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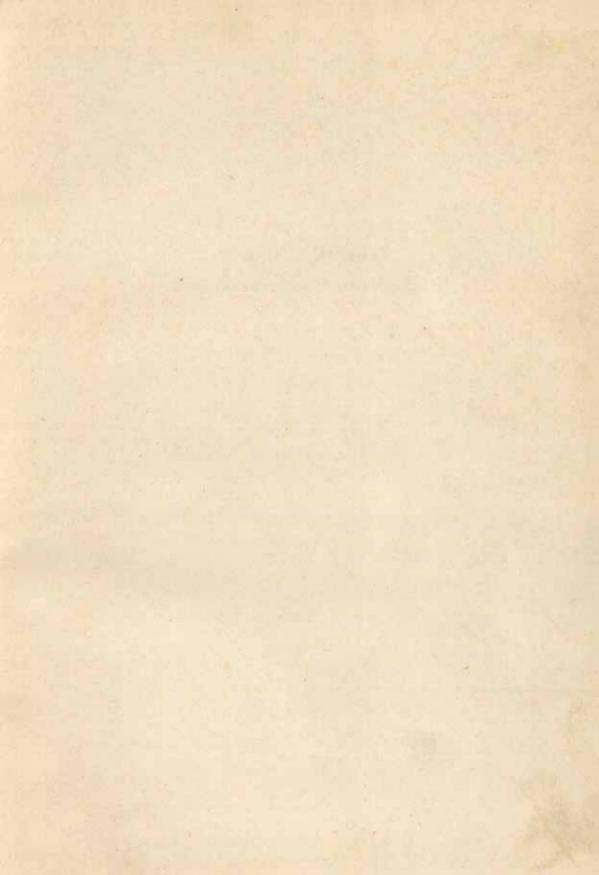
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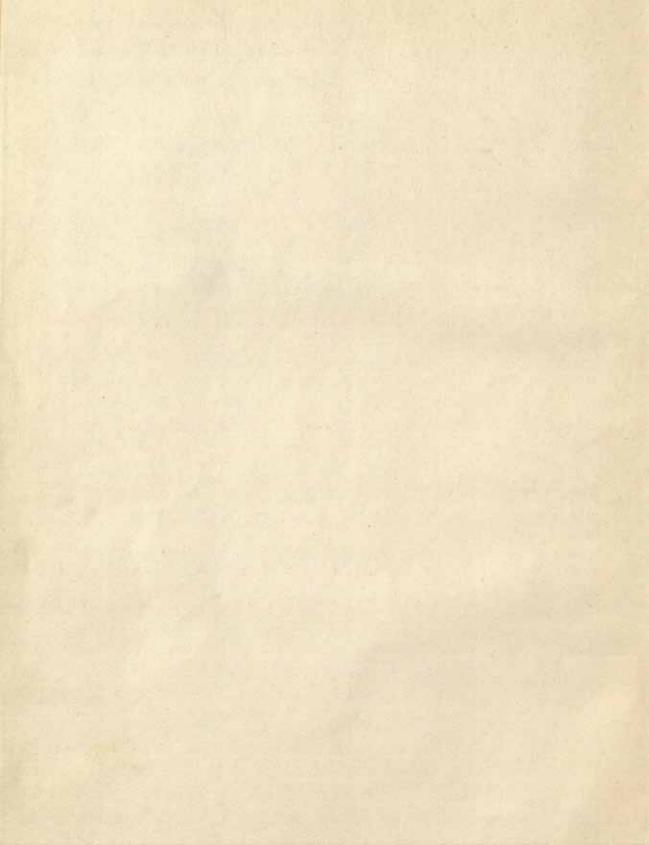
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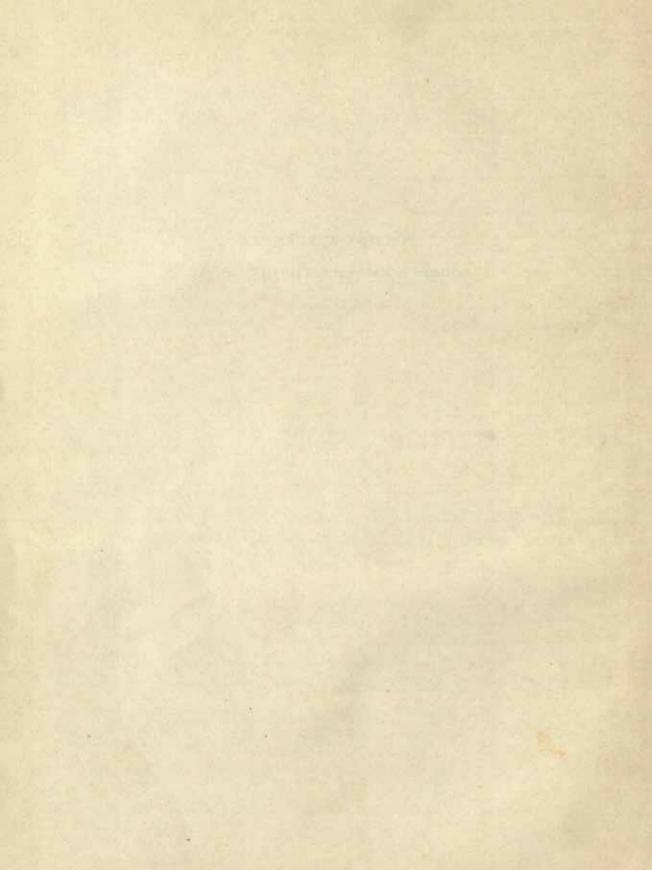
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### ANCIENT KURUKŞETRA

Studies in Historical & Cultural Geography



# ANCIENT KURUKSETRA

STUDIES IN HISTORICAL & CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

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O. P. BHARADWAJ

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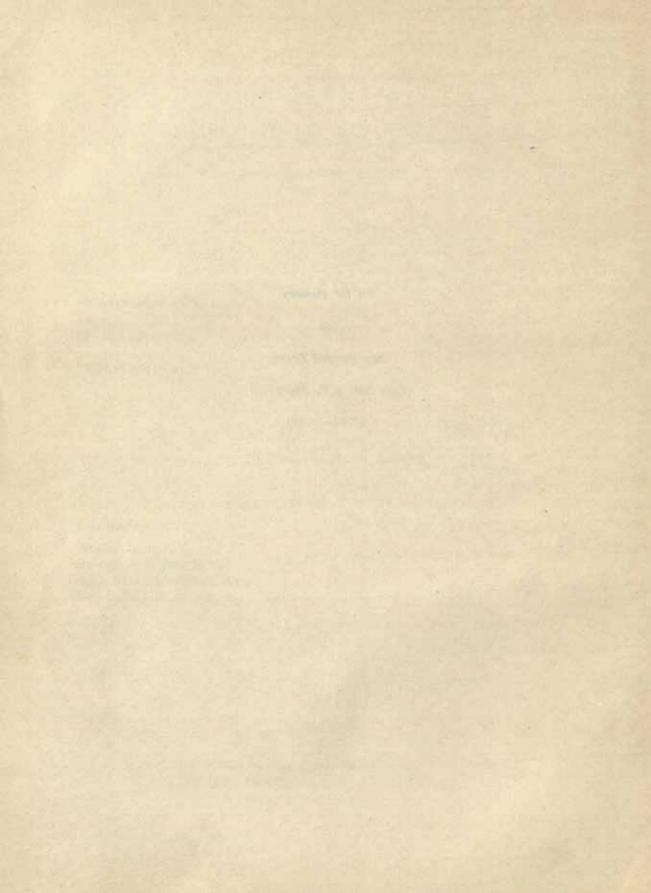
J.V. Printers, E-10, Hari Nagar, New Delhi-110064 at Raj Press, R-3, Inderpuri, New Delhi. To the memory

of

My Revered Father

Late Shri B.R. Bharadwaj

(1901—1984)



#### INTRODUCTION

A Chair in the name of Maharshi Veda Vyasa was set up by the Haryana State Govt. for a term of five years at the Kurukshetra University with the objective of preparing a Historical Geography of Ancient Haryana on the basis of the Mahābhārata and all other relevant material apart from Vedic and post-Vedic literature. The author was offered the assignment and he joined as Professor of Indology in September 1985 with the hope of devoting himself exclusively to research work. This was not to be.

His long judicial and administrative experience led to the author's unsolicited involvement in additional administrative work of the University resulting in heavy encroachment on his academic activities. Out of his five-year term he had to look after the additional work of the Registrar, Principal Secretary to the Vice-Chancellor, Director of the Institute of Sanskrit and Indological Studies and Member of the Unfair Means Committee, apart from sundry other jobs of miscellaneous nature, for almost four years. Shedding one additional position always meant its replacement by another. Only around the last year of his tenure was he free from extra burden, but unfortunately through an adverse turn of situation that deprived him of the basic requirements for carrying on his researches. In the result the work on the Historical Geography of Ancient Haryana still remains to be completed after his retirement from the Chair. It will be continued as his labour of love, albeit without adequate facilities.

History of Ancient India opens in the land of Kurukşetra, now called Haryana. It is the traditional 'Seat of Creation' and 'Cradle of Indian Culture and Civilisation'. Bulk of the Vedic literature and many early Sanskrit works, including the Rgveda, often described as the oldest available testament of the Aryans, and the Great Epic Mahābhārata, were composed here. The valleys of the sacred rivers Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī resounded with the first chantings of Vedic mantras and witnessed the evolution of moral and ethical values which were declared by Manu as worthy of emulation by humanity all over the world.

Study of history rightly begins with the proper perspective of its geographical background. In this regard the remote past of the hallowed land of Kurukşetra

required to be cleared of much mist of confusion. Many geographical names awaited identification and habitats of peoples and tribes needed to be defined. The task looked rather formidable when, about twenty years ago, the author took up the challenge. Happily, the commitment has largely been fulfilled through exhaustive studies of various topics published in reputed research journals and felicitation/commemoration volumes. Twenty of these studies were brought out in 1986 under the title "Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India." This second collection contains nine studies, covering topics relating to historical as well as cultural geography.

The first paper examines the three names, Kuru, Kuruksetra and Kurujangala with a view to removing the confusion over their geographical connotation. It is shown that the first two were almost co-terminous in the Vedic age and larger than the present state of Haryana, extending virtually upto the Sutlej in the northwest and reaching beyond Gangā in the east. For some time the Kuru kingdom embraced a slightly larger area while Kuruksetra gradually shrank in extent till it came to denote first the Sarasvati-Drsadvati doab, and more recently only the Thanesar tirtha-complex. Kurujangala, on the other hand, was the north-eastern part of Kuruksetra, having the Jagadhari-Saharanpur tract as its central portion. The second offers decisive identification of the Vedic Sarasvatt with the present Ghaggar-Hakra river. The source of the river lay above the permanent snow-line in the Himalayan glaciers in the Rgvedic age and shifted down to Plaksa-Prāsravana or Lavasa in Pachhad as a result of the Great Deluge before the compilation of the Atharvaveda. In the next paper it is conclusively established that the course now followed by the Western Jumna Canal from the Dadupur head-works onward is the original bed of the Rgvedic Asmamvati-Drsadvati river which is the present Somb. While in its upper reaches this bed runs quite close to the Yamuna at the lower end it merges in the Sarasvati-Ghaggar after being joined by the Chautang-probably the Vedic Apaya. The combined stream vanishes in the sands near Kalibangan which is the probable site of Vinasana.

The fourth article takes note of the references to the Kurus and Kuruksetra in the Upanisads with suitable explanatory notes while the fifth describes the proselytising activities of the Buddha in the land of the Kurus, noting the different places visited and the various sermons delivered by him. This was intended to be only a prelude to a book-length study which, time and health permitting, should appear in due course. The next paper highlights the direct association of Kuruksetra with as many as eight out of ten incarnations of Visnu which reflects its pre-eminence amongst the earliest religious centres of the country. The seventh paper examines and refutes Prof. V.S. Agrawala's theory of denigration of Kuruksetra in the Mahābhārata and the eighth draws attention to the existence of apocryphal tirtha-names in Kuruksetra with three specific illustrations provided by the names Sudina, Ahan and Ilāspada, adopted from expressions used in the

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Rgveda. The last paper traces the origin and development of Yakşa worship with special reference to its form, centres and extent of prevalence in Kurukşetra.

No effort has been spared to make these studies worthy of attention of learned scholars and it is hoped that this volume will receive their appreciation and prove useful in the reconstruction of the remote past of our ancient land. Each study is supported with copious notes and references from sources covering the vast range of early literature, mediaeval accounts, archaeological reports, gazetteers and other official records and earlier researches in the field. A map of ancient Kurukşetra and nine plates have been added to enhance the usefulness of the volume.

The credit for setting up Maharshi Veda Vyasa Chair goes, in the first place, to the Haryana State Government. The author is therefore grateful to them for making these studies possible. That the author has been able to carry on his work in spite of many handicaps is largely due to the help of his friends and colleagues. The renowned scholar, Prof. Jagannath Agrawal has been a constant source of inspiration and the author's gratitude to his revered Guru cannot be adequately expressed in words. The author is grateful to Shri K.S. Dalal, Librarian, Kurukshetra University, for meeting all his requirements of books and periodicals, occasionally even by making arrangement with other libraries. The author is beholden to eminent scholars and his learned friends and associates for their help and encouragement from time to time. In this regard he would like to mention particularly Dr. Lokesh Chandra, Dr. K.R. Norman, Dr. (Mrs.) Kapila Vatsyayana, Dr. K.D. Bajpai, Prof. Ajay Mitra Shastri, Dr. J.L. Brockington, Dr. B.Ch. Chhabra, Dr. Ram Gopal, Shri Devendra Handa, Dr. Ashvini Agrawal, Shri R.C. Agrawala and Shri K.D. Sethna.

The author would like to place on record his warm appreciation of the generous help and assistance provided by Dr. (Miss) Swarna Prabha, Research Assistant and all other staff members of his Department. He also thankfully acknowledges his debt to learned scholars whose works he has consulted and craves their indulgence to any inadvertent errors and omissions in the exhaustive Notes and References and a fairly comprehensive Bibliography. And it is gratifying for him to add that despite her reluctance to be mentioned it is his wife Yashoda Bharadwaj who enabled him to devote himself exclusively to his academic pursuits.

Last but not the least the author would like to thank Shri Manjit Singh, the enthusiastic and enterprising proprietor of M/s. Harman Publishing House, New Delhi for readily taking up and bringing out this volume in record time and making a really decent job of it.

Vijayā Daśami September 29, 1990. O.P. BHARADWAJ

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## TRANSLITERATION TABLE

ra la va śa sa sa ha

अ	a	布	ka	ढ	dha	₹
आ	ā	ख	kha	ण	ņa	ल
इ	i	ग	ga	त	ta	व
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उ	u	ङ	na	द	da	ष
ऊ	ū	च	ca	घ	dha	せ
驱	r	ন্ত	cha	न	na	ह
	e	ज	ja	q	pa	
Ù	ai	झ	jha	দ	pha	
ओ	0	ञ	ña	व	ba	
ए ऐ ओ ओ	au	ट	ţa	भ	bha	
अं	m/m	ठ	tha	म	ma	
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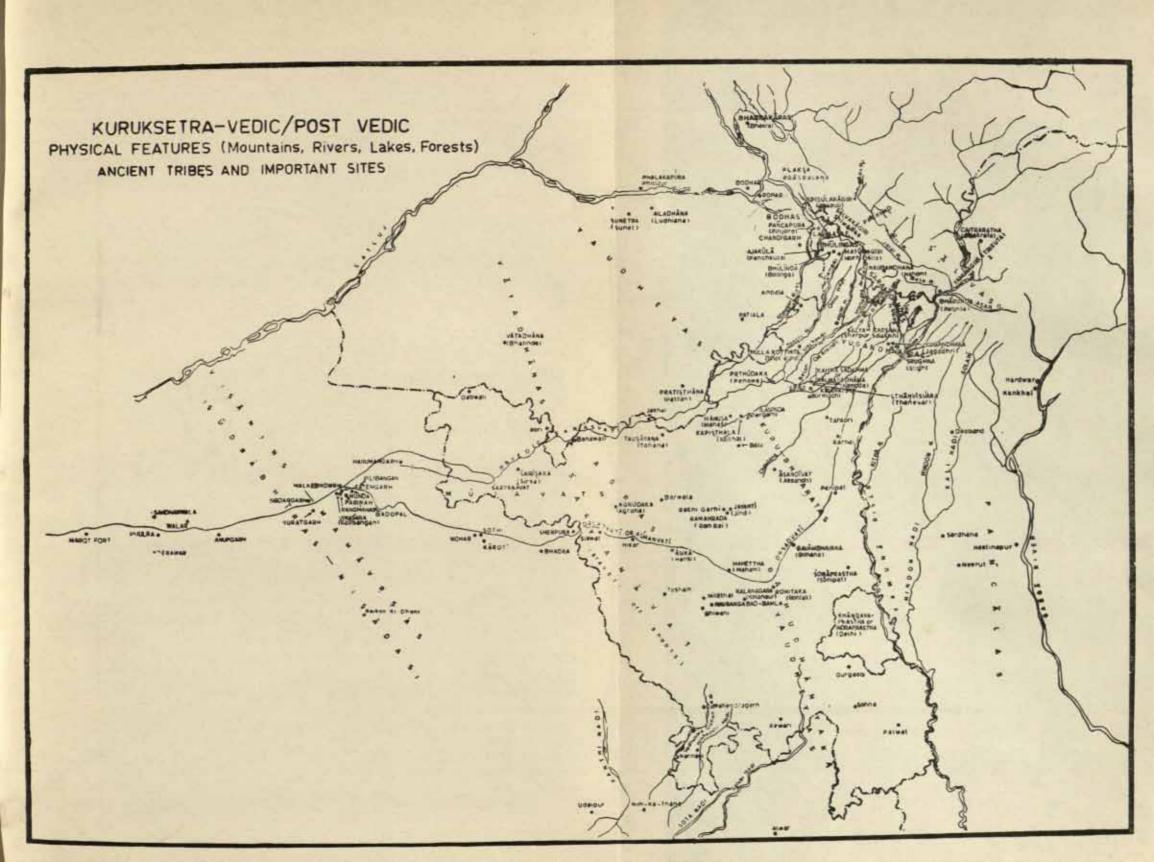
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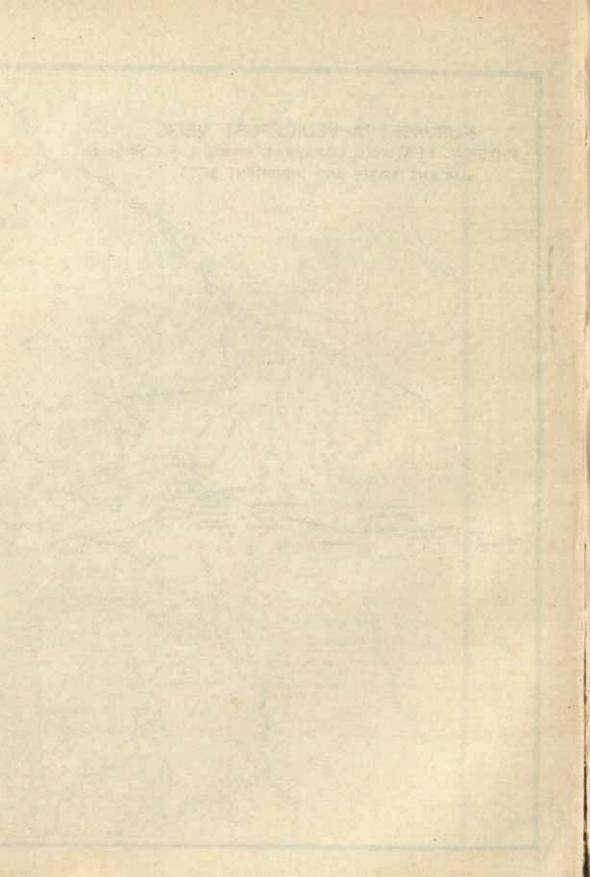
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# THE KURUS, KURUKŞETRA AND KURUJĀNGALA

There is much confusion among scholars about the geographical definition of the names Kuru, Kurukṣetra and Kurujāṅgala. The Kurus, sometimes described as "Kuru rāṣṭra proper" are generally equated with the middle region between the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā,¹ with their two capitals at Hastināpura² and Indraprastha.³ Kurukṣetra is frequently identified with "the area bounded by the rivers Sarasvatı and Dṛṣadvatī."⁴ And Kurujāṅgala is taken to refer to the "wild region⁵ of the Kuru realm" or the "waste land of the Kurus"⁶ and identified with the region stretching from the Kāmyaka forest on the banks of the Sarasvatı to Khānḍava near the Yamunā² or with the tract between the Gaṅgā and North Pañcāla³ or again with the Rohtak-Hansi-Hisar region.9 These definitions cannot be accepted as quite accurate.¹0

To be sure this confusion, to a considerable extent, arises from literary sources which at times present a description of geographical units which is either vague or fanciful or lends itself to more than one interpretations. The first case can be illustrated by the location of the Kurudeśa as given in the Śakti-saṅga-ma-tantra, a late work of the 17th century A.D.<sup>11</sup> It describes the Kuru country as extending from the Hastināpura region and lying to the south of Kurukṣetra and east of Pañcāla! Sircar's attempt to inject some sense in this hopelessly confused and misleading description by equating Pañcāla with the region of the Pir Panchal range and the river named after it, <sup>12</sup> is not convincing.

The second case can be illustrated with two interesting examples. Let us first take this familiar verse of the Mahābhārata.<sup>13</sup>

दक्षिणेन सरस्वत्या उत्तरेण दृषद्वतीम्। ये वसन्ति कुरुक्षेत्रे ते वसन्ति त्रिविष्टपे॥

It is always taken to describe Kurukşetra as the land on the south of the Sarasvatī and the north of the Dṛṣadvatī or in other words just the doab of these two rivers. 14 In reality ancient Kurukṣetra was a much larger geographical entity within which the particularly sacred doab enclosed between the two holy Vedic rivers and described as Brahmāvarta by Manu, 15 would appear to be the subject of comparison with heaven in this verse. In another similar instance the name Kuru-jāngala is often construed to denote "waste land of the Kuru realm" to even though Jāngala cannot mean "infertile land" here but on the contrary stands for a particular kind of soil which is fertile and rich in production of grains and fruits.

The confusion is further confounded by the use of undoubtedly regional and even local names like Kurujāngala, Brahmasara, Rāmahrada, Vinaśana and Samantapañcaka, loosely for the whole of Kurukṣetra. An attempt at clearing this confusion and settling more or less definitive geographical definitions of the three important units of Kuru, Kurukṣetra and Kurujāngala should therefore, be well worth undertaking. Let us therefore examine each name separately in the light of available evidence.

#### The Kurus

Kuru or "Kuru rāṣṭra" is often equated with the region between the Gangā and the Yamunā with its capital at Hastināpura. Raychaudhuri restricts the Kurus proper to the district around Hastināpura Pargiter calls it the middle region between Gangā and Yamunā with capitals at Hastināpura and Khāndavaprastha or Indraprastha. Being unfamiliar with the geography of the area Pargiter did not realise the contradiction involved in the location of a country between Gangā and Yamunā and of its capital outside the doab on the west bank of the Yamunā. V.S. Agrawala notes that Kāśikā, the well-known commentary of Vāmana and Jayāditya on Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī, mentions Kuru, Kurukṣetra and Kurujāngala, all the three, as distinct geographical units.

There is no doubt that, to begin with, the name Kuru signified a particular people. Although it does not appear in the Rgveda specifically in this sense the implication is quite clear from names like Kuruśravana<sup>23</sup> (glory of the Kurus) and Pakasthaman Kaurayana. Kuruśravana was a descendant of the well-known Puru King Trasadasyu. In the later Samhitas like the Maitrayani and Kanva Kuru specifically appears as the name of a people. The Tritsu Bharatas and the

Purus, although enemies at one stage, appear to have coalesced with Kurus later.28 We find the Bharatas in the same territory which was subsequently occupied by the Kurus.29 The Rgveda30 describes two Bharata princes Devasravas and Devavata kindling sacrificial fire at the banks of rivers Sarasvatı, Dṛṣadvatī and Āpayā as well as the lake named Manusa. The Brahamanas31 mention Bharata kings subduing Kāśis, raiding the Satvants and making offerings at the Ganga and Yamuna. The Bharatas appear as a variant for the Kuru-Pañcalas in a passage of the Vājasaneyī Samhitā.32 Also in the list of the great performers of the horse-sacrifice the names of one Kuru and two Bharata princes are mentioned without naming the people over which they ruled, while in other cases that information is specifically given.33 In later literature the Kurus and Bharatas are clearly regarded as one and the same people. For instance in the Mahābhārata, Arjuna is addressed as Bhārata34 as well as Kurunandana.35 The view that the Bharatas held a territory roughly corresponding to Kuruksetra and bounded on the east by the Yamuna is therefore quite plausible.36 On the other hand it appears rather extravagant to say that the Kurus were widely scattered even to the north of the Himalayas and about the Sindhu and Asikni.37

It is now generally recognised that the Brāhmanical culture was developed in the country of the Kuru-Pancalas and that it spread thence, east, south and west.38 Most of the important Brāhmana texts were undoubtedly composed in this region, described in the Aitareva Brāhmana as the middle country, later Madhyadeśa.40 This text also mentions a section of the Kurus as Uttarakurus who are often placed on the other side of the Himalayas on the basis of the expression "parena himavantam,"41 which is usually mistaken to mean "beyond the Himalayas."42 This runs contrary to ethnic and geographic considerations. As we have suggested elsewhere43 "parena himavantum" has to be taken to mean "opposite to or, abutting on the Himalayas."

It is particularly relevant for our purpose that the Kurus are frequently coupled with the Pancalas44 and once with the Mahavrsas in the Brahmanas.45 There is a direct reference in the Kānvīya recension of the Satapatha Brāhmana45 which describes the Kuru-Pañcalas and Kuru-Mahavrsas as the peculiar home of pure speech. Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya46 has taken the compound Kuru-Mahavrsas to mean the Kurus of the Mahavrsa country but this construction is clearly untenable since both names refer either to territorial units or to people. If we take Kuru in Kuru-Mahavrsas to refer to people the second part of the compound must also be construed likewise and not taken to denote a country. Actually 'Kuru-Mahāvṛṣeṣu' is obviously the locative of the dvandva compound formation 'Kuru-Mahavrsah' meaning the Kurus and the Mahāvrsas. The standard example of this compound formation sanctioned by Pānini47 is Madra-kekayāh meaning the 'Madras and Kekayas.' We come across a host of similar formations in literature from the earliest time and in all these cases territorial continguity is an essential ingredient. The combinations of Anga-Magadhas, 48 Śālva-Matsyas, 49 Kāśi-Kosalas, 50 Śūdra-Ābhīras. 51 Cedi-Matsyas 52 and Kosala-Videhas 53 are a few similar instances of dvandva compound based primarily on territorial contiguity. The Pancālas and the Mahāvṛṣas, therefore, denote two separate people or countries geographically adjoining the Kurus. The Kurus lay in the middle flanked by the Pancālas on the east and the Mahāvṛṣas on the west.

Pañcāla has been roughly equated with Rohilkhand comprising Bareily, Badaun, Farrukhabad and the adjoining areas including the Central Doab in the U.P., bounded on the east by the Gumti, on the south by the Chambal, and in the north by the foot of the Himalayas. Kannauj was also its capital at the time of the Buddha. Later it was divided into North and South Pañcāla separated by the Gangā; the capital of the former was Ahichhatrā and that of the latter Kāmpilya. North Pancāla included districts of U.P. lying on the east of the Gangā and north-west of Oudh while South Pancāla covered the country between the Gangā and the Yamunā on the east and south-east of the Kurus and Šūrasenas. Hastināpura, the ancient capital of the Kurus, was situated twenty two miles north-east of Meerut and south-west of Bijnore on the right bank of the Gangā.

The territory of the Mahāvṛṣas lay about Vinaśana and was roughly bounded by the Kurus on the east and extended in the west into Rajasthan areas which were later associated with Niṣādas, Sūdras and Ābhīras. They occupied the country lying in the belt known for its valuable breed of Zebu cattle which gave them their totemic name. This situation agrees with their description as a malarial tract in the Atharvaveda. According to a legend in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad sage Raikva was rewarded with the gift of a cluster of villages called after him as Raikvaparṇa by king Jānaśruti Pautrāyana of the Mahāvṛṣas. These villages still exist in tehsil Nauhar of district Ganganagar and are mainly inhabited by the Raika clan of Rajputs who are evidently the descendants of sage Raikva.

The Brāhmaṇaṣ thus place the Kurus between the Pañcālas on the east, roughly having the Gaṅgā as their eastern boundary and the Mahāvṛṣas about Vinaśana as their western neighbours.

The evidence from Buddhist literature also points in the same direction. We learn that after the age of thirty eight years Gautama Buddha undertook extensive missionary activity and travelled from state to state, town to town and village to village propagating the Faith and sojourning at any one place only during the rainy season. Although the central part of the country received more attention from him the ancient land of the Kurus was also not ignored and according to the Mahāvastu Buddha personally converted the people of Kuru janapada. The Bhaisajyavastu in the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādins which is known to have come into existence probably by the second or first century B.C., 65 describes a long journey of the Buddha in the company of Ānanda. The Buddha went from

Hastinapura through Mahanagara, Srughna, Brahmanagrama, and Kalanagara to Rohitaka where he summoned the Yakşa Vajrapâni and travelled with him to the north-west through Gandhara as far as Uddiyana and back. Another town that finds mention in the same work is Bhadrankara.66 Buddha's visit to this town is described in the Divyāvadāna67 also where two more journeys to Hastināpura and Srughna find mention. Two more Kuru towns visited by the Buddha, viz. Thullakotthita and Kammasadamma have received special importance in Buddhist literature and find repeated mention in several works. 68 A village named Thuna, described as Brahmanagrama and located on the western boundary of Majjhima Deśa69 and another town described simply as Kauravya70 were also visited by him.

The Buddha thus visited at least nine towns in the Kurus which were scattered all over the land.71 Hastinapura lay in tehsil Mawana of Meerut. Mahanagara may refer to Indraprastha. Srughna has been identified with village Sugh near Jagadhari while the Brahmanagrama named Thuna appears to be the same as the present town of Tohana noted as Tausayana by Panini. Kalanagara is Kalanaur, situated 12 miles west of Rohtak, on the road to Bhiwani. The equation of Rohitaka with modern Rohtak is obvious. Bhardrankara, apparently the same as Bhadrakara of the Salva group, is identical with Bhakra after which the prestigious Bhakra dam is named. Thullakotthita has been equated with the twin village Thol-Kurdi on the road leading from Ambala City to Thanesar via Jhansa while Kammasadamma appears to survive in the name Kamoda about 15 kms. from Thanesar on the road to Pehowa.

Buddha is also said to have paid a number of visits to the Uttara Kurus which should literally denote the northern part of the Kurus. The Kuru country was divided into two portions, named Uttara Kuru and Daksina Kuru and was eight thousand yojanas in extent.72 The Jātakas73 describe the Kuru kingdom as three hundred leagues in extent while its capital Indapatta was spread over seven leagues. In the Divyāvadāna74 Hastināpura is also mentioned as its capital while the Mahāvastu75 stresses the greatness of the kingdom ruled from this city by attributing to it sixty thousand cities which presents a contrast with the later description of Haryana in the Skanda Purana76 as a state comprising five lakh villages. In another reference the Somanassa-jataka77 describes Uttara-Pañcāla as a town of the Kuru rāstra.

The Buddhist conception of the Kuru country would thus appear to go beyond the description in Brahmana literature. It comprised the region from beyond Hastinapura in the east to the west of Tohana probably touching Vinasana identified with Kalibangan in the west, and from the district of Indraprastha in the south to the districts of Srughna in the north-east and Bhakra in the north. At times it also included areas of Uttara-Pañcala.

A passage in the Mahābhārata72 enumerates the janapadas situated around the Kurus. These are Pańcala, Cedi, Matsya, Śūrasena, Paṭaccara, Daśarna,

Navarāstra, Malla, Šālva and Yugandhara. These janapadas are described as beautiful and rich in food-grains. The location of Pancala has been given above. The Cedis had Kāśi on their east, Avanti in the west, Matsya and Sūrasena in the north-west and the Vindhyas in the south.79 They can be roughly described as lying to the south of the Yamuna below Vatsa janapada i.e. the region of modern Bundelkhanda and adjoining areas.80 The Matsyas occupied the region of Jaipur including the whole of the present territory of Alwar with a portion of Bharatpur.81 The Surasenas had their capital on the Yamuna at Mathura which is identified with Maholi, five miles to the south-west of the present town. 82 The Pataccaras occupied parts of Allahabad and Banda districts in U.P.83 The Dasarnas had their capital at Vidisā, modern Besnagar on the Betwa or ancient Vetravatī near Bhilsa in Madhya Pradesh.84 This janapada was divided into West and East Daśarnas. The former is equated with eastern Malwa including Bhopal. Fastern Dasarna formed a part of the Chattisgarh district in U.P. and included the native state of Patna.85 Dasarna derives its name from river Dasarna or the modern Dhasan which rises in Bhopal state among the Vindhyas and joins the Betwa.86 The Navarastra is equated with Nausari far away in the Baroach district of Bombay.87 The territory of the Mallas touched the realm of Uttara-Kosala. It was included in the sixteen Mahājanapadas of the Buddhists and consisted of two parts, Mallas of Pāvā called Pāveyaka and those of Kusinārā (modern Kosia 35 miles east of Gorakhpur) called Kosināraka.88

The Śālvas were in the mountainous region spread over the trans-Giri part of the present Nahan state and the Kiarda Dun and Jaunsar-Bawar and probably parts of Dehradun extending deep into the Yamunā-Gangā doab<sup>89</sup> and the Yugandharas comprised the tract around the present town of Jagadhari adjoining the Sālvas on the north-east.<sup>90</sup>

This description of the states around the Kurus does not in any way militate against the geographical limits of the Kurus as already established. It needs to be said however, that the Yugandharas and the Salvas, most of the time, formed a part of the Kuru country.

A word on the location of the Uttara Kurus will not be out of place here. According to the Vinaya Pitaka, when the Buddha went to Uruvelä to initiate three sadhus into the Faith Uruvela Käsyapa was performing a great sacrifice and wanted him to leave. Out of consideration for him Buddha left for Uttara Kurus where he went around for alms, took bath in the Anotatta lake and then took meals and rested at its bank. Again when a famine befell Veranjä Buddha visited the Uttara Kurus on the request of Sthavira Mahāmoggallāna. Actually the region was visited by many monks and journeys to the Anotatta lake by Sthaviras are recorded right upto the time of Asoka. The Anotatta lake has been described in the Papañcasūdani as surrounded by five hills, namely, Sudarsana, Citrakūta, Kālakūta, Gandhamādana and Kailāsa. The Sudassanakūta, which was of golden

colour, stood covering it. It has been identified with the celebrated Manasarovara lake because the flora around it agrees with the Himalayan region.93 If it was situated in the Uttara Kurus, as it undoubtedly was, the equation of the region with Siberia94 has to be ruled out. Uttara Kurus have also been described as inhabited by the Yaksas and ruled by Kubera Vaiśravana whose capital Alakā is traditionally placed near mount Kailasa and lake Manasarovara.95 Without dilating more on the subject it can be observed therefore, that the Uttara Kurus of Buddhist literature probably refer to the region adjoining the Kurus in the north and extending into the high Himalayas. The existence of a sub-division named Kuru (Khat-Kuru) in Jaunsar-Bawar<sup>96</sup> further strengthens this position.

Utpala, the commentator of Brhatsamhitā takes Kurubhūmi to mean the region around Thanesar. 96n Alberuni 66b too, equates Kuru with 'Taneshar' or Thanesar. This Kuru of Utpala and Alberuni is however, just a substitute of Kuruksetra.

The "Sakti-sangama-tantra" describes the Kuru country as extending from Hastināpura and lying to the south of Kurukşetra and east of Pañcāla. This tantra devotes two full pajalas VIIth VIIIth in its Sundari khanda to the geographical description of different states. This description is often wrong in many cases and generally unreliable. It is not possible to exclude Hastinapura from the Kuru country whose main capital it was and to place the Kurus to the east of Pañcālas. The location of the Kurus as given in the Sakti-sagnama-tantra cannot therefore be taken seriously.

The geographical picture of the Kuru country that emerges from the evidence noted above is that of an extensive land. With Bhadrankara or Bhadrakara as its part it touched the Sutlej in the north which means that considerable areas on the north-west of the Sarasvatt were included in it. On the north-east its limits reached into the high Himalayas to cover most of Jaunsar-Bawar and the Salva country. In the east even the region of Uttara-Pañcâla formed its part at one time and, Hastināpura being its main capital, its boundary must have extended considerably beyond this town. In the south it included the district of Indraprastha or present Delhi which was its second capital. The adjoining state on this side was Surasena which had Mathura as its capital. In the south-west it was adjoined by the Matsyas while in the west it had the Mahavrsas about the region of Vinasana or Kalibangan as its neighbours. In the north-west the Sutlej apparently formed the boundary.

#### Kuruksetra

We come across Kuruksetra as the name of a region from the Maitravani-Samhita98 onward. It was already regarded as a holy land and is repeatedly mentioned as the venue of sacrifices by gods and rsis.99 Earlier the Rgveda100 also

refers to Bharata princes kindling sacrificial fire on the sacred rivers Sarasvatī, Drsadvatī and Āpayā as well as the lake Mānuṣa.

A precise geographical definition of the land is however given in the Taittiriya Āranyaka<sup>101</sup> while describing a sacrifice performed by gods with Kuru-kşetra as their altar. The Khāndava i.e. the region about Khāndavaprastha or Indraprastha (the old site of Indarpat in Delhi) made up the southern half of this altar, Tūrghna its northern half, Parinat the lower or western half and the Marus or the Marwar desert its rubbish pit.

The identification of Parinat with Parinos of Arrian, a tributory of the Indus<sup>102</sup> does not appear to be plausible. The place or more correctly the region, should be equated with parts of the Sirsa-Hisar-Hanumangarh tract to satisfy its description as the lower half of Kurukşetra if the upper half is placed in Türghna which is a scribal error for Srughna. From the description of Sārasvata and Dārşadvata sacrificial sessions in the Brāhmanas<sup>103</sup> and Srautasūtras<sup>104</sup> Parinat appears to be the lower part of the Sarasvati-Dṛṣadvatī doab.<sup>105</sup>

The identification of Srughna with the site of Sugh, which was the central town of the region, admits of no doubt. 106 Srughna enjoyed considerable importance in ancient times. The old mound of Sugh lies 30° 9'N and 77° 23'E, on the Western Jumna Canal 107 running in the old bed of the Dṛṣadvatī, 108 about 5 kms. to the east of Jagadhari. Yugandhara of Sanskrit literature. By the time of the Taittirīya Āranyaka the town had acquired enough prestige to lend its name to the surrounding region and thereafter till about the 12th century A.D. it always remained in the lime light. 109 One reason probably was its location on an important east-west trade route. The road from Mathurā to this town has been called Sraughna by Pāṇini. 110 It is also mentioned in Buddhist works like Mahāmāyūrī and Divyāvadāna 112 and in the Bṛhatsamhitā and described in some detail by Hieun-Tsang 113 who visited it in the 7th century A.D. and found an Aśokan stūpa and a monastery to the south-west of the city, apart from many other stūpas.

The site has been excavated on a modest scale and it has yielded Painted Grey Ware sherds of inferior quality associated with Northern Black Polished Ware and Fine Grey Ware datable to circa 600-500 B.C. 114 Cunningham has highlighted its importance while pointing out that it stood on the high road leading from the Gangetic doab via Meerut, Saharanpur and Ambala to the upper Panjab and fell on the route taken by Mahmud of Gazni on the way back from his Kannauj expedition, by Timur while returning from his plundering campaign at Haridwar and by Babar for his advance to the conquest of Delhi.

According to Hieun-Tsang the kingdom of Srughna was six thousand li or one thousand miles in circuit, on the east it extended to the Ganga and on the north to a range of lofty mountains, while the Yamuna flowed through the midst

of it. From these data Cunningham115 concludes that Srughna must have comprised the states of Sirmore and Garhwal, lying between the Giri river and the Ganga, with portions of the districts of Ambala and Saharanpur in the plains. This estimate of Srughna would appear to tally with our definition of the Uttara Kurus as given above. The description of Srughna as the northern half of Kurukşetra thus implies that Uttara Kurus constituted the northern half of Kuruksetra too.

Khandava is first mentioned in the Brahmanas as a venue of long sacrificial sessions. The Jaiminīya116 and the Satyayana117 Brahmanas mention the performance of a satra here by the Gaupāyanas. The Pañcavimŝa118 Brāhmana describes it as the scene of an year-long sacrificial session by the sages, Dhrti and Vâtavat. According to the popular story given in the Mahabharata119 Agni, the god of fire, appeased its hunger by burning this forest with the help of Sri Krsna and Arjuna in the face of Indra's opposition. The town of Khandavaprastha was built by the Pandavas as the capital of their own part of the Kuru kingdom and it came to be known as Indraprastha later. According to another story in the Kalika Purana 120 this forest was originally the abode of Indra. It was cut down by King Sudarsana of the Candra dynasty who built a town called Khandavanagarı in it. It was however wrested from him by Vijaya the king of Kāśi who again turned it into a forest under the direction of Indra. The town built by Sudarsana has been described as hundred yojanas in length and thirty yojanas in breadth.

It would thus appear that the name Khandava of the southern half of Kuruksetra applied to an extensive region with Delhi, the site of the ancient town of Khandavaprastha or Indraprastha, as its focal point. 121 The account of the Kālikā Purāna describes it as not far from Himavat which might have prompted Nando Lal Dey122 to define it as a greater portion of the Meerut division of U.P., from Bulandsahar to Saharanpur, generally identical with Muzaffarnagar. It must be remembered, however, that the central point of this region was Indraprastha and, in view of the fact that it was an extensive region covered with forests, it must have denoted a fairly extensive territory reaching close to Mathura in the south.

Sanskrit inscriptions of the 13th to 16th centuries invariably refer to Jodhpur-Udaipur-Bikaner region as the desert i.e. Maru, Maru desa or Marusthali. 123 The Sarasvatī is said to have dried up about the head or top of the Marus. 124 The spot can be said to be identical with Vinasana where the Sarasvatt lost itself in the desert out of its contempt for the Śūdra-Ābhiras125 and Niṣādas. 126 Vinasana has been equated with Kalibangan where, even now, the flow of Ghaggar-Sarasvati dries up in the sands unless on account of excessive decrease or increase in rainfall it ends short of Kalibangan or a little below it. Existence of many sacrificial altars facing the Ghaggar-Sarasvatt at this pre-Harappan/Harappan site appears to suggest that the Sārasvata and Dārsadvata satras, for which the yajamānas took dīksā at Vinasana, were started from the site of Kalibangan

upstream along the two rivers. 127 This spot eminently qualifies for being described as Maruprstha or the top of the desert.

An examination of the geographical boundaries of Kurukşetra thus appears to make it co-terminus with the Kurus till at least the later Vedic period. This is quite understandable because just as the name Kuru of the people applied to their land also Kurukşetra too originally meant the land of the Kurus. In late medieval Jain works it has been called a raṣṭra. Gradually however the geographical definition of Kurukşetra began to shrink on account of several factors. 127a

Firstly the Sarasvati-Drsadvati doab acquired more religious importance as reflected in its description by Manu as Brahmävarta. 128 The place of Brahmävarta was taken by Kuruksetra with the inevitable consequence of curtailment in its area. Secondly the name got associated with the illustrious king Kuru as the Ksetra or field first ploughed by him. 129 A field naturally had to be a restricted area and not a whole region. Thirdly the concept of Yakşa-dvarapalas came to be applied to Kuruksetra also, 130 While on the one hand it was equated with the Uttara-vedī 131 of Brahma and called Brahmavarta on the other hand the Yaksas named Tarantuka, Arantuka, Macakruka and Kapila were placed at its four 132 corners which, even if not clearly identified, restricted it virtually to a tract between the Sarasvatt and the Drsadvati. Plaksavatarana133 to the north of Jagadhari, Vrddhakanyaka tirtha134 in the upper reaches of the Sarasvati-Ghaggar somewhere below Plaksaprāsravaņa or Lavāsā in Pacchād135 and Munjavaja near Jind136 acquired the position of gates to the land of Kuruksetra. In the third stage the name Kuruksetra got confined literally to the tirtha complex of the present town of Thanesar which appropriated the adjective of Dharmaksetra also. In the confusion it was described as Brahmavedī, the tract of the five lakes of Paraśurāma, Samantapañcaka and even as Brahmasara and Sannihati. 137 On account of the convergence of pilgrims from all parts of the country to the Sannihati lake for a dip at the time of a solar eclipse<sup>138</sup> the main railway station of the city was also christened as Kurukşetra. So much so that people from the neighbouring rural areas started calling even the Brahmasara lake by the name of Kuruksetra tank."

### Kurujangala

As already noted Kurujāngala is often misunderstood as the 'waste land' or the 'wild region' (jāngala) of the Kuru realm. 139 The Mahābhārata 140 however describes it as a rāṣṭra and traces the origin of the name to king Kuru. 141 It has thus been used as another name for the Kurus and Kurukṣetra also. 142 There are however some passages which give a fairly clear indication of the tract to which the name Kurujāngala applied. In Vālmīki's Rāmāyana, 143 for instance, the messengers, directed to fetch Bharata from Rājagṛha in Kekaya, on the sudden death of

Daśaratha, start from Ayodhyā and on their westward journey cross the Gangā, pass through the Pañcala country and then proceeded through Kurujāngala. In agreement with this description of Valmiki Hema Candra 144 describes Kurujangala as the country lying to the north-west of Hastinapura.

The Mahābhārata also appears to support this position. During his selfimposed vānaprastha in the company of his queens Kunti and Mādrī, king Pāndu visits the Caitraratha forest, Gandhamadana peak and the Satasrnga mountain. 145 Caitraratha has been identified with modern Chakrata or Jaunsar-Bawar forest division comprising the northern part of district Dehradun of U.P.146 Gandhamadana finds mention in the Visnu Purāna as the hill on which Badarikāśrama was situated. 147 This Badarikā śrama most probably refers to Adyabadarı on river Somb (old Vedic Asmanyati) to the north of Kapalamocana tirtha near Bilaspur on the Ambala-Jagadhari road in Haryana. The description in the Great Epic is rather loose but from the context the name Satasrnga appears to refer to the Shiwalik range above Adyabadari. From this region Kunti proceeds towards Hastinapura covering the long distance through Kurujangala, 148 having the tract of Jagadhari-Saharanpur as its central portion. This was the north-eastern strip of the Kuru country which is known for its fertility and richness in the production of grains and fruits. It cannot be described as "waste land."

The word 'jangala' in the name Kurujangala cannot be construed to mean "the wild region of the Kuru realm." In reality it denotes a particular kind of soil which according to its traditional definition, makes for a picturesque and prosperous land of wind and sunshine, abounding in delicious fruits and food-grains. 149 It is this kind of rich jangala country that Manu 150 recommends for residence. The name Kurujāngala therefore applied to the north eastern part of Kuru country notwithstanding its occasional use in place of Kuru and Kuruksetra.

We can now sum up the result of our inquiry as follows: Of the three geographical names Kuru, Kuruksetra and Kurujāngala the first two were almost coterminus with the exception that for sometime the Kuru kingdom embraced a slightly larger area, while Kuruksetra gradually shrank in extent till it came to denote first the Sarasvati-Dṛṣadvatī doab and more recently only the Thanesar tirtha complex.

In the Vedic age the names Kuru and Kuruksetra applied to a region larger than the present state of Haryana, extending virtually upto the Sutlei in the northwest and reaching beyond Ganga in the east. Kurujangala, on the other hand, was the north-eastern part of Kuruksetra having the Jagadhari-Saharanpur tract as its central portion.

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   F.E. Pargiter, The Mārkandeya Purāṇa, Eng. Tr. and Notes (M.P.), Calcutta 1954, p. 354, And
   H.C. Raychaudhuri, Political History of Ancient India (P.H.A.I.), 7th ed. Calcutta 1972, p. 20.
- 2. I.P. p. 56.
- 3. M.P. p. 354.
- D.C. Sircar, Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Mediaeval India (G.A.M.I.), Delhi 1971, p. 99.
   Ancient Geography of India (A.G.I.), Ed. S.N. Majumdar, Calcutta 1924, pp. 380 and 701.

V.N. Datta and H.A. Phadke, *History of Kurukşetra*, Kurukshetra 1984, p. 4. Their assertion that "The area bounded by the rivers Sarasvati and Dṛṣadvati, where the Kurus lived was called Kurukṣetra in the *Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas*" is untenable. They do not give any reference to support it.

- 5. P.H.A.I., p. 20.
- 6. M.P., p. 354.
- 7. P.H.A.I., p. 20.
- 8. M.P., p. 354.
- 9. I.P. p. 56.
- Cf. M.R. Singh, Geographical Data in the Early Purāṇas (Singh), Calcutta 1976, p. 67.
- 11. G.A.M.L., p. 76.
- 12. Ibid., p. 110.
- 13. Vana, 81. 175.
- G.A.M.I., p. 99; V.S. Agrawala, Vāmana Purāņa—A Study, Varanasi 1964,
   p. 47; H.H. Wilson, The Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Calcutta 1972, p. 147; Ajay Mitra Shastri, India as seen in the Bṛhatsamhitā of Varāhamihira (Shastri), Delhi 1969,
   p. 85.
- 15. Manusmṛti, ii. 17:

### सरस्वतीद्षद्वत्योर्देवनद्योर्यंदन्तरम् । तं देवनिर्मितं देशं ब्रह्मावर्तं प्रचक्षते ॥

- B.C. Law, Historical Geography of Ancient India (H.G.A.I.), Ist Indian ed., Delhi 1984, p. 100; M.P., p. 354.
- 17. Trikāṇḍušeṣa, ii. 1.14: कुरुक्षेत्रं विनशनं . . . and Vīramitrodaya, Ed. Viṣṇu Prasāda Sharma, Benares 1917, Tīrthaprakāša, p. 462:

आद्यं ब्रह्मसरः पण्यं ततो रामह्रदः स्मृतः । करुणा कृषिणा कृष्टं करक्षेत्रं ततः स्मृतम् ॥

The commentator explains:

ः संज्ञाभदमात्रमेतत् । प्रथमं ब्रह्मसरः संज्ञा ततो रामह्रद संज्ञा ततः कुरुक्षेत्र-संज्ञेति । एवं ब्रह्मसर इति तस्यैव संज्ञान्तरम् । रामह्रद इति च त्रेतायाम् । रामह्रदः स्मतः इत्यक्तेः। एवमत्तरवेदि संज्ञा विनशन संज्ञा प्रयाग संज्ञा सन्निहतसंज्ञा सिन्नहत्यादि संज्ञाप्यस्यैव । विनशन पदेन यद्यपि यत्र नष्टा सरस्वती स देश उच्यते । तथाऽपि सम्पूर्णे कुरुक्षेत्रेऽपि तत्प्रयोगादपि तथा। एवं च रामह्नदादि शब्दानां कुरुक्षेत्रकदेशे रूढानां समस्त कुरुक्षेत्रे रूढि निरूढ लक्षणा वेत्यन्यदेतत्। एवं करुजांगल शब्दस्याप्येकदेशे रूढस्य तथात्वम् । . . .

- 18. M.P., p. 354; I.P. p. 56; H.G.A.I., p. 100.
- 19. P.H.A.I., p. 21.
- 20. M.P., p. 354.
- 21. I.P., p. 56.
- 22. क्रवश्च क्रुक्षेत्रं च क्रुक्रुक्क्षेत्रं, क्रवश्च क्रुजांगलं च क्रुक्रुजांगलम् । Cf. Mbh. Adi., 100. 1088 fn. under v. 30:

### तेषु त्रिषु कुमारेषु जातेषु कुरुजांगलम्। कुरवोऽथ कुरुक्षेत्रं सर्वं त्रयमवर्धतः।।

- 23. X. 33.4.
- 24. VIII. 3.21.
- 25. A.A. Macdonell and A.B. Keith, Vedic Index of Names and Subjects (V.I.), Two volumes, 3rd Reprint, Delhi 1967, Vol. i, pp. 167 and 170.
- 26. IV. 2.6.
- 27. XI. 3.3. and 6.3.
- 28. V. I, i. 167; Also Oldenberg, Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order, (Buddha), Reprint, Delhi 1971, pp. 403 and 404.
- 29. V. I, i. 167.
- 30. III. 23.4.
- 31. V.1., i. 168.
- 32. XI. 3.3.
- 33. V.I. i. 168.
- 34. Bhīsma, 24.14.
- 35. Ibid., 24.41; Other modes of address like Kaurava, Kauravaśrestha, Kauravya, Kauraveya, Bharatarşabha, Bharatasreştha and Bharatasattama are also used in the Mbh.
- V.I. i. 169 N. 44.
- 37. Ibid.

- 14 Ancient Kurukşetra
- 38. V.I. i. 168.
- 39. V.I. i. 165.
- 40. VIII. 14:

ः अस्यां घ्रुवायां मध्यमायां प्रतिष्ठायां दिशि ये के च कुरूपञ्चालानां राजानः सवशोशीनराणां राज्यायैव तेऽभिषिच्यन्ते ।

Oldenberg (Buddha, p. 392 n) points out that in treating of the other territories, instead of 'asyām' the word 'etasyām' is used: 'asyām' contains a significant hint that the compiler of the text belongs to this very territory.

- 41. VIII. 14:
  - ः तस्मादेतस्यामुदीच्यां दिशि ये के च परेण हिमवन्तं जनपदा उत्तर कृरव उत्तरमद्रा इति वैराज्यायैव तेऽभिषिच्यन्ते ।
- 42. V. I. i. 168; Shastri, p. 86.
- 43. Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India (Studies), Delhi 1986, p. 159 f.
- 44. V.I. i. 165.
- 45. Ed. Caland and Raghu Vira, Reprint, Delhi 1983, IV. 2.3.10: उदीचीं पथ्यया स्वस्त्या वाग्वै पथ्या स्वस्तिः तस्मादत्रौत्तरा है वाग्वदतीत्याहुः कृष्पञ्चालेषु कुष्महावृषेष्वित्येतां हि तया दिशं प्राजानन्नेषा हि तस्या दिक् प्रज्ञाता ।
- 46. Racial Affinities of Early North Indian Tribes (N.I.T.), Delhi 1973, p. 51.
- 47. II. 4.7.
- 48. Gopatha Brāhmana (G.B.), I.2.10.
- 49. Ibid.
- 50. Ibid.
- 51. Mbh. Śalya, 36.1.
- 52. Mbh. Virāta, 1.11.
- 53. Śatapatha Brāhmaņa (S.B.), i. 4.1.17.
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- 56. H.G.A.I., p. 115.
- 57. Dey, p. 74.
- 58. Studies, p. 242.
- 59. Ibid., p. 204 ff.
- 60. Ch. IV, Sec. 2.
- 61. Studies, p. 215.
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- 66. Darbhanga ed. p. 145 ff.
- 67. Ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1959, p. 77 ff.
- 68. Studies, p. 149 ff., and B.B.B., pp. 406-410.
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- 70. Studies, p. 152; Avadānašataka, Ed. J.S. Speyer, The Hague 1958, p. 67.
- 71. For identification of these towns and Buddha's visits to the Kurus, see Studies, p. 149 ff.
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   p. 334.
- 73. V. Fausboll, The Jātaka, 7 volumes (Jātaka), London 1964, Vol. V., p. 57, Sambhavajātaka (no. 515).
- 74. P. 283; Also Cf. B.C. Law, Geographical Essays, Vol. I, London 1937, p. 28.
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   p. 301.
- Kumārikā Khanda, 39.135 (ii):
   हरीयाले च ग्रामाणां लक्षपञ्चक सम्मितम्
- 77. Jātaka, IV, p. 444, lines 10-11: अतीते कुरुरद्ठे उत्तरपञ्चालनगरे रेणु नाम राजा राज्यं कारेसि . . .
- 78. Virāļa, 1.9:

सन्ति रम्या जनपदाः बह्वन्नाः परितः कुरून् पञ्चालाश्चेदिमत्स्याश्च शूरसेनाः पटच्चराः । दशार्णा नवराष्ट्रं च मल्लाः शाल्वाः युगन्धराः ॥

- 79. B.B.B., p. 427 and n. 1.
- 80. H.G.A.I., p. 49.
- 81. Dey, p. 128.
- 82. Dey, p. 82; H.G.A.I., p. 51.
- 83. G.A.M.I., p. 31.
- 84. G.A.M.I., p. 205.
- 85. Dey, p. 54.
- 86. Singh, p. 340 f.
- 87. Dey, p. 139.
- 88. Singh, p. 238 f.

89. O.P. Bharadwaj, The Shiwaliks or the Śālvakāgiri and the Śālvāvayavas, paper

presented at the A.I.O.C. Kuruksetra session 1975.

 The Yugandharas belonged to the Salva group of tribes and at one time shared their King Yaugandhari with the Salvas: Apastambīya Mantrapāṭha, II. 11.12:

# यौगन्धरिरेव नो राजेति साल्वीरवादिषु। विवृत्तचका आसीनास्तीरेण यमुने तव।।

91. B.B.B., pp. 68 and 88.

92. Ibid., p. 69.

93. H.G.A.I., p. 143.

94. H.C. Raychaudhury, Studies in Indian Antiquities, Calcutta 1958, pp. 71 ff; also Mehta, p. 364.

95. V.K. Mathur, Aitihāsika Sthānāvalī (Mathur), Delhi 1969, p. 41.

96. Edwin T. Atkinson, The Himalayan Gazetteer, 3 vols. 2 pts. each, Delhi 1973; Vol. II, pt. 2, p. 836.

96a. Shastri, p. 85.

96b. Sachau, Alberuni's India, Reprint, Delhi, p. i.300.

97. Ramādatta Śukla, Prayāga, Sundarī Khanda, 7. 62:

हस्तिनापुरमारभ्य कुरुक्षेत्राच्च दक्षिणे। पाञ्चालात् पूर्वभागे तु कुरुदेशः प्रकीतितः।।

The verse is quoted in G.A.M.I., p. 79 as follows: हस्तिनापुरमारभ्य कुरुक्षेत्रस्य दक्षिणे। पञ्चालपूर्वभागस्तु कुरुदेश: प्रकीतित:।।

In this form the whole of Pancala is described as the eastern part of the Kurus.

98. II. 1.4:

देवा वै सत्रमासत कुरुक्षेत्रे अग्निः सोमा इन्द्रस्तेऽब्रुवन्, यतमं न प्रथमं यश ऋच्छात्तं नः सहेति . . . ।

 In addition to M.S., II. 1.4; M.S., IV. 5.9; S.B., IV. 1.1.2; IV. 1.5.13; Jaiminīya Br. (J.B.), II. 300; III. 126; Pañcavimśa Br. (P.B.), 25.13.3 etc. etc.

100. III. 23.4:

नित्वा दधे वर आ पृथिव्या इलायास्पदे सुदिनत्वे अङ्गाम् । दृषद्वत्यां मानुष आपयायां सरस्वत्यां रेवदग्ने दिदीहि ॥

101. VIII. 1.1:

· · · · तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं वेदिरासीत्, तस्यै खाण्डवो दक्षिणार्धं आसीत्, तूर्घ्नमुत्तरार्धः, परिणज्जघनार्धः, मरव उत्करः · · · ।

- 102. H.G.A.I., p. 101.
- 103. See e.g. P.B., 25-10. 1-23; and J.B., II. 297-298.
- 104. Śāńkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, XIII. 29; Kātyāyana Ś.S., XXIV. 7.22; Lātyāyana S.S., X. 17.12-14; Aśvalāyana S.S., XII. 6. etc. For extracts see Studies, pp. 9 f and 15.
- 105. Studies, p. 23.
- 106. A.G.I., p. 395 f.
- 107. For a brief note see Journal of Haryana Studies (J.H.S.), Jan. 1971, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 8-15.
- 108. See O.P. Bharadwaj, The Rgvedic Drsadvati (Paper presented at the XXXII ICANAS, Hamburg 1986); Studies in Indology (Prof. R.V. Joshi Fel. Vol.), New Delhi 1988-89, pp. 141-156.
- 109. Studies, p. 196.
- 110. I.P., p. 431.
- 111. II. 23.60.
- 112. Darbhanga ed. p. 47.
- 113. Thomas Watters, On Yuan Chawang's Travels in India, 2nd Indian ed., Delhi
- 114. For a report on the excavations at Sugh, See Suraj Bhan, J.H.S. Vol. IX, Nos. 1-2, 1977, pp. 1-49.
- 115. A.G I., p. 398.
- 116. III. 168.
- 117. 65.19.
- 118. XXV. 3.6.
- 119. Adi, Chs. 214-225.
- 120. Ch. 78 quoted in Vacaspatyam, Vol. III, p. 2473;

सोमवंशेऽभवद्राजा महात्मा स महाबलः। वीरः सदर्शनो नाम चारुरूपः प्रतापवान् ॥ स वै हिमवतो नातिद्रे भङ्क्ता महावनम्। सिहान् व्याझान् सम्त्सायं क्वचिच्चापि तपोधनान ॥ खाण्डवीं नाम नगरीमकरोत्तत्र शोभनाम। विशयोजनविस्तीर्णामायतां शतयोजनम ।।

121. The Sarval Inser. of V.S. 1384 (Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1, 1892, p. 93 ff.) describes Delhi, Spelled Dhilli, as a town built by the Tomaras in Haryana which is like a heaven on earth:

> देशोऽस्ति हरियानाख्यः पथिव्यां स्वगं सन्निभः । ढिल्लिकाख्या पूरी यत्र तोमरैरस्तिनिर्मिता।।

123. A Ghosh, The Rajputana Desert—its Archaeological Aspect., Reproduced as App. I in Aural Stein, An Archaeological Tour Along the Ghaggar-Hakra River, Meerut 1989, pp. 98-106, p. 98.

124. Vana, 80.118:

ततो विनशनं गच्छेन्नियतो नियताशनः।। गच्छत्यन्तर्हिता यत्र महपृष्ठे सरस्वती।।

125. Salya, 36.1:

ततो विनशनं राजन्नाजगाम हलायुघः। शूद्राभीरान् प्रति द्वेषाद्यत्र नष्टा सरस्वती।।

126. Mbh. Vana, 130. 3-4:

एषा सरस्वती रम्या दिव्या चौघवती नदी।
एतद् विनशनं नाम सरस्वत्या विशाम्पते।।
द्वारं निषादराष्ट्रस्य येषां द्वेषात् सरस्वती।
प्रविष्टा पृथिवीं वीर मा निषादा हि मां विदुः।।

127. Studies, p. 20 ff.

127a. Tirtha Kalpa, Jinaprabhasūri, Ed. D.R. Bhandarkar, Calcutta 1942, p. 312:

शतपुत्र्यामभून्नाभिसूनोः सूनुः कुरुन् पः । कुरुक्षेत्रमितिख्यातं राष्ट्रमेतत्तदाख्यया ॥

128. See supra N. 14.

129. Vāmana Purāņa, Cr. ed., 23.21-33; Sm., 1.13 and 11.24.

Mbh. Vana, 83.9. 15, 52 and 208.
 Also see O.P. Bharadwaj: Yakşa-Worship in Kurukşetra, ABORI, Vol. LXX (1989) Pune 1989, pp. 199-219.

131. Vāmana P., Sm. 1. 14.

132. Mbh. Śalya, 52.20:

तरन्तुकारन्तुकयोर्यदन्तरं रामह्नदानां च मचकुकस्य च। एतत् कुरुक्षेत्र समन्तपञ्चकं प्रजापतेरुत्तरवेदिरुच्यते।।

Also 52.1.

133. Mbh. Vana, 129. 11 and 13:

अद्य चात्र निवत्स्यामः क्षपां भरतसत्तम । द्वारमेतत्तु कौन्तेय कुरुक्षेत्रस्य भारत ॥

As a corollery it was also the door for heaven to the north of Kuruksetra:

एतत्प्लक्षावतरणं यमुनातीर्थंमुत्तमम् । एतद्वैनाकपृष्ठस्य द्वारमाहुमंनीषिणः ॥ 134. Mbh. Salya, 51.25:

समन्तपञ्चकद्वारात ततो निष्क्रम्य माधवः॥ पप्रच्छिषगणान रामः करुक्षेत्रस्य यत्फलम् ॥

Vrddha Kanyāka is a Sārasvata Tīrtha vide Devala Quoted in Krtyakalpataru of Bhatta Laksmidhara, Ed. K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, G.O.S. Baroda 1942, p. 250:

प्लक्षप्रास्त्रवणं बद्धकन्याकं सारस्वतमादित्यतीर्थं कौबेरं वैजयन्तं पथदकं नैमिषं विनशनं वंशोद्धे दं प्रभासमिति सारस्वतानि ।

- 135. Studies, pp. 8-19.
- 136. Vāmana P., Sm., 13.38 and 41:

ततो मञ्जवटं नाम महादेवस्य धीमतः। उपोष्य रजनीमेकां गाणपत्यमवाप्न्यात् ॥ क्रक्षेत्रस्य तद्द्वारं विश्रतं पुण्यवर्धनम्। प्रदक्षिणमपावर्यं ब्राह मणान्भोजयेत्ततः ॥

Vinasana was the gate towards Nisādarāstra. See N. 126 supra.

- 137. See n. 16 supra.
- 138. The name Sannihati or Sannihatya has been derived from the convergence of Tīrthas into this lake every month. A bath in this tīrtha on Amāvasyā and solar eclipse is particularly sanctifying and performance of braddha on this occasion brings one the merit accruing from the performance of a thousand Asyamedha sacrifices.

Mbh. Cr. Ed., Vana, 81, 166-169, Mbh. G.P. ed., Vana, 83. 195-197 (i):

> मासि मासि नरव्याघ्र सन्निहत्यां न संशय:। तीर्थसंनिहनादेव संनिहत्येति विश्रता ॥ अमावस्यां तु तत्रैव राहग्रस्ते दिवाकरे।। यः श्राद्धं कुरुते मत्यः तस्य पृण्यफलं शृण्। अश्वमेघसहस्रस्य सम्यगिष्टस्य यत्फलम् ॥

and Vāmana P., Sm., 13.50 and 20.9. Also see Kalyāņa, Jan. 1957, No. 1. p. 79.

139. See supra... Even lexicons have erred on this point. See e.g. Vācaspatyam, Vol. III, p. 2124:

जङ्गलमेव जांगलम्, क्रष् जांगलम्।

140. Ādi, 191.9:

कुरुजांगलमृख्येषु राष्ट्रेषु नगरेषु च। अनुत्वमभिषिच्यस्व नृपति धर्मवत्सलम्।।

and 102.22:

वीरसूनां काशिमुते देशानां कुरुजांगलम्। सर्वधर्मविदां भीष्मः पुराणां गजसाह्वयम्।।

141. Ādi, 89.42-43:

ततः संवरणाद्देवी तपती सुषुवे कुरुम्। राजन्नेतं प्रजाः सर्वा धर्मंज्ञ इति मेनिरे॥ तस्य नाम्नाऽभिविख्यातं पृथिव्यां कुरुजांगलम्। कुरुक्षेत्रं च तपसा पुण्यं चन्ने महातपाः॥

142. e.g. Vāmana P., Sm., 1.1:

सरस्वतीद्षद्वत्योरन्तरे कुरुजांगले ....।

and

Dey, op. cit., p. 110.

143. Ayodhyā, 68.13:

ते हास्तिनपुरे गंगां तीर्त्वा प्रत्यङ्मुखा ययुः । पञ्चालदेशमासाद्य मध्येन कुरुजांगलम् ॥

144. Quoted in Vācaspatyam, Vol. VI., p. 5154:

हस्तिनापुरस्य उत्तर पश्चिमे कुरुजांगलाख्ये देशे च.

145. Adi, 110.42-45:

राजपुत्रस्तु कौरव्यः पाण्डुर्मूलफलाशनः।
जगाम सह भायिभ्यां ततो नागसभं गिरिम्।।
स चैत्रस्य मासाद्य वारिषेणमतीत्य च।
हिमवन्तमितकम्य प्रययौ गन्धमादनम्।।
रक्ष्यमाणो महाभूतैः सिद्धैश्च परमिषिभः।
उवास स तदा राजा समेषु विषमेषु च।।
इन्द्रद्युम्नसरः प्राप्य हंसकूटमतीत्य च।
शतश्रुङ्गे महाराज तापसः समपद्यत।

146. Studies, p. 79 f.

147. V. 37.34:

यद्वदर्याश्रमं पुण्यं गन्धमादनपर्वते । नरनारायणस्थाने तत्पवित्रं महोतले ॥ 148. Adi, 117.6 (iii) and 8:

आदाय प्रस्थिताः सर्वे शतश्रुंगान्नगोत्तमात् ॥ सुखिनी सापुरा भूत्वा सततं पुत्रवत्सला। प्रपन्ना दीर्घमध्वानं संक्षिप्तं तदमन्यत्।।

149. Bhāvaprakāša with com. of Lalchand Vaidya, 2 vols., Reprint, Delhi 1986, Pūrvārdha, Vol. 1, p. 62, IV, 5-6:

आकाशश्च उच्चश्च स्वल्पपानीयपादपः। शमी-करीर-बिल्वार्क-पील्कर्कन्ध्संकुल: ।। हरिणैणक्षं पृषत गोकर्णखरसंकुलः। सुस्वादुफलवान् देशो वातलो जांगलः स्मृतः ॥

150. Manusmṛti, VII. 69:

जाङ्गलं सस्यसम्पन्नम् आर्यप्रायमनाविलम्। रम्यमानतसामन्तं स्वाजीव्यं देशमावसेत्।।

Com. Kullūka explains jāngala in the following verse without giving its source:

अल्पोदकतृणो यस्तु प्रवातः प्रचुरातपः। स ज्ञेयो जांगलो देशो बहुधान्यादि संयुत: ।।

## THE VEDIC SARASVATI

Sarasvati can be called the holiest of the holy rivers of India in as much as it has retained its sacred character right from the Rgvedic age to the present day. Many other streams were christened after it by the people moving to other parts of the country from the region of Kuruksetra which was the cradle of Indian civilization. Even the Ganga was invested with more and more of her qualities with the passage of time.1 Gradually it came to signify all the holy rivers as a verse of the Markandeya Purana2 suggests. According to the Mahabharata3 the seven Sarasvatis cover the universe and the Sarasvati made her appearance whithersoever she was summoned. At Puskara she appeared under the name of Suprabhā, at Naimişa as Kāñcanākst, at Gayā as Viśālā, in northern Kosala as Manoramā, at Kuruksetra as Oghavatı and at Gangadvara as Surenu and on the Himavat, Vimaloda. All these seven forms then came and mingled together in the Saptasárasvata tīrtha in Kuruksetra. However the important rivers which bear the name Sarasvati are the Harkhaiti or Harahvaiti also called the Arghandab or Helmand in Kandahar (Arachocia),4 the Arbuda-Sarasvati in Gujarat5 and the Thanesar-Sarasvatī near the city of Thanesar now also known as Kuruksetra.

Scholars who believe in the extra Indian origin of the Aryans think that the name Harkhaiti or Harahvaiti travelled with them to India with the linguistic change of "Ha" to "Sa" while those believing in their autochthonus origin contend that the name Sarasvati was carried westward by the outgoing Indo-Aryans and the linguistic process involved was of the change of "Sa" to "Ha." If we are not

pre-disposed in favour of the foreign origin of the Indian Aryans<sup>6</sup> the second alternative would appear more logical. Whereas it may not be possible to establish the philological process of the change of "Ha" to "Sa" and to explain particularly its change to all the sibilants "sa", "Sa" and "Sa", it is quite easy to prove the reverse of it. From the earliest times through the ages we come across instances of this change of "Sa", "Sa" and "Sa" to "Ha" specially as we proceed from the traditional region of Madhyadesa towards the west. To take only a couple of instances even now Sādhu is pronounced as Hau, Śivaji as Hibji, Sukhdeva as Hukhdeva, Dasa as Daha and Sāhukāra as Haukāra in dialects of Marwar.7 Going back about 25 hundred years we find the place-name spelt as Tausayana by Pānini changing to Tohana8 at some later stage. The earlier change of Vedic Asura to Avestan Ahura9 and Sanskrit Sindhu to Old Persian Hindu9a is well known. The same process operated in the evolution of the name Saryana in the Rgveda10 and Śaryana<sup>11</sup> or Saryana<sup>12</sup> later to Haryana<sup>13</sup> which, like its original, earlier applied to the western parts of the present state.14 The consistent operation of this linguistic process of the replacement of sibilants by "Ha"15 thus justifies the conclusion that the name Sarasvati also logically underwent the same process in its westward journey and became Harahvaiti or Harkhaiti in Arachocia.

Even in India however there are, as already noted, more than one rivers bearing this name. It is proposed to undertake an exercise here to identify the original Vedic Sarasvatī.

The very name Arbuda Sarasvatt shows that it is of later origin otherwise the association of Arbuda with it would be redundant. We are then left with only the Thanesar Sarasvatt which according to the Imperial Gazetteer of India (IGI),16 rises in Sirmur State, debouches on the plains at Adbadri, disappears in the sand a few miles farther on and comes up again about three miles to the south of Bhawanipur. It vanishes again at Balchhapar for a short distance to emerge once more and flows on in south-westerly direction across Karnal until it joins the Ghaggar in Patiala territory after a course of about 110 miles. On the way a district canal takes off from it near Pehowa about 24 km. below Thanesar, Running along the towns of Tohana and Sirsa it turns southward to enter Rajasthan in the district of Ganganagar where it vanishes in the sands of the desert.

There is no denying the fact that the name Sarasvatt at present applies to this river described in the I.G.I. It has indeed the partial support of literary evidence going back at least to the Epics. In the Harsacarita of Bana the Bhairavacarya who initiated Prabhakara-vardhana in Tantric rites is mentioned as staying in a deserted temple on the bank of the Sarasvati.17 On the death of Prabhakaravardhana his cremation takes place on the bank of the Sarasvati. 18 His queen Yasovati precedes him and plunges into fire at the same river.19 Finally when Harşavardhana ascends the throne, his forces start on their victory march from the bank of the same river. Bāṇa presenting a graphic description of this scene describes how the seal of the king drops face downwards on the dry mud of the bank of the holy river and his name is imprinted on the soft earth signifying, as it were the stamping of the earth with the single seal of his sole command.<sup>20</sup> Evidently the river flowing very close to Thanesar, the original capital of the Puṣyabhūtis, was at that time known by the name Sarasvatī.

The Mahâbhârata<sup>21</sup> also describes a large number of tirthas which are located on the Adbadri-Thanesar Sarasvati including the Kapālmocana the Sthānvīśvara and the Pṛthūdaka. It specifically mentions the location of the hermitage of Vasistha at the Sthānu Tirtha and that of Viśvāmitra further on along the Sarasvatī.<sup>22</sup> The celebrated Sthānu Tirtha is located on the northern side of the town. Only about 40 years back the flood waters of the Thanesar-Sarasvatī used to flow into the holy tank at this tirtha. Its antiquity undoubtedly goes back to the age of the Puṣyabhūtis and it was from this tirtha that the town and the Janapada<sup>23</sup> acquired the name Sthānvīśvara which first changed to Sthāneśvara<sup>24</sup> and then to Thanesar.<sup>25</sup> Pṛthūdaka or Pehowa is named after King Pṛthī or Pṛthu son of Vena who figures as a Rṣi in the Rgveda.<sup>26</sup>

In the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa<sup>27</sup> while describing the return journey of prince Bharata from Girivraja in Kekaya to Ayodhyā the poet refers to his crossing the joint stream of the Sarasvatī and the Gangā before entering the Bhāruṇḍa forest in the north of the Kira-matsyas. As we have shown elsewhere<sup>28</sup> this Sarasvatī was also the Adbadri-Thanesar-Sarasvatī while its tributary Gangā represented a small stream in Kurukṣetra named after the holy Gangā.

However there are indications that the river represented in all these references and flowing by the tirthas like Adbadri, Kapalamocana, Thanesar and Pehowa actually acquired the name Sarasvati only at a later stage.

The Pehowa inscription of Bhoja of the Imperial Pratihāra dynasty locates Pṛthūdaka in the vicinity of the Prācī-Sarasvatī. <sup>29</sup> The Vāmana Purāṇa <sup>30</sup> also gives to this river the name Prācī-Sarasvatī at one place. In the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa <sup>31</sup> again we specifically get the name Prācī-Sarasvatī of the river in Brahmāvarta, the country of Manu which too obviously refers to the Thanesar-Sarasvatī. It cannot be argued that the adjective Prācī meaning eastern applies to the Thanesar-Sarasvatī at any one particular point because it is called Prācī-Sarasvatī not only at Pehowa but also at Patan (Anhilpatak) in Gujarat <sup>32</sup> and at the holy tīrtha of Puṣkara at Ajmer. <sup>33</sup> Prof. Raychaudhuri <sup>34</sup> therefore rightly remarks that the very application of the adjective Prācī to the Thanesar-Sarasvatī presupposes the existence of an old river Sarasvatī to its west. As we proceed, the truth of this observation will become evident.

The Epics associate at least four more rivers with the name, Sarasvati. We may first refer here to the Râmāyaṇa 35 where it describes the westward journey of

the messengers from Ayodhya to Kekaya to fetch Bharata from his maternal uncle's capital Girivraja on the sad and sudden demise of King Dasaratha. Only the part of their journey in the region of Kuruksetra is relevant for our purpose.

After crossing the Pract-Sarasvatt and passing by the town of Puskaravatt. probably the same as Bilaspur.36 known for the two very old lotus-lakes Kapálamocana and Rnamocana and as the capital of Śrikantha Janapada,37 the messengers approach and ford the celestial river Saradanda which has been identified with the present Sadadeni,38 a tributary of the Markanda river which, as already mentioned, joins the Praci-Sarasvati near Pehowa. Another tributary of the Markanda was the Aruna, now called Run Cho and mentioned by Valmiki as Agneyi.39

The Markanda rises at Baraban in the hills of Katasan and after flowing from south-east to south-west for a distance of about 24 kms. passes into the Ambala district at Kala Amb. 40 The main stream, which acquired the name Markanda because of the great Rsi's association with it, was probably better known by the names of its two branches Aruna and Saradanda in the past. Saradanda is apparently the same as Saravats, both signifying 'a river abounding in reeds,'41 The people occupying the region below the Nahan Shiwaliks along the river and extending westward probably upto the Tangri inherited its name and are known as one of the constituents of the Salva confederacy of tribes. 42

A traditional verse describes the Saravati as the boundary between the Prācya and Udīcya divisions of India.43 Amarakośa44 fully concurs with this in describing the country to the north of the Saravati as north-west and that to its south as east. Rajasekhara45 says practically the same thing in different words when he places Uttarapatha, another name for the Udicyas, on the other side of Prthudaka. It is the 'Sadadeni-Aruna-Markanda' that flows by the side of Pehowa after meeting the Thanesar-Pract-Sarasvatt. There is, thus, adequate evidence to support the Saravati-Saradanda-Sadadeni equation.

Hemādri46 quotes the same traditional verse with the reading Sarasvat1 for Sarāvatī which suggests that the Sarāvatī-Saradandā-Sadadeni was once known as Sarasvati also. Same is the case with the main river Markanda. When propitiated by the Eternal Sage Markandeya the Sarasvatt, rising at Plakşa, is stated in the Vāmana Purāna<sup>47</sup> to have followed him wherever he led her. It is thus the Sarasvatī itself which is named after sage Mārkandeya. The Arunā, too enjoys a similar situation as it is described in the Mahābhārata as Sarasvati's own form and brought into being by Sarasvati herself.48 All the three sister streams Saradanda, Markanda and Aruna thus shared the name Sarasvati,

The next river forded by the messengers after crossing the Saradanda is named in the Ramayana49 as Iksumati which has been identified with the Ghaggar flowing by the present town of Panchkula near Chandigarh.50 The Mahabharata51

describes Iksumats as a river of Kurukşetra. Literally, the name signifies a river that is rich in sugarcane or whose belt is particularly noteworthy for its fabulous cane crops. This is applicable to the present river Ghaggar which is called Hakra in Rajasthan.

In several villages in the Parganas of Jodhpur and Malani in Rajasthan stone cane-crushers were found which are said to have been used for making gur when the Hakra flowed and supported rich cane crops in the area. 52 Sultan Masaud. son of Mahmud of Ghazni, found the tract around the town of Sirsa, the ancient Śairīsaka.53 remarkable for the extensive growth of cane which his forces used to fill up the moat for storming the fortress.54 The records of Timur's invasion also mention the sugarcane jungles of Tohana.55 Both the towns of Sirsa and Tohana are situated near the Ghaggar, Iksumati is a derivative name used for the river whose real identity is given away by the adjectives qualifying it. It has been called Pitrpaitamahi. Attempts have been made by commentators to explain this adjective to mean 'connected with the ancestors of the Iksvakus' or 'frequented by the ancestors of Dasaratha' or 'the country and towns on whose banks were possessed by the Iksvākus. 56 Such a construction would, however, be not only far-fetched but also unreasonable in as much as the party comprised the messengers who were, at best, only royal servants and not members of the royal family with reference to whom the river could be called Pitrpaitamahi.

As it is, the adjective simply means 'created by God Brahmā who is known also as Prapitāmaha.<sup>57</sup> Now, the river most closely associated with Brahmā is the Sarasvatī. She has been variously described as his daughter, his consort and his first creation among rivers. The alternate reading Devarsicaritā too fits perfectly in the case of Sarasvatī. Illustrious names among gods and men are connected with her. Vālmīki therefore uses Ikṣumatī only as another name for Sarasvatī and leaves us in no doubt about it. Indumatī, the variant reading for Ikṣumatī, is also a name for Sarasvatī which is supposed to have conveyed the Indumatē or Agni-Vaḍavānala to the ocean. The readings Devarsicaritā and Indumatī are, indeed, so obviously applicable to Sarasvatī that it is difficult to resist the conclusion that whosoever introduced them in the text must have been fully conscious of the poet's intention to refer to this river here. The names Saradandā and Ikṣumatī or Indumatī, again, conform to Vālmīki's preference for derivative names, as does the use of Vārunī for the Yamunā and Āgneyī for the Arunā.

This presents an interesting situation where we have three Sarasvatis, viz., the Iksumati-Ghaggar-Sarasvati, the Aruna-Saradanda-Saravati-Markanda-Sarasvati and the Kuruksetra-Thanesar-Sarasvati, also known as Praci or Eastern Sarasvati. While it does call for explanation, it does not defy a satisfactory solution.

The identification of the Rgvedic Sarasvat; with the old bed of the Ghaggar in Rajasthan, called Hakra or Wahinda, is not seriously questioned.66 The difference of view is mainly over the course of the river above Vinasana or the region about Kalibangan 67 It is somewhere above this point that the confluence of the Sarasvati and the Drsadvati68 took place. A long distance before this, the Markanda-Sarasvati joins the Ghaggar three miles above Akalgarh 19 after the Praci-Sarasvati of Thanesar has already merged with it at Urnai near Pehowa.70

Now, the Rgveda describes the Sarasvatt as the river par excellence, rushing down right from the mountains up to the ocean71 with a tempestuous roar,72 breaking and carrying down ridges of hills like lotus-stems73 and filling the realms of earth and the wide tract of the firmament.74 It is superior to her companions,75 and surpasses all other rivers by her majesty?6 and glory.77 It is fierce.78 swiftest of the swift,79 mightiest of her class80 and best of rivers.81 best of mothers82 and even best of goddesses.83 Neither the Markanda-Sarasvats nor the Thanesar-Pract Sarasvati could ever lay claim to this description. The latter, although monopolising the name, is indeed but an insignificant rainy-season nullah, hardly fit to be called a river and now almost extinct. It might be somewhat better around the time of Harsavardhana but could never have been so big as to inspire the Rgvedic poets to the extent of eliciting the lofty epithets quoted above. The terrain simply rules out such a possibility.

On the other hand, this picture of the Rgvedic Sarasvatı immediately recalls to mind the 2-6 miles wide bed of the Hakra84 in Rajasthan and the furious flooded Ghaggar inundating vast areas. If ever the Ghaggar was a perennial river-as it undoubtedly was before the Brahmana period where we find Vinasana mentioned for the first time-it must have deserved every word of the praise showered on the Rgvedic Sarasvatı. Even now, although shorn of its prehistoric grandeur, it presents a formidable spectacle when at the peak of flood. 85 The richness it bestowed on the soil in its belt has earned for it the epithet of Iksumati from Valmiki, and won the adjectives like 'possessed of wealth'66, 'having a golden path,'87 'possessed of vigour on account of flood'88 and 'distributing riches to the whole world'89 from the Rgvedic seers. The Ghaggar-ksumati was therefore the original and Rgvedic Sarasvatī which fact has been acknowledged by the Adikavi in the use of the adjective Pitrpaitāmahı.

The validity of this identification can be easily verified. In the later Vedic literature, the Brahmanas and the Sūtras, we find Plakşa Prasravana90 mentioned as the name of the source of the Sarasvati and Vinasana91 as the place of its disappearance in the sands of Bikaner. Plaksa Prasravana has been identified with Lavasa reserved forest named after a village lying 30° 42' N by 77°9'E in lower mountains in Pacchad sub-division of district Nahan in Himachal Pradesh<sup>92</sup> and Vinasana with the well-known Pre-Harappan/Harappan site of Kalibangan situated 29°.25′N by 74°.5′E some 310 km. north-west of Delhi, in Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan.<sup>93</sup> These two points are respectively the source and tail end of the Ghaggar too.

In Rgveda VIII. 54.494 Sarasvati is invoked separately with seven rivers while in VI. 61.10, 1295 she is referred to as seven-sistered. This would suggest that she had seven tributaries. That these included the Indus would be clear from her adjective Sindhūmātā96 where Sindhu cannot denote the ocean. The other six rivers were in all probability the five Punjab rivers Jhelam, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej and the holy Drsadvati97 which forms with the Sarasvati the venue of sacrifices by Bharata Princes in the Rgveda, 98 of Daradvata sacrificial sessions in later Vedic literature,99 and the southern boundary of Brahmāvarta, the holy heartland of Kurukşetra in the Mahabharata100 and the Puranas.101 Obviously the Kubha cannot claim the seventh position in her place. 102 Where the Sarasvatt is called the seventh103 the other six have to be the Indus and the five Punjab rivers which find mention as her tributaries in the Vajasaneyi Samhita. 104 That this was so at the time of the advent of the Arabs in Sind and till some time later has been conclusively shown by Raverty105 in his exhaustively documented study of the "Mihran of Sind and its Tributaries." It is, therefore, quite safe to accept the equation of the Vedic Sarasvati with the Ghaggar as final.

It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that in the age of the Rgveda this mighty river flowed from the mountains right up to the ocean which tradition is preserved even in later literature. It was at some point of time between the composition of the nucleus of the Rgveda and the age of the Atharva Veda and the Brahmanas that something happened which led to the reduction in the flow and partial diversion of the waters of the Sarasvati. We come across in literature several stories, anecdotes or episodes containing veiled reference to the drying up of the Sarasvati and the nature of the event that led to this phenomenon.

The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa<sup>107</sup> records an incident when the Rṣi's expelled Kavaṣa Ailūṣa from a Soma sacrifice being performed on the Sarasvatī with the intention that he should die of thirst in the desert. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa<sup>108</sup> also contains a similar reference in the episode of another sacrifice performed by the gods in Kurukṣetra. There the gods are said to have declared that the ant who would gnaw the bow-string of Viṣṇu would be granted constant enjoyment of food and he would find water even in the desert. A similar story occurs in the Salya<sup>109</sup> Parva of the Mahābhārata. While travelling the three brothers Ekata, Dvita and Trita encounter a wolf. Trita runs along the Sarasvatī, and falls into a well. Abandoned by his brothers, he performs a mental sacrifice which attracts the attention of Bṛhaspati who brings the gods to the well. The river-goddess Sarasvatī shoots forth from the well and Trita is rescued. Evidently in the time to which these stories relate the Sarasvatī had ceased to be a perennial river and people had

started digging wells in its bed110 to tap the underground reserves of water which were replenished by the rainy season floods.

The death or drying up of the Sarasvats, named in the Puranas as the spouse of Nārāyana,111 is implied in the story of her quarrel with her co-wife Ganga in which both exchange curses leading to a pledge by the former to end her existence. 112 Ultimately, as decreed by Nārāyana, Sarasvatī is persuaded to stay on and only a small part of her self descends into the holy land of Bharata as Praci-Sarasvati. 113 This story would be easily seen to conceal a reference to the reduction in the flow of the holy river and the transfer of its name to another small stream on its east.

The Puranas114 describe the conveying of Agni-Vadavanala to the western ocean at the instance of God Brahmā by his daughter Sarasvatī who flowed underground and surfaced only when she felt exhausted on account of the unbearable heat.115 In one case this fire was created by Rşi Pippalada for destruction of gods who had utilised the bones of his father Dadhici for manufacturing weapons for killing the demons.116 Emerging from Plakya on the Himālaya, Sarasvati is obstructed on its way by a mountain wanting to marry her forcibly. Under the pretext of taking bath before the ceremony Sarasvati entrusts the fire to the mountain which is immediately burnt down by it.117 This is said to have happened in the Caksusa Manyantara. 118 Again in the Vaivasvata Manyantara the same fire is born as Aurvanala to a woman belonging to the tribe of the Bhrgus who were attacked and plundered by Ksatriyas. The woman was pregnant and escaped concealing the foctus in her thigh (Uru) which gave the name Aurvanaia to the fire that started consuming the earth immediately on its emergence. 119 According to another version the woman gave birth to Rsi Aurva who created the fire which was named after him. The fire created for destruction of the Haihaya Kşatriyas who had indulged in large-scale slaughter of the Bhrgus was however confined to the ocean by Sarasvati. 120 Sarasvati is said to have conveyed Aurvanala in a golden pitcher and taking its rise at Pippalādāśrama in the Himalayas it flowed westward reaching Kedara where it pierced the earth's crust to go underground burning with the fire in her hands. 121 It broke forth again at Bhūtiśvara after passing the evil region and then flowed towards Prabhāsa passing through Srikanthadeśa, Kurukşetra, Virāṭanagara, Gopāyanagiri, Kharjūrīvana, Mārkandāśrama and Arbudāranya122 etc. The Skanda Purana predicts the birth of another Vadavanala at the end of the current Manvantara 123 and thus implies a connection between Vadavanala and the Deluge that is traditionally associated with the end of a Manvantara.

Although the Vadavanala episode is related in several versions in different sources124 its essential features do not suffer any serious change. Some interesting points deserve special notice here. Firstly the river Sarasvatī which conveyed the fire to the western ocean flowed through the country of Kurukşetra which is specifically mentioned along with Śrīkanthadeśa which comprised its northern part125

and Virāṭanagara which lay to its southwest near Jaipur. <sup>126</sup> Secondly the Bhrgus, with whom Aurvānala is associated, occupied the lower or western part of Kurukṣetra in ancient times as the tradition of construction by Paraśurāma Bhārgava of five pools with the blood of the cruel Kṣatriyas at Rāmahrada, present Ram Rai near Jind, suggests. <sup>127</sup> Thirdly the text mentions the emergence of the burning Aurva after a violent eruption in Kurudeśa <sup>128</sup> which is most befitting because while the concealment of the foetus in or its birth from the thigh (Ūru) is obviously mythical the emergence of one of the Bhrgus, after lying low for some time in Kurudeśa, to avenge the slaughter of his people is most natural. The hoary antiquity and commonness of the venue of the two events is undoubtedly the only explanation of the introduction of the Bhrgus in the Vaḍavānala episode. And lastly the upheaval was volcanic in nature that engulfed Kurudeśa and the mountain range to its north and drastically tampered with the source and course of the Sarasvatī which flowed red with the rubble thrown up and carried down in the process.

All this finds expression in another form in the story of the Sarasvatī carrying bloody water 129 for a complete year 130 as a result of the curse of Viśvāmitra who felt annoyed on her failure to deliver Rsi Vasisha to him. Now significantly it was not the real Sarasvatī that flowed red with blood but her own other self named Aruṇā in the Mahābhārata 131 and Āgneyī earlier in the Rāmāyaṇa. 132 This Aruṇā has been identified with the present Rūn river 133 which was at one time a major tributary of the river Markanda which crosses the G.T. Road near the town of Shahbad in district Kurukṣetra about 19 km. from Ambala. 134 Markanda or Aruṇā was one of the rivers that gained from the diversion of Sarasvatī's waters and most probably it emerged in the process as an entirely new river. This is undoubtedly the meaning of another episode according to which Sarasvatī on being propitiated agreed to follow the Eternal Sage Mārkandeya 135 who had, with his own eyes, witnessed the Great Deluge in the age of Manu Vaivasvata. 136 This reference too clearly connects the diversion of Sarasvatī's waters with the Great Deluge.

The sequel to the Vasisthapavaha episode is also relevant here. Sarasvati, flowing red with blood, in her misery, complains to Vasistha about Viśvāmitra's curse. 137 The sage travels from Arbuda to her source Plakṣa and, much agitated against Viśvāmitra, goes into meditation repeating the Vāruṇa mantra while fixing his gaze on the ground. 138 As a result the earth is pierced at two points: from one gushes forth the Sarasvatī with water purified of the blood and from the other is born the Sāmbhramatī named after the Rṣi's Sambhrama or agitation against Viśvāmitra. 139 The Sarasvatī and the Sāmbhramatī in this episode undoubtedly refer to the Thanesar or Prācī-Sarasvatī and the Somb torrent with the old bed of which has been identified the Rgvedic Asmanvatī-Dṛṣadvatī, 140 reSanskritised into Sāmbhramatī in the medieval age. 141 The two have their sources close to each other

in the lower Shiwaliks above Adbadri. The Thanesar Sarasvatt and the Sambhramati or the present Somb torrent meeting the Western Jumna Canal at Dadupur Canal works were thus the other rivers that shared Sarasvati's diverted waters, a large portion of which probably started flowing eastward into the Yamuna also through rivers like the Giri. That is why the Aruna-Markanda remained only a rainy season torrent and with the increase in the importance of the town of Sthanviśvara, now also called Kuruksetra, the name Sarasvati was appropriated by the insignificant stream flowing by its side as the name Praci Sarasvati shows.

The event, probably a large-scale tectonic-seismic-volcanic upheaval, rightly described as the Deluge, was indeed so gigantic in proportions that it wrought serious changes in the topography of the Shiwaliks between the Yamuna and the Ravi and affected the whole of the region along the Sarasvatt lying between the Himalayas beyond Nahan on one side and the Rajasthan desert on the other. That this event led to the disappearance of the Sarasvatt is specifically implied in the statement that the river vanished underground on account of the Vadavanala142 which it was made to carry to the ocean.

The episode of destruction of the Kraunca mountain by god Karttikeya reflects the volcanic aspect of the upheaval. According to the Mahabharata143 the gods led by Brahmā brought Kārttikeya to the holy Sarasvatı and annointed him as the Commander of their army. There in the fight against the Daityas Kārttikeya rent assunder, with the sakti given by Agni, the Kraunca mountain sheltered on which the demon Bana, son of Bali, tormented the gods. The involvement of fire in the destruction of the Krauñca mountain near the Sarasvatī river clearly points to volcanic eruption in the hilly tract about the upper reaches of the river.

The story of Tripuradaha by god Śiva144 also appears to rise from the same background. Here the firy missile shot by the great god burns down Tripura with all its Asura population and dumps it into the Western Ocean.145 It was the Sarasvatī that provided the track for his chariot. 146 The great magnitude of destruction is implied in the suggestion that Tripura actually represented not one but a complex of three prosperous Asura cities.147

Yet another episode in the Mahabharata,148 in which the Great Deluge appears to find an echo, is that of sage Utathya who drinks off the entire water of the ocean on Varuna's refusal to return his bride Bhadra whom the god had forcibly abducted. The country is reduced to a desert and Utathya asks the Sarasvatt to go invisible into it so that, forsaken by her, it becomes inauspicious.

There is therefore sufficient evidence to justify the conclusion that according to traditional belief it was the Great Deluge that led to the disappearance about Kalibangan in the sands of Rajasthan, of the Rgvedic Sarasvati represented by the present Ghaggar river, as a result of diversion of its waters and loss of its catchment area

We are now in a position to draw upon the testimony of archaeology to substantiate this traditional belief in the occurrence of the Great Deluge. Let us refer to the excavations at the Pre-Harappan/Harappan site of Kalibangan or Vinasana carried out by a very competent team consisting of senior officers of the Archaeological Survey of India including J.P. Joshi and led by B.K. Thapar and B.B. Lal. 149 In his remarks on the end of the Pre-Harappan or Period I Kalibangan settlement Prof. Lal 150 says that at several places in the trenches was observed cleavage-cum-displacement of the strata and walls, which evidently was the result of some earth movement. He considers it most likely that the site was deserted because of an earthquake. Also in his view the occupation of Period II did not come into being immediately after the end of Period I but about 200 years later. Thapar 151 also subscribes to this view and adds that during the time the site remained abandoned a thin layer of sand, largely infertile and wind-blown accumulated over the ruins.

No more observations upon the extent or intensity of the seismic activity that destroyed the Pre-Harappan phase of Kalibangan are available but whatever has been said is enough to justify the conclusion that it came in the form of a catastrophic earthquake probably accompanied by strong volcanic eruptions, that rendered the country uninhabitable for several centuries and must inevitably have involved terrible damage to life and property. Nor is there any reason to believe that its impact was confined to the region of Kalibangan. Prof. Lal himself admits elsewhere152 the possibility of a tectonic movement involving the divide between the Indus and Ganga systems and accounting for the drying up of the Ghaggar as a result of the diversion of some of its tributaries to the Yamuna as well as for the discovery of the water-laid deposits of Ochre Ware preceding the painted Grey Ware at the archaeological sites like Hastinapura, Ahicchatra, Bahadarabad, Nasirpur, Jhinjhina and Atranjikhera in the Ganga basin. However instead of identifying this tectonic movement with the seismic activity that hit the Pre-Harappan Kalibangan around B.C. 3000 as indicated by available evidence he confines it to the region of the source of these rivers where the Ghaggar and Yamuna basins come close to each other and places it about the first half of the second millennium B.C. so as to synchronise with the desertion of the site of Harappan Kalibangan as a result of the drying up of the Ghaggar and with the supposed later date of the Ganga basin O.C.W. sites. It looks rather improbable that a tectonic movement involving the expansive divide between the Indus and the Ganga systems should have been confined only to the region of their sources. It is also to be remembered that literary evidence supports a fierce seismic-tectonicvolcanic activity extensively involving the long course of the river Sarasvati and its valley and not the Ganga system which hasn't thrown up any positive proof of widespread seismic upheaval like the one that destroyed Pre-Harappan Kalibangan. Neither are the courses of the Ganga and the Yamuna reported to have suffered any major changes at any stage in their known history.

Wheeler's sensational theory of destruction of Harappa and Mohenjodaro by the savage Aryan hordes of India is no more taken seriously.<sup>153</sup> It was indeed as far back as in 1940 that M.R. Sahni noticed silt deposits perched many feet above the level of the Indus plain near the city of Hyderabad and suggested the destruction of these cities as a result of serious floods caused by major tectonic upheavals.154 His view gathered support in only 1960 when a field party of the Pennsylvania University Museum undertook an archaeological survey of the Arabian coast of West Pakistan and discovered settlements of the Harappan era that had clearly been seaports but were now located as far as thirty miles inland showing clearly that the coast-line has risen considerably during the past 4000 years, with the initial rise apparently having occurred during the Harappan period. 155 It is interesting to note that in his extensive surveys conducted in the same year in southern Baluchistan and the lower Indus Raikes 156 also reports a marked coastal uplift along the northern flank of the Arabian sea about the Harappan times which according to him, might have been more extensive so as to cover even the Indus Valley. Raikes137 asserts that the uplift, accompanied by more or less violent earthquake shocks, would not only have caused destruction of cities and settlements but would have disrupted the system of river and coast-wise communication on which the commercial life of the culture must have largely depended. And this event, as he pertinently observes, 158 may have occurred hundreds of thousands of years ago or merely a few thousand years, and it must be admitted that some of the geologists consulted on the subject tend to think in terms of hundreds of thousands of years which he ascribes to a certain reluctance on their part to consider anything more recent than 20,000 years old as geology. The view of Raikes is supported by a number of scholars 159 and this makes it quite safe to accept the possibility of the occurrence of this event around 3000 B.C. 160

Although Raikes suspects Sehwan, some 90 miles down-stream from Mohenjodaro, to be the most probable area of tectonic disturbance Lambrick believes 161 that an avulsion and major change of course by the Indus took place considerably upstream of Mohenjodaro. On the other hand geological evidence of large-scale rock-faulting in the region 162 justifies the suggestion that these earthmovements also embraced the region further north-east to the Simla foothills across the Thar and the Indo-Gangetic divide163 and upraised the entire bed of the Sarasvati and the floor of the sea of its confluence.164 They might indeed be even more widespread because Sir Leonard Woolley165 also found at Ur in Mesopotamia indubitable proof of a flood which must have engulfed all the cities in the delta sometime before B.C. 3000. The significance of the synchronism and of the identical nature of the event can hardly be overemphasised and it is no more possible to dismiss the story of the Great Deluge as a myth now that its literary evidence finds full support in the concrete testimony of independent archaeological discoveries at different places.

### 34 Ancient Kuruksetra

The dating of the event agrees well with literary evidence as well as the testimony of Kalibangan. It is in the Atharvaveda that we meet with the first inklings of the occurrence of the Great Deluge in the mention of the term Nāvaprabhramśana which signifies the place of Manu's landing (abandoning the ship) called Manoravasarpana in the Satapatha Brāhmana<sup>167</sup> and Naubandhana in later<sup>168</sup> literature. As already observed the Great Deluge apparently took place at some time between the composition of the nucleus of the Rgveda and the composition of the Atharvaveda and the Brāhmanas. The generally accepted dating of the Rgveda to 2500 B.C. by Winternitz, <sup>169</sup> is not far removed from 3000 B.C. and one cannot afford to be dogmatic on this point. If a landmark is available the difference of 500 yrs. becomes meaningless in case of probable dating of the events of hoary antiquity and for works the composition of which undoubtedly stretched over long periods of time.

At Kalibangan the following dates have been assigned to the two excavated levels of settlements by Lal and Thapar on the basis of C14 readings:

4 3 5 110	Uncorrected	Corrected after Dales <sup>170</sup>	Corrected after Ralph Michael and Han <sup>171</sup>
ASTURBLE OF	Per	iod I—Pre-Harappan	AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTY.
Lal	2400-2250	2950-2800	2930/2960-2700/2820
Thapar	2450-2300	3000-2850	2970/2990-2850/2870
	1	eriod II—Harappan	
Lal	2200-1700	2700-1900	2630/2670-2060
Thapar	2300-1750	2850-1950	2850/2870-2110

Keeping in view the fact that the C<sup>14</sup> dating method is not yet considered entirely fool-proof<sup>172</sup> one need not be too rigid about these date-brackets. However even if they are taken at their face value one can safely place the end of the Pre-Harappan phase at Kalibangan around 3000 B.C. at the latest<sup>173</sup> as a result of the Great Deluge that took place in the time of Manu Vaivasvata.<sup>174</sup>

The combined effect of all this evidence makes it appear most probable that the earth movements postulated by Lal and Raikes were caused during the same fierce seismic-tectonic-volcanic upheaval which is known in literature as the Great Deluge that wrought extensive changes in the topography of the Shiwalik belt between the Yamunā and Ravi resulting in the diversion of the waters of the Revedic Sarasvati or Ghaggar about 3000 B.C. and leading to its ultimate drying up around Vinasana in the sands of Bikaner.

It must be noted however that the source of the Sarasvatt-Ghaggar shifted down to Plakşa-Prāsravaṇa or Lavasa Pachhad as a result of the Great Deluge before the compilation of the Atharvaveda where Manu's escape from the 'Flood' is first mentioned.<sup>175</sup> In the Rgvedic age the source lay above the permanent snow-line in the Himalayan glaciers which is evident from the description of the Sarasvatī as the mightiest of rivers. This original source is now feeding the sub-terranean flow beneath the Ghaggar.<sup>176</sup> The event is vividly described in the Skanda Purāṇa<sup>177</sup> in a tradition which is undoubtedly of great antiquity.

#### Notes and References

- See Darian Steven, Ganga and Sarasvati—An Incidence of Mythological Projection, East And West, New Series, Vol. 26, No. 3-4 (Sept.-Dec. 1976), pp. 153-166.
- 2. 57.30 (ii).....

# सर्वाः पुण्याः सरस्वत्यः सर्वाः गङ्गाः समुद्रगाः ॥

- Cr. ed. Salya, 37 3-28; Also see Vamana Purana, Cr. ed. Varanasi 1968, Saromahatmya, 16.17-38 and 36. 54.
- Hillebrandt Alfred, Vedic Mythology, Two vols., Delhi 1981, Vol. II, p. 210 and Vedic Index, 3rd Reprint, Delhi 1967, Vol. II, pp. 434 and 437.
- 5. It takes its rise on Mount Abu, traverses the contiguous forest (अर्बुदारण्य) and flows past Patan into the Rann of Cutch. It finds mention in Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsa Khanḍa, XXXV. 38. and a grant of Mūlarāja Chaulukya in the tenth century A.D. Vide Indian Antiquary VI, p. 192.
- For a fresh examination of the question of Aryan origins see Sethna K.D., The Problem of Aryan Origins, Calcutta 1980.
- 7. Cf. Bharadwaj, O.P., Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India, Delhi 1986, pp. 176-191.
- 8. Agrawal V.S., India as Known to Pāṇini, 2nd edn., Varanasi 1963, p. 74.
- 9. Tayler Isaac, The Origin of the Aryans, Reprint, Delhi 1980, pp. 184-186.
- 9a. Agrawala V.S., Bharata Ki Maulika Ekata (Hindi), Allahabad V.S. 2011, p. 30f. Also Tola Fernando and Dragonetti Carmen, India and Greece before Alexander, A.B.O.R.I. Vol. LXVII (Prts i-iv) 1986, pp. 159-194, esp. p. 164.
- 10. Vedic Index, II. 364.
- 11. Shastri K.D., The Ganapatha ascribed to Panini, Kurukşetra 1967, p. 209.
- Ganaratnamahodadhi of Vardhamāna, Ed. Eggeling Julius, Reprint, Delhi 1963, IV. 300, com. and n. 7, p. 338 f. Alternate readings Saryānā and Sāryāna are also available.
- 13. See Bharadwaj, op. cit., pp. 180-181.

- 14. It embraced the tract lying between 28°.30' and 30°. N by 75°.45' and 76°.30'E. chiefly comprising the eastern half of Hisar district, part of Rohtak district and parts of the states of Jind and Patiala. Vide Imperial Gazetteer of India, Oxford 1908, Vol. XXIII, p. 418.
- 15. Cf. Woolner A.C., Introduction to Prakrit, Lahore 1939, p. 17.
- 16. Vol. XXII, p. 97.
- 17. Ed. Parab K.P., Bombay 1912, p. 102.
- 18. Ibid., p. 170.
- 19. Ibid., p. 168.
- 20. Ibid., p. 203.
- 21. Cr. ed. See Tirthayatraparva in Vanaparva, particularly chs. 80-84.
- 22. Salya, 42.4.
- 23. Harşacarita, Ch. III, p. 97.
- Matsya Purana, 13.31; Padma Purana, Srsti Khanda, 17. 195; and Nilamata Purana, Ed. Vreese K.De., Leiden 1936, verse 1054.
- 25. See Bharadwaj, op. cit., p. 182.
- 26. I. 112.15.
- Cr. Ed. Vol. II, ed. Vaidya P.L., Oriental Institute, Baroda 1962, Ayodhyā, 65.1-10.
- 28. Op. cit., pp. 74-87.
- Pehowa Inscription of Imperial Pratihâra Dynasty, Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I, p. 187, 11. 14-15.
- 30. Sm. 21.19:

स्नात्वा गुद्धिमवाप्नोति यत्र प्राची सरस्वतो । देवमार्गप्रतिष्ठा या देवमार्गेण निःसृता ॥

31. Gita Press ed. 4.19.1:

अथादीक्षत राजा तु हयमेधशतेन सः। ब्रह्मावर्ते मनोः क्षेत्रे यत्र प्राची सरस्वतो ॥

- 32. Indian Antiquary VI, p. 192.
- 33. Padma Purana, Srsti Khanda, 18. 220-221:

पुष्करारण्यमासाद्य प्राची यत्र सरस्वती।
मितः स्मृतिः शुभा प्रज्ञा मेधाबुद्धिदंया परा।।
सरस्वत्यास्तु पर्यायाष्यडेते संप्रकीर्तिताः।
ततः प्रभृति यत्रासौ प्राचीभूता सरस्वती।।

- 34. Studies in Indian Antiquities, Calcutta 1958, p. 129.
- 35. Ayodhyā, 62. 10. ff.
- 36. For identification see Bharadwaj, O.P., op. cit., p. 91. It is situated 77°.18'E by 30°.18'N. on the Mulana-Chhachhrauli road in Ambala district.

37. Kathāsaritsāgara, 40.42:

अभूच्छ्रीकण्ठनिलये विलासपुरनामनि । पुरे विनयशीलाख्यो नाम्नान्वर्थेन भूपतिः ॥

- 38. Bhargava P.L., The Geography of Rgvedic India, Lucknow 1964, pp. 72, 100.
- 39. Ram. Ayodhya, 65.3; For identification sec Bharadwaj, op. cit., p. 76 f.

40. Sirmur Gazetteer, Shimla 1969, p. 11.

41. Cf. Ram Gopal, India of the Vedic Kalpasūtras, Delhi 1959, p. 95 f.

 This is evident from the following verse quoted by Kāśikā-vṛtti on Pāṇini iv.1.73, Vaijayantī Kośa 1.31. 38-39 and Candravṛtti on Candravyākaraṇa 2.4.103:

> उदुम्बरास्तिलखला मद्रकारा युगन्धराः। भूलिगाः शरदण्डाश्च साल्वावयवसंज्ञिताः॥

 The verse is quoted by Kāśikā on Pāņini 1.11.75, Kṣīrasvāmin's commentary on Amarakośa 2.1.6-7 and Haradatta on Āpastamba Dharmasūtra 2.7.17.17:

> प्रागुदञ्चौ विभजते हंसः क्षोरोदके यथा। विदुषां शब्दसिद्धयर्थं सानः पातु शरावती॥

44. Ed. Sharma Haradutt, Pune 1941, ii. 7-8:

लोकोऽयं भारतं वर्षं शरावत्यास्तु योऽवधेः। देशः प्राग् दक्षिणः प्राच्य उदीच्यः पश्चिमोत्तरः।।

- 45. Kāvyamīmārhsā, Ed. Sharma Kedaranath, Patna 1954, Ch. 17, p. 227.
- 46. See Kane P.V., History of Dharmasastra, Vol. I, p. 351.

47. Sm., 11.23:

प्रत्युवाच महात्मानं मार्कण्डेयं महामुनिम्। यत्र त्वं नेष्यसे वित्र तत्र यास्याम्यतन्द्रिता।।

48. Śalya, 42.24: (ii)

अरुणामानयामास स्वां तनुं भरतर्षभ।

49. Ayodhya, 62.12A:

अजकूलां ततः प्राप्य बोधीनां नगरं ययुः। पितृपैतामहीं पुण्यां तेरुरिक्षुमतीं नदीम्।।

- 50. Bharadwaj, op. cit., p. 93 ff.
- 51. Adi., 3.141:

कुरक्षेत्रं च वसतां नदीमिक्षुमतीमनु । जघन्यजस्तक्षकस्य श्रुतसेनेति यः श्रुतः ॥  Ojha Gauri Shanker Hira Chand, Ojha Nibandha Sangraha (Hindi), Vol. 1, Udaipur 1954, p. 25.

 Mentioned under Păņini iv. 2.80. See Agrawal V.S., 1963, p. 74 and Mbh. Sabhā, 32.6;

> शैरीषकं महेत्थं च वशे चके महाद्युति:। आकोशं चैव राजिं तेन युद्धमभून्महत्॥

- Whitehead R.B., 'The River Courses of Punjab and Sind,' Indian Antiquary, 61 (1932), pp. 163-169, esp. p. 164.
- 55. Ibid.

56. Vide Gujarati Press edn. of Ram., Vol. II, p. 803.

 Apte V.S., The Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 3rd ed. Bombay 1924, p. 661, col. ii.

58. It is called Brahmanadi; See Bhagavata Purana, 1.7.2 and 9.16.23.

59. Vāmana Purāņa, 23.13:

तत्र देवीं ददर्शाथ पुण्यां पापविमोचिनीम्। प्लक्षजां ब्रह्मणः पुत्रीं हरिजिह्वां सरस्वतीम्।।

and Mbh. Santi, 121.24:

तथोक्ता ब्रह्मकन्येति लक्ष्मीर्वृत्तिः सरस्वती। दण्डनीतिर्जगद्धात्री दण्डो हि बहुविग्रहः॥

60. Devibhāgavata Purāņa, 2.9.6.17:

लक्ष्मीः सरस्वती गङ्गा तिस्रो भार्या हरेरपि। प्रेम्णा समास्तास्तिष्ठन्ति सततं हरिसन्निधौ॥

61. Vāmana Purāna, 23.44 (i)

पूर्वं नदीयं प्रिपतामहेन सृष्टा समं भूतगणैः समस्तैः ।। Note the use of प्रिपतामह an exact equivalent of पितृपितामह Mbh. Anusasana, 134.15 calls it the first among rivers:

एषा सरस्वती पुण्या नदीनामुत्तमा नदी। प्रथमा सर्वेसरितां नदी सागरगामिनी।।

62. Monier-Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p. 166, col. i.

63. Skanda Purāņa, Prabhāsa Khanda, Venkateshwar Press ed. 17.53:

समाहूय ततो देवीं स्वां सुतां पद्मसंभवः। उवाच पुत्रि गच्छ त्वं गृहीत्वाग्निं महोदिधम्।

64. Bharadwaj. op. cit., p. 91.

- 65. Ibid., p. 76.
- 66. Cf. Raychaudhuri, H.C., op. cit., p. 134 f; Oldham C.F., 'The Sarasvati and the Lost River of the Indian Desert, J.R.A.S. 1893 (Series 3 vol. 25), pp. 49-76, esp. p. 51 and Indras, The Lost Sarasvati, Vallabh Vidyanagar 1967, p. 102 n. and p. 138 ff.
- 67. For identification of Vinasana with Kalibangan, Bharadwai, op. cit., pp. 20-43.
- 68. Bhargava (op. cit., p. 57) places it below Manaktheri near Badopal and rightly identifies the Drsadvati with the old bed now occupied by the Hansi-Hisar branch of the Western Jumna Canal. Also n. 102 infra.
- 69. Ibid., p. 79.
- 70. Dey, Nando Lal, The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India, third edn. Delhi 1971, p. 88.
- 71. VII. 95.2: यती गिरिभ्य आ समदात ।
- अमश्चरति रोरुवत । 72. VI. 61.8:
- सान गिरीणां तविषेभिरूमिभिः 73. VI. 61.2:
- आपप्रधी पार्थिबान्युरु रजो अन्तरिक्षम । 74. VI. 61.11:
- उत्तरा (सखीभ्यः)। 75. VII. 95.4:
- महिना सिन्ध्रन्याः। 76. VII. 95.1:
- द्य म्नेभिरन्याः। 77. VI. 61.13:
- घोरा । 78. VI. 61.7:
- अपसामपस्तमा । 79. VI. 61.13:
- असूर्या नदोनाम। 80. VII. 96.1:
- 81. ii. 41.16: नदीतमे ।
- 82. Ibid., अम्बतमे ।
- 83. Ibid., देवीतमे ।
- 84. Oldham, op. cit., p. 63.
- Ambala District Gazetteer, Chandigarh 1984, p. 111.
- 86. RV. vii. 95.4: राया युजा।
- 87. RV, vi. 61.7: हिरण्यवतिनि: 1
- 88. RV, vi. 61.3: वाजेभिर्वाजिनीवती ।
- 89. RV. vii. 95.2: रायश्चतन्ती भूवनस्य भूरे: ।
- 90. Vedic Index, Vol. II, p. 55.
- 91. Cambridge History of India, Vol. I, 3rd Indian Reprint, Delhi 1968, p. 105.
- 92. Bharadwaj, op. cit., pp. 8-19.
- 93. Ibid., pp. 20-43.
- 94. पूषा विष्णृहंवनं मे सरस्वत्यवन्तु सप्त सिन्धवः। आपो वातः पर्वतासो वनस्पतिः शुणोत् पथिवी हवम ॥

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- 95. उत नः प्रिया प्रियासु सप्तस्वसा सुजुष्टा । सरस्वती स्तोम्या भूत् । विषधस्था सप्तधातुः पञ्च जाता वर्धयन्ती । वाजे वाजे हव्या भूत् ।
- 96. RV, vii. 36.6:

## आ यत् साकं यशसो वावशानाः सरस्वती सप्तथी सिन्धुमाता।

- 97. Also called Asmanvati; both names denote literally a river 'full of stones' or 'bringing down stones.'
- 98. iii. 23.4.
- 99. Pañcavimisa Brāhmana, xxv. 10; Āśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra, vi. 6; Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra, xxiv-5; Sāńkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, xiii. 29; Lāṭyāyana Śrauta Sūtra, x. 15 and Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra, I. 1.2. etc.
- 100. Vana, 81.175.
- Vāmana Purāna, 1.1; Manusmṛti II. 17. gives it the name of Brahmāvarta.
- 102. Dṛṣadvatī has been identified with Somb torrent and the old bed now occupied by the Western Jumna Canal. Vide Bharadwaj, O.P., The Rgvedic Dṛṣadvatī, Paper presented at the XXXII, ICANAS, Hamburg 1986.
- 103. RV, vii. 36.6, See supra n. 96.
- 104. XXXIV. 11:
- J.A.S.O.B. Vol. LXI, Prt. I, Extra No. 1892, pp. 471-3 and 475 f. First part of the article appeared in J.A.S.O.B. Vol. LXI, Prt. I, No. III-1892, pp. 155-297.
- 106. Cf. Mbh. Anuśāsana, 134.15, See supra n. 61.
- 107. ii. 19, Also Śāńkhāyana Brāhmaņa, xii. 3.
- 108. XIV. 1.1.8.
- 109. 35. 7-51.
- 110. The story specifically places the well in the river bed: Mbh. Salya, 35.53:

उदपानं च तं दृष्ट्वा प्रशस्य च पुनः पुनः। नदीगतमदीनात्मा प्राप्तो विनशनं तदा।।

111. See for instance Brahmavaivarta Purăņa, ii. ch. 6.17(i):

लक्ष्मी: सरस्वती गङ्गा तिस्रो भार्या हरेरपि।

It is identical with Devibhagavata, 2.9.6.17 which has been quoted above under n. 60.

- 112. Ibid., 70-71.
- 113. Ibid., ii. 7.1:

पुण्यक्षेत्रे ह्याजगाम भारते सा सरस्वती। गंगाशापेन कलया स्वयं तस्थौ हरेः पदम्।।

Skanda Purāņa, Prabhāsa Khanda, 17.53, See n. 63 supra.
 Also Padma Purāņa, Srsti Khanda, 18.198.

- Skanda Purāņa, Prabhāsa Khanda, 33.44; Also cf. Dave, S.K., The Sarasvati Purāņa, Purāņa, Vol. X, No. 1, Jan. 1968, p. 74.
- 116. Skanda Purāna, Prabhāsa Khanda, ch. 32.
- 117. Ibid., 33.89.
- 118. Ibid., 35.34.
- 119. Ibid., 35.6.
- 120. Ibid., 34.36.
- 121. Ibid., 35. 21-26.
- 122. Ibtd., 35. 30-41.
- 123. Ibid., 35.14.
- See Chitrav Siddheshvara Shastri, Prācīna Caritra Kośa (Hindi), Pune 1964,
   p. 105.
- 125. Its capital was Bilaspur 33 miles north-west of Saharanpur on the road to Ambala, see Dey, op cit., p. 191.
- 126. Ibid., p. 38.
- 127. Bhargava, op. cit., p. 93.
- 128. Skanda Purāņa, Prabhāsa, 35.5:

# कालान्तरे ततो भित्त्वा कुरुदेशं महाप्रभः। निर्गतोत्तांभितशिरा ज्वलदास्योऽतिभीषणः॥

- 129. Ibid., Nagara Khanda, 175.13.
- 130. Vāmana Purāņa, Sm., 19.22.
- 131. Śalya, 42.24 (ii), See n. 48 supra.
- 132. See supra.
- 133. Bharadwaj, op. cit., p. 76 f.
- 134. Ambala District Gazetteer, Lahore 1893, p. 6.
- 135. Vāmana Purāņa, Sm., 11.23, See n. 47 supra.
- 136. Mbh. Vana, chs. 186-187, and Bhagavata Purana, xii. 8-9.
- 137. Skanda Purāņa, Nāgara Khanda, 173.
- 138. Ibid., 9-10:

एवमुक्त्वा स विप्रणिरवतीयं धरातले। गतः प्लक्षतरुं यस्मादवतीर्णा सरस्वती।। समाधिं तत्र संघाय निविष्टो धरणीतले। संभ्रमं परमं गत्वा विश्वामित्रस्यचोपरि।।

139. Ibid., 12 and 14:

रन्ध्रद्वयेन विप्रेन्द्रा लोचनाभ्यां निरीक्षणात्। एकस्य सलिलं क्षिप्रं यत्र जाता सरस्वती।। द्वितीयस्तु प्रवाहो यः संभ्रमात्तस्य निर्गतः। सा च सांभ्रमतीनाम नदी जाता धरातले।।

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- Bharadwaj, O.P., Identification of the Rgvedic Drsadvati, Paper presented at the XXXII, ICANAS Hamburg 1986.

141. Bharadwaj, Studies, p. 178.

142. Padma Purāņa, Sṛṣṭi Khanda, 18.198.

143. Mbh. Salya, 43.50, 51:

ततः कुमारमादाय देवा ब्रह्मपुरोगमाः। अभिषेकार्थमाजग्मुः शैलेन्द्रं सहितास्ततः। पुण्यां हैमवतीं देवीं सरिच्छ्रेष्ठां सरस्वतीम्। समन्तपञ्चके या वै त्रिषु लोकेषु विश्रुता।।

and 45.71-73:

वाणो नामाथ दैतेयो बलेः पुत्रो महाबलः । कौञ्चं पर्वतमासाद्य देवसंधानबाधत ॥ तमभ्ययान्महासेनः सुरशत्रुमुदारधीः । स कार्त्तिकेयस्य भयात्कौञ्चं शरणमेयिवान् ॥ ततः कौञ्चं महामन्युः कौञ्चनादनिनादितम् । शक्त्या विभेद भगवान्कार्त्तिकेयोऽग्निदत्त्त्या ॥

144. Mbh. Karna, Ch. 24.

145. Ibid., v. 120:

त्रैलोक्यसारं तिमणुं मुमोच त्रिपुरं प्रति । तत्सासुरगणं दग्ध्वा प्राक्षिपत्पश्चिमाणैंवे ॥

146. Ibid., v. 75:

कमं सत्यं तपोऽर्थश्च विहितास्तत्र रश्मयः। अधिष्ठानं मनस्त्वासीत्परिरथ्यं सरस्वती॥

147. Ibid., v. 14:

ततो मयः स्वतपसा चक्रे धीमान्पुराणि ह। त्रीणि काञ्चनमेकं तुरौप्यं कार्ष्णायसं तथा।

148. Anuśasana, 139. 22-26.

149. For excavation notes see Indian Archaeology, 1961-62, p. 39; 1962-63, p. 20 ff; and 1963-64, p. 30 ff.

 Kalibangan's Contribution to the Understanding of the Indus Civilization, I.I.A.S. Shimla, November 2-7, 1977.

 South Asian Archaeology, Ed. Hammond Norman, London 1973, p. 85 ff. and Ancient Cities of the Indus, Ed. Possehl, Delhi 1979, pp. 196-203.

- 152. 'A Deluge? Which Deluge? Yet another Facet of Problem of the Copper Hoard Culture,' American Anthropologist, Vol. 70, 1968, pp. 857-863; Abstracts produced in Puratattva No. 5, 1971-72, pp. 101-104. For opposition to the possibility of a deluge in the Ganga O.C.W. times see Sharma R.P. in Ecology and Archaeology of Western India, Delhi 1977, pp. 75-77. Shri Aggarwal, R.C. Director, Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan (Retd.) informs us that O.C.W. sites in Rajasthan have been dated to 3000 B.C.
- 153. Cf. Raikes Robert L., The End of the Ancient Cities of the Indus, reproduced in Possehl, op. cit., p. 298.
- 154. Dales George F., The Decline of the Harappans, reproduced in Possehl, op. cit., p. 309.
- 155. Ibid.
- 156. Op. cit., p. 302.
- 157. Ibid., p. 304.
- 158. Ibid., p. 302.
- 159. Ibid.
- 160. Dales, op. cit., p. 309.
- 161. "The Indus Flood Plain and the Indus Civilization" reproduced in Possehl, p. 321.
- 162. Dales, op. cit., p. 309.
- 163. Suraj Bhan, Journal of Harvana Studies, Jan. 1969, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 10.
- 164. Indras, op. cit., Preface, p. iii., His dating of the event around 1500 B.C. is untenable. Rao S.R. assigns the Flood to 1900 B.C., without giving any details of the evidence in support of his view. See The Decipherment of the Indus Script, Delhi 1982, p. 306.
- 165. Ur Excavations, The Early Period, 1958, p. 18.
- 166. XIX. 39.8.
- 167. i.8.1.
- 168. Mbh. Vana, 185.47. and Nilamata Purana, Verses 40, 41, 164 and 178.
- 169. Some Problems of Indian Literature, Reprint, Delhi 1977, p. 20.
- 170, 1975, p. 102 ff. and 1979, p. 332 ff.
- Ralph. E.K., Michael H.N. and Han M., in Possehl, pp. 339-42, Table 4.
- 172. Ibid., p. 339. One of the basic assumptions of C14 method, namely the constancy of the atmosphere inventory of C14, O2, is not strictly valid. For various reasons it has fluctuated during past times. Also cf. Ward Anne, Adventures in Archaeology, London 1977, p. 15.
- 173. The contention of Indras (op. cit., p. 52.) that the decay of the Sarasyati had already set in before the advent of the Vedic people is unwarranted.
- 174. Manu Vaivasvata has been assigned to 4000 B.C. by Law N.N., (Age of the Rgveda, Calcutta 1965, p. 143) and to 3000 B.C. by Bhargava P.L., (India in the Vedic Age, Lucknow 1956, p. 133) and Pusalkar A.D., (The Vedic Age,

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London 1951, p. 269) who calculated it to 3110 B.C. The date 3000 B.C. which closely approaches the traditional beginning of the Kali age in 3102 B.C. would appear to be more reasonable.

175. See Bharadwaj, op. cit., pp. 1-7.

 Prasher, R.N., The Subterranean Sarasvati, Haryana Sahitya Akademi, Journal of Indological Studies, Vol. III, Nos. 1-2, Spring 1988, pp. 301-305.

177. Skanda, Prabhāsa, i. 35.21 and 24-26.

एवमुक्ता तदा तेन ब्रह्मणा च सरस्वती। हिमवन्तं गिरिं प्राप्य पिप्पलादाश्रमात्तदा ॥ तस्मात्स्थानात्ततो देवी प्रतीच्यिभमुखं ययौ । अन्तर्धानेन सा प्राप्ता केदारं हिममध्यगम् ॥ तत्संप्लाव्यगिरेः शृंगं केदारस्य पुरः स्थिता ॥ तेनाग्निना करस्थेन दह्ममाना सरस्वतो ॥ भूमि विदार्यं तस्याधः प्रविष्टा गजगामिनी ॥ तदन्तर्धानमार्गेण प्रवृत्ता पश्चिमा मुखी ॥

## THE RGVEDIC DRSADVATI

Two of the river names mentioned in the Rgveda appear to refer to one and the same river. One is Asmanvati and the other Drsadvati. Literally both names mean 'stony,' signifying a river 'full of stones' or 'bringing down lots of stones.' Asmanvati finds mention in Rgveda X.53.8:

अश्मन्वती रीयते सं रभध्वमुत्तिष्ठत प्र तरता सखायः । अत्रा जहाम ये असन्नशेवाः शिवान्वयमुत्तरेमाभि वाजान् ॥

Sāyana1 comments:

... अश्मन्वती नाम नदी रीयते गच्छति । .. ताम् यज्ञगमनाय उत्तरीतुम उत्तरिकत उद्गच्छत । तथा कृत्वा प्र तरत ताम् नदीमुल्लङ्घयत । हे सखायः यजमानस्य सिखभूता इति देवानां सम्बोधनम् । अत्र अस्यां नद्यां जहाम परित्यजाम । कानिति उच्यते । ये अशेवाः । शेविमिति सुखनाम । ये असुखभूताः असन् अभवन् अस्मान् आश्चित्य वर्तन्ते तान् जहाम । तथा कृत्वा शिवान् सुखकराणि वाजान् अन्नानि हवींषि अभिप्राप्तुम् उत्तरेम् ।

Griffith<sup>2</sup> translates: Here flows Asmanvati: hold fast each other, keep yourselves up, and pass, my friends, the river. There let us leave the powers that brought no profit, and cross the flood to powers that are auspicious.

Dṛṣadvatī appears in Rgveda III. 23.4:

नि त्वा दधे वर आ पृथिव्या इलायास्पदे सुदिनत्वे अह्नाम् । दृषद्वत्यां मानुष आपयायां सरस्वत्यां रेवदग्ने दिदीहि ॥ Griffith<sup>3</sup> translates: He set thee in the earth's most lovely station, in Ilāś place in days of fair bright weather. On Man, on Āpayā, Agni on the rivers Dṛṣadvatī, Sarasvatī, shine richly.

Griffith has erred in translating 'Mānuṣa' as 'Man.' Like Āpayā, Dṛṣadvatī and Sarasvatī Mānuṣa too is obviously one of the spots where the Bharata princes set the sacrificial fire. <sup>3a</sup> It has been rightly identified with the lake called Mānuṣa in later literature<sup>4</sup> and now represented by a huge reservoir of water eight/ten kms. to the west of Kaithal near the village which has adopted its name.<sup>5</sup>

M.L. Bhargava<sup>6</sup> is of the view that the Asmanvati cannot be identical with the Dṛṣadvati since according to him in Rgveda X. 53.8, reproduced above, one side of the river is described as inauspicious and bringing no gains while the other is shown as the reverse of it, which is not the case with the Dṛṣadvati. However, the commentary of Sāyaṇa and the translation of Griffith reproduced above do not warrant this inference.

Waters generally and of rivers particularly are considered purifying in Sanskrit Literature. In the Rgveda (VII. 49.1) they are specifically called 'Punānāḥ.' The river name Aśmanvatī also occurs in two mantras of the Atharvaveda (XII. 2.26-27) which are virtually reproductions of Rgveda X.53.8. The verses are taken as addressed to a group of persons who are wading through the river after performing a funeral ceremony. The custom of taking a purifying bath after performing a funeral ceremony is prevalent among Hindus to this day. In this context the water of the river Aśmanvatī is apparently regarded as purifying in this mantra. As such there is no justification for the view that one bank of the river was inauspicious. However, while on one hand the mantra X.53.8 is prescribed for the performance of a funeral rite, on the other hand its recitation is enjoined at the performance of a rite connected with wedding. We accordingly take it that both the names Aśmanvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī refer to one and the same river which was known to bring down stones or to have a bed full of stones.

Scholars have held different views on the identification of the Dradvatt. Its equation with Ghaggar originally proposed by A.C. Das<sup>8</sup> was rejected long ago since the holiest part of Kuruksetra comprised the tract bounded by the Sarasvatt in the north and the Dradvatt in the south. The Ghaggar too lay in its north and has, as a matter of fact, been identified with the Sarasvatt. Rapson and many other scholars including N.L. Dey<sup>12</sup> and D.C. Sircar<sup>13</sup> identified the Dradvatt with the Chautang Nala. This view has to be discarded for the simple reason that the Chautang had no defined course and it ran through the middle of the holy region of Brahmāvarta. Another stream called Rakshi was favoured by Cunningham<sup>15</sup> but it is too insignificant to represent the Vedic Dradvatt. Like the Chautang it is a rainy season torrent having a course which is known only for a small stretch.

Uday Vir Shastri16 believes that the Drsadvati was identical with the Ganga because some passages in the Mahabharata place the city of Hastinapura quite close to it and the Puranas speak of a confluence of the two rivers. It is, however, quite probable that there was another and older city named Hastinapura near the Drsadvats and the name travelled to its present site on the Ganga much later.17 As to the mention of a confluence of the Drsadvats and the Ganga no significance can be attached to it since the name Ganga was later given to many small streams. For example in Valmiki's Ramavana18 we find Bharata crossing the combined stream of the Sarasvati and the Ganga before reaching the Yamuna on his way from Rājagrha in Kekaya country to Ayodhyā. One Gangā Mandākini is mentioned in the Vamana Purana19 as a river of Kuruksetra. A small stream bearing the name Gangā was thus already in existence in the region of Kurukşetra before the composition of Valmiki's Ramayana. In any case there is absolutely no indication in literature that Ganga was ever flowing westward through the land of Kuruksetra. This consideration also rules out the suggestion of an equation of the Dṛṣadvatī and the Yamuna20 which too flows eastward like the Ganga and joins it at Prayaga.

This leaves us with the identification of the Dṛṣadvatī with the old river bed in which now the Hansi-Hisar branch of the Western Jumna Canal flows. The suggestion was first made by M.L. Bharagava21 in a somewhat incomplete and onesided note. It deserves a more detailed and systematic examination which we propose to undertake here.

The account of the long Sarasvata and Darsadvata sacrificial sessions in the Brāhmanas and Śrauta-si tras<sup>22</sup> gives us a very helpful description of the course of the Vedic Drsadvati. To put it briefly23 anyone undertaking a Sarasvata sacrificial session got initiated at Vinasana or the region where the Sarasvatı disappeared in the sands of Bikaner. This region has been placed about Kalibangan.24 He then moved upstream along the eastern bank of the Sarasvatt reaching the point of its confluence with the Drsadvati which he crossed to regain the eastern bank of the Sarasvati and proceed further. For the Darsadvata sacrificial session he was required to consecrate his fires near the confluence at Parinah before resuming his advance upstream along the eastern bank of the Drsadvati. The session was ultimately to be terminated after a lustral bath in the Yamuna at Triplaksa or Triplakṣāvaharaṇa. According to the Jaiminīya Brāhmana25 Parinah was the name of a lake in the lower half of Kuruksetra while the Latyayana Srauta Sutra26 takes it to represent 'risen ground' भूमेरु सतप्रदेश:. The Taittiriya Āranyaka27 and the Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra28 appear to support the second view which is obviously more acceptable.

We have shown elsewhere29 that the courses of the Sarasvati and the Drsadvati joined near village Malkebhowri, a few kms. above Kalibangan. On the other hand the requirement of a lustral bath at Triplaksavaharana on the Yamuna for terminating the Darşadvata sacrificial session performed upstream along the Drsadvati suggests that in its upper reaches the course of this river lay quite close to the Yamuna. We have thus a fairly clear idea of the upper and lower ends of the Drsadvati as well as the point of its confluence with the Sarasvati as known in the age of the Brahmanas and Śrauta Sūtras. Between these points, the course of the river can be verified with the help of a number of known Vedic and pre-historic sites.

As we shall see these considerations are fully satisfied by the course followed by the Hansi-Hisar branch of the present Western Jumna Canal.

According to the Gazetteers the Western Jumna Canal is by far the oldest of the great canals in the Province, and originated in 1356, when Feroz Shah Tughlak utilized the torrent bed now known as the Chautang to conduct water to the royal gardens at Hansi and Hisar. This was little more than a Monsoon supply channel, and after about a hundred years water ceased to flow farther than the lands of Kaithal. In 1568 the Emperor Akbar re-excavated the work of Feroz Shah and brought a supply from the Yamuna and the Somb into the Chautang and so on to Hansi and Hissar. This was undoubtedly a perennial canal, as is testified by the ancient bridges at Karnal and Safidon and the complete set of water-courses with which the Canal was provided besides the original Sanad or working plan of the Canal which is still in existence and promises a supply of water all the year round...The head of the Canal is at Tajewala in Ambala District 30° 17' N and 77° 37' E about 11 miles from the point where the river (Yamuna) emerges from the lower hills. The river is here crossed by a weir 1700 feet in length, flanked at each end by a scouring sluice and head regulator for the Eastern Jumna Canal on the left bank and for the Western Jumna Canal on the right, the full capacities authorized being respectively 1300 and 6380 cubic feet per second. The Western Jumna Canal has thus a maximum discharge, more than three times that of the average flow of the Thames at Teddington. For the first 14 miles of its course the Canal runs almost entirely in the old West branch of the Yamuna river. It then effects junction with Somb river, a masonry dam across which holds up the combined streams and forces them into the Canal head at Dadupur.30 From Dadupur the Canal flows south in an artificial channel to Buria below which it again takes to an old river bed. The Yamuna flowed below Buria as late as 1760 A.D. when Ahmadshah forced the passage of the stream at this point in the teeth of a Maratha army,31

It enters Karnal district about 25 miles north-east of Karnal and flows to a point 4 miles below Karnal where the Grand Trunk Road crosses it by an old Mughal (Badshahi) bridge. From this point it holds a south-west course for some 18 miles till the Hansi branch strikes off westwards from village Munak<sup>32</sup> and entering the Jind Tehsil at village Auta and following the bed of old Chautang it flows on via Safidon and Jind<sup>33</sup> to Hansi and Hisar to be finally swallowed up in the sands of the Bikaner desert.<sup>34</sup>

The main points that emerge from this account of the Gazetteers are as follows:

- (i) Barring a small strip between Dadupur and Buria in district Ambala the Western Jumna Canal flows in old beds right from its source at Tajewala to its end in Hisar.
- (ii) Feroz Shah Tughlak utilized the torrent bed now known as the Chautang for his canal.
- (iii) The Yamună flowed below Buria as late as 1760 A.D. and for the first 14 miles of its course the Canal runs almost entirely in the old West branch of the Yamună river.

Before examining these points it would be worthwhile to refer to the accounts left by early Muslim historians at least five of which can be cited here.

According to Tarikh-i-Ferozshahi<sup>35</sup> of Shams-i-Siraj Afif a contemporary of Feroz Shah Tughlak, the king built a town and fort in the neighbourhood of the village of great Laras and named it Hisar-Firozah and to meet the scarcity of water conducted into it two streams one from the river Yamunā called Rajiwah and the other from Sutlej called Alaghkhani. <sup>36</sup> Both these streams were conducted through the vicinity of Karnal, and, after a length of about 80 kos, discharged their waters by one channel into the town.

In his Tarikh-i-Mubarkshahi, <sup>37</sup> Yahya Bin Ahmad (first half of the fifteenth century) records that "in the following year (757 A.D. 1356) he (Sultan Ferozshah) brought the stream of Ferozabad from the mountains of Mandati (Sic) and Sirmor and having thrown into it 7 distinct streams he conducted it to Hansi, From thence he led it to Aramana, and there he built a strong fort, which he called Hisar Firozah. Below the palace he dug an extensive tank, and filled it with the waters of the canal. He brought another canal from the river Yamunā, and threw it into the tank of that city, from whence he carried it on farther." Yahya Bin Ahmad, it may be noted, belonged to Sarhind and had access to all the information supplied by earlier historians. He was therefore better placed to have first hand knowledge of the canals of Firoz Shah and their geographical position<sup>38</sup> and is rightly considered to be more adequate and precise.<sup>39</sup>

Following Yahya Bin Ahmad closely Firishta (a contemporary of Akbar) in his Tarikh<sup>40</sup> says that "in the year 757 he (Feroz) constructed another canal between the hills of Mundir and Surmore from the Yamuna into which he led seven other streams, which all uniting, ran in one channel through Hansy (Hansi)

and from thence to Raiseen (Absin) where he built a strong fort which he called Hissar Feroz...At the same time he introduced another canal from the Yamuna, which filled a large lake he caused to be constructed at Hissar Feroz."

Abdul Kadir Badaoni, yet another contemporary of Akbar, notes in his Muntakhabu-t-Tawarikh<sup>41</sup> that in 757 (1356 A.D.) Feroz Shah Tughlaq opened a canal from the territory of Mandu and Sirmur and connected seven other nehrs or streams with it and conducted the waters to Hansi and thence to Rasin; and there the Feroz Hisar or fortress was founded. Beneath the Kasr or palace or castle, a hauz or reservoir was constructed, and filled with water from the canal in question.

Finally referring to this event Inayat Khan (a protege of Shah Jehan) in his Shah-Jahan-Nama<sup>42</sup> says that "the canal that Sultan Feroz Shah Khilji (Sic), during the time he reigned at Delhi, had made to branch off from the river Yamuna, in the vicinity of Pargana Khizrabad, whence he brought in a channel 30 imperial kos long to the confines of Pargana Safidun, which was his hunting seat, and had only a scanty supply of water, had, after the Sultan's death, become in the course of time, ruinous."

These accounts of five Muslim Historians, one of whom was a contemporary of Feroz Shah Tughlaq, do not support the conclusions presented by the Gazetteers. On the other hand they almost unanimously testify to the construction of a canal by Feroz Shah from the Yamunā to Hansi and Hisar. There is mention of another canal too but the most interesting fact to which at least three of them refer is the diversion of the waters of seven other streams into the canal constructed from the Yamunā. There is no mention in these historical accounts of the utilization of any old bed by Feroz Shah Tughlaq between Tajewala and Dadupur not to speak of any specific mention of the Chautang in this connection. Nor do they make any reference to any canal emerging from the river Chautang. And, as a matter of fact, they do not contain even an indirect hint about the existence of any old West branch of river Yamunā. On the contrary the Chautang is supposed to have joined the Feroz Shah Canal much later to the west of Safidon.

Now if we have to make a choice between the accounts available in the Gazetteers and works of early Muslim Historians, we shall have to opt in favour of Muslim Historians without any hesitation. It has been repeatedly realised that in the matter of presentation of historical facts the Gazetteers are often not quite reliable. More than 90 years ago Major H.G. Raverty<sup>45</sup> was compelled to remark that it was a pity the Punjab Government had not someone to correct the historical part of its Gazetteers. In the present case, we find the statement that the Yamuna flowed below Buria as late as 1760 A.D. entirely unwarranted. The Gazetteer erroneously states that Ahmad Shah forced the passage of the stream at this point in the teeth of a Maratha army. The fact is that Ahmad Shah had forded the

Yamuna at the crossing named Buria Ghat and not at the point of Buria town proper. This point of crossing on the Yamuna was called Buria Ghat because it lay on the road from the town of Buria near Jagadhari to Saharanpur on the other side of the river. The existence of such a route is evident from the fact that there is a Mohalla named Buria Darwaza in the western part of Saharanpur.46 To this may be added the fact that there is no mention in literature of the river Yamuna or its branch flowing westward through the territory of the present state of Haryana at any time.

Muslim Historians are also right in saying that Feroz Shah conducted seven other streams into his Jumna Canal. As described above the Western Jumna Canal is joined by the combined stream of the torrents Somb and Pathrala at Dadupur where through a level-crossing their combined waters pass over to the Yamuna unless the low level of the flow in the Canal requires their diversion into it. Rising in the Shiwaliks to the north of Jagadhri, the Somb enters the plains at Ad Badri and is joined by more than half a dozen small tributaries before meeting the Pathrala a short distance above Dadupur. According to a forwarding note dated 3rd April 1917 of Mr. G.C. Laurie, 47 Superintending Engineer, Western Jumna Canal, the combined stream carried a sizeable supply of water which could amount to 1,15,000 cusecs against about 3,50,000 cusecs of the Yamuna during floods. It rose with great rapidity and without warning on account of which the control of the supply was frequently quite out of hand. Mr. Laurie describes the efforts repeatedly made at torrent-training of the Upper Somb. He mentions about a dozen survey plans prepared and executed between the years 1854 to 1910 to train and keep the Upper Somb into a straight line with a better angle of approach to a dam on the Pathrala. This suggests that the Somb was originally not flowing exactly in the same course which it occupies now. There is an indication in the report of Mr. Laurie that the Western Jumna Canal at one time joined the Pathrala channel before its confluence with the Somb.

In another report written in 1832 Col. J. Colvin<sup>48</sup> remarks that probability and tradition point out the head of the original canal to have been where it is now, immediately at the point where the Yamuna issues from the lower range of hills. But he too falls into the mistake committed by the Gazetteers in conjecturing that it was then conducted along one of the many old water courses of the Yamunā till it fell into what was then the mouth of the Somb river. Colvin adds that the water was conveyed into another old channel of the Yamuna under Buria, being a wide hollow, skirting the high ground to its north and west which is continuous, though with numerous and deep indentations from the hills along the right bank of the Somb river and then following this water course as far as Karnal. Colvin cites Major W.E. Baker to say that the Somb was a mountain torrent nearly dry, except in the rains when it received the drainage of the mountains south-east of Nahan



and of the plains east of its course nearly to the Yamuna. Abetted by a strong fall, its floods were then most violent and sudden in their effects.

If the Somb attracted many tributaries from the east and an old river bed. as suggested by Colvin existed from the hills along its right bank it must belong to the Somb itself or its sister stream Pathrala. It is physiographically impossible to relate this old bed to the Yamuna which has its source far away from Ad Badri to the East in the higher Himalayas. The courses of the Somb and the Yamuna run almost at 90° to each other.

Mr. Laurie49 also reports that at one stage the abandonment of the headworks of the Western Jumna Canal at Tajewala had been under serious consideration and the suggested alternatives included construction of a new head-works at Jatlana or Gumthala, lower down the river, or construction of a new high level canal from a point some miles below Tajewala. Such a suggestion would have been entirely out of question if a branch of the Yamuna had actually ever flowed from Tajewala westward through Harvana and provided a naturally convenient bed for the Canal.

Evidently the course of the Somb has been diverted, towards the Yamunā as a result of the numerous attempts made over long periods to tame it. There can be no dispute with the statement in the Gazetteers that the Western Jumna Canal occupies an old river course from Buria right up to its end. Most of the maps, old as well as those prepared by the Survey of India, mark an old dried up river-bed from the tale-end of the Western Jumna Canal till it joins the Ghaggar before vanishing in the deserts of Bikaner.

This position is fully supported by literary evidence. We have already shown in the beginning that the Rgvedic Drsadvatt was a sister river of the Sarasvatt with which it is named in the Rgveda and which it joined before Vinasana according to Brahmanas and later literature. Although undoubtedly a perennial river in Vedic times it appears to have suffered the same fate which befell Sarasvati, the most important Rgvedic river, in the great catastrophe described in the Satapatha Brahmana50 as the Deluge of the time of Manu Vaivasvata. In another article51 we have examined literary and archaeological evidence to establish the plausibility of the occurrence of this Deluge about three thousand years B.C. We have also shown there that this seismic-tectonic-volcanic upheaval, supported by archaeological and literary evidence, brought extensive changes in the topography of the Shiwalik belt between the Yamuna and Ravi resulting in the diversion of the waters of the Sarasvati and the Drsadvati and destruction of many pre-Harappan settlements including the one at Kalibangan. The event involved large scale earth-movements covering a very wide region including the Indus Valley and the country further north-east to the Shimla foot hills across the Thar and the Indo-Gangetic divide.

It would be worthwhile to draw attention to two episodes which are relevant for our purpose here. One concerns the destruction of the mountain named Kraunca while the other relates to the birth of the rivers Sarasvati and Sambhramati. The Mahabharata52 states that god Skanda was appointed as commander of the army of the gods on the bank of the river Sarasvati to destroy the Demons. One of the Demon chiefs Bana, son of Bali, took shelter on Kraunca Mountain and troubled gods. Skanda Karttikeva then smote the Kraunca with a missile given to him by Agni. From the fact that the event took place on the mountains near the Sarasyats, it would appear that it occurred in the Shiwaliks about Nahan or nearby which is the region of the source of the Sarasyati and the Drsadvati. The involvement of Agni would suggest a volcanic upheaval. According to the other story related in the Skanda Purana,53 the waters of the Sarasvati were once converted into blood as a result of a curse of sage Viśvāmitra and it attracted Rāksasas and Piśācas. Sage Vasistha then meditated at its source near the Plaksa tree concentrating on the ground with a mantra addressed to god Varuna. As a result, water gushed forth from two holes in the ground one of which gave birth to the Sarasvati and the other to the Sambhramati so named as it was born as a result of the agitation in the mind of the sage. We suspect that the name Sambhramati is an instance of reSanskritisation of the name Somb in the medieval period. The implication is that the present hill torrent of Somb is the much reduced Asmanvati of the Rgveda. The old river suffered a diversion of a large portion of its waters towards the Yamuna on account of serious changes in the topography of the Shiwaliks during the great Deluge.

This finds support even from prevailing physiographical position in the area. On the other side of the Shiwalik ridge where the Somb now takes its rise we find two streams called Ashmi and Assan joining together and soon meeting the Giri to flow eastward into the Yamunā. The terrain suggests that but for the dividing ridge created in the Deluge their combined waters would have come down through the Somb and followed the old bed utilized for the Western Jumna Canal. This is only a reconstruction of what in all probability was the situation before the occurrence of the great Deluge.

Just like the name Somb the names Ashmi and Assan also immediately remind us of the Asmanvati. Linguistically the evolution of Asmanvati into Ashmi-Assan and Somb is as smooth and natural as the reSanskritisation of Somb into Sambhramati. Asmanvati occurs only once in the Regreda and twice in the Atharvaveda as already noted and thereafter it is replaced by its synonym Disadvati all along in Vedic as well as post Vedic literature. Apparently it lived on in oral tradition and evolved into forms like Ashmi, Assan and Somb during the ages. When Somb found its way into literature in the medieval age its Apabhrasta form was reSanskritised into Sambhramati since its nexus with Asmanvati had been lost. The characteristic of bringing down stones was so strikingly pronounced in

its case that even the prevailing vernacular name of its sister stream Pathrala means 'Stony' like Asmanvatt and Drsadvatt. The present Somb and Pathrala are twin streams like the Ashmi and Assan.

One more factor still remains to be satisfied. If, as we have tried to show, the bed now occupied by the Western Jumna Canal below the Dadupur head-works belongs to the Rgvedic Dṛṣadvatī we should expect to find a number of Vedic and pre-historic sites along this course. In this respect also we receive full support from literary and archaeological sources. Known for its turbulence and fury from the earliest times the Sarasvatī-Ghaggar appears to have obliterated all traces of most of the pre-historic settlements that fell within the reach of its unrestrained flood waters. Comparatively, the Dṛṣadvatī has spared a much more impressive group of ancient sites like Srughna, Āṣandīvat, Rakhigarhi, Mitathal, Siswal, Kārotī, Sherpura, Sothi and Nohar.

Of these Srughna, represented by a small village now called Sugh, lies 30° 9'N and 77° 23' E on the right bank of the river about 5 kms. to the east of Jagadhri, Yugandhara of Sanskrit Literature. It is first mentioned as the name of a province in the Taittiriya Āranyaka<sup>56</sup> where it has been apparently misspelt as Turghna, and described as the northern half of the land of Kuruksetra. The road from Mathura to this town has been called Sraughna.<sup>57</sup> It is also noted by Varāhamihira<sup>58</sup> and by Buddhist works like Mahāmāvūrī<sup>59</sup> and Divyāvadāna<sup>60</sup> and described in some detail by Hieun Tsang. 61 Archaeological excavations at the site on a modest scale62 have yielded Painted Grey Ware shirds dateable to circa 600-500 B.C. although the site is undoubtedly much older. Asandivat identified with the present town of Asandh. 63 lies about 32 kms. south-west of Karnal at a distance from the right bank of the river. It finds mention in the Aitareya64 and Satapatha65 Brahmanas as the capital of Janamejaya Pariksita and the venue of his Asvamedha sacrifice. It is also noticed in Sûtra literature66 apart from grammatical works of Pāṇini and others. Archaeologically the site has not been properly probed but Painted Grey Ware is available and there is a Buddhist Stupa of the Kusana period. Rakhigarhi, also known as Rakhi Shahpur, lying 29° 60' N by 76° 10' E in Hansi tehsil of district Hisar, again on the right side of the river, is supposed to be the most extensive known Harappan site in India and deemed worthy of being considered as a possible eastern-most capital of the Harrapans.67

The remaining sites fall on the left bank of the river. At Mitathal, lying 28°. 50' N by 76° 10' E, about 10 kms, to the north-west of the district town of Bhiwani, excavations revealed the existence of a culture related to pre-Harappan phase of Kalibangan and elements of Harappan and late Harappan phases. 68 The cultural assemblage at Siswal, situated 29°, 10' N by 75° 30' E, about 26 kms, to the west of the district headquarters of Hisar, has thrown up evidence of co-existence of the pre-Harappans and Harappans. 69 Kāroti is a Vedic town of

undoubted antiquity and appears in the age of the Brāhmaṇas as a seat of the fire cult par excellence. The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa at describes it as the place where sage Tura Kāvaṣeya made a fire altar for the gods. Situated 29° 10′N by 74° 50′ E it has been explored to reveal pre-Harappan and Harappan remains. Sherpura lies 7 kms. north-east of Bhadra and is exclusively a pre-Harappan settlement. The well known site of Sothi, 8 kms. east of Nohar, is predominantly pre-Harappan although Harappan material was also noticed towards the top of the mound. Likewise Nohar itself has yielded pre-Harappan antiquities as well as a Harappan culture complex.

We restrict ourselves to Vedic and pre-historic sites in view of the fact that although formally described as a Mahānadi<sup>76</sup> the Dṛṣadvatī had already been reduced to a rainy season torrent by the time of the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas.<sup>77</sup> The existence of these important sites along the bed in which the Hansi-Hisar branch of the Western Jumna Canal now flows provides the final proof of the fact that it was in reality the course followed by the Rgvedic Dṛṣadvati.<sup>78</sup> And of course it fully satisfies the description of the river as available in the details of the Dāṛṣadvata sacrificial sessions given in the Brāhmaṇa and Sūtra literature. This identification thus stands the test of historical, geographical and linguistic considerations.

The conclusion is that between the Tajewala and Dadupur head-works the Western Jumna Canal flows in the channel initially got constructed by Firoz Shah Tughlaq during the later half of the 14th century from the Yamunā and thereafter it follows the bed which originally belonged to the Vedic Aśmanvati—Dṛṣadvatī or the present Somb. In its upper reaches this bed is quite close to the Yamunā while at the lower end it merges in the Sarasvatī-Ghaggar after running along a string of well known Vedic and pre-historic sites. It was joined by the Chautang, which might be the Vedic Āpayā much later in its course, to the west of Safidon.

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# दक्षिणन सरस्वत्या उत्तरेण दृषद्वतोम्। ये वसन्ति कुरुक्षेत्रे ते वसन्ति त्रिविष्टपे॥

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16. सांख्यदर्शन का इतिहास, Ghaziabad 1979, pp. 82-90.

- Cf. Arun Kumar, On the location of Hastinapura, Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda. Vol. XXXIII, Nos. 1-2, Sept.-Dec. 1983, pp. 89-107.
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सरस्वतीं च गङ्गां च युग्मेन प्रतिपद्य च। उत्तरे वारमत्स्यानां भारुण्डं प्राविशद्वनम्।।

19. Sm., 13.7:

आपगा च महापुण्या गङ्गा मन्दाकिनी नदी। मधुस्रवा वासुनदी कौशिकी पापनाशिनो।।

 Suraj Bhan (Archaeological Evidences of the Changes in the course of Yamuna in Sub-recent Times, Journal of Haryana Studies, Vol. II, Nos. 1-2, Jan-Dec. 1970, pp. 1-3) following "a host of geologists and geographers" subscribes to the views that the Yamuna flowed to the west through Haryana in Sub-recent times. Silak Ram Phogat (A note on the old course of the Yamuna, J.H.S. Vol. III, No. 2, July 1971, pp. 9-10) supports him but thinks that below Safidon the Yamuna assumed a quite different westerly course and was joined by the Drsadvati-Chautang.

21. Op. cit., p. 53 ff.

22. Macdonell A.A., Keith A.B., Vedic Index, 2 Vols, Reprint, Delhi 1967, Vol. 1,

23. To quote from 'Sāńkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, ed. with the commentary of Varadattasuta Ānartīya and Govinda, Alfred Hillebrandt, 2 Vols., Reprint, Delhi 1981:

XIII. 29.1 : सरस्वत्या विनशने दीक्षा सारस्वतानाम । . . .

XIII. 29.11: प्रतीपं पर्वेण पक्षसा यन्ति । . . .

XIII. 29.14: अप्यये द्षद्वत्याः । . . .

XIII. 29.27: संवत्सरं ब्राह्मणस्य गा रक्षेत्।

XIII. 29.28 : संवत्सरं व्यर्णे नैतन्धवेऽग्निमिन्धीत ।

संवत्सरे परीणह्यग्नीनाधाय द्षद्वत्या दक्षिणेन तीरेणाग्नेयेनाष्टाकपालेन XIII. 29.29: शम्यापरासे शम्यापरासे यजमान एति ।

XIII. 29.30 : त्रि: प्लक्षां प्रति यमुनामवभूथमभ्यवयन्ति ।

XIII. 29 31 : इति दार्षद्वतम ।

24. Bharadwaj, O.P., Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India, Delhi 1986, pp. 20-43.

25. Ed. Raghuvira, Nagpura 1954, ii. 300:

तेषाम उ तेषां परीणदिति कृरुक्षेत्रस्य जघनार्धे सरस्कन्दन्तं दीक्षायं ते प्राञ्चो यन्ति समया कुरुक्षेत्रम् । . . .

26. X. 19.1:

संवत्सराद्धवं परीणं नाम स्थली करुक्षेत्रे तस्यामग्नोनाधाय ।

Says the Commentator:

परीणहीति देशश्रुतिः परीणम् नाम स्थली क६क्षेत्रे भमेरुन्नतप्रदेशः तस्यां स्थल्याम अग्नीनाधाय . . . . ।

27. Ed. Shastri and Rangacharya, Reprint, Delhi 1985, VIII. 1.1: तेषां कुरुक्षेत्र वेदिरासीत्। तस्यं खाण्डवो दक्षिणाधं आसीत् तुर्न्नमूत्तरार्धः। परीणज्जधनार्धः । मरव उत्करः ।

28. XXIV. 6.32:

क्रुक्षेत्रे परिणहिस्थले अन्याधेयमन्वारम्भणीयान्तं भवति । .

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- 33. Punjab States Gazetteers, Vol. XVII A., Phulkian States, Patiala Jind and Nabha, Lahore 1909, p. 274.
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- 39. Banerjee J.M., History of Firoz Shah Tughlaq, Delhi 1967, p. 147, n. 26.
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# अथ ह स्माह शाण्डिल्य:। तुरी ह कावषेय: कारीत्यां देवेभ्योऽग्निं चिकाय।

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दृषद्वती कौशिकी च पुण्या हैरण्वतो नदी। वर्षाकालवहाश्चेता वर्जयत्वा सरस्वतीम्।।

78. See map.

### THE KURUS AND KURUKŞETRA IN THE UPANIŞADS

Indian tradition regards the land of Kurukşetra as the Seat of Creation and the Cradle of Indian Civilization. According to the Vāmana Purāṇa¹ the Sannihatī lake in Thanesar is the spot where the Golden Cosmic Egg took form resulting ultimately in the creation of the worlds. The holy tirtha of Pṛthūdaka, now known as Pehowa, is mentioned in the Mahābhārāta² and the Vāmana Purāṇa³ as the venue of creation of the worlds and the four Varnas. At another place the Bhāgavata Purāṇa⁴ describes Prajāpati Kardama as undertaking austerities on the Sarasvatī when Brahmā asked him to take ūp the creation of the worlds.

The fabric of Indian mythology is woven around gods most of whom are associated with Kuruksetra in one way or the other. Manu<sup>5</sup> gives the name of Brahmāvarta to the heartland of Kuruksetra comprising the doab of the holy rivers Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī and the oldest Vedic works place the earliest religious and political activities in this region. It is generally agreed that the bulk of Vedic literature was composed here.<sup>6</sup> This is the land of the Bharatas who are regarded as the greatest among the peoples of ancient India.<sup>7</sup>

Naturally there are many references in early Sanskrit Literature relating to the history and culture of Kurukşetra and its people. Even a precise geographical definition of Kurukşetra is provided to us first in a late Vedic work, the Taittiriya Āranyaka<sup>8</sup> where it is described as a sacrificial altar of gods. Of this Vedi of Kurukşetra Khāndava and Tūrghna respectively formed the southern and northern halves. Parinat was the lower half and the Marus the Utkara or the rubbish heap. Here Khāndava signifies not any particular place but the whole region of Khāndava

(well-known as the Khandava forest) which was much bigger than the present district of Delhi and Türghna, undoubtedly a scribal error for Srughna,9 denotes the region around Jagadhari (Skt. Yugandhara) with its headquarters at the present village of Sugh situated on the Western Yamuna Canal at a distance of about 5 kms. to the east of Jagadhari town in the district of Yamuna Nagar. The ancient district of Srughna extended into the neighbouring hilly areas of the Shiwalik range. The name Parinat applied to the region around the lower part of the Sarasvati and Drsadvati doab touching their confluence10 while the sandy areas of Rajasthan beyond this point comprised the rubbish heap of this sacrificial altar. It would thus appear that ancient Kurukşetra would be coterminus with the present state of Haryana if the districts of Delhi and Meerut, areas between the Ghaggar and Sutlej and some areas of Hanumangarh and Nohar near Kāroti, which is men tioned in the Satapatha Brahmana, 11 were added to it.

This region of Kuruksetra can be roughly described as Kurubhumi also even though much later Utpala, the commentator of Brhatsamhita restricts the name to the region around Thanesar.12 Kuru proper is also taken to include the region between the Ganga and Yamuna with Hastinapura near Meerut as its capital.13 The tract between the Sarasvati and Yamuna was specifically known as Kuru-Jangala14 while that to the north of Srughna was called the Uttara-Kurus.15.

The age of the Upanisads synchronises with the end of the Vedic period.16 The older ones, often along with their respective Āranyakas actually form the constitutents of the Brahmanas. Therefore, they are rightly known as Vedanta, i.e. "the end of the Veda." In fact, in the Satapatha Brahmana18, the Upanisad is described as "the essence of the Veda". Two of the Upanisads namely the Siva-Samkalpa and the Isa form parts respectively of the thirty fourth and the fortieth books of the Vājasaneyi Samhitā. The Aitareya along with its Āranyaka belongs to the Aitareya Brahmana, and the Kauşitaki along with its Aranyaka to the Kausttaki Brahmana. These two Brahmanas belong to the Rgveda. The Taittiriya Upanişad along with its Āraṇyaka is a part of the Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa which belongs to the Taittiriya Samhitā of the Yajurveda. So does the Mahānārāyana-Upanisad. The Brhadaranyaka forms a part, along with its Āranyaka, of the Satapatha Brāhmana of the Vājasaneyi Samhitā. The Chândogya, having its first section as an Aranyaka is supposed to belong to the Tandya-Mahabrahmana of the Sāmaveda while the Kena originally belongs to the Brāhmana contents of the Jaiminiya or the Talavakāra, school of the Sāmaveda. Thus the Aitareya, Brhadaranyaka, Chandogya, Taittiriya, Kauşitakı, Kena, Sivasamkalpa and Isa represent the earliest works of their class. Of the remaining texts some like the Jábála could be placed before the beginning of the Christian era and the rest assigned to later dates.19 In all about two hundred Upanişadic texts are now available. A collection brought out by the Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay in 1917 contained one hundred and twelve Upanisads and one published by M/s Motilal

Banarsidass from Delhi in 1970 (followed with a second edition in 1980) contains one hundred and eighty eight.

The composition of the earlier Upanişads is generally placed between 700 B.C. to 600 B.C. although some of their contents would appear to indicate a much earlier date.<sup>20</sup> We shall try to present here all those extracts from these texts which refer to the land or people of the Kurus or Kurukşetra. Each extract will be followed by a brief elucidation of the reference involved.<sup>21</sup>

1. Brhadaranyaka Upanisad

iii. 1.1:

जनको ह वैदेहो बहुदक्षिणेन यज्ञेनेजे तत्र ह कुरुपञ्चालानां ब्राह्मणा अभिसमेता बभूवस्तस्य ह जनकस्य वंदेहस्य विजिज्ञासा बभूव कः स्विदेषां ब्राह्मणानामन्चानतम इति स ह गवां सहस्रमवरुरोध दश दश पादा एकैकस्याः शृङ्कयोराबद्धा बभूवः।

Among the Brāhmaṇas, assembled at a sacrifice performed by Janaka, king of Videha, offering rich sacrificial rewards and accompanied by a philosophical discussion promising a thousand cows with ten Pādas (quarter coins of Gold) tied to their horns the presence of the Brāhmaṇas from the region of Kurus and Pañcālas is specially noted, undoubtedly because they were held in great esteem for their learning, philosophical wisdom and debating skill.

अथ हैनं भुज्युर्लाह्यायिनः पप्रच्छ याज्ञवल्क्येति होवाच मद्रेषु चरकाः पर्यंत्रजाम ते पतञ्चलस्य काष्यस्य गृहानैम तस्यासीद्दृहिता गन्धवंगृहीता तमपृच्छाम कोऽसोति सोऽब्रवीत्सुधन्वाऽऽिङ्गरस इति तं यदा लोकानामन्तानपृच्छामार्थनमब्रूम क्व पारिक्षिता अभवित्रिति क्व पारिक्षिता अभवित्रिति ।

Little is known about the Rsis Bhujyu Lahyayani (descendant of Lahyayana) and Patancala Kapya (a descendant of Kapi). Yajnavalkya is well-known as an authority on the questions of Ritual and Philosophy. He was a pupil of Uddalaka Āruņi and belonged to the Kurus. The text indicates the historical importance of the descendants of Pariksit.

The daughter of Patancala was possessed by a Gandharva named Sudhanva of the family of Angiras. Bhujyu asked him about the boundaries of the world and while doing so wanted to know where the descendants of Parikşit were. Bhujyu repeats the same question to Yājnavalkya.

iii. 3.2:

स होवाचोवाच वै सोऽगच्छन्वै ते तद्यत्राण्वमेधयाजिनो गच्छन्तीति क्व . .।

The reply of Yajnavalkya shows that the descendants of Pariksit were known for performing Asvamedha sacrifices. It is suggestive of the glory of these kings that Indra in the shape of falcon is stated to have surrendered them personally to the wind who then carried them to the region where the performers of the Aśyamedha sacrifice abide.

According to the Bhagavata Purana24 Pariksit performed three Asvamedha sacrifices on the bank of the Ganga with Saradvata Krpacarya as his priest. He offered rich sacrificial rewards and the gods graced the occasion with their physical presence. We also know from the Aitareya25 and the Satapatha26 Brāhmanas that Janamejaya Pārikṣita performed Aśvamedha sacrifices, at Āsandīvat, the present town of Asandh in district Karnal of Haryana and the pre-Harrapan site of Kāroti<sup>28</sup> near Nohar in Rajasthan just across the western boundary of the state with Tura Kāvaseya and Indrota Devāpi Saunaka as the respective priests. Kāroti is situated on the bed of the R gvedic river Drsadvati which goes on to meet the Vedic Sarasvati before the combined stream is lost in the sands about Kalibangan, the spot well-known in literature by the name of Vinasana.29 In the Vedic age the Marus formed the western limit of Kuruksetra30 which is described as the sacrificial altar of gods. Later its place is taken by Vinasana beyond which lay the territories of the Śūdrābhīras31 and Niṣādas.32 As a matter of fact the three sons of Janamejaya, Bhīmasena, Ugrasena and Śrutasena are also named among the performers of the Asvamedha.

Evidently the successors of Parikşit were able to maintain their family tradition of performing the Asvamedha sacrifice as paramount rulers in the region. Bhujyu's question is therefore intended to test Yājňavalkya's knowledge of history. It also points to the distant past to which, in the eyes of the author of the Upanişad the descendants of Pariksit belonged.

iii. 9.19:

याज्ञवल्क्येति होवाच शाकल्यो यदिदं क्रपञ्चालानां ब्राह्मणानत्यवादोः कि बह्म विद्वानिति दिशो वेद स देवा: सप्रतिष्ठा इति यद्दिशो वेत्थ स देवाः सप्रतिष्ठाः ॥

Sākalya the descendant of Sakala is the patronymic of Vidagdha in the Satapatha Brāhmana33 and of Sthavira in the Aitareya34 and Sānkhāyana Āranyakas.35 In the Purānas36 one Vedamitra or Devamitra is also known as Śākalya. The present Śākalya probably refers to Vidagdha after whom the available Rgveda text is known as Sakala Samhita. It is possible that he is the original maker of the Padapātha of Rgveda.37 Sākalya is piqued by the idea of Yājňavalkya becoming conceited by defeating the Kuru-Pañcala Brahmanas in philosophical argument,

The Brahmanas of the Kurus and Pancalas were known and even feared for their learning<sup>38</sup> and defeating them in debate was naturally a matter of great pride for anyone.

V. 1.1:

ॐ पूर्णमदः . . . . ।। ॐ खं ब्रह्म खं पुराणं वायुरं खिमिति ह स्माह कौरव्यायणी पुत्रो वेदोऽयं ब्राह्मणा विदुर्वेदनेन यद्वे दितव्यम् ।।

Kauravyāyaṇi-Putra refers to the son of a female descendant of Kuru. Nothing more is known about him except that he is named as a teacher. Apparently he was a philosopher Kuru-king.

2. Chāndogya Upanişad

i. 10.1-3:

मटचीहतेषु कुरुष्वाटिक्या सह जाययोषस्तिहं चाकायण इभ्यग्रामे प्रद्राणक उवास । १

स हेभ्यं कृल्माषान्खादन्तं विभिक्षे तं होवाच । नेतोऽन्ये विद्यन्ते यच्च ये म इम उपनिहिता इति । २

एतेषां में देहीति होवाच, तानस्मै प्रददी हन्तानुपानमित्युच्छिष्टं वै में पोतं स्यादिति होवाच । ३

There is a reference here to a famine in the land of the Kurus on account of a severe hail storm<sup>39</sup> (Majaci, which has also been rendered as locust<sup>40</sup> in which case the famine might have been caused by an attack of locust swarm). In the Brhadaranyaka Upanişad the name Uşasti is spelt as Uzasta.<sup>41</sup> He was the son of Cakra and belonged to the Kuru country. The famine was so severe that Uşasti and his wife Ajiki had to leave their village and accept left-overs of a dish of beans at an elephant-driver's place.

iv. 2.1-5:

तदु ह जानश्रुतिः पौत्रायणः षट् शतानि गवां निष्कमश्वतरीरथं तदादाय प्रतिचक्रमे तं हाभ्युवाद । १

रैक्वेमानि षट् शतानि गवामयं निष्कोऽयमश्वतरोरथो नु म एतां भगवा देवतां शाधि यां देवतामुपास्स इति । २

तमु ह परः प्रत्युवाचाह हारेत्वा शूद्र तवैव सह गोभिरस्त्वित तदुह पुनरेव जानश्रुतिः पौत्रायणः सहस्रं गवां निष्कमश्वतरीरथं दुहितरं तदादाय प्रतिचक्रमे । ३

तं हाभ्युवाद रैक्वेदं सहस्रं गवामयं निष्कोऽयमश्वतरीरथ इयं जायाऽयं ग्रामो यस्मिन्न'स्सेऽन्वेव मा भगवः शाधीति । ४

# तस्या ह मुखमुपोग्दगह्मन्नवाचाजहारेमाः शुद्रानेनैव मुखेनालापयिष्यथा इति ते हैते रैक्वपणी नाम महावषेष यत्रास्मा उवास तस्मे होवाच । प्र

These passages along with the preceding part (i) relate the story of acquisition of spiritual knowledge by Pautrayana the descendant of Janasruta, king of the Mahāvrsas from sage Raikva. The country of the Mahāvrsas lay about Vinasana and was roughly bounded by the Kurus on the east and extended in the west into the part of Rajasthan later associated with the Sūdras, Abhīras and Niṣādas. It was known for its valuable breed of Zebu cattle which gave them their totemic name. At the prime of their power the Mahavrsas controlled parts of Kurukşetra adjoining their territories on the east. The name Raikvaparna of a group of villages given by the king to Raikva still survives in the name Raikon ki Dhani in district Ganganagar of Rajasthan. Many families of Raikas, undoubtedly the descendants of Raikva, are living in tehsil Nohar in this group of villages including Pandusar, Dhani Raikan, Naiyasar, Dhirdesar and Moter. The Mahavrsas find mention in the Atharvaveda and some later Vedic works also.42

iv. 3.5:

### अथ ह शौनकं च कापेयमभित्रतारिणं च काक्षसेनिं परिविष्यमाणौ ब्रह्मचारी विभिक्षे तस्मा उ ह न ददतु:।

Abhipratarin son of Kakşasena was another philosopher Kuru king. 43 He is mentioned in the Jaiminiya-Upanisad-Brāhmana44 and the Pancavimsa-Brāhmana45 as engaged in philosophic discussions. According to the Jaiminiya Brāhmaņa46 his sons divided the property amongst themselves while he was still alive. Saunaka descendant of Kapi was his Purohita according to another passage of the Jaiminīya-Upanisad-Brāhmana.47

iv. 17.10:

# मानवो ब्रह्म वैक ऋत्विक्कुरूनश्वाभिरक्षत्येवं विद्ध वै ब्रह्मा यज्ञं यजमानं सर्वाश्चित्विजोऽभिरक्षति तस्मादेवंविदमेव ब्रह्माणं क्वींत नानेवंविदं नानेवंविदम ॥

The word Kuru in this passage has been construed by some scholars to mean "a warrior" but the authors of the Vedic Index49 appear to be right in taking it to represent the Kuru tribe. The reference is thus made here to the Kurus being saved by a mare (Aśvā). The disaster from which they were saved is not mentioned. There are hints at several places towards some misfortunes suffered by the Kurus. The Śāńkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra50 alludes to their being driven from Kuruksetra. The Jaimintya Brāhmana51 records their failure to achieve success in a sacrifice and consequent expulsion by the Salvas from Kurukeetra. It also describes a Bharata king named Sindhuksit as held up on the other side of the Indus and praying to be restored to his home and kingdom. 52 The Mahabharata53 describes a great set-back to the Kurus when Kuru's father Samvarana was overwhelmed in battle by one Pāñcālya and obliged to flee with his wife, son, minister and intimates from his kingdom which he was able to regain later with the help of Vasiṣṭha. The reference to the frequent performance of Aśvamedha sacrifice by the Kuru kings has already been noted above. In the context of a great conflict between the Śālvas and the Kurus, the protection of the Kurus by a mare can be explained as the victory of their cavalry over the elephant corpse of the Śālvas who belonged to the hilly region of the Yamuna, where elephants were found in abundance. They must have maintained a strong elephant corpse in their army. It is significant that the Śālva king is said to have invaded Dvaraka with a force comprising foot soldiers and elephants<sup>54</sup> and fought in the Mahābhārata battle riding the best elephant of Duryodhana.<sup>55</sup> It would therefore be more appropriate to accept this reference as alluding to the protective merit earned by the Kuru kings from the performance of Aśvamedha sacrifices.

v. 3.1:

श्वेतकेतुर्हारुणेयः पञ्चालानां समितिमेयाय तं ह प्रवाहणो जैवलिरुवाच कुमारानु त्वाशिषत्पितेत्यनु हि भगव इति ॥

Uddālaka, son of Aruna is known as a Kuru-Pancāla Brāhmana and one of the most prominent teachers of the Vedic period. His son Svetaketu is described here as repairing to the court of Pravāhana Jaivali king of the Pancālas. The Kurus are often mentioned with the Pancālas. The reference here appears to suggest that Uddālaka Āruni and his son Svetaketu belonged to the Kurus.

v. 11.1-2:

प्राचीनशाल औपमन्यव: सत्ययज्ञः पौलुषिरिन्द्रद्युम्नो भाल्लवेयो जनः शाकं-राक्ष्यो वृडिल आश्वतराश्विस्ते हैते महाशालां महाश्रोत्रियाः समेत्य मीमांसां चक्रः को नु आत्मा कि बहनेति ॥१॥ ते ह संपादयां चक्रु ह्हालको वै भग-वन्तोऽयमारुणिः संप्रतीममात्मानं वैश्वानरमध्येति तं हन्ताभ्यागच्छामेति तं हाभ्याजग्मुः ॥२॥

Prācīnaśāla, son of Upamanyu, Satyayajāa son of Pulusa, Indradyumna, son of Bhallava, Jana, son of Šarkarākṣa and Budila, son of Aśvatarāśva decide to approach Uddālaka Āruṇi to acquire knowledge of the soul Vaiśvānara. Although the nativity of the Rṣis's excepting Uddālaka is not clear we can say that Prācīna-śāla the descendant of Upamanyu belonged to the Kurus since the latter is known as one of the pupils of Dhaumya<sup>57</sup> whose association with the Pāṇḍavas is testified by the Mahābhārata.<sup>58</sup> His other companions also probably belonged to the Kurus.

3. Kauşîtakî-Brāhmaņa-Upanişad:

iii. 1:

प्रतदेंनो ह वै दैवोदासिरिन्द्रस्य प्रियं धामोपजगाम युद्धेन च पौरुषेण च तं हेन्द्र उवाच प्रतदेंन वरं वणीष्व इति: : ।

King Pratardana, a descendant of Divodasa is here said to have attained the world of Indra through his death in battle. In the Kausitaki Brahmana saa he is mentioned as arriving at the sacrifice of the Rsis in the Naimisa forest and asking them how errors in the sacrifice could be remedied. The original Naimisa forest was in Kuruksetra which indicates his connection with this land. 58h It is further confirmed by his being a descendant of Divodasa who was a father or grand-father of Sudas, the famous king of Trtsu Bharatas58e who has been stated as having been granted to Vadhryaśva as son by Sarasvati58d and having fought against the Panis, the Paravatas and Brsaya at its banks. 58e In the Jaiminiya Brahmana 58f his son Ksatra is said to have been attacked by ten kings at Mānusa which appears as the name of a lake or place in the Rgveda. 58g If the fight at Manusa was one of the battles fought during the famous Dasa Rajya war of Sudas Pratardana might be an uncle of Sudās. His son Ksatra was a contemporary of Sudās and fought probably as his ally in different engagements in the same war. Also both were descendants of Divodasa and ruled in the same country. This Pratardana could not have been a king of Kasi Janapada who is mentioned in the Puranas.58h

iv. 1:

अथ ह वै गाग्यों बालिकरन्चानः संस्पष्ट आस सोऽवसद्शीनरेषु सवसन्म-त्स्येषु कुरुपञ्चालेषु कार्णिविदहेष्विति स हाजातशत्रुं काश्यमात्रज्योवाच बह्य ते ब्रवाणीति तं होवाचाजातशत्रुः सहस्रं दद्य इत्येतस्यां वाचि जनको जनक इति वा उ जना धावन्तीति ॥

Kurus are mentioned as one of the countries (including Usinara, Matsya, Pañcâla, Kāśī and Videha) which were visited by Gargya, the son of Balāka during his Vedic studies. Little is known about Gargya, descendant of Garga<sup>59</sup> who is also mentioned in the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad.60 The second Vamsa list of the Brhadāranyaka61 actually mentions two Gārgyas. Others occur in the Taittiriya Āranyaka62 and the Nirukta63 as well as in the ritual Sūtras. Gārgva is said here to have resided in the region of the Kurus and Pancalas apart from Usinaras. Matsyas, Kāśis and Videhas before he goes to Ajātaśatru king of Kāśi and is cured of his conceit.

4. Jābālopanisad:

12

ॐ बृहस्पतिरुवाच याज्ञवल्क्यं यदनु कुरुक्षेत्रं देवानां देवयजनं सर्वेषां भूतानां ब्रह्मसदनम्। अविमुक्तं वै क्रुक्षेत्रं देवानां देवयजनं सर्वेषां भुतानां ब्रह्मसदनम् । तस्माद्यत्र क्वचन गच्छति तदेव मन्येत तदिवमुक्तमेव । इदं वै जन्तोः प्राणेषुत्क्रममाणेषु रुद्रस्तारकं ब्रह्म व्याचष्टे येनासावमती-भुत्वा मोक्षीभवति तस्मादविमुक्तमेव निषेवेत अविमुक्तं न विमुञ्चेदेव-मेतद याज्ञवल्क्यः ॥

Brhaspati in this passage addresses Yājāavalkya and describes Kurukṣetra as a place of sacrifice of the gods and the Brahman-seat of all beings. Avimukta, known to be a place in Kāśī<sup>65</sup> is compared with Kurukṣetra. The Parivrājaka is advised to consider every place as true Kurukṣetra, the gods' place of sacrifice and the Brahman-seat of all beings. When the vital breath departs out of a person, Rudra is said to impart the saving formula, by which one participates in immortality and liberation. The passage suggests the shifting of the centre of Indian culture towards Kāśī from Kurukṣetra which however, still appears as the most sacred Tīrtha.

The passage is repeated almost verbatim in SriRāmottaratāpinyupanisad<sup>66</sup> as its opening para. Here however Avimukta appears to have been used as an adjective of Kurukşetra which could perhaps mean "not abandoned by the gods." As a matter of fact this interpretation of Avimukta might appear more appropriate in case of the above passage of Jābālopanişad too.

This passage is particularly popular since it has been reproduced in the Tarasaropanisad<sup>67</sup> also.

5. Dakşināmūrti Upanişad:

i.

ॐ ब्रह्मावर्ते महाभाण्डीरवटमूले महासत्राय समेता महर्षयः शौनकादयस्ते ह समित्पाणयस्तत्विज्ञासवो मार्कण्डेयं चिरंजीविनमुपसमेत्य पप्रच्छुः केन त्वं चिरं जीवसि केन वानन्दमनुभवसीति ।

Maharsis led by Saunaka are stated to have gathered under a lofty Nyagrodha tree in Brahmāvarta for the performance of a long sacrificial session. Desirous of knowing the truth, they approached the long-lived Mārkandeya holding Kuśa grass in their hands and asked him the secret of his long life and bliss.

Brahmavarta was the name of the Sarasvati-Dṛṣadvatī doab. 68 The name is also applied to a landing ghat on the Ganges at Bithur in the district of Kanpur which is known as Brahmavarta Tirtha. 69 Since Saunaka is connected with the Kurus Brahmavarta of the Kurus is meant here. The region was well known for the performance of Sattras in the Naimiṣa forest 70 and along the holy rivers Sarasvati and Dṛṣadvatī. 71

### 6. Itihāsa Upanişad :

ॐ वृषादिवकुलं ह वै शिविकुलं बभूव । तस्यायिमितिहासः कुलविद्या बभूव । तद्यो ह स्मेममधीते स ह स्मै राजा भवति । स किञ्चित्प्राप्या-न्तिहितः । सोऽज्ञवीत् । यो मामितिहासं ग्राहयेत् । वरमस्मै दद्यामिति ।...

Vṛṣādarvi's family belonged to the Sıbi tribe. Their family specialised in the study of history.

Sibis have been identified with the Sibois of the Greek historians 72 and the Sivas of the Rgveda.73 They were also called Müjavatas on account of abundant growth of Munja grass. They occupied the areas of Jind, Hisar and Sirsa in the narrowing doab of the rivers Sarasvati and Drsadvati extending down to their confluence and formed a part of Kurukşetra.74

### 7. Chāgaleya Upanisad:

- ॐ ऋषयो वै सरस्वत्यां सत्रमासत । तेऽथ कवषमैलूषं दास्याःपुत्र इति दीक्षाया आच्छिदन्। ते होचु:। अप वा एतदृग्यजुषादप साम्न इति। स होवाच । भगवन्तो यदिदं सत्रमाध्वै यद्चोऽधीध्वै यद्यजूषि यत्सामानि कस्यायं महिमेति । ते होचुर्बाह्मणा वाव समस्तेषामेविमिति ।
- स होवाच । नैमिषेऽमी जूनकाः सत्रमासत । . . . iii.
- क्रक्षेत्र एवोपसमेत्य ये बालिशास्तानुपाध्वै । . . . iv. ते ह तत एवोपसमेत्य कुरुक्षेत्रमुपजग्मुः।... कुरुक्षेत्रमध्यासत इति।

The sacred Sarasvatt is again presented here as a venue of a sacrificial session by the Rsis. Kavasa is a prominent Vedic seer. He is mentioned in a hymn of the Rgveda75 while the Anukramani attributes to him the authorship of several hymns of the Rgveda including X.32 and X.33 which deal with prince Kuruśravana and his descendant Upamaśravas.76 According to Zimmer Kavaşa was the Purohita of the joint tribes named Vaikarna who comprised the Kuru-Pañcalas.77 Our passage follows the Aitareya Brāhmana78 in describing Kavasa Ailūsa as a Brahmana born of a female slave who was reproached on this ground by the other Rşis. The passages also mention Naimişa as the venue of a sacrificial session of the descendants of Saunaka. Kuruksetra too has been repeatedly mentioned which supports the location of Naimisa in Kuruksetra. In the Aitareya Brahmana the Rsis expel Kavaşa in the desert away from the bank of the Sarasvati in the hope that he would die of thirst. Kavaşa however sees the Aponaptriya hymn as a result of which the waters of the Sarasvati burst forth all around him and he is saved. The spot where the waters of the Sarasvatt surround him is named in the Aitareya Brāhmana as Parisaraka which probably is later known as the Saraka Tirtha.79

Incidentally it suggests that the Aitareya Brahmana belongs to a date after the desiccation of the Sarasvati. The Satra was thus in all probability performed by the Rsis somewhere in the region of Vinasana and Parisaraka or Saraka should also be located there, and not near Kaithal.80

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8. Jābāladarsana Upanisad:

iv. 49:

कुरुक्षेत्रं कुचस्थाने प्रयागं हत्सरोरुहे। चिदम्बरं तु हन्मध्ये आधारे कमलालयम्।।

The verse visualises parts of human body as Tirthas and attributes Kurukșetra to Kucasthâna or the region of the breasts. The idea is that the body is itself
a Tirtha and it is more important to keep it pure and clean. The next verse<sup>81</sup>
declares that a person looking for Tirthas outside his own person is like one
looking for pieces of glass after discarding the jewel in his own hand.

9. Śiva Upanişad:

vi. 189.

श्रीपर्वते महाकाले वाराणस्यां महालये। जल्पेश्वरे कुरुक्षेत्रे केदारे मण्डलेश्वरे॥

Kuruksetra is here counted among Sivaksetras where in case of death one attains the world of Siva (Sivaloka).

The information available from the material before us throws welcome light, among other things, on the sanctity of the Kurus or Kurukşetra, their political supremacy, their relations with neighbouring states, munificence and spiritual leanings of enlightened rulers of the age, natural calamities and political reverses suffered by them and their people, the erudition, philosophical wisdom and debating skill of contemporary sages for which they were held in great esteem and popularity of metaphysical discussions.

These are the references relating to the Kurus which we have noticed in the Upanişads. Identical or almost identical passages occurring in more than one text or at more than one place in the same text have been reproduced only once with all relevant citations. Learned readers are requested to take the trouble of drawing our attention to any reference that might have been left unnoticed.

#### Notes and References

- 1. Vāmana Purāna, Cr. ed., Anand Swarup Gupta, Varanasi 1967, Sm., 22.34:
  - ः यस्मिन् स्थाने स्थितं ह्यण्डं तस्मिन् सन्निहितं सरः।
- 2. Mahābhārata, Poona, Cr. ed., Śalya, 39.35:

ससर्ज यत्र भगवाँ लोकान् लोकपितामहः।

Vāmana Purāņa, Sm., 18, 21-22:

• • • पथदकं समाश्रित्य सरस्वत्यास्तटे स्थितः ॥ चातर्वर्ण्यस्य सुष्टयर्थमात्मज्ञानपरोऽभवत् । . . .

4. Bhagavata Purana, Ed. Prof. J.L. Shastri, First ed. Delhi 1983, III. 21.6:

प्रजाः सुजेति भगवान कर्दमो ब्रह्मणोदितः । सरस्वत्यां तपस्तेपे सहस्राणां समा दश ।।

5. Manusmrti, II.17:

सरस्वतीदषद्वत्योर्देवनद्योर्यंदन्तरम् । तं देवनिमितं देशं ब्रह्मावतं प्रचक्षते ॥

- 6. See for example Keith A.B., The Veda of the Black Yajus School, Second issue Delhi 1967, Introduction, p. XCIII and Winternitz M., History of Indian Literature, Vol. I, Reprint, Delhi 1987, p. 196.
- 7. Satapatha Brāhmana (SB), xiii. 5.4.23:

महदद्य भरतानान्न पूर्वे नापरे जनाः। दिव मर्त्यंऽइव पक्षाभ्यान्नोदापुः सप्तमानवा ऽ इति ।

8. viii. 1.1:

तेषां करक्षेत्रं वेदिरासीत, तस्यै खाण्डवो दक्षिणार्धं आसीत्, तूर्व्नमुत्तरार्धः, परिणज्जधनार्धः, मरवः उत्करः ....।

9. Kane P.V., History of the Dharmasastra, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1973, Vol. IV, p. 681. Also Dey N.L., The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India, 3rd ed., New Delhi 1971, p. 194.

10. Bharadwaj, O.P., Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India (Studies), Delhi 1986, p. 23.

11. ix. 5.2.15.

अथ ह स्म आह शाण्डित्य:। तुरो ह कावषेयः कारोत्यां देवेभ्योऽग्नि चिकाय . . . ।

12. "कुरुभूमिजाः जनाः स्थानेश्वरे निवसन्ति" See Ajay Mitra Shastri, India as seen in the Brhatsamhitā of Varāhamihira, Delhi 1969, p.85.

- 13. Ibid.
- 14. Ibid.

15. Studies, p. 159 f.

16. Winternitz, M., op. cit., p. 216.

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- 17. Ibid., p. 217 f.
- 18. X. 3.5.12:

## तस्य वा एतस्य यजुषो रस एव उपनिषद् ।

19. Winternitz, op. cit., p. 221 f.

 Dasgupta S.N., A History of Indian Philosophy, Five Volumes 1st Indian Edition, Delhi 1975, Vol. I, p. 28.

 For Sanskrit text and English translation of the Upanişads following works have been used in this study:

(i) Shastri J.L. ed., Upanisatsangrahah, Reprint, Delhi 1980.

- (ii) Deusen Paul, Sixty Upanişads of the Veda, Translated from German by Bedekar and Palsule, Two volumes, First ed., Delhi 1980.
- (iii) Roer E., The Twelve Principal Upanişads, Text in Devanagari and tr. and notes in English. Three volumes, Adyar 1931.
- (iv) Limaye and Valekar, Eighteen Principal Upanisads, Vol. I, Poona 1958.
- 22. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 473.
- 23. Vedic Index, Vol. II, p. 189.
- 24. i. 16.3:

आजहाराश्वमेधांस्त्रीन् गंगायां भूरिदक्षिणान्। शारद्वतं गुरुं कृत्वा देवा यत्राक्षगोचराः॥

25. Aitareya Brāhmana, VIII. 21:

एतेन ह वा ऐन्द्रेण महाभिषेकेण तुरः कावषेयो जनमेजयं पारिक्षितम-भिषिषेच, तस्मादु जनमेजयः पारिक्षितः समन्तं सर्वतः पृथिवी जयन् परीयायाश्वेन च मेध्येनेजे ॥

- 26. SB., XIII. 5.4. 1-3:
- 27. Studies, p. 195.
- 28. Ibid., p. 116 ff.
- 29. Ibid., p. 20 ff.
- 30. See No. 8 supra.
- 31. Mbh., Śalya, 37.1:

शूद्राभीरान् प्रति द्वेषाद्यत्र नच्टा सरस्वती।

32. Mbh., Vana, 130, 3-4;

एषा सरस्वती रम्या दिव्या चोघवती नदी। एतद् विनशनं नाम सरस्वत्या विशाम्पते॥ द्वारं निषाद राष्ट्रस्य येषां द्वेषात् सरस्वती। प्रविष्टा पृथिवीं वोर मा निषादा हि मां विद्ः॥

33. XI. 6.3.3.

34. III. 2.1.6.

- 35. VII. 16; VIII. 1.11.
- 36. Siddheśvarashastri Citrava, Practna Caritrakośa, Poona 1964, p. 956.
- 37. Cf. Vedic Index, Vol. II, p. 360 f.
- 38. SB., XI. 4.1. 1-2:

# · · · उदीच्यानां ब्राह्मणान्भीविवेद ।१। कौरुपाञ्चालो व। अयम्ब्रह्मा ब्रह्मपुत्रः । यद्वं नोऽयमदंत्र पर्याददीत . . . ।

- Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 166.
- 40. Ed. Limaye and Valekar, Vol. I, p. 79.
- 41. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 104.
- 42. e.g. Atharva-Veda, V. 22.4; 5; 8; Jaiminiya Brāhmana, i. 234; SB., (Kānvīya r. c.) iv. 2.3.10; Jaiminīya Upanişad Brāhmana, iii. 40.2; Baudhāyana Srauta Sūtra, ii. 5.
- 43. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 27.
- 44. I. 59.1; III. 1.21; II. 2.13.
- 45. X. 5.7; XIV. 1.12; 15.
- 46. III. 1.56.
- 47. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 396.
- 48. Mitra and Cowell, Vol. III, p. 149.
- 49. Vol. I, p. 166 ff.
- 50. XV. 16. 12-13.
- 51. Ed. Raghu Vira and Lokesh Chandra, Nagpur 1954, II. 206.
- 52. III. 82.
- 53. Adi., 94, 37-38.
- 54. Vana, 16.1.
- 55. Salva, 20. 1-4.
- 56. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 87.
- 57. Práctna Caritra Kośa, p. 85.
- 58. Adi., 182.2.
- 58a. 26.5.
- 58b. Studies, pp. 129-137.
- 58c. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 363.
- 58d. Rgveda, vi. 31.1.
- 58e. RV., vi. 61.1.
- 58f. iii. 245:

# क्षत्रं वे प्रातदंनं दाशराज्ञे दश राजानः पर्ययतन्त मानुषे ।

- 58g. Ram Gopal, "A New Interpretation of the Vedic word Manusa," Journal of the Ganganatha Jha Research Institute, Vol. XVII, pts. 3-4, pp. 193-202.
- 58h. Mbh., Anusasana, XXX. 16 and 30. Also see Bhargava, P.L., India in the Vedic Age, pp. 59, 79.

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- 59. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 226.
- 60. II. 1.1.
- 61. Kāṇva rec., IV. 6.2.
- 62. I. 7.3.
- 63. I. 3.12; III. 13.
- 64. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 226.
- 65. Vol. II, p. 757.
- 66. V, 20.
- 67. 1.1.
- 68. Manusmrti, II. 17.
- 69. Dey, op. cit., p. 40.
- 70. Studies, p. 129 ff.
- 71. Ibid., p. 35, N. 14.
- 72. Ibid., p. 251, N. 200.
- 73. Ibid., p. 251, N. 196.
- 74. Ibid., p. 210 ff.
- 75. Rgveda, VII. 18.12.
- 76. Vedic Index, Vol. I, p. 143.
- 77. Ibid.
- 78. II. 19.
- 79. Mbh., Vana, 83.75; 76; 81 and Vamana P., Sm., 15.18 ff.
- 80. A.S.I. Vol. XIV, p. 104.
- 81. IV. 50.

### BUDDHA'S SERMONS IN KURUKŞETRA

According to the Atthakathā (Manoratha-pūraṇī) of the Anguttara Nikāya and the Buddhavamsa Atthakathā (Madhuratthavilāsinī) Gautama Buddha renounced the world at the age of 29 years. During the next nine years he performed austere penance and attained Buddhahood. For 46 years thereafter he travelled from state to state, town to town and village to village propagating the faith and sojourning at any one place only during the rainy season.

Although the part of the country nearer home naturally claimed more of his time and attention he took trouble to visit even remote areas some of which, like the Uttara Kurus,<sup>2</sup> were by no means easy of access. Kuruksetra, the ancient land of the Kurus was also favoured with several visits. The *Bhaişajyavastu* in the *Vinaya* of the *Mūlasarvāstivādins*, which is known to have come into existence probably by the second or first century B.C.<sup>3</sup> describes a long journey of the Buddha in the company of Ānanda. In this tour Buddha went from Hastināpura through Mahānagara, Srughna, Brāhmanagrāma and Kālanagara to Rohitaka where he summoned the Yakṣa Vajrapāṇi and travelled with him to the north-west through Gandhāra as far as Uḍḍiyāna and back.<sup>4</sup> Other towns like Bhadrankara,<sup>5</sup> Kammāsadamma<sup>6</sup> and Thullakoṭṭhita<sup>7</sup> were also visited by him during journeys undertaken on different occasions.

Although by the time of the Buddha, the age of political ascendancy of the Kurus was past they still enjoyed considerable prestige culturally. The Kuru janapada is named in the Anguttara Nikāya among the sixteen mahājanapadas or

prominent states of Jambūdvīpa, having abundant food and wealth and the seven kinds of gems. It was 8000 yojanas in extent and divided into two portions, Uttarakuru and Dakṣiṇakuru. The King of the Kurus is named as Dhanañjaya Koravya who ruled from Indraprastha and belonged to Yudhiṭṭhila gotta or the family of Yudhiṣṭhira, the eldest of the Pāṇḍavas. The elimate was agreeable and food was rich. The people, therefore, enjoyed good health physically as well as mentally and were always ready to receive instruction in profound religious truths. The Bhikṣus, Bhikṣuṇīs and the Upāsakas and Upāsikās, all conducted themselves in the spirit of Smṛtiprasthāna. The talk of the domestic servants and labourers revolved around it; so much so that even at the village wells and weaving centres none indulged in idle gossip."

Buddhist literature is, indeed, full of stories in which the land of the Kurus and its people and princes play a leading part. 12 Bodhisattva is born to the chief queen of the Kuru king Dhanañjaya in his capital city of Indapatta. On coming to the throne the Bodhisattva along with his family and officials adopts and obeys the Kurudhamma which consisted in the observance of the Five Sīlas or rules of moral conduct and possessed the mystic virtue of ushering prosperity in a country where it was practised. 13 This established idea of righteousness prevailing among the Kuru people is made explicit again and again. In the Mahāvastu, for instance, the Kuru prince Sudhanu praises morality and non-violence, whereas Asṭamaka, another Kuru King shows his concern for the next world. Yet another Kuru King Mahendra dedicates his life to wait upon a Buddha. The story of King Dhanañjaya and his wise minister Vidhura Pandita finds repeated mention in the Jātakas.

It has been well observed that it is this fame of the Kurus that is reflected in the traditional belief that men of Uttarakuru are virtuous by nature. And the great esteem accorded to Kurudhamma in Buddhism reminds us of Manu's statement that the moral values evolved in this land are worthy of emulation by humanity all over the world. Penetration into this acknowledged stronghold of Brahmanism must have posed a challenge to the zealous Redeemer and he did not ignore it. How far he succeeded in winning over the people of Kuruksetra and inducing them to look for enlightenment in Buddhism need not detain us here. We have examined it briefly elsewhere. Here we propose to take note of the Suttas or sermons delivered by the Buddha among the Kurus.

The Buddha visited at least nine cities of Kuruksetra, namely Hastināpura, Mahānagara, Srughna, Brāhmanagrāma, Kālanagara, Rohitaka, Bhadrankara, Thullakouhita and Kammāsadamma. The towns of Hastināpura and Rohitaka are well known. So is the identification of Srughna with the village of Sugh near Jagadhari in district Ambala.<sup>17</sup> Of the remaining names Mahānagara has been equated with Indapatta or Indraprastha as suggested by the arrangement of the place names in Buddha's journey described in the Bhaisajyavastu. The site of the

ancient town has been located and excavated near the Old Fort in New Delhi leading to the discovery of Painted Grey Ware. 18 The Brahmanagrama of the Vinaya appears to be identical with the town named Thuna which has also been described as a Brahmanagrama and located on the western boundary of Madhya Desa in the Mahāvagga19 and the Divyāvadāna.20 We have identified this town with Tohana, Tausayana of Pānini,21 which presents a close linguistic similarity with it. It can also be said roughly to be located on the western boundary of the Madhya Desa and eminently fits into the route taken by the Buddha. Kalanagara meets the location of the present town of Kalanaur which lies 12 miles west of Rohtak on the road to Bhiwani.

Bhaisajyavastu22 gives a detailed account of the conversion by the Buddha of the Grhapati Mendhaka of Bhadrankara, capital of the republic of the same name. An almost identical version of this account finds place in the Divyavadana.23 Bhadrankara has been equated with Bhadrakara, one of the Salva group of tribes. The town proper, apparently their capital, was located on the outskirts of the Madhya Deśa and answers to the situation of the present town of Bhakra on the eastern bank of the Sutlej where the well known Bhakra Dam has been built.24 The name Thullakotthita still survives in the name of the twin village of Thol Kurdi on the road leading from Ambala City to Thanesar-Kuruksetra via Jhansa. It is a big village overlooked by a huge mound, now almost completely croded, and enjoys considerable prestige in rural areas of the region. It is a Painted Grey Ware site25 and an ancient trade-route probably passed through it to Thanesar. This important town was the seat of the contemporary Kauravya King. He had a beautiful garden named Migacira nearby. It was a prosperous market-place surrounded by rich and fertile country, plentiful in grains which kept the stores of the inhabitants always full, thereby earning it the name Thullako thita as explained by Buddhaghosa.26 The name is also spelt as Sthūlakosthaka and Thullakatthika.28

Kammasadamma, a celebrated trade centre was visited by the Buddha more than once. It was the residence of the nuns Nanduttara and Nittakalika.29 The name is spelt as Kalmasadamya in the Divyāvadāna30 and Buddhacarita but the Jātakas mention two names of Cullakammāsadamma<sup>32</sup> and Mahākammāsadamma<sup>33</sup> of which the former was in Kampilla and the latter in the Kurus.34 According to the Jayaddisa Jātaka35 the town came to be known as Kammasadamma because at this place the Bodhisattva, once born as a son of Jayaddisa of Kampilla, subdued his other son called Kammasapada, on account of a wound (Kammasa) on his foot (pada), who had turned into a cannibal due to evil influence of a Yakşini. In the Mahāsutasoma Jātaka, the name is attributed to the taming of Kalmāşapāda Yakşa here by Bodhisattva born as Sutasoma.36 A similar explanation is offered by Buddhaghoşa37 who gives the name as Kammasadamma which originated from the initiation of the demon Kammasa into Kurudhamma, the celebrated faith of the Kuru people.

In view of the tradition connecting Kalmāṣapāda with it the original Sanskrit name was in all probability Kalmāṣadhāma, an abbreviated form of Kalmāṣapādadhāma or Kalmāṣadamana from Kalmāṣapādadamana. Even the Sanskrit form Kalmāṣadamya would not make much of a difference phonetically. Mitrasaha Kalmāṣapāda and his father Sudāsa are connected with Vasiṣtha and Viśvāmitra³ who, according to the Mahābhārata, had their hermitages on the Sarasvati, the former on its left bank near Sthāņu tirtha on the north east of Thanesar ³ and the latter on its right bank further down near Prthūdaka or Pehowa. On all these considerations Kammāsadamma has been identified with village Kamoda situated 29°.55′N and 70°.40′E about 15 kms. from Thanesar on the road to Kaithal not very far from the Prāci-Sarasvati. Local tradition associates the town with the Pāṇdavas and the name makes a reasonably plausible phonetic equation with its Sanskrit and Pāli originals. 42

Of these towns visited by the Buddha only the last two are material for our purpose. It was in these two towns that some of his most profound discourses, compiled in the four Nikâyas, were delivered. Nine discourses in all were delivered, one at Thullakotthita by Ratthapâla and eight at Kammāsadamma by the Buddha himself. These towns have been called Nigamas, or market towns, which were, as a rule, situated on trade-routes and their important confluences. According to Moti Chandra Nigama was the city of bankers. It was of two categories, Sāngrahika and Asāngrahika. The former did the business of pledging the goods and deposits and the second, besides doing banking business, could also do other business. Thullakotthita and Kammāsadamma were therefore important banking towns and trade centres regularly visited by a large number of people, not only from the neighbouring townships but also from distant places. Evidently they were chosen for the Buddha's visits with the idea that a large number of people from all sections of society would come into contact with his message.

A very brief resume of each discourse is given below mainly from Malalasekera's Dictionary of Pāli proper names. For the sake of convenience reference to the text of the Suttas as published by the Pāli Publication Board, Bihar and their English translation published by the Pāli Text Society, London is also added.

### (a) Suttas delivered at Kammasadamma

#### (i) Mahānidāna Sutta45

This discourse occurs in the Digha Nikāya and was preached to Ānanda. Ānanda thought that he had clearly understood the doctrine of events as arising from causes and it looked deep only in appearance. The Buddha warns him that it was not so and proceeds to expound in detail the Paticcasamuppāda or the Chain of Causation as it was called later, explaining how each link in the chain of Samsāra is both the effect of one factor and the cause of another. The Buddha then goes on to discuss the idea of "Soul," the seven resting places of cognition (Viñāānatthiti), the two spheres (Āyatana), and the eight kinds of deliverance (Vimokkha).

#### (ii) Mahasatipatthana Sutta46

This discourse also occurs in the Dīgha Nikāya. Buddha explains to the monks that the one and the only path leading to Nibbāna is that of the Four Bases of Mindfulness. These, in brief, are the four ways of directing the mind to the impurities and the impermanency of the body: (1) Kāya, physical structure and activities; (2) Vedanā, the emotional nature, first as bare feeling, then as having ethical implications; (3) Citta, conscious life or intelligence, considered under ethical aspects; (4) Dhamma, considered under the five hindrances; the five groups (khandhas), the six spheres of sense, the seven bojjhangas, and the four Ariyan Truths.

According to Malalasekera this Sutta is considered as one of the most important in the Buddhist Canon. It has been translated into various languages, and several commentaries on it are in existence. Its mere recital is said to ward off dangers and to bring happiness, and it is the desire of every Buddhist that he should die with the Satipatthāna Sutta on his lips, or, at least, with the sound of it in his ears.

#### (iii) Satipaţţhāna Sutta47

This discourse occurs as the tenth Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya. Like the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya it was addressed by the Buddha to the monks. The two Suttas are identical except that the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna contains towards the end, additional paragraphs explaining in detail the Four Noble Truths. This additional portion forms a separate Sutta, the Sacca Vibhanga Sutta in the Majjhima Nikāya.

#### (iv) Māgaņdiya Sutta48

Forming a part of the Majjhima Nikāya this discourse contains the Buddha's address to the Paribbājaka Māgandiya. The discourse is provoked by Māgandiya's observation that the Buddha is a repressionist (Bhunahu) Buddha denies this saying that he teaches only the subjugation of the senses. Knowing their origin and their cessation he has discarded all craving after them and dwells with his heart at peace. He then relates how, in his youth, he had enjoyed the greatest and most luxurious kinds of sensuous pleasures and had renounced them. He could no more crave for them than a leper, cured of his disease, craves for his old sores. Both the Buddha and teachers of other persuasions are convinced that health is the greatest boon and Nibbāna the highest bliss. But the Buddha's conception of health and Nibbāna

differs from that of other teachers. Their knowledge is as that of a blind man, taken on trust.

Magandiya listens and is convinced. He enters the Order and becomes an arabant.

### (v) Āņañjasappāya Sutta49

This discourse from the Majjhima Nikāya was preached by the Buddha to the monks, with Ānanda at their head. It deals with real Permanence  $(\bar{a}na\bar{n}jasap-p\bar{a}ya)$  and with the various ways of meditating on impassibility and the attainments and true release. True Deathlessness is only the heart's deliverance  $(anup\bar{a}d\bar{a}cittassa\ vimokkh\bar{a})$ , and there are several stages of the paths that lead to it.

Buddhaghoşa says that this Sutta describes the arahantship of the Sukkhavipassakā. Arahantship is mentioned in nine different connections in the Sutta, which is therefore praised as being well-taught (sukathitam).

### (vi) Nidāna Sutta50

This discourse, contained in the Samyutta Nikāya, was addressed to Ānanda by the Buddha. As in the Mahānidāna Sutta Ānanda tells Buddha that although the Paţiccasamuppāda is so deep, yet, to him, it is so plane. The Buddha warns him against such an idea, because all Samsāra is due to lack of understanding of the Causal Law.

According to Malalasekera this Sutta was probably called the Cülanidāna Sutta as opposed to Mahānidāna Sutta.

#### (vii) Sammasa Sutta51

This discourse, forming a part of the Samyutta Nikāya, was delivered by the Buddha to the monks. On the request of Ānanda, the Buddha explains to the monks that whosoever in former times, or in future times, or now, whether they be recluses or Brahmins, look upon whatever in the world seems lovely and pleasing as impermanent, as suffering, as not good, as disease, as danger, they put off craving, substance, and suffering. They are liberated from ill.

#### (viii) Ariyavasā Sutta52

This discourse occurs in the Anguttara Nikaya. The Buddha addresses the monks on the ten ways of Ariyan Living according to which Ariyans have lived, do live and shall live. He thus defines the stages when a monk has abandoned Five Factors, is possessed of Six Factors, guards One Factor, has observed Four Bases, has shaken off individual belief, has utterly given up longings, when his thoughts are unclouded, his body-complex tranquillized, he is well released, well released by insight.

#### (b) Sutta delivered at Thullakotthita

Ratthapāla Sutta53

Only one discourse, again from the Majjhima Nikāya, was delivered at Thullakoṭṭhita, not by the Buddha but by Raṭṭhapāla, son of a wealthy councillor, to the Kuru King. It gives an account of Raṭṭhapāla's admission into the Order, his visits to his parents after attaining Arahantship, and his conversation with the Kuru king in the latter's Deer Park. This last conversation forms the chief theme of the discourse.

The king asks Ratthapāla why he left his house when he suffers neither from old age, failing health, poverty, nor death of kinsfolk. Ratthapāla answers that his reason for leaving it was his conviction of the truth of the four propositions enunciated by the Buddha (cattāro dhannaddesā) that the world (1) is in a state of continual flux and change; (2) there is no protector or preserver; (3) in it, we own nothing, but must leave all behind us; (4) it lacks and hankers, being enslaved by craving. He explains the meaning of these statements to the satisfaction of the king and summarises his statements in a series of stanzas.

This Sutta is mentioned as an example of a discourse in which the rūpakammaṭṭhāna is given first, leading on through Vedanā to the arūpakammaṭṭhāna.54

Rāhula Sānkrityāyana<sup>55</sup> erroneously mentions one more discourse, namely the *Mahāsakuludāyī* as delivered in the Kurus at Kammāsadamma. Actually this discourse of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, was delivered at Rājagrha.<sup>56</sup>

The people of the Kurus had a reputation for deep wisdom and good health which is said to have prompted the Buddha to deliver his Suttas here.<sup>57</sup> Indeed it was considered a compliment to the intellectual calibre of the Kurus of Kammāsadamma that Buddha taught them Suttas like the Satipaṭṭhāna, the Mahānidāna and the Sammasa.<sup>58</sup>

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- 39. Śalya 42.4:

# आश्रमो वै वसिष्ठस्य स्थाण्तीर्थेऽभवन् महान्। पूर्वतः पार्श्वतश्चासीत विश्वामित्रस्य धीमतः ॥

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### KURUKŞETRA AND VIŞNU'S INCARNATIONS

The land known by the name of Kuruksetra in early Sanskrit literature was slightly more extensive than the present state of Haryana. It has been described in the Taittiriya Āranyaka¹ as having Khāndava² or the region around Delhi as its southern half, Tūrghna or Srughna,³ the region around the present site of Sugh near Jagadhari as its northern half and Parinat⁴ or the country comprising the lower part of the Sarasvatī Dṛṣadvatī doab extending upto Vinaśana as its lower half. The Vedic Sarasvatī is to be identified with the present river Ghaggar⁵ while the old bed of the Vedic Dṛṣadvatī is now occupied by the Western Jumna Canal.⁶ The name Vinaśana was used for the desert areas around the well known Harappan site of Kalibangan where the Sarasvatī came to lose itself in the later Vedic age.⊓

This geographical definition of Kurukşetra visualises it as the Vedi adopted by the gods for performing a sacrifice. The repeated occurrence in Vedic literature of references describing Kurukşetra as a sacrificial altar of gods<sup>8</sup> gives an idea of the great sanctity attached to this region from the earliest times. Some of these references even name individual gods as undertaking sacrificial sessions here. The Maitrāyani Samhitā,<sup>9</sup> for instance, speaks of a sacrifice performed in Kurukşetra by gods generally and by Agni, Soma, Indra, Makha and Vāyu specifically. As a matter of fact the region was so closely associated with divinities that it was designated as Devayajana or the place selected by gods for performing sacrifices<sup>10</sup> and later its heartland, comprising the Sarasvati-Dṛṣadvatī doab, came to be known as "the land fashioned by gods." 11

Prajāpati, who held an important position in the Vedic Pantheon<sup>12</sup> and rose to be the chief of deities in the Brahmanas, 13 is said to have adopted Kuruksetra as the Uttaravedi of His sacrificial altar. 14 His intimate association with the land is evident from names like Brahmavarta, 15 Brahmavedi, 16 Brahmaksetra 17 and Brahmasara18 later associated with this region. However, the links of Visnu with this land are also equally remote even if in the beginning, apparently less intimate. Later works like the Mahabharata and the Vamana Purana, which glorify Kuruksetra, clearly reflect an increase in the popularity of Visnu. This was the logical outcome of a process which had started in the Vedic age itself.

Actually Visnu's rise to supremacy began very early. He is already presented in the Rgveda as a leader in battle19 and his greatness is inconceivable.20 He and Indra are looked upon as "Masters of the World."21 He is called the germ of sacrifice,22 innocuous and bountiful,23 a generous protector24 and the efficacious protector of the embryos.25 Dandekar26 believes that Visnu must have been a highly worshipped god even in very ancient times and was deliberately shoved into the background in the Vedic religion on account of some intrinsic characteristics of his essential nature which might have been disagreeable to the Vedic religious ideology. His later emergence as supreme god was merely a legitimately recognised come back. In the Aitareya Brāhmana27 we find Agni described as the lowest among the gods and Visnu as the highest. The Satapatha Brahmana28 and the Taittiriya Āranyaka<sup>29</sup> speak of a sacrificial session held by the gods for the attainment of splendour, glory and food. They proposed to themselves that, he amongst them, who by his deeds reached the end of the sacrifice before the others, should attain the highest place among them all. Visnu reaches the end before the others, and becomes the highest of the gods. Therefore, they say that Visnu is the highest of the gods. Prof. Keith30 is of the view that Visnu's constant identification with sacrifice was the most important factor in his elevation to the rank of the highest god. It is to be noted that the venue of this sacrificial session at which Visnu earned supremacy over all other gods was Kurukşetra itself.

By the time of the Epics and the Puranas Visnu's supremacy had already been established. He is equated with the ultimate Brahma in later Upanisads.31 In Kurukşetra a number of tırthas like Krtasauca, 32 Vişnupada, 33 Anaraka, 34 Vişnuloka, 35 Gokarna, 36 Kotitirtha, 37 Kulottarana, 38 Satata 39 and Salagrama 40 are connected with his worship. The Vamana Purana41 also gives a list of places of Vaisnava affiliation which were centres of Bhagavata worship and therefore sacred to Vamana. V.S. Agrawala42 calls these places Visnupithas on the anology of Saktapuhas. More than a dozen of these spots are located in Kuruksetra or Kuru Janapada which had a wider geographical connotation. 43 They include Manasa, 44 Kausikī, 45 Hastināpura, Kālindī, Varāhatīrtha, 46 Kuruk etra, Krtasauca, 47 Madhuvana, 48 Kurujāngala, 49 Saravana, 50 Plaks ivatarana, 51 Yamunātata, 52 Trivistapa 53 and Sankukarna. 54 Evidently Visnu worship was quite popular in the region. With

this background it would be interesting to trace the association of Visnu's incarnations with Kuruksetra.

It is not necessary for our purpose to make more than a passing reference to the doctrine of incarnation or its origin and development. According to a popular verse of Śrimad Bhagavadgītā55 an incarnation takes place "for the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness from age to age." One or the other of these three situations can provide the raison d'etre for every incarnation. As to the origin of the doctrine, like much else in Hindu religion and philosophy, it has been traced to the Rgveda itself.56 Reference is made in this regard to Visnu's capacity to assume different forms and his taking three strides for the deliverance of mankind in distress.57

There are several categories of incarnations. The Brahmavaivarta Purana58 mentions five namely (i) Pūroa avatāra (ii) Amsāvatāra (iii) Kalavatāra (iv) Kalamśāvatāra and (v) Vibhūti. The Bhāgavata Purāna59 names three: Amsa, Kalā and Vibhūti. They are born of a part, aspect or grace etc. of Visnu. Vyūha is another kind of manifestation noted in the Bhagavata Purana.60 It is connected with creation or cosmological activities as against an Avatāra or Vibhava which is said to be concerned with Divine sport with the individual souls. The Avataras vary in their number as well as order. They have been differently placed at six,61 ten,62 twelve,63 sixteen,64 twenty two,65 twenty three66 and finally said to be innumerable. 67 Hopkins 68 accepts only seven as original namely the Boar, Tortoise, Man-lion, Dwarf, Fish, Rama and Krsoa. The number of ten however gained general acceptance and was already recognised in the Mahabharata69 in the following order; the Matsya or Fish, the Kurma or Tortoise, the Varaha or Boar, the Nṛṣimha or Man-lion, the Vāmana or Dwarf, Paraśurāma, Rāma Dāśarathi, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki. It received its popular sanction perhaps long before the end of the 12th century A.D. as the Daśāvatāra stotra in the Gitagovinda of Jayadeva shows.

We shall therefore adopt this list and take up each incarnation separately to ascertain the extent of his association with Kuruksetra.

### 1. Matsya

Vișnu became a Fish to save Manu Vaivasvata, the progenitor of the human race, from the universal deluge.

The story of the Deluge of the Great Flood is known to most of the ancient civilisations of the world in one form or the other.71 In Indian literature it first appears to be alluded to in the Atharvaveda which refers to a site called Navaprabhramsana or 'abandoning of the ship,' on a Himalayan peak where Manu Vaivasvata is supposed to have fastened the boat that saved him during the Great Flood. The Satapatha Brāhmana<sup>72</sup> presents the first clear Indian account of the Deluge in which Manu is fore-warned by a fish and then his boat steered to safety from the catastrophe that destroys all other beings. Here the site where he disembarks finds mention as Manoravasarpana or 'Manu's descent' and is said to be located on the Uttaragiri or "Northern mountain" i.e. the Himalayas. At the time of the composition of Mahābhārata73 it was known as "Naubandhana" or "the place of fastening of the ship."

The story occurs in the Puranas too. Here the Bhagavata, 74 the Matsya 75 and the Agni76 shift the scene of the Great Flood to the South. They however carry a much later and modified version which cannot get preference over older and more reliable texts. The Nılamata Purana77 is more specific in naming Naubandhana as the mountain peak where Visnu, in the form of Fish, tied the boat containing the seeds of all beings and describing it as the middle one of a group of three peaks, associated with Siva and having to its north and south, peaks named after Brahmā and Vişnu respectively.78 The three peaks lie to the west of Banahal. Naubandhana, with its height of 15,523 feet79 is the westernmost and highest of them 80

This identification of Naubandhana is however, untenable for two reasons. First, most of the geographical names of Kashmir, as found in the Nılamata Purana have been borrowed from other parts of India. It has been rightly observed that the beautiful spots in Kashmir were named by visitors after the favourite tirthas of their home states.81 This is conclusively proved by the existence in Kashmir of names like Prayaga, Ganga, Godavari, Puskara. Vasisthasrama Bhrgutunga, Pandavatirtha, Mandakini, Vaitarant, Apaga, Rsikulya, Sarasvati, Ramahrada, Varaha tirtha, Koti tirtha and Cakra tirtha etc. As a matter of fact, this has been acknowledged in the text of Nilamata Purana itself.82 The source of much of the nomenclature given in the Nılamata Purana, which is a late work of the sixth or seventh century A.D.83 is thus to be found outside Kashmir and Naubandhana is no exception.

Second, according to the Atharvaveda<sup>84</sup> Navaprabhramsana was situated on a peak of the Himalayas where the Kustha (Aucklindia Costus) and the Soma plants grew and the Asvattha tree (Ficus Religiosa) was also found. This is not applicable in case of the mountain peak in Kashmir which is too high to permit growth or cultivation of these flora. 85

Three, there is ample evidence in the Epics and the Puranas which places the scene of the Great Flood in the valley of the Vedic Sarasvatt and the mountains where its source lay.86 The mountain peak that fits in this situation is now called Nahan where Kustha, Soma and Aśvattha could grow, as it is only about 3800 feet high.87 It lies to the west of Gangadvara as described in the Kalika Purana88 and can be rightly called the Uttaragiri with Brahmavarta, the valley of the Sarasvati and the heart of Kurukşetra, also called the country of Manu, at its feet. Furthermore it meets the description in the Kulanta-pitha Mahatmya of a mountain called Bandhana as lying to south of Kulanta-pitha or Kullu. Finally, the present name Nahan can be explained most appropriately as a corruption of Naubandhana in its linguistic evolution through stages like Naubandhana-Nauandhana-Nadhana-Nahan.

The identification of Naubandhana with Nahan which, although a part of Himachal Pradesh now, was, in all probability, included in the northern portion of Kurukşetra, convincingly associates the Matsya incarnation with Kurukşetra.

This finds support from the Puranic texts. The Vişnu Purana, 92 for instance, describes Vişnu as residing in the Kuru region in his Matsya incarnation. The Vamana Purana 93 specifically connects Matsya incarnation with the Manasa lake. From the context where it is mentioned along with other places situated in Haryana the name Manasa has to be taken as a corrupt form of the Revedic lake Manuşa which is coupled with the rivers Sarasvati, Drşadvatı and Apaya or Apaga. 14 has been identified with the village and lake bearing the name Manas and lying about 8-10 kms. to the west of the town of Kaithal, old Kapişthala.

### 2. Kurma

Kūrma or the Tortoise figures, in the Satapatha Brāhmaņa, <sup>96</sup> in one of the early cosmogonic theories. Prajāpati the Creator broke open the Cosmic Egg and the juice which flowed from it became the Tortoise. Its lower shell is the earth, the curved upper shell the sky, and its body the atmosphere. <sup>97</sup> It is the vital element in the creative process, the very life-sap and therefore associated with the Creator Prajāpati. "Having assumed the form of a Tortoise, Prajāpati created offspring. That which He created, He made; Hence the word Kūrma. Kaśyapa means Tortoise, Hence men say, 'All Creatures are descendants of Kaśyapa.' <sup>98</sup> In his Kūrma incarnation Prajāpati is thus said to have created all living beings. <sup>99</sup> Another purpose of the Kūrma incarnation was to aid in recovering some valuable articles lost in the Deluge. The Tortoise supported mount Mandara which was used by the gods and Asuras as a rod for churning the ocean (Samudra Manthana) with the help of the serpent Vāsuki who was used as a rope to turn it. The process threw up many invaluable objects including Amṛta and goddess Śri. <sup>100</sup>

The Bhāgavata Purāna<sup>101</sup> says that in his eleventh incarnation, the Lord in the form of a Tortoise supported on his back the churning mountain, when the gods and Asuras were churning the ocean. In the Mahābhārata<sup>102</sup> too Vişnu describes Kūrma as his own incarnation to Nārada. The Matsya Purāṇa appears to suggest the priority of the Kūrma incarnation to Varāha when it says that while raising up the earth the Varāha placed one foot on the tortoise who was supporting

the earth and came up from Rasātala. It also ordains that the image of Varāha should have one foot on the Kurma and the other on an elephant's forehead. 104

Vāsuki, the lord of the Nāgas is connected with Kurukşetra in the Purānas as well as in folk-tradition. According to Vāmana Purāņa 105 Vāsuki was assigned for the protection of Kuru-Jangala along with the Yakşa called Candra, the Vidyadhara named Śankukarna, the Raksasa lord Sukesi, king Ajavana and Agni Mahādeva while granting a boon to king Kuru. The Kūrma incarnation is also associated with river Kausiki which is a tributary of the Drsadvati. 106 The Kausikisangama or the confluence of the two streams has been located near village Balu about 25 kms. to the south of Thanesar. 107 Balu is one of the Harappan sites of Haryana.108

### 3. Varaha

Like the Matsya and the Kurma the Varaha incarnation also rests on a creation myth of the Brahmanas109 and with the earlier two avataras represents an intermediate state in the development of avatāravāda. 110

The origin of this incarnation is also traced to an archaic cosmogonic or fertility myth like that of the storm god Rudra called "the Boar of heaven" in the Rgveda.<sup>111</sup> Some sort of Varāha story occurs in the Taittiriya,<sup>112</sup> Maitrāyant<sup>113</sup> and Kâthaka Samhitâs114 almost on identical lines. The Taittiriya Samhitâ however gives a second version which is more direct and easily intelligible than the one it shares with the other two. "It was all water in the beginning. In it Prajapati moved in the form of air. He saw it (the earth submerged under water). He became the Boar and raised it.115 The Satapatha Brahmana116 more specifically credits the Boar called Emūsa, a form of Prajāpati, for raising the earth of which he is the lord. The Taittiriya Āranyaka<sup>117</sup> describes the Boar lifting the earth as black and hundred-armed. There is an Upanisad named after Varaha.118 However we would like to refer to the Rāmāyana119 which goes a step turther saying that "All was water in the beginning. In the water earth was found. Then Brahma the self-existent arose with the deities. He, becoming a Boar, raised up the earth and created the entire world," Here too the incarnation of Varaha has been attributed to Brahma Prajāpati. Same is the case with the Vāyu Purāna. 120 But there does appear to be a nexus between Vișnu and Varāha also from some mantras of the Rgveda<sup>[2]</sup> although they are not clearly intelligible. In a reference of the lost Caraka Bråhmana<sup>122</sup> Vișnu, not Prajāpati, is presented as personified sacrifice who brines Varaha in the form of a sacrifice for the gods. It might be remembered in this context that Kuruksetra is the Uttaravedi of Prajāpati, 123 and Visnu also, alongwith other gods, performed sacrifices here. 124 The land is known as Devayajana or "the place of divine worship." This establishes a link between the Boar incarnation and Kuruksetra.

A reference in the Kapisthala Katha Samhitā<sup>126</sup> deserves to be mentioned particularly. "In the beginning there were primeval waters. Once Prajāpati, taking the form of a Boar entered it and brought up the soil exactly of the size of his snout, that soil became this very earth." The original home of the Kapisthalas was about the present town of Kaithal, situated 20° 48′ N by 76° 24′ E a few miles to the east of the Prāct-Sarasvatt in district Kuruksetra. <sup>127</sup> Local tradition ascribes its foundation to Yudhişthira. <sup>128</sup> Its mention by Alberuni, <sup>129</sup> Varāhamihira, <sup>130</sup> Hieun-tsang <sup>131</sup> and in the Kāšikā <sup>132</sup> confirms its antiquity. Alberuni's notice is of particular interest in as much as it describes the inhabitants as fire worshippers, which means that fire rituals were still practiced here in the 11th century A.D. This is relevant in view of the Yajña and Varāha relationship.

The running Kalpa is named after Varāha as Varāha-Kalpa since this incarnation is supposed to have taken place at the time of the creation of the present world. The purpose in the raising of the earth by Varāha was the recovery of the lost Vedas which had been submerged in the waters by the demon Hiran-yākṣa. The spot where the earth was actually raised has been named in the Mahābhārata Both Viṣau and Siva are said to be ever present at this place. Another tirtha, however, exists in the name of Varāha incarnation at the village called Barah, situated two miles to the east of village Bastali, a corrupt form of Vyāsasthalī near Jind. The suppose the same of Varāha incarnation at the village called Barah, situated two miles to the east of village Bastali, a corrupt form of Vyāsasthalī near Jind. The suppose the same of Varāha incarnation at the village called Barah, situated two miles to the east of village Bastali, a corrupt form of Vyāsasthalī near Jind.

### 4. Nrsimba

The earliest reference to Nṛṣimha or Man-lion as one of the incarnations of Viṣṇu occurs in the Taittiriya Āraṇyaka<sup>137</sup> where the legend of the death of demon Hiraṇyakaṣipu at his hands is described. The objective was to save the demon's pious son Prahlada whose life was threatened on account of his devotion to Viṣṇu.

Three later Upanişads Nṛṣimha Pūrvatāpanī, <sup>138</sup> Nṛṣimha Uttaratāpanī <sup>139</sup> and Nṛṣimhaṣaṭcakra <sup>140</sup> are named after this incarnation. The story appears in the Mahābhārata <sup>141</sup> as well as the Purāṇas. The Vāmana Purāṇa <sup>142</sup> associates the event with the tīrtha named Kṛtaśauca which is traditionally located at village Barahban near Jind. <sup>143</sup> It also mentions another tīrtha named Anyajanmā to the east of Saraka. <sup>144</sup> At this spot took place a fight between Viṣṇu in the form of Nṛṣimha and siva in the form of Sarabha. By the time of the later Upaniṣads, mentioned above, the cult of Nṛṣimha worship had already developed to the extent of being divided into sub-sects which adopted Tāntrie practices and sectarian mantras. <sup>145</sup> The Nārada Purāṇa <sup>146</sup> also describes Nṛṣimha in various forms while explaining the mode of worship of Nṛhari with different kinds of mantras, diagrams and Tāntrie practices.

It is interesting to note that the Asuras are often associated with Kuruksetra. 147 The death of Vrtra and Namuci at Indra's hand is said to have taken place near the Sarasvati;148 the Karttikeya-Taraka war took place in Kuruksetra where Karttikeya was appointed as commander of the forces of the gods and killed Banasura by smiting the Kraunca mountain;149 Bali performed his sacrifice here150 and the demons Sunda and Upasunda resided here after their world conquest. 151 Sarasyata, as one of the names of the Asuras is also indicative of their connection with the valley of the Sarasvati. 152 Kurukşetra would thus be the most appropriate land for appearance of Nrsimha incarnation.

#### 5. Vamana

Visnu descended as Vâmana or Dwarf to deprive the demon Bali of the dominion of the three worlds in the Treta Yuga. 153

The origin of the legend of Vamana incarnation can be traced to the Rgveda<sup>154</sup> where the three steps of Visou Trivikrama are mentioned. The Aitareya Brahmana<sup>155</sup> also specifically identifies Vamana with Visnu. So does the Satapatha. 156 The fascinating story occurs at many places in later literature also and as a result of its popularity Vamana came to be associated with several sites or regions. He has been connected with Gaya on the basis of a hill named Visnupada in its neighbourhood.157 The Rāmāyana158 places the hermitage of Vāmana near that of Visvāmitra called Siddhāśrama which has been located near the junction of stream Thoras with the Ganga. The Bhagavata Purana159 connects it with Bhrgu Kaccha on the Narmada bank while the Skanda Purana 160 places it at Gurukulya on the same river. Here the name of Bali's wife is given as Vindhyavali apparently in a later attempt to associate Vamana with the south. The Agni Purana, 161 on the other hand, mentions Gangadvara as the venue of Bali's sacrifice where Vamana visited him. Gangādvāra appears to be the same as the modern Haridvāra.

Despite these contradictory statements the claim of Kurukşetra on its earliest association with Vamana looks quite plausible. The Nilamata Purana 162 hames the holy Visoupada among the tirthas of Kuruksetra like Prthiidaka, Sthäneśvara and Cakra tırtha. The Mahābhārata163 also mentions Viṣṇupada immediately before river Beas and among the tirthas of Kuruksetra, specifically with Vāmanaka which is obviously christened after Vāmana. There is a tīrtha named Gangahrada at village Kamoda near Thanesar164 and Bali is said to have performed his sacrifice at Kuruksetra where Vamana came along with sage Bhāradvāja. 165 Here Prajāpati is said to have performed his initial sacrament 166 and river goddess Sarasvatı presented him with an Akşamålå. 167

The Padma Purāṇa168 speaks of a Vāmanakṣetra in Kurukṣetra which was very dear to god Vāmana. The Vāmana Purāņa169 describes in detail the birth and sojourn of Vāmana in Kurujāngala. The installation of god Vāmana was performed at Koţi tirtha by all the gods jointly.<sup>170</sup> Koţi tırtha is well known as one of the Kurukşetra tırthas. Again at the Vāmanaka tirtha Viṣṇu, in the form of Vāmana is said to have restored to Indra his kingdom after snatching it from Bali.<sup>171</sup> Local tradition locates all the three tırthas Viṣṇupada, Vāmanaka and Koṭi tırtha at village Bolsam, seven miles to the south of Thanesar.<sup>172</sup> According to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa,<sup>173</sup> after Bali had been deprived of life by Indra, he was restored by the Brāhmaṇas of the race of Bhṛgu who consecrated him for supreme dominion and celebrated for him a Viśvajit sacrifice. This sacrifice had the virtue of enabling him to conquer all his enemies. The Bhṛgus were originally connected with the land of Kurukṣetra.<sup>174</sup> It may also be recalled that the Asuras had been associated with the region of Kurukṣetra in very early times.<sup>175</sup>

As a matter of fact, the Vāmana incarnation is considered inseparable from Kurukşetra in the Vāmana Purāṇa, 176 which ordains that Kurukşetra should be remembered along with Vāmana.

### 6. Parasurama

In his incarnation of Parasurama Visnu was born as the son of Jamadagni of the clan of Bhrgus in the Treta Yuga. He is said to have cleared the earth of tyrant kşatriya kings twenty one times.<sup>177</sup>

The Bhrgus were also called Ārcikas or Ārjikas after their legendary progenitor Reika. The According to the Reyeda the Ārjikas pressed Soma juice with the Purus Purus Program who dwelt on the Sarasvati. The Mahābhārata mentions a lake of Cyavana, another renowned Bhārgava, in Kurukşetra and a hill called Ārcīka Parvata which have been connected with the lake and hills of Saryanāvat named in the Reyeda. The Mahābhārata locates Cyavana's hermitage on the Vadhūsarā river which has been identified with the Dohan flowing near Narnaul, the headquarters of district Mahendragarh. A village called Dhosi near a small hill close to the town is still associated with the memory of Cyavana and has a temple dedicated to him.

A tirtha named Rāmahrada after Paraśurāma exists about 17 kms. to the west of Jind<sup>186</sup> where the warrior god is said to have filled five lakes with the blood of exterminated kṣatriyas in order to gratify his fore-fathers.<sup>187</sup> In return he was granted a boon that his ascetic merit would again be increased, he would be freed of the sin of exterminating the kṣatriya race and his lakes would become tirthas celebrated all over the world.<sup>188</sup> The present name Ramrai of the tīrtha is obviously a corrupt form of Rāmahrada. At one time it was applied to Kurukṣetra generally which points to its importance.<sup>189</sup>

In view of the unbroken tradition connecting the Bhrgus generally and Parasurama particularly with the valley of Dṛṣadvatī which ran close to Ramahrada

and Jind, and much of whose old bed is now occupied by the Western Jumna Canal. 190 the claim of Kuruksetra to being the land of Parasurama appears to be well-founded. The movement of the Bhrgus towards the south and south-west is undoubtedly a later phenomenon.

### 7. Rama

Visnu's incarnation as Ramacandra, the hero of the Ramayana, son of King Daśaratha of Ayodhya took place at the close of the Treta Yuga to destroy the demon Rāvana. 192

According to a legend explaining the tirtha-name Kapalamocana Rama Dāśarathi once cut off the head of a wicked demon. Falling in a forest the head stuck to the shank of sage Rahodara after piercing his bone. The sage visited one tirtha after another but failed to get rid of it till at last he came to the Ausanasa tirtha. As soon as he touched the water here the head fell off. The incident resulted in the naming of the tirtha as Kapāla-mocana. 194

There is however, no evidence of any direct association of Ramacandra with Kuruksetra.

### 8. Krsna

The Kṛṣṇa incarnation took place at the end of the Dyapara Yuga when Visnu was born as the eighth son of Vasudeva and Devaki of the Lunar race for the destruction of the tyrant Kamsa, the representative of the principle of evil, corresponding to Ravana who was destroyed by the previous incarnation Rama 195

Although Krsna was not born in Kuruksetra, his association with this land in later years is only too well known. The Mahabharata 196 which is the epic of the Kurus and Kuruksetra specifically describes him as Vișnu. His close relationship with the Pandavas and active participation in the Mahabharata war in the beginning of which the sacred teachings of Srimad Bhagavadgitā were imparted to Arjuna are of course common knowledge. The Mahābhārata 197 also mentions the performance by Krsna of a twelve year Satra on the bank of the Sarasvati.

It would be no exaggeration to say that after outgrowing his childhood Krsna remained in close touch with the land and people of Kuruksetra throughout his life.

### 9. Buddha

Visnu in his incarnation as Buddha, moved by deep compassion condemned the Vedic way that ordained animal slaughter in rites of sacrifice. 198 According to another view however Visnu assumed the form of the great sceptical philosopher, in the Kali or the current age, to delude the Daityas or demons into neglecting the worship of the gods and thus exposing them to destruction. 199

Buddha's association with Kuruksetra is restricted to his proselytizing activities. He undertook long and tiresome journeys in pursuance of his aim to reach the common man. 200 Although the heart of Madhya Desa proper received more attention from him the ancient land of the Kurus was also not ignored and, as the Mahayastu<sup>201</sup> states, the Buddha himself converted the people of Kuru Janapada.

The Bhaisajyavastu<sup>202</sup> in the Vinaya of the Mūla Sarvāstivādins, which is known to have come into existence probably by the second or first century B.C., describes a long journey of the Buddha in the company of Ananda. The Buddha went from Hastinapura through Mahanagara, Srughna, Brahmanagrama and Kalanagara to Rohitaka where he summoned the Yaksa Vajrapani and travelled with him to the north-west through Gandhara as far as Uddivana and back.203 Another town that finds mention in the same work is Bhadrankara, capital of the Janapada bearing identical name. Buddha's visit to this town is described in the Divyavadāna<sup>204</sup> too. The Divyāvadāna<sup>205</sup> also mentions visits to Hastināpura and Srughna which apparently refer to journeys undertaken on different occasions.

Buddha's visits to the two Kuru towns of Thullakotthita and Kammasadamma have received special importance in Buddhist literature and find repeated mention in works like the Divyāvadāna,206 the Avadānasataka207 and the Nikāyas.208 At least two villages visited by Buddha, both named Thûnā, have been described as Brahmanagramas in several works apart from the Vinaya but it is possible to differentiate between them since one is located in the Malla Janapada and the other on the western boundary of Majjhimadeśa. 209 The Master's visits to the Uttarakurus210 refer to the region generally while a journey to a Kauravya town is also mentioned without specifically naming211 it. This Kauravya town is most probably Indapatta where a Kauravya dynasty of Yudhisthira gotra is said to have been ruling.

The Buddha thus visited at least nine towns in the Kurus<sup>212</sup> out of which Hastinapura and Rohitaka (present Rohtak) are well known. Of the rest, Mahanagara appears to refer to Indraprastha while Srughna has been identified with the present site of Sugh near Jagadhari. The Brāhmanagrāma of the Vinaya, most probably identical with the town named Thuna located on the western boundary of the Madhya Desa in the Mahayagga and the Divyayadana has been equated with the present town of Tohana which is mentioned by Panini as Tausayana.213 Kālanagara refers to a present town of Kalanaur situated 32°0′ N and 75°10′ E 12 miles west of Rohtak on the road to Bhiwani. The name Bhadrankara survives in the name Bhakra, of the town near which the prestigious Bhakra dam stands. Thullakotthita has been equated with the twin village of Tholkurdi, 30°10'N and

76°40'E on the road leading from Ambala city to Thanesar-Kuruksetra via Jhansa. And Kammasadamma, probably the corrupt form of Sanskrit Kalmasadhama has been identified with village Kamoda situated 29°55'N and 76°40'E about 15 kms. from Thanesar on the road to Pehowa, not far from the Pract-Sarasvati river. Apart from these towns the Buddha's journeys to Uttara-Kurus also probably led him through the northern portion of Kuruksetra.

The Buddha thus made a determined attempt towards the propagation of the Faith in this region. Although his efforts failed to produce any mass movement and resulted only in sporadic conversions here and there leading to the setting up of stray monastaries in a few prominent towns, there is sufficient evidence to establish a prolonged association of the Buddha with the land of Kurukşetra.

### 10. Kalki

The tenth incarnation of Kalki is yet to take place.

Out of the nine past incarnations of Visnu, only one, Rama Dasarathi, is not directly associated with Kuruksetra. Two, namely Kṛṣṇa and Buddha, are actively associated with this land through their activities, the former by virtue of his family relationship with the Pandava branch of the Kuru clan, involvement in contemporary politics and participation in the Mahabharata battle and the latter in pursuance of propagation of his teachings. The remaining six, Parasurama, Vāmana, Nrsimha, Varāha, Kūrma and Matsya can be said to belong to Kuruksetra on the basis of available evidence. The clan of Parasurama, the Bhrgus lived in Kurukşetra before moving towards the south and south west of the country. The scene of the exploits of Vāmana and Nrsimha too was this very region and it is connected in literature with the demons too.

The first three, the Boar, the Tortoise and the Fish are described as incarnations of Prajapati in Vedic literature and even some later works.214 The association of Prajāpati Brahmā with Kuruksetra has already been brought out above. It would be relevant to note, here that most of the contents of the Samhitas and early Brāhmana works were composed in Kuruksetra and refer to events and episodes which should logically be taken to relate to this region. Visnu's own early association with Kuruksetra has been brought out above. He replaces Prajapati in later literature even in case of the first three incarnations. He is further associated or identified not only with Siva or Mahadeva but with Rama in the Ramayana and Krsna in the Mahabharata.215

It may be observed in conclusion that the association of Visnu's incarnations with Kuruksetra supports the traditional position of this land as the cradle of Indian culture and civilisation.

### Notes and References

- 1. Ed. Mahadeva Sastri and Rangacarya, Delhi 1985, VIII. 1.1.
- 2. Name of the forest near Yamunā burnt by Agni with the help of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. The Pāṇḍava capital Khāṇḍavaprastha, also known as Indraprastha was located in it. The ruins of the old site in Delhi area near Purānā Qilā are now known as Indarpat. Cf. Nando Lal Dey, The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India, 3rd ed. New Delhi 1971, p. 77 f.
- For identification see. Kane, P.V., History of the Dharmasastra, Pune, 1973, Vol. IV, p. 681.
- 4. Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, Calcutta, 1924, p. 395 f.
- See, O.P. Bharadwai, Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India (Studies), Delhi 1986, p. 23, and O.P. Bharadwaj, The Vedic Sarasvati, Haryana Sahitya Akademi Journal of Indological Studies, Vol. II, Nos. 1-2, Spring 1987, pp. 38-58.
- O.P. Bharadwaj, The Rgvedic Dṛṣadvati, Studies in Indology (Prof. R.V. Joshi Felicitation Volume), Delhi 1988-89, pp. 141-156.
- 7. Studies, pp. 20-43.
- Maitrāyanī Samhitā II.1.4; IV 5.9; Jaiminīya Brāhmana, II. 300; III. 126; Satapatha Brāhmana, IV.1.5.13; XIV. 1.1.2; Tāndya Mahābrāhmana, II. 25.13.3; Jābālopanişad i and Taittirīya Āranyaka, VIII 1.1. etc.
- 9. ii. 1.4:

देवा वै सत्रमासत कुरुक्षेत्रे अग्निः सोमा इन्द्रस्तेऽब्रुवन्, यतमं नः प्रथमं यश ऋच्छात्तं नः सहेति, तेषां वै सोमं यश आर्छत्, तमभिसमगच्छन्त तस्मात्सोममभिसंगच्छन्ते ।

10. Śatapatha Brāhmana (ŚB), XIV. 1.1.2:

देवा ह वै सत्रं निषेदुः। अग्निरिन्द्रः सोमो मरवो विष्णुिष्वश्वेदेवाऽन्यत्र वाश्विभ्याम्। तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं देवयजनमास। तस्मादाहुः कुरुक्षेत्रं देवानां देवयजनमिति। तस्माद् यत्र क्व च कुरुक्षेत्रस्य निगच्छति तदेवमन्यतऽ-इदम् देवयजनमिति तद्धि देवानां देवयजनम्।

11. Manusmṛti, II. 17;

सरस्वतो दृषद्वत्योर्देवनद्योर्यदन्तरम् । तं देवनिर्मितं देशं ब्रह्मावर्त्तं प्रचक्षते ॥

- 12. A.A. Macdonell, Vedic Mythology, Reprint, New Delhi 1971, p. 118.
- 13. Ibid. Also S.B. xiii. 1.8.2.

# .... ते देवा अन्न वन्नेतावती वाव प्रजापतेर्वेदिर्यावत् कुरुक्षेत्रमिति तौ न व्यजयेताम् ।

- 15. See Manusmrti, II. 17 quoted in n. 11 supra.
- 16. Vāmana P. Cr. Ed., Varanasi 1967, SM, 1.13.
- 17. Mahābhārata, B.O.R.I. Pune Cr. Ed., Vana, 81.4.
- 18. Vāmana P. SM, 11.24:

आद्यं ब्रह्मसरः पुण्यं ततो रामह्नदः स्मृतः। कुरुणा कृषिणा कृष्टं कुरुक्षेत्रं ततः स्मृतम्।।

Also SM, 28.38.

- 19. i. 156.3.
- 20. vii. 100. 5-6.
- 21. vi. 69. and vii. 99.
- 22. i. 156.3.
- 23. viii. 25.12.
- 24. i. 155.4.
- 25. x. 184.1.
- 26. Vedic Mythological Tracts, Delhi 1979, pp. 81 and 89.
- 27. i. 1:

# अग्निर्वे देवानाम् अवमो । विष्णुः परमः । . . . .

- 28. xiv. 1. 1-5.
- 29. viii. 1.1.
- The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanişads, Two Vols. Reprint, Delhi 1970, Vol. I, pp. 110-111.
- 31. Goptcandanopanişad, pt. ii, p. 67:

# कश्च विष्णुः परं ब्रह्मं व विष्णुः।

- 32. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81.17 and Vāmana P. SM, 13.22.
- 33. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81.87 and Vamana P. SM, 10. 82-84 and 15.66.
- 34. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81.146 and Vamana P. SM, 20. 24-25.
- 35. Mbh. Gita Press ed., Vana 81.9 and Vāmana P. 59. 117-119.
- 36. Vāmana P. SM, 13.47.
- 37. Vâmana P. SM, 13.14.
- 38. Mbh. Gita Press ed., Vana, 81.88 and Vāmana P. SM, 15. 74-76.
- 39. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81. 8-9.
- 40. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 82.106. and Vamana P. 59.60 ff and 117.
- 41. Cr. ed. 63.1 ff.
- 42. Våmana Purana-A Study, Varanasi 1964, p. 176-178.

- It included Kurukşetra and the tract between the Ganga and the Yamuna and had Hastinapura as its capital city.
- 44. Same as Mānusa, See infra.
- 45. A tributary of the Dṛṣadvati. According to Cunningham, Kauśikisangama is near village Balu on the Rakshi river 17 miles to the south of Thanesar. See Arch. Survey Reports, Reprint. Vol. XIV p. 88.
- 46. At Vil. Barah in district Jind. See infra.
- 47. See n. 32 supra.
- 48. One of the seven forests of Kurukşetra. Vamana P. SM, 13.5; 57.31.
- 49. V.S. Agrawal erroneously equates Kurujāngala with the Rohtak-Hansi-Hissar tract of Haryana. B.C. Law (Historical Geography of Ancient India, New Delhi 1984, pp. 40 and 101) also mistakes it for a wild region. So do others like M.R. Singh (Geographical Data in the Early Purānas, Calcutta 1972, p. 68-69) and Wilson (The Vişnu Purāna, Eng. tr. and notes, Calcutta 1972, pp. 151 and 158, n. 98.). Actually Jāngala in the name Kurujāngala denotes a particular kind of soil known for its fertility and richness in production of fruit and grains. See Bhāvaprakāśa quoted in Vācaspatyam p. 3084:

सुस्वादु फलवान् देशो वातलो जांगलः स्मृतः।

Manusmṛti VII, 69, recommends residence in Jāngala country:

जांगलं सस्यसम्पन्नमार्यंप्रायमनाविलम् । रम्यमानतसामन्तं स्वाजीव्यं देशमावसेत् ॥

Kullūka in his gloss on this verse quotes:

अल्पोदक तृणो यस्तु प्रवातः प्रचुरातपः। स ज्ञेयो जांगलो देशो बहुधान्यादि संयुतः।।

Kurujāngala has been often used in the Mbh. and the Purānas as another name of the Kuruksetra or Kuru land. From references in the Rāmāyana and the Mbh. it appears to have denoted the north-eastern strip of the Kuru country. See O.P. Bharadwaj, Studies, p. 90, Also cf. M.R. Singh as already cited.

50. See Mbh. Cr. ed., Anuśasana, 84.75:

स तु गर्भो महातेजा गाङ्गोयः पावकोद्भवः। दिव्यं शरवणै प्राप्य ववृधेऽद्भृतदर्शनः॥

The forest is also connected with the birth of Skanda Karttikeya. It is located in Saraka tirtha at village Shergarh near Kaithal. Vide Kalyana, Vol. 31, No. 1, Jan. 1957, p. 85. More probably it was situated in the northern part of Kurukşetra. See Vamana P. 31, 15-38.

51. A tirtha on the right bank of the Yamuna in its upper reaches, probably somewhere near the present town of Paonta in Himachal Pradesh on the Nahan-Dehra Dun Road. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 129, 13:

एतत्प्लक्षावतरणं यमुनातीर्थमुच्यते । एतद्वै नाकपृष्ठस्य द्वारमाहुमंनीषिणः ॥

52. Apparently the right bank of the Yamuna, touching Kurukşetra.

 Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 81.70, same verse in Vamana P.S.M. 15.41; Identified with village Theontha by M.L. Bhargava, The Geography of Regredic India, Lucknow 1964, p. 67.

54. Vāmana, P, 23.40: Name of a Vidyādhara assigned for protection of Kuru-

kşetra by Vişnu.

55. Mbh. Cr. ed. Bhisma, 26.8:

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् । धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

Margaret and James Stutley, A Dictionary of Hinduism, New Delhi 1986,
 p. 32 q, v., Also J.N. Banerjea, Purănic and Tantric Religion, Calcutta 1966,
 p. 45.

57. R.N. Dandekar, op. cit., p. 80 f.

 A.J. Rawal, Indian Society, Religion and Mythology (A Study of the Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, Delhi 1982, p. 143.

59. ii. 6. 41-46.

- T.S. Rukmani, A Critical Study of the Bhagavata Purana, Varanasi 1970,
   p. 210 f.
- R.G. Bhandarkar, Vaişnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems, Pune 1982, p. 59.

62. Mbh. Gita Press ed. Śānti; 348. 2; Vāyu P. 98.63 ff; etc.

63. Vāyu P. 97.72 ff.

64. Bhāgavata P. XI. 4.3 ff.

65. Ibid., i. 3. 6-22.

66. Ibid., ii. 7.1 ff.

67. Ibid., i. 3.26 (i):

अवताराः ह्यसंख्येयाः हरेः सत्त्वनिधेद्विजाः।

Also Harivamsa P. 1.41.11, and Brahma P. 213.17 which give the number in thousands.

68. Epic Mythology, Delhi 1968, p. 211.

69. Gita Press ed. Sānti, 348.2:

मत्स्यः कूर्मो वराहश्च नरसिंहोऽय वामनः। रामो रामश्च रामश्च बुद्धः कल्कीति ते दश।।

- Ed. with English tr. Barbara Stoler Miller, Delhi 1984, Intro. pp. 4-6 and verses 5-16.
- See Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Ed. James Hastings, Edinburgh 1974, Vol. iv, pp. 545-557.
- 71a. J. Muir, Original Sanskrit Texts, 2nd ed. Amsterdam 1967, Vol. 1, pp. 181-220.
- 71b. XIX, 39.8.
- 72. i. 8.1.
- 73. Cr. Ed., Vana, 185.47:

तच्च नौबन्धनं नाम श्रृंङ्गं हिमवतः परम्। ख्यातमद्यापि कौन्तेय तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ।।

- 74. Gita Press Ed. viii. 24. 10-11.
- 75. Anandashram Ed. Chs. 1-2. Also Muir, op. cit., p. 203 ff.
- 76. Ed. Bala Upadhyayadeva, Varanasi 1986, Ch. 2 and Muir, op. cit., p. 211 f.
- 77. Ed. K. De. Vreese, Leiden 1936; Ved Kumari, Jammu 1968, (Vol. ii, Text with Eng. tr.).
- 78. Verses 40-41, 164 and 178.
- 79. M.A. Stein, Kalhana's Rajatarangini, Reprint Delhi 1979, Vol. ii, pp. 389-393.
- 80. Ved Kumari, op. cit., Vol. i, pp. 24-25.
- 81. Ibid., p. 45.
- 82. Verse 126:

नानादेशसमुत्यैस्तु ततः प्रभृति मानवै:। षण्मासान् वसते देशः षष्मासान् पिशिताशनै:।।

- 83. Ved Kumari, op. cit., Vol. i. p. 15; Buhler cited by Stein, op. cit., p. 377.
- 84. xix. 39.8:

यत्र नावप्रभ्रंशनं यत्र हिमवतः शिरः। तत्रामृतस्य चक्षणं तत्र कुष्ठोऽजायत। स कुष्ठो विश्वभेषजः साकं सोमेन तिष्ठति॥

and 6: अश्वत्थो देवसदनस्तृतीयस्यामितो दिवि । Also V. 4.3.

- 85. Studies, p. 3.
- For a detailed discussion see Studies, pp. 20-43; and O.P. Bharadwaj, The Vedic Sarasvati, Haryana Sahitya Akademi Journal of Indological Studies, Vol. II, Nos. 1-2, Spring 1987, pp. 38-58.
- 87. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Oxford 1908, Vol. xviii, p. 321.
- 88. 32 34:

विशालां बदरीं यातो गंगाद्वारान्तिकं खलु। तत्र गत्वा जगद्धर्ता मनुः स्वायंभुवः स्वयम्॥ 33.61(i):

ततो जलप्लवे जाते विध्वस्ते भुवनत्रये।

33.68:

ततः शनैः शनैस्तोये शोषं गच्छति वै चिरात् । पश्चिमं हिमवच्छुङ्गं सुमग्नं तोयमध्यतः ॥

89. Bhāgavata P. iv. 19.1:

अथादीक्षत राजा तु हयमेघशतेन सः। ब्रह्मावर्ते मनोः क्षेत्रे यत्र प्राची सरस्वती।।

- Hiranand, Arch. Sur. Rep. 1907-8, p. 264 cited by K.K. Dasgupta, A Tribal History of Ancient India, Calcutta 1974, p. 76 ff.
- The region of Srughna described as the northern half of Kurukşetra in the Tai. Ār. viii. 1.1. covered, undoubtedly, extensive areas of the neighbouring Shiwalik hills.
- 92. ii. 2.51:

मत्स्यरूपश्च गोविन्दः कुरुष्वास्ते जनार्दनः। विश्वरूपेण सर्वत्र सर्वः सर्वत्रगो हरिः॥

93. 63.1:

आद्यं मात्स्यं महदूपं संस्थितं मानसे ह्रदे।

94. RV, iii. 23.4:

नि त्वा दधे वर आ पृथिव्या इलायास्पदे सुदिनत्वे अह्नाम् । दृषद्वत्यां मानुष आपयायां सरस्वत्यां रेवदग्ने दिदीहि ॥

95. M.L. Bhargava, The Geography of Rgvedic India, Lucknow 1964, p. 55.

96. S.B. vi. 1.1.12 and vii. 5.1.1.

97. Ś.B. vii. 5.1.2.

98. S.B. vii. 5.1.5:

स यत्कूर्मो नाम । एतद्वै रूपं कृत्वा प्रजापितः प्रजाः असृजत । यदसृजत अकरोत् तत्, यदकरोत्तस्मात् कूमंः । कश्यपो वं कूमंः । तस्मादाहुः सर्वाः प्रजाः काश्यप्य इति ।

99. S.B. vii. 5.1.7:

प्राणो वै कुर्मः प्राणो होमाः सर्वाः प्रजाः करोति ।

For the story of Samudramanthana see Mbh. Adi. Ch. 18. Also Muir op. cit.,
 Vol. iv. p. 27.

101. i. 3.16.

102. Gita Press ed. Śānti, 339. verse immediately preceding 77
द्वितीयं कूमें रूपं में हेमकूटनिभं सुत ॥
मन्दरं धारियण्यामि अमृतार्थे द्विजोत्तम ।
मग्नां महार्णवे घोरे भाराकान्तामिमं पुनः ॥

103. 246.75:

कूर्मपृष्ठे पदं न्यस्य निश्चकाम रसातलात्।

104. 259,30:

कूर्मीपरि तथा पादमेकं नागेन्द्रमूर्धनि । संस्तूयमानो लोकेशैः समन्तात् परिकल्पयेत् ॥

105. 23. 39-40:

तस्य क्षेत्रस्य रक्षार्थं ददौ स पुरुषोत्तमः।
यक्षं च चन्द्रनामानं वासुर्कि चापि पन्नगम्।
विद्याधरं शङ्कुकणं सुकेशि राक्षसेश्वरम्।
अजावनं च नृपति महादेवं च पावकम्।।

106. Ibid., 63.2:

कौर्ममन्यत्सिन्धानं कौशिक्यां पापनाशनम्।

107. Cunningham, Arch. Sur. Rep. XIV. (1878-79), p. 88.

108. An Encyclopaedia of Indian Archaeology. Two Vols. Ed. A. Ghosh, New Delhi 1989. Vol. ii, p. 44.

109. Margaret and James Stutley, op. cit., p. 157.

110. Ibid.

111. i. 114.5:

दिवो वराहमरुषं कपर्दिनं ....।

Also see Margaret and James Stutley, op. cit., p. 322.

112. vi. 3.4.2.

113. iii. 8.1.

114. 25.2.

115. vii. 1. 5-1.

116. xiv. 1.2.11:

इयती वा इयमग्रे पृथिवी आस प्रादेशमात्री। ताम् एमूष इति वराह उज्ज्ञधान। सः अस्याः पतिः प्रजापतिः . . . . ।

117. i. 10.8:

उद्भृतासि व राहेण कृष्णेन शतबाहुना . . . . . ।

This verse occurs in the Mahanarayani Upanişad (4.5) and the Padma Puraņa (Srṣṭi, 20.156.) also.

- 118. Upanişatsangrahah, Ed. J.L. Shastri, Delhi 1970, Prt. i, No. 102, pp. 603-615.
- 119. Chowkhamba ed. Ayodhya, 110.3:

सर्वं सिललमेवासीत पथिवी सिललिनिमिता। ततः समभवद्बद्धा स्वयंभूः दैवतेः सह।। स वराहस्ततो भूत्वा प्रोज्जहार वसुन्धराम ।

Also see Muir, op. cit., Vol. iv, pp. 33, 36 and 37.

- 120. 6. 1-15.
- 121. See e.g. i. 61.7; viii, 77.10; and X, 99.6.
- 122. Quoted by Sayana on RV viii. 77.10:

विष्णयंज्ञ:। स देवेभ्य आत्मानमन्तर्धात । तमन्यदेवता नाविन्दन इन्द्र-स्त्ववेत् । स इन्द्रमब्रवीत् को भवानिति । तिमन्द्रः प्रत्यब्रवीत् अहं दुर्गाणाम-मुराणां च हन्ता। भवाँस्तुकः ? इति। सः अन्नवोत् अहं दुर्गादाहर्ता, त्वं त् यदि दुर्गाणामसुराणां हन्ता ततः अयं वराहो वाममुषः एकविशत्याः पूराम् पारेऽश्ममयीनां वसति तस्मिन्नस्राणां वस् वाममस्ति तमिमं जहीति। तस्येन्द्रस्ताः पुरो भित्त्वा हृदयमविष्यत् । अधि तत्र यदासीत्तद्विष्णराहरत इति ।

123. Mbh. Cr. ed., Salya, 52.20. and Vāmana P., SM, 1.14. For Kurukşetra as Prajāpati's Vedi see Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa, XXV. 13.3:

> • • • ते देवा अब बन्नेतावतो वाव प्रजापतेर्वेदियावत् कुरुक्षेत्रमिति तौ न व्यजयेताम ।

- 124. N. 10. supra.
- 125. Ibid. Also Jaimintya Br. ii. 300:

...एतद्वे देवानां देवयजनं यत् (करु)क्षेत्रं; देवानामेव तत देवयजनेन यन्ति... And Jābālopanişad, 1.

126. vi. 7:

• • अापो वा इदमासन । सलिलमेव स प्रजापतिवंराहो भूत्वोपन्यमज्जत । तस्य यावनमुखमासीत्तावतीं मदमुदहरत । सेयमभवत ।

- 127. Kapişthala-Katha-Samhita, Ed. Raghu Vira, Lahore 1932, Intro. p. 1 f.
- 128. Ibid., Intro. p. 2.
- 129. Alberuni's India, ed. Sachau, Two Vols. in one, Reprint, Delhi 1964, p. 206. The name is spelt as Kavital.
- 130. Brhat-Samhitā XIV, 4; Also see Ajay Mitra Shastri, India as seen in the Brhatsamhita of Varahamihira, Delhi 1969, p. 110.
- 131. On Pănini viii, 3.91:

• कपेः स्थलं कपिस्थलम ।

- 132. Raghu Vira, op. cit., Intro. p. 2.
- 133. Mbh. Gita Press ed. Sabhā, 38.29 ff.
- 134. Vana, 81. 36-37.
- Situated about 18 kms. east of Narwana—B.K. Muztar, Kurukşetra: Political and Cultural History, Delhi 1978, p. 114.
- Vana, 81.15. and V\u00e4mana P. SM, 13.32 and 79.5.
   For location see Muztar, op. cit., p. 113.
- 137. X. 1.7:

वज्रनखाय विद्महे तीक्ष्णदंष्ट्राय धीमहि। तन्नो नारसिंहः प्रचोदयात्।।

- 138. Upanişatsangrahah, Prt. i., No. 28, pp. 218-226.
- 139. Ibid., Prt. i, No. 29, pp. 227-235.
- 140. Ibid., Prt. ii. No. 28, pp. 84-85.
- Mbh. Gita Press ed. Vana, 272. 56-60; Vişnu P. i. Chs. 19 and 20; Matsya P. Chs. 160-162, etc.
- 142. 63.5:

### कृतशीचे नृसिहं च ...।

- 143. Kuruksetra Rahasya (Hindi), Jind V.S. 1988, p. 30.
- 144. 15. 28-29.
- K. Damodar, Nărada Purăņa A Critical Study.
- 146, Prt. i. Ch. 71.
- 147. For a detailed discussion on this point see Studies p. 232 ff.
- 148. Ibid.
- Mbh. Cr. ed. Salya 45.79. Also see O.P. Bharadwaj, The Vedic Sarasvati, op. cit., p. 48.
- 150. Vāmana P. 62.1:

गतेऽथ तीर्थयात्रायाम् प्रह्लादे दानवेश्वरे । कुरुक्षेत्रं समभ्यागात् यष्टुं वैरोचनो बलिः ॥

151. Mbh. Cr. ed. Vana, 209.27:

एवं सर्वा दिशो दैत्यौ जित्वा कूरेण कर्मणा। नि: सपत्नौ कुरुक्षेत्र निवेंशमभिचकतु:॥

- Rangeya Raghava, Prācīna Bhāratiya Paramparā Aura Itihāsa, Delhi 1953,
   p. 169.
- 153. For the story in detail, Vamana P. SM, Chs. 2-10.
- 154. i. 22.17:

# इदं विष्णुविचकमे त्रेधा निदधे पदम् । . . . . .

repeated as YV, v. 15 and xxxiv. 43; AV, 7.26.5 and SV, 2.10.20 etc. and other RV references like i. 154.3 and i. 155.4.

155. ii. 1.3 and ii. 4.12 etc.

155a. vi. 3.7.

156. i. 1.2.13; i. 9.3.9; iii. 6.3.3 etc.

157. P.V. Kane, op. cit., p. 645 f.

158. Bāla, 29. 2-9.

159. viii. 18.21.

160. Mäheśvara Khanda, i. 18.153.

161. 4.7.

162. P. 13. verse 131.

163, Cr. ed. Vana, 130.8.

164. Cunningham, A.S.R. Vol. xiv, p. 100,

165. Vāmana P. 62.52:

ब्रह्मन् व्रजामि देह्याज्ञां करुक्षेत्रं महोदयम्। तत्र दैत्यपतेः पूण्यो हयमेधः प्रवर्तते ॥

and 63, 47-48.

166. Ganga Sagar Rai, Vāmana Legend in the Vedas, Epics and Purāņas, Purāna, xii, No. 1, Jan. 1970 pp. 102-140.

167. Ibid.

168. Ibid., Also Matsya P. Gita Press ed. ii. 244. 5-6.

169. SM., 2.2:

श्रुणध्वं मूनयः प्रीताः वामनस्य महात्मनः। उत्पत्ति च प्रभावं च निवासं करुजांगले।।

170. SM., 13.30(i):

तत्रंव वामनो देव: सर्वदेवै: प्रतिष्ठित: ।

171. Ibid., 15.64 (ii)-65:

ततो वामनकं गच्छेत त्रिष् लोकेषु विश्रतम्।। यत्र वामनरूपेण विष्णुनाप्रभविष्णुना । बलेरपहृतं राज्यम् इन्द्राय प्रतिपादितम् ॥

172. A.S.R., Vol. XIV, p. 99. Where the name is spelt as Burasyam, Also V.S. Agrawala, op. cit., App. i, p. 188. For enumeration of these tirtha names, Våmana P. 15. 63-66; Padma P. 26.96 and Mbh. Vana, 83.103.

173. viii, 15.3 ff.

174. See infra.

175. See pp. 147-152 supra.

176. SM., 15.78:

दरस्थोऽपि स्मरेद्यस्त् क्रुक्षेत्रं सवामनम्। सोऽपि मुक्तिमवाप्नोति कि पुनर्निवसन्नरः ॥

- 177. Mbh. Gita Press ed. Adi, 2. 1-12 and 64.4.
- 178. Descendant of Cyavana and father of Jamadagni whose son was Bhārgava Paraśurāma. See P.L. Bhargava, India in the Vedic Age, Lucknow 1956, p. 71.
- For Contiguous location of the Ārjikas, Pañcajanas and Śaryanāvat etc. see Studies, p. 209 f.
- 180. vii. 96.2., also Vedic Index, Vol. II, p. 12.
- 181. Cr. ed., Vana, 125, 11-12.
- 182. Ibid., Vana, 125.13. It is said to be beyond the Saindhava forest.
- 183. M.L. Bhargava, op. cit., p. 20-23. Contrary to the view of P.L. Bhargava, he erroneously locates them in Kashmir.
- 184. Cr. ed., Adi, 6.7:

# नाम तस्यास्तदा नद्याश्चके लोकपितामहः। वधूसरेति भगवांश्च्यवनस्याश्रमं प्रति।।

- 185. P.L. Bhargava, op. cit., p. 71.
- 186. Cf. S.S. Parui, Kurukşetra in the Vamana Purana, Calcutta 1946, p. 76.
- 187. Vāmana P. SM., 14. 1-3.
- 188. Ibid., 14.9.11.
- 189. Vāmana P. SM., 1.13:

# आर्द्येषा ब्रह्मणो वेदिस्ततो रामह्रदः स्मृतः। कुरुणा च यतः कृष्टं कुरुक्षेत्रं ततः स्मृतम्।।

- 190. See The Rgvedic Drsadvati, cited above.
- 191. Jayanti Panda, Bhrgus-A Study, New Delhi 1984, p. 173.
- Monier Williams, Indian Wisdom, London, p. 332 and Gitagovinda, p. 130. verse 11. For tr. ibid., p. 70.
- 193. Vāmana P. SM., 18. 3-13.
- 194. Parui, op. cit., p. 96. V.S. Agrawala, op. cit., p. 73.
- 195. Monier Williams, op. cit., p. 332 f.
- 196. Cr. ed. Udyoga, 22.31(i):

# •••• सनातनो वृष्णिवीरश्च विष्णुः।•••

197. Gita Press Ed. Vana, 12.14:

# अवकृष्टोत्तरासंगः कृशोधमनिसंततः। आसीः कृष्णः सरस्वत्यां सत्रे द्वादशवार्षिके।।

- 198. Gttagovinda, p. 131, verse, 13. For tr. ibid., p. 71.
- 199. Monier Williams, op. cit., p. 335.
- For details see B.S. Upadhyaya, Buddhakalina Bharattya Bhūgola, Prayag,
   V.S. 2018, p. 90 ff. And O.P. Bharadwaj, Gautama Buddha in Kurukşetra,
   Studies pp. 149-165.

202. M. Winternitz, A History of Indian Literature, Calcutta 1933, Vol. ii, p. 232. According to G.S.P. Misra its Chinese and Tibetan translations do not go beyond the 5th century A.D. See the Age of the Vinaya, Delhi 1972, p. 7.

 E. Frauwallner, The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginnings of Buddhist Literature, Roma 1956, pp. 31-32.

204. p. 77 ff.

 Ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1959, p. 293 ff. Sudhana Kumaravadana and p. 45 ff. Stutibrahmanavadana.

205a. p. 47 ff. Indra nāmabrāhmanāvadāna.

206. p. 446 ff, Måkandikåvadåna.

207. Ed. P.L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1958, p. 227, No. 90, Rastrapālāvadāna.

Majjhima Nikāya, 2.4.2; Anguttara Nikāya (Nidāna Sutta), Dīgha Nikāya, 2.2 etc.

209. Studies, p. 153-155.

210. B.S. Upadhyaya, op. cit., pp. 68 and 88.

211. Studies, p. 152.

212. For identification of these towns see Studies, pp. 152-160.

213. V.S. Agrawala, India as known to Panini, 2nd ed. Varanasi 1952, p. 74.

214. See e.g. Vișou P. i. 4. 1-10. Particularly verses 7(ii) and 8.

अनुमानात्तदुद्धारं कर्तुकामः प्रजापितः ॥ अकरोत् स्वतनूमन्यां कल्पादिषु यथा पुरा । मत्स्यकूर्मादिकां तद्वद् वाराहं वपुरास्थितः ॥

215. Muir, op. cit., Vol. iv, Ch. II, Sec. 5, p. 182 and passim.

### IS THERE KURUKŞETRA-KUTSANA IN THE MAHĀBHĀRATA?

On the death of Dronacarya in the great Bharata war Karna accepts the command of the Kaurava forces and Salya, the king of Madras¹ and maternal uncle of the Pandavas, agrees to be his charioteer. A fit of self-glorification by Karna² is countered by Salya with deprecation of his prowess and praise of Arjuna.³ This provokes a bitter argument in the course of which Karna condemns the social, moral and ethical conduct of the Madras in the most derogatory terms.⁴ In the process the whole Vahika land of five rivers, of which the Madras formed a part, receives severely censorious strictures at the hands of Karna and gets branded as the scum of the earth.⁵

In his address as General President of the 22nd session of the All India Oriental Conference<sup>6</sup> the late learned Prof. V.S. Agrawal rightly observed that this diatribe against the Madras and their people entitled 'Madraka-Kutsana' in the Epic colophons was in reality directed against many social customs, introduced by the Indo-Greeks or Yavanas after they took possession of the Madras, which were considered reprehensible when compared with the orthodox Indian social code.

In a detailed three volume study in Hindi<sup>7</sup> Prof. Agrawala finds in the Great Epic similar denegration of Kurukşetra. He declares<sup>8</sup> that "Kurukşetra was a part of that Vāhīka country where the Greek rulers of Vāhlīka had over-run the Madras and the centre of Sākala and completely disturbed the traditional Ārya social conduct......... As a result the most sacred land of Kurukşetra came to be regarded

as forbidden to the Aryas. People still went there but only to pay formal visits to tīrthas while in their mind they believed in:

# आरट्टा नाम वाह्लीका (वाहीका) न तेष्वार्यो इयहं वसेत्।।

(Karna 30, 43)

The Aratta land is full of the Yavanas of Vähltka and an Arva should not stay there for the second day. The same thing is conveyed to the pilgrim through Ulūkhalamekhalā Yakşī of Kuruksetra. "After passing a day in Kurukşetra do not stay for the second night. Otherwise you will find the behaviour entirely opposite to what happens during the day." (Vana, 129.10).

Later in the book9 he again remarks: "It has been declared (in the Mbh.) for Kurukşetra also, the region lying between the Sarasvatı and the Drsadvatı and considered the holiest land on the earth, that it should be visited for pilgrimage to tirthas only during day time and one should return the same day without staying for the night."

Now, the Indian literary tradition regards the land of Kurukşetra as the cradle of Indian culture and civilisation. This is generally accepted even by modern historians of ancient India. A major portion of the earliest Indian literature was composed in this region. The Mahabharata itself is, in all probability a product of this land. It has been the stronghold of Brahmanical religion throughout its long history. The decline set in only in the medieval age. It is for the first time in the allegorical play Prabodhacandrodaya of Krsnamiśra (circa 11th century A.D.) that we find the two evil characters, Carvaka and king Mahamoha rejoicing over the decline of learning even in Kuruksetra the foremost of the holy places.10 Prof. Agrawal's hypothesis is, therefore, on the very face of it, not in keeping with these facts. It would be interesting to see if it is supported by the verses on which he has based it.

The following four verses occur in the Mbh. Vana Parva, Ch. 129 immediately after the mention of the Ramahrada tirtha and the Raupya Drsadvati:

> अत्रानुवंशं पठतः शृण् मे कुरुनन्दन। उलखलराभरणैः पिशाची यदभाषत ॥ ॥ युगन्धरे दिध प्राप्य उषित्वाचाच्यतस्थले । तद्वदभतिलये स्नात्वा सपुत्रा वस्तुमिच्छसि ॥६॥ एकरात्रमिषत्वेह द्वितीयं यदि वत्स्यसि। एतदवै ते दिवा वृत्तं रात्री वत्तमतोऽन्यथा ।।१०॥ अत्राद्याहो निवत्स्यामः क्षपां भरतसत्तम । द्वारमेतद्धि कीन्तेय करक्षेत्रस्य भारत ॥११॥

Verse 9 appears again in the Karna Parva Ch. 30 with a slight change as follows:

युगन्धरे पयः पोत्वा प्रोध्य चाप्यच्युतस्थले। तद्वद् भूतिलये स्नात्वा कथं स्वगं गमिष्यति ॥४२॥

It is to be noted that there is no mention of Kurukşetra in these verses. The tirthas named are Rāmahrada, Yugandhara, Acyutasthala and Bhūtālaya or Bhūtīlaya which obviously refer to places and not regions.

The Vāmana Purāṇa, again apparently a work composed in Kurukṣetra and borrowing extensively from the Mbh, gives the name of Muñjavaṭa tīrtha in place of Rāmahrada. It supplies some welcome information which makes it worthwhile to reproduce the relevant portion of the text here.

· ततो मुञ्जवटं नाम महादेवस्य धीमतः ॥३८ (ii) उपोध्य रजनीमेकां गाणपत्यमवाप्नुप्यात् । तत्रैव च महाग्राही यक्षिणी लोकविश्रता ॥३६॥ स्नात्वाऽभिगम्य तत्रैव प्रसाद्य यक्षिणीं ततः । उपवासं च तत्रैव महापातक नाशनम ॥४०॥ करक्षेत्रस्य तदद्वारं विश्रतं पृण्यवर्द्धनम । प्रदक्षिणम्पावत्यं बाह्मणान् भोजयेत् ततः ॥४१॥ पुष्करं च ततो गत्वा अभ्यच्यं पितदेवताः ॥४२॥ · कपिलश्च महायक्षो द्वारपालः स्वयं स्थितः । विघ्नं करोति पापानां सूगति च प्रयच्छति ॥४४॥ पत्नी तस्य महायक्षी नाम्नोल्खलमेखला। आहत्य दुन्दभि तत्र भ्रमते नित्यमेव हि ॥४५॥ सा ददर्श स्त्रियं चैकां सपुत्रां पापदेशजाम् । तामुवाच तदा यक्षी बाहत्यिन।श दुन्द्भिम् ॥४६॥ युगन्धरे दिध प्राश्य उषित्वा चाच्यतस्थले । तद्वद् भूतालये स्नात्वा सपुत्रावस्तुमिच्छिस ॥४७॥ दिवा मया ते कथितं रात्री भक्ष्यामि निश्चितम् । एतच्छ त्वा त् वचनं प्रणिपत्य च यक्षिणीम ॥४६॥ उवाच दीनया वाचा प्रसादं करु भामिनि। ततः सा यक्षिणी तां तु प्रोवाच कृपयान्विता ॥४६॥ यदा सूर्यस्य ग्रहणं कालेन भविता क्वचित । सनिहत्या तदा स्नात्वा पता स्वर्गं गमिष्यसि ॥५०॥

In these verses too the name of Kuruksetra is conspicuous by its absence. The description relates to Muñjavara tirtha although three individual tirthas Yugandhara, Acyutasthala and Bhūtālaya also incidentally find mention in verse 47 which is virtually identical with Mbh. Vana, 129, 9, and Karna, 30, 42, reproduced above. Here in verse 48 the opposite behaviour expected during the night is clearly defined in the threat of Mahāvaksī Ulūkhalamekhalā to devour the female pilgrim. On her prayer the pilgrim is promised heaven if she takes bath in the Sannihati tirtha which too is in Kuruksetra.

The induction of the regional name Kuruksetra in his Hindi translation by Prof. Agrawal is therefore not only unwarranted but also utterly incongruous. As a matter of fact the Great Epic has only good words to offer on the sacred and sanctifying character of Kuruksetra. It is the Dharmaksetra of the opening verse of Śrimad Bhagavadgītā12 and a touch of its wind-blown dust leads even the sinner of darkest deeds to Parama Gati, the ultimate goal of moksa. 13 And within the boundaries of Kuruksetra the tract lying between the holy rivers Sarasvati and Drsadvati has been equated with Trivistapa or heaven itself14 while Kuruksetra has been called Brahmavedi<sup>15</sup> and Kuruksetra Samantapañcaka the Uttaravedi of Pitāmaha16 Brahmā. Karna himself while squarely condemning the Madras repeatedly praises the people of the Kurus as possessing the knowledge of Dharma, 17

Prof. Agrawal however, considers Kuruksetra a part of the Vahika country and as such the description of the Vāhīkas could be taken to be equally applicable to it. Here also the learned Professor was grossly mistaken. Clear evidence, both positive and negative in nature, is available in abundance to show that the territories of Kuruksetra and the Vah kas were mutually exclusive. Restricting ourselves to the Mbh. we may refer to the geographical definition of the Vahika land given in the Karna Parva right in the midst of the diatribe against the Madras. "The polluted Vāhika country which is devoid of Dharma, impure and deserves to be avoided" declares the poet, "lies outside the limits of the Himalayas, away from the Ganga, Yamuna, Sarasyati and Kuruksetra and within the five rivers with Sindhu as the sixth."18 He does not leave us in doubt about the identity of the five rivers and soon adds, "Where there are the forests of the Pilu tree and the five rivers Satadru, Vipāśā, Irāvatī, Candrabhāgā and Vitastā with Sindhu as the sixth flow, leaving the hilly tract, that is the land named Aratta, devoid of Dharma and undeserving of a visit."19 Indeed one gets an impression as if the author is anxious to pinpoint the geographical position of the Madras, Vahikas or Arattas with an exactitude proportionate to the severity of the strictures passed against them. Yet again in the same chapter he reminds us the third time that "Aratta, also named Vāhīka, is the land where flow the five rivers after leaving the mountains."20 The Vāhīkas and Kuruksetra are thus specifically defined as entirely separate political and geographical entities in absolutely unambiguous terms.

Finally what delivers the coup de grace is the hard fact of history that the Indo-Greeks could not have controlled the land of Kurukşetra or East Punjab long enough to influence the religious and social outlook of its people. As A.K. Narain observes Menanders' kingdom shows Indo-Greek power at its height and "he ruled from the Kabul valley in the west to the Ravi in the east, and from the Swat valley in the north to northern Arachosia in the south." Even if Menander is taken to be the Yavana king who beseiged Saketa and invaded Pāṭaliputra there is nothing in the available evidence to suggest that the presence of the Indo-Greeks in the Madhyadeśa, including Kurukşetra, was anything but transitory, indeed too transitory to make any cultural impact. It is therefore, not at all possible to sustain the hypothesis in propounding which the late Prof. V.S. Agrawal, a scholar of acknowledged erudition, was evidently carried away by his otherwise well-placed enthusiasm for his apposite explanation of the Madraka-Kutsana episode in the Great Epic.

This leaves us with one question which, even if not quite obligatory to answer, does need to be touched upon at least briefly, for a logical conclusion of this discussion. Why is night stay or more than one night stay at Ramahrada or Muniavata forbidden? And what is the meaning of the threat to a pilgrim eating curd at Yugandhara, staying at Acyutasthala and taking a dip at Bhūtālaya? Surprisingly, Prof. Agrawal himself offered an appropriate explanation to these questions. In his study of the Vamana Purana,22 published one year before his Gauhati address and four years before Bharata Savitri he observed, "Many an inference can be drawn from this Gatha verse (Vamana P. SM., 13, 47 = Mbh. Vana, 129,9. and Karna, 30,42). Originally Yaksī Ulūkhala-Mekhalā (of Muñiavata tirtha) was an ogress fed with oblation of blood and flesh or bloody-sacrifices. That tradition continued in the minds of the people. There were three other places in Kuruksetra, viz. Yugandhara, Acyutasthala, and Bhūtālaya visited by the pilgrims on special occasions marked by particular ceremonies, viz. milk or curd as the Prasada eaten in Yugandhara and a short stay at the two latter places. Then one came to the shrine of the Yaksi where the pilgrims staved only during day time and were scared away at night for fear of being eaten up by the Yaksī, the bloodthirsty ogress, probably an illusion is made to bloody sacrifices nocturnally indulged in, which were a cause of general terror in the minds of the people. There is no doubt that here we find conspicuous mention of the Yaksa-cult prevailing in Kuruksetra."

Suffice it to say here that we fully agree with this view and accept it as the only plausible explanation which Prof. Agrawal erroneously discarded under the influence of his theory on the Madraka-Kutsana episode. A more elaborate study of the Yakşa-cult in Kurukşetra deserves an independent treatment.

### Notes and References

- 1. Country around Sakala, modern Sialkot in Pakistan.
- 2. Cr. ed. Pune 1954, Karna, 26, 42-60.
- 3. Ibid., 62-69.
- 4. Ibid., 27, 73-91 and 30, 7-81.
- 5. Ibid., 30, 68:

क्षत्रियस्य मलं भैक्षं ब्राह्मणस्यान्तं मलम्। मलं पृथिव्या बाह्मीकाः स्त्रीणां मद्रस्त्रियो मलम।।

- 6. Gauhati (Assam). Jan. 2-4. 1965, pp; 18-22
- Bhārata Sāvitrī, three volumes, Delhi 1977.
- 8. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 259 f.
- 9. Vol. II, p. 264.
- 10. Ed. Shastri, K. Sambashiva, Trivandrum 1936, p. 60.
- 11. Cr. ed. Gupta A.S., Varanasi 1967, S.M. 13, 38-50.
- 12. Mbh. Bhisma. 23, 1.
- 13. Mbh. Vana, 81, 174;

पांसवोऽपि क्रक्षेत्रे वायना समुदीरिताः। अपि दुष्कृतकर्माणं नयन्ति परमां गतिम।।

14. Ibid., 175:

दक्षिणेन सरस्वत्या उत्तरेण दषद्वतीम। ये वसन्ति क्रक्षेत्रे ते वसन्ति त्रिविष्टपे।

15. Ibid., 177:

ब्रह्मवेदी करुक्षेत्रं पूण्यं ब्रह्मिषसेवितम। तदावसन्ति ये राजन् न ते शोच्याः कथंचन ।

16. Ibid., 178:

तरन्त्कारन्त्कयोयंदन्तरम रामह्रदानां च मचक् कस्य च। एतत्क्रुरुक्षेत्रसमन्तपञ्चकम् पितामहस्योत्तारवेदिरुच्यते ॥

17. Mbh. Karna 30, 73, 75:

ब्राह्मं पाञ्चला कौरवेयाः स्वधर्मम् सत्यं मत्स्याः श्रसेनाश्च यज्ञम् । प्राच्या दासा वृषला दाक्षिणात्याः, स्तेना बाह्मीकाः संकरा वै सुराष्ट्राः ॥ आ पाञ्चालेभ्यः कुरवो नैमियाश्च, मत्स्याश्चैवाप्यथ जानन्ति धर्मम् । कलिङ्गकाश्चाङ्गका मागधाश्च, शिष्टान्धर्मानुपजीवन्ति वृद्धाः

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18. Ibid., 30. 10-11:

बहिष्कृता हिमवता गङ्गया च तिरस्कृताः। सरस्वत्या यमुनया कुरुक्षेत्रेण चापि ये।। पञ्चानां सिन्धुषष्ठानां नदीनां येऽन्तराश्चिताः। तान्धर्मवाह्यानशुचीन्वाङ्कीकान् परिवर्जयेत्।।

19. Ibid., 35-36 (1):

शतद्रश्च विपाशा च तृतीयेरावती तथा। चन्द्रभागा वितस्ता च सिन्धुषष्ठा बर्हिगिरेः। आरट्टा नाम ते देशा नष्टधर्मान्न तान्त्रजेत्।।

20. Ibid., 43:

पञ्चनद्यो वहन्त्येता यत्र निःमृत्य पर्वतात् । आरट्टा नाम बङ्कीका तेष्वार्यो न द्यहंवसेत् ॥

21. Vide, The Indo-Greeks, Oxford 1962, p. 97.

22. Vāmana Purāņa-A Study, Varanasi 1964, 67.

### SOME APOCRYPHAL TĪRTHA-NAMES IN KURUKŞETRA

The land of Kurukşetra is the cradle of Indian Civilization. A large portion of the earliest literature in Sanskrit was composed here in the valleys of the holy rivers Sarasvati and Drsadvati. It was the scene of the first political and cultural activity in our country. It is not surprising therefore that most of the Hindu gods are associated with this land in one way or the other and it is dotted with innumerable Tirthas connected with sites, forests, lakes and rivers some of which had already acquired a holy character in the remote Vedic age.

Popular tradition places the number of holy sites in the region at 360.¹ Even if this number is an exaggeration, the lists of Tīrtha-names which are available to us are impressively large. Sir Alexander Cunningham in his "Report of a Tour in the Panjab in 1878-79"² listed about 207 Tīrthas. Pt. Ram Swaroop Sharma in the first part of his "Kurukşetra Rahasya" published in 1931 from Jind in Haryana³ gave the names of only 125. Ten years later Dayali Ram, sometime Director Education erstwhile Patiala State, gave probably the longest list of the Tīrthanames, about 259 in all, in his "Kurukşetra Darpana," originally brought out in Urdu from Ambala in 1941.⁴ In an article on "Tīrthas of Kurukşetra as enumerated in the Mahābhārata and Vāmana Purāṇa," published in 1976,⁵ Silak Ram listed about 229 names.⁶ There are several other accounts also but a systematic and analytical examination of the innumerable Tīrtha-names of Kurukşetra, roughly comprising the present state of Haryana, remains yet to be undertaken.²

Cunningham suspected most of the Tirthas in his list to be invention of modern days. This suspicion cannot be said to be wholely unwarranted. There are many names which appear rather odd as Tirtha-names although they cannot be branded as spurious without proper examination.

In this brief note we intend to take up the three Tirtha-names Sudina, Ahan and Ilāyāspada or Ilāspada which can be easily demonstrated to be apocryphal. It is interesting to note that these three names are duly mentioned in the Mahābhārata<sup>9</sup> and the Vāmana Purāṇa<sup>10</sup> and have been traditionally assigned to specific villages. Pt. Ram Swaroop Sharma places Sudina and Ahan both at village Bastali (Sanskrit Vyāsasthalī)<sup>11</sup> and Ilāspada at village Shergarh near Kaithal.<sup>12</sup>

Cunningham connects Sudina and Ahan both with village Dusen<sup>13</sup> and places *Ilāspada* at village Shergarh which, he thinks, was earlier known as Saraka.<sup>14</sup> Silak Ram locates *Sudina* at Dusen, *Ahan* at village Ahun<sup>15</sup> and Ilāspada at Kaithal. Dayali Ram does not take note of these three Tīrtha-names.

Although these names find mention among the Tirthas of Kuruksetra in the Mahābhārata and the Vāmana Purāna they have been undoubtedly fabricated out of expressions occurring in Rgveda 3.23.4 which is reproduced below in Padapāṭha<sup>17</sup> along with corresponding translation in English.

नित्वा दधे वरे आ पृथिव्या: इलाया: पदे सुदिनत्वे अहनाम् I place thee in the best spot of earth the seat of Ilā on the best day of all days.

दृष द्वत्याम् मानुषे आपयायाम् सरस्वत्याम् रेवत् अग्ने दिदीहि ॥ On the Dṛṣadvatī, Mānuṣa, Āpayā, Sarasvatī, richly Agni! Shine.

The Rsis of this hymn, addressed to Agni, are the two Bharata princes Devasravas and Devavata. In the Mantra before us the poets place Agni in the best spot of earth, the seat of Ila, on the best of days and pray to the god to shine in all effulgence at Disadvati, Mānuṣa, Āpayā and Sarasvati. Disadvati, Āpayā and Sarasvati are the three well known rivers of Kurukṣetra. Mānuṣa has been construed by Wilson<sup>18</sup> and Geldner<sup>19</sup> as an adjective of the (banks of) three rivers and rendered as "frequented by men". Griffith<sup>20</sup> on the other hand takes it as the vocative singular of Mānuṣa and translates it as "O man!" However M.L. Bhargava<sup>21</sup> suggested long ago that the word here stands for the name of a town and lake and like the three accompanying river-names, is the locative singular of the stem Mānuṣa. It has since been conclusively established by Ram Gopal<sup>22</sup> that Mānuṣa stands, in this Mantra, for the name of a lake. The second half of the Mantra thus contains four names, one of a lake or town<sup>23</sup> and three of rivers which had all acquired a sacred character by the time this hymn was composed.

In the first half the three expressions Ilayaspade, Sudinatve and Ahnam present no difficulty. While Sayana24 and Venkatamadhava25 explain "Ilavaspade" as "Uttaravedyam" or "in the Uttaravedi" denoting the land of Kuruksetra which is known as the Uttaravedi of god Brahma26-it agrees well with the context since the Manusa lake and all the three rivers mentioned above belong to Kuruksetramodern scholars uniformly translate it as "the seat of Ilā. It is to be noted that Ilāyāspade, being a conjunction of the two words, Ilāyāh (genitive sing, of Ilā) and Pade (loc. sing. of Pada), cannot be taken as one single word to devote a placename. Sudinatve (loc. sing. of Sudinatva) is explained by Sayana as "यजनीय दिव-सानाम् शोभनदिनत्वार्थम् । येषु दिनेषु इन्द्रादयो वरीयांसो देवाः पुज्यन्ते तानि सुदिनानि" or "a day worthy of performing a sacrifice" representing days on which sacrifice is offered to foremost gods like Indra. Venkatamādhava takes it as "a cloudless day" in contradistinction to "Durdina", "a bad day" in the sense of a "cloudy or rainy day" (अन भ्रत्वादहनां मुदिनत्वम). Modern scholars uniformly render it as "the best day" which too cannot be a place-name. Ahnam is the genitive plural of the word Ahan meaning "of days," and again utterly unthinkable as a place-name. It is thus impossible to visualise these three words or expressions as names of Tirthas. Nevertheless this is precisely the situation presented to us by the Great Epic and the Vamana Purana. Why?

The explanation is quite simple.

As we have already seen the second half of the Mantra contains four Tirthanames, of one holy town/lake and three sacred rivers. Some-one placed the three expressions Ilāvāspada, Sudina(tva) and Ahan also in the same category and, taking the form Ilaspada of the first name,27 converted them into lirtha-names and introduced them in the Mahabharata Vana Parva Tirthayatra account which is, in any case, most disorderly and disorganised. Their entry into the Vamana Purana which owes much to the Mahabharata, posed no difficulty. Priests eager to multiply the number of Tirthas for obvious reasons assigned them to different villages.

Was this the work of a simple scribe, a mischievous interpolator or a motivated redactor? The answer to this question lies in the situation of the villages to which these three Tirthas have been assigned. All the places lie in tehsil Kaithal of district Kuruksetra. Shergarh is hardly 2-3 kms. from Kaithal and Bastali about 25 kms. on the road to Karnal. Ahun not far from Bastali, lies a few kms. closer to Kaithal. In the same area, hardly 11 kms. to the west of Kaithal, lies the village and lake of Mānusa, now called Mānasa, with the river Āpayā only one krośa28 to its east; both mentioned in the second half of the Mantra. It appears that the fabricated Tirtha-names were knowingly assigned to places near Manusa and Apaya ! The selection of the villages Ahun and Dusen was a clever move with

an eye on the phonetic similarity of these names with Ahan and Sudina. The interpolations are therefore most probably the work of a shrewd redactor who belonged to Kaithal (ancient Kapisthala) or some place nearby.

It is difficult to pinpoint the interpolations to any particular date or period in the absence of any clue. The closest possible guess could be some time around the 7th century A.D. which may be taken as the earliest possible date of the composition of the Vāmana Purāṇa.<sup>29</sup> It may be that these names were introduced in the Mahābhārata and the Vāmana Purāṇa about the same time. This will however remain only a conjecture till some definite evidence becomes available.

It may be added that relevant verses containing these Tirtha-names find place in the main texts accepted in the critical editions of the Mahābhārata and the Vāmana Purāṇa. This only shows that the texts constituted in critical editions are generally not to be taken for granted.

### Notes and References

- Alexander Cunningham, Report of A Tour in the Punjab in 1878-79, Archaeological Survey of India Vol. XIV. p. 90.
- 2. See pp. 97-106.
- 3. See pp. 28-45. Part-II of this booklet never appeared.
- 4. See pp. 63-118. A Hindi version also appeared from Ambala. The author acknowledges the help taken in the preparation of his work from Kurukşetra Māhātmya of Ramachandra Saraswati, Kurukşetra Darpaņa of Munshi Kale Rai, Risala of Pt. Chuni Lal and several other works including Kurukşetra Māhātmya, Kurukşetra Parikramā, Gurutīrthasangraha and Tarikh Khalsa. See Intro. p. 4.
- 5. Journal of Haryana Studies Vol. III, Nos. 1-2, pp. 14-32.
- The lists of Cunningham, Dayali Ram and Silak Ram contain names of traditional Tirthas also which are not mentioned in literature.
- 7. See e.g. सरयूप्रसाद गुप्त, महाभारत तथा पुराणों के तीथौं का आलोचनात्मक अध्ययन, वाराणसी।

Bhagwan Singh Suryavanshi, Geography of the Mahābhārata, New Delhi, 1986; S.S. Parui, Kurukṣetra in the Vāmana Purāṇa, Calcutta 1976; Savitri V. Kumar, The Purāṇic Lore of Holy Water-places, New Delhi, 1983; and S.M. Bharadwaj, Hindu places of pilgrimage in India, Delhi 1973 etc.

8. Op. cit., p. 90.

9. Cr. ed. Pune 1942, Vana, 81. 63 and 84 (i):

रुद्रकोटिस्तथा क्षे ह्रदेषु च महीपते। इलास्पदं च तत्रैव तीर्थं भारतसत्तम।। अहण्च सूदिनं चैव हे तीर्थे च सूदर्लमे।

Readings इडास्पदं and श्रद्धास्पदं are also available.

10. Cr. ed. Varanasi 1967, SM., 15.24 (ii) and 61. Reads Idaspada for Ilaspada:

इडास्पदं च तत्रैव तीर्थं पापभयापहम् ॥ अलं च सुदिनं चैव हे तीथें भवि दलंभे। तयोः स्नात्वा विशद्धात्मा सर्यलोकमवाप्नयात ॥

- 11. Op. cit. p. 38. He spells Ahan as Ahna and Sudina as Munina, Mudita or Sudita.
- 12. Op. cit. p. 35. He gives a second name Indraspada too for Ilaspada.
- 13. Op. cit. p. 99. Spells Sudina as Sindan and Ahan as Anna.
- Op. cit. p. 104. Spells Ilāspada as Irāspada.
- 15. Op. cit. p. 23. Erroneously states that Ahna is spelled as Anan in Vamana P. SM., 15. 61.
- 16. Op. cit. p. 21.
- Vaidika Samsodhana Mandala Pune ed. See infra n. 24.
- 18. Rgveda Samhita, Text and Eng. Tr. etc. 6 Vols. Delhi, 1977.
- Der Rig-veda, German Tr. Harvard Oriental Series, Vols. 33-35., 1951.
- 20. The Hymns of the Rigveda, Eng. Tr. Third ed., Two volumes, Benares.
- 21. The Geography of Rgvedic India, Lucknow 1964, p. 31 f.
- 22. A New Interpretation of the Vedic Word Manusa, Journal of the Ganganatha Jha Research Instt. Vol. XVII, May-August 1961, (prts. 3-4) pp. 193-202.
- 23. There is a village of identical name on a very old mound by the side of the lake, now called Manasa.
- Rgveda Samhită, 5 Vols., Vaidika Samsodhana Mandala Pune, 3rd ed. 1984.
- Rgveda with commentaries of Skandasvämin, Udgitha etc., 8 vols, Ed. Vishva Bandhu, Hoshiarpur, 1965.
- 26. Mbh. Vana, 81. 178:

तरन्त्कारन्त्कयोर्यदन्तरं रामह्नदानां च मचक्कस्य च। एतत्करुक्षेत्रसमन्तपञ्चकं पितामहस्योत्तरवेदिरुच्यते ॥

This verse has been repeated in Salya 52.20 and also in the Vāmana Purāna SM., 1. 14.

Also see Vāmana P. SM., 1. 13; and 12. 15.

Much earlier Tandya Mahabrahmana, XXV. 13. 3 says:

त दवा अब वन् एतावती वाव प्रजापतेर्वेदियांवत् कुरुक्षेत्रमिति तौ न व्यजयेताम .....

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- Ilāyāspada is not used in later works. Rgveda has the form Ilāspada too. See e.g. 1. 128. 1, X. 91. 1. Ilāyāspada occurs in III. 29.4 and X. 91.4 also.
- 28. Mbh. Vana 81.55:

मानुषस्य तु पूर्वेण कोशमात्रे महीपते। आपगा नाम विख्याता नदी सिद्धनिषेविता।।

The verse is almost literally repeated in Vāmana P. SM., 15.1. Āpayā and Āpagā are identical.

29. Scholars widely disagree over the date of composition of the Vāmana P. R.C. Hazra (Purāṇic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs, 2nd ed. Delhi 1975, p. 91) considers it not earlier than the 9th century A.D., P.V. Kane (History of Dharmaśāstra, Vol. V, Prt. II, pp. 904 f.) puts its compilation between 600-900 A.D.; V.S. Agrawal (Vāmana Purāṇa-A Study, p. ii) places it in the first half of the 7th century A.D.

# YAKŞA-WORSHIP IN KURUKŞETRA

The history of Yaksa-worship goes back to hoary antiquity. It was widely prevalent in India and its neighbouring countries since immemorial times. However, while it may well be called pre-Vedic<sup>2</sup> there is hardly any justification for describing it as non-Aryan or pre-Aryan.<sup>3</sup>

In later literature the Yakṣas are usually bracketted with the Asuras, Rākṣasas and Piśācas<sup>4</sup> and placed by lexicons<sup>5</sup> in the category of demi-gods like Vidyādharas, Gandharvas Kinnaras, Guhyakas, Siddhas and Bhūtas. These demi-gods share some peculiar characteristics so that distinction in their worship is often blurred even where the presiding deity is specifically named, as we find in case of Munjavaṭa. At this tīrtha the same deity has been described as a Piśācī<sup>6</sup> and Rākṣasī<sup>7</sup> in the Mahābhārata and as a Yakṣiṇī in the Vāmana Purāṇa.<sup>8</sup>

The word Yaksa has been derived from the root  $\sqrt{4}$ स् (यस्-अ) "to speed on, to manifest". in the sense of "a mysterious being", "a supernatural being revealing himself suddenly" (as did the Yakṣa to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Vana Parva of the Mbh.) as well as in the sense of (यस्-इन्) "pursuing-avenging" which reminds us of his later characteristic of "seizing, possessing" expressed in the term 'Yakṣa-graha'. Piśāca(=Piśitāśa) is "one who eats raw flesh" (पिशितं मांसम्बन्तिति = पिशित् +  $\sqrt{अश-अ}$ ). Yakṣa has thus a split personality, as it were, both pleasant and unpleasant while Piśāca has little pleasant about him. This etymological dichotomy between the pleasant and unpleasant or benevolent and malevolent-aspects of the personality of Yakṣa persists all along through the ages.

The word Yaksa occurs several times in the Rgveda (R.V.),11 the oldest literary testament of mankind and, although the meaning assigned to it is not always free from doubt, it has often been made to yield a sense which is not entirely unhelpful for our purpose. In vii. 56.16,12 Yakşas are mentioned as models of beauty while in x. 88.13.13 Agni is presented as more powerful than even the Yaksa who, by implication, was counted among the powerful. By contrast in iv. 3.1314 Agni is requested not to visit even secretly the house of one who frequents the abode of the Yaksa; in vii. 61.5,15 the purport appears to be that only immature and unintelligent people believe in strange gods like Yakşas and in v. 70.4,16 the poet prays to the gods to save him from an encounter with a Yakṣa. The word Pisaca, in the only instance of its appearance (i. 133.5), has undoubtedly a demoniac sense.17 In the Atharvaveda (A.V.) Yaksa is called "a soulful prodigy"18 and "holy folk"19 on the one hand and "a soul-possessing monster"20 on the other. Pisaca stands for a class of demons who 'are eaters of raw flesh' (ऋब्याद).21 According to the Kausika Sūtra22 in a rite for curing a person caught by the Piśacas, the medicine-man-priest makes powder of Prśniparni (Hemionitis Cordifolia), performs an offering with A.V. 1.35, pours the remnants of that offering on the powder, utters the same hymn on it and besmears the patient with it from top to bottom. The Piśacas were thus probably already recognised as grahas or seizers of human beings in the age of the A.V.

The position does not change in later Vedic Literature. In the Brāhmaṇas Yakṣa appears only a few times and applies to a 'wonderous thing'.<sup>23</sup> However, they could not have been uniformly held in great esteem as Kubera, their king and lord in later literature, is a Rākṣas and lord of robbers and evil-doers in the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa<sup>24</sup> and his hosts appear as plagueing children in the Sūtras.<sup>25</sup> Thus even while being an ideal for beauty<sup>26</sup> the Yakṣa is considered an "Evil being".<sup>27</sup> This also finds support in the Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads. The Sāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka couples Yakṣas with Rākṣasas and Piśācas as killers.<sup>28</sup> So does the Sivopaniṣad (5, 3) which justifies their destruction.<sup>29</sup> According to the Sāmarahasyopaniṣad (v. 7) worshippers of Yakṣa are always to be abandoned.<sup>30</sup>

The ambivalence in the attitude towards Yaksa has left Piśāca unaffected. In the Taittirīya Samhitā<sup>31</sup> and the Jaiminiya Brāhma a<sup>32</sup> (J.B.), we find him standing in the company of Asuras and Rāksasas in opposition to the gods, fathers and men. According to J.B.<sup>33</sup> the wife of Triyaruṇa, king of the Iksvākus was a Pišāci and she suppressed the power of their fire. She is destroyed by Vrsa son of Jana the domestic priest of Triyaruṇa by reciting some verses of the Rgveda. The Maitrāyanyupaniṣad<sup>34</sup> describes the Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Bhūtas, Ganas, Piṣācas, Uragas as grahas who seize beings. According to the Atharva-Parisiṣia<sup>35</sup> a town infilterated by Piṣācas, Rākṣasas and their likes soon suffers destruction of human life by epidemics.

The dual character of Yaksa survives in Jain and Buddhist works also. Yaksas and Yaksins appear as protectors of Jain Tirthankaras, each Tirthankara having a Yaksa and a Yaksini as attendants.36 They are called Vyantara or gods of intermediate status37 and said to be dwelling in unoccupied houses, trees, forests or woods, ponds etc. which are then said to be possessed (adhisthita) by them. 38 Their temples known as Yaksayatanas, Yaksakulas, Yaksagrahas or Yaksabhayanas, Yaksaprāsādas and Yaksacaityas were located outside the city39 and visited by dubious characters like the robber Vijava who was in the habit of wandering through gambling dens, drink-saloons, courtesans' houses and crossroads. 40 Some Yaksas are devoted to the Buddha 41 while others molest his followers in their woodland haunts.42 In the Ayakūtajātaka Yaksas annoyed with the Buddha, on being denied bali, plan his assassination. 43 There are direct references to sacrificial offerings to the Yaksa demons in the Jatakas.44 Malalasekera45 classifies different kinds of Yaksas, known in Buddhism, as spirits, ogres, dryads, ghosts, spooks-generally speaking decadent divinities-beings half deified, having a deva's supernatural powers, particularly as regards influencing people, partly helpful, partly harmful. At many places Devatā and Yaksa are synonymous.46 Nonetheless there is a tendency in Buddhism to restrict the designation Yaksa to demons.<sup>47</sup> A passage in the Dīghanikāya sums up all the demoniac attributes of a Yaksa.48 In later Buddhist literature they have been degraded to the state of red-eyed cannibal ogres.49 The female Yakşas (Yakşinis) are, in these cases, more fearful and evil-minded than the male. They eat flesh and blood and devour even men and corpses. They eat babies and are full of spite and vengeance. Jataka stories abound in instances of this nature 50

In the Epics and Puranas the degeneration of Yaksa to his malevolent self is largely accomplished and he gradually becomes almost a regular member of the Asura-Gandharva-Bhûta-Piśāca-Guhyaka-Vetāla group.51 It is in keeping with this development that the Ramayana52 derives Yakşa from the root / Yaks "to gobble." Tādakā, originally a Yaksini, becomes a Rāksasī53 while Ulūkhalamekhalā is at the same time a Yaksī, Piśācī as well as a Rākṣasī.54 Although at one place the Rāmāyana<sup>55</sup> compares them to blooming lotuses in the sky at another<sup>56</sup> they are described with the Raksasas and horrifying Pisacas as creatures who wander in the night. Manu<sup>57</sup> mentions meat and intoxicating drinks as the food of Yaksas, Piśācas and Gandharvas. In the Mahabharata58 Raksasas, Piśācas and others of their group are known as "eaters of raw flesh." They eat human flesh and drink blood. 59 The Yatudhanas and Piśacas steal oblations. 60 The Yakşı named Jara of Rajagrha is described as मांसजोणितभोजना.61 There are Piśacagrahas and Yaksagrahas. 62 One possessed by a Yaksa soon turns mad and is known as Yaksagraha,63 The Puranas give a detailed account of the nature, food and habitat of the Piśacas. They are said to dwell or congregate in cremation grounds together with Bhūtas, Vetālas, Yaksas etc. and move about at twilight frequenting deserted

houses, royal roads and doorways.<sup>64</sup> One who sees them or other demons will die within nine months. They can be propitiated with small and mean offerings such as food that has been sneezed or stepped on, food mixed with hair, insects or tears, or licked by a dog, or unconsecrated food. They are given offerings of liquor, flesh, rice, curd, sesamum, incense, black cloth etc. They have the power of invisibility and can easily enter the mouth of anyone and penetrate to the intestines and they feed on faeces.<sup>65</sup> The Yakṣas, just by a glance, the Rākṣasas by entering and the Piśācas by afflicting or pressing, drink the blood and eat the flesh and marrow of human beings.<sup>66</sup>

According to the Bhagavata Purana<sup>67</sup> the Rakşasas, deranged by hunger, attacked, together with the Yakşas, Brahman himself who had assumed a nightlike body, and the Creater cried out to them not to eat, but to protect him. Their king is Kubera the lord of Alakā.<sup>68</sup> Ulūkhala-Ulūkhalī are counted among Piśaca couples.<sup>69</sup> We shall revert to them again.

Still later, about the second half of the 11th century A.D., we come across a Yakşa as gigantic as a mountain in the Kathāsaritsāgara. In the same work Bhūtivarmā Rākṣasa tells Kānabhūti that the Yakṣas, Rākṣasas and Piśācas rejoice in the night since, eclipsed by the brilliance of the sun, they wield no power during the day. A Vidyādharī named Madanamancukā makes an offering of wine, flesh and other dainties with her own hand to Yakṣas. We hear of a Yakṣiṇī of heavenly beauty, surrounded by many Yakṣas with feet turned the wrong way and squinting eyes, enjoying all kinds of meat and drink. Four Pāśupata ascetics stay overnight in a deserted temple of Siva in a wood where each one of them falls prey to Yakṣiṇī Sṛṇgotpādinī who, playing on a lute of bones recites a charm which produces horns on him. Bewildered he rises up and dances till he falls into the blazing fire from which he is dragged out half-burnt by the Yakṣiṇī and devoured with delight. She is ultimately subdued by their companion Niścayadatta. A Yakṣa named Supratika is turned into a Piśāca by the curse of Kubera.

The Nilamata Purāṇa<sup>76</sup> relates a story according to which Kashmir was occupied, in consequence of a curse of Kaśyapa, for six months of each year by the Piśācas, who forced the human settlers to retire from the country from the full-moon day of Aśvayuja to that of Caitra. The Grāmadevatāpratiṣṭhā<sup>77</sup> includes Yaksas among grāmadevatās in the company of Pūtanā and others who kill children, Bhūtas, Pretas and Piśācas, Kūsmāṇḍas, Sākinīs, Pākinīs, Vetālas and others. As V.S. Agrawal<sup>78</sup> has shown Yakṣa-cult is still widely prevalent in the form of worship of various local male and female deities like Birs or Pīrs, Mātās and Yoginīs. However now it rests more on fear than on genuine respect.

Having formed an idea of the character of the Yakşas and their kin and of the nature of Yakşa-worship we can take up a brief survey of the Yakşa cult in

Kuruksetra. The observations arising from the evidence of our earliest literary works are of course, largely relevant in case of Kuruksetra which is regarded as the cradle of Indian civilisation. We shall therefore take note of more specific traditions only. In the remote past when the austerities of king Kuru were successful god Visnu, granting him the desired boons, assigned for the protection of Kurujängala the Yaksa named Candra, the serpent Väsuki, the Vidyadhara Sankukarna, the Rākṣasa chief Sukeśi, the king Ajāvana and the great god Agni. 79 A Yakṣa was thus associated with the region from the very day it acquired the name Kuruksetra. A verse common to the Mahabharata80 and the Vamana Purana81 describes the heartland of Kuruk etra, with a radius of five vojanas on all sides and therefore known as Samantapañcaka, as bounded on its four corners by four Yakşas called Dvārapālas or guardian deities. This core of the country was also named Uttaravedī of god Brahmā. 82 The four Yaksas were Tarantuka, Arantuka, Kapila and Macakruka.83 Cunningham84 has identified Tarantuka with Ratan Yakşa in the N.E. corner close to the town of Pipli on the G.T. Road near the Sarasvati, Arantuka with village Ber or Baher to the N.W. of Kaithal where a Yaksa-kuhda exists, Macakruka with village Sinkh in the S.E. corner and Kapila Maha Yakşa of Ramahrada with the present town of Ram Rai in the S.W. corner where we have a tirtha named after Kapila. In place of Rāmahrada the Vāmana Purāna85 names the tirtha Munjavata which local tradition connects with a neighbouring village called Barahban. The Mahabharata86 describes one Sankhattrtha. three other tirthas away from Vinasana upstream on the Sarasvatt, where Yaksas. Vidyādharas, Rāksasas, Piśācas and Siddhas in thousands subsisted on the fruit of that tree while moving about unseen by human beings.

As the statement appended at the end shows the identification of the towns associated with the four guardian Yakşas of Kurukşetra is by no means free from confusion. Some other suggestions, even though rather unorthodox, are more in keeping with the traditional geographical definition of Kurukşetra, as a sacrificial altar given in the Taittir ya Āranyaka with Khāndava as the southern half. Srughna the northern half. Parinat the lower or western half and Marus or the Raiasthan desert as its Utkara or rubbish heap. V.S. Agrawal87 places Macakruka Yaksa at Jakhala in the N.W. of Kuruksetra across the Sarasvati Ghaggar. The name is probably a corrupt form of Yaksasthala and its location makes it an ideal site for the Yaksa Dvarapala in the N.W. corner. There are other centres of Yaksaw rship like Jakhepal identified with village Yaksapālaka88 and Patran identified with Pățala 89 in the same region. The Vâmana Purana 90 names Mâlavata Yaksa near Pañcanada. Some other Yaksas are also mentioned in the region. 91 The pilgrim is advised to go to Pañcanada after propitiating Rantuka or Arantuka Yakşa.92 Since Pancanada figures as a tirtha it obviously refers to the place below Multan, now in Pakistan which went by this name93 and not generally to Punjab as a land of five rivers. If Rantuka or Arantuka was near Pañcanada we have to

place one of the Dvarapala Yakşas of Kurukşetra somewhere deep in the Marus which agrees better with its traditional western corner. Placing all the four Dvarapalas to make a much smaller rectangle within the Sarasvati-Drsadvati doab would lead to the conclusion that the geographical definition of Kuruksetra had shrunk to denote a very small unit by the age of the Great Epic and the Puranas. Programme 25

The Aţānātiya96 Sutta contains a vivid description of the Yakkha kingdom of Uttarakuru which, according to Buddhist literature, denoted the hilly region to the north of Kuruksetra extending from Srughna into the high Himalayas.<sup>97</sup> In the Dighanikaya two Yakkhas, Yugandhara98 and Serisaka,99 are mentioned who were apparently the guardians of the two important towns of Yugandhara or Jagadhari in the N.E. and Sairisaka or Sirsa in the N.W. The Mahamayuri, translated into Chinese in the 4th century A.D., 100 gives names of numerous localities together with the names of their presiding Yaksas. Several of these are from Kuruksetra. The text assigns Kapila Yaksa to Bahudhanyaka, 101 the country about Rohtak, 102 Malyadhara 103 and Munjakeśa 104 to Agrodaka or the present town of Agroha, 105 Kārttikeya to Rohitaka or Rohtaka,106 Duryodhana107 and Siddhayatra108 to Srughna identified with the site of Sugh near Jagadhari, 109 Arjuna to Arjunavana, 110 Puranjaya to Yaudheya,111 Sthuna to Sthuna112 and the Yaksa chiefs Tararka and Kutarārka113 and the well-known Yakşī Ulūkhalamekhalā114 generally to Kuruksetra. The last three immediately remind us of Dvarapalas Tarantuka and Arantuka<sup>115</sup> and Yakşı Ulûkhalamekhalâ, wife of Kapila Yakşa<sup>116</sup> of Râmahrada.117

The Mahāmāyūrī is supposed to belong to the class of works called the Dhāraṇīs or "protective spells" which constitute a large and important part of Mahāyānist Buddhist literature. It is one of the five Dhāraṇīs collectively entitled Pañcarakṣā which is extremely popular in Nepal. The other four Dhāraṇīs are Mahāpratisarā for protection against sin, disease and other evils, Mahāsahasrapramardinī against evil spirits, Mahāsītavatī against hostile planets, wild animals and poisonous insects and Mahā(rakṣā) mantrānusāriṇī against diseases. The Mahāmāyūrī frequently entitled Vidyārājñī—"Queen of secret sciences"—is for protection against snake-poison. It takes its name from the notorious hostility of mayūra(peacock) towards the snakes, but was also used as a general remedy for diseases. 118

The popularity of the Mahāmāyūrī in Kurukṣetra of the 7th century A.D. deserves special notice. In the Harṣacarita<sup>119</sup> Bāṇa describes how Harṣavardhana, returning in haste on account of his fathers' terminal illness, enters the royal palace and finds people performing various kinds of ceremonies and sacrifices and chanting the Mahāmāyūrī hymn. This popularity of Mahāmāyūrī need not be taken to reflect the spread of Buddhism in the region. In spite of extensive proselytising activity by Gautama Buddha himself and zealous royal patronage extended

particularly by Asoka and Kaniska Buddhism failed to make a dent in the religious learnings of the people of Kuruksetra. 120 The Nalanda Clay Seal and Sonepat Copper Seal<sup>121</sup> and Madhuban Plate<sup>122</sup> inscriptions of Harsa describe his father as a Paramāditvabhakta (devout worshipper of Āditya or Sun) and Varnāśramavyavasthāpanapravrttacakra (the upholder of Varnāśramadharma). According to Bana, the conversion to Buddhism of Harsa and his sister took place only after the completion of his conquests under the influence of the Buddhist ascetic Divakaramitra. 123 Even then he did not patronise Buddhism to the exclusion of other religions. His inscriptions refer to him as a Paramamāheśvara (devout Saiva) and his Sonepat seal as well as the seal presented to him by a village headman, as recorded in the Harsacarita, bore a Nandi device, while his coins carry Saiva devices.124

As observed by Winternitz125 "the Dharanis belong to a period at which Buddhism in India began to be more and more assimilated to Hinduism, while outside India it tended to make compromises and to become contaminated by the popular religions of the countries in question. In the course of time the difference between the Dharants and the Mantras belonging to the Tantras, became more and more obliterated and finally the Dharanis were completely supplanted by the Mantras." There is for instance "a Ganapati Dhāranī, addressed to the Saivite god Ganapati in spite of the fact that it is proclaimed by Buddha." This observation finds full support in the prevalence of Saivism and Tantric worship in Kurukşetra side by side with the popularity of the Mahamayuri as testified by Bana. The Harşacarita126 narrates the performance of the exordium of the potent rite Mahākālahrdaya in the great cemetry by Bhairavācārya with the active assistance of none else but king Puspabhûti, the progenitor of the dynasty. The rite was performed in the night and its successful completion involved the subduing of a Vetăla or goblin, a ghost occupying a dead body. The people in the capital city of Sthanviśvara are said to have included worshippers of Candi and Mahakala. 127 The Bhairavacarva too, was a Śākta who had offered human flesh to Śakti and the Piśācas and thereby secured superhuman powers. 128 Evidently therefore, the reason for the popularity of the Mahamayuri in Sthanviśvara was not popularity of Buddhism but the fact that it was not considered an exclusively Buddhist text any more.

To some of the Yakşas the Mahâmâyûrı assigns whole Janapadas or districts/regions instead of single towns. Thus Kapila is the presiding Yaksa of Bahudhanyaka or the region around Rohtak, which was conquered by Nakula after vanquishing the Mattamayūraka Yaudheya warriors in a fierce fight. 129 Arjuna Yakşa presides over Arjunavana which is probably a scribal error for Ārjunāyana, the country where the Ārjunāyanas held sway. 130 Puranjaya Yakşa is assigned to Yaudheya which is described as a Janapada in the Yasastilakacampū131 with its capital at Rajapura, identified with the present town of Rajpura situated on the G.T. Road about 25 kms. from Ambala on the way to Ludhiana. 132 The town

would be an appropriate choice for a capital if the Yaudheyas, at any time, controlled the whole of Haryana and Punjab upto the Sutlej as the wide provenance of their coins suggests. Yakşa chiefs Tarārka and Kutarārka and the Mahā Yakşā Ulūkhalamekhalā also commanded a very wide area of influence as they have been assigned to Kurukşetra generally which was in early ages almost coterminous with the present state of Haryana.

Archaeological evidence also confirms the prevalence of Yakşa cult almost all over the region. Yakşa images provide the earliest specimens of lithic art in India. They can be distinguished by their colossal size, massive build, emphasis on muscular strength, a bulging belly, a turban on the head, scarf thrown on shoulders and arms with a knot around the chest, dhoti as a lower garment fastened with a girdle, heavy ear-rings, heavy torque, flat triangular necklace and armlets with feathered projections. Yakşa sculptures have been recovered from places scattered all over Kurukşetra and even across its boundaries:

- (i) A head and bust of a colossal Yaksa image of red sandstone was found at Palwal in Gurgaon district in 1914 and is now deposited in the Provincial Museum Lucknow (0.107). The style of the turban and the torque, the necklace and the armlets with feathered projections seen in the side view, all point to the image being an early Yaksa type that may be assigned to the early Sunga period about the second century B.C.<sup>136</sup> (Plate 1)
- (ii) Two Yakşa sculptures have been reported by D.S. Punia, <sup>137</sup> one from village Bhadas 63 kms. south of Gurgaon on the Delhi-Alwar road and the other from village Hathin 77 kms. south-east of Gurgaon on the Palwal-Hathin road. The Bhadas figure (190 × 26.67 cm.) carved on a railing pillar in red sandstone, with mutilated face and headgear, wearing a dhoti, a seven-stringed bracelet reaching above the navel, seven-stringed armlets and five-stringed wristlets, stands in a samabhanga pose on a fish-tailed makara. The Hathin sculpture, similarly carved on a railing pillar (142.50 × 25.40 cm.) of red sandstone, stands in samabhanga pose on a Bharavahaka dwarf who appears to support the pillar. In this case too the face and headgear are partly mutilated. The figure wears a dhoti tied with a Kāyabandha, a sanghāti as upper garment and four-stringed bangles. Both sculptures appear to belong to the Sunga period. (Plates 2 & 3)
- (iii) One beautiful image of a Yakşı was recovered from Mehrauli near Delhi which was traditionally a part of ancient Kurukşetra. It is preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi (No. A-29). Made in buff sandstone, the Yakşı is shown standing under a tree, embracing its trunk

- with her left hand in an attitude suggesting a Salabhaniika figure and has been assigned to the second century B.C. 138 (Plate 4)
- (iv) The ancient mound of Khokrakot at Rohtak yielded a carved lioncapital fragment, 3 ft. in width and 18 inches in height which is now preserved at the National Museum in New Delhi. On one side of this fragment two winged lions (sapaksa simhas) are seated facing in opposite directions while its backside carries lions without wings with a couple holding reins in a traditional manner. The figure to the left is a Yaksī and to the right a male Yaksa offering her a cup of wine with his extended right hand, in a pleasant mood. 139 (Plate 5)
- (v) About 8 kms. to the S.S.E. of Thanesar, in village Amin, the traditional site of the Cakravyūha in the Mahābhārata war,140 were discovered two inscribed red stone rectangular pillars from the Thakurii shrine on the west bank of the tank called Suraj Kunda. R.C. Agrawal<sup>141</sup> and A.K. Coomaraswamy 142 place these pillars somewhere in the Sunga period. The pillar to the left side depicts a male person in the Sthanaka mudra wearing a typical Sunga turban, a dhoti tightened with the help of a Kāyabandha (waiste-cloth), long ear-rings and two full-bloomed lotuses carved above his head. The figure has been identified with a Padma-Pāni Yaksa who appears to be pondering over some problem out of great anxiety.

The pillar to the right side depicts a couple in an amorous scene. The lady with very large breasts wears a typical Sunga turban, three necklaces, heavy kundalas in her ears and a dhoti tightened with a Kayabandha. She is looking with a smile at the male who holds a wine cup in his left hand. The couple is taken to represent a Yaksa mithuna.

Moving further in the north, the well known site of Sanghol, about 40 kms. from Chandigarh on the road to Ludhiana, has yielded a number of interesting sculptures carved on railing pillars. Following four of these represent Yaksas and Yaksis.

- (vi) Paribhoga-darsint (Yaksi with mirror) 100 cm. (H) 19 cm (W); 15 cm (D)-Yaksī standing gracefully over a dwarf Yaksa and admiring herself in a mirror. Her bent left hand is holding a mirror; the index finger of her bent right hand is pointing towards nail marks (nakhaksata) in the shape of a crescent on her right cheek. [43] (Plate 6)
- (vii) Yaksārohī (Yaksī riding Vāma Yaksa): Yaksī seen being borne by a Yaksa under a sala tree (shorea robusta). She is astride his back, her hands on his shoulders and her thighs pressing his sides, her eyes and lips curved in a joyous smile.144 (Plate 7)

- (viii) Darpana-dhārinī (Yakṣī with a mirror): Yakṣī seen standing over a crouching Yakṣa under a Kadamba tree (stephegyne parviflora) in full bloom-wearing a nūpura, mekhalā and a necklace which she is looking in the mirror to see how it sets off her beauty.<sup>145</sup> (Plate 8)
  - (ix) Yakst holding lotus flowers seen holding a bouquet of lotus flowers by their stalks in her right hand beside her face standing over the back of a kneeling Vāma Yakşa grasping her mekhalā or girdle and wearing bangles on her forearms, kundalas in her ears and nupuras on her ankles. 146 (Plate 9)
  - (x) From Sirsa in the N.W. has been recovered a headless terracotta figurine depicting a pot-bellied male wearing a Yajñopavíta and a shawl over his shoulders who apparently represents a Yakşa. 147

Two of these sculptures described at numbers (iii) and (v) have been counted by V.S. Agrawal<sup>148</sup> among 18 notable Indian Yakṣa-Yakṣī images.

But for the depredations of invading hordes from the north-west much more sculptural wealth would undoubtedly have been available today because the region was in no way wanting in artistic activity. Bāṇa<sup>149</sup> describes Śrikaṇtha Janapada another name for Kurukṣetra, as the country where stone-cutters were busy chiselling and carving stones for use in temples.

A peculiar aspect of the traditional attitude towards the Yakşa tīrthas of Kuruksetra deserves special notice. The pilgrims are allowed only a hurried visit to these places and night stay or more than one night's stay is not permitted. We are referring particularly to Râmahrada<sup>150</sup> or Muñjavata, Yugandhara, Acyutasthala and Bhūtālaya.151 Of Rāmahrada and Yugandhara the former, as already noted, is the seat of Mahā Yakşa Kapila and his wife Mahā Yakşī Ulukhalamekhalā. This is a rather strange couple. While the husband is described as the guardian of one of the gates of Kuruksetra and is said to destroy sins and grant good position after death<sup>152</sup> his consort is depicted as quite the opposite of it. The Mahābhārata<sup>153</sup> calls her a Piśaci and the Vāmana Purāna<sup>154</sup> adds the adjective Mahāgrāhī pointing to her demoniac characteristic of seizing body and mind of people and causing insanity etc. She comes of the family of the Piśaca couple Ulūkhala and Ulukhali whose horrifying looks are characterised by rigid, unwinking eyes and a long darting tongue. 155 The adjective of Pisitasana-eater of raw flesh given to a Pisaca, becomes really meaningful in her case in view of her threat to eat up the female pilgrim during the night156 which is the time for the Yaksas and Pisacas to operate. Night stay is therefore forbidden. The eating of curd, one of the items to be offered to Piśacas and Yaksas, is disallowed at Yugandhara 157 (Jagadhari) which is the seat of the Yakşa bearing identical name. Hardly four kms, away lies Srughna or Sugh which is assigned to Yakşas, Duryodhana and Siddhayatra.

Acyutasthala has not been identified so far. Bhūtālaya, probably signifying 'abode of Bhūtas' fellow creatures of the Yaksas, has been placed at Jind. At Acyutasthala sleeping or night stay and at Bhūtālaya taking of bath is forbidden which confirms their Yaksa connection. This is contrary to the normal requirement of a purifying bath at other tirthas. In the land of Kuruksetra particularly, every tirtha has its pond or tank, often with pucca bathing ghats. At bigger sacred complexes like Thanesar there are many tanks and a dip in each one of these has its own special merit. Although the centres of Yakşa cult present in the night an atmosphere entirely opposite of that during the day there is no doubt whatsoever of the merit of visiting them during the day. In fact the pilgrim is required to begin his tirthayatra in Kuruksetra with a visit to the Rantuka Yaksa. 158 Also the ban on nightstay is limited only to these Yaksa tirthas and does not apply to the region of Kuruksetra generally as V.S. Agrawal thinks, 159 Kuruksetra is the holiest of the holy tirthas according to the Mahabharata160 and the Puranas161 and there is not even a trace of any idea of Kuruksetra-Kutsana in the Great Epic. 162

It has been observed that in early centuries of the Christian Era assimilation and synthesis of the Yaksa cult within the fold of Saivism was in progress. 163 The Mahāmāyūri164 counts Siva Mahākāla in its list of Yaksas as the presiding deity of Sivapurāhāra and Varanasi. According to the Matsya Purāna 165 many Yakşas enrolled themselves as ganas of Siva and several others got converted to Saivism. Even Mahā Yaksa Kubera was raised to the position of Ganesa and Mudgarpāni enrolling himself in the service of Siva began acting as a doorkeeper of the citizens of Varanasi. 166 The phenomenon is however best illustrated by the story of Harikeśa, son of the Yaksa king Pūrnabhadra, who disregarding his father's opposition, worships Siva and wins a boon to become the guardian deity-kşetrapāla of Varanasi and chief of all his gap as there. 167 All this however does not justify the sweeping assertion that only Yaksa-worship existed earlier and Siva-worship developed entirely out of the Yaksa-cult.168

Fusion of the Yaksa-cult with Tantric worship was another contemporary and corelated phenomenon. We find the Maha Yaksa Senapati figuring in a Tantric mantra in the Garuda Purana:169 ॐ नमः खडगवज्रपाणये महायक्षसेनापतये स्वाहा । This process of assimilation, synthesis or fusion, whatever we might call it, was wide-spread and covered Kuruksetra too. Munjavara, the seat of Mahayaksi Ulūkhalamekhalā, is called a tirtha of Mahādeva and a pilgrim passing a night there is promised the status of Siva's Ganapati. 170 The mention of the Yaksini there gets only the second place. Saptacaru, below Vinasana, is a Saiva tirtha also connected with Yakşas, Guhyakas and Rākşasas etc. 171 In case of two other tirthas of Siva, namely Pancanada and Kotitirtha the pilgrim is advised to undertake a visit after first paying homage to the Yaksa Arantuka who is one of the four Yaksa gate-keepers of Kuruksetra. 172

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We have also seen above how Yaksini Śrngotpādint devours four Pāśupata ascetics staying in a deserted Śiva temple during the night before she is subdued there.

The nexus between Saktism and Tantrism and Yakşa-worship suggested by the Garuda Purāṇa above can also be similarly supported. The region dotted with centres of Yakṣa-worship has an equally generous share of Saktapiṭhas. The names include Sarasvatī, <sup>173</sup> Jyotiḥsara <sup>174</sup> Brahmāvarta, <sup>175</sup> Prthūdaka, <sup>176</sup> Rṇamocana, <sup>177</sup> Kapālamocana, <sup>178</sup> Oghavatī, <sup>179</sup> Kurukṣetra, <sup>180</sup> Karavīrapura <sup>181</sup> and Kṛtaśauca. <sup>182</sup> Like some of the Yakṣa-centres quite a few of the Saktapīṭhas are located across and adjoining the boundaries of Kurukṣetra, as for instance Pāṭalā, <sup>183</sup> Satadru, <sup>184</sup> Pañcanada, <sup>185</sup> Mathurā <sup>186</sup> and Hastināpura. <sup>187</sup> And of course some of these are not exclusive to one of them but common to both.

All this evidence leads to the conclusion that the Yakşa cult was, at one time, fairly wide-spread in the land of Kurukşetra and its adjoining areas and constitutes an important chapter in the history of development of religious beliefs in this region.

Statement Showing

Authority	Arantuka	Tarantuka	Macakruka	Kapila
Cunningham ASR Vol. XIV (pp. 89- 90)	Ber/Baher W.N.W. of Kaithal	(=Ratan Yakşa) Near Pipli on the Sarasvatī 6 kms. N.E. of Thanesar	Sinkh (a Yakşa- Kunda exists)	Ram Rai 17 kms. W. of Jind
R.S. Sharma	-do- (p. 33)	Sinkh (p. 29)	(=Ratnuk Yakşa) Ratgal near Pipli (p. 28)	-ор-
Dyali Ram (Hindi)		(=Ratan Yakşa) Samak near Panipat (p. 63)	1	
Dyali Ram (Urdu)	Sinkh (p. 74)	(=Ratan Yakşa) Ratgal near Pipli (p. 66)		
Silak Ram	Barta 18 kms. N.W. of Kaithal	-do- (p. 16) Also (=Tarkhu tirtha) Sinkh, 16 Kms.) N. of Gohana	Kirmach 16 kms. S. of Thanesar (p. 16)	Ram Rai

... Contd.

Authority	Vāsuki	Ulākhala	Bhūtešvara Bhūtālaya	Hara Yakşa	Yakşa (no name given)
Cunningham ASR XIV	1	1	(california de la constantia de la const		Ber/Baher/Sinkh
R.S. Sharma	1	1	Jind (p. 30)	1	
Dyali Ram	Or to	ı	Jind (p. 71)	Baher W.N.W. of Kaithal (p. 83)	Baher W.N.W. Kaithal (p. 85) of Kaithal and Samak (p. 63) (p. 83)
Silak Ram	Barta 18 kms. N.W. of Kaithal (p. 18)	IS)	Jind (p. 71) Ram Rai (p. 18) (Also locates Yugan- dhara at Ram		Dakhni Khera 8 kms. S. of Jind (p. 18)

Works cited: (i) Cunningham Alexander, Archaeological Survey of India Reports, Vol. XIV (1878-79, Reprint, Varanasi 1970.

(ii) Sharma R.S. Kuruksetra Rahasya, Prt. i, (Hindi), Jind 1926.

(iii) Dayali Ram Lala, Kuruksetra Darpana (Hindi), Ambala Cantt. 1941.

(iv) -do- (Urdu),

(v) Phogat Silak Ram, Tirthas of Kurukşetra as enumerated in the Mahābhārata and Vāmana Purāṇa, Journal of Haryana Studies, Vol VIII, Nos. 1-2, 1976, pp.

### Notes and References

- 1. Tavakar N.G., The Essays throwing new light on the Gandharvas, The Apsarases, The Yakshas and The Kinnaras, Bombay 1971, p. 57.
- 2. Ibid., p. 58.
- 3. Coomaraswamy Anand K., Yaksas, New Delhi 1971, Intro. p. 3.
- 4. See the account of creation in Manu Smrti, 1.37 (1):

यक्ष रक्षः पिशाचांश्च गन्धर्वाप्सरसोऽस्रान ।

- e.g. Amarakośa, Sarga, 11.
- 6. Cr. ed. Vana, 129.8:

अत्रानुवंशं पठतः श्रृणु मे कुरुनन्दन। उल्खलराभरणैः पिशाची यदभाषत।।

7. Ibid., Karna, 30.46:

इति तीर्थानुसर्तारं राक्षसी काचिदब्र्बीत । एकरात्रशयी गेहे महोल्खलमेखला।।

8. Cr. ed. SM., 13.39:

उपोध्य रजनीमेकां गाणपत्यमबाप्न्यात्। तत्रैव च महाग्राही यक्षिणो लोकविश्रता।।

- 9. Suryakanta, A Practical Vedic Dictionary, Delhi 1981, p. 536.
- 10. Ibid., p. 430.
- 11. Vedic Index, ii. 182.
- 12. • यक्षदृशो न शुभयन्त मर्याः ।
- 13. • अग्निं • • यक्षस्याध्यक्षं तविषं बृहन्तम् ॥
- 14. मा कस्य यक्षं सदमिद्धरो गा : . . .
- 15. अमूरा विश्वा वृषणाविमा वां न यासु चित्रं ददशो न यक्षम् । द्रहः सचन्ते अनुता जनानां न वां निण्यान्यचिते अभूवन् ॥ For interpretation Cf. Agrawal V.S., प्राचीन भारतीय लोकघर्म, Varanasi 1964, p. 120.
- 16. मा कस्याद्भतकत् यक्षं भुजेमा तन्भिः। मा शेषसा मा तनसा ॥
- 17. पिशकुभिष्टिमम्भणं पिशाचिमिन्द्र संमण । सर्वे रक्षो निवर्हय ॥ (Wilsons' trans: 'Destroy, Indra, the tawny-coloured, fearfully roaring Piśāci; annihilate all the Raksasas.') Also cf. Keith A.B., The Religion and Philosophy of The Veda And Upanisads, Reprint 1970, Pt. i, p. 74.

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- X. 8.43. For English translation and notes see Whitney William Dwight, Atharva-Veda Samhită, Two Volumes, Delhi 1962.
- Stutley, Margaret and James, A Dictionary of Hinduism, New Delhi 1986, p. 345.
- 20. X. 2.32.
- 21. V. 25.9., Cf. Vedic Index, i. 533.
- 22, 26,36,
- See e.g. Jaiminīya Brāhmana, ed. Raghuvira and Lokesh Chandra, 2nd revised edn., Delhi 1986, iii. 203.
   and The Gopatha Brāhmana, ed. Gaastra Dieuke, Leiden 1919, 1.1.1.
- 24. xiii. 4.3.10.
- 25. Keith, Op. cit., i. 242.
- 26. Cf. Gobhila Grhya Sūtra iii. 4.28 and Drāhyāyaṇa Grhya Sūtra iii. 1.25: यक्षमिव चक्षषः प्रियो भयासम ।
- 27. e.g. A.V. X. 2.32. Whitney's tr.
- 28. xii. 5:

नैनं यक्षो न पिशाचो हिनस्ति। न जम्भको नाप्यसुरो न यक्षः॥

29. Upanişad Sangraha, ed. Shastri J.L., Delhi 1980, Pt. ii, p. 337: यक्षरक्षः पिशाचानां घ्वंसनं मन्त्रसत्कृतम् । रक्षार्थं बालरूपाणां सृतिकानां गृहेषु च ॥

30. Ibid., p. 235:

यक्षोपासकाः सदा त्याज्याः ।

31. ii. 4.1.1:

देवा मनुष्या पितरस्तेऽन्यत आसन्नसुरा रक्षांसि पिशाचास्तेऽन्यतः . . . .

32. i. 154.

33. iii. 96:

पिशाची वा इयं त्रियरुणस्य जाया सैनत् किशपुना छादियत्वा अध्यास्त इति । तद् अभिव्याहरत् इत्येवैनाम् इदम् अग्नेर् हर ऊर्घ्वम् उद्द्रवत् सर्वाम् प्रादहत् . . . .

- 34. Upanişad Sangraha, Delhi 1980 p. 176: यक्षराक्षसभूतगणपिशाचोरगग्रहादीनाम....
- 35. 70.15.4:

संप्रविष्टैः पिशाचैर्वा रक्षोभिर्वापि तन्निभैः। अचिरान्नगरं तत्र जनमारेण मार्यते॥

- 36. Tavakar, op. cit., p. 67.
- 37. Venkatasubbiah A., Vedic Studies, Mysore 1932, p. 152.
- 38. Ibid., p. 152 f.
- 39. Ibid., pp. 153 and 156.
- 40. Ibid., p. 153.
- Haldar J.R. in Religious Life In Ancient India, ed. D.C. Sircar, Calcutta 1972, p. 156.
- 42. Ibid.
- 43. Fausboll V., The Jataka, 7 Vols. London 1962. Vol. iii, p. 146:

यक्खा बलिकम्मं अलभमाना बोधिसत्तस्स कुज्झित्वा हिमवन्ते यक्खस-मागमं कत्वा बोधिसत्तस्स मारणत्थाय एककक्खलं यक्खं पेसेसुं।

- 44. Haldar J.R., Ibid., p. 155.
- Malalasekera G.P., Dictionary of Pali Proper Names, 2 Vols. London 1960, Vol. ii, p. 675.
- 46. Venkatasubbiah, op. cit., p. 195.
- 47. Coomaraswamy, op. cit., Prt. ii. Addenda p. 7.
- 48. Ed. Kashyap Bhikkhu J., 3 Vols. Nalanda 1958, Vol. iii. p. 157, ix. 3.9:

अयं यक्खो गह्नाति, अयं यक्खो आविसति, अयं यक्खो हैठेति, अयं यक्खो विहेठेति, अयं यक्खो हिसति, अयं यक्खो न मुञ्चतीति।

- 49. Malalasekera, op. cit., p. 676.
- The Jātaka (Eng. Tr. of Jātaka Stories) Ed. Cowel E.B., 3 Vols. London 1957, Jātaka Stories No. 1, 96, 155, 196, 398, 510, 537 and 546 etc.
- Mbh. Ādi, 1.35, and 111.10-11; Viṣṇu Purāṇa v. 1.19. Also Amarakośa, Svarādi Kāṇḍa 11.
- 52. vii. 4.13:

रक्षाम इति यैरुक्तं राक्षसास्ते भवन्तु वः। यक्षाम इति यैरुक्तं यक्षा एव भवन्तु वः॥

Cf. Mārkandeya Purāṇa 45.20 (ii):

खादाम इति ये चोचुस्ते यक्षा यक्षणाद्द्विज।

- 53. Coomaraswamy, op. cit., Prt, ii, p. 5.
- 54. See supra notes 6 and 7. In the Kathāsaritsāgara also a Yakşa named Supratīka is turned into a Piśāca by the curse of Kubera. See no. 75. infra.
- 55. V. 57.3 (ii):

भुजङ्गयक्षगन्धवंप्रबुद्धकमलोत्पलम् ।

56. i. 34.18.:

नैशानि सर्वभूतानि विचरन्ति यतस्ततः। यक्षराक्षस संघाश्च रौद्राश्च पिश्रिताशनाः।।

57. xi. 96:

यक्षरक्षः पिशाचान्नं मद्यं मांसं सुराऽऽसवम् । तद्ब्राह्मणेन नात्तव्यं देवानामश्नता हवि : ॥

58. Bhişma 82.44(i):

राक्षसाश्च पिशाचाश्च तथान्ये पिशिताशनाः।

59. Sauptika, 8.127 and 131-133:

तथादृश्यन्त रक्षांसि पिशाचाश्च पृथिविद्याः । खादन्तो नरमांसानि पिबन्तः शोणितानि च ॥ पीत्वा च शोणितं हृष्टाः प्रानृत्यन्गणशोऽपरे । इदं वरिमदं मेध्यिमदं स्वाद्विति चाबुवन् ॥ मेदोमज्जास्थिरक्तानां वसानां च भृशाशिताः । परमांसानि खादन्तः कव्यादा मांसजीविनः ॥ वसां चाप्यपरे पीत्वा पर्यधावन्विकृक्षिलाः । नानावकास्तथा रौद्राः कव्यादाः पिशिताशनाः ॥

Also Drona, 48. 47-48 and 51. And Vāmana P., 9. 41-42.

60. Anuśāsana, 90.16:

तिलदाने च ऋव्यादा ये च क्रोधवशा गणाः। यातुधानाः पिशाचाश्च विप्रलुम्पन्ति तद्धविः॥

61. Sabhā, 16.38:

ते चतुष्पथनिक्षिप्ते जरानामाथ राक्षसी। जग्राह मनुजव्याघ्र मांसशोणितभोजना।।

62. Vana, 219. 51-52.

63. Vana, 219. 51:

आविशन्ति च यं यक्षाः पुरुषं कालपयंये। उन्माद्यति स तु क्षित्रं ज्ञेयो यक्षग्रहस्तु सः।।

64. Markandeya P., 8. 108(i):

पिशाचभूतवेतालडाकिनीयक्षसंक्लम् ।

65. Ibid., 43.5:

दृष्ट्वा प्रेतिपिशाचादीन् गन्धवंनगराणि च। सुवर्णवर्णान् वृक्षांश्च नवमासान् स जीवति।।

Vayu P. Uttara, 8, 281-282:

मधुमांसीदनेदंध्ना तिलचूर्णसुरासवै: । धूपैर्हारिद्रकृणरेस्तैलभद्रगुडौदनै: ॥ कृष्णानि चैव वासांसि धूपाः समनसस्तथा । एवं युक्ताः सुबलयस्तेषां वै पर्वसन्धिषु ॥

Also Brahmanda P., ii. 3.7. 409-411.

66. Vāyu P. Uttara, 8.191:

यक्षा दृष्ट्वा पिबन्तीह नृणां मांसमसृग्वसाम् । रक्षांस्यनुप्रवेशेन पिशाचाः परपीडनेः ॥

67. iii. 20, 19-21:

विससर्जात्मनः कायं नाभिनन्दंस्तमोमयम् । जगृहुयंक्षरक्षांसि रात्रि क्षुत्तृट्समुद्भवाम् ॥ क्षुत्तृड्भ्यामुपसृष्टास्ते तं जग्धुमभिदुदुवुः ॥ मा रक्षतेनं जक्षध्विमत्यूचुः क्षुत्तृडदिताः ॥ देवस्तानाह संविग्नो मा मां जक्षत रक्षत । अहो मे यक्षरक्षांसि प्रजा यूयं बभूविथ ॥

68. Vāyu P. Uttara, 8.190:

यक्षाणां राक्षसानां च पौलस्त्यागस्त्ययक्ष्च ये। तेषां राजा महाराजः कुबेरो ह्यलकाधिप:।। and Mbh. Udyoga, 16.33.

69. Vāyu P. Uttara, 8. 251-254: 254(ii): उपचारोपचारश्च उल्खल उलखली।

70. Eng. Tr. 'The Ocean of Story', Tawney C.H. 10 Vols. London 1924, Vol. ii, p. 52.

Also cf. Mbh. Vana, 297.20:

विरूपाक्षं महाकायं यक्षं तालसमुच्छ्यम्। ज्वलनाकंप्रतीकाशमधृष्यं पर्वतोपमम्।।

71. Vol. i, p. 76-77.

Particularly i. 7.35:

दिवा नैषां प्रभावोऽस्ति ध्वस्तानामकंतेजसा। यक्षरक्षः पिशाचानां तेन हृष्यन्त्यमी निशि॥

- 72. Ibid., Vol. viii, p. 25.
- 73. Ibid., Vol. vi, p. 118.
- 74. Ibid., Vol. iii, p. 187 f.
- 75. Ibid., Vol. i. p. 7.
- Ed. Vreese K. De., Leiden 1936, vv. 208. 326; cf. Stein M.A. Kalhana's Rājatarangini, Delhi 1961, Vol. i, p. 184, n. to v. 710.
- Oppert Gustav, On the Original Inhabitants of Bhāratavarşa or India, Reprint Delhi 1972, p. 455.
- 78. Op. cit., p. 132 ff.
- 79. Vāmana P. Cr. ed. A.S. Gupta, Varanasi 1967, 23. 39-41:

तस्य क्षेत्रस्य रक्षार्थं ददौ स पुरुषोत्तामः । यक्षं च चन्द्रनामानं वासुर्कि चापि पन्नगम् ॥ विद्याधरं शंकुकणं सुकेशि राक्षसेश्वरम् । अजावनं च नृपति महादेवं च पावकम् ॥ एतानि सर्वतोऽभ्येत्य रक्षन्ति कुरुजांगलम् । अमीषां विलनोऽन्ये च भृत्याश्चैवानुयायिनः ॥

80. Vana, 81.178:

तरन्तुकारन्तुकयोर्यदन्तरम् रामह्नदानं च मचकुकस्य च। एतत्कुरुक्षेत्रसमन्तपञ्चकम् पितामहस्योत्तरवेदिरुच्यते ॥

- 81. SM., 1.14.
- 82. The verse is repeated in Mbh. Salya, 53.24 too with अजापत: as a variant of पितामहस्य.
- 83. The Vamana P. gives Caturmukha in place of Macakruka in SM., 1.14(ib): यदन्तरं रामह्रदाच्चतुर्मुखम्।
- Archaeological Survey of India Reports, Vol. XIV, Reprint, Varanasi 1970. pp. 89-90 and 97-106.
- 85. SM., 13. 38-39. See n. 170. infra.
- 86. Śalya, 27. 19-24.
- 87. Vāmana Purāņa-A Study, Varanasi 1964, p. 49.
- 88. Bharadwaj O.P., Studies in the Historical Geography of Ancient India, Delhi 1986, p. 176.
- 89. Ibid.
- 90. 18, 44, 53 and 67.

- 91. Ibid., 18.67; and SM., 13. 24-26. The whole region is called यक्षमण्डल in Vamana P. 18.59.
- 92. Vâmana P., SM., 13. 24-26.
- 93. See Sachau E.C., Alberuni's India, Reprint, Delhi 1964, Vol. 1, p. 240.
- 94. Marus have been called the Utkara of the Vedi of Kuruksetra in the Taittiriya Aranyaka viii. 1.1.:

# देवा वै सत्रमासत । . . . . तेषां कुरुक्षेत्रं वेदिरासीत् । तस्यै खाण्डवो दक्षिणार्धं आसीत् । तघ्नंमृत्तरार्धः । परीणज्जघनार्धः । मरवः उत्करः ।

- 95. The definition given in the Taittiriya Āranyaka covers a much bigger area and is roughly co-terminus with the present state of Haryana.
- 96. Dīghanikāya, Ed. Kashyap Bhikkhu J., 3 Vols. Nalanda 1958 Vol. iii Pāthika Vagga, p. 155 ff. Also Cf. Malalasekera, op. cit. p. 677.
- 97. Cf. Bharadwaj, O.P., op. cit. p. 160. The Varaha P. Cr. ed. Gupta A.S. Varanasi 1981, 81-83 mentions a hundred towns of Yakşas on the Satasrnga, a name used for the Shiwalik range.
- 98. ix. 3. 9. v. (verse) 3.
- 99. Ibid., v. 4.
- 100. See Agrawal V.S., The Geographical Contents of the Mahamayuri, Journal of the U.P. Historical Society, Vol. XV. Pt. 2, December 1942, p. 24-52.
- 101. Ibid., p. 27. v. 15.
- 102. Ibid., p. 32.
- 103. Ibid., p. 27. v. 18.
- 104. Ibid., p. 28. v. 70.
- 105. Ibid., p. 33.
- 106. Ibid., p. 27. v. 21.
- 107. Ibid., p. 27. v. 23.
- 108. Ibid., p. 28, v. 60.
- 109. Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India, Calcutta 1924, p. 395 f.
- 110. Ibid., p. 27. v. 23.
- 111. Ibid., p. 28, v. 56.
- 112. Ibid., p. 28. v. 60.
- 113. Ibid., p. 28. v. 57.
- 114. Ibid., p. 28, v. 58.
- 115. Cf. Ibid., p. 44.
- 116. Vamana P., SM., 13. 44-45.
- 117. Mbh. Vana, 129. 6-8.
- 118. Winternitz Maurice, History of Indian Literature, Revised ed. Vol. ii, Delhi 1983, p. 371.
- 119. Ed. Kane P.V., Reprint Delhi 1973, Ch. V. p. 21 ' ' पठ्यमान महामायुरी ' ' Also Mookerji R.K., Harsha, 3rd, ed., Delhi 1965, p. 141.

120. See Bharadwaj O.P., op. cit., pp. 149-165.

- 121. See Thaplyal Kiran Kumar, Inscriptions of the Maukharis, Later Guptas, Puşpabhūtis and Yaśovarman of Kanauj, Delhi 1985, p. 186 11. 5-6. The first twelve lines of the two seals are identical, p. 188.
- 122. Ibid., p. 182. LL 3-4.
- 123. Mookerji, op. cit., p. 14?.
- 124. Thaplyal, op. cit., p. 71.
- 125. Op. cit., p. 373.
- 126. Ch. iii, p. 49 f.
- 127. Mookerji, op. cit. p. 141.
- 128. Cf. Kane, op. cit. Notes on chapters i-iii, p. 200.
- 129. Mbh. Sabhā, 29. 4-5.
- Cf. Agrawal V.S., Geographical Contents of Mahāmāyūri, p. 35 n. 8. and Dasgupta K.K., A Tribal History of Ancient India, Calcutta 1974, p. 18.
- 131. Pürvakhanda, ed. Sunder Lal Shastri, Varanasi 1960, p. 8,

# यौधेयो नाम धाम संपदो जनपदः।

- 132. See Handiqui K.K., Yaśastilaka and Indian Culture, Sholapur 1949, p. 395.
- 133. Cf. Agrawal Jagannath, An Ancient Republic of the Punjab—The Yaudheyagana, in Dr. M.S. Randhawa Fel. Vol. Chandigarh 1970, pp. 49-55, p. 54; Sahni Birbal, The Technique of Casting Coins in Ancient India, Bombay 1955, p. 7 ff. and Allan John, A Catalogue of The Indian Coins in The British Museum, Reprint Oxford 1967, pp. cxl vii ff. and 265 ff. etc.
- 134. Agrawal, V.S., भारतीय कला, Reprint Varanasi 1987, p. 125.
- 135. Ibid., p. 128.
- Agrawala R.C., 'Early History and Archaeology of Haryana' in Haryana Studies in History and Culture, Kurukshetra 1968, p. 20.
- Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Deptt. of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Kurukshetra University, pp. 182-183, Plates xx and xxii.
- 138. Journal of U.P. Historical Society, Vol. xxiv-xxv, p. 191 f. (cited by Punia).
- 139. Agrawal R.C. in Haryana Studies, p. 26 f.
- 140. A.S.R. Vol. xiv. p. 97 ff.
- 141. Haryana Studies pp. 20-21.
- Coomaraswamy A.K., A. History of Indian and Indonesian Art, London 1927, p. 32.
- Kuṣāṇa Sculptures from Sanghol (1st-2nd century A.D.) Vol. i. ed. Gupta S.P. New Delhi, 1985, p. 116, fig. 1.
- 144. Ibid., p. 118, fig. 7.
- 145. Ibid., p. 119, fig. 8.
- 146. Ibid., p. 123, fig. 20.

- 147. Shukla V.S., Some Terracotta Figurines from Sirsa (Haryana), Indological Studies (Essays in Memory of Shri S.P. Singhal) Delhi 1987, (pp. 79-86), p. 81. fig. 4.
- 148. भारतीय कला, p. 123.

149. Harşacarita, Ch. iii. p. 43:

सरालयशिलाघट्टनटङ्किनिकरनिकृत्ता इव व्यदीर्यन्त विपदः ....

Also Cf. Devahuti D., Harsha-A Political Study, Oxford 1970, p. 57.

- 150. Mbh. Vana, 129. 8-10.
- 151. Vāmana P., SM., 13. 38 (ii)-48.
- 152. Ibid., v. 44.
- 153. Vana, 129. 8 quoted supra.
- 154. SM., 13. 39 (ii):

तत्रैव च महाग्राही यक्षिणी लोकविश्रता ॥

155. Vāyu P. (Venkateshwar Press edn.) Uttara, 8. 268 (i):

विष्टब्धाक्षा महाजिल्ला लेलिहाना ह्य दुखलाः

156. Vāmana P., SM., 13.48 (i):

दिवा मया ते कथितं रात्री भक्ष्यामि निश्चितम ।

157. Mbh. Vana, 129.9:

युगन्धरे दिधप्राश्य उषित्वा चाच्यतस्थले। तद्वद् भूतालये स्नात्वा सपुत्रा वस्तुमहंसि ॥

Vāmana P., SM., 13. 47. is identical but for इच्छिस in place of अहंसि. Parui S.S. (Kurukşetra in the Vamana Purana, Calcutta 1976. p. 77) agrees with this interpretation. Agrawal V.S. (Vāmana Purāna-A Study, Varanasi 1964, p. 67) thinks curd or milk was eaten as a Prasada in Yugandhara. According to him this Gatha verse is open to many inferences. The interpretation accepted by us appears to suit the context better and finds support from Mbh. Karna, 30. 42 also:

> यगन्धरे पयः पीत्वा प्रोध्य चाप्यच्यतस्थले। तद्वद भतिलये स्नात्वा कथं स्वगं गमिष्यति ॥

158. Vāmana P., SM., 12. 19-21 and 13. 11:

रन्तुकं च नरो दृष्ट्वा द्वारपालं महावलम्। यक्षं सम्भिवाद्यं व तीर्थयात्रां समाचरेत्।।

159. Bhārata Sāvitrī, three volumes, Delhi 1977, Vol. 1, p. 259 f. and Vol. ii, p. 264.

160. e.g. Vana, 81. 184:

पांसवोऽपि कुरुक्षेत्रे वायुना समुदोरिताः ॥ अपि दष्कृतकर्माणं नयन्ति परमां गतिम् ॥

161. e.g. Matsya P., 109. 3:

पृथिव्यां नैमिषं पुण्यम् अन्तरिक्षे च पुष्करम् । त्रयाणामपि लोकानां कुरुक्षेत्रं विशिष्यते ॥

For religious importance of Kuruksetra also see Laksmidhara, Kṛtyakalpataru,

Baroda, Vol. iii. pp. 175-79.

162. Cf. Bharadwaj O.P., Is there Kurukşetra-Kutsana in the Mahābhārata? In 'Indological Studies' (Essays in Memory of Shri S.P. Singhal), New Delhi 1987, pp. 295-301.

163. Kantawala S.G., Cultural History from the Matsya Purana, Baroda 1964,

p. 191 f.

164. p. 27, v. 28 and v. 12.

165, 183, 63-66,

166. Kantawala, op. cit. p. 172.

167. Agrawala V.S., Matsya Purana-A Study, Varanasi 1963, p. 279.

168. Agrawal, भारतीय कला, p. 127.

169. i. 78. 10 (i). Also cf. Avasthy A.B.L., गरुड पुराण-एक अध्ययन । Lucknow 1968, p. 256.

170. Vāmana P., SM., 13. 38 (ii)-39 (i):

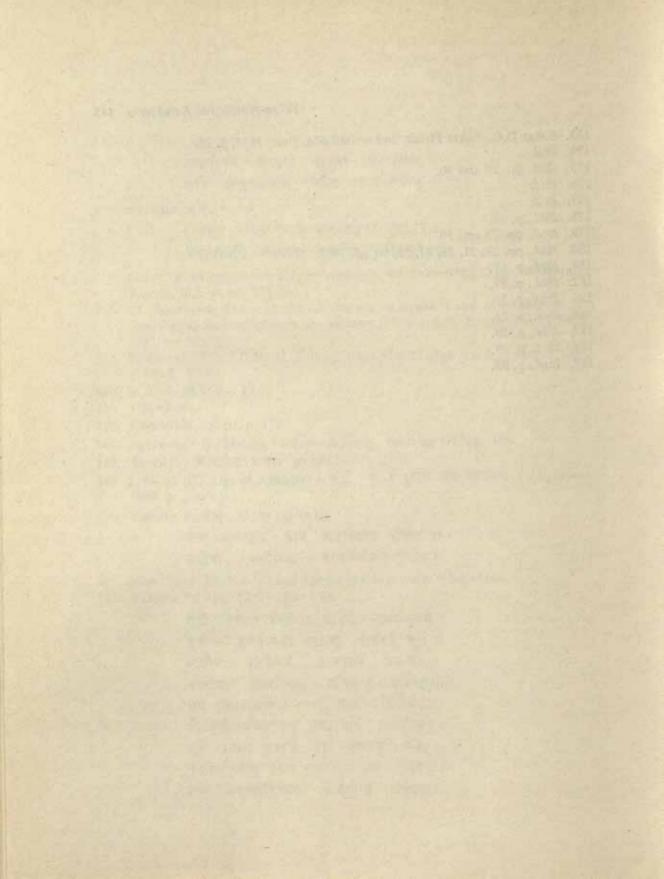
ततो मुञ्जवटं नाम महादेवस्य धीमतः॥ उपोष्य रजनोमेकां गाणपत्यमवाष्नुयात्॥

171. Mbh. Vana, 80. 106-107 and variant readings under these verses.

172. Vāmana P., SM., 13. 24-26 and 28:

ततो गच्छेत विप्रेन्द्रा द्वारपालं त्वरन्तुकम्।
तत्रोध्य रजनीमेकां स्नात्वा तीर्थंवरे णुभे ॥
द्वितीयं पूजयेद्यत्र द्वारपालं प्रयत्नतः।
ब्राह्मणान् भोजयित्वा च प्रणिपत्य क्षमापयेत् ॥
तव प्रसादाद्यक्षेन्द्र मुक्तो भवति किल्विषः ॥
सिद्धिमंयाऽभिलिषता तया सार्धं भवाम्यहम्।
एवं प्रसाद्य यक्षेन्द्रं ततः पञ्चनदं व्रजेत् ॥
कोटितीर्थानि रुद्रेण समाहृत्य यतः स्थितम्।
तेन त्रैलोक्यविख्यातं कोटितीर्थं प्रचक्षते ॥

- 173. Sircar D.C., Śākta Pɪihas, 2nd revised edn. Delhi 1973, p. 26.
- 174. Ibid.
- 175. Ibid., pp. 26 and 30.
- 176. Ibid.
- 177. Ibid.
- 178. Ibid., p. 69.
- 179. Ibid., pp. 26 and 30.
- 180. Ibid., pp. 29, 31, 36, 41, 51, 60, 63.
- 181. Ibid., p. 69.
- 182. Ibid., p. 89.
- 183. Ibid., p. 26.
- 184. Ibid., p. 29.
- 185. Ibid., p. 29.
- 186. Ibid., p. 89.
- 187. Ibid., p. 85.



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Plate 1. Palwal Yakşa, reproduced from Punia, Plate XIX B

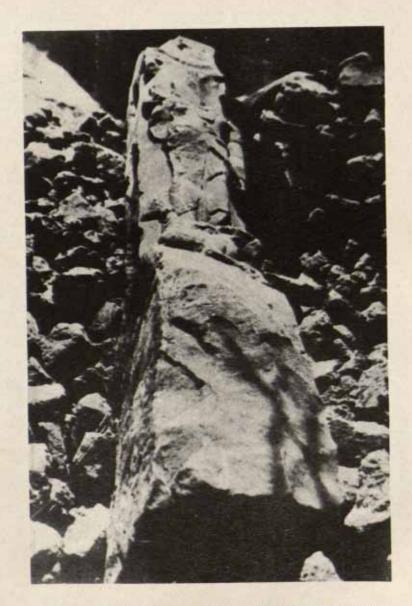


Plate 2. Bhadas Yakşa, reproduced from Punia, Plate XX

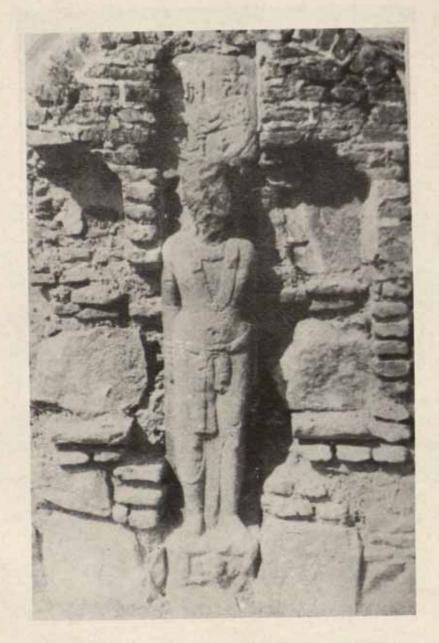


Plate 3. Hathin Yakşa, reproduced from Punia, Plate XXII

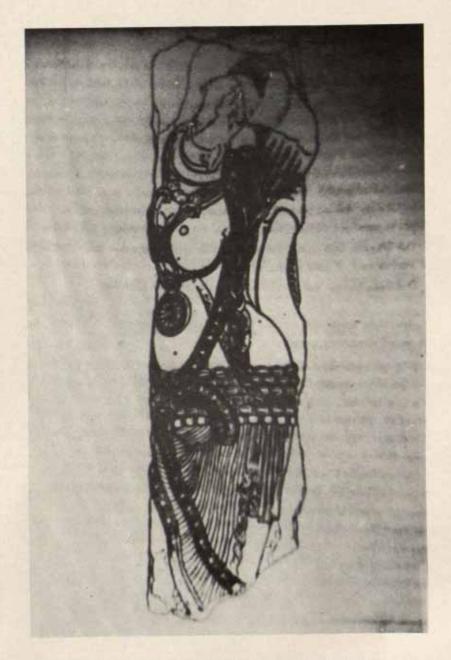


Plate 4. Mahrauli Yakşa, reproduced from Punia, Plate XIX C



Plate 5. Khokarakot Yakşa and Yakşi on the Lion Capital, reproduced from R. C. Agrawal, Plate 2

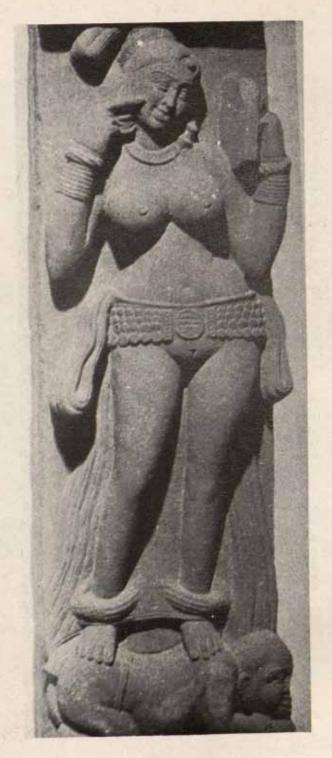


Plate 6. Paribhoga darśini, reproduced from S. P. Gupta, p. 61/1

Plate 7. Yakṣārohī, reproduced from S. P. Gupta p. 55/7.1





Plate 8.

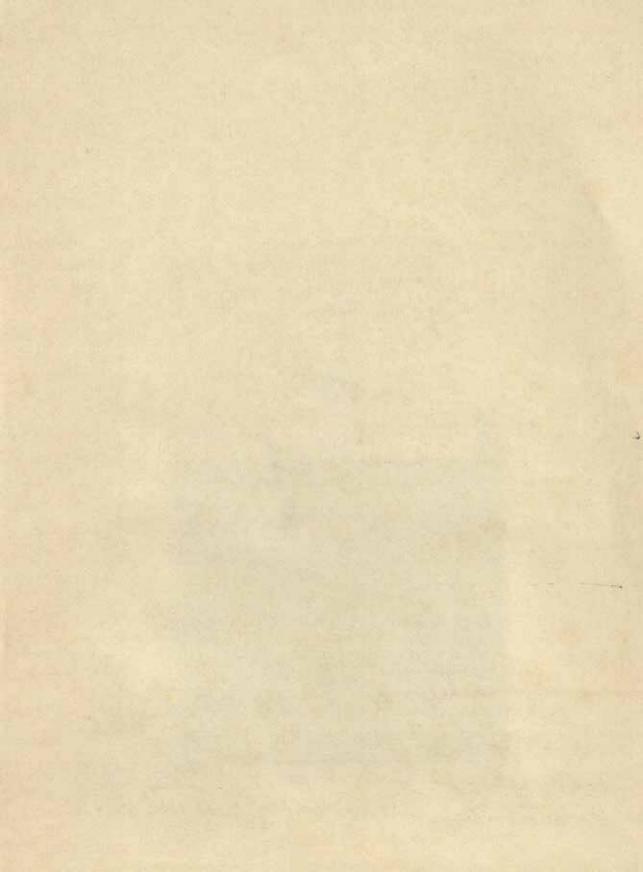
Darpaṇa-dhāriṇt, reproduced from S. P. Gupta p. 68/8





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Plate 9. Yakşī holding lotus flowers, reproduced from S. P. Gupta p. 85/20



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