura-pāla (No. 18). A city was governed by a Municipality called Parishat, as in the case of the city of Udānakūpa. A city had a special officer as a Superintendent of Dharmaśālā, who was called Avataṭhika (Mallasarul inscription of Gopachandra).

The Pāhāpur Copper-plate inscription of G.E. 159 = A.D. 479
and of the time of emperor Budha Gupta gives new details regarding local administration. It refers to the executive officers of the district as Ayuktakas and to the city municipality [adhishtana (=city) adhikarana (=municipal office)] headed by (Puroga) the Mayor of the city (Arja-nagara-sresthi). The proposals for transfer of land in the village are in the first instance referred to the standing non-official Village Council consisting of (1) leading Brahmans (Brähmanottaras), (2) leading villagers (Mahattaras), and (3) representative householders (Kuṭumbinas).

The Damarpur Copper-plate inscription No. 2 also gives slightly different details. It comprises the Village Council of 4 classes of members, viz., (1) Mahattaras, (2) Aśja-kulādikarana, (3) Grāmikas, and (4) Kuṭumbinas (householders).

Sources of Revenue and Taxation. These are indicated in the records of grants of land specifying the benefits and immunities which the grants carried for the beneficiaries. These are thus mentioned: (1) Udraṅga (probably the land-tax); (2) Uparikara (‘a tax levied on cultivators who have no proprietary rights on soil’—Fleet); (3) Vāta (unexplained); (4) Bhūta (probably what is ‘grown’, distinguished from ‘withered vāta’); (5) Dhānya; (6) Hiranya (gold); (7) Adeya (what is to be surrendered); (8) Vaishṭika (forced labour, if necessary); (9) Dasi-prāda (Fines from Ten Offences, viz., (a) three offences of the body, theft, murder, and adultery; (b) four offences of speech, harsh words, untruthful words, libellous words and pointless words; and (c) three offences of mind, coveting others’ property, thinking of wrong, and devotion to what is not true); (10) Bhoga (enjoyment); (11) Bhāga (share). No. 55 of Fleet’s ‘Gupta Inscriptions’ indicates very well, though negatively, the obligations imposed by the State on a village rendered free by the king’s grant: ‘It is not to pay taxes (akṣaraṇāy); it is not to be molested by the regular troops or police (bhāṣa), or by outlaws (cbāṣta); it is not to yield increase in its cows and bulls; nor in its flowers or milk, pastureage, hides, and charcoal; nor any taxes on salt or wet salt, on sale and purchase, or produce of mines; it is not to contribute forced labour or surrender its hidden treasures and deposits, the kṛipta and upakṛipta (unexplained).’ We may also cite in this connexion the Poona Copper-plate inscription of Prabhāvat Gulpā (EL, XV 39) recording her grant of a village to her family Guru, Āchārya Chanāla Svāmī belonging to the community or agrāhāra of Chāturvidyās. The record enumerates the following exemptions (paribhāra) carried by the grant: ‘freedom from molestation by soldiers (bhāṣa) and the king’s umbrella-bearers (cbāṭra); not yielding the right to pasturage (cbārāṣana), hides (charmā), angāra (charcoal), the purchase (kreni) of fermenting drugs (kīnva) and mines (klānaka), not yielding the
right to increase of cattle; not to supply animals for sacrifice; not to give any share of flowers and milk, or hidden treasures and deposits, together with kripta and upakripta (probably sales tax).

Bengal Inscriptions. In conclusion, it may be noted that most of the Bengal inscriptions of the period are remarkable for the concrete details and data they contain as regards land-transactions and the light they throw upon the working of the village administration. These inscriptions may be enumerated in the chronological order as follows:

   1. Dhānāidāha Copper-plate inscription of G.E. 113 = A.D. 432.
   2. Kalaikuri Inscription of 120 = A.D. 439.
   3. Damodarpur No. 1 Copper-plate inscription of G.E. 124 = A.D. 443.

II. Reign of Budha Gupta (c. A.D. 476-495).
   6. Damodarpur No. 3 Copper-plate inscription of A.D. 476.
   8. Damodarpur No. 4 Copper-plate inscription of G.E. 163 = A.D. 482.

III. Reign of Narasimha Gupta (A.D. 495-533).

IV. Reign of Kumāra Gupta III.
   11. Damodarpur No. 5 Copper-plate inscription of G.E. 224 = A.D. 543.

V. Reign of Dharmāditya.
   12. Faridpur Copper-plate inscription No. 1 of Dharmāditya.
   13. Same No. 2.
   14. Mallasarul Copper-plate inscription of Vijayasena and Dharmāditya.

VI. Reign of Gopachandra.
   15. Faridpur-Copper-plate inscription of Gopachandra.

Land Transaction. The evidence of these inscriptions has been already considered in connexion with the reigns of the kings associated with them. It will suffice here to notice only some of its general features.

As a rule, the entire cultivable land of a village was settled and distributed into holdings among its householders (kustumbinah). Land that was required for a public purpose or a charity could not be taken by government out of these settled holdings of peasant-proprietors. It had to be taken out of the fallow and unsettled land
3. KUMĀRA GUPTA I:—The coinage of Kumāra Gupta I shows a large variety of types, as many as fourteen.

(a) The Elephant-rider of this hoard shows the following complete legend: 'Kshetrapāṇi Kumāragupta goptā rājā jayatyanikam' 'Rājā Kumāragupta, Protector of his people, is constantly conquering, with his enemies afflicted.' The reverse shows the complete legend 'Śrī-Mahendra-gajaḥ' 'the elephant of Śrī Mahendra (Kumāra Gupta)', not so far read.

(b) The Elephant-rider Lion-slayer type shows on the reverse the legend 'Simhabanibanta Mahendra-gajaḥ.'

(c) A new coin of the Bayana hoard corresponding to the 'Pratāpa' type contains a legend on the reverse which is read by Dr. A. S. Altekar as Āpratīgha. The figures on the obverse of this coin are exactly those of the old Pratāpa type.

The following are new types of coinage of Kumāra Gupta I brought to light in the hoard: (1) Chttra type (2) Lyrist type (3) The King and Queen type. The observe of this shows the King offering flowers to the Queen. (4) Rhino-slayer type. The obverse shows the King on a horse wearing a buttoned coat and trousers and leaning to attack the rhino by the sword (Addendum Pl. I fig. 1). The rhino stands at bay with his single horn on his head and circular spots on his body, turning back his head to attack the king. The legend reads: 'Bhartī Khadgatrātā Kumāragupto jayatyanikam (Jayatyanikam), 'Always conquering is Lord Kumāra Gupta who saves himself from Khadga (rhino), or saves his people' by his Khadga (Sword).


The legend on the reverse which is read as Lichhaviyayāḥ should be interpreted to mean that the coin in question was issued by the Republican Community of Lichchhavis whose sovereignty and independence were not affected by the alliance in marriage between Chandra Gupta I and the Lichchhavi princess Kumārdevi also named on the reverse. Although the Lichchhavi republic perhaps became a part of the Gupta empire, it did not affect the local autonomy of the Lichchhavis as a republic who thus exercised their right to issue their own coins.

2. As usual the reverse figures a goddess who is taken to be Durgā as Śivabhavānī or seated on lion but Śri C. Śivaramamurti has pointed out to me that the lion is also figuring along with the lotus and therefore he suggests that the lotus should point to goddess Lakshmi and the lion to her status as the Goddess of Sovereignty (Rājyalakshmi) of which the lion is the symbol.

3. The reverse also gives the figures of the 'Cornucopia,' the bowl of plenty, corresponding to the traditional Sanskrit term Koba for the royal treasury, and also of the noose which stands for Danaṇḍa, the other emblem of sovereignty. These two symbols further strengthen the supposition that the goddess Lakshmi is the sovereign goddess of the empire (Kshiti) symbolised by Koba and Danaṇḍa. Cf. Kālidāsa: kubodharaśvīkṣhitiḥ.

4. Archer type—p. 34.

This and similar legends on other coins are inspired by Kālidāsa's classical description of heaven being attained by good deeds on earth-dyām suktipalabādāṃ and kundāsādātaiḥ dyām ārjitaṃ karmākārabururoḥa (Raghuvarṇa).
5. Chandra Gupta II Couch type—p. 54.

The reverse show the figures of the king holding a lotus in the right hand and the legendRAPÂKRÎH, ‘embodyment of beauty.’ Kâlidâsa describes a prince at the sugahâvara of Indumati flourishing a lotus to appear handsome (Raghuvamasha).

6. Chandra Gupta II Chattrra type—p. 54.

Thechattra in Hindu polity is the symbol of sole and supreme sovereignty, that of an ekavâs as described in Kâlidâsa’s significant lines ekâtapatra, jagañåh prabhutvam (Raghuvamasha).


Kâlidâsa throws light on the appropriateness of god Kârttikeya or Skanda appearing on the reverse as the god of war, an appropriate object of worship by kings. Kings must take after Kârttikeya and Kâlidâsa writes (a) Kumâra, kumâram (b) kumârapati, kumâravikrama, and bhûyêštban āśid upamayûkântir mayûrajyêštâbhâranyanâ guhina (Raghuvamasha). The last line is translated into the figure of the coin.


According to Sanskrit tradition the king has always a state elephant as a symbol of his sovereignty of which the umbrella is also another token.

It will thus appear from the aforesaid and many other passages of Kâlidâsa that the poet created the entire vocabulary and tradition which have inspired the later Imperial Gupta inscriptions and coinage. About the priority to the Gupta age of Kâlidâsa whom tradition assigns to 57 B.C. we may note a remarkable piece-of evidence found on coinage to support it. It is that issued by Yajña Sûta Karmanê whose date is not later than 2nd century A.D. A coin of this type shows on obverse the bust of king whose youth is very appropriately indicated by the symbol kâlapakhsha while his widespread fame is indicated on the reverse by the following symbols: (a) crescent on hill, (b) crescent on Ujjain symbol, (c) zigzag line, (d) circle of dots. The meaning of these symbols is best understood in the light of the following verse of Kâlidâsa (Raghuvamasha, VI, 77): Arûgårûmadar planâbhy svetram bhûjagrâmamânam vasati pravisham | urddhvanâ gatah yanâ ya na eûm-bandhī yaksab paryabhêbhettvà hi yatayêlam | The king’s fame ascended the mountains (symbolised by the moon on hill), crossed the oceans (figured by the four circles of the Ujjain symbol and crescent), penetrated into the subterranean abode of Vâsuki (as figured in the zigzag line) and went up to the most high (as represented in the dots standing for starry heaven).

[These references to Kâlidâsa are taken from Śri C. Šivaramamurti’s interesting work entitled ‘Numismatic Parallels of Kâlidâsa,’]
Framed panel of sculptures from Deogarh Temple (c. 5th Century A.D.) in Jhansi District, representing four-armed Vishnu lying in Samādhi or Yoga-nidrā on the Cosmic Serpent (Śeshāyī). Above, Brahmā on lotus in the centre; on his right, Indra and Kārttikeya, and, on left, Śiva-Pārvatī on Nandi Bull, followed by an attendant. Below, five heroes and a female figure, probably the five Pāṇḍavas and Draupadi seen at the right end. Art-critics consider this sculpture as a masterpiece of Indian art, with its unique artistic setting in a frame of pilasters and architraves in which the panel is sunk to look like a false window.
Penance of Nara and Nārīyaṇa (from Deogarh Temple)
A sunk panel or niche in a wall of the Deogarh Temple representing the Deliverance of the Lord of Elephants (Gajendramoksha) by Krishna.
Deogarh Temple gate-way, with its Jamb of four decorated posts showing from right to left:

1. Door-keeper (Pratibhā) surmounted by foliated scroll (Patronali or Patralatū).

2. A female dancer surmounted by figures of amorous couples (Mithuna).

3. Another female dancer with other dancers above.

4. A Dwarf (Pranattha) surmounted by the Tree of Prosperity (Sri Vriksa).
Seated Buddha Image of Sarnath, admitted on all hands as a masterpiece of art.
Deogarh Temple showing the beginnings of the śikhara.
Architect, Calcutta).
Restored Bhitargaon Temple of about 4th Century A.D. in Cawnpore and its restored porch (from Percy Brown's *Indian Architecture*).
Sculpture in Cave No. 5 at Udayagiri depicting the descent of Gaṅgā and Yamunā from Heaven to Earth, and ultimately, into the Sea represented by its Lord Varuṇa. Gaṅgā is marked out as standing on her Vāhuna or vehicle, Makara (alligator), and Yamunā on Kaḷēbhārapa (tortoise). This is the first time that the images of Gaṅgā and Yamunā appear in Indian sculpture with the revival of Brahmanism under the Gupta Empire, and its conquest of the countries associated with these two rivers.
Boar-Incarnation of Vishnu from Udayagiri Cave No. 5. With His right tusk, the God lifts up the tiny figure of goddess Prithivi out of the floods overwhelming Her, a picture of strength and determination in carrying through His cosmic mission of rescuing Mother Earth.
Figure of God Sūrya as capital of a Pillar found at Pawaya (Gwalior) of Gupta times.
Fragment of lintel showing music and dance found at Pawaya: Gupta Sculpture.
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